TELEHOUSE DATA STORAGE CENTRE, EAST INDIA DOCKS

"ensuring removal of risk and potential costly delays to the construction programme, due to multidisciplinary skills available in-house"

CASE STUDY

SLR’s Archaeology and Heritage team helped gain planning consent for Telehouse’s London Docklands data-storage facilities. The site was infilled with demolition debris and sand following abandonment of East India Dock in the 1970s, and lies within the Lower Lea Archaeological Priority Area. Surviving dockyard walls are protected as listed buildings.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

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OUR ROLE

The EIA established no significant effect for designated assets, but mitigation was proposed for potential direct impact on the 19th-20th century Import Dock, and to investigate earlier deposits beneath the dock backfill. Detailed negotiations with English Heritage resulted in agreement after SLR designed an innovative scheme of investigation.

A programme of geoarchaeological investigation was undertaken to retrieve cores for sampling to investigate buried archaeological landscapes. The analysis included sediment description, pollen assessment, radiocarbon dating, integration of other boreholes near the site, and reassessment of the Lea Valley Mapping Project (LVMP), in order to create a deposit model of buried landscapes beneath the site.

A key outcome was the first radiocarbon dates from the area, which showed that the silts and clays and all of the upper sand and gravel deposits, were deposited from the Bronze Age onwards, resolving an issue over whether they were Holocene alluvium rather than Pleistocene brickearth deposits.

SLR’s approach achieved a successful outcome for the client, ensuring removal of risk and potential costly delays to the construction programme, due to the particular multidisciplinary skills available in-house at SLR. The work also secured valuable information which increased archaeological understanding for this part of London.