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Date
16th February 2022

Our Reference: AR WD21 2356 Land at Old Orchard Hse Horam
For the attention of: Matthew Taylor

Dear Mr Robins

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION

WD/2021/2356/MAO LAND AT OLD ORCHARD HOUSE, HOREBEECH LANE, HORAM, TN21 9DZ. OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF UP TO 38 DWELLINGS, ACCESS, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Recommend for approval in principle subject to the imposition of conditions	The information provided is satisfactory and identifies that there is a risk that archaeological remains will be damaged. Nonetheless it is acceptable that the risk of damage to archaeology is mitigated by the application of planning conditions which are outlined in this response.	**YES**

If the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning permission, then we ask that the following condition be applied:

[ARCH 1] No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

[ARCH 3] No phase of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post - investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) for that phase has been completed and approved in writing by the *Local Planning Authority. The archaeological site investigation and post - investigation assessment will*

be undertaken in accordance with the programme set out in the written scheme of investigation approved under condition **[ARCH 1]**

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Relevant National Planning Policy

205. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Detailed Comments:

The proposed development site has already been subject to a geophysical survey undertaken in association with previous application WD/2018/0509. This survey identified a number of geophysical anomalies of potential archaeological interest, however, these anomalies have not as yet been subject to archaeological excavation.

More concrete evidence for the archaeological potential of the current application site has been provided by recent archaeological excavations undertaken at Rose Mead Farm, located to the immediate north of Old Orchard House. At Rose Mead Farm, the oldest material encountered comprised a thin scatter of prehistoric flintwork recovered mostly from the overburden. Some of this material appears to be Mesolithic / Neolithic in origin and is probably indicative of transient hunter - gatherer activity. A thin scatter of mostly charcoal - rich pits dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age was also discovered. However, the first tangible changes to the landscape appear to have occurred in the early Romano-British period when a ditched enclosure overlooking a valley to the north was established. Material recovered from this enclosure suggests that at least one iron - producing bloomery furnace was operating locally during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. In the medieval or early post-medieval period, the site was divided by a field boundary that was respected until the excavation of numerous mine pits for the extraction of iron ore. The archaeological investigations at Rose Mead Farm uncovered over 1,300 iron ore extraction pits in remarkably dense clusters. These features possessed diameters of up to 5m. and depths of up to 4m. and may be associated with the Heathfield Furnace complex which lay c.2km to the north-east. Heathfield Furnace was in operation between the 1690s and 1790s. Two hearths for roasting ore, also thought to date from this period, were also recorded.

It is our opinion that there is a high potential for the application site to contain *in situ* archaeological features, deposits and artefacts of at least local significance. More specifically, the presence of further dense clusters of deep iron ore extraction pits analogous to those found at Rose Mead Farm and other features associated with the post-medieval iron industry seems likely.

In the light of the potential for impacts to heritage assets with archaeological interest resulting from the proposed development, the area affected by the proposals should be the subject of a ***programme of archaeological works***. This will enable any archaeological deposits and features that would be disturbed by the proposed works, to be either preserved *in situ* or, where this cannot be achieved, adequately recorded in advance of their loss. These recommendations are in line with the requirements given in the **NPPF** (the Government's planning policies for England):

In furtherance of this recommendation, we shall be available to advise the applicant on how they can best fulfill any archaeological condition that is applied to their planning permission and to provide a brief setting out the scope of the programme of works.

The ***written scheme of investigation***, referred to in the recommended condition wording above, will set out the contracted archaeologist's detailed approach to undertake the programme of works and accord with the relevant sections of the Sussex Archaeological Standards (2019).

Could you please send us a copy of the planning decision once it has been made? In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us again if you need further information or advice.

Yours sincerely

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