WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
Strategic Planning

Response to consultation : ARCHAEOLOGY

Date : 6th December 2012

Local Planning Authority: Arun District Council
FAO : Peter Cleveland

Application reference : **A/82/12**

Location : Land to east of Roundstone Lane Angmering

Proposals : Residential development comprising 150 no. dwellings including 30% affordable with access, landscaping, open space & associated works

REVISED RESPONSE

OS map ref. : 507601 104075

Recommendation

Objection is not raised to the proposals, subject to suitable further archaeological assessment and mitigation measures, to be provided for through the use of an appropriate planning condition.

Planning Condition (Archaeology)

Development shall not commence until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented in accordance with a written Archaeological Mitigation Strategy document to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Mitigation Strategy shall include commitments to:

- carry out on site archaeological investigation in accordance with an agreed project design;
- preserve *in situ* and intact non-designated archaeological heritage assets that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments (with reference to Historic Environment guidance in Paragraphs 132, 133 and 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012));
- fully investigate, record, analyse and report, to a specification to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and to a standard proportionate to their significance, archaeological heritage assets that unavoidably will be affected adversely by development-related ground excavations;
- prepare and implement satisfactory procedures to communicate the findings of archaeological investigation to the local community.

Summary of comments

In the light of further information from the applicant's archaeological consultant, that the applicant has no present access to the site for the purposes of ground excavations, West Sussex County Council revise their previous comments. It is recommended that archaeological investigation, and appropriate mitigation measures to follow, should be provided for through the use of a suitable planning condition.

The above revised comments are made without prejudice to West Sussex County Council's sustained recommendation, that best archaeological planning practice, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and the still material PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide*, is for necessary archaeological assessment to be carried out before determination of this application, in this case involving field evaluation through exploratory trench excavation.

Comments

In their previous response to consultation on this application (16/10/2012), West Sussex County Council have referred to the strong likelihood that archaeological remains may exist within the site, and that such remains would be adversely affected by development. Similar conclusions were set out in the *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment* submitted in support of this application (L-P Archaeology, July 2012).

West Sussex County Council have recommended (i) that the application should not be determined in the absence of further information concerning the archaeological impact of development, and (ii) that this information should be obtained through the carrying out of a programme of archaeological work on site, involving field investigation.

West Sussex County Council have now been given to understand by L-P Archaeology, speaking on behalf of the applicant, that the applicant has no present access to the site for ground excavation purposes of any kind. West Sussex County Council are also given to understand by L-P Archaeology that this constraint relates to the wellbeing of the existing landowner's grazing horses there, a matter of the difficulty of ensuring reinstatement of ground excavations, in the recent prevailing poor ground conditions, to a condition matching the existing ground surface (Telephone conversation with, and e-mail from, L-P Archaeology (John Duffy), respectively 23/10/2012 and 26.10.2012).

West Sussex County Council reiterate their previous advice, to the effect that best archaeological planning practice, as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, should in this instance involve obtaining sufficient information on the potential archaeological impact of development, before determination of the application, to ensure that its determination may be made on a fully informed basis; and that this information should be obtained through field evaluation.

Early field evaluation of this nature would also allow the greatest flexibility of development approach to allow non-designated archaeological heritage assets, that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments (where shown through evaluation to exist on the site), to be preserved intact and *in situ*, e.g. through appropriate changes to the layout of the development. Refer Historic Environment guidance in Paragraphs 132, 133 and 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012).

As previously recommended, such information will best be obtained through the excavation of exploratory trenches. This is because non-intrusive archaeological prospection methods, such as geophysical survey, have a known poor reliability for detecting most buried archaeological features, on the brickearth drift geology of the Sussex coastal plain.

Such archaeological investigation, and suitable mitigation measures to follow, must be carried out before approval of detailed planning proposals for the development layout, in order to allow the greatest opportunity for amendments to the detailed plans, to preserve any nationally significant archaeological remains, found to exist on the site, and at risk of adverse impact from intended development works.

Provision for this investigation should be set out in a written Archaeological Mitigation Strategy document, to be approved by the Local Planning Authority, under terms of a suitable planning condition.

John Mills
Senior Archaeologist (Strategic Planning)
West Sussex County Council

John Mills | Senior Archaeologist, Strategic Planning, West Sussex County Council |
Location: Northleigh House, Tower Street, Chichester, PO19 1RH
Internal: 56851 | External: +44 (0) 1243-756851 | E-mail: john.mills@westsussex.gov.uk