

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:  
SWYNFORD COTTAGE, MOAT LANE,  
OLD BOLINGBROKE,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: TF 3490 6512  
SITE CODE: MLOB04  
ACC. NO.: 2004.90  
Planning ref.: S/018/01335/03

Report prepared for Mr & Mrs Bogg.

by

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May 2004



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EVENT L14957

SOURCE L19384  
L19385

NEGATIVE

CONS  
L19387

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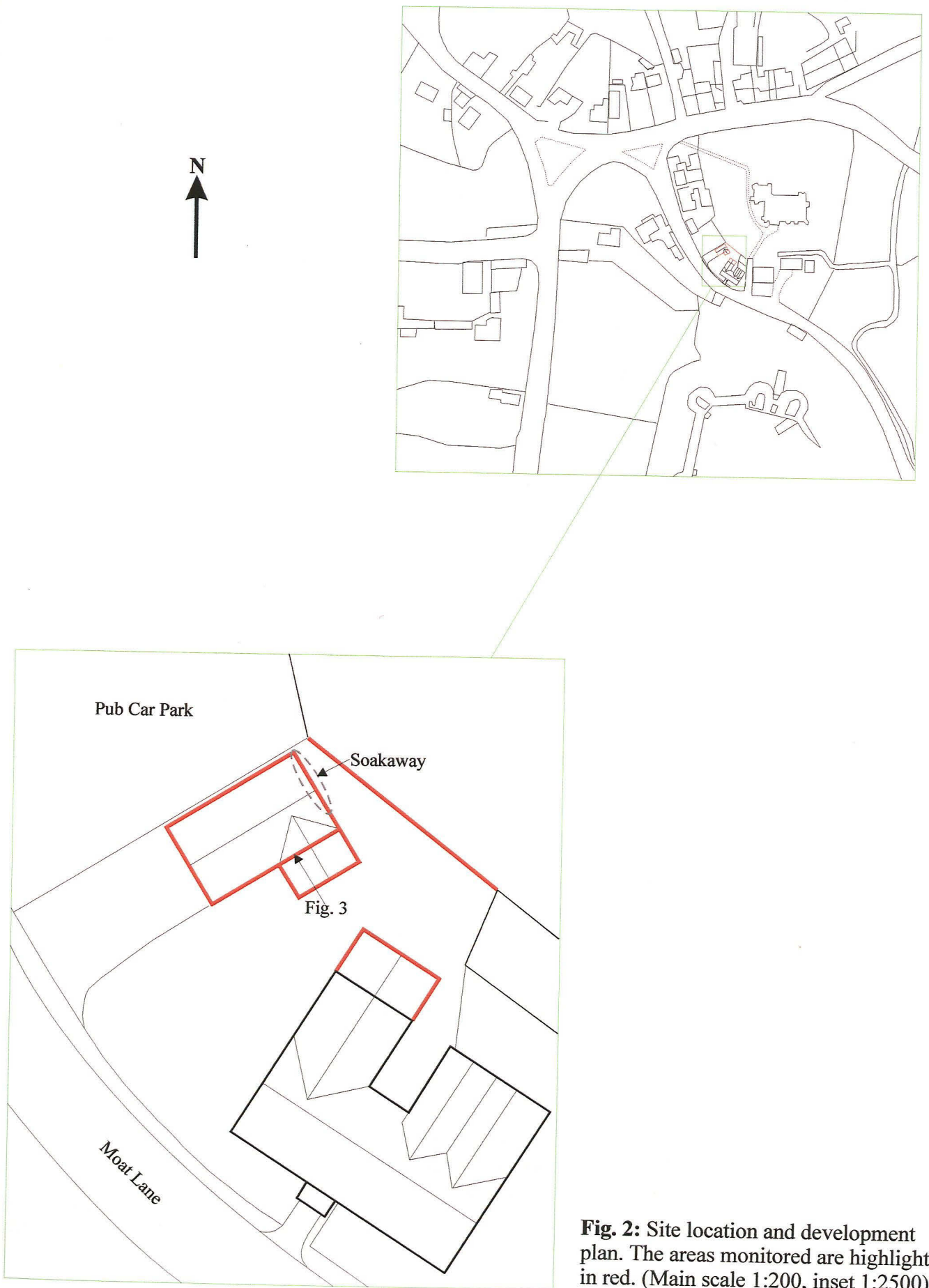
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### Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a house extension and garage on land at Swynford Cottage, Moat Lane, Old Bolingbroke, Lincolnshire.
- The site lies in the traditional medieval core of the village close to the parish church and to Bolingbroke Castle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the birthplace of Henry IV. An important late medieval pottery industry existed in the area.
- Few deposits of archaeological significance were identified; the stratigraphy examined comprised deposits of demolition rubble and post-medieval ground raising/levelling.



**Fig.1: Site Location. (Scale 1:25000)**  
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**Fig. 2:** Site location and development plan. The areas monitored are highlighted in red. (Main scale 1:200, inset 1:2500)

## 1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Mr. & Mrs. Bogg to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for an extension and garage on land at Swynford Cottage, Moat Lane, Old Bolingbroke, Lincolnshire. These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal project brief issued by the Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council, and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This 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, 1999), and the Lincolnshire County Council document, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice* (LCC, 1998).

Copies of this report have been deposited with the commissioning body and the County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long-term storage and curation.

## 2.0 Site location and description

Old Bolingbroke is in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 9km south-east of Horncastle. The village is at the southern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, surrounded by higher ground to the north, west and east, and looks southwards over a gentle incline towards low lying fenland.

The development site is at the core of the village, immediately to the north of Bolingbroke Castle. It lies to the east of Moat Lane, and to the west of the parish church. The extension is attached to the east side of Swynford Cottage, with the garage to the north. The site is at a height of approximately 33m above Ordnance Datum.

The local geology consists of Ancholme Group Jurassic Clay (British Geological Survey, 1995), overlain by Wickham 2 stagnogley (seasonally waterlogged) clayey soils (Hodge et. al., 1984).

Central National Grid Reference TF 3490 6512.

## 3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission was granted to construct an extension to Swynford Cottage and detached garage with store (planning ref. S/018/01335/03). This permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks.

#### 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

There is tentative evidence for the presence of prehistoric occupation in the area: a Neolithic polished stone axe and a scatter of Bronze Age flints are recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for the parish. The southern and central area of the Lincolnshire Wolds contains a significant amount of Neolithic burial activity, in the form of around 60 long barrows, surviving largely as cropmarks detected by aerial photography. These features delineate the marginal zone between the Wolds and the low-lying fenland of the Lincolnshire Marsh (May, 1976).

There is a dearth of activity in the Romano-British period, the closest major settlement being at Horncastle, approximately 9km to the north-west. The Roman road that runs from Lincoln to Burgh-le-Marsh, is approximately 10km to the north.

At the time of the Domesday Survey, Bolingbroke was the centre of a large estate under the ownership of Ivo Tallboys. This estate was 6 leagues long and 6 leagues wide (approximately 18 miles by 18 miles). A total of seventeen separate manors are listed, including twelve churches and six mills. The estate stretched from Revesby in the west to Thorpe St. Peter in the east, and from Raithby in the north to Sibsey in the south (Morgan & Thorne, 1986). As the seat of such a large estate, Bolingbroke would have been endowed with a substantial residence, possibly with an Anglo-Saxon precursor.

Dewy Hill, to the north of the village, has been postulated as being the location of this early settlement. Excavations on the hill revealed a ditched enclosure containing pottery of 12<sup>th</sup> century date, and this phase of building has been linked with William de Roumare, Earl of Lincoln in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century (Thompson, 1974). It is possible that any earlier activity has been masked or destroyed by the construction of this defended enclosure.

Bolingbroke Castle is believed to have been built around 1220-1230. The construction of this monument has been attributed to Ranulph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester and Lincoln (Pevsner & Harris, 1989). The first documentary reference comes from 1232, when the castle passed into the hands of Ranulph's sister, and then, in 1243, it was granted to the crown (Thompson, 1974). By 1311, it was in the possession of the Duchy of Lancaster, and in 1367, Henry of Bolingbroke, later Henry IV, was born in the castle (Mee, 1970).

In 1399, the estates of the Duchy of Lancaster, including Bolingbroke Castle, once again became the property of the crown. The south-west tower was rebuilt 1444-56 in octagonal form, and around the same time a hall was built against the north-east wall. The remains of ancillary service buildings have been excavated against the south wall of the castle (Pevsner & Harris, 1989).

The castle served as a prison in the Tudor period, and then was briefly occupied by a Royalist garrison in the Civil War, which fled following defeat at the nearby battle of Winceby in 1643. The castle was slighted by the Parliamentary forces and gradually fell into disrepair (Thompson, 1974), until archaeological investigation, restoration and conservation measures were taken in the 1980s and 1990s.

Old Bolingbroke was the centre of a late medieval pottery industry, exploiting the readily available supplies of local clay. The SMR lists pottery scatters, dumps of wasters and several kiln sites, including one brick kiln excavated in 1987 within the castle, and a large dump of wasters in the castle ditch.

In 2002, a watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a new house to the west of Moat Lane. This exposed a series of late medieval – post-medieval ground raising/levelling deposits, sealing two large linear features possible related to the water supply of the castle moat (Clay, 2002).

## **5.0 Methodology**

The groundworks were carried out using a JCB, which was fitted with a 0.4m wide toothed bucket for the excavation of a garden wall trench along the east side of the development. The foundations were excavated with a 0.6m wide bucket to depth of c.0.8m, extending to 1.2m where a soakaway from the adjacent public house was exposed.

All plan and section surfaces were examined and intermittently cleaned, to examine the stratigraphic sequence. Where necessary, limited excavation by hand was carried out to establish the profile, orientation, date and function of exposed archaeological features. These features were accurately plotted on a site plan and section drawings were made at a scale of 1:20. 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.

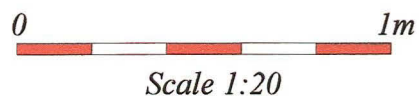
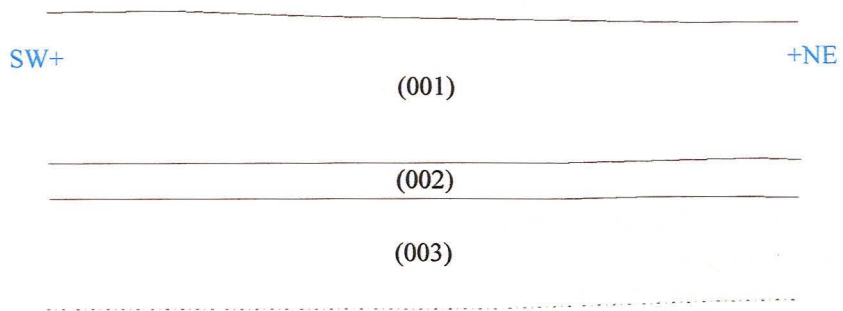
The fieldwork was carried out on Thursday April 1<sup>st</sup> and was monitored at all times by the author.

## **6.0 Results**

The uppermost deposit across the site was a dark brown silty loam with abundant rootlets and fragments of brick and tile, 001. Across most of the site, this deposit was between 0.4 and 0.5m deep. In the garden wall trench it extended to the base of the trench (c.0.7m deep). This is most likely to be because the wall defines the limits of a garden area in the grounds of the adjacent church, where the extensive reworking of the soil by the actions of bushes and trees has formed deeper topsoil. This deposit was interpreted as former topsoil, containing an element of demolition/building rubble.

In the garage plot, the above sealed a 0.1 – 0.2m deep layer of orange/brown clayey sand, containing occasional small fragments of ceramic building material, 002. This did not appear in the foundation trenches for the extension and may represent a layer of ground raising/levelling material. This sealed another possible ground raising/levelling deposit, 003, consisting of brownish grey sandy clay, with occasional small fragments of ceramic building material. This was evident across the whole of the garage plot and the extension, and extended beyond the limit of excavation.





**Fig. 3:** Representative section, garage plot (scale 1:20)

In the north-east corner of the garage plot, the foundations were excavated to c.1.2m deep, in order to remove a large area of gravel in a matrix of black organic silt, representing a soakaway from the adjacent public house.

#### **7.0 Discussion and conclusion**

The deposits exposed in the foundation trenches were of limited archaeological significance, representing episodes of ground raising/levelling and dumping of demolition material. No dating evidence was recovered for this material, although it may be related to similar deposits exposed in the house plot monitored on the opposite side of the road, where pottery of late medieval to post-medieval date was recovered (Clay, 2002).

#### **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the development. The watching brief was able to illustrate that the deposits exposed were of limited archaeological significance, and the small area of ground disturbed by this development has hence had little impact on the archaeological resource.

#### **9.0 Acknowledgements**

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Bogg for this commission, and for their co-operation during the watching brief.

## 10.0 References

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## 11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. 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 2004.90.

APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates



**Pl. 1:** General view of the development area, looking east-south-east



**Pl. 2:** View of the completed groundworks, looking east-south-east



**Pl. 3:** Representative shot of stratigraphic sequence, garage plot, looking north-west

## APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Layer	Topsoil. Deeper along NE edge of development. Contains some building rubble
002	Layer	Possible ground raising deposit. Does not appear in extension footings
003	Layer	Possible ground raising deposit. Appears in both extension and garage footings