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13<sup>th</sup> February 2023

**20221016 Higham Railway Station, School Lane, Higham, Rochester Kent**

**Erection of three single storey buildings to provide 10 Class B1 Light Industrial business units with associated parking.**

Thank you for consulting us on this application.

The site of the application is within an area post-medieval industrial archaeological potential being part of the site of the former Thames-Medway Canal, on which construction started in 1800. and subsequently, the 1846 South Eastern Railway extension for the South Eastern Railway Company's North Kent Line. In 1846 the South Eastern Railway had purchased the Thames and Medway Canal line and the tunnel and laid railway tracks through it, with trains running a year later. The original canal tunnel entrance lay within the present development site but the tunnel entrance was moved to the south-east when the railway line was put through.

As the site lies within an area of former quarrying, the principal archaeological interest will be related to below-ground remains of the former canal, railway line and associated infrastructure. Historic mapping indicates that part of the former canal before it was infilled extended into the area of proposed development. Groundworks associated with the proposed development, may therefore impact on any surviving below-ground remains associated with the site's post-medieval use and I recommend that if planning permission is granted the following condition is applied to any forthcoming consent:

*No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that groundworks are observed and items of interest and finds are recorded and the*

*information made publicly accessible. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined, recorded, reported and the information made publicly accessible.*

I would be pleased to discuss the above further and to provide a brief for the applicant upon request.

Yours sincerely

**Casper Johnson**  
Senior Archaeological Officer  
Heritage Conservation