

# PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;  
HILLTOP COTTAGE,  
FORDINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE**  
NGR: TF 4186 7172  
SITE CODE: FORD02  
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2002.395  
Planning ref: S/191/00657/02





Event L13378  
Source 48092  
L18093  
negative

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*Wicely with Fordington Parish*

Report prepared for  
Mr. Richard Butler  
by Chris Clay  
September 2002

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### Summary

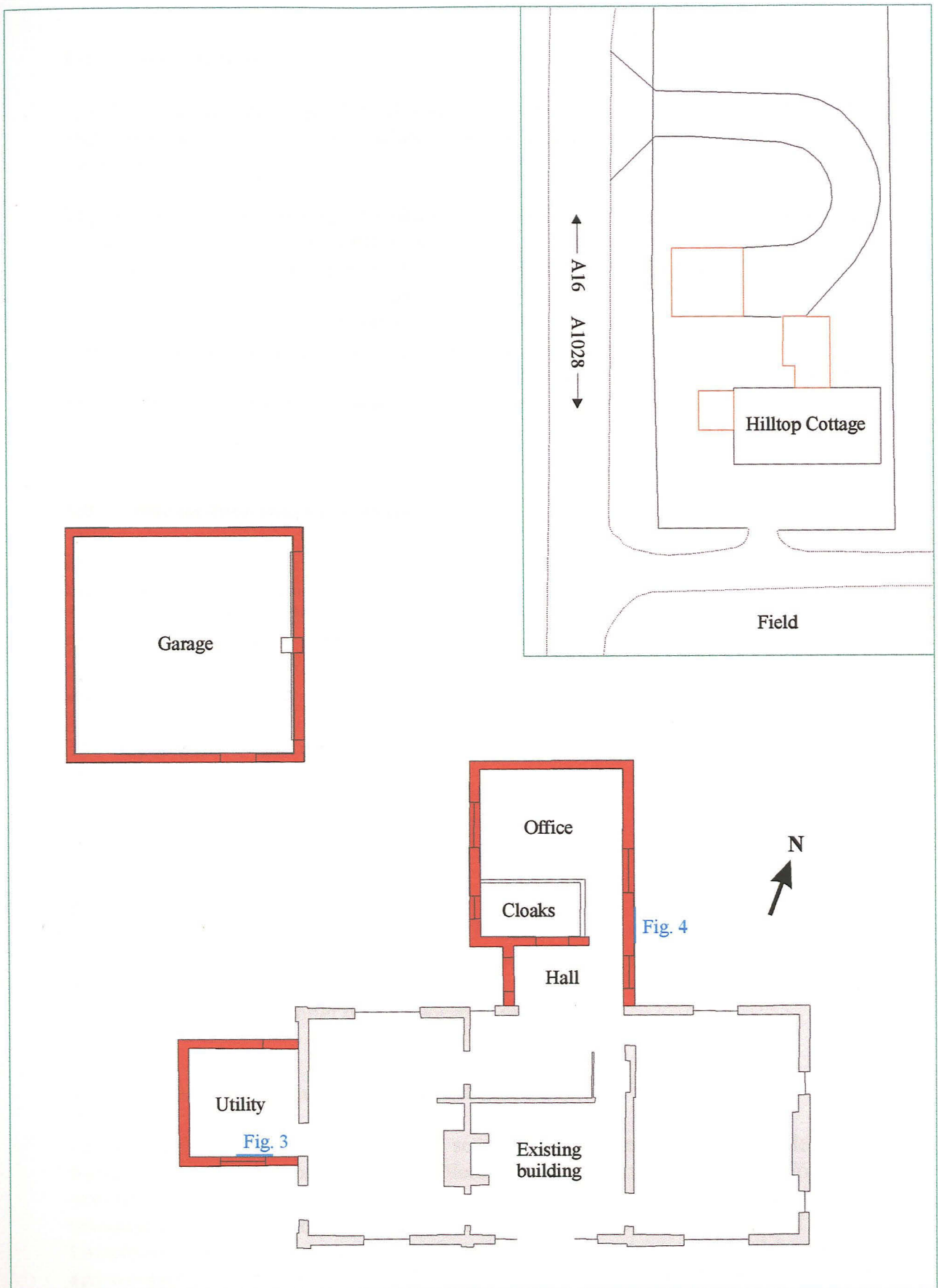
- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for an extension and garage at Hilltop Cottage, Fordington, Lincolnshire.*
- *The site is within an area that appears to have been a focus of Neolithic burial practice. Romano-British settlement activity is well represented in the area, and the site is also adjacent to a series of earthworks reflecting a deserted medieval village.*
- *No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during this watching brief, despite the known proximity of archaeological remains.*



**Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)**

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**Fig. 2:** Site location, showing position of drawn sections (the areas monitored are highlighted in red) (scale 1:150, inset 1:500)

## 1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Mr. Richard Butler to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a house extension and garage.

This was undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal project brief issued by the Assistant Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council, and a project specification by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). The approach is consistent with the recommendations of *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IFA, 1994), and the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice* (LCC, 1998).

## 2.0 Site location and description

Fordington is a small hamlet in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 5km south-west of Alford, on the east edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The site lies on the north side of a river valley at an elevation of approximately 87m OD. The development comprised three separate units; a utility room on the west side of the existing building, an office with cloakroom and hall attached to the north side, and a garage further to the north (fig. 2).

The local geology consists of Cretaceous deposits of Ferriby Chalk (British Geological Survey, 1996).

Central National Grid Reference TF 4185 7170.

## 3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission was granted for the construction of a new access, extension and garage (planning ref. S/191/00657/02), subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks.

## 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The site lies within an area of abundant settlement evidence, dating from at least the Neolithic period. Approximately sixty Neolithic long barrows are spread along the eastern edge of the southern-central area of the Lincolnshire Wolds, marking the marginal zone between the uplands of the Wolds and the low lying fenland of the Lincolnshire Marsh. A number of these are near to the development, the closest being approximately 0.5km to the east. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 27867) which, although damaged by a chalk quarrying pit, survives as a cropmark approximately 125m long and 30m wide. Just over 1km south-east of the site is a group of three barrows, of which two are scheduled; Giant's Hill I (SAM 27866),



which survives as an earthwork, and the cropmark remains of Giant's Hill III (SAM 27872). Giant's Hill I was excavated in 1933-4 by C.W. Phillips, revealing a mound of chalk rubble 65m by 23m, that was higher and broader to the south-east. The mound was surrounded by a ditch and a timber revetment, and covered the remains of eight individuals. Radiocarbon dates from deer antlers found in the base of the perimeter ditch dated the monument to 3500 – 2700 BC (May, 1976). Other known barrows in the area include Spellow Hills, a cropmark between Fordington Wood and Skendleby Psalter, and the paired barrows of Deadmen's Graves, immediately west-north-west of Claxby.

There is however, no direct evidence of Neolithic settlement activity associated with this area of ritual burial practice. Likewise, subsequent periods of prehistory are poorly represented for both settlement and burial; the archaeological record intensifies in the Romano-British period.

To the north of Fordington, Bluestone Heath Road runs south-east to north-west, representing the Romano-British formalisation of a prehistoric trackway running along a chalk ridge. This formed part of the Roman road that runs from Lincoln, north of Horncastle, and past Fordington to Burgh-le-Marsh, and perhaps beyond to a now submerged ferry point on the coast of The Wash (Whitwell, 1992). From 1913-23 a Romano-British settlement was excavated on the line of the road, south-south-west of Ulceby Cross roundabout. This revealed rammed chalk floors and stone foundations, and considerable quantities of pottery, tile, glass, and metalwork (SMR ref. TF47 SW W). The settlement extended over both sides of the road, and yielded coinage from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. The presence of roof tiles, stone foundations, and a high proportion of samian ware among the pottery assemblage suggests a moderately high status for at least some of the buildings in this community (Whitwell, 1992). Further scatters of pottery and coins have been located in the parish, including three late 3<sup>rd</sup> century coins from fieldwalking of the deserted medieval village of Fordington (see below).

There is no archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation at Fordington. However, it appears in the Domesday Survey, together with Ashby, Bratoft and *Langene* as part of a jurisdiction of Earl Hugh, suggesting that there was a settlement here prior to 1086. Three churches are listed in this jurisdiction, making it quite likely that there was a church in Fordington at this time (Morgan & Thorne, 1986).

The area was certainly occupied in the medieval period. The field immediately to the south of the development contains numerous well preserved earthworks pertaining to the deserted medieval village. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 284). The visible components include a hollow way, trackways, enclosures and a raised mound, upon which the village church formerly stood. These earthworks are concentrated towards the more sheltered base of the river valley, and seem to tail off before the northern field boundary, closest to the current site. Prior to the scheduling of the site, the adjacent field to the east was bulldozed in 1974, levelling some of the earthworks, including part of the church mound. This revealed a scatter of medieval and post medieval pottery. Fieldwalking of the DMV area recovered three Romano-British coins of late 3<sup>rd</sup> century date, four medieval coins (of Edward I and Edward III), 1 Nuremburg jetton (14<sup>th</sup> century) and assorted medieval pottery.



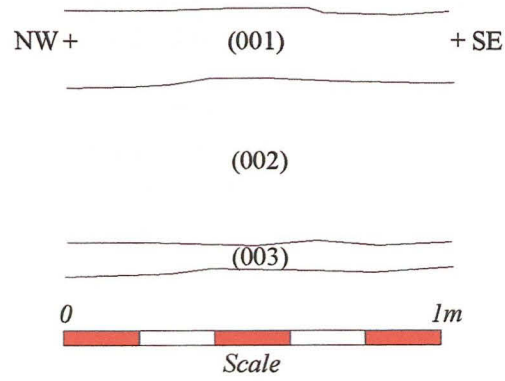


Fig. 3: Representative section, utility room (scale 1:20)

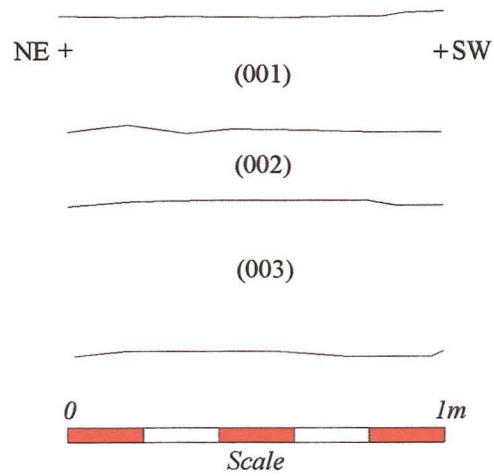


Fig. 4: Representative section, main extension (scale 1:20)

## **5.0 Methodology**

Prior to excavation of the foundation trenches, surface vegetation and a portion of the topsoil was stripped from the area of development. The foundation trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of c1.2m in the areas of the utility room and the office, and to a maximum of 1m in the garage plot. The trenches were excavated using a JCB fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket.

During excavation, all plan and section surfaces were examined and intermittently cleaned to determine the presence/absence of archaeological features or deposits. Section drawings were made at a scale of 1:20, and context information was recorded on standard watching brief record sheets. A colour photographic record was maintained, selected prints from which have been reproduced in this report. The fieldwork was carried out by the author on August 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002.

## **6.0 Results (figs. 3, 4)**

The uppermost deposit was a 0.2m deep layer of dark brown topsoil, which contained a moderate amount of brick, tile and glass fragments (001). This overlay a subsoil deposit, (002), consisting of a chalky brash, with a mid-light brown matrix and poorly sorted sub-rounded chalk chunks. This deposit varied in depth between 0.2 and 0.5m, being deepest in the foundation trenches of the utility room. This sealed a natural deposit of chalk brash, (003), with a much lighter, pale yellow/brown matrix. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were recovered.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

No archaeological deposits were encountered during the watching brief. There was no evidence of extensive disturbance or truncation of deposits which may have destroyed archaeological features, suggesting that the permanent occupation represented by the nearby medieval earthworks did not extend into this area.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

The methodology was appropriate to the development. It allowed a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site, and showed that the development would not adversely affect the archaeological resource in the area.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr. Richard Butler for this commission.



## 10.0 References

British Geological Survey, 1996. *Skegness. England and Wales Sheet 116. Solid and Drift Geology*. 1:50000 Provisional Series. Keyworth, Nottingham: British Geological Survey

May J., 1976, *Prehistoric Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire I, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln.

Morgan P., & Thorn C., (eds.), 1986, *Domesday Book: vol.31: Lincolnshire*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd, Chichester

Whitwell J.B, 1992, *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln

## 11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2002.395.

**APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates**



**Pl.1:** General view of the site, looking south. The garage plot is in the foreground, with the utility room to the right of the building



**Pl.2:** Shot of foundation trench, utility room extension, looking north-east



**Pl.3:** Shot of foundation trench, office extension, looking south-east



## APPENDIX 2: List of SMR entries

<i>SMR ref.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>NGR (TF)</i>
TF47SW B	Pot scatter: 18 <sup>th</sup> /19 <sup>th</sup> century Toynton/Bolingbroke Wares	4185 7165
TF47SW F	Earthworks bulldozed Feb 1974. Medieval/post medieval pottery scatter observed	419 715
TF47SW N	Romano-British pottery scatter, including samian	408 736
TF47SW Q	Fieldwalking finds: 3 Romano-British coins, 3 medieval coins, medieval pottery, flints	4161 7160
TF47SW R	Fieldwalking of Fordington DMV: 3 Romano-British coins (Claudius II, Tetricus, Valens), 4 medieval coins (Edward I & Edward III), 1 Nuremburg jeton, medieval pottery	4182 7130
TF47SW T	3 Romano-British brooches	412 734
TF47SW W	Romano-British settlement, excavated 1913-23. Rammed chalk floors, stone foundations, pot, tile, glass, 1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> cent. coins, metalwork	408 732
42746	Cropmark: Giant's Hill III Neolithic long barrow. 90m x 30m, aligned NW-SE (SAM 27872)	4277 7127
43174	Cropmark: Outer ditch of Neolithic long barrow. 125m x 30m, aligned E-W (SAM 27867)	4235 7164
43319	Cropmark: Outer ditch of Neolithic long barrow. 50m x 20m, aligned N-S (SAM 27853)	4337 7194
43621	Earthwork: Giant's Hill I Neolithic long barrow. Excavated 1933-4 (SAM 27866)	4286 7110

**APPENDIX 3:**List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Layer	Dark brown loam - topsoil
002	Layer	Mid-brown chalk brash - subsoil
003	Layer	Pale yellow/brown chalk brash - natural