

LAND TO THE EAST OF 41 MAIN STREET, SCOPWICK, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

REPORT

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Prepared for

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Summary

- Archaeological recording was conducted during groundworks for a new dwelling in the former garden of No. 41 Main Street, Scopwick.
- A layer of soil and brick and stone demolition rubble overlay a buried topsoil horizon, which covered natural sands and gravels. No evidence was found of past human activity or artefacts pre-dating the post-medieval period. Eight sherds of post-medieval to modern pottery and one fragment of modern wall tile were recovered from the uppermost layer.
- The sands and gravels indicate that a watercourse crossed the site at an unknown period.



Fig.1: Site location (based on the 1999 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer map, Sheet 272. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS Licence No. 100049278).

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) was commissioned by Jackson Homes (Scopwick) Ltd to undertake a scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the groundworks for the construction of two dwellings and the conversion of existing buildings on land to the east of 41 Main Street, Scopwick, Lincolnshire. Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by Julian Sleep on July 12th and 15th 2010.

The archaeological programme was undertaken to meet the objectives of a project specification prepared by PCAS (dated 21/4/2010), based upon a detailed brief issued by the North Kesteven District Council Planning Archaeologist (dated 11/2/2010). The project followed current best practice and national guidance including the *Archaeology Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council, 2010), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 as revised), and *Code of Conduct* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2008).

2.0 Site Location and Description (Figs. 1 & 2)

The village of Scopwick is situated 13km north-east of Sleaford. The development site is to the east of 41 Main Street, to the north of the road and towards the eastern side of the village. The plot lies to the south-east of the Springfield Estate and west of Vicarage Lane (NGR SK 07125 58095). The land had been part of the garden of No. 41 but was derelict with a disused outbuilding at the northern end.

The British Geological Survey has mapped argillaceous (clayey) rocks with sandstone and limestone on the site, which is on the northern side of a small stream valley at about 14.7m OD. Limestone deposits are present to the south-east of the village.

3.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted by North Kesteven District Council for the construction of two new dwellings, and the conversion of existing buildings to become a garage and family annexe. The consent had conditions attached, including Condition 11:

"No development shall take place unless and until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of an agreed written specification that sets out a programme of work to archaeologically monitor groundworks during development. The specification shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The programme of work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved specification. A final report of the archaeological findings will be submitted to the local planning authority within six months of the completion of the development, or such longer period as may be agreed by the local planning authority."

Reason: To ensure that provision is made for archaeological remains encountered during development works to be adequately recorded, and the information is made available in accordance with Policy HE3 of the adopted North Kesteven Local Plan.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Iron Age pottery has been found in a garden to the north of Main Street (Lincs. Historic Environment Record 63414), and 4th century Roman pottery, a human skull, and coins (HER 63405) were reported from a findspot c. 85m to the west of the site in 1959 during excavations for a sewer. Further pottery was found in 1976 to the south of Vicarage Lane (HER 63399), and a Roman ditch was identified in the same area (HER 63573).

The settlement of Scopwick is recorded in the *Domesday Survey* of 1086 and is probably of Saxon origin although there are indications from the early place-name forms that this could have been the earliest Scandinavian settlement on the slope to the south of Lincoln (Cameron 1998, 107; Lincs. HER 63378). The site probably lies within the historic settlement core, and the development area previously formed part of the garden of 41 Main Street.

A description of 19th century Scopwick, published in 1960, recorded that village labourers lived close to the beck in one-roomed thatched cottages (Oliver 1960, cited by HER 63378).

5.0 Aims and Objectives

The primary objective of the scheme was to identify, record, and interpret any archaeological remains exposed, disturbed or destroyed by groundworks associated with the development.

6.0 Methodology

Archaeological monitoring and recording took place during excavation by the contractors of test pits to the south and north of Plot 1, on the western side of the development area. Both test pits encountered sandy gravels with a high water table and solid ground was only reached in the northern test pit at a depth of 1.8m below ground level. The ground conditions required a revision of the foundation strategy, and a 200mm thick consolidation layer was laid in the trenches immediately after a 5m length had been excavated. The ground conditions and this construction method reduced the opportunities for detailed recording of the trench faces.

The 1m wide foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.8m below ground level using a JCB fitted with a toothed bucket. Trench and context numbers were assigned by PCAS for recording purposes, and these are identified on Figs. 3 and 4 and in Appendix 2. A machine breakdown occurred after the excavation of the majority of the foundation trenches for Plot 1, and further monitoring of the groundworks was halted as no archaeological features or significant artefacts had been found.

7.0 Results (Figs. 3 and 4)

7.1 Test Pits

Each of the test pits was excavated to a width of 1m – 1.5m and a length of 2m. The southern pit, Test Pit 1, was sited 5m south of the position of the new dwelling in Plot 1, and Test Pit 2 was sited 4m to the north of the dwelling site.

Test Pit 1 was excavated through a 0.9m thick layer of soil, brick and stone rubble (001) into a layer of orange sands and gravels (002) which extended to the test pit base, 2m below ground level (Fig. 4a).

In Test Pit 2, layer (001) was 0.6m thick and covered a 0.4m thick layer of dark grey/brown silty clay (003), which was interpreted as a buried topsoil horizon (Fig. 4b; Pl. 2). Beneath it, the sand and gravel layer (002) was 0.7m thick, with part of an underlying grey clay layer (004) visible at the trench base.

No artefacts or archaeological features were found in either test pit.

7.2 Foundation Trenches, Plot 1

The uppermost layer (001), containing brick and stone rubble, was thickest (0.6m) at the south-western part of the new house plot, thinning to 0.3m at the northern end. Buried topsoil layer (003) was present in all trenches, and thickest at the northern end of the house plot. This suggests that (001) had been used to level a slightly sloping site and may have been introduced from elsewhere.

Eight sherds of pottery were found in layer (001), ranging in date from the 18th to 20th century. A fragment of wall tile may be even more recent. No other artefacts or archaeological features were found during excavation of the foundation trenches.

8.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The only evidence of past human activity on this site comprised 8 sherds of post-medieval-modern pottery and a piece of modern wall tile. There were no indications of archaeological features, but the naturally deposited sands and gravels appear to be evidence of a former watercourse, crossing the entire site. The date of this natural feature is not known but the presence of the watercourse (or its former site) may have limited the extent of the Roman occupation which has been previously recorded to the north-west beside Vicarage Lane and within the Springfields estate.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology.

The methodology employed was sufficient to allow the identification and recording of deposits exposed by the groundworks.

10.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank Jackson Homes (Scopwick) Ltd for this commission.

11.0 Bibliography

- Archaeology Handbook* (2010), Lincolnshire County Council.
Cameron, K., 1998 *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*. The English Place-Name Society.
Institute for Archaeologists, 2008. *Code of Conduct*. Reading: IfA.
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Oliver, G. 1960 *Lincolnshire Historian*. Vol 2, No 7, p. 32.

12.0 Site Archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently held by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. This will be deposited with The Collection. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the LCNCC: 2010.63.

Appendix 2: Context Summary

Context	Type	Relationships	Description
001	Layer	Above 003	0.9m thick layer of grey/brown silty sand with frequent limestone rubble and recent demolition debris. Post-medieval and modern ceramic sherds.
002	Layer	Below 003, above 004	1m thick layer of orange gravel, apparently naturally laid.
003	Layer	Above 002, below 001	0.4m thick layer of dark grey/brown silty clay, interpreted as a buried topsoil layer.
004	Layer	Below 002	Grey clay layer, at least 0.1m thick. Natural clay.