
12.0 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

12.1 Introduction

12.1.1 This section of the ES considers the archaeological potential of the proposed development of Sleaford REP, Lincolnshire. This section summarises the archaeological desk-based assessment of the site (Appendix 12.1) and a subsequent archaeological study of the site (Appendix 12.2).

12.2 The Desk-Based Assessment

12.2.1 The assessment examines former land use and the archaeological potential of the study area to provide a better understanding of past activities within this part of Lincolnshire. The assessment covers all aspects of the study area, which includes the existing built environment and the sub-surface archaeological potential and associated cultural connections, such as important events or figures of national or local historic significance. This provides a baseline of known and potential archaeology, related to existing cultural values, against which the impact of the proposed development is considered.

Aims, Objectives and Methodology

12.2.2 The report is based on the Institute of Field Archaeology Standards and Guidelines and considers the following Government & Local Planning Procedures:

- Planning Policy Guidance 16 – Archaeology & Planning;
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment;
- Lincolnshire Structure Plan;
- North Kesteven Local Plan (Revised Deposit Draft June 2003).

12.2.3 The Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) is the primary source of information concerning the current state of archaeological and architectural knowledge. Together with historic map sources, this information predominantly

forms the description of the baseline conditions. The assessment also involved the consultation of the following sources:

- an examination of available topographical evidence;
- an inspection of available geological sources (maps/borehole logs/trial-pit data) relevant to the site;
- an assessment of existing impact on the site;
- an assessment of historical and documentary evidence held by Sleaford Local Studies Library, the Lincolnshire Archives and the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record;
- an assessment of relevant published and unpublished archaeological sources, including searches through local archaeological journals;
- a site walk-over;
- published sources listed in the Bibliography.

Archaeology and Historical Evidence

12.2.4 The assessment identified 64 Historic Environment Records (sites and monuments) within a 1km radius of the centre of the application site. These are compiled from finds, sites and events from the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Records. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, HER entries or Listed Buildings within the site boundary and the site is not within an archaeological priority zone or conservation area. There are no Listed buildings, conservation areas or registered parks and gardens within the 1km search radius (although there is a Grade II* Listed Building 1.2km east of the site).

12.2.5 The cartographic and historical sources indicate that the site is located in an archaeologically rich landscape. In the prehistoric period the sea levels were substantially different, placing the site in closer proximity to the edge of the Fens. This locates the site within an important economic and industrial landscape, connecting the edge of the Fens (with natural resources including salt), and the rest of Lincolnshire. Sleaford is identified in the North Kesteven Plan as a centre for Iron Age activity, and there is a large amount of Roman activity centred around the crossroads of Mareham Lane (a Roman Road) and Boston Lane (which is not recorded as a Roman road, but archaeological evidence may suggest ancient antecedents), with evidence for Roman activity

across the study area. Although the site is located outside the Saxon and medieval centre of Sleaford and Kirkby la Thorpe, evidence for Saxon and medieval activity has been recovered from archaeological investigations to the east of the site, out with these centres. Cartographic sources have identified a number of post-medieval features which may survive within the site boundary.

Identified and/or anticipated Remains

12.2.6 Based on the baseline information, it was considered that the design scheme may have a direct affect on:

- the potentially surviving unidentified remains of prehistoric (Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age) activity;
- the potentially surviving unidentified remains of Iron Age activity;
- the potentially surviving unidentified remains of Roman activity;
- the potentially surviving unidentified remains Saxon activity;
- the potentially surviving unidentified remains medieval activity;
- the potentially surviving identified remains post-medieval activity.

12.3 Subsequent Archaeological Assessment

Introduction

12.3.1 In April 2008 Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) (PCA Lincoln) carried out an archaeological evaluation of the site following consultation with the North Kesteven Council Heritage Officer which was itself informed by a geophysical survey of the entire site to determine its archaeological potential.

12.3.2 The scheme of investigation complied with the recommendations of Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Dept. of Environment 1990) and also follows the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999), Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (EAA Occasional Paper 14) and the Management of Archaeological Projects II (English Heritage 1991).

12.3.3 The aims of the evaluation were to identify and characterize the extent of any archaeological remains or potential for remains within the proposed development area.

12.3.4 The full report on the evaluation is presented as Appendix 12.2.

Methodology

12.3.5 The evaluation methodology required the excavation of seventeen trenches, each 30m long by 2m wide. Initial excavation was carried out using an excavator, where archaeological deposits were encountered, all further excavation was by hand.

12.3.6 Archaeological features were sample excavated to establish depths and profiles and, where possible, date and function. Features were recorded in plan and in section at appropriate scales. Written accounts were prepared on pro forma context record sheets. A colour photographic record was maintained throughout.

Results

12.3.7 The evaluation identified a concentration of archaeological remains within the southern third of the site. Some Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeology was identified.

12.3.8 The post-medieval archaeology was classified as insignificant.

12.3.9 The medieval archaeology (historic records of ridge and furrow agriculture) was classed as of local interest, but it is suggested that this requires no further investigation beyond that carried out for the archaeological evaluation.

12.3.10 The Roman period archaeology is more significant and includes a land boundary; a number of probable enclosure ditches and some large pits. There was evidence to suggest that there were once Roman structures, though no actual structures were identified.

Conclusions

12.3.11 The report concluded:

“Although the archaeology is considered to be of local and possibly regional significance, no remains have been identified that would preclude a proposed development of the area, provided that a suitable mitigation strategy is in place to ensure preservation of the most significant archaeological remains by record (ie excavation, recording and reporting). As such, at least as far as archaeology is concerned, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted by the local planning authority, with a condition being attached to ensure the implementation of a concluding programme of archaeological investigation in advance of development.”

12.4 Summary

12.4.1 Extensive desk based assessments and field work have been carried out to determine the impacts on archaeology and heritage of the Sleaford REP.

12.4.2 This work has concluded that there is nothing on site that should preclude its development, subject to an programme of excavation, recording and reporting to preserve the archaeology that is present (which is deemed to be of local and possibly regional significance). Such work could be managed by attaching appropriate conditions to any planning permission, and the applicant would ensure that this was completed before construction began on site.