

Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the groundworks for the construction of a new residential dwelling on land at 18 Queen Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire.
- Given the shallow nature of the foundation excavations, the watching brief did not identify any archaeological features and/or deposits, and no artefacts were retrieved.

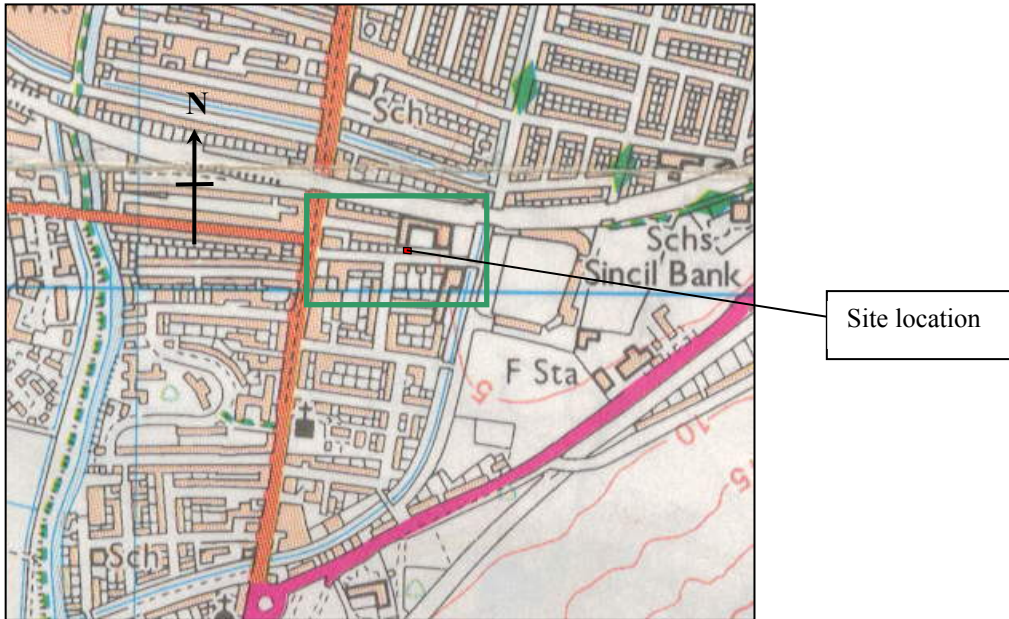


Figure 1: Location of site at a scale of 1:25,000, with a green inset showing the outline of Figure 2. (O.S. copyright licence no. A1 515 21 A0001)

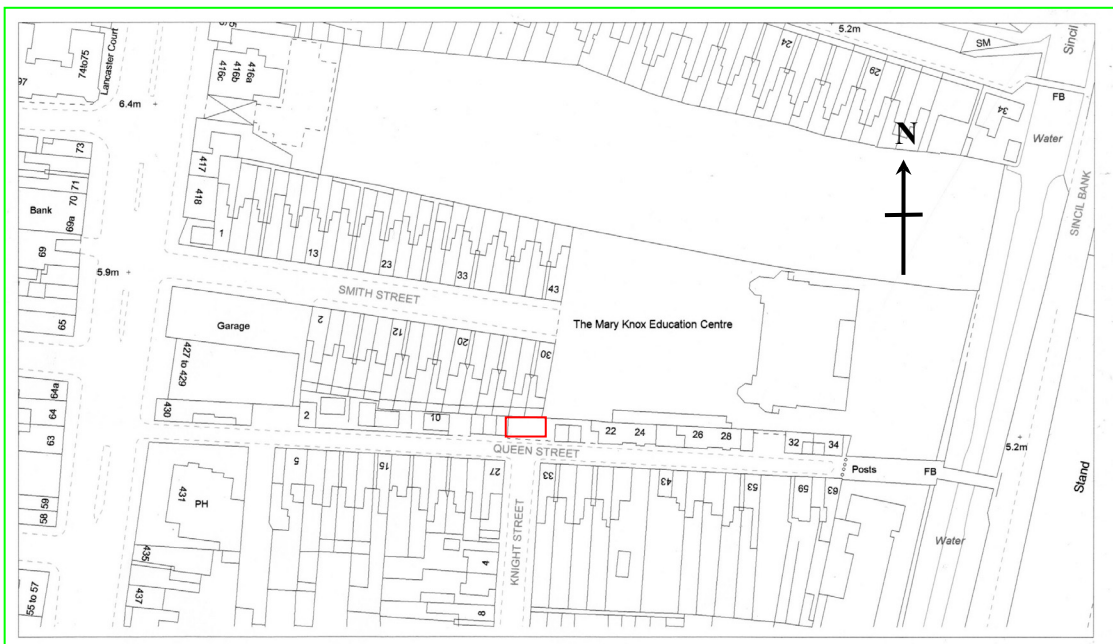


Figure 2: Site location, showing site boundaries outlined in red (scale 1:2,500)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Saxilby Construction Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the initial site groundworks for the construction of a residential dwelling on land at No. 18 Queen Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire.

The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Archaeologist for the City of Lincoln Council, and the recommendations of '*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice*' (LCC, 1998), *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (Department of the Environment, 1990), and *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IFA, 1999).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the client, the Planning Archaeologist of the City of Lincoln Council, and the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER). A further report will also be deposited at the Lincoln City and County Museum (The Collection), along with an ordered project archive for long-term storage and curation.

2.0 Site location and description (Figures 1 and 2)

The development site is situated to the south of the city centre, to the east of the High Street, and on the northern frontage of Queen Street. It comprises a rectangular shaped plot of land of approximately 8.5m by 6m in extent, which is bounded to the north, east and west by residential dwellings, and to the south by Queen Street itself. The site was formerly a small open area of waste ground at a height of approximately 5mAOD.

The local drift deposits comprise river terrace alluvial sands and gravels (BGS, 1973).

National Grid Reference: SK 9730 7006

3.0 Planning background

An application for planning permission for the erection of a residential dwelling on land at No. 18, Queen Street, Lincoln was submitted to, and granted consent by, Lincoln City Council. However, as the development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area, an archaeological condition (No. 5) was attached to this consent requiring that a watching brief be carried out during the construction phase of development.

Planning reference: 2006/0402/RM

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

With the exception of occasional chance finds of prehistoric artefacts, there is little evidence of sustained contemporary settlement activity in Lincoln until the later Iron Age. During this period, much of Lincolnshire was occupied by a tribe called the *Corieltauvi*, who had a major centre at Lincoln.

By the late 1st century AD, Lincoln or *Lindum* was a Roman *colonia* enclosed with a defensive wall. By the 2nd century AD, this settlement had extended southwards and downhill towards the River Witham.

A Roman road – Ermine Street – extended southwards from this settlement, and probably passed close to the site. It is known that extensive contemporary ribbon settlement extended along either side of Ermine Street, with the potential that settlement remains such as buildings, cemeteries etc. may be situated in the vicinity. The site is also situated to the west of the Sincil Dyke, which was constructed as a flood defensive earthwork during the Roman period. Finds of early military tombstones have been made to the south of the site, on the South Common, suggesting that an early Roman fort may have existed in this area.

There is also potential for medieval settlement activity to be encountered within the area of development. The Sincil Dyke formed the eastern boundary of the medieval suburb of Wigford. It is believed that medieval properties were located on the line of the modern High Street, which is situated approximately 100m to the west of this site. The area is also known to have been a focus for medieval tile manufacture.

On the land now occupied by 53-59 Queen Street, and to the southeast of the site, two watching briefs were carried out between 2003-4. The first identified an alluvial horizon that recorded a sequence of flooding episodes associated with the nearby River Witham. The second located a linear boundary and/or drainage features of early medieval origin, and a probable Victorian quarry pit.

Two further archaeological watching briefs have been undertaken on the adjoining properties to the immediate west and east. At No. 16, Queen Street, the watching brief revealed a sequence of demolition or levelling deposits that yielded a small assemblage of 13th century roof tile. However, it was undetermined whether this material was *in situ* or residual. The watching brief at 20-21 Queen Street located a domestic refuse pit dated to the mid 12th-mid 13th centuries overlain by a later garden soil.

5.0 Methodology (Figure 3)

Following the initial clearance of vegetation and general rubbish, the excavations for a slab foundation were carried out using a 3-ton 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.2m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trench was excavated to a uniform depth of approximately 450mm below the adjacent street level.

Where necessary, surfaces were hand cleaned for examination and recording, and deposits observed were recorded on standard context recording sheets. A plan and

section were compiled of the exposed deposits at scales of 1:50 and 1:20 respectively, and were located on the site plan. A complementary colour photographic slide record was maintained, extracts from which are reproduced in Appendix 1.

The watching brief was completed on the 28th of November 2006, and was carried out by Neville Hall.

6.0 Results (Figure 3, Section 1)

Following the removal of modern overburden, which consisted of roots, brick fragments etc. within a dark black sandy silt, down to an average depth of 160mm, the watching brief identified a modern topsoil (001). This extended down to a further depth of 200-250mm, at which point mechanical excavation was terminated. Large modern brick fragments and fragments of wood were observed within deposit (001).

Two modern brick walls were also encountered during the watching brief. These comprised the basal courses of probable former modern tenement walls. The east-west orientated brick wall was removed during the course of the foundation excavations.

7.0 Discussion and conclusions

The watching brief revealed a modern topsoil horizon below modern overburden. Both of these deposits extended throughout the whole area of the site.

Given the shallow nature of the foundation excavations, no archaeological features and/or deposits were identified, and no artefacts were recovered from the site, excluding modern building rubble.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen and the limited nature of the groundworks adequately demonstrated the unlikelihood of significant archaeological remains being encountered in the development area, while providing sufficient time to record the deposits observed; a more detailed level of archaeological intervention was not therefore necessary.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Saxilby Construction Limited for this commission.

10.0 References

Brett, A., 2003, *Queen Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report*. PCA (Lincoln) client report.

British Geological Survey, 1973, *Lincoln: England and Wales Sheet 115, Solid and Drift Geology, 1:50,000 Provisional Series.*

Clay, C., Savage, S., 2004, *Archaeological Watching Brief Report: Land Between 53-59 Queen Street, Lincoln.* PCA (Lincoln) client report.

Munford, W., 2005, *Archaeological Watching Brief Report, Land off Queen Street, Lincoln.* PCA (Lincoln) client report.

11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). The paper and object archive will be deposited at The Collection in Lincoln within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number: 2006.264.