



Archaeological Field Unit

The Red Lion Public House, Stretham: Archaeological Monitoring

A. Hatton

1998

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. B33

Commissioned by Neale Associates

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INTRODUCTION

On the 5th March 1998 a series of foundation trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator within the grounds of The Red Lion Public House (TL 5125 7457) (fig. 1), prior to the construction of additional bedrooms and associated car parking. The total area covered by the development was 220 square metres. The work was carried out at the request of Neale Associates and was in response to a Brief prepared by the County Archaeology Office (Kaner 1997).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL and HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Study of the Cambridgeshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record suggests that the subject site lies within the Medieval core of Stretham, opposite St James church. Excavations within the village has already shown the presence of medieval buildings close to the site as well as Iron Age, Roman and Saxon archaeology (SMR No's 07122, 07174, 09833& 09833a, 10199).

METHODOLOGY

The foundation trenches were mechanically excavated using a 500mm ditching bucket, a process that was observed continuously. Written context records were supplemented by photographs where considered necessary. Hand cleaning and excavation of features was not required as a sufficiently clean result was obtained by the digger bucket and no archaeological features were encountered.

RESULTS

The average length of the foundation trenches running in a north-east/south-west direction was c. 3.5m; and the approximate length of the trench running parallel to Chapel Street was 13m; all trenches were approximately 0.50m wide. The excavated depth of the trench at the rear of the subject site was 1m increasing to a depth of 1.25m at the front of the site parallel to Chapel Street. The increased depth of the trench along the frontage of the site was necessary to extricate fully the footings of a fairly modern brick built wall still in-situ. The excavated section along the north-

east/south-west trench showed the topsoil to vary in depth from 600mm at the rear of the site to 200mm along the frontage of the site; Topsoil lay directly on the natural lower Greensand.

The variation in the depth of topsoil across the site could be explained by landscaping of the 'pub garden' over many years.

CONCLUSION

Proximity to the historic centre of Stretham of the subject site required archaeological monitoring to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development works. However, the lack of archaeological evidence from the site possibly suggests that early settlement may have been concentrated to the north of St. James's church on the higher ground, and along both sides of the High Street, running in a northerly direction.

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