

Economy, Skills and Environment  
6 The Churchyard, Shire Hall  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 1RX

Stephen Wood  
Head of Planning  
Forest Heath District Council  
College Heath Road  
Mildenhall  
Suffolk  
IP28 7PH

Enquiries to: Kate Batt  
Direct Line: 01284 741227  
Email: [kate.batt@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:kate.batt@suffolk.gov.uk)  
Web: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk>

Our Ref: 2015\_2151  
Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2016

For the Attention of Chris Rand

Dear Mr Wood

**Planning Application DC/15/2151/OUT: Great Wilsey Park Wilsey Road Little Wratting  
Suffolk – Archaeology**

River valleys have been shown to be a major focuses of historic activity, and this site occupies an area of gently sloping land bisected by a tributary of the River Stour. Furthermore, several springs rise within the site. These features have been shown to be important in a later prehistoric ritual context. In addition, archaeological investigations undertaken in conjunction with several recent developments fringing the proposed development site have produced evidence indicative of later prehistoric, Roman and Medieval occupation.

An archaeological desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and limited trenched field evaluation has been completed. In this instance, following discussions with Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS), 2.5% trenching was identified as sufficient to test the accuracy of the results of the geophysics and identify areas of extensive archaeological remains which could represent a major constraint and impact the principal of development at this outline planning stage. Further archaeological evaluation will be required, at a suitable stage in the planning process, to fully characterise heritage assets with archaeological interest and inform an appropriate mitigation strategy which will include areas of excavation.

The archaeological evaluation report states *“The excavation identified remains from a number of archaeological periods. Eight clear clusters of archaeological remains were identified, dating from the Iron Age and medieval periods. A number of other scattered features of similar dates, and features dating to the post-medieval and modern periods, were also observed. A large proportion of the development area, however, contained no observable archaeological remains.”*

All phases of the proposed development will require further archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation. This will be informed by the results of the investigations already undertaken, and may include the application of additional survey techniques, such as systematic metal detecting survey.

Several areas of significant and extensive archaeological remains have been identified, which will be affected by the proposed development. These areas will require significant resource to adequately mitigate the impact of the proposed development, as required by NPPF141. This is likely to include substantial areas of open area archaeological excavation. Of particular note:

- Iron-Age and Medieval settlement across substantial areas of phases 2A, 2D and 3B. The archaeological remains identified include substantial and important evidence of both occupation and industrial activity, including potential Middle Iron-Age pottery production.
- Medieval occupation, most likely agricultural settlement, and Iron-Age occupation, largely characterised by multiple ditches which probably represent field systems, across a large area of phases 3A and 1D
- On the south-western edge of the site, within phase 1B, an area of dispersed Iron Age activity, and a number of undated features which might also have been in use during this period. This area of the site was heavily disturbed by later cultivation channels and furrows, of probable medieval date.
- An area of peripheral Medieval settlement in phases 1D and 2D
- An extensive area of relict ridge and furrow across phases 2A and 2D
- A concentration of undated features corresponding to geophysical anomalies within phase 1B

It is of note that although the main concentrations of archaeological remains correspond with areas identified by geophysical survey, a significant number of features identified in the trenches were not picked up as anomalies by geophysical survey. Some features of archaeological interest were identified from within all phases of the proposed development.

It is also noted that phase 2C has not been subject to any archaeological investigation. It is understood that it is proposed this area will be retained as parkland, however, any ground disturbance, including landscaping, habitat-creation or SUDS, within this area would potentially impact heritage assets with archaeological interest. Therefore, the site of any proposed works would require a programme of archaeological evaluation to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.

In addition to the below ground heritage assets identified, Great Wilsey medieval moated site (NHLE1020175), a Scheduled Monument, lies within the proposed development site. SCCAS previously advised:

*We object to the principle of development within the vicinity of Great Wilsey Farm that would detrimentally affect the setting of a Scheduled Monument (DSF 33287)."*

The Masterplan states, on page 28:

*"A Scheduled Ancient Monument comprising of a moated site lies to the north of the site within Great Wilsey Farm. Further heritage assets, that will be potentially affected, lie to the east and north of the site, notably within Calford Green and Kedington. It will be essential that the setting of these heritage assets are adequately protected and development screened with new woodland planting to both the east and west of the farm."*

This fails to provide a proper assessment of the potential impact on the designated heritage asset of Great Wilsey Farm Moated Site (NHLE1020175). Although it is not proposed that this designated heritage asset will be directly impacted by the proposal, the effect of development in close proximity, on the monument's setting will need to be fully examined, and an appropriate mitigation strategy designed. This may include redesign of the proposed layout of the development to allow for a buffer zone. Historic England is the appropriate body

to provide advice on this issue and should be consulted for comment on issues of layout, screening etc. prior to approval of the Masterplan.

Apart from the issues around setting of the Scheduled moated site at Great Wilsey Farm, there are no grounds to consider refusal of permission in order to achieve preservation *in situ* of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Paragraph 141), any permission granted should be the subject of planning conditions to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

In this case the following two conditions, **used together**, would be appropriate:

1. No development shall take place within any phase or sub-phase of the area indicated [the whole site] until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured for that phase or sub-phase, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

2. No building shall be occupied or area brought into use, within each phase or sub-phase, until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed for that phase or sub-phase, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition 1 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

**REASON:**

*To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy CS3 of Forest Heath District Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012)*

**INFORMATIVE:**

*The submitted scheme of archaeological investigation shall be in accordance with a brief procured beforehand by the developer from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team.*

In this instance, a programme of archaeological investigation will be required, which will include:

- Further evaluation of a number of areas to fully characterise and define the extent of heritage assets with archaeological interest, to inform appropriate mitigation. **This should be undertaken before determination of detailed planning** Decisions on the need for any further investigation (excavation before any groundworks commence) will be made on the basis of the results of the evaluation.
- Open area archaeological excavation of areas of occupation or settlement

I would be pleased to offer guidance on the archaeological work required and will, on request of the applicant, provide a brief for each stage of the archaeological investigation. Please see our website for further information on procedures and costs:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/culture-heritage-and-leisure/suffolk-archaeological-service/>

Yours sincerely

Kate Batt BSc(hons)

***Archaeological Officer  
Conservation Team***