

Sarah Kasparian
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 P01/25/1420-2
Your ref **25/01420/FP**
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 28 August 2025

Dear Sarah,

Re-Consultation: Change of use and external alterations to former agricultural buildings comprising grade II listed threshing barn and non-listed courtyard buildings. Partial demolition of courtyard building between proposed Units 1 and 2 to facilitate access. Single-storey rear extension to facilitate Unit 10. Subdivision and two-storey rear extension to farmhouse to form Units 11 and 12. Erection of new building for two dwellings (Units 13 and 14). Partial demolition and modify building for cycle storage to Units 2 to 8 inclusive. Erection of building to accommodate 2 car port spaces for Unit 5 and refuse storage for Units 2-8 inclusive. Detached bin enclosure / cycle store buildings for Units 9 - 14 inclusive. Hard and soft landscaping in association with the provision of private and communal space. Boundary treatment, installation of 14no. EV charging points, installation of solar PV array on south facing roof slopes of Unit 14 and both the cycle and refuse storage buildings serving Units 2 -8 including provision of BNG area. | Highover Farm Highover Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0RQ

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for re-consulting us on the above application.

Any amendments have not been explained so our advice remains the same as that sent on 18 July 2025 and repeated below, with an amended condition A):

The Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the farmstead is shown on the 1844 tithe map as '*High-Over Farm*'. The name, meaning 'the high bank or slope' is documented since the thirteenth century. From the mid fifteenth century Highover was owned by wealthy wool merchants named Pulter and regarded as a manorial estate. In 1690 it consisted of the farmhouse, outbuildings, barns, stables and land, both arable and pasture. The current house is timber-framed and probably of sixteenth or seventeenth century date (HER17200).

The Threshing Barn is Listed Grade II as being of architectural and historic significance and dates from at least the seventeenth century (LB 1452743). The site includes a hay barn of similar date, early nineteenth century stables and other buildings.

An Iron Age and Roman site has been revealed a little to the north of the farm, suggesting potential for activity from these periods too.

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 the historic buildings, 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 evaluation, of the proposed development area, prior to development commencing,
- 4) Such appropriate mitigation measures indicated as necessary by this 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;
- 5) 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;
- 6) 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, referred to as A, B and C for convenience:

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 required 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. Provision to be made for public engagement and interpretation
8. 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.