WITHAM ARCHAEOLOGY

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON

MILLFIELD NURSERY, SPALDING COMMON, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.: H16-0668-16

MUSEUM ACCESSION CODE: LCNCC2021.39

SITE CODE: SCSP21

SUMMARY

This document sets out details of a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation to be carried out in advance of the redevelopment of the existing Millfield Nursery site on land off Spalding Common, Spalding, for residential development of up to 135 dwellings.

Undated cropmarks of possible enclosures and field boundaries have been identified in the immediate vicinity, some possibly extending into the site. From after the Roman period until it was drained in the late 17th century the site was located within an area of freshwater fen known as Deeping Fen.

The site will be evaluated through the excavation of seventeen trenches, 30m long by 1.8m wide.

The project will culminate in the production of a report describing and interpreting the findings. Subsequent to this, the complete project archive will be deposited with The Collection, Danes Terrace, Lincoln.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This document has been prepared by Witham Archaeology for Seagate Homes. The document sets out details of an archaeological trial trench evaluation to be carried out in advance of a housing redevelopment at Millfield Nursery, Spalding Common, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

1.2. The Scheme of Investigation is designed to comply with the usual requirements of the local planning authority. Prior to the commencement of any fieldwork, it should be submitted for approval by the archaeological adviser to South Holland District Council.

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1. The town of Spalding in the parish of the same name is located in the administrative district of South Holland, approximately 25km north north-east of Peterborough and 30km south-east of Sleaford.

2.2. The site at NGR TF 2344 2004, lies at the southern edge of Spalding, approximately 2.5km from the centre of the town. Most recently in use as a nursery, the site is sub-rectangular in plan, covering an area of approximately 4.62ha. It is located between Spalding Common and Cradge Bank.

2.3. The site is located on a geology of Oxford Clay Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 157 to 166 million years ago in the Jurassic period. The bedrock is overlain by superficial deposits of tidal clay and silt formed up to three million years ago in the Quaternary period (British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer website).

3. PROJECT BACKGROUND

3.1. The proposed scheme of development provides for the construction of 135 new dwellings.

3.2. Planning permission for the development (SHDC Planning Ref. H-16-0668-16) has been granted by South Holland District Council subject to the approval of a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation (Condition 21) and the completion of any archaeological works detailed in the scheme. In accordance with advice from the archaeological adviser to SKDC, initial investigations will be two-fold. First, a programme of historic building recording covering the early 19th century remains of a windmill prior to its demolition, and then a programme of trial trench evaluation designed to assess the potential for significant archaeological remains and, if necessary, to inform a strategy for mitigation of impact. This WSI will only address the trial trench evaluation.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1. A Heritage Impact Assessment of the site, carried out in 2016, indicates that the site is located in the vicinity of undated cropmarks, located to the west and south. These cropmarks were considered typical of the Late Iron Age and Roman periods, and to represent enclosures, trackways and field boundaries, possibly extending into the proposed area of development (Cope-Faulkner 2016).

4.2. The earliest mention of Spalding dates to the 7th century. The place-name derives from the Old English and means ‘the people of Spalde’ (Key to English Place-Names website), a tribe mentioned in the *Tribal Hideage*, a document dating from the 7th to the 9th centuries that lists thirty-five tribes present to the south of the River Humber. Despite this there are no known Saxon remains in the vicinity of the site, probably reflecting the development of the freshwater fen that later became Deeping Fen (op cit.).

4.3. The 1086 Domesday Book mentions 91 households at Spalding, divided between three holdings held by Guy of Craon, Ivo Tallboys and by the abbey of Crownland. The Domesday Book also mentions six fisheries and two salthouses (Open Domesday website).

4.4. During the medieval period the site was probably within developing freshwater fen, and would therefore have been a significant location for resources such as wildfowl and thatch. This might explain its use as common land and the origins of the placename.

4.5. The area was drained in the late 17th century. A mid-18th century map based on a 1670 map shows the site clear of development and adjacent to a thoroughfare. The neighbouring fields are possibly shown as pasture fields.

4.6. The earliest surviving structure on site is the Common Mill and was originally built with five stories around 1816.

4.7. Cartographic evidence shows the site for the most part clear of development until the mid-20th century when the Millfield Nursery came into being. By the 1980s most of the site was occupied by greenhouses.

5. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

5.1. The general aims and objectives of the trial trench evaluation are to:

- provide information on the presence/absence, nature, date and quality of survival of archaeological deposits and remains which might be contained within the site, at the depth of proposed construction disturbance, and to assess the importance of such remains in terms of their local, regional and national context.
- assess the possible scale of development impact on any remains and provide information which might influence development design so that impact on any remains can be avoided or minimised.
- provide information that will allow the local planning authority to reconcile development proposals with their policy for preserving archaeological remains and make an informed and reasoned decision on a planning application.
- provide site specific archaeological information which (if necessary) would allow for the design and integration of timing and funding of any further archaeological work (or other mitigating strategy) which might be required in advance of or during any subsequent development programme.
- produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum and from which the potential for further study and academic research could be assessed.
- provide information for accession to the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

6.1. The Planning Archaeologist, South Holland District Council, has requested the implementation of a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation as an initial phase of investigation of the site. There are no known archaeological deposits on the site, so trenches will be randomly distributed to ensure adequate coverage in all areas. The programme of works will consist of seventeen 30m long by 1.8m wide trenches to assess the site (a 2% sample of the available area).

6.2. A record will be made of any extant features or other factors, such as previous or current land-use, that might have affected the survival or condition of archaeological remains. Consideration will also be given to the impact which prevailing site circumstances (e. g. the location of existing buried services) might have on the proposed investigation techniques and/or the location of trial trenches.

6.3. Care will be taken to avoid damage or disturbance to any archaeological deposits or remains other than is necessary to achieve the objectives of the project as set out above.

6.4. Recent deposits (topsoil etc) will be removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth-bladed bucket. This work will be supervised by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist and will be discontinued upon reaching the first significant archaeological horizon.

6.5. All archaeological features/deposits revealed in the trenches will be investigated by hand to determine character, extent, condition and position in the stratigraphic sequence. Ditches will be investigated through the excavation and recording of a single segment, positioned to obtain a maximum of stratigraphic information, while excavations on discrete features (pits and postholes etc) will be sufficient in scope to determine their date, character and survival condition.

6.6. Trenches will not be excavated to below safe working depths, usually a maximum 1.2m below local ground level. If significant deposits are encountered at depths greater than 1.2m (such as alluvium or peat contained in ancient river channels) these will be investigated through hand augering in accordance with advice from the project environmental archaeologist.

6.7. Furnaces and any other special features and deposits will be sampled, characterised and dated to a level sufficient for the purposes of evaluation. It is not anticipated that full and detailed excavation will be undertaken at evaluation stage, and artefacts will only be recovered in sufficient quantity to permit assessment of date, range, and function.

6.8. A record of the investigations will be compiled through:

- Notes detailing the progress of archaeological fieldwork

- Individual written descriptions for archaeological contexts, made on *pro forma* recording sheets and indexed appropriately.
- Measured section drawings showing specific archaeological contexts as well as general stratigraphic sequences, produced at scales 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.
- Measured plans of archaeological contexts (individually and/or multiply) at scale 1:20.
- Sequences of colour and black & white photographs showing individual archaeological features and overall site circumstances

6.9. All plans and sections will be referenced to Ordnance Datum, while reference points used in the compilation of plans and sections will be located in relation to fixed points present on Ordnance Survey plans. All survey work will be undertaken with survey grade GPS.

6.10. Unless otherwise stated in our quotation, all trenches will be backfilled using the excavated material only. Pre-existing surfaces will not be made good.

6.11. Deposits in archaeological features such as ditches and pits can be rich in material (plant remains/charred plant remains, molluscs and small faunal remains) preserving evidence about the ancient environment. Provision will therefore be made for a programme of sampling, processing, assessment and analysis should suitable material be found in dated deposits. The samples will be extracted and recorded in accordance with *Environmental Archaeology* (English Heritage 2011).

6.12. Any articulated human remains encountered during the investigation will be left *in-situ*, with work being limited to preliminary identification and recording. If the removal of human remains becomes unavoidable, consequent work will represent a variation in the scope of this specification. Additional fieldwork will be valued at the rates shown in the accompanying quotation. In the event that the removal of human remains becomes necessary a Ministry of Justice licence (in accordance with the Burials Act 1857) will be required. Witham Archaeology will obtain the licence on behalf of the client. The Planning Archaeologist and the local coroner will be informed immediately upon the discovery of human remains.

6.13. In accordance with the **Treasure Act 1997** and *Code of Practice* finds of gold and silver will be archaeologically removed to a safe place and reported to the Coroner immediately. Where it is not possible to remove finds on the same day as discovery, appropriate security arrangements will be put in place. Any finds which might be considered treasure under the terms of the Act will be reported to the Planning Archaeologist within 14 days of discovery.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

7.1. Work will be undertaken in compliance with all relevant statutory Health and Safety provisions and in accordance with the specific instructions of the client and/or the main contractor or site manager. A copy of the Witham Archaeology health and safety policy and manual will be provided upon request.

7.2. A risk assessment will be carried out in advance of fieldwork. Witham Archaeology will liaise with the landowner and client to ensure that all potential risks are minimised.

7.3. Procedures for ensuring a Covid-19 safe environment during fieldwork are set out in the document 'Witham Archaeology: Coronavirus – Procedures for Fieldwork'. All staff will have access to a hygiene kit containing masks, soap, disinfectant spray and hand sanitizer.

8. POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

8.1. Post-fieldwork tasks will be as follows:

- Checking and ordering of the site record to ensure a consistent archive
- Production of a stratigraphic matrix
- Cataloguing of photographic and other records
- Processing and dating of finds (together with any necessary x-ray and conservation treatment to stabilize fragile items)
- Compilation of a client report
- Accession of information to the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record
- Preparation of the complete project archive for museum deposition

8.2. All such work shall be carried out in accordance with the standards of the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC 2002) and the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC 1992).

8.3. Any conservation work required on finds will be carried out by the Norfolk Museums Service.

9. REPORTING PROCEDURES

9.1. The client report, in A4 format, will be produced in accordance with the provisions of 'Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment' (English Heritage 2009).

9.2. The report will contain an appraisal of the recorded evidence within its local, regional and national context, with reference to regional and national resource assessments and agendas, most notably the 'East Midland Historic Environment Research Framework'.

9.3. The report will contain:

- A non-technical summary
- An account of historical and archaeological background
- A description of the data gathering process
- An account of the findings of archaeological fieldwork together with an interpretation of any remains.
- Site location plans

- A plan(s) of the site showing locations examined
- Section drawings showing the general stratigraphic sequence as well as particular features/contexts together with plans as necessary
- A selection of photographs depicting the main phases of fieldwork and any significant archaeological features or finds
- Summary artefact lists
- The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) reference ID and summary form (see below)
- If available, the unique event number assigned by the relevant HER

9.4. An unbound copy of the report marked DRAFT will be presented to the Planning Archaeologist within four weeks of the completion of site works (unless there are reasonable grounds for more time). Following acceptance, the report will be distributed as follows:

Recipient	**Copies**
Client	Digital copy + hard copies as required
Lincolnshire County Council HER	Digital copy (.pdf format)
The Collection	1 hard copy + digital copy

10. ARCHIVE PREPARATION AND DEPOSITION

10.1. The Project Archive, preferably including all finds**, shall be deposited with The Collection, Danes Terrace, Lincoln. In English law all material collected from a site through archaeological fieldwork (except Treasure Trove) is the property of the landowner. In advance of the project Witham Archaeology will therefore seek agreement in principle to the transfer of ownership of the finds archive from the applicant/landowner to Lincolnshire County Council.

10.2. The archive will be prepared for long term storage in accordance with requirements set out in the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Handbook (Jennings 2019).

10.3. The archive will be deposited under the accession code LCNCC:2021.39. The site code SCSP21 has also been confirmed with The Collection.

** other than human remains, subject to conditions included in any Ministry of Justice licence to excavate (under the Burials Act 1857) and finds reported under the Treasure Act 1996.

11. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION

11.1. An OASIS online form will be initiated at the ADS internet site (ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis), in advance of the commencement of fieldwork. A digital copy of the report (pdf format) will be uploaded to OASIS on completion of the project (subject to any provisions regarding confidentiality).

11.2. A summary of the results will be published in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology', the journal of the Society for Lincolnshire History and

Archaeology. The scope of such publication will be dependent upon the results of the investigations.

11.3. Copyright – Witham Archaeology retains full copyright of any commissioned reports and associated project material, excepting that exclusive license is provided to the client for use of such material in all matters directly relating to the project.

12. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

12.1. This specification will form the basis for monitoring by the Planning Archaeologist.

12.2. Witham Archaeology will inform the Planning Archaeologist, in writing and at least one week in advance, of the proposed start date of the project, so that appropriate monitoring arrangements can be put in place.

12.3. The Planning Archaeologist will be kept informed about the progress of site work and subsequent post-excavation work.

13. RESOURCES & PROGRAMMING

13.1. Witham Archaeology will supply all necessary recording materials and tools, as well as arranging transport to and from site.

13.2. The client, developer or main contractor will provide:

- Details of the groundwork programme
- A plan(s) showing the scope of the groundwork, i.e., foundations, buried services, landscaping, etc
- Any information regarding possible contamination on the site
- All necessary measures to allow safe access to trenches where this might be required by the archaeologist
- The free use of shelter and other general facilities as might be available on the site

13.3. Fieldwork and report preparation will be undertaken by an experienced Project Officer employed by Witham Archaeology. The Project Officer will have had substantial expertise in the management and execution of all types of archaeological projects.

13.4. All work, relating to artefactual/palaeoenvironmental material from the site will be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced specialists and will be strictly limited in scope to meet the primary objectives set out in this document. The principal specialists likely to be employed on this project are:

Animal Bone	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Prehistoric Pottery	Sarah Percival
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, Norwich Museum
Environmental Analysis	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy

Human skeletal remains	Sue Anderson
Lithics	Barry Bishop
Iron Age Pottery	David Knight (advice)/Maggie Darling
Post Roman Pottery and Ceramic Building Materials	Alex Beeby or Anne Irving
Radio-Carbon dating	Beta-Analytical, Miami
Registered/Other Finds	Gary Taylor
Roman Pottery	Alex Beeby

13.5. Programming will be as follows:

- Fieldwork – to be completed within two working weeks
- Post-fieldwork management, analysis, and report – to be completed within four weeks of the completion of fieldwork

13.6. Provision has been made for the processing and analysis of primarily later prehistoric and Roman finds, expected to comprise mainly ceramic material. There is also provision for occasional finds of post Roman material (pot, building material and metalwork etc.). A contingency sum palaeoenvironmental sampling and analysis has been included.

14. INSURANCE STATEMENT

14.1. Witham Archaeology maintains Public Liability insurance with indemnity to the value of £5,000,000, Employer's Liability to the value of £10,000,000 and professional indemnity insurance to the value of £2,000,000.

15. STANDARDS

15.1. All work shall be undertaken to professional standards and in accordance with best current practice as set out in the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (CIfA 2014), and the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Handbook (Jennings, revised 2019).

16. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7th March 2021