



Mr Chris Stanworth
Northumberland National Park Authority
Eastburn
South Park
Hexham
Northumberland
NE46 1BS

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Our ref: P00567961

19 April 2017

Dear Mr Stanworth

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

**HOUSESTEADS CAR PARK, MILITARY ROAD, HAYDON BRIDGE, HEXHAM,
NORTHUMBERLAND, NE47 6NN
Application No. 17NP0041**

Thank you for your letter of 11 April 2017 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.

Summary

This development lies in an area of high archaeological sensitivity, within the wider area of Roman settlement associated with the Roman fort at Housesteads. For this reason, in line with the NPPF, it is very important that the potential impact of the proposed works are clearly understood before a planning determination takes place. As such, at this stage we recommend that the applicant be asked to provide a supporting document which examines the proposed works, and uses current knowledge about the archaeology present to provide an informed assessment of its potential impact. Once such supporting information has been provided we would be happy to provide further advice on this application.

Historic England Advice

The site of this proposed development is one of very high archaeological sensitivity, something which is clearly appreciated by NNPA both as applicant and Planning Authority. This sensitivity derives from the position of the proposal in relation to the known archaeology of the Housesteads area: the site lies on a low ridge south of the fort and main vicus at Housesteads, close to the location of known Roman cemeteries, and immediately on the opposite side of the Military Road from a scheduled barrow which could also be of Roman date. Added to this, during the construction of the current visitor centre to the north of the present site, an important Roman statue was discovered which seems likely to derive from a shrine in the vicinity. In addition to this,



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the recent extension on the south side of the car park revealed the presence of an important Roman road, which a welcome redesign of the car park levels allowed to be preserved in-situ.

All these pieces of evidence suggest that there is a strong potential at the proposed development site for the presence of further important Roman archaeological remains. Although this site is not currently protected as a scheduled ancient monument, if such remains are found to be present on this site they are likely to be of national archaeological importance. As such, it is very important that the potential archaeological impact of the current proposal is clear before any decision is taken on this application.

As a first stage in doing this, we would recommend that the applicants needs to produce a supporting document which:

- provides detail of the potential options that exist to secure the development needs here, including the options for avoiding or reducing the level of excavation required

- provides unambiguous and clear information about the location, extent and depth of excavations necessary for the development under the preferred option

- uses current understanding of the archaeology of this part of the Housesteads site, and the construction of the car park, to provide an informed assessment of the impact of the excavations on the archaeology of the site

Once a supporting document, in line with the above, has been produced, we would be happy to provide further advice on this proposed development.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. The need to understand the potential impact of proposed development on the historic environment, to allow an informed judgement about the level of harm likely to be caused, is in line with paragraph 128 of the NPPF. Your authority should take these representations 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

Mike Collins

Inspector of Ancient Monuments (Hadrian's Wall)

E-mail:





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cc. Chris Jones - NNPA



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