

**Antlands Lane West, Shipley Bridge,
Crawley, West Sussex, 2006**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Matthews (Sussex) Limited

by Simon Cass and Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ARC 06/115

November 2006

Summary

Site name: Antlands Lane West, Shipley Bridge, Crawley, West Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 3000 4040

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 9th October – 1st November 2006

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Simon Cass

Site code: ARC 06/115

Area of site: 2.336 ha

Summary of results: No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Crawley Museum in due course.

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| | Steve Preston ✓ 21.11.06 |

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Report 06/115

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Antlands Lane West, Shipley Bridge, Crawley, West Sussex (TQ 300 404) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andrew Josephs of Andrew Josephs Limited, L'ancienne ecole, Felines 82160, Caylus, France on behalf of Matthews (Sussex) Limited, Stephenson's Place, Stephenson Way, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 1TN.

Planning permission (CR/2005/0585/FUL) has been gained from Crawley Borough Council to store soil on the site. This consent is subject to a condition (2) relating to archaeology, which requires the implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation to mitigate the effects of groundworks on any potential archaeological remains.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr John Mills, Archaeologist with West Sussex County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Natasha Bennett, Simon Cass, Danielle Milbank and Sean Wallis, between 9th October and 1st November 2006, and the site code is ARC 06/115.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Crawley Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a relatively flat parcel of land to the south of Antlands Lane West and east of Balcombe Road (B2036). The site is 2km south-east of the outskirts of Horley, and about 5km north of Crawley. Gatwick Airport is about 1.5km to the west. The site has until relatively recently been used for farming, during which time it was very infrequently ploughed, however two recent ploughings have occurred to deter unauthorized access and use of the land. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying natural geology is Weald Clay, and this was observed throughout the site. The site lies at a height of approximately 62m above Ordnance Datum. Upon commencement of the work it was apparent that only the western half of the site would be seen, as

the easternmost side had already been filled and reinstated – henceforth all reference to the site shall be to this western half (as indicated in Fig. 2).

Archaeological background

Although this region is known for its association with iron production, from the Iron Age through the Medieval period and into early post-medieval times, little archaeology is known for the immediate vicinity of the site (Rudling 2003). However, given the relatively large area of the site there is a possibility of the presence of archaeological deposits.

Objectives and methodology

Topsoil was removed from a large part of the site (Fig. 2), to expose the underlying Weald Clay. The stripped area was then to be filled and subsequently re-covered with topsoil.

The general objectives of the project were to:

- Excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development;

- Produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on site;

- Establish the character of these deposits and attempt to define functional areas on the site, such as industrial, domestic, etc;

- Produce information on the economy and local environment, and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.

Topsoil stripping was to be carried out using a 360° type mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision.

Results

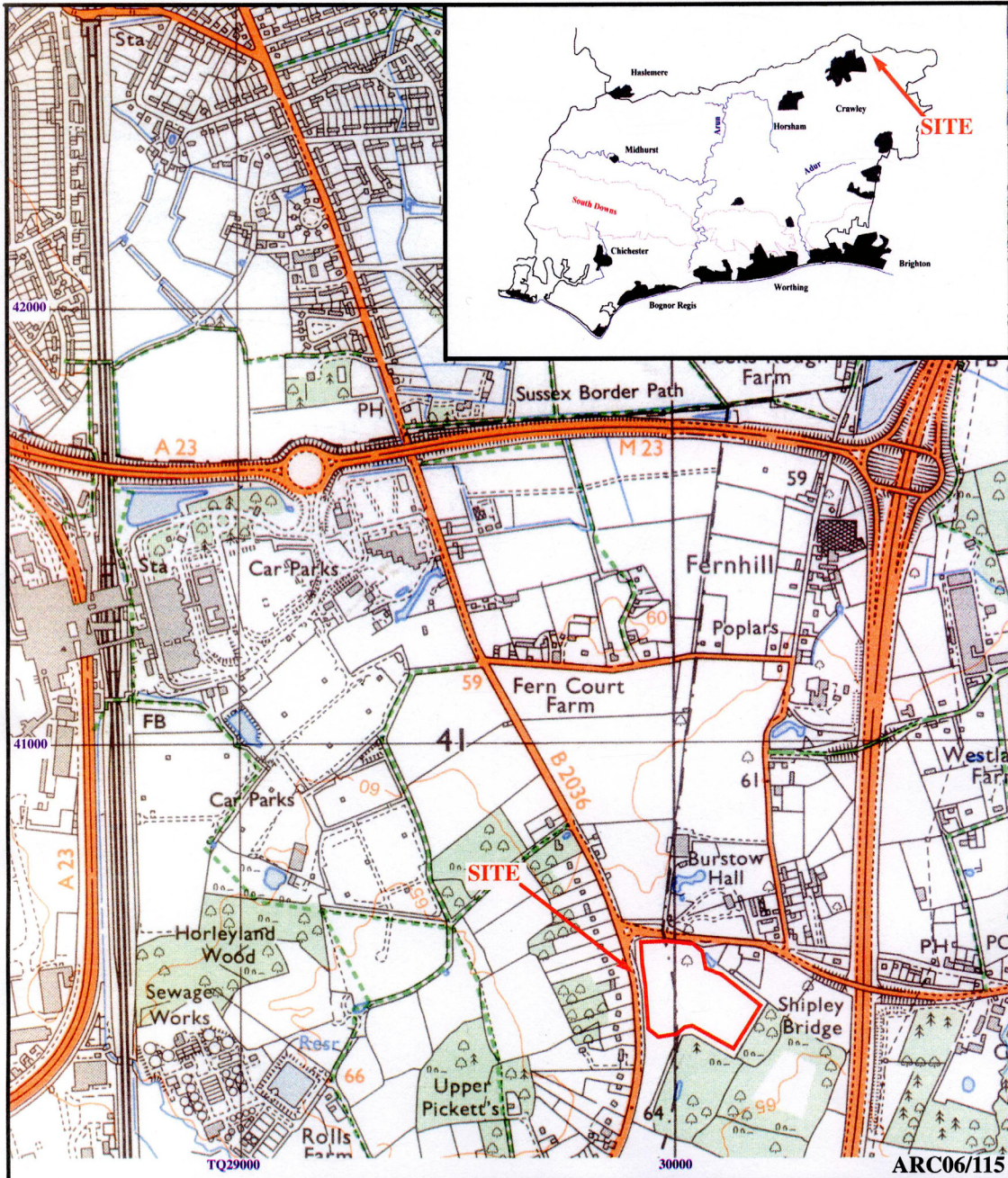
The stratigraphy observed during the stripping was essentially uniform across the site, and generally consisted of 0.2m of turf and topsoil above up to 0.1m of light greyish brown silty clay subsoil, which lay directly above the light yellow brown Weald Clay (Fig. 3). Apart from two modern ditches (Fig. 2), no archaeological finds or features were recorded. One of the ditches contained modern glass and pottery and the other had been an extant ditch until recent ploughing had infilled it. The recent ploughing had also caused extensive scarring into the top 0.1m–0.2m of subsoil.

Conclusion

Given the relatively large size of the site it is perhaps surprising that no archaeological finds or features were recorded during the watching brief. However, it is possible that the underlying Weald Clay would have made the area unsuitable for agriculture prior to the post-medieval period.

References

BGS, 1972, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000 Sheet 302, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
Rudling, D (ed), 2003, *The archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Brighton



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Figure 1. Location of site within Crawley and West Sussex.

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Figure 2: Plan of stripped area

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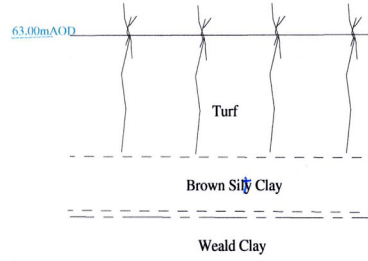


Figure 3: Representative Section

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