

Archaeological assessment and Heritage Statement

Planning application for a polytunnel at Galteemore Farm, Beckhampton, Marlborough, SN8 1FE

PP-13605096

Archaeological assessment

The construction of the polytunnel would require twelve small holes to be dug to secure the anchor plates. The holes would need to measure 45 cm deep and 40 cm x 40 cm square according to the information on the website of the supplier <https://construct.firsttunnels.co.uk/products/10ft/foundations-for-an-earth-base/>.

I have contacted Neil Adam, Assistant County Archaeologist at the Wiltshire Council Climate and Environment Service for advice as to the level of archaeological assessment required. He has advised that as the site is located within the World Heritage Site (an area of very high archaeological potential), the small groundworks required to anchor the polytunnel will require an archaeological response. He advises that the excavation of the anchor holes is monitored by a qualified archaeologist.

He suggested that he intended to ask for this monitoring to be secured via a condition to be attached to any planning permission that may be issued.

In line with his advice, I would obtain the services of an archaeological contractor to carry out the monitoring, should permission be granted. He has confirmed that this is not required prior to planning permission being granted.

Heritage Statement

The proposal does not affect any buildings but is a proposal to erect a small polytunnel in a field. The field is within the Avebury World Heritage site, which is a very significant heritage site. I have considered the siting of the polytunnel so as to minimise its visibility and to keep it close to some existing large barns. The proposed structure is also small (3.05 m x 7.62 m footprint; height 2.13 m). From the places where it can be seen, it will appear as a small structure in front of some large barns and will therefore be in keeping

with the current appearance of the agricultural land. The site is not visible at all from the south or west as the ground is private arable land which rises slightly to the south, and there are no footpaths in that direction. The site is adjacent to large barns to its west. From the north and east, it is partly visible from limited small sections of the A4. From the Silbury Hill car park and nearby paths, the polytunnel would be mostly or entirely screened by the hedge along the south of the A4, because the ground at Silbury Hill is lower than the site. For visitors at this location the most significant heritage asset (Silbury Hill) is in the opposite direction to the site. Generally only the top section of the barns next to the polytunnel site can be seen. From the higher ground to the northeast of Silbury Hill, the site is mostly screened by trees. There are small areas of high ground from which it would be partly visible in front of the larger barns, at a distance of around 1km. As there is already a group of large agricultural buildings there, the polytunnel would be visually in keeping with the use of the site as a farm. I will also make suitable plantings around the polytunnel to soften its appearance.

I would also note that although I hope to continue to grow on this site for a number of years, the polytunnel is in no way a permanent change to the site.

This document written by the applicant, Stephanie Williams.