



FAO: Planning Department,
Mid Sussex District Council

Application ref: DM/25/2474
Date: 27 October 2025

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVICE

RE: Land South Of Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood

The application is for The erection of twelve houses, comprising 4x two bedroom houses, 4x three bedroom houses and 4x four bedroom houses, with associated access (Via Yewhurst Close) and parking.

The West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that no known archaeological investigations have been undertaken within or in proximity to the proposed development site. This makes assessing the archaeological potential of the site a difficult prospect.

In general terms, this area of the High Weald has potential for historic iron-working activity (largely Late Iron Age and Roman in date) to be present, and similarly the site may well contain evidence of medieval/post-medieval land management or agricultural activity, being in the hinterland of Ashurst Wood village and several farmsteads. In the late nineteenth century the site was located within a designed landscape associated with Ashurstwood Abbey (named as "Yewhurst" on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map) to the east, and garden features associated with this use may also survive within the development site.

Although currently the archaeological potential of the development site is uncertain, what is clear is that any remains that do survive will likely be negatively impacted by the groundworks associated with the proposals.

Accordingly, 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:



RECOMMENDATION: 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.**

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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