

## Chapelton of Elswick

### Archaeological advice

#### Introduction

MOLA has been asked by Turnberry Planning to review the archaeological works carried out so far on Stage 1A and 1B of the Chapelton at Elswick development. An assessment of the archaeological remains formed part of the EIA and the planning permission had a condition attached requiring archaeological investigation via an agreed written scheme of investigation.

Large scale archaeological investigation works covering a total of 12,027m<sup>2</sup>, comprising both archaeological evaluations and monitoring of a gas main trench, have been carried out. Geophysical survey has not been carried out as would normally be the case, presumably because it is not usually suited to sites on granite.

Stage 2 of the development is also subject to the planning permission and its associated archaeological condition.

#### Review of Archaeological Findings

A total of 6,027m<sup>2</sup> of trenches were excavated as an evaluation of Stage 1A by AOC Archaeology (a 7% sample). One pit, two unstratified flint artefacts and some evidence of ridge and furrow plough marks were uncovered.

A total of 2,800m<sup>2</sup> of evaluation trenches were excavated as an evaluation of Stage 1B by AOC Archaeology (approximately a 5% sample). A further 3,200m<sup>2</sup> was monitored for the laying of a gas main. Two pits and two unstratified flint artefacts (one of Neolithic date).

The natural subsoil was predominantly sandy clay with occasional outcrops of bedrock (granite). There was significant evidence for scarring from ploughing suggesting that, had there been past activity in the area, it would have been removed.

The objectives, as set out by AOC Archaeology in their report were to:

“to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area”, and

“to advise and implement an appropriate form of mitigation.....”

The second report concludes that a significant and representative sample of the site has been evaluated and that the development area can be considered ‘archaeologically sterile’.

## Proposals for the Future

Stage 2 of the site lies to the north-west of Phase 1A and Phase 1B of the site. Well in excess of 50% of the development area has been subject to archaeological evaluation and that work has been carried out in the areas of the site where sandy clay more often overlies the granite bedrock. In general the evaluation noted that the granite bedrock outcropped in the northern upslope of the site. A subsequent phase of trial pitting in the Stage 2 area has noted a similar pattern.

Given the almost total absence of archaeological features of any kind and the total absence of firmly dated archaeological activity, the evidence for scarring from ploughing and the increasing outcropping of granite, it is not recommended that further archaeological work is undertaken on Stage 2.

The site clearly has very low potential for archaeological material and a very large sample has already been evaluated on the most productive geological ground. It is recommended that the archaeological condition is discharged with no further archaeological work.

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