

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment  
In advance of Development at the  
Church of SS Peter and Paul, Church Lane,  
Shoreham, Kent

NGR: 552275 161590



Report for  
The Parochial Church Council of SS Peter and Paul

**SWAT. ARCHAEOLOGY**

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## **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment in advance of Development at the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Shoreham, Kent**

### **1 SUMMARY**

*1.1 SWAT Archaeology has been commissioned by the Parochial Church Council of St Peter and St Paul, Shoreham, Kent to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of the proposed impact of the build of modern facilities and improved access to the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Shoreham in Kent.*

*The proposed development is for:*

- *New accessible entrance and toilet facilities including an accessible WC*
- *Provide additional new build accommodation to include meeting rooms, modest kitchen facilities and extra storage adjacent to the existing church*

*1.2 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 a programme of archaeological investigation to a Archaeological Specification approved by Sevenoaks District Council will be required and further archaeological mitigation may be necessary if archaeological remains are exposed by the proposed development.*

*1.3 Modern archaeological investigations of the Church of SS Peter and Paul are recorded in Archaeologia Cantiana in 1952 and 1959. Mr Elliston-Erwood wrote some brief architectural notes on the structure and said: 'while the building is both clean and tidy, it is in some ways a disappointment for the architectural student. The name of the parish is included in the list of churches in the Textus Roffensis and this is generally accepted as a proof of pre-conquest origin, but there are no architectural evidences of such an early church' (Elliston-Erwood 1952: 146).*

## **1. Introduction**

This report presents the findings of a provisional desk-based archaeological assessment of development proposals at the Church of SS Peter and Paul at Shoreham, Kent (centred NGR 552275 161590).

This provisional desk-based archaeological assessment is a consultation document prepared for the client which may be submitted as part of a planning proposal. It constitutes a pilot study assessing the potential for further research, either desk-based or in the field. Additional desk-based research and/or fieldwork may be requested by planning authorities or specified as conditions on any planning consent, although such a request should clearly demonstrate the benefits of future desk-based work rather than fieldwork, for example.

The objective of the desk-based research, agreed with the client and in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 12, was to view readily available existing evidence in order to assess the extent and nature of any heritage assets with archaeological interest within the Proposed Development Area (PDA) and its setting, and thereby gauge the likelihood of heritage assets of archaeological interest being affected by development within the PDA.

Research has been undertaken to an appropriate level of detail in response to funding limitations which affect the affordable scope and provisional nature of the study, as well as the particular circumstances of the proposed development.

While no precise details of the proposed foundation works have been viewed in preparation of this report, a basic (interim) impact assessment of the likely effects of any proposed foundation trenching, service trenching or landscaping on the buried or extant archaeological resource is offered below. Recommendations for appropriate mitigation of potential impacts on the buried and extant archaeological resource within the PDA have also been made.

### **2.1 POLICY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS**

This report has been prepared in accordance with national and regional policy regarding heritage assets and with reference to research frameworks.

## The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

It is worth quoting from this planning document, in particular Policy 12: 12.8.

### 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

12.6. 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.

12.8. 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.

### *Regional Policy*

Policy BE6 of the South East Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy for the Southeast; May 2009) on management of the historic environment states that 'When

developing and implementing plans and strategies, local authorities and other bodies will adopt policies and support proposals which protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment and the contribution it makes to local and regional distinctiveness and sense of place.’ In addition, ‘historic environment includes the physical evidence of past human activity. It is all around us as part of everyday life, and it is therefore dynamic and continually subject to change. It is not limited to the built environment and archaeological sites, but includes landscapes, both urban and rural ... These environments are fragile and require protection, but also have an enormous potential to contribute to a sense of place and identity...’

#### Local Policy

The relevant Sevenoaks Local Plan (Sevenoaks District Council 2009) policies are SDC18 (Setting of Listed Buildings) and SDC20, 21 (Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites).

#### *Research Frameworks*

The national and regional policy outlined above should be considered in light of the non statutory heritage frameworks that inform them. While the South East Research Framework for the historic environment (SERF) is still in preparation, initial outputs are available on-line and have been considered in preparing this report.

A key feature of ‘landscape’ is that it is conceptual, subjective and relative rather than absolute. A succinct Highways Agency (2007) definition states that ‘Historic Landscape is defined both by people’s perceptions of the evidence of past human activities in the present landscape and the places where those activities can be understood in the landscape today.

This definition highlights the role of perception and emphasises the rich cultural dimension implanted in landscape character by several millennia of human actions.’ When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.



Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional.

Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

The existence of the latter within a proposed development area can be partially investigated and to an extent predicted via desk-based assessment, but field evaluation and/or archaeological monitoring of groundworks are likely to be a planning requirement and should be expected.

More recently English Heritage has issued detailed guidance on the *Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011). This guidance is based on principles and guidance already issued by English Heritage in the *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (2010), and *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008). It provides a framework for assessing impacts based on the identification of individual asset's cultural significance and the relationship between that and its surroundings followed by assessment of the degree to which change in the surroundings affects significance.

*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.*

## **2.2 The Proposed Development**

The proposed development area (PDA) will comprise of a planning application for the provision of modern facilities and improved access to the building and to:

- *New accessible entrance and toilet facilities including an accessible WC*

- *Provide additional new build accommodation to include meeting rooms, modest kitchen facilities and extra storage adjacent to the existing church*
- *Consider relocating the Vicar's vestry*

### **2.3 Project Constraints**

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

### **2.4 Geology and Topography**

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) has been consulted and shows that the proposed development site (PDA) is situated in an area of Holywell Nodular Chalk surrounded by alluvial deposits to the north and bands of head deposits to the west and east. The PDA itself is located on the north side of the Church of SS Peter and Paul (Plate 1). The average OD height of the PDA is 62.00mAOD.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned in order to supplement a planning application for development at the Church of SS Peter & Paul, Shoreham, Kent.

Ms Wendy Rogers of KCC Heritage was consulted on the application by Sevenoaks District Council and her advice sent by email (18/02/2015). Ms Roger's main points of advice were:

- It is important that the archaeological and historic significance of the church is fully understood prior to determination of the application
- Early assessment of the archaeological impact of the proposed development both in terms of the potential impact on historic fabric, buried features and on buried human remains needs to be robustly considered
- There should be a clear archaeological and historic building impact assessment and consultation with the Diocesan Archaeologist

In response to Ms Roger's letter SWAT Archaeology were commissioned by the Parochial Church Council of St Peter and St Paul, Shoreham, Kent to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of the proposed impact of the build of modern facilities and improved access to the Church of SS Peter and Paul.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Desk-Based Assessment**

#### *4.1.1 Archaeological databases*

A search of the Historic Environment Records (HER; Appendix 1) as well as a list of reports of archaeological investigations not yet included in the HER was commissioned from Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group. The HER and reports search covers important areas around the PDA (centred NGR 552275 161590). These records (15 in total) have been assessed in terms of their particular relevance to the PDA and only significant evidence is cited in this report. KCCHER records can be viewed on-line. Further (on-line) HER's (National Monuments Records, the National Heritage List for England) were also consulted in comparison. A pilot survey of readily available aerial photographic evidence (generally on-line or within the HER) and satellite imagery (on-line) has also been carried out. Only photographs, images or results showing significant features or topographical developments are reproduced. No relevant geophysical surveys are known. The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) and was also used. 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. However, historic maps were consulted.

#### *4.1.3 Cartographic and pictorial documents*

It has been considered beyond the means of this project to pursue detailed questions requiring an in-depth study of primary documentary and cartographic sources. General historical context for archaeological findings is provided where applicable, and a survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and contour survey) has been undertaken. A full list of maps consulted is provided in the list of sources at the end of the report. Only maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced in this report. Aerial photographs and satellite

imagery may also supplement this study. All results of analyses are presented in synthesis and in order of chronology. Research was also carried out using resources offered by the Internet and Ordnance Survey Historical mapping (Figs. 1-7).

#### 4.1.4 Aerial photographs

The collection of aerial photographs by Google Earth from 1940 to 2008 were consulted (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

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**

## 5.1 Introduction

The Darent Valley creates a natural routeway leading from the Thames estuary through the Kent Downs and conveniently intersects the ancient, possibly even prehistoric, trackway known as the Pilgrim's Way which follows the east-west scarp of the Downs.

The valley is littered with the cropmarks of ring ditches marking the probable remains of early Bronze Age burial mounds, one of which survives as a tumulus above Otford.

Later in the Bronze Age the beginnings of the intensification of agriculture were probably taking place in this fertile landscape, while during the Iron Age small farmsteads seem to have been one of the most frequent types of settlement.

The Roman appreciation of the advantages of the Darent Valley is clear from the sheer numbers of villa sites which have been found all along the riverbanks. There are at least seven villa or agricultural estate sites along the Darent, many of which have other associated buildings such as granaries, mills and bath houses.

The villa at Lullingstone with its fine mosaics and early Christian shrine is a well known archaeological and tourist site.

The period after the end of Roman rule is less well known but there is intriguing evidence that early Saxon settlers utilised the abandoned Roman buildings and added their own post-built hall and sunken floored houses.

Later Saxon life in the Darent Valley may not always have been very peaceful. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle records a battle between King Offa of Mercia and the men of Kent and Sussex which took place in Otford in 775. The locals were victorious in this rebellion against Mercian rule, and managed to hold on to their independence for another ten years. Nearly two and a half centuries later in 1016 battle raged again in Otford when Edmund Ironside, the son of King Ethelred the Unready, fought Canute for the throne of England.

After the Battle of Hastings the Normans rapidly imposed control over the countryside. Eynsford Castle, built in 1088, is one of the earliest castles built by the Normans for this purpose. Excavations in the early 1970's suggest that this was already a high status site, possibly belonging to the local Saxon lord.

In 1312 the castle was raided and sacked during local disturbances and gradually fell into decay. By the mid 18th century it was being used as kennels for hunting dogs and it was not until the late 19th century that attempts were first made to repair and stabilise the ruins, which are now owned by English Heritage and open to the public. The Church was a major landowner and Otford had been the site of one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's many residencies since as early as the ninth century. The Palace built by Archbishop Warham in around 1518 was said to rival Hampton Court in size and splendour but Henry VIII forced Archbishop Cranmer to relinquish it and eventually it was abandoned in the late 16th century. All that now remains of this fine building are part of the northern gatehouse and the lower part of a massive tower.

Shoreham is one of a number of delightful villages along the Darent Valley, a civil parish in the Sevenoaks District. Shoreham is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Its name is probably derived from the Saxon word *scor* pronounced *shor* which means a 'steep slope'. So a village 'ham' located at the base of a steep slope- Shoreham.

The sacred focus of the village was the church and as Shoreham church is listed in the *Textus Roffensis* it is thought the establishment of the church could pre-date the AD1122-1124 manuscripts.

The archaeological record for the Church of SS Peter and St Paul was established by the work of F C Elliston-Erwood and A D Stoyel who published their results in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (Elliston-Erwood in 1959 and AD Stoyel in 1959).

To summarise Elliston-Erwood wrote that on first view the church appeared to be late in date with the red brick and flint tower replacing an earlier tower destroyed by fire in c.1775. The nave arcade he enthused about dating it to the late 15th to early 16<sup>th</sup> century. He noted that the walling inside had been rendered and colour washed, while the exterior has been rebuilt, refaced and repointed.

He also noted that; 'nothing can be gathered from these sources, therefore, save here and there a re-used piece of Roman brick or diagonal-toothed stone speak of an earlier structure'.

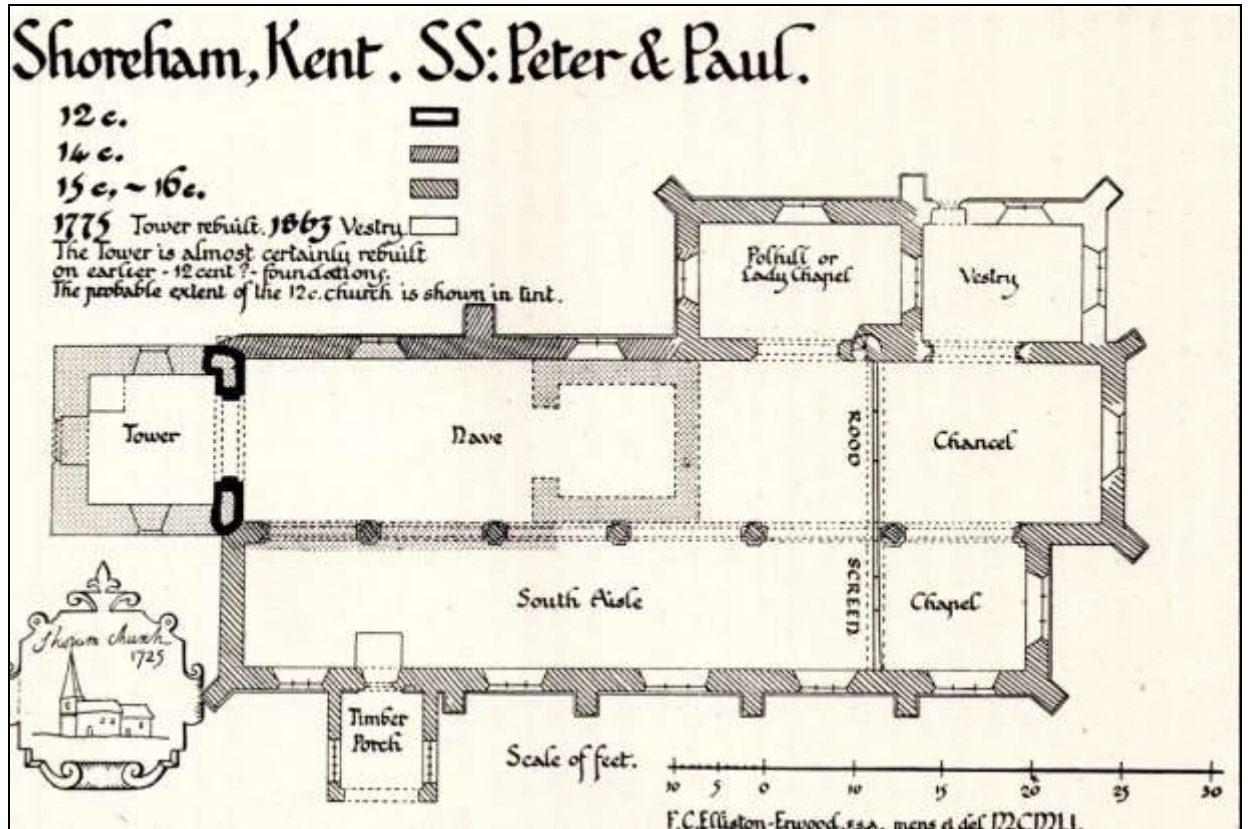


Figure 8. Plan of the church showing Elliston-Erwoods proposed phases (Arch Cant 1952)

What excited Elliston-Erwoods imagination was the possibility that the arch from the nave to the western tower seemed to be of a late 12<sup>th</sup> century (transitional) date, and with the adjacent walls the only survival of the first stone church and the present tower was erected on these earlier foundations (see above Fig. 8).

Elliston-Erwood went on to say that there was no evidence for this but maybe a small excavation ‘would show the truth of this suggestion’.

So the matter rested until December 1956 to September 1957 when Mr A D Stoyel with the help of the Vicar and Mr R Booker took advantage of the foundations exposed during the re-laying of the floor and exposed the footings of the Norman chancel on the north side (Stoyel 1959: 216-219).

The Rochester Diocese commissioned a historical and archaeological survey prior to the church being reclassified as Grade 1 in 2007 and a summary is below:

*DESCRIPTION: This church, which is famous for its magnificent surviving Rood-screen and loft, was unfortunately heavily restored in 1864 by Henry Woodyer. The east end*

*in particular, was rebuilt and many of the windows have been restored. The western tower was also completely rebuilt in £. 1775, and the west wall of the south aisle is completely obscured by cement render, and the north wall of the nave by render and stuck-on flint.*

*Despite this, the architectural history of the church has been worked out by F C Elliston Erwood and A D Stoyel, and fully published, after the later had done some small-scale excavations. The earliest nave and chancel have been discovered, by excavation, to have occupied the site of the present nave. There was a small 16 feet square chancel, probably of early Norman date, on the site of the central part of the nave and the original nave extended west from this. Fragments of its west wall may survive in the present nave west wall.*

*In the late 12th century a west tower was built (at the same time as the present west tower) and the tower arch into this can still be seen at the west end of the nave. It is pointed and has simple chamfers on Reigate stone blocks (much covered now by whitewash) with rough tooling marks. No capitals only simple chamfered abaci.*

*The position of the Polhill chapel on the north-east suggests that the chancel was enlarged in the 13th century but no above-ground evidence survives for this.*

*In the early 14th century the two two-light Decorated windows (with chamfered rere-arches) were put into the north wall of the nave, and what is probably a tomb niche was built on the north-east side of the nave. It has fine carved hood-stops.*

*The next addition was probably the north-east or Lady Chapel (later the Polhill chapel) which has windows in the north and west walls in an early Perpendicular style. They were made in Tunbridge Wells sandstone, and have chamfered rere-arches.*

*In the later part of the 15th century, the whole of the south aisle and south chapel, and the fine slender six-bay arcade were constructed. There is no evidence for an earlier south aisle and chapel, but they well have existed and been demolished at this time. The east end of the chancel may also have been reconstructed at this time, but the 1864 rebuilding makes it difficult to confirm this. The east window of the south chapel, though completely restored, is perhaps in an earlier Perpendicular style.*



*The south doorway into the south aisle is a fine 'early Tudor' affair without a hood mould and with a stoup to the east. It is probably contemporary with the south aisle, as is the fine timber porch around it. Though quite heavily restored, the porch still contains many of its original timbers, including the very large and striking monoxalic durns to the outer doorway. There are also carved barge-boards above, and traceried side lights.*

*The nave still has its later 15th century crown-post roof over it, while there is a simpler (and much restored) rafter collar, and soulace roof over the south aisle.*

*The slightly higher east ends of both roofs have later boarded ceilings, and the Polhill chapel seems to have a 19th century crown-post roof.*

*The final major pre-Reformation feature that was put into the church is the magnificent early 16th century Rood screen and loft which runs right across the east end of the nave and south aisle in eight bays. There is late Perpendicular tracery in the screen, and the loft is supported by fanning out timbers on both the east and west sides. The contemporary Rood-loft stair also survives, built into the south-east corner of the Polhill chapel, and its wooden doors at top and bottom may be original, though much reconstructed. There has also been quite a lot of repair to the screen.*

*The octagonal font is also probably 15th century, and is of Ragstone covered in small pick marks. This was apparently done so that it could be painted with 'imitation grained marble', as described in the earlier 19th century (all now removed). There is a c. 17<sup>th</sup> century octagonal wooden lid with a finial.*

*The distinctive brick and knapped flint west tower was apparently rebuilt in about 1775 after a fire. It stands on the site (and foundations) of the earlier tower.*

*The main and thorough restoration was in 1863-4 by Henry Woodyer, as we have seen. The north-east vestry (now also containing the organ) was also built at this time. The organ is the choir section of Schrider's organ of 1730 for Westminster Abbey, and the pulpit also comes from the Abbey (who own the advowson of the church). It was designed by Blore in 1827, and is a fine early 19th century Gothic piece, but missing its base. The nave was partially refloored in 1956-7.*

5.2 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. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on page 11 in Table 1.

### **5.3 Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas**

The PDA is located inside the Shoreham Conservation Area (KCC 2015: Appendix 1). There are numerous listed buildings located near the PDA but no Historic Parks and Gardens.

### **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. Evidence of prehistoric settlement within the county of Kent can be dated back to the Palaeolithic period and can be found around the River Gravels of the Thames. Numerous find spots of worked flint are known from the Darent valley including a flint axe and flakes in the vicinity of the PDA (TQ 56 SW 51).

The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age. The Kent HER has no record of any definitive 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 represented by numerous worked flint finds 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 is not represented in the assessment area.

#### **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 and hillforts. That there was an Iron Age presence along the Darent valley is in no doubt and although the evidence is elusive an Iron Age copper alloy brooch has been found in the vicinity (MKE 72483).

#### **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.

Roman remains in the Darent valley are extensive and important and although archaeological work in the past has been focussed on the Roman villas there is no doubt that extensive remains of the Roman agricultural estates still remain to be found. Of importance to this study are elusive reports on a Roman villa or Roman bath house located on the Darent river bank just to the north-west of the PDA. The Kent HER states that 'Romano-British pottery and a quern stone found in the river bed beside Shoreham Roman villa' (TQ 56 SW 10). In addition the web site Archaeology UK ARCHI database holds data on three find spots of Roman material from the 'Shoreham Roman Villa'.

#### **5.6 Anglo-Saxon**

The Anglo-Saxon period is represented by extensive remains along the Darent valley and the name of the parish is included in the list of churches in the *Textus Roffensis* and this is generally accepted as a proof of pre-conquest origin of the village and church of Shoreham with its Anglo-Saxon name.

#### **5.7 Medieval**

The medieval period is represented within the assessment area by the fabric of the church of SS Peter and Paul- the proposed development site.

## **5.8 Post-Medieval**

The Post Medieval period within the assessment area is represented by a number of farms located in the vicinity of the PDA (MKE 83693, 83695, 83696) and it is likely there will be inhumation burials within the area of the proposed development.

## **5.9 Modern**

Modern archaeology within the assessment area has been limited to remains from watermill activity along the River Darent and the building of the adjacent railway in 1862 by the Sevenoaks to Maidstone Railway (TQ 75 NE 816).

However, within the confines of the development site there are at least nine known inhumation burials of which the location is known (Fig. 4).

## **5.10 Cartographic Sources and Map Regression**

It has been considered beyond the means of this project to pursue detailed questions requiring an in-depth study of primary documentary and cartographic sources. General historical context for archaeological findings is provided where applicable, and a survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and contour survey) has been undertaken. A full list of maps consulted is provided in the list of sources at the start of the report. Only maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced in this report (Figs 1 & 2). Aerial photographs and satellite imagery may also supplement this study. All results of analyses are presented in synthesis and in order of chronology.

A limited map regression exercise on large scale Ordnance Survey maps has been carried out on the proposed development area (Figs. 1-2). It is obvious that in the last 200 years no development has taken place at the proposed development site apart from at least nine inhumation burials (Fig. 3).

## **5.11 Aerial Photographs**

The National Monuments Records were consulted during the writing of this report and Google Earth provided a 2013 location aerial photograph (Plate 1).

## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL**

### **6.1 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age**

The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age within the confines of the proposed development are considered **low**.

### **6.2 Iron Age**

The potential for finding remains dating to the Iron Age within the confines of the development site are also considered **low**.

### **6.3 Romano-British**

The potential for Romano-British archaeology is considered to be **medium**.

### **6.4 Anglo-Saxon**

The potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period on the development site are considered as **medium**.

### **6.5 Medieval**

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

### **6.6 Post-Medieval and Modern**

The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval and modern period are considered as **high**.

## **7 IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Existing Impacts**

The search area is for the most part, has been subject to prehistoric and historic activity. The existing impact on the PDA is likely to be **high**. Investigation of church sites in the Darent valley and beyond has shown that a large numbers are located close to and some cases built on Roman buildings. The finding of Roman building

material in the structure of the church by Elliston-Erwood and a walkover by the writer of this report recovered nine fragments of Roman building material in the flowerbeds around the church.

In addition a plan by Cecil Hooper drawn in 1906 show at least nine graves in the proposed development area (Fig. 4). A site visit (03/03/15) revealed that no grave stones are still in place in the area of the proposed development (Plates 2-5).

Experience by the writer in excavating drainage runs at St Marys Church in Faversham showed that graves can be stacked up to a depth of at least 2 metres with the later graves being cut into the earlier inhumations.

## **7.2 Proposed Impacts**

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the extent of the proposed development was the construction of Vestry/Meeting Room, Vestibule/Meeting Room, WC and areas of Storage adjacent to the north wall of the Nave (Fig. 5).

In addition two new doorways are to be inserted through the historic fabric of the church (Doors 1, 2. Fig.6).

No details of foundation design have been finalised but the preferred option on sites with important archaeological remains are to specify a concrete ring beam construction with a depth of about 600mm. This can ensure archaeological remains are preserved in situ. The impact of the proposed development on the exterior face of the north wall of the Nave has yet to be ascertained.

## **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.

This desk-based assessment has identified a potential for below ground archaeology within the proposed development area (PDA) and groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the site could result in a negative impact upon this resource.

In addition there will be a negative impact on the historic fabric of the north walls of the church.

The proposed development impacts will include:

1. The opening up for services could cut through important historic elements without regard to their significance.
2. Any trenching both inside and outside the church may chance upon unexpected and important evidence for the use and phases of the building.
3. Conversion of windows into doorways usually involves the removal of tracery, and in all cases piercing of the wall. In the case of Doorway 1 the existing window sits on a blocked up doorway (Plate 5).
4. Doorway 2 cuts through the north wall of the Nave which may have fabric of the 12<sup>th</sup> century church in it Plate 6).
5. The possibility of medieval wall paintings beneath later paint layers must also be considered (Plate 7).

In line with National Planning Policy to assess the archaeological resource, an archaeological specification approved by the Local Planning Authority may be required before development.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### **8.1 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**

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Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA.

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Plates



Plate 1. Google Earth 2008. Eye altitude 617m



Plate 2. Proposed Development site (Looking south-west)





Plate 3. Proposed Development site (Looking south)



Plate 4. Proposed Development site (Looking south-east)





Plate 5. Proposed Development site showing blocked up doorway of proposed Doorway 1 (Looking east)



Plate 6. Proposed Development site, interior of north wall (Looking north)



Plate 7. Proposed Development site, possible painted plaster of north wall