

Melanie Perkins

From: Matthew Adams <Matthew.Adams@lincolnshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 May 2024 13:30
To: Planning
Cc: James Mountain; Tim Snell; Emily Gillott
Subject: 24/00384/FUL - Land Adjacent To A614 Worksop Nottinghamshire
Attachments: ufm15_External_Consultation.rtf

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Dear James

Thank you for consulting me us on this application.

The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential associated with late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement activity.

Two large areas of cropmarks within the site fields are identified in the Riley surveys from the 1980's. These are likely associated with late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement and agricultural activity, however the full extent and nature of this has yet to be determined. Smaller concentrations of cropmarks are also record within the site boundary and it is likely that further remains are present within the 'blank' areas between them.

The applicant has submitted a desk-based assessment (DBA) including the results of a geophysical survey. The DBA provides an outline of archaeological potential based on available sources and the geophysical survey and recognises the potential for prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains within the site boundary. An area in the northern portion of the site has been removed from the scheme based on the results of the DBA which is welcomed.

However, the DBA states that the impact from solar farms is considered low. This is incorrect and the impacts are of equivalence to other forms of development when the cumulative effect is properly considered. Piling, kilometres of cable trenching, associated infrastructure, construction activity, decommissioning and numerous future refits and maintenance throughout the operational life of the solar farm are all highly intrusive and potentially destructive to any surviving archaeological remains.

The DBA further recommends that any further investigation and mitigation work can be conditioned (if permission is granted), based on the DBA and geophysical survey alone. I would strongly recommend that the site should also be subject to trial trench evaluation prior to determination so that a proper assessment of archaeological potential and impact can inform an appropriate planning recommendation and mitigation strategy. We have numerous examples in Bassetlaw where geophysics (and other desk-based or non-intrusive techniques) has failed to identify significant archaeological remains, which have only been recorded through evaluation trenching.

To this end, the archaeological resource across the whole site needs to well established in terms of location, character, extent, depth and state of preservation, before a planning recommendation can be made and I would strongly recommend that this is done at an early stage to help inform the viability of the site as well as help inform the design. Given the cropmark data, it is entirely possible that other areas of the site will need to be excluded from development or a well-structured programme of archaeological mitigation work agreed before the application can be approved.

Recommendation:

Currently there is insufficient specific information on the archaeological potential for the site and the extent of impact to buried archaeological remains from the proposed development.

Given the high archaeological potential, but as yet unknown location, character and extent, I recommend that applicant submit the results of an archaeological **trial trench evaluation** (full site boundary, minimum 3% coverage) to both target known anomalies in the desk-based research and the geophysical survey and also the 'blank' areas where other techniques have failed to establish potential. This work will aim to determine the presence, absence, significance, extent depth and character of any archaeological remains which could be impacted by the proposed development as noted above.

Trenching results are also essential for effective risk management and to inform programme scheduling and budget management. Failing to do so could lead to unnecessary destruction of heritage assets, potential programme delays and excessive cost increases that could otherwise be avoided.

This information should be provided with the application so that an informed planning recommendation can be made and to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 200 and 209 and Policy DM8 of the Local Development Framework.

This will also help inform an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed impact, if necessary, and should permission be subsequently granted.

I hope this is helpful and please let me know if you have any queries.

Kind regards

Matt

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