

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**PROPOSED EXCAVATION FOR FORMATION OF AN EARTHBANK SLURRY
STORE AND A CONCRETE PAD FOR THE STORAGE OF SILAGE FEED FOR
THE DAIRY HERD**

FOR

MANOR FARM PARTNERS

AT

**MANOR FARM
UPTON LOVELL
WARMINSTER
WILTSHIRE
BA12 OJN**

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This information supports a 28 day prior notification application for a proposed excavation of an earthbank slurry store and concrete pad for the storage of silage feed at Manor Farm, Upton Lovell, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0JN.

1.2 The new earthbank store is necessary to be able to store and manage the slurry storage at Manor Farm. At least 6 months storage is recommended by the Environment Agency and to enable the efficient spreading of slurry fertiliser on adjacent arable and silage fields. The proposal is in line with DEFRA and Natural England's recommendations for slurry storage.

1.3 The new silage pad is required, as there is not enough capacity to store all the feed required for the dairy herd and the access to the different cuts of silage crop is not possible with the existing facilities. Additional storage space will both allow for adequate volumes of silage feed to be stored and allow the access of the different cuts of silage crop, as is required to feed the dairy herd correctly.

1.4 The application is made by Manor Farm Partners, Manor Farm, Upton Lovell, Warminster, BA12 0JN.

2.0 The proposal

2.1 The proposal is for the excavation of a concrete feed pad and an earthbank lagoon on an arable field site, adjacent to the existing dairy facilities, to the north east of the dairy buildings and existing silage clamps.

3.0 Siting the proposed lagoon and silage pad

3.1 The proposed site selection is based on a number of factors, that are favourable for the environment, efficient farm operations and the effective use a distribution of farm slurry as a fertiliser and access to the silage forage.

3.2 The siting of the proposed earthbank lagoon at Manor Farm is appropriate, as the proposed siting is in an arable field adjacent to the dairy facilities, as well as being in close proximity to the existing arable fields for growing the feed crops for the dairy herd. The site is well screened by existing trees and hedges and would not be visible from the public highway or byway.

3.3 The proposed slurry lagoon will enable the farm to have over 6 months storage and improve the flexibility of the application of the manure to the farms crops. Siting it close to the farm's arable crop fields will enable more efficient and timely applications to the crops during the growing season. This will help improve nutrient management on the farm while also protecting natural habitats and the habitats of species.

3.4 From an operational point of view, the proposed slurry lagoon needs to be in a position that will allow the slurry from the current store to be redirected to the proposed lagoon, at the times when the current store requires emptying. At the moment it is not possible to completely empty the current store, as it is being added to on a daily basis from the dairy unit. In order to utilise the nutrients in the current store to its full potential, the whole store needs to be emptied, at appropriate times. The proposed lagoon will allow more flexibility in the operation of manure applications to the farm crops, at more appropriate times. As it is not possible to completely empty the current store, this is resulting in some capacity of the store being lost, with the build up of solids within the store.

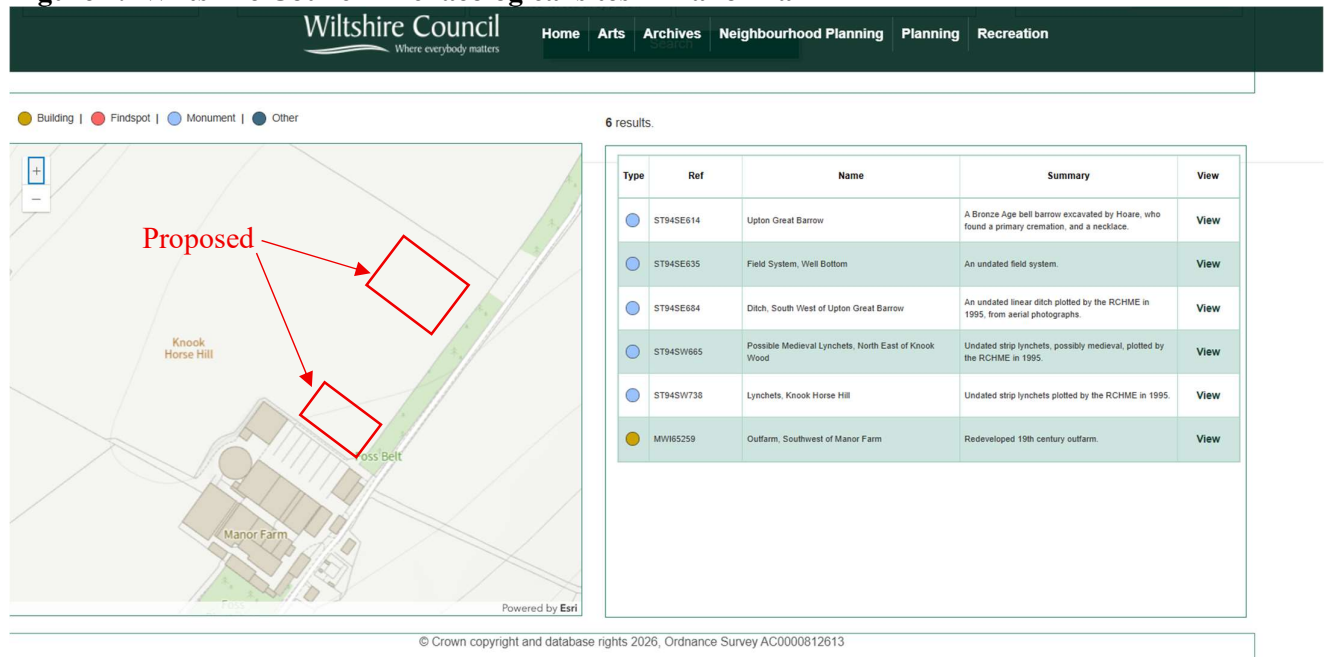
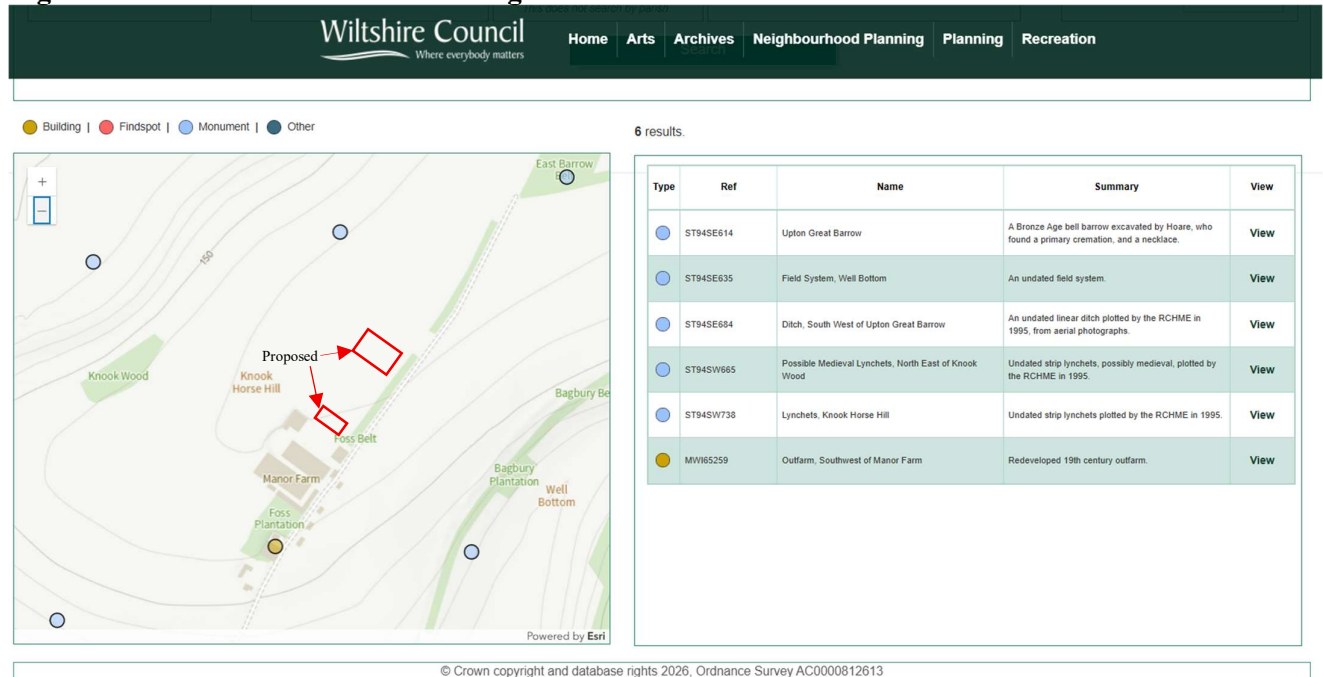


Figure 2. Wiltshire Council Archaeological sites - Manor Farm



4.0 DEFRA, Environment Agency and Natural England recommendations and slurry infrastructure grant

4.1 The earthbank store will be used in conjunction with the existing farm store, which is located close to the farm buildings. The Environment Agency are recommending and promoting at least 6 months storage and is a requirement in order to qualify for existing or future Slurry Infrastructure grant schemes.

4.2 The extracts from the Slurry Infrastructure Grant information for local authorities, below explain the need for 6 months slurry storage:

4.3 What the government is doing to tackle nutrient pollution:

- The government is taking coordinated action to reduce the environmental impact of farming on protected sites while supporting thriving farm businesses.
- Defra has recently consulted on Environment Act 2021 targets to improve water quality. This included proposed targets to substantially reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution from agriculture and a target to reduce phosphorus from treated wastewater, to deliver significant improvements to the water environment. The UK also has legally binding targets to reduce ammonia emissions and nitrogen deposition on sensitive habitats.

4.4 Why the government is introducing slurry storage grants:

- The Slurry Infrastructure grant is one step to help farmers improve nutrient management on farms while also protecting natural habitats and the habitats of species.
- The government set out the [Agricultural Transition Plan](#) in November 2020. This included proposals for a new slurry investment scheme alongside other measures. The first round of the renamed Slurry Infrastructure grant was launched in autumn 2022.

- Defra decided to make grant funding available specifically for slurry storage, alongside the other actions the government is taking to tackle nutrient pollution, in recognition of the scale of the problem nationally. The government needs sufficient speed and scale in take up, to help delivery of forthcoming Environment Act 2021 targets.
- Improvements to slurry storage will help to deliver the target to halt the decline in species by 2030 through reducing run off and leaching and improving air quality. This can benefit freshwater and terrestrial species.

4.5 Defra has consulted Natural England and the Environment Agency on the grant. When considered in combination with the other steps government is taking, they concluded that the grant is:

- an appropriate step for the Secretary of State to take
- likely to play a role in incrementally improving the condition of protected sites
- likely to play a role in avoiding the deterioration of habitats
- likely to help secure a better future for many farm businesses

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The proposed Earthbank Slurry Store is in line with DEFRA and Natural England's recommendations. Both the silage pad and slurry store will comply with the Environment Agency requirements and comply with Farming Rules for Water and be SSAFO compliant. There is an agricultural need for the proposed slurry storage and silage storage pad and the site selected is the most appropriate for the effective and efficient operation of the farm and by grouping the lagoon and silage pad close to the existing dairy unit, it assists with the farming operation. It will be viewed in context with the existing farmyard, minimising its impact. The proposed will be well screened by existing trees and hedges and topography, minimising the visual impact. The proposal will result in environmental benefits of reduced ground water pollution and a lower carbon footprint for the farm and more effective storage of the farms silage feed. The proposed site is more than 400m from the curtilage of a protected building and the proposal is appropriate for a permitted development application, as detailed in paragraph A.1 of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).