



FAO: Planning Department,
Mid Sussex District Council

Application ref: DM/25/3067
Date: 8 December 2025

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVICE

RE: Land West Of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

The application is for Erection of 80 new residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including affordable housing units, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access including new footpath links to the east and west of the site along Reeds Lane), landscaping and open space, parking, sustainable drainage and other related works.

The West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that little in the way of intrusive archaeological investigation has been undertaken in the vicinity of the site.

A programme of archaeological trenching undertaken to the east of the site uncovered four pieces of worked prehistoric flint, but no archaeological features (HER MWS14983). A series of nineteenth-century farmsteads are recorded in the HER to the north, south and west of the proposed development area (HERs MWS8774, MWS13416 & MWS13243), suggesting that related archaeological activity may extend into the area of the proposed development, including evidence of land management and agricultural activity.

Aside from these records there is very little to inform on the archaeological potential of the proposed development site. As noted by the desk-based assessment there is a recorded nineteenth-century brickworks to the east of the site (HER MWS14983), and the site itself may have contained associated brickfields for clay extraction. These could have truncated remains and reduced archaeological potential within their footprint, however, the presence and extent of any areas of clay extraction is not shown on historic mapping and is currently unknown. Therefore, the resultant impact upon any archaeological potential is uncertain.

It seems clear, however, that any archaeological remains that are present on the proposed development site are likely to be negatively impacted by the groundworks associated with the proposed development.

Given this, I recommend that a programme of archaeological trenching is undertaken on the proposed development site prior to any development works commencing, to inform on the archaeological potential of the development site and any mitigation works (if required).

To understand the potential for, and significance of, archaeological deposits impacted by the proposal, a programme of trial trenching followed by excavation is being recommended in line with paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Mid Sussex District Plan policy D34. A recognised team of professionals should undertake the archaeological work. The

archaeological potential beneath the site needs to be further understood by a programme of trial trenching. Should this reveal archaeological deposits it could be followed by further targeted excavation/mitigation; this could be outlined in further detail by a brief from this office to inform a Written Scheme of Investigation.

In view of the above, I recommend that the following conditions are placed on any permission:

Archaeological trial trenching and excavation

- (1) **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.**
- (2) **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.**
- (3) **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.**

Mark Baister BA MCIfA
Historic Environment Consultant
Place Services
Email: HistoricEnvironment@essex.gov.uk



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