

FAO: Planning Department,  
Mid Sussex District Council

Application ref: DM/25/1434  
Date: 25 June 2025

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVICE

### RE: Land Rear Of Chesapeake Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

The application is for the proposed demolition of an existing dwelling house, stables and barn buildings and the proposed development of 27 dwellings, with a new vehicular access, associated landscaping, parking, open space, and all other associated development works.

No historic environment objections	
No historic environment objections subject to attached conditions	X
Further information required	
Recommend discharge condition	

The West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the proposed development is located in an area where very few archaeological monuments, finds or sites have been recorded. As attested by the submitted desk-based assessment (DBA), only 19 HER record entries lie within 1km of the proposed development site, only one of which comprises an archaeological fieldwork investigation (HER EWS1950). The remainder are chance findspots of a prehistoric date including Mesolithic flintwork; (HER MWS3764) and a Bronze Age Macehead (HER MWS1246), or the locations of medieval and post-medieval farmsteads or brickworks.

The lack of archaeological fieldwork undertaken in the vicinity makes assessing the potential of the development site a difficult prospect, but it would be a mistake to conflate an absence of evidence with evidence of absence.

Although low in number, the nearby findspots do suggest the potential for prehistoric activity in the area, and the trial-trenching evaluation carried out to the north of the site, although encountering no features, did recover a small assemblage of prehistoric worked flints.

Prehistoric sites, particularly early prehistoric sites, are often relatively ephemeral, dispersed and transitory in nature with only loose areas of concentration. Given this, and the finds recovered nearby, there may be the potential for previously unknown prehistoric remains to be present within the proposed development site. Moreover, the lack of widespread modern disturbance on the proposed development site suggests that any archaeological remains that do survive will be well preserved.

Given the above, I recommend that a programme of archaeological trial trenching is undertaken on the development site, secured by condition and targeted on the areas of proposed construction.

The results of this trenching programme would serve to suitably address the archaeological potential of the site, and inform on any archaeological mitigation, if appropriate.

I therefore recommend that the following conditions are placed on any consent, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 218 and Mid Sussex District Plan policy D34:

**RECOMMENDATION: Archaeological trial trenching and excavation**

- (i) No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until a programme of archaeological investigation has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted by the applicant, for approval by the Local Planning Authority.
- (ii) No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the completion of the programme of archaeological investigation identified in the WSI defined in 1 above, and any subsequent mitigation has been agreed.
- (iii) The applicant will submit a final archaeological report or (if appropriate) a Post Excavation Assessment report and/or an Updated Project Design for approval by the Local Planning Authority. This shall be submitted within 6 months of the date of completion of the archaeological fieldwork unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Local Planning Authority.

The archaeological work should be carried out by a recognised team of professional archaeologists and will comprise the trial-trenching of the development site, in advance of any development works commencing. Should this reveal archaeological deposits it could be followed by further targeted excavation/mitigation, as appropriate.

An archaeological brief can be produced from this office on request. This would detail the work required and can be acquired prior to the production of a WSI.

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Place Services

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*Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter*