

**Postal Point CHN 108
Hertfordshire County Council
Farnham House, Six Hills Way,
Stevenage, SG1 2FQ**

Naomi Reynard
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

Contact Andy Instone
Tel 01992 555241
My ref P01/26/1499-1
Your ref **26/01499/SO**
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 9 July 2026

Dear Naomi,

Re: Screening Opinion: Proposed solar photovoltaic farm and associated infrastructure. | Land Between Knebworth Golf Club And A1M Old Knebworth Lane Knebworth Hertfordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

A request for a Screening Opinion has been submitted with this application.

It includes a Chapter for Cultural heritage (sic), although it is not clear if this has been written by an archaeologist. It admits *“Like any rural site, there is also the potential for impacts on any unknown archaeological assets within the Site”* and we are pleased to note that it goes on to say, *“The Cultural Heritage Assessment would therefore include detailed consideration of this.”*

However, it then asserts; *“A geophysical survey would also be undertaken to establish whether or not there are any significant buried archaeological remains within the Site, and if any mitigation would be required for the solar panel area and/or excavation for the underground cable. It should be noted that solar farms are relatively low impact in terms of ground disturbance.”*

We do not agree that geophysical survey on its own can fully characterise any heritage assets even if more than one technique is used. This is because different techniques identify different types of geophysical anomalies which may or may not represent archaeological remains whose date, significance and level of preservation are unlikely to be confirmed by geophysical survey alone. Furthermore, any archaeological evaluation at this stage is not to determine mitigation measures but to identify if the site may contain any heritage assets with archaeological interest that might be worthy of designation and which therefore might be a constraint on development. We also disagree with the blanket statement that solar farms necessarily have a low impact on archaeological remains. This would need to be demonstrated by the applicant.

The chapter concludes by asserting “*It is therefore considered that the Proposed (sic) would not result in significant environmental effects to cultural heritage or archaeology*”. This cannot be concluded on the current evidence available.

Although on its own the historic environment (archaeology) is unlikely to be a reason to require an EIA, should an EIA be required we also recommend that Archaeology be ‘Scoped In’. After consultation with Herts LEADS, we recommend that the Environmental Statement should include the results of an archaeological evaluation of the site. Any planning application should include the same.

An informed decision can then be made regarding impact of this proposal on the historic environment and on the significance of any heritage assets which may be at the site.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Instone
Senior Historic Environment Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS
Environmental Sustainability

Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.