

- *An archaeological recording brief was conducted prior to and during development on land adjacent to the Welton Family Health Centre and Co-Op Store at Cliff Road, Welton, Lincolnshire.*
- *Large Saxo-Norman pits, two 13th to 14th linear ditches (possibly former property boundaries) and an un-dated pit/post hole were exposed during the brief.*
- *These features are believed to have been associated with the medieval settlement, and they appear to have been backfilled with material that incorporated quantities of domestic rubbish.*

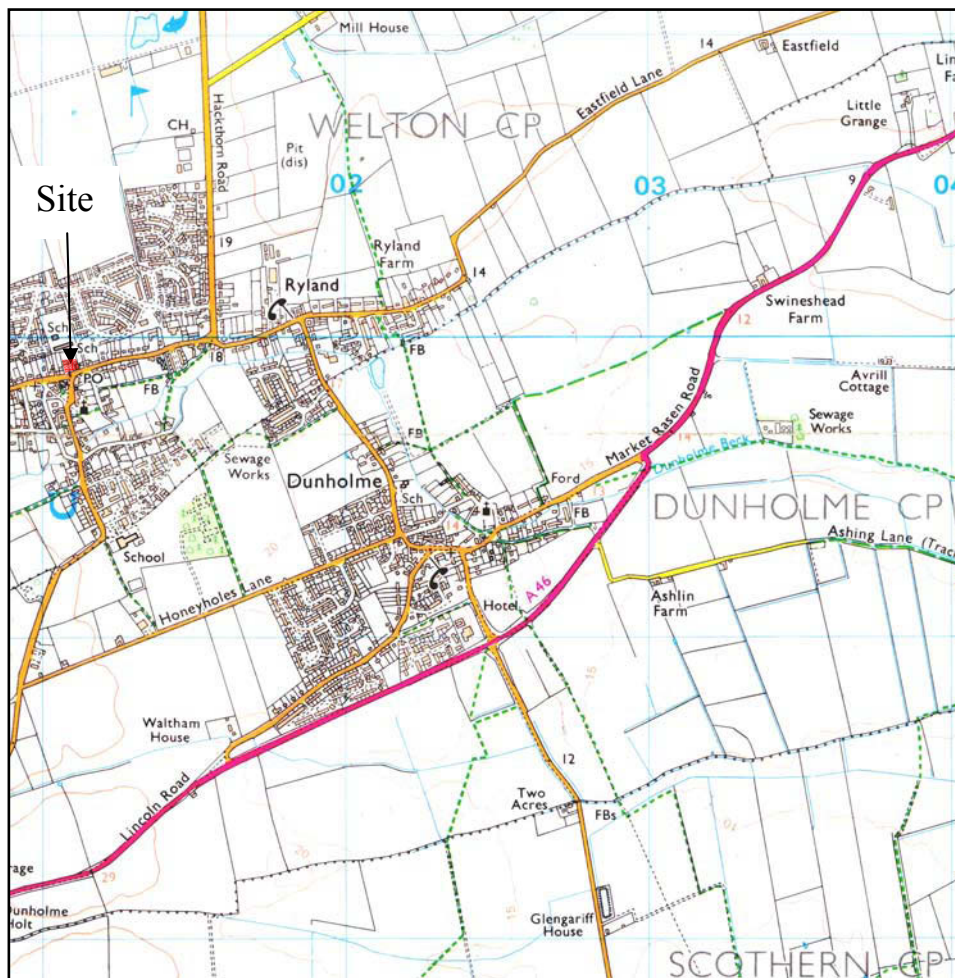


Fig. 1 General site location. Scale 1:25 000.
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1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by LC S Property Ltd to undertake an archaeological recording brief during groundworks for a development on land adjacent to the Welton Family Health Centre, Cliff Road, Welton, Lincolnshire. These works were undertaken at the request of West Lindsey District Council; an approach that is consistent with the recommendations of *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990)*, *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *standards and guidance for Archaeological watching briefs* (IFA, 1994) (as revised) and the LC C document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice*, 1998.

2.0 Site location and description

Welton is 9.5km north-east of Lincoln in the administrative district of West Lindsey.

The development site is situated to the immediate north of the junction formed by Cliff Road, Lincoln road and Ryland Road. It has a mean elevation of c.20.00m AOD and is centred on NGR TF 0104 7990 (figs.1 and 2). The underlying geology of the local area consists of Snitterby Limestone with overlying till (BGS, 1998).

3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission was granted with conservation area consent for the construction of a new library and pharmacy, along with the extension of an existing Co-Op Store and post office at Cliff Road, Welton, Lincolnshire. This permission was granted subject to conditions; one requiring a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Planning Ref: M06/P/1099, Conservation Ref: M06/P/1097).

4.0 Archaeological and historical context

Early archaeological activity is known from the Welton area: a Neolithic axehead was discovered during the 1950's less than 1km north of the current site, while cropmarks of possible prehistoric features are also known throughout the area (ADS, 2008).

Discoveries relating to occupation of the area during the Romano-British period are known, and masonry, pottery and roof tile fragments have been ploughed up in a field c. 500m to the south-west of the site. A further scatter of pottery of this period is known c. 150m away in the same direction, and a considerable amount of pottery has been recovered from within the village itself.

In 1971 an extensive Anglo Saxon cemetery dating from the 6th century was excavated at West Yard, just west of the current site. Grave goods were recovered which included annular brooches, shield bosses and beads, while evidence relating to contemporary structures were present in the form of earth-cut features.

5.0 Methodology

The watching brief methodology involved monitoring an initial topsoil strip followed by the excavation of foundation trenches to the rear of the store and library, as well as foundation and service trenches to the front of the store.

Archaeological deposits, where identified, were sample excavated to assist interpretation and recover datable artefactual remains. The field investigation resulted in the preparation of written descriptions on pro-forma record sheets, as well as colour photographs and scale drawings, in both plan and section.

The author undertook the fieldwork on an intermittent basis over a period of 6 days, between February 21st 2007 and June 4th 2008.

6.0 Results (Figs 2 and 3)

Natural limestone brash (001) was the earliest deposit recorded; occurring approximately 0.40m below present ground level. A 0.10m thick layer of subsoil (002) covered this and was sealed by topsoil (003).

Archaeological features that were exposed at the site were typically earth-cut pits, ditches and a post-hole or small pit.

Two large inter-cutting features, [024] and [034] were exposed in the north east corner of the rear area. Both features had cut through the underlying substrata to a depth of between 0.20m-0.60m, and each contained an indistinguishable mid-grey/brown silty clay fill. The fill of the northernmost feature, [024] (context (023)), incorporated a range of pottery sherds, predominantly of 11-12th century date, though material of earlier and later date was also recovered, as were occasional fragments of pig and goat bone (see Appendices 3 & 4).

Two linear ditches/gullies [016] and [018] were exposed just to the east of the above features. Ditch [016] was orientated north-east to south-west where it ran for approximately 4.50m before becoming unclear. The second (unexcavated) ditch [018] was adjacent to the east site boundary on a north to south orientation. The fills of both features were identical to those associated with other features in the area, and each feature yielded single sherds of 13th – 14th century pottery, (see Appendix 4).

A small pit-like feature was exposed a short distance to the west of [018]. This contained mid-grey/brown silty clay that was devoid of any finds (fig. 3).

To the front of the store, only modern/reworked ground was exposed within foundation and service trenches; contexts (036) and (037).

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

The recorded contexts across the site comprised of natural limestone brash, wide pit-like features, ditches, one small pit/post hole and modern levelling layers. The earth-cut features were concentrated in one relatively small area; in the northeast corner of the stripped area to the rear of the Co-Op store/library.

It is difficult to provide a secure archaeological interpretation for such a small group of relatively uninspiring archaeological remains (ie without the benefit of examining a wider zone). One assumes that, in a secondary context only, some of them may have been used for the disposal of domestic rubbish (eg the pottery/ animal bone), though this is unlikely to have been their primary function. It was suggested by one interested party that the pits may have been small quarries but, given that these features did not penetrate the base of the limestone brash to reach the better stone, this would seem unlikely. The two linear ditches may well have functioned as property boundaries at different times although only one of these, [018] was at right angles to Ryland Road (the other, [016], was on the same alignment as Lincoln Road).

The pottery assemblage is of local interest and includes at least one sherd of Late Saxon Lincoln kiln-type. Most of the other sherds are Saxo-Norman (often sooted from cooking) local shell wares.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology was effective, and it allowed sufficient time to record archaeological features and deposits within the development groundworks, enabling a reasonable interpretation of the archaeology to be made.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank L CS Property Ltd for this commission.

10.0 References

Archaeological Data Service (ADS) 2008.

British Geological Survey, 1998, *Market Rasen 102, Solid and Drift Geology, 1:50 000* Provisional Series. Keyworth, Nottingham: British Geological Survey.

11.0 Site archive

An archive of the written, drawn, photographic and object elements is in preparation and will be deposited at the Lincoln City and County museum within six months following the completion of this report. Access to it can be gained by quoting: L.C.N.C.C 2008.43.