

Alex Howard
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 P01/24/1444-3
Your ref 24/01444/FP
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 11 September 2025

Dear Alex,

Re: Erection of 14 dwellings (including affordable housing) including creation of access from Ashwell Street, footpath link to Lucas Lane, public open space and soft and hard landscaping, biodiversity enhancement and, associated infrastructure on land north of Ashwell Street, Ashwell - Land Between Huntsridge And Ashwell House 5 High Street

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

I write to you further to our advice given on 20 August 2024 and telephone conversation earlier today.

In our correspondence we noted that we had previously advised you on similar proposals to develop this site. These included a letter dated 11 February 2023 under planning application 22/03094/FP. In that letter we noted the significance of the heritage assets that have been found at this site. These were identified during archaeological trial trench investigations which this office recommended be carried out prior to determination of planning application 20/00126/FP.

We described the character and likely significance of those heritage assets and recommended that should you be minded to grant consent, that an archaeological excavation be carried out prior to development, secured by appropriate planning conditions.

For our advice to be as proportionate and reasonable as possible, as per NPPF, we requested further information regarding development on the western part of the site. This is because it was not clear if this area would be subject to development.

It has since come to our attention that planning application 22/03094/FP was refused by North Herts DC and subsequently allowed at appeal. Regrettably it appears that our letter of advice was not forwarded to the Planning Inspector by North Herts DC at this time, so an archaeological condition was imposed without independent expert advice. We do not believe this condition as worded is sufficient to properly allow for the likely impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest at the site.

To date we have not received any further information or clarification from the applicant and given the above appeal decision we wish to avoid any delays in your decision making. Therefore, we offer the following recommendations as per previous advice from this office:

We believe therefore that the proposed development is such that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and we recommend that the following provisions be made, should you be minded to grant consent:

1. The archaeological open area excavation of the proposed development area (housing and access), prior to any development commencing;
2. The preservation of archaeological remains *in situ* if appropriate;
3. Provision for an appropriate programme of archaeological works to mitigate any impacts arising from the works located in the area of public open space;
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 interests of the site;

We believe that these recommendations are both reasonable and necessary to provide properly for the likely archaeological implications of this development proposal. We 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. The parts in bold should be renumbered to suit your planning decision. We suggest the following wording:

First condition: 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. Provision to be made for public outreach and interpretation***
- 7. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.***

Second condition: 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 (First condition)

Third condition: 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 (First condition) and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.

If planning consent is granted, we 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.