

Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to monitor groundworks during the construction of an extension to Aldi Stores, Enterprise Way, Castleford.*
- *Although the site is located in close proximity to the defenses of Castleford's Roman fort and a Roman road, no deposits of any great archaeological significance was exposed.*
- *The stratigraphy of the site was characterised by a series of substantial tip-lines/dump deposits and leveling layers, reflecting the re-deposition of modern industrial residue.*
- *Relict building remains of a possible 18th century date were also recorded.*

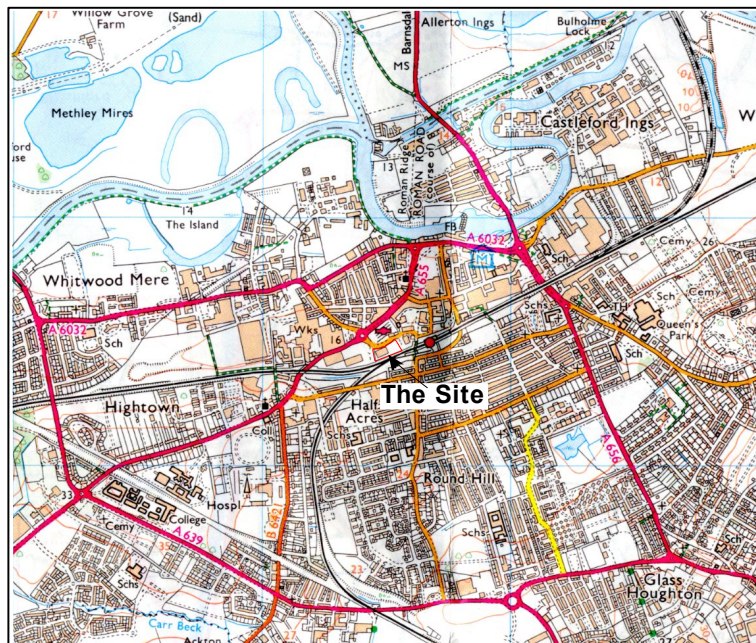


Fig 1: General location map at scale 1:25 000
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1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Space Build on behalf of Aldi Stores Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief to monitor all ground works associated with the construction of an extension to the existing Aldi store, Enterprise Way, Castleford (planning ref: 07/01832/FUL).

These works were undertaken intermittently by Emily Rowe between the 7th March and 6th June 2008 to fulfill the objectives of a project specification prepared by West Yorkshire Advisory Service on behalf of Wakefield MDC. This approach is consistent with the recommendations of *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, Dept. of Environment (1990); *Management of Archaeological Projects*, EH (1991) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, IFA (1999).

2.0 Site location and description

The development site lies on the southern side of Castleford town center, within the administrative district of Wakefield. It is bounded at the south by the railway, to the north by Enterprise Way and to the west by an industrial estate. The land was previously used as parking for the existing Aldi store.

The localised topography is predominantly flat, and the underlying geology comprises Middle Coal Measures and Sandstone (BSG 1998)

The site is centered on NGR SE 4250 2546

3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission (planning reference; 07/01832/FUL) was granted by Wakefield MDC to construct an extension to the existing Aldi stores. This permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief during all stages of the development involving ground disturbance; to record archaeological remains that would be disturbed or destroyed as a result of development.

4.0 Archaeological context

The majority of known archaeology in the vicinity of the development area pertains to the Roman period excluding a single Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrow head. The development lies approximately 200m south of the defenses of Castleford's Roman fort ('*Lagentuim*') and west of a Roman road. The full extent of the civilian settlement ('*Vicus*') has not been established, although excavations during the 1970's and 80's revealed significant structural remains in close proximity to the current site. These included a '*mansio*', work shops, and a possible temple. Close to the north-east of the development, a pyre site and ceramic and glass assemblages of 1st -4th century date have been previously reported.

Significant quantities of pottery (including amphora) were recovered from the Goodenough's Bakery site, which lies to the south-east of the site.

A recent reassessment has suggested that burials recovered from land between the railway and Enterprise Way possibly date to the 5th or 6th century.

5.0 Methodology

Initially, the works were carried out using a mechanical digger (JCB) and comprised; the excavation of a strip footings trench for the new extension, the excavation of a trench for a septic tank, the location of existing services and a trench for a manhole.

Following observation and excavation, section and plan surfaces were cleaned and examined to establish the presence/ absence of archaeological deposits and to assess the general site stratigraphy. Spoil upcast was also monitored for artefactual remains.

Sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 and context information was recorded on standard pro-forma context record sheets. A colour photographic record was maintained throughout the scheme, examples of which are appended to this report.

6.0 Results

The development programme revealed a stratigraphic sequence characterized by modern deposits of industrial waste and relict building remains.

6.1 Septic Tank Trench (Section C-D)

The earliest deposit exposed in the base of the trench (106) was at a depth of 2.70m below the present ground level. This was a natural layer of light-yellow brown clay with streaks of grey alluvial clay. The stratigraphic sequence above this deposit comprised a series of leveling or ground raising layers of varying thickness: context (105) was a dark blue-grey ashy-clay containing fragments of modern ceramic building materials; (104) a light yellow-brown silty clay with frequent ash; (103) a layer of industrial waste comprised of dark brown-black slag, ash and ceramic building materials; (102) light yellow-white gravel and sand; (101) a deposit of hardcore stone chippings, and (100) a 0.15m thick layer of concrete, this being the modern ground surface (Fig 3).

6.2 Manhole Trench (Section E-F)

Layers of industrial waste (for the most part analogous with (103)) were noted in other areas of the development zone. In the manhole trench (situated to the immediate south-east of the septic tank trench) one such deposit (115), appeared to have accumulated around the relict remains of a former building (114) (Fig 3). The building remains were constructed with 2 ³/₄ inch hard faced bricks bonded with a lime mortar and was sealed by a second industrial-type deposit (113).

6.3 Foundation Trench (Section A-B)

The foundation trench exposed a series of steep tip-lines/dump deposits and another layer that was clearly of industrial origin, (110). The character of these deposits suggested that they were put down in very quick succession, with heavy tipping taking place from south to north, raising the ground level in the process by 1.0m+.

The earliest deposit was a 'bank' of dark yellow brown sandy-clay (111) encountered at 0.50m below the modern ground level (Fig 3). Sealing this was a series of tipped/dumped deposits: modern demolition rubble (107) overlain by deposits of mid grey-brown redeposited clay (108) and (109). A dark yellow-brown clay containing fragments of ceramic building material abutted industrial layer (110).

A leveling of gravel and sand (102), stone chippings (101) and (112) and tarmac (100) formed the most recent layers.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

Despite the development being situated only 200m south of the defenses of Castleford's Roman fort and to the west of a Roman road, no significant archaeological deposits or features were exposed.

The function of the former building remains anomalous, although the size of the bricks would suggest a construction date prior to the late 18th century (Brunskill 1990).

The general stratigraphy of the site was characterized by modern deposits of industrial waste, reflecting almost 'mammoth-scale' re-deposition and ground raising.

It is very possible that archaeological remains survive below some of these deposits, but due to their depth (more than 1.0m below the present ground level) such deposits were not disturbed by the current redevelopment.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The watching brief methodology was commensurate to the scale of this scheme of development. It confirmed that, if present, significant archaeological deposits are likely to lie at some considerable depth, where the upper archaeology is entirely characterized by modern industrial deposits.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Space Build for this commission.

10.0 References

British Geological Survey, 1998, *Wakefield, Sheet 78* Solid and Drift Edition

Brunskill R.W., 1990, *Brick Building in Britain*, Victor Gollancz

<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/search/fr.cfm?rcn=EHNMR-631019>

11.0 Site Archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This will be deposited at Wakefield Museum within six months.