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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

**DRAYTON MOTORS, DRAYTON,
SWINESHEAD**

LINCOLNSHIRE



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY (Lincoln)

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DRAYTON MOTORS, SWINESHEAD

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

FOR

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1.0 Non-Technical Summary

A planning application was submitted to Boston Borough Council which sought permission for the erection of a car showroom at Drayton Motors, Drayton, Swineshead (Fig. 1). A condition, requiring a programme of archaeological observation and recording to take place during earth-removal, was issued by the planning authority.

A two-day recording brief identified a series of features dating to the post-medieval/modern periods - the site was occupied by brick structures.

2.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place on May 22nd and again on October 3rd, 1995 on the site of a commercial development (Fig.'s 1 and 2). These works were commissioned by Mr J Wright of Drayton Motors, Drayton, Swineshead, and were centred on a project specification submitted to the Client and the Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council.

Data contained as part of the County Sites and Monuments Record and records held by the Community Archaeologist suggested the archaeological significance of the site was potentially high, with the greatest appraised potential being for the Roman period.

Remains dating within the Romano-British period were not exposed on this occasion, though stratified and unstratified finds were removed from contexts dating between the C16th and C18th.

The central national grid reference is TF 2435 3935.



Fig. 1 Site location

3.0 Planning background

Mr J Wright of Drayton Motors, Swineshead, applied for full planning permission to construct a new garage showroom on a vacant strip of land situated immediately to the west of an existing workshop and showroom (Fig. 2). The site is situated on the south side of The Drayton, an east-west road which links Swineshead/Drayton with the A52.

Planning permission was granted, subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief. A project brief, outlining the scope of the archaeological requirement, was issued by the Community Archaeologist for Boston and a project specification was prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln).

4.0 Geology and topography

The site lies immediately south of the village of Swineshead and is situated within an adjoining cluster of buildings known as Drayton. The land is characteristically flat, lying at a point approximately 3.0m OD. Drayton and Swineshead lie in the silt Fens of South Lincolnshire.

The infilling of the Fen basin since the retreat of the last ice sheets, approximately 10,000 years ago, has been sporadic, fluctuatory and subject to the influences of a complex set of palaeogeographic, riverine and marine variables (Lane, 1993). The Pre-Flandrian land surface lies, in many instances, beneath thick beds of marine silt and alluvium, with intermittent peat horizons indicative of drier phases. There have been successive phases of marine transgression and regression following an initial rise in sea level after the last glaciation, and each of these phases has left its own mark in the geological record. However, the timing of individual events, and the extent to which these events were physically expressed is a matter of some debate and falls beyond the scope of this report.

Attempts to drain land within the Fens have taken place since at least the Roman and medieval periods, though the major effort came during the 17th and 18th centuries (Robinson, 1993). Not until the early 19th century, however, were the Lincolnshire Fens completely drained.

Prior to development taking place, a dark silty topsoil was present over most of the site. This measured 20cm - 30cm in depth and sealed the top of a deep alluvial build-up; indicative of periodic flooding which preceded the major attempts at draining the Fens.

5.0 Archaeological and historical background

There have been few finds of prehistoric date recovered from the area now known as Swineshead, though early fen sites do, in some places, lie masked beneath substantial beds of post-glacial marine and fresh water silt.

By the end of the C1st BC, the fen basin appears to have been considerably drier than it was in earlier times (Simmons 1993). Occupation deep within the Fens may have been possible for the first time; corresponding (broadly) with a phase when the Emperor Hadrian (AD117 - 138) was encouraging the settlement of inhospitable areas, with the promise of rent-free land for five years (Whitwell 1992).

The nature of Romano-British occupation in the Fens (as defined by archaeology) was of a different character to that associated with other parts of the region: there is little evidence of towns or villas, or of a military presence or extensive road systems; and there is also no (archaeological) evidence of widespread cereal farming, despite claims made by some historians (Simmons 1993).

It may be that salt procurement, processing and trade was a major stimulus behind an apparent increase in settlement density during the Roman period. Salt production in the Fens, which was also of major importance during the preceding Iron Age, appears to have continued throughout much of the Roman period, as it did in the post-Roman era.

Salt-making material and Romano-British pottery was recorded at Coney Hill, west of the present development. Pottery of a similar date has been reported from land directly to the rear of the present development, though a cultural context for this material has not been defined. There existed a possibility, therefore, that important deposits and finds would be exposed during construction trenching for the new garage showroom.

6.0 Aims

The principal aims of the watching brief were to ensure that any archaeological features or artefactual remains exposed or retrieved during groundworks were recorded and interpreted to standards accepted by the Community Archaeologist for Boston. A project Specification, based around these objectives, was jointly agreed between Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), the Community Archaeologist and the Client.

7.0 Methodology

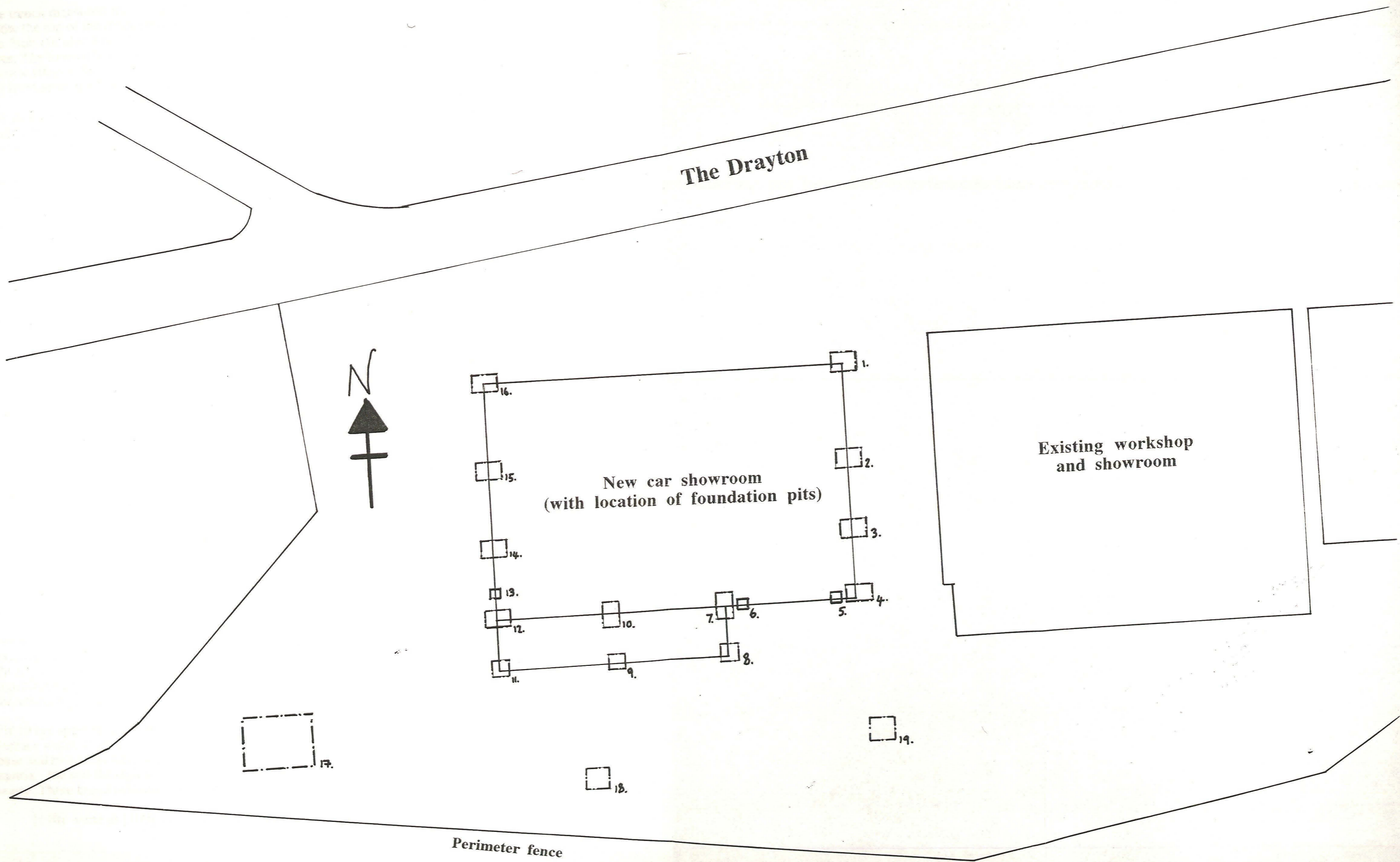
The foundation footprint was marked-out in advance of construction trenching. A vegetation layer and the upper topsoil was also stripped in advance. Sixteen foundation pits were then excavated, usually to a depth of c. 0.5m. Subsequent to basic construction, three further pits were excavated on the south side of the new building: for sewage and water run-off.

The bases and sides of the construction pits were cleaned and inspected for intrusive archaeological features. For the most part, the pits appeared archaeologically sterile, though post-medieval and modern deposits were truncated in at least four areas.

The written record was entered on standard watching brief daily log sheets. Artefacts (stratified and unstratified) were collected and subsequently processed and submitted for specialist appraisal (Appendix 1). Colour photographs were taken and features were planned and/or drawn in section at scale 1:20.

Recording and excavation was undertaken by Simon Johnson and Colin Palmer-Brown.

Fig. 2 1:200 site plan, incorporating location of foundation, drainage and sewerage pits



8.0 Results

8.1 Foundation pit 1 (Fig. 3)

The trench measured approximately 1.9m x 1.6m in plan and was excavated approximately 50cm below the top of the (truncated) ground surface. In the base of the cutting was the north-west sector of a ?sub-circular, brick-lined feature [103], which lay largely beyond the south and east section faces. The lining [105] was made from small, hand-made, bricks, each measuring approximately 20cm x 10cm x 5cm; of these, at least three courses were removed during machining (courses above this level appeared to have been removed/robbed in antiquity).

The inside of the structure, which may have been a well of some size, was filled with dark brown sandy (?humic) silt, [104] mixed with ash and coal fragments. It contained pottery sherds which have been dated between the early and late C18th.

The ?well was cut through deposits of mottled, possibly disturbed, sandy silt [101].

8.2 Foundation pit 12 (Fig. 4)

Approximately 22.0m south-west of the above, a second brick-lined structure was exposed in the sides and base of Pit 12. The brickwork, [108] which showed traces of robbing in the modern period, was L-shaped in plan; extending from the south and east section faces. At least six courses could be seen in section, where the bricks were tightly butted against the edge of a vertical cut, [107]. The feature had cut through the same silt-based horizon exposed in Pit 1.

Contained within the brick lining were deposits of clean and dirty silt-based soils, mixed with coal, charcoal and brick fragments, [106]. It is suggested the structure was a cellar and that it was filled-in when an associated superstructure was destroyed. Pottery recovered from the fill has been dated between the mid-C16th and late C17th.

8.3 Foundation pit 15 (Fig. 5)

A large earth-cut feature was exposed in the sides of Pit 15, approximately 7.5m north of Pit 12. Considerable quantities of animal bone were brought to the surface during the excavation of the cutting, which was subsequently cleaned and inspected. A wide, shallow feature, [114], was exposed in the north, east and south section faces. It was sealed by the topsoil, [100], and was cut through deposits of clean, natural fen silt, [115] to a depth c. 45cm beneath the top of the (truncated) ground surface, and had been purposely backfilled with a mixture of clean silt and topsoil-like material, [113]. In the base of the feature were the ?articulated bones of a large animal; a horse or possibly a cow. No pottery was recovered from this context, though the excavator suggested the feature was probably late post-medieval in date.

8.4 Soakaway pit 19 (Fig. 6)

Following the erection of the new showroom, the site was again inspected during and following the excavation of three cuttings on the south side of the new building; Pits 17, 18 and 19. One of these, Pit 17, was too deep and dangerous to enter, though superficial inspection suggested it was devoid of significant deposits: another, Pit 18, had been excavated and largely backfilled and could not, therefore, be adequately monitored for archaeological remains.

Pit 19 lay approximately 9.0m south-east of the new building and was dug as a soakaway; to remove surface water. It measured approximately 1.1m x 1.0m in plan and was excavated to c. 1.0m. Its base and two of its sides were thoroughly cleaned, as it appeared to lie within a distinctly cultural matrix - the soil through which it had been cut was dark, mixed and (relatively) littered with cultural waste. Three broad horizons were identified in the east and south section faces:-

[110]: same as [100]; compact dark brown sandy silt containing flecks of charcoal, coal

fragments, tile, brick and plaster - modern truncated topsoil, c. 25cm in depth.

[111]: up to c. 20cm of mixed greyish-brown sandy silt, intermingled with cleaner sandy silt; occasional flecks of charcoal and coal

[112]; more than 60cm of light brown sandy silt mixed with darker areas; it contained a small - moderate quantity of small limestone fragments, occasional brick fragments and pottery sherds; the pottery has been dated between the early and late C17th.

It is suggested that [111] and [112] were the internal fills of a feature (?pit), the edges of which lay beyond the sides of the soakaway pit associated with the new garage showroom.

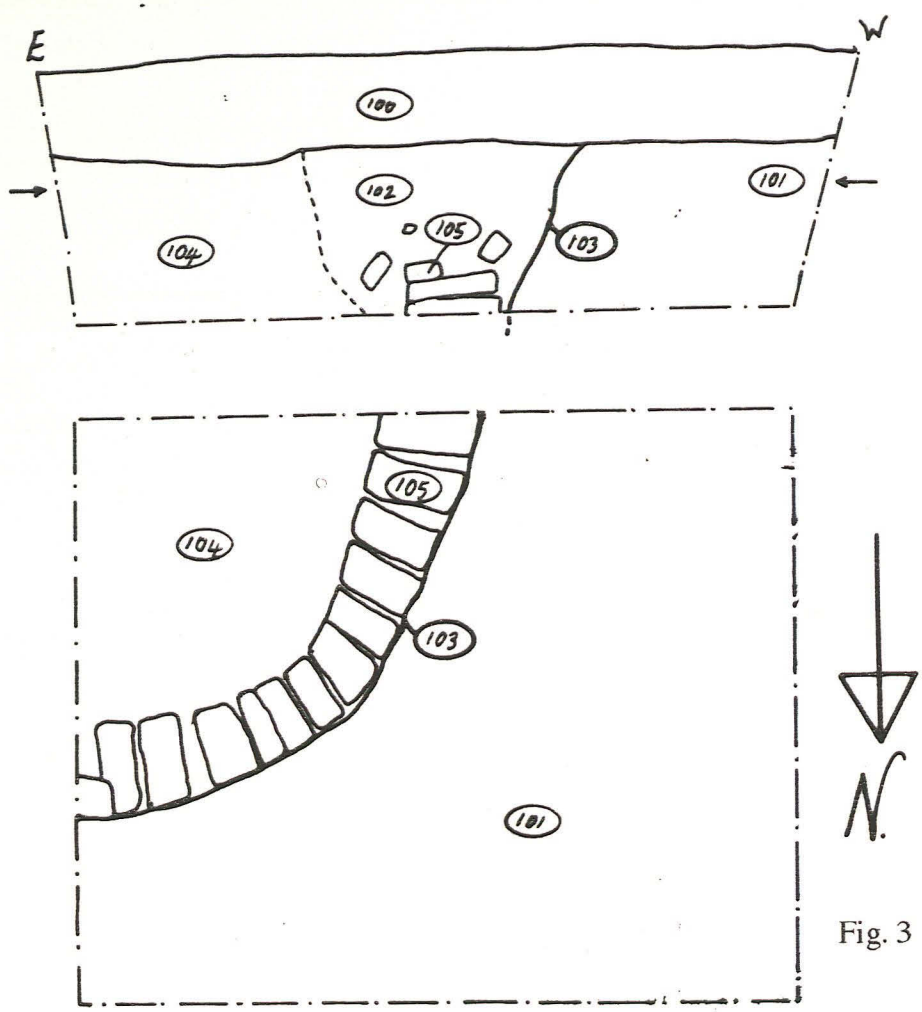


Fig. 3 Features exposed in plan and south section face of foundation pit 1

Scale = 1:20

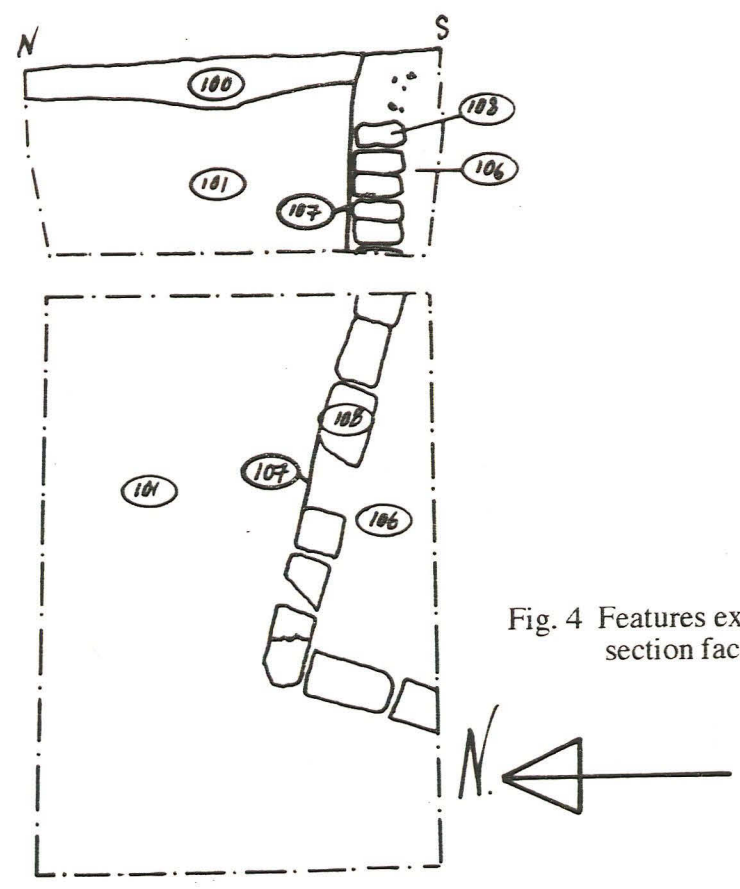


Fig. 4 Features exposed in plan and east section face of foundation pit 12

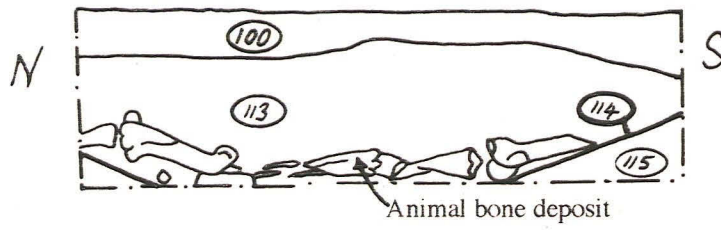
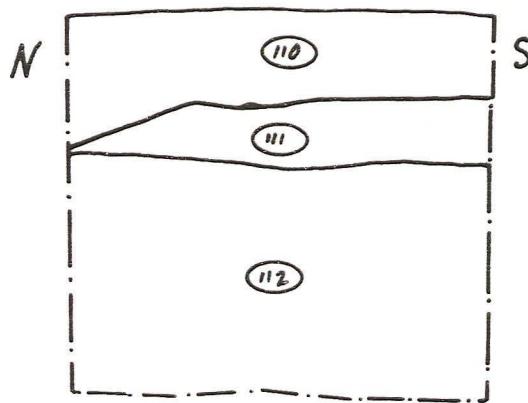


Fig. 5 East section face, foundation pit 15



Scale = 1:20

Fig. 6 East section face, soakaway pit; 19

9.0 Summary and conclusions.

The watching brief results suggest that the site was occupied by brick buildings in the C17th and later. The evidence takes the form of two brick-lined features (possibly a well and backfilled cellar), as well as pits and a topsoil containing numerous brick/tile fragments.

No Romano-British features or artefacts were identified during the brief - a surprising situation, given the proximity of known resources.

Informal discussions with the site owner indicate that the site was occupied by farm buildings into the latter part of the present century. The modern Ordnance Survey sheet, which pre-dates the construction of the existing garage range, would appear to confirm this (Fig. 1).

10.0 Acknowledgements

On behalf of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), thanks are expressed to the commissioning client, Mr J Wright of Drayton Motors. Thanks also to Jane Young (City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit) for pottery assessment.

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Pottery archive by Jane Young (CLAU recording system)

11.2 Colour photographs

11.3 Site Archive

11.4 References

11.5 Relevant extracts from the County Sites and Monuments Record

Appendix 11.1

POST-ROMAN POTTERY ARCHIVE: DMS95 WARE TYPES BY CONTEXT

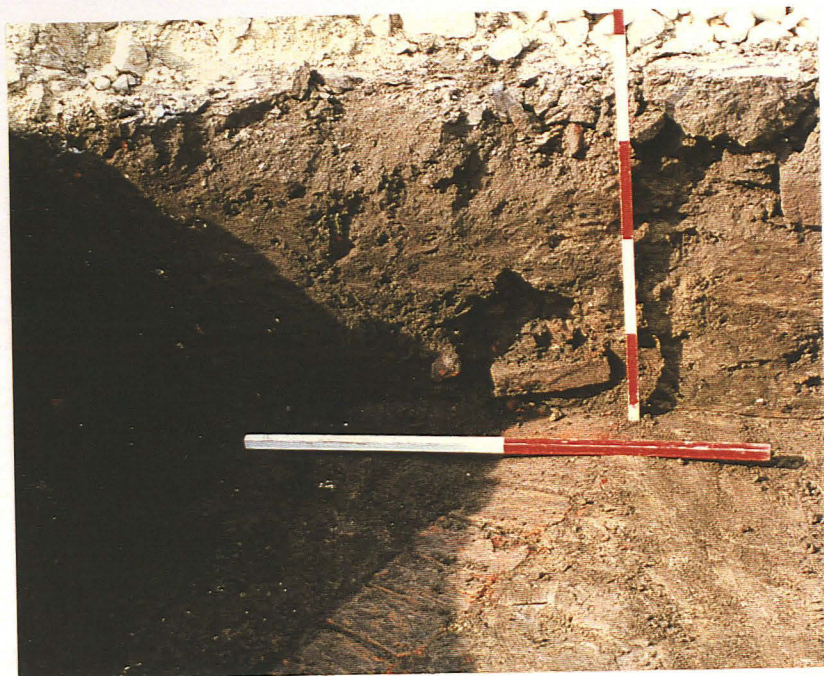
Context	Ware	Sherds	Form	Comments
104	BL	1	-	DIFF VESS ?
104	BL	3	-	STAFFS;SLIPPED
104	WS	1	-	-
106	BOU	1	JAR/JUG	-
106	GRE	2	JAR/JUG?	SV;BASE
112	BL	1	-	INT GLZE
112	BL	1	JAR	RIM
112	LSW1/2	1	JUG	? ID
112	TB	1	BOWL	RIM
U/S	BL	1	BOWL?	BASE
U/S	BL	1	JAR	-
U/S	BL	1	JAR	RIM
U/S	TB	1	PANCHEON	RIM
U/S	TGE	1	DISH	RIM;BL/W DEC

DATING

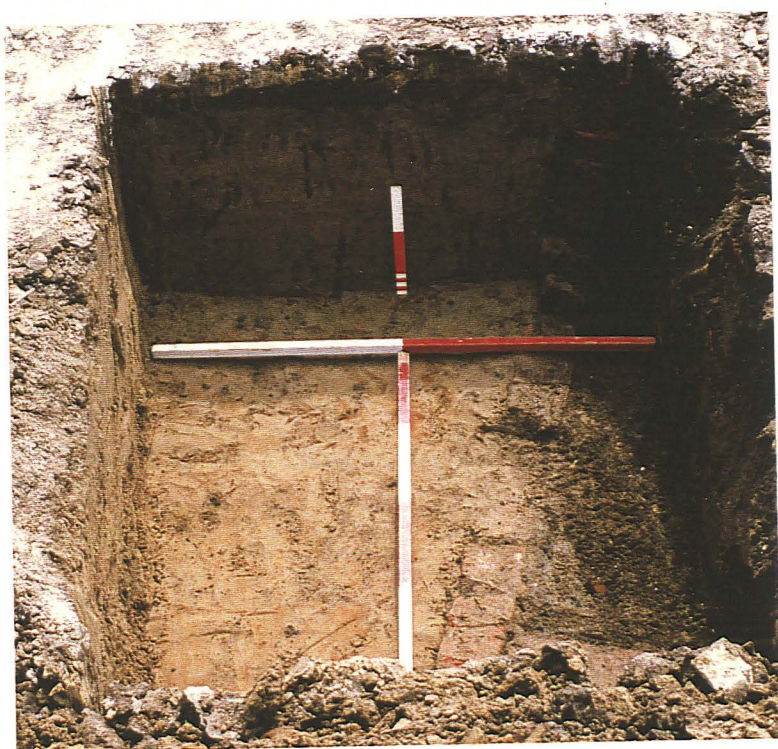
Context	Earliest horizon	Latest horizon	Date
104	PMH8	PMH9	EARLY 18TH TO LATE 18TH CENTURY
106	PMH3	PMH5	MID/LATE 16TH TO MID/LATE 17TH CENTURY
112	PMH4	PMH6	EARLY TO LATE 17TH CENTURY

With the exception of context 104 a good date for the rest of the material would be the mid to late 17th century.

11.2 Colour Photographs



P1 Brick-lined feature [103],
Pit 1, looking south



P2 Brick-lined feature [107],
Pit 12, looking east



P3 Feature [114] with animal bone deposit in base; Pit 15, looking east

11.3 Site Archives

The basic site archive comprises the following elements:

x3 watching brief record sheets

x2 colour print films

x1 (composite) 1:20 plan/sections

x3 bags of finds

Misc. notes and correspondence.

Primary records are currently with Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), though the paper and physical archive will be deposited with the City and County Museum within 1 year of completion of this report, together with a more detailed archive list.

11.4 References

Lane, T 1993 *East Anglian Archaeology* No. 66

Robinson, D 1993 in Bennett & Bennett (Eds) *An Historical Atlas of Lincolnshire*; 8 - 9

Simmons, BB 1993 in Bennett & Bennett (Eds) *An Historical Atlas of Lincolnshire*; 18 - 21

Whitwell, JB 1992 *Roman Lincolnshire* (Revised edition)

11.5 Information derived from the Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) and records held by the Boston Community Archaeologist

Site grid ref.	SMR ref.	HTL ref.	Description
TF 22804150	12574	??	Flint scraper (Neolithic) in imported gravel?, 1976
TF 23114182	12570	19/030	Neolithic polished stone axe, found 1954
TF 23224211	12569	19/024	Bronze Age (?socketed) axe, found March, 1957. Also, Roman + medieval pottery
TF 23204210	12568	19/023	Scatter of Romano-British pottery discovered by Mr Frankish (now departed). Find spot = Creasey Plot
TF 23204210	12589	??	Medieval faceted pipkin handle
TF 242395	(P) - map	??	Large concentration of medieval pottery + occasional sherds of Romano-British and saltern material (??)
TF 1231231398	(N) - map	??	Scatter of Stamford ware pottery + Bourne type, Toynton, ?Saxo-Norman pot + bronze spoon
TF 236406	(P) - map	19/04	Complete medieval jug; brown glazed, green splashes
TF 24753965	(D) - map	??	Human remains; associated C16th/C17th pottery, tile, mould fragments. Site of St Adrian's Chapel (EMAB (1965), 27)
TF 223410	??	19/001	Soil marks (recorded on aerial photographs, CUCAP 1975); rectangular + linear - probably settlement enclosure and associated fields
TF 23754020	??	19/006	St Mary's Church
TF 221433	??	19/031	Romano-British grey ware pottery, colour coat + Samian ware
TF 229422 clearing- ancient	12590	19/032	Romano-British pottery: reported after out of the New Hammond Beck. Appears to have derived from a marked geological division between clay and silt and is possibly the course of the River Witham
TF 235408	??	19/040	Human skeleton associated with C14th/C15th pottery. Found 4 feet beneath modern ground surface in sewer trench
TF 23204125	??	19/041	Possible pit discovered during watching brief; no associated finds
TF 23114240	??	19/043	Negative watching brief result

TF 226417	??	19//044	Pit-like feature; burnt deposits, pottery, bone (?x1 Potterhanworth-type sherd + 2 earlier fragments). Watching brief
TF 236407	??	19/045	Timber-framed mud and stud cottage destroyed. Medieval pottery found. ?Watching brief/survey.
TF 231399			Estevening Hall (site of)
TF 225420			Hardwick Grange (close to Old Hammond Beck)