

Winterton Omission Site – Land of Cemetary Road

Archaeological Survey Email submitted by NLC during Hearing Discussions

To: Kate Mills/ NorthLincs
From: Alison Williams/LE/NorthLincs
Date: 01/19/2015 04:21PM
Subject: Re: Winterton Keigar Homes

Hi Kate

I've had a quick read through and my comments as follows:

The geophysical survey has confirmed the archaeological features previously identified from aerial photographs but has not positively identified the Roman building excavated in the 1950s. The Roman building is clearly part of a more extensive settlement aligned east-west with enclosures appended to the south. It should be noted that the traces of medieval ridge and furrow detected on the geophysical survey as extending across the site may be masking earlier underlying features with a less magnetic response.

Further evaluation comprising systematic fieldwalking and trial trenching is therefore required to confirm the findings of the geophysical survey and to determine the appropriate southern extent of the open space to ensure the integrity of the archaeological features that would be preserved in situ. The boundary of the open space/housing as currently proposed is on, or thereabouts, an east-west linear feature identified on the aerial photographs and the geophysical survey. The character and significance of this feature and any associated features is not yet sufficiently understood to define where the boundary of the open space and housing should be precisely drawn. NB. The report recommends this course of action for evaluation (para 12.14), but this information is needed to inform the current inquiry if the inquiry is setting allocation areas, unless it is acceptable that there may need to be a bit more open space and less housing and that this can be decided at pre-planning design stage?

The report makes much of the fact that the archaeology is currently suffering from plough damage and the attentions of illicit metal detecting and would therefore be better off as part of open space of a housing allocation. There are however other ways to protect the archaeology without resorting to a housing allocation such as all the farmland being entered into an agri-environment scheme that provides the farmer with payments in return for agreeing to a minimum depth of cultivation and tillage.

It is unclear whether by making a housing allocation there is any guarantee that the northern area if not developed would be permanently removed from agriculture? Similarly what guarantees are there that the

open space would be appropriately used and managed to avoid damaging the archaeology? The open space could easily succumb to more damaging practices than the continuation of ploughing such as use as allotments, playing fields, children's playground, tree planting etc. Nor would its use as open space prevent the continuation of illicit metal detecting and may actually encourage it if the land is not 'owned' and 'policed'.

There would a need for a very tight S106 agreement that adequately covered and financed these issues; the council has experience of a similar public open space scheme to protect an area of archaeological sensitivity (Timberlands) and it's fair to say that it's not a happy experience with no easy (cheap) solutions!

In addition, the underground ROC monitoring post on the northern boundary of the site will need appropriate management within the open space. I disagree with the assessment in the report that this site is of negligible significance and impact (Table 4, Early Modern); these cold war military sites are not particularly rare though since abandonment in the 1990s they are increasingly vulnerable to vandalism as well as infilling and destruction on health and safety grounds. This example at Winterton is believed to be in particularly good condition with surviving furniture etc and has been capped off for some time. It is a site of local significance and I would expect it to be appropriated preserved and managed within the open space.

In view of the archaeological potential of the whole site, further evaluation should be required before a decision is made on the open space/housing allocation. Without prejudice to this recommendation, subject to the above matters re the open space being satisfactorily mitigated and adequate finance provided, plus agreement of whatever archaeological mitigation works would be required as informed by the intrusive archaeological evaluation on the housing area that has yet to take place, in my opinion there are no statutory or historic environment policy reasons why the southern area should not be developed.

One final point, the report notes the presence of a large pit or hole on the site that has apparently been infilled with modern rubbish, so our Environmental Protection team would probably be interested in this.

Hope this assists you.

Regards,
Alison

Alison Williams
Historic Environment Record Officer