

**S62A/2025/0133**

### **Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, West Dene, Shirehampton, Bristol BS9 2BH**

The Bristol Conservation Advisory Panel (BCAP) endorses the representations of both the Bristol City Council Conservation Section<sup>1</sup> and representations on behalf of the We Love Stoke Lodge - Representations concerning Cotham School's heritage statement. These clearly demonstrate that the playing field are within the curtilage of Stoke Lodge, a Grade II listed building.

BCAP has two more observations to add to this:

1. The trees growing on the site add to its historic and cultural character.
2. The site's Anglo-Saxon archaeology adds to its historic character.

The two specimen Turkey Oaks, symmetrically placed in the centre of the playing fields, demonstrate that the playing fields were always intended to form part of the Lodge's parkland setting. Turkey Oaks were introduced into the UK as an ornamental tree in the 1700s. These trees are some 250 years old, so are likely to have been planted in around the 1770s and have become heritage assets in their own right.

These, together with the other specimen trees growing nearby – Lucombe Oak, Corsican & Scots Pine, Cedar of Lebanon, Dougals Fir, Deodar Cedar, Magnolia Grandiflora, Copper Beech - all add to this planned parkland setting.

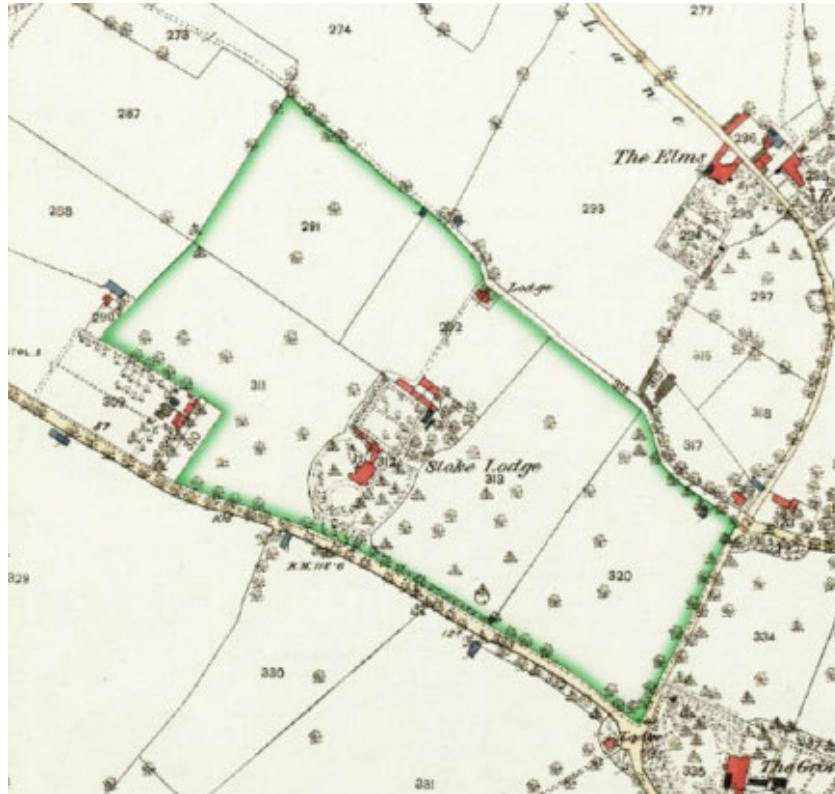
This aerial image, taken in 1946, shows that other trees were (probably) growing on the site on 01 January 1948.



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<sup>1</sup> 25\_14649\_PINS-CONSERVATION\_CONSULTEE\_COMMENTS-4087159

These trees, together with others, are shown on the 1884 Ordinance Survey map.



### 1. The site's Anglo-Saxon archaeology adds to its historic character.

There is an embankment (probably with an associated ditch) running along the southern side of Ebenezer Lane. This lies within the area of the applicant's lease.

This embankment appears to be the last remnant of an earthwork that has survived mostly untouched since the 9th/10th century, and which was described as 'old and respected' even in the Anglo-Saxon Charters of Stoke Bishop in 969 and 984 AD. The Roman path, now known as Ebenezer Lane (probably a corruption of Abonae, the Roman port at Sea Mills) ran alongside, joining a mill at the lower end to lead works on the Bristol Downs.

Volume 120, of the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society [2002], published a paper written by D. H. Higgins - The Anglo-Saxon Charters of Stoke Bishop: a study of the boundaries of Biscope stoc.<sup>2</sup>

This paper describes the Anglo-Saxon boundaries of Stoke Bishop (now part of Bristol) by reference to the Anglo-Saxon Charters of 969 and 984. The author identifies a piece of land bounded by an embankment running along a Roman path, the land being (he suggests) a common field for the Anglo-Saxon settlement. That piece of land is now known as Stoke Lodge and is indicated in the centre of the map at page 124 of Higgins' paper.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.bgas.org.uk/tbgas\\_bg/v120/bg120107.pdf](https://www.bgas.org.uk/tbgas_bg/v120/bg120107.pdf)

At pages 125-126, Higgins notes:

Landmark III. *har maer* ('the old boundary') as already stated, lay to the north of II. the 'old earthwork'... Meaning literally the 'grey' boundary... the phrase's qualifier *har* signifies 'hoary' in the metaphorical sense of 'old and respected, venerable'... *Har* is formulaic, the common component of a *styleme* found in early charters, employed as an attribute of objects marking a boundary-line... Stoke Bishop's *har maer* is therefore the 'old and respected' boundary, sanctioned by authority a century earlier in the charter of 883. Remains of this mere bank are still prominent in the lane (Ebenezer Lane) along the northern edge of the Stoke Lodge playing fields.

From the old boundary (*har maer*) into the north part of IV. the open field (*filidleah*)

The common 'open field' of the settlement lay, as stated, on the south side of Ebenezer Lane and is now represented by the playing fields of Stoke Lodge. The 'north part' lies under the housing of Cheyne Road, towards its junction with Bell Barn Road.

Figures 4 & 5 they show a line called 'Stoke I boundary of 883 charter' running along Ebenezer Lane in the centre of the map. This is the northern boundary of Stoke Lodge Playing Fields. Shirehampton Road forms its southern boundary.

DH Higgins states (at page 123):

'A short distance to the north of the settlement of Stoke Bishop lay IV. the *filidleah* of the 984 charter, the 'open field' typical of a late Anglo-Saxon nucleated village, largely surviving in the Stoke Lodge playing fields.'

DH Higgins viewed the embankment as a 'unique, largely untouched' ancient monument of the Bristol region. He stated in emails:

The Stoke Bishop charters of 969 and 984 indicate that the Stoke Lodge playing fields are the last remaining area of genuine open field '*filidleah*' attached to the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Stoke Bishop. The Anglo-Saxon boundary of *Bisceopes stoc* (which divided the 'stoke' from the parent manor of Westbury on Trym) is formed in one of its most prominent stretches by the ancient earth embankment (*har maer*) which runs along what is now Ebenezer Lane, the northern boundary of the estate. The embankment has been mostly untouched since the late Anglo-Saxon period. It is a monument of archaeological significance for Bristol's history of this period, of which very little remains within the city's boundaries.

Another scheduled monument, a cromlech, exists close by.

The embankment is overgrown with nettles and brambles but is apparent at a number of crossing points that are well-used by members of the public – though, perhaps without any knowledge that the earthwork they are crossing and potentially eroding is over 1000 years old.

This OS map shows the location of the embankment.

# BCAP

## Bristol Conservation Advisory Panel



Drafted for submission 11.12.25 on behalf on BCAP by  
Iain Boyd (Chair)

