

Paul Chaston
Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council

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Contact Andy Instone
Tel 01992 555241
My ref P01/26/0558-2
Your ref **26/00558/HYA**
historic.environment@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Date: 2 July 2026

Dear Paul,

Re-Consultation: Hybrid application for a mixed-use development to provide a total of up to 230 dwellings, a residential care home (Use Class C2), an Independent Special School (ISS) and new sports pitch, with access from Bedford Road, landscaping, parking and SuDS comprising: Phase 1 Application for full planning permission for the erection of 100 dwellings, an ISS, new sports pitch and associated parking, landscaping, open space and SuDS; Phase 2 An outline application on the remaining part of the site for the erection of up to 130 dwellings, a residential care home (Use Class C2) and associated works with access from Bedford Road (all matters reserved apart from access).|Land At Pound Farm Bedford Road Ickleford Hertfordshire SG5 3RS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

Further to our advice to you dated 27 April 2026 where we requested further archaeological information, the applicant has issued a rebuttal letter (*TetraTech*).

TetraTech note the archaeological potential of the site and the results of the geophysical survey:

“Any archaeological remains likely to be present would relate to later prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or Medieval activity and would be of low / local significance; geophysical survey has identified remains of probable and potential archaeological origin.”

We noted in our letter of advice that:

“Archaeological remains from the Saxon period are extremely rare in Hertfordshire and have the potential to be of national significance. A site elsewhere in North Herts, in Pirton at Priors Hill found evidence of Saxon activity which was considered nationally important (Historic Environment Records 31108, 31109) and Scheduled by Historic England, Anglo-Saxon settlement, and probable prehistoric ring ditches, west of Pirton village (SM 1434415).”

TetraTech concede the potential for archaeological remains dating to the Saxon period as a possibility on this site. However, given the above, they continue to assert there are no archaeological remains of national importance on the site so further information is not required. They also begin their letter by stating:

“We wish to highlight that the application site is currently in active agricultural use and planted with a barley crop, which will not be harvested until July 2026. As a result, the land is not practically available for either intrusive archaeological evaluation works during the current growing season. Requiring this work to be completed prior to determination would therefore introduce a significant and unavoidable delay to the determination of the application.”

It would be helpful if TetraTech could clarify if it is for archaeological reasons or practical reasons that they are objecting to our advice. Furthermore, if the applicant had engaged with this office pre-planning application, then any delay would have been avoided and the site appropriately risk assessed prior to a planning application being submitted.

We note TetraTech’s comment:

“We would of course be happy to agree suitable condition wording with the Council and Hertfordshire LEADS to ensure a robust and transparent post-determination archaeological strategy.”

Therefore, in the spirit of co-operation we ask if there is scope for the Masterplan to be altered should heritage assets with high significance be found so that they can be preserved and if you are minded to include such provisions within a planning condition?

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.