Sheffield find reveals castle's importance in medieval times

By **Daily Telegraph Reporter**

SHEFFIELD was once a "major" stronghold in medieval England, archaeologists have declared, after finding the city's "lost" castle was among the most important sites in the country.

Archaeologists studying the site of Sheffield Castle say the massive structure deserves a place in English history alongside well-known landmarks like those in Warwick, Dover and the Tower of London.

The castle site is in the centre of the South Yorkshire city, at the confluence of the River Don and the River Sheaf, but the structure was demolished in the Civil War.

The little that still remains of the structure was hidden for years in the basement of a grim, concrete markets complex. But the site has been opened up by the redevelopment of the area and archaeologists say there is strong evidence that more substantial parts of the castle walls may still be in place.

A spokesman for the University of Sheffield said a new assessment of all the excavations on the site "reveals how Sheffield Castle was among the most important political and cultural centres in medieval England, home to aristocrats who played major roles in local, national and international affairs".

The team concluded that the castle "played a major role in local, national and international affairs in the medieval era, and shaped the development and topography of modern-day Sheffield".

Prof John Moreland from the university's Department of Archaeology said: "Sheffield is seen by most people as the Steel City, but what our research makes clear is that the city has a deep history that dates right back to the Middle Ages."