

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

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21st May 2025

Planning CONSULTATION RESPONSE – Application 251086 Land at Stanbury House Spencers Wood

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 site lies in an area with Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval potential as highlighted in the desk-based assessment submitted with the application. These include Iron Age, Roman and Early Medieval settlement c.900m to the east; a Bronze Age assemblage, Iron Age settlement and industry, and Early Medieval activity c.830m to the north; Iron Age to early Romano-British settlement evidence c.500m west; and Mesolithic to Post-Medieval evidence c.700m south.

A 1997 geophysical survey of parts of the application site found potential archaeological anomalies, however the subsequent limited 1999 trial trench evaluation was unable to cover all these elements, and much of the rest of the site remains untested. Therefore further archaeological investigation is required to facilitate a better understanding of past activity on the site, enable preservation by record, and mitigate the impacts of the development.

Early mitigation, prior to reserved matters, is recommended which would permit any archaeology found to inform on the design details of this development.

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 218 of the NPPF(2025) 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:

- 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, Prehistoric Roman and Early-Medieval 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 will entail ground impacts spread over the majority of the site. 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, field **evaluation through trial trenching** would represent an appropriate initial phase of work in order to determine the archaeological potential, levels of previous truncation, and the need for any further phases of work. This should take into account previous archaeological work completed within the site.

It is advised that this should be completed prior to submission of reserved matters.

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

Linden Ellicott
Archaeology Officer