

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road
Littlehampton, West Sussex**

NGR 503101 101961

**Project No: 5319
Site Code: LFS11**

**ASE Report No: 2012057
OASIS ID: archaeol6-119955**

**By
Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With contributions by
Luke Barber**

March 2012

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road
Littlehampton, West Sussex**

NGR 503101 101961

**Project No: 5319
Site Code: LFS11**

**ASE Report No: 2012057
OASIS ID: archaeol6-119955**

**By
Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With contributions by
Luke Barber**

March 2012

**Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR
Tel: 01273 426830
Fax: 01273 420866
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk**

Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by West Sussex County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the erection of front and rear extensions to Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex.

The watching brief was maintained during groundworks for front and rear extensions to the existing fire station. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the monitored areas. There was evidence of heavy disturbance by services.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 The Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

HER Summary Sheet
OASIS Form

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location
Figure 2: Site plan: the monitored areas

TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of site archive
Table 2: Quantification of finds

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by West Sussex County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the erection of front and rear extensions to Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex (NGR 503101 101961; Fig. 1)

1.2 Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 Littlehampton Fire Station is located in a built-up area of Littlehampton on the northern side of Maltravers Road at a height of c. 5m AOD. It is bounded to the east by Littlehampton Library and to the west by the Arun District Council offices, both of which front onto Maltravers Road. The site of the former Arun Community Hospital (earmarked for the new Littlehampton Community Hospital) lies immediately to the north.
- 1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock is the local chalk formation. The superficial geology recorded for the site consists of river terrace deposits of sand, silt and clay (BGS 2012).

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission for the building work was granted by West Sussex County Council in 2011 (planning ref. WSCC/053/11/LU). Following consultation within the Planning Department of West Sussex County Council, John Mills, Senior Archaeologist recommended that a condition (No. 5) was attached to the permission, stating that:

‘Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved a programme of archaeological work will be implemented in accordance with a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which is to be submitted and agreed in writing to the County Planning Authority.’

Reason: To ensure investigation and recording of archaeological Heritage Assets on the site during the course of development.’

- 1.3.2 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) was duly produced by ASE, outlining the methods to be used in the field and in the production of a report and a site archive (ASE 2012).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aims stated in the WSI (*ibid.*) were to:

'to monitor all excavations associated with the development including, in order to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the excavations are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.'

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological monitoring of groundworks at the site carried out during February 2012. The on-site work was undertaken by Andrew Margetts and Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologists) and project managed by Jon Sygrave (Project Manager) and Jim Stevenson (Post-Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A full appreciation of the archaeological and historical background to the site was given in the WSI (ASE 2012), but in summary, although much of the post-war development of Littlehampton was undertaken without preceding archaeological work, some 'salvage' work was possible. Sites of prehistoric and Romano-British date were recorded, including the Gosden Road Roman Villa, as well as a number of Romano-British field systems and/or enclosures (Gilkes 1993, 1).
- 2.2 More recent fieldwork has revealed evidence of early Romano-British settlement, including an enclosed working area and pottery production at the Horticultural Research International site to the north (Lovell 2002), and a farmstead on the opposite side of the River Arun at Middleton-on-Sea (Barber 1994), as well as remains of the port's post-medieval waterfront to the west (Bradley & Phillpotts 2006).
- 2.3 Archaeological remains have also been recovered from within the immediate vicinity of the current site. According to entries in the West Sussex County Historic Environment Records (Nos. WS3467 and WS7097), several 1st and 2nd century burials were disturbed c. 1908 in the grounds of the hospital immediately to the north. Subsequently a Roman cremation urn was recovered from the site during building work in the 1920s, and when the car-park to the west of the hospital buildings was constructed in the early 1970s a further 30 or so 'Roman' burials were uncovered but were discarded without recording.
- 2.4 It is unknown if the inhumations from the site were indeed of Roman date, or whether they originated from the medieval church and associated burial ground that was located on the plot currently occupied by the modern Church of St. Mary. Archaeological investigations carried out in 2005-6 at the hospital (ASE 2006) led to the recovery of two Romano-British pottery vessels, one definitely a cremation deposit and the other probably so, as well as part of a Late Bronze Age double-ditched enclosure.
- 2.5 The presence of inhumations and cremations strongly suggests the presence of a Romano-British mixed rite cemetery but the complication that the inhumations might have been medieval in date clouds any firm interpretation. It was unfortunate that no bones from the disturbance of burials during the 1970s were retained, as scientific dating may have been able to dispel the ambiguity. However, the presence of the cremation urns is in itself evidence of a cemetery of some kind.
- 2.6 The characteristics of Romano-British rural internments are as yet not fully understood in rural areas, but Cleary (2000, 132) has noted that burial sites range from small formally laid-out cemeteries to apparently isolated burials in the corners of fields or enclosures. It was therefore thought possible that the cemetery would extend into the current site.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The mechanical excavation of a pipe trench and footings trenches were monitored, as well as limited ground reduction. All sections were examined for the presence of archaeological features, and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts.
- 3.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.2 A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The site archive is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and has been accepted for deposition in Littlehampton Museum. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	12
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	-
Bulk Samples	-
Photographs	20 digital photographs
Bulk finds	1 small bag
Registered finds	-
Environmental flots/residue	-

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken at the site between the 14th February and the 24th February 2012 on 6 separate visits. The monitored groundworks consisted of mechanical excavation of a pipe trench, limited ground reduction, and the mechanical and manual excavation of footings trenches for extensions to the front and rear of the existing fire station building.

4.2 The Pipe Trench

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
001	Layer	Tarmac & Make-Up	200mm
002	Layer	Made Ground	200mm
003	Layer	Redeposited 'Natural'	>200mm

4.2.1 A 350mm wide, 600mm deep pipe trench was excavated to the rear of the building. Excavations were undertaken by hand adjacent to the buildings and by machine further away. A straightforward sequence of deposits was encountered, consisting of a layer of tarmac and associated bedding, context [001] which overlay made ground consisting of a mixture of garden soil and brick rubble, context [002], which in turn overlay a layer of apparently deposited 'natural' orangey brown clay, context [003] which extended to the base of the trench. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed.

4.3 The Front Extension

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
004	Layer	Paving Slabs	45mm
005	Layer	Make-up/Levelling	230mm
006	Layer	Garden Soil	200mm
007	Layer	Made Ground	1.07m
008	Layer	'Natural'	>100mm

4.3.1 An area measuring c. 5m by c. 5m was disturbed during groundworks for the front extension. Again a straightforward stratigraphic sequence was revealed consisting of a layer of paving slabs, context [004] (removed prior to monitoring), which incorporated a flower bed of unclear extent, containing humic topsoil, context [006]. Following the removal of these deposits across the entire area, footing trenches measuring 600mm wide and a maximum of 1.3m deep were mechanically excavated on the western, southern and eastern sides of the area.

4.3.2 The footings trenches revealed a simple sequence. The uppermost deposit was an orangey brown sand and flint gravel make-up layer, context [005], which directly overlay a deposit of made ground consisting of a mixture of

garden soil and brick rubble, context [007]. The 'natural' brownish yellow silty sand, context [008] was encountered at the very base of the trench. No archaeological deposits or features were observed and finds were limited to late post-medieval pottery and glass recovered from context [007].

4.4 The Rear Extension

Context Number	Type	Description	Max. Deposit Thickness
009	Layer	Tarmac	120mm
010	Layer	Make-Up/Levelling	220mm
011	Layer	Made Ground	1.2m
012	Layer	'Natural'	>100mm

- 4.4.1 An area measuring c. 8m by c. 10m was disturbed during groundworks for the rear extension. Again initial work consisted of the removal of the surfacing material, in this case tarmac, context [009] across the entire area. Footings trenches measuring 350mm wide and a maximum of 1.6m deep were then mechanically excavated on the northern and eastern sides, with some internal elements.
- 4.4.2 The tarmac rested on an orangey-brown sand and flint gravel make-up/levelling deposit, context [010], which in turn overlay a layer of made ground consisting of a mixture of garden soil and brick rubble, context [011] (although there was less rubble than in the corresponding made ground, context [007] to the front of the building). This deposit extended to the base of the majority of the trench, which was usually c. 1m deep, but close to a brick-built soakaway in the north-western corner of the new extension the trench was deepened to 1.6m and brownish yellow silty sand 'natural', context [012] was encountered at the base of the trench.
- 4.4.3 Much of the area of the rear of extension had been disturbed during previous laying of services, and following consultation with John Mills, Senior Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council, it was decided that continued monitoring of the trenching (in this case the western 'arm' of the footings) was unnecessary.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Only 2 artefacts were recovered during the watching brief, an almost complete pottery vessel and a fragment of decorated glass (Table 2).

Context	Pottery	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)
7	1	228	1	40

Table 2: Quantification of Finds

5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.2.1 A single sherd of pottery was recovered from context [007]. This consists of the greater part (228g) of a small English stoneware cream jug with exterior orange brown wash under a Bristol glaze and 'GG' stamped on its base. The vessel has a 44mm diameter base, 52mm diameter spouted rim and is 92mm tall. The handle has broken off the vessel, presumably the reason for its discard. A later 19th- to early 20th- century date is probable.

5.3 The Glass by Luke Barber

- 5.3.1 Context [007] produced a 40g fragment from a white glass cylindrical ?cream pot with moulded decoration of cows in arcaded panels. A later 19th- to early 20th- century date is probable.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded during the monitoring of the excavation of the pipe trench, or in the groundworks for either of the extensions to the existing building at the site.
- 6.2 The very limited finds assemblage recovered during the watching brief contained no artefacts of particular note or great antiquity, and appears the result of the casual inclusion of residual domestic refuse in a layer of made ground, perhaps associated with groundworks for the construction of the fire station.
- 6.3 Therefore, based on currently available evidence, it cannot be proven that the Romano-British cemetery known to have existed immediately to the north extended into the current site. Whether this lack of evidence is due to post-depositional processes (i.e. the heavy truncation seen during the watching brief) or is a true reflection of the actual extent of the cemetery remains open to question.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE 2006. *Archaeological Investigations at Arun Community Hospital Fitzalan Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex. Post-Excavation Assessment and Project Design for Publication*. Unpub. ASE document

ASE 2012. *Littlehampton Fire Station, Littlehampton, West Sussex Archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpub. ASE document

BGS 2012. British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer, accessed 20.03.2012 http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html

Barber, L. 1994. The excavation of a Romano-British site at Moraunt Drive, Middleton-on-Sea, West Sussex, 1992, *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter SAC) **132**, 87-100

Bradley, T and Phillpotts, C. 2006. The development of the port of Littlehampton, West Sussex, and excavations at East Bank, Rover Road, SAC **144**, 155-68

Cleary, S. 2000. Putting the dead in their place: burial location in Roman Britain, in Pearce, J., Millett, M., and Struck, M., (eds.) 2000. *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World*. Oxbow books, Oxford, 127-42

Gilkes, O. 1993. Iron Age and Roman Littlehampton, SAC **131**, 1–20

Lovell, J. 2002. An early Roman pottery production site at Horticultural Research International, Littlehampton, SAC **140**, 21-40

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank West Sussex County Council Planning Department for commissioning the work. Thanks are also due to John Mills, Senior Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council for his input at various stages of the project. The co-operation and hospitality of the on-site contractors is also gratefully acknowledged.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	LFS11					
Identification Name and Address	Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton					
County, District &/or Borough	Arun District, West Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	503101 101961					
Geology	River Terrace Deposits					
ASE Project Number	5319					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 14.12.2012 - 24.02.2012	Other		
Sponsor/Client	West Sussex County Council					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other		
<p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by West Sussex County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the erection of front and rear extensions to Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex.</p> <p>The watching brief was maintained during groundworks for front and rear extensions to the existing fire station. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the monitored areas. There was evidence of heavy disturbance by services.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-119955

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by West Sussex County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the erection of front and rear extensions to Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex. The watching brief was maintained during groundworks for front and rear extensions to the existing fire station. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the monitored areas. There was evidence of heavy disturbance by services.
Project dates	Start: 14-02-2012 End: 24-02-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	5319 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	LFS11 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	WSCC/053/11/LU - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Current Land use	Other 11 - Thoroughfare
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX ARUN LITTLEHAMPTON Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road
Postcode	BN16 9SA

Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 03101 01961 50.8074488361 -0.5365640143 50 48 26 N 000 32 11 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 4.00m Max: 5.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	West Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave/Jim Stevenson
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	West Sussex County Council

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Littlehampton Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Littlehampton Museum
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Littlehampton Museum
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Miscellaneous Material','Notebook - Excavation','Research','General Notes','Report','Unpublished Text'

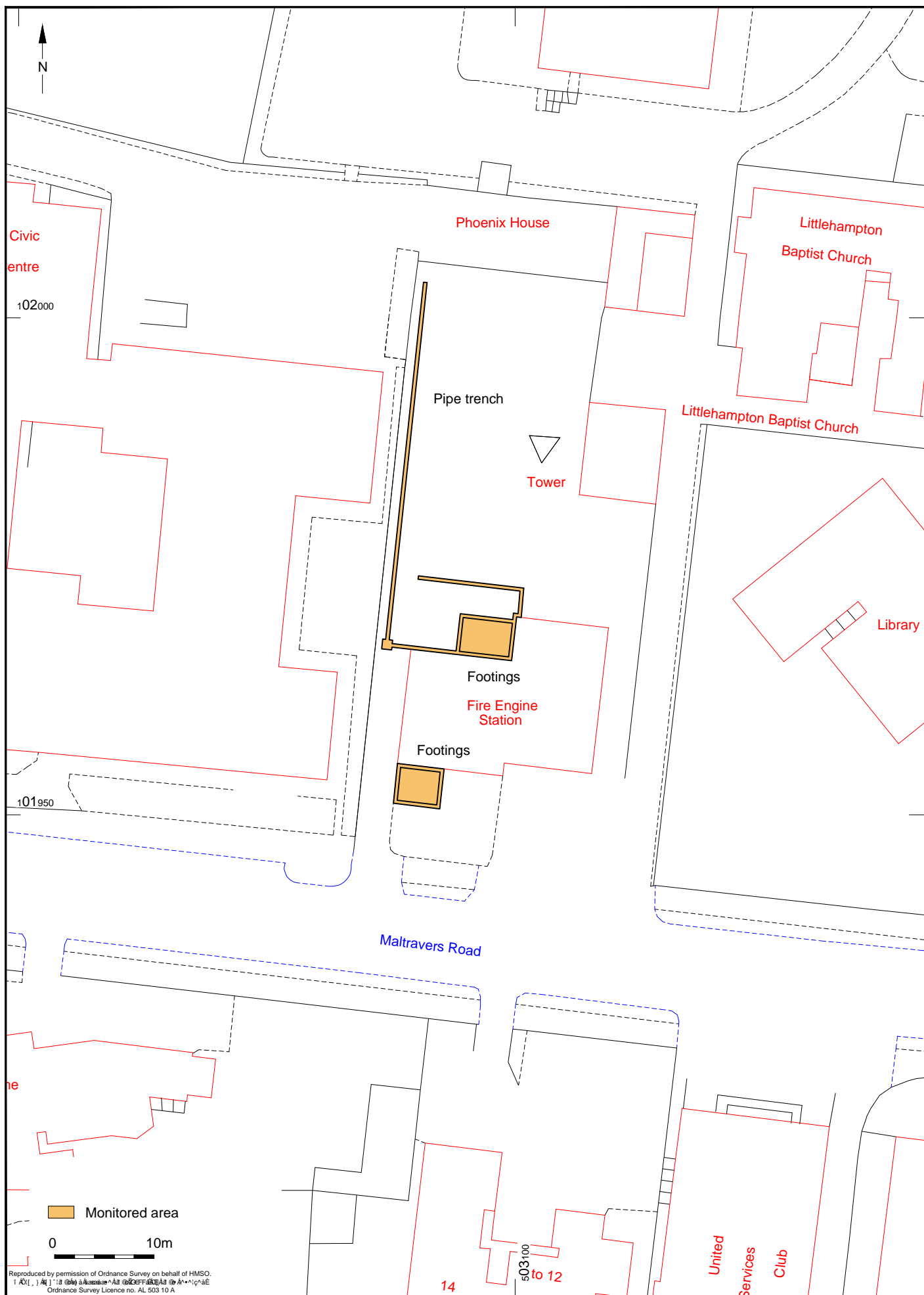
Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
------------------	---

Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Littlehampton Fire Station, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Stevens, S.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No. 2012057
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade, East Sussex
Description	ASE client report. A4-sized with cover logos.
Entered by	Dan Swift (d.swift@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	21 March 2012



© Archaeology South-East		Littlehampton Fire Station	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5319	March 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012057	Drawn by: JLR		



↑ Archaeology South-East		Littlehampton Fire Station	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5319	March 2012	Area of watching brief	
Report Ref: 2012057	Drawn by: JLR		

Head Office
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
Tel: +44(0)1273 426830 Fax: +44(0)1273 420866
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk



London Office
Centre for Applied Archaeology
Institute of Archaeology
University College London
31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 0PY
Tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
Fax: +44(0)20 7383 2572
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

The contracts division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, University College London 

©Archaeology South-East