

8 Archaeology

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 This chapter assesses archaeology. The chapter of the ES has been prepared by Richard Smalley BA (Hons) FSA, MCIFA, AssocIHBC, Senior Director at RPS Consulting Ltd (a Tetrattech Company).
- 8.1.2 This chapter details the methodology followed, a review of the baseline conditions in the defined study area, the results of the assessment and mitigation.
- 8.1.3 This chapter is supported by the following figures and appendices:
- Figure 8.1 – Map of Archaeological Receptors
 - Appendix 8.1 – Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
 - Appendix 8.2 – Geophysical Survey Report
 - Appendix 8.3 – RGB/Multi-Spectral Survey Report
- 8.1.4 A description of the Proposed Development can be found in Chapter 3 (Proposed Development).

Planning Policy Context

Local Planning Policy

- 8.1.5 Reference should be made to the Planning Statement for a detailed summary of the Policy context. However, for the purposes of this chapter the following local planning policy remains relevant. The Site is situated within the jurisdiction of Wokingham Borough Council.
- 8.1.6 The assessment contained within this Chapter and the accompanying Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (RPS, 2025) (Appendix 8.1) has been conducted in line with the following legislation, national and local planning policy, and guidance:
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024 with minor updates in 2025);
 - Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (DCLG, 2019);
 - Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008);
 - Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2nd ed., 2017);
 - Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan (Core Strategy) Adopted 2010)

8.2 Assessment methodology

8.2.1 Assessment of likely significant environmental effects on cultural heritage resources within the Site has been conducted in line with the latest and most comprehensive guidance provided in the “Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK” published by Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP – then IEMA) in July 2021.

8.2.2 The assessment methodology has also been guided by Historic England’s Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.

Study Area

8.2.3 A study area extending 200m from the Site boundary has been applied. This is considered appropriate given the scale of the Proposed Development and the character of the surrounding landscape, being sufficient to gather background data to inform the assessment of archaeological potential and to identify assets where there is potential for significant effects to occur as a result of change to their setting.

Data Sources

8.2.4 The following data sources have been drawn upon for the purposes of the assessment:

- Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE);
- Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER);
- Historic mapping;
- Environment Agency LiDAR data;
- Satellite imagery;
- Site visits on a number of occasions including May 2022, September 2023 and May 2025;
- Geophysical survey;
- Multispectral survey.

Significance Criteria

8.2.5 The sensitivity of heritage receptors reflects their relative importance which will depend on factors such as condition, rarity, potential as an information source, associations with events or people, and architectural or historic interest. Importance and hence sensitivity has been defined here with reference to designation, where applicable, and professional judgement, taking into account the above-mentioned factors. Table 8.1 sets out the guidance criteria for assessing sensitivity.

8.2.6 The assessment methodology stages, can be outlined as follows:

Table 8.1 Value/sensitivity assessment

Receptor value / sensitivity	Receptor type
High	Archaeological assets of national importance, e.g., Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields and non-designated archaeological assets demonstrably of schedulable quality.
Medium	Archaeological sites with potential to meaningfully contribute to regional research objectives.
Low	Archaeological assets of value in the local context.
Negligible	Archaeological assets of very low significance such as historic agricultural activity (field boundaries, cultivation systems etc.)

8.2.7 Magnitude of impact has been considered in terms of change in the cultural significance (as defined in NPPF) of the heritage receptor. Such change may be beneficial or adverse. Beneficial effects may occur where, for example, a proposal arrests on-going loss of physical fabric, thereby preventing the loss of cultural significance, or removes elements of the receptor's setting that hinder the appreciation of its cultural significance. Adverse effects may occur where a proposal results in the loss of physical fabric and hence cultural significance or introduces features to the receptor's setting that detract from the appreciation of its cultural significance. As different elements of a heritage asset or its setting will make differing contributions to its cultural significance, the level of contribution and whether this is positive or negative, or neutral, is taken into account when determining magnitude. For this reason, a relatively small change in a receptor's fabric might result in a high magnitude of effect, whilst a large change in its setting might result in a low magnitude of effect, or vice versa. Furthermore, as elements of an asset's setting may make a neutral contribution to its cultural significance, it is possible for even relatively large changes in setting to have no impact upon its cultural significance, resulting in a neutral change. Guidance criteria for assessment of magnitude are provided in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 Magnitude of impact

Magnitude	Description
High	<p>Beneficial: Proposal would provide for the long-term conservation/survival of the heritage receptor where this is otherwise threatened or would remove elements of its setting that substantively detract from the receptor’s cultural significance or prevent its appreciation.</p> <p>Adverse: Proposal would result in total or substantial destruction of the heritage receptor or change in its setting resulting in the complete or near complete loss of its cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p>
Medium	<p>Beneficial: Proposals would reduce rate of current degradation thereby preserving the receptor’s cultural significance or remove elements of its fabric or setting that detract from its cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p> <p>Adverse: Proposal would result in change in setting or loss of fabric resulting in partial loss of the receptor’s cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p>
Low	<p>Beneficial: Proposal would result in changes in the receptor’s fabric or setting that slightly increase its cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p> <p>Adverse: Proposal would result in change in setting or loss of fabric leading to slight loss of the receptor’s cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p>
Negligible	<p>Change to a heritage receptor or its setting that leads to a very slight loss, does not affect their cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it.</p>

8.2.8 Level of effect is determined through professional judgement with reference to the sensitivity of the receptor and magnitude of impact. Table 8.3 provides guidelines to assist in the consistent application of professional judgement. Medium or high magnitude impacts on a medium or high sensitivity receptor are classified as significant effects for the purposes of this assessment; these may be adverse or beneficial.

Table 8.3 Level of effect

Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major Adverse or Beneficial	Moderate Adverse or Beneficial	Minor Adverse or Beneficial	Negligible
Medium	Moderate Adverse or Beneficial	Moderate to Minor Adverse or Beneficial	Minor Adverse or Beneficial to Negligible	Negligible
Low	Minor Adverse or Beneficial	Minor Adverse or Beneficial to Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Geographic Scope

8.2.9 The geographic scope for this assessment includes the Site and area up to 200m from its boundary. This is deemed sufficient to assess the archaeological potential close to the Site and impacts of the Proposed Development on nearby archaeological receptors.

Temporal Scope

8.2.10 No defined temporal scope is used in the assessment. The assessment has assumed that effects will be present for the duration of the receptors' physical presence in the landscape and the length of the Proposed Development's construction and occupation.

Consultation

8.2.11 An EIA Scoping Report was submitted to WBC in December 2024 and a response received on the 28th of February 2025.

8.2.12 Consultation has been undertaken with Linden Ellicott, Archaeology Officer at Berkshire County Council and Historic England.

8.2.13 Consultation is summarised in Table 8.4, below.

Table 8.4 Consultation

Consultee	Date/Time	Comments	Outcomes/Actions
Linden Ellicott, Berkshire Archaeology	12 th February 2025. 09:28.	Copy of RGB/multispectral survey report sent and suggesting Teams meeting.	Teams meeting agreed for 18 th February.
Linden Ellicott, Berkshire Archaeology	19 th February 2025. 16:37.	Follow-up from Teams meeting, sharing masterplan, road alignment, drainage	Acknowledged 26 th February 2025. 09:33. Discussed scope of predetermination evaluation works.

		and an illustrated summary.	
Linden Ellicott, Berkshire Archaeology	5 th March 2025. 15:55.	Sent WSI for geophysical survey for approval.	Approved the WSI 7 th March 2025. 09:53.
Linden Ellicott, Berkshire Archaeology	23 rd April 2025. 15:46.	Sent geophysical survey report. Enquired whether possible to undertake trial trenching post consent under a condition.	Acknowledged 30 th April 2025. 11:40. Requested trial trenching predetermination but indicated happy to discuss the scope going forward.
Linden Ellicott, Berkshire Archaeology	16 th May 2025. 16:01.	Sent Written Scheme of Investigation for geophysical survey of spine roads along with proposed start date.	Acknowledged 21 st May 2025. 16:27.
Guy Robinson, Historic England	8 th July 2025. 14:17.	Email to open discussions regarding the possibilities for providing heritage benefits through the conservation of the Scheduled Monument within the Site.	Historic England confirmed that there is no existing project in place for the conservation of the asset. Requested to see Heritage reports when ready.

Assumptions and Limitations

8.2.14 Assessment is based on desk-based assessment and geophysical survey. Further archaeological evaluation is programmed in for the autumn of 2025.

8.3 Baseline conditions

8.3.1 This section summarises the results of the baseline studies, comprising desk-top research and archaeological geophysical survey. The full results are presented in the appendices.

Current Baseline

8.3.2 Archaeological receptors **SM1** and **AR1-AR12** are all located within the Site.

8.3.3 As a Scheduled Monument, **SM1** is a High Sensitivity receptor comprising the remains of St Bartholomew's Church close to Hall Farm. It is the only statutorily designated archaeological asset on the Site.

8.3.4 The setting and significance of **SM1** is assessed in the archaeological desk-based assessment (Appendix 8.1) and the details are not repeated here. However, to summarise, Appendix 8.1 concludes that **SM1** derives the majority of its significance from its age, level of preservation of its physical remains and the potential for those remains to contain evidence that will contribute to the national archaeological record. The setting of the monument was found to make a much-reduced contribution.

- 8.3.5 **AR1** is a curvilinear feature in the southern part of the Site which may have been contemporary with the Medieval church. **AR1** is not a designated asset. It is not of the highest state of preservation and is of local interest. Therefore, it is considered to be a Low sensitivity asset.
- 8.3.6 **AR2** is a road running from Shinfield to Arborfield. It is marked on a 1756 estate map and cropmarks of the former course of the road which linked Arborfield Hall to the Medieval village of Arborfield are visible on aerial photographs. The course of the road is also evident in the data collected by the RGB/Multi-Spectral survey (Appendix 8.3). **AR2** is considered to be a Low sensitivity asset.
- 8.3.7 **AR3 – AR9 (inclusive)** are archaeological features related to Areas of High Archaeological potential as identified by the Local Planning Authority’s archaeological advisors. These areas of archaeological potential correlate with cropmark features evident in aerial photography of the Application Site and records included within the Historic Environment Record. Several of these features are also evident in the data collected by the RGB/Multi-Spectral survey (Appendix 8.3). They are all cut features related to former enclosure ditches, field systems and settlement activity. Such features are not uncommon, and those on Site are likely to have been truncated by past agricultural activity. However, they seem to be widespread across the Site. As such, receptors **AR3 – AR9** are deemed to be of no more than regional interest and therefore of Medium Sensitivity.
- 8.3.8 **AR10** comprises a number of areas of potential archaeological features of an unknown date and function identified by the RGB/Multi-Spectral survey (Appendix 8.3) beyond the boundaries of the above-mentioned Areas of High Archaeological Potential, and in areas of the Site proposed for public open space.
- 8.3.9 **AR11 – AR12** comprise a number of areas of potential archaeological features identified by the RGB/Multi-Spectral survey (Appendix 8.3) beyond the boundaries of the above-mentioned Areas of High Archaeological Potential, and in areas of the Site proposed for built development. The data and function of these features are not known.
- 8.3.10 At this stage, there is no evidence to indicate that Archaeological Receptors **AR3-AR12** are of higher than local to regional significance. Given the size of the Site and the number of archaeological receptors within it, it is reasonable to assume that the archaeological information retrieved from the study of these receptors would make a meaningful contribution to the Regional Research Framework. As such, in accordance with the criteria in Table 8.1, Archaeological Receptors **AR3-AR12** are deemed to be of Medium Sensitivity.

Future Baseline

- 8.3.11 In terms of future baseline, it is considered that without the implementation of the Proposed Development, the undeveloped area of the Site would remain in use as agricultural land. Alternatively, the land within the Site could be the subject of other planning applications and development.
- 8.3.12 The likely evolution of the current archaeological environment would include the unrecorded truncation and removal of archaeological receptors **AR1-AR12** through continued agricultural purposes.
- 8.3.13 As a Scheduled Monument, the owners of **SM1** are obliged to comply with the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. It would be a criminal offence to destroy or damage **SM1** either intentionally or through recklessness. It would also be a criminal offence to carry out, or permit others to carry out, unauthorised works to **SM1**. It is therefore assumed that **SM1** will remain in the same condition as was in place when it was Scheduled.

8.4 Inherent design mitigation

- 8.4.1 The Proposed Development has been designed to avoid physical impacts on **SM1** through not including development within the Scheduled area and by drawing development back from its boundary to preserve parts of its setting.
- 8.4.2 The proposals have designed areas of open space (see Figure 3.7 IM001 Illustrative Masterplan and Figure 8.1 Map of Archaeological Receptors) in the areas of **AR1** and **AR2**. These archaeological receptors will therefore be preserved in situ.
- 8.4.3 Archaeological receptors **AR3-AR12** will be subject to additional mitigation.

8.5 Potential effects prior to additional mitigation

Construction Phase

- 8.5.1 Sources of potential impacts on archaeological resources during the demolition and construction phases are:
- Soil stripping and terracing;
 - Cutting of new roads, foundations and associated services;
 - Changes to surface or groundwater flows;
 - General hard and soft landscaping of the Site; and
 - Indirect setting impacts (such as noise, dust, vibration).
- 8.5.2 As described in Appendix 8.1, **SM1** derives most of its significance from its physical structural remains and its relationship with its associated graveyard. **SM1** and the burial ground it which it sits will be retained. The Proposed Development would not result in total or substantial destruction of **SM1** nor result in a change to its setting that would result in the complete or near complete loss of its cultural significance or the ability to appreciate it. Furthermore, the Proposed Development would not result in such a change in setting or loss of physical remains to cause a partial loss of the receptor's cultural significance. Therefore, the Proposed Development does not represent a High Magnitude of Impact, nor a Medium Magnitude of Impact on **SM1**.
- 8.5.3 In accordance with Table 8.1 and Table 8.2 (Assessing Sensitivity and Magnitude of Impact) the Proposed Development represents a Low Magnitude of Impact upon a High Sensitivity receptor. In line with Table 8.3, this would be a minor adverse effect and therefore not significant in terms of EIA regulations.
- 8.5.4 Archaeological Receptors **AR3, AR6, AR7, AR8, AR9, AR11** and **AR12** are located in areas of the Site that will be subject to below-ground impacts. The damage caused to archaeological receptors within the Site will represent a High Adverse Magnitude of Impact on no more than Medium sensitivity receptors, resulting in **Moderate Adverse** level of effect. This would be considered significant in terms of EIA regulations.
- 8.5.5 Archaeological Receptors **AR1, AR2, AR4, AR5** and **AR10** are located in parts of the Site proposed for public open space that will not be subject to development. No impacts are anticipated on these receptors. No impacts will result in no adverse levels of effect, which would not be significant in terms of EIA regulations.
- 8.5.6 Vibration and noise effects are assessed in Chapter 15. That Chapter concluded that construction noise and vibration have the potential to cause impacts at nearby receptors.

However, with the implementation of mitigation outlined within the CEMP, significant adverse effects can be avoided. It is considered that noise and vibration will not impact the significance of archaeological receptors.

Operational Phase

- 8.5.7 Archaeological receptors will have been preserved in situ or their removal preserved by record. As such the effects of the completed development on archaeological receptors (both on and off Site) are considered to be similar to those identified for the construction phase.
- 8.5.8 No significant adverse noise and vibration effects are identified in Chapter 15.
- 8.5.9 Archaeological receptors **AR3, AR6, AR7, AR8, AR9, AR11 and AR12**, where they lie within areas of below-ground impacts, will all have been removed during the Construction Phase. Therefore, the potential Operation Phase effects are **Neutral**.

8.6 Additional Mitigation

Construction Phase

- 8.6.1 Archaeological evaluation is planned to take place during the determination period of the application and when the crop has been removed from the Site. Should the evaluation identify archaeological remains, it is anticipated that a programme of archaeological mitigation comprising detailed excavation, recording, analysis and reporting would subsequently be agreed with the Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisor.

Operational Phase

- 8.6.2 No additional mitigation is required. Any archaeological fieldwork on Site will have been completed during the Construction Phase; however, given that post-excavation analysis and reporting can take a year or more, it is possible that post-excavation assessment, analysis, reporting and publication may be ongoing during the Operational Phase.

8.7 Residual effects

Construction Phase

- 8.7.1 A programme of archaeological mitigation works (if required), such as detailed excavation and recording will offset the physical loss of archaeological receptors **AR1-AR12**. In respect of any archaeological remains, the works will almost completely offset their physical loss by realising their archaeological potential through excavation and analysis. However, it is acknowledged that there is likely to remain some loss of data that might be recovered by future archaeological methods. It is therefore considered that following the implementation of the mitigation measures there will likely remain an adverse impact of small magnitude. This is considered to represent an effect of **Minor** significance. This is not significant in the terms of the EIA Regulations.
- 8.7.2 The Landscape and Visual Chapter (Chapter 14) confirms that there will be no significant landscape effects on areas of the Site which also relate to the setting of archaeological receptors, such as **SM1** for example.

Operational Phase

- 8.7.3 The completed development will have introduced residential development into the agricultural setting of **SM1**. It will not result in total or substantial destruction of the heritage receptor or such a change in its setting that would result in the complete or near complete loss of its cultural

significance or the ability to appreciate it. This is not considered to represent a significant effect in the terms of EIA Regulations.

8.7.4 The Landscape and Visual Chapter (Chapter 14) confirms that there will be no significant landscape effects on areas of the Site which also relate to the setting of archaeological receptors, such as **SM1** for example.

8.7.5 Archaeological receptors **AR3 – AR12** will all have been removed during the Construction Phase. Therefore, the potential residual Operation Phase effects are **Neutral**.

8.8 Implications of Climate Change

8.8.1 Any archaeological remains on Site will have been sufficiently excavated and recorded prior to their removal through the Proposed Development. Once the archaeological remains have been removed and recorded, they will not be affected by climate change.

8.9 Cumulative effects

Loddon Valley Garden Village Strategic Development Location

8.9.1 The Loddon Valley Garden Village Strategic Development Location includes the phased delivery of around 3,930 dwellings, expansion of the Thames Valley Science and Innovation Park, neighbourhood centres (including retail, leisure, sports, cultural, health and service facilities), and education provision.

8.9.2 Archaeological impacts are considered likely to be site-centric and no adverse cumulative effects are expected. Any archaeological recording undertaken in relation to the above would add to the understanding and knowledge of the local archaeological record.

Wider Committed Development

8.9.3 The following applications have been assessed for cumulative impacts:

- Land north of Arborfield Road, west of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road (Application No. 242484). Geophysical survey and trial trenching undertaken on this site did not identify any significant archaeological remains. No comments from the LPA archaeological officer were noted on the application.
- Land north of Reading Road, Arborfield (Application No. 243099). This application was refused. Archaeology was not included as a reason for refusal. The LPA archaeologist recommended a conditioned approach to archaeology.

8.9.4 The remaining cumulative sites as are not considered relevant due to their distance from the Site.

8.9.5 No cumulative effects are anticipated.

8.10 Summary

8.10.1 This Chapter concludes that the Proposed Development will result in no more than a Minor Adverse magnitude of effect on **SM1**.

8.10.2 Archaeological receptors **AR1-AR12** are considered likely (on the basis of the completed desk-based assessment, partial geophysical survey and RGB/Multispectral survey) to be of no more than regional interest.

8.10.3 None of the effects are considered to be significant in terms of EIA Regulations.

8.10.4 A summary of the assessment is set out in Table 8.5 overleaf.

8.11 References

- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (updated 2023) *National Planning Policy Framework*
- Historic England (2017) Good Practice Advice in Planning 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets: 2nd edition
- IEMA (2021) Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK (now ISEP)

8.12 Assessor information

Table 8.5 Assessor Information

Chapter	Responsibility	Name	Qualifications	Assessor information
Archaeology	RPS Consulting Services Ltd	Richard Smalley	BA (Hons), FSA, MCIfA, AssocIHBC	Richard Smalley is Senior Director for RPS Consulting. He has a degree in Archaeology from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (BA Hons), is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA), a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (FSA) and an Associate Member of the Institute for Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). Richard has over 20 years' experience working in the archaeology sector including fieldwork (geophysics, trial trenching, excavation), research, graphics, and consultancy. As a consultant Richard has provided archaeology and heritage advice and project management to clients for a variety of developments including residential, infrastructure, commercial and renewable energy. He has also acted as an expert witness in Public Inquiries.

Table 8.6 Summary of effects

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Construction Phase					
SM1	High	Change to setting	None	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR1	Low	None	None	None	Not Significant
AR2	Low	None	None	None	Not Significant
AR3	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR4	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR5	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR6	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR7	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR8	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR9	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR10	No more than Medium	None	None	None	Not Significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
AR11	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
AR12	No more than Medium	Physical impact through development	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting	Minor Adverse	Not Significant
Operation Phase					
As per Construction Phase					

8.13 Mitigation commitments Summary

Table 8.7 Summary for Securing Mitigation

Identified receptor	Type and purpose of additional mitigation measure (prevent, reduce, offset, enhance)	Means by which mitigation may be secured (e.g. planning condition / legal agreement)	Delivered by	Auditable by
Construction Phase				
AR3-9 and AR11-12	Programme of archaeological excavation, recording, analysis and reporting.	Planning Condition.	Applicant	LPA
Operation Phase				
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A