

Melissa Tyler
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

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County Hall, Pegs Lane
HERTFORD SG13 8DN**

Contact Andy Instone
Tel 01992 555241
My ref P01/23/0407-1
Your ref 23/00407/FP
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 7 October 2024

Dear Melissa,

Re: Conversion of Node Court to 8no. dwellings. Conversion of Midden building to residential and the erection of 6no. terraced dwelling-houses as development to facilitate the restoration of Node Court together with associated car parking, landscaping, boundary treatment and ancillary works (Amended Plans received 30 August 2024) | Node Court Drivers End Codicote Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8TR

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

In correspondence dated 14 March 2019 we advised you on application 18/03366/FP to develop this site.

Recommendations

This advice is unchanged and is noted below.

Advice for Planning Application 1/18/03366/FP

The proposed development involves alterations to the grade II listed Node Court and erection of a new residential building. Node Court is a dairy and stud farm designed in eccentric style by Maurice Chesterton in 1927 (Historic Environment Record no. 7277). It is a building of exceptional architectural and historic interest that, along with The Midden, an outbuilding, is worthy of full, detailed historic building recording prior to any development taking place.

The applicant has submitted a Historic Building Appraisal and Impact Assessment (Archaeological Solutions 2018). While this includes a thorough photographic survey, it does not attempt to record the exterior or interior of either building in any detail. It recommends that the building 'might benefit from further detailed study' and states that the building's conversion 'offers an opportunity to record a building postulated to have set the standards for hygiene and efficient dairy farming in England' (para 5.6).

There is also potential for below ground archaeological features to be present. The next door property, Chandlers Cottage is a 17th century farmhouse, part of Driver's End farm, a post medieval farmstead (HER no. 18681). There is believed to have been a farmstead at this location since the medieval period, however, as the name is associated with the family of William le Drivere, documented in 1314 (Gover et al 1934).

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 building recording of the standing structures, to Historic England Level 3, in their present form before any development commences;
2. The archaeological monitoring of all groundworks associated with the development, including foundation trenches, service trenches, landscaping, site clearance, and all other ground disturbance. This should include a contingency for the preservation or further investigation of any remains encountered;
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 the policies included within Policy 16 (para. 199, 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.