

MEMO

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

TO: ED SENIOR, DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
FROM: ALISON WILLIAMS, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OFFICER
REF: PA/2023/1124
DATE: 10/04/2024

SUBJECT: Planning permission for the development of 599 No. dwellings and lake, along with associated infrastructure, including landscaping, public open space and play area, pedestrian and cycle links, pumping station and sub-station. Lincolnshire Lakes, Land east of M181 and north of Burringham Road, Scunthorpe

SUMMARY OF ADVICE

- Archaeological evaluation has been completed and the assessment report is now available and should be submitted to the planning authority
- The results of the geoarchaeological assessment demonstrate the presence of peat deposits across much of the site with some potential for waterlogged archaeological material of Bronze Age date; the sands may contain earlier material of Mesolithic to Bronze Age date
- The organic-rich sediments have potential for climatic and landscape reconstruction over the chronological framework
- No archaeological remains were identified during the excavation of the trial trenches although these represent only a small percentage of the application site and prehistoric material may be present as discrete areas
- The proposed development will directly impact any archaeological remains and remove the organic-rich sediments within the artificial lake; changes to the site hydrology around the lake and across the site will affect the preservation of the peat sediments, and the palaeo-environmental resource
- To off-set the harm, archaeological mitigation measures are required to monitor the ground excavations and record any remains that may be encountered and undertake a programme of palaeoenvironmental analysis
- An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy detailing the archaeological work to be undertaken should be submitted and approved **PRIOR TO DETERMINATION** of the planning application
- The HER advises a **HOLDING OBJECTION** until this information is submitted
- Following receipt of an acceptable Strategy, planning conditions would be recommended to secure the implementation of the agreed programme of works
- This procedure accords with the NPPF and local planning policies CS6 and HE9.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER) FUNCTION: To hold, maintain, interpret and manage heritage information, enhancing the understanding of the area's historical development as a distinctive and attractive place. HER information provides source material for interpretation by heritage professionals and for use by community groups and individuals. The HER database is updated as new information about the historic environment is discovered.

The HER also provides advice on development proposals that affect, or may affect, the sites and settings of all heritage assets i.e. designated and non-designated historic buildings, archaeological sites and monuments, and historic places, areas and landscapes. This advice is provided against saved local plan policies and national historic environment policies. See <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/historic-environment-and-conservation/>

DETAILED ADVICE

Further to my previous correspondence re the Keepmoat proposed development and planning application, I'm pleased to inform you that the applicant has undertaken and completed the archaeological evaluation to establish the archaeological, geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental significance of the site as I advised.

I have received (08/04/24) the final evaluation report incorporating the results of the archaeological trial trenching, and the geoarchaeological investigations and deposit modelling. The applicant should submit this report to the planning authority for consideration with their application.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The report demonstrates that although no archaeological remains were found within the excavated trial trenches and test pits, these sampled only a small percentage of the overall site area and there continues to be some potential for waterlogged remains within the peat and organic-rich sediments present across the site, as well as within the underlying sands.

The deposit modelling of the stratigraphy across the site and wider Lincolnshire Lakes area, and of radiocarbon dates of the peat from previous investigations, indicates that archaeological remains dating from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age are possible, especially within the Bronze Age accumulations of peat and at the margins of these deposits where the sands rise and formed dryland islands.

In addition, previous work established the palaeoenvironmental potential of the deposits to provide evidence for human activity, climatic and landscape reconstruction of the Trent floodplain across this chronological framework.

The results demonstrate that the application site has the potential to contain archaeological, geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains with high evidential value and the potential to inform on the national research framework for the Mesolithic period and the regional East Midlands research agendas and objectives [East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework - East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework \(researchframeworks.org\)](https://www.researchframeworks.org/).

IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The impacts of the proposed development on the known and potential archaeological, geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental resources of the site are set out in the evaluation report (Appendix 8, section 6.4). These impacts include the major residential construction such as foundations and piling and associated infrastructure, drainage and pumping strategy, and the creation of an artificial lake (formerly the southern half of Lake 1, ref PA/2016/1736), encompassing most of the application site.

The artificial lake is proposed to be at least 2.20m deep (KPLL-AWP-ZZ-XX-SK-C-0008_P1 - Proposed Lake Section - Alternate Shallow Lake Option) and will involve significant truncation of sub-surface superficial deposits including all the organic-rich sediments and sands within the impact depth.

The geoarchaeological assessment also identifies that there will be secondary impacts affecting the sub-surface hydrology of the site by piling and remodelling of the surface topography as part of flood mitigation and SuDs. The peat deposits, located close to the present-day surface that are likely preserved through irregular water saturation, are particularly sensitive to changes to the sub-surface

hydrology. The area surrounding the artificial lake will require a well point dewatering, which will significantly impact the sub-surface hydrology for a large area.

Whilst no archaeological remains were recorded during the trial trenching other than linear cuts representing channels and drains associated with the man-made warping to create fertile agricultural land from the mid-19th century, and/or field boundaries from this period, the warp and sands may mask archaeological deposits of significance and make archaeological prospection difficult. The area is considered to retain the potential to preserve earlier archaeological remains such as discrete areas of prehistoric material and artefacts given the large scale of the development area in relation to the investigations carried out.

The organic-rich deposits (peats) have been shown to be present throughout the site at a range of near-surface depths (within 1.00m BGL). Radiocarbon dating undertaken during previous archaeological investigations in this area (including for the former Lake 1 project and the M181 northern junction) has demonstrated the organic peats span at least the Mesolithic into the later Bronze Age (c.7000 – 1500 BC).

Previous palaeoenvironmental assessment have demonstrated that these deposits can provide insights into past vegetation change, landscape reconstruction, climate, human influence, and potential land use over this prolonged period. The impacts of the proposed development on the sub-surface hydrology will result in the physical degradation and destruction of the peats across an increasing area and the palaeoenvironmental evidence it contains.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS

Paragraph 209 of the NPPF directs local planning authorities that in the case of non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. The archaeological significance of the application site and the impact of development should therefore inform the determination of this application once the applicant has submitted the final evaluation report.

I am satisfied that the known archaeological resource is not nationally important or of equivalent significance as a designated scheduled monument and thus does not represent a constraint on the proposed development. As such, it is neither practical nor desirable to seek to secure preservation in situ. However, whilst there are no reasons to object to the principle of development for archaeological reason, it will be important to ensure that the remains are appropriately preserved by record within the Keepmoat application site.

It is important that **PRIOR TO THE DETERMINATION** of the application the applicant and local planning authority agree appropriate mitigation measures to preserve the archaeological, geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental evidence of the site.

To mitigate the substantial harm to the archaeological remains described above and to further public understanding of the evidence, it will be important to carry out a programme of archaeological work so that any remains that the development would otherwise destroy are recorded.

The archaeological mitigation programme should comprise the following elements:

- Archaeologically controlled excavation and monitoring of the artificial lake to ensure the identification, recording and recovery of archaeological, geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental evidence.
- Archaeological monitoring and recording of ground excavations for the residential development and associated infrastructure; the extent of the monitoring will be dependent on further detailed information relating to the impact depths and should be kept under review during the development.
- Programme of palaeoenvironmental assessment and analysis of deposits of high palaeoenvironmental potential as previously identified for the former Lake 1 proposal now the Keepmoat artificial lake.
- On completion of identified stages of the archaeological site works relating to separate phases of construction and timescales, completion statements and post-excavation assessment report/s will be submitted to the HER and planning authority with updated proposals for further analysis and the publication of results as appropriate.
- On completion of the programme, the physical and digital archaeological archive will be deposited with the North Lincolnshire Museum Service and the Archaeological Data Service respectively.

- Proposals for the presentation of significant results to the public such as provision of interpretation board/s within the development site, inclusion of information leaflets in new home packs, educational material for use in local schools etc. North Lincolnshire Museum Education service should be consulted for their specialist knowledge and input. The proposals should include an outline of contents and timetable for production, installation and completion in relation to the development phases and construction programme.

All archaeological work should be carried out by a suitably experienced archaeological contractor, such as a Registered Organisation accredited by the Chartered Institute for Archaeology (see <http://www.archaeologists.net/>) or an organisation that can demonstrate that they have equivalent experience, capability and quality management systems in place. The appointed contractor must have access to appropriate geo-archaeological and palaeoenvironmental expertise. All fieldwork should be undertaken in accordance with CIFA's published Standards and Guidance (www.archaeologists.net) and relevant Historic England professional guidelines (<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/>).

The detail of the archaeological mitigation programme of work, including an indicative timeframe for the on and off-site work, should be set out in an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy that includes provision for the archaeological contractor appointed to carry out the work to prepare a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (**WSI**) for each stage of the work.

The Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and/or the WSI should be submitted to the HER and the planning authority **PRIOR TO THE DETERMINATION** of the planning application. This is to ensure the planning authority is satisfied that the proposed measures are appropriate, and that the applicant understands the archaeological requirements and allows sufficient time for the archaeological programme to take place within the overall construction framework.

RECOMMENDATION

The potential archaeological significance of the application site and the impact of development should be considered when determining this application (NPPF, 209). Provision should be made to record the evidence and enhance public understanding of the heritage asset (NPPF, 211; Local Plan saved policy HE9).

The applicant should be requested to submit the following information as soon as possible **PRIOR TO DETERMINATION** of the application:

- Final archaeological evaluation report of the trial trench evaluation and geo-archaeological investigations, and
- Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and/ or archaeological contractor's WSI

Once the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and/or the WSI is agreed, and if the planning authority considers that the loss of any archaeological remains is justified and is minded to grant permission for this application, planning conditions to secure the implementation of the agreed archaeological mitigation strategy and WSI would be necessary.

I would be grateful therefore if you would request that the applicant submits an archaeological mitigation strategy or the WSI prepared by their archaeological contractor, at the earliest opportunity. I would be pleased to provide the further advice about the content and extent of further archaeological works.

The application should not be decided until an agreed Mitigation Strategy is in place and in the meantime, I advise a **HOLDING OBJECTION**.

The mitigation strategy can be prepared relatively rapidly and should not delay the determination of this application; if for any reason this cannot be prepared within the determination period the applicant could be advised to withdraw the application with a view to resubmission once the strategy is available.

In due course I will be able to provide updated advice to the planning authority regarding the mitigation strategy and WSI. Where the planning authority is ultimately minded to grant planning permission, conditions securing the implementation of the strategy in accordance with an agreed WSI would be needed and I can advise on appropriate wording.

If the applicant does not submit this information, the planning authority may consider refusal of planning permission as contrary to paragraph 201, 206 and 211 of the NPPF, Core Strategy policy CS6, and saved Local Plan policy HE9, because the applicant has provided inadequate information to ensure mitigation of damage and to allow the Local Planning Authority to approve an appropriate mitigation strategy.

Should the planning authority for any reason be minded to determine the application prior to approving an appropriate mitigation strategy contrary to this advice, it will be necessary to include pre-commencement archaeological conditions on any permission that may be granted.

I would be grateful to be consulted and advise on any further reports and documents submitted to the planning authority, and on the appropriate wording of any planning conditions to secure implementation of an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy.

I trust this recommendation is acceptable for the Keepmoat site.

Alison Williams
Historic Environment Officer
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APPENDIX - RELEVANT HERITAGE POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2023) provides guidance to local authorities for conserving and enhancing heritage assets and their settings, which includes archaeological sites and remains. Paragraph 8 refers to the role of the planning system to contribute to achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective includes contributing to protecting and enhancing the historic environment.

Section 16 (paragraphs 195-214) of the NPPF details the government's approach to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 195 describes heritage assets as '**an irreplaceable resource**' to be '**conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations**'.

Paragraph 200 requires an applicant to submit information that identifies any heritage asset that their proposals may affect, and that assesses the significance of the assets including the contribution of their settings. Consultation of the local HER is the minimum requirement in this process. Paragraph 200 states that '**Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets of archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.**'

This information should be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of any affected heritage assets. It should also allow the local planning authority to assess the degree of impact on the heritage assets and their settings, and how this impact may be mitigated, by avoiding or minimising any conflict between conserving the asset and any aspect of the proposal (NPPF 201).

Such assessment allows the planning authority to make an informed and reasonable decision in line with the sustainable development principles of the NPPF, as well as local planning policies.

Where impact assessment shows that the significance of heritage assets will be adversely affected by the proposals, then consideration should be given to drawing up appropriate mitigation measures to conserve them (NPPF 201). This may include avoiding or minimizing disturbance to assets and areas of significance, if necessary, by modifying the layout and/or design of the proposals

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF guides local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Effects of an application on designated and non-designated heritage assets are a material consideration and local planning authorities are directed to have regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset when judging the planning balance. The higher the significance of the heritage asset, the greater the weight for its conservation. As all heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification (NPPF 205-209).

Where loss of non-designated heritage assets because of development is considered justified, the NPPF (211) makes provision to allow for the recording and advancing understanding of the upstanding or below-ground heritage asset before it is lost (wholly or in part) using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The NPPF states that the results of these investigations should be made available to the public via the local HER and that the archive evidence should be deposited with a local museum. Such investigations may range from pre-development historic building recording, archaeological excavation of selected areas, to archaeological monitoring and recording during construction work, all such work to be followed by post-excavation assessment and analysis and the publication of results.

The national approach accords with the following current local planning policy:

Core Strategy policy CS6 Historic Environment states that '**The council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance North Lincolnshire's historic environment as well as the character and setting of area of acknowledged importance including historic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings (both statutory and locally listed), registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological remains.....**'. And '**Development proposals should provide archaeological assessments where appropriate**'.

Where Scheduled Monuments, or sites of equivalent significance, are affected directly or indirectly, Saved Local Plan policy HE8 Ancient Monuments directs **'Development proposals which would result in an adverse effect on Scheduled [Ancient] Monuments and other nationally important monuments, or their settings, will not be permitted.'**

Saved Local Plan Policy HE9 Archaeological Evaluation **'Where development proposals affect sites of known or suspected archaeological importance, an archaeological assessment to be submitted prior to the determination of a planning application will be required. Planning permission will not be granted without adequate assessment of the nature, extent and significance of the remains present and the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect them.'**

Sites of known archaeological importance will be protected. When development affecting such sites is acceptable in principle, mitigation of damage must be ensured and the preservation of the remains in situ is a preferred solution. When in situ preservation is not justified, the developer will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before and during development.'