

**Ramsden Village Hall, Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke**  
**Archaeological Earthworks Survey**

NGR:	TF 35468 64649
PCAS Job No.:	2527
PCAS Site Code:	ROBT 21
Accession Number:	LCNCC: 2021.203

Prepared for  
Old Bolingbroke and Hareby Parish Council

by  
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## Summary

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Old Bolingbroke and Hareby Parish Council to undertake an archaeological earthworks survey prior to a scheme of tree planting on King George V Field, Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke in the East Lindsey District of Lincolnshire.

The site lies to the immediate east of Ramsden Village Hall with earthworks surviving along the northern edge of the field, in addition to ridge and furrow to the south. The purpose of the earthworks survey was to preserve the archaeological remains in their context by record prior to development.

Several earthworks were identified on site. These consisted of a possible building platform along the northern boundary, two probable boundary ditches and a total of eight furrows. The furrows were most visible along the eastern side of the field and were on a northwest to southeast alignment. They were between 7m and 9m in width (ridge centre to ridge centre).

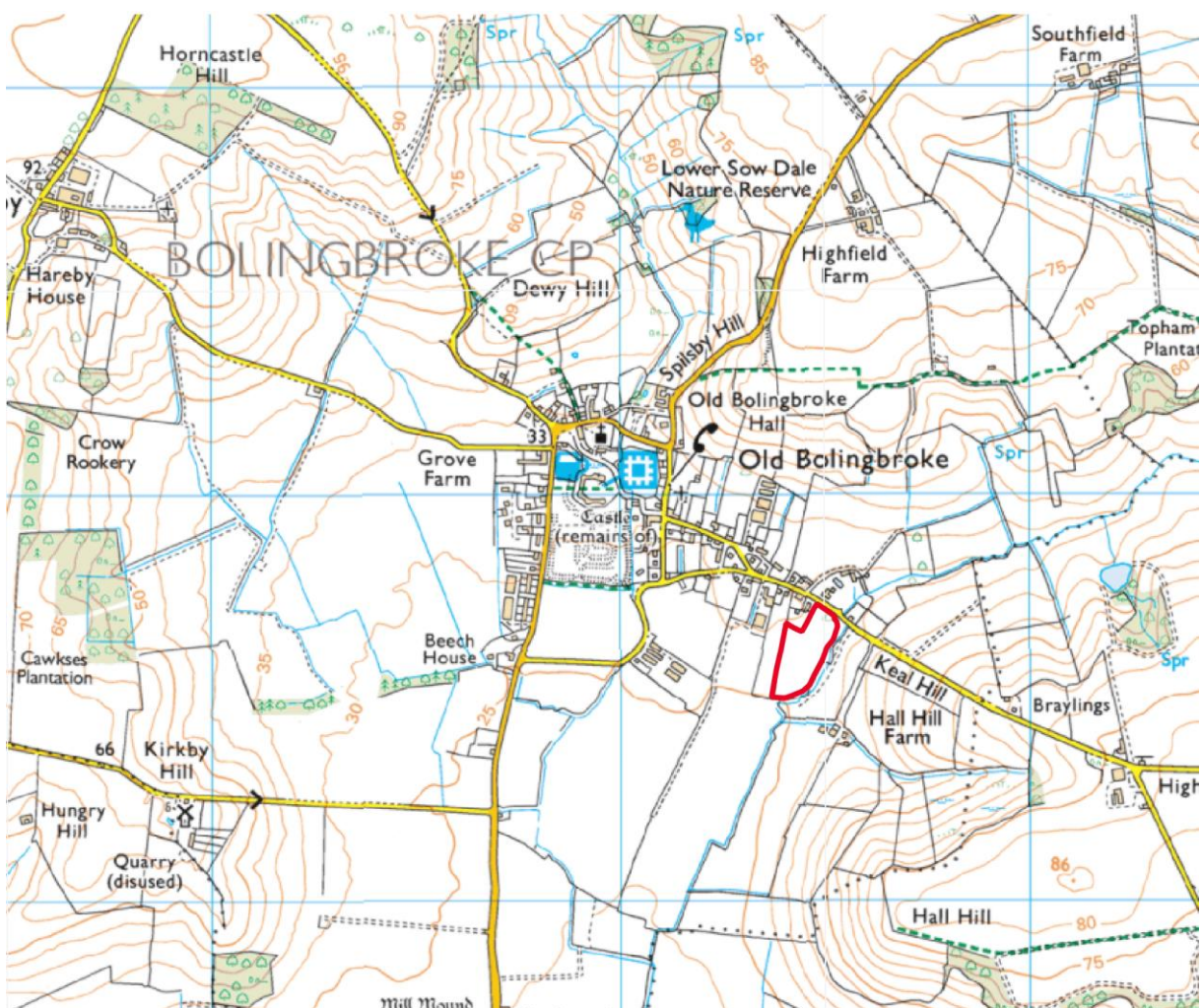


Figure 1: Location plan of the site at scale 1:20000. The site is marked in red. OS mapping. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

## 1.0 Introduction

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This document and all preceding fieldwork follow current best practice and national guidance, including:

- NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- ClfA Code of Conduct (2019)
- Historic England Guide to Good Recording Practice (2nd edition 2017)
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)

## 2.0 Location and Description

The site, King George V field, is 2ha in size (centred around TF 35468 64649) and is located around and behind Ramsden Village Hall on Keal Hill, on the eastern side of Old Bolingbroke.

Old Bolingbroke is a village and civil parish in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 9km southeast of Horncastle. The village is at the southern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, surrounded by higher ground to the north, west and east, and looks southwards over a gentle incline towards low lying fenland. The village is arranged around the west, north and east sides of the earthwork monument of Bolingbroke Castle, which formed a focus of the medieval village.

## 3.0 Topography and geology

The site was generally flat, with the natural slope slanting west to east. The highest ground in the field was located along the northern and western edges

BGS (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) notes the local bedrock geology to be Kimmeridge Clay Formation - Mudstone. This is a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 151- 156 million years ago in the Jurassic Period when the area was predominately formed of shallow seas. River Terrace deposits of sand and gravel are recorded near to the southern edge of the site.

## 4.0 Planning Background

The Old Bolingbroke and Hareby Parish Council are seeking to develop the King George V field to the south and east of Ramsden Village Hall. This will consist of a scheme of tree and hedge planting. No planning application is required for this, however after consultation with the Historic Environment Officer for East Lindsey District Council it was deemed that an earthwork survey would be needed to ensure that any surviving earthworks on site would be recorded prior to any possible disturbance.

## 5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Evidence of early activity in the Old Bolingbroke area is limited to several worked flint and stone tools recovered from the vicinity. There is a concentration of these finds from the summit of Hall Hill, 1km southeast of the site, largely dating from the late Neolithic – Bronze Age (e.g. LHER ref: 40933), but with a small number of earlier artefacts also identified, for example a Palaeolithic Acheulian handaxe (LHER ID: 40903). Roman pottery and coins have also been recovered from this hill top.

The only evidence for Roman activity within Old Bolingbroke is a single sherd of pottery recovered unstratified during a watching brief on the eastern periphery of the modern village (LHER ID 43446). In a wider area there are at least three possible Roman settlements within c1.5km of the site (LHER ref: 43158; 40945; 40964).

Occupation of Bolingbroke likely started in the Saxon period. The place name derives from the Old English personal name Bula, Old English connective particle ing and the word broc, meaning stream or brook (Cameron, 1998). The prefix Old is not used until the late 19th century, to distinguish between this village and New Bolingbroke, a new post-medieval settlement lying c.8km to the southwest, close to Stickney. The settlement quickly developed into the centre of a large wapentake, and is recorded as such in the Domesday Book, but there is little artefactual evidence for the Saxon occupation of the settlement to date.

Domesday Bolingbroke, or Bolinbroc, was a large settlement of 32 households, in addition to the ploughlands, a church, three mills and 70 acres of meadow. The land had been held by the Saxon Stori of Bolingbroke but was given along with the rest of the Bolingbroke wapentake and several other manors throughout Lincolnshire to a new Norman overlord, Ivo Taillebois. Although Bolingbroke was a substantial settlement, it was one of several such agricultural villages in the area, and by no means the largest.

Bolingbroke Castle was built in the 1220's by Ranulf, Earl of Chester & Lincoln after he returned from the Crusades, the stone likely quarried locally in Somerby. The castle remained a possession of the Earl of Lincoln for the next few generations, and through the marriage of Blanche (of Lancaster) daughter of the House it was inherited by John of Gaunt. Their son Henry was born at Bolingbroke Castle in 1367 (earning the nickname Henry Bolingbroke), later becoming Henry IV. The castle was a local administrative centre throughout the later medieval period, however its importance fell with the Tudor monarchy after the Wars of the Roses due to its association with the Plantagenets. The castle became a Royalist garrison in the Civil War when it was besieged by Parliamentary forces; the structure was destroyed to prevent it being used as such again when the Royalists surrendered in the winter of 1643.

The medieval parish church of SS Peter and Paul to the north of the castle is Grade II\* listed (HER 42101, NHL 1359705, 400m NW of the Site) and comprises a nave with a north aisle and a north west tower. The church was likely to have been built by John of Gaunt, son of King Edward III at around AD1365-70, and was originally much larger, the Decorated nave was originally the south aisle of a much larger church. The church was also partially destroyed during the English Civil War of the mid-17th century, undergoing restoration in 1866 and 1890.

In the 15th – 18th century Bolingbroke was the centre of a local pottery industry; archaeological investigation around the village have identified at least eight kilns, scattered around the village core, those confirmed lie around Keal Road itself, Hagnaby Road and Moat Lane.

## 6.0 Aims and Objectives

The objective of the earthwork survey was to record in detail, using non-intrusive methods of archaeological investigation, the topography of the site and any potential buried archaeological remains associated with the earthworks. The Historic Environment Officer for East Lindsey District Council suggested that the earthworks to be impacted by the proposed planting should be recorded, in addition to any features present outside of the planting area as it will provide more information on their context as part of the wider landscape.

All earthworks lying within the field's boundary were surveyed to ensure they were understood and recorded in their setting.

The site was not to be treated in isolation, and reference was to be made to relevant historical sources and previous archaeological work in the area when interpreting the results.

An online record of the project data was initiated with the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS database) before fieldwork commenced, and completed at the end of the project, including an uploaded digital copy of the report.

## 7.0 Methodology

Earthwork surveys determine the relative locations of points on the ground surface by measuring horizontal distances, differences in elevation and directions. The survey was carried out in accordance with guidelines published by English Heritage (2007). The extent of the earthwork survey area was determined by GPS measurement, using a Leica GNSS survey instrument. It was produced using the hachure method with full RTK GPS, accurate to 0.03m. Site boundaries and existing landscape features, such as dykes, drains and hedgerows were recorded as control points.

A digital photographic record was compiled with photographs consisting of:

- General site views from different viewpoints under varying light conditions where possible.
- Specific earthworks or surface features, where encountered.
- Groups of earthwork features where their association indicates functional or chronological relationships.

Notes describing the general nature of the topography and more detailed descriptions of any discernible earthworks or buried features were also compiled.

The survey took place during October 2021 using a Leica GNSS full RTK GPS. After a rapid walkover, the field was then surveyed (fig. 3). Weather conditions were sunny and dry.

Colour photographs complement the survey (below in text).

## 8.0 Results (Figs 2 and 3)

The field was in rough pasture at the time of survey with the grass cut to approximately 10 to 30cm height.

The most notable earthworks were seen in the northern half of site. Upon entering the field from the village hall car park, a relatively flat area can be seen along the northern boundary. This is approximately 12m wide and 17m long, sloping gently to the west, and more severely

to the east. This is the highest point in the field, with the ground sloping to the south and to the east from the north-western corner. This is potentially a building/industrial platform along the roadside. Approximately 25m to the east of this, near the base of the slope, is a small circular mound. This is relatively prominent and is approximately 2.5m in diameter. The top of this feature is concave, with its sides dropping to the north, south and east.



Plate 1: Platform in NW corner of site (looking E).



Plate 2: Small circular feature in north of site (looking NW).

To the south of these features were two linear depressions, most likely boundary ditches, which run parallel to the road on an approximately WNW-ESE alignment. The northernmost of these runs for about 35m into the field, and is 4.6m wide, whilst the southernmost one runs for 63m and is 3.6m wide at its narrowest and 7m wide at its widest.



Plate 3: Northernmost ditch (looking E)



Plate 4: Southernmost ditch (looking W)

These features clearly truncate a series of ridge and furrow, which are most visible on the eastern half of site. A total of eight furrows and nine ridges were recorded, with a ridge to ridge width of approximately 7- 8m. These were aligned NNE-SSW, on what appears to be the alignment of the medieval village. To the north of Keal Hill, the original burgage plots are still visible, and they match this alignment (see Fig. 3).





Plate 5: Shot of furrows on eastern half of site (looking SE)

In the western half of site, a circular depression, with a shallow concave profile, was identified in the centre of the field, near to the modern play park. This feature may indicate the presence of a former pond or watering hole. To the immediate west of this is an area of slightly raised ground. This runs along the western boundary for approximately 70m and is 20m in width. This area is relatively flat, and no further features are seen on top of it.

The final feature identified was along the southernmost boundary of the field. This was an oval shaped depression 20m long and 15m wide. The function of this is unclear, although it may be another watering hole for any livestock that may have pastured in the field.



Plate 6: Slightly raised ground on western edge of site (looking S)



Plate 8: Depression in western half of site (looking NE)



Plate 7: Oval shaped depression along southern boundary of site (looking E)

- Site Boundary
- Furrow
- Ridge
- Hashure
- - - Break of slope

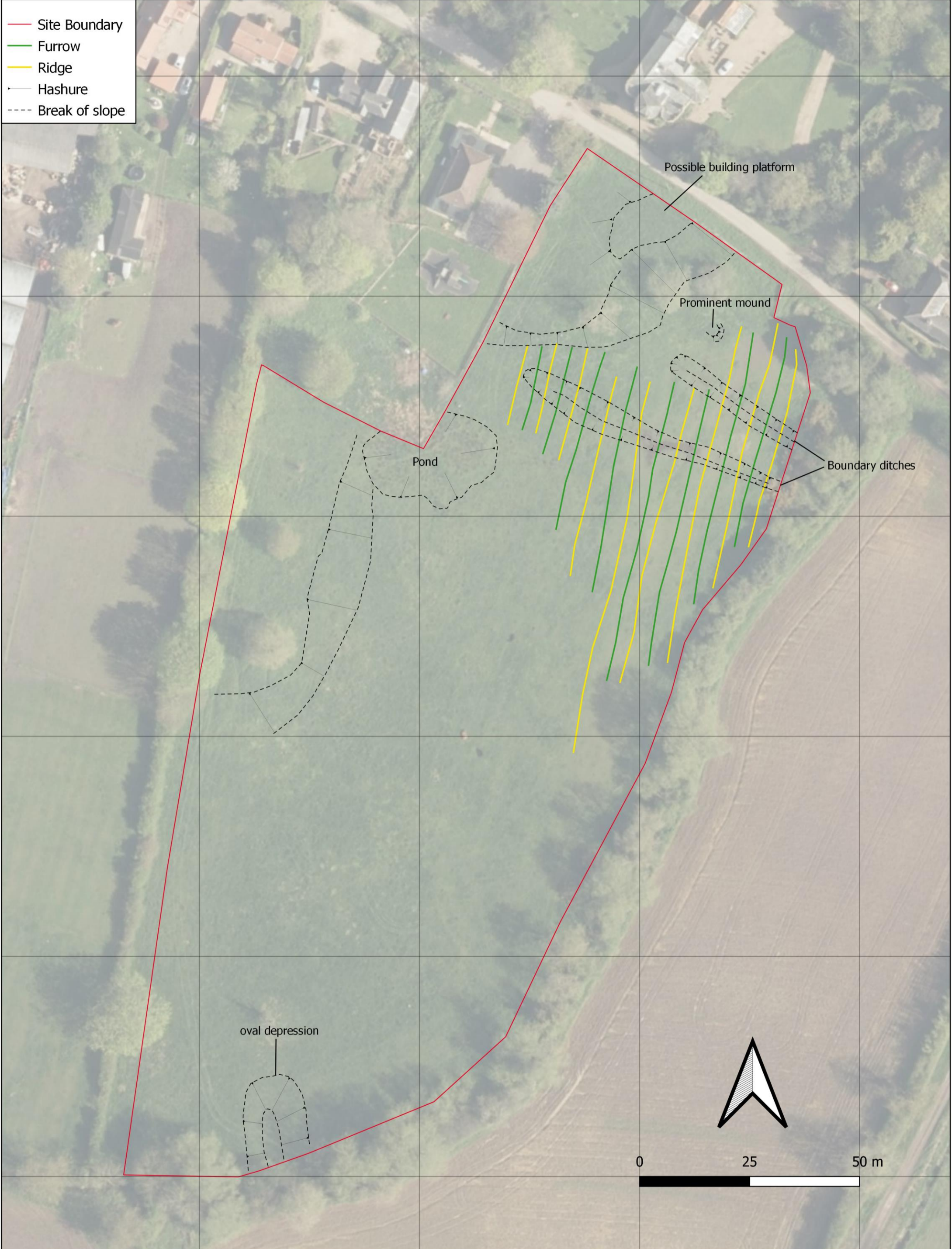
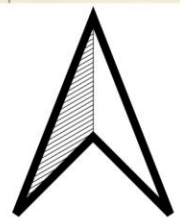


Figure 2:  
Plan of earthworks  
1:750

- Site Boundary
- Furrow
- Ridge
- Hashure
- - - Break of slope



0 25 50 m



**PCAS**  
Archaeology

Figure 3:  
Plan of earthworks overlying 1906 Historic OS.  
1:1500

## 9.0 Discussion and conclusions

The survey confirms that the site lies within, although on the periphery of, the medieval settlement of Old Bolingbroke and that earthwork remains associated with this period survive within the field, especially along the northern and eastern boundary.

There are at least two phases of activity that can be discerned from the earthworks. The ridge and furrow present along the eastern edge of the site are clearly truncated by the two ditches that run east to west across the field. This indicates that the latter were a later development, most likely post-medieval in date, although no features can be seen on historic mapping. The furrows suggest that this part of the field was primarily used for cultivation during the medieval period.

The two prominent earthworks near the northern boundary are respected by the furrows, indicating that they may be contemporary. The largest of these is likely to be a possible building platform, although it is possible that this may have been an area of industrial activity. The nature of the second smaller, circular earthwork is less obvious, however due to the location on Keal Hill, in an area known for pottery production, it may be that it could be related to this activity in some way.

## 10.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology employed has allowed the rapid and accurate preservation by record of the earthworks within the proposed development area.

## 11.0 Project Archive

The project archive, consisting of the raw GPS data and digital photographs, will be deposited with printed copies of this report at The Collection, Lincoln; following deposition, it will be available for public consultation. A copy of the full report will also be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service OASIS (Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations) database, where it will be publicly accessible online.

## 12.0 Acknowledgements

PCAS Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Old Bolingbroke and Hareby Parish Council for this commission.

## 13.0 References

Ordnance Survey, 2010, Lincolnshire Wolds South: Horncastle & Woodhall Spa. 1:25,000 Explorer series no. 273. The Ordnance Survey, Southampton.

Websites:

<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/mapsearch.aspx>

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html>

<http://mapapps.b++gs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.htm>

## Appendix 1: OASIS

# Analytical Earthwork Survey at Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke, East Lindsey, Lincolnshire, England

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**OASIS ID (UID):** preconst3-502793

**Project Name:** Analytical Earthwork Survey at Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke, East Lindsey, Lincolnshire, England

**Activity type:** Analytical Earthwork Survey

**Project Identifier(s):** ROBT 21

**Reason for Investigation:** Community research

**Organisation Responsible for work:** PCAS Archaeology Ltd

**Project Dates:** 01-Oct-2021 - 31-Oct-2021

**HER:** Lincolnshire HER

**Project Methodology:** PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Old Bolingbroke and Hareby Parish Council to undertake an archaeological earthworks survey prior to a scheme of tree planting on King George V Field, Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke in the East Lindsey District of Lincolnshire. The site lies to the immediate east of Ramsden Village Hall with earthworks surviving along the northern edge of the field, in addition to ridge and furrow to the south. The purpose of the earthworks survey was to preserve the archaeological remains in their context by record prior to development. Several earthworks were identified on site. These consisted of a possible building platform along the northern boundary, two probable boundary ditches and a total of eight furrows. The furrows were most visible along the eastern side of the field and were on a northwest to southeast alignment. They were between 7m and 9m in width (ridge centre to ridge centre).

**Project Results:** The survey confirms that the site lies within, although on the periphery of, the medieval settlement of Old Bolingbroke and that earthwork remains associated with this period survive within the field, especially along the northern and eastern boundary. There are at least two phases of activity that can be discerned from the earthworks. The ridge and furrow present

along the eastern edge of the site are clearly truncated by the two ditches that run east to west across the field. This indicates that the latter were a later development, most likely post-medieval in date, although no features can be seen on historic mapping. The furrows suggest that this part of the field was primarily used for cultivation during the medieval period. The two prominent earthworks near the northern boundary are respected by the furrows, indicating that they may be contemporary. The largest of these is likely to be a possible building platform, although it is possible that this may have been an area of industrial activity. The nature of the second smaller, circular earthwork is less obvious, however due to the location on Keal Hill, in an area known for pottery production, it may be that it could be related to this activity in some way.

**Keywords:**

**Subject/Period:** Ridge And Furrow: MEDIEVAL

FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

**Subject/Period:** Boundary Ditch: UNCERTAIN

FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

**Subject/Period:** Building Platform: MEDIEVAL

FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

**Archive:**

Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire

**Location**

**Site 1**

**Site name:** Keal Hill, Old Bolingbroke, East Lindsey, Lincolnshire, England

**Coordinates:**

TF 35458 64758 LLNGR12 fig

**Administrative Areas:**

Country : England

County : Lincolnshire

District : East Lindsey

Parish : Bolingbroke