

Protection of archaeological features -what to do and what not to do

Taken from David Robertson's *Heritage Management Plan for Thetford Forest*.

Protection of archaeology (including burial mounds, warren banks, other banks and ditches) during forestry operations.

Archaeological Sites must not be damaged so:

- Do not drive on or across earthworks.
- Keep vehicles at least 10m away and go around them.
- Fell trees away from earthworks, rather than across them.
- If a number of earthworks are present in close proximity, areas of open space can be created to open up views between them.
- Lift felled trees off earthworks, rather than dragging them. Dragging can cause significant damage.
- Leave stumps and roots in place.
- Timber must not be stored/stacked within 20m of earthworks.
- Do not plant trees on or within 20m of earthworks.
- Excavations to repair/resurface track/ride surfaces and for drainage purposes (for grips and sumps, for example) must not take place within 20m of an earthwork.
- Block informal/unapproved paths with brash creating during felling and thinning.

Protection of archaeology from formal recreation trails.

Archaeological Sites must not be damaged so:

- New trails must not cross archaeological sites
- New formal trails must be designed in liaison with the county archaeologist.
- Any existing/established formal trails that cross archaeological sites should be moved.
- Formal trails should not come closer than 20m (to avoid damage that could be caused by users moving off the trail).
- No new posts can be installed directly on the archaeological site (for signs or waymarking posts, for example).

Protection of Archaeology during formal recreation events.

Archaeological Sites must not be damaged so:

The Recreation Team must assess the impact that every event held off the formal trails will have on archaeological features. This assessment must be undertaken in liaison with the county archaeologist.

The Forestry Commission's recreation team requires event organisers to provide GPS derived maps showing event routes and prepare method statements explaining how archaeological features will be protected.

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- Event routes must not cross or come within 20m of an archaeological site.
 - Any existing/established event routes that cross or come within 20m of an archaeological site must be moved.
 - There should be no more than one event route passing an individual archaeological site. Once an appropriate event route has been established, this must be used by all subsequent events.
 - All tents, marquees, toilets, vehicles, trailers and other equipment used during events must be kept off archaeological sites.

Protection of archaeology from informal/unapproved paths.

Archaeological sites must not be damaged so:

- The Recreation Team must record existing informal/unapproved paths that cross an archaeological site. The record should include location information (potentially GPS derived), the depth of erosion and photographs of each path.
- Existing informal walking paths that cross an archaeological site must be monitored by the Recreation Team. If they remain stable and erosion is minimal, they can be left in place.
- All existing informal bike or horse paths that cross an archaeological site must be closed.

The following staged process to stop bike and horse access is recommended:

- Brash should be placed across the informal trail to discourage its use. It may be necessary to lay the brash in a way that it diverts users around the archaeological site and establishes another pathway. Enough brash should be used to ensure the trail is blocked effectively (a few branches will not be adequate).
- If the brash is removed, it should be replaced and accompanied by signage that states cycling and/or horse riding is not allowed.
- If the brash is removed again, it should be replaced and accompanied by signage that explains why it has been put in place, requests users do not move it or ride over the mound, and that the site will be regularly monitored by staff.
- If the brash and/or signs are removed again, step 3 should be repeated as many times as necessary until bike and/or horse riding stops.

Adapted from Forestry Guidelines.