



**Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of
Archaeological Works at Naldretts Farm, Pookbourne Lane,
Sayers Common, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9HD**

December 2024

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This document sets out the methodology to be followed by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd in carrying out a programme of archaeological works at Naldretts Farm, Pookbourne Lane, Sayers Common, Hassocks, West Sussex, associated with the creation of a proposed polo field.

While there are no known archaeological remains existing within the area to be impacted, the lack of previous archaeological investigations and the extent of the proposed ground works associated with the development, which have the potential to have a negative impact upon any surviving archaeological remains, means that it is proposed to excavate 37 archaeological evaluation trenches within the area to be impacted by this development in order to establish the nature and extent of any surviving archaeological deposits.

Should no significant archaeological deposits be revealed within the trenches then no further on-site archaeological work will be undertaken in connection with this planning permission. However, should such remains be encountered, then the results from the evaluation trenches will be used to inform a decision over whether any further archaeological mitigation is required in relation to this development.

BACKGROUND

Project Background



Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License no:AL100036068

1. Naldretts Farm lies between the town of Burgess Hill and the A23, in West Sussex, on the north-western slopes of an area of higher ground between the Pook Bourne stream to the north and a second stream to the south (Fig.1). Both streams are feeders for the head of the River Adur to the west. The site itself sits on the southern side of that area of higher ground, at 20m aOD, with a c.7m slope from north to south, and is centred at OS grid reference TQ 2788 1929. The underlying geology of the site is the Weald Clay Formation and the current land-use is pasture, with some limited cover crop for a pheasant shoot.
1. Mr J Bunn has obtained planning permission (DM/18/1860) from Mid Sussex District Council for the change of use of grazing land to a polo pitch with associated works including the formation of a new lagoon, landscaping, and vehicular access. Condition 10 of that permission states: “No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority”. West Sussex Archaeology Ltd has been appointed by the applicant to write and submit the Written Scheme of Investigation, which is this document.

Archaeological & Historical Background

1. A full discussion of the archaeological and historical background can be found in the Heritage Statement submitted with the application (Anelay 2017). This concluded that the earliest known evidence for human activity in the vicinity of the site are the various surrounding farms of post-medieval or modern date, although it is possible that as yet undiscovered earlier buried remains might exist on or around the site.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. The aims and objectives of these archaeological works are to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened archaeological deposits within the site. Such information will then be used to inform any further necessary mitigation.

METHODS STATEMENT



Figure 1 Plan of the proposed development, with the evaluation trenches marked in red.

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1. The proposed development involves the installation of a polo pitch with associated works, including the formation of a new lagoon, landscaping, and vehicular access (see Figure 3). In advance of any groundworks taking place associated with this development, 37 evaluation trenches will be excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under the control of the supervising archaeologist. The trenches will be positioned as indicated on Figure 3, with all being 30m long and 1.8m wide. The area covered by these trenches equates to approximately 5% of the area to be impacted by the development.
2. The trenches will be mechanically excavated to a depth equal to the top of the undisturbed geology, or until the surface of any archaeological deposits is reached. Excavation of any archaeological deposits revealed will then be undertaken by hand by staff of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd.
3. Should no significant archaeological deposits be revealed within the trenches, then no further on-site archaeological work will be undertaken in connection with this planning permission. However, should such remains be encountered, then the results from these evaluation trenches will be used to inform a decision over whether any further archaeological mitigation is required in relation to this development. Should the nature of such revealed archaeological deposits warrant it, these mitigation methods may be agreed in the form of a further WSI setting out the works to be undertaken.
4. All exposed archaeological features within the trenches will be planned and recorded, including the recording in plan of all features. A proportion of these features will then be partially excavated: 50% of each intrusive feature (pits, postholes); 25% of each linear feature's exposed area including all terminals and intersections; 50% of structural features (e.g. beamslots, ring ditches); actual surviving structural elements (e.g. walls, collapse/debris fields) just require exposure, cleaning & preservation for excavation in more appropriate circumstances if required; 50-100% domestic/industrial working features (e.g. hearths, ovens), unless large and structural, in which case they are to be treated as with structural elements (see above). Additional excavation of features, up to complete removal, may be required should the excavated samples fail to provide the necessary information required to enable their purpose or date to be ascertained.

Recording

1. Details of the nature, extent and date (where possible) of archaeological contexts will be recorded upon sheets provided by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd.

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2. Measured drawings (plans normally at 1:20, sections normally at 1:10) will be made ensuring that each context recorded is shown in at least one section and/or plan, including at least one section of each individual feature excavated. All trenches and drawings will be accurately related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
3. All significant artefacts will be recorded in 3D where their exact location is key to their understanding, for example where they have been deliberately deposited upon a buried surface or are in relationship with other significant artefacts.
4. Levels will be taken ensuring that each context recorded is related to Ordnance Datum.
5. Digital photographs will be taken in RAW format, using a Canon EOS 1200D (18 megapixels) or equivalent, and showing a suitable scale, ensuring that each context recorded is shown in at least one image. All digital images will be stored on a CD-ROM and placed within the project archive, together with colour copies of all the images critical to archive interpretation printed on high quality photo paper in a stable format.
6. Should unexpected human remains be encountered during the course of this project, such remains will wherever possible be left *in situ*. Where this is impractical a Ministry of Justice Licence will be obtained before their removal.
7. Any recovered artefacts falling within the scope of the Treasure Act 1996 will be dealt with in accordance with its terms and reported to the Coroner within the time period specified.

Artefact Sampling

1. Artefacts will be retained where considered necessary in the light of their context and/or importance. Artefacts of a demonstrably modern date (post-AD1800) will normally be discarded, as will non-diagnostic CBM of any date.
2. All artefacts recovered during the excavation will be processed according to current UKIC/Rescue guidelines as set out in First Aid for Finds, 1998, and to the standards of the museum with which they will be deposited.
3. All retained artefacts will be quantified by number and where appropriate by weight.
4. All retained artefacts will be bagged and boxed in containers approved by the museum and sympathetic to their condition and marked with the site code.

5. In cases where a more detailed analysis and/or conservation of finds is required for the understanding of individual contexts and the site as a whole, this will be carried out by an appropriately qualified specialist.

Environmental Sampling

1. Bulk environmental samples will be collected under the following circumstances:
 - where the nature of deposits suggest that meaningful results relating to the paleo-environment could be gathered from processing
 - where it would contribute to fulfilling the aims of this project
2. Samples will be taken only from deposits that are well dated or datable and well-sealed. Samples will not be taken from un-stratified deposits, make-up layers or contexts with a high degree of residual or intrusive artefacts.
3. The size of any collected samples will be determined after an assessment of the nature of the deposit from which they are to be taken. This will usually be a minimum of 40l, or 100% should its total bulk be less, but for exceptionally rich or significant deposits this could increase as appropriate.
4. All collected samples will be sent to an appropriate archaeological body for processing and assessment. Samples will be processed using a 500µm mesh for the residues, and 250µm for the flots. The residues will be sorted using sieves of 4mm and 2mm. 100% of material over 4mm in size will be sorted and 25% of material from 2mm-4mm. The unsorted material will be bagged and retained with the project archive.

Project Archive

1. The project archive will be prepared according to the standards set out in the following documents:
 - English Heritage's *MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation*. Appendix 1
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*
2. The project archive, subject to the landowner's permission, shall be deposited with a suitable local repository, however should this occur there will be a Museum box charge levied on each box deposited. If relevant an accession number will be obtained from that repository.

Project Report

1. A report will be written on the excavation detailing what was found, with appropriate illustrations, and analysing the remains in relation to the stated aims of the project, according to the standards set out in the following documents:
 - English Heritage's *MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation*.
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Universal guidance for archaeological excavation*.
2. Copies of this report will be given to the client, the Planning Authority and to West Sussex County Council's Historic Environment Record.
3. Should any remains discovered as part of this project be of local, regional or national importance then further dissemination may be necessary, with a presumption that the findings will be fully reported and published, the recommended medium being the Sussex Archaeological Collections.

Monitoring

1. The project will be monitored by Archaeological Advisor to Mid Sussex District Council who will ensure that the aims and methodology laid out in this document are met. The timing of this monitoring will be agreed with that Archaeological Advisor, noting that the evaluation trenches will not be backfilled until signed off by the Archaeological Advisor.

Resources

1. These archaeological works will be undertaken by George Anelay of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd or a suitably qualified employee of that organisation.
2. The following specialists shall be used:
 - Ceramics – Duncan Brown/Jane Timby
 - Bone – Martyn Allen
 - Environmental Samples – QUEST
3. All equipment necessary for the carrying out of this project will be provided by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd, with the exception of the mechanical excavator.
4. West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. holds up to date certificates for all the necessary insurances for the carrying out of this project.

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5. All staff of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. shall at all times observe the requirements of the relevant by-laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
6. All statements and opinions are offered in good faith; but West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.
7. The submission of this written scheme of investigation to the local planning authority will be considered to represent the agreement of all parties to its terms and conditions.

Timetable

1. The fieldwork will take place in the winter of 2025. A report on this archaeological work will be completed within four calendar months of the completion of the fieldwork.
2. The programme given above shall be adhered to as closely as possible, but West Sussex Archaeology Ltd accepts no responsibility for delays caused by another party or by adverse weather conditions which can reasonably be proven to have rendered the continuation of works unfeasible.

Health and Safety

1. All staff of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd shall at all times observe the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety Acts, Regulations and Codes of Practice applying to their particular activity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anelay, G. 2017 ***Heritage Statement and Written Scheme of Investigation for Proposed Works at Naldretts Farm, Pookbourne Lane, Sayers Common, Hassocks, West Sussex*** Unpublished

CiFA 2023 ***Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation***

CiFA 2020b ***Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives***

CiFA 2021 ***Code of Conduct***. IFA.

English Heritage. 2008. ***MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation***.

Watkinson, D. & Neal, V. 1998. ***First Aid For Finds***. Rescue/UKIC.