

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey East Sussex**

**NGR: 538317 116921
TQ 38317 16921**

**Planning Reference: LW/11/0183
Amended Reference: LW/11/1041**

**ASE Project No: 4903
Site Code: CYF11**

**ASE Report No: 2012152
OASIS id: archaeol6-130483**

By Nick Garland MA

July 2012

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Commercial Management Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey East Sussex during groundworks for the construction of a new stable. The work was undertaken on the 12th July 2012.

Two trenches were excavated across the footprint of the proposed building, each measuring 38m in length and 1m in width. The excavations revealed a sequence of topsoil and/or hardcore overlying natural Weald Clay. No archaeological deposits, finds or features were uncovered.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre of Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL), was commissioned by Commercial Management Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks on land at Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey East Sussex, (NGR TQ 38317 16921; Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is situated to the west of the main centre of the village of South Chailey, immediately to the north of Yokehurst Farm house. The site lies within a pasture field bounded to the north and west by similar plots of land and to the east by a trackway leading to the farm. The area to be developed lies on a slight incline, sloping from the north down towards the farm buildings to the south.

1.2.2 The British Geological Survey shows that the underlying geology is Weald Clay Formation (BGS 2012).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning consent was granted by Lewes District Council for the erection of a barn and associated areas of hard standing (Planning Ref: LW/11/1041 and amendments LW/11/0183). Due to the location of the site within an archaeologically sensitive area a condition (5) was placed on the planning permission stating:

No development shall take place within the area indicated (this would be the area of archaeological interest) until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LDC) and carried out in accordance with that approval.

Reason: To facilitate the recording of finds of archaeological interest having regard to National Policy Statement 5.

1.3.2 Accordingly, a Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2012) was submitted to and approved by Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council prior to the commencement of works. This document detailed the aims, objectives and methods to be used during these works and was compiled with reference to the East Sussex Standards (ESCC 2008) and the relevant *Standards and Guidance* of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2008).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aims and objectives for the archaeological investigation are detailed in the WSI (ASE 2012):

1.4.2 The general objective of the archaeological work was to monitor the ground works specified below in order to ensure that any deposits and features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.4.3 Relevant research aims to the site were:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity, including the presence of residual finds?
- Pre-medieval occupation of the area is largely unknown. Is there any evidence of this?
- Is an early 14th century date of the farmstead likely to be accurate?
- Are there building foundations or demolition deposits relating to the 20th century contraction of the farmstead? What were the likely form, function and date of the demolished building(s)?

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the findings of the archaeological watching brief undertaken by Nick Garland on the 12th July 2012. The project was managed by Andy Leonard (Fieldwork Project Manager) and Dan Swift (Post-Excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A search of East Sussex County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) within 1km of the site revealed a number of archaeological references in close proximity to the site. These are summarised in Table 1.

Site Number	HER Ref	Period	Details
1	MES 1262	Post-medieval	Windmill
2	MES 1270	Post-medieval	The Alcorn Pottery works (c.1809-81)
3	MES 1271	Post-medieval	The Norman Pottery works, possibly in operation from 1615
4	MES 1272	Post-medieval	Chailey South Smock Mill – built in 1790
5	MES 1321	medieval	Hurter's farm – mid 15 th century date
6	MES 1325	Post-medieval	Farm complex – 16 th century date
7	MES 1327	Neolithic	Flint Axe found at 1976 at Warningore Farm
8	MES 6936	Mesolithic	Flint Scatter including core and blades
9	MES 16628	Post-medieval	19 th century Old Pouchlands hospital
10	MES 16768	Post-medieval?	Claypit close to 'Roman Spring Farm'
11	MES 17105	medieval	Farm complex
12	MES 17130	Post-medieval	Windmill

Table 1: HER records within 1 km radius of the site

- 2.2 The earliest known activity is represented by two find-spots dating to the prehistoric period. A flint scatter (Site 8) of mostly Mesolithic date was found at South Downs College (MES6936) and a Neolithic axe (Site 7) was found in 1976 at Warningore Farm (MES1327).
- 2.3 No later prehistoric, Roman or Saxon finds or sites are known within the study area and it is likely to have been heavily-wooded until the undertaking of the tree-felling clearance creating the open fields associated with the medieval settlement of South Chailey.
- 2.4 Yokehurst Farm dates from AD 1307 and the earliest element of the current building is probably of late 15th century date. The farmstead developed throughout the post-medieval period although cartographic evidence shows a marked reduction in the size of the complex in the 20th century. No evidence of the early medieval phases has so far been identified archaeologically (Greg Chuter *pers. Comm.*).
- 2.5 Another medieval farm (Site 5) is known to the immediate north at Pixie Barn (MES1321). However the majority of HER monuments in the area are of post-medieval date and included two windmills (Sites 1 & 12) (MES1262 & MES17130); two pottery works (Sites 2 & 3) (MES1270 & MES1271); a clay-pit (Site 10) (MES16768); a farm (Site 6) (MES1325) and a hospital (Site 9) (MES16628).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 It was agreed prior to excavations on site that several trenches across the footprint of the building would be excavated under archaeological supervision in order to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains.
- 3.2 The watching brief was conducted by excavating two trenches across the footprint of the building. The two trenches each measuring 38m in length and 1m in width were excavated diagonally across the footprint of the building down to the level of the natural horizon. These trenches represented approximately 10% of the total area under development.
- 3.3 Adequate time was made available for hand-cleaning and recording to be undertaken by the archaeologist in attendance.
- 3.4 All deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards (IfA 2008) and in accordance with the approved ASE Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2012) using *pro-forma* recording sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.5 Relevant features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10.
- 3.6 All spoil from the excavations was inspected by archaeologists visually and with a metal detector to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.7 A photographic record of the watching brief was kept and forms part of the site archive presently held at Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, East Sussex. The archive will be submitted to Lewes Castle Museum.

Number of Contexts	3 contexts
No. of files/paper record	1 folder
Photographs	40 digital

Table 2: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m OD
001	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.3m	58.73
002	Deposit	Natural Weald Clay	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	58.43
003	Deposit	Hardcore	Tr.	Tr.	0.3m	58.69

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

- 4.1 Two archaeologically negative trenches were excavated across the footprint of the building down to the level of the natural horizon. Following consultation with Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeological, ESCC it was agreed to discontinue the watching brief.
- 4.2 Compact, light-orange Weald Clay [002] was observed in the base of both trenches at 57.81m OD to the north-east and 59.05m OD to the north-west.
- 4.3 To the south-east a layer of hard core [003] had been laid directly over the clay. A layer of topsoil [001], a soft light brown clayey silt deposit containing occasional small sub-rounded stone inclusions overlay the clay elsewhere.
- 4.5 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered during the excavations.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The monitoring of excavations at Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey did not reveal any archaeological features, deposits or finds despite sampling a large percentage of the total area under development.
- 5.2 While the deposits overlying the natural horizon were not particularly thick (0.3m), the Weald Clay appeared to be little affected by truncation or ploughing. As such it is considered that had any archaeological features or material been cut into the clay, these would have survived.
- 5.3 If the fields surrounding the site are similarly untruncated they may have archaeological potential. This is particularly relevant in proximity to the medieval farmstead at Yokehurst.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Nigel Welby of Commercial Management Ltd for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter County Archaeologist East Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring throughout the project.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	CYF11					
Identification Name and Address	Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey, East Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	South Chailey, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	538317 116921					
Geology	Weald Clay Formation					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4903					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief X	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field X	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 12/7/12	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Commercial Management					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Nick Garland					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other None		
<p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Commercial Management Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey East Sussex during groundworks for the construction of a new stable. The work was undertaken on the 12th July 2012.</p> <p>Two trenches were excavated across the footprint of the proposed building, each measuring 38m in length and 1m in width. The excavations revealed a sequence of topsoil and/or hardcore overlying the natural Weald Clay. No archaeological deposits, finds or features were uncovered.</p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-130483

Project details

Project name	Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey, East Sussex
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Commercial Management Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey East Sussex during groundworks for the construction of a new stable. The work was undertaken on the 12th July 2012. Two trenches were excavated across the footprint of the proposed building, each measuring 38m in length and 1m in width. The excavations revealed a sequence of topsoil and/or hardcore overlying the natural Weald Clay. No archaeological deposits, finds or features were uncovered.
Project dates	Start: 12-07-2012 End: 12-07-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CYF12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 5 - Character undetermined
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX LEWES CHAILEY Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey
Postcode	BN8 4PY
Study area	740.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 38317 16921 50 0 50 56 04 N 000 01 52 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 57.81m Max: 59.05m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	East Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Nick Garland
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report"

Project bibliography

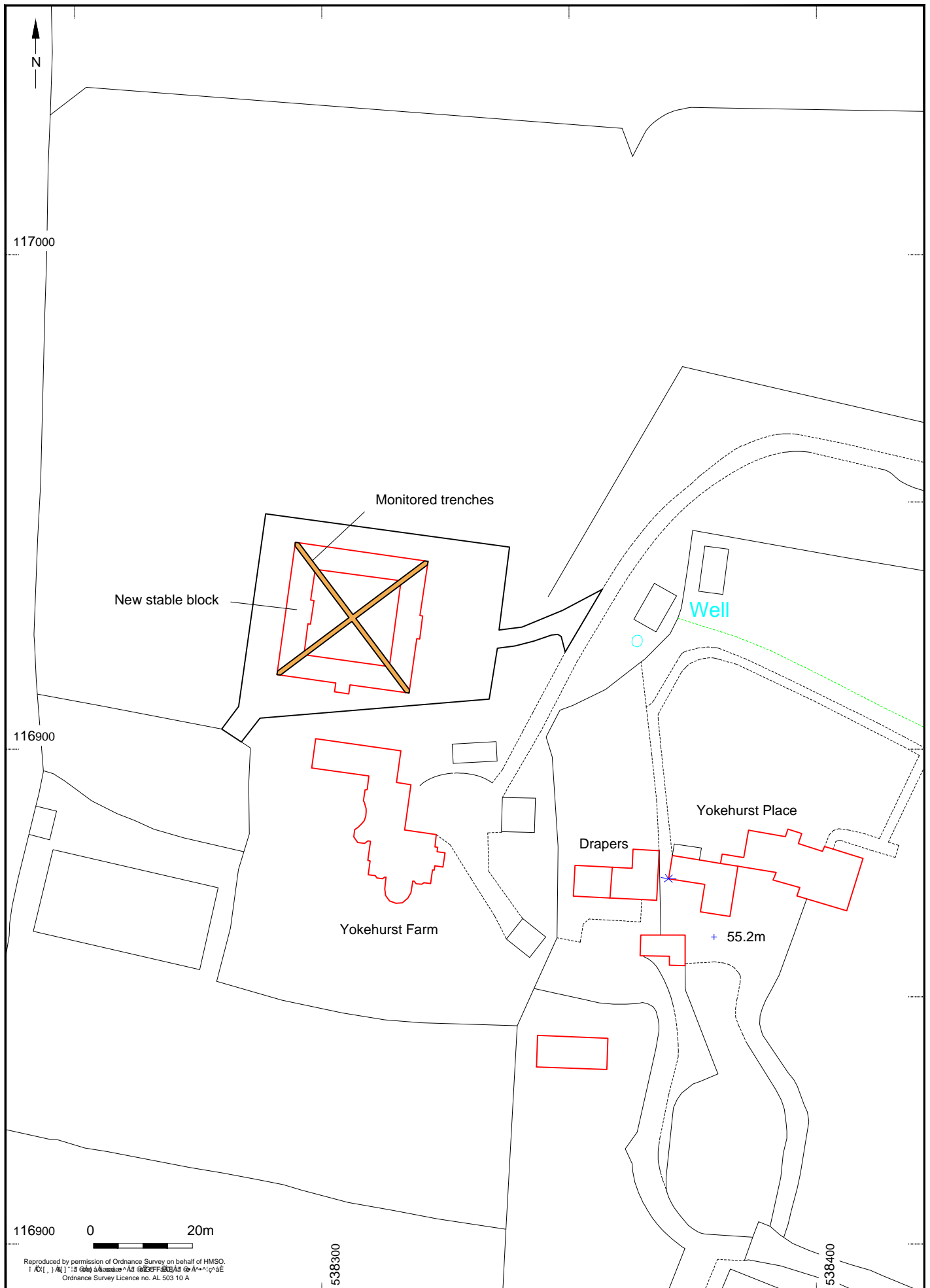
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© Archaeology South-East		Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4903	July 2012	Site location		
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Archaeology South-East		Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4903	July 2012	Plan of monitored area		
Report Ref: 2012152	Drawn by: JLR			



Fig. 3.1: Excavated trench facing north-east



Fig. 3.2: Excavated trench facing west

© Archaeology South-East		Yokehurst Farm, South Chailey	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 4903	July 2012	Site location	
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