



**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT  
WHITE HILL GRAIN STORE,  
BOUGHTON ALUPH, KENT**

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Front cover: 20th century photograph of the site (looking north)

Appendix 1. Building description

Appendix 2. Digital photography list

Figure 1. Site location

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In March 2017 Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT Archaeology carried out a historic building recording of a Romney Shed at White Hill Grain Store, White Hill, Boughton Aluph in Kent (Figure 1). The building is presently unoccupied and is about to be demolished.

1.2 The building recording was carried out on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 in accordance with a Level 1 survey as detailed in the English Heritage publication 'Understanding Historic Buildings: *A Guide to Good Recording Practice*' (2016). *The Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2017) and the *KCC Historic Building Recording Requirements Part C*.

This is essentially a visual record. Historic England guidelines suggest that written information should be the minimum to identify the building's location, age, type, materials, use and when and whom compiled the report.

General photographs of the exterior as well as any specific architectural or historic features (both internal and external) should be taken.

**1.3 In summary the work consists of a basic descriptive report accompanied by digital photographs.**

1.4 The principal elements of the survey involved the creation of a record and description of the historic fabric of the building together with an analysis and interpretation of the buildings origins and historic development.

1.5 A review of Historic OS mapping has been made and the Pevsner Architectural Guide (*Kent, North East and East 2012*) was consulted as was the National Heritage Register for England.

1.6 This report consists of a descriptive report accompanied by digital photographs and annotated plans.

## **2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 Location

The site is located on land to the west of White Hill and north of the A28 Canterbury Road. To the west is the hamlet of Boughton Aluph and just beyond the village of Boughton Lees. The site itself is within a quarry with a level at about 29.50m aOD (Figure 1). The underlying geology at the site as revealed in the excavations of the ten 2m x 2m foundations was modern clay/chalk infill and chalk and the base of the relict quarry.

2.2. The application site is within an area of known important archaeological remains. In response to the planning application for the new agricultural building the county archaeologist advised that:

*'The site of the proposed development is set within a quarry and industrial complex identifiable on the 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS map. There are lime kilns noted and earthworks, some of which may still survive. The complex is therefore of post medieval industrial archaeological interest. There is also recorded the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon burial found between 1902 and 1904 at "Tarbutt's chalk quarry" and although the application site is within the quarry itself, associated Early Medieval remains may be encountered. There may be some interest in the Nissan Hut itself. These tended to be corrugated iron buildings of a certain period and reflect industrial and agricultural building techniques of the early and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century' (Wendy Rogers 2/09/15).*

Additional research has shown that a lime kiln can be identified on the 1842 OS map (front cover) and in 1902/1904 an Anglo Saxon inhumation with Roman coins was found buried at the Lime Kiln Works (TR 04 NW 4). In addition to the west linear features and cropmarks have been identified near Soakham Farm (TR 04 NW 32). The site itself is identified on the KCC HER as the site of a Lime Kiln and quarry (TR 04 NW 53).

The OS location is NGR 603709 148784 (Figure 11).

## 2.2 Setting

The Romney Shed (not Nissan Hut) is located in the central area of the agricultural buildings which are for the most part used as grain storage. The Romney Shed was erected in 1946 and the concrete floors laid in 1985 (pers corre C. Denne).

### 2.3 Statutory Designation

The Romney Shed is not listed.

### 2.4 Significance of the Building

The significance of the building lies in its contribution to the rural scene and of interest as a type of storage building now rapidly disappearing.

### 2.5 Historic Background

A rapid map assessment of OS historic mapping shows that in 1842 the quarry was host to a number of lime kilns and by 1940 historic aerial photography shows the site was still lime kilns but by 1946 a large Romney Shed can be seen on the west side of the site and a large agricultural building on the east side.

By 1989 both buildings had been joined by numerous agricultural buildings (Figures 6 & 7).

### 2.6 History of the Romney Shed

At the outbreak of World War II, the British military developed a series of prefabricated huts to supplement the World-War-I-era Nissen hut. The Iris hut was one of these, a medium-scale hut of 35 feet (11 m) span and from 60 feet (18 m) to 96 feet (29 m) in length, with bays of 4 feet (1.2 m) sectional length able to be added as required. However, the Iris hut had a major design flaw; it was unable to resist the weight of snow lying on the roof and had a tendency to collapse after snowfalls. For this reason, it was superseded by the Romney hut by 1941.

Both the Iris hut and the Romney hut were constructed of a clamped tubular steel frame with a central entrance. The hut was used to accommodate facilities for which abnormal roof spans were required. On some airfields, two or more Romney or Iris huts would be erected to accommodate large stores and workshops; or occasionally used as aircraft hangars.

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING**

#### **3.1 Exterior**

The building is 30 feet wide (9.14m) and 89feet long (24.38m)

### **4. INTERIOR**

4.1 The interior of the building has eight bays of about 10 feet length. The ribs are cold bent mild steel tubing with a welded connection flange drilled for four connecting bolts.

### **5.0 DISCUSSION**

5.1 The Romney building is a good example of its type which can still be found on numerous farms in the UK, a simple modular building which can be erected with a non specialist work force.

### **6.0 PARAMETERS**

5.1 The photographic survey was conducted using digital photography and as the exterior of the building was available no drone coverage of the exterior of the building was undertaken. However, the use of drones for capturing important buildings is now an acknowledged part of historic building recording. For drone footage of other building and archaeological sites recorded by SWAT Archaeology access here: [www.swatarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.swatarchaeology.co.uk) and go to 'NEWS'.

5.2 This work did not include any investigation of below ground archaeology. Such work is administered separately by SWAT Archaeology to a WSI prepared for the Local Planning Authority.

5.3 The site survey took place on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and photographs can be seen in the following Plates.

Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCifA., FRSA

25/01/2018

## 6. References

English Heritage, 2017 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*

The National Heritage List for England (accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017)

Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists, *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2008).



Archive photograph of typical build sequence



Plate 1. View of front elevation (looking NNW)



Plate 2. Side view of front elevation (looking NNE)



Plate 3. Front view(looking NNW)



Plate 4. Rear view of building (NNE)



Plate 5. View of roof



Plate 6. View of struts

**HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY:  
Summary Sheet**

<b>Property Name</b> White Hill Grain Store, White Hill, Boughton Aluph	<b>Address</b> White Hill, Boughton Aluph, Kent	<b>Building Name</b> Romney Hut
<b>Property/ Building Reference</b>	<b>OS Grid Reference</b> NGR 603709 148784	<b>Surveyor/Date of Survey</b> Paul Wilkinson 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2017
<b>Category</b> Agricultural	<b>Original Use</b> Grain Store	<b>Current Use</b> Grain Store
<b>Date(s) of Construction</b> The building represents t a good example of a Romney Hut	<b>Statutory Designation (s)</b> n / a	<b>HER Reference</b> n/a
<b>Walling Materials</b> Wall construction is of corrugated iron	<b>Roofing Materials</b> Corrugated iron	<b>Flooring Materials</b> Concrete
<b>Description:</b> The building is an eight bay modular building designed originally for military use but utilised for farm buildings in the post- war period		
<b>Architectural/Historic Significance:</b> The building is significant as part of a fast disappearing group of WWII buildings		<b>Landscape Significance:</b> There is no significance
<b>Notes/Qualifications Regarding Survey:</b> The survey was undertaken whilst the building was empty and prior to development which enabled access to most parts of the building.		
<b>Additional Information Sources for this Building (s):</b>		

