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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**Torksey Common
Land Forming Part of the Hume Arms Caravan Park
Torksey, Lincs.**

Archaeological Watching Brief

NGR: SK 8430 7880

Site Code: TTC 05

Accession No.: 2005.12

Planning Application No.: W114/575/95

Reserved Matters MO2/P/1024

Report for

Kinvena Homes

By

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Torksey Common, Land Forming Part of the Hume Arms Caravan Park

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Summary

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks including topsoil stripping, service trenches and excavation of house foundation trenches. No archaeological deposits were revealed, but a single sherd of Charnwood type ware from the mid Saxon period dated between the 5th – 8th century was found north east of the site along the track previously used as a railway embankment.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Kinvena Homes Ltd in February 2005 to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Torksey Common (Fig. 1). The work was carried out in accordance with the general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* published by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council (1998), and with the planning permission granted by West Lindsey District Council. Work was started on 23/05/2005 and completed 01/09/2005.

Site Location and Description

Torksey is located on the eastern bank of the River Trent 20 km west of Lincoln (Fig.1). The near-rectangular plot is located east of the village on the south side of Station Road and the Lincoln Golf Club, alongside the now partially removed and landscaped railway line and embankment and former railway station. The site levels have been changed in recent years because of this landscaping and because of the construction of several small lakes with the excavated contents of the lakes being spread over the remainder of the site. The majority of the site was covered with small trees and bushes until quite recently.

Planning Background

Planning permission was granted in 1999, with reserved matters agreed in 2002, for the construction of twelve houses and garages with associated access road, subject to an archaeological watching brief being carried out (Fig 2, Pls. 1 and 2). The development will be sold as individual plots which means the present project watching brief covered the construction of the access road, the sewer connection which enters the south-west corner of the site and follows the access road, and Plot 1, at the north-east corner of the site.

Archaeological Background

Torksey was an important Anglo-Saxon town which became a burgh before the Norman Conquest. It went into decline when the Foss Dyke silted up in the 13th century. There was a major pre-Conquest

pottery industry in Torksey and late Saxon kilns have been found in the village to the west of the site. The remains of one of the lost medieval abbeys were found to the west of the development site but geophysical survey in 1994 over the development site itself failed to identify any archaeological features. The conclusion was that the ground was affected by modern disturbances. Anglo-Saxon pottery has been found on the north side of the road to the golf club in a field to the east of the site. It was therefore possible that early Saxon occupation could have been present on the development site.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the Watching Brief was to record any archaeological deposits disturbed during groundworks at the above site.

Method

All earthmoving operations (topsoil stripping of the site, access road, sewer connections and the excavation of the house foundation trenches) were observed by an experienced archaeologist. Archaeological features were to be excavated and drawn where appropriate, depending upon safe access. A full photographic record was made of the works on site. Because of the problems in recording deep trenches, the sewer trenches were excavated to a depth of approximately 1m and recorded, before further machining to the full depth (2.4m) and the insertion of metal box shoring.

Results

The Access Road and Sewer Connections

The access road was stripped to a depth of 0.3m whilst the sewer connections went 2.4m below the current ground surface (Pls. 3-7). The topsoil, layer **001**, was 0.27m thick, a dark grey brown compact silt sand containing modern rubbish, and overlying a grey brown sand subsoil layer, **003**, 0.15m thick maximum. Beneath **003** was either gritty orange sand with mottling or yellow sand, **002**, which represent the natural. Several fragments of modern and Victorian pottery sherds collected from the topsoil were discarded after processing.

House Plot 1

Area stripping

The area of the house and garage was levelled using a 360 type excavator, reducing the height by up to 0.3m (Pl. 8). This operation removed the majority of a re-deposited material, **004**, and the topsoil from most of the site but at the same time showed that the south east corner of the site had been raised by up to 0.4m, probably several years ago when the small lake to the east of the house plot was created. At this point natural sand was seen over the majority of the area with no sign of any archaeological features.

Excavation of Foundation trenches

The foundation trenches for the house and garage were excavated to a depth of between 0.7m and 0.9m beneath the newly created ground level (Pls 9-13). In the south east corner of the plot a dirty grey brown mixed sand **004** overlaid the topsoil, **001**, to a depth of up to 0.5m. Topsoil, **001**, overlaid

the same subsoil layer, **003**, seen elsewhere, which in turn sealed the yellow sand natural, **002**. No archaeological features or layers were apparent in any of the foundation trenches.

Other Finds

A single piece of Saxon pottery was found on the access road east of the development site which was on the verge and must have been disturbed during construction of the railway (now removed).

Evidence for the station platform was revealed along the northern site boundary during preliminary site clearance.

Conclusion

The lack of archaeological features suggests that if archaeological activity was occurring on site it was destroyed prior to the present development of the land but there is probably a genuine absence of activity in this area despite the stray find of Saxon pottery.

Mick McDaid and Doug Young.
Lindsey Archaeological Services
September 2005

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank Kinvena Homes for their help. The fieldwork was carried out by Naomi Field, Mike Garrett, and Doug Young. This report was edited by Naomi Field and collated by Doug Young.

Site Archive

Context sheets

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Sections

Correspondence

Photographs: LAS film nos. 05/89/1-10; 05/62/11-15, 25-29, 05/92/ 1-3, 05/103.

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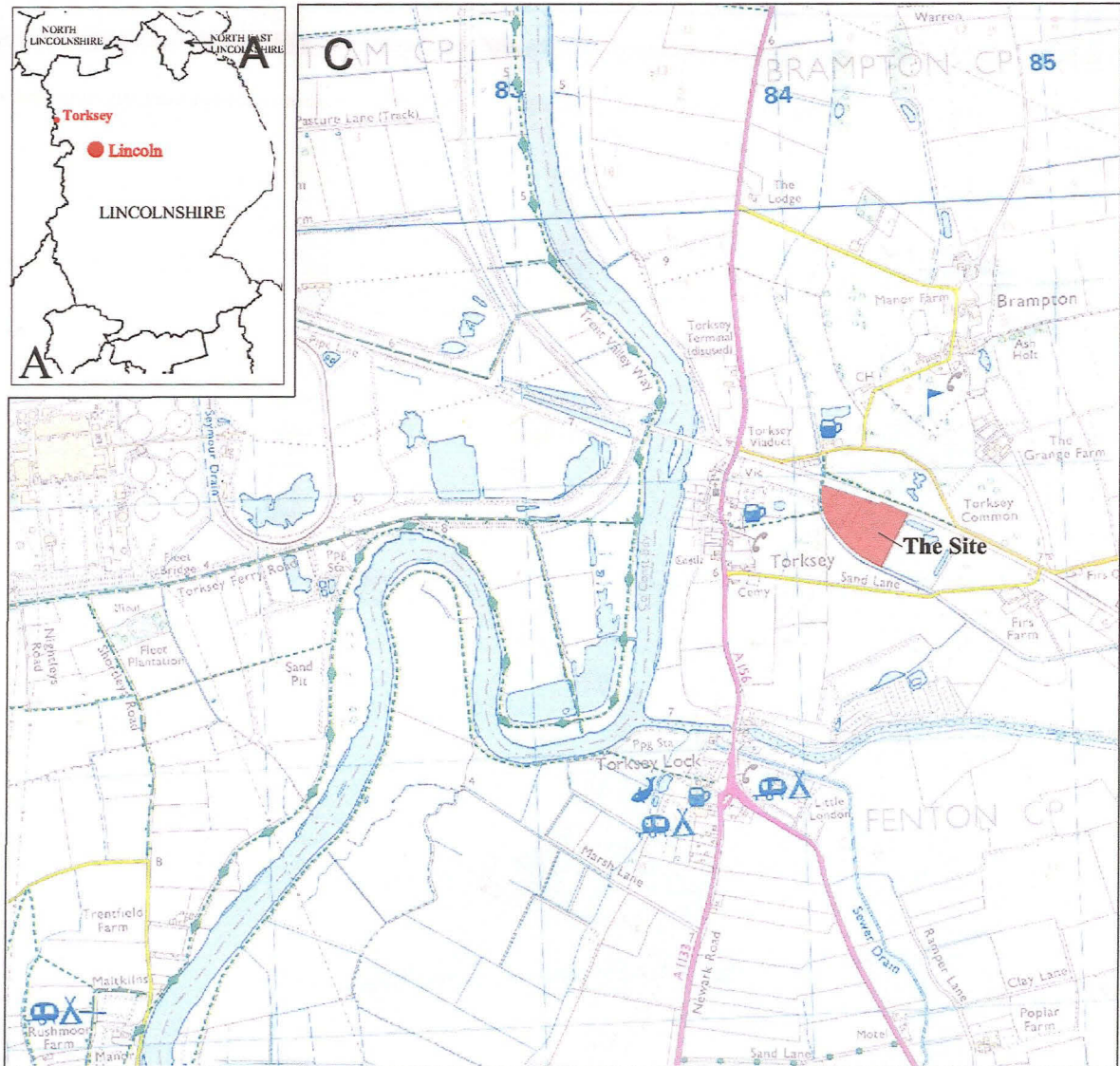
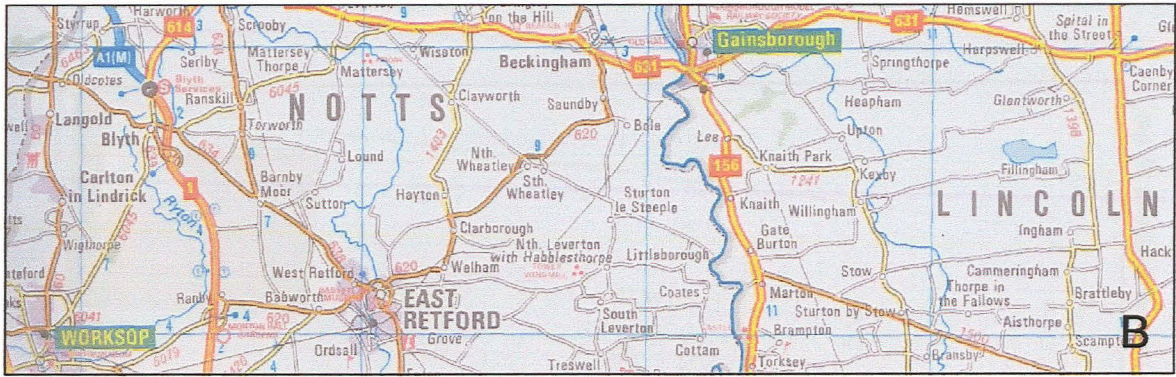


Fig. 1 Location of Torksey Common, Torksey (C based on the 2000, 1:25 000 Ordnance Survey map, Explorer 271, Crown copyright, reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 10002165).

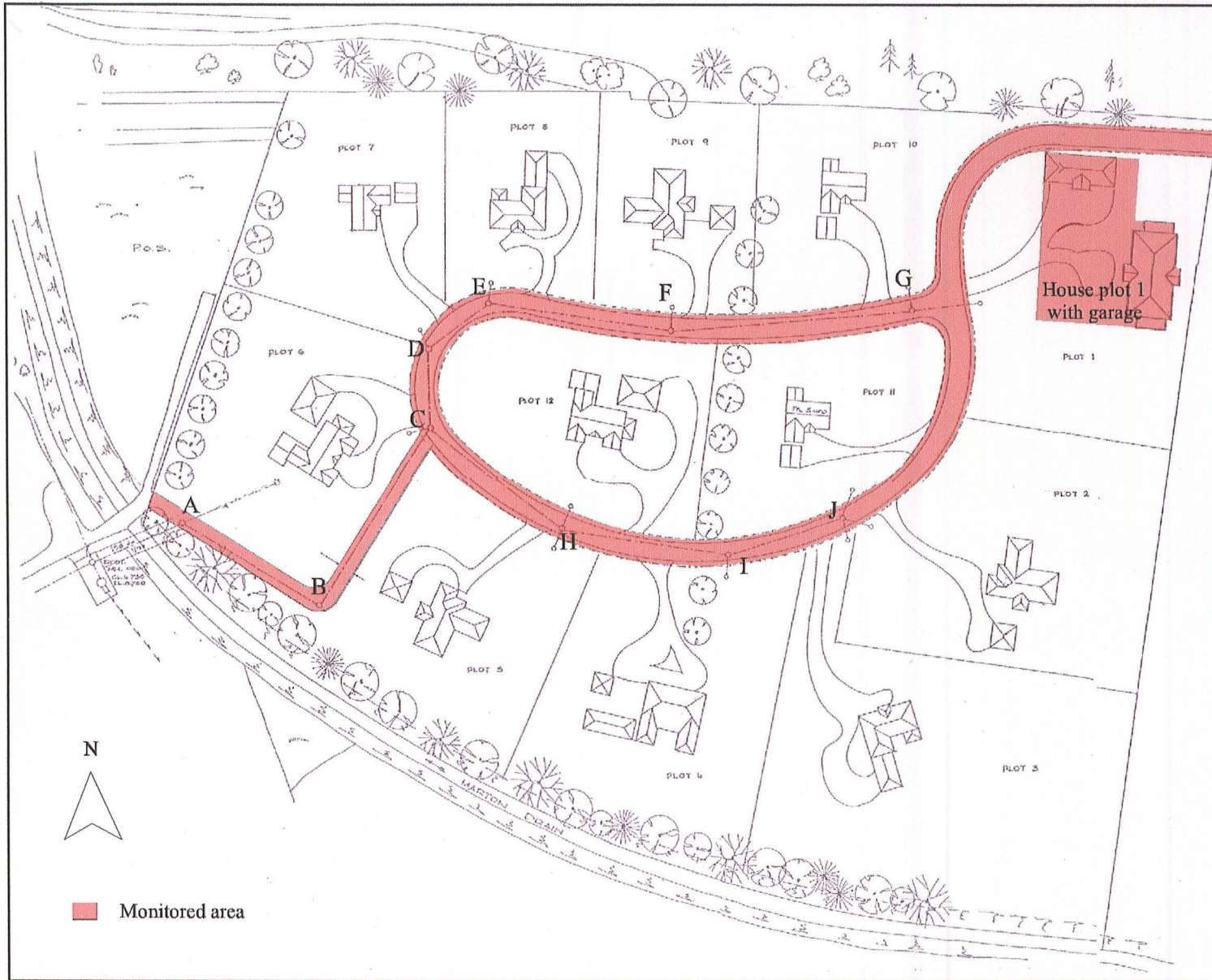


Fig. 2 Plan of the development site giving the positions of roads, drainage trenches and plot 1 (taken from a drawing supplied by the client).

THE PLATES



PI. 1 General view of the development site(looking west).



PI. 2 General view of the site from inside the entrance (looking west).



PI. 3 Stripping for the construction of the road with the steel box shoring inserted into the drainage trench.



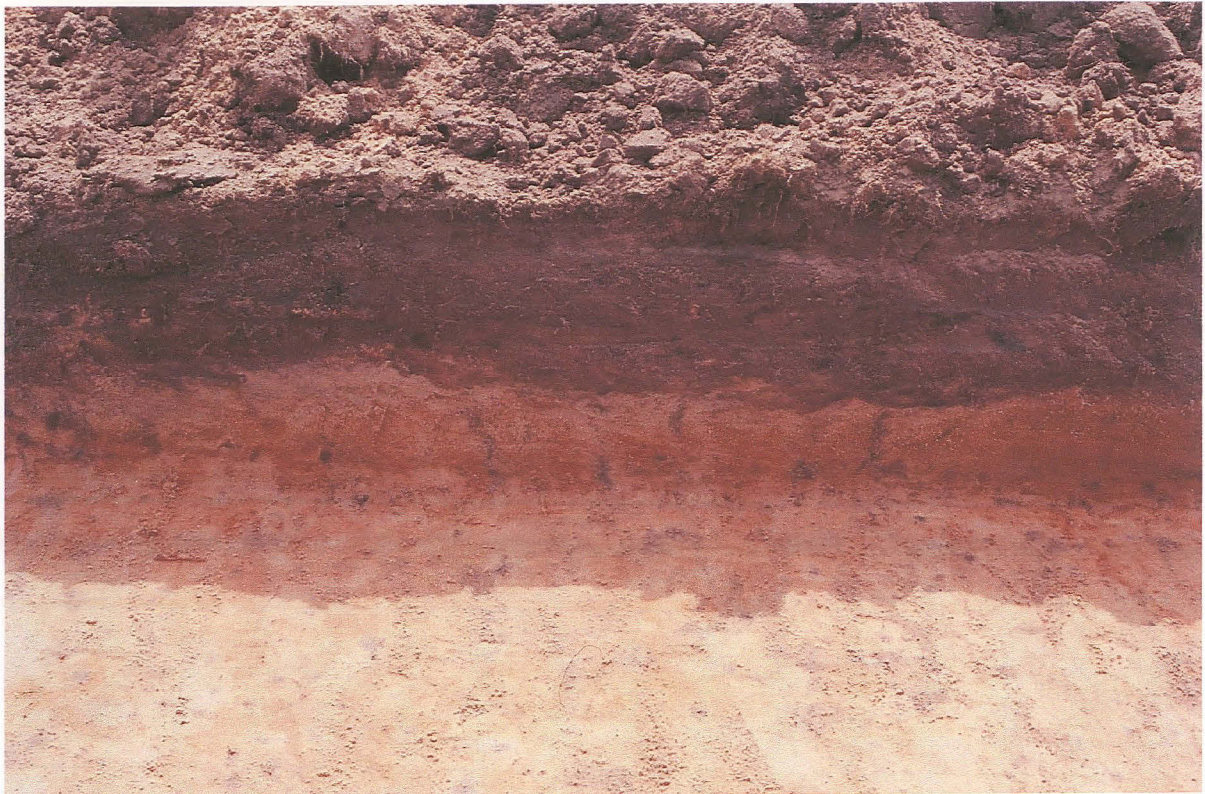
PI. 4 A section of the drains excavation trench between points A and B (see Fig. 2).



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PI. 7 Detail of the drains excavation trench between points D and E (see Fig. 2)



PI. 8 House plot 1 during the area stripping and prior to the machining of the foundation trenches.



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PI. 12 The foundation trenches of the garage being machined.



PI. 13 The detail of the northern foundation trench of the garage showing the topsoil and subsoil with the banked material above.