

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**S O U T H**

**The Fletchers Arms, Station Road, East Preston,  
West Sussex**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: FAE10/90**

**(TQ 0645 0294)**

# **The Fletchers Arms, Station Road, East Preston, West Sussex**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For Cheesemur Building Contractors**

by James McNicoll-Norbury  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services  
Ltd

Site Code FAE 10/90

**October 2010**

## Summary

**Site name:** The Fletchers Arms, Station Road, East Preston, West Sussex

**Grid reference:** TQ 0645 0294

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 24th August to 9th September 2010

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** FAE 10/90

**Summary of results:** Apart from a modern well in the northern part of the site no archaeological artefacts or deposits were identified.

**Monuments identified:** None

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 26.10.10
	Steve Preston✓ 26.10.10

# **The Fletchers Arms, Station Road, East Preston, West Sussex An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by James McNicoll-Norbury

**Report 10/90**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the site of former The Fletchers Arms, Station Road, East Preston, West Sussex (TQ 0645 0294) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Selina Walker of Michael Cook Associates, Brooklyn Chambers, 11 Goring Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN12 4AP on behalf of Cheesemur Building Contractors, Cobb Barns, Beddingham, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 6JU.

Planning permission (R/36/10) has been gained from Arun District Council to demolish the existing buildings on the site and construct eleven new dwellings with associated car parking. This permission is subject to a condition (6) which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological works during the groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Mark Taylor, Senior Archaeologist with West Sussex County Council who act as archaeological advisers to the District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury between 24th August and 9th September 2010 and the site code is FAE 10/90.

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

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on a slightly irregular patch of land on the west side of Station Road in East Preston near Angmering railway station in the grounds of the former Fletchers Arms to the east of Littlehampton (Fig. 2). The site was previously occupied by a public house and associated car parking and a garden. The underlying geology is described as Aeolian deposits 'brickearth' (BGS 2000) which was observed during the groundworks. The site lies at 5.8m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location on the coastal plain of West Sussex which is considered archaeologically rich for most periods (Rudling 2003). Information obtained from the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) revealed a number of entries for the vicinity of the site. For example, the Angmering Roman villa is located to the north-west of the site and to the south west a Bronze Age hoard was discovered in 1954. Two Roman cremation cemeteries are also recorded in the environs. To the south east a 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD cremation has been discovered. To the east, eight largely complete pots have been discovered which dated to the early 1<sup>st</sup> century which are assumed to also be cremation urns. There are no entries in the HER for Saxon or medieval period and East Preston itself is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. East Preston lies to the east of the historic centre of Littlehampton which is within Domesday Book as '*Hantone*'.

Recent evaluation on the north west outskirts of Littlehampton has revealed extensive Bronze Age and Roman settlement deposits (Wallis in prep.). Although work to the South East at Manor Road East Preston revealed no archaeological finds or features (Wallis 2008)

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This involved examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks in particular any ground reduction and the digging of foundation trenches for the new dwellings, and any related service runs.

## **Results**

The footings were dug by a machine using a toothless bucket up to a depth of 2.0m and were 0.65m wide (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1). The stratigraphy comprised 0.34m of topsoil overlying 0.32m of subsoil with substantial root action, which in turn overlay natural geology ('brickearth')(Pl. 2). Once the footings were dug and concreted the area within the footings was reduced by 0.70m from the surface level.

On the northern edge of Plot 10 a still active modern brick-built well (52) was identified which was 1.00m in diameter and over 3.0m deep. The bricks measured 230mm x 100mm x 70mm and were bonded with mortar.

Plots 1-6 did not require footings to be dug due to piled foundation being used, but ground reduction did take place in this area. However, the depth of overburden removed did not expose the natural geology.

Additional services were dug during the watching brief however the depth of these did not impinge on the archaeologically relevant levels.

No archaeological deposits or features were observed.

## **Finds**

No finds were recovered from site.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the site's location on the archaeologically rich coastal plain of West Sussex the watching brief has revealed that whilst the archaeologically relevant levels on the site have survived there were no archaeological features and no finds were recovered. The presence of both topsoil and subsoil on the site suggests it had not been previously disturbed except by the former building and a modern well.

## **References**

- BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 317/332, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Rudling, D (ed), 2003, *The Archaeology of Sussex to AD2000*, Brighton
- Wallis, S, in prep, Land at Courtwick Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex, An archaeological evaluation, Thames Valley Archaeological Services South report 10/85, Brighton
- Wallis, S, 2008, Land at Manor Road, East Preston, Littlehampton, West Sussex, an archaeological evaluation. Thames Valley Archaeological; services report 08/128, Reading





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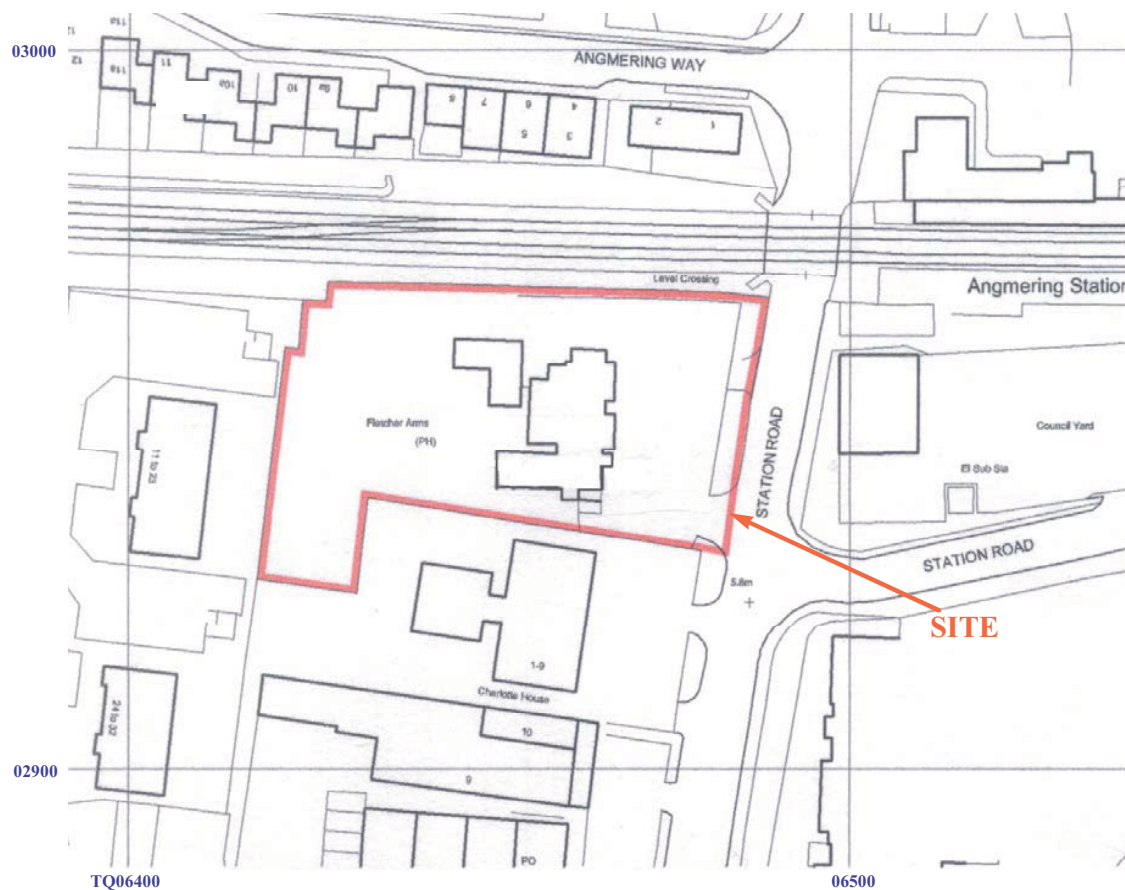
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Figure 1. Location of site within East Preston, Littlehampton  
and West Sussex.

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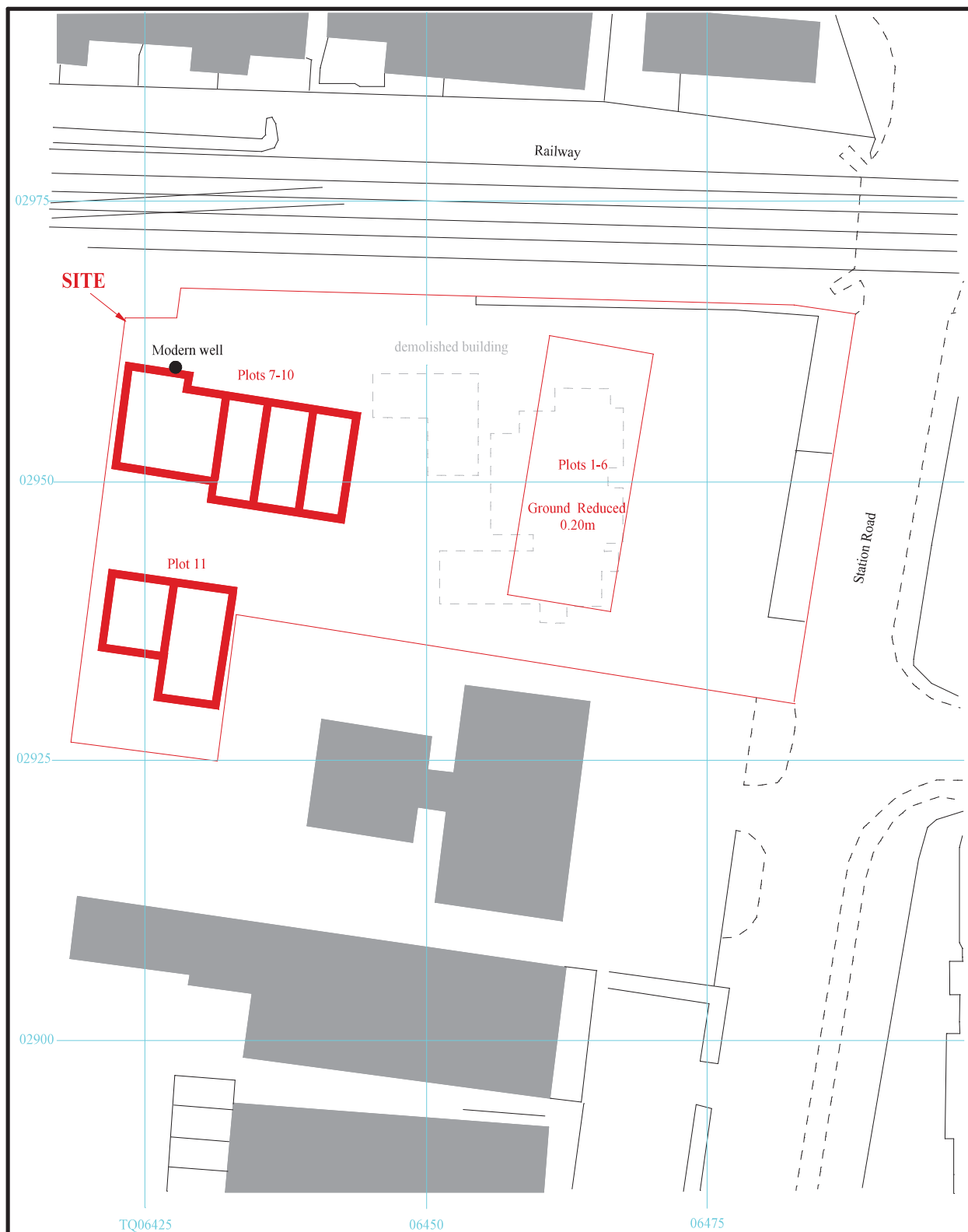
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Station Road.

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Figure 3. Areas of works



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N \_\_\_\_\_ S

Topsoil

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Subsoil

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Brickearth (natural geology)

\_\_\_\_\_ Base of footing

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Figure 4. Representative Section

0 \_\_\_\_\_ 1m

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Plate 1. General site conditions (Plot 11 looking south)



Plate 2. Representative section, scales 2m and 1m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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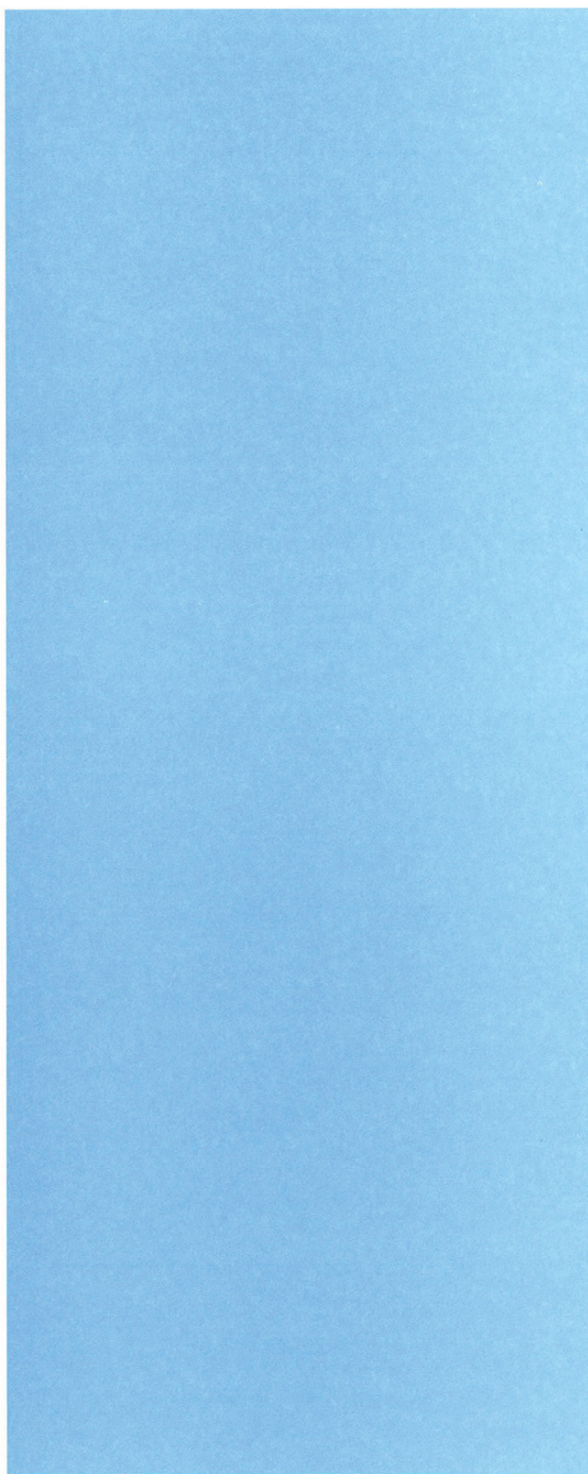


## TIME CHART

### Calendar Years

Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 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





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