

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Goldsel Road, Swanley, Kent



NGR: 551596 168193

Site Code: GOLD/EV/16

Planning Application: SE/16/00253

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NGR: 551596 168193

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Goldsel Road, Swanley in Kent. A Planning Application (SE/16/00253) to develop this site for 185 dwellings and associated landscaping and other works went to Sevenoaks District Council, whereby the Council requested that an Archaeological and Geo-archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC Specification A and Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The results of the excavation of 10 evaluation trenches revealed that no archaeological features were present within the trenches (Figure 1). The natural geology of Thanet Sand bedrock was reached in some of the geological test pits. The archaeological and geological investigations showed that about half the site to the north-west was made up ground whilst the other half to the south-east had been truncated. The Archaeological Investigations have therefore been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by Persimmon Homes (South-East Ltd) to carry out an archaeological and geological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2016) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The evaluation was carried out on the 16th-18th December 2016.

3. Site Description and Topography

The proposed development site is located towards the southern extent of Swanley town, south of the railway line and north of the M20. It is centered at NGR 551596 168193.

The site is artificially flat at about 69m OD with the geotechnical survey indicating considerable areas of made up ground.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) (1:50,000 Sheet 271 Dartford 1998) shows the site is underlain by the Lower Tertiary Thanet Sand Formation, described as 'Sand, fine-grained, silty, green-coated nodular flints at base'.

4. Planning Background

Sevenoaks District Council gave planning permission (SE/18/00253) for development of land at the site of the former United House, Goldsel Road, Swanley, Kent.

On the advice of the Wendy Rogers, Senior Archaeological Officer (KCC) a programme of archaeological works in the form of an initial archaeological evaluation and geotechnical investigation was attached to the consent:

(Condition) No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

The results from this evaluation will be used to inform KCC Heritage and Sevenoaks Council of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

The application site lies within an area with known archaeology. The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains.

11 Palaeolithic handaxes and 1 piece of debitage were found c.230m to the north as part of Southern Rivers Palaeolithic Project 1993 (HER TQ 56 NW 126) and further Palaeolithic remains were located to the west (HER No: TQ 56 NW 125). Both these findings came from within the same deposits which may survive on site.

Palaeolithic artefacts have been found in the Swanley area and are recorded by Roe (1968) whose records were utilised in the course of the Southern Rivers Palaeolithic Project and remain the principal published source of information on the Palaeolithic potential of the Swanley area. Twenty handaxes are recorded in the Swanley area by Roe and 22 other Palaeolithic artefacts.

Much of this material (8 handaxes and 20 other artefacts) is recorded by Roe at a general location, Wood Street (TQ537 695) which lies ca. 2.5 km north and east of Goldsel Road and at a lower level between 60m and 70m OD.

Wymer (1999) records another find nearby in the same area at Beechenlea Lane (TQ 528 695). Roe records one handaxe from the general location of Swanley Junction (TQ 513 684) which is probably the nearest find to Goldsel Road.

The provenance of the remaining artefacts (including 11 handaxes) is given by Roe simply as 'Swanley'. The Goldsel Road site is well above the highest levels at which artefacts have been

recovered from terrace deposits of the Thames or its tributaries. Thus, all of this Palaeolithic material is likely to have been recovered as surface or near-surface finds.

6. Aims and Objectives

According to the KCC Archaeological Specification, the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were to ensure that:

The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for Palaeolithic remains and to clarify the potential for later (Holocene) archaeology where original ground levels might survive.

The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching and geo-archaeological test pits. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate.

Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, historic buildings recording and/or an archaeological watching brief during construction work. This specification sets out the requirements for trial trenching on the site and any further archaeological work, such as detailed excavation work or a watching brief, would need to be subject to further specifications (KCC 2016).

7. Methodology

The Archaeological Specification called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising a first phase of ten trenches within the footprint of the proposed housing development. Geo-archaeological test pits will be excavated at one end of each trench in accordance with the methodology set out in the KCC Appendix for geo-archaeological test pitting. This work is to be carried out by a geo-archaeological specialist agreed with the County Archaeologist. A 7.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and subsoil to expose the natural geology and/or the archaeological horizon. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. These are used in the report and shown in **bold**. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the KCC Specification (7.Methodology), the KCC Specification Manual for Trial Trenching Part B and ClfA standards and guidance.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The evaluation has identified no archaeological features within the ten trenches (Figure 1).

Trench 1

9.1 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plate 2). The trench lay on a W to E alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(103)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand, at a depth of approximately 0.45m (68.85m OD) below the present ground surface at 69.30m OD at mid-trench. The natural geology was sealed by made ground of concrete and brick rubble **(102)** 0.45m thick. Above this was a layer of concrete **(101)**.

Trench 2

9.2 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plate 5). The trench lay on an NNE to SSW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(203)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.20m (68.15m OD) below the present ground surface at 69.35m OD at the NW end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a layer of made ground of concrete and brick rubble **(202)** 0.20m thick. Above this was a layer of concrete **(201)**.

Trench 3

9.3 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Figure 3). The trench lay on an NW to SE alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(303)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.30m (69.05m OD) below the present ground surface at 69.35m OD at the N end of the trench. The southern area of the trench was made up ground of sticky clay silt overlaying brick rubble and broken paving stones. The natural geology at the north end of the trench was sealed by made up ground of concrete and brick rubble **(302)** 0.30m thick. Above this was a layer of concrete **(301)**.

Trench 4

9.4 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Figure 3). The trench lay on an NE to SW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.30m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(403)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.50m (68.90mOD) below the present ground surface at 69.40m OD at the N end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a layer of made up ground of concrete and brick rubble **(402)** 0.50m thick. Above this was a layer of concrete **(401)**.

Trench 5

9.5 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plate 3). The trench lay on an NE to SW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

No natural geology was identified across the trench and two sondages were dug on the trench footprint 2m deep through made up ground to a depth of 67.10 **(501)**.

Trench 6

9.6 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Figure 4). The trench lay on a NNE to SSW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

No natural geology was identified across the trench and two sondages were dug on the trench footprint 2m deep through made up ground to a depth of 67.10 **(601)**.

Trench 7

9.7 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Figure 5). The trench lay on an NE to SW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(703)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 1.50m (67.70mOD) below the present ground surface at 69.20m OD at the N end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a layer of made up ground of concrete and brick rubble **(702)** 1.50m thick. Above this was a layer of concrete **(701)**.

Trench 8

9.8 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plate 6). The trench lay on an SE to NW alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(803)** was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.10m (69.10mOD) below the present ground surface at 69.20m OD at the N end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a layer of tarmac and rubble **(802)** 0.10m thick.

Trench 9

9.9 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Figure 9). The trench lay on an E to W alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology (**903**) was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.10m (67.20mOD) below the present ground surface at 67.30m OD at the W end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a clean layer of light grey to brown topsoil (**902**) 0.10m thick.

Trench 10

9.10 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plate 4). The trench lay on an NW to SE alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology (**1003**) was identified across the trench as Thanet Sand at a depth of approximately 0.40m (66.90mOD) below the present ground surface at 67.30m OD at the NW end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a clean layer of light grey to brown topsoil (**1002**) 0.40m thick.

No archaeology features or archaeological artefacts were recovered from any of the ten trenches.

10. Discussion

With numerous archaeological sites in the vicinity of the PDA it was expected that the evaluation may produce evidence of archaeological activity. But there was none. Most of the site has been quarried and backfilled. The only trenches to show a typical sequence of topsoil, subsoil and natural geology was Trenches 8, 9, 10. The other trenches followed generally the evidence of the geotechnical survey. The Geo-Archaeological investigation (attached, Appendix 1) notes that no Pleistocene deposits were recorded in any of the trial pits which consisted of either Made Ground or Topsoil overlaying Thanet Sand Bedrock. No artefacts or ecofacts were recorded in any of the trial pits.

11. Finds

No finds were found.

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed no archaeological features or artefacts.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of made up ground **(102)** sealing the natural geology of Thanet Sand **(101)**. Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the planning condition and the Archaeological Specification.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, Persimmon Homes (South East) Ltd for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers, Senior Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. Site survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Allen MCIfA and the project was managed and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Paul Wilkinson

03/02/2017

14. References

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2014). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

KCC Heritage (January 2016) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

KCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC HER data 2016

QUEST: Geo-archaeological Fieldwork Report, Goldsel Road, Swanley, Kent



Plate 1 – Trench 4 under excavation (looking NE), 1m scale



Plate 2 – Trench 1 (looking E)



Plate 3 – Trench 5 (looking SW)



Plate 4 – Trench 10 (looking SE)



Plate 5 – Trench 2 (looking NE)



Plate 6 – Trench 8 (looking NW) 1m scale



Plate 7 – Trench 6 (looking NE)

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Goldsel Road, Swanley, Kent

SWAT Site Code: GOLD/EV/16

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for residential housing whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Evaluation and Geo-Archaeological investigation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring revealed no archaeology.

District/Unitary: Sevenoaks Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 551596 168193

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: December 2016

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Thanet Sand

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2016) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Goldsel Road, Swanley, Kent

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

No archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 03/02/2017

