

Mr Mark Peacock
Planning
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

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Date: 9th February 2021

Dear Mark,

**Re: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 14 dwellings - Wells Farm
Northaw Road East Cuffley Potters Bar EN6 4RD**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for consulting me on the above application.

Please note that the following advice is based on the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The application site abuts Area of Archaeological Significance no. 37 as identified in the Local Plan. This includes cropmarks of a polygonal enclosure of unknown date, part of the boundary of the 17th century deer park of Theobalds park of which sections are visible as a tree line and walling, and soilmarks of a linear feature. There is also evidence of prehistoric activity in the vicinity, represented by concentrations of Mesolithic and Neolithic flints found in the area of Cuffley Hill, and at Church Close, Cuffley.

Wells Farm is a 20th century farmstead, which stands on the site of a post-medieval farmstead shown on 19th century Ordnance Survey maps [Historic Environment Record No 10969]. These show a farmhouse on the north east side of a yard lined with a large barn and other buildings. It is possible that below ground remains of the demolished post medieval farmstead may survive. In addition, although the site has been impacted upon by the construction of the 19th century farm buildings and ponds, and the subsequent demolition of these buildings, and redevelopment of the site from the late 1970s, it may retain some potential to contain archaeological remains of a prehistoric date.

With the above in mind, I believe that the position of the proposed development is such that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on heritage assets with archaeological interest. I recommend that the following provisions be made, should you be minded to grant consent:

1. The archaeological evaluation, via trial trenching, of the proposed development area, further to the demolition of the existing buildings on the site, to slab level, but prior to any development commencing. This should comprise a minimum of a 5% sample of those areas to be developed;
2. Such appropriate mitigation measures indicated as necessary by that evaluation.

These may include:

- a) the preservation of any archaeological remains *in situ*, if warranted;
 - b) the appropriate archaeological excavation of any remains before any development commences on the site, with provisions for subsequent analysis and publication of results;
 - c) the archaeological monitoring and recording of the ground works of the development, including foundations, services, landscaping, access, etc. (and also including a contingency for the preservation or further investigation of any remains then encountered);
3. the analysis of the results of the archaeological work, with provisions for the subsequent production of a report and an archive, and the publication of the results, as appropriate;
 4. such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological 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 (para.199, etc.) of the National Planning Policy Framework. and the guidance contained in Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (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 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 suggested 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. *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.*

B *The 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,

Alison Tinniswood BA MA ACIfA
Historic Environment Advisor
Environmental Resource Planning