

F/9/14 PL Land south of Burndell Rd, Ford

Proposal:

Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved for 45 x new dwellings and new access. This application also lies within the parish of Yapton.

West Sussex County Council response: ARCHAEOLOGY 12th May 2014

Summary

- No objection – it is recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation and recording be undertaken in advance of construction.
- Following permission, it is recommended that provision be made by means of a suitable planning condition for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording, to take place (before the commencement of construction of any access road/s and services) to appropriately investigate and record any below ground heritage assets (archaeological features). The findings will be incorporated into a written report which will become publicly accessible through the West Sussex HER. The resulting archive (written report and site notes together with any artefacts) will be deposited in a suitable local museum or other repository.

Suggested Planning Condition (Archaeology)

An archaeological investigation of the site shall be carried out at the expense of the developer in accordance with a specification (written scheme of investigation) to be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing before the commencement of building works.

Reason : To ensure appropriate investigation and recording of archaeological heritage assets on the site prior to commencement of new building works.

Policies: draft Arun Local Plan (Local Plan 2013-2028) Policy DM 33 Sites of Archaeological Interest, (Arun District Local Plan, 2003: retained Policy AREA17), NPPF paragraphs 135, 169.

Comment

Some 300 metres to the south west of the application site a Bronze Age hoard (consisting of axes, rings and some copper cake) was found in the mid 19th century

in woodland which no longer exists. The precise location of the find is not known but there is woodland shown to the north of Park Farm on the Yeakell and Gardner 1778-1783 2 inch to one mile survey and on the OS draft sheet Chichester to Arundel of 1805-6. The Climping Tithe map 1843-5 shows a piece of land centred at NGR 498282 102480 described as North Wood which is likely to be the location of the hoard. The place-name North Wood is preserved in North Wood Farm and latterly Northwood House even though the wood itself had gone by the 1870s.

In the late 1990s, archaeological monitoring of the Bognor to Littlehampton transfer pipeline showed that there was some evidence for Bronze Age activity (burnt mounds) to the south. In 2011, the land off Goodhew Close and north of Burndell Road, which lies some 200m to the north of the application site, was the subject of archaeological evaluation (undertaken in connection with application Y/81/10 which was subsequently permitted on appeal).

I visited this archaeological evaluation, which was being conducted by Cotswold Archaeology, in April 2011. There were three main areas of archaeology across the site and all the features were almost exclusively prehistoric (Bronze Age or early Iron Age) but there were a couple of Roman coins found in the north eastern part of the site. Most of the features were ditches reflecting a rural, farmed landscape in prehistoric times but there were also pits, possible postholes and a trough packed with burnt flint which indicated settlement or processing activity nearby. One large pit, close to this trough filled with burnt flint, contained some small pieces of animal bone with distinct butchery marks. This evidence, taken in conjunction with finds of Bronze Age pottery (in sufficient quantities to represent more than an odd sherd which might be found as occasional debris in a field ditch) suggests that it is reasonable to conclude that there was settlement somewhere nearby.

Overall, taking into account the results of this evaluation and the general pattern of discoveries elsewhere in the locality it suggests that, even where no prior information is known (in terms of records/ entries on the West Sussex Historic Environment Record) the coastal plain can be productive of prehistoric and Roman evidence.

I recommend that if planning permission is granted any below ground archaeological remains likely to be destroyed by development are identified, appropriately sampled and recorded.

Initially this investigation should involve excavation by an archaeologist(s) of exploratory machine-excavated trenches, to assess the character, quality, density and extent of surviving ancient features. If deposits and features come to light in the exploratory investigation which require further, more detailed recording by means of a second stage of fieldwork (or a 'follow on' contingency to extend/ open up a wider area of the preliminary investigation) should be provided for in the written scheme of investigation.

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12/05/14