

# MP BRIEFING NOTE

## Preventing the Loss of Historic Artefacts During Development

### The Issue

Historic artefacts are frequently discovered by chance during construction and groundworks. By this stage, mechanical excavation may already have damaged or destroyed artefacts, with spoil sometimes removed from site before discovery, resulting in irreversible loss.

### Why the Current System Misses Things

Existing planning-led heritage processes are effective at identifying known assets and sub-surface structural remains. However, portable artefacts and dispersed historic activity within topsoil are often not detected before mechanical excavation begins.

### The Proposal

WAYMARK LAND & HERITAGE proposes an early-stage, non-intrusive heritage intelligence approach that takes place before mechanical groundworks. It complements existing archaeological and planning requirements and helps identify artefact-rich areas and historic land-use indicators early.

### Why This Matters

Earlier identification reduces artefact loss, limits damage from excavators, supports better preservation outcomes, and reduces reactive disruption to construction programmes.

### What Is Being Asked

This is not a request for new regulation or public funding. It seeks recognition of early-stage heritage intelligence as accepted good practice and support for a small, voluntary pilot.

### Pilot Proposal

A pilot framework has been prepared proposing developer-funded trials in Shropshire and Cheshire to test whether early-stage intelligence improves outcomes.

### Why MP Support Helps

MP support can help open dialogue with planning policy teams, support pilot discussions, and demonstrate cross-party interest in practical heritage protection.