

Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Little Oyster Residential Home, Seaside Avenue, Minster, Sheppey, Kent

Site Code: OYS -EV-19

NGR Site Centre 595310 173800

Planning Application Number: 16/504551/OUT



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Little Oyster Residential Home, Seaside Avenue, Minster, Sheppey in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Kent County Council Principal Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in September 2018 with additional work in March 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology January 2018) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of three trenches, which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology with one feature of low archaeological potential in Trench 2.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Little Oyster Residential Home, Seaside Avenue, Minster in Kent (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 In mitigation of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (KKCHC), who provide an advisory service to Swale Borough Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological evaluation be undertaken to satisfy the planning condition 17 of the planning permission 16/504551.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in September 2018 and additional work in March 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by SWAT Archaeology (29/01/2018), prior to commencement of works, and in discussion with Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

1.1 4 Site Description and Topography

The application site comprises an area to the east of the Little Oyster Residential Home located at the seaward end of Seaside Avenue, Minster in Sheppey, Kent.

The NGR to the center of the site is NGR 595310 173800 (Figure 1).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of London Clay Formation- Clay and Silt. Superficial deposits are not recorded but revealed on site as fine Orange Brown Sandy Clay. The PDA is set at an average height of 15.00m AOD.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

Details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record and have been summarised in the Specification produced by SWAT Archaeology (January 2019). The potential of this area has been assessed in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains and there is to the east a number of earthworks on Merryman's Hill (TQ 97 SE 1025). To the north Bronze Age objects have

been recovered (TQ 97 SW 1000) and to the north east multi period occupation site at Minster Pumping Station dating from the Early Iron Age to Roman (TQ 97 SE 1007).

Simon Mason the Principal Archaeological Officer has commented that:

'The proposed development is located in an area that is archaeological sensitive, close to the former defences of the WW1 Thames and Medway Defences, in particular the disguised battery of Merrymans Hill lay close to this site and the defence lines extended through the site. The site has been relatively undisturbed from past development and given the location there is good potential for prehistoric activity as seen elsewhere in Minster'.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.2 Specific Aims (SWAT 2019)

2.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (SWAT 2018) were to:

2.2.2 *6.1 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the earlier history of the PDA and also any other Prehistoric and Roman activity.*

2.3 General Aims

2.3.1 The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to;

- establish the presence or absence of any elements of the archaeological resource, both artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest across the area of the development;
- ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation;
- determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource, if present, and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2018 and KCC Manual of Specifications 'B') and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIIfA 2017).

3.2 Fieldwork

- 3.2.1 A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated across the Site (Figures 1, 2).
- 3.2.2 Each trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable natural or archaeological horizon, under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.
- 3.2.3 Where appropriate, trenches, or specific areas of trenches, were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were 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. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC and CfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.3 Recording

- 3.3.1 A complete drawn record of the evaluation trenches comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. The plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights. These are retained in the site project archive.
- 3.3.2 Photographs were taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, along with images of the overall trench to illustrate their location and context. The record also includes images of the Site overall. The photographic record comprises digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the site project archive.
- 3.3.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (100), whilst the cut of the feature is shown [100]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. Each number has been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (*i.e.* Trench 1, 101+, Trench 2, 201+, Trench 3, 301+ etc.).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 A total of three evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

- 4.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising a mix of topsoil mixed with demolition material sealing an intact subsoil of orange sandy clayey silt overlaying the natural yellow brown silty clay (London Clay).
- 4.2.2 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figures 1-2 provide a site plan and trench location plan while Plates 1-4 include selected site photographs.

4.3 Overview

- 4.3.1 The three trenches were located across the site to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains.

5 FINDS

- 6.1 No finds of any archaeological merit were recovered from the archaeological evaluation.

6 Discussion

6.1 Archaeological Narrative

- 6.1.1 In the initial evaluation in September 2018 a change of colour was noted in the east end of Trench Two but with a change of contractor the area had to wait to March 2019 before investigation of the feature could be undertaken. On investigation in March 2019 the infill of the pit was dated by 20th century tin cans and modern brick and tile and the pit reduced further by machine to clarify dating and function which is a pit dating from the 20th century.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Development proposals are not likely to impact on archaeological remains.
- 6.2.2 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work show that the proposed development is not likely to impact on any archaeological remains.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CfA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

- 7.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics and will be retained by SWAT Archaeology until a Kent museum archive procedure is in place.

8 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 8.1.1 SWAT would like to thank the developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council, for his advice and assistance.
- 8.1.2 Dr Paul Wilkinson MClfA supervised the archaeological evaluation and survey and illustrations were produced by Digitise This. Paul Wilkinson MClfA produced the text for this report.

9 REFERENCES

ADS 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)

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Compiled by: SWAT Archaeology (PW). The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham, Kent

Dated 23rd July 2019.

Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1	Dimensions: 20m x 1.6m Depth: 0.70m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW NNE-end Ground Level: 15.01m aOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil mixed with demolition rubble	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.55
102	Mid orange brown, clayey sandy silt	Subsoil	0.55-70
103	Brown clay (London Clay)	Natural	0.70-
Trench 2	Dimensions: 20m x 1.6m Depth: 0.30m Trench alignment: WNW-ESE NNW-end Ground Level: 15.15m aOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil mixed with demolition rubble	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.56
202	Mid orange brown, clayey sandy silt subsoil	Subsoil	0.56-71
203	Mid brown sandy silt	Natural	0.71-
204	Cut of modern pit	Modern pit	
205	Light brown demolition mix with soil brick, tile and modern rubbish	Fill of modern pit	
Trench 3	Dimensions: 20m x 1.6m Depth: 1.25m-0.30m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW NNE-end Ground Level: 15.11m aOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil (SSW end of trench)	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.65
302	Mid orange brown, clayey sandy silt	Subsoil	0.65-478
303	Brown clay (London Clay)	Natural	0.78-

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Little Oyster Residential Home, Seaside Avenue, Minster, Sheppey, Kent

SWAT Site Code: OYS/EV/19

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has a planning application for a 50 bed care home whereby Swale Borough Council requested that Archaeological works be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation which revealed no meaningful archaeology.

District/Unitary: Swale Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 595310 173800

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: September 2018 and March 2019

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of London Clay Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Little Oyster Residential Home, Seaside Avenue, Minster, Kent

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

No meaningful archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson



1:1250@A4

0m

100m

Figure 1: Location of evaluation trenches



1:1250@A4

Figure 2: Location of evaluation trenches
overlain on development plan



Plate 1. Trench 1 looking SSW (Scale shown 1.00m)



Plate 2. Trench 2 looking west (Scale shown 1.00m).



Plate 3. Trench 3 looking SSW (Scale shown 1.00m)

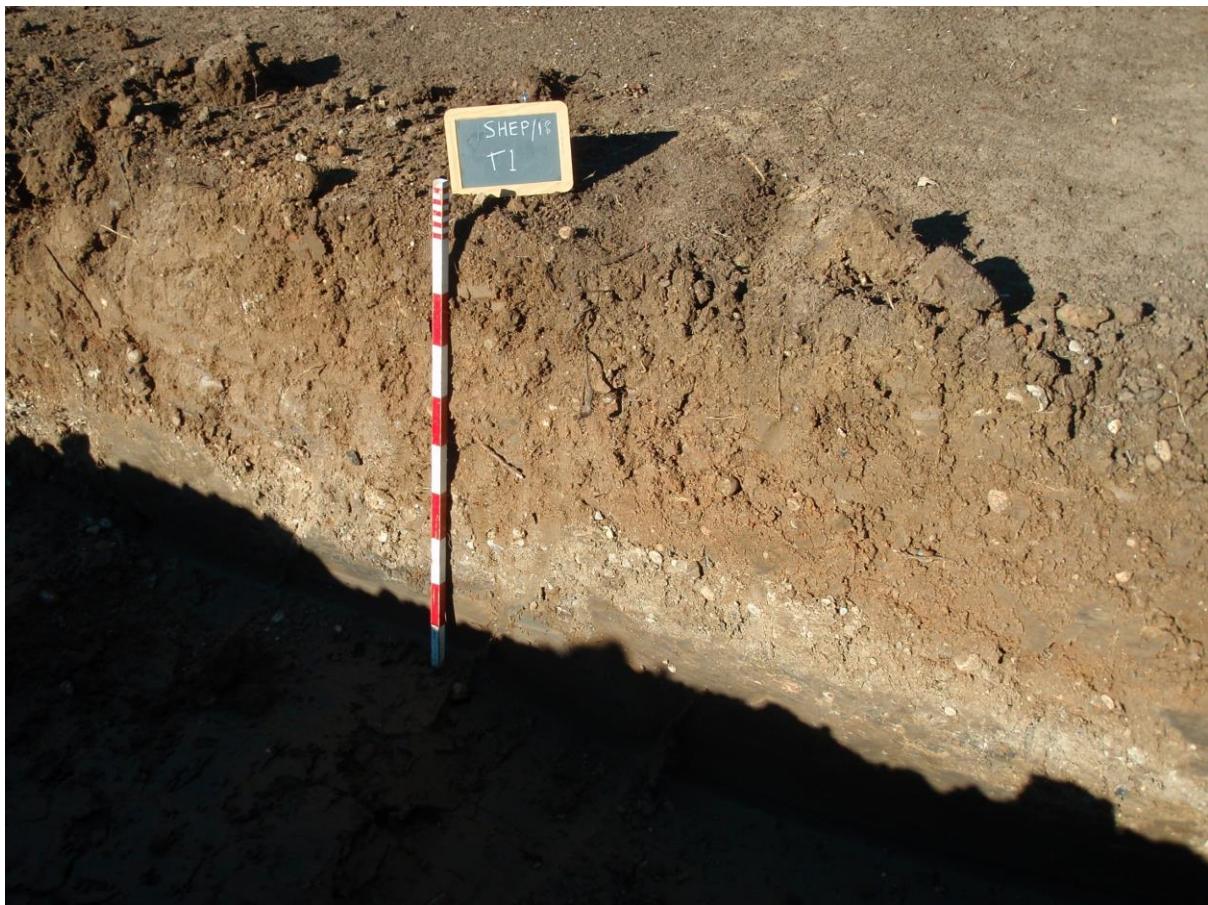


Plate 4. Section of Trench 1 (Scale shown 1.00m)