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FORMER TYRE DEPOT, SWAN STREET, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL EXCAVATION REPORT

Site code NGR: LCCM Acc No: TDSS 03 TF 2461 2275 2003.2

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Report prepared for Thistlemoor Estates Ltd. by S.A. Savage

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Highways & Planning Directorate January 2003

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Jane Young Alan Vince

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Summary

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- An archaeological evaluation took place in advance of redevelopment at a former Tyre Depot at Swan Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire.
- The evaluation identified several archaeological features and deposits, mostly of a medieval and post-medieval date.
- It has been possible to establish that significant archaeology at the site does not occur within 1.4m of the modern ground surface



Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000) (O.S. Copyright License No. A1 515 21 A0001)

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Fig. 2: Location of proposed development area (outlined in red), showing the position of the evaluation trenches. The area outlined in blue is that shown in Fig. 3. Scale 1:1250.

1.0 Introduction

An archaeological trial excavation took place to assess the impact of redevelopment at a former Tyre Depot, Swan Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference TF 2461 2275). Thistlemoor Estates Ltd commissioned the work to fulfil a recommendation attached to an outline planning application for commercial redevelopment (Ref. H16/1011/02).

This report documents the results of archaeological investigations undertaken on 9.1.2003. It has been prepared to meet the requirements of current local guidelines (Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice, 1998); and a formal project specification prepared by this company. The approach complies with the recommendations of *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), and *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, (IFA, 1994).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the contractor, the Senior Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council, the County Sites and Monuments Record, and the Local Planning Authority. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*; and this will feature as a short note in due course. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

2.0 Location and Description (Figs 1 and 2)

Spalding is in the administrative district of South Holland, approximately 22km south-west of Boston and 25km north-east of Peterborough. The site is within the traditional core of the town, immediately north of the historic Sheep Market. (National Grid Reference: TF 2461 2275). The former tyre depot comprises a rectangular unit, 25m x 9m.

The site lies at an altitude approximately 6.0m above modern sea level. The soils are permeable silty loam and silty clays of the Wisbech and Wallasea/Pepperthorne Associations (Hodge et.al., 1984). These overlie a series of Quaternary drift deposits, which can be up to 20m in depth. The uppermost of these are the Terrington Beds, a series of sandy silts, sands and clays, which were deposited in a range of wetland environments, including tidal creeks, salt marshes, rivers and by marine inundation (BGS, 1992). Beneath the Terrington Beds are further drift deposits, possibly including Devensian Abbey Sand and Gravel, and beds of Glacial Sand and Gravel of Anglian age. These cover the uppermost formations of the solid geology, which consist of the mudstones of the Oxford Clay Series, deposited during the Upper Jurassic period.

The site comprises the former National Tyre Depot: an open-plan, corrugated asbestos-roofed building, constructed within the last 50 years of reinforced concrete stanchions with brick infill walls on three sides, and large folding doors opening to

Swan Street. The floor consists of a series of poured reinforced concrete plates, approx 3.5m wide (N –S) and 0.26m thick.

3.0 Planning Background

An outline planning application has been submitted to South Holland District Council for a commercial redevelopment. Because of the archaeological potential of this area of the town, the Senior Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire county Council recommended that an archaeological field evaluation should be undertaken to determine the overall archaeological potential of the site. If necessary, the results of this evaluation will assist the formulation of a mitigation strategy to safeguard the interests of buried archaeological remains.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The coastline of prehistoric Lincolnshire was considerably further inland than at present, and the area of Spalding was a frequently submerged island, uninhabitable for long periods. A prehistoric stone axe and a stone axe-hammer appear in the Sites and Monuments Record for Spalding parish (reference numbers 22367 and 22368), and pre-Roman salt workings have been found in the area (Simmons, 1993).

Salt production continued during the Roman period, and the Wash creeks may have been used for river traffic and fishing; settlement increased greatly in the 2nd century AD, probably due to a widespread drainage and administration programme (Hallam, 1970). A number of Romano-British coins and pottery scatters are recorded in the SMR within Spalding itself, as are a statue, probably of Venus (SMR ref. 22372), a ragstone female bust (23610), and a bronze figurine of a horse (22394).

By the Saxon period, falling sea levels had rendered Spalding a coastal settlement rather than an island, although the 'coastline' in this area still varied greatly with the tide and the season. The Fenland Survey records 6th century and later Saxon pottery in the west of the parish (Sawyer, 1998), and Spalding may have become a Royal Estate Centre in the 7th or 8th century AD (Palmer-Brown, 2000). The name itself is ascribed to the *Spalda*, one of the local tribes listed in the 7th/8th century *Tribal Hidage*.

Saxon and medieval development in the Spalding area was strongly influenced by monasticism. Crowland abbey received numerous land grants in the 9th century AD (Sawyer, 1998) and, with the nobles Ivo Tallboys and Guy de Craon, is listed as a major landowner in *Domesday Book*, which refers to a market, fisheries and salthouses in Spalding (Morgan and Thorn, 1986). The abbey established a Benedictine priory at Spalding: the charter granting land for its foundation is dated 1051, but it may not have been built until after the Norman Conquest (Sumner, 1988). The priory is well documented, but archaeologically, little survives. Ivo Tallboys was made 'Lord of Spalding and all Holland' in 1073, and subsequently built a castle in the town: its earthworks were said to be visible at Coney Garth, c. 400m north-east of the development site, in 1746, but are no longer extant.

The medieval port town was directly north-east of the priory, between the River Welland and the Westlode: wool and woad (then a popular dyestuff) were exported via the Welland, and prestige goods such as wine (for Crowland) imported. The Westlode was primarily a drain, and may have originally been part of the Roman drainage system, but was also used to transport goods inland to Bourne, and local agricultural produce to Spalding. Boats using the Westlode landed at the present Sheep Market, c. 100m south-west of the development site.

Both the town and the district were radically altered by the massive enclosure and drainage projects carried out in the Fens in the 18th and 19th centuries: large areas of previously unexploited wetland came under cultivation, and much of the produce was exported via Spalding, a prosperous port whose population doubled in the first half of the 19th century. Steam-powered pumping engines made the Welland obsolete in 1824 (Gooch, 1940): it was filled in, and its course is now followed by New Road and Westlode Street.

5.0 Methodology

The field evaluation was carried out by a team of two archaeologists on 9.1.2003. It consisted of the excavation and subsequent recording of two evaluation trenches. This work was undertaken with a JCB 3CX employing a selection of digging buckets and hammers. The main evaluation trench was 3m x 3m and 2.4m deep, located in the centre of the building (fig. 3). A small subsidiary trench was opened against the east wall to determine the depth and nature of the foundations of the existing building. The trenches were excavated under direct archaeological supervision, ensuring that all archaeological features exposed were identified and recorded.

The archaeological fieldwork entailed the cleaning by hand of all exposed surfaces, followed by a thorough inspection. All archaeological deposits exposed by this method were subjected to sample excavation to assess their nature/dimensions and to attempt to recover datable material. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each layer on standard context recording sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings complement these accounts.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1 (Figs. 3, 4 & 5)

This trench was 3m x 3m in area, and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m, with a narrow central slot (1m in width and oriented N-S) being excavated to a further 1.2m.

The concrete floor was removed by pneumatic hammer; consisting of two layers with a steel reinforcing mesh between, 0.26m thick, numbered context 101.

Beneath the floor was a levelling deposit, approximately 0.10m thick - 102. This sealed a dark brown/black silty coarse sand layer, approximately 0.09m in thickness, containing numerous laminations of charcoal and cinder - 103. This was a ground surface prior to the construction of tyre depot. A 0.57m thick layer of dark grey sandy

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silt containing frequent brick and tile fragments and Victorian pottery lay below 103. This layer, 104, represents dumped material, used as make-up, probably associated with the infilling of the River Welland to the south of the development area. In the north-west corner of the trench, a Victorian brick soakaway (120) was cut into 104. This feature, approximately 2.2m in diameter and founded 2.3m below present floor level, was associated with several other drains. A clay tobacco pipe was recovered from the fill of the construction trench of the soakaway, and has been dated c.1660-1680.

Beneath 104 was a dark greyish-brown sandy clay layer, also containing glazed pottery and frequent brick and tile fragments -105. It yielded one sherd of a Bourne D ware jug dating mid 15^{th} to mid 17^{th} century.

Below these layers (and probably associated with building up the ground level after infilling of the River Welland), were a series of flood deposits (110, 111, 117, 118, 119) cut by a series of pits - [107], [109], [113], [116]. The pits fall into two distinct phases of activity, separated by silt deposits associated with flood events.

Directly below 105, was a mid-brown silt layer, 0.48m in depth and containing occasional small brick and tile fragments -110. Beneath this was a mid-brown pure silt layer containing occasional charcoal flecks (111); varying in thickness from 0.2m at the north side to 0.32m towards the south. Pottery from the two layers has been dated to the $13^{\text{th}} - 14^{\text{th}}$ centuries.

Two pits, [109] and [107], were cut from the surface of layer 110. The earlier of these, [109], was 1.25m in length (N-S) and went beyond the limit of excavation on the east and west sides of the trench. It was 0.84m deep, with steep straight sides breaking to a flat base, and it was filled with mid-brown silty clay, containing occasional brick and tile fragments, small sandstone fragments and one piece of coal (108). This pit was in turn cut on the south side by a shallower pit, [107]. Only the northern edge of this occurred within Trench 1, which was again steep and straight-sided, breaking sharply to a flat base. The fill of the pit was a mid-brown sandy silt containing occasional shell, moderate small and medium mortar fragments and occasional small tile fragments (106).

Beneath 111 was a mottled mid-brown/light grey-brown pure silt layer, 0.1m - 0.15m in depth -117. This sealed a dark grey silt lens (118), up to 0.05m in thickness. Below 118 was another silt layer (119); a mottled orange/light brown soil containing a small quantity of fine sand; it was seen to a depth of 0.22m, but safety limits prevented its full exposure. No finds were recovered from these layers.

Two further features, [113] and [116] were cut from the surface of layer 117. Feature [116], was 0.7 m in width (N-S) and went beyond the limit of excavation to the east and west sides of the trench. This pit had steep regular sides, but depth limitations prevented full excavation. Two fills were seen in pit [116]: the uppermost, 114, was a clean mottled mid-/dark brown moist silt, sealing a dark brown pure silt, 115.

Pit [113] was cut into layer 117 on the south side of Trench 1. Only the northern edge of this was within the trench, which was again steep and straight-sided. Safety limits

again prevented its full excavation. The fill [113] was a mottled mid-brown silt containing occasional charcoal flecks (112).

Pottery recovered from fills112 and 115 has been dated to the $12^{th} - 13^{th}$ centuries.

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 6)

This trench was located in the centre of the site, against the east wall of the building. Given that its purpose was to assess the depth and nature of the foundations of the standing building, this was only excavated to a depth slightly exceeding the foundations. The only earth context seen here (202) corresponds to layer 104 in Trench 1, and finds from this layer have been dated to late $18^{th} - \text{mid } 19^{th}$ century.

Excavations in Trench 2 show that the stanchions for the present building are set into trench-poured concrete stanchion bases approximately 0.55m square and founded 1.2m below the existing floor level. The brick walls between the stanchions are built on concrete sills, founded 1m below the existing floor level.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The evidence from Trench 1 demonstrates that post-medieval and modern deposits seal a number of medieval layers and features on the site. The post-medieval and modern deposits include a Victorian brick soakaway, associated drainage and made ground which confirm that the trench lies within the area between two buildings shown on the First edition Ordnance Survey map. It is probable that this activity was associated with the infilling of the River Welland to the south of the development area in the early part of the 19th century.

Below the post-medieval layers were a series of well-defined flood deposits cut by a series of pits. Pottery recovered from these features and flood horizons shows two distinct phases of activity separated by silt deposits associated with the flooding of the River Welland. The earliest phase of activity dates to the late $12^{th} - 14^{th}$ centuries, while the later phase dates to the $13^{th} - 14^{th}$ century. The most recent of these features lies 1.4m below existing ground level, while the earliest flood horizon seen in this sequence (context 119) lies 2.2m below modern ground level at 3.42m OD and predates the earliest phase of pits. Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine whether or not this horizon sealed earlier activity.

Trench 2 demonstrates that the deepest foundations of the existing tyre depot do not truncate the medieval deposits on the site, as they are not founded deeper than 1.2m below modern floor level.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology allowed the presence/absence, the depth and the dating of the archaeological features to be determined in each of the trenches. However, health and safety considerations prevented excavation to the base of the stratigraphic sequence.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr Wells for the commission and his assistance during the evaluation. Thanks are due to R D Gardner for her assistance on site, and also to J Young for the specialist pottery archive and Alan Vince for the clay tobacco pipe report.

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Fig. 3: Plan showing Trenches 1 and 2. Scale 1:50





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Fig. 5: North facing section of Trench 1. Scale 1:20



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Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view of the former Tyre Depot during excavation work, looking south.



Plate 2: The concrete floor being removed in the area of Trench 1, looking north.

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Plate 3: General view showing excavation work in progress, looking north-east.



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Plate 4: West facing section of Trench 1, looking east.



Plate 5 (left): General view of Trench 1, showing north facing section, looking south



Plate 6 (right): West facing section of Trench 2, looking east.

Appendix 2: Post-Roman pottery Archive

Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services

context	cname	sub fabric	full name	form type	sherds	vessels	weight	decoration	part	description	date
105	BOU		Bourne D ware	jug	1	1	79		BS		mid 15th to mid 17th
110	TOY		Toynton Medieval Ware	jug	1	1	11		BS		13th to 14th
111	BOUA	B/C	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	jar	1	1	8		BS		13th to 14th
111	BOUA	A/B	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	bowl/jar	1	1	16		base	int glaze	13th to 14th
112	BOUA	A/C	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	jug	1	1	18	applied bows	BS	thick glaze;? ID or ELY	early to mid 13th
112	BOUA	В	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	jar	1	1	17		BS	soot int & ext	late 12th to 14th
112	BOUA	В	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	jar	2	1	45		base	soot	late 12th to 14th
112	BOSTTT		Boston Glazed ware - Toynton type	jug	1	1	15	fe strip dec	BS		13th to 14th
112	BOUA	A/B	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	jar	1	1	5		BS	soot	late 12th to 13th
115	BOUA	A/B	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	?	1	1	8		BS	soot;int dep	late 12th to 13th
115	BOUA	A/B	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	?	1	1	3		base	soot	late 12th to 13th

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context	cname	sub fabric	full name	form type	sherds	vessels	weight	decoration	part	description	and discussion of the	date
202	PEARL		Pearlware	?	1	1	5	transfer ?	base			late 18th to mid 19th
202	PORC		Porcelain	cup?	1	1	36	overglaze & underglaze paint	base			18th to 19th
202	NOTS		Nottingham stoneware	small bowl	_1	1	. 29		profile			18th

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Appendix 3

Assessment of Clay Tobacco Pipe from Site TDSS03

Alan Vince

A clay tobacco pipe was recovered from context 122, the cut of a cistern, on site TDSS03. The pipe has a broken stem but is otherwise in good condition and therefore potentially provides a good guide to the date of construction of the feature.

Description

A clay tobacco pipe bowl and stem. The pipe is heeled with a slightly bulbous bowl. Its general form and size suggest a manufacturing date in the third quarter of the 17th century, c.1660-80. A rouletted band has been applied to the upper part of the bowl, probably as part of the trimming of the bowl rim.

The pipe had been used and has a sooty deposit on the inside of the bowl.

Assessment

The pipe is of a widely-used style and it is unlikely that detailed analysis would conclusively identify the source of the pipe. No further work is therefore recommended.

Appendix 4: Context Summary.

Trench 1

Context	Description
101	Concrete floor
102	Make-up below concrete
103	Cinder layer below 101
104	Victorian make-up layer
105	Make-up layer below 104
106	Fill of pit 107
107	Pit at S end of Trench1
108	Fill of pit 109
109	Large pit
110	Flood deposit
111	Flood deposit
112	Fill of pit 113
113	Pit at S end of trench below 111
114	Upper fill of linear feature 116
115	Lower fill of linear feature 116
116	Linear feature at base of trench
117	Flood deposit
118	Silty lens within flood deposits
119	Flood deposit
120	Brick soakaway
121	Fill of 122
122	Construction trench for 120

Trench 2

Context	Description
200	Modern standing building
201	Concrete floor
202	Make-up layer – same as104