

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Conservation Advisory Group 21st April 2004
Leader & Conservation Portfolio
Holder

AUTHOR/S: Conservation Manager

LINEAR SITES ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT – IMPROVING ACCESS & INTERPREATION ON FLEAM DYKE 2004/05.

Purpose

1. To support proposed new initiatives within 2004/05 for improving access and interpretation on the Fleam Dyke, one of the 'Linear Sites'.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The project aims to improve the access and on-site interpretation of the Fleam Dyke, an Anglo-Saxon dyke of national importance. The project meets both Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils objectives by :
 - Delivering high quality services on ancient monuments of National Importance.
 - Improving access and interpretation to local communities.
 - Contributing to sustainability by ensuring that the monument is protected and preserved for future generations both for archaeology and its nature conservation value. The monument is both a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Creating an effective partnership project between the SCDC and Cambridgeshire County Council, English Heritage, English Nature, the Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust, Friends of Roman Road & Fleam Dyke.
3. The project contributes to meeting the Annual priorities for 2004/05 by improving access to the countryside and local heritage.

Background

4. Originally the Fleam Dyke (and Roman Road) were two of the three Cambridgeshire Linear Sites (the third being Devils Dyke in East Cambs). This project was part of a large HLF grant application to improve the management, protection, conservation and access and interpretation of these nationally important archaeological and wildlife sites. Unfortunately, the HLF were reluctant to award a very large single grant for all three sites and only the Devils Dyke (to date) has received a HLF funding support. However the bodies involved in all three sites

have continued to support the management and conservation of these important monuments and sought other grant aid. This included a successful LHI grant being made to the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke in 2002 to support works and interpretation of the Roman Road).

5. Members will be aware that as part of SCDC's support for the development of the original initiative, funding was allocated in the Heritage Initiative Fund under the Linear Sites Project. Members subsequently agreed to re-focus the residual funding (c£13,000) to contribute to securing the fabric and interpretation of Fleam Dyke, subject to consideration of individual projects, as and when they are developed. The revised Linear Sites Project is, therefore, to develop schemes that complement projects being supported by other agencies working on the Fleam Dyke including : Cambridgeshire County Council; English Heritage; English Nature; the Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust; The Friends of Roman Road & Fleam Dyke. In addition all owners, tenants, local societies and other interested parties are included in consultations. The project outlined below is the latest phase of the SCDC initiative.

Considerations

6. The revised South Cambridgeshire Linear Sites proposal is to focus SCDC funds solely for the purpose of improving access and interpretation. Other partners have contributed resources to protect and conserve the monument, however, no funds have been available for the broader issues of public access and understanding. All English Heritage and English Nature funding is required to be spent on physical fabric conservation requirements, support from the Conservation Portfolio will, therefore, focus resources on much needed access and interpretation improvements. The project components are outlined below and have been developed by identifying the areas where there is currently no specific provision.

7. ***Improving Interpretation :***

Project Component	Cost
Research and Design 4 x A1 Interpretation Boards (AFU)	£4,400
Production of 4 x A1 Interpretation Boards (Shelly Signs@£765 each)	£3,060
Design Leaflet (to accompany board)	£ 600
Print 5,000 Leaflets (Victoires)	£ 700
Information to be accessible via the Web.	£ 200
Total Interpretation Costs	£8,960

NOTE: *There is an economy of scale and the graphics and illustrations necessary for the interpretation boards can then be used at little cost to produce leaflets and on CCC, SCDC and other websites.*

8. **Improving Access**

Project Component	Cost
Erecting (No.1) new ladder steps	£1,000
Signposts (No. 10)	£2,000
Total Access improvement Costs	£3,000

9. Partnership Funding:

Partnership Funding	Contribution
English Heritage & Cambridgeshire County Council (2003 to 2007)	£10,000
English Nature 2003/04	£10,266
English Nature 2004/05 (proposed)	£11,000
Beds & Cambs Wildlife Trust & Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke (via grant aid Awards for All)	£ 5,000
Total Partnership Funding	£36,266

Options

10. Support for these initiatives is entirely discretionary therefore the Conservation advisory Group are asked to consider the following options :

(a) To continue to support the Linear Sites Project in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of upto £11,960 from the Heritage Initiatives Fund, specifically to support the interpretation and access improvements on the Fleam Dyke to secure the preservation and enhancement of this key archaeological site in South Cambridgeshire, as described in this report.

(b) To continue to support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on the Fleam Dyke by recommending that the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises development of complementary projects with partnership agencies.

(c) Not to support the development of further partnership initiatives within 2004/05, setting out the reasons for this option. All other partnership funding would continue, however these resources would be entirely allocated to conservation requirements

Financial Implications

11. The identified total costs £11,960 (Improving the Interpretation-£8,960 and the Improvement for access at £3,000) can be met from the existing allocation for Linear Sites Projects in the Heritage Initiatives Fund. The SCDC funding will be matched by significant partnership funding.

Legal Implications

12. None Specific.

Staffing Implications

13. None specific. The AFU (Contracts section of Cambridgeshire Archaeology) have the recognised expertise and experience within its Outreach and Design teams to manage the project implementation. The project will be developed in liaison with the Conservation Manager. The AFU have undertaken an almost identical scheme for the Devils Dyke Lottery Project.

Consultations

14. Each site subject to MMP or archaeological intervention is subject to extensive local consultation initiated by the County and English Heritage the national statutory body who oversee Scheduled Ancient Monuments. In addition the project will be carried out with full consultation of the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke, English Nature and the Wildlife Trust. SCDC Consultation will be via the Conservation Manager.

Conclusions/Summary

15. SCDC has experienced great success in archaeological outreach projects, including the Monument Management Project and other individual partnerships projects such as the Fulbourn Training Excavation, Car Dyke Project and Milton Landfill site scheme.
16. It is, however, clear that, given the extent of the district's vast archaeological heritage initiatives need to be developed and prioritised. The Fleam Dyke is not only one of the key archaeological sites in the district but it also contributes to meeting countryside access Community Strategy. It is, therefore, a major target for Conservation action. However, given the complexity and scale of the site, this requires an innovative approach to target and utilise resources effectively. A model which may influence future key projects is the Devils Dyke Project, which has recently received major lottery funding and was developed by a local steering group. This current proposal seeks to mirror aspects of the management and implementation of the East Cambs project to secure improved interpretation and access for the Fleam Dyke.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that the Conservation Advisory Group :
 - a. continue to support the Linear Sites Project in 2004/5, and recommend that the Conservation Portfolio Holder allocates a sum of upto £11,960 from the existing budget for Linear Sites in the Heritage Initiatives Fund, specifically to support the interpretation and access improvements on the Fleam Dyke to secure the

preservation and enhancement of this key archaeological site in South Cambridgeshire, as described in this report.

- b. continue to support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on the Fleam Dyke by recommending that the Conservation Portfolio Holder authorises development and monitoring of complementary projects with partnership agencies.
- c. request that the County Archaeologists present a progress report to the Conservation Portfolio Advisory Group and Conservation Portfolio Holder on the development of the Linear Sites Project before the end of 2004/05 to facilitate consideration of future support.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

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