

**ERECTION OF TWO-STOREY REAR EXTENSION INCLUDING LOWER
GROUND FLOOR AT 59 STEEP HILL, LINCOLN**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING
REPORT**

Site code	SHLM 11
NGR:	SK 9766 7160
Planning Ref:	2010/03/0319/F
LCNCC Acc No:	2011.43
PCAS Ref:	742

Report prepared for

Robin Bradley Building Design
(on behalf of Mr and Mrs Keir-Tomalín)

by

J. Sleaf

September 2011



Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
47 Manor Road
Saxilby
Lincoln
LN1 2HX

Tel. & Fax. 01522 703800

©Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

Contents

	Site Summary	1
1	Introduction	2
1	Site Location	2
3	Planning Background	3
4	Archaeological Background	3
5	Methodology	4
6	Results	4
7	Conclusion	5
8	Bibliography	6
9	Acknowledgements	6
10	Site Archive	6

Appendix 1	Plates
Appendix 2	Context Summary
Appendix 3	Roman Pottery Archive for SHLM 11 by <i>Ian Rowlandson</i>
Appendix 4	Pottery Archive for SHLM 11 by <i>Jane Young</i>
Appendix 5	Ceramic Building Material Archive for SHLM 11 by <i>Jane Young</i>
Appendix 6	Animal Bone Archive for SHLM 11 by <i>Paul Cope-Faulkner</i>
Appendix 7	OASIS Form

The Figures

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).

Fig. 2 Detail of site location and monitored area (supplied by client) scale 1:500.

Fig. 3 Plan of monitored area & sections. Scale 1:50 & 1:40.

The Plates

- Pl. 1** General view of development area looking north.
- Pl. 2** Ground horizon (109) at base of possible Robber trench [111].
- Pl. 3** Consolidation deposit (108).
- Pl. 4** Possible column pad or capping (104) above consolidation deposit (108).
- Pl. 5** Terracing deposit (105) with consolidation (108) to the north and wall (113) visible to the south, cutting (105).
- Pl. 6** Wall (113) looking east.
- Pl. 7** Wall (113) looking east, with possible working surface (116) immediately south
- Pl. 8** Pit [107] truncating stone consolidation deposit (108) and ground horizon (109).

Summary

- *Archaeological monitoring and recording during contractors' reduction of ground levels for a rear extension at 59 Steep Hill, Lincoln revealed significant archaeological deposits and structures.*
- *The monitoring exposed a rectangular pit and post hole with associated structural features, including a dense foundation deposit, a wall and remnants of a possible degraded column base.*



Figure: 1 Site location map (based on the 2006 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey Explorer Map Sheet 272. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCA License No. 100049278).

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) undertook archaeological monitoring and recording to the rear of 59 Steep Hill, Lincoln. Controlled monitoring by H. Holderness took place between 23rd – 25th February and 1st March 2011.

The archaeological scheme was a condition of planning permission 2010/0319/F, granted in July 2010 by the City of Lincoln Council for “the erection of a two-storey rear extension, incorporating dining room at lower ground floor level and conservatory at ground floor level”. Condition 3 of this consent stated:

No development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of an appropriate programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved by the City of Lincoln Council as Local Planning Authority. The development shall take place only in full accordance with the approved WSI. No variation shall take place without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the preparation and implementation of an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation.

Condition 4 of the consent stated:

The applicant shall notify the Local Planning Authority of the intention to commence all works at least 7 days before commencement. Thereafter, the programme of archaeological work shall be completed in accordance with the approved WSI, including any necessary fieldwork, post-excavation analysis, report writing and archive deposition, as detailed in the approved scheme. The report and archive shall be prepared and deposited with the City Council’s Heritage Team within the LPA and the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of the archaeological works. The archive shall be deposited with The Collection, (Lincolnshire Museums) within twelve months of the completion of site works. No variation shall take place without prior written consent of the LPA

Reason: To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation and recording.

2.0 Site location and description

59 Steep Hill is located to the south of the junction between Steep Hill, Well Lane and St Martins Street (Figures 1 and 2). It sits within an area of mixed residential properties and shops (NGR: SK 9766 7160).

The rear of 59 Steep Hill lies below the present ground surface, and may possibly have been excavated to that level when originally constructed. Alternatively the surrounding levels to the rear of the property may have been built up with imported materials.

The site lies between two areas of drift geology, comprising Middle Lias clay and shale with ferruginous and phosphatic nodules in the north, with Lincolnshire Limestone and clay to the south (British Geological Survey, Sheet 114,1973).

3.0 Planning Background

Planning permission was granted in July 2010 by the City of Lincoln Council Planning Authority for “the erection of a two-storey rear extension, incorporating dining room at lower ground floor level and conservatory at ground floor level” (2010/-319/F).

The consent was granted subject to conditions: of particular relevance are Conditions 3 and 4 (above).

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 Iron Age, Lincoln is thought to have been a major centre for the *Corieltavi*, the local tribal entity that dominated much of the East Midlands on the eve of the Roman conquest. Evidence for Iron Age settlement around Lincoln appears to concentrate 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.*).

Early Saxon settlement in Lincoln is currently poorly understood. Small quantities of pottery and other cultural debris identified in the Upper City suggest some form of continuity, though not necessarily settlement *per se* 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 9th century (*ibid.*).

By the end of the 12th century Lincoln was the largest urban centre in the East Midlands and a pre-eminent European city. Most of its commercial success was based on the growing woollen and cloth industries, which were exported throughout the country and western Europe (Jones *et. al.* 2003).

The area is characterised predominately by 18th and 19th century red brick buildings, but stone medieval houses are known in the area: Norman House, at the top of Steep Hill, Jew’s House and Jew’s Court within 80m of the site. The site is also close to the location of the town’s medieval corn market (first recorded in 1310).

The site lies within the northern part of the lower town, close to the junction of Well Lane and St Martin’s Street. It fronts Steep Hill which is thought to have been established in the 11th century (Jones *et al* 2003: 194). Excavations at the junction of Steep Hill and Well Lane recovered Late Saxon Shelly ware (LSH) and Late Saxon Lincoln Sandy ware (LSLS).

There is much evidence of small and large scale terracing along the slope of the hill, but truncations from all periods have made certain sections difficult to interpret. Excavations in 1974 to the south of the site recorded Romano-British deposits close to the modern ground surface (Jones *et al* 2003: 85), and later Monitoring of groundworks at Ventnor Lodge, Danesgate, Lincoln, revealed a dense clay, stone robbed surface dating to the 1st century AD, interpreted as being remnants of possible terracing (PCAS 2010).

Steep Hill is not known to be a Romano-British thoroughfare, but Well Lane to the immediate north of the site has been suggested as the probable route for wheeled vehicles during the *Colonia* Era (Jones *et al* 2003: 86).

5.0 Methodology

The groundworks monitored comprised the removal of concrete slabs covering the present yard area (3m by 7m) and ground surface reduction to the rear of 59 Steep Hill, Lincoln, prior to consolidation by a concrete raft and underlying compacted limestone to a depth of approximately 300mm.

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.

6.0 Results

The earliest deposit encountered comprised mottled orange-brown clay (109), which has been interpreted as a bedding deposit for a substantial concentration of roughly hewn limestone blocks (108) set within stiff green clay, approximately 2.1m square. A total of 21 sherds of pottery were recovered along with a single fragment of glass. The pottery assemblage comprised twenty sherds dating from the Neronian period and the later 2nd century AD. This group was mainly fresh but the intrusion of later 2nd century material suggests a disturbed context, resulting mainly from the re-working of terracing during subsequent Roman occupational phases. A rare fabric in the form of a single sherd of Central Gaulish Green Glaze was present within this assemblage: decorated with applied barbotine trails of fine white clay, this sherd, from either a cup or beaker, is one of only four others retrieved from excavations within the city of Lincoln.

The function of this structure is unknown, but from its general spread across the area concerned, it appeared to be some form of levelling or consolidation.

Set within (108) was an arrangement of irregular limestone fragments (104), measuring approximately 1.1m x 0.9m in plan. These fragments were firmly set within a bonding of grey clay, the majority being on edge and possibly forming some type of capping for a large pit or well, or possibly the base for a column or post.

Partially sealing (108) was a dense, compact deposit of grey-yellow clay (105), 0.25m+ thick. This re-deposited material may represent surviving remnants of Roman terracing, reinforcing the interpretation that (108) was an area of hard standing. A similar deposit was encountered during monitoring at Ventnor Lodge, approximately 20m to the north-west, and also interpreted as terracing material (PCAS 2010).

A small amount of animal bone was retrieved, belonging to cattle and sheep (the pelvis of one exhibited butchery marks). This deposit also yielded three sherds of

pottery dated to the early to middle 2nd century AD, including two fragments from a cream ring necked flagon and a sherd of the legionary LEG fabric. Also present was a fragment of Roman or post-Roman tile coated in mortar.

At its northern extent, (108) was truncated by a partially visible, possibly rectangular, pit [107], 1.6m x 0.7m in plan, and filled with dark brown silty clay (103). This yielded a small assemblage of animal bone pertaining to cattle, sheep/goat, two of which showed signs of butchery.

A small posthole [112], filled with grey silty clay (110), was revealed cutting into bedding deposit (109).

Truncating the clay deposit (105) to the south was a foundation trench [114], containing a limestone wall foundation (113). The single course revealed was approximately 0.2m in height, 1.8m in length and 0.5m wide, constructed from large dressed blocks on its south facing edge, with smaller, roughly hewn material behind to the north, from which a single pottery sherd was retrieved (Nene Valley colour coated beaker dated to the late 2nd to 4th century AD). The smaller stones were interpreted as packing but could well be tumble or deliberate deposition within the silty clay backfill (115) of the wall cut, which produced four sherds of Roman pottery and an intrusive fragment of 19th century drain.

Immediately south of wall (113) lay a small, narrow patch of mid brown silt containing frequent small limestone chippings (116). Identified as a possible working surface, this deposit could represent the Roman ground horizon, contemporary with the construction of the wall.

The partial remnants of a cut feature [111] were revealed at the northern limit of the monitored area. Aligned east to west, this feature had truncated both pit [107] and consolidation layer (108). Its fill comprised brown gritty clay (106), containing occasional brick, stone fragments and animal bone, one, a radius belonging to a deer. Also present were two sherds of pottery; a glazed red earthenware bowl from the mid 16th to mid 17th century and an early medieval fabric dated to the 12th century. This feature may have been associated with the construction of 59 Steep Hill, and its irregular cut edges (following the stonework of (108)) may indicate the deliberate robbing of material from underlying Roman horizons.

Truncating all deposits and structures along the western edge of the site was a significant area of disturbance (102) which comprised a large modern drain set within concrete, along with a manhole and several re-cuts for smaller services radiating out to the south - all constructed in the 1960s.

Sealing the site was a levelling of grey-brown gritty clay (101) and concrete (100), forming the levelling and current ground surface to the yard.

7.0 Conclusion

The monitoring at 59 Steep Hill revealed a high concentration of archaeology within a small area, approximately 4m by 3m. The southern and western extents of the site were heavily disturbed by services installed in the 1960's.

The northern end of the investigated area was dominated by a dense concentration of limestone (108). Interpreted as an area of hard standing, and combined with compacted clay (105), this combination of materials may possibly have been associated with Roman terracing between the 1st to late 2nd century AD. This context

yielded an assemblage of pottery associated with drinking vessels; supporting the notion that a trading community of wine shops and 'booths' (*canabae*) operated within this area (Jones 2003).

The southern extent of (105) was truncated by a limestone wall (113) dated between the late 2nd to 4th centuries AD. This structure may have formed a revetment to counteract subsidence of the terracing due to surface water that emitted from springs on the hillside (Jones 2002).

The narrow view offered by such small scale monitoring made it difficult to fully elucidate the deposits encountered, as did the intrusive nature of later services. However, the survival of material immediately below existing ground level highlights the importance of monitoring small scale developments within this area of the *Colonia*.

8.0 Bibliography

BGS 1973 *British Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales); Solid and Drift; Sheet 114 Lincoln*. Scale 1:50,000.

Jones, M.J. 2002 *Roman Lincoln: Conquest, Colony & Capital*.

Jones, M.J., Stocker, D., and Vince, A. 2003 *The City by the Pool: Assessing the archaeology of the city of Lincoln*.

Rylatt, J. 2008 *Robey Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire: Lithic Material Catalogue*.

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd 2010 *Ventnor Lodge, Danesgate, Lincoln: Archaeological monitoring and recording. Unpublished client report 642*.

9.0 Acknowledgements

PCA would like to thank Robin Bradley Building Design 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 2011.43).