



Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation

Statement – Archaeology & Cultural Heritage

Land north of The Packway and east of Larkhill

Former Stonehenge Golf Centre

Phase 4

Date: December 2017

1.0 Extant Planning Permission

- 1.1 Full planning permission was granted in July 2016 for a development of 444 dwellings to provide Service Family Accommodation (SFA), land for a new primary school and community facilities, public open space, play areas, landscaping, internal roads and all associated infrastructure works on land situated to the north of The Packway and to the east of Larkhill, Wiltshire (planning application number 15/05540/FUL).
- 1.2 The application site falls adjacent to but outside the red line area of the approved 2016 masterplan for the Larkhill site. Since the grant of this permission further archaeological investigation has identified that the original masterplan area was used far more extensively for military training than was originally envisaged, specifically for trench warfare training. In light of these findings, it was revealed that the previously consented scheme could not be implemented.
- 1.3 As a result of the above findings the masterplan was redesigned and application was made for Phases 1 and 2 (ref. 17/03959/FUL), which will provide 196 dwellings and Phase 3 (ref. 17/06370/FUL) which will provide 94 dwellings. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 1 and 2 application on 27 September 2017. Planning permission was granted for the Phase 3 application on 27 November 2017.
- 1.4 The schemes prepared for Phases 1 & 2 and Phase 3 thus far have not been able to provide the required number of SFA housing units. This is due to constraints of the site as discussed above. The Phase 4 development will provide the balance of 160 SFA housing units. The housing units to be delivered will be a mixture of house types, including semi-detached and detached houses.
- 1.5 A Cultural Heritage Appraisal, Archaeological Evaluation & Watching Brief Report and Geophysical Survey Report were submitted as part of the 2016 planning application.
- 1.6 A Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted to Wiltshire Council in January 2017 to discharge condition 19, pursuant to permission 15/05540/FUL. On 4th April 17 the Council consented to partially discharge condition 19, subject to implementation of the WSI.

2.0 Current Position – Archaeology

- 2.1 Proposed Phase 4 development forms part of the Larkhill SFA. The proposals have been subject to similar archaeological assessment as the previous three phases of Larkhill SFA development, with desktop assessment and evaluation excavations.

- 2.2 The proposed Phase 4 development has been subject to desktop archaeological appraisal and both historic map research from online sources, and an aerial photographic search were undertaken, following consultation with the Wiltshire Archaeology Service and they have been engaged throughout. The site is located north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, with its numerous Prehistoric archaeological remains, including Woodhenge and Durrington Walls, located to the south-west. Further Neolithic and Bronze Age remains are located in the surrounding landscape north of the World Heritage Site, including a long barrow and a number of round barrows extant within the garrison, both of which are designated as Scheduled Monuments. The only Conservation Area close to the proposed development is at Durrington, which is at the north end of the village and includes the historic core of the village.
- 2.3 Air photos were obtained from the Historic England Archive in Swindon. The earliest photo (1924) showed the landscape prior to the construction of the sports pitches and with small arms ranges terraced into the hillside on the west side of the site. One small area of possible military trenching was also shown. No evidence of archaeological remains was identified on or around the site. An undated photo taken a short time after the construction of the sports pitches, demonstrated by the lack of trees around the boundary, shows a series of features consistent with probable Prehistoric ring ditches and in-filled linear earthworks immediately to the east of the site. By 1943, a USAF air photo shows a well-established sports pitch that is clearly terraced into the hill on its southern side and built up with fill materials to the north. By 1954, a photo shows that the trees around the site are maturing along their present lines. The historic maps consulted show open downland on the 1887 Ordnance Survey 6" First Edition, which is how it remains until the 1923 revision (published 1941) which shows the "Recreation Ground". Neither maps shows any record of antiquities on the site.
- 2.4 Archaeological works undertaken in support of the Phase 3 development have identified limited archaeological remains; however, a hengiform that included a ring ditch with a ring of large postholes encircling it was identified immediately north of the north-east corner of the Golf Centre.
- 2.5 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology during geotechnical investigations (Wessex Archaeology report 11598.1.01). This demonstrated that the whole hilltop had not been truncated during construction works and that a cut and fill method had been employed to level the playing fields, prior to their conversion into the Golf Centre. However, no archaeological features or deposits were identified during the watching brief.
- 2.6 Wessex Archaeology also undertook a geophysical survey to the west of the Phase 4 site to better define the ring ditches and linear features identified on the inter-war air photo and, thereby, to support

their protection during construction of the temporary byway. The report (Wessex Archaeology 115980.01) clearly identified the ring ditches and linear feature shown from the air, as well as potential new features within the survey area.

- 2.7 While it was anticipated that the terracing of the sports pitches into the hill top may have truncated part of the site, the use of fill materials to level the pitches was anticipated to have potentially protected archaeological remains in other parts of the site. In addition, the nearby remains indicated high potential for archaeology to be present on the site. As a result, an archaeological evaluation was requested by the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service, to better inform the planning application. The evaluation was to include trial trenching, equal to a 5% sample of the site area.
- 2.8 The archaeological evaluation of the proposed Phase 4 site was undertaken in December 2017. While no evidence for archaeological finds, deposits or features was identified across the greater part of the site, one trench, in the north-east corner of the site, revealed a large posthole and section of curved ditch. The trench was extended and revealed remains indicative of a hengiform similar to that seen in Phase 3, and this was confirmed by a further trench that showed more of the arrangement of ditch and attendant postholes very similar to that recorded in Phase 3.
- 2.9 Discussions with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service have indicated that either full excavation or preservation by design would be acceptable but that the latter option would entail more evaluation to better characterise the monument prior to its reburial. Full excavation has potential to provide extra information relating to the Phase 3 hengiform, which was lacking in any dateable material, and to the relationship between these two, similar monument. Discussions with Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service indicate that there will be no objection to the planning application but that an archaeological condition will be recommended, so that appropriate levels of mitigation, including the treatment of the hengiform, will be undertaken. A Written Scheme of Investigation for the excavation is currently in preparation by Wessex Archaeology for Lovell.