

Internal Memorandum



Development Management Case Officer: Neil Underhay

Dated: 3rd March 2021

Application: Change of use of land from gypsy pony track/agricultural land to a Park & Ride car park for Bristol Airport with 3101 parking spaces and associated works

Reference Number: 20/P/1438/FUL

Location: Heathfield Park, Hewish

Comments from the Senior Archaeologist regarding the above application:

The submitted Heritage Statement is considerably lacking in detail, does not meet the requirements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for desk-based assessment (historic environment assessment), and has not been produced by a competent archaeologist. Whilst the online version of the North Somerset Historic Environment Record has been consulted, a full HER search has not been undertaken, and therefore not all information that would be available to the applicant will have been taken into consideration.

The Heritage Statement does therefore not comply with paragraph 189 of the NPPF or policies DM6 or DM7 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan.

Known archaeological resource (Non-designated/designated assets)

There are no heritage assets recorded within the proposed development area, but this is likely a result of lack of investigation at this particular location. Within the wider area there are records of numerous undated enclosures, ditches, trackways and dispersed farmsteads and isolated agricultural buildings, alongside medieval settlement evidence closer to Puxton and Romano-British field systems to the south-east.

Previous investigations

There are no records of previous investigations within the proposed development area, but those within the vicinity will help determine the level of potential for archaeological remains at this location.

Of particular interest will be the suite of documentary research and fieldwork undertaken between 1993 and 2004 by Prof. Stephen Rippon at Puxton and Hewish, published in '*Landscape, Community and Colonisation: The North Somerset Levels during the 1st to 2nd millennia AD*' (2006).

Historic landscape impact

This area is characterised historically as 'post-medieval (15th – 17th C) organised enclosure of anciently reclaimed inland moors', with adjacent land characterised as 'post-medieval (15th – 17th C) irregular fields enclosed from anciently reclaimed inland moors'.

The area is currently classified (in the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment) as A1: Kingston Seymour and Puxton Moors. Key characteristics of this landscape classification includes 'extensive low-lying lands of estuarine alluvium and peat, reclaimed from the sea and now drained and protected by flood defences', highly rural, peaceful landscape and, in many places, a sense of remoteness and isolation', and 'water ever-present in the artificial linear form of the many ditches and rhynes, and embanked and canalised rivers'. There are important features which preserve the historic character of this area.

Relevant Legislation / Planning Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, principally paragraphs 184-202 (2019)

North Somerset Council Core Strategy – Policy CS5: Landscape and the historic environment

North Somerset Council Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (DM4: Listed Buildings, DM6: Archaeology & DM7: Non-designated heritage assets)

The large-scale development of this low-lying agricultural land has the potential to significantly impact on the characteristics mentioned above, but it is positive to see many of the drainage channels and rhynes retained in the proposed site layout.

Historic field names recorded on the 1840 tithe for Congresbury include 'Pill Mead' and 'Pill Field' may reference an historic creek/waterway.

Recommendations for further investigation/mitigation/impact

Upon receipt of a Historic Environment Assessment (desk-based assessment), which should include a settings/impact assessment, there may be scope for further investigation through geophysical survey and field evaluation. These investigations would then inform the nature and design of any required mitigation measures to ensure minimal impact on the historic environment.

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National Planning Policy Framework, principally paragraphs 184-202 (2019)

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