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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
ON LAND BETWEEN ERMINE STREET  
AND WILSFORD LANE,  
ANCASTER,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(AWL00)**



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES

Conservation  
Services

05 OCT 2001

Highways & Planning  
Directorate



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Source L17143 L17144  
482289  
35445

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
ON LAND BETWEEN ERMINE STREET  
AND WILSFORD LANE,  
ANCASTER,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(AWL00)**

Work Undertaken For  
Idrang Ltd

September 2001

Report Compiled by  
James Snee BSc (Hons)

Planning Application Nos: SK98/990/02 & SK98/1166/02  
National Grid Reference: SK ~~98414383~~ 9840  
City and County Museum Accession No: LCNCC : 2000.83

4382

A.P.S. Report No. 119/01



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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the erection of three dwellings on the junction of Ermine Street and Wilsford Lane, Ancaster, Lincolnshire. The area is archaeologically sensitive, being close to the scheduled Roman town.*

*However, no archaeological deposits of earlier date than post-medieval were revealed. A sequence of post-medieval remains were recorded, including the cut and fill of a foundation trench believed to be associated with a cottage that formerly stood on the site.*

*Animal bone and post-medieval pottery were also recovered from this investigation.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

A 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 on land or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2000 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the first phase of a residential development for 6 dwellings on land at the junction of Ermine Street and Wilsford Lane, Ancaster, Lincolnshire.

Approval for the two phases of the development, each of three dwellings, was sought through the submission of two

planning applications SK98/990/02 (Phase 1) and SK98/1166/02 (Phase 2). Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording.

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Mr David Blaine of Idrang Ltd to undertake the archaeological watching brief. The investigation was carried out in accordance with a brief produced by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist (Appendix 1).

Unfortunately due to a break down in communications only Phase 1 was monitored.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Ancaster is situated 27km south of Lincoln in the administrative district of South Kesteven (Figure 1). The development lies adjacent to Wilsford Road on the eastern side of Ermine street, close to the centre of the village.

Soils in the area are Elmton 1 Association shallow, well-drained, brashy, calcareous fine loamy soils developed on Lincolnshire Limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Ancaster is situated in an area of significant known archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic to the post-medieval period.

Stone artefacts of Neolithic date (3500-2000 BC), and evidence of later settlement during the Iron Age (600 BC- AD43), have been recorded in the area (May 1976).

During the Romano-British period Ancaster was the site of an early temporary Roman fort, situated to the northwest of the present village. The site lies to the east of Ermine Street, a major Roman road that connected

London, Lincoln and the Humber Estuary. In addition, the site is located a short distance to the north of the Romano-British walled town, established in 280 AD. Archaeological excavations in and around Ancaster (Todd 1975 & 1981), have uncovered evidence of the town's earthen rampart and walled defences and extensive stone buildings with fragments of tessellated pavements. Coins and coin moulds, stone sculpture and inscriptions, brooches and pottery have been found, together with a possible pottery kiln and cemeteries outside the town walls (APS 1995).

Anglo-Saxon activity is represented by a cemetery to the south of the village. This suggests that occupation of the Roman town continued into the Anglo-Saxon period, but that as yet, no settlement evidence has been recovered.

Ancaster is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, however, nearby West Willoughby is recorded as having two churches, one of which may have been located at Ancaster (Morris 1986). Ancaster is first referred to by name in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. The name is Old English and means 'Ana's Roman station' (Cameron 1998).

The church of St. Martin has a Norman chancel and northern arcade and a possible fragment of an Anglo-Saxon window. The tower is 14<sup>th</sup> century. A medieval chapel of St. Mary stood in the field opposite (Pevsner & Harris 1989).

Various 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings can be found in the village (*ibid.*). Ancaster became a parish in its own right in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief was to record and interpret the archaeological features

exposed during the groundworks.

### 4. METHOD

The development was divided into two phases of three dwellings. Phase 1 comprised a block of three dwellings located at the west end of the site, fronting onto Ermine Street. The groundworks for this phase was a single footing. Phase 2 comprised three dwellings located at the east end of the site, fronting onto Wilsford Lane. Unfortunately the groundworks for this phase were not monitored.

The footing for the dwellings was mechanically excavated to a depth of approximately 1m. The base and sides of the test pits and pipe trench were inspected and hand cleaned at intervals. The depth and thickness of each deposit was measured from the ground surface. Each deposit or feature was allocated a unique reference number (Context Number) with an individual written description. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and annotated sketch plans were produced. A photographic record was compiled, depicting the setting of the site and the nature of recorded features and deposits.

### 5. RESULTS

The records of deposits excavated during development were examined. A list of contexts appears as Appendix 2. Only post-medieval and later deposits were identified.

#### 5.1 Post-medieval and Later Deposits

The earliest deposit revealed during the investigation was up to 0.45m of compacted, very dark grey-brown (very humic) sandy silt (004), with occasional large limestone fragments. Finds of bone and post-medieval pottery were recovered from this deposit.

At the west end of the footing sandy silt (004) was cut by a flat based, north-south oriented linear feature (003), probably a foundation trench. Unfortunately the sides of the cut were not revealed due to truncation by modern services. Overlying the cut was a 0.05m thick fill layer (002), comprising firm, pale yellow-brown sandy silt, with occasional limestone slabs and blocks.

Overlying fill (002) and covering the entire footing area was 0.44m of friable, pale yellow-brown sandy silt (001), with frequent limestone building blocks, bricks and occasional wood and roots.

## 6. DISCUSSION

A single archaeological phase of post-medieval and later deposits were revealed. The earliest deposit was probably a buried soil, the upper horizon of which may have represented a former ground level. Cut (002) was probably for a foundation and fill (003) may have been the base of a truncated stone wall. A cottage existed on the site in the recent past and it is likely that (002) and (003) represent the last traces of this building. The latest deposit (001) was a make up deposit or demolition layer left from when the cottage was levelled. The cottage is shown on the 1984 Ordnance Survey and its demolition must therefore be after that date.

## 7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the erection of three dwellings on the junction of Ermine Street and Wilsford Lane, Ancaster, Lincolnshire. The area is archaeologically sensitive, being close to the scheduled Roman town.

However, The earliest deposit encountered was post-medieval in date and the only archaeological remains were the cut and fill of a foundation trench believed to be associated with a cottage that formerly stood on the site.

Finds of Bone and post-medieval pottery were recovered from this investigation.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr David Blaine of Idrang Ltd who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by James Snee and this report was edited by Dale Trimble and Tom Lane. Gail Smith, the Community Archaeologist for South Kesteven District Council, kindly permitted examination of the relevant parish files.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: James Snee  
Site Supervisor: James Snee  
Cad Illustration: James Snee  
Photographic Reproduction: James Snee  
Post Excavation Analyst: James Snee

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services



Figure 1 General Location Plan.

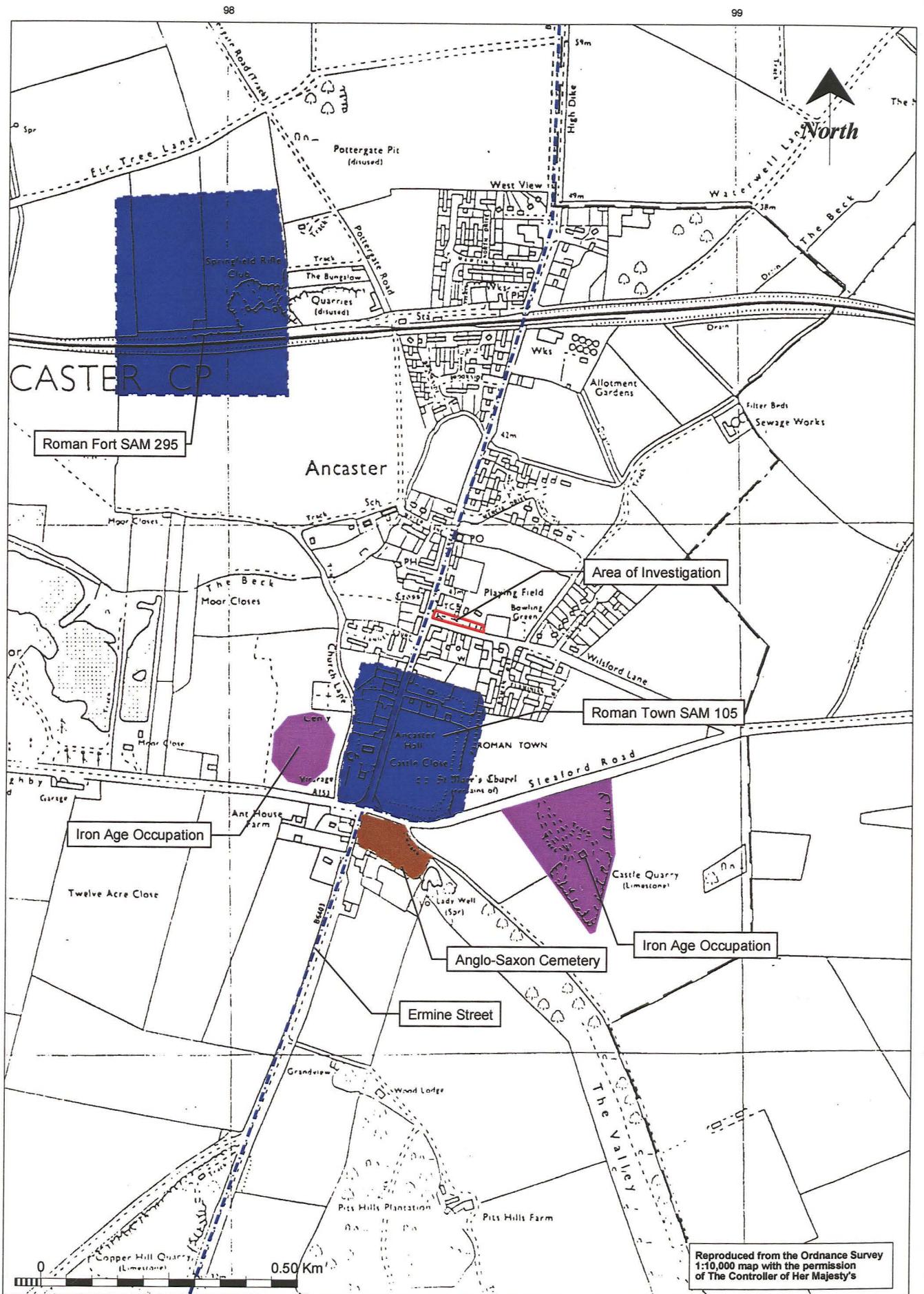
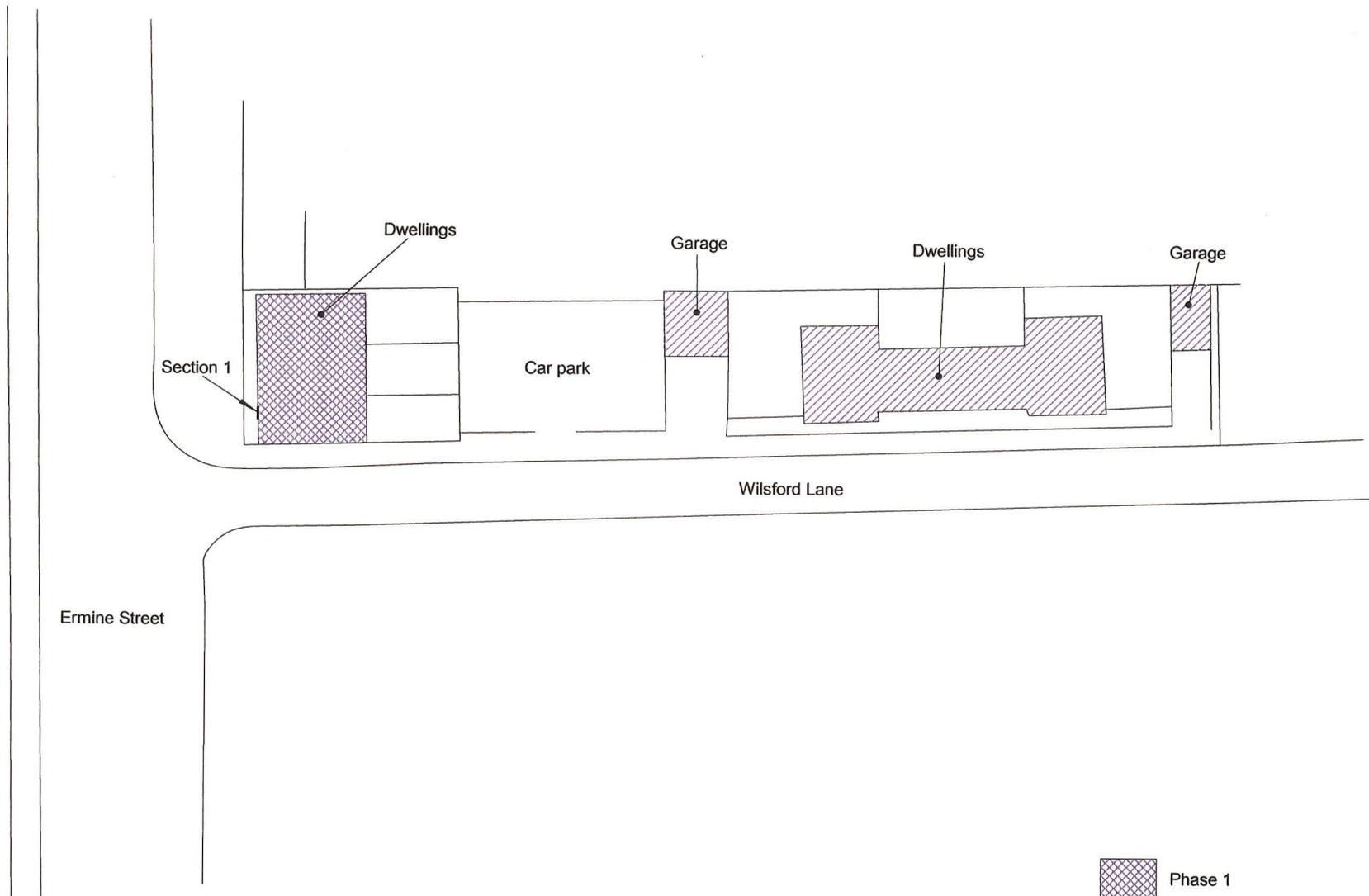


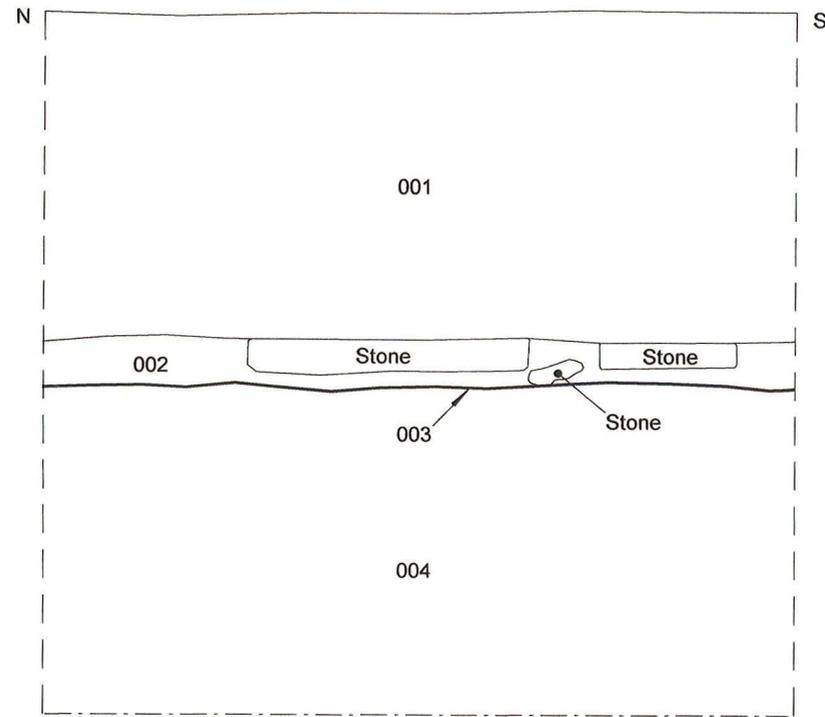
Figure 2 Location plan and archaeological setting



0 25m

Phase 1  
Phase 2

Figure 3 General Plan of the Development Area. Scale 1:500.



Section 1 West Facing



Figure 4 Section 1. Scale 1:10.



Plate 1 General view of site during excavation, looking west.



Plate 2 Section 1, looking east.

**SOUTH KESTEVEN COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST  
INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

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**APPLICATION NUMBER:** SK98/990/02

**APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:** Erection of 3 Dwellinghouses. Junction of Ermine Street and Wilsford Lane, Ancaster.

**Recommended Action:**

The application site lies within one of the most archaeologically sensitive areas in Lincolnshire. Ancaster has been the focus for human settlement since at least Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) times through to present day. A significant Late Iron Age settlement existed in the area of the modern graveyard which was also the location of a Roman fort and a late Roman cemetery. A large undefended Roman town developed into a walled, Roman town, the centre of which was the area which is now scheduled and lies just to the south of the proposed development. Prior to the construction of the walls the Roman town actually appears to have been much larger and spread along either side of Ermine Street.

Due to the site's position within such an important area, it is recommended that an archaeologist be contracted to carry out a watching brief during the groundworks stages of the development in order to record and retrieve any archaeological remains which are disturbed.

Signed.....

Date..... 26.10.98

Jenny Stevens  
South Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

Heritage Lincolnshire  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
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Sleaford. Lincs. NG34 9RW  
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E: :MAIL Jenny@heritage.compulink.co.uk

**SOUTH KESTEVEN COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST  
INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

---

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** SK98/1166/02

**APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:** Erection of 3 Dwelling houses. Phase 2, Junction of Ermine Street and Wilsford Lane, Ancaster.

**Recommended Action:**

The application site lies within one of the most archaeologically sensitive areas in Lincolnshire. Ancaster has been the focus for human settlement since at least Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) times through to present day. A significant Late Iron Age settlement existed in the area of the modern graveyard which was also the location of a Roman fort and a late Roman cemetery. A large undefended Roman town developed into a walled, Roman town, the centre of which was the area which is now scheduled and lies just to the south of the proposed development. Prior to the construction of the walls the Roman town actually appears to have been much larger and spread along either side of Ermine Street.

Due to the site's position within such an important area, it is recommended that an archaeologist be contracted to carry out a watching brief during the groundworks stages of the development in order to record and retrieve any archaeological remains which are disturbed.

Signed.....

Date.....18.11.98

Jo Simpson  
South Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

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The Old School  
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# BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING (WATCHING BRIEF)

**For the particular attention of the Client**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This brief should be sent to 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 South Kesteven 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.)**

1.2 Detailed specifications should be submitted by the client for approval by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist. Failure to seek approval at an early stage may result in delay later on; contractors are therefore strongly advised to seek approval of the detailed specification as soon as possible. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy this brief.

1.3 The client must give the chosen contractor a full set of plans before work commences.

**For the particular attention of the contractor**

## 2. REQUIREMENT FOR WORK

2.1 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 All contractors supplying specifications should refer to SCAUM Principles of Competitive Tendering (SCAUM Guidelines and Notes on Competitive Tendering for Archaeological Services 1996).

2.4 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:

2.4.1 The staff structure and numbers must be detailed.

2.4.2 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.

2.4.3 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.

2.4.4 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.

2.4.5 Contingency costs should only be used in the event of unexpected discoveries. These should only be activated after discussion with the Community Archaeologist and the client.

### 3. METHODS

3.1 The project 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.

3.2 Where possible, the use of an appropriate machine with a wide, toothless ditching blade to remove topsoil should be used.

3.3 Where appropriate, the watching brief should involve:

3.3.1 archaeological supervision of topsoil stripping;

3.3.2 inspection of subsoil for archaeological features;

3.3.3 recording of archaeological features in plan and section;

3.3.4 rapid excavation of features if necessary;

3.3.5 archaeological supervision of subsoil stripping;

3.3.6 inspection of natural for archaeological features and subsequent recording;

3.3.7 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 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. Attempts must be made at all times not to cause offence to any interested parties.

3.3.8 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.

3.3.9 the use of a metal detector on site is encouraged, especially for the survey of spoil heaps.

#### 4. MONITORING ARRANGEMENT

4.1 The Community Archaeologist of South Kesteven District Council will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and will require preferably fourteen days notice but at least five days notice from the developer or archaeological unit contracted 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.

#### 5. REPORTING REQUIREMENT

5.1 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 is an essential requirement of the watching brief condition, irrespective of the fieldwork result and must be produced and submitted in order to discharge the planning condition.** The report should include:

5.1.1 location plan of the development at a minimum scale of 1:10,000;

5.1.2 section and plan drawing, with ground level, vertical and horizontal scales and Ordnance Datum as appropriate;

5.1.3 specialist descriptions of artefacts and ecofacts as appropriate;

5.1.4 an indication of the archaeological potential of the development site and its immediate surrounding area;

5.1.5 photographs of the site scanned at a high resolution in colour. Photocopies are not acceptable.

5.1.6 a complete bibliography of all reference material.

5.2 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.

5.3 A site archive should be produced and deposited with the artefacts as detailed in 5.2.

#### 6.0 PUBLICATION & DISSEMINATION

6.1 The deposition of a copy of the report with the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record will be deemed to put all information into the public domain, unless a special request is made for confidentiality. If material is to be held in confidence, a timescale must be agreed, but it is expected that this will not exceed six months.

6.2 Should archaeological features be revealed, a summary of the results will be published in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology' in due course.

6.3 Should the Watching Brief reveal finds of national or regional importance, provision should be made for publication in the appropriate regional or national journal.

## 7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

7.1 An archaeological watching brief 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.

7.2 Further contact addresses:

South Kesteven Community Archaeologist  
Heritage Lincolnshire  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
Heckington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9RW  
Tel: 01529 461499

County Sites and Monuments Record  
Highways and Planning Directorate  
Lincolnshire County Council  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
City Hall  
Lincoln  
LN1 1DN  
Tel: 01522 553073

Land Use Planning Services  
South Kesteven District Council  
Council Offices  
St. Peter's Hill  
Grantham  
Lincolnshire  
NG31 6PZ  
Tel: 01476 406080

Mr T. Page  
City and County Museum  
12 Friars Lane  
Lincoln  
LN2 5AL

Brief set by Community Archaeologist, South Kesteven District Council. This project brief is valid for a period of one year. After that period consult the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

## Appendix 2

### Context Summary

Context Number	Section Number	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Friable, pale yellow-brown sandy silt, with frequent limestone building blocks, bricks and occasional wood and roots, 0.44m thick.	Made up ground/demolition layer.
002	1	Firm, pale yellow-brown sandy silt, with occasional limestone slabs and blocks, 0.05m thick.	Fill of 003.
003	1	Linear cut, 0.05m deep, width unknown, flat base, sides not revealed, oriented north-south.	Foundation cut.
004	1	Compacted, very dark grey-brown sandy silt, with occasional large limestone fragments, >0.45m thick, very humic.	Buried soil.

## Appendix 3

### THE FINDS

Gary Taylor and Paul Cope-Faulkner

#### Provenance

The material was recovered from buried soil (004).

#### Range

The range of material is detailed in the following table. Only a small assemblage of a single potsherd and a single bone fragment was recovered.

Table 1: The Pottery and other artefacts

Context	Description	Latest Date
004	1x Staffordshire-type press-moulded flatware, brown slip-trailed decoration, 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> century	18 <sup>th</sup> century
	1x pig scapula, poor condition	

#### Condition

Although the pottery is a small fragment, it is in good condition, the bone is in a poorer condition but presents no long-term storage problems. Archive storage of the material is by material class.

#### Documentation

Archaeological investigations have been undertaken in Ancaster previously, and are the subject of reports. Records of archaeological remains and finds are maintained in the files of the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist and the County Sites and Monuments Record.

#### Potential

As a small and predominantly recent collection, the assemblage has limited potential.

## Appendix 4

### GLOSSARY

<b>Anglo-Saxon</b>	Pertaining to the period when Britain was occupied by peoples from northern Germany, Denmark and adjacent areas. The period dates from approximately AD 450-1066.
<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 interpretation 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>Domesday Survey</b>	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
<b>Iron Age</b>	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term used 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>Neolithic</b>	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500-2250 BC.
<b>Post-medieval</b>	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
<b>Prehistoric</b>	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
<b>Romano-British</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
<b>Saxon</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany

## Appendix 5

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 4 - Context records
- 1 - Photographic record sheets
- 1 - Drawing sheets
- 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: LCNCC : 2000.83

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: AWL00

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.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.