



Horsham District Archaeology Group. (HDAG)

PROJECT DESIGN FOR TEST PITS at CORSLETTS FARM, BROADBRIDGE HEATH, RH12 3LD

Preparing for Spring 2016

Site code **CF16**

NGR TQ 147314

Introduction.

HDAG have been asked by the present owners if we would be interested in digging in their garden as they have found pieces of pottery and other small items whilst gardening, particularly in the vegetable patch at the western end, which is closest to where the farm buildings would have been before being demolished to make way for a housing development.

Could we find any of the original farm buildings and date them? Perhaps add to the history of the existing building and find out if there was anything there before it?

At a meeting on site in Sept 2015 they agreed to 2 test pits being dug at the rear of the building with possibly a 3rd near the entry drive.

Aims of the project -To add to what is currently understood about the history of Corsletts Farm and therefore educate and promote a greater understanding within the local community of their local heritage and that of the wider surrounding historic landscape. To promote HDAG's research within the local and wider community with a view to promoting community projects.

Site Location.

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The site is located within the boundary of Corsletts Farm, Broadbridge Heath.



This property is situated in the middle of a 1960s housing development and accessed by Church Road.

Another map showing pit locations will be inserted when they have been surveyed.

Background.

Corsletts Farm was built as a 4 bay Hall House in the last quarter of the 14th Century, with a 2 bay Hall. (The middle section in the photo below) The roof was probably of local Horsham stone quarried nearby. It was ‘modernised’ in the mid/late 16th Century, by the division of the main hall to create a first floor, the addition of glazed windows and a hearth with a hood to Carry the smoke to the roof to escape.



Gable faced wings were added in the 17th & 18th Centuries to the Southwest and Northeast. The NE wing is clearly visible above. There is a suggestion the wattle and daub of the western aspect and rear addition were replaced by burnt end bricks in the 18th century. In 1750 the house was owned by a local businessman, John Agate. It was rented out and probably divided into two dwellings at this time. Several generations of Agates (local business men) owned this property.

In 1752, tenants at Corsletts , Ann Whale and her cousin Sarah Pledge, poisoned Ann's husband James, the pair were found out, tried, found guilty of murder and punished by death.

The house is recorded on the census as occupied by two separate families , mostly agricultural workers, right through the 19th Century, until 1901 when it was in sole occupation of Mrs Whalley. . It is recorded as part of the parish of Sullington during this period.

Mrs Whalley was shown on the 1911 census as employing live in servants. At this time tithes were still being paid to the manor of Sullington. She also bestowed the village with a hall for their use. There have been many alterations and additions inside and out through the last century.

In the 1950s it was owned by Mr Richardson and run as a pig farm and in the 1960s the land was sold to Croudace and developed for housing that surrounds it today. It was probably at this time the farm buildings were demolished. The house has been privately owned since then and in 1972, the timbers were treated with preservation, it was re-roofed in 1988 and re-wired in 1994. It has now been sympathetically modernised into a beautiful 7 bedroom property, retaining many original features, by the present owners.

Health and Safety

Before commencement of digging the utilities will be traced and checked for and a risk assessment completed.

Only HDAG members will be allowed on site and will be briefed on H & S at the beginning of each day. *(A simple form is being formatted for each person to sign)*

A first aid kit will be on site.

All pits will be clearly marked & secured if left open when HDAG leave the site.

Insurance is provided by **Export and General Insurance Services Limited**.

Equipment

Only hand tools such as spades, trowels, hand shovels, sieves & buckets, will be used on site.

A metal detector, Garrett Ace 250, will be used where required on site.

A Total Station model, Leica TPS 803, will be used for surveying on site.

A full list will be prepared before digging starts.

Methodology.

HDAG will undertake to dig by hand 2 1m x1m test pits and record any features, all evidence of human activity and the contexts within each test pit.

Each test pit will be pegged out and excavated in 10cm spits and the spoil, placed on tarpaulins, scanned with a metal detector.

All finds will be put in labelled trays for processing off site.

Measured drawings will be done and photographs taken if needed.

Finds collection. Post-Fieldwork Methodology .Those finds that are not susceptible to damage by water will be washed in clean pure water, using a soft brush and then marked with the site and context codes. Other items will be carefully dry brushed. In most cases cleaning is only needed to assist identification and to remove excess soil prior to weighing and recording and therefore care will be taken not to over-clean items. All items will be dried naturally before re-bagging and/or boxing. The contents of each bag will be recorded on to the pro-forma sheet by number of items and weight under the designated type to form the paper record of the data collected. The paper record will be subsequently transposed into a Microsoft Excel computer database to form a digital record and to aid interpretation of the data.

Any finds discovered that fall within the statutory definition of treasure, as defined by the Treasures Act 1996, will be reported to the Finds Liaison Officer at Barbican House, Lewes for assessment and supervision of the mandatory procedures. Significant archaeological features will be reported to the HER at the earliest opportunity.

Human Remains

It is not anticipated that any human remains will be encountered during this excavation. Should any be uncovered, digging will cease immediately and the Police notified to determine the age of the remains. Expert archaeological advice will then be sought how to proceed if they are deemed to be archaeological remains and not from a crime scene.

Recording. All archaeological features encountered will be recorded in accordance with recommended standards with a full written record being kept using standard context record sheets supported by a daily site diary and photographic record. Plans at 1:20 scale and sections at 1:10 of all excavated areas and cuts will be drawn on plastic tracing film. All features recorded will be located on a site grid related to the GB National Grid and the general site and significant features will be referenced to Ordnance Datum.

Reporting. HDAG will undertake to create a separate report at the end of the fieldwork that will include:

Summary - Introductory statement - Aims and purpose of the evaluation – Methodology - A statement of the results - Conclusion - Data including table of basic quantification of finds – Any specialist reports.

A copy of the report will presented to the owners, Jaqui King & Alan Rumery, sent to the West Sussex Heritage Environment Record, and published on HDAG's website.