



Mr Andrew Hunter  
North Herts Council  
PO Box 10163  
Nottingham  
NG6 6DW

Direct Dial: 07867 902 092

Our ref: P01583917

28 October 2024

Dear Mr Hunter

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015  
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**30 SHILLINGTON ROAD, PIRTON, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG5 3QL  
Application No. 24/02156/FPH**

Thank you for your letter of 17 October 2024 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

**Single storey rear extension. Removal of two garage doors and replace with windows and insertion of two rooflights to existing garage to facilitate garage conversion into art studio. Alterations to fenestration of main dwelling and garage. Erection of detached shed in side garden**

Thank you for your letter of 17th October 2024 concerning the above planning application.

On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist the Planning Authority in determining the application.

**Historic England Advice**

Significance of the historic environment

The application site is located immediately to the northwest of the scheduled monument of 'Moated site and associated enclosure at Rectory Farm', List Entry Number 1009451 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1009451>.

Moated sites form a significant class of medieval monument and are important for the understanding of the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside.

The monument at Rectory Farm is unusual in that it has two moated enclosures, one possibly having been for habitation, the other for horticulture. Despite some infilling of



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the ditches and the construction of the 17th century farmhouse, the monument survives well and evidence of the original mediaeval structure that occupied the site survives on the island. Additionally, the ditches will retain environmental evidence relating to the occupation of the site and the economy of its inhabitants.

The setting of the scheduled monument contributes to its significance and how the site is experienced; the moated enclosure is situated in an essentially rural and agricultural landscape surrounded by farm buildings to the west and, largely, by open fields to the north and east.

#### Impact on the significance of the historic environment

This proposed development would result in a slight change to the setting of the scheduled monument. In our view, the harm would be towards the lower end of less than substantial.

We note, the addition of the proposed shed against the eastern edge of the scheduled monument from the current application, which had been submitted in a previous scheme (22/02484/FPH). Although it creates slightly more harm, the location close to the house and the low profile of the shed are not a significant increase.

#### Policy considerations for this proposal

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the planning system (paragraphs 7, 8, 10 and 11) which also identifies protection of the historic environment as an important element of achieving sustainable development. Further policy principles relating to the historic environment are set out in Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

In particular, it emphasises the importance of conserving heritage assets, which are an irreplaceable resource, in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (NPPF paragraph 189).

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF establishes that

*'local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected' at a level of detail proportionate to the assets' importance and through consultation of the relevant historic environment record and the use of appropriate expertise'.*

The NPPF goes on to state in paragraph 201 that,

*'local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any*



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*heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal' and 'take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'.*

When considering the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of scheduled monuments, NPPF paragraph 205 requires great weight to be given to the monument's conservation.

As NPPF paragraph 206 sets out, any harm to the significance of a scheduled monument, including from development within its setting, requires clear and convincing justification irrespective of the level of potential harm.

Where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a scheduled monument, NPPF paragraph 207 requires that the harm is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Paragraph 212 goes on to state that, '*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development... within the setting of heritage asset, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably*'.

#### Historic England's Advice

The proposed application will result in a slight change to the setting of the scheduled monument known as 'Moated site and associated enclosure at Rectory Farm'. This is because the scheduled monument draws some significance from its landscape setting. In our view, however, the harm would be towards the lower end of less than substantial.

#### **Recommendation**

Historic England has no objection to the application on heritage grounds. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist archaeological adviser.

The Planning Authority should take this representation into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Single



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Historic England

Inspector of Ancient Monuments (Essex and Hertfordshire)

Email: [adam.single@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:adam.single@HistoricEngland.org.uk)



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[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)

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