



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
47 HIGH STREET, LINCOLN**

NGR: SK 97195 69956
SITE CODE: TOL00
LCNCC ACC. NO. 2000.263
Planning ref: 2000/02520F





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Report prepared for
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November 2000

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Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a rearward extension to 47 High Street, Lincoln.
- The city of Lincoln developed around a first century AD Roman legionary fortress, and was a major urban centre throughout the Roman and medieval periods.
- Although it lies to the south of the Roman and medieval settlement foci, the current site has considerable archaeological potential, as it is situated close to Ermine Street, and is within the medieval suburb of Wigford.
- Despite the above, no significant archaeological features were exposed. The watching brief produced a single sherd of late 12th to mid 13th century roof tile from the subsoil.



Fig.1: Site location (Scale 1:25000)
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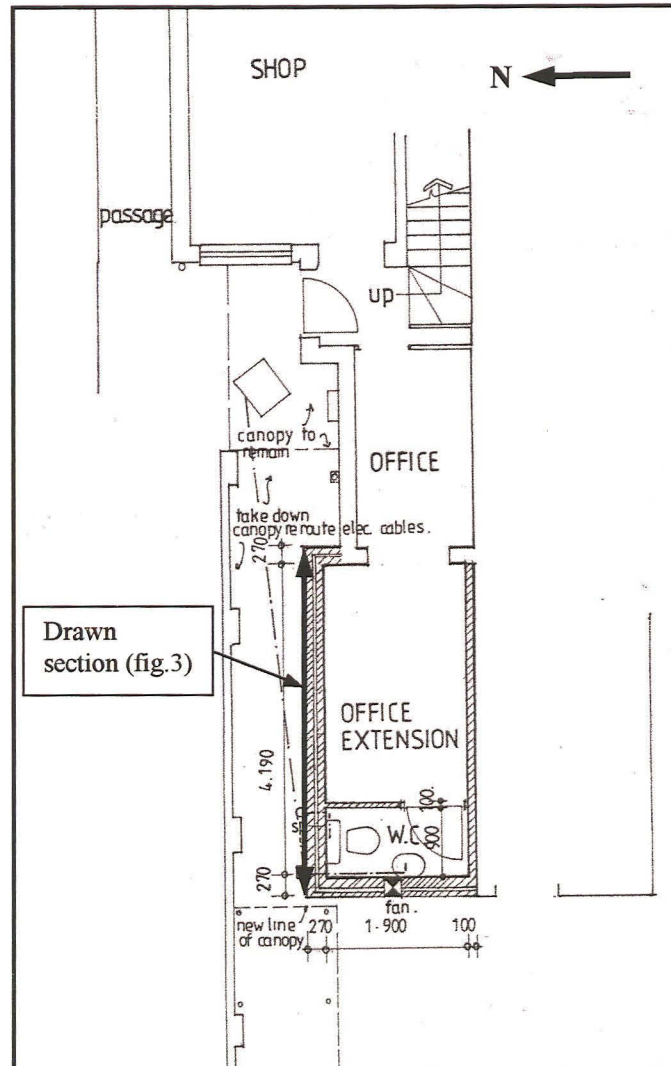


Fig.2: Architect's plan of proposed extension (Scale 1:100)

1.0 Introduction

Pre Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned by George Tokarski (Photographers) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for an office extension to their property at 47 High Street, Lincoln. This was undertaken to fulfil a planning requirement issued by Lincoln City Council.

This report details the result of the work. It is written to conform to both national and local guidelines as set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998).

2.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted by Lincoln City Council for the erection of a small rearward extension to 47 High Street (Planning ref. 2000/0252/F). This will form part of the offices to George Tokarski Photographers (fig.2).

The planning consent was subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief, involving on site recording and post excavation analysis, the production and dissemination of an illustrated report, and deposition of a detailed project archive with the receiving museum.

3.0 Location and description

The site is to the south of the city, located on the west side of Lincoln High Street, at its junction with Robey Street, NGR SK 97195 69956. The office extension is in the back yard of 47 High Street, against the north wall of an existing outbuilding, with access at its eastern end to the current office.

The site lies on a drift geology of river terrace sand and gravel (BGS, 1973).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The city of Lincoln has been continuously occupied since at least the late Iron Age, attested by large amounts of pre-Roman Iron Age pottery from the area of Brayford Pool. The name of the city itself is derived from a native word, 'Lin', meaning 'pool' or 'lake' (Jones, in Whitwell, 1992). At this time, Lincoln fell within the territory of the Corieltavi tribe, who are mentioned in Ptolemy's *Geography* as having two major settlements, at Lindon (Lincoln) and Rhage (Leicester) (Todd, 1991).

Roman occupation of Lincoln began with the construction of a legionary fortress for the Legio IX *Hispana*, on Steep Hill, to the north of the Iron Age settlement. Samian

pottery from the fortress dates its construction to sometime in the 60s AD (Jones, in Whitwell, 1992). However, early Roman settlement evidence and military tombstones found south of the Witham indicate the possibility of an earlier fort in the area of South Common, much closer to the current site (Todd, 1991).

By c.AD90, Lincoln had acquired the status of *colonia*, a self-governing civilian community, populated largely by retired legionaries. This represented one of only four such settlements in England, the others being at Colchester, Gloucester and York. Thus, the city became a major administrative centre and prosperous urban community (Whitwell, 1992).

Much use was made of the original legionary fortress site by the new *colonia*. Its defences and street plan were maintained, and the fortress headquarters were demolished to make way for the basilica and forum, the town's administrative, legal and commercial centre. By the second century, the rapidly expanding urban area extended down slope beyond the southern defences of the fortress, towards the River Witham. Eventually this area was also walled, probably in the later third century (Todd, 1991).

To the south-west of the walled city, a large scale Roman pottery industry was established in Swanpool and Boultham, while discoveries to the north of Monks Road suggest an industrial quarter to the east of the walled area. Furthermore, evidence for Roman cemeteries has been found on every side of the city, notably from Monson Street, approximately 500m north of the current site (Whitwell, 1992).

The city maintained its importance into the fourth century, both as one of four provincial capitals in the newly subdivided Britain, and as an episcopal see, following the advent of Christianity (Sawyer 1998).

The lack of early Saxon remains point to the possible abandonment of Lincoln after the Roman withdrawal in the early fifth century. However, this seems unlikely, as evidence from Bede suggests the city was still a major centre in the early seventh century, with a stone church and a '*praefectus Lindocolinae civitatis*' who was converted to Christianity by Paulinus in AD627 (Todd, 1991). A degree of continuity is suggested by the maintenance of a distinctly Roman title for a local official (above), and the similarity of the city's early English name, *Lindcolun*, to its Roman predecessor, *Lindum colonia* (Sawyer 1998).

In the ninth and tenth centuries, settlement by Danish Vikings stimulated the regrowth of the city, with the foundation of workshops and kilns producing new forms of pottery. The city also received renewed status as a mint from the end of the ninth century. Much of this regrowth took place in the lower part of the Roman city and south of the Witham, in the suburb of Wigford, in which the current site stands (Jones, in Bennett & Bennett, 1993). Development of the upper city took place after the Norman Conquest with the imposition of a motte and bailey castle and the new cathedral, both within the limits of the Roman legionary fortress (*ibid.*).

Much of the city's wealth was based on the production and export of cloth and wool, but by the end of the fourteenth century, with the loss of much of the cloth trade to

Flemish manufacturers and the impact of the Black Death, Lincoln was once again in decline (Jones, in Bennett & Bennett, 1993). This problem was exacerbated by heavy taxation during the Hundred Years War, a situation which continued into the next century, to the extent that despite the continuing war Lincoln was intermittently granted exemption from taxation from 1434 (Hill, 1965).

Lincoln's revival from this slump did not begin until the late seventeenth century, and was rapidly accelerated by the arrival of the railway in 1846, which allowed the growth of a large heavy engineering industry throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Kemp in Bennett & Bennett, 1993).

5.0 Methodology

The archaeological fieldwork was carried out by the author on Friday 27th October. It involved the monitoring of the groundworks for the extension. This included the cleaning and inspection of all plan and section surfaces, and subsequent drawing, recording and photographing of archaeological features as necessary.

This information forms the basis of this report, as well as a detailed site archive.

6.0 Results

On arrival at site, much of the excavation of the foundations had been completed. They were excavated by hand, due to the limited space and the several services associated with the existing property. The foundations reached a depth of approximately 1.3m below the modern ground surface (fig.3).

Examination of the longest section, facing south, suggested the area had been considerably disturbed by recent building work. The stratigraphy was characterised by mixed layers of sandy soils. One of these, number (002) was a clayey sand which contained large amounts of broken nineteenth/twentieth century brick and tile, indicating building or demolition work on the site.

Layers (001) and (005) produced small fragments of animal bone. However, these deposits were undated and it was not deemed worthwhile to analyse this small amount of material. The only dateable material from the site was one sherd of a type 3 glazed nibbed roof tile from context (003), which was dated to the late 12th - mid 13th century (Jane Young, pers. comm.).

The shorter, east facing section of the foundation trench was found to exhibit a similar stratigraphy, although this section was more heavily disturbed by service pipes (plate 3).

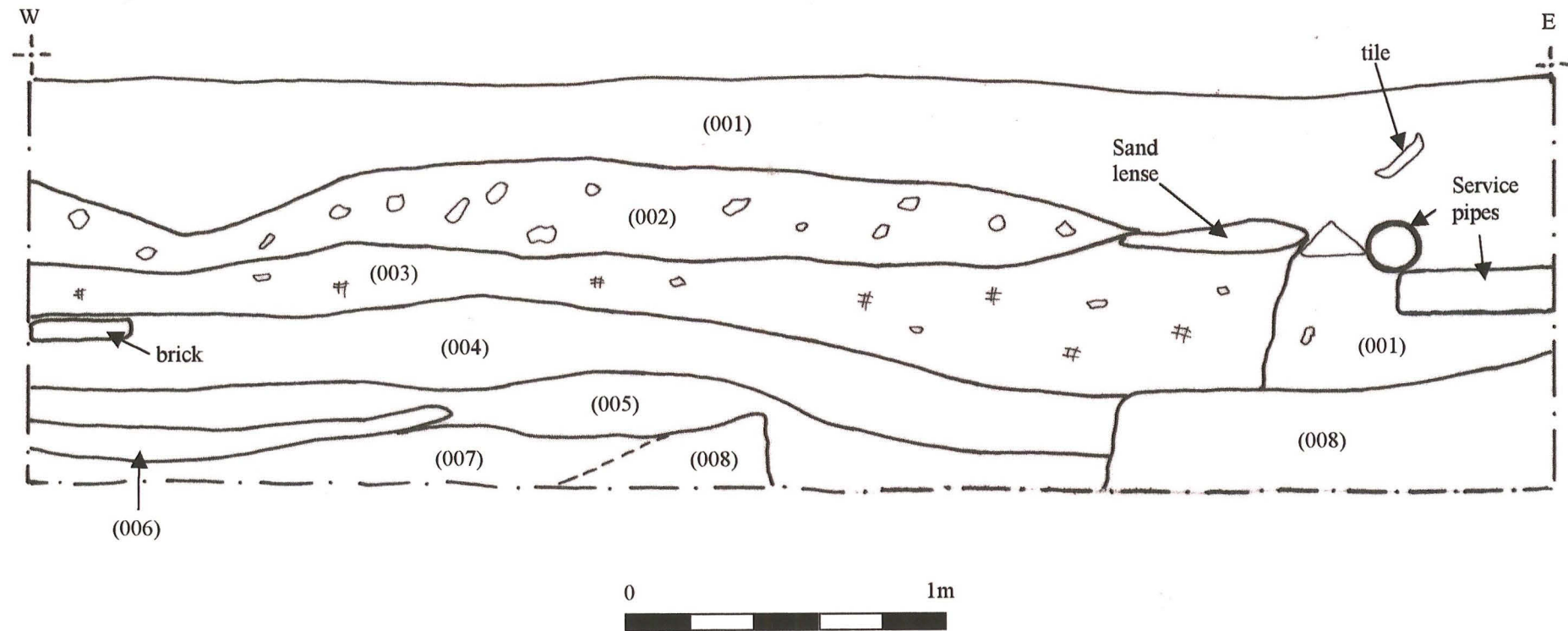


Fig.3: South facing section of foundation trench

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

This watching brief produced no archaeologically significant finds or features, and therefore was deemed to be negative. The building work has had no significant impact on the archaeology in this area. This work adds little to the deposit model for the archaeology of Lincoln.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank George Tokarski (Photographers) for this commission and for their co-operation during this watching brief

9.0 References

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- Todd M., 1991, *The Coritani*, Duckworth, London
- Whitwell J.B., 1992, *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln

10.0 Site archive

The primary records for the site are currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. The paper and photographic element of this report will be deposited with Lincoln City and County Museum within six months.

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Colour plates



Plate 1: General view of site, looking north-east

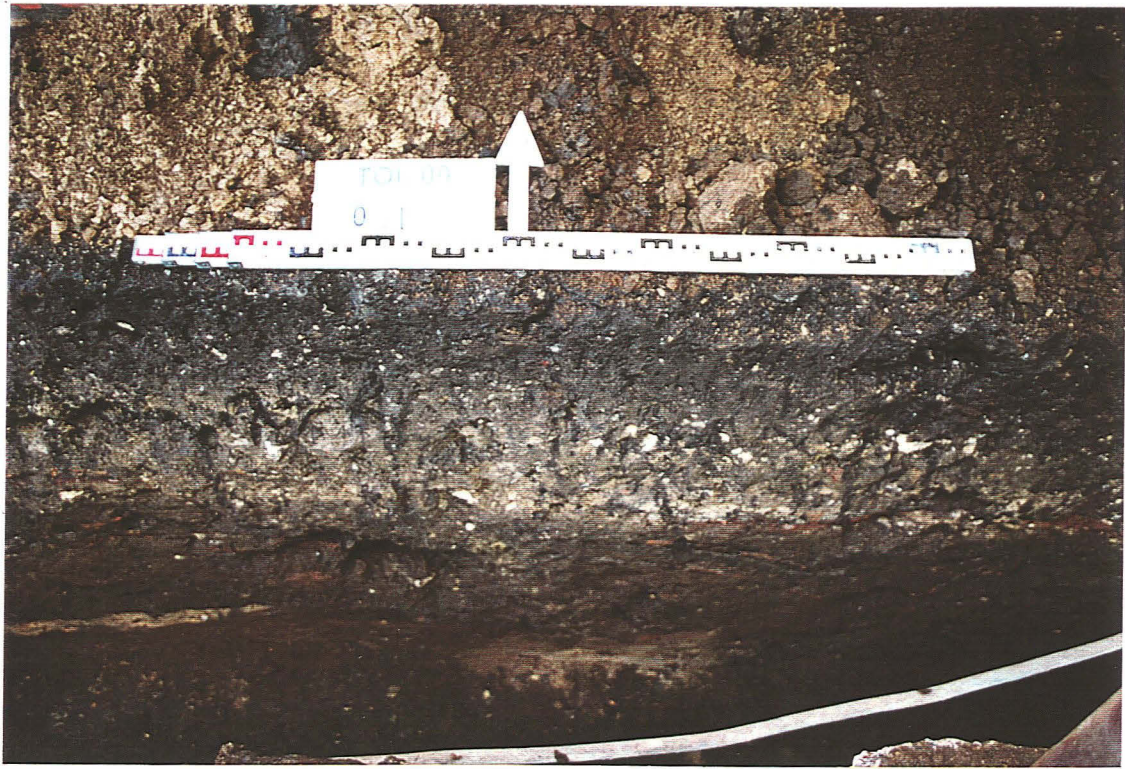


Plate 2: South facing section, looking north



Plate 3: East facing section, looking west.

11.2 List of archaeological contexts

Context	Description
001	Topsoil
002	Demolition layer
003	Silty sand, with charcoal and brick frags
004	Silty sand deposit
005	Silty sand deposit
006	Silty sand deposit
007	Silty sand deposit
008	Sand deposit (natural ?)