

Henry Thomas
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 P01/25/1141-1
Your ref **25/01141/FP**
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 9 July 2025

Dear Henry,

**Re: Change of use of existing barn from storage and distribution (Use Class B8) to use as a community events and learning centre for agriculture, cookery and related rural-based activities (Use Class F1). Single storey extension to barn following demolition of existing lean-to. Installation of solar panels to roof of converted barn and plant to the roof of the proposed extension including six cycle spaces.]
Irongate Barn Halls Green Weston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7DR**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the farmhouse dates from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Is Listed Grade II* as being of architectural and historic significance (LB1347439). It was altered and elaborately re-fronted in the early 18th century (HER15656). The site also contains historic barns. In Hertfordshire, past medieval farms are frequently found to have medieval origins.

A Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted with this planning application (*Michael Collins Architects*) notes that the barn subject to conversion is a concrete structure dating from the 1960s (*para 1.2, page 9*). Photos of the structure confirm this. The DAS states that only the modern barn is subject to development (*para 1.5, page 14*), however OS historic mapping and aerial photos suggest that a projecting porch from the historic barn may survive. Any written scheme of investigation submitted as part of information required to discharge archaeological planning conditions should clarify this, should NHDC be minded to grant consent and add our recommended conditions (see below).

I therefore 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 historic building recording of any historic buildings impacted by the development, prior to any development taking place;

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

3) the archaeological monitoring of all groundworks related to the development, including foundation trenches, service trenches, hard landscaping, and all other ground impact, including a contingency for the preservation or further excavation of any remains encountered;

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 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and 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 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.

I hope that 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,

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.