

**LAND TO REAR OF SWALLOW GRANGE, NELSON ROAD,  
FISKERTON, WEST LINDSEY, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

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Prepared for  
Stirlin Developments Ltd.

by  
D. Moro

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PCAS Archaeology Ltd  
47, Manor Road,  
Saxilby  
Lincoln  
LN1 2HX

Tel. (01522) 703 800

e-mail: [info@pcas-archaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@pcas-archaeology.co.uk)

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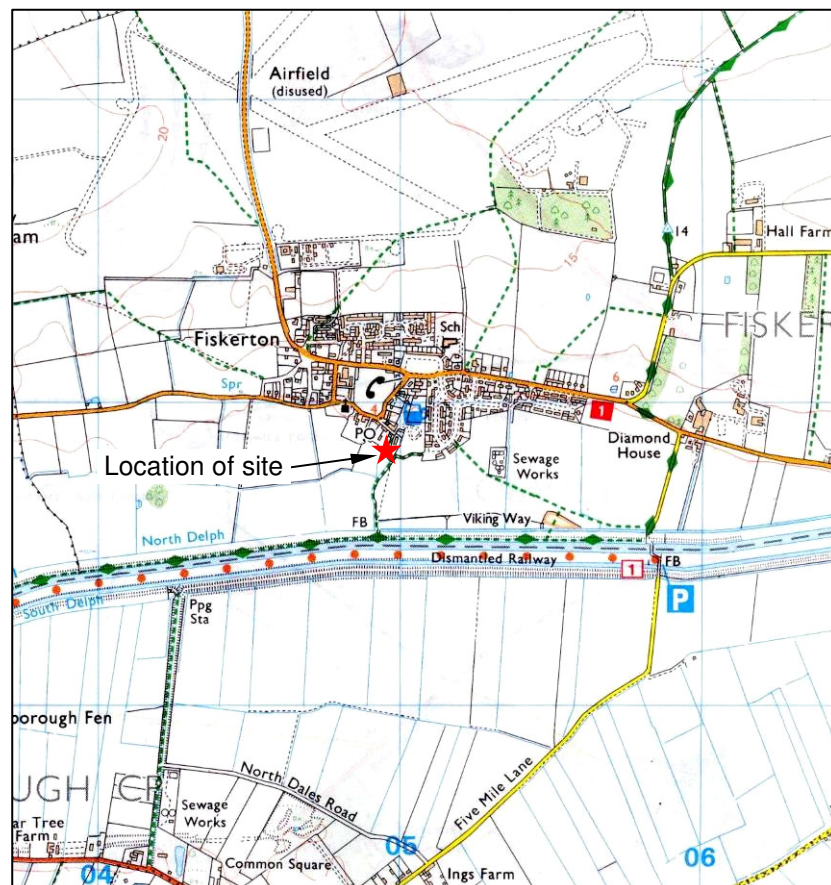
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## Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording took place during the construction of a single-storey sun room in the rear garden of Swallow Grange, on Nelson Road in the village of Fiskerton, in the district of West Lindsey in Lincolnshire.

The development site lies within an area of significant archaeological potential, within the core of the medieval settlement and in an area where evidence for both prehistoric and Roman settlement has been found. The nationally significant site of the Fiskerton Iron Age causeway lies perpendicular to the modern course of the River Witham, some 300m to the south of the site, while an extensive area of Romano-British hard-standing was discovered adjacent to a relict course of the Witham near Five Mile House, approximately 100m to the west. The demolished remnants of Fiskerton medieval manor have been encountered closer to the site, during archaeological works at the east end of Nelson Road.

No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were found during the archaeological monitoring works.



**Figure 1:** Site location plan at scale 1:25,000. The site is marked in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

## 1.0 Introduction

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by by Stirlin Developments Ltd. to carry out an archaeological monitoring and recording on all development groundworks associated with the construction of two dwellings.

As the proposed development site lies within an area of significant archaeological potential, within the core of the medieval settlement and in an area where evidence for both prehistoric and Roman settlement has been found, the Historic Environment Officer for West Lindsey District Council recommended that archaeological monitoring work should be carried out as a condition of planning permission (R.D. Savage 2016).

## 2.0 Site Location and Description (figs. 1 & 3)

The village of Fiskerton is within the West Lindsey district of Lincolnshire, and lies on the north bank of the modern, canalised course of the River Witham, approximately 7.5km to the east (downstream) of Lincoln. Fiskerton has no designated Conservation Area (WLDC).

Swallow Grange is accessed from the south side of Nelson Road, a cul-de-sac leading off Fiskerton High Street. The existing house does not front on to the road, but is situated to the rear of another property, within a long, narrow, irregular plot (plate 1). The roughly rectangular northern portion of the plot, in which the existing house lies and the new sun room is to be situated, is surrounded by residential properties and bordered by a footpath on its east side, while the roughly triangular southern portion is surrounded by cultivated land and bordered by a drain on its east side. The proposed building will occupy an area of some 56 square metres, lying within the garden to the south (rear) of the house.

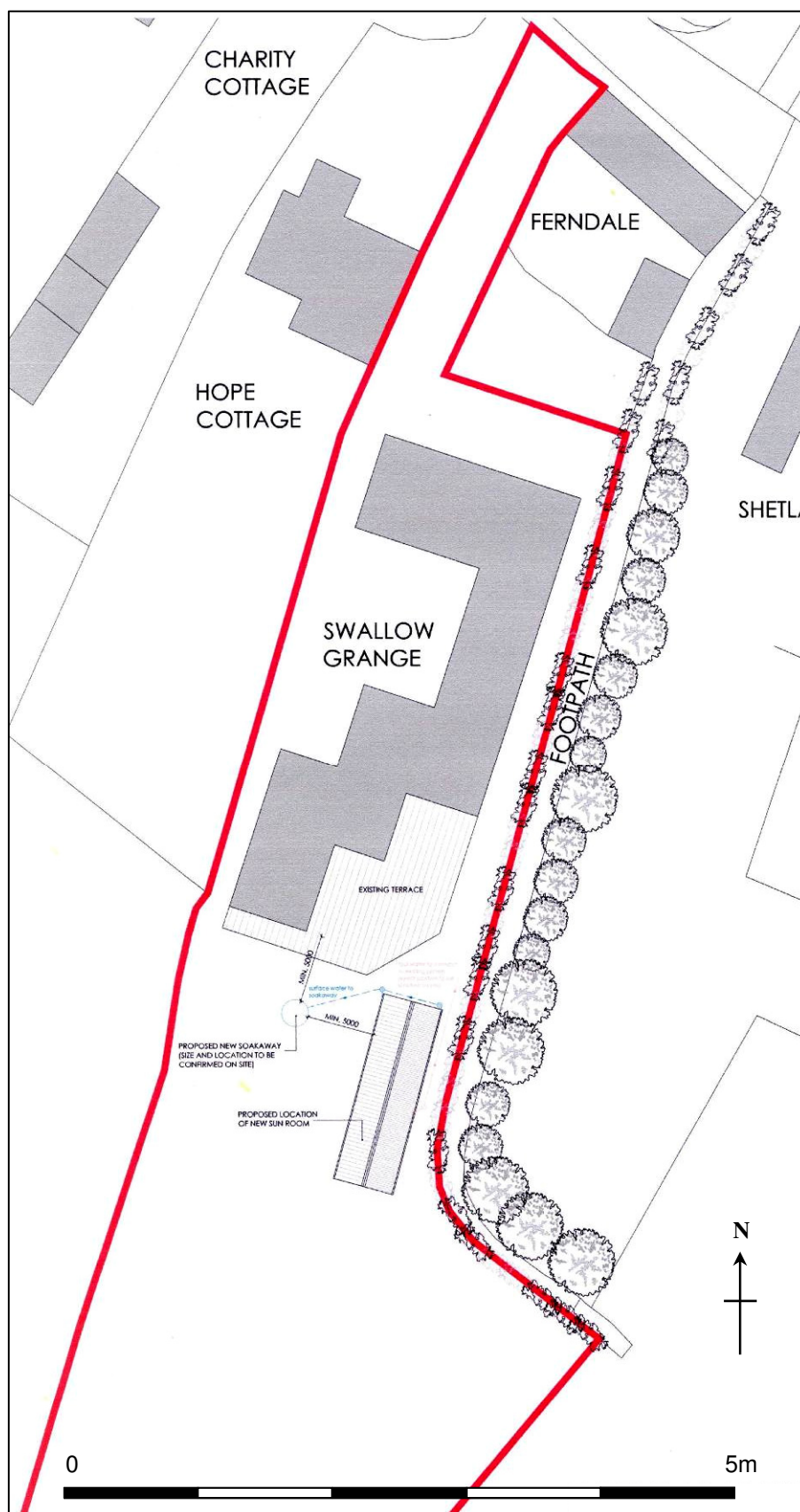


**Plate 1:** Pre- excavation general view of the site.

## 3.0 Topography and Geology

Fiskerton village lies on undulating land at the foot of the Lincoln Edge, sloping eastward to the fens and southwards into the valley of the River Witham. The majority of the village is situated between the 5m and 10m OD contour lines, just above the historic fen-edge, which is generally considered to be contiguous with the modern 5m above Ordnance Datum sea level contour line; Nelson Road lies slightly below that line, just within the fen-edge.

Fiskerton is situated on the lowest exposed strata of solid geology at the base of the Lincoln Edge, just above the glacial and alluvial drift deposits of the fen. The majority of the village lies on exposed Oxford Clay, but its western and south-western edges, including the site, lie on an exposed solid deposit of Kellaways Sand and Clay (BGS, 1973). Archaeological projects in the vicinity of the site have also recorded local peat deposits (Palmer-Brown, 2000; Savage, 2003).



**Figure 2:** As-proposed plan of the site at scale 1:500. Plan supplied by client.



## **4.0 Planning Background**

Full planning permission for the construction of sun room was granted in March 2016 (planning application number 133912). Among the pre-start conditions incumbent on the grant of planning permission, Condition 3 stipulates that a written scheme of archaeological investigation should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of groundworks, while Condition 4 requires the developer to inform the LPA in writing of the intention to commence the archaeological works, in accordance with the approved WSI, at least 2 weeks in advance. Following commencement of the development groundworks, Condition 7 of the grant of planning permission stipulates that the archaeological site work is to be carried out only in full accordance with the approved WSI, while Condition 8 requires the archaeological report to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA within 3 months of the completion of site works, and Condition 9 requires the site archive to be deposited with the appointed museum of record within 6 months (R.D. Savage 2016).

## **5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

A series of archaeological works on a site off Nelson Road, approximately 50m to the east and north-east of the proposed development site, encountered Neolithic to Bronze Age settlement features, including post holes, pits and potentially structural linear features, with a prehistoric buried soil and peat horizon, during the evaluation phase of the works, in a trench on the south side of the site, nearest to the river (Palmer-Brown, 2000; HER ref. 54525). Prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site is also attested to by a Neolithic polished stone axe found during construction work at Fiskerton school, approximately 250m to the north of Swallow Grange; a hoard of Late Bronze Age socketed axes discovered in Church Piece Field, adjoining the southern portion of the site to the west, in 1890 (HER ref. 52877), and a Bronze Age perforated stone axe-hammer found in St. Clement's churchyard (HER ref. 52911), while two Bronze Age round barrows are sited within the fen-edge, some 350m to the south-west of Swallow Grange, and the nationally significant site of the Fiskerton Iron Age causeway, constructed of timber posts and planks and associated with quantities of well-preserved artefacts believed to have been votive offerings, including tools, weapons, horse furniture and two logboats, lies adjacent to the modern course of the River Witham, some 300m to the south (Palmer-Brown, 2000; HER ref. 52904).

A programme of archaeological works, consisting of a desk-based assessment followed by an evaluation, was carried out on land to the rear of Five Mile House, approximately 100m to the west of Swallow Grange, in 1994. The works encountered an extensive area of Romano-British hard-standing adjacent to a relict course of the Witham: in some places, the surface consisted of two layers, with the upper layer bedded on a thick deposit of gritty sand sealing the lower layer. It was interpreted as a landing stage for boats. This may have been solely for the use of local travellers, traders and fishermen, but it has been suggested that the Witham between Roman Lincoln and Fiskerton was not navigable for large craft, and that this hard may therefore have represented a staging-post where goods were transferred into or out of smaller vessels to continue their journey (Palmer-Brown, 2000; HER ref. 51467). The use of this stretch of the Witham during the Roman occupation is also attested to by Roman artefacts found among the votive offerings deposited alongside the Fiskerton causeway (HER ref. 52904).

The medieval settlement of Fiskerton was a single manorial estate, and was in the possession of Peterborough Abbey before the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 (HER ref. 52886). The remains of two phases of a high-status medieval stone building, with an associated ditch that may have been a moat, were exposed during the 1999 archaeological works off Nelson Road. These buildings had been constructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century or earlier, and demolished between the mid-16<sup>th</sup> and mid-17<sup>th</sup> centuries: they were interpreted as parts

of the medieval manor house. No occupation levels were identified, although a patch of cobbles was believed to be the base of a hearth or oven (Palmer-Brown, 2000; HER ref. 54526). Further manorial remains were encountered during archaeological mitigation in advance of the construction of 'Mulberry Croft', some 400m to the north-east of the present development, in 2003: demolition deposits and the robbed-out footings of stone walls were recorded, associated with medieval and post-medieval pottery, with possible indications of an earlier timber structure. Again, occupation levels were not encountered (Savage, 2003).

The Grade I Listed church of St. Clement, some 180m to the west of the site, incorporates surviving Norman masonry in the forms of a chapel on the north side of the chancel and a north arcade, with other material believed to have been re-used; other portions of the church are in Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular styles, and it was heavily restored in 1863 (Pevsner and Harris, 1989, pp.278-9).

## 6.0 Methodology

A full description of the methodology followed was described in the specifications of the project (R.D. Savage 2016). A tracked mini-digger with a 1.3m flat-bladed bucket, was used to undertake all groundworks.

All features and deposits seen were recorded on standard PCAS context recording sheets, and the progress of the groundworks noted on a standard PCAS site diary sheet. Sample sections were drawn at intervals at a scale of 1:20, and plotted on a base plan. A colour slide and digital photographic record was maintained.

The monitoring works took place from 04/10/2016 to 10/10/2016.

## 7.0 Results (fig. 2-4)

No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were identified during the monitoring works.

The maximum depth excavated was 1.0m, located in the southern area of the site, and not reaching solid geological levels (Plate 2). Four deposits were exposed.

The two principal deposits consisted of topsoil **001**, and subsoil **004** (Pl.4). On the north-west area two other deposits, **002** and **003** (Pl.3), were identified and investigated, but were not considered to be of archaeological interest; interpreted as a fen-edge peat and a potentially wind-blown deposit overlying it.



**Plate 2:** Post-excitation general view of the stripped area



**Plate 3:** Section 2. Looking north.



**Plate 4:** Section 4. Looking west.

## 8.0 Conclusion

No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were exposed during the archaeological monitoring works.

## 9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology employed during this project achieved its primary objective, ensuring that any archaeological remains that might have been present on the site would not have been destroyed unrecorded, while causing the minimum of disruption to the construction process.

## 10.0 Acknowledgements

PCAS Ltd would like to thank Stirlin Developments Ltd. for this commission.

## 11.0 Site Archive

The project archive is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd. in Saxilby, Lincolnshire while being prepared for deposition, and will be deposited with the Lincoln City and County Museum ('The Collection') LCNCC: 2016.118.

## 12.0 Bibliography

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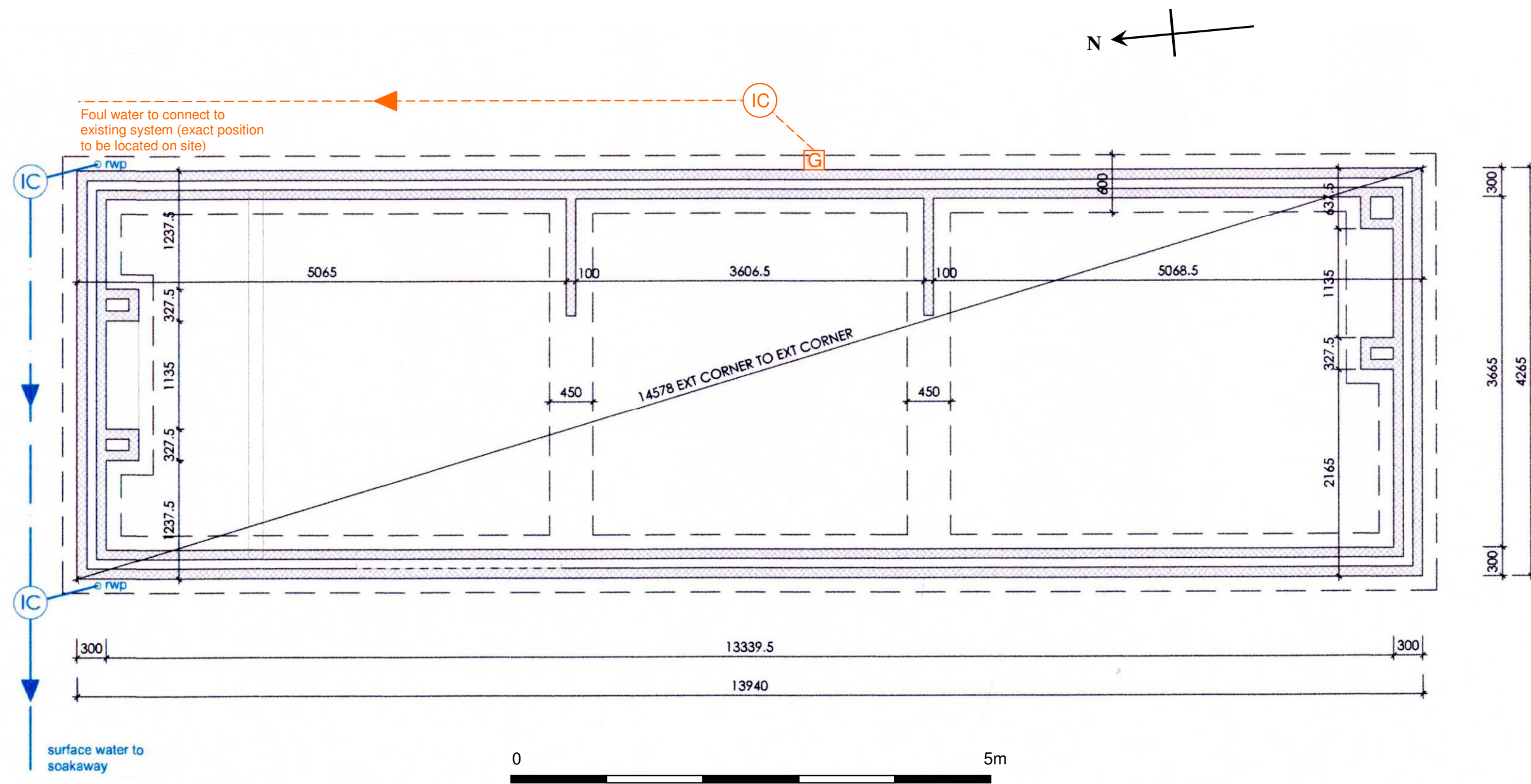
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List of conservation areas in West Lindsey consulted online at <http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building/conservation-and-environment/conservation-areas>



**Figure 3:** Foundation plan of the proposed new building at scale 1:50. Surface water drainage is shown in blue and foul water in orange. Plan supplied by client.

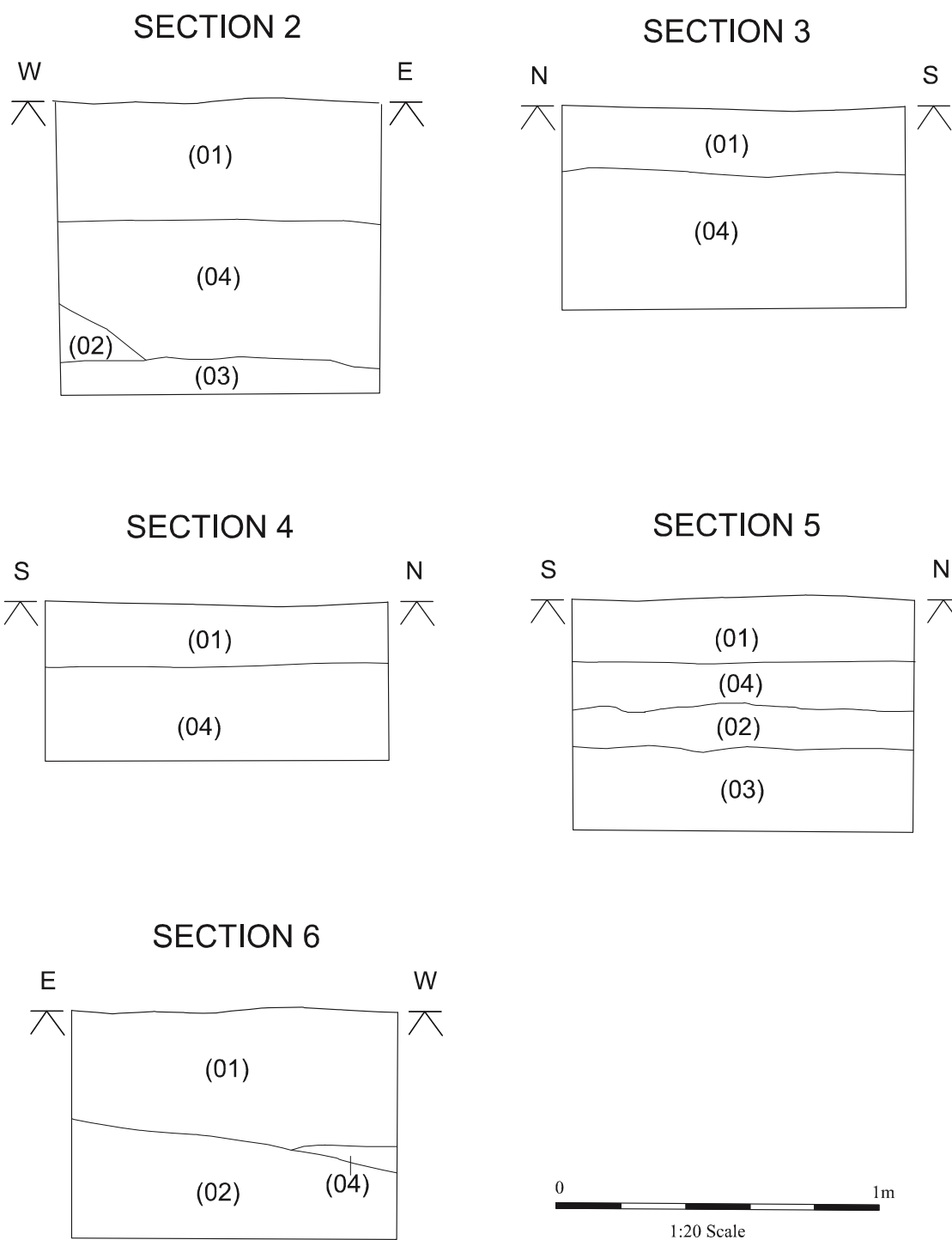


Figure 4: Sections 2-6

## Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Description	Finds/Dating
001	Layer	Topsoil. Plastic dark grey silty clay with occasional small pebbles, recorded under modern lawn turf.	No finds. Modern
002	Layer	Friable clayey sand with lenses of mid grey plastic silty clay inclusions. Natural deposit, probably wind-blown deposit overlying peat.	No finds.
003	Layer	Friable dark brown silty degraded peat with occasional mid brown clay patches and rare pebble inclusions. Considered as the fen-edge peat.	No finds.
004	Layer	Subsoil. Dark brown light brown/mid grey silty clay.	Contains a single fragment of 19 <sup>th</sup> pottery.



**Appendix 2: Oasis form:**