

James Smith
Lewes District Council,
6 High Street,
Lewes,
East Sussex, BN7 2AB

Your Ref: LW/24/0820
Our Ref: 132194

Contact:
Diccon Hart

diccon.hart@eastsussex.gov.uk

Dear James,

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION

LW/24/0820 Land South of Green Road Wivelsfield Green Outline application for the erection of up to 150 dwellings, with associated works, parking, landscaping, publicly accessible open space, land for education or community use, with access from Green Road and Eastern Road

Recommend for approval in principle subject to the imposition of conditions	The information provided is satisfactory and identifies that there is a risk that archaeological remains will be damaged. Nonetheless it is acceptable that the risk of damage to archaeology is mitigated by the application of planning conditions which are outlined in this response.	YES
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Thank you for your consultation received on January 7th 2025. If the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning permission, then we ask that the following condition be applied:

[ARCH 1] No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

[ARCH 3] No phase of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post-investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) for that phase has been completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The archaeological site investigation and post - investigation assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the programme set out in the written scheme of investigation approved under condition

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological and historical interest of the site is safeguarded and recorded to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Relevant National Planning Policy

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Detailed Comments

The planning application lies partly within an Archaeological Notification Area (a non-designated heritage asset) associated with a Second World War auxiliary patrol operational base in West Wood.

The site is also of archaeological interest due to its location within a landscape with evidence of past human activity from the prehistoric period onwards. The prehistoric evidence in the wider vicinity of the site includes concentrations of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age struck flint recorded to the south-east of the site during the construction of the Ditchling to Wivelsfield water main. Although this material was recorded some distance from the proposal site the quantity of material recorded suggests it may be associated with nearby settlement, the location of which remains to be determined. In addition, possible prehistoric worked flint and associated areas of burning were recorded directly the north of the site during the digging of a gas main. This evidence remains difficult to interpret but does raise the possibility of prehistoric activity in close proximity to the site.

The site is located some distance from the nearest known zones of Romano-British activity, although a copper alloy brooch of Roman date was recovered by metal detector from within the site boundary. No sites of Anglo-Saxon date are recorded within a c. 1km radius of the site, and the site appears to have lain beyond the limits of the medieval settlement of Wivelsfield, although it is probably located within the settlements agricultural hinterland. The agricultural character of the site continued throughout the post-medieval period, though at least two small cottages are shown within the site boundary from the late 18th century onwards, albeit both demolished by the turn of the 20th century. Subsequent activity includes a Home Guard Auxiliary Unit hide constructed in West Wood, close to the site boundary at its south-west corner.

An archaeological desk-based assessment submitted as part of this application (RPS project ref. JCH02048) has reviewed the available archaeological evidence within a

1km radius of the site, concluding that '*a generally low archaeological potential can be ascribed to the study site for all past periods of human activity. A localised raised potential can be identified at two locations of mapped late-18th/19th century cottages at the northwest and northeast site boundaries*'. Whilst we broadly concur with this assessment, I would note that previous observations suggest the possibility of prehistoric activity close to the northern boundary of the site that remains imperfectly understood and which could extend into the proposal site itself.

Recommendations

In the light of the potential for impacts to heritage assets with archaeological interest resulting from the proposed development, the area affected by the proposals should be the subject of a ***programme of archaeological works***. This will enable any archaeological deposits and features that would be disturbed by the proposed works, to be either preserved *in situ* or, where this cannot be achieved, adequately recorded in advance of their loss. These recommendations are in line with the requirements given in the **NPPF** (the Government's planning policies for England):

In furtherance of this recommendation, we shall be available to advise the applicant on how they can best fulfil any archaeological condition that is applied to their planning permission and to provide a brief setting out the scope of the programme of works.

The ***written scheme of investigation***, referred to in the recommended condition wording above, will set out the contracted archaeologist's detailed approach to undertake the programme of works and accord with the relevant sections of the Sussex Archaeological Standards:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/archaeology/planning/>.

This advice is provided to the Local Planning Authority by the County Archaeologist in line with the Service Level Agreement and is not a statutory consultation response.

Please could you send us a copy of the planning decision, once it has been made. Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact us again if you need further information or advice.

Yours sincerely

Diccon Hart

Archaeology Section
Environment Team
East Sussex County Council