



**Report on a Programme of Archaeological Works at Westons
Farm Cottage, Milland, West Sussex**

April 2018

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This document sets out the results from a programme of archaeological works carried out by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd at Weston's Farm Cottage, Iping Road, Milland, West Sussex, during fencing and hedging laying works. The archaeological work was carried out on the 13th April 2018.

Weston's Farm Cottage lies on the site of a Roman mansio situated upon the Chichester to Silchester Roman road. These works helped to define a spread of re-deposited clay noted in previous archaeological investigations, probably associated with disturbance to the ramparts associated with the construction and development of Westons Farm. No further evidence for pre-rampart occupation was uncovered, neither were any remains revealed associated with the mansio itself.

BACKGROUND

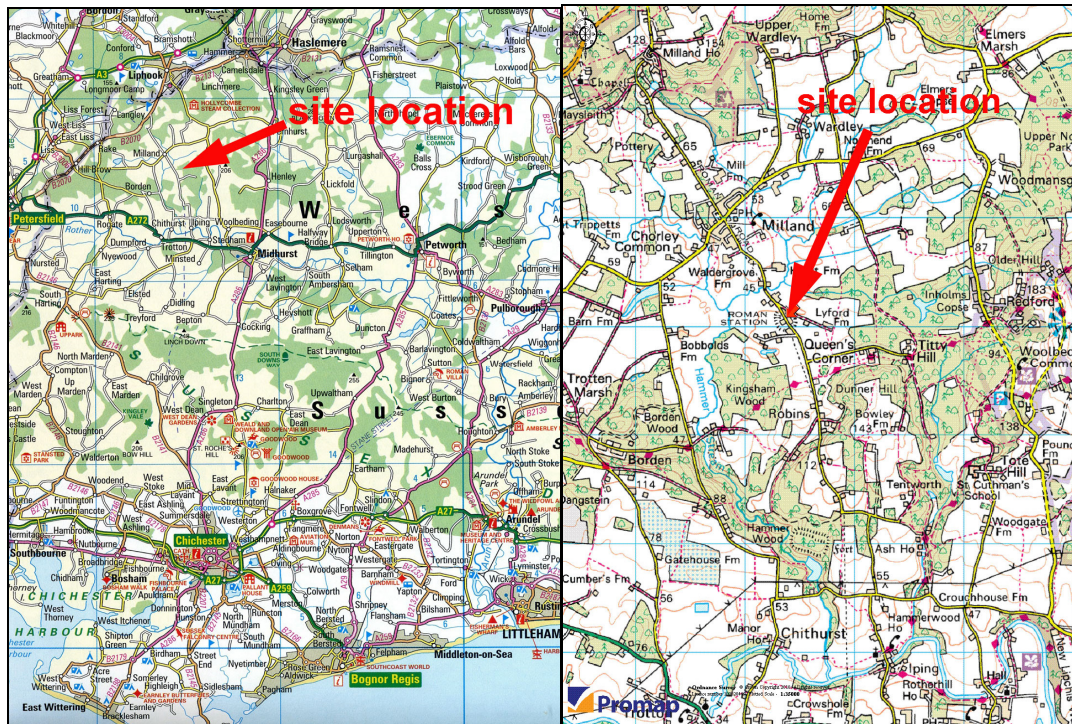


Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

Project Background

1. Weston's Farm Cottage lies approximately 1 mile to the south-east of the village of Milland in West Sussex (Figs.1), at c. 54m aOD and OS grid reference SU 8442 2602. The underlying geology of the site was found to be the sands and clays of the Weald Clay formation.
2. The owners of Weston's Farm, Mr. & Mrs. Aves, have received Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) (Ref. S00187425) from Historic England (HE) for the replacement of a damaged fence, the relocation of a road side fence, the planting and removal of hedgerows, and the laying of an electric cable. The SMC included a condition (e) for archaeological works to be carried out in accordance with a specification to be agreed in advance with HE.
3. West Sussex Archaeology Ltd was appointed by Mr. & Mrs. Aves to write and submit such a specification (WSA 2108) and to carry out the ensuing archaeological works. This report details the results of that archaeological work, which was carried out on the 13th April 2018 by George Anelay of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd.

Historical Background

1. The property, now called Weston's Farm Cottage, was constructed between 1874 and 1897, when it was named Weston's Farm. The name appears then to have moved across the road to a newly constructed property, now called Weston's Farm, in the 1950s, with the original site renamed Weston's Farm Cottage.
2. Both Weston's Farm and Weston's Farm Cottage sit within the enclosing ditch of the Roman *mansio* at Iping, which itself lies astride the Roman road which runs from Chichester to Silchester. Little is known about the Iping *mansio*; it was only identified in 1949, despite the survival of substantial earthworks which represent the remains of the surrounding rampart and ditch. The *mansio* was protected as a Scheduled Monument (No. 29242) in 1955.
3. Six previous archaeological investigations have taken place within, or in the immediate vicinity of, the *mansio*:
 - In 2005 an archaeological excavation was carried out associated with the construction of an extension to Weston's Farm. The results from this suggested that the *mansio* was constructed c.AD200 and had been preceded by an earlier settlement, possibly having its origins in the first century AD (Anelay 2006, p2).
 - A subsequent geophysical survey was undertaken in the field immediately to the south of the *mansio*, on the west side of the Iping Road. This recorded a series of anomalies which may be linked to a possible *vicus* (Dicks & Haskins 2007) or the pre-*mansio* settlement.
 - In 2010 an archaeological watching brief was maintained on the laying of a replacement sewer main along the Iping Road, as it passed through the *mansio* and to the north. During the course of this it was discovered that the majority of the trenched area had been previously disturbed by services already laid in the road. A fragment of amphora was found in the backfill of one of these service trenches (Killeen, p.i).
 - Also in 2010 a watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a service trench around the north-east corner of the *mansio*. This recorded the line of the *mansio* ditch (Anelay 2010).
 - In 2012 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Weston's Farm cottage which exposed a stretch of infilled ditch associated with a field boundary ditch visible on historic mapping, but no evidence for remains associated with the Roman *mansio*, save for a clay layer which may be the slighted remains of the *mansio* rampart (Anelay 2015, p.2).

- In 2016 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Weston's Farm cottage which demonstrated that the south rampart of the *mansio* survives to a height of at least 0.65m under Weston's Farm cottage. In addition, sealed beneath the rampart, further evidence was found for the settlement pre-dating the *mansio*, or at least the latter's rampart. The date of the Roman pottery recovered suggested a later date than previously thought for the construction of the *mansio*, or its rampart, pushing it forwards into the third century or later (Anelay 2016, p.8).

RESULTS



Figure 2 Plan of proposed works. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. The archaeological works essentially comprised two elements, an archaeological watching brief over hedging works (Nos. 1, 2 & 3 in Fig.2), and an archaeological watching brief over the excavation of post-holes for new fencing (Nos. 2 & 4 in Fig.2). The former proved to of little value in terms of adding new data to the archaeological record.
2. The removal of three hedge plants from the existing hedge to the north-west of the existing outbuildings (No.1 in Fig.2) was carried under archaeological supervision in order to assess the nature and depth of any impact upon buried remains. It was done using a mechanical excavator, fitted with a narrow toothed bucket, in order minimise damage to the root system. The shallow depth needed to remove the hedge plants, together with the impossibility of observing any features or deposits in the holes save the disturbed topsoil, meant that nothing would be gained from further archaeological observation (see Fig.3), and so it was not continued.
3. The proposed hedge in front of the new fence through the old farmyard (No.2 in Fig.2) was, in the event, decided to be formed of seedlings rather than relocated mature hedge plants, placed within very shallow holes, and therefore no archaeological watching brief was deemed necessary.



Figure 3 The disturbance caused by the removal of one of the hedge plants in the north-western hedge (No.1 in Fig.2), looking south-west. As can be seen, only the topsoil has been disturbed.

4. The excavation of a trench to enable the planting of a new hedge to the front of the existing house (No.3 in Fig.2) was again undertaken under archaeological supervision, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. The trench reached a maximum depth of 0.35m, with three layers exposed. The upper was the existing topsoil, c.0.1m thick, below which was an orange/brown earlier soil, c.0.2m thick, overlying a layer of orange/yellow clay, of which only c.0.05m was exposed at the northern end of the trench. The latter is likely to be the clays of the *mansio* rampart (see Fig. 4). Two modern ceramic land drains were also noted, running east-west and cutting into the top of the rampart clay, presumably once emptying into the now infilled roadside ditch.



Figure 4 The trench for the new hedge to the front of the existing house (No.3 in Fig.2), looking south-east.

5. The watching brief over the excavation of the new fencing post-holes proved more rewarding. This was done using a machine-mounted augur c.0.3m in diameter. While no archaeological artefacts or features were observed, save for a single fragment of Roman tile from post-hole 7 in the western row (No.2 in Fig.2), the recording of the layers visible in the sides of the post-holes, did enable a profile of deposits to be created.

6. The underlying Weald clay was found to form a sloping spur, running downhill to the north, while sloping away to the south-east and north-west. Above this an historic topsoil was preserved along Fenceline 4, up to 0.15m deep. This was, however, only present at the southern end of Fenceline 2. Capping this layer was a redeposited orange/yellow clay, the extent of which is shown on Fig.5. This is likely to have originated from the *mansio* rampart to the south-east, and was spread when the latter was partially levelled and dug into with the creation of Weston's Farm in the late 19th century. Capping this clay were the modern topsoil, concrete and gravel of the current land surface.

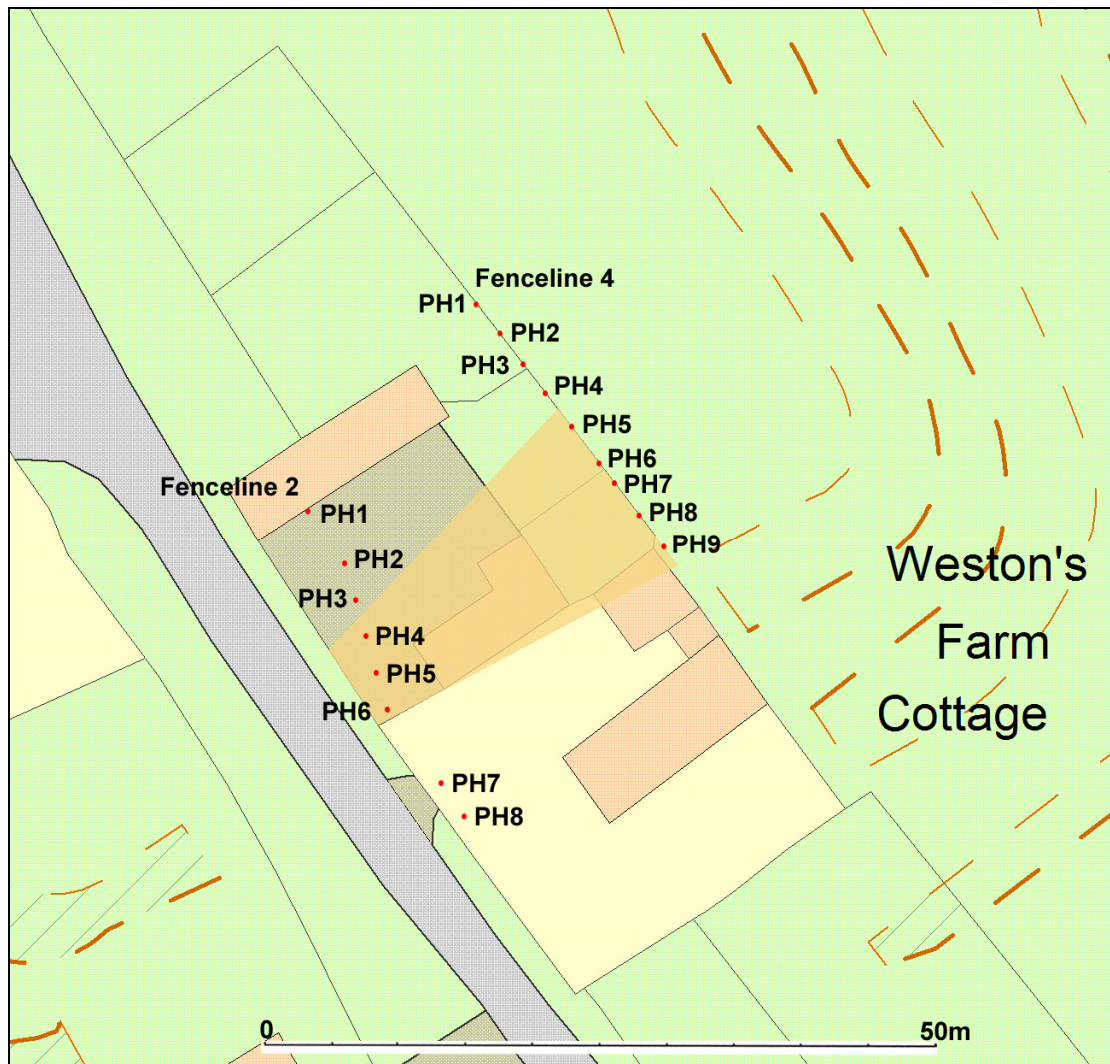


Figure 5 Plan of the postholes forming fencelines 2 & 4. The spread of re-deposited clay is shown in orange

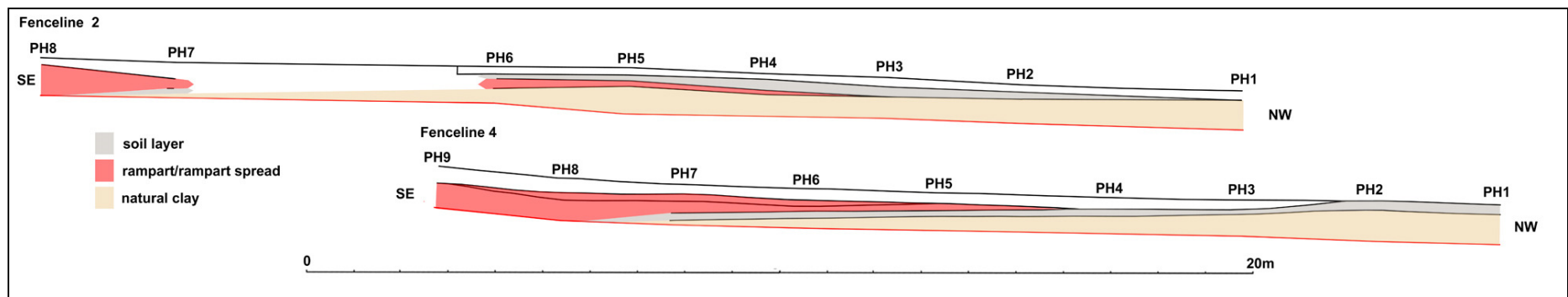


Figure 6 Reconstructed sections based upon the data from the fenceline post-holes.

CONCLUSION

1. The results from this programme of archaeological works has confirmed and enlarged upon the findings of previous investigations on the site. The northern limits of a spread of re-deposited clay, noted in the 2012 and 2106 archaeological trenches, were recorded running across the old farmyard and into the field to the north-east. This layer probably originates from the construction of Westons Farm in the late 19th century, when the rampart was partially levelled and footing trenches presumably dug through it and down into the underlying Weald clay.
2. No further evidence was found for the pre-rampart occupation noted in previous archaeological investigations, although this was to be expected given the limited nature of the ground disturbance. Neither was any indication found of the nature of any structures within the *mansio* itself, something which has proved elusive in all the archaeological work undertaken to date within its bounds.

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