

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at
Rocks Oast, 84 The Rocks Road, East Malling,
West Malling, Kent

Site Code ROCK/WB/19



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SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company

The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road

Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP

Tel; 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112

info@swatarchaeology.co.uk www.swatarchaeology.co.uk

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Archaeological Watching Brief on Land at Rocks Oast, 94 The Rocks Road, East Malling, West Malling, Kent

Site Code ROCK/WB/19
NGR 570361 156647



AP 1. View of proposed development area (2017)

1.0 Abstract

1.1. In October 2019 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief of ground works involved in the re-instatement and enclosure of one of the roundals at ground floor at Rocks Oast (Figure 1 and Plates 1-7).

1.2. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the demolition strip and foundation excavations of the site. (Plates 1-7).

1.3. The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Demolition strip and digging out of the foundations for the new extension on 10th October 2019 (Plates 1-7).

1.4. The Archaeological Investigations were to determine whether any significant archaeological remains had survived within the footprint of the proposed groundworks. In particular, any evidence of archaeological activity associated with the known archaeological sites in the area included on the KCCHER data.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (TM/18/01945/FL).

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by KCC Heritage Conservation the Archaeological Investigation revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The site is located to at Rocks Oast, 94 The Rocks Road in Kent. The site itself is level at about 52m AOD (Figure 1).

2.2 Planning Background

The following Condition (4) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring 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 excavations are observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The Watching Brief shall be in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and closely monitored the excavation works on 10th October 2019.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The specific aims of the archaeological work were to:

(3.1) The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

4.2. The ground works comprise the re-instatement and enclosure of one of the roundals at ground floor level (Plates 1-7).

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 is Bedrock Geology of Hythe Formation. Superficial deposits are not recorded.

5.2 The archaeological advice was sought from KCC Heritage by Tonbridge & Malling

Borough Council and Francesca Clark Archaeological Officer KCC responded on the 11th October 2018:

The application site lies within the historic farmstead complex of Rocks Farm which is identifiable on the 1st Ed OS map. Rock Farmhouse, which lies adjacent to the Rocks Oast, is a Grade II Listed Building of 16th century origins. There is potential for remains to be exposed during the work involved in the above relating to the construction and use of the historic farmstead at Rocks Farm.

5.3 A KCCHER search revealed that listed buildings are surrounding the Proposed Development Area (PDA) with Rock Farmhouse being a Grade II Listed building dated from 1500-1832 (TQ 75 NW 287). In addition a Roman building has been identified some 300m to the north of the PDA (TQ 75 NW 6).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Archaeological Investigations were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by SWAT Archaeology.

6.2. The works comprised the close monitoring of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

6.3. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed bucket necessary to remove the existing floor surfaces down to formation level (Plates 1-7).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA).

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 investigation work was carried out in accordance with current ClfA Standards and Guidance, (ClfA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Archaeological Officer KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 General

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. No subsoil was encountered across the site as formation level was to be just under the brick floor which was removed by hand and stacked for reuse. No archaeological features were revealed and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site.

7.2 The proposed build is for the re-instatement and enclosure of one of the roundals. The areas watched were surveyed in and shown on Figure 1.

7.3 The site produced no archaeological features or deposits or finds and no environmental potential was recognised on site.

8.0 Finds

No finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

The development site is in an area of high archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Investigation has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the SWAT 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 the landowner for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Rocks Oast, 94 The Rocks Road, East Malling, West Malling, Kent

SWAT Site Code: ROCK/WB/19

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 the re-instatement and enclosure of one of the roundals at ground floor level whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Works be undertaken to close monitor the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site attendance which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 579361 156647

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Investigation

Date of recording: 10th October 2019

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Thames Group

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Rocks Oast, 94 The Rocks Road, East Malling West Malling, 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



Plate 2. View of the site (looking NNE)



Plate 3. View of the site (looking N)



Plate 4. Demolition of modern structure (looking SW)



Plate 5. Demolition of modern structure (looking W)



Plate 6. Removing modern floor surfaces (looking S)



Plate 7. Removing modern floor surfaces (looking S)

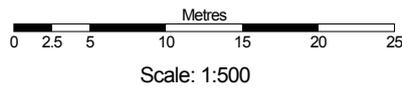


AP 2. View of site in 1940



AP 3. View of site in 1960

Figure 1
Area watched



Supplied by: National Map Centre
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Serial number: 2163914

Plot centre co-ordinates: 570362,156645
Download file: SWAT_ME19_6AU.zip
Project name: SWAT_ME19_6AU