

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 950

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Monks Lawn, Bacton, Norfolk**

39693 BAC

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Location: Monks Lawn, Bacton, Norfolk
District: Bacton
Grid Ref.: TG 3491 3329
HER No.: 39693 BAC
Date of fieldwork: 30th September 2003

Summary

An archaeological watching brief at Monks Lawn, Bacton to observe footing trenches for a proposed private dwelling and garage. No features or finds of an archaeological interest were located during the observations on site.

1.0 Introduction

(Figs 1 and 2)

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) to observe footing trenches for a property development scheme. The site was located on the corner of two roads, Back Lane and Priory Road in Bacton, Norfolk, between the villages of Broomholm and Keswick. The work was commissioned and funded by Mr Paul Brown.

Approximately 200m to the south of the site lie the remains of the medieval Broomholm Priory (Historic Environment Record 1073). The Cluniac Priory was founded in AD 1113 and dissolved in AD 1536, the ruins being later used for various functions, including a lighthouse, dovecote and military headquarters. The proximity of the development area to this historical site necessitated the presence of an archaeologist to monitor groundworks on site.

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref.: EJR/16/09/02).

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, in accordance with the relevant policy on archiving standards.

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during excavation of footing trenches. The Brief required that an archaeologist should be in constant attendance during the groundworks and that the ground to be disturbed should be metal detected prior to the commencement of the excavation. This was carried out by an independent metal detectorist, Mr G. Abel, before the archaeologist arrived on site.

The groundworks comprised nine main footing trenches for a single dwelling within a footprint slightly smaller than c. 13m x13m (162 sq. m) and five trenches for a garage within a c. 6m x 6m (36 sq. m) area (Fig. 2). The footing trenches were excavated by an JCB-type mechanical digger fitted with a toothed bucket. The width of the trenches were on average 0.7m wide and 0.6m in depth and were excavated in several sweeps of the bucket along the trench line.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU *pro forma* sheets. Plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Site conditions were fine with good access to the site in general and for observation of the groundworks.

2.0 Observations

The deposits encountered consisted of a loamy topsoil ([1]) of c. 0.15m in depth containing building debris such as glass and brick fragments. This overlaid a mid brown sandy silt subsoil ([2]) containing moderate small flint pebbles and occasional flecks of chalk and charcoal which continued to the excavated base of the trenches. At the bottom of the trenches, patches of a lighter sandy silt containing gravel was identified which may have indicated part of the underlying natural. These deposits exhibited no evidence of archaeological remains within their make-up.

Overall, no features of archaeological interest were observed while monitoring the excavation of both the house footings and the garage trenches. The spoil from the trenches was examined but apart from several fragments of modern ceramic and other modern refuse which were discarded, no artefacts were recovered.

3.0 Conclusions

The ground works observed during the project did not disturb any archaeological deposits or features. The absence of archaeology within the footing trenches suggests activity associated with the Cluniac Priory situated close-by to the south-west did not extend to this location.

Acknowledgements

The work was commissioned and funded by Mr Paul Brown who was developing the site. The watching brief was carried out by Piers Wallace and the post-excavation undertaken by the author. Historic Environment Record information was provided by Jan Allen. The report was illustrated, formatted and produced by Maggie Foottit and edited by Alice Lyons.

Bibliography

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(Ed)

An Historical Atlas of Norfolk, Norfolk Museums Service

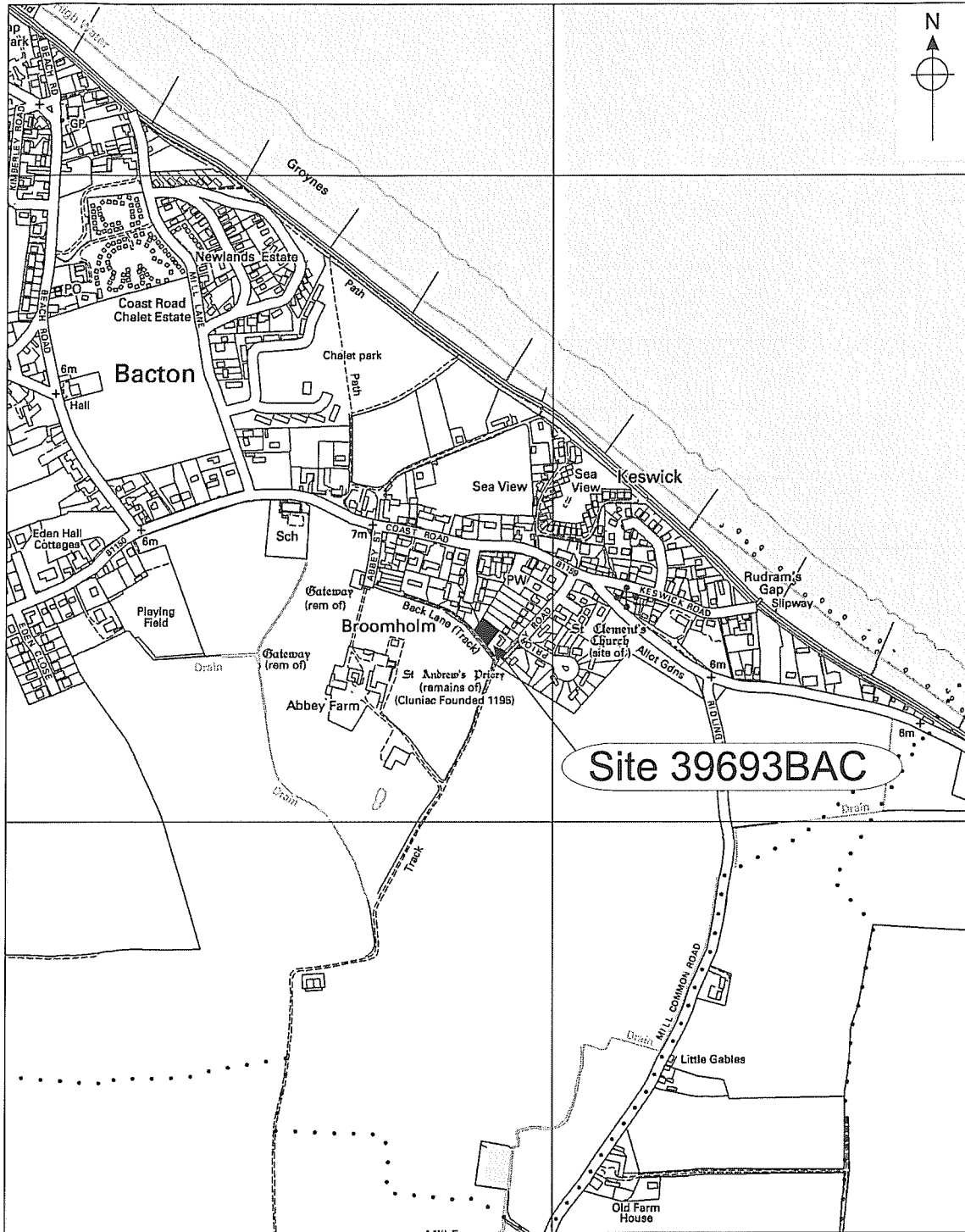


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:10,000

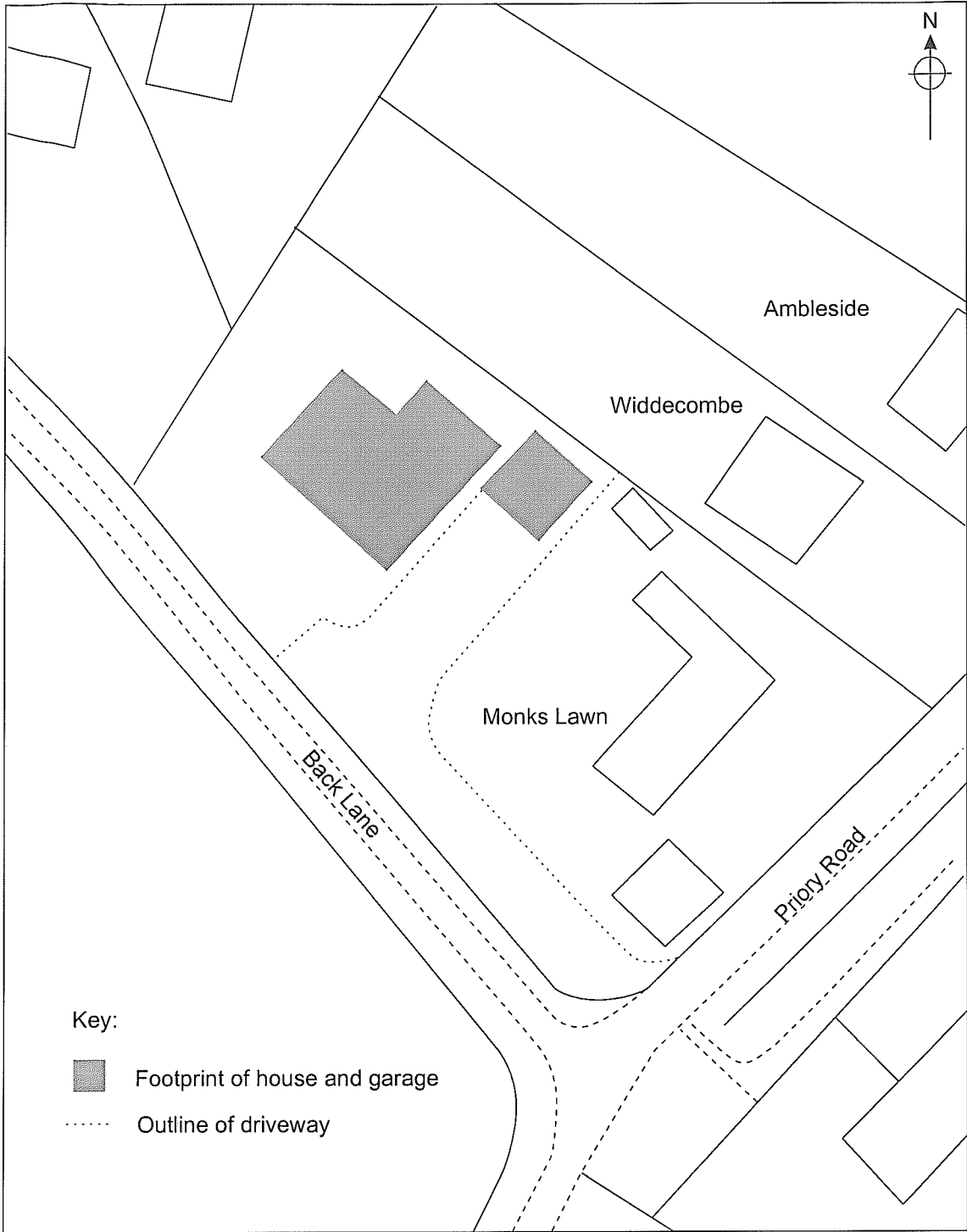


Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500