

Archaeological Monitoring at
Moat Farm, Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green,
Tonbridge, Kent

NGR: 564600mE 146000mN
Site Code FOG/WB/13



Report for Rural Partners Ltd

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company
The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road
Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP
Tel; 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112
info@swatarchaeology.co.uk www.swatarchaeology.co.uk

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Date of report: 11/03/13



Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red circle) showing the site prior to development.

(GoogleEarth 2003).

1.0 Summary

1.1. From February 11th to the 13th 2013 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of an extension to an existing agricultural building to house a packing facility at Moat Farm, Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green, Tonbridge, Kent (Fig. 1 & Plate 1).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners and instructions received from Rural Partners Ltd.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the machine digging for new foundations (Plate 3-4).

The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Excavation of footings for the new building.

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any archaeological below ground impact.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is: 11/01406/FULMJ/CP3.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential was low to medium the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Planning Background

Planning application 11/01406/FULMJ/CP3 for the erection of a new agricultural building to house additional cold storage and packing facilities was submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (5) was attached to the planning consent:

No development shall take place until the applicant(s), or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist attended the site and monitored the excavation works from February 11th to 13th 2013.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, were to:

“Contribute to knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the ground works. Particular attention will be paid to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.”

4.2. The ground works were to excavate footings (post pads) for the new agricultural building (Plates 3-4).

4.3. A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place (Fig. 2).

4.4. Confidence Rating

No factors hindered the recognition of archaeological and deposits during the monitoring and recording exercise.

5.0 Archaeological and Geological Background

5.1. The underlying geology at the site according to the British Geological Survey map is Bedrock geology of Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation-Sand, Silt & Clay and Superficial deposits of Clay & Silt (BSG website 1: 50,000). The geology revealed on site sand, silt & clay.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area of yard adjacent to the large packing facilities of Moat Farm, itself just north of the village of Five Oak Green. The site itself is generally level at a height of about 17m aOD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of unknown archaeological potential associated with archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER. Moat Farmhouse is a listed building (TQ 64 NW 129), originally built in the late 16th to early 17th century if not earlier. Few archaeological remains have been found in the vicinity of Moat Farm but this because little archaeological investigation has taken place.

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by Rural Partners Ltd and it also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA: 1994, revised Oct 2008).

6.2. The works comprised the observation of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

6.3. The Watching Brief was carried out in one phase according to the needs of the building contractors from February 11th to 13th 2013.

6.4. Excavation of the post pads was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed bucket necessary to remove the natural silty clay (Figs 3-4).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

6.6. Where possible the areas of excavation were subsequently hand-cleaned with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section.

6.7. If found archaeological features under threat were to be excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations, should these prove to be necessary.

6.8. The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with current IfA Standards and Guidance, (IfA: 2008), and generic methodology discussed with Archaeological Officers, KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 General

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site sand, silt and clay overlaid by tarmac scrapings and crushed concrete pieces with no archaeological features revealed in the natural geology (Fig. 4).

8.0 Finds

No buried archaeological features were located in the Archaeological Monitoring phase and no finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

The development site is in an area of low to medium potential and the potential for post-medieval remains close to the farm was high.

The archaeological team were somewhat disappointed that no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. As far as it is known no buried archaeological features have been affected as a result of the development.

11.0 Acknowledgments

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank Rural Partners Ltd for commissioning the project.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. It is enclosed within a thin, double-lined rectangular border.

Dr Paul Wilkinson, FRSA., MIFA.

References

HER data (KCC 2013)

IFA (1994 & 2008) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

KCC Generic Archaeological Watching Briefs

Rural Partners Ltd Archaeological Watching Brief (2013)

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development site at Moat Farm, Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green, Tonbridge, Kent

SWAT Site Code: FOG/WB/13

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Monitoring on the development site above. The site has planning permission for a new build livestock building whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Monitoring be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site visits which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: SBC **Parish:** Five Oak Green

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 564600mE 146000mN

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Monitoring

Date of recording: Feb 2013

Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology)

Geology: Underlying geology is sand, silt and clay.

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2012) Archaeological Monitoring at Moat Farm, Whetsted Road, Five Oak Green, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)

See above

Location of archive/finds: SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 11/03/2013

Plates



Plate 2. General view of site with post pads about to be excavated, facing north-east



Plate 3. The site showing ground works (post pads) facing south



Plate 4. Foundation pad showing geology (facing north)