

Historic England (formally “The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England”) is the Government’s adviser on the historic environment in England - including historic buildings and areas, archaeology, and historic landscape. We have a duty to promote conservation, public understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment.

Historic England is an executive non-Departmental public body established by S32 of the National Heritage Act 1983. We answer to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Our primary remit in relation to any application is to advise on the impact of the Project on Grade I and II* listed structures, registered parks and gardens, and on scheduled monuments. We may also comment on un-designated archaeological assets or geoarchaeological deposits which we consider to be potentially of national significance.

We would not wish to comment on Grade II listed buildings (unless their demolition is proposed) as these are outside the remit of Historic England.

We are content to defer to the Local Planning Authorities and their archaeological advisors on matters of local and regional heritage assets, including any Grade II structures, and we refer the Examining Authority to their submissions as relevant.

The impacts of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage are assessed in Chapter 11 of Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES) which has been submitted in support of the DCO application. Chapter 11 is supported by a number of Appendices contained in Volume 2 of the ES. Appendix 11.1 is a detailed Cultural Heritage Study, Appendix 11.2 is a gazetteer of all designated and non-designated heritage assets within the boundary of the Proposed Development and the defined study area around it. Appendix 3 includes historic map extracts and Lidar images, Appendix 11.4 includes photographs of the Proposed Development site and the area around it, including key heritage assets, and 11.5 is a Setting Assessment dealing specifically with the impact of the Proposed Development on designated heritage assets in its vicinity.

Historic England considers that the assessment of the impacts of the Proposed Development in Volume 1, Chapter 11 of the ES and the supporting appendices has been carried out in accordance with current best practice and has fully identified the extent and nature of those impacts.

The site of the Proposed Development is an area of low-lying marginal land adjacent to the River Mersey, which is unlikely to have attracted permanent settlement due to its marshy nature. It is not without archaeological potential, but most of the undesignated heritage assets identified as potentially surviving within the Proposed Development boundary are unlikely to be affected, either due to their location or because they are buried beneath a thick layer of dredged material. Some features of minor significance which might be directly impacted by the construction of the

Proposed Development include areas of relatively recent ridge and furrow, and some modern ventilation shafts.

The main archaeological interest of the site lies in the deep accumulation of sediments, including layers of peat which have the potential to include important palaeoenvironmental material, underlying it. While the majority of the peats are believed to lie at a depth of more than 5 metres below ground level (bgl), and therefore below the level that would be impacted by the Proposed Development, it is possible that in some areas peats may survive at more shallow depths than 5 metres bgl.

The setting assessment reported in Appendix 11.5 suggests that the impact of the Proposed Development upon the settings of designated heritage assets within the defined study area would be negligible, with a limited impact on the settings of the scheduled Promontory Fort on Helsby Hill, the Grade II listed Frodsham War Memorial, and three conservation areas.

Proposals for mitigation of the impacts of the construction of the Proposed Development are also set out in Chapter 11 of the ES. These include photographic recording of the ventilation shafts and targeted programmes of investigation of the other non-designated heritage assets which might be directly impacted. These would be carried out in accordance with written schemes of investigation (WSIs), to be agreed by the local planning authority in consultation with the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service and Historic England. An Outline WSI submitted in support of the application outlines the process for determining the archaeological requirements associated with the DCO Proposed Development and sets out the methodologies and process by which the programme of archaeological mitigation would be delivered.

Additionally, a programme of geoarchaeological investigation in the form of a purposive borehole survey would be undertaken in the southern, central and south-eastern parts of the site of the Proposed Development. The scope of this work would be agreed with CAPAS and Historic England and carried out in accordance with a WSI.

The Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is secured by Paragraph 18 of Schedule 2 ('Requirements') of the Draft Development Order. The commitment to carry out archaeological investigation and recording is also specified in Commitments C45 and C46 of the Commitments Register.

Historic England considers that the impacts of the Proposed Development have been properly assessed in Chapter 11 of the ES, and that those impacts would be appropriately mitigated by the proposed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy.