

Rural County (Environmental Advice)

Staffordshire County Council
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FAO Tom Nutt

Senior Planning Officer
Development Management Team
South Staffordshire Council
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Please ask for: Laura Pritchard

12 April 2023

Our Ref: HoEC/EC3210/SS/LP/CST9074 **Your Ref:** 23/00145/FUL

Dear Mr Nutt,

LAND ON SOUTH-WEST SIDE OF LEVEDALE ROAD, LEVEDALE

Thank you for your consultation request regarding the proposed battery energy storage facility and substation with new access and associated fencing and landscaping at the above site. This letter outlines the response of Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Team regarding the historic environment implications of the proposals.

Archaeological/Historic Environment Interest

This application has been reviewed against the information held by the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), historic mapping and the Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (HEDBA) submitted in support of the application. The information detailed in the HEDBA will not be repeated in detail here, although it demonstrated that the proposed development site is located within an area which has been subject to little archaeological investigation, hence the archaeological potential of the site is largely unknown; the HEDBA concluded that on the basis of available information, the potential for buried archaeology at the site is generally low, but highlighted that the proposed development has the capacity to disturb archaeological deposits where present. Within the wider landscape of the site, evidence of ridge and

furrow and find spots ranging from prehistoric to post-medieval in date indicate past activity in the area.

Recommendations

Taking the above into account with regards to the uncertain archaeological potential of the site, and considering the potential impact of the scheme, it is advised that, should permission be granted, a staged archaeological evaluation be conducted in order to determine the significance of any surviving archaeological remains and to assess the need for and scope of further archaeological mitigation (such as excavation, watching brief etc.). The archaeological evaluation must be undertaken sufficiently in advance of construction so that, should further archaeological mitigation be required, it can be designed and fully implemented. This staged archaeological evaluation should comprise a geophysical survey followed by targeted trial trenching, the scale and location of which should be informed by the geophysical survey and any ground investigation works carried out associated with the proposed development or previously carried out and available.

This approach, i.e. archaeological evaluation, is supported by NPPF (2021) para 194, while any works which stem from the evaluation are supported by para 205. The works should be undertaken by an appropriately experienced archaeologist working to the requirements of a brief prepared by this office (or approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct and to a level commensurate with the relevant CIfA Standards and Guidance.

Suggested Condition

The above work* would most appropriately be secured via a condition being attached to any permission issued. This condition should state:

A) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a written scheme of archaeological investigation ('the Scheme') shall be submitted for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The Scheme shall provide details of the programme of archaeological works to be carried out within the site, including post-fieldwork reporting and appropriate publication.

B) The archaeological site work shall thereafter be implemented in full in accordance with the written scheme of archaeological investigation approved under condition (A).

C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post-fieldwork assessment has been completed in accordance with the written scheme of archaeological investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured."

Should you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Pritchard

Laura Pritchard

Environment Specialist (Archaeology)

*Applicant please note that in May 2018 Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Team, archaeological advisors to East Staffordshire Borough Council, introduced a charged-for curatorial service for planning applications with archaeological conditions. Our curatorial service will be charged at a single fee per application and may include: production of a brief/specification (where deemed necessary), review and validation of any submitted written schemes of investigation, monitoring visits (if deemed necessary), review and validation of any submitted reports, liaison with local planning authority and anything that will enable us to recommend discharge of conditions. Fees are based on the size of the development. The production of a brief/specification to inform the tendering process and additional monitoring visits can also be purchased separately. These fees should be paid in advance by your appointed archaeological/historic environment organisation/contractor (who should include them in their tender quote) or by the applicant/agent using our online payment system. More details can be found here:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Environment-and-countryside/HistoricEnvironment/Advice-and-guidance.aspx>