

- *An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land to the rear of 12-28 Bark Street and 3-13 Highgate, Cleethorpes, North-East Lincolnshire. This was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) prior to redevelopment of the site.*
- *Medieval and post-medieval cut features and deposits were encountered, with associated evidence that industrial processes had taken place in the vicinity of the investigation.*
- *The evaluation established that previous development of the site has had little impact on underlying archaeology and, the state of preservation is reasonable and relatively close to the existing ground level.*

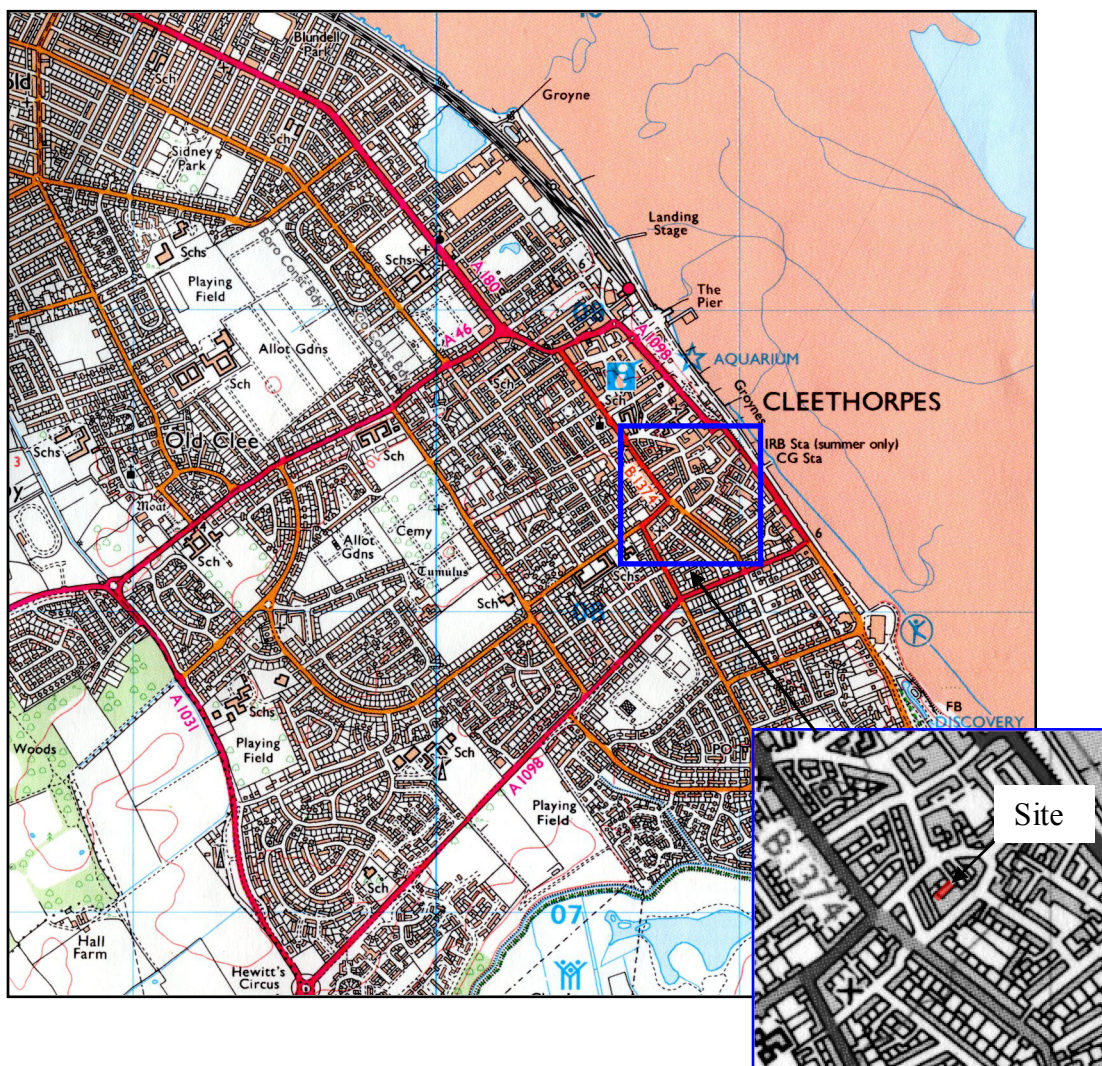


Fig. 1 General site location. Scale 1:25 000. Close up map showing site location and outlined in blue. Scale 1:10 000. (O.S. Copyright licence no: AL 515 21 A0001).

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Response 24-7 to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 12-28 Bark Street and 3-13 Highgate, Cleethorpes, North-East Lincolnshire.

These works were undertaken at the request of North-East Lincolnshire Council as a condition attached to a planning application. This approach is consistent with the *recommendations of Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Standards and guidance for archaeological evaluations* (IFA, 1994 *as revised*) and the LCC document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice, 1998*.

2.0 Location and description

Cleethorpes is situated on the Lincolnshire coast, to the immediate south-east of Grimsby. The site is approximately 0.5km from the town centre and centred on TA 3308 5083 (fig. 1). It comprises a sub-rectangular parcel of land measuring approximately 57sqm in extent and situated on land between 12-28 Bark Street and 3-13 Highgate. It was until recently occupied by garaging and lies at 11m AOD (fig. 2).

The geology of the area comprises of glacial till, sealing a solid geology of Flamborough Chalk (British Geological Survey 1990).

3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a single dwelling. The archaeological evaluation took place to inform the archaeological implications of this scheme (planning ref. DC/417/06/CRB).

A specification detailing the archaeological methodology was compiled by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This was based on a brief provided by the North-East Lincolnshire Archaeology Service Planning Archaeologist.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

Archaeological evidence in the immediate locality of the development area is scarce, but becomes slightly more evident further away from the site.

Approximately 1.20km north of the site, scatters of Neolithic worked flint and pottery have been found, while a Bronze Age barrow known as Beacon Hill survives 1km to the east. Stray finds of Iron Age coins have been found closer to the site, whilst further coin finds of this period discovered throughout the area have speculated the possible existence of an Iron Age trading settlement in the local area (ADS, 2007) 1990).

Evidence of Romano-British activity throughout Cleethorpes is sparse: a single pottery sherd and individual finds of coins dating to between the 1st-2nd centuries AD have been found just over 1km north of the site.

Cleethorpes did not exist as a town during the medieval period and there is no mention of it prior to the 17th century (Mills, 1998). The first documented evidence comes from the Domesday survey of 1086, where the hamlet of Itterby, also known as Far or Middle Cleethorpes is mentioned. It is Itterby, along with its neighbouring hamlets of Hole and Trunscoe which were nucleated around the village of Clee and amalgamated to form the current town. The name Cleethorpes is derived from the Old English name for the Village of Clee, *clæg*, meaning 'clayey soil' and the Old Danish *thorpe*, meaning 'the outlying settlements belonging to Clee'(Mills, 1998).

The development of the site seems to have altered very little since the middle of the 19th century. Maps showing it prior to and after the time of the enclosure award show the site area as a parcel of land enclosed by ditches, and this appears to be the case up until the beginning of the 20th century, when it is encompassed by residential development. It is only sometime during the last century that garage buildings were erected on the site. Prior to this the area may have served as gardens or allotments servicing the surrounding houses (fig. 5).

5.0 Methodology

The evaluation methodology required monitoring of a single trench, 25.00m long and 3.00m wide; this was located north-east to south-west parallel with the southern boundary wall of the development area (fig. 2).

All archaeological deposits identified were subjected to limited excavation, in order to access their nature, dimensions and to attempt to recover datable materials. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions on context record sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings, in both plan and section complement these accounts. The initial groundwork was carried out using a 360° mini tracked excavator using a 1.25m toothless ditching bucket.

The work was undertaken over a period of three days between the 15th-19th of February 2007 by the author.

6.0 Results

Natural

The natural soil across the site comprised of a light brown clay (009). This was directly underneath the concrete pad foundation and hardcore layer of the previous development, where it only appeared to have suffered one small area of truncation within the confines of the evaluation trench, caused by one of the brick piers from the previous development (fig. 3).

Features

Three linear features were exposed within the trench and were dispersed along its length. These were: [001], [003] and [006] (fig. 3).

Towards the centre of the trench was linear ditch [001], orientated north-west to south-east. It contained a succession of fills; (008) a re-deposited marly natural, (005) a mid brown silty clay which contained pig and fish bones and also pottery dating between the 12th-14th centuries AD. This was sealed by (002), a mid brown silty clay that also had pottery of these dates present and also fired clay fragments (see Appendix 3). Feature [003] was located close to the south-west limit of the trench, where it ran across it on a north-south orientation and had narrowly escaped truncation by a modern service pipe. Excavation revealed a single fill (004), this contained possible sheep but also fish bones, along with pottery sherds dating between the 12th-15th centuries. Finally, and emerging from the far eastern corner of the trench was a linear gulley [006] which terminated some 1.80m along its length. It contained a single fill (007), this had occasional 17th-18th century pottery sherds and a single floor tile fragment of a similar date; it also looked superficially cess-like in appearance.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

Contexts recorded across the site consisted of natural deposits and three linear ditches which have been dated to between the 12th-18th centuries AD.

The earliest ditch encountered was [001], dated to between the 12th-14th centuries AD (see Appendix 3). Interestingly, apart from pottery and animal bone fragments, two of its fills (002) and (005) contained waste from two separate industrial processes; iron working and salt production (see Appendix 5 and 6). The size of this ditch was relatively large, 2.00m in width and in excess of 1.20m deep, and this may perhaps suggest that its function was more than just that of a field boundary.

The remaining two ditches were relatively slight in contrast. Ditch [003] has been dated to between the 12th-15th centuries AD and may represent a field boundary, while [006], which is much later (dated to the 17th-18th centuries AD) may also be a field boundary, or possibly even a gulley associated with settlement on the periphery of the site.

The discovery of possible field boundaries is not exceptional and can generally be expected to be found on archaeological sites of all periods, especially within areas that have a short history of urbanisation, and where pockets of undisturbed ground lay. The size of ditch [001] is intriguing and suggests that its function was something more than just that of field boundary. It could represent a parish boundary belonging to one of the former hamlets associated with Cleethorpes, possibly Itterby, which is thought to have been situated close by. Early maps (see fig. 5) indicate ditches approximately within the area of the evaluation, although their position, layout and size do not suggest anything more than ditches associated with agriculture and associated buildings.

Another interesting feature of [001] is the burnt clay and iron fuel ash slag retrieved from two of its three fills. This suggests that two industrial processes were taking place somewhere close by during the medieval period. The burnt clay is specifically indicative of medieval salt production which is well attested throughout the Lindsey marshes for this period (see Appendix 5).

The iron fuel ash slag (see Appendix 6) suggests that an industrial process generating high levels of heat was also taking place somewhere in the area and associated perhaps with some form of iron working. This is verified by the discovery of metallic material found throughout the fills of all three ditches during environmental processing. The metallic material may represent hammer scale, tiny flakes of iron which are formed during the working of iron under extreme temperatures, although this would have to be verified by a specialist (see Appendix 7). The dating of the slag by its association with other artefacts and the discovery of hammer scale in a feature of later date may suggest that there was some continuity with this process or possibly that it was taking place intermittently between the medieval and post-medieval periods.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology required the machining of one 25m x 3.00m trench across the site. This was machined down to an archaeological level, any archaeological features and deposits encountered were then hand cleaned which ensured limited damage. This enabled a detailed and accurate record of the archaeology to be established and a reasoned interpretation to be made.

9.0 Acknowledgments

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Response 24-7 UK Limited for this commission, and also Hue Winfield of North-East Lincolnshire Archaeology Service for his assistance during the fieldwork.

10.0 References

Online resources

Archaeological Data Service (ADS): www.ads.ahds.co.uk

Primary resources

1846 Clee Enclosure map, North-east Lincolnshire Archives Office, ref .1/920.

1889 Ordnance Survey First Edition, 6" to one mile scale, Lincolnshire Archives Office, microfiche copy.

1908 Ordnance Survey Second Edition, 6" to one mile scale, Lincolnshire Archives Office, microfiche copy.

Plan of Clee and Cleethorpes showing boundary of hamlets prior to 1846.
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