



**Chris Butler MCIfA  
Archaeological Services Ltd**



**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
at Parrock Brook, Parrock Lane,  
Upper Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4AS**

(WD/2013/1676)

Project No. CBAS0471  
TQ 4540 3485

by  
Keith Butler PCIfA

July 2015

## **Summary**

*A watching brief was carried out during the reduction of the ground surface in connection with the construction of a new stable block. The ground was reduced by 800mm at its deepest point. During this work no archaeological features were noted. Only a very small number of artefacts were recovered from the reduction. These consisted of three fragments of clay pigeon, and a small sherd of stoneware. Evidence of low level Prehistoric activity on or near the site was recovered in the form of a single piece of fire cracked flint and a single humanly-struck flint flake.*

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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd (CBAS) was commissioned by Mr D Neyland (The Client) to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the construction of timber framed stables and stores on land to the rear of Parrock Brook, Parrock Lane, Upper Hartfield, Hartfield, East Sussex. TQ 4540 3485 (Fig. 1).

1.2 As a result of the site's location, and the archaeological potential of the area, the local planning authority have put conditions on the planning consent for the development (WD/2013/1676), requiring an appropriate programme of archaeological work to be undertaken.

*2. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. A written record of any archaeological works undertaken shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the completion of any archaeological investigation unless an alternative timescale for submission of the report is first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. AR01*

*REASON: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 129, 131, 132 and 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

*3. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition [2] to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the County Planning Authority.*

*REASON: To enable the recording of any items of historical or archaeological interest, in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 129, 131, 132 and 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

1.3 The site is situated within a designated Archaeological Notification Area defining an area of Medieval and Post-Medieval activity including occupation and industrial activity relating to iron ore processing (Fig. 1). Parrock Brook is a Grade II Listed Building (296354) dating to c1800 with extensions added in the 1970's (WD/1976/3072) and 1980's (WD/1988/0021 & 0277).

- 1.4** Parrock Brook is situated on the south side of Parrock Lane, to the west of Upper Hartfield in the parish of Hartfield. The site is located on a north-west facing ridge and falls away to the north into the valley of the River Medway. The site is situated at approximately 75m OD.
- 1.5** The geology, according to the British Geological Survey sheet 303, is Ashdown Sand, with an outcrop of Wadhurst Clay situated immediately to the south of the site. This isolated outcrop of Wadhurst Clay was important as it contained iron ore and marl, and both of these natural resources were exploited from Roman through to Post Medieval times.
- 1.6** The appropriate programme of archaeological work comprises an archaeological watching brief as specified in a brief issued by the Archaeology Team at East Sussex County Council. A written scheme of investigation<sup>1</sup> covering the watching brief was submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority. HER data had been provided by ESCC (083/14).
- 1.7** The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological remains which may be damaged or destroyed by the development. The watching brief is also intended to provide information which may help to define more closely the areas of medieval and Post-Medieval activity, including occupation and industrial activity relating to iron ore processing
- 1.8** The archaeological watching brief was maintained by the author on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014, with the project being managed for CBAS by Chris Butler MCIfA.

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<sup>1</sup> Butler, C. 2014 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Parrock Brook, Hartfield, East Sussex*. CBAS

## 2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.1 Early archaeological evidence is found in the form of a small group of Mesolithic flintwork (MES3210) found to the north of the site. A Roman road (MES5286) running between Coleman's Hatch and Wych Cross was identified by Margary, and is situated to the south of the site.
- 2.2 The parish of Hartfield was part of the hundred of Hartfield, in the rape of Pevensey, and is situated between East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells. Hartfield appears in the Domesday Book as 'Hertevel'<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.3 Parrock ('Apedroc') also appears in the Domesday Book, and is recorded as having land for two ploughs, with two villagers with 1½ ploughs and woodland for 40 pigs. The Count of Mortain holds ½ hide in Parrock, and there is also one virgate where the Count has his hall<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4 There are a number of references to Parrock, including one to 'Parrockrowe' during the 13th century, whilst the Lay Subsidies of the late 13th and early 14th centuries suggest a population for Parrock of between 50-100 people in 1296, rising to 150-200 by 1332<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.5 The presence of an iron furnace and forge at Parrock (MES5204) is first recorded in the 16th century, although iron working in the area had almost certainly started in the Medieval period. The pond bay and other features associated with the furnace and forge are located at TQ458357, approximately 1km to the north-east of the site<sup>5</sup>. A 16th century pottery kiln was also excavated nearby in 1977 (MES5264)<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.6 In 1513 Robert Scorer was the lessee of Lower Parrock. His will, made on the 9th of November in that year, left to his brother Richard the guardianship of his children, and also "all and as many gunstones of iron as be now redy made as well at London as at my fferme of Parok or any other place in Sussex, which I will shall be delivered to him by myn executrix"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://theweald.org>

<sup>3</sup> Morris, J. (ed.) 1976 *Domesday Book*, Chichester, Phillimore.

<sup>4</sup> Tebbutt, C.F. 1975 'An Abandoned Medieval Industrial Site at Parrock, Hartfield' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **113**, 146-151.

<sup>5</sup> Cleere, H. & Crossley, D. 1995 *The Iron Industry of the Weald*, Cardiff, Merton Priory Press.

<sup>6</sup> Freke, D.J. 1979 'The excavation of a 16th-century pottery kiln at Lower Parrock, Hartfield, East Sussex, 1977', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* **13**, 79-126.

<sup>7</sup> Straker, E. 1931 *Wealden Iron*, G. Bell & Sons.

- 2.7** In 1518 Richard Warner mortgaged or leased the manor of Parrock to John Carill, including "a parcel of land called the Weke with a myll builded upon the same grounde called an yron myll, and all the yronworks builded upon the same p'cell of land; that is to say, a ffurnes, a fyner and a hamer with all many of instrumentes thereunto belongyng." It still belonged to Warner in 1525<sup>8</sup>.
- 2.8** In 1564 William Saunders, Knight, was in peaceable possession, and in 1570 left the iron mill to his son Nicholas. In 1574 the furnace and forge were worked by George Bullen, of Hartfield, for Lord Buckhurst, probably leased from the Saunders family. In 1590 the works were sold to another Nicholas, who again sold them in 1593 to William Garway. They passed to John Garway in 1600<sup>9</sup>. There are no further documentary references to the furnace and forge at Parrock after this date<sup>10</sup>.
- 2.9** The 1795 Gardner & Gream Sussex map shows a building at the site of Parrock Brook. Parrock Brook is shown on the Hartfield Tithe Map<sup>11</sup> of 1842 (Fig. 3) and is described as two tenements and gardens in the apportionment. The property and much of the surrounding area is owned by Augustus Elliott Fuller, and occupied by Stephen Langridge.
- 2.10** Parrock Brook is described as being 18th century or earlier, comprising two storeys, with two windows, faced with weather-boarding on a red brick base. It has a tiled roof with pentice to the south-west half above a stone base. Sprocket eaves and casement windows<sup>12</sup>.
- 2.11** The 1st Edition OS map (1875) shows Parrock Brook, along with a smaller building immediately to its north on the lane frontage (Fig. 4). The situation remains the same through the 2nd Edition (1898) and 3rd Edition (1910) OS maps. The house remains un-named on all of these maps.
- 2.12** The HER records were consulted and produced a large number of sites around Parrock Brook (Table 1). The majority of these sites were discovered during a survey of Parrock undertaken in 1973-4, which discovered evidence for a Medieval settlement (MES5257), together with numerous bloomery slag and minepit sites in the immediate vicinity of the site<sup>13</sup>. A series of earthworks at the site may represent former house platforms.

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<sup>8</sup> Straker, E. 1931 *Wealden Iron*, G. Bell & Sons.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Cleere, H. & Crossley, D. 1995 *The Iron Industry of the Weald*, Cardiff, Merton Priory Press.

<sup>11</sup> ESRO (TD/E 149)

<sup>12</sup> English Heritage listing description.

<sup>13</sup> Tebbutt, C.F. 1975 'An Abandoned Medieval Industrial Site at Parrock, Hartfield' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **113**, 146-151.

**2.13** An archaeological watching brief and targeted building recording was carried out in June 2011 during the construction of a new extension. The watching brief resulted in the recovery of a small number of Post Medieval artefacts dating to the later 19th and early 20th centuries. The only archaeological feature found was an undated oval area of burning. The parts of the existing building affected by the new extension and other modifications were all shown to be of recent date<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Butler, C. 2011 *An Archaeological watching brief at Parrock Brook, Hartfield, East Sussex*. CBAS0221



### 3.0 Archaeological Methodology

- 3.1 The groundworks for the stable were located in the north-western corner of the field to the rear (south) of Parrock Brook. The field sloped to the north and the west and was under grass (**Plate 1**). The plan of the stables was 'L' shaped with the area in the north-east being hard-standing. The ground works comprised the preparation of a rectangular platform measuring 14m north to south by 12m east to west.



**Plate 1:** Site before Reduction of the ground surface

- 3.2 Due to the slope of the land to the north and west, the groundworks consisted of excavating the south-eastern corner of the site to 800mm to terrace the building into the slope. The spoil from the excavation was to be used to build-up the ground level of the north-western part of the site. The northern and western walls of the stables were to be laid onto sleepers.
- 3.3 The site of the stables had been marked out with string lines and road pins the day before the visit to the site. The footprint of the stables was scanned with a Garrett ACE250 metal detector for the recovery of metal finds, the area was also visually inspected. The metal detector was also used to scan the spoil.
- 3.4 First a trench was excavated at the eastern end of the site with a depth of 800mm at the southern end, this reduced to zero at the northern end (**Plate 2**). Then a trench was excavated at the southern end of the footprint of the stable. This trench was also 800mm at the eastern end reducing to zero at the western. The ground of the south-eastern corner was then reduced and graded. The spoil was then transported to the north-western corner where it was used to raise the ground level in that corner of the site.
- 3.5 All the excavations were carried out using a 1.6 tonne 360° tracked excavator fitted with either a 450mm or a 900mm toothless bucket as required. The ground was reduced in shallow spits under archaeological supervision.



**Plate 2:** Eastern Baulk of Reduction  
taken from the West

- 3.6** All archaeological deposits, features and finds were excavated and recorded according to accepted professional standards. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart
- 3.7** A full photographic record of the work was kept as appropriate and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd. A site reference of PBH 14 has been allocated.

## 4.0 Results

**4.1** During the groundworks only two deposits were apparent. Context **1** was the topsoil and turf, which had a depth of 200mm to 250mm. This was a dark brown silty clay loam with inclusions of small sandstone pieces up to 40mm (<1%) and light rooting in association with the turf. This deposit had a very clear interface with the deposit below suggesting that the field had only been lightly ploughed in recent times. All the artefacts recovered from the excavation were from this topsoil deposit and consisted of a single sherd of pottery, a piece of humanly-struck flint, a piece of fire-cracked flint, and three small fragments of clay pigeon targets.

**4.2** Context **2** was below Context **1** and was the assumed natural. This was a dark orange-brown silty clay with a firm consistence. This deposit was apparent at the limit of excavations, and had an exposed depth of 600mm in the deepest part of the excavations in the south-eastern corner of the site (**Plate 3**). No artefacts were recovered from this deposit.



**Plate 3:** South-eastern Corner taken from the West

**4.3** No archaeological features were noted during the course of the reduction of the ground level over the footprint of the stables.

## **5.0 The Finds.**

### **5.1 The Pottery and other Ceramic Finds** by Jan Oldham

**5.1.1** A single sherd of salt glazed stoneware (4g) was the only piece of pottery recovered from the excavations. This dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was possibly from a Bellarmine Jug of continental manufacture but the sherd was too small to make identification certain.

**5.1.2** Also recovered were three fragments of clay pigeon target discs, these were of a modern date.

### **5.2 Flintwork** by Chris Butler

**5.2.1** A single un-dateable humanly-struck hard hammer-struck flint flake, weighing 16g, was recovered from the topsoil (Context 1).

**5.2.2** Also from Context 1 was a single piece of fire-fractured flint weighing 4g.

## 6.0 Discussion

- 6.1** During the excavation of the platform for the construction of a new stable block in the field to the rear of Parrock Brook no archaeological feature were noted. Only a small number of artefacts being recovered, these consisted of fragments of clay pigeon, a single shed of stoneware pottery, a single piece of fire-fractured flint and a single piece of humanly-struck flint.
- 6.2** The lack of any archaeological feature is possibly due to the small area excavated for the foundations and the shallow impact that the reduction had on the ground. Only the south-western corner of the platform for the stables was excavated to the full 800mm, with both the southern and eastern footing trenches being graded up to meet with the northern and western walls which were to be constructed on wooden sleepers.
- 6.3** The excavations did reveal that the ground in this area of the field was un-disturbed, with a clear interface visible between the topsoil and the natural silty clay, with no evidence for the possible house platforms noted in 2.12 above. The field was also walked over and visually inspected to see if any trace of the earth works mentioned on the HER survived as above ground features, but none were noted (**Plate 4**).



**Plate 4:** Field Viewed from the North

- 6.4** The fragments of clay pigeon do show recent use of the field, with the single sherd of pottery being evidence for possible manuring of the field at an earlier date. The piece of humanly-struck flint and the single piece of fire-fractured flint do appear to indicate a low level of human activity in the Prehistoric period.

## **7.0 Acknowledgements**

**7.1** I would like to thank Mr D. Neyland for commissioning this archaeological watching brief, and for their hospitality and co-operation during the fieldwork. I would also like to thank Jan Oldham and Chris Butler reported on the artefacts.

**7.2** The project was managed for CBAS by Chris Butler MifA.

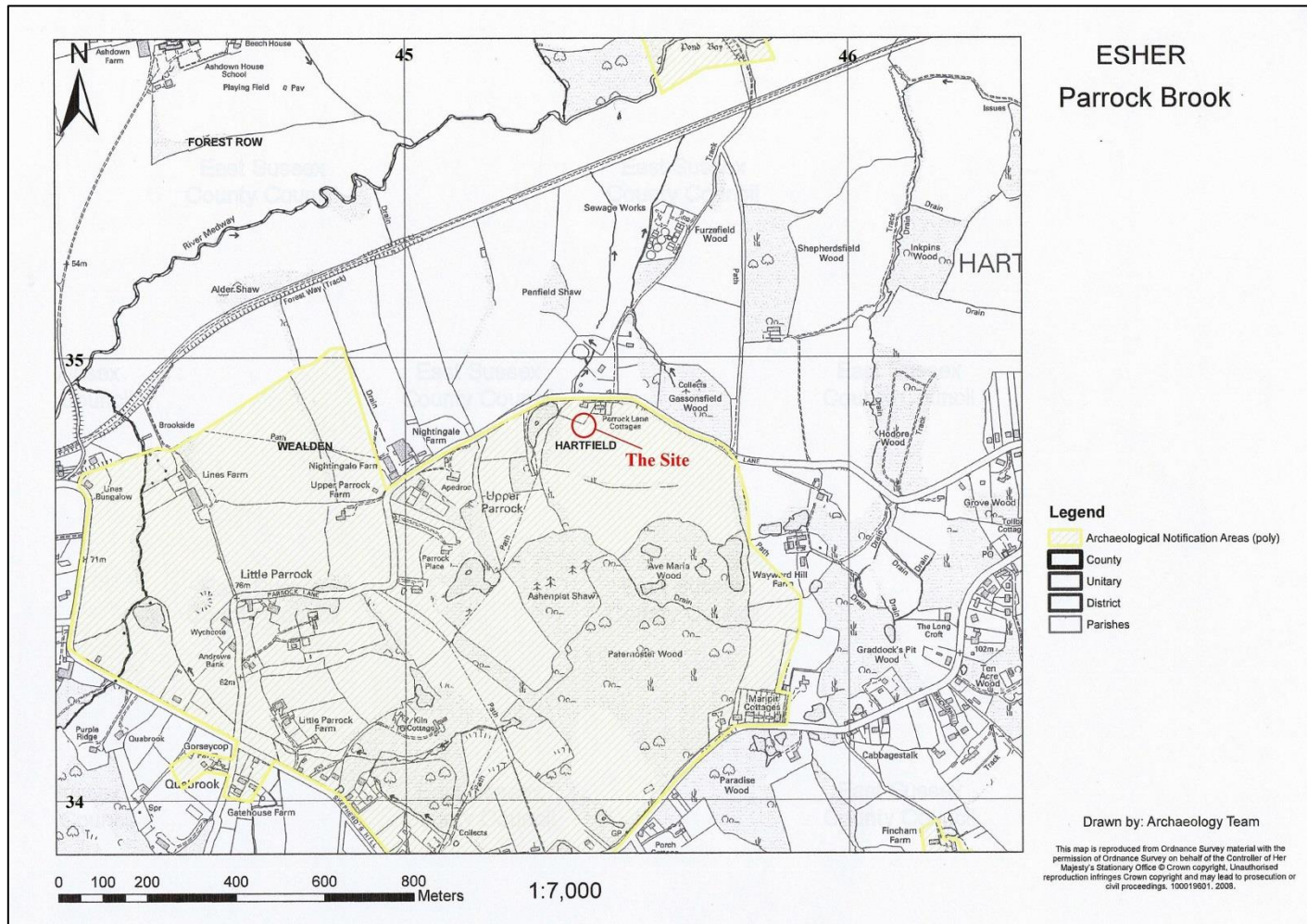


Fig. 1: Parrock Brook, Hartfield: Archaeological Notification Area and site location  
(Adapted from map provided by ESCC)  
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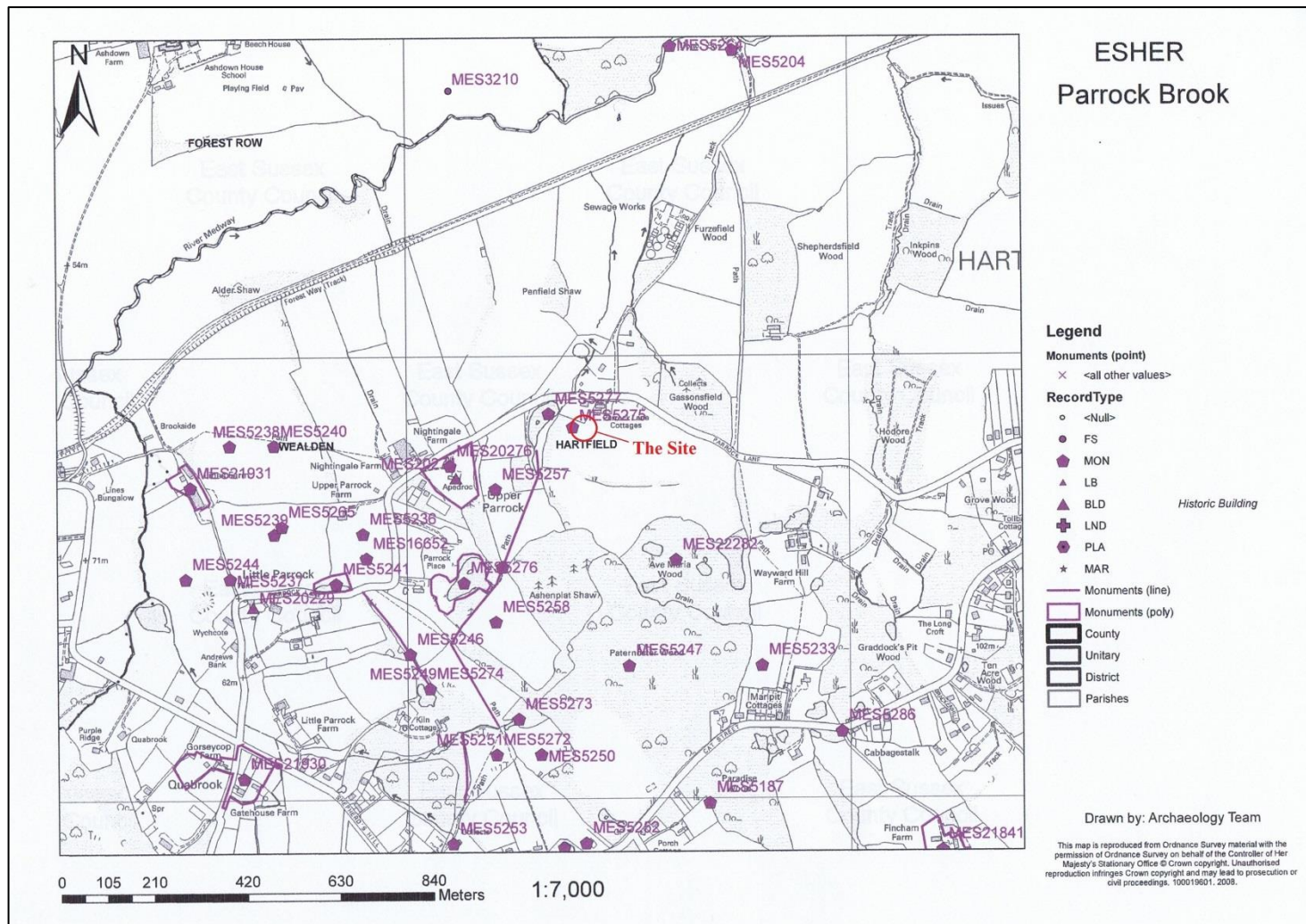


Fig. 2: Parrock Brook, Hartfield: Sites on the HER  
(Adapted from map provided by ESCC)  
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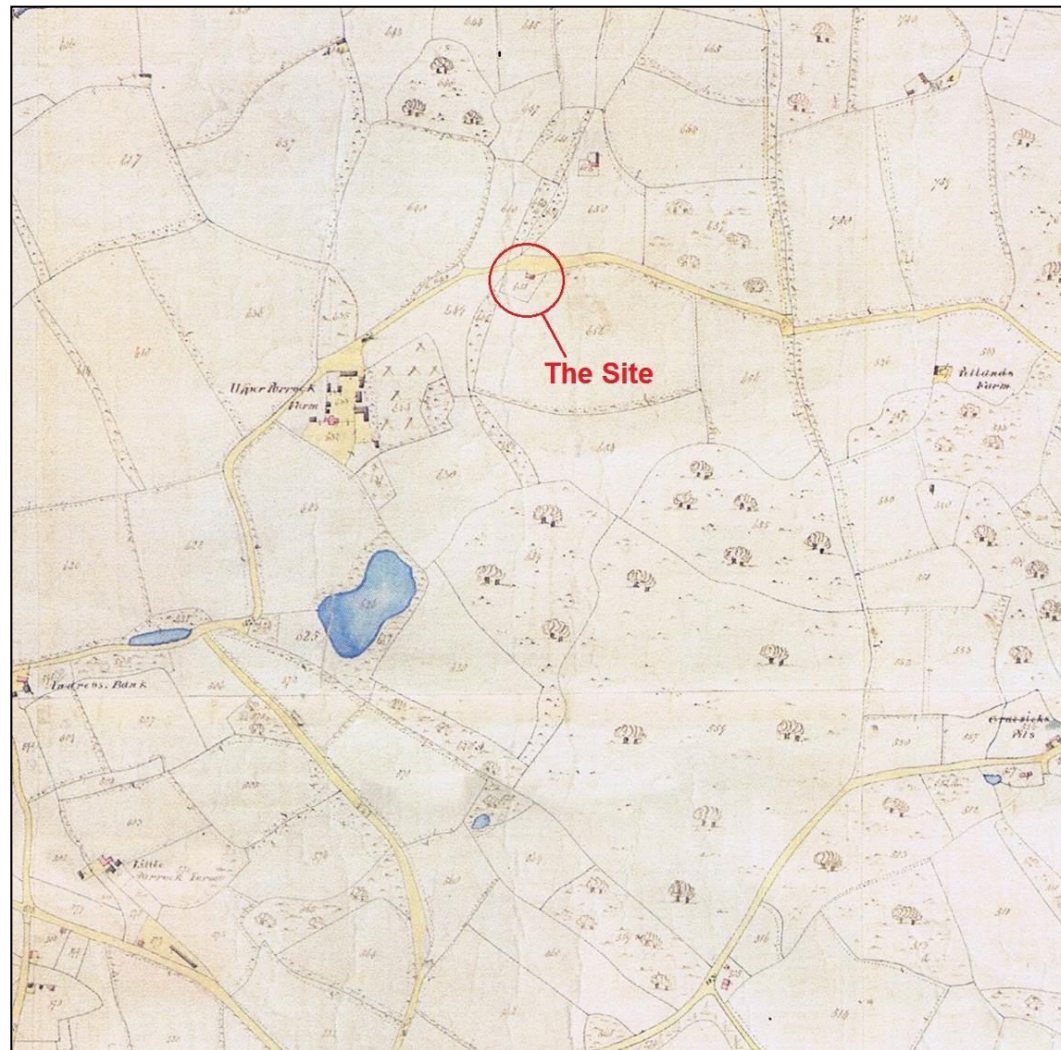


Fig. 3: Parrock Brook, Hartfield: 1842 Tithe Map (Reproduced with permission ESRO - TD/E 149)

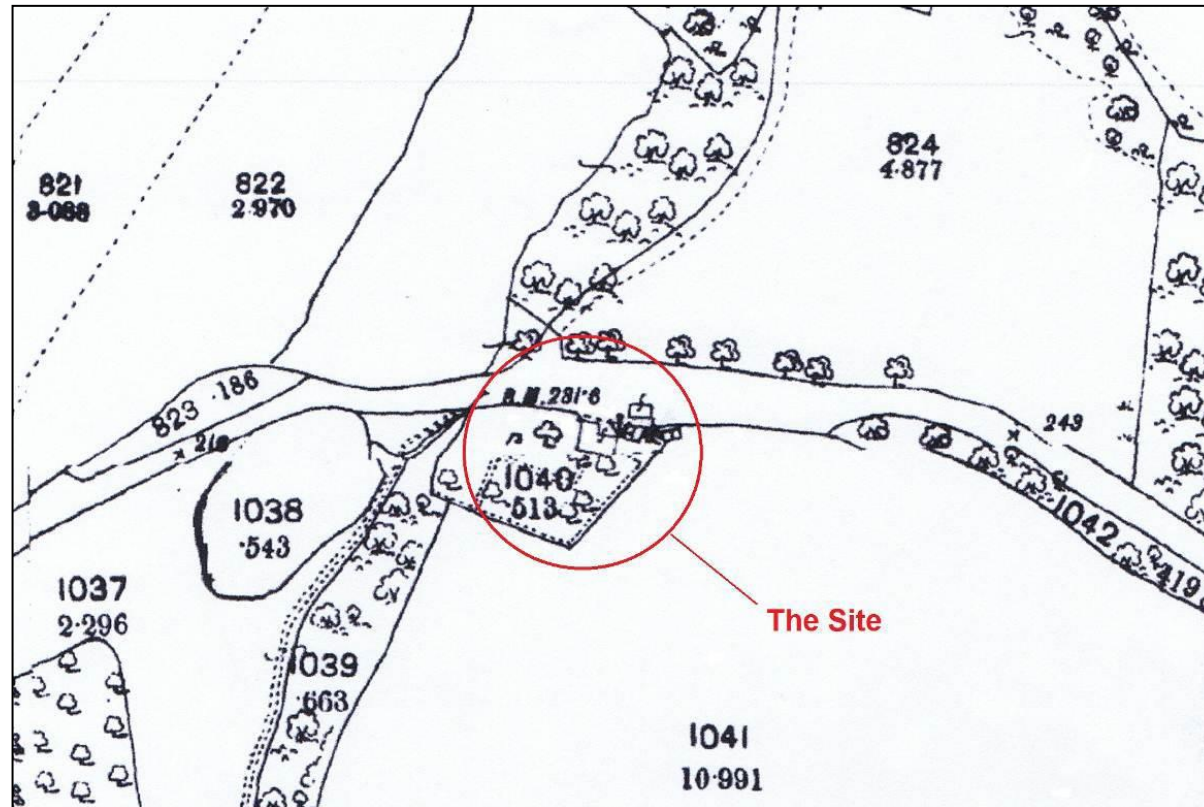


Fig. 4: Parrock Brook, Hartfield: 1st Edition OS Map (1875)



Fig. 5: Parrock Brook, Hartfield: Development Plan showing area monitored  
(Adapted from architects drawing)

### Appendix 1: HER Summary Form

Site Code	PBH 14					
Identification Name and Address	Parrock Brook, Upper Hartfield, East Sussex.					
County, District &/or Borough	Wealden District Council					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 4540 3485					
Geology	Ashdown Sand with outcrop of Wadhurst Clay to North of site					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief <b>X</b>	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field <b>X</b>	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. <b>X</b>	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr D Neyland					
Project Manager	Chris Butler MCIfA					
Project Supervisor	Keith Butler PCIfA					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM <b>X</b>	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>A watching brief was carried out during the reduction of the ground surface in connection with the construction of a new stable block. The ground was reduced by 800mm at its deepest point. During this work no archaeological features were noted. Only a very small number of artefacts were recovered from the reduction. These consisted of three fragments of clay pigeon, and a small sherd of stoneware. Evidence of low level Prehistoric activity on or near the site was recovered in the form of a single piece of fire cracked flint and a single humanly-struck flint flake.</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 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, and a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and was a part time lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sussex. 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.

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

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