
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
LAND AT START RIGHT NURSERY,
12A ERMINE STREET,
ANCASTER,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(ANES 09)**

**Work Undertaken For
Mrs. L. Lukies**

April 2009

Report Compiled by
Mark Peachey BA (Hons)

Planning Application No: S08/0984/02
National Grid Reference: SK 9824 4351
City and County Museum Accession No: 2009.22
Oasis Record No: archaeo11-56975

APS Report No. **23/09**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the erection of a portable building at Start Right Nursery, 12a Ermine Street, Ancaster, Lincolnshire.

The work was required as the site was archaeologically sensitive, lying within the Roman town at Ancaster, protected as Scheduled Ancient Monument number LI105.

The investigation revealed probable post-medieval topsoil.

Roman remains were not identified and no artefacts of any period were retrieved.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as “a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed.” (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

A planning application (S/08/0984/02) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for the construction of a portable building adjacent to the north side of the current building. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted under Section 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Permission was subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during groundworks connected with the construction. Archaeological Project

Services (APS) was commissioned by Mrs L. Lukies to undertake this work which was carried out on 13th March 2009 in accordance with a specification prepared by APS and approved by the South Kesteven Planning Archaeologist (Appendix 1).

2.3 Topography and Geology

Ancaster is located 27km south of Lincoln in the administrative district of South Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The site lies in the centre of Ancaster, approximately 170m northeast of St. Martin’s Church on the east side of Ermine Street at national grid reference SK 9824 4351 (Fig 2) at c. 45m OD. Local soils are predominantly deep permeable fine and coarse loamy and sandy soils of the Ruskington Association with Blackwood Association sandy and coarse loamy soils developed on glaciofluvial drift (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Ancaster has archaeological remains of national importance, some of which are protected as Scheduled Monuments. An Iron Age settlement, with hut circles and enclosure ditches has been found to the south and west of the village.

The site lies within the defended area of the Roman town (Scheduled Monument LI 105), located near the northeast corner of the ramparts, which survive as significant earthworks in places, and 75m east of Ermine Street, a major Roman thoroughfare that connected London to Lincoln and beyond, to the Humber estuary (Margary 1973, 228). The site also lies 800m southeast of a Roman marching camp (Scheduled Monument LI 295) (Malone 2001, 2). A roadside settlement grew up around Ermine Street with a cemetery and a pottery kiln to the north of the site. It is thought that Ancaster experienced a fairly rapid expansion during the 2nd century AD (Burnham and

Wacher 1990). Defences were added to the town in the 3rd century AD and a number of buildings have been recorded through excavation (Todd 1975). A number of excavations have taken place within the interior of the defended area in the last few decades. These were fairly limited but did record several buildings orientated end on to the street layout (Burnham and Wacher 1990).

Known Anglo-Saxon activity is restricted to a large cremation cemetery to the south of the Roman town (Meaney 1964, 151). No associated settlement has yet been identified, though it has been suggested as implying continuity of the Roman town (*ibid.*).

Ancaster is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey and is first mentioned during the 12th century. Referred to as *Anacastro*, the name is derived from the Old English and means 'the (Roman) fort belonging to *Ana*' (Cameron 1998, 3).

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

An archaeological evaluation undertaken c 300m north of the site identified an extensive peat deposit overlain by later dumping and post-medieval development along the frontage to Ermine Street. Residual Romano-British material was identified, though no features of the period were apparent (Malone 2001, 1).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the work was to record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during excavations for foundation trenches and services.

The objectives of the investigation were to determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered and their spatial arrangement; as far as practicable to recover dating evidence from them and to establish the sequence of archaeological remains present on the site.

4. METHODS

Two drainage trenches were excavated by a small mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision. Selected sections were then cleaned by hand. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation the records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced.

5. RESULTS (Figs 3, 4)

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The drainage trenches (Fig 3) were generally excavated to a depth of 0.33m. However, the earliest deposit, encountered where the trench was excavated to a depth of 0.68m to locate an existing water pipe, was soft dark greyish brown sand (003) (Fig 4, Section 2, Plate 3) which contained occasional limestone and post-medieval ceramic building material fragments. This was overlain by 0.33m thick limestone rubble layer (002) which was sealed by a 0.09m thick tarmac surface (001) (Fig 4, Sections 1 and 2, Plates 2 and 3).

6. DISCUSSION

Dark greyish brown sand (003) was probably the former topsoil, prior to the building of the extant yard. The limestone rubble (002) was the make-up layer for the current tarmac surface (001).

7. CONCLUSIONS

An archaeological watching brief on land at the Start Right Nursery, 12a Ermine Street, Ancaster, Lincolnshire revealed a probable post-medieval topsoil. The works made no impact on potential underlying remains.

No finds were retrieved

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mrs L. Lukies who commissioned this investigation. The work was co-ordinated by Dale Trimble who edited this report with Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Dale Trimble
Site Supervisor: Chris Moulis
Photographic reproduction: Mark Peachey
Illustration: Mark Peachey
Post-excavation analysis: Mark Peachey

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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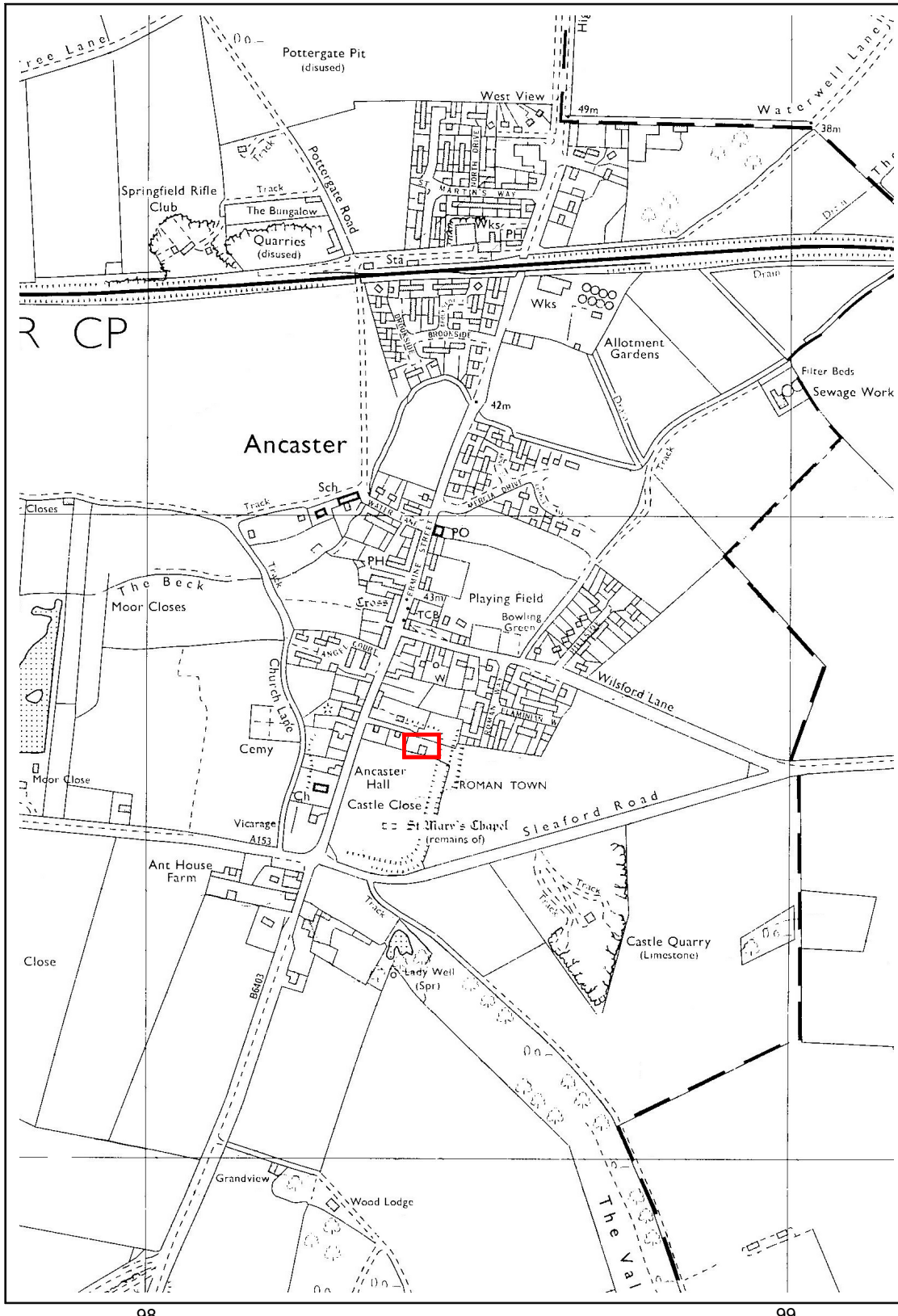
Todd, M, 1981 *The Roman Town of Ancaster, Lincolnshire. The excavations of 1955-1971*


11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
DoE Department of the Environment
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists



Figure 1 - General location plan



 Area shown on Figure 3

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. HTL Ltd Licence No. AL5041A0001




| | | |
|---|---------------|------------------|
|  Archaeological Project Services | | |
| Project Name: Ancaster Ermine Street ANES09 | | |
| Scale 1:10000 | Drawn by: MJP | Report No: 23/09 |

Figure 2 - Site location plan

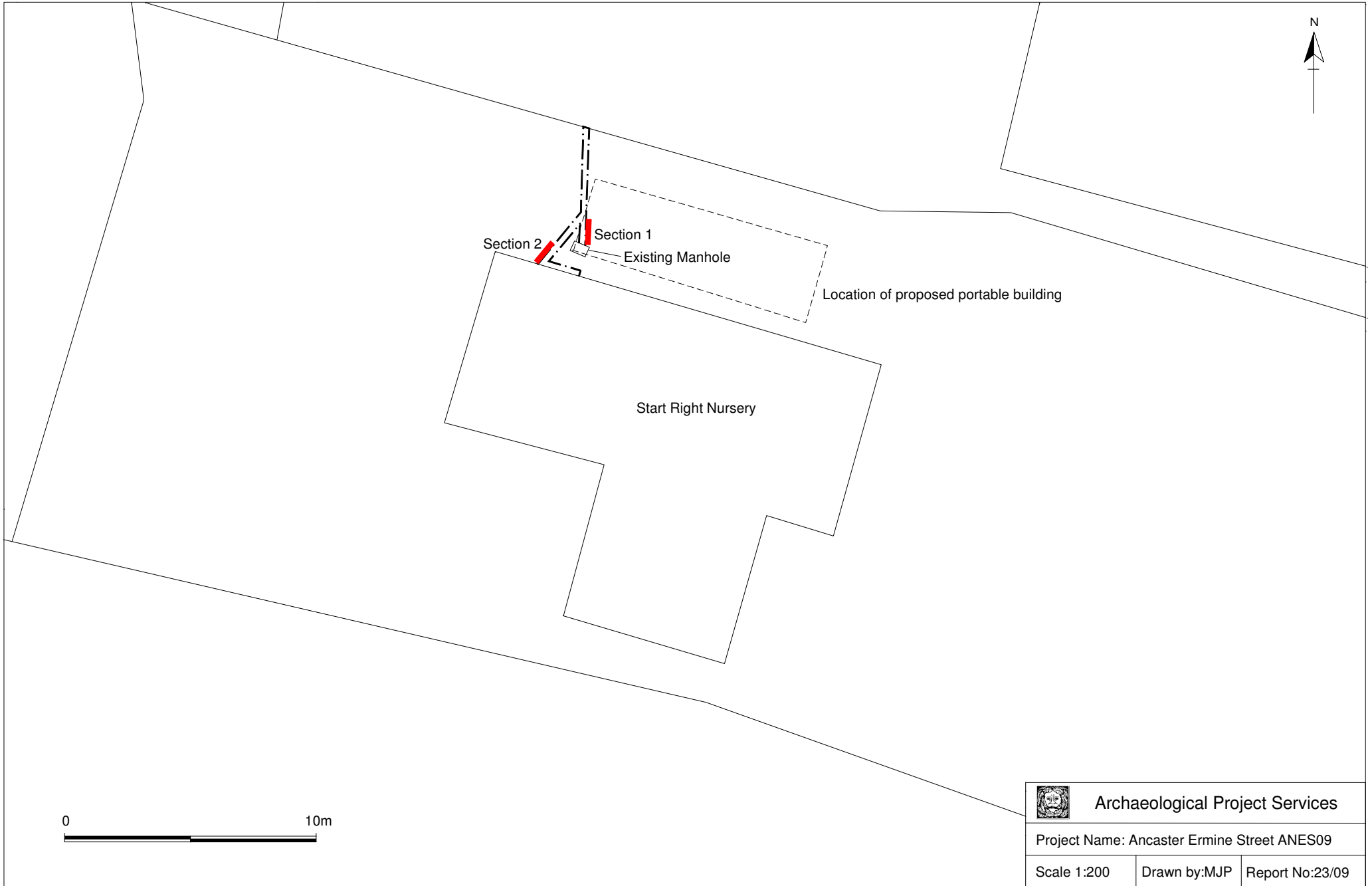
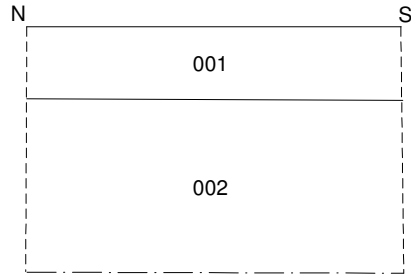
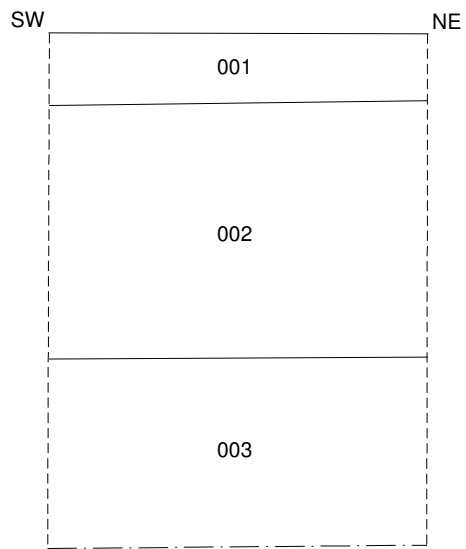


Figure 3. Trench Location Plan



Section 1



Section 2




| | | |
|---|---------------|------------------|
|  Archaeological Project Services | | |
| Project Name: Ancaster Ermine Street ANES09 | | |
| Scale 1:20 | Drawn by: MJP | Report No: 23/09 |

Figure 4. Sections



Plate 1. Pre-excitation view
looking southeast



Plate 2. Representative
Section 1



Plate 3. Representative
Section 2

Appendix 1: Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared for Mrs. L. Lukies

by Archaeological Project Services
February 2009

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *An archaeological watching brief is required during groundworks associated with the erection of a portable building at Start Right Nursery, 12a Ermine Street, Ancaster, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The site is archaeologically sensitive, lying within the site of the Roman fort at Ancaster, protected as Ancient Monument number LI105.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological work will consist of a watching brief during groundworks on the site.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the results of the watching brief. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for archaeological watching brief during erections of a portable building on land at Start Right Nursery, 12a, Ermine Street, Ancaster, Lincolnshire. The site is located at National Grid Reference SK 9843 4364.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - 2.2.1 Overview.
 - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
 - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
 - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Ancaster is situated 27km south of Lincoln in the administrative district of South Kesteven. Ermine Street runs through the centre of the present village. The site lies in the centre of Ancaster, approximately 170m northeast of St Martin's Church on the east side of Ermine Street at National Grid Reference SK 9824 4351.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (S08/0984/02) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for construction of a portacabin adjacent to the north side of the current building. Permission was subject to a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of watching brief during groundworks connected with the construction.
- 4.2 Scheduled Monument Consent has been granted under Section 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 subject to the following conditions recommended by English Heritage
 - i) The works to which this consent relates shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, who will be advised by English Heritage. At least two weeks notice, (or such shorter period as may be mutually agreed) in writing of the commencement of works shall be given to:

Dr Glynn Coppack
English Heritage
44 Derngate
Northampton NN1 1UH

- ii) Before works are carried out, the applicant will ensure that an approved archaeological contractor has made the arrangements to enter the site at any reasonable time before and during the execution of the specified works for the purposes of inspecting the site and recording and removing for study of any matters of archaeological importance observed in the course of the inspection.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site lies at c. 45m OD on the east side of Ermine Street. Local soils are predominantly deep permeable fine and coarse loamy and sandy soils of the Ruskington Association with Blackwood Association sandy and coarse loamy soils developed on glaciofluvial drift (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179; 127).

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 Ancaster possesses archaeological remains of national importance, some of which are protected as Scheduled Monuments. It is the site of an Iron Age settlement, Roman fort and Roman town lying on the route of Ermine Street north to Lincoln.
- 6.2 The site lies within the circuit of the defences of the Roman town, located towards the northeast corner of the enclosed area, close to line of the eastern and northern ramparts which survive as significant earthworks in places. The Roman fort is protected as Scheduled Monument number LI 105.
- 6.3 It is thought that Ancaster experienced a fairly rapid expansion during the 2nd century AD, prior to later the imposition of the defended circuit (Burnham and Wachter, 1990).
- 6.4 A number of excavations have taken place within the interior of the defended area of the last few decades. These were fairly limited in area but did record several building oriented end on to the street layout (ibid).

7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:
 - 7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during excavations for foundation trenches and services.
- 7.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:
 - 7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
 - 7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
 - 7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
 - 7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8 SITE OPERATIONS

- 8.1 General considerations
 - 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
 - 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA registered organisation no. 21.
 - 8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

8.2 Methodology

- 8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.
- 8.2.2 Stripped areas and trench sections will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.
- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
 - the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench;
 - groups of features where their relationship is important.
- 8.2.4 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

9 POST-EXCAVATION

9.1 Stage 1

- 9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued and labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.
- 9.1.2 All finds recovered during the field work will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

- 9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.
- 9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

- 9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.
- 9.3.2 This will consist of:
- A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
 - A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
 - Description of the topography of the site.
 - Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
 - A text describing the findings of the watching brief.

- A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
- Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- Sections of the archaeological features.
- Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
- Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
- Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10 REPORT DEPOSITION

- 10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client; the South Kesteven District Council Planning Archaeologist; South Kesteven District Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

11 ARCHIVE

- 11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to the City and County Museum, Lincoln. This will be undertaken following the requirements of the document titled Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives for long term storage and curation.

12 PUBLICATION

- 12.1 Details of the report will be entered onto the OASIS online database. A report of the findings of the watching brief may be presented as a condensed article to the editor of the journal *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*. If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date.

13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the South Kesteven District Council Planning Archaeologist. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

14 VARIATIONS AND CONTINGENCIES

- 14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.
- 14.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator (*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* 1998, Sections 5.7 and 18).
- 14.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.
- 14.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

15 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

- 15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological

site work.

- 15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.
- 15.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one person-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

- 16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

| <u>Task</u> | <u>Body to be undertaking the work</u> |
|------------------------|--|
| Conservation | Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln |
| Pottery Analysis | Prehistoric – Carol Allen, Independent Specialist Roman – A Boyle, APS with B Precious, Independent Specialist Anglo-Saxon - A Boyle, APS with J Young, Independent Specialist Medieval and later – A Boyle and G Taylor, APS |
| Non-pottery Artefacts | J Cowgill, Independent Specialist or G Taylor, APS |
| Animal Bones | J Kitch, APS |
| Environmental Analysis | V Fryer, Independent Specialist |
| Human Remains Analysis | R Gowland, Independent Specialist |

17 INSURANCES

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 COPYRIGHT

- 18.1 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.
- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
- 18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work

and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

19 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Burnham, B.C., & Wachter J., 1990 *The Small Towns of Roman Britain*. Batsford

Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

| No. | Description | Interpretation | Date |
|-----|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| 001 | Tarmac 0.09m thick | Current yard surface | Modern |
| 002 | Limestone rubble 0.33m thick | Make-up for yard surface | Modern |
| 003 | Soft dark greyish brown sand with occasional limestone fragments and post-medieval ceramic building material fragments, 0.25m+ thick | Former topsoil | Post-medieval |

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Anglo-Saxon | 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. |
| 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, e.g. [004]. |
| Domesday Survey | A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD. |
| Iron Age | A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and 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. |
| Old English | The language used by the Saxon (q.v.) occupants of Britain. |
| Post-medieval | The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800. |
| Romano-British | Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain. |

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Context register sheet |
| 3 | Context record sheets |
| 1 | Plan record sheet |
| 1 | Section record sheet |
| 2 | Drawing sheets |
| 1 | Photographic record sheet |
| 1 | Daily record sheet |

All primary records 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
The Collection
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

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: | 2009.22 |
| Archaeological Project Services Site Code: | ANES09 |
| Oasis Record No: | archaeo11-56975 |

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.