

GLOSSOPDALE & LONGDENDALE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A Company Limited by Guarantee - registration no. 7595452
Registered Office - 5 Roundhill Close, Hadfield, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 2BH

Chair and Company Secretary - Roger Hargreaves MA (Cantab) MSc (Oxon)
rogerhargreaves20@gmail.com - Tel. 01457 862003

GLAS is a member of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Federation
and the Council for British Archaeology

18/8/15

Michael Green

Planning Applications Manager

High Peak Borough Council

Dear Mr Green

Re: Land at Dinting Road; HPK/2015/0412 and HPK/2015/0424

This letter is on behalf of both GLAS and the Glossop Heritage Trust. Although the above applications are from different applicants, the sites are adjacent and the archaeological issues are largely common to both.

HPK/2015/0424 contains no Heritage Statement or archaeological assessment; HPK/2015/0412 contains the latter only, but the conclusions of this, insofar as they are valid, can be applied to both sites.

This desk-based assessment, by CgMs Consulting dated March 2015, was in common with most of its kind made without consultation with the local heritage bodies, and in consequence omits information and knowledge held locally. It also repeats the common circular argument that since there have been very few recorded finds locally (since virtually no archaeology has been carried out) there is unlikely to be anything to find, and so no need for any archaeology, and which is an especially dangerous assumption in areas such as this where most farmland has never been ploughed or otherwise disturbed, or not since recording of finds began. Many of the local finds on the Heritage Environment Record date to a period in the late C19th /early 20th when active ploughing and drainage by the Howard estate overlapped with the arrival of the first knowledgeable local antiquarians. A more logical approach is to ask whether, regardless of actual finds, the overall context of known sites, settlement patterns and movement corridors points to the possibility of there being other unknown sites of significance.

In this respect, the CgMs assessment overlooks important evidence from two periods. First of all, although the summit of Mouselow is recorded only as the site of an early mediaeval ringwork, which is as much as can be safely concluded from the very limited excavation so far carried out, it has been widely believed since the C18th, on the basis of both visual and place-name evidence, that it sits inside a much larger Iron Age fort. The name "Dinting" is Celtic in origin and the "din" prefix is associated elsewhere with hillforts. The slopes of Mouselow are also largely free of boulder clay and therefore more suited to Celtic farming practices, and although no hard evidence of Iron Age/Romano-British settlement has been found, there is evidence on a 1940s air photo of possible fields on the south-east side, and there have been a number of Roman or Romano-British finds on the

north side at Little Padfield where GLAS carried out geophys in 2009. As one of a local cluster of otherwise-rare Celtic settlement names, Dinting has been put forward as a possible site of "Celtic survival", i.e continuity of occupation from the IronAge/Romano-British to the Anglo-Saxon period.

Secondly, the assessment omits completely any reference to the Anglo-Saxon, Mediaeval and Post-Mediaeval periods. Dinting, which although latterly part of the Manor of Glossop was a discrete township, separately recorded in Domesday, was distinctly different in form to most of the other 11 "Domesday villages" in the valley, having no common-field system or major village centre but consisting of a total of 6 dispersed hamlets. Three of these, Dinting or Higher Dinting, Little or Lower Dinting, and The Ashes, lie close to the development sites; Lower Dinting is adjacent on the west side, and the other two are 125 and 250 metres from the boundary.

It can reasonably be assumed that Higher Dinting is the oldest of these three, probably dating back to the original A-S settlement circa 650 (if not earlier), but in view of the dispersed form of the township the other hamlets may well be much older than the "satellite" settlements of neighbouring townships, such as Little Padfield, which would mostly have developed only when the village centre became overcrowded or the common fields were enclosed around the C16th. The main farmhouse at The Ashes is said to contain cruck beams, supporting documentary evidence of settlement there at least by the C14th. Nor can it be assumed that the relative size of these hamlets has always been as it appears on the earliest maps – in recent years it has been established that Arnfield, to the north, was once much bigger, a sizeable deserted village having been located on the edge of the later hamlet. Lower Dinting was certainly once bigger than it now appears, having been truncated by the railway.

The development sites therefore sit within an area of Anglo-Saxon, and possibly Iron Age settlement and farming activity, and in addition they lie close to the main east-west pre-industrial way along the north side of the valley, of which Ashes Lane is a remnant and which can be clearly seen on the 1st Series One-Inch Map (surveyed circa 1839, before the building of the branch railway interrupted the line).

We understand that Steve Baker, DCC's Development Control Archaeologist, is asking in respect of the larger site, HPK/2015/0412, for a geophysical survey to be made a condition of permission. This would be consistent with the Inspector's decision in respect of HPK/2013/0324, a site adjacent to another of the Dinting hamlets (Shaw), and is in our view justified in view of the above. The likelihood of significant archaeology is still low, but it is not negligible. Logically, if this requirement is made in respect of HPK/2015/0412, it ought to be applied also to HPK/2015/0424, which is closer to the known settlements and the ancient way.

Yours sincerely



Roger Hargreaves

Chair, GLAS.

Cc Steve Baker, DCC