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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF DEVELOPMENT AT MONK'S COTTAGE,  
KIRKBY UNDERWOOD ROAD,  
ASLACKBY, <sup>+ LAUGHTON</sup> <sub>Street</sub>  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(AKU 00)



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OF DEVELOPMENT AT MONK'S COTTAGE,  
KIRKBY UNDERWOOD ROAD,  
ASLACKBY, + LAUGHTON <sup>Street</sup>  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(AKU 00)

Work Undertaken For  
Mr and Mrs Potter

August 2000

Report Compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

Planning Application No: S00/0067/03  
National Grid Reference: TF 08438 30113  
City and County Museum Accession No: 2000.114

A.P.S. Report No.124/00



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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of an extension to an existing property at Monk's Cottage, Kirkby Underwood Road, Aslackby, Lincolnshire.*

*A Romano-British (AD50-410) burial contained within a stone cist was found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century at Monk's Cottage. During the medieval period (1066-1500), Aslackby was a centre for a Knight's Templar preceptory and possibly a castle.*

*The watching brief revealed a subsoil, buried soil and a concrete yard surface. However, a quantity of human bone was retrieved from the subsoil and may indicate the presence of a group burial.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as a 'formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons within a specified area or site.., where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Potter to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the construction of an extension to an existing dwelling at Monk's Cottage, Aslackby, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application S00/0067/03. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological

recording. The watching brief was undertaken on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2000.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Aslackby is located 16km south of Sleaford and 18km east of Grantham in the administrative district of South Kesteven (Fig. 1).

The site is located 300m south of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. James (Fig. 2). Situated at a height of c. 35m OD the site is centred on National Grid Reference TF 08433 30113. Local topography describes the village as set within a stream valley and the site on the north facing slope.

Local soils are of the Denchworth Association, typically pelo-stagnogley soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 155) with Ragdale Association, also pelo-stagnogley soils, on the higher ground around the village (*ibid.* 293). These soils overlie outcrops of Jurassic Cornbrash, Oxford Clay and Blisworth Clay, with more recent alluvium in the valley floor (GSGB 1972).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Aslackby is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period to the present day. A Romano-British burial, within a stone cist, was found on the site of Monk's Cottage about 1836.

Aslackby is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Aslachebi* the name is derived from the Old Norse and means the settlement or 'by' of 'Aslac's' people (Ekwall 1974, 16). The Domesday Survey records that the land was owned by Robert de Toden, Gilbert de Gand and Oger the Breton and contained at least 52 acres of meadow and 38 acres of underwood and may



also have had a church (Foster and Longley 1976).

Extant remains of the medieval period comprise the church and Aslackby Manor House (DoE 1987). St. James's church dates from the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries with additions in *c.* 1330 and the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.* 8) and the Manor House is late medieval (*ibid.* 3, 10).

Located 300m northeast of the site is Temple Farm where a Knight's Templar preceptory was founded in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century (Page 1988, 211). Remains of the buildings, including a round church, were visible in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (White 1981, 5). Following the suppression of the Knight's Templars in 1312 the land was taken over by the Knight's Hospitallers who managed the estate from Temple Bruer (Page 1988, 212). Carved stones, including a 15<sup>th</sup> century window, are found in the present farmhouse.

Located north of the church are a number of earthworks believed by some to be the remains of Aslackby Castle although the few references to the castle appear to have been mistaken with Bourne (Cathcart-King 1983, 265). However, the earthworks are a Scheduled Ancient Monument (County No. 288).

### 3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as detailed in the project brief (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, form and function.

### 4. METHODS

A single trench was excavated to the depth required for the new extension. Following

excavation by hand, the sides of the trench were cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were partially or fully excavated by hand to determine their nature and to retrieve artefactual material. The depth and thickness of each deposit was measured from the ground surface. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Records of the deposits and features encountered were also examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

## 5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis, a total of two phases were identified:

Phase 1	Undated deposits
Phase 2	Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in square brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

### Phase 1 Undated deposits

Located in the base of the trench was a subsoil deposit of yellowish brown clayey silt (001) that was thicker than 0.5m. A quantity of human bone was retrieved from this deposit, although given the size of the trench, it could not be ascertained if the material was articulated. The bone was concentrated along the eastern side of the trench.



Overlying the subsoil was a former topsoil of greyish brown silt (004) that measured 0.2m thick.

## Phase 2 Modern deposits

Overlying the buried topsoil (004) was a 0.12m thick layer of mixed rubble (003) forming the make-up for the present concrete yard surface (002).

## 6. DISCUSSION

A subsoil represents the earliest deposit encountered (Phase 1). The subsoil is overlain by a buried topsoil.

Human bone was retrieved from the subsoil deposit and indicates the presence of at least four individuals, two adult and two juvenile. The proximity of a known Romano-British burial in the vicinity would suggest that these are of the same period. As the bones came from a well defined area, it is possible that the development affected a group or family burial. The bone includes fragments from all over the skeleton and may suggest it was disarticulated prior to burial.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were carried out during development at Kirkby Underwood Road, Aslackby, Lincolnshire, because the site lies in close proximity to a known Romano-British burial and later medieval remains.

A small quantity of human bones, representing at least four individuals, was retrieved from a subsoil. Though undated, they may be part of an extensive Romano-British cemetery. The nature of the local site conditions would suggest that few environmental indicators (seeds, wood, snails

etc.) would survive other than through charring.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr and Mrs Potter who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Tom Lane. Jo Simpson, the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist, permitted access to the relevant parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor  
Supervisor: Rachael Hall  
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley  
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner, Phil Mills  
Photographic Reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## **11. ABBREVIATIONS**

GSGB Geological Survey of Great Britain

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

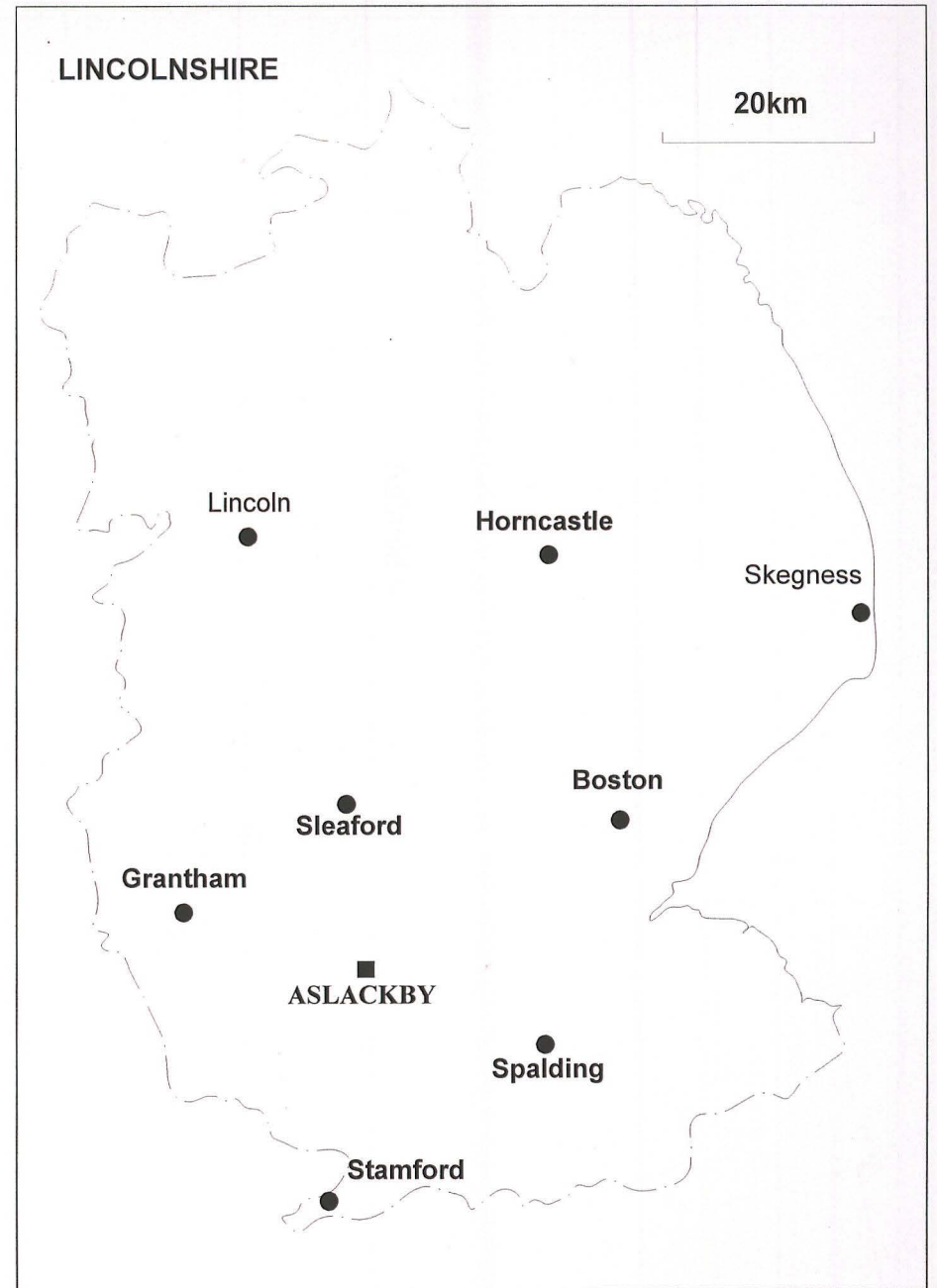
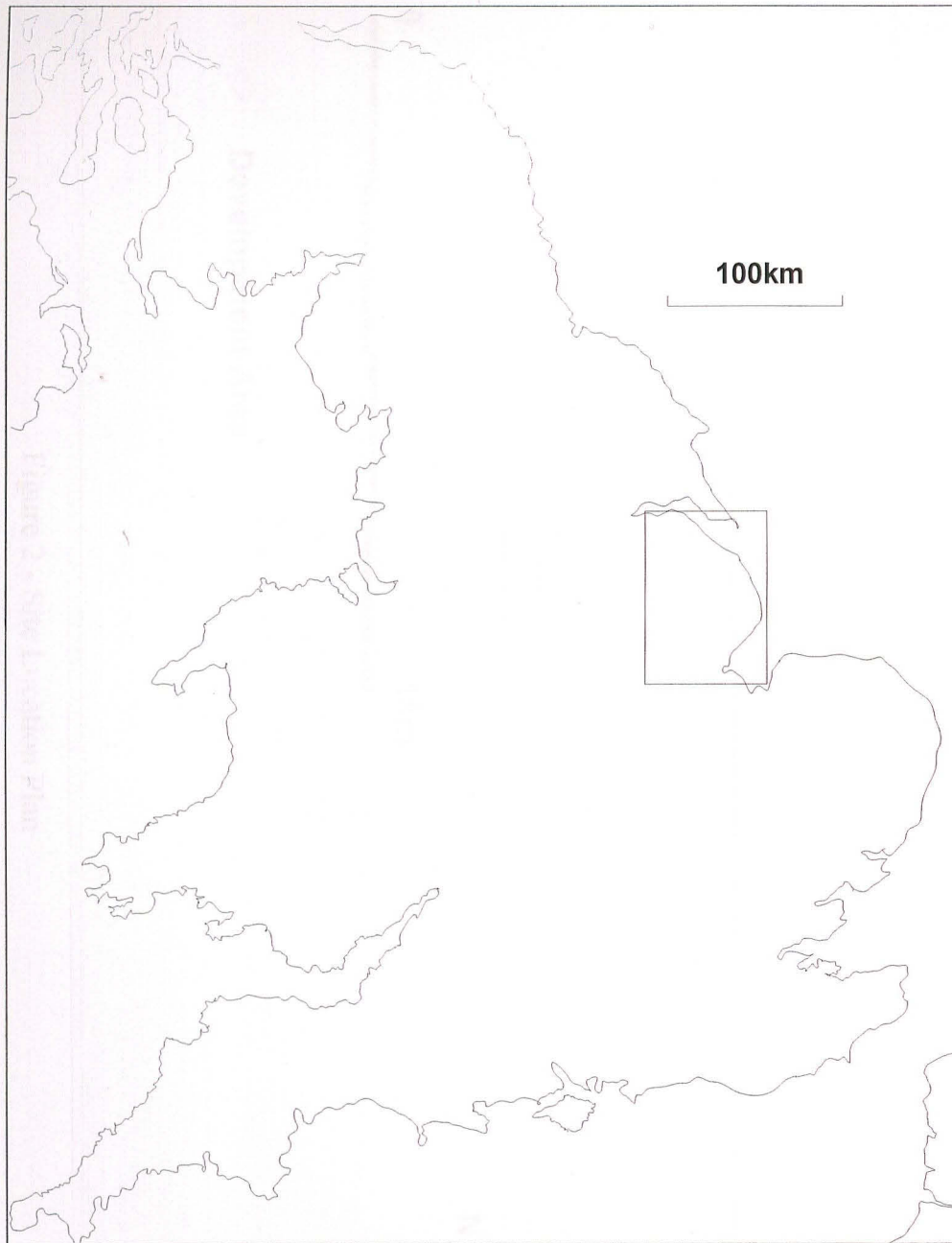


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



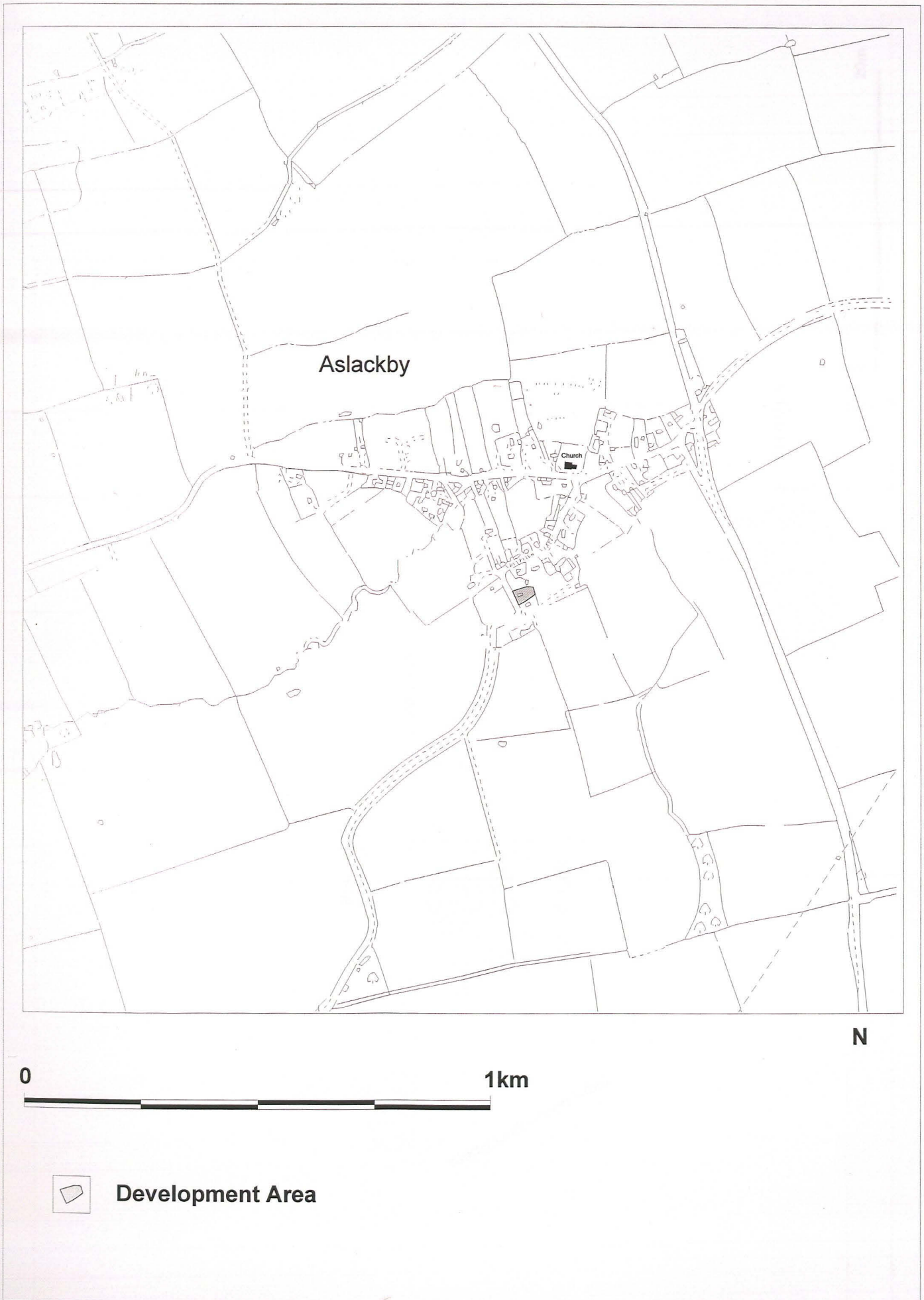


Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

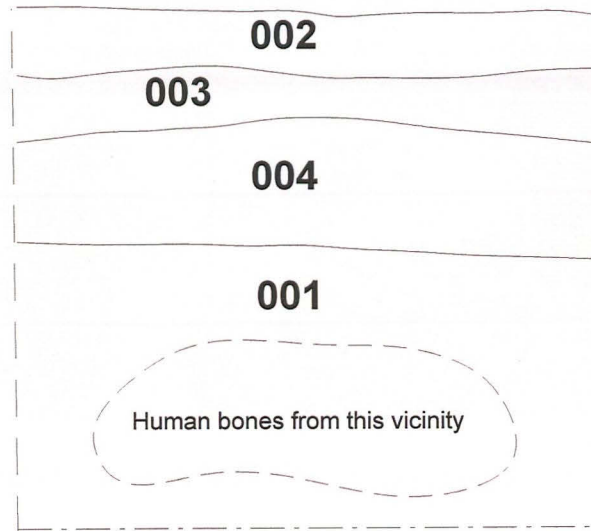


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section location



SE

NW



Section 1  
Southwest Facing



Figure 4 - Section 1

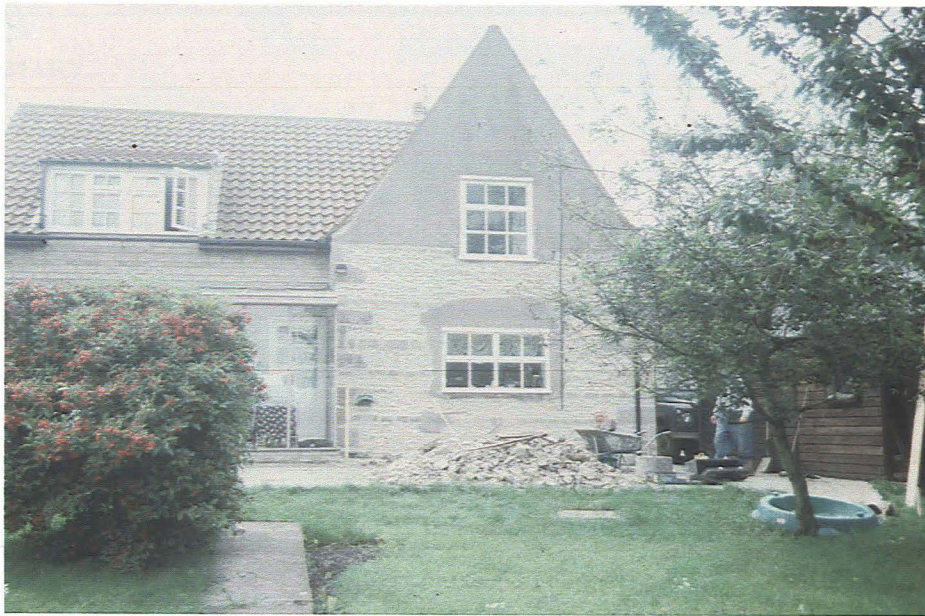


Plate 1 - General view of the development area, looking west



Plate 2 - Section 1, looking east



## Appendix 1

### WATCHING BRIEF DURING EXTENSION TO DWELLING, MONKS COTTAGE, KIRKBY UNDERWOOD ROAD, ASLACKBY.

#### 1. SUMMARY.

- .1 This document is the brief for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during two-storey extension to dwelling, Monks Cottage, Kirkby Underwood, Aslackby.
- 1.2 This brief should be used by archaeological contractors as the basis for the preparation of a detailed archaeological project specification. In response to this brief contractors will be expected to provide details of the proposed scheme of work, to include the anticipated working methods, timescales and staffing levels. (The Community Archaeologist does not maintain a list of archaeological contractors but names of local units can be found in the Yellow Pages or from the Institute of Field Archaeologists Tel 0118 931 6446.)
- 1.3 The detailed specifications will be submitted for approval to the Community Archaeologist of South Kesteven District Council. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy this brief.

#### 2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.

- 2.1 The application site lies in the south of the village. Aslackby village itself is sited towards the east of the South Kesteven administrative district. The actual site itself is situated at NGR: TF 08438 30113. Please see location map.

#### 3. PLANNING BACKGROUND.

- 3.1 A full planning application renewal has been submitted to South Kesteven District Council for: Two storey extension to dwelling (S00/0067/03). Due to the possibility that archaeological remains may be present on the site, the Community Archaeologist for South Kesteven has recommended that a Watching Brief take place during the groundwork stages of the development.

#### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

- 4.1 The application site lies within a village rich in medieval remains. St. James' church dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century at least, and possibly the thirteenth century. Close by is the Manor, which has acquired later additions, but appears to have started out as a medieval open hall. Behind both the church and Manor lie the earthwork remains of Aslackby Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument 288). Evidence suggests the castle has been there since the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. Temple Farm, to the north-east of the proposed development, is the site of the former Knight's Templars preceptory founded in 1192. Although very little remains of the templar buildings, old descriptions and sketches indicates that it was actually very similar to the better preserved Templar site at Temple Bruer in North Kesteven. In the close vicinity of the application site, remains relating to an even earlier period in Aslackby's history were discovered in the last century, in the form of a cist burial, which is believed to date to the Roman period, on evidence of later finds of pottery and glass in the area. **There are indications that human remains may be uncovered in this area, it may therefore be wise to include a contingency sum to cover this possibility.**

#### .5 REQUIREMENT FOR WORK.

- 5.1 The objective of the watching brief should be to ensure that any archaeological features exposed by the groundworks are recorded and interpreted and that any remains disturbed are recovered.
- 5.2 Any adjustments to the brief for the Watching Brief project should only be made after discussion with the Community Archaeologist of South Kesteven District Council.



5.3 The contractor's specification should be prepared according to requirements of this brief and the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook's section 'Standard Briefs for Archaeological Projects in Lincolnshire' (August 1997) and should include the following details:

- 5.3.1 A projected timetable must be agreed for the various stages of work.
- 5.3.2 The staff structure and numbers must be detailed.
- 5.3.3 It is expected that all on-site work will be carried out in a way that complies with the relevant Health and Safety Legislation and that due consideration will be given to site security.
- 5.3.4 The recovery and recording strategies to be used must be described in full. It is expected that an approved single context recording system will be used for all on-site and post fieldwork procedures;
- 5.3.5 An estimate of time and resources allocated for the post-excavation report in the form of 'person hours'. This should include lists of specialists and their role in the project. **There should be no change to any of the specialists listed in the specification, unless previously discussed with the Community Archaeologist.**

## .6 METHODS

6.1 The investigation should be carried out by a recognised archaeological body in accordance with the code of conduct of The Institute of Field Archaeologists. **If the specialists to be used by the archaeological body are not IFA registered and are not locally recognised, a CV or some other form of reference should be provided with the specification.**

6.2 Where appropriate, the watching brief should involve:

- 6.2.1 archaeological supervision of soil stripping;
- 6.2.2 inspection of subsoil for archaeological features;
- 6.2.3 recording of archaeological features in plan;
- 6.2.4 rapid excavation of features if necessary.
- 6.2.5 archaeological supervision of subsoil stripping;
- 6.2.6 inspection of natural for archaeological features and recording of them;
- 6.2.7 any human remains encountered must be left in situ and only removed if absolutely necessary. The contractor must comply with all statutory consents and licences under the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981 or other Burial Acts regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. It will also be necessary to comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the method of removal, reinterment or disposal of the remains or associated items. Attempt must be made at all times not to cause offence to any interested parties;
- 6.2.8 If discovered during excavation, finds of gold and silver must be archaeologically removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner immediately (within 14 days) in accordance with the procedures of the Treasure Act 1997 and Code of Practice. If removal of such finds is not possible on the same day then adequate security arrangements must be made.
- 6.2.9 The use of a metal detector on site is encouraged. Especially for the survey of spoil heaps.

## 7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENT.

7.1 The Community Archaeologist of South Kesteven District Council will be responsible for monitoring



progress and standards throughout the project and will require at least fourteen days notice prior to the commencement of the work. The Community Archaeologist should be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and regularly updated on the project's progress. They should be allowed access to the site at their convenience and will comply with any health and safety requirements associated with the site.

## 8. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

- 8.1 A full report should be produced and deposited with the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist, South Kesteven District Council Planning Department, the Developer and the County Sites and Monuments Record. The report should include:
  - 8.1.1 location plan of the development;
  - 8.1.2 section and plan drawing, with ground level, Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scales as appropriate;
  - 8.1.3 specialist descriptions of artefacts and ecofacts;
  - 8.1.4 an indication of potential archaeological deposits not disturbed by the present development;
- 8.2 After agreement with the landowner, arrangements should be made for long term storage of all artefacts in the City and County Museum, Lincoln, as outlined in that Museum's document 'Conditions for the acceptance of Project Archives'. The City and County Museum should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity so that the full cost implications of the archive deposition can be taken into account.
- 8.3 A site archive should be produced and deposited with the artefacts as detailed in 8.2.
- 8.4 A summary of the results will be published in Lincolnshire History and Archaeology in due course.
- 8.5 Should the Watching Brief reveal finds of national or regional importance, provision should be made for publication in the appropriate regional or national journal.

## 9. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

- 9.1 This document attempts to define the best practice expected of an archaeological watching brief but cannot fully anticipate the conditions that will be encountered as work progresses. However, changes to the approved programme of excavation are only to be made with the prior written approval of the Community Archaeologist.

Brief set by Community Archaeologist, South Kesteven District Council. February 2000. This project brief is valid for a period of six months. After that period consult the SKCA.

## Appendix 2

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Soft mid yellowish brown clayey silt with frequent human bone, >0.49m thick	Subsoil
002	Solid greyish white concrete with gravel inclusions, 0.11m thick	Yard surface
003	Compact mixed grey and reddish yellow rubble, 0.12m thick	Make-up for 002
004	Firm dark greyish brown silt, 0.2m thick	Former topsoil



### Appendix 3

#### THE HUMAN BONE

*by James Rackham*

*Environmental Archaeology Consultancy*

A collection of human bones (context 001) were retrieved during a watching brief at Aslackby and submitted for analysis.

The collection is an assemblage of disarticulated human bones including parts of the pelves, scapulae, clavicle, femur, humerus, radius, ulna, ribs, vertebrae, skull and foot. A single dog chewed radius shaft of a sheep is also included.

At least four individuals are represented among the bones, although only the ulnae have examples from all four individuals. Three individuals are represented by the humeri and femora, two by the radii, pelves, scapulae and clavicles, and one by the skull, vertebrae, ribs, sacrum and foot bones.

The majority of the bones (femora, humerus, pelves, scapula, radii, ulnae, a tarsal and metatarsal, ribs and vertebrae) appear to derive from a tall robust adult male. This individual had a healed break to the distal radial shaft, and exhibited some lipping of the proximal ulnar-radial joint.

A second individual represented by the proximal femora, both ulnae, parts of both humeri, a clavicle, a radius, both pelves and a scapula is an adult female.

A third individual is only represented by two severely eroded humeri and ulnar shafts, while the fourth is represented only by a single eroded ulnar shaft. One large gracile femur with its distal epiphysis unfused and the femur head only recently fused may belong to either of these latter two individuals (or possibly a fifth person), and probably represents a tall juvenile male.

## Appendix 4

### GLOSSARY

<b>Context</b>	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, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
<b>Cut</b>	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.
<b>Fill</b>	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).
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
<b>Medieval</b>	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
<b>Natural</b>	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
<b>Post-medieval</b>	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
<b>Romano-British</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.



## Appendix 5

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

4	Context records
1	Scale drawings
1	Photographic records
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:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum  
12 Friars Lane  
Lincoln  
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: 2000.114

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: AKU 00

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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