

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Aviaries, Magpie Hall Road, Stubbs Cross, Ashford, Kent

Site Code AVI/WB/19



Date of report 16/07/2019

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Archaeological Watching Brief on land Aviaries, Magpie Hall Road, Stubbs Cross, Ashford, Kent

Site Code AVI/WB/19
NGR TQ 99188 38732

Date of report: 16/07/2019



AP 1. Aerial view of site (red target) showing the site before development.

(Google Earth 2017: Eye altitude 501m).

1.0 Abstract

1.1. In March 2019 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a wildlife pond at Aviaries, Magpie Hall Road, Stubbs Cross, Ashford in Kent. (Figure 1 and Plates 1-6).

1.2. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the ground reduction excavation of the site. (Plates 1-6).

1.3. The archaeological work was undertaken in two phases.

Phase 1: Ground reduction of topsoil/subsoil on 28th March 2019 (Plates 1-2).

Phase 2: The digging out of the pond to about 2.00m below present ground level of about 42.00m AOD (28th March 2019 & Plates 3-6).

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 known archaeological sites in the area included on the KCCHER data.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Ashford Borough Council (18/01319/AS).

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

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The site is located in the rear garden area of Aviaries, Magpie Road, Stubbs Cross, Ashford in Kent. The site itself is level at about 42m AOD (Figure 1).

2.2 Planning Background

The site has planning permission for the construction of a pond behind the house which is currently grassland and mixed woodland/scrub.

The following Condition (3) 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 excavation is observed and items of interest and finds recorded. The Watching Brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification, which has been submitted and approved 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 monitored the excavation works on 28th March 2019.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, 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 were to excavate the ground for the build of a wildlife pond (Plates 1-6).

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 Weald Clay Formation- Limestone whilst the Superficial Deposits are not recorded. The geology revealed on site was clayey silt (Plates 1-4).

5.2. KCCHER entries for the location show that 400m to the NW an Iron Age site and field systems have been found (TQ 93 NE 84).

In addition an Palaeolithic hand axe was also retrieved (TQ 93 NE 75).

100m to the SW a medieval ditch has been found (TQ 99 NE 82) whilst undated ditches to the SSE have also been identified (TQ 93 NE 79).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by SWAT Archaeology (2019) and it also complied with the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIfA: Dec 2017).

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 according to the needs of the building contractors in March 2019.

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 down to formation level (Plates 1-6).

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 watching brief was carried out in accordance with current CIfA Standards and Guidance, (CIfA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Senior 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 deposits of brown yellow sandy clay overlaid by topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site.

7.2 The proposed build is for a wild life pond. The area 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 archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring 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 developer 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 behind Aviaries, Magpie Hall Road, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent

SWAT Site Code: AVI/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 a wildlife pond whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief 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: Ashford Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 99188 38732

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: 28th March 2019

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Weald Clay Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Watching Brief on land behind Aviaries, Magpie Hall Road, Stubbs Cross, Ashford, 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 1. Topsoil strip



Plate 2. Topsoil strip



Plate 3. Topsoil strip



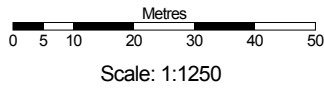
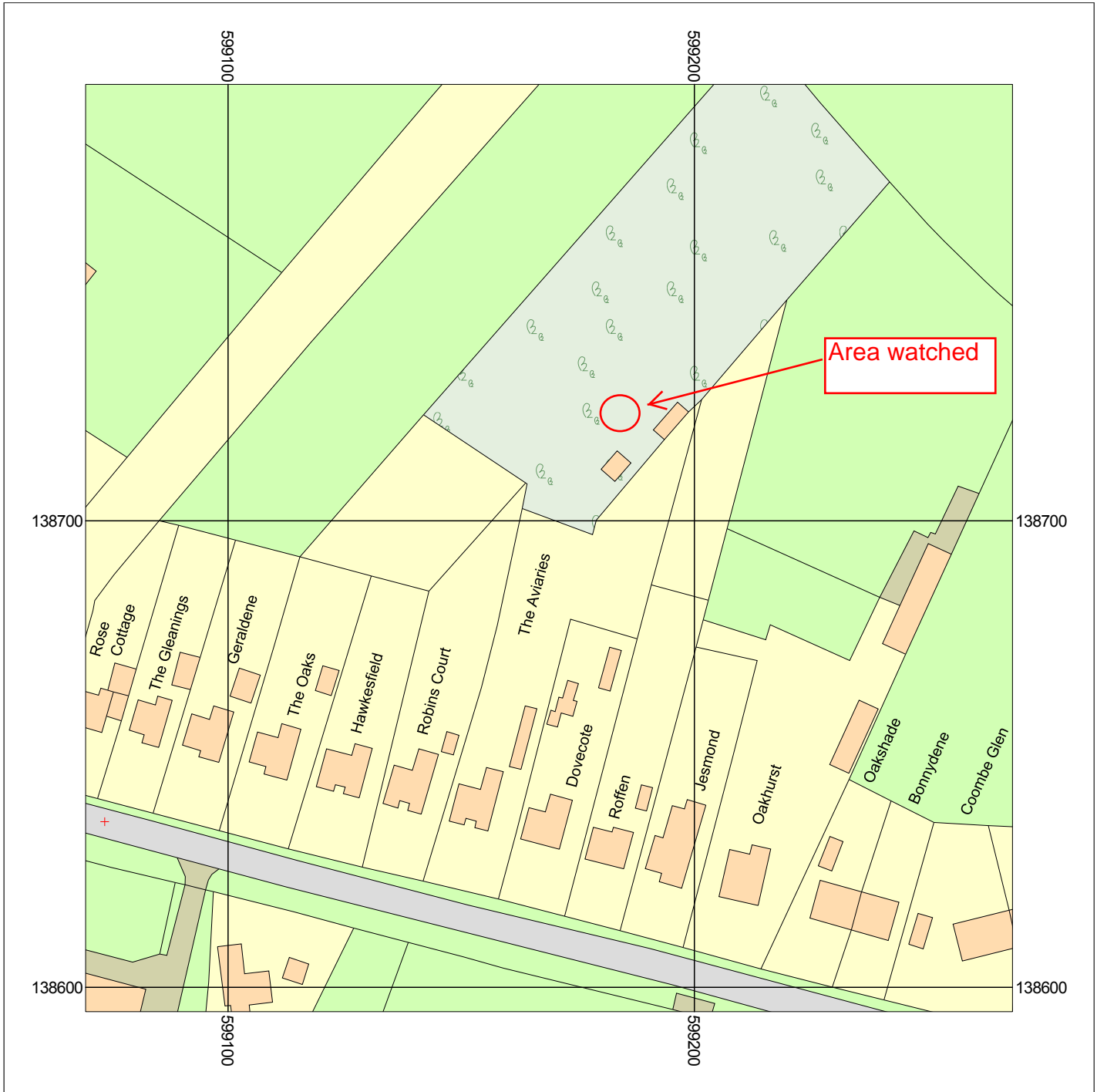
Plate 4. Ground reduction for pond



Plate 5. Ground reduction for pond



Plate 6. Ground reduction for pond



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Avaries
Magpie Hall Road
Stubbs Cross
Ashford
TN26 1HF

Plot centre co-ordinates: 599169,138694
Download file: SWAT_Avaries_Stubbs.z
Project name: SWAT_Avaries_Stubbs