

RPS Comments on archaeology at Land South of Station Road, Cowfold

These comments are provided by RPS Group who provided an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) for the site in March 2020 and commissioned a Geophysical Survey of the site on behalf of the client in November 2020. The qualifications and professional accreditations of the authors are provided in those documents.

Desk Based Assessment

The desk-based assessment found that the proposed development will not impact on any designated archaeological assets.

The study site is located within an Archaeological Notification Area as defined by the West Sussex Historic Environment Record, which is associated with a possible Medieval or Post Medieval pottery centre. As a result, the assessment identified a moderate archaeological potential at the study site for the Medieval and Post Medieval periods. A generally low archaeological potential has been identified at the study site for all other past periods of human activity. Any archaeological remains within the site were considered most likely be of a local significance.

Geophysical Survey

A detailed magnetometer survey was conducted over two parcels of land to the south of Station Road, Cowfold, West Sussex. A series of possible kilns, potentially linked to the presumed pottery making industry in the vicinity, were detected in the results, along with a series of divisions associated with former allotment gardens. A few linear trends of uncertain origin were also mapped, along with a former footpath / track and evidence for ridge and furrow.

The series of discrete, thermoremanent type responses indicative of kilns were identified in the southwest of the southern field. Given their proximity to the possible medieval or post-medieval pottery making centre, and the fact that they lie immediately north of a former brick field it is likely that they are associated with former kilns and waster heaps.

Impact

The location of the potential kilns is clearly identified by the geophysical survey. The kilns are not located within any areas of proposed development and therefore there should be no impact on these potential archaeological remains.

Position

The geophysical survey has successfully identified any areas of potential archaeological interest within the site. These areas are outside of the proposed development footprint and therefore a significant archaeological impact is not expected to take place. Within the development footprint only weak anomalies are identified potentially relating to post-medieval agriculture and drainage.

As no widespread or significant archaeological impacts are likely to occur and any potential archaeological remains could be mitigated against at the masterplanning stage, it is considered the remaining archaeological interest of the site would be afforded proportionate protection by a standard worded planning condition secured to any planning consent.

