

Appendix 4

Proposal

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

As part of the EIA an assessment has been undertaken of the effects of the project on the archaeology of the area, the above or below ground remains left by previous generations including pre history, Roman, early medieval, medieval, post medieval and later. The assessment considers the likely significant effects on archaeology and cultural heritage assets resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed exploration compound, the construction of the associated access route and the installation of the seismic monitoring array.

The assessment has been carried out in accordance with national guidance documents in the absence of any statutory requirements to use any particular methodology for the assessment of impacts on heritage assets. A number of different historical records have been used to inform the assessment including data held by the County Council and English Heritage. A walk over survey has also been carried out. There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, listed buildings or Conservation Areas within 1km of the site. The assessment has confirmed there are no records of archaeological finds within the planning application boundary for any of the proposed surface works.

The EIA has identified that the only activities associated with the project that have the potential to result in a significant effect on archaeology are the construction of the well pad, access track and connection to the national transmission system as a result of top and sub soil removal as part of the construction of the site which might encounter archaeology which without specific mitigation could be lost with the opportunity of recording it. To mitigate this it is proposed to record any evidence of the track and field systems during excavation works. It is concluded that this would not result in significant effect on heritage or archaeological features.

The site is not in close proximity to above ground heritage assets such as listed buildings to avoid any indirect visual impacts on their setting.

An interconnection from the site to the national grid is proposed in the event extended flow testing of gas is carried out and which would be laid in an excavated trench to then be covered and the surface restored. There are no known heritage assets on the proposed alignment. Nevertheless the excavation of trench to accommodate the interconnection could have a significant effect in disturbing unknown archaeology.

In terms of cumulative impacts, the assessment concludes that the Preston New Road site is considered sufficiently distant from the Roseacre Wood site such that their combined impacts on heritage features will not result in a greater combined effect than individually.

To mitigate the impact of the development works it is concluded that the most appropriate way to implement a scheme of investigation would be to carry a strip, map and record exercise during the excavation of the topsoil if the monitoring archaeologist identifies any features requiring further investigation

Summary of consultee comments and representations

The County Councils Archaeology Service (LCAS) has confirmed the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapter of the ES has been undertaken in line with the requirements of the Service which agrees with the assessment that the site has a low potential to contain previously unknown archaeological finds or features. The proposed mitigation measures are considered to be appropriate. LCAS recommend that should planning permission be granted it should be subject to a condition preventing the commencement of development until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work is secured.

No issues relating to archaeology have been raised in representations.

Policy

Policy EP21 of the Fylde Local Plan requires developers to provide an archaeological assessment or if necessary a field evaluation where there is an identified archaeological interest and to make adequate provision for recording remains if their preservation in situ cannot be justified.

Assessment

The proposed development of the site, access roads and trench would not have any impact on World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, listed buildings or Conservation Areas. The construction of the site, access road and trench for the interconnecting pipeline would have significant effects on unknown archaeology; however these effects could be mitigated by carrying out a strip, map and record exercise during the excavation of the topsoil if the monitoring archaeologist identifies any features requiring further investigation and which would be addressed by condition.

Conclusions

Subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work is secured prior to commencement of development it is considered the development would not have an unacceptable impact on archaeology and would comply with policy EP21 of the Fylde Local Plan.