

WSSC/030/21 - Proposed new clay-pit (mineral extraction) and the development of a construction materials recycling facility to provide recycling facility and for use during restoration of the clay-pit at Land in forestry area near Loxwood, off Loxwood Road, Loxwood, West Sussex, RH14 0RA

Environment & Heritage Team response to consultation Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

A desk-based assessment has been submitted by the applicants as part of the planning application. This has identified that 'There is a low probability for archaeology of all periods except the Post medieval period, which has a high probability of remains associated with woodland and agricultural activities, and industrial activities such as brick and glassmaking'. We would largely concur with this as an interpretation, with the significant caveat that the absence of evidence for earlier periods is a likely to be the result of an absence of archaeological investigation as a genuine absence.

Lidar and ground-truthing has identified the presence of woodland banks, associated with historic trackways and drainage, associated with the post-medieval management of the site, and may have earlier origins. The entrance and access road are located on the site of a 19th century brickworks and have the potential to impact on associated earthworks and belowground remains.

The site has therefore been identified as having surviving historical features and the potential for further archaeological remains to be present.

Planning Condition (Archaeology)

1) The woodland banks that form the boundaries to the site, particularly those along its northern, eastern and western sides, should be excluded from the extraction and preserved with a small internal buffer of 3m. Provision should be made within the scheme for appropriate fencing and signage to ensure that no inadvertent damage takes place either during the extraction or the restoration phases of work on this site.

2) No development shall commence within the site until:

a) A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority; and

b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

POLICIES: National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 199 (Conservation of the Historic Environment); West Sussex Joint Minerals Plan (July 2018), Policy M14 (b) (Historic Environment); Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (Adopted March 2018), Policy DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets.

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