

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT NEW ROAD, LANGTOFT, LINCOLNSHIRE (LANR 12)

Work Undertaken For Baxter and King Builders Limited

April 2012

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Planning Application No: S09/0827/FULL National Grid Reference: TF 1275 1265 The Collection Accession No: LCNCC: 2012.46 OASIS Record No: archaeol1-123501

APS Report No. 24/12



Quality Control

Archaeological Evaluation New Road Langtoft Lincolnshire LANR 12

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at New Road, Langtoft, Lincolnshire. This was in order to determine the archaeological implications of proposed housing development at the site.

A Bronze Age (2200-800 BC) ring ditch has been identified to the west of the village, close to an area where excavation revealed Iron Age (800 BC-AD 42) enclosures and roundhouses. Romano-British (AD 42-410) activity is well attested to with numerous finds of pottery and coins from around the village. The Romano-British watercourse, the Car Dyke, lies to the east and there are a number of cropmarks of probable Roman date in the vicinity of the site. The site lies to the south of the medieval (AD 1066-1540) village which is centred on the 12^{th} – 13th century church of St. Michael. Earthworks relating to the manor and ridge and furrow of the medieval field system have also been recorded from the vicinity.

The evaluation identified a sequence of natural, undated and recent deposits. A ditch, gully and posthole were recorded during the work. The ditch is certainly of some age as it is sealed by a subsoil that contained Romano-British finds. Romano-British pottery was also recovered from the gully, which may be associated with a series of cropmarks that are of presumed Romano-British date.

Other than Romano-British pottery, finds from the investigation include a Bronze Age flint nodule/core and a small quantity of faunal remains. Environmental sampling identified cereal grains, including wheat, and snails suggestive of open country habitats.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of an Evaluation

An archaeological evaluation is defined as 'a limited programme of non-intrusive fieldwork intrusive which and/or determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site. If such archaeological remains are present Field Evaluation defines their character and extent, quality and preservation, and it enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate' (IfA 2008).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Baxter and King Builders Limited undertake to а programme of archaeological investigation in advance of proposed development at New Road, Langtoft, as detailed in Application S09/0827/FULL. Planning The evaluation was undertaken on the 27th and 28th March 2012 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services and approved by the Senior Historic Environment Officer for South Kesteven District Council.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Langtoft is located 11km northeast of Stamford and 16km southwest of Spalding in the administrative district of South Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 410m east of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. Michael at National Grid Reference TF 1275 1265 (Fig. 2). The site lies on the west side of New Road at a height of c. 6m OD on land that slopes gently down eastwards towards the fens of south Lincolnshire.

Local soils are of the Badsey 2 Association, typically calcareous fine loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 101). These soils are developed on sands and gravels of the 1^{st} River Terrace that seals a solid geology of Jurassic Oxford Clay and Kellaways Sand (BGS 1984; Booth 1983).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Langtoft lies in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Bronze Age to the present day. Cropmarks of ring ditches, perhaps Bronze Age barrows, have been identified northwest of the site.

Excavations undertaken close to the centre of the village, also west of the site, revealed Iron Age enclosures and two roundhouses with a further building, possibly a granary, also identified (JSAC 2000, 28).

The above excavations also identified evidence for Romano-British occupation in the village, principally associated with agricultural activity, possibly vine growing (*ibid.* 29). Around the village, pottery and coins of this period have also been recorded. To the east of the site lies the Roman watercourse, the Car Dyke, a canal or drainage scheme extending between Lincoln and Peterborough (Simmons and Cope-Faulkner 2004, 1).

Extensive cropmarks of archaeological remains occur immediately to the south of Langtoft. These cropmarks appear to define a long southwest-northeast aligned road or trackway, with attached enclosures and field systems (RCHME 1996). Some of these enclosure or field system ditches appear to extend into the current investigation site (Fig. 2).

Langtoft is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of *c*. 1086. Referred to as *Langetoft*, the name is derived from the

Old Norse *langr* and the Old Danish *toft* and means 'the long messuage' (Cameron 1998, 77). At the time of Domesday the land was held by Crowland Abbey and contained 100 acres of meadow, marsh two leagues in length by two wide and woodland (Foster and Longley 1976).

The only extant remains of the medieval period is the parish church of St. Michael which was built in the late 12th or early 13th century with later additions (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 424). In the fields immediately east of the site, earthworks of ridge and furrow of the medieval field system were visible on aerial photographs taken during the mid 20th century. Situated 450m to the north are the earthwork remains of a moated enclosure, believed to be the boundary ditch to the manorial centre of Langtoft, and an associated fishpond (Healey and Roffe forthcoming).

3. AIMS

The aim of the evaluation was to gather information to establish the presence or absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits in order to enable the Senior Historic Environment Officer for South Kesteven District Council to formulate a policy for the management of archaeological resources present on the site.

4. METHODS

Three trenches, each measuring 10m by 1.5m were excavated to the surface of the underlying natural geology. The trenches were placed to provide sample coverage of the area and were located within the footprints of the proposed new buildings (Fig. 3).

Removal of topsoil and other overburden

was undertaken by mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. The exposed surfaces of the trenches were then cleaned by hand and inspected for archaeological remains.

Each deposit exposed during the was allocated unique evaluation a reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their interpretations appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was also compiled and sections and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20 respectively. Recording of deposits encountered was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Environmental sampling was undertaken on the discretion of the site supervisor using guidelines established by English Heritage (2011). The subsequent processing of the samples is detailed in Appendix 3.

The location of the excavated trenches was surveyed in relation to fixed points on boundaries and on existing buildings.

Following excavation, finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. **RESULTS**

The results of the archaeological evaluation are discussed in trench order. Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Trench 1

The earliest deposit within this trench was

a layer of natural orange brown sand and silt with frequent gravel (103).

Cut into the natural was a northwestsoutheast aligned ditch (104). This measured over 3.27m long by 0.93m wide and was 0.45m deep (Fig. 4, Section 3; Plate 4). Two fills were recorded; a primary fill of orange brown silty sand (105) and an upper fill of brown sandy silt with frequent gravel (106). Fragments of animal bone were recovered from (106), together with rare charred cereal grains and shells of open country species of molluscs (Appendices 2, 3).

Sealing the ditch was a 0.45m thick subsoil comprising brown sandy silt with frequent gravel (102). Pottery of 2^{nd} to 4^{th} century date was recovered from this layer. This deposit was in turn sealed by the current topsoil of brown sandy silt with gravel (101) that measured 0.3m thick.

Trench 2

Natural deposits within this trench were identified as yellowish brown sand with gravel (205).

Towards the south end of the trench was east-west aligned gully (202).an Measuring over 1.55m long, it was 0.7m wide and 0.28m deep (Fig. 5, Section 1; Plate 6) and contained a single fill of light brown sandy silt (201). This contained a single sherd of Romano-British pottery 2^{nd} - 3^{rd} century date and a Bronze Age flint. Fragments of animal bone, including cattle, were also recovered together with shells of open country molluscs (Appendices 2, 3).

Located 2.9m to the north was an oval posthole (204) that was 0.44m long by 0.3m wide and 0.3m deep (Fig. 5, Section 2, Plate 7). A single fill of grey to yellowish grey sandy silt (203), which contained a very small amount of charred organic material, was recorded.

Sealing all deposits was the current topsoil of brownish grey silty sand (200) that measured 0.34m thick.

Trench 3

Yellowish brown sand with gravel (302) was identified as the natural within this trench. Developed upon this was a subsoil layer (301) comprising brownish yellow silty sand measuring 0.13m thick (Fig. 6, Section 5; Plate 9).

Overlying the subsoil was a layer of grey silty sand (300) topsoil that was 0.27m thick.

6. **DISCUSSION**

Natural deposits comprise sands, silt and gravel that relate to the underlying drift geology of 1st River Terrace deposits.

Three features were identified, though dating evidence was limited due to a lack of artefactual remains. A single ditch within Trench 1 was sealed by subsoil which suggests it is of some antiquity. Furthermore, the subsoil contained Romano-British pottery.

A possible Roman gully and an undated posthole were located within Trench 2. The gully broadly coincides with an eastwest cropmark that enters the site from the southeast. This cropmarks turns to the southeast outside of the site boundary. The gully also lies approximately parallel to a northeast-southwest track of presumed Romano-British date and could, therefore, be contemporary.

Subsoil was encountered in Trenches 1 and 3. It is markedly thicker in Trench 1 which may indicate a headland. The absence of subsoil in Trench 2 could indicate that there is vestigial traces of ridge and furrow of the medieval field system. Finds retrieved from the investigation include Romano-British pottery, a Bronze Age flint core/nodule and a small quantity of animal bone. Environmental analysis identified a few cereal grains, including wheat, and snails of open country mollusc species.

7. CONCLUSIONS

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at New Road, Langtoft, as the site lay in an area of known archaeological remains of prehistoric and Romano-British date.

However, no features were identified which were securely dated to these periods. Instead, an undated ditch, gully and a posthole represent the only archaeological features recorded at the site. The ditch may be of some age as it is sealed by a subsoil that contained pottery of Romano-British date. Varying thicknesses of subsoil may suggest that traces of ridge and furrow of the medieval field system survive at the site.

Finds recovered during the evaluation include two sherds of Roman pottery, a single Bronze Age flint and a small collection of animal remains.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr D Woods of Baxter and King Builders Limited for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Young, the Senior Jenny Historic Environment Officer for South Kesteven District Council, kindly allowed access to the library and parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor Site Staff: Paul Cope-Faulkner, Bryn Leadbetter Finds Processing: Denise Buckley

Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

- APS Archaeological Project Services
- BGS British Geological Survey
- If A Institute for Archaeologists
- JSAC John Samuels Archaeological Consultants
- RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England



Figure 1 - General location plan



Figure 2 - Site location plan



Figure 3 - Trench location plan



Figure 4 - Trench 1: Plan and sections



Figure 5 - Trench 2: Plan and sections



Figure 6 - Trench 3: Plan and section



Plate 1 – General view across the proposed development area, looking southwest



Plate 2 – Trench 1 after cleaning, looking northwest



Plate 3 – Trench 1, Section 3, looking northeast



Plate 4 – Trench 1, Section 4 showing ditch (104), looking southeast



Plate 5 – Trench 2 after cleaning, looking south



Plate 6 – Trench 2, Section 1 showing gully (202), looking west



Plate 8 – Trench 3 after cleaning, looking southwest

Plate 7 – Trench 2, Section 2 showing posthole (204), looking northeast





Plate 9 – Trench 3, Section 5, looking northwest

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Description	Interpretation
101	Friable dark to mid brown sandy silt with frequent angular gravel, 0.3m thick	Topsoil
102	Friable mid to dark brown sandy silt with frequent angular gravel, 0.45m thick	Subsoil
103	Friable to compact mid orange brown sand and silt with frequent gravel	Natural deposit
104	Linear feature, aligned northwest-southeast, 0.93m wide by 0.45m deep, steep sides and rounded base	Ditch
105	Friable mid orange brown silty sand	Primary fill of (104)
106	Friable mid to dark brown sandy silt with frequent gravel	Secondary fill of (104)

Trench 2

No.	Description	Interpretation
200	Friable dark brownish grey silty sand, 0.34m thick	Topsoil
201	Soft to firm light brown sandy silt	Fill of (202)
202	Linear feature, aligned east-west, >1.55m long by 0.7m wide and 0.28m deep, gradual sides and rounded base	Gully
203	Firm mid grey to light yellowish grey sandy silt	Fill of (204)
204	Oval feature, 0.44m long by 0.3m wide by 0.3m deep, steep sides to SW, gradual to NE, flattish base	Posthole
205	Firm to friable dark yellowish brown sand with gravel	Natural deposit

Trench 3

No.	Description	Interpretation
300	Firm dark grey silty sand, 0.27m thick	Topsoil
301	Firm light brownish yellow silty sand, 0.13m thick	Subsoil
302	Firm to friable dark yellowish brown sand with gravel	Natural deposit

THE FINDS

ROMAN POTTERY

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by Darling (2004) and to conform to Lincolnshire Council's *Archaeology Handbook*. A total of three sherds from two vessels, weighing 59 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 1 below.

Condition

All of the pottery is abraded and may be residual. A single piece is also burnt.

Results

Table 1, Roman Pottery Archive

Tr	Cxt	Fabric	Full Name	Form	Dec	NoV	Alter	NoS	W (g)	Comments
1	102	PARC	PARCHMENT WARE	F	Painted vertical and horizontal lines	1	ABR	2	30	BSS; RED PAINTED DEC; FAIRLY COARSE CREAM FABRIC
1	102	ZDATE								ML2-4C
2	201	NVGW	NENE VALLEY GREY WARE	CLSD		1	ABR; BURNT	1	29	BASE
2	201	ZDATE								M2-3C

Provenance

Roman pottery came from the subsoil (102) in Trench 1 and gully feature [202] in Trench 2.

Range

There are two sherds of parchment ware (PARC) from the subsoil (102) in Trench 1 and a single piece of Nene Valley Grey Ware (NVGW) from gully [202] in Trench 2. Neither of these fragments can be precisely dated although NVGW is not likely to have been produced long before 150 or after 300 AD.

Potential

There is limited potential for further work. The pottery should be retained as part of the site archive and should pose no problems for long term storage.

Summary

Three sherds of Roman pottery from two vessels were recovered during the evaluation. There is little that can be said about the nature of the site from this small assemblage.

FAUNAL REMAINS

By Paul Cope-Faulkner and Gary Taylor

Introduction

A total of 13 (52g) fragments of animal bone were recovered from stratified contexts.

Provenance

The bone was collected from the fill of a ditch (106) and the fill of a gully (202).

Condition

The overall condition of the remains was good to moderate, averaging at grades 2-3 on the Lyman Criteria (1996).

Results

Cxt	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	W (g)	Comments
106	medium mammal	long bone	-	1	8	
106<3>	medium mammal	long bone	-	2	<1	
100532	small mammal	long bone	-	2	<1	
202	cattle	mandible	-	7	43	
202<1>	micro-mammal	long bone	-	1	<1	

Table 3, Snails

Cxt	Taxon	Number	W (g)	Comments
202<1>	Trichia hispida	2	<1	1 very fresh – recent?

Summary

Most of the animal bones are probably food waste, though the small and micro-mammal bones may be remains of natural creatures such as rodents. The mollusc shells are of catholic terrestrial species (Kerney and Cameron 1979, 191), though one of them looks very fresh and is possibly a recent contaminant.

WORKED FLINT

By Tom Lane

Introduction

A single flint nodule was retrieved from the fill of a gully in Trench 2.

Condition

The piece is very heavily abraded. There are no requirements for conservation.

Results

Table 4, Worked Flint Archive

Cxt	Description	No	Wt (g)	Date
201	Nodule. Possible piece from core reduction. Several flake scars present. Very	1	36	Bronze Age
	heavily abraded. 36 x 25 x 24mm			

Summary

The piece has little potential to elucidate on-site activities and indicates no-more than a presence at the site at some point in the Bronze Age.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

A single other find weighing 797g was recovered.

Condition

The other find is in good condition.

Results

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
202	Stone	Natural, possibly burnt	1	797	

Provenance

The other find was recovered from a gully.

Range

The single other find was a piece of stone. It has a number of fractures, typical of having been burnt. However, it bears no indications of scorching and, therefore, the fractures could be natural.

Potential

As an isolated find which may be natural the other find is of very limited potential. It can be discarded.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 6 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 6, Spot dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
102	Mid or late 2 nd to 4 th	Subsoil
201	Mid 2 nd to 3rd	Based on a single abraded sherd
202	Mid 2 nd to 3rd	Same as 201

ABBREVIATIONS

BS	Body sherd
CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
TR	Trench
W (g)	Weight (grams)

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL DATA By Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Excavations at Langtoft, undertaken by Archaeological Project Services (APS) recorded a limited number of features, at least one of which had a probable Roman date $(2^{nd} - 3^{rd} \text{ century A.D.})$ Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from gully, ditch and post-hole fills, and three were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by APS and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred. Modern fibrous roots, seeds, arthropod remains and shells of the burrowing snail *Cecilioides acicula* were present throughout.

Results

All three flots are extremely small (considerably less than 0.1 litres in volume) and very limited in composition, comprising individual cereal grains (including one possible specimen of wheat (*Triticum* sp.)), occasional flecks of charcoal/charred wood and small fragments of black porous and tarry material, all of which are possibly derived from the high temperature combustion of organic remains. A small number of shells of open country and catholic species of terrestrial molluscs are also recorded, but their overall good condition would appear to suggest that most are modern contaminants within the contexts from which the samples were taken.

Sample No.	1	2	3
Context No.	201	203	106
Feature No.	202	204	104
Feature type	Gully	Post hole	Ditch
Charred plant macrofossils			
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grain)			х
Cereal indet. (grains)	х		х
Charcoal <2mm	x		х
Charred root/stem			х
Other remains			
Black porous and cokey material	х	х	х
Mollusc shells			
Open country species			
Vallonia sp.	x		
V. costata	х		х
Catholic species			
Cochlicopa sp.	х		
Trichia hispida group	x		
Sample volume (litres)	2.5	1.8	2
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, it would appear most likely that all three assemblages are principally derived from scattered detritus, all of which was probably accidentally incorporated within the feature fills.

As none of the assemblage contain a sufficient density of material for further quantification (i.e. 100+ specimens), no further analysis is recommended.

Reference Stace, C., 1997

New Flora of the British Isles. 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press

 $\frac{\text{Key to Table}}{x = 1 - 10 \text{ specimens}}$

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, $e.g.(004)$.
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1^{st} century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 15 Context records
- 1 Photographic record sheet
- 5 Sheets of scale drawings
- 2 Daily record sheets
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix
- 1 Bag of finds

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services The Old School Cameron Street Heckington Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

The Collection Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire Danes Terrace Lincoln LN2 1LP

Accession Number:	LCNCC: 2012.46
Archaeological Project Services Site Code:	LANR 12
OASIS Record No:	archaeol1-123501

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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