

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

L I N C O L N

LAND ADJACENT TO
IVY COTTAGE, AUTHORPE,
LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF REPORT

Site code	AULO 02
NGR:	TF 4001 8081
LCCM Acc No:	2002.3



Event L2859
Source L17540
L17541

L17239

Mon 482680 44391
L182682 44392

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Report prepared for Harris Building Services
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Summary

- An archaeological watching brief took place during residential development on Land on the north side of Main Road, Authorpe, Louth.
- The watching brief identified some limited archaeological features, mostly of a post-medieval date.

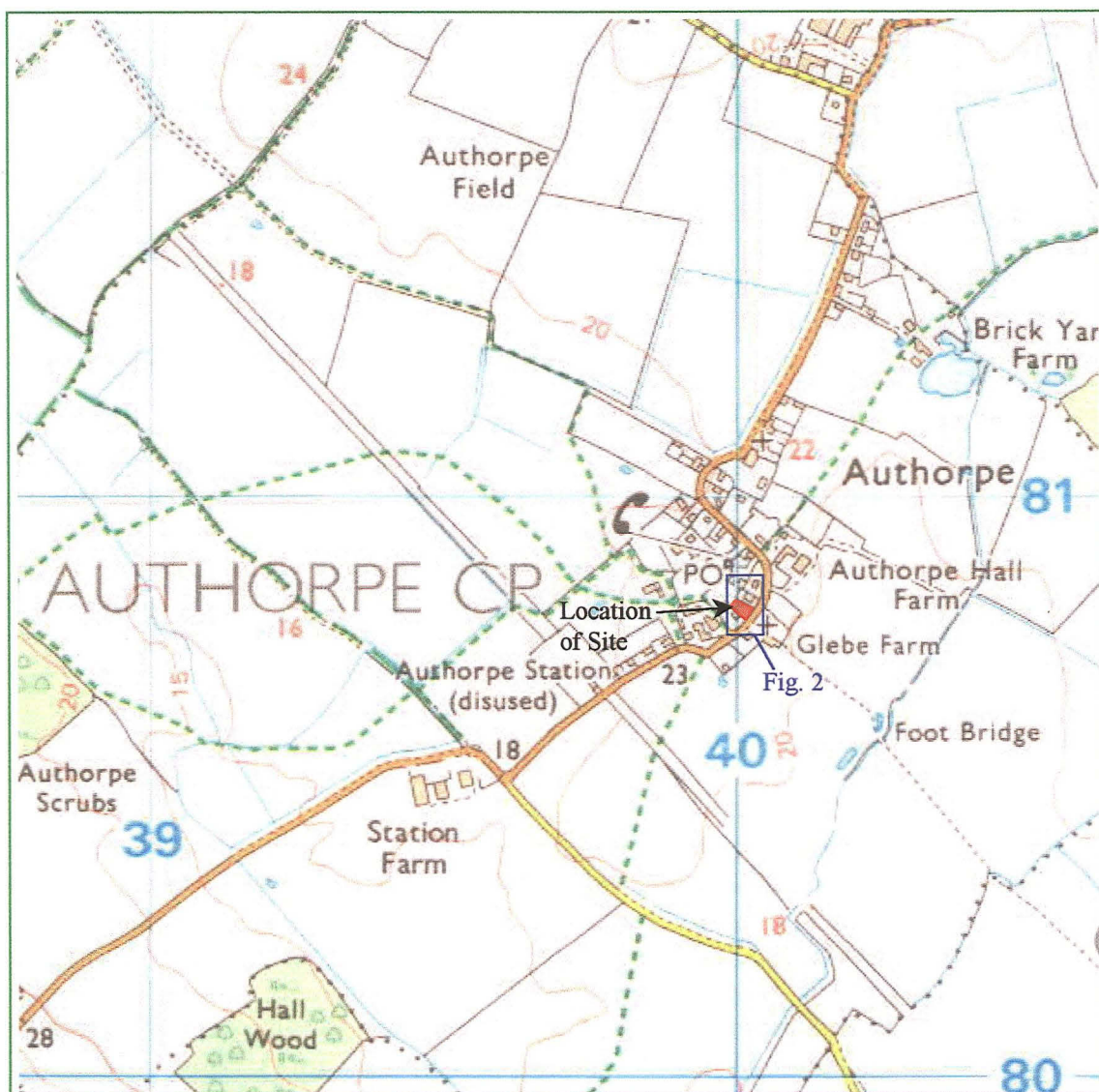


Fig. 1: Site location. The site is highlighted in red and the area shown in Fig. 2 is outlined in blue. Scale 1:12500 (OS copyright licence AL 515 21 A001)

1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place during the excavation of footings trenches for a housing development, comprising a single dwelling on land adjacent to Ivy Cottage, Authorpe, Louth (National Grid Reference TF 4001 8081). The work was commissioned by Harris Building Services, to fulfil a condition attached to planning permission for a residential development (Ref. N/010/169/01).
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This report documents the results of the archaeological observation and recording undertaken over a period of three days: 7 - 9.01.2002. It has been prepared to meet the requirements of current local guidelines (Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice, 1998); and a formal project specification prepared by this company.

Copies of this report will be deposited with Harris Building Services, the Assistant Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council / the County SMR. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*; and this will feature as a short note in due course. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

2.0 Location and Description (Figs 1 and 2)

Louth is in the administrative district of East Lindsey at the eastern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Authorpe is located approximately 8km south-east of the town, on the eastern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

The site of development lies towards the south side of the settlement, on the northwest side of Main Road (National Grid Reference TF 4001 8081). It comprises a sub-rectangular unit of approximately 36m x 16m.

The Quaternary geology of the area is characterised as a glacial till (Marsh till) deposited in the Devensian period, which lies above a weathered secondary chalk. (BGS 1998).

Prior to this development, the site comprised part of the garden of Ivy Lodge, the property located to the east. The plot itself is defined by a mature hawthorn hedge and a 4ft wooden post and panel fence on the west and north sides, a post and rail/panel fence and the existing property to the east, and is presently open to Main Road to the south, apart from two mature trees. Generally, the ground slopes approx 1.5m downwards to the southeast and Main Road, however, before development the rear third of the property was occupied by a large depression which local tradition maintains to have been the village pond. During removal of tree stumps from this area prior to levelling, no standing water was encountered. Immediately to the south of the above mentioned "pond" was a block-built septic tank, and in the south east corner of the property the dwarf walls and floor of a former garage were present. When the watching brief was undertaken the ground cover generally comprised grass and some thistles etc, with two stumps of mature trees in the area of the depression.



Fig. 2: Location plan of development plot, showing property boundary and house footprint. The area of the depression at the back of the property is shown in purple. Scale 1:500

Planning permission was granted for a single dwelling, subject to an archaeological watching brief being undertaken on all groundworks. (See fig. 3).

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The origins of Louth can be traced back as far as the Anglo-Saxon period: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that, in the year 790AD, Abbot Aethelheard of a monastery at Louth was elected Archbishop of Canterbury.

Authorpe was one of the settlements listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (*Agetorp*), indicating an origin at some point during the Saxon period. At this time, the manor was held by Asgautr, and was a jurisdiction of Burwell (Morgan & Thorne 1986).

The Lincolnshire Archives office records finds of a polished stone axe on the NE side of the village (TF4081) and a Neolithic polished stone axe to the SW of the village (TF3980).

The RCHME National Mapping Programme has identified ridge and furrow in fields to the N, NE, SE, and S of Authorpe Hall Farm, and more ridge and furrow has been identified to the West of the village – i.e. W and NW of Wayside Farm, up to the disused railway line.

The site is located within what would have been the traditional medieval core of the village, opposite the cemetery of the recently demolished St. Margaret's church (TF4005 8078), which is recorded as likely to have contained re-used medieval window tracery.

4.0 Methodology

The site was visited on 7 - 9.01.2002, during which period it was cleared, and foundation trenches were cut for the house. This work was undertaken with a JCB excavator employing a 0.6m wide flat-bladed bucket. The foundation trenches were generally 0.6 – 0.7m wide and a minimum of 1m deep. Due to the lay of the land and the requirement that the trenches remained level, this resulted in trenches up to 1.2m deep in the N part of the site. This work was monitored continuously to ensure that any archaeological features exposed were identified and recorded.

The archaeological fieldwork entailed the cleaning by hand of all exposed surfaces, followed by a thorough inspection. All archaeological deposits exposed by this method were subjected to limited excavation to assess their nature/dimensions and to attempt to recover datable material. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each layer on standard watching brief context recording sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings complement these accounts.

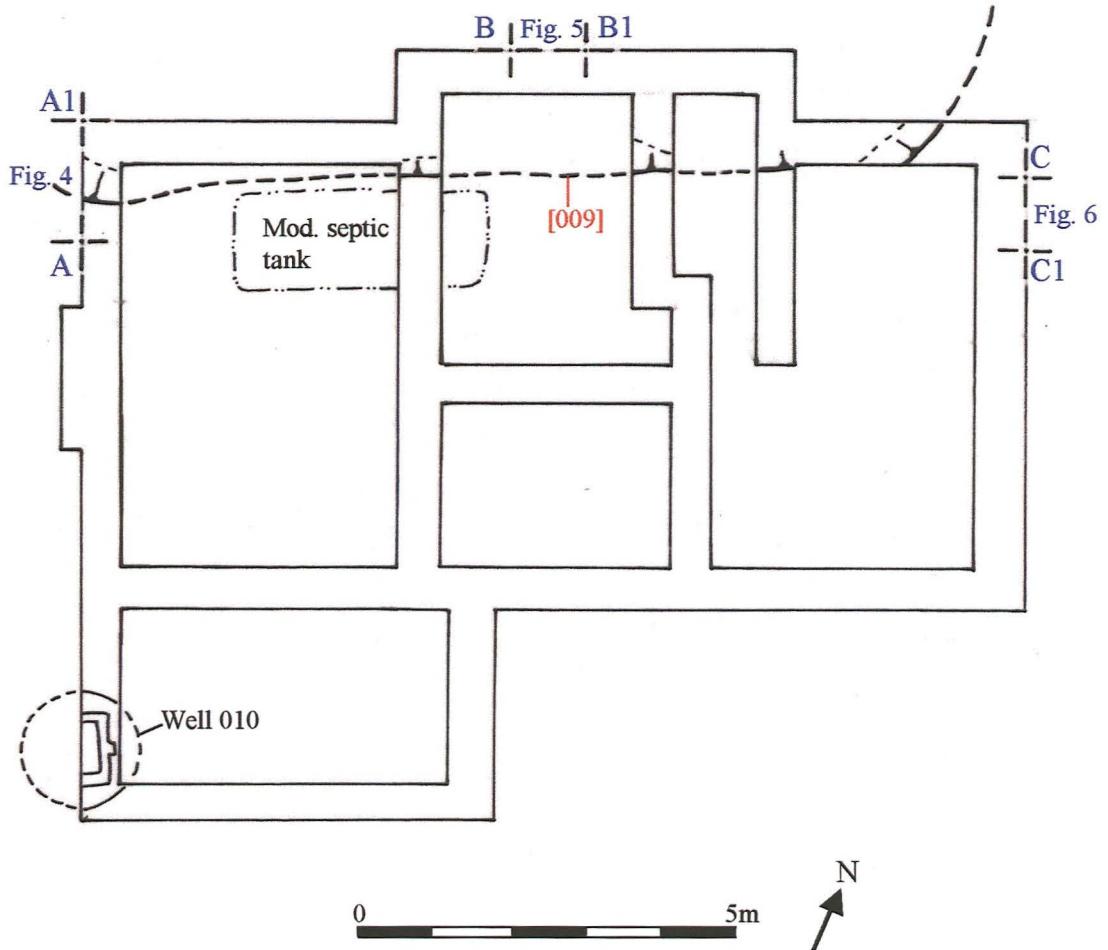


Fig. 3: Plan of footings trenches, showing the location of recorded sections (Figs.4 – 6), and the projected line of the 'pond' [009]. Scale 1:100.

5.0 Results

The modern topsoil, context 001, consisted of a mixed, mid-brown silty clay loam, containing occasional small rounded flint pebbles, small and medium sub-angular chalk frags and rounded pebbles, brick and tile fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. This topsoil was encountered across the whole site to a depth of 0.20-0.30m.

On the eastern side of the site, below the topsoil, in a band approximately 2m wide, lay a thin layer of poorly sorted limestone chippings (002). This material, of approximately 10cm grade, probably represents a temporary surface laid down during the construction of an extension to the neighbouring property to the east.

In the north-western trenches of the house footprint, a large cut feature was observed, [009]. This was recorded in two sections, one located at the northwest end of the SW wall foundation trench (see fig. 4) where the edge of it could clearly be seen in section, and another located in the middle of the NW wall foundation trench (see fig. 5). In the latter section, the primary fill of this feature, 008 was a very dark grey silt, approximately 0.07m in thickness, above which lay the major fill, 007. This fill consisted mostly here of handmade brick and tile rubble and was very wet and loose in nature. Above 007 lay the ubiquitous modern topsoil 001, above which was recently deposited material from the landscaping at the rear of the property.

The section recorded at the northwest end of the SW wall foundation trench shows a different stratigraphy. Here, at the edge of the feature, the primary fill was 007, and consisted of large chunks of chalk rubble (up to 0.25m in size), with only occasional handmade brick and tile fragments. The fill was 0.2m thick here, but lensed out to the SE. Above 007 was a dark greenish grey sandy clay containing occasional chalk flecks – 006. Fill 006 was 0.16-0.22m in thickness and ran beyond the boundary of the cut [009]. Above 006 was a thin lens of chalk and broken brick hardcore, some 0.06m thick, but again lensing out to the SE. Above 005 was the buried subsoil 004, above which the buried topsoil 003 lay.

The large feature seen here would appear to be the backfilled pond of local tradition (an extrapolated edge of which has been shown on fig. 3). The section illustrated in fig. 5 shows the typical stratigraphy in the middle of this feature, with 008 representing a silt which has accumulated at the base of the pond and 007 a major backfilling event. The section illustrated in fig. 4, located at the edge of the feature, shows a series of backfill/levelling events (007 and 005), with some accumulation of material in between (006). This appears to represent the gradual shrinking of the pond, or the dumping of material at the edge of the feature.

Although the topsoil, 001, stripped off onto disturbed material (002 and 011) over the majority of the site, along the eastern side of the area (see Fig. 6), the modern topsoil was not present, instead the uppermost layer was a redeposited sandy clay natural (012) which had been directly seeded. This material overlay a buried topsoil (003), and a buried subsoil (004) was encountered below this, which in turn sealed the natural mid-brown sandy clay. Layer 004 yielded three sherds of early medieval pottery (see appendix 2). This represents the undisturbed sequence of stratigraphy for the site. Elsewhere on the site, this sequence was encountered below 002 and 011, i.e. modern or recent disturbance.

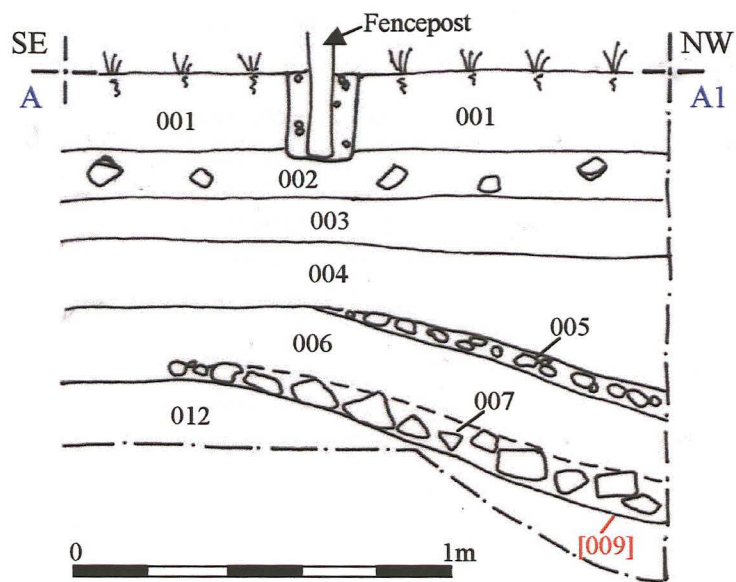


Fig. 4: Northeast facing section showing cut for pond [009] and the sequence of backfill/levelling events (007 – 005). Scale 1:20

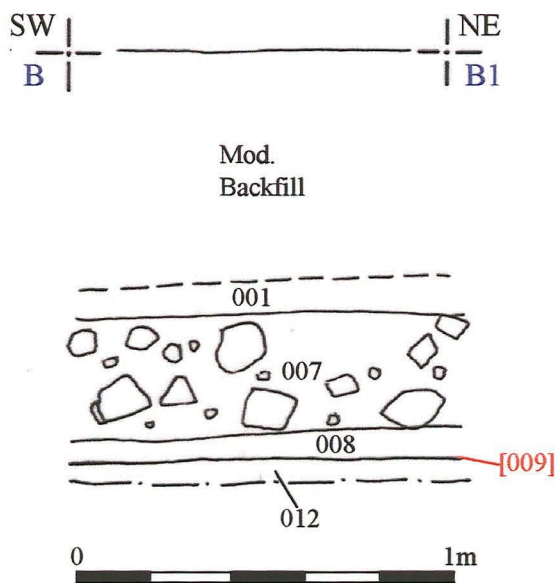


Fig. 5: Southeast facing sample section showing pond stratigraphy. Scale 1:20

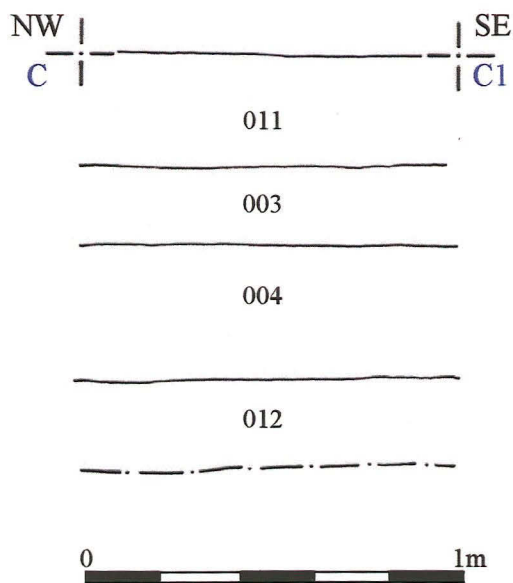


Fig. 6: Southwest facing sample section showing undisturbed site stratigraphy. Scale 1:20

At the SE end of the southwest wall foundation trench, 002 stripped off onto the sandstone cover of a brick built well (010). Well 010 was presently in use as a soakaway, as modern rainwater runoff pipes led into it from the neighbouring property to the southwest. Its original function as a well can be inferred from the presence of a lead water pipe leading up from it. Well 010 was built of manufactured bricks, and was rendered on the inside. It was 1.6m in diameter (internal), and 2m deep from domed cap to base.

Natural mid-brown sandy clay was encountered at the base of the footings trenches across the whole of the houseplot and was assigned the context number 012.

Over the remainder of the plot, to the southeast of the pond, the topsoil (001) overlay a very dark, grey-brown material 013, which contained a large quantity of brick and tile rubble, mortar etc. This material may represent the levelled material produced by the demolition of a street front property; however, as no excavation work was carried out beyond topsoil stripping no further information could be gained. This material extended over the southern half of the plot to a thickness of 0.24-0.30m.

6.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The watching brief at Main Road, Authorpe has only encountered features of limited archaeological significance, the most interesting of which is the presence of the partially backfilled 'pond' at the rear of the property. The location of the footprint of the house has meant that any potentially interesting street-front remains were not encountered in the watching brief, although the presence of a pond at the rear of the area may preclude the possibility that a property ever stood on the street front here.

7.0 Bibliography

Knowles, D & Hadcock, R N, 1971, *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales*

Morgan, P & Thorn, C (eds), 1986, *Domesday Book: Lincolnshire*

Pevsner, N. & Harris, J. 1989 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire* (2nd Edition revised by N. Antram). London, Penguin.

8.0 Appendix1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view of the site before ground clearance, looking NW



Plate 2: General view of the site during clearance works, looking NW. The JCB is parked in the area of the house footings.



Plate 3: NE facing section at edge of feature 009 (see also fig.4).



Plate 4: SE facing section in the middle of feature 009 (see also fig.5).



Plate 5: General view of footings trenches, looking S.



Plate 6: Well (010), looking SW.

8.1 Appendix 2: Post Roman Pottery Report

Pottery Archive AUL02

Jane Young

context	cname	sub fabric	full name	form type	sherds	vessels	part	description	date
004	EMX	reduced with oxid surfaces; fine sandy with oolite; hard	Non-local Early Medieval fabrics	jug	2	1	base	splashed glaze	12th
004	LSW1		12th century Lincoln Glazed ware	jug	1	1	BS	hard fired; ? ID	12th