

# Archaeological Monitoring of Land to the rear of The Ridges, Valley Drive, Gravesend, Kent

NGR: 566215 170479  
Site Code RIDGE/WB/14



Report for Mr Sall  
Date of report 27/03/2014

## **SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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

**(Google Earth 7/9/2013: Eye altitude 324m).**

## **1.0 Summary**

1.1. From January 28th-30th 2013 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a new dwelling on land to the rear of The Ridges, Valley Drive, Gravesend, Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plate 1).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners and instructions received from Jeremy Isherwood Architects.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the machine digging and levelling (Plates 2-4). The archaeological work was undertaken in two phases.

Phase 1: Topsoil strip and access road strip.

Phase 2: Foundations dug. Any services trenches were to connect to the existing services.

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any signs of archaeological activity. In particular, any evidence of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery located about 170m to the east.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is 20130378.

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

## **2.0 Introduction**

### **2.1 Planning Background**

Planning application 20130378 was submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the LPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition was attached to the planning consent:

*AR4 No development shall take place until the applicant, 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 programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

## **3.0 Schedule of Visits**

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works from 28th-30<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

## **4.0 Aims and Objectives**

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

*“The objectives of the archaeological investigation are to observe, excavate and record archaeological remains revealed by the ground works, to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area and ensure suitable specialist observation close to sensitive archaeological site”(KCC 2013).*

4.2. The ground works were to strip and landscape the topsoil, build the rubble base of the access road and excavate foundation trenches (Plates 2-4).

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

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 Thanet Formation-Sand. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 56 to 59 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period (BSG website 1: 50,000). The geology revealed on site was silty clay & sand topped by dark brown humic topsoil.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area adjacent to the A2 and adjacent to the route of the Roman road now called Watling Street. The site itself is generally level at a height of about 75m aOD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with important Roman and Anglo Saxon activity. In 1825 in an entrenchment in Claylane Wood on Watling Street just to the east of the development site, "three wagon loads of human bones mingled with leather, many metal celts, spearheads, and armour" were found (TQ 67 SE 7). Some of the celts, pieces of armour and weapons are in a museum at Gravesend. In addition just to the north of the development site in 1857 a 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman flagon was found (TQ 67 SE 24). Just to the south of the development site runs the route of the Roman road called Watling Street (TQ 86 SW 132).

## **6.0 Methodology**

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC 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 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothless bucket necessary to remove the topsoil and cut the foundation trenches (Plates 2-4).

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 methodology discussed with the Archaeological Officer KCC.

## **7.0 Results**

### **7.1 General**

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site sandy silty clay overlaid by topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the topsoil (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 archaeological potential. The archaeologist on site was 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 KCC Archaeological 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 Jeremy Isherwood for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Paul Wilkinson.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr Paul Wilkinson, FRSA., MIfA.

## References

HER data (KCC 2013)

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

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2013)

## Appendix 1

### Kent County Council HER Summary Form

**Site Name:** Development site at land to the rear of The Ridges, Valley Drive, Gravesend, Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** RIDGE/WB/14

**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 dwelling 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:** Gravesham Borough Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 566215 170479

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Monitoring

**Date of recording:** January 2014

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

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Thanet Sand Formation

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2014) Archaeological Monitoring at Land to the rear of The Ridges, Valley Drive, Gravesend, 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:** 27/03/2014

**Plates**



**Plate 2. General view of site, facing south-east**

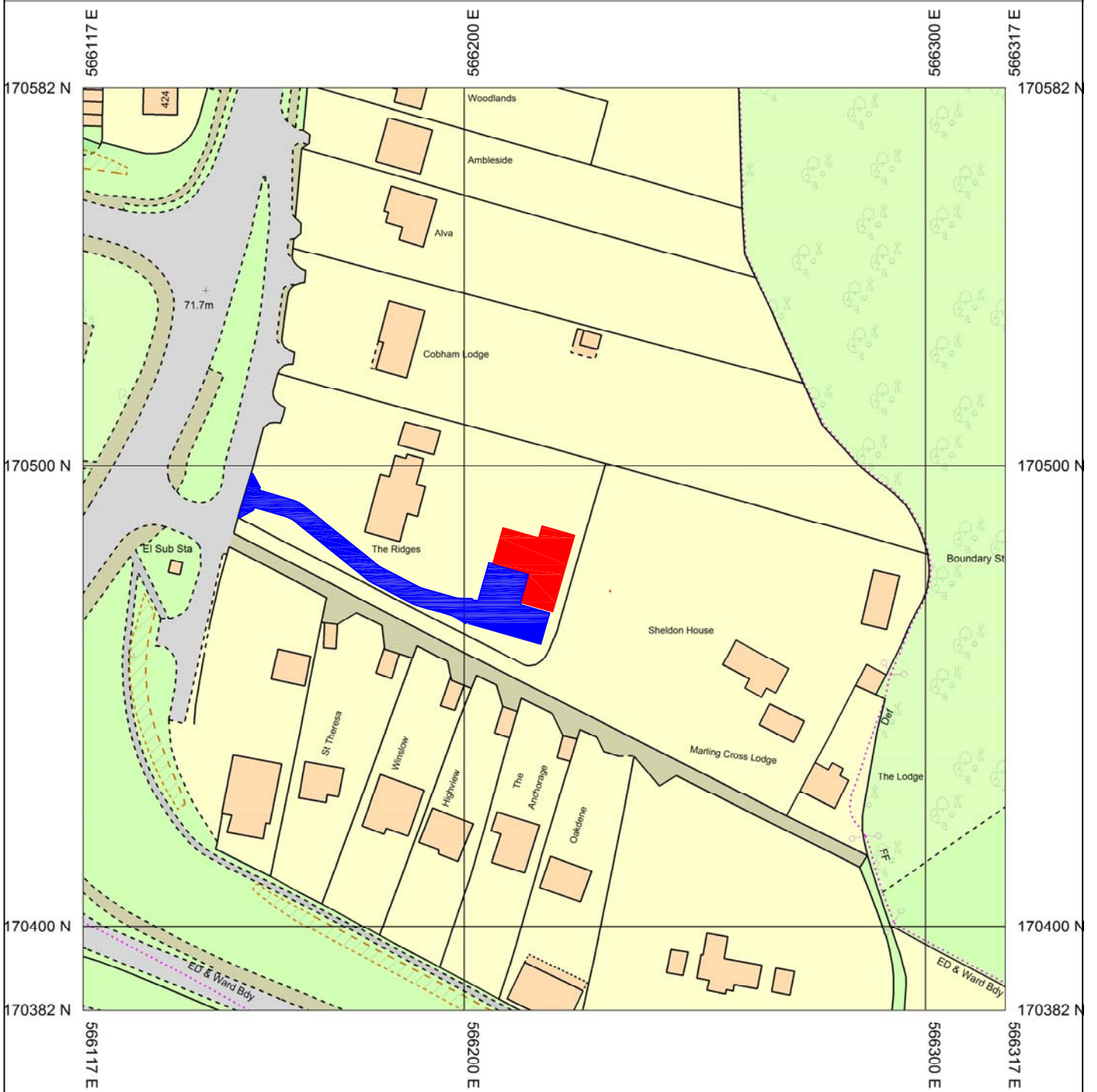
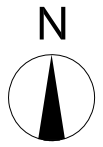




**Plate 3. The site showing cutting of foundation trenches on the east side**



**Plate 4. Foundation trenches on the west side**



Key:

Phase 1 - Topsoil and access road strip

Phase 2 - Foundations strip

1:1250@A4



Figure 1: Location of site

Cobham Lodge

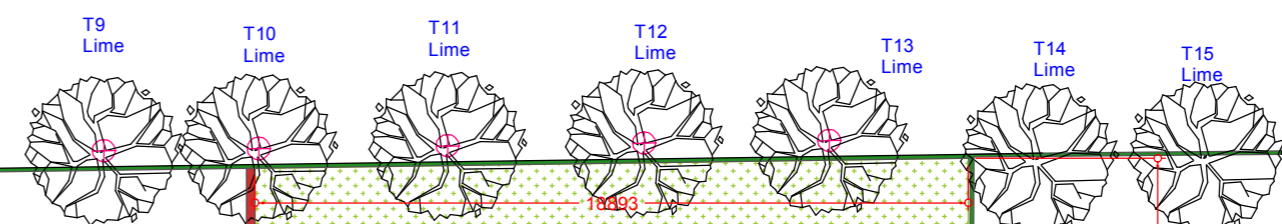
The Ridges

site of Sheldon House

VALLEY DRIVE

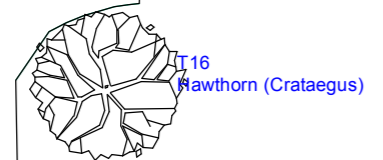
NORTH

ex. trees under TPO

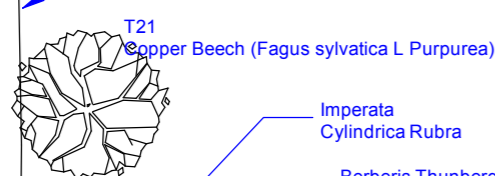


ex. waney edge fence panels with conc. posts & gravel boards 1.8m high

ex. gates to "The Ridges"



ex. brick boundary wall



Imperata Cylindrica Rubra

Berberis Thunbergii Atropurpurea Nana

Choisya Ternata

Berberis Thunbergii Atropurpurea Nana

Berberis Thunbergii Atropurpurea Nana

Prunus Amanogawa

Berberis Thunbergii Atropurpurea Nana

Cotoneaster Horizontalis

Vinca Minor Illumination

Lavandula angustifolia Imperial Gem

Pachysandra Terminalis

Choisya Ternata

Hypericum X Moserianum Tricolor

Buxus Sempervirens

T21 Cherry (Prunus)

Vinca Minor Illumination

Lavandula angustifolia Imperial Gem

Hebe Pinguifolia Pagei

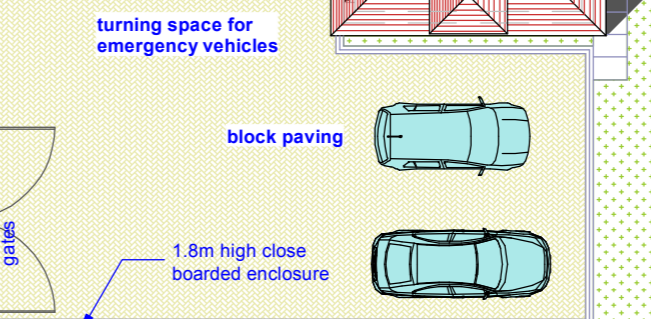
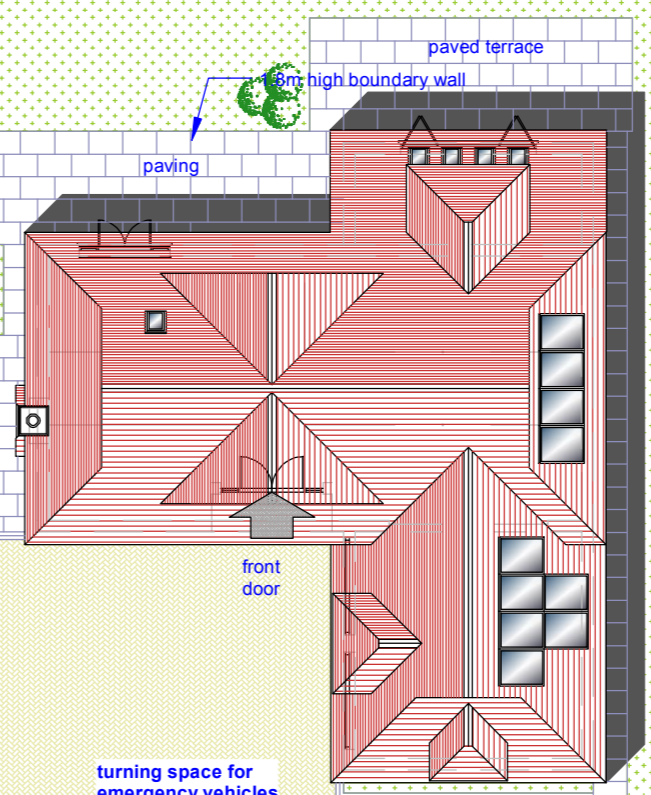
665x665mm gate post 2.5m high

T28 Silver Birch

refuse storage area

1.8m high boundary wall

ex. waney edge fence 1.8m high



painted steel gates

665x665mm gate post 2.5m high

2.5x2.5m sight visibility splay

2 rows granite setts

2.5x2.5m sight visibility splay

block paving

2 rows granite setts

block paving

3.7m wide tarmac access drive

665x665mm gate post 2.5m high

block paving

1.8m high close boarded enclosure

paved terrace

paving

front door

turning space for emergency vehicles

block paving

1.8m high close boarded enclosure

T28 Silver Birch

refuse storage area

SCHEME / SHEET  
**Proposed House at the rear of The Ridges, Valley Drive, Gravesend: A. Sall Esq. Proposed Site Plan**

|                |                    |                            |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| SCALE<br>1:200 | DATE<br>April 2013 | DRAWING NUMBER<br>423/PL01 |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|

This drawing prints A2 @ 1:200

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