Environment and Infrastructure
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Date: 21st May 2018

Kate Poyser
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

Dear Kate,

Re: Single storey rear extension with two rooflights, glazed link extension to new build bedroom following demoltion of existing garage. Insertion of first floor window to side (west) elevation. - The Bull, 28 High Street, Offley, Hitchin, SG5 3AD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting me on the above application. I note that it succeeds two previous applications for similar proposals on which this office commented last year (application refs 17/00406/1HH & 17/00407/1LB, our e-mail dated 7/4/17).

As previously notified, the proposed development lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, as identified in the Local Plan. This area covers the medieval settlement of Great Offley [Historic Environment Record no. 2700], which has Anglo-Saxon origins and is mentioned in the Domesday Book as 'Offelei'. Local tradition links the village to a palace built by King Offa of Mercia (AD 757-796), and if that is the case a high status Saxon settlement may have existed here.

Archaeology of both the Medieval and Saxon periods has been identified throughout the village, but of particular relevance to the proposed development is an evaluation that was carried out at the site of former allotments, adjacent to the development area to the south and west. This identified a high density of cut Saxon features [HER no. 31230], including seven ditches in Trench 14, which was closest to the proposed development site.

The Bull public house is itself a Grade II listed building dating from circa 1700. A north west wing and stable were added in the early 19th century, but a substantial proportion of original fabric, fixtures and fittings remain.

I believe therefore that the proposed development is such that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and, as per revious advice, I recommend that the following provisions be made, should you be minded to grant consent:

1. the archaeological monitoring of groundworks related to the new development, including all ground reduction, foundation trenches, service trenches, landscaping, and any other ground disturbance. This should include a contingency for preservation or further archaeological investigation of any remains encountered;

2. The archaeological recording of all interventions to the fabric of the building in areas where such works might reveal additional information relating to the development of the building, and for the purpose of recording any original historic features (etc.) that may be exposed.

3. the analysis of the results of the archaeological work with provision for the subsequent production of a report and an archive, and the publication of the results;

4. such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological and historic interests of the site.

I believe that these recommendations are both reasonable and necessary to provide properly for the likely archaeological implications of this development proposal. I further believe that these recommendations closely follow para. 141, etc. of the National Planning Policy Framework, and the relevant guidance contained in the National Planning Practice Guidance, and in the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015).

In this case three appropriately worded conditions on any planning consent relating to these reserved matters would be sufficient to provide for the level of investigation that this proposal warrants. We suggest the following wording:

A *No demolition/development shall take place/commence until an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:*
1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.

B *The demolition/development shall take place/commence in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition* ***(A)***

C *The development shall not be occupied/used until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition* ***(A)*** *and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.*

If planning consent is granted, we will be able to provide detailed advice on the requirements for the investigations and provide information on professionally accredited archaeological contractors who may be able to carry out the investigations.

I hope you will be able to accommodate the above recommendations.

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

Yours sincerely,



Alison Tinniswood BA MA ACIfA
Historic Environment Adviser
Environmental Resource Planning