

Hurst Farm Moreton Dorset

A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

HILLSIDE | HUNGER HILL | EAST STOUR | GILLINGHAM
DORSET | SP8 5JS

T: 01747 83985 | | E: MAIL@CONTEXTONE.CO.UK

W: CONTEXTONE.CO.UK



Looking after the past, today...

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*This report was prepared by Clare Randall FSA, BA (Hons), BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD, MCifA
with contributions from Cheryl Green, FSA, BA (Hons), PhD, MCifA*

Illustrations were drawn by Tara Fairclough, BA (Hons), PCifA

Report compilation by Richard McConnell, BA (Hons), MCifA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) has prepared this Heritage Impact Assessment to support inclusion in the Dorset Mineral Sites Plan of a proposed aggregate extraction and processing site at Hurst Farm, Moreton, Dorset. The aim of the assessment is to provide information on the impact to the significance of any heritage assets that might be affected by the proposal and identify opportunities for change that conserve, enhance and better reveal their significance.

There are around 40 designated heritage assets within a 2km radius of the Site. Of these, the majority are Listed buildings, all Grade II. Ten are situated within 500m of the Site, including at Hurst and Hurst Bridge, to the east of the Site, and Pallington, c. 400m to the north. The majority of the rest of the Listed structures are situated c. 0.5-2km to the south-east within the village of Moreton, associated with the Moreton Conservation Area. Additional groups are associated with The Frampton Arms c. 1.5km to the south-west, The Frome Bridge, c. 1.9km to the west, and Eweleaze c. 2km to the north-west. In addition, there are three Scheduled Monuments situated on the ridge c. 1.8km to the north of the Site at Pallington Heath. These comprise a total of six Bronze Age barrows. The considerable amount of mature woodland, hedgerows and single field trees across the area interrupts views of, and within, the Site, and result in a more limited number of assets having actual intervisibility with it. Therefore, three areas were selected for detailed consideration: the Moreton Conservation Area to the south-east, Hurst, immediately to the east of the Site and Hurst Bridge to the north-east; and Pallington to the north. It was clear that the majority have no relationship with the Site, being screened by hedges and trees. Of the remaining assets, the majority, particularly in the case of Moreton Conservation Area, were distant from the Site and screened by interposed vegetation. There was however a direct relationship between the Site and the Grade II Listed Hurst Dairy House and its barn immediately east of the B3390 which have a historical relationship with the Site.

The significance of Hurst Dairy House and barn derives from their fabric as agricultural buildings directly associated with the development of the dairying landscape. This seems to have been integral to the re-organisation of the Moreton Estate during the later 18th and 19th centuries. There is a clear historical, functional and visual connection between Hurst Dairy House and its barn, and the Site, particularly its eastern extent. Whilst the current condition and use of the Dairy House compromises its legibility as part of the farming landscape, and it is separated from the Site by an already busy road, there is potential for harm to occur to the setting of both of these Grade II Listed buildings. This would certainly relate to views from and to the buildings but also kinetic views in which both the proposed works and the buildings can be seen. In addition, there is likelihood of intrusive noise from the works, and the possibility of dust, vibration and noise from an increase in heavy vehicles using the B3390. It is therefore considered that there would be less than substantial harm to the setting of these assets, and thereby their significance. With respect to Hurst Bridge and other Listed assets on the B3390 to the north-east of the Site, it was considered that there was some likelihood of additional noise, vibration or dust from the working of the Site, but there was no intervisibility. However, the routing of additional heavy traffic up the B3390 could have a potential impact on Hurst Bridge in particular, and possibly on other roadside assets. This was considered to constitute less than substantial harm to Hurst Bridge, which could be mitigated by detailed structural recording, examination by a structural engineer and on-going monitoring. In addition, the broader landscape setting of the Scheduled barrows on Pallington Heath would be altered and this would have been a key element in the original choice of their location and thereby significance, although this was considered less than substantial harm. Depending on the eventual extraction methods and location and design of the processing facility there may be impact on the north-western part of the Moreton Conservation Area, although this is likely to constitute no harm or less than substantial harm.

It is noted that the exact impact on heritage assets will depend on the eventual sequence and methods of extraction. There must also be some consideration of the potential cumulative effect on the historic agricultural landscape when should either or both of the neighbouring Sites (Station Road, Moreton and Woodsford Extension) be adopted or worked. On balance it is considered that impacts can be minimised during the extraction phase at Hurst Farm by moving the eastern boundary to the west, consideration of parcel by parcel extraction; retention of the historic hedged boundaries and mature trees which both screen views and signify the historic arrangement of the landscape; and avoidance of visually intrusive spoil dumps during the extraction. It would be desirable to maintain as much of the existing boundary system as possible, but reinstatement of those which have to be removed or damaged should be carried out after extraction completion. This would mitigate the long-term effects on setting, even if the landform is permanently altered. Restoration plans need to take this into account the permanent alteration of the landform and identify areas where the greatest remaining ground level reduction is least visually evident and explore potential for enhancing the legibility of the landscape. In addition, appropriate evaluation and mitigation in relation to the archaeological potential of the Site may provide the opportunity for greater understanding of both the post-medieval estate development, but in particular the important water meadows which are partly represented in the north-west of the Site.

INTRODUCTION

Context: One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) has prepared this Heritage Impact Assessment (the 'assessment') to support inclusion in the Bourmemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan of a proposed aggregate, processing and extraction Site at Hurst Farm, Moreton, Dorset (the 'Site') (AS26). The assessment was commissioned by Dorset County Council (DCC).

The Heritage Assessment was preceded by a scoping exercise (referred to as Phase 1) which provided baseline heritage data for twelve sites under consideration. The results were presented as a series of short statements accompanied by summary figures showing the site boundaries and all heritage assets within their environs. Following this, the Site was selected by DCC as requiring a second stage of examination (Phase 2) based on a predefined brief to:

- ◆ evaluate the potential level of impact from the proposed allocation on heritage assets and (where applicable) their settings;
- ◆ where impacts were identified, to assess whether these might be sufficiently mitigated so that the level of impact from the plan is acceptable.

The Heritage Assessment indicated the potential for below ground archaeology within the area of the Site, but also noted the proximity of a number of designated assets which might have their settings and thereby significance impacted in some way by the proposed inclusion of the Site. In a letter dated 31 January 2018 Rohan Torkildsen (Principal South West and West Midlands Historic Environment Planning Adviser, Historic England) commented on the pre-submission draft of the Mineral Sites Plan, and with respect to Hurst Farm referred to informal comments made in June 2017 by Benjamin Webb (Conservation Officer, Purbeck District Council). These comments noted:

- ◆ Potential structural harm to Hurst Bridge
- ◆ Destruction of historic estate landscape character
- ◆ Loss of historic watercourses related to past use of the land as water meadows, and a copse created by the estate for game cover
- ◆ Adverse visual impact on the setting/context of listed buildings whose appreciation would be compromised by quarrying immediately opposite
- ◆ Some cumulative impact viewed in conjunction with AS25 (Station Road, Moreton).

The aim of this assessment is therefore to provide information on the impact to the significance of any heritage assets that might be affected by the proposal and identify opportunities that conserve, enhance and better reveal that significance. It expands on the heritage assessment work already undertaken and extends the previous 500m research buffer to encompass a greater part of the Moreton Conservation Area and its component designated assets.

THE SITE

The Site comprises open agricultural land situated to the north-west of Hurst Farm, c. 1.2km north-west of the village of Moreton (Figure 1). The southern eastern boundary of the Site runs along the B3390 Crossways to Waddock Cross road. On the south side, it borders Hurst Heath. The western and northern boundaries of the Site are adjacent to further agricultural land. The River Frome lies to the north of the Site, and meanders from west to east, with lakes at Pallington, now landscaped as a sculpture park, and a fish farm and watercress beds towards Waddock Cross.

The Site slopes gently from west to east at c. 36m - 27m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) as the land drops towards the river. The recorded geology for the Site is Poole Formation - Sand (BGS, 2018). The soils are described as freely draining and slightly acid loam with naturally high groundwater (CSAIS, 2018).

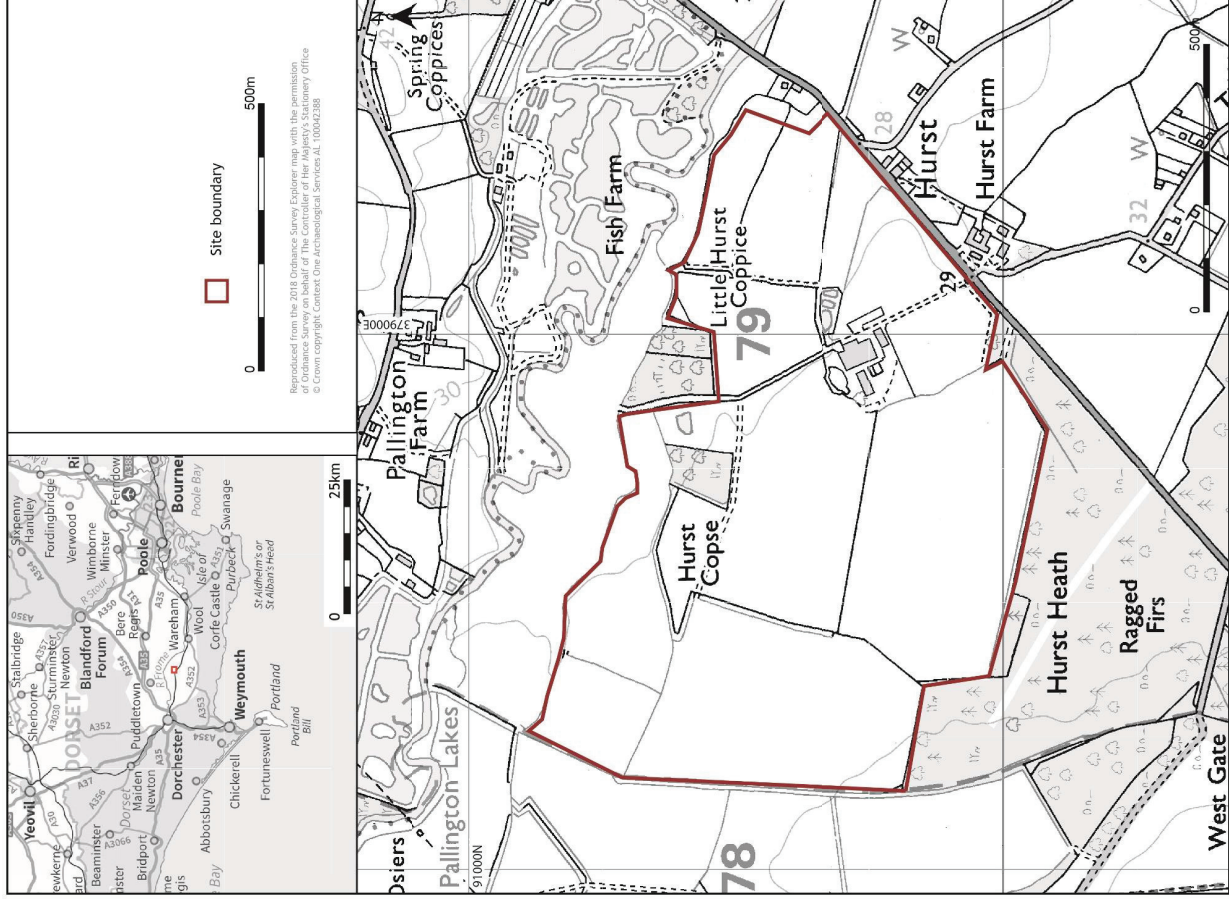


Figure 1. Site setting