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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT
PLOT 1, MAIN STREET, TORKSEY**

Site Code: MST99
LCNCC Acc No. 30.99
NGR SK 8379 7875
Ref 98/P/0830 113385

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Report prepared for Mr and Mrs E Watson
by James Snee
April 1999

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Fig. 2 Location of development footprint (1:500)

Fig. 3 North-south section across post-medieval pit [3] (scale 1:20)

Summary

- * *An archaeological recording brief took place during the groundworks for a single detached dwelling and double garage on land to the rear of the Old Post Office, Main Street, Torksey, Lincolnshire*
- * *Although residual late Saxon, Saxo-Norman and post-medieval artefacts were recovered as a result of the groundworks, important archaeological remains were not disturbed*
- * *It is concluded that the archaeological methodology employed was successful and that the most important archaeological remains have been preserved beneath the new structure*

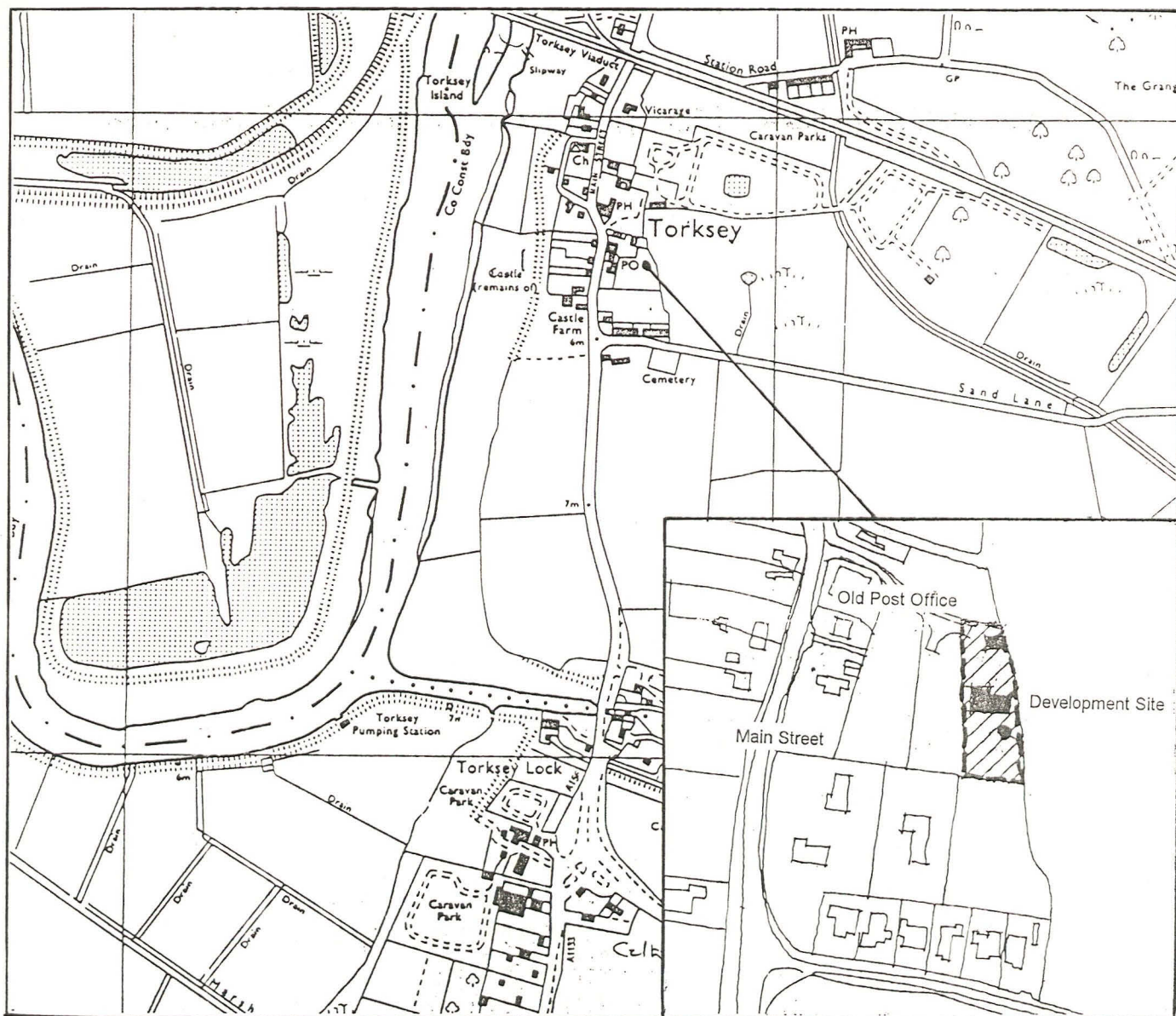


Fig. 1 1: 10,000 site location (inset at 1: 2500)

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1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Mr and Mrs E Watson to fulfil a planning requirement associated with the construction of a single dwelling and garage on land east of Main Street, Torksey, Lincolnshire.

This project was carried out in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section publication *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook; A manual of archaeological practice*, 1998. It also followed the procedures set out in a formal project specification by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), dated February 1999.

2.0 Location and description

Torksey is in the administrative district of West Lindsey on the east bank of the River Trent, immediately north of its junction with the Fosse Dyke. The development site is located to the east of Main Street to the rear of the Old Post Office and centres on NGR SK 8379 7875.

Prior to development, the site (which is one of three plots) was covered with rough grass vegetation.

The underlying geology consists of wind-blown sands of varying depths, overlying Mercia Mudstone (clay).

3.0 Planning background

The site was allocated for housing development in the West Lindsey District Council Local Plan (To1).

Full planning consent was granted for the construction of a single detached dwelling and garage. The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief during ground disturbance.

As a condition of planning, both the dwelling and the garage footings were constructed on raft / slab foundations. This was a precautionary measure, designed to limit ground disturbance and the impact to archaeological resources which are known to lie within the broad site area (McDaid 1997).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric artefacts have been recovered from around the present village, including a hand axe and a polished flint axe which was dredged from the River Trent on the west side of Torksey Island. A Neolithic flint adze was recovered from the garden of a

property which lies a short distance south of the present site, and residual worked flints were recovered from the excavations at Castle Farm (Palmer-Brown, 1995).

Torksey was certainly of some economic importance in the Roman period: pottery kilns of 3rd century date have been excavated on the south side of the Fosse Dyke at Little London Farm. The potters were specialising in the production of grey ware vessels and, like similar production sites at Lea and Knaith, were ideally placed for water transportation to important centres such as Lincoln (*Lindum*). No evidence of Romano-British occupation has been found north of the Fosse Dyke (Barley 1964, 172).

A programme of excavation on the former site of Castle Farm in 1994 exposed two late Saxon pottery kilns, three further kilns (which may also have been used for pottery production) and a possible medieval lime kiln. To the north of this 'industrial zone' was an inhumation cemetery which may have been contemporary with the kilns. A context for the cemetery was not established, though it was thought possible that it related to the Church of All Saints, the site of which is currently unknown.

In the medieval period, Torksey was one of the principal towns in Lincolnshire. The earliest reference to the settlement occurs in AD873 when the Danish army came under their king, *Halfdene*, to Lindsey and wintered at a place called *Turcesige* (Hill 1965, 306). At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086), Torksey was the third largest borough, after Lincoln and Stamford.

There were three medieval churches in the parish: dedicated to All Saints, St Peter and St Mary; each of which came into the hands of the Augustinian priory of St Leonard which was founded during the reign of Henry II. A small Cistercian nunnery was established south of the town which became known as St Nicholas de Fosse, or the Fosse Nunnery. The foundations of these religious houses seem to belong to the second half of the 12th century and the first half of the 13th century - the period associated with the towns greatest prosperity (*ibid.*).

Torksey owed much of its growth and prosperity to its privileged position at the junction of the Trent and Fosse Dyke. By the late 13th century, the canal was beginning to fail and, by the middle of the 14th century, wool, for example, was being transported by road from Lincoln to Barton on Humber, instead of to Torksey and thence by boat to Hull (*ibid.*, 311).

An area close to the present site was evaluated by Lindsey Archaeological Services in 1997 (McDaid 1997). Three trenches established the presence of important archaeological remains c. 0.9m beneath the modern ground surface. A series of Late Saxon / Saxo-Norman features were exposed. Although the evaluation did not expose any Late Saxon pottery kilns (which are abundant in this part of the settlement), pottery waster sherds were recovered, suggesting that such structures do indeed lie within the area sampled.

5.0 Methodology

The watching brief was on an intermittent basis by the writer between the 22nd and 25th February 1999. The garage foundation was monitored by C Palmer-Brown on April 4th, 1999.

The fieldwork element of the project consisted of archaeological observation during all the excavations and a thorough inspection of all plan and section surfaces exposed as a result of the groundworks. A record was made of all the soil horizons exposed. That record included scale drawing, colour photography, and written descriptions.

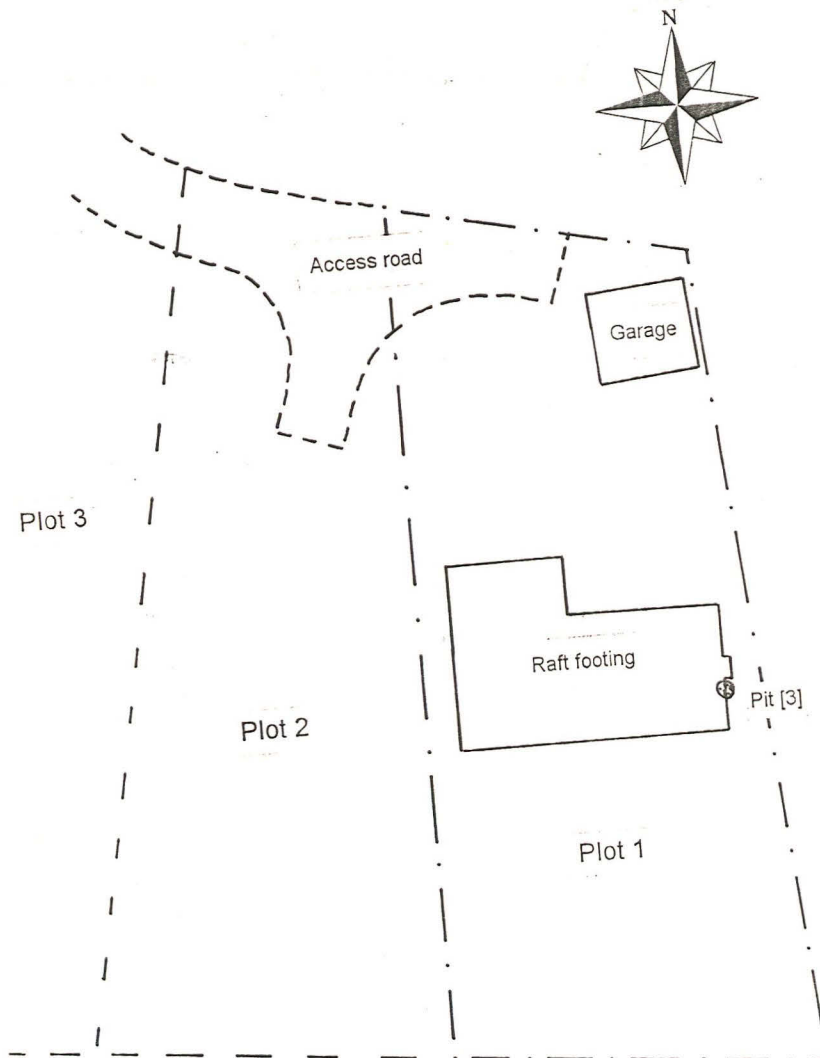


Fig. 2 Location of development footprint (1:500)

6.0 Results

6.1.1 The house foundation/raft

Ground disturbance for the raft footings consisted of a topsoil strip to a depth between 20 and 45cm and the excavation of a strip trench around the perimeter of the raft to a depth of 90cm. All of these works were intensively monitored.

The basic stratigraphy comprised only two layers. The most recent was a thick topsoil, a dark grey-brown silty-sand (up to c. 60cm deep). A variety of pot sherds were recovered from this layer dating between late Saxon and early modern times. Below the topsoil was a thick layer of mid-brown wind blown sand (greater than 45cm), which contained occasional thin lenses of darker brown or lighter brown sand. A single pot sherd dating between the 10th - early 11th century was recovered from this layer.

Only one discrete feature was exposed; a shallow pit, cut into the underlying windblown sand. This feature was filled with dark grey-brown silty-sand (very similar to the topsoil) and contained a small amount of limestone and brick rubble. A number of pot sherds dating between the 17th and 18th centuries were recovered from this feature, confirming its use as a rubbish pit in the post-medieval period

No other archaeological remains were exposed in this area.

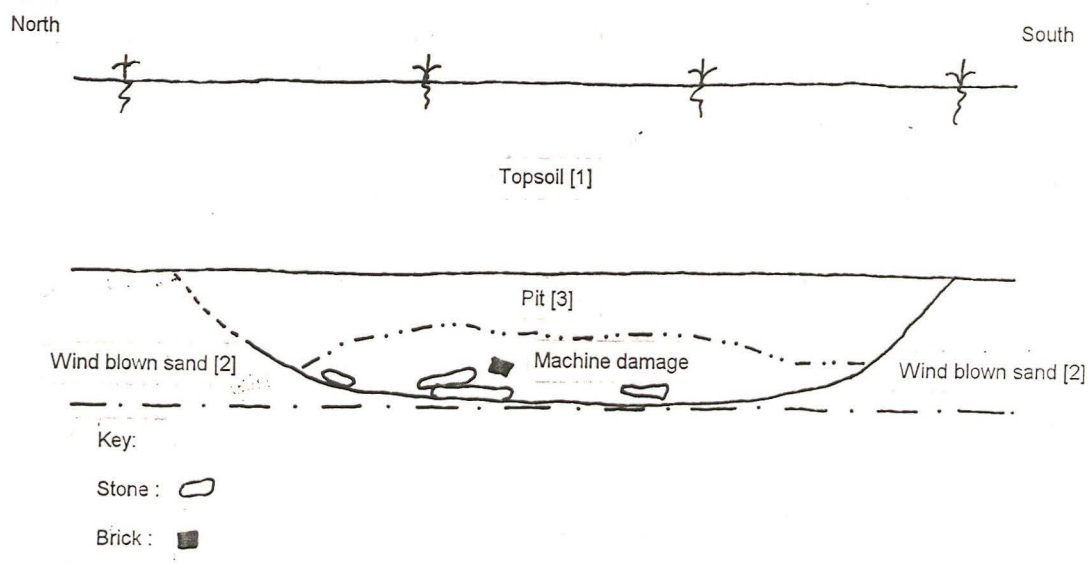


Fig. 3: North-south section across post-medieval pit [3] (scale 1:20)
Location on Fig. 2

6.1.2 The garage foundation/raft

This occupied an area measuring approximately 6m x 6m in plan, approximately 15m north of the dwelling.

Excavations were carried out to depths 50 - 80cm beneath the modern ground surface, exposing a) a dark sandy topsoil deposit up to 30cm in thickness overlying b) a

mid-brown wind-blown sand that is common to this area of Torksey and usually seals the late Saxon / Saxo-Norman remains.

Wind-blown sands occupying the eastern third of the footprint were cut through by a substantial modern feature. Protruding through the top of this feature were lengths of modern electricity cable and pieces of polythene - one assumes therefore that the feature (which may have destroyed important underlying archaeological remains) was no more than 20 - 25 years old.

No residual Saxon or Saxo-Norman pottery sherds were recovered from this area.

7.0 Conclusions

The watching brief did not result in the exposure of sensitive archaeological remains: technically, therefore, the methodologies employed (both architectural and archaeological) were well suited to this project.

The occurrence of residual late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery sherds confirms the use of the site in these periods and it is without doubt that associated remains must now lie successfully preserved beneath the modern building complex.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to express their thanks to Mr and Mrs E Watson for this commission, and to their project manager, Mr B Needham. Thanks are also offered to the building contractor, Mr T Ratcliffe..

9.0 Site Archive

The archaeological archive will be transferred to Lincoln City and County Museum. Access may be granted by quoting the site accession number, 30.99.

10.0 References

Barley, MW 1964 'The Medieval Borough of Torksey: Excavations 1960 - 62', *Antiq. J.* 44, 164 - 87.

Hill, JFW 1965 *Medieval Lincoln*

McDaid, M 1997: *Land to the rear of the Old Post Office, Main Street, Torksey*. Unpublished Evaluation Report

Palmer-Brown, CPH 1995 : *Castle Farm, Torksey: Archaeological Excavation Report* (unpublished)

MST 99: Assessment Report on the Post-Roman Pottery.

Jane Young

1. Introduction

A very mixed group of 71 sherds of post-Roman pottery was recovered from the site. The material ranged from late Saxon to early modern in date.

2. Condition

The pottery is mainly in a poor condition with most sherds having worn or lost surfaces.

3. Overall Chronology and Source

The group of Torksey ware sherds in context 1 could be waste material but it is too worn and fragmentary to be sure. The fresh Torksey ware sherd in context 2 indicates that contemporary deposits of 10th or 11th century date may occur on the site. The medieval material includes regional imports from Nottingham, Beverley and the Humber area as well as more local vessels from Lincoln.

pottery archive mst99

<i>context</i>	<i>cname</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>nosh</i>	<i>nov dec</i>	<i>part</i>	<i>description</i>
1						
	TORK	bowl	1	1	rim	flanged rim
	BERTH	jar?	1	1	BS	int & ext glaze;18th
	BERTH	jar?	1	1	BS	int glaze;17/18th
	BERTH	bowl	1	1	BS	int glaze;17/18th
	LSTON	?	1	1	base	18-20th
	MISC	?	1	1	BS	fine reduced quartz;no ext surf
	LSWA	jug	1	1	handle	small grooved rod
	MEDX	?	1	1	BS	buff fabric;fine subround quartz
	HUMB	jar/jug	1	1	base	
	LSW3	jug	1	1	BS	
	LKT	JAR	1	1	rim	EVERTC rim;leached surfaces;? ID
	NOTG	jug	1	1	BS	
	HUM	jug	1	1	BS	worn
	HUMB	jug?	1	1	BS	
	BL	tall cylindrical jar	1	1	BS	vitr;17/18th
	TORK	jar	1	1	base	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired

<i>context</i>	<i>cname</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>nosh</i>	<i>nov dec</i>	<i>part</i>	<i>description</i>
	TORK	jar	1	1 small DROUL	BS	
	HUMB	jug?	1	1	BS	
	TORK	jar?	1	1	base	
	TORK	bowl	1	1	rim	flanged rim; grey fabric
	TORK	jar	1	1	base	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	base	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	rim	oxid fabric
	TORK	jar	1	1 pressed rim	rim	
	TORK	bowl	1	1 piecrust rim	rim	
	BL	jar	1	1	BS	17/18th
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	BL	jug	1	1	BS	17/18th
	HUM	jug/jar	1	1	BS	
	HUM	jug/jar	1	1	BS	
	HUM	?	1	1	base	
	GRE	bowl?	1	1	BS	late;? LHUM
	HUM	jug/jar	1	1	BS	
	NOTG	jug	1	1	BS	
	HUM	jug	1	1	handle	
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	TORK	jar	1	1	BS	slightly overfired
	BL	bowl	1	1	BS	17/18th; staffs
	SLIP	bowl	1	1	BS	worn

<i>context</i>	<i>cname</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>nosh</i>	<i>nov dec</i>	<i>part</i>	<i>description</i>
	SLIP	hollow	1	1	BS	very worn
	STSL	press moulded dish	1	1 trail & comb	BS	
	GRE	jar/jug	1	1	BS	late;? LHUM
	CRMWARE	?	1	1	BS	
	MISC	?	1	1	base	fine oxid fabric;part ext missing
	BL	jar	1	1	BS	17/18th
	BL	?	1	1	base	18th
	BL	jar/jug	1	1	BS	17/18th
	BL	bowl	1	1	BS	17/18th
	HUM	jug/jar	1	1	BS	
	LPM	?	1	1	rim	lustre;18th+
	BL	tall cylindrical jar	1	1	BS	vitri;17/18th;staffs;int dep
	MISC	?	1	1	BS	frag;no surfs;? Date;earthen
	CIST	cup	1	1	base	late
	CIST	cup	1	1	base	soft red fabric
	CIST	cup	1	1	BS	
	TGE	?	1	1	base	light orange fabric;plain
	BEVO	small jug/jar	1	1	BS	? ID
	BL	jar?	1	1	BS	17/18th;worn
2						
	TORK	jar	1	1	rim	thin EVERTA rim;10-early 11th;fresh frag
3						
	LHUM	bowl	2	1	rim & base	17/18th
	BL	tall cylindrical jar	1	1	rim	staffs;17/18th

<i>context</i>	<i>cname</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>nosh</i>	<i>nov dec</i>	<i>part</i>	<i>description</i>
BL		?	1	1	BS	17/18th;staffs
BL		?	1	1	BS	17/18th;staffs
BL		?	1	1	BS	17/18th
BL		tall cylindrical jar	1	1	rim	staffs;17/18th

tile archive mst99

<i>context</i>	<i>cname</i>	<i>no frags</i>	<i>description</i>
1	MISC	1	fired clay;hearth/kiln
	MISC	1	fired clay;hearth/kiln
	MISC	1	fired clay;hearth/kiln
	PNR	1	med;flat roof
	PNR	1	misc scrap
	GRID	1	probably Lincoln;olive glaze
3	PNR	1	post med;flat roof
	MISC	1	fired clay;hearth/kiln

pottery dating mst99

<i>context</i>	<i>earliest horizon</i>	<i>latest horizon</i>	<i>date range</i>
1	PMH8	PMH9	mid to late 18th
2	ASH8	ASH12	10th to early 11th
3	PMH5	PMH8	mid 17th to mid 18th

Appendix 2: Colour Photographs



P1. General view of house footprint following excavations, looking north-west



P2. General view of garage footprint following excavations, looking north-west