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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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North Kelsey (Station Road) Mains Relay:

Archaeological Watching Brief

(NGR TA 0460 0200 - 0740 0172)

October 1994

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Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Anglian Water Services to maintain an intermittent archaeological watching brief along Station Road, North Kelsey during mechanical excavation of a trench for a replacement water main. Lincolnshire County Council's Archaeological Officer had advised an occasional inspection by an archaeologist.

The monitored stretch was 2.3km in length and the 0.5m wide trench was placed in the northern roadside verge. Work started in early July 1994 but LAS were not advised by Anglian Water until July 15th, by which time 0.3km had been excavated and backfilled. The first visit on 15.7.94 showed that the new pipeline was being inserted above a redundant cast-iron pipe and that the trench was being cut through backfilled material. This observation was confirmed by the contractors on site as a continuation of conditions at the beginning of the pipeline. A second inspection visit 0.5m to the east found that the new trench continued to follow an existing pipe. Ian George (Lincs. County Archaeology Section) was contacted and advised of the situation, and he requested that the monitoring be continued in case the pipes diverged. A fourth inspection between Cutley Beck and North Kelsey level crossing on 11th August again located the disturbed soil; no further visits were made.

Archaeological Background

Station Road is a continuation of the very straight west-east aligned road across North Kelsey Moor and Caistor Moor, marked as a Roman road on Ordnance Survey maps (OS 1962). To the west of North Kelsey station, the road becomes slightly less straight and leads to the NE edge of the village before the line is lost. During this stretch it crosses Cutley Beck at Cutley Bridge, a fairly deeply cut stream. Immediately south of North Kelsey station a Romano-British site has been recorded close to Smithfield Farm (SMR 50562) and it is likely that this settlement made use of any local road network.

Since the 1980s there has been some doubt as to whether Station Road dated from the Roman period or whether it represented a carefully surveyed road constructed as a result of the Enclosure Act of 1813 when local open fields were sub-divided and allotted to named land owners (Russell 1987). It is noticeable on Ordnance Survey maps that the parish boundary uses the straight stretch across North Kelsey Moor; this boundary could be Saxon in date and if unchanged probably fossilises a break in land tenure blocks such as a road.

The main purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to determine whether any evidence to confirm or refute the Roman road theory was present, and if confirmed to ensure no Romano-British roadside occupation was disturbed without a suitable record.

The only reported prehistoric find in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline is a perforated stone axe/hammer found early this century on North Kelsey Moor but at an unknown location. The Roman building remains and a Roman pottery scatter located SW of Smithfield Farm are in the vicinity of cropmarks on air photographs and are probably all associated. Other cropmarks probably of Roman date have been recorded on the site of Caistor Airfield.

Air photographs also show possible earthworks of a deserted medieval village in a field south of Station Road. A possible medieval grange at Smithfield Farm has been postulated.

Conclusion

This pipeline followed the course of an earlier redundant service very closely and no undisturbed deposits were exposed. It was not possible to confirm or refute the presence of a Roman Road under the verge beside the modern road but no redeposited metalling material was noted. No artefacts were found. The fieldwork and documentary research for this project was curtailed in response to the archaeological results.

Acknowledgements

LAS was grateful for the co-operation received from Anglian Water Services and their contractors, M.P. Burke plc. Help was also given by Lincs. County Archaeology Section and the staff of the Sites and Monuments Record.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
6th October 1994

References

Russell, E. and R.C. 1987 Parliamentary Enclosure and New Lincolnshire Landscapes (Lincolnshire History Series 10)
Lincs. Recreational Services. Gainsborough.
118-144.

Air Photographs

Air photographs of three cropmark sites in North Kelsey are held at the Lincs. County Sites and Monuments Record.

TA 090 020
063 025
067 011 (PRN 5157-12)

Lincs. County Sites and Monuments Record Summary:

Grid Ref.	SMR	Description
TA OOSW		
0326 0124	B	Polished stone axe, found West End Farm 1951
0192 0071	C	Flint axe, found during ditch cleaning 1940
0246 0005	D	Neolithic stone axe with pointed butt, found 1920
0436 0160	E	Mass burial pit ?16-17th century plague
unlocated	F	Flanged bronze palstave
0425 0215	G	Little London Farm placename- sometimes indicates pottery kiln
011 005	H	Oak piles; thought to have been support for Roman road
034 013	K	Medieval brooch pin, found 1977, Westgate Farm
0355 0130	L	Roman pottery and 2 Neolithic axes found 1978, Westgate Farm
TA 00SE		
068 014	B	Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age occupation site 50562
0686 0145	B	Stone axe, 50721
" "	Q	Flint arrowheads
" "		Roman pottery and coins (3-4th century) found 1928
0765 0181	K	?Neolithic stone mace head, found 1958
067 018- 107 051	L	Possible Roman Road alignment, probably Enclosure Road.
070 015	M	Romano-British greyware pottery, colour-coated wares, spindle whorl, flue and roof tile fragments, found 1967
unlocated	R	Bronze Age perforated axe-hammer, found 1912 N. Kelsey Moor
0746 0213	S	?Iron Age bronze coin, found 1879

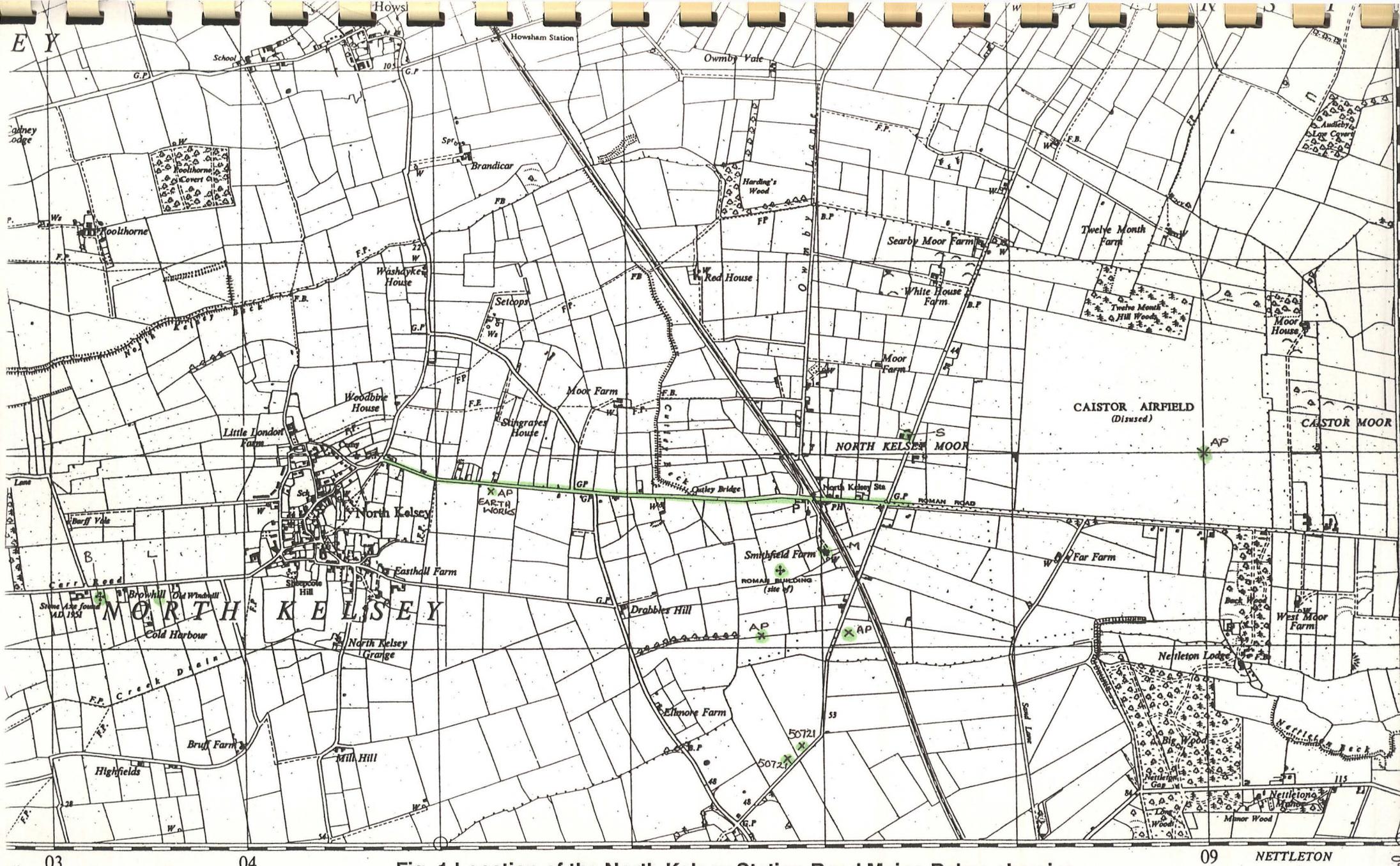


Fig. 1 Location of the North Kelsey Station Road Mains Relay, showing archaeological sites and finds noted on Lincs. Sites and Monuments Record (based on the 1962 Ordnance Survey 1: 25,000 survey, Sheet TA 00 with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 50424A)