



Melissa Tyler
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

**Postal Point CHN 108
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall, Pegs Lane
HERTFORD SG13 8DN**

Contact Andy Instone
Tel 01992 555241
My ref P01/25/1118-1
Your ref **25/01118/FPH**
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 23 June 2025

Dear Melissa,

Re: Enlargement/excavation of basement, installation of two front basement glazed doors, and rear lightwell to facilitate conversion of basement into habitable accommodation. Addition of roof light to existing roof and addition of front railings. Enlargement/alteration to rear windows, including changing a rear window to a door. | The Library 10 Brand Street Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1HX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting me on the above application and apologies for the late reply.

The proposed development lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, as identified in the Local Plan. The Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that is in the medieval core of Hitchin and close to where part of a large fortification or boundary ditch was found. This might represent the edge of an Anglo-Saxon Burh or fortified town (HER 40375). Palaeolithic (HER 282) and Roman finds have also been found nearby (HER 1419).

The Library is Listed as being of architectural and historic significance and dates from at least 1860. This noted by documents supplied with this planning application, a Design and Access Statement and a Heritage Impact Assessment. The latter notes that the proposed development is likely to reveal parts of the historic fabric of the building (i.e. above ground archaeology) and that below ground works such as those to the basement offer an opportunity for (i.e. below ground) archaeological investigation.

I believe that the position of 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. archaeological Level 3 building recording of all interventions to the fabric of the buildings in areas where such works might reveal information relating to the development of the buildings, and for the purpose of recording any original historic

features (etc.) that may be exposed during the course of the development, including ceilings, floors, basement, soft stripping.

2. the archaeological monitoring of all groundworks related to the development, including foundation trenches, service trenches, hard landscaping, road and path construction, building works compounds and vehicle tracking routes and all other ground impact, including a contingency for the preservation or further excavation of any remains encountered;
3. such appropriate mitigation measures indicated as necessary by that evaluation and archaeological monitoring of groundworks. 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 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,

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.