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**Heritage Conservation
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Ask for: Jacob Warrender
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20 October 2025

Re: 20250321 – Oak Tree Stables, Gore Green Road, Higham, Rochester, Kent

Application for variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission ref no. 20180380 for Proposed conversion of and alterations to listed timer frame barn into a 4 bedroom dwelling; conversion/rebuilding of stables into a 3 bedroom dwelling, with carports and store and linked addition at the rear for kitchen/diner and living room; demolition and removal of outbuildings for use as carports and bine store; new boundary treatment, landscaping and other ancillary works including the provision of parking spaces; and provision of new access arrangements to Black Cottage to allow the use od the carports as habitable accommodation.

Thank you for consulting us on the above planning application.

The site of application lies within an area of archaeological potential relating to the Gore Green Farm historic farmstead complex. Gore Green Farm Barn is a Grade II Listed Building of possible 16th century date, and the site has general multi-period archaeological potential. Groundworks associated with planning permission 20180380/81 were subject to an archaeological watching brief by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (2020/160). The watching brief, which was located within the historic farmstead and yard area, recorded post-medieval to early modern farmyard layers above a possibly deliberately levelled natural geology. A single trench evaluation was carried out by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (2020/132) in November 2020, this showed evidence of a palimpsest of post-medieval to early modern farmyard buildings. The groundworks of the proposed development, including the creation of access routes, landscaping and boundary treatments, may impact on below-ground archaeological remains around the periphery of the former yard, in less disturbed areas at the site

However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data for the area and the relatively limited extent of the proposed works, I consider it unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case

As noted above the barn is thought to be of possible 16th century date but there appears to be some uncertainty about its original design and any subsequent changes. The building has undergone important recent conservation work and there are detailed architectural plans and sections of the barn before the recent works, however, there does not appear to be a photographic record of the current interior of the conserved building, and the proposed works may impact on surviving historic fabric and impact the significance of the listed barn.

It would be preferable if an archaeological building report (**HBR level 1**) of the barn could be submitted pre-determination to ensure that informed decisions on the likely impact of the proposed works.

I would be pleased to discuss any of the above further and provide a brief for the archaeological works.

Yours sincerely

Jacob Warrender

Senior Archaeological Officer
Heritage Conservation