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Our Ref: CSF46764
Date: 20/12/23

For the Attention of Bron Curtis

Dear Mr Isbell

Planning Application DC/23/05656 – Land at Grove Farm and Land East of The Railway Line, Bentley: Archaeology

This site lies in a large area of archaeological potential recorded on the County Historic Environment Record, near the medieval church of St Mary (BTY 014). Crop marks are present to the south (BTY 006) and Iron Age cremations (BTY 055) have been found in the vicinity. Geophysical Survey (AOC Archaeology, 2023) also showed some anomalies that may be of archaeological origin. As a result, there is high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development have the potential to damage or destroy any archaeological remains which exist.

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 211), 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.

Should the developer wish to explore the use of no dig construction methods as an alternative to archaeological excavation for areas of archaeology which have already been defined, or any further areas of archaeology which are defined in subsequent trenching works, we would not object to this, however, would recommend the additional third condition to be included alongside our standard condition wording.

In this case the following conditions would be appropriate to secure the ongoing archaeological work at this site:

1. No development shall take place within the area indicated [the whole site] until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured, 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. The solar farm shall not be brought into operation until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, 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 part 1 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

3. No development shall take place the area indicated [the whole site] until a management plan for any archaeological areas to be preserved in situ has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, setting out the methodology to secure the ongoing protection of these areas both during construction, operation and decommissioning of the solar farm. A detailed site plan showing Archaeological Exclusion Zones must be included, defining areas within which development will be excluded or provide sufficient design mitigation to avoid any impact to below ground archaeological deposits. Full details of the final construction methods to be implemented for any works in these areas must also be provided for approval. The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved management plan.

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 LP19 - The Historic Environment (p78-80) in the BMSDC Joint Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

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.

I would be pleased to offer guidance on the archaeological work required and, in our role as advisor to Babergh District Council, the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service will, on request of the applicant, provide a specification for the archaeological work required at this site. In this case, an archaeological evaluation will be required to establish the potential of the site (including along the cable corridor) and decisions on the need for any further investigation (excavation before any groundworks commence and/or monitoring during groundworks) will be made on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

Further details on our advisory services and charges can be found on our website: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/archaeology/>

Please do get in touch if there is anything that you would like to discuss or you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Cutler

Senior Archaeological Officer
Conservation Team