

Planning Application APP/24/00342 Woodcroft Farm Development Site, Woodcroft Lane, Waterlooville

Thank you for your consultation. The site lies within a wider landscape of some archaeological potential, however records of archaeological remains within the immediate vicinity of the site become more sporadic. Historically, the site is likely to have fallen within the Forest of Bere, with woodland dominating the landscape until late medieval/post-medieval clearances started.

I would draw your attention to the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) that was submitted in support of this application (Savills 2024). The DBA assesses the archaeological potential of the site as low for prehistoric, Roman, early medieval, and medieval periods and as high for post-medieval and modern periods (para 5.3.1). The significance of any archaeological remains which might be present is assessed as being of local significance.

Previous impacts are assessed as leading to a low chance of archaeological survival, with the DBA stating, 'Clearance activities and ploughing are likely to have truncated any earlier remains that may have been present within the Site.' (para 5.2.1).

The documents concludes (para 7.1.6): 'Development groundworks within the Site would have a direct impact on any archaeological remains present within its boundary. If deemed necessary by the LPA Archaeological Officer, any impacts from groundworks associated with the Proposed Development could be mitigated through an agreed programme of archaeological works which could then be undertaken prior to and / or during the construction phase as a condition of consent.'

Whilst I largely agree with the assessment presented in the DBA, I believe that the document somewhat overstates the effect of the previous impacts on the site (forest clearance and ploughing), which although may have created impacts the extent of which are unknown. However, this does not fundamentally alter the interpretation and I would endorse the conclusion reached. Owing to the nature of the development, the proposal would result in the complete removal of any below ground archaeological remains that might be present. However, I agree with the DBA, that archaeological matters would not present an overriding concern and that a staged approach to archaeological mitigation can be secured through condition.

As such, I would recommend that the assessment, recording and reporting of archaeological deposits be secured by suitably worded conditions attached to any planning consent that may be granted. For example:

1) That no development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological evaluation, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To assess the extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits that might be present and the impact of the development upon these heritage assets.

2) That no development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation of impact, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets and to ensure that information regarding these heritage assets is preserved by record for future generations.

3) Following completion of archaeological fieldwork a report will be produced in accordance with an approved programme submitted by the developer and approved in writing by the local planning authority setting out and securing appropriate post-excavation assessment, specialist analysis and reports, publication and public engagement.

Reason: To contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past by ensuring that opportunities are taken to capture evidence from the historic environment and to make this publicly available.

Yours sincerely,

Thom Hayes BA(Hons) MRes, ACIfA
Senior Archaeologist

Waste and Environmental Services
Universal Services
Hampshire County Council