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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT MOUNT LANE,
KIRKBY LA THORPE,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MLK97)**

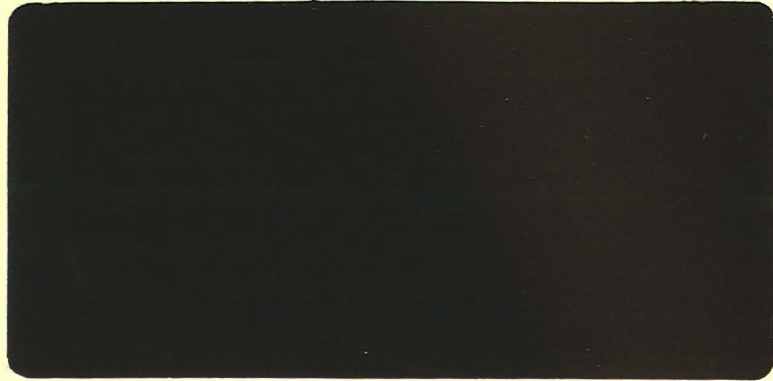


A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

1 2 JAN 98

12 Friars Lane
LINCOLN LN2 5AL
TEL: 01522 575292 FAX: 01522 530724



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT MOUNT LANE,
KIRKBY LA THORPE,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MLK97)**

Work Undertaken For
Mr R. Ballard

November 1997

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner

Planning Application No: N34/749/97
National Grid Reference: TF 09880 45140
City and County Museum Accession No: 265.97

A.P.S. Report No. 59/97

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief undertaken by Archaeological Project Services during development between 64 and 66 Mount Lane, Kirkby-La-Thorpe monitored the excavation of the foundation trenches for a single dwelling.

The watching brief was undertaken because the site lay within an area of known archaeology dating from the Romano-British (AD 52 - 410) and medieval (AD 1066 - 1500) periods. The site also lies within the boundaries of the deserted medieval village of Laythorpe.

The investigation revealed a single undated pit and a subsoil containing fragmentary animal bone. No other finds were made.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 6th November 1997, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during excavation of foundation trenches of a single dwelling on land adjacent to Mount Lane, Kirkby-La-Thorpe (National Grid Reference TF 09880 45140). Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application N34/749/97. The archaeological work was commissioned by Mr R. Ballard and carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven District Council (Appendix 1).

An archaeological watching brief is defined as *'a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological purposes within a specified area, where there is a possibility that*

archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1994, 1).

2.2 Topography and Geology

Kirkby-La-Thorpe is located 3km east of Sleaford in the civil parish of Kirkby-La-Thorpe, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site lies *c.* 900m south of the village as defined by the parish church of St. Denis (Fig. 2). The area of development measures approximately 50m by 50m at a height of *c.* 9m OD (Fig. 3).

Local soils are Ruskington Association gleyic brown earths overlying fen and glaciofluvial gravels (Hodge *et.al.* 1984, 304). Beneath these deposits is a solid geology of Jurassic clays.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

The development site lies within an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period (AD 50-410). Aerial photographs have revealed suspected Romano-British settlements 400m to the west (NK34.5) and 600m to the northeast (NK34.16). Romano-British pottery and a Roman coin have been found 100m south of the development site (NK34.8). Two more coins have been found within the main village to the north (NK34.9 and NK34.23).

The village of Kirkby La Thorpe originally comprised two separate settlements. The main village was Kirkby and Lathorpe was a smaller settlement along what is now Mount Lane (NK34.14) in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Lathorpe or Laythorpe is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and is referred

to as 'Leduluetorp' and 'Ledulvetorp' and may derive from the Old Norse 'Leik's' settlement (Ekwall 1974, 279). Thorpe was a name usually given to a smaller subsidiary settlement, settled by an existing village, in this case Kirkby. At the time of the Survey the land was owned by the Bishop of Lincoln and Colsuain and contained half a church, maintaining half a priest (Foster and Longley 1976). Kirkby is also recorded as having one half of a church. The villages eventually combined, for in the *Curia Regis Rolls* of 1206, the village is referred to as 'Kirkebi et Leitorp' (Ekwall 1974, 279).

Laythorpe had its own chapel which lay 100m to the south of the proposed development (NK34.8). Nothing of this chapel now survives, although quantities of medieval pottery have been recovered from its vicinity.

Previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity have taken place 100m to the north (Palmer-Brown 1995, Cope-Faulkner 1997) revealing the presence of Romano-British and medieval field systems, a quarry and rubbish pits.

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as set by the brief (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The proposed development required the excavation of foundation trenches for a single dwelling on land between Nos. 64 and 66 Mount Lane. Following removal of between 0.15m and 0.2m of topsoil the trenches were opened by a mechanical

excavator. Sides of all these trenches were then cleaned and rendered vertical. The depth of each deposit was measured from the ground surface. Each deposit or feature revealed within an opened area was allocated a unique reference number (Context number) with an individual written description. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. A photographic record was also compiled.

5. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

Records of the deposits and features identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A list of all contexts with interpretations appears as Appendix 2. Three groups of deposits were recognised:

- Group 1 Natural deposits
- Group 2 Undated deposits
- Group 3 Modern deposits

The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Group 1 Natural deposits

Natural deposits of light brownish yellow sand with calcareous gravel (004) were encountered at the base of all foundation trenches.

Group 2 Undated deposits

Located along the southern edge of the development was a feature identified as a possible pit (003). The pit measured 1.8m wide and 0.22m deep, and contained a single fill of reddish brown sand (002). Red colours in soils often indicate alteration by heat.

Situated along the base of the foundation trench in the northwest corner of the plot was a spread of yellowish brown sand, also with calcareous gravel (005). Interpreted as a

subsoil, this deposit may have been contained within a feature, although no clear traces of a cut were observed. Fragmentary animal bone was recorded within the deposit although not collected as the size discriminated against identification.

Group 3 Modern deposits

Sealing all deposits was topsoil of mid brown sand (001) up to 0.6m thick. Small 'pockets' of limestone and modern brick within the topsoil indicate attempts to fill hollows as the plot was previously a field entrance.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (Group 1) are associated with alluvial accumulation, either as a result of glacial outwash or from a stream or river course.

Undated deposits are represented by a single pit and a subsoil. The pit may have had a refuse function as it was filled with apparently burnt sands with no trace of charcoal to suggest it had been burnt within the feature. No dating evidence was recovered from either of these deposits.

Modern deposits constitute a topsoil in which pockets of limestone and brick were used to level hollows, thus enabling the plot to function as a field entrance prior to the development.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at land adjacent to Mount Lane, Kirkby La Thorpe were undertaken because the site fell within an area of known archaeological remains. Notably, an area previously identified as containing evidence for Romano-British and

medieval occupation, as evidenced by aerial photographs of crofts, and the likelihood existed of archaeological deposits being disturbed.

Only a single undated feature was uncovered during this investigation. This scarcity of archaeology is in marked contrast to other investigations in the vicinity which revealed features associated with the Romano-British and medieval periods. Romano-British archaeology would appear to be located north of the development while medieval occupation associated with the chapel and deserted village may be concentrated further south. It would appear that land use in the immediate area has mainly been associated with agriculture, culminating in the use of the site as a field entrance in the modern period.

As such, the site may be deemed of local importance only. The nature of the local site conditions would suggest that few environmental indicators (seeds, shells *etc*) would survive, other than through charring.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish acknowledge the assistance of Mr R. Ballard for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Gary Taylor coordinated the work and Tom Lane and Dale Trimble edited this report. Kate Orr, the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven District Council, permitted examination of the relevant parish files maintained by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisor: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

NK These letters refer to the primary code used by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer.

PCA Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)

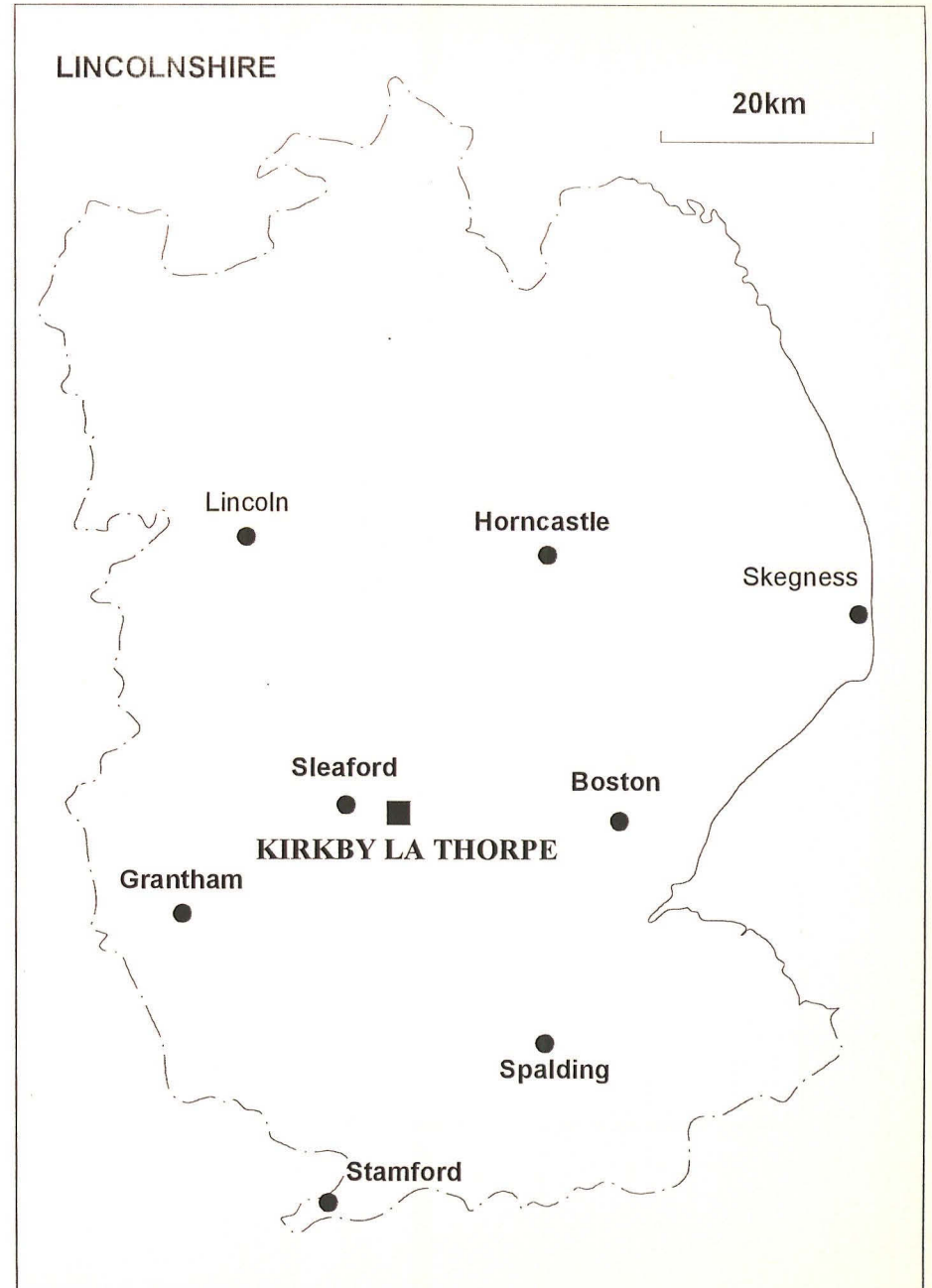
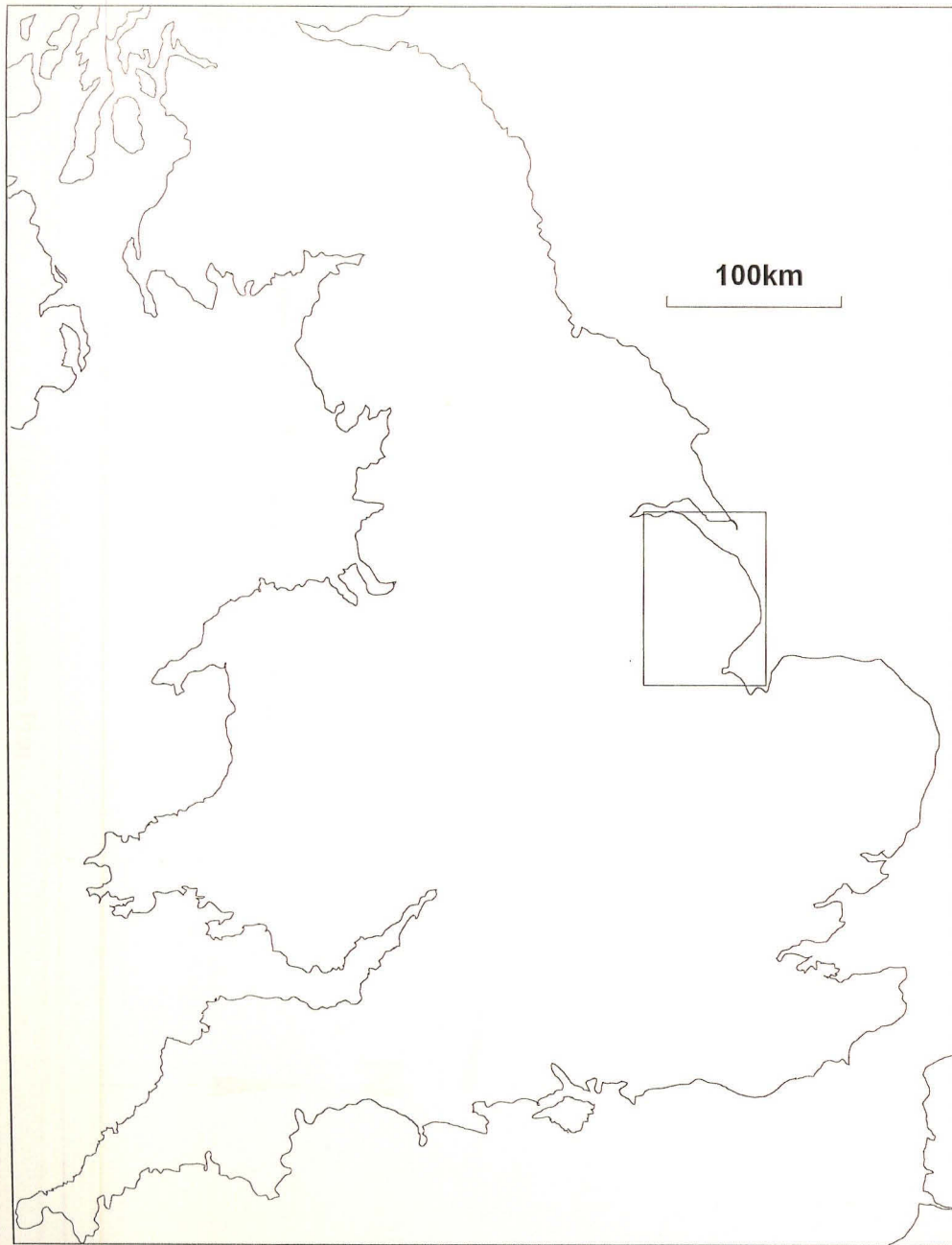


Figure 1 - General Location Plan

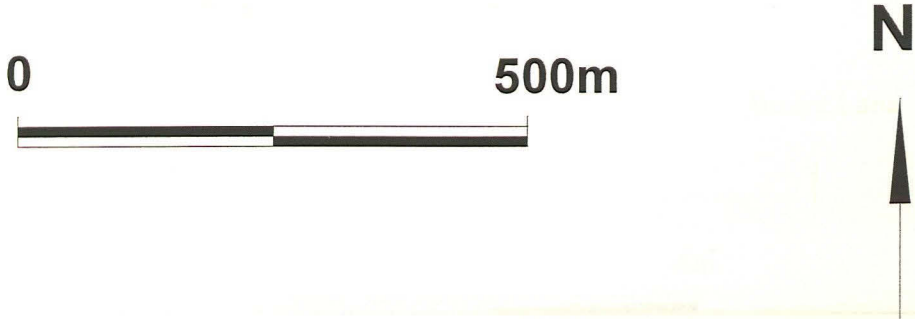
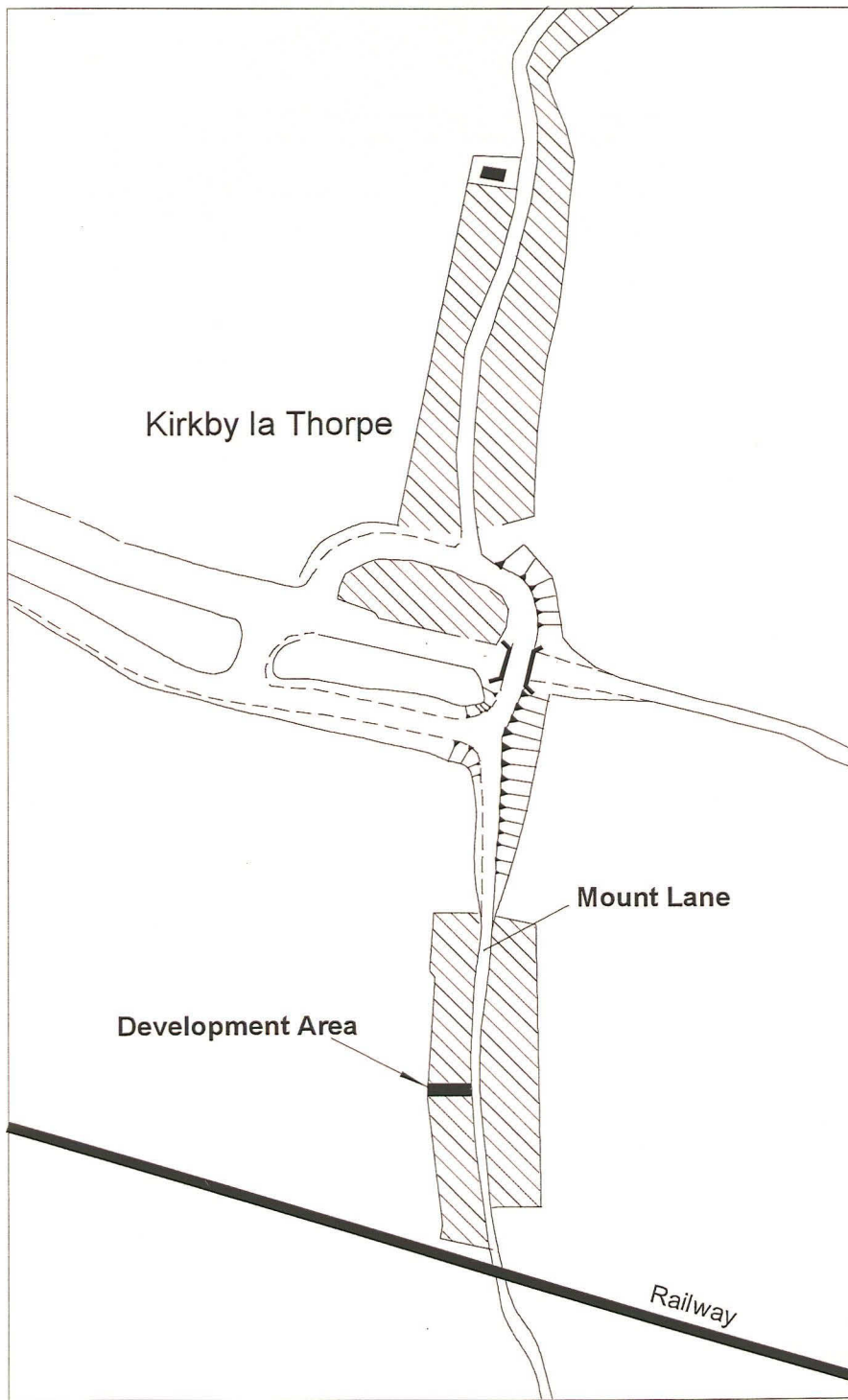


Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

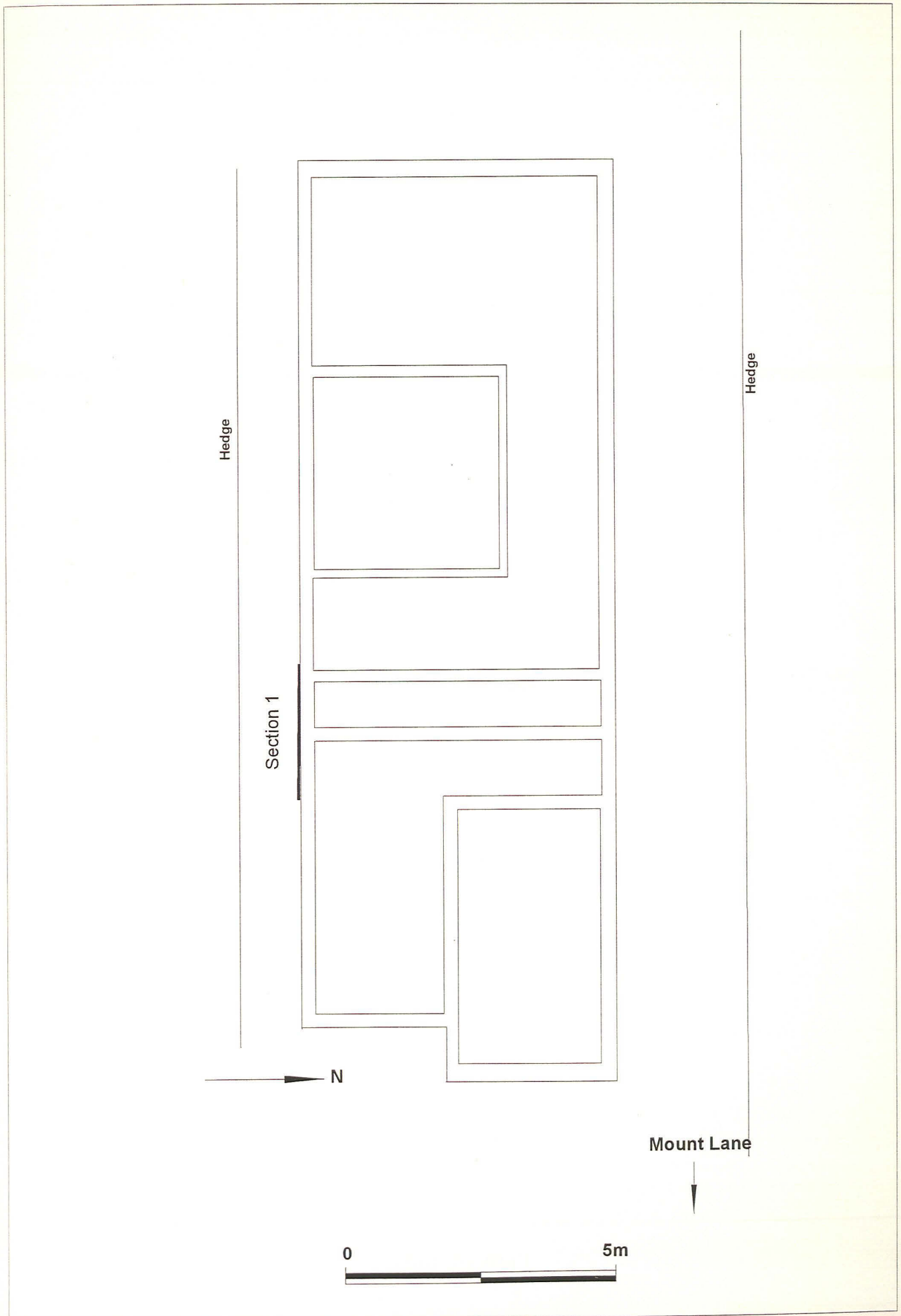
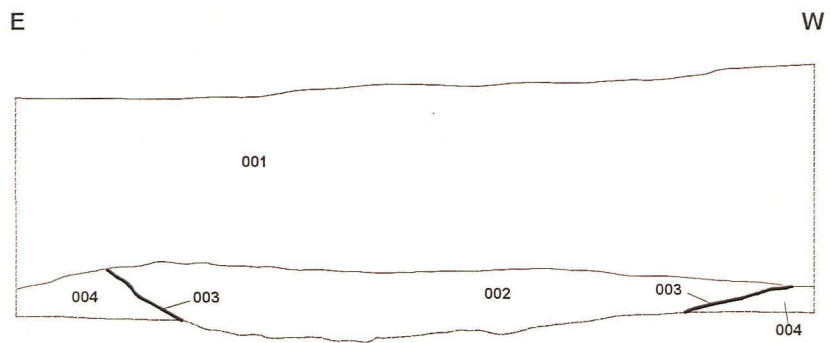


Figure 3 - Plan of Development



Section 1



Figure 4 - Section 1

Appendix 1

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING (WATCHING BRIEF) - Land between 64 & 66 Mount Lane Kirkby La Thorpe, Lincs

Planning Application Number: N /34/749/97

NGR: 509880 345140

1. Summary

- 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 include the anticipated working methods, timescales and staffing levels.
- 1.2 These detailed specifications will be submitted by the client for approval by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy the brief

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Kirkby La Thorpe is a small village situated approximately 4km east of Sleaford. The site is located on the western side of Mount Lane in the southern part of the village.

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission has been given to erect one house on this site.

4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The development site is within the area once inhabited in the medieval period. A Cambridge University Air photo clearly shows crofts (medieval paddocks) behind modern houses in this area of Mount Lane. This would indicate that in the medieval period there would have been houses lining the road.
- 4.2 In 1995 an archaeological evaluation (N/34/36/94) 100m to the north gave evidence of a Romano-British settlement. Some of the finds could imply a Roman Villa. The ensuing watching brief in 1997 found a feature containing Romano-British pottery. Late Saxon and medieval pottery was also abundant.

5. Requirements 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.
- 5.2 Any adjustments to the brief for the watching brief project should only be made after consultation with the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven.
- 5.3 The following details should be given in the contractor's specification:
 - 5.3.1 An agreed projected timetable for the various stages of work.
 - 5.3.2 Details of the staff structure and numbers including person hours for on-site work.
 - 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 A full description of the recovery and recording strategies to be used.
- 5.3.5 An estimate of time and resources allocated for the post-excavation work and report production in the form of person hours. This should include lists of specialists and their role in the project. It is expected that medieval finds will be encountered and therefore adequate provision should be made for specialists in this area.
- 5.3.6 Contingency costs should only be used in the event of unexpected costs and should only be activated after discussion with the Heritage Officer.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 The Heritage Officer for North Kesteven will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and will require preferably fourteen days notice but at least five working days prior to the commencement of the work. The Heritage Officer should be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and should be 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 Requirements

- 8.1 A full report should be produced and deposited with the planning department of North Kesteven District Council, the Heritage Officer, the client and the County Sites and Monuments Record. The report should include:
- 8.1.1 location plan of the trenches;
- 8.1.2 section and plan drawings, 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 are to be made for long term storage of all artefacts and paper archive in an appropriate museum.
- 8.3 If the receiving museum is to be the City and County Museum, Lincoln then the archive should be produced in the form outlined in the museum's document 'Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives', see address below.

9. Publication and Dissemination

- 9.1 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 with the North Kesteven Heritage Officer but is expected this will not exceed six months. Consideration must be given to a summary of the results being published in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology' in due course.

10. Additional Information

- 10.1 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 programme are only to be made with the prior written approval of the Heritage Officer.

Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Description	Interpretation
001	Mid brown sand, 0.6m thick	Topsoil
002	Reddish brown sand	Fill of 003
003	Cut, 1.8m wide by 0.22m deep	Possible pit
004	Light brownish yellow sand with calcareous gravels	Natural deposit
005	Mid yellowish brown sand with calcareous gravels	Subsoil?

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

5	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
2	Scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix

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: 265.97
Archaeological Project Services Site Code: MLK97

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Appendix 4

GLOSSARY

Context	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> (4).
Cut	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.
Fill	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).
Iron Age	Part of the prehistoric era characterised by the introduction and use of iron for tools and weapons. In Britain this period dates from approximately 700 BC - AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.