

**LAND BETWEEN ROBEY COURT AND 49 HIGH STREET, LINCOLN,  
LINCOLN**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING**

**REPORT**

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Report prepared for  
John Bell Civil Engineering Ltd

by

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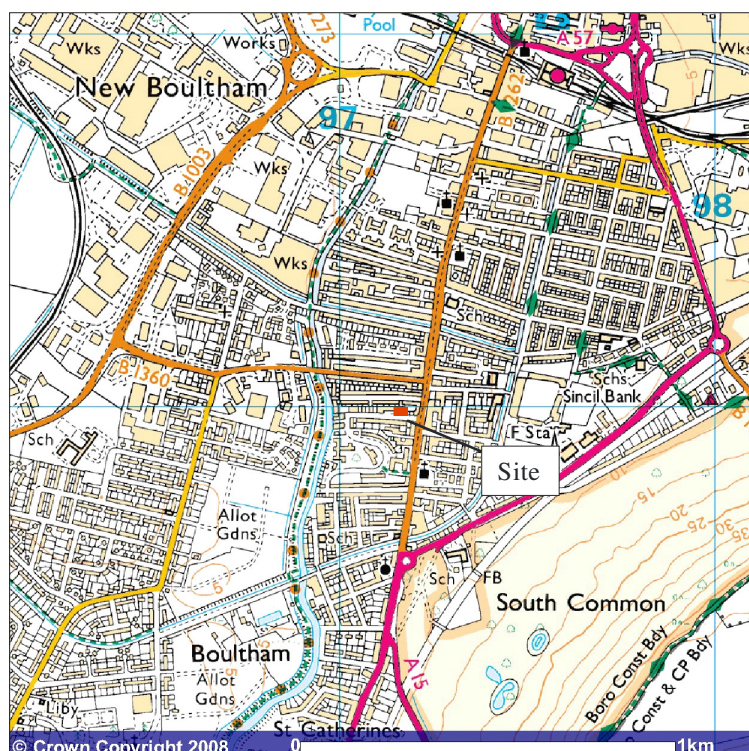
- Fig. 1** Site location plan (not to scale; based on the 2006 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey Explorer map, Sheet 272. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCA Licence No. 100049278).
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## Summary

- *Archaeological monitoring and recording during contractors' excavation of footings identified no archaeological features.*
- *No archaeological remains were observed or recovered on the site; the only features present being 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century services possibly relating to the previously demolished garage and workshop that occupied the site.*



**Figure: 1** Site location plan (not to scale; © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCA Licence No. 100049278).

## **1.0 Introduction**

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS Ltd) undertook archaeological monitoring and recording for John Bell Civil Engineering Ltd at Land between Robey Court and 49 High Street, Lincoln during groundworks for the erection of apartments. Controlled monitoring by Ian Rowlandson took place on 26th and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

The archaeological scheme was condition of planning permission 2007/0506/F, and was carried out in accordance with an agreed Archaeological Works Specification, dated 13/10/2009. The work followed the standards recommended in *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy and Guidance Note 16* (Department of Environment 1990), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA 2008) *Lincolnshire Archaeology Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council, 2009; *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE).

## **2.0 Site location and description**

The site is located to the north of Robey Street, either side of an electricity substation, and to the rear of 49-51 High Street within the suburb of Boultham, historically medieval Wigford.

Prior to development the site was occupied by a garage and workshop, both now demolished.

The drift geology of the area is undifferentiated river terrace sand and gravel of the Pleistocene and recent era (BGS 1973). The site is at approximately 6m AOD, east of the River Witham.

## **3.0 Planning Background**

Planning permission has been granted for the erection of apartments on land between Robey Court and the rear of 49 High Street, Lincoln (Ref. 2007/0506/F). A condition attached to the planning permission required that a scheme of archaeological investigation should be undertaken to inform possible mitigation measures. An archaeological evaluation was conducted in 2008, which identified some surviving archaeological features. The city archaeologist has subsequently requested a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during all groundworks associated with the development, in order to permit the identification and preservation by record of affected archaeological remains.

## **4.0 Archaeological Background**

The earliest archaeological evidence of human activity within the Lincoln area is derived from a cluster of worked flints, dating to the Mesolithic period, identified approximately 1km north east of the city in the area of the Roaring Meg spring.

A small quantity of Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flints have also been recovered from later medieval and post-medieval contexts in the St Catherine's suburb of Lincoln. Further work in this area, sieving alluvial deposits underlying medieval layers, has recovered over 400 worked flints dating from the Mesolithic period through to the Bronze Age (Rylatt 2008).

By the later prehistoric period, Lincoln is thought to have been a major centre for the *Corieltavi*, the local tribal group that dominated the East Midlands during the Late

Iron Age. Evidence for Iron Age settlement around Lincoln appears to concentrate predominantly in the area of the Witham Valley (Jones *et al.* 2003).

Archaeology relating to the Roman conquest and occupation is well represented locally and in Lincoln is of national significance with important extant structural remains, including entrance gateways such as the Newport Arch, the north gate of the legionary fortress/*Colonia* and segments of walling such as the Mint Wall in Bailgate (*ibid.*).

Roman settlement is not recorded in the Wigford suburb before the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD as the area was believed to be prone to flooding; however successive landfill operations enabled the development of the suburb along the Fosse Way and Ermine Street (Steane *et al.* 2001). Excavations in the area of the St Mary's Guildhall have identified this suburb with traders' houses fronting on to Ermine Street and the Fosse Way from 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD onwards (Jones 2002).

A watching brief to the rear of 49, 50 and 50a High Street identified a number of small pits and possible walls; these are thought to be associated with Roman commercial properties fronting the Fosse Way, though this was not substantiated by dateable evidence (CLAU 2002).

Early Saxon settlement in Lincoln is currently poorly understood. Small quantities of pottery and other cultural debris identified in the Upper City suggest activity, though not necessarily actual settlement within the former Roman defences. Evidence for settlement in the mid-Saxon period is stronger, though focused outside of the city defences, with occupation shifting from outside to inside the former city defences towards the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*).

During the medieval period Lincoln was a thriving and prosperous city. This was enhanced after the Norman Conquest by the construction of the royal castle and cathedral in the Upper City (Dobney *et al.* 1996). By the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Lincoln was the largest urban centre in the East Midlands and a pre-eminent European city. Most of Lincoln's commercial success was based on the growing woollen and cloth industries, which were exported throughout the country and western Europe (Jones *et al.* 2003).

There is archaeological evidence for suburbs at Newport, Newlands and Thorngate in the late 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century. There is also archaeological evidence of the same date for an expansion of the *Butwerk* suburb and possibly the Lower Wigford suburb. The Wigford suburb, in which Robey Street is located, had a clear identity during the medieval period, caused by its separation from the rest of the city by the River Witham (Jones *et al.* 2003).

The suburb of Wigford can be divided into three areas; the upper and central third may have been occupied as early as the late 9<sup>th</sup>-early 10<sup>th</sup> century, while the lower third may not have been occupied until the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The upper third appears to have been mainly residential while the central third had a commercial focus, though there is no clear division between the two. There has been little archaeological intervention in the lower third of Wigford, in which Robey Street is located, so its formation and development remains poorly understood (Steane *et al.* 2001).

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century Wigford appears to have been a wealthy suburb. St Mary's Guildhall is thought to have been initially constructed as a magnate of the highest order in the 1150s. It may have been constructed by Henry II as a royal *hospicium* to accommodate the royal crown wearing in the city. St Andrew's Hall opposite, was

also a grand 12<sup>th</sup> century house and one of a number of elaborate buildings built throughout the central and northern parts of the suburb (Jones *et. al.* 2003).

The post-medieval period saw another expansion of Lincoln, reaching far beyond the medieval suburbs (Jones *et al* 2003). The parish of St Botolphs was included in this expansion and documentary evidence for the development site becomes evident.

Excavations within the Wigford suburb have identified elements of industrial activity, as well as domestic occupation. These include pottery and tile kilns dating to the 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century (Steane *et. al.* 2001).

An archaeological evaluation by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS Ltd) on this development site in 2008 identified an early medieval pit, and two further pits which, although undated, are likely also to be early medieval. Part of the site had been disturbed by 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings.

The Lincoln UAD Industrial Archaeology Survey records a Carriage works and wheelwrights workshop (Industrial Monument ID 5152) within the site and identifies the buildings occupied by the car showroom as that of the wheelwrights shop, blacksmiths shop and paint shop, laid out c. 1900.

## **5.0 Methodology**

The groundworks monitored comprised the excavation of footings, approximately 0.4 to 0.7m below the current ground surface, at 6.05mOD, with the subsequent floor level of the development being higher and consolidated with hardcore.

The monitored works were photographically recorded and selected photographs are provided in this report (Appendix 1). Context numbers were assigned for recording purposes and these are listed in Appendix 2. Levels were recorded with reference to a benchmark at the corner of The Shakespeare Public House.

## **6.0 Results**

The earliest deposit encountered was compact, mid orange/yellow sand (003) sealed by (001), interpreted as a mixed and heavily disturbed deposition of topsoil containing brick rubble and a high concentration of roots. This disturbance became more prominent towards the south-west end of site where the 2008 evaluation trench lay (Fig: 3).

Visible on the surface were two service trenches, aligned north-east to south-west [004] (Figs: 3 & 5) and east-west [008]. Both contained salt glazed ceramic drains, [004] being partially set within concrete.

Towards the north-east corner of the site was a roughly circular pit, interpreted as a soakaway yielding modern ceramics and bricks.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

No archaeological remains were encountered. Observation and recording was hampered visually by topsoil deposit (001) being heavily disturbed by previous groundworks, most notably the demolition of the previously upstanding garage and workshop and later truncation and backfilling of the 2008 evaluation trench.

## **8.0 Bibliography**

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## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

PCA would like to thank John Bell Civil Engineering Ltd for this commission.

## **10.0 Site Archive**

The archive is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd, Saxilby, Lincolnshire and will be deposited at The Collection, Lincoln (LCNCC 2009.165).



## Appendix 1 Plates



Plate 1.  
Site location,  
looking north.



Plate 2  
Excavated footings,  
Looking north.



Plate 3.  
Excavated footings looking south-west.  
Soakaway [006] in foreground truncated by machine.

Plate 4.  
Excavation of footing within east-west  
Run of drain [008].





**Appendix 2****Context Summary (RSTL 09)**

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>		<b>Description</b>
001	Layer	Above (003)	Mid brown silt/sand, very disturbed/mixed 0.75m thick with occasional bricks and frequent root disturbance.
002	Fill	Fill of Drain cut [004]	Mid brown sand sealing salt glazed drain, concrete and bricks.
003	Layer	Below (001)	Mid orange/yellow compact sand.
004	Cut	Contains (002), cuts layer (001)	Linear cut for drain, aligned north-east to south-west, 0.75m deep.
005	Fill	Fill of soakaway [006]	Loose dark grey/brown sand containing modern ceramics and bricks.
006	Cut	Contains (005), cuts layer (001)	Circular modern soakaway pit.
007	Fill	Below (009), fill of [008]	Dark grey sand sealing salt glazed drain.
008	Cut	Contains Fill (007)	Linear cut for drain, aligned east-west.
009	Layer	Above fill (007)	Concrete slab.