



**Chris Butler MfA
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Archaeological Watching Brief
at
74 High Street,
Westham, East Sussex**

(WD/2012/1902/F)

CBAS0375

By

David Atkin

September 2013

Summary

A watching brief was maintained during the ground-works associated with the construction of three detached garages to the rear of 74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex. Overall ground reduction of the topsoil was to 30mm although a maximum of 200mm in place, and was carried out using a 3 tonne machine with 800mm toothless ditching bucket. Aside from some modern material, no finds or features of note were recorded during the watching brief.

Contents

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Historical & Archaeological Background	4
3.0	Archaeological Methodology	5
4.0	Results	6
5.0	Finds	7
6.0	Discussion	7
7.0	Acknowledgements	7

Figures:

Fig. 1 Location Map and Archaeological Notification Areas

Fig. 2 Development Plan

Plate 1. Working shot.

Appendix 1

HER Summary Form

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) had been commissioned by Mr & Mrs Bubear (The Client) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the works associated with the construction of three detached garages to the rear of 74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex TQ 64078 04525 (Fig. 1).
- 1.2 As a result of the site's location, and the archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority put a condition on the planning consent for the development (WD/2012/1902), requiring an appropriate programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.
- 1.3 The site is situated in an Archaeological Notification Area defining the Medieval and Post Medieval village of Westham. An archaeological Desk-based Assessment¹ has established that the site is located on the edge of the Pevensey Levels, and as such may have witnessed limited exploitation of its natural resources prior to the Bronze Age when adjacent lands first became settled. Although it may never have been permanently settled, the site may have been used for grazing in the late prehistoric and Roman periods, and possibly in Saxon times as well. In the medieval period, the site could have been used for burgage plot activities, even if sited directly outside them. The site may have been cultivated during this period. It was meadow by 1838 and has been part of a garden since at least the late 19th century. Its two existing garages were erected sometime after 1980.
- 1.4 According to the British Geological Survey², the geology of the site comprises siltstone, mudstone and sandstone of the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation.
- 1.5 The appropriate programme of archaeological work comprised of an archaeological watching brief, as specified in a brief prepared by the Archaeology Team at ESCC. A written scheme of investigation covering the watching brief was prepared and approved by the local planning authority.
- 1.6 The watching brief was required to monitor any intrusive groundworks at the site during the development, including any excavation for the foundation raft, and any drains/soak-a-way.
- 1.7 The field work was undertaken on the 1st May 2013 by the author.

¹ Russell, C. 2012 *A Desk-based Assessment of Land at Rear of 74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex*, CBAS0346

² http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html

2.0 Archaeological & Historical background

2.1 The Desk-based Assessment Report³ has investigated the archaeological and historical evidence for the site and its immediate surroundings. Reference should be made to that document for this background information.

³ Russell, C. 2012 *A Desk-based Assessment of Land at Rear of 74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex*, CBAS0346

3.0 Method Statement

- 3.1** The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with ESCC's *Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation in East Sussex* dated April 2008 (Recommended Standards).
- 3.2** The ground reduction for the foundation raft for the new garages (Fig. 2) was excavated by machine to a depth of c30mm using a 3 tonne excavator using a 600mm flat-bladed bucket under archaeological supervision. The footprint for each garage foundation raft was monitored, and no other intrusive ground-works were to be undertaken.
- 3.3** The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest. A Garrett ACE150 metal detector was also used to scan the spoil derived from the excavations.
- 3.4** All deposits were recorded according to accepted professional standards. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.5** The archive is presently held by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd. A site reference of HFW13 has been allocated, and the paper archive will be offered to Eastbourne Museum who have allocated an Accession Number 2013.40.

4.0 Results

- 4.1 Context 1 (the topsoil) was the only context excavated. It was a soft/loose, dark black-grey loamy-silt with roots at 5%, plastic at <1% and very occasional ceramic building material at <1%. It was excavated to a depth of 200mm to the limit of excavation where roots had been grubbed-out, otherwise the excavation was only c30mm in depth and was below the depth of the adjoining concrete hardstanding.



Plate 1: Working shot.

- 4.2 No other excavation or groundworks was carried out, and no archaeological features or artefacts were noted during the watching brief.

5.0 Finds

- 5.1** Other than modern detritus above and within the topsoil, no archaeological finds were noted during this watching brief.

6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** Due to the shallow nature of the ground reduction for the concrete raft in the form of a partial topsoil strip, no archaeology either in the form of features or finds was noted.
- 6.2** As the excavation was not deep enough to disturb any archaeological features, any in-situ archaeology will be preserved below the level of the excavation. However there was no indication, in the form of artefacts other than modern material, of any potential archaeology noted during the excavation.
- 6.3** The methodology adopted for this investigation proved to be satisfactory, and the confidence rating should be considered to be reliable.

7.0 Acknowledgements

- 7.1** We would like to thank Mr and Mrs T. Bubear for appointing us to undertake this project and the contractors for their co-operation throughout.
- 7.2** The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler. The project was monitored for ESCC by Greg Chuter.

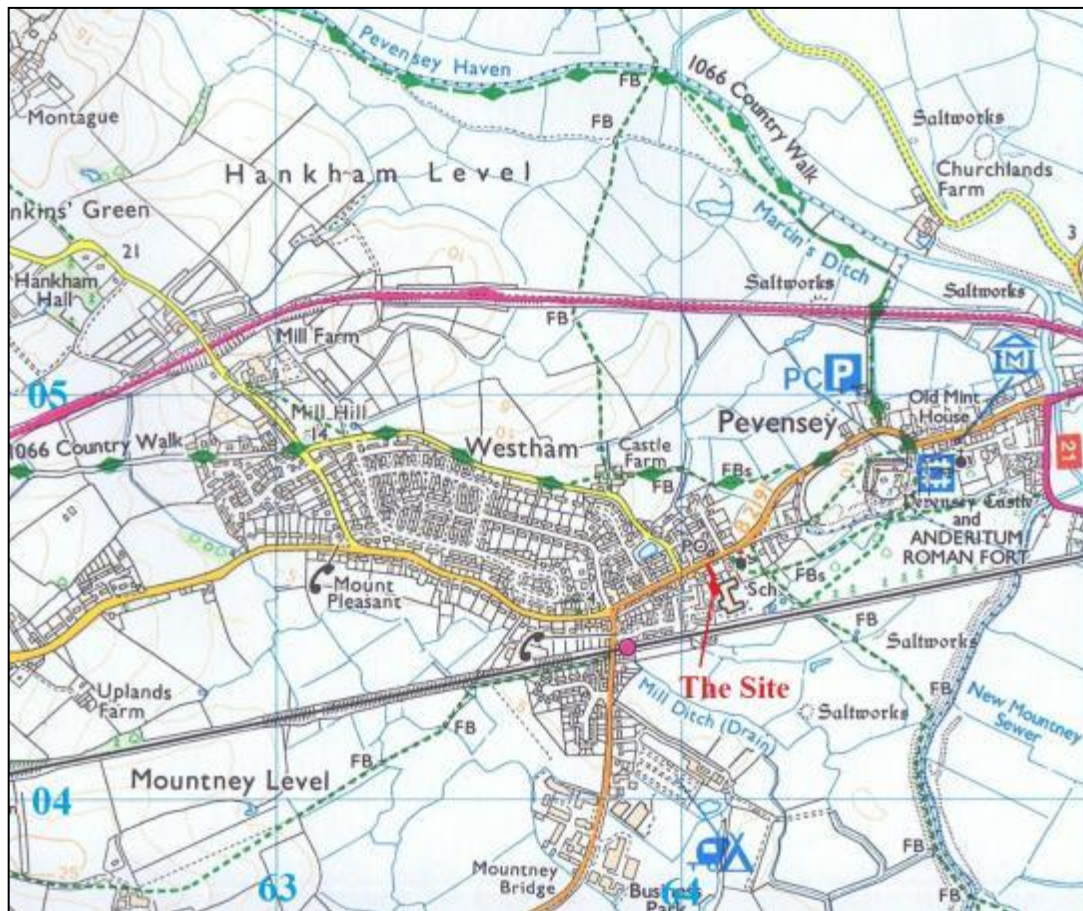


Fig. 1: 74 High Street, Westham: Site location map

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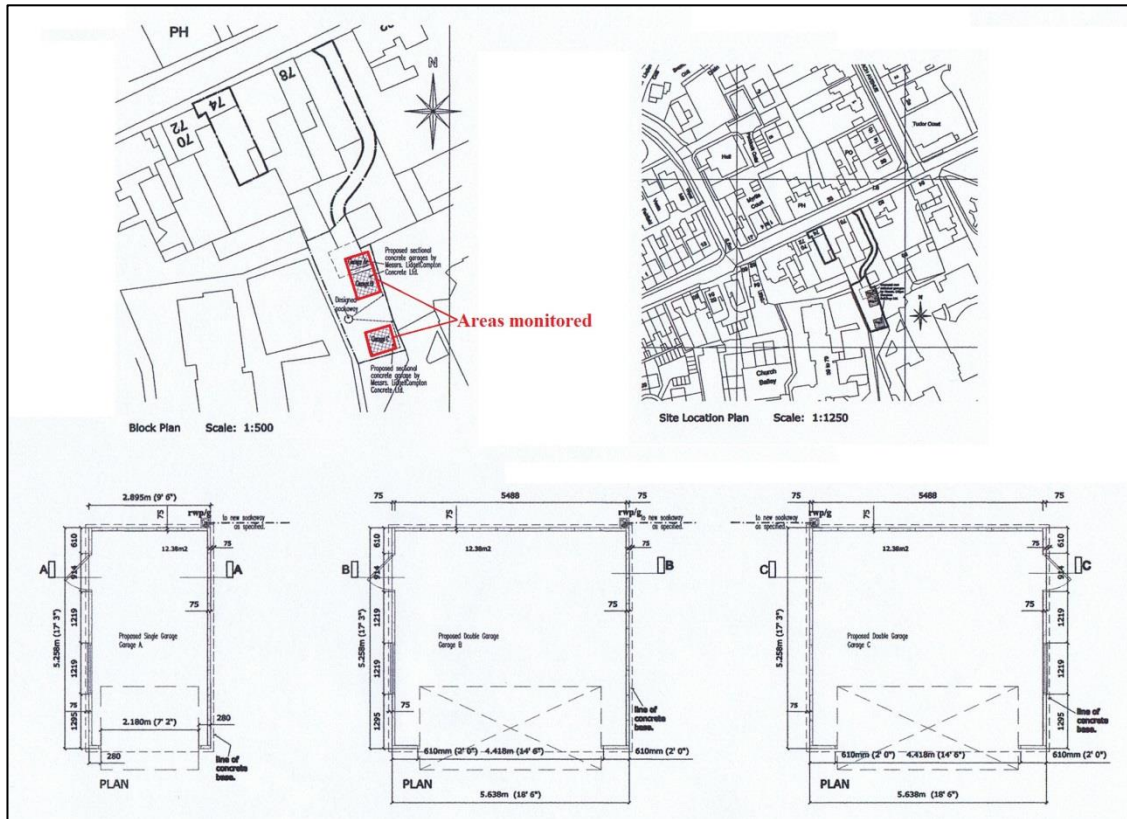


Fig. 2: 74 High Street, Westham: Development plan showing areas monitored
(adapted from architects drawing)

Appendix 1 HER Summary Form

Site Code	HFW13					
Identification Name and Address	74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Wealden District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 64078 04525					
Geology	Tunbridge Wells Sand.					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief X	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 01.05.13	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr. and Mrs. T. Bubear					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MIFA					
Project Supervisor	David Atkin					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM X	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>A watching brief was maintained during the ground-works associated with the construction of three detached garages to the rear of 74 High Street, Westham, East Sussex. Overall ground reduction of the topsoil was to 30mm (maximum 200mm in places) was carried out using an 3 tonne machine with 800mm toothless ditching bucket. Aside from some modern material, no finds or features of note were recorded during the watching brief.</i></p>						

Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd

Chris Butler has been an archaeologist since 1985, and formed the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in 1987, since when it has carried out numerous fieldwork projects, and was runner up in the Pitt-Rivers Award at the British Archaeological Awards in 1996. Having previously worked as a Pensions Technical Manager and Administration Director in the financial services industry, Chris formed **Chris Butler Archaeological Services** at the beginning of 2002.

Chris is a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and a committee member of the Lithic Studies Society. He was a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex, and until recently taught A-Level Archaeology at Bexhill 6th Form College having qualified (Cert. Ed.) as a teacher in 2006. He continues to run the Mid Sussex Field Archaeological Team in his spare time.

Chris specialises in prehistoric flintwork analysis, but has directed excavations, landscape surveys and watching briefs, including the excavation of a Beaker Bowl Barrow, a Saxon cemetery and settlement, Roman pottery kilns, and a Mesolithic hunting camp. He has recently undertaken large landscape surveys of Ashdown Forest and Broadwater Warren and is Co-Director of the Barcombe Roman Villa excavation project.

His publications include *Prehistoric Flintwork*, *East Sussex Under Attack* and *West Sussex Under Attack*, all of which are published by Tempus Publishing Ltd.

Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd is available for Flintwork Analysis, Project Management, Military Archaeology, Desktop Assessments, Field Evaluations, Excavation work, Watching Briefs, Landscape and Woodland Surveys & Fieldwalking, Post Excavation Services and Report Writing.

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