

# Archaeological Monitoring of Land at Ashenden Cottage, Tree Lane, Plaxtol, Kent

Site Code PLAX/WB/15



Report for Christopher Rayner Architects  
Date of report 27/08/2015

## **SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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

Site Code RIDGE/WB/14

Date of report: 27/03/2014



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

**(Google Earth 20/04/2015: Eye altitude 228m).**

## **1.0 Summary**

1.1. From 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a new extension to an existing dwelling on land at Ashenden Cottage, Tree Lane, Plaxtol in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 2-6).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners and instructions received from Christopher Rayner 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.

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 archaeological activity associated with the adjacent church.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is TM/14/00733.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by KCC Heritage Conservation 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 TM/14/00733 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:

*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 7<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

### **4.0 Aims and Objectives**

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

*“The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the ground works””(KCC 2015).*

4.2. The ground works were to strip the topsoil, and excavate the 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 Hythe Formation- Sandstone and Limestone. The geology revealed on site was Hythe Formation topped by dark brown humic topsoil.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area adjacent to Plaxtol Church. The site itself is generally level at a height of about 109m aOD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with important Roman and Anglo Saxon activity and is adjacent to Plaxtol Church, a post-medieval building which may be built on earlier foundations (TQ 65 SW 3).

### **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 7<sup>th</sup> May to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

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 was Hythe Formation overlaid by topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the topsoil. It is unfortunate that a greater part of the site had been destroyed by the build of a Victorian cess pit which could not be entered or recorded for health & safety reasons (Plate 3).

## **8.0 Finds**

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 apart from a Victorian cess pit 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 Mike Brewin 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, BA (Hons), FRSA., MIfA.

## **References**

HER data (KCC 2013)

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

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2015)

**Appendix 1**  
**Kent County Council HER Summary Form**

**Site Name:** Development of land at Ashenden Cottage, Tree Lane, Plaxtol, Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** PLAX/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 extension to an existing 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:** Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 6019 5364

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Monitoring

**Date of recording:** May 2015

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

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Hythe Formation

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2014) Archaeological Monitoring at Land at Ashenden Cottage, Tree Lane, Plaxtol, 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:** 27/08/2015



## Plates



Plate 2. General view of site with Victorian cess pit





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





Plate 4. Foundation trenches on the east side





Plate 5. Section of foundation trenches (facing west)



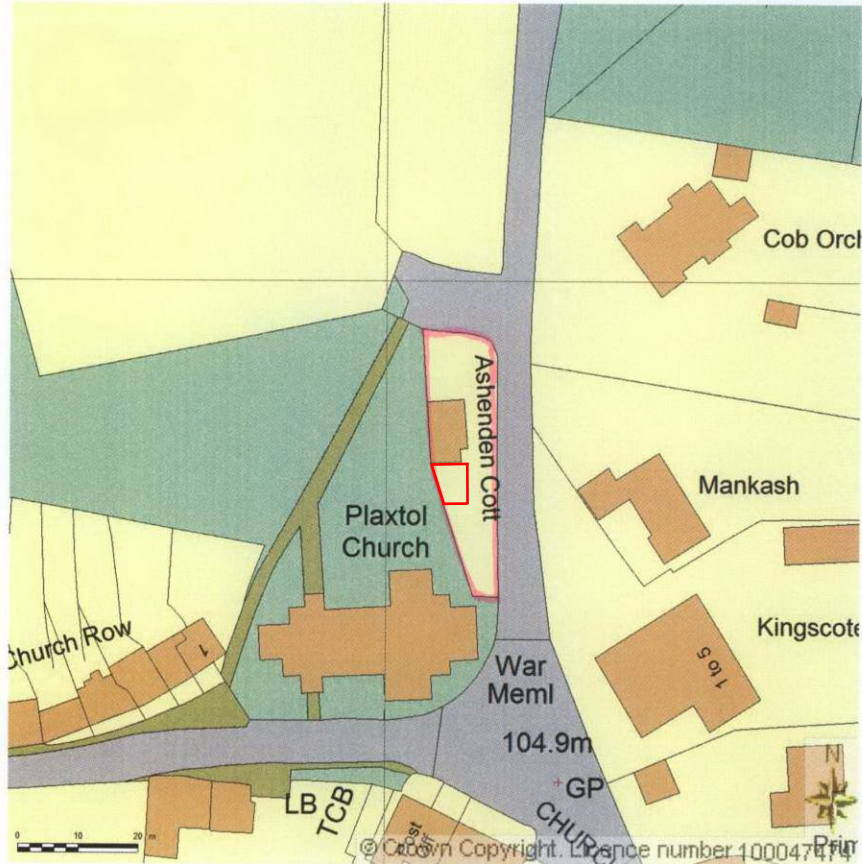
Plate 6. View of site of Ashenden Cottage (facing north west)

Figure 1. Area watched  
(red square)

TM 14 / 0 7 3 3



SITE LOCATION PLAN  
AREA 2 HA  
SCALE 1:1250 on A4  
CENTRE COORDINATES: 560208, 153675



## Ashenden Cottage, Tree Lane, Plaxtol, Kent TN15 0QA

### Site Location Plan 1:1250



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