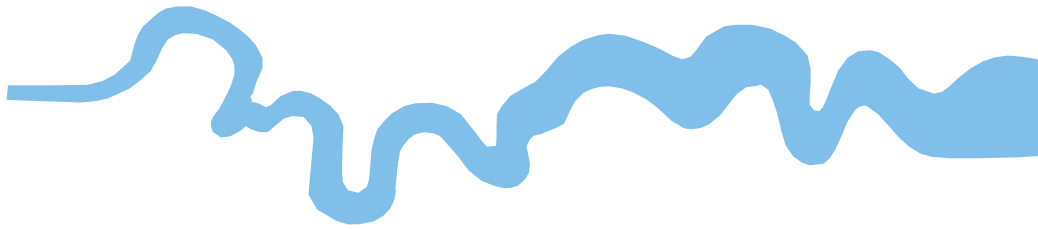


T V A S



SOUTH

**Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston,
East Sussex**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: FAS18/18

(TQ 5210 0311)

Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston, East Sussex

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ms Sharon Alison

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code FAS 18/18

September 2018

Summary

Site name: Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston, East Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 5210 0311

Planning reference: SDNP/17/04656/HOUS

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 2nd May 2018

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Jim Webster

Site code: FAS 18/18

Summary of results: The watching brief at Farthings, Alfriston, successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the excavation of four pits against an existing garden wall. Due to the relative shallowness of the pits, the natural geology was not encountered, and no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The preferred depository for the site archive is Lewes Museum. Unfortunately the museum is not accepting new material, so the archive will be held at TVAS Brighton until a suitable repository can be found.

This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 20.09.18
	Steve Preston ✓ 20.09.18

Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston, East Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Sean Wallis

Report 18/18b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston, East Sussex (TQ 5210 0311) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Christopher Eadie of The Flint Wall Company to carry out the necessary archaeological work, on behalf of the property's owner, Ms Sharon Alison.

Planning permission (SDNP/17/04656/HOUS) had been gained from the South Downs National Park Authority for the partial demolition and rebuilding of one of the boundary walls. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (3) relating to archaeology and historic environment. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the Authority's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer (Mr Greg Chuter), who advises the Authority on archaeological matters.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Jim Webster on 2nd May 2018, and the site code is FAS 18/18. The archive is currently held at TVAS Brighton and will be deposited with a suitable depository in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the historic core of Alfriston, and is accessed via an entrance through the rear garden from the southern end of River Lane (Fig. 2). Although the surrounding area generally slopes down towards the River Cuckmere, the site itself was relatively flat and lies at a height of approximately 7.5m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Head Deposits (BGS 2006). However the natural geology was not encountered during the watching brief due to the shallowness of the excavations.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been gleaned from a recent search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record. In summary, the site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area associated with the medieval and post-medieval village of Alfriston. The village has late Saxon origins, and is first mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) as *Alvricestone*, which probably means 'farmstead or village of a man called Aelfric' (Mills 1993). The parish church, dedicated to St Andrew, has elements dating from the 14th century, although there have been various later additions and alterations. Most of the entries in the HER relate to the numerous historic buildings within the village, which date from the late medieval period onwards. However, there have been a number of archaeological fieldwork projects within the village. Medieval and post-medieval finds were recorded at Riverbank, to the north of the present site, along with a palaeochannel which produced a small amount of Mesolithic flintwork. Further prehistoric flintwork was found at Ye Olde Smugglers Inne, to the north-west of the present site, along with a medieval pit and post-medieval finds.

The house on the site is thought to date from at least the 18th century, and may have originated as barn. It is shown on historic maps from 1842 onwards, and appears to have been extended and converted into a residential dwelling in the 20th century. The western boundary, along which the wall runs, is depicted on the 1842 tithe map.

Objectives and methodology

The primary aim of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks. This was to involve the monitoring a number of pits which were dug against the garden wall, to enable strengthening works and the creation of a new set of steps into the garden. Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client and the East Sussex County Council Archaeological Officer. Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record. The watching brief was to be carried out in accordance with the relevant sections of *Sussex Archaeological Standards* (ESCC 2017), and the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist (CIfA 2014a).

Results

Prior to the commencement of the project, the southern part of the boundary wall had been demolished. Four pits (A, B, C and D) were then excavated by hand against the northern part of the wall (Fig. 3). Pits A, C and D were square in plan, measuring 0.80m by 0.80m, and were dug to enable new buttresses to be built against the wall.

Pit B was longer (1.40m) as it was dug to enable the construction of a new set of steps into the garden. The pits were between 0.30m and 0.40m deep and the stratigraphy generally consisted of about 0.25m of turf and topsoil (50) over a mid reddish brown subsoil (51). The only exception was pit A, which was excavated in the patio area immediately to the rear of the house, where topsoil was exposed immediately below the brick paving (Fig. 4).

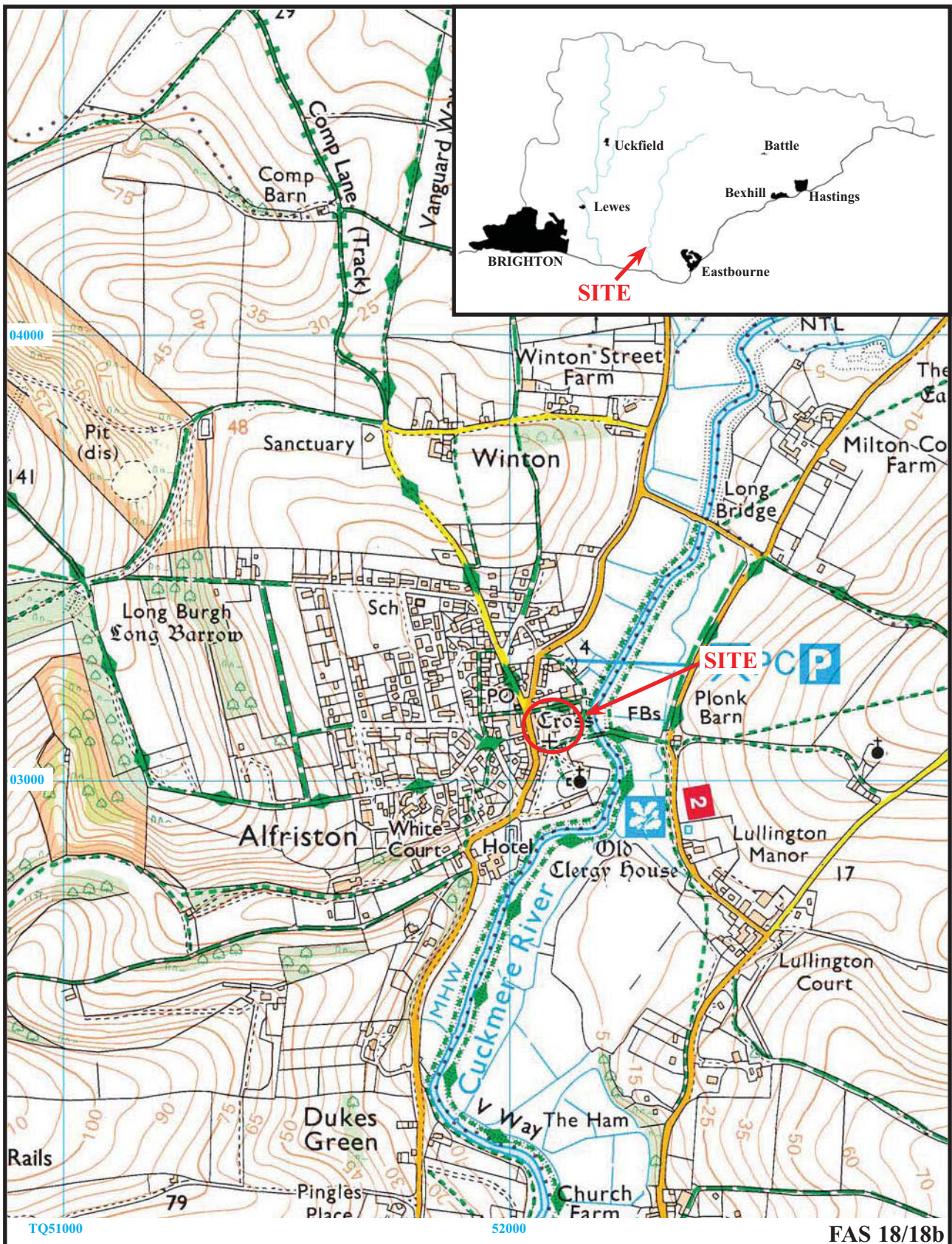
None of the pits were deep enough to reveal the natural geology and, unsurprisingly, no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Conclusion

The watching brief at Farthings, Alfriston, successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the excavation of four pits against an existing garden wall. construction of the new extension to the existing house. Due to the relative shallowness of the pits, the natural geology was not encountered, and no archaeological finds or features were recorded.

References

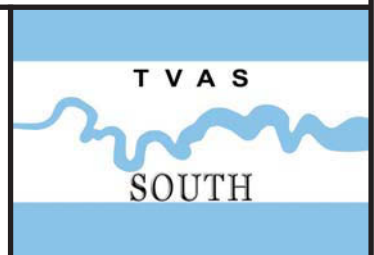
- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **319/334**, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- CIFA, 2014a, *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologist, Reading.
- ESCC, 2017, *Sussex Archaeological Standards*, East Sussex County Council, Lewes (2nd edition).
- ESHER, 2018, Historic Environmental Record full search, reference **049/18**.
- Mills, A D, 1993, *English Place-names*, Oxford.

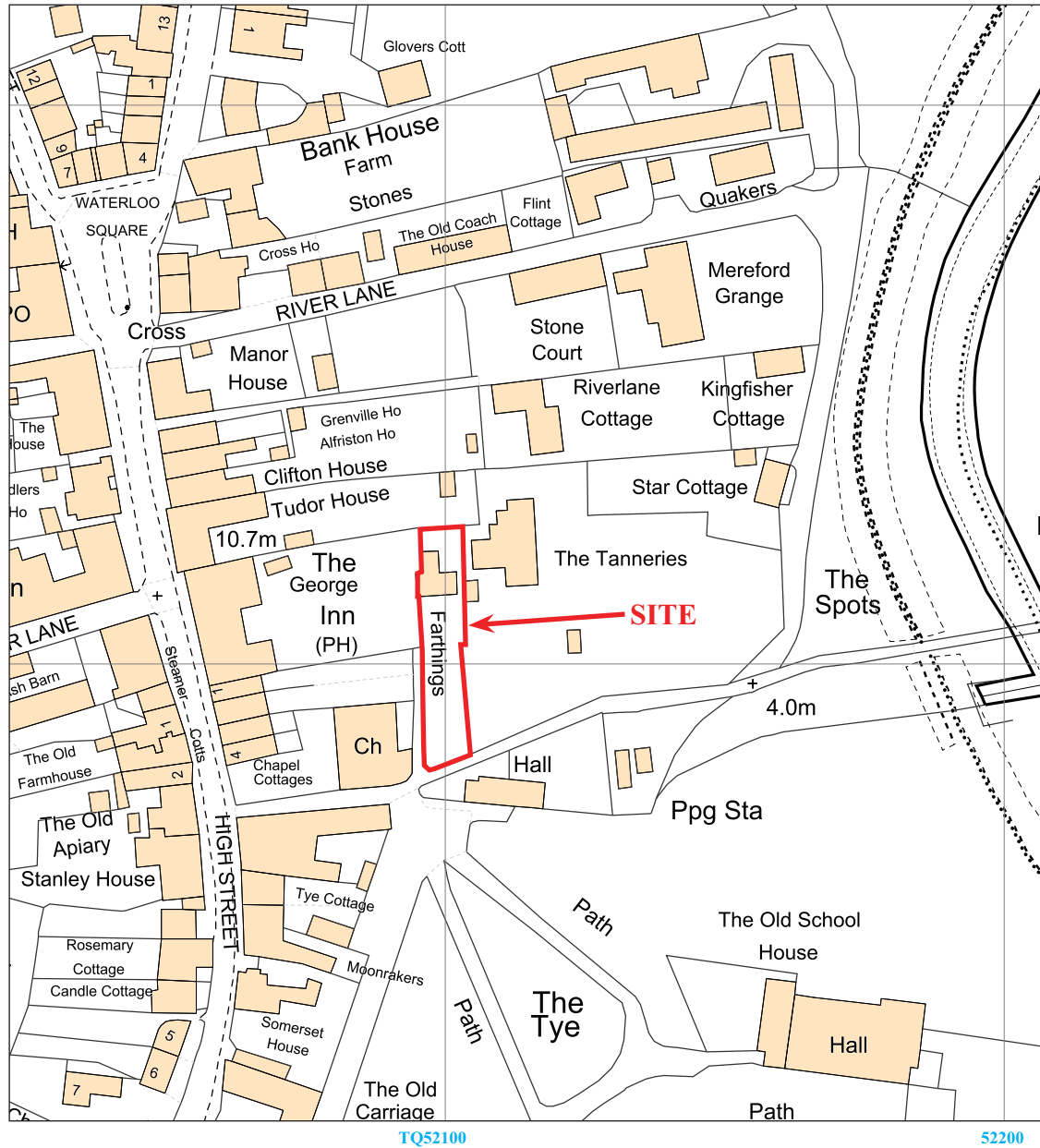


**Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston,
East Sussex, 2018
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Alfriston and East Sussex.

Reproduced under licence from Ordnance Survey Explorer Digital mapping at 1:12500
Crown Copyright reserved





FAS 18/18b

**Farthings, River Lane, Alfriston,
East Sussex, 2018**
Archaeological Watching Brief
 Figure 2. Detailed site location.

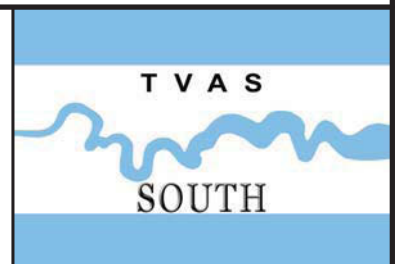
Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping under licence.
 Crown copyright reserved. Scale 1:2500



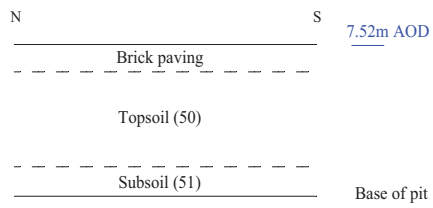


**Farthings, River Lane,
Alfriston, East Sussex,
Archaeological Watching Brief**

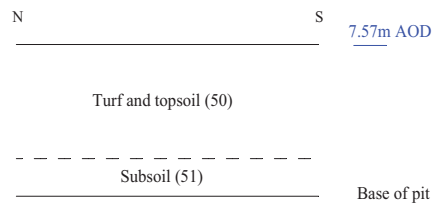
Figure 3. Detailed plan of site showing areas monitored.



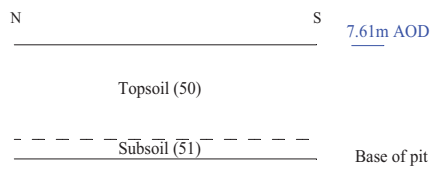
Pit A



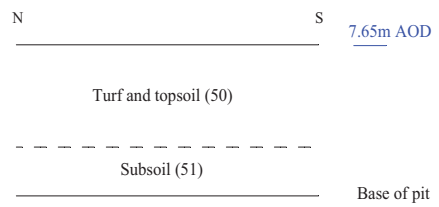
Pit B



Pit C



Pit D



FAS 18/18b

**Farthings, River Lane,
Alfriston, East Sussex, 2018
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Representative Sections.

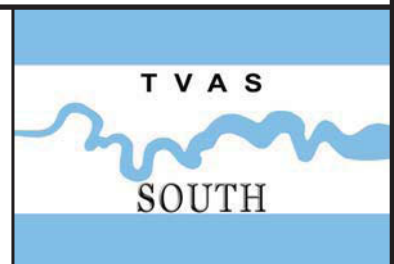




Plate 1. Pit A after excavation, looking West.
Scales: 0.50m, 0.30m and 0.10m.



Plate 2. Pit B after excavation, looking West.
Scales: 1m, 0.50m and 0.10m.



Plate 3. Pit C after excavation, looking West.
Scales: 0.50m, 0.30m and 0.10m.



Plate 4. Pit D after excavation, looking West.
Scales: 0.50m, 0.30m and 0.10m.

FAS 18/18b

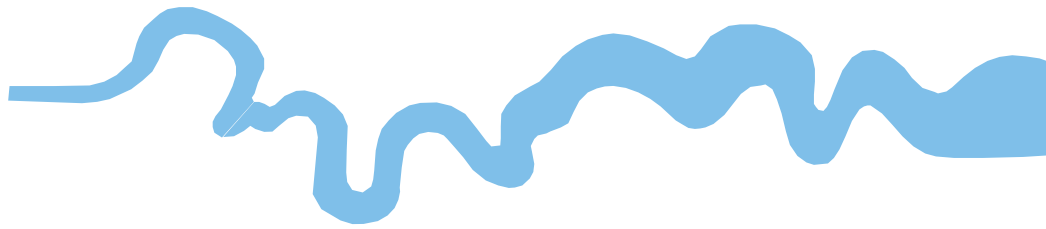
**Farthings, River Lane,
Alfrsiton, East Sussex, 2018
Archaeological Watching Brief
Plates 1 to 4.**



TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**TVAS (South),
77a Hollingdean Terrace
Brighton, BN1 7HB**

**Tel: 01273 554198
Email: south@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk/south**

***Offices in:
Reading, Taunton, Stoke-on-Trent and Ennis (Ireland)***