Growth and Environment
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My ref P03/24/1255-1
Your ref 3/24/1255/OUT
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Date: 18th July 2024

Dear David,

Re. Outline planning application for development of employment land (flexible use B2, B8, E(c) and E(g)), informal open space, associated works and infrastructure including a new access from A507, with all matters reserved except for access.- Land South Of A507, West Of A10 Buntingford

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

Please note that the following advice is based on the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework

The proposed development site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, as identified in the Local Plan. This denotes an area of agricultural land with a high number of metal detector finds of Late Iron Age, Roman, and medieval date, which will be subject to direct impacts from the proposed development. The Historic Environment Record (HER) notes those metal detector finds within the area of the proposed development. Examples include Iron Age (HER nos. 19297, 28185, 28186, 28649) and Roman coins (HER nos.18900, 18962, 18963, 24261, etc.), Roman armour scale (HER 28936) and copper-alloy lion head mount (HER 28935) and multiple Roman copper-alloy pins (HER 28645, 28646, 28647, 28648).

The archaeological desk-based assessment submitted with the application (Willis, C. and Walker, C., *Land South of A507 and West of A10, Buntingford* (Orion Heritage Ltd 2024) concludes that the study site is known to have the potential to contain finds and features from the Prehistoric, Iron Age and Roman periods and a low potential for all other periods. Although no archaeological investigations have been undertaken on this site, there have been a number of investigations in the immediate area, notably an evaluation 50m to the southeast of the site, which identified evidence of a Bronze Age enclosure, as well as Iron Age and Roman field systems and ditches. This, coupled with the metal detector finds on the site would suggest a prolonged occupation of the larger landscape during the Prehistoric to Roman periods.

The site is of substantial size (c.13.28ha), and historic mapping suggests that it has been in very long term agricultural use. Although ploughing may have caused some truncation, it is likely to have had a minor negative archaeological impact (as may the introduction of field drains). Any archaeological remains present may therefore be well preserved.

Given this, the proposed development site should be regarded as having the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest (NPPF para 200).

However, information about the significance of buried archaeology that may be present within the proposed development area, and the impact of any development, is not yet available.

We therefore advise that an archaeological field evaluation of the site should be undertaken. The archaeological evaluation should comprise geophysical survey and a programme of intrusive archaeological trial trenching, in order to provide sufficient information about the significance of heritage assets that may be affected by the development. This work should be carried out prior to determination of the application.

The results of these evaluations would determine whether any further archaeological work would be deemed necessary, either prior to the determination of the application, or following planning consent, should such consent be granted. Should the evaluation identify non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, these should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets (NPPF para 206, fn 72).

This office would be happy to discuss the scope of the above works further with the applicant or the applicant's agent.

I hope that you will be able to accommodate the above recommendations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Peri Horsley
Historic Environment Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS
Environmental Sustainability

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.