

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

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25th Sept 2024

Planning CONSULTATION RESPONSE – Application 242189 Norton Road Riseley

Thank you for consulting Berkshire Archaeology regarding the above application. Berkshire Archaeology is part of Reading Borough Council's Museum and Town Hall Services and provides historic environment advice to the five unitary authorities of Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council. This response relates solely to buried archaeological heritage, the Council's Conservation Officer should be consulted for any matters relating to the historic built environment.

There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record. The proposal lies on the course of the Roman road known as the Devils Highway, which passes east-west through the centre of the site.

Although the plans suggest that the build will respect and reflect the course of this road, it is likely that any ground works for the development will impact either the road or any associated roadside features which extend either side of its course. The previous building on the plot 'The Old School House' does not appear, from the photographs included in the application paperwork, to have had significant foundations and it is possible that any archaeological remains are preserved relatively undisturbed.

Any development, therefore, needs to consider the below ground remains and ensure that a full account is recorded of archaeology, not just at the site of the build, but throughout the plot, where new track, entrance, landscaping, and services impact the ground.

There have been several previous applications for this plot, along with the associated Hart application for this proposal, through Hart Council (which covers the majority of the site). Each of these has had comments from their County Archaeologist, recommending an archaeological condition, with which I concur.

As shown, the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that the following condition is applied, should permission be granted, in order to mitigate the impacts of development. This is in accordance with Paragraph 211 of the NPPF(2023) which states that local planning authorities should '*require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible*'.

Condition:

Berkshire Archaeology
An Archaeological Service for: Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Reading Borough Council, Slough Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council & Bracknell Forest Council

A) No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work, including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing.

The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

B) The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition (A).

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason:

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

The proposed development is immediately adjacent to a Roman road and it is likely that both the road and any associated roadside features would be affected by the ground works required for the build, including foundations, services, highway access and landscaping.

In view of the nature and scale of the development and the low likelihood of the potential archaeology, should it exist, meriting preservation in situ, an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise in the form of a Watching Brief is likely to represent an appropriate programme of works. However, the applicant may prefer to deal with archaeology earlier in the process by way of an evaluation.

Berkshire Archaeology would be pleased to discuss the approach with the applicant, or their archaeological consultant, should permission be granted.

Linden Ellicott
Archaeology Officer