



Harriet Sanders
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

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Contact Peri Horsley
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My ref P01/24/1466-1
Your ref 24/01466/FPH
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Date: 29th October 2024

Dear Harriet,

Re: Erection of garage outbuilding, following demolition of existing service outbuilding.- Hexton Manor, Hexton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3JH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

Please note that the following advice is based on the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed development site is within an Area of Archaeological Significance, as identified in the Local Plan. The existing outbuilding to be demolished is in direct association with Hexton Manor and its Registered Park and Garden, and part of the Grade II listed curtilage.

The Planning, Design, Access and Heritage Statement (Intouch Planning Ltd 2024) submitted in support of the application notes the site comprises a large detached main dwelling building with various substantial outbuildings, separate cottages, lake, extensive gardens, walled garden and internal access roads which all make up Hexton Manor Estate as a whole. Hexton Manor is an early 18th century house incorporating part of an earlier 17th century farmhouse. The outbuilding considered in this application is situated immediately adjacent the main house and can be found on later 19th century maps of the site.

Building Conservation comments, dated 12th September 2024, notes that although the existing service outbuilding is historic, as it appears on map regressions of the site, it has an overall of low significance. Therefore, we believe a recording of this building is not necessary, although there may be below-ground significance within the footprint of the existing and of the proposed service outbuildings, which could be contributed to the post-medieval manor, or earlier activity in the area. The Historic Environment Record (HER) notes several findspots within the immediate vicinity which relate to the post-medieval Hexton Manor and earlier occupation. These include Neolithic flint scrapers and knives

(HER no. 277), Roman puddingstone quern (HER no. 1407) and coins (HER no. 1409), early medieval pottery vessel and coins (HER no. 1607) and a post-medieval icehouse (HER no. 11448).

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 I recommend that the following provisions be made, should you be minded to grant consent:

1. the archaeological monitoring of all groundworks related to the development, including grubbing out foundations of the existing outbuilding, excavation of foundation trenches for the proposed, ground reduction, landscaping and all other ground impact, including a contingency for the preservation or further excavation of any remains encountered;
2. 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;
3. such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological 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 the policies included within Policy 16 (para. 211, etc.) of the National Planning Policy Framework. In this case three appropriately worded conditions on any planning consent would be sufficient to provide for the level of investigation that this proposal warrants. I 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, I will be able to provide detailed advice concerning the requirements for the investigations, and to provide information on professionally accredited archaeological contractors who may be able to carry out the necessary work.

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

Yours sincerely,

Peri Horsley
Historic Environment Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS
Environmental Sustainability

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