

## CASTLE CARLTON, LINCOLNSHIRE:

### The origins and evolution of a castle and medieval new town

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#### Introduction

The earthworks of a motte and bailey and its surrounding landscape at Castle Carlton, Lincolnshire, were the subject of a detailed topographic and geophysical survey in two phases during 2013 and 2014. In addition to the impressive remains of the castle, documentary sources reveal that Castle Carlton was the site of a medieval new town establishment. The present investigation reveals that the castle and town were not contemporaneous developments as some have previously assumed, and were situated instead in distinct locations. The castle – which was probably constructed at some point during the eleventh or twelfth century – features an unusually circular bailey, suggesting the reuse of an earlier prehistoric enclosure. Whereas the castle attracted extramural settlement particularly to the west, in the 1220s Robert Bardolf founded a new town on virgin land some way removed from the existing focus. It is uncertain how long Bardolf's settlement flourished or indeed whether it grew into a truly urban centre at all; an area of building platforms indicates post-medieval shrinkage or shifting, until these features were in turn also abandoned, leaving today a predominantly rural landscape on the site of the intended town.

The hamlet of Castle Carlton is situated within the parish of Reston, in the East Lindsey district of Lincolnshire (centred TF 39816 83681) (Fig. 1). Approximately 8 km south of the market town of Louth, the present-day settlement of Castle Carlton comprises a handful of buildings situated at an elevation of approximately 12 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), in countryside characterised by farmland and woodland. A motte and bailey castle located around 200 m west of these buildings lends its name to the area, and is classified as a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No: 31629). Writing in the 18th century the antiquary Richard Gough declared that Castle Carlton had 'once been a thriving market town' and added that '...in every part of it stone causeways and the foundations of buildings are frequently discovered' (Gough 1789, 274). Given the clear potential of Castle Carlton, the settlement and its environs were the subject of an archaeological investigation, involving topographic and geophysical survey, undertaken in two separate one-week stages during October 2013 and March 2014 (Fig. 2). These works were supplemented by an assessment of the relevant documentary and cartographic sources relating to Castle Carlton, with the primary aim of reconstructing the chronological evolution of the settlement and castle.

Castle Carlton and the entirety of Reston parish lie in an area known locally as the 'Middlemarsh' – a landscape of muted topography between the foothills of

the Lincolnshire Wolds and the reclaimed wetlands of the 'Outmarsh' (British Geological Survey 1980, Louth Sheet 103). During the early medieval period the salt marshes to the east of Castle Carlton began to see some seasonal settlement, with written sources indicating the growth of more permanent occupation following the natural development of a protective storm beach in the eleventh century. This arc of sites, many of which grew into sizeable medieval villages, extends between Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe All Saints (Owen 1984, 46). In addition to providing suitable pasture for sheep grazing, it is probable that this 'Outmarsh' landscape was utilised for salt extraction and processing. Evidence for early medieval salt industry is rare nationally, but in Lincolnshire an 8th-century saltern has been excavated at Fishtoft, near Boston, and a probable Late Saxon salt-working site has also been identified at Marshchapel (Ellis *et al.* 2001, 153; Cope-Faulkner 2012). It has been proposed that in the Outmarsh some medieval churches occupy low topographical rises formed by saltern waste, at Skidbrooke, Saltfleetby St Peter and Theddlethorpe All Saints (Sawyer 1998, 15). While the origins of the churches is difficult to determine, the identification of 10th- to 11th-century stonework at Theddlethorpe St Helens hints that at least some are Late Saxon foundations (Everson and Stocker 1999, 264). The parish of Reston is located the easterly saltmarsh and the uplands of the Lincolnshire Wolds to the west. This geography may have been central to Castle Carlton's development, as it lies on a major thoroughfare connecting the two resource bases.

#### Medieval Castle Carlton: previous research

Until the present survey, our understanding of medieval Castle Carlton has largely been based upon written sources, but unusually the site is not listed in Maurice Beresford's (1967) *New Towns of the Middle Ages*. The medieval documents relating to Castle Carlton have been assessed by A.E.B. Owen (1992; 1996a), and while it is not necessary to repeat the full details of these studies, they provide vital context for this research. Charting Castle Carlton's earliest development is fraught with difficulty due to the fragmentary character of the surviving written documents, and scholars have been largely reliant on the back-projection of later sources. The validity of such an approach is debatable, and problems are compounded in the case of Castle Carlton on the heavy reliance upon a document known as the Wyggeston Manuscript (Wyg. Hosp. Rec. xviii–xxi). The text is a 16th-century assessment of Castle Carlton's tenurial history, compiled when Wyggeston's Hospital in Leicester acquired a one-third interest in the manor. All

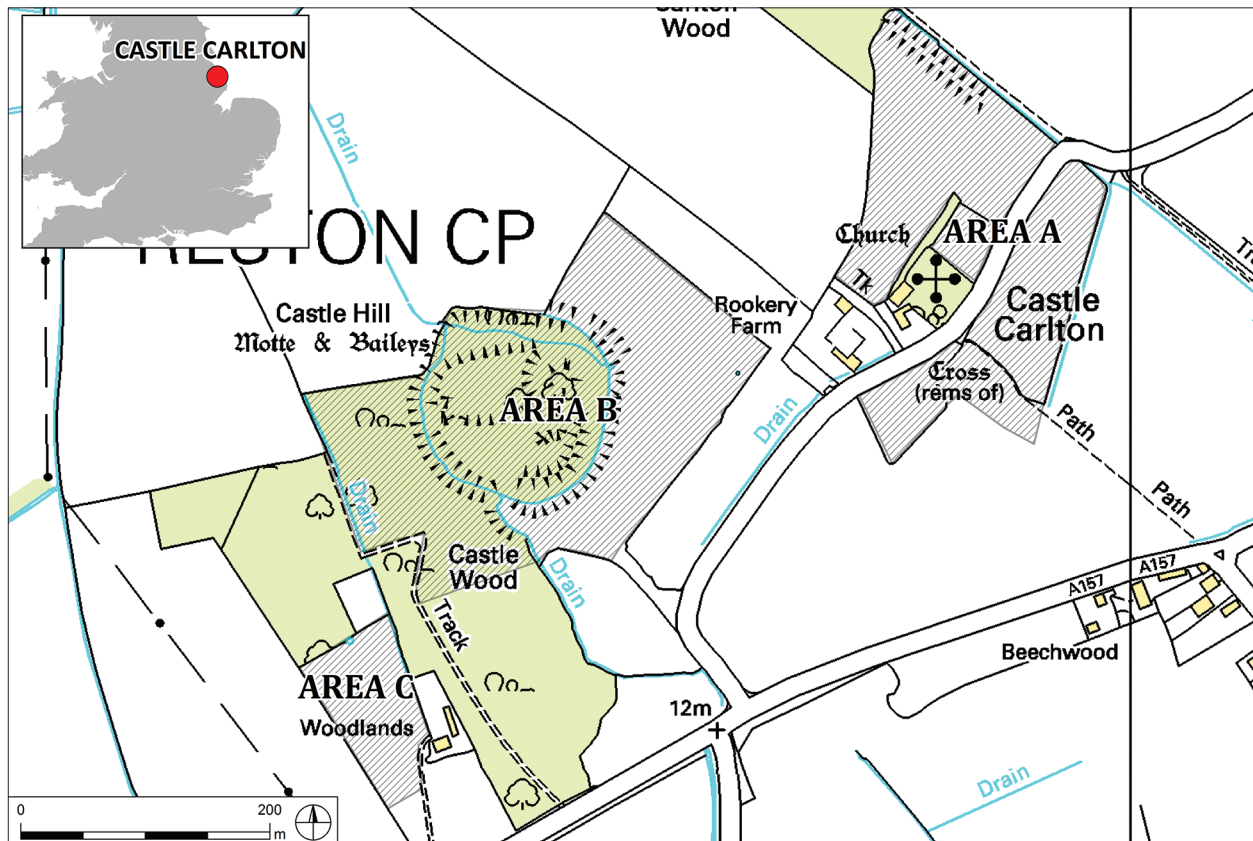


Figure 1 Castle Carlton in the local landscape and its position within central England (inset). Also illustrated are the three survey areas. © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2015. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence).

elements of the manuscript relating to medieval Castle Carlton were compiled on the basis of copied charters whose reliability is not possible to verify. This difficulty is further compounded by the work of the 16th-century scribe, whose attempt to translate the medieval Latin of the original sources generated many obscurities in language and a lack of clarity in many passages (Owen 1992, 19).

These characteristics caused confusion to Owen and other scholars as to what extent the Wyggeston Manuscript can be trusted, and how reliable a source it represents for charting the early history of Castle Carlton. Indeed, on the basis of the manuscript Owen (1992, 18–19) at first assumed that the town had been established in the middle of the 12th century. Sir James Holt, however, has since demonstrated that the earliest privileges bestowed on Castle Carlton in the Wyggeston Manuscript are in fact typical of 13th-century borough confirmations (Holt pers. comm. cited by Owen 1992, 19). Significantly, the first recorded presentation to ‘the chapel of Karleton’ in 1222–3 was made by Robert Bardolf, who seems to have been promoting the simultaneous foundation of borough and church (Wyg. Hosp. Rec. xviii, Owen 1996a, 26–7). Robert Bardolf was a powerful and influential landowner in the region, and was given the title *advocatus* – denoting his patronage – of nearby Barlings Abbey following his grant to support the addition of thirteen canons to the monastic community (Everson and Stocker 2011, 373). In order to attract population to his nascent town, Robert apparently introduced a series of incentives, including tax-free land for six years on condition of building a

dwelling. Particularly informative for archaeological research, the text also gives details of the intended physical arrangement of tenements in the settlement, noting that it was to be laid out in 50 or 52 tofts including ten held by the lord and three by the Church (McKinley 1958, 398–405; Clay 1966, 10–18; Owen 1992, 18–19). Further details apparently dating to the 13th century, contained within the Wyggeston Manuscript refer also to residents of Castle Carlton as ‘burgesses’, as well as mentioning the rights and obligations of the town mayor. The role of Castle Carlton’s hayward – an official who oversaw tenurial rights – is also informative, and reveals the importance of the coast to the local medieval economy, with the production of salt particularly prominent. The hayward, for instance, was allowed to levy a horn full of salt from every cart passing through Castle Carlton, suggesting that the route was important in connecting local industrial activity (Wyg. Hosp. Rec. xviii–xx).

While the evidence from the Wyggeston Manuscript therefore implies that Robert Bardolf probably established a church and town at Castle Carlton in the 1220s, earlier texts demonstrate that the manor already possessed a community. A charter of King John dated to 1201 granting the younger Hugh Bardolf the right to hold yearly fairs at ‘Karleton’ (*Rotuli Chartarum*: Hardy 1837, 91) demonstrate that by this point Castle Carlton acted as a seasonal centre at the very least. This is significantly followed only four years later by the first reference to a castle in a Fine Roll which describes ‘Carlton on sea with its castle and appurtenances’ [*Karleton super mare cum castro et cum pertinenciis*



Figure 2 Magnetometry survey being undertaken in Area B, Castle Carlton.

*suis*] (*Rotuli de Oblatis et Finibus*: Hardy 1835, 296). A chronological distinction between the development of the castle and the subsequent foundation of the town is of central significance for understanding medieval Castle Carlton, especially as previous interpretations have tended to view their origins as simultaneous (e.g. Owen 1996a; Creighton and Higham 2005, 80), and favoured the mid-12th century as the likely context for the planning of the settlement (see also Everson *et al.* 1991, 16, 157). Indeed, as will be argued, the archaeological evidence is consistent with this revised interpretation of the documents and demonstrates that castle and new town were not only established separately, but also in geographically distinct locations.

With regard to the later medieval history of Castle Carlton, a fair was still being held on All Saints Day in 1371, although the success of the market is less certain. Despite common reference to 'Market Carlton' as an alternative name for Castle Carlton, the market is not referenced in extents dated to the late 13th and 14th centuries, and it seems that it did not become a permanent feature following its first valuation in 1247 (Owen 1996a, 28). The failure of the market hints at the economic struggles to be faced by the town, factors that were probably central to why it did not flourish into the later medieval and post-medieval periods. Another important contributor to the decline of Castle Carlton may have been the three-way partition of the manor in 1427 (Owen 1996b, 20). By the time of the Lay Subsidy in 1334, Castle Carlton was assessed with Great Carlton at £55 (Glasscock 1975, 183; Everson *et al.* 1991, 16). Tracing the exact trajectory of decline at Castle Carlton

is difficult, but there was clearly no longer a substantial settlement when it was visited by Gough in the 18th century since he observed 'only nine wretched houses of mud and straw' (Gough 1789, 274). The church of the Holy Cross was demolished in 1902, long having fallen into a state of disrepair.

#### Archaeological survey and results

The Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (LHER) has a dozen entries relating to Castle Carlton, including the motte and bailey castle and several local historic buildings. The LHER also records surface finds of Romano British and medieval ceramics made in several unspecified locations in the Castle Carlton area (e.g. LHER 42502). Archaeological fieldwork, consisting of a measured earthwork investigation and magnetometry survey, was undertaken at Castle Carlton in two one-week stages in late 2013 and early 2014. For the purposes of the survey, the investigated landscape was subdivided into three distinct zones: Area A, Area B and Area C (Fig. 1). The majority of the survey area was used for pastoral farming at the time of investigation, although the motte and bailey earthworks are heavily wooded and utilised for pheasant rearing.

#### *Earthwork survey results and interpretation*

A hachured plan of surveyed earthworks is presented in Fig. 3. The largest surveyed part of Area A consists of a field currently used for pasture, which extends to the north of the main road. The most prominent earthwork is a linear bank which extends for approximately 75 m

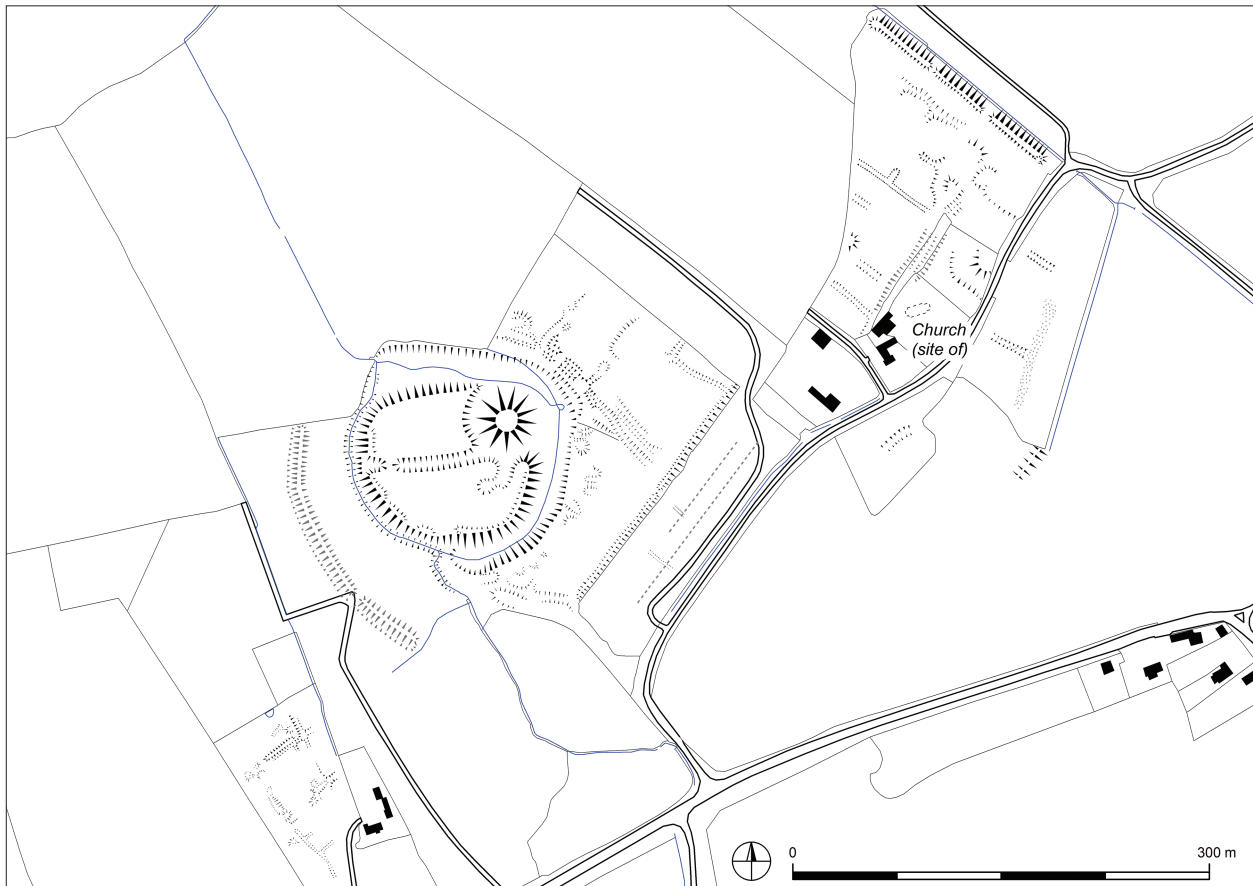


Figure 3 Hachured earthwork plan of Castle Carlton.

in a north-west to south-east orientation. The earthwork is known locally as the 'Bull Bank', perhaps referencing the historic use of the field for penning livestock. Located to the south-west of the Bull Bank are a series of amorphous platforms surrounded by a series of sinuous platforms of varying width. The complex shares a general alignment with the Bull Bank and it is possible that they represent former building platforms and associated pathways which have become weathered through stock movement and localised flooding. A series of more regular ditches are located to the south-west, forming a series of platforms which again have the same alignment of both the denuded earthwork complex and the Bull Bank. The platforms appear to front onto a hollow way which extends from the lane between Rookery Farm and the White House in a north-east alignment where it joins the denuded earthwork complex. The size and form of the platforms suggest they may be of post-medieval or early modern date (or else were modified substantially in the post-medieval period) and local residents remember building remains of Victorian houses being visible in the field until the second half of the 20th century. In a small paddock fronting onto the main thoroughfare, immediately north-east of the disused churchyard, a ditch may represent the remains of a hollow way, extending in a south-east to north-west orientation.

On the southern side of the road, a paddock was also surveyed as part of Area A, and while no upstanding earthworks were identified, a pattern of possibly

significant vegetation change was noted – buried ditches typically retain more water which can help to stimulate plant growth, and can lead to detectable differences in surface vegetation. Two linear, inter-connected alignments forming a T-shape of lush, greener vegetation were recorded. The wider, more extensive linear was recorded as running parallel to the road, from which a second feature was identified. It is tentatively proposed that these features may indicate the existence of a ditched enclosure network of uncertain provenance which previously fronted onto the road. Indeed, the OS First Edition illustrates a single tree-covered plot on such an orientation, perhaps representing the last element of more comprehensive arrangement of property boundaries. In the south-east part of Area A, a break in slope may be the remains of a heavily denuded bank. This feature shares the alignment of the bank noted by Everson (1986), which may once have defined the extent of medieval settlement parallel to the main thoroughfare through Castle Carlton.

Area B includes the motte and bailey earthwork castle which is located on a natural rise in the local topography (max. 20 m aOD), the ground level falling away gradually to the north and west of the monument. The complex comprises a distinctive circular bailey, the diameter of which measures approximately 127 m east to west, and 111 m north to south. The bailey is lined by internal banks along the southern and western sides, and the western part of the enclosure is surrounded by a steep-sided ditch. The eastern part of the monument is

encompassed by a less well-defined ditch, the broader section of which also has a more irregular outer scarp with almost linear edges in the northern and north-eastern parts. The height of the bailey bank varies but is most prominent in the western part of the circuit where it rises to 1.5 m above the interior. The northern part of the circuit is heavily denuded and there is a significant break in the western side of the bailey bank which seems to have formed an original entranceway into the enclosure. On the southern side of the monument a second, funnelled entrance is formed by an interruption in the curve of the surrounding ditch and break in the bailey bank.

The interior of the bailey is subdivided into roughly equal northern and southern halves by a ditch, approximately 5 m in width, which extends in a westerly direction from the broad ditch surrounding the motte; the ditch terminates at its western end before it meets the break in the western bank of the bailey. This abrupt termination gives the impression that it may be an unfinished hollow way, originally intended to connect with the western entrance to the bailey. The significant size of the feature is unusual, however, and the wide and deep ditch would probably have impinged upon settlement or other activity within the enclosure. An alternative scenario is that the ditch was developed not to provide access but with the intention of dividing the bailey in two. One possibility is that it might relate to the fragmentation of the manor of Castle Carlton (see below). The motte is located in the north-eastern part of the enclosure, and is formed by a circular mound measuring 40 m in diameter and 8 m in height. It has steep sides and a flattened top. Five mature yew trees on the top of the motte, as well as the apparently levelled character of the bailey interior, suggest that the monument may have been deliberately landscaped. The motte is surrounded on all sides by a ditch of varying depth and width, which connects in its western section to the east-west ditch which divides the interior of the bailey. The watercourse which is channelled around the monument forms a shallow pond immediately east of the motte base.

Located in heavy woodland approximately 40 m to the west of the main complex of earthworks is a well-defined curving embanked feature which mirrors the course of the bailey and extends for around 120 m. On closer inspection it can be argued that it comprises three consecutive linear sections of ditch. At its southern terminus it joins a broad ditch, apparently representing a watercourse which before canalisation probably connected to the stream which fills the bailey ditch. The feature ceases abruptly at its northern terminus, where it meets an east-west field boundary. Such a sharp cessation indicates that the feature may have continued further north, but has probably been destroyed through ploughing. The purpose of this consecutive linear ditch feature is difficult to discern, and has not been recorded by any previous investigations of Castle Carlton. Given the remarkable symmetry it displays with the western course of the main castle enclosure, it is conceivable that it represents the remnants of a second, outer bailey which has previously not been noted by observers.

The open L-shaped field which extends around the eastern and northern east sides of the motte and bailey

complex also possesses a number of earthworks of probable archaeological origin. Running parallel to the south-west/north-east oriented field boundary, around half-way along its length is a gap which may be the result of erosion. It is possible that this feature is either the remains of a former field boundary, or alternatively, it defined the extent of roadside settlement to the east. This feature may represent the 'wode dike' recorded in documentary records relating to the town (see below). To the north of the castle ditch a series of sinuous earthworks may be of archaeological origin, but are heavily eroded. This indistinct complex is cut by two spread but linear ditches which emanate from the castle ditch, probably denuded tracks formed by stock movement. Further east, a series of parallel and slight linear ditches may represent eroded remains of post-medieval narrow rig ploughing. The counterscarp of the moat possesses several interruptions in its course, which again are likely the result of livestock activity. In the southern part of the L-shaped field, a broad raised bank is bordered to its south by a broad shallow ditch. Although truncated and eroded, these features may be the remains of a routeway which connected between the southern entrance to the castle and the main thoroughfare through Castle Carlton. In the field adjacent to the road itself, two faint banks running perpendicular to the routeway may define former roadside property plots. In the same field, visible on LiDAR for the area, are a series of low linear banks, probably relict ridge-and-furrow.

In Area C three ditch configurations form a central earthwork platform, measuring around 20m square, with further raised platforms on the periphery. The character of the platforms is comparable to those typically found on deserted medieval settlements, and the broad ditches probably represent the lines of hollow ways connecting the tenement plots. The relationship of these apparent medieval settlement remains to the rest of the Castle Carlton landscape is uncertain, but LiDAR data suggest that the area lies within an enclosure partially preserved in the line of remaining field boundaries. The earthworks could form part of a westerly extension of settlement from the castle (see below), or otherwise they may be an area of outlying tofts that was originally distinct from the main focus of activity.

#### *Geophysical survey results and interpretation*

A magnetometer survey of approximately 4.5 ha of the Castle Carlton landscape was undertaken using a Bartington Grad 601-2 (dual sensor) fluxgate gradiometer and automatic data logger. This magnetometer survey identified a number of anomalies, some of which may be of archaeological origin (Figs 4 and 5). Some of the anomalies to the north and east of the castle may be related to post-medieval agrarian activity (anomalies m20 and m21), but no features that could be confidently associated with medieval settlement were identified. A number of linear anomalies in the fields adjacent to the castle identified by the earthwork survey were also located by magnetometry, probably related to several phases of organised drainage. In the field immediately south-west of the Bull Bank, the right-angled anomalies of m4 to m10 are also visible as earthworks in an area of probable post-medieval building platforms. The linear anomalies in this area again may represent part of

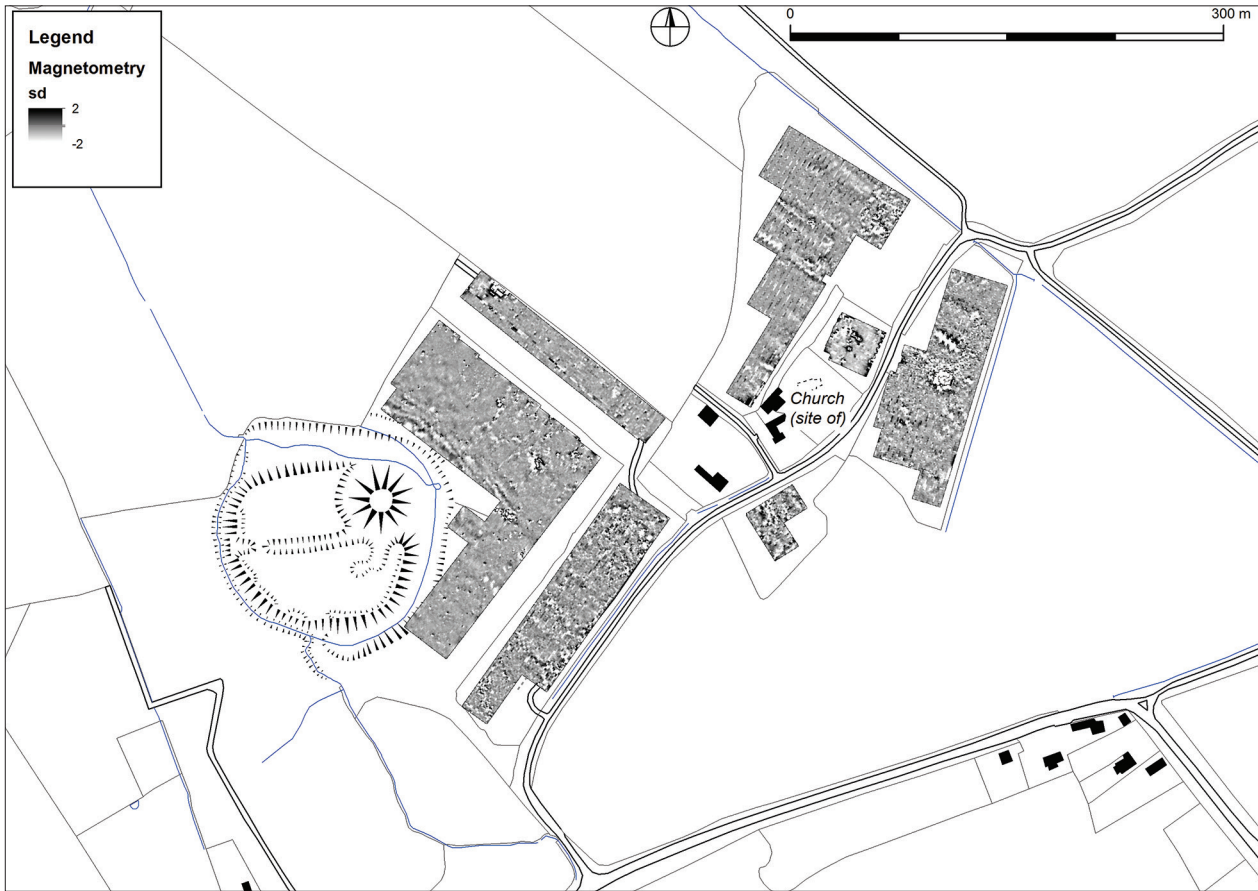


Figure 4 Magnetometry survey plot of Castle Carlton.

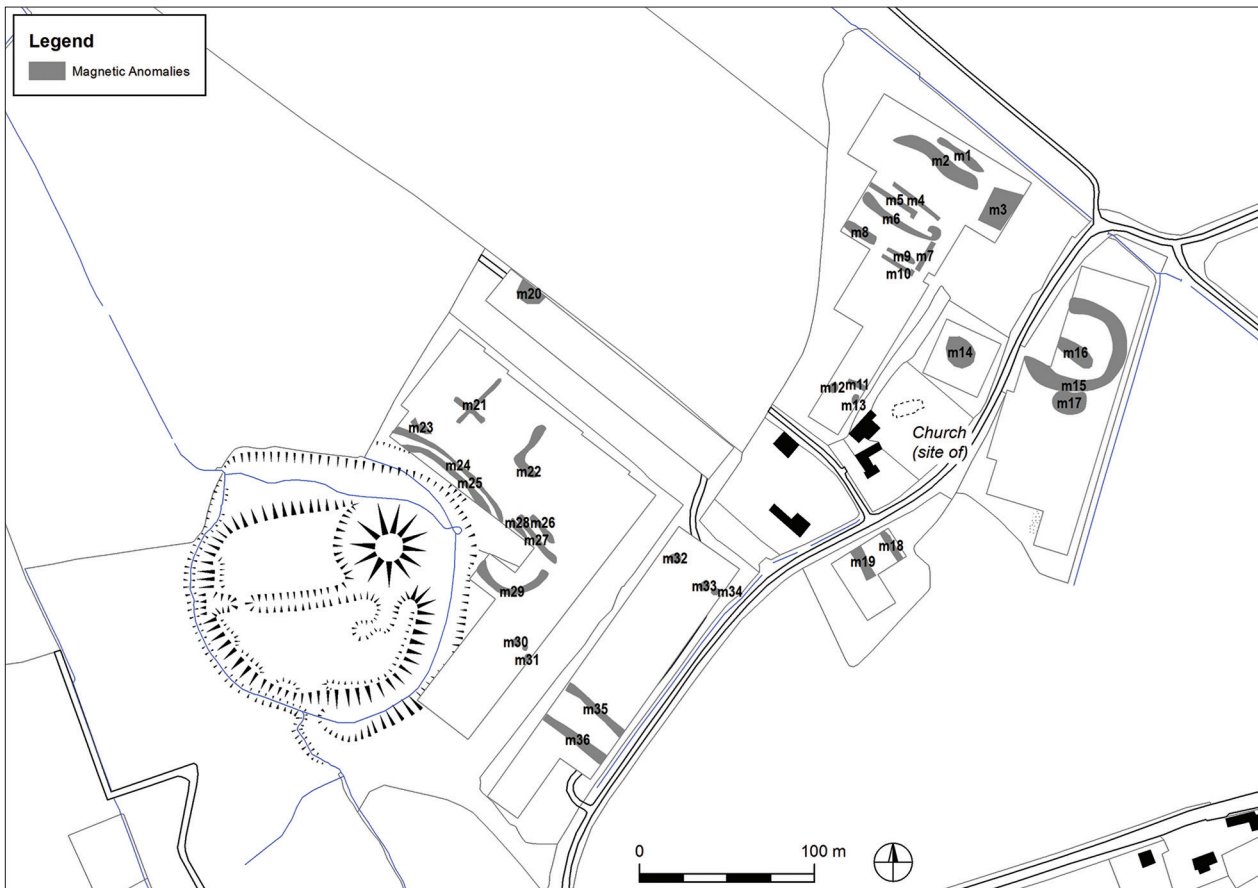


Figure 5 Interpretation of anomalies identified by magnetometry survey.

a drainage regime, or relate to buried masonry. On the opposite side of the thoroughfare, anomaly m16 is more likely part of a medieval tenement apparently fronting onto the street. Further south, m35 may represent similar street-fronting plots of medieval date.

## Discussion

Our archaeological investigations provide valuable new information regarding the character of medieval Castle Carlton, which can complement and enhance the evidence from the problematic written sources. Documents first mention a castle at *Karleton* in 1205, but archaeological assessment suggests that the motte and bailey was probably established at an earlier date; the character of the bailey at Castle Carlton is somewhat unusual, owing both to its relatively large size but also its remarkably circular form. It is impossible to be sure how such a regular circular bailey was created, but the most likely scenario is that the motte was established within a pre-existing earthwork enclosure, possibly of prehistoric origin, which was enhanced and adapted to function as the castle bailey. The reuse of prehistoric, particularly Iron-Age, monuments for castle construction is certainly attested elsewhere (see Higham and Barker 1992, 200; 239); illustrative examples include Ludgershall, Wiltshire (Ellis 2000) and British Camp, Herefordshire (Remfry 1996; see also Creighton 2005, 70).

Attempting to assign a close date of construction for the motte is more difficult and while there are a number of possibilities, the monument form proves most informative. Motte and baileys can generally be dated to a broad phase from the Norman Conquest up to around 1150, but at Castle Carlton the size of the motte may provide a more specific guide. At 8 m in height and 40 m in diameter, the motte is substantial and comparable to early Norman urban examples at locations such as Norwich, Oxford, Thetford and York, or more locally, the enormous and likely early motte and bailey at Castle Bytham, Lincolnshire (Creighton 2005, 106). All of these examples date to the late eleventh century and were built for the early consolidation of Norman power. Although located within a rural context, the motte of Castle Carlton could be of comparable date, and through reuse of a pre-existing enclosure, the castle builders would have been able to quickly raise a symbol of new Norman authority within the politically contested landscape of the Danelaw. The situation of Castle Carlton near to the Lincolnshire coast could also be seen to support this premise, given the continued threat posed from Danish North Sea invasion throughout the early post-Conquest period. Another important early Lincolnshire castle interpreted as a martial foundation of the immediate post-1066 period is the ringwork and bailey at Castle Hills, Thonock, which overlooks a strategic crossing point of the River Trent (Everson *et al.* 1991, 193–4). The argument that the motte at Castle Carlton was built for coastal defence is not supported by viewshed analysis for the site, however, which demonstrates that the motte instead affords the best vistas towards the landward areas north and west (Fig. 6). Located less than 4 km from the site the motte and bailey of Toot Hill bears a close resemblance to that at Castle Carlton. While Toot Hill does not have a circular

bailey – and indeed the relationship of the motte within the bailey demonstrates that unlike Castle Carlton the monument was developed during a single phase – at 8 m in height the motte at Toot Hill is of almost identical scale (National Monument No. 355689). If constructed at a similar date, it is conceivable that the monuments at Castle Carlton and Toot Hill may have formed two elements of a coordinated castle building strategy; alternatively, they may have been created at a similar time by rival lords seeking to exert power over the local landscape.

Irrespective of exactly when and by whom the fortification at Castle Carlton was built, it is the archaeological evidence alone which proves informative of the character of activity within and around the castle. Settlement does not appear to have been limited to the motte and bailey following its establishment, with expansion particularly evident to the west. Perhaps settlement was initially enclosed within a second bailey, but further westerly expansion is hinted at by the identification of medieval settlement remains in Area C. Together with the large break in the western side of the bailey – which presumably represents the primary entrance into the enclosure – the evidence from the west of the main earthwork complex gives the overall impression that the castle ‘faces’ in a westerly direction. By the time Robert Bardolf came to establish a new town in the 1220s, it thus seems likely that Castle Carlton already possessed a relatively sizeable population which had possessed rights to hold an annual fair for over two decades. The town was not appended to this pre-existing focus, however. Instead, the 50 or so tenements were developed on a virgin site straddling a thoroughfare connecting Castle Carlton with the mixed resource base of the Outmarsh. The importance of salt for the local economy is discernible in 13th- and 14th-century texts relating to Castle Carlton, and it is probable that the town was specifically located astride a previously established routeway.

The tenements alluded to in the documents appear to have fronted onto the north and south sides of the road, although it is impossible to know whether Bardolf attracted the level of permanent settlement his incentives intended. The extent of roadside properties appears to have been defined by banks at least in some places, such as the almost 200 m long feature in Area B which may represent the ‘wode dike’ referenced in late medieval documents (Owen 1996a, 29). The name hints that the dike delineated the boundary between occupation and woodland, a premise supported by this survey which detected little evidence for medieval settlement in the areas to the north and east of the castle. Settlement on the south-eastern side of the road may also have been defined, since a largely ploughed-out feature no longer visible on the ground is detectable on LiDAR. Perpendicular to the road, the ‘Bull Bank’ may not have originally been built to mark the limits of medieval settlement or as a genuinely defensive earthwork, but instead represents the line of the route connecting Craker Lane with Two Mile Bank and Hedge End. It is therefore possible that the ‘Bull Bank’ represents one part of a raised causeway that was only later used to define the extents of apparently post-medieval building platforms.

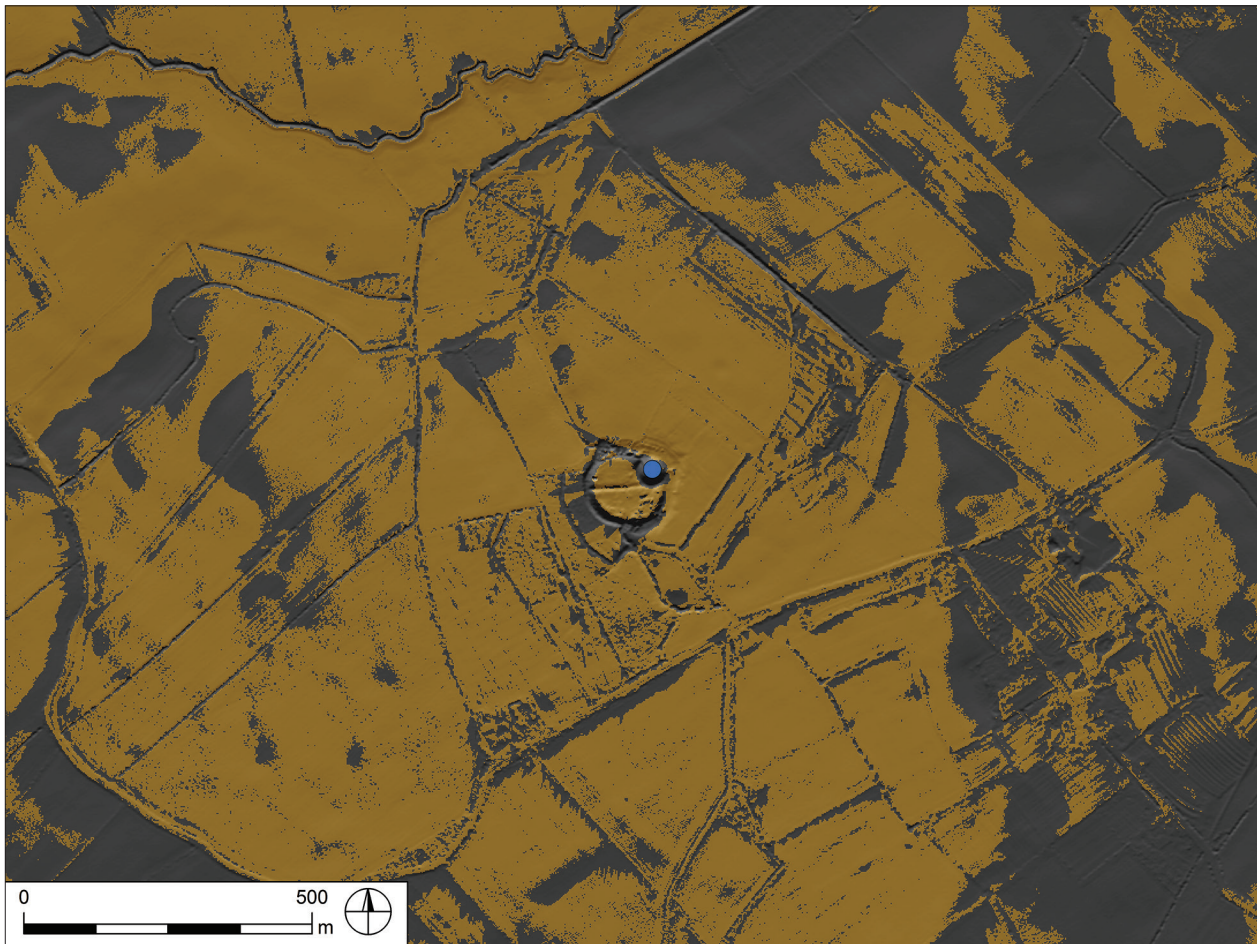


Figure 6 Viewshed map from a 2 m elevation from the top of the motte at Castle Carlton (circle). The light shading represents visible areas. The motte affords the best views to the west and north – the vista to the east towards the sea is not as extensive. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency.

The medieval market place at Castle Carlton probably lay in close proximity to the church. By the 19th century the church was dedicated to the Holy Cross but it may earlier have possessed an alternative dedication. Documentary sources refer to both a church and a chapel dedicated to St John, and it uncertain whether the term is used interchangeably to refer to a single foundation or that Castle Carlton was at one time furnished with two religious buildings. The earlier castle may have been serviced by a chapel perhaps located within its bailey, with a new foundation later erected for the tenants of the new town and dedicated to the Holy Cross. It is difficult to assess the character of settlement during the medieval period, and uncertain whether Bardolf's establishment ever possessed urban activity of the sort detectable at sites such as Castle Acre, Norfolk, where a town was planted within a large embanked rectangular precinct and appended to the castle of the de Warenne earls of Surrey (Coad and Streeten 1982, 138). The apparent failure of Castle Carlton's market to continue in use beyond the 13th century may signify a more comprehensive inability to attract inhabitants and economic prosperity. Decline may have been accelerated by the division of the manor in the 15th century, a process perhaps resulted in the rather unusual subdivision of the castle bailey; the large ditch which runs through the centre of the enclosure would

certainly have proved a hindrance to practical use, and correlates with the written evidence in demonstrating an acrimonious division between heirs: Owen has illustrated how the manor house was subdivided in a way that would have prevented any of the three parties from using it, and perhaps the landscape was fragmented in similar fashion (Owen 1996b, 20). Castle Carlton was clearly not wholly abandoned, however, and the presence of a handful of building platforms in the north-west of the surveyed area suggests a shift in focus during the post-medieval period. Settlement during this time was clearly not urban: the size of the platforms reflects the presence of large agricultural buildings. By the 18th century apparently only nine houses were still standing, and today only Rookery Farm and the White House are permanently occupied.

### Conclusion

The documentary and archaeological assessments undertaken by this research provide insights into the development of Castle Carlton, allowing the relationship between medieval settlement and castle to be understood with greater clarity. The archaeological evidence is particularly clear in showing that the castle and planted town were located at distinctly separate



sites, and it is almost certain that the two centres did not emerge contemporaneously as has previously been argued. Rather, it appears that the motte and bailey was constructed in the 12th or more likely the late 11th century, possibly as part of the early Norman settlement of Lincolnshire. The evidence from the written sources reveal that the new town at Castle Carlton was established significantly later, probably by Robert Bardolf in the 1220s. Bardolf's nascent community was not centred upon the pre-existing castle, however, but was instead located on the major thoroughfare leading eastwards towards Great Carlton and the coast. It is possible that the route itself was already in existence when the town was founded, and may have represented one of the informal ways of reaching the areas of salt extraction which characterised the Outmarsh. The current archaeological evidence provides some indication of the likely town plan, although further research is required in order to expose the character of settlement in greater detail. The new town at Castle Carlton does not appear to have flourished for long if indeed at all, and the market is not mentioned following its first evaluation in 1247. The division of the manor may have precipitated the process of decline, but Castle Carlton was not abandoned entirely and some parts of the former town continued in use into the post-medieval period. The church too survived into the 20th century, but by then the local parochial and population focus had shifted to other centres such as nearby Great Carlton. Indeed, today only the most fragmentary standing remains such as the market cross and the headstones in the old graveyard of All Saints church hint at the brief urban life intended for this part of East Lindsey.

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