

Old Church Street – Friar Street (NET 2 Area B6) – Lenton City of Nottingham

Report on Archaeological Attendance during removal of rails and track laying

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Plate1: Track Laying

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SUMMARY

On the 15th and 17th of November 2014, Trent & Peak Archaeology, on behalf of Taylor Woodrow, conducted archaeological attendance on the removal of railings and the laying of a temporary prefabricated road surface at Lenton Priory, City of Nottingham (Scheduled Monument 1019675). The work was carried out as urgent work (with English Heritage's notification) under Class Consent 5 (Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979) - Class Consents Order 1994. This was acceptable to English Heritage following the submission of a Method Statement and Specification for archaeological attendance

The key objective of the archaeological attendance was to prevent any unnecessary incursion into the surface of the ancient monument, and to monitor any excavations made during the removal of rail fencing.

The interventions made to remove the railings were a maximum of 300mm in circumference and 400mm in depth, but remained exclusively within the extent of the concrete sub-base used during the original fence construction. No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered. Archaeological monitoring ensured that the track was laid without any plant tracking over the Scheduled Monument.

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Quality Assurance

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<i>Signed</i>	
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1. INTRODUCTION

On the 15th and 17th of November 2014, Trent & Peak Archaeology, on behalf of Taylor Woodrow and English Heritage, conducted an archaeological attendance on the removal of railings and the laying of a temporary prefabricated road surface at Lenton Priory, City of Nottingham (Scheduled Monument 1019675).

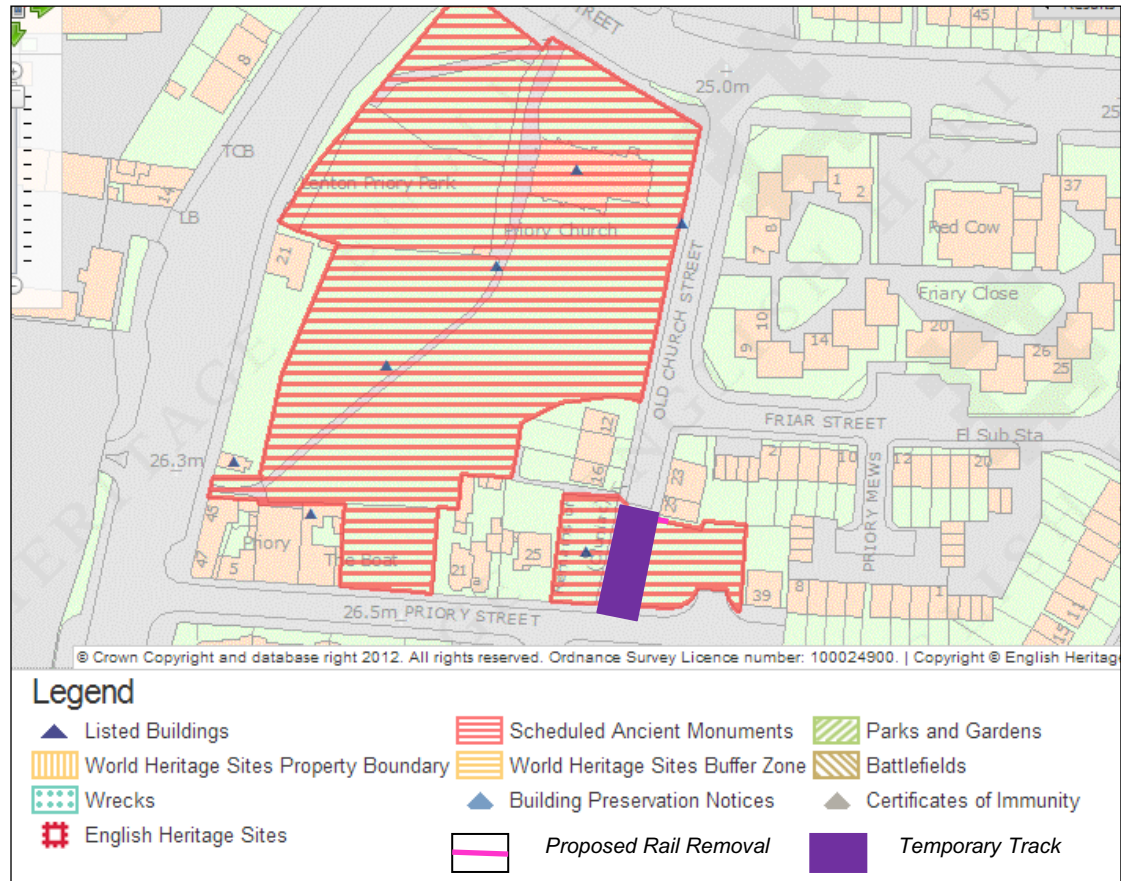


Figure 1: Lenton Priory Scheduled Monument showing area of the proposed temporary highway and rail removal

2. SITE BACKGROUND

As part of the ongoing groundworks associated with Nottingham's new Tram extension (NET 2), Vinci require installation (for a period of 6 weeks) of a temporary highway for emergency and residential access for the nearby residential estate south of Gregory Street/Lenton Lane and removal of railings (requiring very limited hand excavation at base of railings to enable removal). The track base and other associated utilities re-routing have planning permission, but this aspect is a new proposal. The temporary highway will have no sub-surface impact and will be laid on aluminium tracking, but the removal of railings will necessitate the hand excavation (perhaps with concrete bases broken by a pneumatic drill) of small holes at railing bases. This operation is located within the area of Lenton Medieval Priory (Scheduled Monument 1019675).

Lenton Priory, founded 1106-7, and abandoned by the monks in 1538, was one of the greatest monastic houses in England. The Chapel of St Anthony is now the only standing building (although a small portion of a column from the east end of the main priory is extant at the junction of Priory Street and Old Church Street). The priory was founded in 1106 or 1107 by the Cluniac order, and became one of the wealthiest houses of an order noted for the size and magnificence of its churches. Although the precise location of many of these buildings at Lenton Priory is presently unknown, the buried remains of some of these structures,

particularly those around the priory church survive as significant sub-surface archaeological remains. This has been demonstrated by recent excavations during the re-routing of services associated with the construction of NET 2 (Hobson and Flintoft 2013). In Old Church street, structural remains relating to the east end of the main conventual church have been located at a depth of 0.15m below ground level (Hobson and Flintoft 2013).

The proposed temporary highway passes through the eastern extent of the Scheduled Monument of Lenton Medieval Priory (Old Church Street), this is roughly the eastern end of the main priory building. The proposed route continues through the southern side of the main priory building and joins up with Priory Street. The temporary trackway is to be constructed of aluminium tracking and will have no sub-surface impact but the removal of railings may have an impact of 0.25m square and up to 0.2m deep at each railing support base and English Heritage therefore require a Written Scheme of Investigation approved as part of a Scheduled Monument Consent Class 5 Notification (as outlined in the Class Consents Orders of 1994). English Heritage will only allow sub-surface impact in areas immediately already impacted upon by the installation of the railings in the Twentieth century (where there is less potential for the priory remains to be impacted upon), but archaeological attendance will be required to confirm this and record any remains that may be exposed

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record. Where practical (within the constraints of the watching brief and development), this will include an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains. Any features of significance will be recorded and, if possible, an appropriate level of excavation and environmental sampling will be undertaken.

Methodology

The proposed archaeological work comprised continuous archaeological monitoring of the removal or railings, with concrete bases removed in a footprint of up to a width of 0.3m square and a depth of c. 0.5m and archaeological attendance during the laying of temporary tracking to ensure there is no sub-surface impact.

The site was attended during the removal of the fence rails and laying of the track. All incursions were hand cleaned where possible and representative sections photographed and drawn at a scale at 1:20 and 1:50. Plans were drawn at 1:50. Archaeological features and natural deposits were given an individual four figure context number e.g. 0001. All recording was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines of the IfA Institute for Archaeologists (Standard and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief *published October 1994, revised September 2001 and October 2008*).

4. RESULTS

A total of 16 small holes were excavated to remove two sections of north to south and east to west aligned railings (Figure 1). Each intervention excavations measured a maximum of 300mm in circumference with a maximum depth of 420mm (see Plate 2). As most of these holes collapsed on the removal of the fence, only one section was observed. Within this profile a single deposit (0001) was observed, this comprised a mixture of concrete sub-base and mid-dark sandy silt topsoil.

All excavations were by hand with the aid of a pneumatic hammer to cut the concrete holding the fence in place.

No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during the removal of the fence; all spoil was examined for artefacts but none were recovered.



Plate 1: Pneumatic hammer used in the cutting of concrete, looking north along Old Church Street.



Plate 2: South East facing section of incursion number 6



Plate 3: Placing of temporary road surface looking west



Plate 4: Site looking north on completion of fence removal and track laying.

REFERENCES

Davies G, 2014, Old Church Street – (Net 2 Area B6- Lenton Priory, City of Nottingham - Method statement (Written Scheme of Investigation) and Specification for archaeological attendance during removal of railings and track laying, Trent and Peak Archaeology, Report Number 118/2012.

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