

From:
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Ms Alison Hall
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CDC/16/01766/OUT

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Dear Ms Hall

16/01766/OUT
Land parcel west of Horcott Road, Fairford

Outline application with all matters reserved apart for access for up to 92 dwellings (including up to 50% affordable housing), public open space and children's play area and associated works

Results of archaeological field evaluation

Further to my letter of 12.5.2016 I am writing to advise you that I have received a report on an archaeological field evaluation undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (report dated July 2016). I wish to make the following observations regarding the results of that investigation.

The field evaluation comprised the excavation of 20 trial-trenches, placed to investigate ground anomalies detected by a geophysical survey and also to test areas where no geophysical anomalies had been detected. The result of the field evaluation was positive, in that widespread archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon periods were found. Only in the southernmost part of the application site were remains apparently absent.

The prehistoric phase was represented by a ring-ditch representing a ploughed-down prehistoric barrow (found in Trench 1), a scatter of pits (found in Trenches 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13 and 15) and several small ditches (found in Trenches 4, 11 and 17). Similar features have been found in the wider area, and the remains can be interpreted as elements of an early prehistoric funerary landscape.

The Anglo-Saxon phase was represented by numerous features relating to an area of former settlement dating to the 5th – 8th centuries AD. Up to 15 potential sunken-featured buildings (found in Trenches 2 – 7, 11 – 14 and 16), and a post-built rectangular structure (found in Trench 13) can be interpreted as the sites of former houses and/or workshops. Associated activity was represented by numerous pits, post- and stake-settings, ditches and gullies (found in Trenches 1 – 9 and 11 – 17).

It is clear from the results of the evaluation that the archaeological deposits are not of the first order of preservation, since they have undergone erosion from medieval and later ploughing with the result that all surfaces associated with the remains have been destroyed. In addition the result of the evaluation suggests that there may be limited potential for the recovery of some categories of finds (eg, charred plant remains) from the Anglo-Saxon deposits.

For those reasons it is my view that the prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon remains are not of the highest significance. Nevertheless, it is clear that the archaeological remains present on this site have the potential to make a very substantial contribution to our understanding of the archaeology of Gloucestershire, and indeed further afield.

On that basis I advise that I have no objection in principle to the proposed development, with the proviso that a programme of archaeological excavation should be undertaken in advance of the development proceeding.

To facilitate the archaeological work I recommend that a condition based on model condition 55 from Appendix A of Circular 11/95 is attached to any planning permission which may be given for this development, ie;

'No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, including a timetable for the submission of the findings, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority'.

Reason: It is important to agree a programme of archaeological work in advance of the commencement of development, so as to make provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains that may be destroyed by ground works required for the scheme. The archaeological programme will advance understanding of any heritage assets which will be lost, in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework

I have no further observations.

Yours sincerely

Charles Parry, Archaeologist
Gloucestershire County Council