

College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex

Heritage Impact Assessment



Blue Willow Heritage
Historic Environment Consultancy

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Heritage Impact Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blue Willow Heritage was commissioned to provide an assessment of the potential heritage impact of a proposed development at the Land off College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex. Whilst not contained within the boundary, the site is situated immediately adjacent to the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area along its south-eastern extent, and is considered to form a component of its rural setting.

The proposed development comprises an area of greenfield, historically in agricultural use particularly as pastureland but also with some arable farming, surrounded by residential dwellings to the north, east, and west. However, further fieldscapes lie directly to the south of the plot. The proposed development seeks to erect 3 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings, together with 3 no. detached garages, and will utilise the existing access along College Lane which will be reinforced with resin-bound permeable gravel.

Two previous iterations of the scheme for 10 no. (DM/17/0992) and 6 no. (DM/17/4601) dwellings were refused primarily on heritage grounds -specifically, over concerns regarding the perceived harm upon the character and appearance of the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area as a result of the 'siting, layout, and density' of the proposed new-build housing. It was consequently determined by the local planning authority that the previous schemes would result in 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, though only a neutral impact to the Grade II listed building of Wickham Farmhouse (NHLE 1025662) by virtue of the spatial separation between the two sites. However, extant planning permission exists for the erection of a single two-storey dwelling together with a detached garage which has established the principle of development at this site (DM/22/1616).

In order to overcome the obstacles related to both the purported impact upon the historic character of the village, and appreciations of the linear planform of the conservation area in terms of its spatial separation from the adjoining villages of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks, a heritage-led design response was implemented, the overarching aim of which was to create a scheme that better reflects the semi-rural character of the village. Though the previous schemes had attempted to replicate the designs of the esteemed British architect Peter Aldington, the inclusion of 'angular' post-war housing is not considered to be sympathetic to the historic local vernacular and has not been replicated as part of this scheme.

Instead, the new proposals aim to emulate the character present in the southern portion of the village – characterised by larger dwellings with more substantial gardens and hedgerows set back from the street frontages – in order to not only retain but reinforce the visual distinction between the architectural forms and styles present within the north and south of the village. Elements of traditional design from the palette of existing local materials throughout the village have also been selected, including hung tiles and weatherboarding which strongly echo the distinctive visual character of Sussex. Consequently, where views of the site are possible, these are intended to be of sympathetic addition of built form, which reinforces as opposed to detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed development's design response to the key heritage issues associated with the site has also been guided by taking account of the recognised significance of the rolling countryside context of the conservation area, and efforts have been made to ensure that the site only minimally projects southwards from the existing residential boundaries established along the east / west horizon bound by College Lane and Hurst Wickham Close. It is the opinion of this assessment that the contribution of this particular plot to the wider countryside context has been inflated by virtue of a lack of recognition of this existing built form to the east and west which has entirely fragmented appreciations of a rolling countryside context along this east / west horizon.

Most importantly, the notion that development within this field preserves the distinction between the adjoining villages to the east and west is not considered to be grounded in the existing spatial data – again, considering that built form already exists to the east and west. The plot is thus considered to form a logical site for infill development up to the existing built horizon characterised by residential dwellings. To protect the wider setting of the village, no further development is considered appropriate within the open fields to the south which better capture the rural setting of Hurst Wickham, and allows it to be appreciated as a settlement in its own right.

Overall, taking into account the design mitigations incorporated as part of this scheme, the proposed development is considered to result in the lower end of less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. This is principally based on the conclusion that the contribution of the plot as existing to the rolling countryside context of the conservation area has been denuded as a result of existing development to the north, east and west, yet still constitutes green space on the immediate periphery of the designated area. It is also considered that the schematic changes to the scheme ensure the concerns previously expressed by the local planning authority have

been satisfactorily addressed, principally due to the introduction of a more scattered semi-rural arrangement, and in the incorporation of traditional form and materials. Public benefit must therefore be assessed accordingly with regards to the planning balances afforded by provisions of new housing in Sussex.

When considering this public benefit, the sympathetic approach of the scheme and its design response to the identified heritage constraints is therefore considered to fulfil the environmental objectives of 'sustainable development' defined in NPPF (MHCLG 2024, 5). This is in so far as it seeks to protect the natural and historic environment as much as possible, whilst allowing national social objectives to be met by providing a range of homes to meet the needs of current and future generations. The use of design which reinforces the local vernacular specifically seeks to ensure the continued contribution of the plot to quality of place within the Conservation Area.

On this basis, the proposed development is also considered to be in line with local planning policy - particularly policies DP35 of the Local Plan with regards to preserving the character, setting, and views within the conservation area (Mid Sussex District Council 2018). The scheme has also addressed policies C3 and C4 of the neighbourhood plan in how the wider rural setting of the village will be conserved, with the immediate semi-rural but developed setting around the immediate periphery of the conservation area developed in a mode sympathetic to the scale, function, and character of its existing surroundings (Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council 2015).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been commissioned to provide an assessment of the potential heritage impact of a proposed development at College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex. The existing plot comprises a greenfield site and is situated in a historic setting within the immediate periphery of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area.

A number of previous applications have been submitted at this site regarding proposals to redevelop the plot into residential use. This included a proposal for the erection of ten houses (DM/17/0992) followed by a reduced proposal for six dwellings (DM/17/4601), both of which were refused in 2017 and 2018, principally due to the perceived harm upon the character and appearance of the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area as a result of the development proposals.

A new proposal was subsequently approved in 2017 for the change of use of the land from agricultural to residential, and for the erection of a three-storey new build house with access from a new driveway off College Lane (DM/17/0948). However, a fourth proposal was approved in 2022 with amendments to the former application to allow for a larger two-storey dwelling house with a timber framed detached two-storey garage (DM/22/1616). Such planning permission is still extant, although Condition 2 dictates that the development must commence before 2nd August 2025.

The purpose of this HIA is to provide baseline information on the cultural heritage resource in the proposed development site and surrounding area, and to assess any potential effects of the proposed development on that resource.

The conclusions reached in this report are informed by detailed historic research, a site visit and the application of professional judgement based on historic, archaeological, architectural, or artistic interest. It has been prepared and checked by an accredited member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in line with Historic England Advice Note 12 '*Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*' (Historic England 2019) and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*' (Historic England 2017).

1.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is situated within the settlement of Hurst Wickham which lies within the wider village of Hurstpierpoint in the District of Mid Sussex, and the county of West Sussex. The nearest town is Burgess Hill, the centre of which is situated approximately 3.5 km north-east, whilst the nearest city of Brighton and Hove is located approximately 12 km to the south-east. The development site itself is centred at SK TQ 29248 16311 and comprises a field on the outskirts of the village situated between existing built form. The site also forms the immediate setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. Furthermore, it can be considered that the site forms the wider setting, though not the immediate periphery, of the South Downs National Park, considering that the plot is located approximately 490 m north-east of the national park boundary.

1.3 GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

The underlying bedrock of the proposed development site is composed of silty sandstone of the Lower Greensand Group formed between 126.3 and 100.5 million years ago during the Cretaceous period (BGS 2024). No information has currently been made available regarding the superficial deposits within the development site. Online mapping provided by the UK Soil Observatory (2024) characterises the soils across the development site as 'slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils' (CSAI 2024).

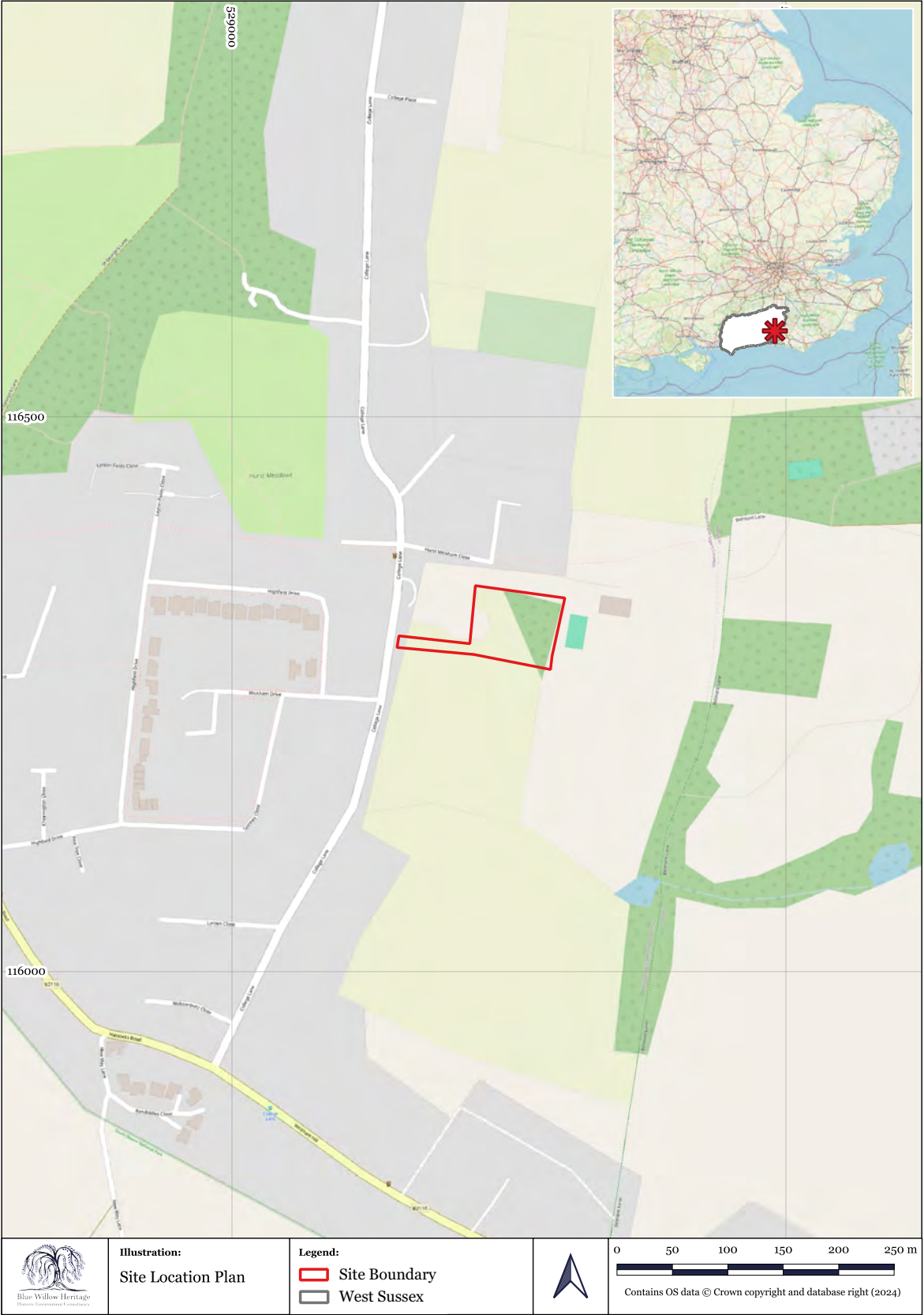


Figure 1: Location plan



Figure 2: Location plan over satellite

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development seeks to develop the site in a mode sympathetic to its existing surroundings, with an intention to erect a series of residential dwellings which are wilfully modern but strongly emulate elements of the historic local vernacular. This approach aims to introduce built form of high-quality design into a plot which situated between existing built form to the north, east and west. Therefore, the plot is considered a strong contender for a suitable location for infill development in Hurstpierpoint to meet ambitious governmental targets for the creation of new housing in Sussex.

The principle of development, though on a smaller scale, has already been established for this plot, as reflected by the grant of planning permission for the erection of a single detached dwelling together with a detached single-storey garage (DM/22/1616). The new scheme to which this document relates seeks to erect 3 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings, together with 3 no. detached garages. The scheme will utilise the existing access along College Lane, which will be reinforced with resin-bound permeable gravel.

It should be noted that an irregular arrangement for the dwellings has been deliberately incorporated into the proposed site layout, including the placement of three of the structures around an open courtyard intended to mimic the agricultural roots of the region by echoing elements of U-shaped courtyard farmsteads. Boundary treatments will include the addition of post and rail fencing together with access gates where required, in addition to native hedging, a small section of brick walling, and a close boarded fence.

Full details of the proposed scheme can be found in the supporting information.

1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The focus of this document relates principally to the setting of the proposed development site within the historic village of Hurstpierpoint and in the immediate setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area – as well as within the wider setting of the South Downs National Park – and the potential impact of the proposed development on this setting.

The aims of the study are:

- To assess the known cultural heritage resource within the proposed development area and the wider study area
- To assess the potential effects of the proposed development upon the known and potential cultural heritage resource
- Make recommendations based upon this assessment as to any potential requirement for evaluation and/or mitigation and off-setting which may be required.

2. SITE SURVEY DESCRIPTION

A site visit was undertaken in sunny conditions on 6th December 2024. A description of the site and those assets which are considered to form a strong component of its overall heritage context are explored in the following sections.

2.1 COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT



Figure 3: Proposed development site

As previously noted, the study site is situated within the settlement of Hurst Wickham, which lies within the wider village of Hurstpierpoint. Although situated on the outskirts of the village, the study site still forms part of the historic village of Hurstpierpoint, which is characterised by medieval burgage plots, comprising dwellings with associated gardens. The study site sits within the northern extent of the settlement of Hurst Wickham, between two major sections, which are divided by College Lane, situated to the east. The study site is bounded by semi-rural built form to the north, east and west, and rolling grassland/agricultural pastureland to the south.

The study site comprises a partially enclosed parcel of formerly agricultural grassed field land (0.49 hectares/1.2 acres). Existing boundary treatments comprise a mixture of dense hedgerow and timber post and rail fencing. The study site holds significance as part of a wider system of fields in the village. Indeed, it was noted during the site survey that two linear field boundaries, which run through the study site on both a north-east / south-west axis, and an east / west axis are discernible at ground level, despite the fact that the field has been ploughed in recent years, and subject to intensive 21st century planting and landscaping – including the removal of the existing wooded area in the north-eastern corner of the plot, save for at least one mature tree. Further detail pertaining to the historical development of the plot can be found in Section 2.5.1, whilst information relating to the potential for archaeological remains to exist within the study site can be found in Section 2.6 of this report.

Although the site fronts directly onto College Lane, it occupies a slightly elevated position above this road in parts. Indeed, the study site rises gently at the north east corner of the plot. Access into the study site is currently gained via large agricultural-style timber gates anchored to modern timber gateposts in the western corner of the plot. The gates lead off College Lane, which serves as one of the main roads, providing access between the village of Hurstpierpoint and settlement of Hurst Wickham. It is important to note that there is no public access from the east of the site as this comprises private land.



Figure 4: Looking south west from within the site



Figure 5: Looking north from within the site



Figure 6: Looking south west from within the site



Figure 7: View looking towards southern boundary



Figure 8: Looking towards the eastern boundary of site



Figure 9: Looking towards the southern boundary



Figure 10: North east corner of site



Figure 11: View looking north of the study site



Figure 12: North west corner of site



Figure 13: South-east corner of site



Figure 14: North-eastern corner of site



Figure 15: View looking towards the eastern boundary



Figure 16: View looking towards the south east corner of the study site



Figure 17: View looking towards the north east corner of the study site



Figure 18: View from south-western extent looking north-east



Figure 19: View of the entrance into the adjacent field

2.2 HURST WICKHAM CONSERVATION AREA

As previously noted, the development site is situated within a historic setting in the immediate vicinity of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. A conservation area appraisal for this designated region has been published in recent years by the Mid Sussex District Council (2018). The area was designated in 1989, although was subsequently extended in 2018 to include Hurst Wickham Barn, given that this structure attests to the earliest history of the hamlet when it comprised Wickham Farm, together with a number of isolated cottages. A summary of the relevant information contained within the conservation area appraisal has been reproduced below.

The Hurstpierpoint Conservation Areas are made up of three distinct regions; Hurst Wickham, Hurstpierpoint, and Langton. Modern built form has long since eroded the once open rural character between Hurst Wickham and Hurstpierpoint. Though this has detracted from the setting of these conservation areas, such development occurred on a semi piecemeal basis and is now considered to be well-established. It can be summarised that the special character afforded to the Hurstpierpoint area as a whole is in part made up of the architectural interest derived from the various villages and hamlets making up the region – including Hurst Wickham itself which is situated to the east of Hurstpierpoint.

The village is composed of various agricultural buildings, cottages, and terraced villas, and the abundance of historic buildings throughout attests to the architectural interest of the settlement, with elements reflective of the traditional local vernacular clearly contributing much to its semi-rural character. The distinction between these three designated areas is also at the heart of their significance, which has subsequently been met with a drive to preserve their local distinctiveness.

The historic development of the conservation area is of much interest, spanning from its origins as the farmstead surrounding Hurst Wickham Barn and a number of scattered cottages. Following the establishment of the railway at Hassocks, a number of semi-detached villas were established to support the growing population, including the dwellings at 22-32 College Lane, in addition to the brick structures at Alice Terrace. Many of these terraces, and those built in subsequent years, retain their original lead name plaques which attest to the social history of the settlement. Further development also followed in the 20th century, and, despite the linking of the hamlet to the village of Hurstpierpoint to the west, Hurst Wickham is noted to have still retained its distinct character embodied by its ‘semi-rural appearance’, made up of a narrow winding lane lined with terraces.

Although no longer in existence, the retained original post-box in the garden wall of one of the dwellings attests to a time where the village held a shop and post office. The lane is noted to widen in the southern portion of the conservation area which is in part afforded by the development of 19th and 20th century houses separated from the road by sizable front gardens. Much of the earliest architectural fabric within the conservation area is characterised by render or polychrome brickwork - sometimes featuring hung tiles, and often with hipped roofs. The terraces to the north comprise two storey brick-built structures raised above road level – some rendered, and occasionally with polychrome brickwork. The roofscapes are composed of slate with regularly spaced chimney stacks creating a sense of uniformity along both the street frontage and roofline.

In terms of typical fenestrations throughout the conservation area, as with most historic settlements, timber sash windows make an important contribution to Hurst Wickham – including the number of tripartite sashes which add an additional layer of architectural interest. Where windows have been replaced with uPVC units, this makes a notable negative contribution to the setting and architectural interest of the conservation area. Other typical fenestrations include some projecting window bays, in addition to recessed porches with arched heads which are specifically noted to add ‘movement and interest’ to these façades when viewed from the road. Later porch additions which are modern in character are again noted to detract from this architectural interest, where they are present.

Boundary treatments in the northern portion of the conservation area are characterised by brick or brick and flint walls with decorative iron railings, which is noted to instil a sense of continuity and unity along the street frontage. The shallower front gardens also create a strong contrast to the larger lawns present to the south. Senses of enclosure are noted to be softened by glimpsed views of the rural countryside context and small trackways between the buildings themselves. Boundary treatments to the south are typically constructed in stone or brick, in addition to boundary hedging. The contrast between these boundary treatments to the north and south make up a significant part of the architectural interest afforded to the conservation area.

Road surfaces include the tarmacked road making up College Lane, which is absent of raised footpaths. The northern portion of the conservation area is instead made up of less formal gravelled tracks which provide access to the rear of the houses arranged along the street frontage. Street lighting is noted to be 'limited and utilitarian in nature', most of which is attached to the timber pylons running along College Lane. The southern portion of the conservation area is noted to be populated with mature trees which combine with the hedging and vegetation within the larger front and rear gardens to create what has been deemed a 'soft and verdant character, which complements the spacious nature of this part of the conservation area, creating a gentle transition between the centre of the hamlet and the open fields to the south.'

This rural setting has been noted as one of the key positive characteristics of the conservation area, including preserving impressions of the settlement as a small hamlet, despite the new development now linking it to the village of Hurstpierpoint to the west. It has also been noted that the fields to the south of Hurst Wickham to the east of College Lane are 'particularly important in retaining a feeling of separation from Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks'.

2.3 VIEWS

Although the access into the development site fronts onto College Lane, the remainder of the plot occupies a more subservient position set back by approximately 65 m from both College Lane to the west, and by c. 18m from the lane leading from Hurst Wickham Close to the north. Visibility of the study site is limited on the approach north along College Lane, at Wickham Farm and Hurst Wickham Barn, looking north-east, due to trees/hedgerow screening. This will be even more dense in summer months. The site reveals itself as one travels north along College Lane towards the site, where it then becomes clearly visible looking east towards the site from College Lane. There is no visibility from the public realm on the north side of the site from the path which runs from College Lane from west to east to the north of the site.

The proposed development is partially tucked behind existing built form present at the site of Hurst Wickham Barn, and is laid over a relatively flat topography. The site is blocked by standing buildings (Hurst Wickham Barn) once within the Conservation Area itself, except when standing on the south side of Hurst Wickham Barn. Though bridleway number 8C is situated approximately 145 m to the east of the site boundary, the plot is enveloped by a variety of screening comprising both hedgerows and intervening built form. It is considered that such screening would be even greater in the summer months.

From the development site itself, views are again heavily screened, and characterised by hedgerows, trees, surrounding built form to the north, east and west, electric cabling on wooden pylons, and most importantly, the rolling countryside context to the south. Views of the South Downs National Park have also been noted as one of the special characteristics of the Hurstpierpoint area more generally— both in terms of appreciations of the continued rural setting in addition to views of Wolstonbury Hill – a distinctive landmark which can be appreciated from numerous points in the villages adjoining Hurstpierpoint.

In terms of visibility from neighbouring properties, it is considered that there is a direct line of sight from properties on the northern edge of the study site, particularly from upper floors. Equally, the study site is likely to be visible from properties to the south of the site and in longer ranging views from the Downs to the south as an extension to the settlement, although it is unlikely to be individually discernible amongst the existing built form from the latter.



Figure 20: College Lane looking towards the conservation area



Figure 21: View of College Lane looking towards the study site



Figure 22: College Lane looking towards the study site



Figure 23: View of entrance to the study site



Figure 24: Facing south along College Lane out of conservation area



Figure 25: 49 College Lane including villa terraces



Figure 26: Junction of College Lane and Hurst Wickham Close



Figure 27: View north along College Lane



Figure 28: View of Hurst Wickham Barn



Figure 29: Entrance to Hurst Wickham Barn, now residential



Figure 30: View towards entrance to study site from College Lane



Figure 31: View southwards out of conservation area



Figure 32: View looking east along College Lane towards study site



Figure 33: View east into study site



Figure 34: View north-east facing Hurst Wickham Barn



Figure 35: View of Wickham Farmhouse



Figure 36: View of Wickham Barn



Figure 37: View from Wickham Barn facing north



Figure 38: View from adjoining road of Wickham Farmhouse



Figure 39: View from road of Wickham Farmhouse



Figure 40: View through screening of Wickham Farmhouse



Figure 41: View down track of Wickham Barn

2.4 SURROUNDING HERITAGE ASSETS IN THE STUDY AREA

2.4.1 DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Beyond the boundary of the proposed development site but within the 500 m study area, the HER records the following designated heritage assets:

- One Conservation Area
- One Grade II listed building

As previously mentioned, the plot is situated in the immediate setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, whose boundary directly adjoins the north-western corner of the development site. It is also located in the near periphery of the South Downs National Park, which lies approximately 500 m to the north-west of the site boundary and therefore is not included in the study area consulted as part of this assessment. As such, the plot is not considered to form the immediate setting of this designated area, and is instead more inherently tied to the setting of the immediately adjacent Hurst Wickham Conservation Area.

The only listed building within the 500 m study area is known as Wickham Farmhouse (NHLE 1025662), which is listed at Grade II. This designated heritage asset is situated c. 120 m south-west of the development site boundary. It is believed to date to at least the 17th century but could conceivably be earlier in date. The building is most likely of timber-framed construction with red brick infilling, although it has since been refaced with further brick and hung tiles. It bears a half hipped tiled roof, casement windows, and decorative grey headers above the various openings.

A full gazetteer of listed buildings is included in the Appendices.

2.4.2 NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

There is a total of six records within the HER for the 500 m study area relating to historical/archaeological sites or findspots, one of which is a duplicate of the designated heritage asset noted above pertaining to the Grade II listed building of Wickham Farmhouse (MWS11824). A second record located immediately beyond the development site boundary again relates to Wickham Farm, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common (MWS11823).

A group of post-medieval field boundaries together with ridge and furrow have also been mapped in the surrounding area (MWS15845). Two further HER sites are associated with another historic farmstead known as Clayton Wickham Farm (MWS7292; MWS9829). The final large polygon monument record pertains to the Downs from Above Aerial Survey project led by the National Trust (MWS15745).

No further assets recorded within the HER are considered directly relevant to the proposed development site. A full gazetteer of HER sites is included in the Appendices.

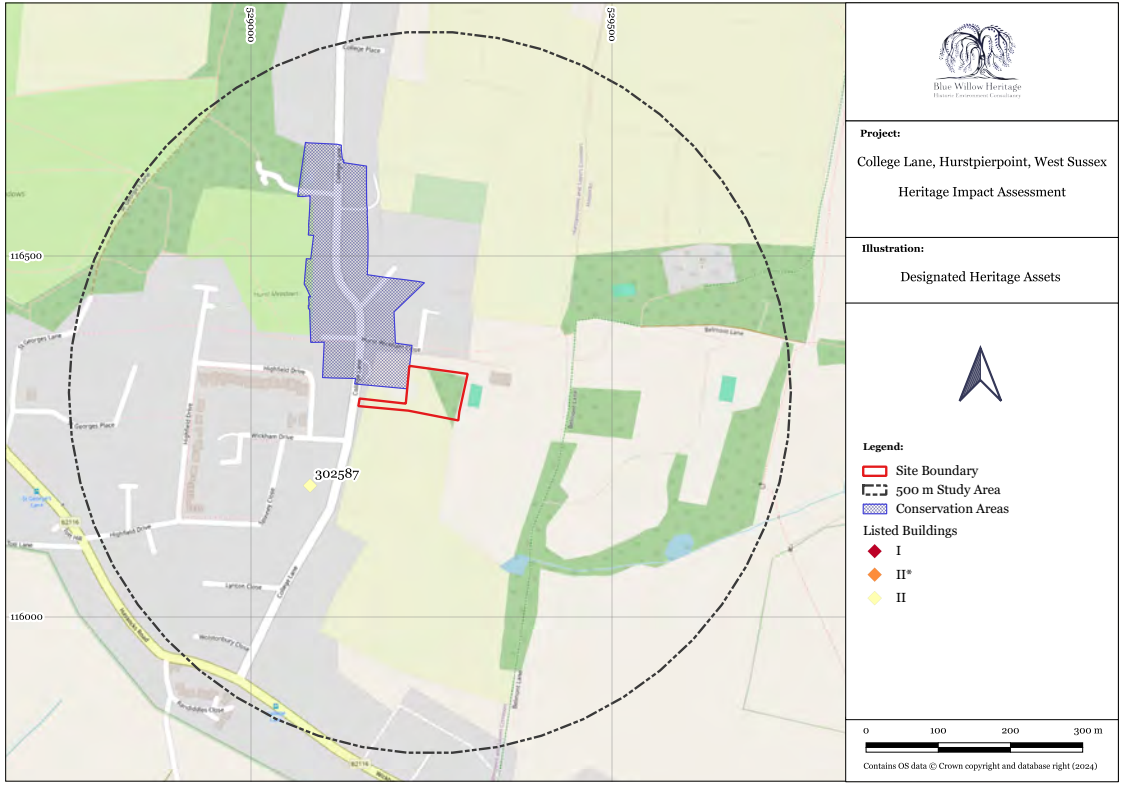


Figure 42: Designated heritage assets in the 500 m study area

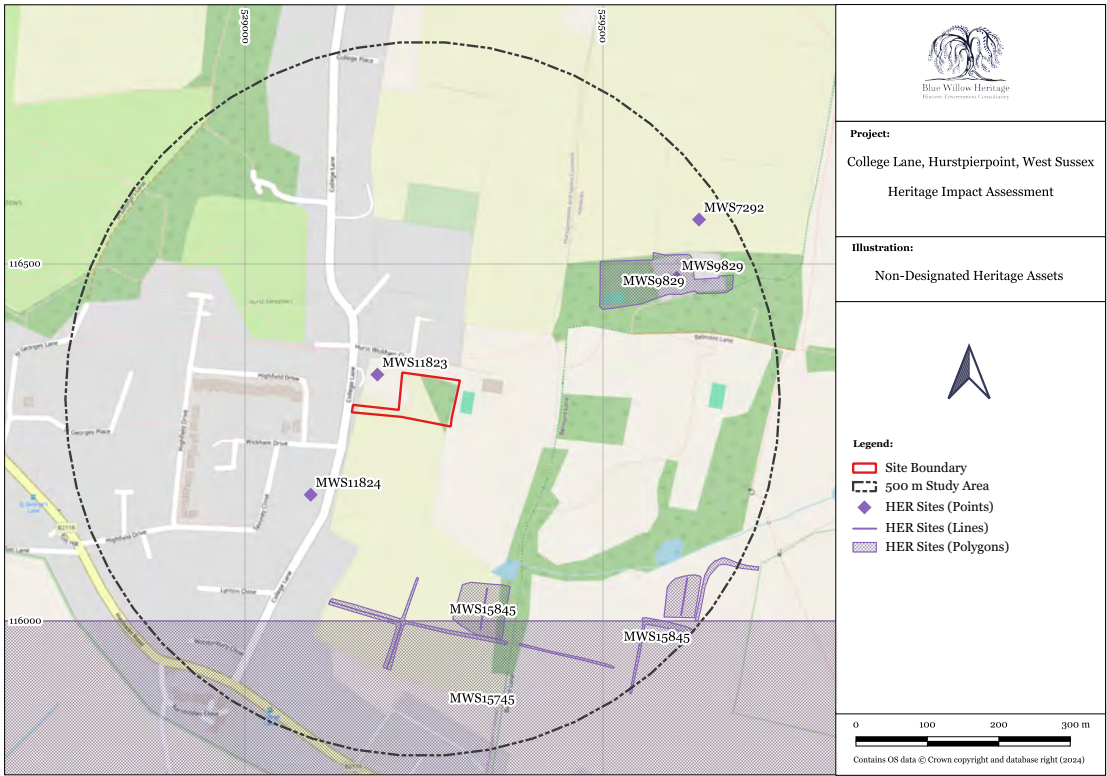


Figure 43: Non-designated heritage assets in the 500 m study area

2.5 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- 1842** Consultation of the historical mapping showed that, whilst there are a number of early pictorial maps of the area, none of these are at a sufficient scale to provide any detail of the proposed development site. Information gleaned from this mapping does not show the site in any great detail until the tithe map for the parish of Hurstpierpoint which was published in 1842 (IR 29/35/144). At this point in time, the development site was known as Plot 237 – a large field which bordered Hurst Wickham Farm (Plot 236). This farmstead had already been established by this time and had adopted a regular L-shaped plan characteristic of courtyard farmsteads of this nature.

Plot 237 itself was known as ‘Barn Mead’, and is recorded to have been utilised as pastureland. Both plots were owned by Catherine Elizabeth Sibley and occupied by the King Brothers, although Plot 237 is also recorded to have been owned and occupied by Nathaniel Borrer. In the wider area, Wickham Farm to the south-west had also already been established by this date, as had the buildings adjoining Wickham Cottage. However, the village of Hurst Wickham itself had not yet been established by this point, and the settlement would have been better characterised as that of a hamlet during this time.

- 1873** By the time of the first edition six-inch Ordnance Survey map surveyed between 1873 and 1874, additional structures had populated Hurst Wickham Farm which had developed a U-shaped plan with additional dispersed structures along the northern boundary of the farmstead. However, the addition of a boundary along the western extent of the courtyard gave the appearance of a fully enclosed yard. A pond is also shown immediately beyond the yard. It is worthy of note that during the 19th century, the site of Hurst Wickham Farm as we know it today went by the name of Wickham Farm, whilst the plot to the south was initially known as Hurst Wickham Farm, before the names were exchanged between the two farms.

The development site itself remained predominantly unchanged during this time, with the exception of an additional trackway which is now shown to have run along the northern boundary of Plot 237 providing access to a second site also known as Wickham Farm, together with Wickham House to the east. A number of trees are also shown to have populated the hedgerows which enclosed the field. In the surrounding area, of note is the fact that the area contained by the village of Hurst Wickham had been further developed by this time, with additional structures now shown to the north and south of Wickham Cottage.

- 1896** Little further development is shown in the following 23 years by the time of the subsequent 25-inch Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1896. However, it can be noted that the proposed development site was clearly labelled as Plot 754 on this mapping.

- 1909** It can again be noted that little further development occurred in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site between the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. The only notable change occurs within Hurst Wickham Farm where the former pond was no longer shown. The farmstead was also now clearly labelled as ‘Hurst Wickham Farm’ as opposed to ‘Wickham Farm’ which was now sited to the south. However, it is clear that further development occurred to the north of Wickham Cottage within the village of Hurst Wickham.

- 1937** A series of major changes occurred during the early-to-mid 20th century whereby the large field accompanying Wickham Farm was divided into three separate parcels of land known as Plots 754, 754a, and 754b. Several new plots were also added immediately to the north including at least one new structure, with further housing development occurring immediately north of Hurst Wickham Close. To the east, a large structure known as Hurst Wickham Rise was added, together with enclosed parcels of land within the building’s curtilage.

A new structure was even added within Wickham Farm itself. It can also be noted that a new road was constructed to the west adjoining Wickham Place. As such, it is clear that this period was characterised by a sharp acceleration in rural growth, including the expansion of the village of Hurst Wickham accompanied by the enclosure of the former larger fields once characterising the wider fieldscape.

- 1962** Little further development can be seen in the following 25-inch National Grid map surveyed in 1955. However, by the time of the following 25-inch map surveyed in 1962, fields 754, 754a and 754b were once again amalgamated into one larger plot. An additional enclosed field had also been added in the north-eastern corner which was broadly rectangular in shape. Also of note is a steep rise in further rural growth to the west where several modern cul-de-sacs were established, as accessed from Wickham Drive.
- 2001** Our first clear visual impressions of the site in publicly-available satellite imagery come in 2001, where it can be seen that the separate parcel of land in the north-eastern corner of the field now formed part of the wider plot and was not delineated on the ground by any form of permanent field boundary. The field as a whole was maintained as grassland with dense hedgerows to the east and south.
- 2007** By 2007, a shift in the use of the landscape can be seen, with the field to the south now used as arable land. A small triangular woodland plantation was also implemented in the north-eastern corner of the plot. Furthermore, an irregular oval-shaped boundary now projected eastwards from Wickham Farm.
- 2015** The oval-shaped boundary adjoining Wickham Farm appears to have been lost at some point between 2013 and 2015, and appears to have been replaced by a more regular rectangular plot now projecting southwards from the boundary of the farmstead.
- 2022** The removal of the woodland plantation in the north-eastern corner of the field is shown to have occurred at some point between 2020 – 2022. Such alterations are believed to have coincided with the partial removal of hedgerow from the western boundary of the plot along College Lane to facilitate the creation of a new access into the plot.

Historic mapping consulted is outlined in the table below:

Date Surveyed	Date Published	Map/Compiler	Author and Work (where known)
-	1842	Tithe	IR 29/35/144
1873-1874	1879	Ordnance Survey	<i>OS Six inch England and Wales, 1842-1952</i>
1896	1897	Ordnance Survey	<i>OS 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952</i>
1909	1910	Ordnance Survey	<i>OS 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952</i>
1937-1938	1946	Ordnance Survey	<i>OS 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952</i>
1955	1955	Ordnance Survey	<i>National Grid Maps, 1944-1973</i>
1954-1962	1963	Ordnance Survey	<i>National Grid Maps, 1944-1973</i>
1962	1963	Ordnance Survey	<i>National Grid Maps, 1944-1973</i>

Table 1 Historic mapping consulted

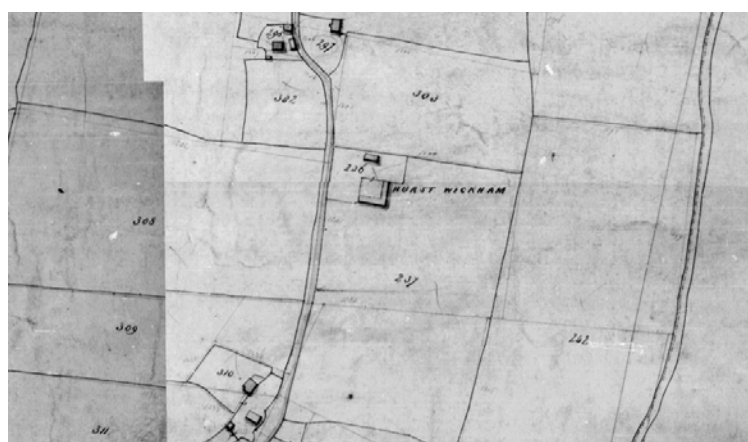


Figure 44: Tithe map published in 1842



Figure 45: Six-inch Ordnance Survey map surveyed between 1873-1874



Figure 46: 25-inch Ordnance Survey map revised in 1896



Figure 47: 25-inch Ordnance Survey map revised in 1909



Figure 48: 25-inch Ordnance Survey map revised 1937-1938



Figure 49: 25-inch National grid Map revised in 1955



Figure 50: 25-inch National Grid map revised in 1962



Figure 51: Satellite imagery captured in 2001



Figure 52: Satellite imagery captured in 2007



Figure 53: Satellite imagery captured in 2009



Figure 54: Satellite imagery captured in 2013



Figure 55: Satellite imagery captured in 2015



Figure 56: Satellite imagery captured in 2018



Figure 57: Satellite imagery captured in 2020



Figure 58: Satellite imagery captured in 2022

2.5.1 ARCHIVAL SOURCES

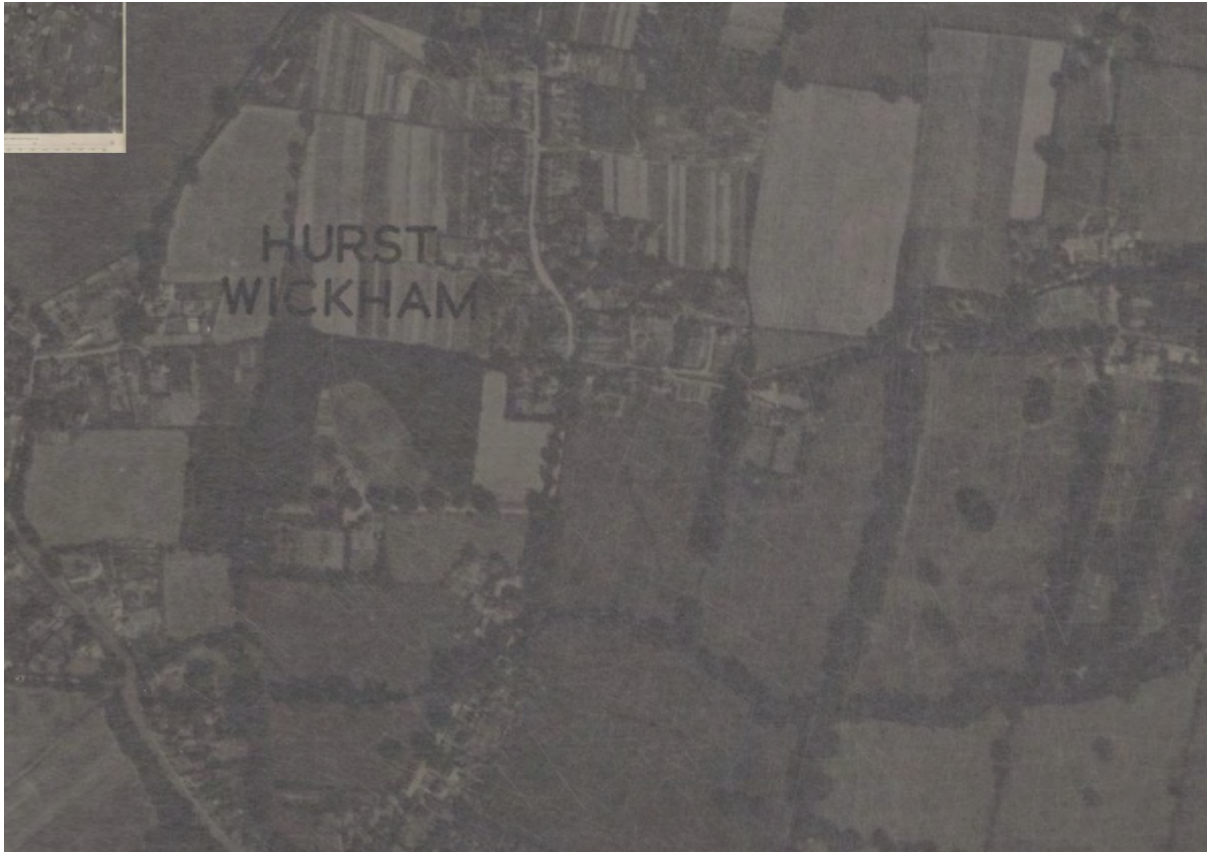


Figure 59: Air Photo Mosaic captured in 1947

Archival sources were consulted as part of this assessment, in particular to supplement existing historic mapping. However, no significant sources were discovered pertaining directly to the proposed development site itself, of which no archival photographs captured on the ground were uncovered. Although one aerial photograph was consulted as part of this study, no new information worthy of note was provided by this resource.

However, the history of Hurst Wickham has been outlined in the Conservation Area Appraisal published by Mid Sussex District Council (2018). College Lane has been recognised as an ancient routeway named after the establishment of St John's College in 1853. The rapid increase in rural growth during the late 19th century – 20th century has been ascribed to the establishment of the railway station at the adjoining village of Hassocks which facilitated the growth of new dwellings and ultimately the transition in Hurst Wickham itself from a small hamlet into a growing village.

2.5.2 PREVIOUS WORK

The Historic Environment Record (HER) records a total of six previous archaeological events and/or interventions within the 500 m study area, the closest of which directly adjoins the development site at the south-eastern corner. This record pertains to a Desk Based Assessment of the Land Off College Lane (EWS1263). The plot was deduced to have a moderate to high archaeological potential principally based upon the number of regionally important sites situated in the vicinity of the development site dating from the Palaeolithic into the Post-Medieval periods, with a notable frequency of Roman finds which has led to the hypothesis that a Roman settlement site once existed somewhere close by.

Known sites included a Roman Road to the east and south-east, in addition to a Roman cemetery to the south. Other periods characterised by a relatively high frequency in the archaeological record included the Saxon period, in addition to the Post Medieval period north of Clayton Wickham Farm. Four further Desk Based Assessments (DBAs) have been conducted within the 500 m study area, which shared similar conclusions. This includes the site on the eastern periphery of the study area which has yielded a variety of small finds dating back as far as the Mesolithic (EWS1784). The sixth event record once again pertains to the Downs From Above research report (EWS2294), the results of which have been published online (Carpenter et al. 2023).

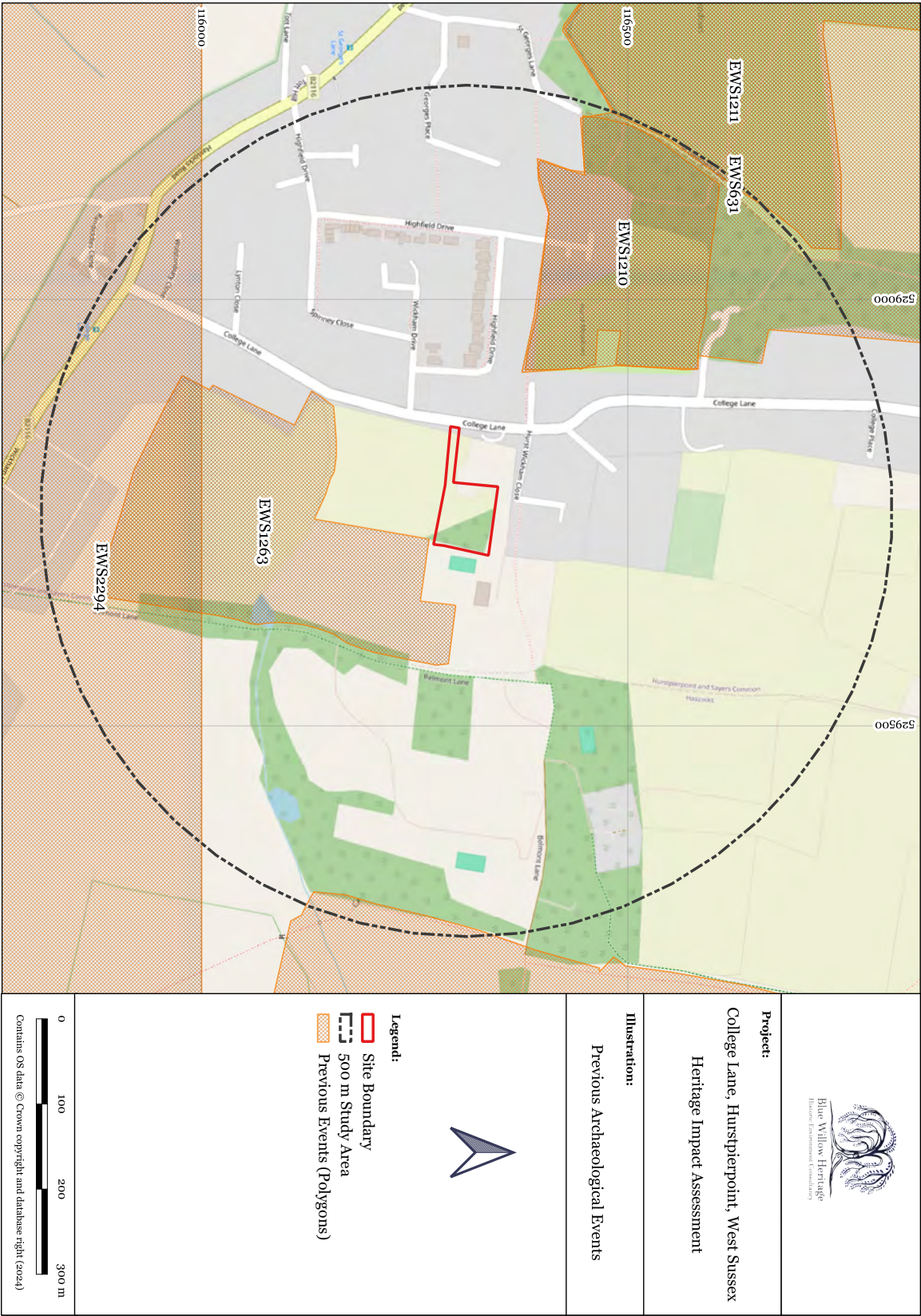


Figure 60: Previous archaeological events within the 500 m study area

2.5.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTIFICATION AREAS

The closest archaeological notification area to the development site is that relating to Hurst Wickham Farm, approximately 105 m south-west of the site boundary (DWS9084).

Also present within the study area is an area of multi-period settlement activity recorded at Hassocks, c. 160 m north-east of the development site boundary (DWS8613). Although early phases of activity were identified at this site, much of the area was redeveloped during the Anglo-Saxon period during the establishment of a local settlement site, as evidenced by both structural remains – including a pit house – and isolated finds comprising pottery, worked stones, and both osteoarchaeological and zooarchaeological remains.

To the south of the development site, further prehistoric flint working sites have been identified which date to both the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Bronze Age (DWS8193). Bronze Age tools and an urn field have also been identified, in addition to a possible Roman settlement and cemetery near Ham Farm. Known Roman roads in the region are centred at Hassocks, one of which follows the route of Greensand Way. Later stages of activity have been represented in the archaeological record via early medieval remains - including cemeteries, lime kilns, and general small finds often in the form of potsherds.

To the west along Chalkers Lane, another multi-period settlement site has been identified, which was suggested to continue on into the surrounding areas beyond the extents defined by previous archaeological excavations (DWS9077). Once again, neolithic and early bronze age flints have been identified, in addition to a late iron age / early Romano-British enclosure comprising roundhouses, pits, postholes, and middens. A possible early medieval sunken building was also identified, which was followed by instances of post-medieval agricultural activity.

2.5.4 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION (HLC)

The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) recorded within the HER identifies the area in which the proposed development site is situated as fieldscapes of the formal enclosure type dating from the medieval to the post-medieval periods, including the probable presence of ponds and fields of the private enclosure type (HWS7445).

2.6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Although the proposed development site itself is not situated within an archaeological notification area, four such zones have been recorded in the local HER database within the 500 m study area. Given the fact that this evidence is concentrated to both the north-east, north-west, and south of the development site, it is reasonable to assume that the development site holds a moderate potential for evidence of prehistoric flint and tool working sites, in addition to multi-period settlement activity as indicated by evidence of permanent structures and small finds previously uncovered in these regions. The area also appears to have been exploited in both prehistoric and historic times as a funerary landscape, as evidenced by the presence of urn fields and cemeteries.

However, the extents of previously identified settlement sites, flint working sites, and cemeteries are not always clear, and, based on the nature of the evidence, the archaeological potential of the development site cannot be further deciphered without further investigation. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that any archaeological features within the development site may have been truncated as a result of intensive 21st century planting and landscaping – including the subsequent removal of the wooded area in the north-eastern corner of the plot. The field has also been ploughed in recent years, as evidenced by historic satellite imagery. As such, any buried features or deposits may have been heavily truncated as a result of subsequent interventions and thereby, their significance consequently denuded. What can be seen in the available LiDAR evidence are two linear field boundaries running through the development site on both a north-east / south-west axis, and an east / west axis.

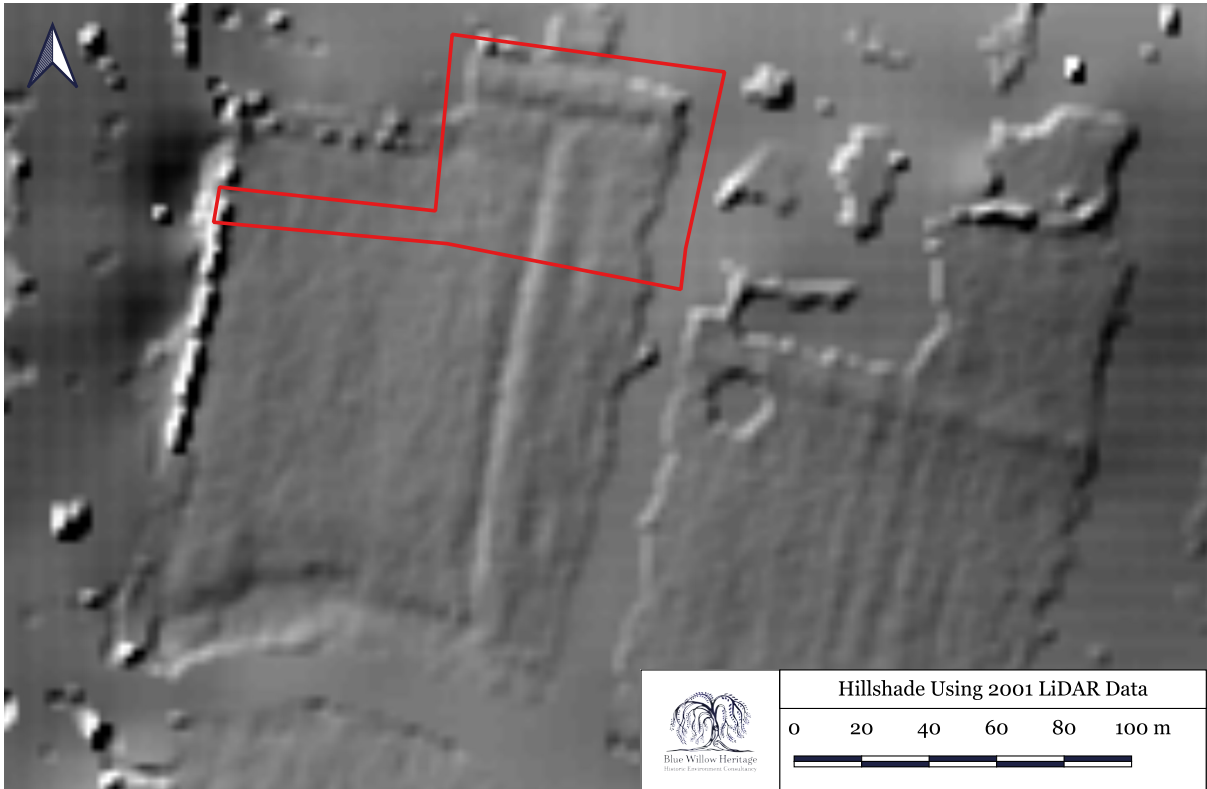


Figure 61: Multidirectional hillshade created using 2 m resolution LiDAR data captured in 2001 prior to tree plantings (© DEFRA 2024)

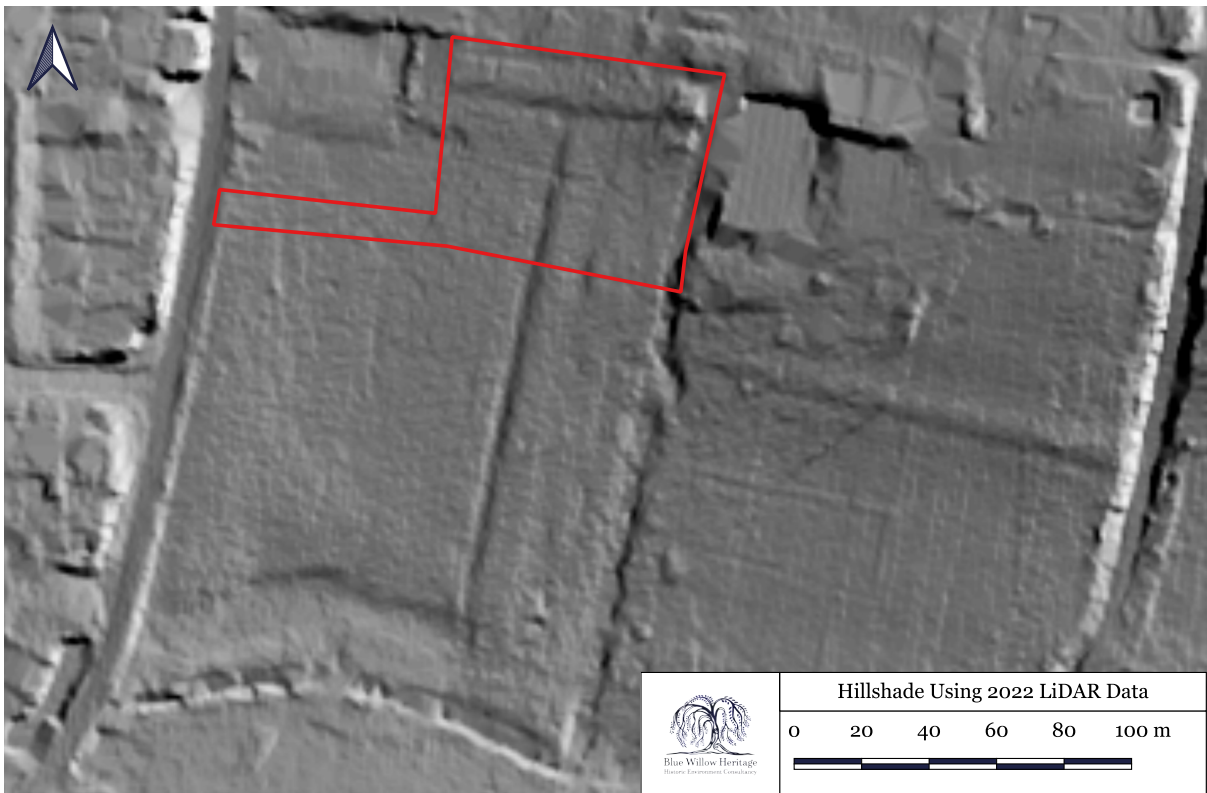


Figure 62: Multidirectional hillshade created using 1 m resolution LiDAR data captured in 2022 postdating landscaping (© DEFRA 2024)

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance can be defined using a number of criteria derived from varied sources, all of which can contribute useful factors to the process. For the purposes of this assessment, discussion has been grouped under the heading of the four ‘interests’ identified within *NPPF* (MHCLG 2024). These criteria have been used, alongside relevant guidance, where appropriate, in part or in whole, depending on what can best articulate the nature of the heritage asset. As the proposed development site itself is not considered to hold any inherent heritage value, beyond the posited potential for archaeological remains, this will relate to its contribution as existing to the significance of its surrounding heritage assets.

3.1 LAND OFF COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT

Asset	Contribution of Proposed Development Site to Significance	
Hurst Wickham Conservation Area	Archaeological Interest	The proposed development site has a medium to moderate potential to make some contribution to the archaeological interest of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, principally through the potential for surviving archaeological remains - as evidenced by the substantial archaeological resource yielded from previous archaeological investigations within the 500 m study area, including those which have been mapped by the four Archaeological Notification Areas in the vicinity of the study site. Such evidence has thus far been characteristic of prehistoric flint and tool working sites, in addition to multi-period settlement activity preserved in the archaeological record in the form of both permanent structures and small finds. Settlement evidence is particularly numerous within the Saxon period, although a possible Roman settlement and cemetery site has also been identified near Ham Farm. As such, there is some potential that the development site could contribute to the archaeological interest of the conservation area by virtue of yielding further evidence of early periods of human activity and the establishment of permanent settlements in the region. However, it must be noted that the development site has been subject to intensive modern disturbances, including re-landscaping associated with Hurst Wickham Farm, in addition to the establishment of a sizable triangular-shaped woodland plantation which was subsequently removed. Such activities are considered to have a high potential to have severely truncated the archaeological resource within the development site, should any such remains survive. This form of disturbance therefore has the potential to denude the significance of the evidence, should the ability to interpret what remains in the archaeological record be severely impacted as a result of these modern interventions.
	Historic Interest	The proposed development site – absent of any built form - is not considered to make any discernible contribution to the historic interest of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. The only known historic interest afforded by the plot is primarily derived from some limited evidence of both historic field boundaries and the agricultural exploitation of the landscape more generally – including its former use as animal pasture and its relationship with both Wickham Farm and Hurst Wickham Farm, as evidenced by both the title apportionments and historic Ordnance Survey mapping.
	Architectural and Artistic Interest	The proposed development site makes no discernible contribution to the architectural and artistic interest of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area due to the absence of historic or architecturally significant structures within the field. Boundary treatments also comprise hedgerows which are more intrinsically associated with the setting of the conservation area, as opposed to its architectural interest.
	Setting	The strongest contributor of the proposed development site to the significance of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area is derived from its setting, given that the plot lies immediately adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the designated area. On a more local level, the development site can be considered to contribute to the rural agricultural setting of this particular village – including on the approach into the conservation area from the south. This is emphasised by both the historic use of the plot as pastureland for the adjacent farms – as appreciated from cartographic

		sources – in addition to the soft verdant boundary treatments composed of trees and hedgerows, as is highly characteristic of the southern portion of the conservation area. However, the development site has seen extensive boundary changes and as such, no longer resembles the open pastureland once present prior to population growth and the expansion of the hamlet during the 19th and 20th centuries. On the one hand, the rolling countryside context afforded by the lack of built form within the plot is considered to contribute to efforts to preserve the distinction between the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area and the Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area, in addition to the village of Hassocks to the east when viewed in plan. On the other, though this countryside context is still evident in the fields to the south, it is clear that built form exists to both the north, east, and west of the plot. In particular, Hurst Wickham Farm – situated to the west of the plot - marks the site of one of the earliest structural complexes within the hamlet. As such, the significance of the ‘countryside context’ of the conservation area as appreciated along this horizontal axis has already been somewhat eroded – particularly by the 20th century and modern developments to the north and east of the development site.
South Downs National Park	Archaeological Interest	By virtue of falling beyond the boundary of the South Downs National Park, the development site is not considered to contribute any direct archaeological interest to this designated landscape. At best, it can inform understandings of human activity in the region more generally, should any new archaeological information be contributed by this site.
	Historic Interest	Once again, considering that the development site does not fall directly within the South Downs National Park, the plot as existing is not considered to make any discernible contribution to the historic interest of the National Park, especially considering that it does not contain any historic built form.
	Architectural and Artistic Interest	The proposed development site makes no discernible contribution to the architectural and artistic interest of the South Downs National Park due to the absence of built form within the field.
	Setting	The main contribution of the proposed development site to the South Downs National Park is through its setting. The plot forms the near setting of this designated landscape by virtue of being positioned within one of the historic hamlets on the periphery of the national park. However, given the distance between the two sites, any contribution made by the development site to the setting of the National Park is considered to be limited – something which is more firmly defined by those developments on the immediate periphery of the national park boundary.
Grade II listed Wickham Farmhouse (NHLE 1025662)	Archaeological Interest	Given the nature of the anticipated archaeological resource within the development site – which was historically used as pastureland and does not contain ridge and furrow – the plot is not considered to have any notable potential to contribute to the archaeological interest of the Grade II listed Wickham Farmhouse. Nevertheless, any isolated small finds pertaining to agricultural activity dating from the post-medieval or industrial periods would have some small potential to indirectly contribute to this significance, as can also be noted for Hurst Wickham Farm to the north-west.
	Historic Interest	Again, much of the historic interest of the plot in relation to the adjacent farmsteads known as Wickham Farm and Hurst Wickham Farm is today predominantly appreciated from cartographic sources, where we can see that the proposed development site was once used as pastureland.
	Architectural and Artistic Interest	The proposed development site makes no discernible contribution to the architectural and artistic interest of the Grade II listed farmhouse due to the absence of historic structures within the field, and the notable degree of spatial separation between the two sites.
	Setting	The development site can be considered to make a small indirect contribution to the setting of the designated heritage asset by virtue of forming the rolling countryside context of the village of Hurst Wickham which reinforces the site’s semi-rural setting and agricultural context, as has been noted above.

Table 2: Statement of Heritage Significance

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

As previously mentioned, the proposed development seeks to erect 3 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings, together with 3 no. detached garages. The scheme will utilise the existing access from College Lane, whilst landscaping will be composed of resin bound permeable gravel. Boundary treatments will include the addition of post and rail fencing together with access gates where required, in addition to native hedging, a small section of brick walling, and a close boarded fence. Full details of the proposed scheme can be found in the supporting information.

4.1 PHYSICAL IMPACTS

The primary physical impact of the scheme concerns the introduction of modern built form and associated landscaping into a formerly agricultural plot composed of an enclosed grassed field. This includes the creation of hard landscaping composed of resin bound permeable gravel to allow the access into the site to remain practical and functional. The impacts of such proposals have been minimised through the use of the existing access so as to preserve the hedgerow boundaries encircling the plot, which make some contribution to the setting of the conservation area.

The laying of foundations for the construction of the new dwellings will also result in a physical impact on this landscape. This is in addition to the division of the plot via new internal boundaries to accommodate five separate residential plots. However, it must be noted that this field has been subject to extensive boundary changes since historic times and therefore no longer resembles an open fieldscape. Such is considered to reduce the scale of physical impacts associated with the development proposals, including the fact that the legibility of the former boundaries has already been lost. The new boundaries are also intended to be soft and permeable, as complemented by the use of native hedging. Though brick and stone are more characteristic of existing boundary treatments within the southern portion of Hurst Wickham, post and rail fencing has also been selected as a more permeable alternative which will have a lesser physical impact upon the landscape.

In summary, the development will therefore be constrained within what can be considered to be a relatively modern field, albeit bordering a historic farmstead situated within the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. The proposed development is considered to have a negligible impact upon our understanding and/or appreciation of the heritage significance of the site, which is today constrained to historic cartographic sources, making the legibility of the original character of the site fragmented, at best.

The principle of development, though on a smaller scale, has also already been established for this plot, as reflected by the extant grant of planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling together with a detached single-storey garage (DM/22/1616). It must also be considered that the plot is situated between existing built form to the north, east, and west, and therefore is considered a strong contender for a suitable location for infill development, as opposed to new encroachment into the wider fieldscape to the south.

4.2 POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT

As previously noted, this assessment has concluded that the proposed development site hosts a medium to moderate archaeological potential, considering evidence within the 500 m study area pertaining to prehistoric flint working sites, in addition to multiperiod settlements and their accompanying cemeteries – particularly those associated with the Roman and Saxon periods.

Whilst the only clear evidence visible in publicly available LiDAR data is limited to former historic field boundaries, the archaeological potential of the site cannot be definitively established without further investigation, such as that in the form of a geophysical survey or archaeological evaluation. However, it is notable that the site has been subject to several modern disturbances. As such, it is considered that any as yet unknown archaeological remains – should they survive – are likely to be highly truncated and their significance denuded as a result.

4.2.1 RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

Given the long history of human activity in the area, it is considered that the site may benefit from further investigation regarding the extant archaeological resource within the plot, particularly concerning the potential for previously-identified sites to extend beyond the boundaries of previous excavations. At a minimum, archaeological monitoring could be considered for any groundworks within the development site which intrude below the topsoil - including the laying of foundations for the new dwellings.

The potential impact to the anticipated limited archaeological interest of the proposed development site by virtue of their truncation as a result of modern disturbances could be mitigated by such works secured as a condition of planning permission, as outlined by *NPPF* (MHCLG 2024).

4.3 SETTING IMPACTS

The most pertinent elements of the setting in relation to the impacts of the proposed development are examined here.

4.3.1 VIEWS

As previously noted, the proposed development site is well-screened from long-ranging views and even immediate views from College Lane and Hurst Wickham Close by virtue of existing tall hedgerows, trees, and intervening development. As such, only glimpsed views are considered to be possible from the southern portion of College Lane on the approach into the conservation area, in addition to Hurst Wickham Close to the north, with some small potential for further private realm views. This includes Wickham Barn itself which is now included within the conservation area and shares a boundary with the development site. It has also been established that the plot is set back from the frontages of these streets which further reduces the potential visibility of any proposed built form.

Where views looking into the site are possible, and particularly when looking east towards the site from College Lane, attempts have been made to ensure that the proposed built form within the plot remains sympathetic to the historic local vernacular. In particular, great consideration has been given to the form, scale, massing, layout, design, and materiality of the proposed development, taking reference from the existing pattern development throughout the conservation area. This includes both the dwellings themselves, their arrangement, and the boundaries which are proposed to be softened through the use of native hedging.

Furthermore, limited views of the rolling countryside context to the south are considered to be unimpacted as a result of the proposed development, which again, is considered to constitute an area of logical infill between existing built form to the north, east, and west. Given the limited views of the site from the approach to the conservation area from the south, this contrast between the 'residential spread of Hurstpierpoint village to the west and open fields to the east' is therefore considered to be severely limited from above the horizon delineated by the southern extent of the development site boundary, and can instead be better appreciated from the fields to the south. For these fields, it can be agreed that this openness helps to reinforce Hurst Wickham's character as a small semi-rural settlement.

As such, and as explored in more detail below, it is considered that the proposed dwellings will not represent an incursion into the village's semi-rural landscape nor will it erode its wider agricultural character, but rather complement the existing pattern of development and reinforce the traditional built form found throughout. Given this lack of intervisibility between the conservation area and the development site, the impact of the development upon the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area is considered to be more intrinsically related to its setting. However, should the visibility of any aspects of the proposed development form the subject of further review, a ZTV model or similar should be prepared accordingly.

4.3.2 SETTING IMPACTS TO CONSERVATION AREA

BASELINE

The conservation area appraisal notes the following with regards to development within the setting of the conservation area:

The setting of the Conservation Area is very important to the manner in which its special interest as a rural hamlet close to, but separate from, the larger villages of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks is appreciated. Development within the setting of the Conservation Area, where this is acceptable, should be respectful of this, and in particular should preserve important views into and out of the Conservation Area, the character of the approaches to it, and the sense of separation from adjacent settlements.

(Mid Sussex District Council 2018, 55)

The local authority also defines the setting of the conservation area as the following:

Despite the spread of development from Hurstpierpoint to the south west, Hurst Wickham remains largely surrounded by open fields. This open, rural setting is very important to the character of the area as a small hamlet. Countryside views between the properties lining College Lane and from their rear gardens help to place the settlement in its rural context, as does the approach to the hamlet along College lane with fields to one or both sides of the road. The open fields to the south of Hurst Wickham to the east of College Lane are particularly important in retaining a feeling of separation from Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.

(Mid Sussex District Council 2018, 54)

Negative impacts which at present detract from this setting are noted as the following:

Features detracting from the character of the area include unsympathetic alterations to the original buildings such as replacement uPVC windows and rendering of brickwork. Car parking along College Lane, which is in parts very narrow, and traffic congestion can also detract from the semi-rural nature of the hamlet. The loss of front garden boundaries to allow off street parking or to create new accesses is detrimental to the character of the street scene.

(Mid Sussex District Council 2018, 55)

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

As previously mentioned, the development site is situated just outside of the designated conservation area boundary along its south-western extent. As such, it is not considered to be located within the historic core of Hurst Wickham, but rather in its immediate setting, which is already characterised by modern built form situated further to the east, as accessed from Hurst Wickham Close.

In any development of this nature, the introduction of built form into the wider fieldscape has the potential to impact on the legibility of historic village plan form. However, as previously mentioned, the principle of development, though on a smaller scale, has already been established for this plot (DM/22/1616). The scale of impact to this legibility is also minimal, given that the proposed development has been carefully sited to align with existing patterns of modern development to the north, east, and west. As such, the site is considered to form a logical place for further infill development, so long as built form does not extend beyond the southern boundaries within the domestic curtilage of the plots to the east and west. It can be noted that the southern boundary of the proposed development site is sited a few metres north of the plot visible to the east.

Built form is also only proposed to project very slightly from that observed in the vicinity of Hurst Wickham Barn. Vitally, the proposed dwellings do not encroach upon the far southern boundary of the plot. Further infill of this nature between existing built form is therefore not considered to have a substantial impact upon the character of this setting, given the retention of the rural fields to the south which have been recognised as one of the most important parts of the conservation area's setting.

Whilst it is still considered that the scheme will result in the loss of open green space to the east of Hurst Wickham Barn (which forms the south-eastern corner of the conservation area), the boundary shared by this green space and the conservation area itself measures only 32 m long. This green space is also limited by the constraints of the field itself before meeting further built form to the north, east, and west – including modern built form and substantial domestic landscaping with the inclusion of a tennis court at Hurst Wickham Rise.

As such, it is not considered that the proposed development has any potential to obscure the distinguishment between Hurst Wickham and the village of Hassocks to the east, and such conclusions can be ascribed to the fact that elements of substantial modern landscaping particularly at Hurst Wickham Rise are not clearly shown on publicly-available mapping services. As such, it is strongly recommended that satellite imagery is consulted on this matter. It must also be considered that the plot itself has been subject to extensive boundary change following the disuse of the former pastureland, and is no longer inherently tied to the adjacent Hurst Wickham Farm which has subsequently been converted into residential use. The modern, enclosed field is therefore already considered to have lost its 'open, rural nature' from when it once resembled a larger field utilised as pastureland.

In addition, the design of the scheme has been carefully considered to echo and even reinforce the rural and, in places, agricultural character of the village of Hurst Wickham. Whilst the northern portion of the conservation area is characterised by terraced villas set above street level, the southern portion of Hurst Wickham is instead made up of larger dwellings with sizable front and rear gardens reinforced by hedgerow boundaries. As such, an irregular arrangement for the dwellings has been selected to preserve the semi-rural character of the settlement. This has been accomplished via the placement of three of the structures around an open courtyard intended to echo elements of U-shaped courtyard farmsteads present in the region, with two further scattered dwellings present to the south delineated by boundaries which have been softened with native hedging.

The use of timber boarding has been intentionally incorporated to further echo the agricultural origins of the hamlet and ensure materiality which successfully integrates with, rather than competes against, the prevailing local vernacular. It is further recommended that the scheme incorporate the use of timber or aluminium fenestrations to further enhance appreciations of the historic local vernacular. Provisions of garages have sought to prevent any negative visual impacts associated with on-street parking within the conservation area or its approach.

Overall, the proposed development is intended to develop the site in a mode sympathetic to its existing surroundings, with an intention to erect a series of structures which are wilfully modern but strongly emulate elements of the historic local vernacular.

4.3.3 SETTING IMPACTS TO SURROUNDING HERITAGE ASSETS

As previously mentioned, a number of previous applications have been submitted pertaining to new residential development within the proposed development site. Consultation advice prepared by the acting Conservation Officer on behalf of the Mid Sussex District Council in response to these applications has already established that residential development within this plot is considered to have a neutral impact upon the Grade II listed building of Wickham Farmhouse (NHLE 1025662) by virtue of the distance between the two sites. As such, no further discussion is warranted on this matter, given that there are no further designated heritage assets situated within the 500 m study area consulted as part of this assessment.

4.4 OVERALL IMPACT

The proposed scheme is considered to result in no physical impact to any historic fabric or boundaries contained within the plot. Any surviving archaeological resource within the development site is expected to have been significantly truncated as a result of the modern development of the site and, as such, any impacts to this significance have the potential to be fully offset by an appropriate scheme of archaeological investigation and recording.

The proposed introduction of built form into the plot, though contributing to some further erosion of the once rural character of these formerly open landscapes, is considered to be appropriate in principle subject to the necessary

planning balances, considering the existing built form present to the north, east and west. This is so long as built form does not project beyond the southern boundaries defining the residential curtilage to the east and west. It is also considered that the proposed development will have a negligible impact upon views to and from the conservation area, by virtue of the lack of intervisibility between the site and the core of the conservation area, in addition to the incorporation of the prevailing local vernacular into the design of the scheme.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development will result in the lower end of less than substantial harm to the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, principally due to the fact that the green space within the plot directly borders the conservation area. Such development merits a full evaluation of the necessary planning balances with regards to public benefit – including provisions of new housing to meet ambitious governmental targets for the creation of new housing in Sussex – along with the mitigation provided by the sensitive design.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development comprises an area of greenfield, historically in agricultural use particularly as pastureland but also with some arable farming, surrounded by residential dwellings to the north, east, and west. However, further fieldscapes lie directly to the south of the plot. The proposed development seeks to erect 3 no. detached dwellings and 2 no. semi-detached dwellings, together with 3 no. detached garages, and will utilise the existing access along College Lane which will be reinforced with resin-bound permeable gravel.

Two previous iterations of the scheme for 10 no. (DM/17/0992) and 6 no. (DM/17/4601) dwellings were refused primarily on heritage grounds -specifically, over concerns regarding the perceived harm upon the character and appearance of the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area as a result of the 'siting, layout, and density' of the proposed new-build housing. It was consequently determined by the local planning authority that the previous schemes would result in 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, though only a neutral impact to the Grade II listed building of Wickham Farmhouse (NHLE 1025662) by virtue of the spatial separation between the two sites. However, extant planning permission exists for the erection of a single two-storey dwelling together with a detached garage which has established the principle of development at this site (DM/22/1616).

In order to overcome the obstacles related to both the purported impact upon the historic character of the village, and appreciations of the linear planform of the conservation area in terms of its spatial separation from the adjoining villages of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks, a heritage-led design response was implemented, the overarching aim of which was to create a scheme that better reflects the semi-rural character of the village. Though the previous schemes had attempted to replicate the designs of the esteemed British architect Peter Aldington, the inclusion of 'angular' post-war housing is not considered to be sympathetic to the historic local vernacular and has not been replicated as part of this scheme.

Instead, the new proposals aim to emulate the character present in the southern portion of the village – characterised by larger dwellings with more substantial gardens and hedgerows set back from the street frontages – in order to not only retain but reinforce the visual distinction between the architectural forms and styles present within the north and south of the village. Elements of traditional design from the palette of existing local materials throughout the village have also been selected, including hung tiles and weatherboarding which strongly echo the distinctive visual character of Sussex. Consequently, where views of the site are possible, these are intended to be of sympathetic addition of built form, which reinforces as opposed to detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed development's design response to the key heritage issues associated with the site has also been guided by taking account of the recognised significance of the rolling countryside context of the conservation area, and efforts have been made to ensure that the site only minimally projects southwards from the existing residential boundaries established along the east / west horizon bound by College Lane and Hurst Wickham Close. It is the opinion of this assessment that the contribution of this particular plot to the wider countryside context has been inflated by virtue of a lack of recognition of this existing built form to the east and west which has entirely fragmented appreciations of a rolling countryside context along this east / west horizon.

Most importantly, the notion that development within this field preserves the distinction between the adjoining villages to the east and west is not considered to be grounded in the existing spatial data – again, considering that built form already exists to the east and west. The plot is thus considered to form a logical site for infill development up to the existing built horizon characterised by residential dwellings. To protect the wider setting of the village, no further development is considered appropriate within the open fields to the south which better capture the rural setting of Hurst Wickham, and allows it to be appreciated as a settlement in its own right.

Overall, taking into account the design mitigations incorporated as part of this scheme, the proposed development is considered to result in the lower end of less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. This is principally based on the conclusion that the contribution of the plot as existing to the rolling countryside context of the conservation area has been denuded as a result of existing development to the north, east and west, yet still constitutes green space on the immediate periphery of the designated area. It is also considered that the schematic changes to the scheme ensure the concerns previously expressed by the local planning authority have been satisfactorily addressed, principally due to the introduction of a more scattered semi-rural arrangement, and in the incorporation of traditional form and materials. Public benefit must therefore be assessed accordingly with regards to the planning balances afforded by provisions of new housing in Sussex.

When considering this public benefit, the sympathetic approach of the scheme and its design response to the identified heritage constraints is therefore considered to fulfil the environmental objectives of ‘sustainable development’ defined in *NPPF* (MHCLG 2024, 5). This is in so far as it seeks to protect the natural and historic environment as much as possible, whilst allowing national social objectives to be met by providing a range of homes to meet the needs of current and future generations. The use of design which reinforces the local vernacular specifically seeks to ensure the continued contribution of the plot to quality of place within the Conservation Area.

On this basis, the proposed development is also considered to be in line with local planning policy - particularly policies DP35 of the *Local Plan* with regards to preserving the character, setting, and views within the conservation area (Mid Sussex District Council 2018). The scheme has also addressed policies C3 and C4 of the neighbourhood plan in how the wider rural setting of the village will be conserved, with the immediate semi-rural but developed setting around the immediate periphery of the conservation area developed in a mode sympathetic to the scale, function, and character of its existing surroundings (Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council 2015).

6. SOURCES

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APPENDIX 1 – GAZETTEER

NHLE Number	Name
2858	Hurst Wickham

Table 3: Conservation areas in the 1 km study area

NHLE	Name	Grade
1025662	WICKHAM FARMHOUSE	II

Table 4: Listed buildings in the 500 m study area

UID	Name	Type
MWS15745	Changing Chalk: Downs From Above - Overview	BARROW; CAUSEWAYED ENCLOSURE; FIELD SYSTEM; CROSS DYKE; ENCLOSURE; HILLFORT; HOLLOW WAY; RIDGE AND FURROW; WINDMILL MOUND; MANORIAL FARM; EXTRACTIVE PIT; MILITARY SITE
MWS15845	A Group of Post Medieval Field Boundaries and Ridge and Furrow, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common and Hassocks	FIELD BOUNDARY; RIDGE AND FURROW
MWS11823	Hurst Wickham (Wickham Farm) Historic Farmstead, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common	FARMSTEAD
MWS11824	Hurst Wickham Farm Historic Farmstead, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common	FARMSTEAD
MWS7292	Clayton Wickham Farm - Recent Finds	FINDSPOT
MWS9829	Clayton Wickham Farm Historic Farmstead, Hassocks	FARMSTEAD

Table 5: Non-designated heritage assets in the 500 m study area

UID	Type	Name
EWS1210	DBA	Highfield Drive, Hurstpierpoint - Addendum Report, Heritage Desk-Based Assessment and Impact Assessment
EWS1211	DBA	Little Park Farm, Hurstpierpoint- Heritage Desk-Based Assessment and Impact Assessment.
EWS1263	DBA	Land off College Lane, Hurstpierpoint - Desk-based Heritage Assessment
EWS1784	DBA	Land at Hassocks Golf Club, Hassocks - Archaeological Assessment
EWS631	DBA	Little Park Farm, Hurstpierpoint - Desk Based Assessment and Walkover Survey
EWS2294	EVS	Changing Chalk: Downs From Above

Table 6: Previous archaeological events in the 500 m study area

APPENDIX 2 – LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

LEGISLATION

National legislation which applies to the consideration of cultural heritage within development and the wider planning process is set out in the table below.

Title	Key Points
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002)	Scheduled Monuments, as defined under the <i>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)</i> , are sites which have been selected by a set of non-statutory criteria to be of national importance. Where scheduled sites are affected by development proposals there is a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. Any works, other than activities receiving class consent under <i>The Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1981</i> , as amended by <i>The Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1984</i> , which would have the effect of demolishing, destroying, damaging, removing, repairing, altering, adding to, flooding or covering-up a Scheduled Monument require consent from the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	Buildings of national, regional or local historical and architectural importance are protected under the <i>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990</i> . Buildings designated as 'Listed' are afforded protection from physical alteration or effects on their historical setting.
Hedgerows Regulations 1997	The <i>Hedgerow Regulations (1997)</i> include criteria by which hedgerows can be regarded as historically important (Schedule 1 Part III).

Table 7: Legislation relating to cultural heritage in planning

POLICY

NATIONAL

The principal instrument of national planning policy within England is the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* (MHCLG 2024), which outlines the following in relation to cultural heritage within planning and development:

Paragraph	Key Points
8	Contributing to protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment is specifically noted as being a part of one of the three key objectives contributing to sustainable development. Specifically, environmental objectives can be realised by schemes which serve to: 'protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'
207	In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
208	Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
209	Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
210	In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

	c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
211	In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.
212	When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
213	Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional
214	Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
215	Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
216	The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
217	Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
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 ⁷³ . However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.
219	Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
220	Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
221	Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Table 8: Key passages of NPPF in reference to cultural heritage

LOCAL POLICY

Under planning law, the determination of an application must be made, in the first instance, with reference to the policies of the local development plan. For the proposed development, this is currently represented by the saved policies of the *Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031* (Mid Sussex District Council 2018), in addition to those outlined by the Neighbourhood Plan (Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council 2015). Within the former document, the following are key policies with reference to cultural heritage and the nature of the proposed development:

Policy	Key Text
DP34	Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets Strategic Objectives: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence; 4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination. Evidence Base: West Sussex Historic Environment Record; Register of Listed Buildings. Listed Buildings Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that: • A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal; • Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use; • Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable; • Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself; • Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building; • Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric. Other Heritage Assets Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment. The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance.
DP35	Conservation Areas: Strategic Objectives: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence; 4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination. Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Conservation Area Appraisals; Sussex Extensive Urban Surveys; West Sussex Historic Environment Record. Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that: • New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;

	• Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character; • Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located; • Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area; • Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported; • New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area. New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area.
DP36	Historic Parks and Gardens Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination. Evidence Base: West Sussex Historic Environment Record. The character, appearance and setting of a registered park, or park or garden of special local historic interest will be protected. This will be achieved by ensuring that any development within or adjacent to a registered park, or park or garden of local historic interest will only be permitted where it protects and enhances its special features, setting and views into and out of the park or garden.

Table 9: Summary of relevant local planning policy

GUIDANCE

NATIONAL

During the assessment and preparation of this document, the following guidance documents have been referred to, where relevant:

- *National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)* (MHCLG 2019)
- *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (EH 2008)
- *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015)
- *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets* (HE 2017)
- *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 12 – Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (HE 2019)
- *Standard and Guidance for Commissioning Work or Providing Consultancy Advice on Archaeology and the Historic Environment* (CIfA 2014a)
- *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (CIfA 2014b).

APPENDIX 3 – METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

OVERVIEW

In accordance with the aims outlined in Section 1 above, the information within this report has been gathered from a number of sources, both primary and secondary; it has been undertaken in line with the relevant Historic England and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance (CIfA 2014a; 2014b; 2019; HE 2008; 2015; 2016; 2017).

The following tasks were undertaken as part of this assessment:

- Consultation of historical mapping, freely available satellite imagery, and archival sources
- Compilation of appropriate desk-based and online resources including the National Heritage List for England
- Creation of a bespoke geographical information system (GIS) to allow for the integrated analysis of all data
- Site visit to establish current conditions and make an assessment of potential effects on heritage assets
- Rapid appraisal of heritage significance of existing site and/or building
- Preparation of an assessment of known and potential physical and setting effects.

WALKOVER SURVEY

A walkover survey, forming part of the Heritage Impact Assessment, was undertaken in December 2024 and comprised an assessment of the building and its environs.

SIGNIFICANCE

DEFINING SIGNIFICANCE

Significance can be defined using a number of criteria derived from varied sources, all of which can contribute useful factors to the process. Where assessment of significance is necessary, particularly in determining potential effects of the development, the following criteria have been adopted in part or in whole, depending on what can best articulate the nature of the heritage asset being described:

Source	Significant Criteria
NPPF (MHCLG 2023)	The statement of heritage significance is based upon four ‘interests’ and their relative ‘importance’: • Archaeological • Architectural • Artistic • Historic
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	This act gives guidance on the criteria considered during the decision to provide designated protection to a monument through scheduling. The criteria are: • Period or category • Rarity • Documentation (either contemporary written records or records of previous investigations) • Group value • Survival/condition • Fragility/vulnerability • Diversity (importance of individual attributes of a site) • Potential

Table 10: Criteria for assessment of significance

ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

The assessment of significance comprises three stages, as set out in *Note 2 of the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning* (Historic England 2015):

- Understanding the nature of the significance through identification of what values or interests (as above) contribute
- Understanding the extent of the significance
- Understanding the level of significance, perhaps the most important step in terms of planning-led assessment as it can dictate what level of test is applied when determining the potential effects of a proposed development.

It should be noted that the varied nature of heritage assets means that, in the majority of cases, they are unsuitable for assessment via a nominally ‘objective’ scoring of significance, and there will always therefore be an element of interpretation and professional judgement within a considered assessment. There is no ‘one size fits all’ criteria for assessing the level of significance, as each asset must be evaluated individually against the four interests outlined within *NPPF*. The following table outlining relative significance is intended to be used as a guideline for determining the level of significance any given element of an asset holds or the level of contribution it makes to the asset’s overall significance.

Relative Significance	Description
High	Elements of a heritage asset and/or place which are of key national significance, comprising one of the best and/or only surviving examples of its type, or being associated to other assets of equal or greater significance. Potential for a high degree of communal value, stemming from important social and/or historic events, movements, or ideas.
Medium	Elements that contribute to the character and understanding of an asset or place, providing further historical and/or spatial context to other features of equal or greater significance. Features can be considered good and representative examples of a building or site type, being of local and/or regional significance, but surviving examples may be common nationally. Potential for historic and/or spatial association to other heritage assets of equal or greater significance, as well as a moderate degree of communal value.
Low	Elements that are of minor contribution to significance, either in and of themselves, or in terms of their contribution to our understanding and/or appreciation of an asset, but crucially also not considered to disturb or detract from significance.
Negligible	Elements which make a highly limited contribution to significance, whereby their absence and/or alteration would not meaningfully impact upon our understanding and/or appreciation of an asset.
None	Elements which are wholly modern and considered to hold no discernible heritage value, or elements (such as unknown below-ground archaeological remains in cases where the potential has been identified as low) where it is not possible to be certain on the basis of the evidence currently available.
Detracts	Elements of the physical fabric and/or setting of a heritage asset which detracts visually from or obscures understanding of more significant elements. Their removal and/or improvements to mitigate their impact on an asset is encouraged.

Table 11: Criteria for assessing relative significance

DEFINING THE CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING

Setting is a contributory factor to the overall significance of a heritage asset, and assessment begins with identifying the significance of a heritage asset as described above. As outlined in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2017), setting is defined as (quoting *NPPF*) ‘the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral’ (*ibid.*, 2). A staged approach to the assessment of potential effects on the setting of heritage assets is also set out in the guidance (*ibid.*, 7):

- Identify which heritage assets and their settings may be affected
- Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)
- Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether positive, neutral or negative

- Explore ways to maximise enhancements and avoid or minimise harm
- Document the process and decision and monitor outcomes

The guidance provides (non-exhaustive) lists of attributes relating to, firstly, characteristics of a heritage asset's setting (both physical and intangible), and also to potential attributes of a development which may have an effect upon that setting. The guidance is clear that, in both cases, only a limited selection of characteristics is likely to be relevant to individual heritage assets, and so the lists are not reproduced here. There are, however, a number of broad categories into which potential effects on setting can be grouped for ease of assessment:

- Location and siting of development
- Form and appearance of the development
- Other effects of the development, including
- Physical effects such as changes to a skyline or environmental factors such impact of noise, dust, lighting, hydrology or soil chemistry
- Changes to wider context such as the alteration of landscape character or use
- Changes to public appreciation through alteration of access or amenity
- Permanence of the development
- Longer term or consequential effects, with examples given including changes to ownership and economic, social and communal use viability.

The changing nature and mutability of setting is acknowledged in its definition, and therefore an assessment of setting can only consider its current contribution to significance. It is not appropriate to 'second-guess' future changes to the setting beyond the potential effects of a proposed development or associated mitigation and off-setting, as this would render an assessment meaningless. This axiom also helps resolve an apparent contradiction within guidance (MHCLG 2019) which states that "setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced" and also that "the contribution that setting makes to the significance does not depend on there being...an ability to... experience that setting".

With certain heritage assets, there is no requirement to access a site physically to experience it, but with the majority of archaeological sites in particular, physical and intellectual access is an important prerequisite to fully experiencing them, as they can be largely invisible or even completely buried. The resolution to this anomaly lies in the application of a second part of the definition of setting: "elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset". Acknowledging this, "the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the asset does not depend on there being...an ability to... experience that setting" (MHCLG 2019), it is just that the lack of access is likely to mean that the current contribution will be negative. This approach accords with the *Good Practice Advice Note 3* in relation to the setting of 'buried assets' (Historic England 2017, 5).

ASSESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING

In terms of the practical method for this assessment, initial discrimination of those sites for which there was a potential effect on setting was undertaken as a desk-based exercise before further consideration was given to those heritage assets where non-visual and/or intangible elements of setting may be affected by the proposed development.

Following preliminary desk-based discrimination, further consideration was given to those heritage assets where non-visual and/or intangible elements of setting may be affected by the proposed development. This stage also included a consideration of potential setting effects deriving from the other aspects of the proposed development: principally the alteration of historic fabric or inclusion of modern elements into historic buildings.

IMPACT

ASSESSING IMPACT

The final stage of this assessment, following the establishment of the existing significance of the asset, is to understand the impact of the proposal upon that significance in line with *Good Practice Advice Note 12* (Historic England 2019, 3) in relation to analysing the significance of heritage assets. It is generally considered that negative impact should, in the first instance, be avoided; failing that, it should be minimised, such as by the proposal being reversible. Any negative impact should be justified in accordance with the social, economic, and/or environmental objectives in *NPPF* and, where possible, mitigated. Proposals are also encouraged to incorporate any opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance.

ASSESSING HARM

Harm is defined by Historic England as ‘change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage values of place’. Development or alterations are not, by definition, considered to result in harm; this is only applicable where the development or alteration reduces the significance (derived from the four interests out-lined in *NPPF*) in a way which is harmful. The scale of harm, or negative impact, ranges from negligible to minor to moderate to major. This is further explored in the table below.

ASSESSING POSITIVE IMPACT

As part of this assessment, opportunities for positive impacts which better reveal or enhance the significance of the heritage asset. Positive impacts, depending on their scale of impact (minor, moderate, or major) have the potential to offset and/or balance negative impacts of equal scale, i.e. a minor negative impact resulting from an element of the scheme may be offset by a minor positive impact resulting from an element of the scheme, on balance resulting in an overall neutral impact to significance.

SCALE OF IMPACT

As previously noted, proposals are required to avoid or minimise and, where required, mitigate impact upon the significance of a heritage asset. Harmful impacts or negative impacts on aspects of significance may, if applicable, be justified by public benefit and/or offset by enhancing other aspects of significance. The overall scale of impact is, as part of this assessment, determined by assessing the balance of positive and negative impacts resulting from the individual elements of the scheme, as well as any justification by public benefit and/or mitigation of impact. The following table outlines the criteria utilised as part of this assessment to determine the overall impact, assessing both positive and negative impacts.

Level of Impact	Criteria for Determining Level of Impact
Major Positive	High beneficial impact, resulting in alterations which improve and/or better reveal elements of high significance.
Moderate Positive	Medium beneficial impact, resulting in alterations which improve and/or better reveal elements of significance.
Minor Positive	Low beneficial impact, which is limited in scope and/or affects elements low significance.
Neutral	Alterations which will neither meaningfully enhance nor detract from significance.
Negligible	None or very limited impact, overall preservation of significance.
Minor Negative	Low adverse impact, which is limited in scope and/or affects elements of low significance.
Moderate Negative	Medium adverse impact, potentially amounting to ‘less than substantial harm’ as defined in <i>NPPF</i> .
Major Negative	High adverse impact. Potential for ‘substantial harm’ and/or total loss as defined in <i>NPPF</i> .

Table 12: Criteria for assessment of impact

It is important here to distinguish between a neutral impact to an element of a scheme versus an overall neutral impact of a scheme. In the case of the latter, an overall neutral impact does not constitute no change, but rather the result of a planning balance taking into account the positive and negative impacts of a scheme where one is considered to outweigh the other.

SOURCES

NATIONALLY DESIGNATED SITES

The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) was consulted to allow an assessment of designated heritage assets, including:

- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Registered Battlefields
- Protected Wreck Sites

This assessment has considered all designated assets within the 500 m study area. All assets within the study area have been assessed in terms of potential setting effects.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

The West Sussex County Council Historic Environment Record was consulted for the study area of 500 m around the proposed development site (ref WSCC-668024300). Information concerning the site and its immediate vicinity has allowed for an assessment of potential physical impacts, whereas other sites were examined in order to allow both an assessment of the general archaeological and historic character of the area and also to feed into the assessment of setting, over and above any potential effects on designated heritage assets.

CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Assessment of relevant mapping held in archives and digital mapping available online was undertaken to provide information on the archaeological potential of the proposed development site and its historic development.

PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

In addition, relevant published and unpublished sources were consulted, relating both to specific sites of interest, and also to the general archaeological and historic character of the wider study area. Unpublished reports of previous archaeological interventions (grey literature) were consulted online where relevant.

CHRONOLOGY

Where chronological and archaeological periods are referred to in the text, the relevant date ranges are broadly defined in calendar years as follows:

- Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age): 1 million – 12,000 BP (Before present)
- Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age): 10000 – 4000 BC
- Neolithic (New Stone Age): 4000 – 2400 BC
- Chalcolithic/Beaker Period: 2400 – 2000 BC
- Bronze Age: 2000 – 700 BC
- Iron Age: 700 BC – AD 43
- Roman/Romano-British: AD 43 – 410
- Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian: AD 410 – 1066
- Medieval: AD 1066 – 1540
- Post-medieval: AD 1540 – 1750
 - Tudor: AD 1485 – 1603
 - Stuart: AD 1603 – 1714
 - Georgian: AD 1714 - 1837
- Industrial: AD 1750 – 1900
 - Victorian: AD 1837 - 1901
- Modern: AD 1900 – Present



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