



Historic England

WEST MIDLANDS OFFICE

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Direct Dial: 0121 625 6820

Our ref: P00992937

29 November 2018

Dear Mr Lewis

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

**MOSS FIELD, BACK LANE, WEOBLEY
Application No. 183856**

Thank you for your letter of 12 November 2018 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.

Historic England Advice

The proposal is for two detached dwellings on Back Lane, Weobley, within a Conservation Area, and within the setting of numerous listed buildings. The development site also includes part of a scheduled ancient monument (SAM). A site visit was made by Sarah Lewis, Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas and Bill Klemperer, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments on 28th November 2018.

Weobley retains the structure and fabric of a small medieval town. The centre is well defined in an axis between the Church and Castle, representing the authority of church and state in the life of the town and area. The proposed development site is accessed by a subsidiary road to the west of the centre, where medieval tenements and industrial activities would have been concentrated, with gardens and orchards behind, before giving way to strip fields. In overall terms the settlement is a well preserved medieval town and any new development should be designed sympathetically in order to respect the established layout, as well as the massing and materials of buildings.

In this case our view is that the impact upon the Conservation Area and upon the setting of individual listed buildings is not of great concern.

The main interest is the scheduled ancient monument that is a medieval pottery production site, National Ref No: 1005313, that was discovered in 1975 when kiln debris and pottery dated to the 13th-15th centuries was excavated. Work at the nearby castle in 2004 has discovered similar pottery and it is most likely that this pottery is a



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rare example of a recorded production site that can be directly associated with the medieval development and life of this town and area. Much information, however, remains as buried archaeology and it is important that the site remains undeveloped so that this important archaeological resource is preserved for the future. This is why the site is scheduled as being of national importance.

The proposed development of two houses is just outside of the scheduled monument, but their gardens would be almost entirely within it. We do not object to the development of land outside of the SAM in principle, but are concerned that the current proposal would necessitate a land division through the middle of the SAM. We do not support the introduction of a boundary through the middle of the site as this subdivision would break up the still largely open area formerly occupied by the medieval pottery. This open area is important as it results from the site's former use as a medieval pottery which is an example of an industrial back road activity in the medieval town. We do not support, therefore, the current proposal for two properties.

A development compromising one dwelling would be more appropriate in this sensitive location, as that would allow all of that part of the SAM within the development boundary to remain as one garden without the need for subdivision. We would also advise that:

- a single property was set a few metres further back from the SAM (i.e. to the north nearer the access road),

- that due to the likelihood of the area immediately surrounding the SAM also being of archaeological interest that the Council considers an archaeological mitigation strategy for that part of the site.

- the applicant is reminded that all works within the SAM require written consent of the Secretary of State.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of the NPPF Section 16. In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas, and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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



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