

97/12

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

76A Eastgate, Louth, Lincolnshire

Site Code: EGL 97
LCNCC Acc No. 237.97
NGR: TF 32945 87420
Planning Ref. n/105/0191/97

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

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Report prepared for Stuart Grant (Building Surveyor) by James Albone
October 1997

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Summary

- * *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of an extension to Secrets Nightclub, 76A Eastgate, Louth, Lincolnshire. (TF32945 87420).*
- * *A series of undated and post-medieval deposits, including the remains of a baked clay surface, were exposed, though time constraints and other difficulties prevented detailed archaeological intervention.*
- * *A small quantity of post-medieval and two unstratified sherd of medieval pottery, were also recovered.*



Fig. 1: Site location incorporating principal entries from the County Sites & Monuments Record (1:10,000)
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1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) during the construction of an extension to Secrets Nightclub, 76A Eastgate Louth for J S Grant (Building Surveyor). The work was carried out in accordance with the Lincolnshire County Council 'Standard Brief for Archaeological Projects in Lincolnshire' and to fulfil a planning requirement issued by East Lindsey District Council.

Copies of this report, with an ordered project archive, will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln and with the local planning authority. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, effectively placing the information in the public domain.

2.0 Location and description

Louth is located in the East Lindsey district of Lincolnshire at the eastern edge of the chalk Wolds. It lies on post-glacial deposits, mainly boulder clay, between 25m. and 30m. OD. The development is located in the town centre, to the rear of 76A Eastgate at NGR TF 32945 87420.

3.0 Purpose and methods

As with many developments which lie close to the historic cores of towns, there existed a potential for the disturbance or destruction of archaeological deposits during the construction of the extension to the nightclub. This was supported by entries within the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

The level of recording considered to be appropriate on this occasion was an archaeological watching brief:

'An archaeological watching brief is defined as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during the destruction of archaeological deposits, resulting in the preparation of a report and ordered archive' (IFA, 1994 Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs)

The excavation of foundation trenches was carried out using an excavator fitted with a back actor and 0.65m. wide toothed bucket. In general, trenches were excavated to a depth of c.1m. below the modern ground surface.

A wide range of problems were encountered during the watching brief. A dumped sand-silt [104] which covered the south part of the site was very loose and did not result in stable section faces for recording purposes (Plate 1.). The only stable section was on the west side, where this remained capped by a concrete yard surface [100]. The use of a backhoe excavator in the small space remaining in the yard (5-7m. x 12m.) presented further problems as all work was being carried out over the top of the western trench, making recording virtually impossible (at the building inspectors

request, the internal and west wall trenches were excavated to a greater depth immediately prior to the arrival of concrete). No recording was possible whilst this work was in progress and, by the time it was completed, only a partial section drawing was possible in advance of concreting. This resulted in superficial recording of the stratigraphic sequence with no time to obtain dating and environmental evidence.

4.0 Archaeological and Historic Background

The place-name Louth is derived from the River Lud which flows through it (Ekwall 1989, 305). The origins of the town can be traced back as far as the Anglo-Saxon period. It is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that, in the year 790 AD, Abbot Aethelheard of a monastery at Louth (*Hludensis monasterium*) was elected Archbishop of Canterbury (Ibid. ~~2~~ Garmonsway 1992, 54).

A small quantity of Anglo-Saxon pottery associated with pits was recovered from the site of the Marquis of Granby public house on Eastgate, close to the current development.

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Louth (*Ludes*) had a market and was held by the Bishop of Lincoln (Morris 1986, 7,56). During the medieval period Louth prospered, its wealth coming from the wool and cloth trades. The archaeological evidence for this period is sparse, though building remains have been discovered in Eastgate and burials in Upgate.

During the early 1930's the site was an iron foundry. Morton, Son and Lock had their shop at 76 Eastgate with the foundry, off Queen Street, in the yard behind (Kelly's 1933, 410). In 1892, the shops at 74-76 Eastgate belonged to Thomas Isaac Burton, a bookseller. 17 Queen Street, which also backs onto the site, belonged to William Samuel Dennis, a joiner and cabinet maker, and it is possible that the yard was in his use (Kelly's 1892, 345).

5.0 Results

The existing surface of the site consisted mainly of modern concrete, brick and underlying hardcore [100A]. A small area along the south boundary was covered with light brown sand-silt containing rubble [100B]. Below these were further modern deposits. The north part of the site was covered by dark grey silt-clay [105A]. This deposit contained modern pottery, brick and stone fragments and was within a straight sided cut [105B]. Cut by this, and extending over the rest of the site, was a loose sand-silt containing abundant brick, stone rubble and 20th century pottery [104A]. This deposit represents dumping to raise or level the ground surface. It filled a previously existing hollow [104B]. Contained within, and occasionally at the base of, [104] was an intermittent layer of chalk rubble [111]. The variation in the position of this layer within [104] suggested that it represented 'tip lines' in the dumped deposit.

A right angled section of brick wall [108], possibly relating to the site's use as a foundry, had been built into the top of [104]. A small pit [110], 0.4m across x 0.4m. deep, was also cut into the top of [104] at the south side of the site. The fill of this [109] contained modern pottery and oyster shell. At the base of [104], in the south east corner of the site and adjacent to wall [107], were the remains of a brick built open drain [106].

Below the modern cuts [104B] and [105B] a dark grey-brown clay [112] extended across all of the site. It contained 16th to early 17th century pottery. Animal bones and cockle and oyster shells were also found but were not retained. Deposits below this layer were only visible in the western section. A lens of chalk rubble [113] was between [112] and another clay layer [114]. This clay was medium grey in colour and contained small brick/tile fragments. A single, unstratified, sherd of medieval pottery may have derived from this layer. Below this was a layer of, apparently burnt, red-brown clay [115] overlying a thin layer of black, organic-rich, clay [116A]. It is likely that both of these deposits related to fragments of a pink-red baked clay surface which was underlying them [116B], (as already stated, time constraints prevented detailed recording and sampling of these deposits). Underlying the clay surface was a dark grey silt-clay [117] and a yellow silt-sand containing limestone fragments [118]. It is impossible to be certain whether these deposits were archaeological or natural.

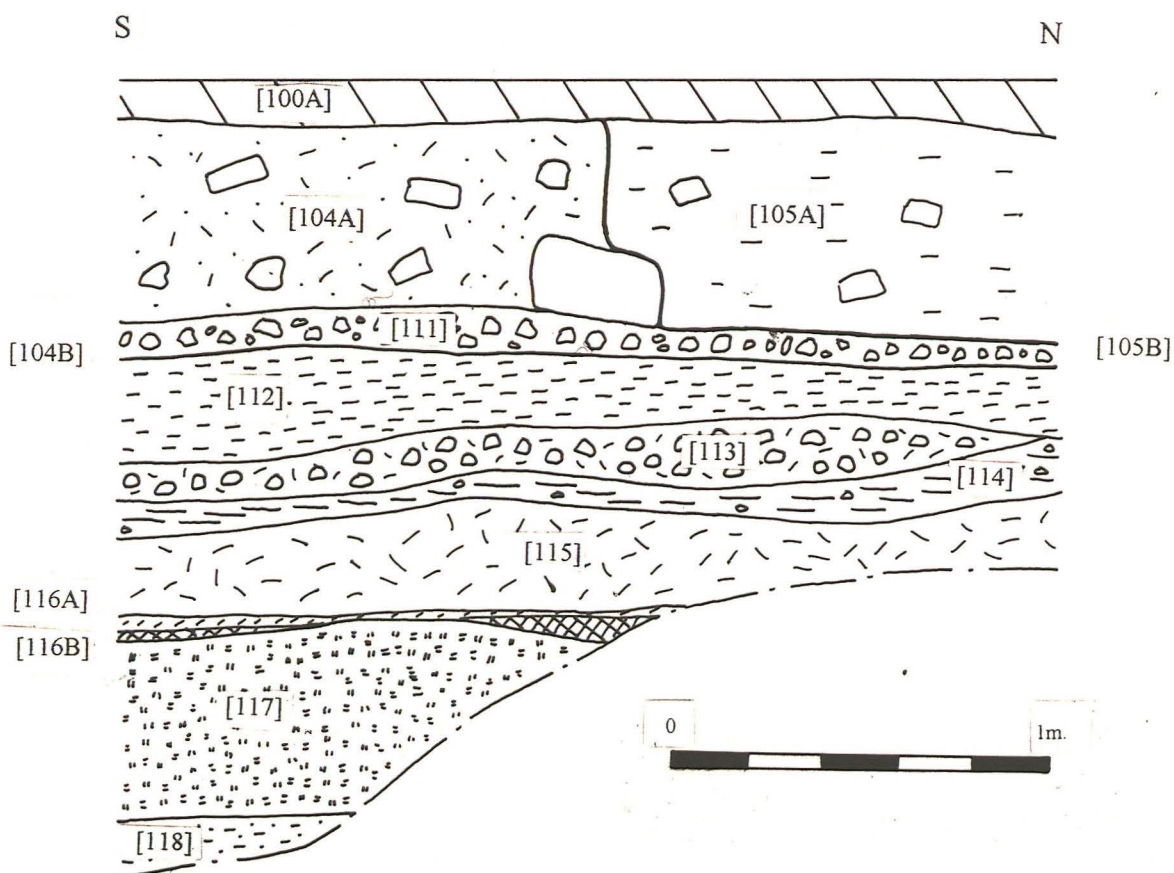


Fig. 3: Section through the series of archaeological deposits showing baked clay surface [116B].

(location indicated on Fig. 2)

6.0 Discussion

The sequence of deposits encountered can only superficially be interpreted. The baked clay surface and overlying deposits, presumably relate to a structure of some kind, perhaps a medieval hearth or oven, but further interpretation is not possible. The absence of any building remains in the observed sections does not preclude the presence of larger structures on the site. The lack of dating evidence and environmental information from the lower deposits is particularly disappointing, as these had the potential to provide important new information on the development of Louth before the 16th century.

7.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) express their sincere thanks to J S Grant (Building Surveyor) and to his clients. Thanks also to Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy (County SMR) for allowing access to the parish file.

Appendix 8.1

POST-ROMAN POTTERY AND TILE ARCHIVE: EGL97 WARE TYPES BY CONTEXT

Context	Ware	Sherds	Form	Comments
US/114	TB	1	JUG/JAR	BASE;DATE?;?MED
U/S	NIB	1	FLAT	MED
112	GRE	1	BOWL	EVERT RIM
112	GRE	1	BOWL	RIM
112	GRE	1	JAR;SMALL	RIM & SHOULDER; V THIN WALLS;INT & EXT GLZE
112	TB	3	BOWL	BASE;INT GLZE; <i>SV (joining)</i>
112	TB	1	JAR/JUG	BS
112	CIST	1	CUP	HANDLE

POST-ROMAN POTTERY ARCHIVE: EGL97 HORIZON DATING

Context	Earliest horizon	Latest horizon	Probable horizon	Date range
112	PMH3	PMH8	PMH3-PMH4	16th to early 17th

Appendix 8.2 Site archive

The site archive consists of :

Paper Element:

- x 1 Project Specification
- x 1 General account sheet
- x 11 Context record sheets
- x 5 Site drawings
- x 1 Development plan
- x 1 Colour print film

Object Element:

- x 1 Bag of post-medieval pottery
- x 1 Bag of medieval pottery

Primary records are currently with PCA (Lincoln). An ordered archive of both paper and object elements is in preparation and will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, within six months.

8.3 References

- Ekwall, E. 1989 The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names.
- Garmonsway, G.N. 1992 The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.
- Kelly's 1892 Directory of Lincolnshire
- Kelly's 1933 Directory of Lincolnshire and Hull
- Morris, J. (gen. ed.) 1986 'Lincolnshire' Domesday Book.
- Pevsner, N., Harris, J & Antram, N. 1995 The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire.

8.4 List of Contexts

Context	Description
100A	Concrete and brick yard surface,
100B	Silt and rubble yard surface.
101	Extant brick wall.

102	Chalk rubble wall foundation.
103	Gritty clay wall foundation.
104A	Silt with rubble.
104B	Pit cut of uncertain function.
105A	Silt-clay.
105B	Pit cut of uncertain function.
106	Brick open drain.
107	Extant brick wall.
108	Brick wall.
109	Ash pit fill.
110	Ash pit cut.
111	Chalk rubble and silt.
112	Soft clay.
113	Chalk rubble.
114	Clay.
115	Burnt Clay.
116A	Organic-rich silt.
116B	Baked clay floor.
117	Silt-clay
118	Silt-sand.

Appendix 8.5 colour photographs



P1. Excavation of an internal wall trench through [104] showing the loose nature of the deposit. Looking north-west.



P2. Brick drain [106] looking north.