Environment
Director and Chief Executive: John Wood

Tom Rea
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Contact Simon Wood
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My ref P01/18/0912
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Date: 15 May 2018

Dear Tom,

Re: Change of use of agricultural land to residential use and erection of a part single, part two storey dwelling following demolition of existing stables. Provision of associated garden, parking area and vehicular access - Land Off Burge End Lane Pirton Hertfordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting me 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 is located circa 20m to the west of an Area of Archaeological Significance, as identified in the Local Plan. This covers the core of the village of Pirton which has a complex history with origins in the early to middle Anglo-Saxon period. Archaeological features indicating settlement at this location from much earlier times are widespread, however, with Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman remains revealed through excavations particularly to the west of the village (e.g. Historic Environment Record nos. 553, 31109, 17170 & 18649). Pirton was a settlement of some size and significance in the medieval period in particular, with the remains of a motte and bailey castle (HER no. 32) and a moated manor house (HER no. 2221) surviving within the historic core of the village, both of which are Scheduled Monuments.

An archaeological evaluation has previously taken place at the proposed development site, before the construction of the present stables and manege (Archaeological Services and Consultancy 2010). While this evaluation did not find significant archaeology, it is likely that it did not reach the archaeological layers in many places. The investigation did

unearth several archaeological features, of unknown date, that were interpreted to be agricultural in nature, including the footings of a wall.

The site is also close to the location of several archaeological test pits, excavated between 2008 and 2010 by university students, Pirton residents and the North Hertfordshire Archaeological Society, under the supervision of the archaeological outreach unit of the University of Cambridge. The closest of these pits were located roughly 35m to the east, south east and south of the site, and a substantial quantity of pottery, dating mainly from the 11th to 15th centuries AD, was recovered. Notably some Romano-British sherds and a small quantity of prehistoric pottery were also present. The substantial quantity of pottery recovered, along with the large size of some of the sherds, suggests the presence of medieval settlement archaeology in the general area, along with potential for earlier remains.

I believe 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 any groundworks associated with the demolition of the existing stables, including the grubbing out of foundations or the removal of slab;

2. the archaeological field evaluation, via strip, map and record, of the proposed development area, including the footprint of the new building, the new vehicular access and any other areas of ground reduction, post demolition of the existing structure but prior to any new development commencing;

3. such appropriate mitigation measures indicated as necessary by that evaluation. These may include:
    a. the preservation of any remains *in situ*, if warranted,
    b. appropriate archaeological excavation of any remains before any development commences on the site, with provisions for subsequent analysis and publication of results,
    c. archaeological monitoring of the groundworks of the development (also including a contingency for the preservation or further investigation of any remains then encountered),
    d. such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological interests of the site;

4. 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;

5. 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 the policies included within Policy 12 (para. 141, 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 and methodology of site investigation and recording as suggested by the evaluation*
3. *The programme for post investigation assessment*
4. *Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
5. *Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
6. *Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
7. *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,

Dr Simon Wood FSA Scot
Historic Environment Advisor
Environmental Resource Planning