



making sense of heritage

St Marks Street Lincoln, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Ref: 100040.01
July 2013



**St Marks Street
Lincoln, Lincolnshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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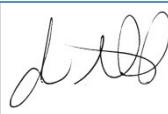
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St Marks Street Lincoln, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the development of land at St Marks Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire (NGR 497372 370852).

Planning permission for the erection of student accommodation and commercial units has been granted with a condition requiring archaeological investigations prior to development (planning ref. 2012/0197/F).

An archaeological desk-based assessment, incorporating the results of monitoring during geotechnical excavations, indicated that there was low potential for significant archaeological remains to be disturbed during development. The stratigraphic sequence was predicted to comprise river deposits from 3.1m to at least 12m below the modern ground level, overlain by at least 2m of made ground dated to the 17th to 19th centuries.

CgMs and the acting Lincoln City Archaeologist agreed that a watching brief during construction groundworks would be sufficient to mitigate the likely archaeological impact of development. A Written Scheme of Investigation detailing the methodology for the watching brief was prepared by CgMs and approved by the Lincoln City Archaeologist.

The excavation of trenches for the construction of ground beams and the lift pit were monitored. All of the excavated trenches revealed the same general stratigraphic sequence - a 0.3m thick layer of building debris overlying made ground. None of the trenches were deeper than the made ground deposit.

No evidence of pre-19th century structures was identified indicating that 19th and 20th century development had removed all remains from this period or that the site was previously unoccupied.

The archive is currently stored at Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield office under project number **100040**. The archive will be deposited with the City and County Museum, Lincoln under the museum side code **SMBF13** and accession number **LCNNCC:2013.78**.



St Marks Street Lincoln, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by CgMs Ltd on behalf of Studeous Contracts Ltd and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to William Bedford in this regard.

The watching brief was carried out by Diana Swales, Sam Fairhead and Neil Parker. The report was compiled by Andrea Burgess with illustrations by Chris Breeden and Chris Swales. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Norton.



St Marks Street Lincoln, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the development of land at St Marks Street, Lincoln (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 City of Lincoln Council has granted planning permission for the erection of a seven-storey building to accommodate 120 student bedrooms with commercial units at the ground floor at the Site (planning ref. 2012/0197/F). A condition of this permission required archaeological investigations prior to development.
- 1.1.3 An archaeological desk-based assessment, incorporating the results of monitoring during geotechnical excavations, indicated that there was low potential for significant archaeological remains to be disturbed during development. CgMs Consulting Ltd and the acting Lincoln City Archaeologist (advisor to the Local Planning Authority) agreed that a watching brief during construction groundworks would be sufficient to mitigate the likely archaeological impact of development.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing the methodology for the watching brief was prepared by CgMs (2013) and approved by the Lincoln City Archaeologist.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The development Site is located within the city of Lincoln, centred on NGR 497372 370852 (**Figure 1**). The 0.05 hectare development area lies on the northern side of St Marks Street and prior to development it was an open plot used for parking.
- 1.2.2 The Site is located at approximately 7m above Ordnance Datum and the geology is mapped as clay, silt, sand and gravel alluvial deposits overlying mudstone of the Scunthorpe Mudstone Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (Geology of Britain viewer 1:50,000).
- 1.2.3 Historically the Site lay on the edge of the Brayford Pool and would have been marshy and subject to flooding. This was confirmed by geotechnical investigations which found alluvial deposits approximately 3m below the ground level (CgMs 2012).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological potential of the Site was detailed in the desk-based assessment (CgMs 2012). The following is summarised from that document.

2.2 Designated heritage assets

2.2.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site, however it does lie within Area 6 of the City of Lincoln Conservation Area, and there is a grade II listed building (St Marks Church Hall) adjacent to the development Site to the west.

2.3 Prehistoric

2.3.1 The Site lies within a wider area of known prehistoric activity associated with a settlement on Brayford Island; the possible limit of this settlement is approximately 100m to the north of the Site.

2.4 Romano-British

2.4.1 There is no evidence of activity dating to this period from the Site but it is situated within an area of known potential relating to a possible commercial hub to the south of the walled city, on Ermine Street (now High Street).

2.4.2 Evidence of Romano-British structures, burials and other features is recorded 100m to the south of the Site, industrial activity and drainage ditches are recorded 50m to the south and a Roman house, public house and industrial activity have been found 150m to the north.

2.4.3 The Site may have been situated on marshy land beyond the main focus of Romano-British activity in this area, which appears to have been Ermine Street approximately 75m to the east and southeast.

2.5 Saxon to early medieval

2.5.1 A late Saxon/early medieval burial was found 50m to the south of the Site and evidence of late Saxon land reclamation was recorded 100m to the northwest, close to the River Witham.

2.5.2 The Site appears to remain beyond the focus of settlement in this period and possibly under agricultural use.

2.6 Medieval

2.6.1 A stone church was built 50m south of the Site in the 11th century and a Carmelite friary was founded in the 13th century, 100m to the south, but no evidence of this period has been found within the Site itself.

2.6.2 Medieval settlement appears to have focussed on High Street, which is approximately 75m to the east and southeast. It is thought likely that the Site remained in agricultural use during this period or may have been occupied by yards to the rear of properties fronting High Street.



2.7 Post-medieval and modern

- 2.7.1 Cartographic evidence from 1610 and 1722 indicates that settlement remained focussed on High Street at that time. However, by 1842 the Site was occupied by yards following reclamation of the marshy land in the 17th and 18th centuries.
- 2.7.2 The Site was occupied by a street named St Marks Court and surrounded by workshops from the later 19th century until the mid-20th century. An abattoir and bacon factory were constructed at the Site in the 1930s. Following the demolition of the factory premises, the Site was used for parking.

2.8 Recent archaeological investigations at the Site

- 2.8.1 In order to obtain accurate archaeological information regarding below ground conditions at the Site a watching brief was conducted during geotechnical works (Pre-construct Archaeological Services 2012).
- 2.8.2 The results indicate that the Site had been flooded previously causing a build-up of river deposits from 3.1m to at least 12m below the current ground level. These deposits were overlain by at least 2m of made ground containing 17th to 19th century artefacts. No evidence of pre-19th century structures was identified, indicating that 20th century development had removed all remains from this period.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Archaeological impact

- 3.1.1 The archaeological assessment and geotechnical monitoring established that the proposed ground beams, lift pit, service trenches, foundation piles and pile caps would impact only on 17th to 19th century made ground and 20th century construction debris (CgMS 2012).
- 3.1.2 Following consultation between CgMs and the Lincoln City Archaeologist it was agreed that no further archaeological mitigation was required in relation to the piled foundations, but that groundworks for the ground beams and lift pit would be subject to an archaeological watching brief. A requirement for monitoring the excavation of service trenches would be reviewed following the initial watching brief.

3.2 Aims and objectives

- 3.2.1 The aims of the project were:
- To preserve by record any archaeological remains which may be disturbed by development works ;
 - To make available the results of the investigation.

3.3 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.3.1 The watching brief was carried out between May 5th and June 4th 2013. It was conducted in accordance with the WSI (CgMs 2013) and professional standards and guidance (IfA 2008a and b).



- 3.3.2 All recording took place in accordance with standard Wessex Archaeology methodologies and the WSI (CgMs 2013). A digital photographic record was maintained.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 The excavation of trenches for the construction of ground beams and the lift pit were monitored (**Figure 1; Plates 1-4**).

4.2 General Site stratigraphy

- 4.2.1 All of the excavated trenches revealed the same general stratigraphic sequence. The ground beam trenches were approximately 0.5m wide and 0.6m deep (approximately 6.4m aOD). Excavation revealed a 0.3m thick layer of building debris overlying 0.3m of made ground predominantly composed of dark brown silts. None of the trenches were deeper than the made ground deposit.
- 4.2.2 The trench for the lift pit measured 4m by 4m and was excavated to a depth of 2m below ground level (approximately 5m aOD). The stratigraphic sequence observed within the pit comprised the same made ground as seen elsewhere on the Site.
- 4.2.3 The trenches each contained evidence of 20th century construction methods such as steel piles within the lift pit and concrete footings in the ground beam trenches.
- 4.2.4 No features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were observed. The monitoring was then curtailed in accordance with the WSI (CgMS 2013).

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 The watching brief was maintained as required but no archaeological features or deposits were identified. The sequence of deposits recorded across the Site confirmed the results and interpretation of the previous archaeological monitoring exercise.
- 5.1.2 The Site was most likely marshy prior to the levelling of the area in the post-medieval period and unsuitable for settlement.
- 5.1.3 Confirmation of the presence of significant made ground deposits, to a depth of at least 1.7m, established that further construction groundworks were likely to impact only on previously recorded deposits.

5.2 Recommendations

- 5.2.1 No further work is recommended.



6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Archive

6.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with standard guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives (UKIC 2001; Brown 2007).

6.2 Storage

6.2.1 The archive is currently stored at Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield office under project number **100040**. The archive will be deposited with the City and County Museum, Lincoln under the museum side code **SMBF13** and accession number **LCNNCC:2013.78**.

7 REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

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Site location and plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: General view of excavated ground beam trenches



Plate 2: Stratigraphy in ground beam trench



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Plate 3: Stratigraphy in ground beam trench



Plate 4: Excavated lift pit trench

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