

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at the former Coach Depot, King Street, Brenzett, Kent

Site Code BREN/WB/18



Date of report 25/01/2019

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Site Code BREN/WB/18
NGR 632495 149803

Date of report: 25/01/2019



Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red target) showing the site prior to development.

(Google Earth 2003).

1.0 Abstract

1.1. On the 28th November 2017 and 9th, 10th January 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 residential dwellings on land at the former Coach Depot, King Street, Brenzett in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 2-7).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the land owner.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the excavation of the site investigation and foundation trenches (Plates 2-7).

The archaeological work was undertaken in two phases.

Phase 1: Soil investigation below present ground level of about 3.00m AOD (28th November 2017 & Plates 2-3).

Phase 2: Foundation trenches (9th-12th January 2019 & Plates 4-7).

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 including the nearby Rhee Wall.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Shepway District Council (Y14/0578/SH).

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 on the south-east side of King Street in the village of Brenzett on Romney Marsh. The site itself is level at about 3.00m aOD (Figure 1).

2.2 Planning Background

Planning application Y14/0578/SH was submitted to the local planning authority for the erection of a block of 4 two storey dwellings, with some rooms in the roof and 2 semi-detached dwellings together with associated parking, sewage treatment work following demolition of buildings. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the LPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (14) 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 are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has previously 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 in accordance with policy SD1 of the Shepway Local Plan Review

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works in November 2017 and January 2019.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, were to:

“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.

4.2. A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place.

4.3. 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 the site, which is located at an elevation of some 3m aOD, is situated on underlying geology consisting of clay and silt Tidal Flat Deposits which overlie bedrock sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Hastings Beds.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area of known important archaeological remains.

Ben Found Senior Archaeological Officer KCC has commented on the application:

'The proposed development site lies close to the centre of the village of Brenzett and it is possible that remains associated with the settlements development survive buried at the site. The site lies some 100m to the south of the line of a medieval canal known as the Rhee Wall and it is possible that archaeological remains related to activities associated with the canal could be revealed during the development. Deposits associated with the Rhee Wall have been investigated by Wessex Archaeology and South-East Archaeological Services (now Archaeology South-East) during construction of the roundabout to the north.

*2.2 The site may also contain deposits and sequences that could help our understanding of the geomorphology and development of the Romney Marsh. **Particular attention will be paid to any sequences and deposits exposed during deep excavation and if necessary a suitably experienced geoarchaeologist will attend the site to investigate and record any such deposits.** The site would have been the subject of varying wetland and dryland environments in ancient times as a result of rising and falling sea-levels in the period 6,000 to 500 BC. Recent broad-level geomorphological studies of the Romney Marsh suggest Saltmarsh had developed in the Brenzett area by 1,000BC. By the Romano-British period breaches in the Dymchurch shingle bank would have allowed sea water again inundate parts of the saltmarsh, with Brenzett being located towards the head of an extensive tidal lagoon. By the early medieval period the marsh north-east of the Rhee Wall had been reclaimed, with the site itself probably lying in an area of freshwater wetland.*

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC Archaeology and it also complied with the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (ClfA: 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 November 2017 and January 2019. The work in 2017 was conducted by a geological investigation company with Paul Wilkinson observing but recording of soil strata by the

geologist on site. In January 2019 Paul Wilkinson observed the digging of foundation trenches but piling had already taken place.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a bucket necessary to remove the soil down to formation level (Plates 4-7).

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 watching brief was carried out in accordance with current ClfA Standards and Guidance, (ClfA: 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 very wet dull brown subsoil overlaid by thin topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site which was swept with a Fisher CZ 3D metal detector.

7.2 The proposed builds are two adjacent footprints at the front of the site. The areas watched were surveyed in and shown on Figure 1.

7.3 The site reduction was about 1.50m-1.70cm deep with ground level about 3.11m AOD. 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 landowners for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

References

HER data (KCC and Historic England 2018)

CIfA (2017) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA

25/01/2019

Appendix 1
Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at the former Coach Depot, King Street, Brenzett, Kent

SWAT Site Code: BREN/WB/18

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 two new residential houses 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: Shepway District Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 600265 127195

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: November 2017 and January 2019

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Hastings Beds Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Watching Brief at the former Coach Depot, King Street, Brenzett, 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. General view of site showing soil investigations in 2017 (looking NNE)



Plate 3. View of site soil investigations (looking NNW)



Plate 4. View of site trenching in 2019 (looking W)



Plate 5. View of the trenches (looking NNE)

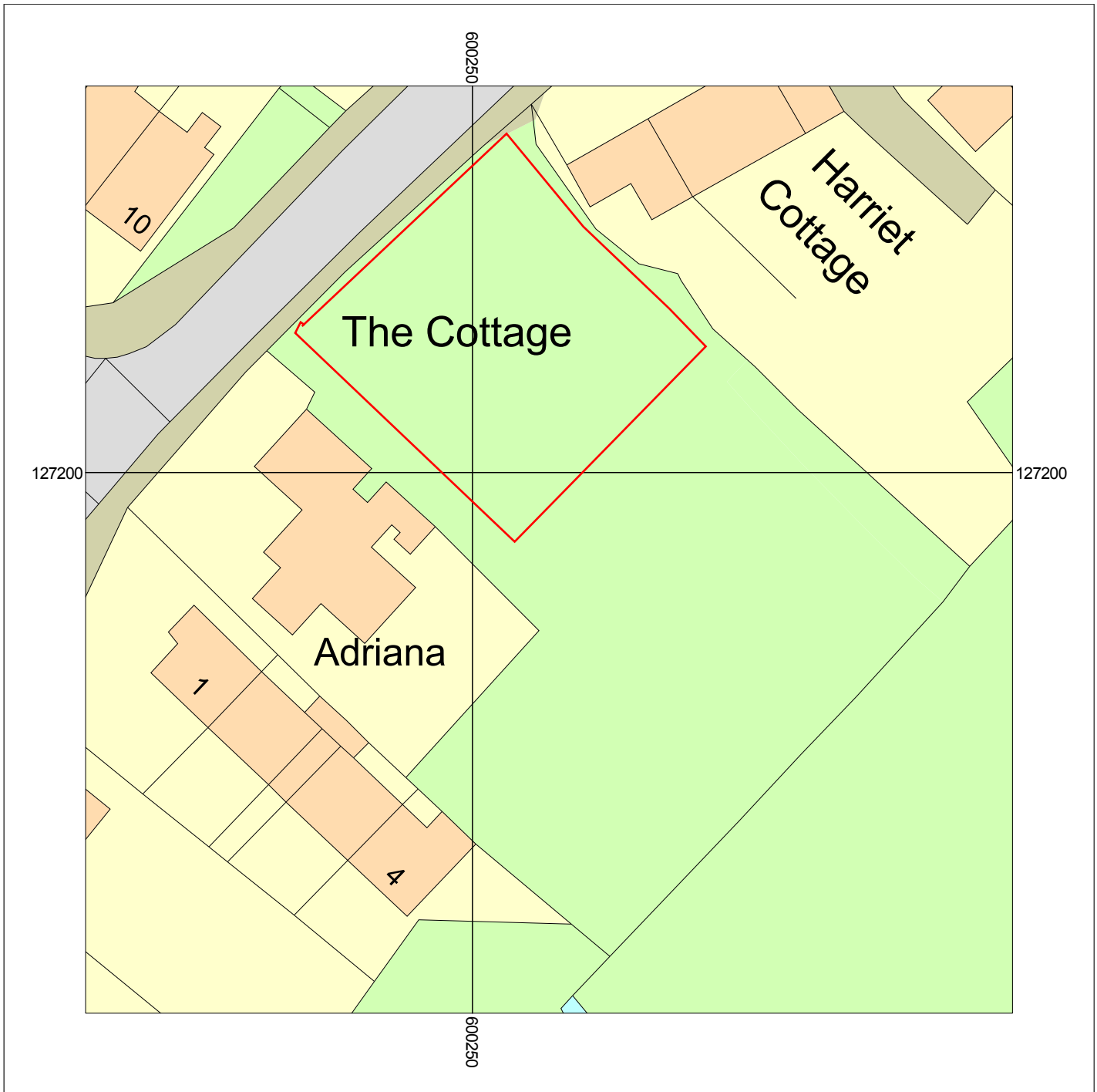


Plate 6. View of the trenches (looking SE)



Plate 7. View of the trenches (looking west)

Figure 1
Location of area
watched



Metres
0 2.5 5 10 15 20 25
Scale: 1:500



Supplied by: National Map Centre
License number: 100031961
Produced: 25/01/2019
Serial number: 2073499

Plot centre co-ordinates: 600257,127193
Download file: swat_kingstreet.zip
Project name: swat_kingstreet