



Heritage Conservation

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2025 0136 – St Joseph’s Convent Of Mercy , Hillside Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1NY

Erection of a 4x 4 bedroom houses with garage, home office and gardens on the land north of the Convent of Mercy Gravesend. Works include an extension of Hillside Drive ending in a new turning area, private driveway and off-road parking for each house, an electrical substation, and a managed biodiversity area along the north-east boundary of the site

Dear Alison,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

The site lies within an area of multi-period background archaeological potential and the application has been made with a useful archaeological desk-based assessment (Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2024) which sets out, and considers, the existing archaeological data for the site and its surroundings.

I broadly agree with the findings of the assessment which concludes that the potential for the survival of significant archaeological remains of prehistoric to post-medieval date is uncertain, in part because of a relative lack of modern archaeological work close to the site. The location of the site, on higher ground, with the Thames to the north and valley to the south and east, could have made it an attractive location for settlement in the past. In addition there is the potential for Head deposits of Pleistocene date, with Palaeolithic potential to exist at the site, and any such remains could be significant.

Whilst development of the area from the later 19th century, including terracing of the gardens, may have had some impact, the proposed development groundworks will impact any surviving below-ground archaeological remains

at the site and I therefore 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

i. archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

ii. following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure appropriate assessment of the archaeological implications of any development proposals and the subsequent mitigation of adverse impacts through preservation in situ or by record.

The field evaluation would comprise archaeological trial trenching, including a geoarchaeological component. I would be happy to discuss any of the above further and provide a brief for the field evaluation work on request.

Yours sincerely

Casper Johnson FRSA MCIfA FSA
Senior Archaeological Officer
Heritage Conservation Team
Environment, Planning & Enforcement