

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – PLANNING SERVICES

Environment & Heritage Team – Response to consultation by County Planning

ARCHAEOLOGY comments

To: - planning.applications@westsussex.gov.uk

FAO: - Andrew Sierakowski, County Planning

DATE: 20 May 2021

Consultation date: 6 May 2021

REF.: WSCC/052/20

LOCATION: Land to the north of Eastergate and north-west of Barnham, PO22 0DF

PROPOSAL: The construction of a 1.3km single carriageway with a 3m wide shared cycleway/ footway, 2.5m wide central island, one uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with a central island to enable users of the PRow to cross the carriageway, three roundabouts, provision of hard and soft landscaping, road markings, traffic signals, bus stops, and signalised pedestrian crossings, construction of a substation building; installation of a noise barrier, and associated works

RECOMMENDATION:

No objection on archaeological grounds is raised to the proposals, subject to the provision of a suitable planning condition for archaeological mitigation measures, as follows: -

Planning Condition - Archaeology

All development and groundworks hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the submitted Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy for Planning Submission and Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation (Draft for Planning Submission) (respectively Appendices 13.3 and 13.4 of the submitted A29 Realignment Phase 1 Environmental Statement) save for any variation thereto which may be submitted to and approved in advance in writing by the County Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the identification, recording, analysis, reporting, archiving and understanding of heritage assets.

SUMMARY:

- Probable archaeological features of later prehistoric or Roman date have been identified within the red line boundary of the scheme by means of non-intrusive geophysical survey; these features are non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest of anticipated local/ regional significance.
- It is expected that these assets will be reduced or removed by ground excavations associated with the proposals.
- Measures to mitigate the impacts of development have been submitted in support of this planning application and are considered to be proportionate and appropriate to the degrees of harm to and loss of significance of the heritage assets.

COMMENTS:

The following comments address archaeological considerations only. West Sussex County Council's Historic Environment Record database has been consulted.

Archaeological background

The supporting Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Appendix 13.1) reasonably states that there is a moderate to high potential for buried remains of prehistoric date to exist on the site, and a moderate potential for buried remains of Roman date.

Non-intrusive geophysical survey of the eastern 60% of the route carried out in 2020 (report in Appendix 13.2) showed the presence of a buried probable trackway of later prehistoric or Roman date, and ancient field boundaries. Further to the west, the presence of a badger sett, woodland and land not accessible prevented that area becoming part of the survey area.

A 19th-century flint-built wall survives within the application area, fronting Fontwell Avenue.

Archaeological impact

Archaeological features are expected to be buried below only a shallow depth of topsoil, so that topsoil stripping and earthworks for construction of the new road, landscaping, attenuation ponds and construction compounds will expose and in most cases reduce or remove those features.

The impacts of the proposals upon buried archaeological features and deposits, in this case non-designated heritage assets, should be mitigated appropriately. With reference to the National Planning Policy Framework, paras. 197, 199 (Conserving the Historic Environment), the degree of harm to and loss of significance of archaeological features is expected to be at a local/ regional level, for which full investigation and recording of those features, in advance of development, is considered to represent appropriate and proportionate mitigation.

The 19th-century flint-built wall would be demolished in connection with the scheme.

Mitigation measures

The submitted Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (Appendix 13.3), proposes an initial stage of excavation of trial archaeological trenches along the whole route, in order to define areas of significant archaeological features. A Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 13.4) for this initial stage of trial trench excavation has been submitted and is considered suitable for its purpose.

Once defined, such areas, where unavoidably at risk from road construction and associated works, will either (a) be opened up to pre-construction archaeological investigation and full recording by overburden stripping between and around relevant trial trenches, or (b) will be fully investigated and recorded immediately in advance of construction works, through being stripped of overburden as part of the main road construction and earthworks excavations (a Strip-Map-Sample-Assess-Record procedure).

Either procedure for full investigation and recording will be followed by post-excavation analyses, writing up, scoping assessment for final reporting, final reporting and publication.

The flint-built wall would be suitably recorded before demolition and reported as part of the mitigation measures.

These measures are considered proportionate and appropriate for the purposes of archaeological mitigation.

Conclusion

Based on the proposed measures to mitigate the impact of development upon nondesignated archaeological heritage assets, no objection on archaeological grounds is raised to the proposals.

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