

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Map Regression in advance of Development at the former St Marys Priory, Higham, Kent

NGR: TQ 7025 7525



Report for
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SWAT. ARCHAEOLOGY

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1 SUMMARY

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) has been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment and map regression of the proposed development of a single storey garage and stores at Abbey Farm House, Church Street, Higham, Kent, as part of the planning application by Willis Associates on behalf of Matthew Ledger (Application 20130817).

*This Desk Based Assessment examines the wide variety of archaeological data held by Kent County Council and other sources. This data is reviewed and it is recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required in the form of an **Archaeological Evaluation** on the footprint area of the proposed new building prior to the ground works of the proposed development.*

A Design and Access Statement was prepared by Willis Associates and this document sets out the architectural proposals for the single storey garage and stores.

The proposals seek to develop a small area of the site in a responsible and sensitive manner to both respects the existing landscape whilst ensuring that the proposed development does not lessen the sites visual impact. The map regression exercise has shown that historically, a farm building existed on part of the site of the proposed garage, and that the proposed development will in fact reinstate part of an earlier building now demolished ensuring a low impact on any potential archaeology within the footprint area of the proposed building.

The site is located east of St Mary's Church and situated on the site of the former St Mary's Priory (Fig. 2). Rochester town centre is about 3.5 miles to the south-south east. The site itself is about 5mOD.

1.1 Archaeological history of the site

In the immediate area of the Proposed Development Area (PDA) are the remains of St Mary's Priory founded in 1148 by the daughter of King Stephen and it can be considered a royal foundation. The site was excavated by P J Tester from April 1966

with work completed in September 1966. The excavation was funded by a grant towards the cost by the Kent Archaeological Society and published in the *Archaeologia Cantiana* Vol. LXXXII 1967. The archive from the excavation is to be found in the library of the Kent Archaeological Society situated in Maidstone Museum. Tester writes in the opening page of the report that: "A resistivity survey was carried out by Mr K W E Gravett and Mr J E Caiger made a large scale plan on which subsequent discoveries could be plotted" (Tester 1967: 143). Despite a thorough search of the archive neither item could be found.

It had been suggested by KCC Heritage that there could be evidence for trenches dug by Tester in the vicinity of the proposed development. Again no evidence could be found in the archives.

A walk over of the site indicated that the plan of the priory drawn by Tester could be seen to follow the raised outlines in the turf of the site (Fig. 2). The Abbey Farm House seems to contain a number of surviving upstanding walls of the priory, and a short length of wall, probably part of the south wall of the nave remains standing (Plate 7). At the foot of the wall a number of pieces of worked stone were found (Plate 8), and Roman brick and tile (Plate 9).

Tester commented on the construction of the walls in his report: "The excavated foundations of the church and claustral buildings were composed of flint rubble incorporating some chalk and ragstone. Several pieces of Roman tile or brick had been re-used in the footings and Roman remains are recorded to have occurred 300 yards south-west of the Priory, as noted on the Ordnance Survey maps" (Tester 1967: 151). The OS map that accompanies Tester's report does not show this. However, the HER data reports that a Roman internment was found during the laying of a water main at a spot c.100yds south of St Mary's Church 'along the ancient way which leads to the causeway to the Thames' (TQ 77 SW 5). In addition sufficient evidence can be found in the HER archives that a substantial Roman settlement comprising pottery works and cemetery, possibly in connection with the postulated Roman ford of the River Thames grew up around the site of the later priory, itself having valuable toll rights to the later ferry.

In June 1959 two cottages attached to the 18th century farmhouse known as Abbey Farm were demolished, the cottages deemed unfit for human habitation by the local council. It was fortunate that Mr D Spittle of the Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments was on hand to record the event. Spittle's report can be found in the Tester archive held by KAS, and A F Allen in 1965 published the report and his own observations in *Archaeologia Cantiana* of that year with a set of excellent photographs (Plates 1, 3-6).

Allen had visited the site two years prior (1957) to the demolition of the buildings and wrote:

“An inspection of the site suggests that the medieval buildings formed a quadrangle, the recently demolished portion constituting the western side and the surviving buildings forming part of the southern side. To support this suggestion there is still a small section of medieval masonry having a length of about 15 feet, a height of 6 feet, and a thickness of 2 feet running in an east-west direction some 24 feet to the east of the northern end of the recently demolished north-south wall. The masonry of this wall is of knapped flints on the northern face but of rounded or unknapped flints on the southern face. The eastern end of this wall is broken away to ground level and it seems likely that its foundations extend in an easterly direction under the garden ground belonging to the cottages. Any extension of its foundations to the west would be under a farm road. East of the patch of garden ground belonging to the cottages is a small ploughed field which shows a scatter of flint, tiles, and rubble in a north-south trace roughly parallel with the demolished north-south wall of the cottages and at a distance from the demolished cottages of about 120 feet. In the field to the south of the remaining cottage there are similar traces of rubble and tile on an east-west line to a point a little to the west of the surviving cottage (Fig.2).

Further to support this suggestion of a quadrangular form for the original priory buildings the ploughman living in the remaining cottage claimed to have regularly ploughed both these adjoining fields and said that he had from time to time struck foundations whilst ploughing the field to the south of the site, and pointed out three large pieces of ashlar stone which he stated he had brought to the surface whilst ploughing at this point. These stones were apparently quoin stones, and the place where they were ploughed up would represent the south eastern corner of the conjectured quadrangle.

Likewise when in 1957 a cesspool was dug in the cottage gardens at a point roughly in the centre of this quadrangle two burials were found at a depth of 6 to 8 feet. The builder commented that the earth at this point was much disturbed and in his opinion the top layer two or three feet thick was filled earth.

Unfortunately these burials were not reported at the time, but it is a plausible suggestion that they were graves of nuns and that the garden ground represented a cloister set within the rectangle of monastic buildings” (Allen 1965: 190).



Plate 1. General view of cottages on east side showing north-south wall on right and east-west part with outbuildings on left (Tester archive KAS and Allen 1965: facing p188).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Sites of Archaeological Interest.

Scheduled Monuments, of which the application site is one, are protected by Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and investigation for archaeological purposes is provided for in designated areas by Part II of that Act.

Guidance in Circular 11/95 states in paragraph 80:

80. Scheduled ancient monuments are protected by Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, and investigation for archaeological purposes is provided for in designated areas by Part II of that Act. Where these provisions apply, their effect should not be duplicated by planning conditions (cf paragraphs 21-23 above), although authorities granting planning permission in such circumstances are advised to draw the attention of the applicant to the relevant provisions of the 1979 Act.

81. Where, however, planning permission is being granted for development which might affect a monument which has not been scheduled, or which might affect land in an area which is considered to be of archaeological interest but which has not been formally designated as such under section 33 of the 1979 Act, the local planning authority may wish to impose conditions designed to protect the monument or ensure that reasonable access is given to a nominated archaeologist -

either to hold a "watching brief" during the construction period or specifically to carry out archaeological investigation and recording before or in the course of the permitted operations on the site. (For further advice on archaeology and planning conditions see paragraphs 29 and 30 of PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning or PPG 16 (Wales), and model conditions 53-55).

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

It is worth quoting from this long awaited planning document, in particular Policy 12: 128.

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

126. Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

2.2 *This Desk-Based Assessment therefore forms the initial stage of the archaeological investigation and is intended to inform and assist in decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for the proposed development and associated planning applications.*

2.3 The Proposed Development

The proposed development will comprise of the erection of a lightweight timber framed single storey garage and stores with a gravel-dressed access driveway (Fig. 1).

2.4 Project Constraints

No project constraints were encountered during the data collection for this assessment.

2.5 Geology and Topography

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) indicates the underlying surface is anticipated to be Lambeth Group: Sand, Silt and Clay, however there may be deposits of Alluvium (BGS 1:50,000 digital). The site averages 5.00aOD.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by Willis Associates, acting on behalf of their client, Matthew Ledger in order to inform a planning application for the development of the site at the Abbey Farm House, Church Street, Higham in Kent

3.2 Desktop Study – Institute for Archaeologists (revised 2011)

This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Institute for Archaeologist (revised 2011). A desktop, or desk-based assessment, is defined as being:

“a programme of study of the historic environment within a specified area or site on land, the inter-tidal zone or underwater that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. It consists of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets and, in England, the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate”. (2011)

The purpose of a desk-based assessment is to gain an understanding of the historic environment resource in order to formulate as required:

- 1. an assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study*
- 2. an assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering, in England, their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests*
- 3. strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined*
- 4. an assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings*
- 5. strategies to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and their settings*
- 6. design strategies to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and local place-shaping*
- 7. proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not.*

IFA (2011)

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Desk-Based Assessment

4.1.1 Archaeological databases

The local Historic Environment Record (HER) held at Kent County Council provides an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area and the surrounding environs of Church Street, Higham.

The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) and was also used. The search was carried out within a 500m radius of the proposed development site (28/01/14).

A listing of the relevant HER data is included in Appendix 1. The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (PAS) was also used as an additional source as the information contained within is not always transferred to the local HER.

4.1.2 Historical documents

Historical documents, such as charters, registers, wills and deeds etc were not relevant to this specific study which was focused on the archaeological remains in the near vicinity to Abbey Farm House, Church Street, Higham.

4.1.3 Cartographic and pictorial documents

A map regression exercise was undertaken during this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by Kent County Council, the Internet and Ordnance Survey Historical mapping.

4.1.4 Aerial photographs

The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by English Heritage and Google Earth (2003, 2006, 2007, 2011 & 2013) were undertaken (Plate 1).

4.1.5 Geotechnical information

To date, no known geotechnical investigations have been carried out at the site.

4.1.6 Secondary and statutory resources

Secondary and statutory sources, such as regional and periodic archaeological studies, landscape studies; dissertations, research frameworks and Websites are considered appropriate to this type of study and have been included within this assessment where necessary.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Prehistoric | Palaeolithic | c. 500,000 BC – c.10,000 BC |
| | Mesolithic | c.10,000 BC – c. 4,300 BC |
| | Neolithic | c. 4,300 BC – c. 2,300 BC |
| | Bronze Age | c. 2,300 BC – c. 600 BC |
| | Iron Age | c. 600 BC – c. AD 43 |
| Romano-British | | AD 43 – c. AD 410 |
| Anglo-Saxon | | AD 410 – AD 1066 |
| Medieval | | AD 1066 – AD 1485 |
| Post-medieval | | AD 1485 – AD 1900 |
| Modern | | AD 1901 – present day |

Table 1 Classification of Archaeological Periods

The Archaeological record within the area around Church Street, Higham is diverse and comprises possible activity dating from one of the earliest human period in Britain (the Neolithic) through to the post-medieval period. The geographic and topographic location of the site is within a landscape that has been the focus of trade, travel and communication since the Palaeolithic.

This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local context. Each period classification will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape (500m radius centered on the PDA), followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on this page in **Table 1**.

5.2 Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas

Scheduled monuments; Listed Buildings, and Conservation Areas are recorded within the confines of the proposed development area (PDA).

Scheduled Monuments

Remains of Benedictine Priory, founded 1148, dissolved 1521.

Benedictine nunnery founded as an alien priory circa 1148 became independent after 1227 and was dissolved 1521-2.

Fragments of rubble walling and precinct wall remain. Excavation has revealed the layout of the buildings. The church consisted of nave and quire with North and South transepts. The claustral range was arranged to the South with the chapter house and warming room in the East range, the frater in the South range, (part of which survived built into cottages demolished in 1964), and the West range. The reredorter was a separate building at the South-East corner of the cloisters (information from the Heritage Gateway site).

From the National Heritage List for England:

The monument includes the alien Benedictine Priory of St Mary, situated on level ground c.2km from the south bank of the River Thames. This includes the church, the cloister, east, west and south ranges, the reredorter and drain, the cemetery to the east of the church, the footings and foundations of associated monastic buildings and the ground in between.

Abbey Farm farmhouse is situated in the south west corner of the cloister and has incorporated the standing remains of the west range and the north and west walls of the frater. These lie to the south of the cloister garth, or courtyard, and are built of stone and flint up to 0.9m thick. Part of the south wall of the church is upstanding on

the north side of the cloister garth and measures 0.7m thick, 4m long and 1.5m high. To the east are the buried foundations of the chapter house, warming house, rere-dorter and covered drains which were all noted during partial excavation in 1966. To the south of this area, chalk footings of other medieval monastic buildings have also been noted, all within the area of the precinct.

The priory, originally built to house 16 nuns, was founded c.1148, when Mary, the daughter of King Stephen, became the first prioress. As an alien priory, St Mary's was originally dependent on St Sulpice, Rennes. This was the monastery from which Mary had come, bringing with her a number of the nuns. The priory, however, became independent at sometime around 1227 when the King granted the priory a yearly fair at Michaelmas. The house was suppressed in 1521-2 when it was granted to St John's College, Cambridge.

In 1965 a resistivity survey was undertaken in order to identify the position of any surviving foundations. The following year partial excavation of the site took place which revealed the plan of the medieval priory buildings. A stone coffin in the east alley of the cloister is the earliest datable evidence from the site, while a late 13th century brass jetton was found embedded in the mortar of a covered drain. None of the buildings can be dated unequivocally to the period of the founding of the priory, but some appear to have been built or possibly rebuilt in stone during the 13th century. Excluded from the scheduling are the occupied buildings, garden sheds, aviary, other outbuildings, gates, fences and fence posts, but the ground beneath all these features is included.

Assessment of Importance

A nunnery was a settlement built to sustain a community of religious women. Its main buildings were constructed to provide facilities for worship, accommodation and subsistence. The main elements are the church and domestic buildings arranged around a cloister. This central enclosure may be accompanied by an outer court and gatehouse, the whole bounded by a precinct wall, earthworks or moat. Outside the enclosure, fishponds, mills, field systems, stock enclosures and barns may occur. The earliest English nunneries were founded in the seventh century AD but most of these had fallen out of use by the ninth century. A small number of these were later re-founded. The tenth century witnessed the foundation of some new houses but the majority of medieval nunneries were established from the late 11th century onwards. Nunneries were established by most of the major religious orders of the time, including the Benedictines, Cistercians, Augustinians, Franciscans and Dominicans. It is known from documentary sources that at least 153 nunneries existed in England, of which the precise locations of only around 100 sites are known. Few sites have been examined in detail and as a rare and poorly understood

medieval monument type all examples exhibiting survival of archaeological remains are worthy of protection.

Listed buildings

These include the barn adjoining the church and dated from the medieval to post-medieval (TQ 77 SW 1040).

The Church of St Mary dating from 600 to 1899 (TQ 77 SW 1009).

The Old Vicarage, a timber framed building dating from the post-medieval to modern (TQ 77 SW 1030).

The Clerks Cottage, medieval to post-medieval (TQ 77 SW 1013).

5.3 Prehistoric (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age)

The Palaeolithic represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age. Palaeolithic dated material occurs in north and east Kent, especially along the Medway Valleys. On the Hoo Peninsula and adjacent marshes prehistoric settlement is known from recent archaeological work prior to development.

No Palaeolithic presence has been found within the assessment area.

The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age. The Kent HER has no record of archaeological evidence from this period within the assessment area.

The Neolithic period, the beginning of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry is not represented within the assessment area.

The Bronze Age, a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level are represented in the assessment area. Barrow Hill, to the north west of the PDA and on the boundary of Higham Marshes is a possible site of a crouched inhumation and was located by George Payne and published in 1889 (TQ 77 SW 1). In 1880 a Mr E L Arnold excavated a collapsed cist of Kentish ragstone in a denuded burial mound of marsh turf. The crouched skeleton was accompanied by 79 beads of *Porosphaera globularis* which are now preserved now at the British Museum. (TQ77 SW 11).

5.4 Iron Age

The Iron Age is, by definition a period of established rural farming communities with extensive field systems and large 'urban' centres (the Iron Age 'Tribal capital' or

civitas of the Cantiaci, the tribe occupying the area that is now Kent, was at Bigbury then moved to Canterbury). The Kent HER records no Iron Age activity in the environs of the PDA.

5.5 Romano-British

The Romano-British period is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years.

The predominant feature of the Roman infrastructure within Kent is arguably the extensive network of Roman roads connecting administrative centres: the towns to military posts and rural settlements (villas, farmsteads and temples) increasing the flow of trade, goods, communications and troops. Canterbury or *Durovernum Cantiacorum* was a major town of the Roman province of Britannia and the regional capital. The assessment area includes a number of important sites which may impact on the PDA. These include an extensive area of Roman industrial and burial activity within 200 yards of Higham Church. The HER records (TQ 77 SW 1003) that in 1848 A. H. Burkitt excavated an area of a least four acres and retrieved “a great variety of Roman pottery, domestic utensils, and masses of a metallic substance, mixed with clay, probably refuse from potter’s kilns. The sherds indicate the site of a Roman pottery (TQ 77 SW 4), while the urns with human remains, indicate a cemetery (TQ 77 SW 1003). In the adjacent churchyard a grave digger was digging up Roman tiles (TQ 77 SW 95). A Roman internment was found during the laying of a water main in Church Street 100yds south of St Mary’s Church (TQ 77 SW 5). A possible Roman ford across the Thames (TQ 77 SW 34) down slope from St Mary’s Church may suggest that in the near vicinity of the PDA there will exist the remains of a Roman settlement serving the ford, the lowest crossing point of the Thames (TQ 77 SW 34). Google Earth shows quite clearly the route of the road to the later ferry on the Kent side and also part of the causeway on the Essex shore.

5.6 Anglo-Saxon

Recent investigation just to the west of the PDA at No 1 Abbey Farm Cottages (TQ 77 SW 191, 192) by A. Ward revealed a chalk block foundation and a pit containing 9th century Anglo-Saxon pottery. In addition an Anglo-Saxon bucket was found in 1907 at Haigham (TQ 77 SW 93). In addition it is likely that a Saxon church existed on the site of St Mary’s Church as one is documented in the *Textus Roffensis* list of churches.

5.7 Medieval

The medieval period is well represented within the assessment area with St Mary's Church and the remains of St Mary's Priory. It is likely the priory was established in a rural location rather than urban one is probably because of the wealth generated from the tolls generated by the ferry crossing across the Thames. Higham in the medieval period was the Kentish end of a ferry to Essex and the mile long causeway from near Higham Church to the river bank was a highway for traffic of all sorts between East Anglia, Kent and the Continent. Hasted notes that in 1257 the Prioress Amfelisia failed to keep the causeway leading to Higham Ferry in good repair (Hasted Vol. 3: 483). Archives preserved at St John's College note the construction of a water conduit from 'La Gore', presumably Gore Green, about 600m away to the priory. It is worth noting that St John's College, Cambridge, have complete accounts of the farms attached to the priory covering a period from 1288 to its dissolution in December 1521 (Allen 1965: 194).

5.8 Post-Medieval

The Post Medieval period within the assessment area is represented by the barn adjoining the church and dated from the medieval to post-medieval (TQ 77 SW 1040). The Church of St Mary dating from 600 to 1899 (TQ 77 SW 1009). The Old Vicarage, a timber framed building dating from the post-medieval to modern (TQ 77 SW 1030). The Clerks Cottage, medieval to post-medieval (TQ 77 SW 1013).

5.9 Modern

Modern development within the assessment area has been limited to domestic housing, farming and light industry– all being partly responsible for the present landscape. Of interest is a Barrage Balloon site (TQ 7174 7412) in the field to the south of the priory site.

5.10 Undated

There is no Kent HER undated records that fall within the assessment area.

5.11 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression

A limited map regression (1769-1993) exercise carried out on the proposed development area has shown that the site was mostly farm up to the 20th century (see map regression on page 21)

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

There is one record that reflects prehistoric activity within the search area. The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age within the confines of the proposed development is therefore considered **low**.

6.2 Iron Age

The potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age within the confines of the PDA is considered **low**.

6.3 Romano-British

The presence of Romano-British archaeology in the research area suggests that the potential is therefore to be considered as **medium**.

6.4 Anglo-Saxon

Anglo-Saxon archaeology within the assessment area has been represented. The potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period on the development site is considered as **high**.

6.5 Medieval

The potential for finding remains dating to the medieval period is considered as **high**.

6.6 Post-Medieval

The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval period is also considered as **high**.

7 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Existing Impacts

The search area is for the most part, subject to farming and the potential impact on buried archaeological deposits will have been due to agricultural activities. But the proposed development site had an extensive medieval priory built close to the site. It has been shown through excavation in the 1960's that medieval remains are to be found immediately below the turf. However, the map regression has shown that part of the area proposed for development of garage and stores building have been previously built over. Following the demolition of the earlier building (s) the agricultural land use has been mainly orchard until approximately 25 years, at which time the pear orchard(s) were grubbed. Arboreal advice indicates that mechanical

grubbing of the pear trees would have resulted in ground disturbance in the order of 3m dia x 1m depth each tree. Therefore, the previous impacts are considered **high**.

7.2 Proposed Impacts

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the extent of the proposed development was for the build of a single storey timber framed garage and store with a floor area 7.1 x 14.5m. The lightweight timber framed building will be constructed off a reinforced concrete floating slab with a maximum thickness of 250mm for the reinforced concrete slab with 450mm deep edge stiffening (BSF Consulting Engineers Appendix 3). It is envisaged that the ground preparation, i.e. is the removal of top soil, will be to a depth no greater than the ploughing depth utilised to prepare the ground for grass pasture sowing following the grubbing of the orchard(s).

With the removal of top soil it is envisaged that the access driveway will be formed with a Type 1 base, 75mm thick, dressed with washed pea shingle [gravel] such that a permeable area will be maintained.

It is necessary to consider the proposed impacts on the site in detail:

1. The orchard was grubbed out about 25 years ago and the ground subject to modern ploughing.
2. Traditional foundations will not be used, It is envisaged that a 250mm concrete slab with edge stiffening of 450mm will be the preferred form of construction.
3. Service trenches are not required. Roof water will be harvested. Electrical supply will be by armoured cable in 75mm galvanised pipe at a depth of no more than 150mm. Oil supply pipe will be contained within the proposed building and supplied from the main house in a similar manner to the electricity supply.
4. No landscaping will take place.
5. It is therefore considered that the impact of the building and driveway is considered **low**.

8 MITIGATION

The purpose of this archaeological desk-based assessment was to provide an assessment of the contextual archaeological record, in order to determine the potential survival of archaeological deposits that maybe impacted upon during any proposed construction works.

The assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within a SAM area of **high** archaeological potential. However, it is proposed to build the proposed garage on a reinforced concrete floating slab which will mitigate the impact on any surviving archaeological remains which may exist within the nominal area of the building.

It is recommended in this case that further archaeological assessment will be required and that an **archaeological evaluation** should be carried out on the footprint of the proposed building and access driveway to the depth required by the concrete floating slab design of a maximum thickness of 250mm. This will provide an additional assessment of the nature; depth and level of survival of any archaeological deposits present within the area of the proposed building and used to inform further mitigation if necessary.

9 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Setting

The site visit aimed to identify any designated heritage assets within the wider context of the Site which might be considered potential sensitive receptors to the proposed development, by comparing the theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) to the actual views available of the landscape surrounding the Site. Other aspects of the landscape were also considered in order to attempt to establish whether the Site constituted or contributed to the setting of any monuments within the theoretical ZVI, in accordance with *The Setting of Heritage Assets – English Heritage Guidance* (English Heritage 2011). The above guidance states that “*setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset*” (The Setting of Heritage Assets, English Heritage 2011).

The nearest Designated Heritage Assets to the Site are all at c.300m distance, the Grade II listed Barn to the north-north-west (TQ 7167 7426), the St Mary's Church (TQ 7164 7420) to the west. Both heritage assets are screened from the proposed development by existing buildings, and share no intervisibility with it.

No intervisibility between the Site and the remaining designated heritage assets within the Study Area was established during the Site visit.

In 2008 advice was sought from English Heritage on the overall proposal to reinstate the Site to occupied residential use. By letter dated 17 June 2008 English Heritage provided advice on the reinstatement of the main house. That advice has been implemented by formal planning permission and SAM consent.

English Heritage's advice of 2008 also addressed the issue of future need for new structures in conjunction with the reinstated residential use in the following terms

“..... or new structures such as a garage are to be provided it would be best to locate these in areas where buildings once stood and where archaeological remains may already have been disturbed.”

The siting and design of the proposed building has been arrived at in consultation with the LPA and the LA's Conservation Officer and follows such advice in respect of siting and design.

9.1 Archive

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, two copies of this desk-based assessment will be submitted to Kent County Council (Heritage) within 6 months of completion.

9.2 Reliability/limitations of sources

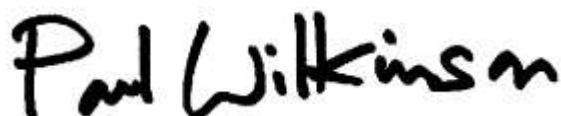
The sources that were used in this assessment were, in general, of high quality. The majority of the information provided herewith has been gained from either published texts or archaeological 'grey' literature held at Kent County Council, and therefore considered as being reliable.

9.3 Copyright

Swale & Thames Survey Company and the author shall retain full copyright on the commissioned report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. All rights are reserved, excepting that it hereby provides exclusive licence to Matthew Ledger (and representatives) for the use of this document in all matters directly relating to the project.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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17th February 2014

11 HISTORIC MAP REGRESSION ANALYSIS

1. SUMMARY

In January 2014 Swat Archaeology were commissioned by Willis Associates to undertake a Historic Map Regression of land at Abbey Farm House, Church Street, Higham, Kent. The development of the site involves the construction of a single storey garage and stores plus access road. This study has been carried out in order to assess any likelihood of previous impacts on the site from historic development.



Plate 2. Google Earth 7/9/2013. Eye altitude 189m. The site is shown with a red line.

2. METHODOLOGY

A Map Regression Analysis (MRA) will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature of the cartographic resource within a specified area. It will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the *Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, and other relevant By-Laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

Our definition of a MRA is a programme of assessment of the known or potential cartographic resource within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. It consists of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic mapping in order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

The purpose of MRA is to gain information about the known or potential archaeological or historic resource within a given area or site, (including its presence or absence, character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality of the potential archaeological resource) in order to make an assessment of its merit in context, leading to one or more of the following:

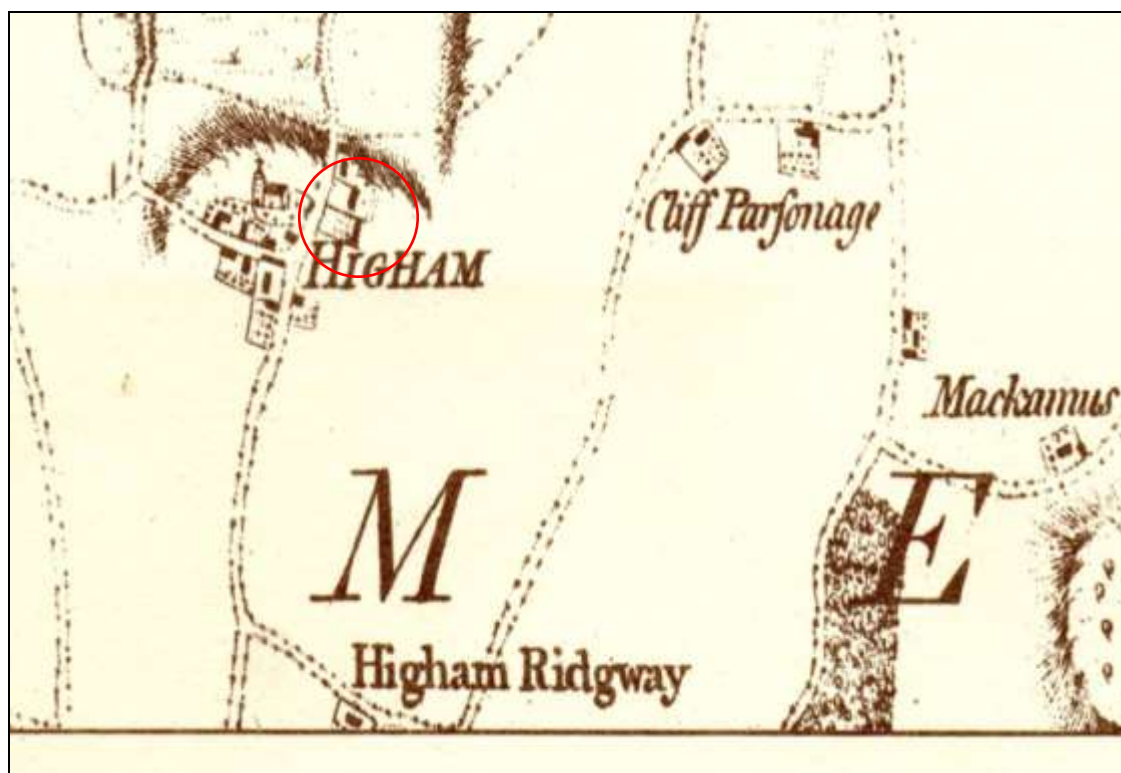
- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy for further investigation, whether or not intrusive, where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised

Figure 3. Andrews, Dury and Herbert map (1769)



Andrews and Dury published their famous atlas some thirty years before the Ordnance Survey, immediately becoming the best large scale maps of the county. It is thought that Edward Hasted based his maps of the Hundreds of Kent on Andrews and

Dury's work. The finely engraved hatching at once distinguishes these sheets from other maps of the period and the use of the large scale enables one to see individual houses and, particularly, the ground plans of the country seats, many of which are identified with their owners' names; even the houses of the lesser gentry are included. A circular of 1765 sought subscriptions for this project. Andrews appears to have been the principal engraver and possibly surveyor as well. Dury and Herbert were booksellers in London who backed the project. The Map was reprinted in 1775, 1779 and 1794, all the issues are rare and highly prized. The map was issued in this first edition as uncoloured sheets, and coloured in outline.



The map (above), a detail of Figure 3 shows the farm complex of Abbey Farm, but unfortunately at such a scale that individual buildings are not identifiable.

Figure 4. OS Surveyors Drawings (1797)



Responsibility for the mapping of Britain fell to the Board of Ordnance, from which the Ordnance Survey takes its name. The Board had been established in Tudor times to manage the supply of stores and armaments for the army and maintain national defences. From its headquarters in the Tower of London, engineers and draftsmen set out to produce the first military maps by a system of triangulation.

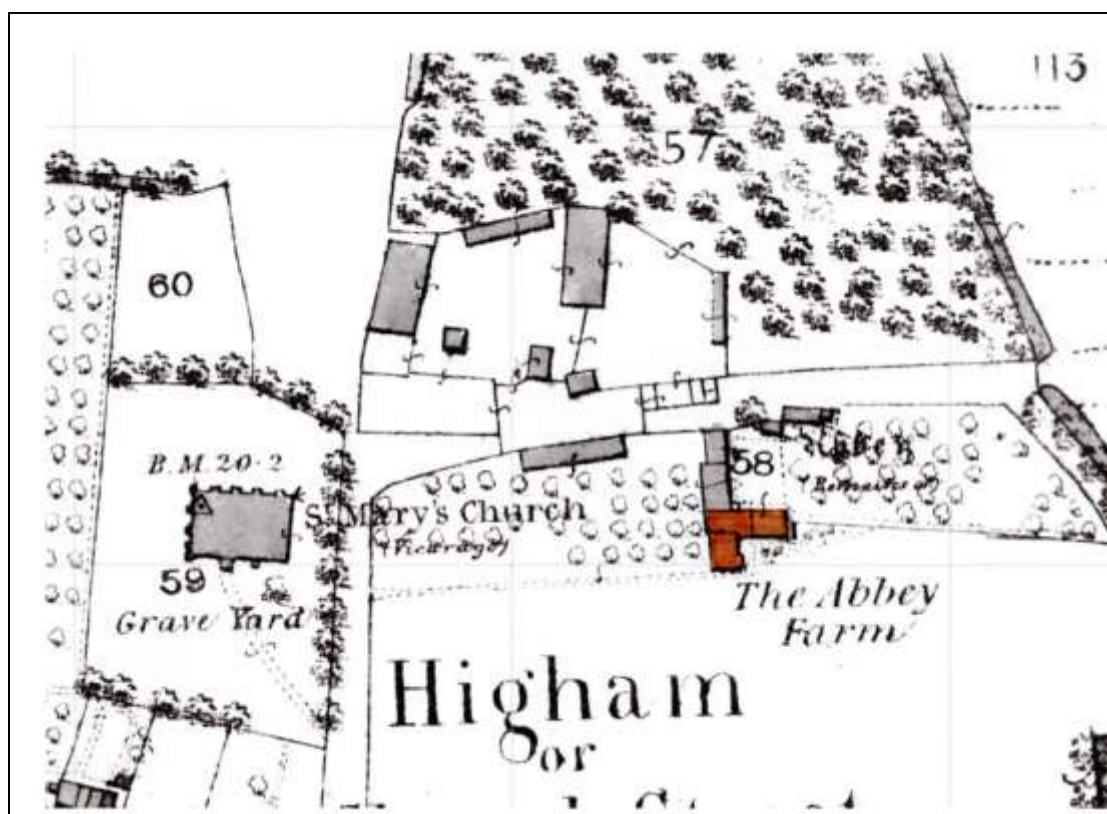
The survey of Kent was first to go ahead. It began in 1795 under the direction of the Board's chief draftsman, William Gardner. Critical communication routes such as roads and rivers were to be shown clearly and accurately. Attention was paid to woods that could provide cover for ambush, and elaborate shading was used to depict the contours of terrain that might offer tactical advantage in battle.

Preliminary drawings were made at scales from six inches to the mile, for areas of particular military significance, down to two inches to the mile elsewhere. Back in the Drawing Room at the Tower of London, fair copies of the drawings were prepared at the reduced scale of one inch to the mile. From these, copper plates were engraved for printing.

The map of Kent was published in 1801 at a scale of 1" to the mile whereas the Ordnance Survey Surveyors drawing were drawn at 6" to the mile. In consequence a tremendous amount of detail shown on the surveyor's drawings does not make it on to the smaller scale engraved maps.

This map (above) shows in some detail the area to the west of the proposed development site, but unfortunately is badly damaged in the area where Higham should be. A visit to the London Library may recover the damaged section.

Figure 5. OS Mapping (1864 Edition 1:2500 County Series)



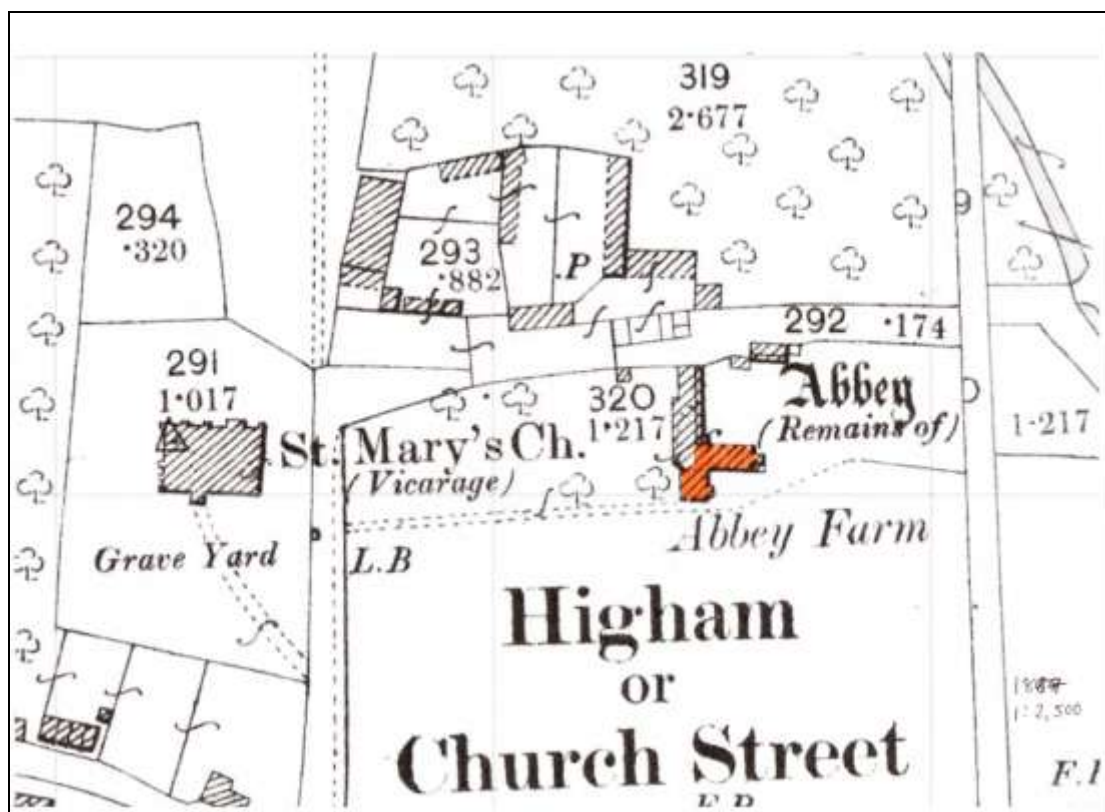
From the 1840s the Ordnance Survey concentrated on the Great Britain 'County Series', modelled on the earlier Ireland survey. A start was made on mapping the whole country, county by county, at six inches to the mile (1:10,560). From 1854, to meet requirements for greater detail, including land-parcel numbers in rural areas and accompanying information, cultivated and inhabited areas were mapped at 1:2500 (25.344 inches to the mile), at first parish by parish, with blank space beyond the parish boundary, and later continuously. Early copies of the 1:2500s were

available hand-coloured. Up to 1879, the 1:2500s were accompanied by Books of Reference or "area books" that gave acreages and land-use information for land-parcel numbers. After 1879, land-use information was dropped from these area books; after the mid-1880s, the books themselves were dropped and acreages were printed instead on the maps. After 1854, the six-inch maps and their revisions were based on the "twenty-five inch" maps and theirs. The six-inch sheets covered an area of six by four miles on the ground; the "twenty-five inch" sheets an area of one by one and a half. One square inch on the "twenty-five inch" maps was roughly equal to an acre on the ground. In later editions the six-inch sheets were published in "quarters" (NW,NE,SW,SE), each covering an area of three by two miles on the ground. The first edition of the two scales was completed by the 1890s. A second edition (or "first revision") was begun in 1891 and completed just before the First World War. From 1907 till the early 1940s, a third edition (or "second revision") was begun but never completed: only areas with significant changes on the ground were revised, many two or three times.



The 1864 map (Figure 5, above) shows in this detail a farm building which is in about the same locality as the proposed garage/store.

Figure 6. OS Mapping (1897 Edition 1:2500 County Series)



The revised edition of 1897 shows that the building in the location of the proposed garage/store has been reduced in size. Shown both on this map and the 1864 map are the remains of the west range and cloister of the medieval priory and part of the quire.

Changes from the 1868 first edition

1. Reduction in size of the building near the location of the proposed garage/store.
2. Reduction in size of one of the great barns in the farm complex to the north of the development site.
3. Changes and additions to other farm buildings to the north.

Figure 7. OS Mapping (1908 1:2500 County Series)



The 1908 map shows little change to the proposed development site. Note the land to the west of Abbey Farm, and the area of the proposed development is orchard in 1908, as it was in 1864 and 1897.

Changes from the 1897 edition

1. More farm buildings to the north of the development site have disappeared.

Figure 8. OS Mapping (1939 Edition 1:2500 County Series)

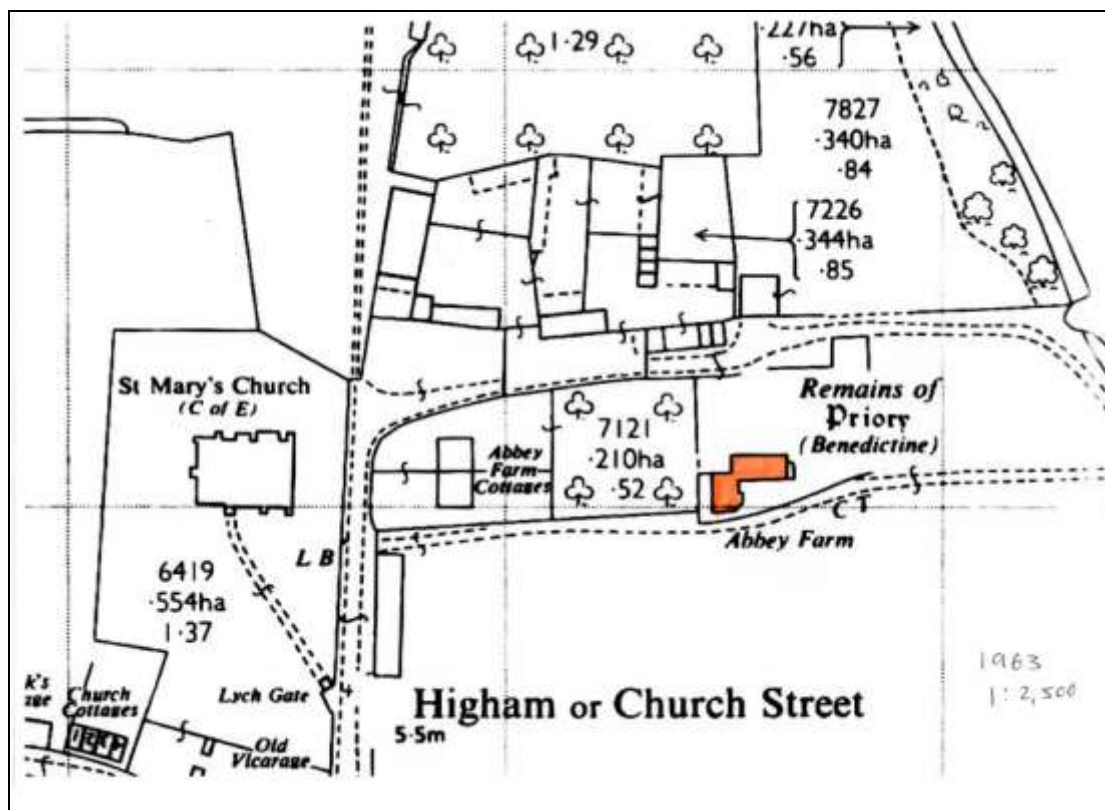


The 1939 edition shows little change from the 1908 map. The west range and part of the quire seem still to be existence.

Changes from 1908

1. Development of houses along Church Street to the south of Abbey Farm.

Figure 9. OS Mapping (1963 Edition 1:2500 National Grid)

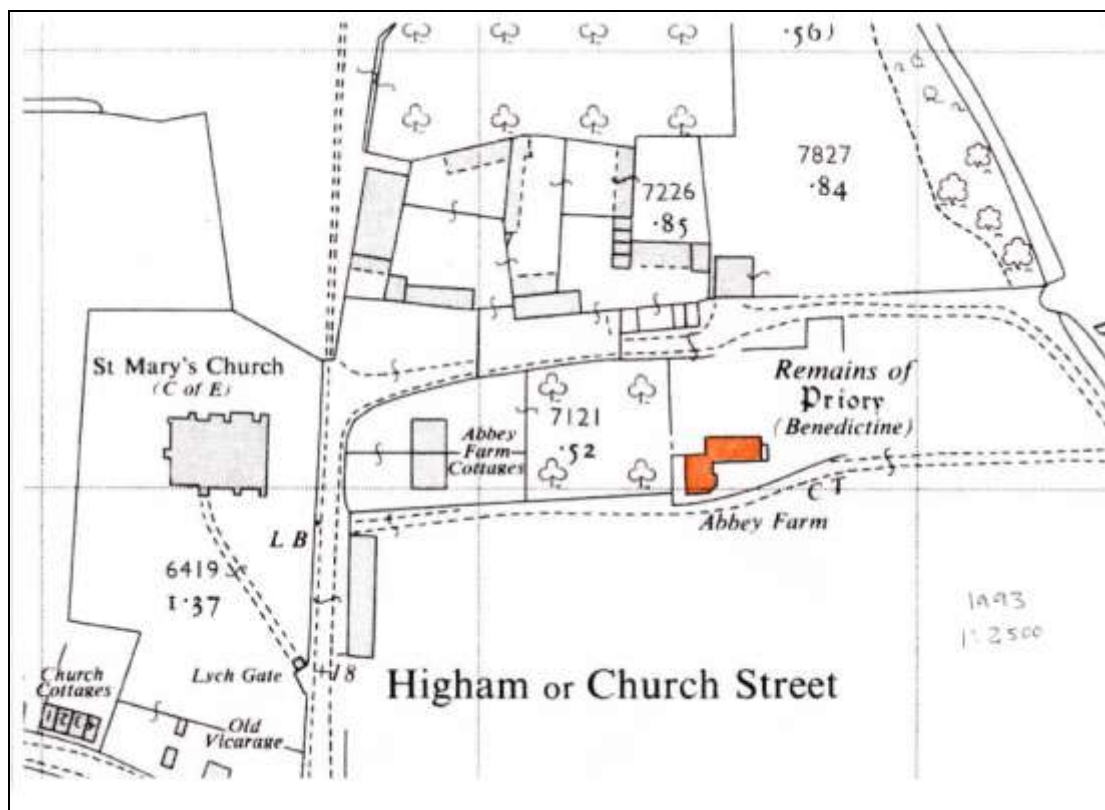


By 1963 tremendous changes have taken place to the topography around the proposed development. The west range and quire of the medieval priory have been demolished. Two cottages have been built to the west of the proposed development site, and farm building to the north demolished.

Changes from 1939

1. Remains of the medieval priory demolished.
2. Two cottages built to the west of the site.
3. Farm buildings to the north of the site demolished.

Figure 10. OS Mapping (1993 Edition 1:2500 National Grid)



By 1993 little change had taken place. However, it is worthy of note that the land to the west of Abbey Farm House has now been orchard since 1864.

Changes from 1939

1. Little change has taken place.

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Plates



Plate 3. General view of cottages on east side showing medieval masonry and blocked doorway (Tester archive KAS and Allen 1965: facing p188)



Plate 4. General view of cottages on east side showing north-south wall on right and east-west part with outbuildings on left (Tester archive KAS and Allen 1965: facing p188)



Plate 5. General view of cottages on west side showing orchard to the west of Abbey Farm House (Tester archive KAS)



Plate 6. General view of cottages on east side looking west (Tester archive KAS)



Plate 7. General view of upstanding medieval wall (looking west)



Plates 8. Close-up of masonry at base of medieval wall



Plate 9. Close-up of Roman tile at base of medieval wall



Plate 10. General view of medieval wall (looking east)



Plate 11. General view of medieval wall (looking north)



Plate 12. General view of proposed development site (looking north)



Plate 13. General view of development site (looking south-east)

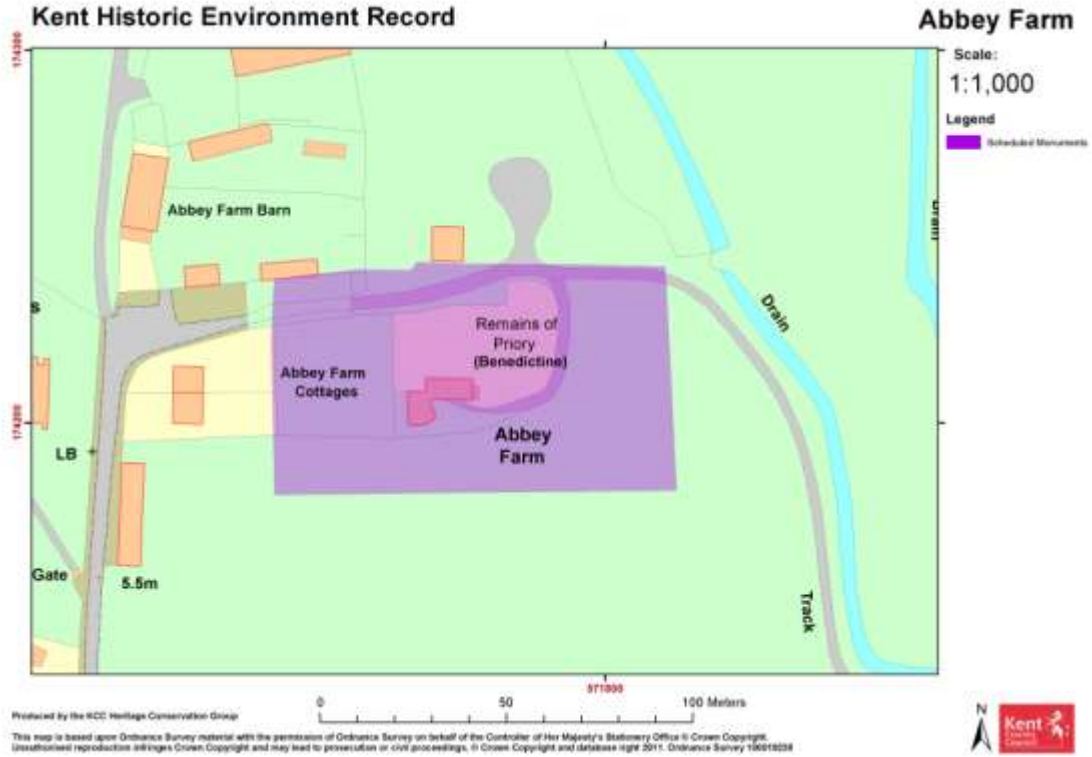


Plate 14, 15. Extent of Scheduled Area (above), and proposed development (below)

