

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Walkhurst Road, Benenden, Kent

Site Code BEN/WB/19



Date of report 14/12/2019

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

Contents

1.0 ABSTRACT.....	4
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.2 PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	5
3.0 SCHEDULE OF VISITS.....	5
4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	5
4.2 PROPOSED GROUNDWORKS.....	5
4.4 CONFIDENCE RATING.....	6
5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	6
6.0 METHODOLOGY.....	6
7.0 RESULTS.....	7
7.1 GENERAL.....	7
8.0 FINDS.....	8
9.0 DISCUSSION.....	8
10.0 CONCLUSION.....	8
11.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	8
APPENDIX 1 - KCC HER Summary Form.....	9

Plates 1-14. General view of site and foundation trenches

List of Figures

Figure 1. Site plan and location of archaeological investigation area

Conditions of Release

All rights including translation reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission from SWAT Archaeology.

Archaeological Investigation on Land at Walkhurst Road, Benenden, Kent

Site Code BEN/WB/19
NGR 581083 133023



AP 1. View of proposed development area (2018)

1.0 Abstract

1.1. From 20th August to 15th October 2019 to Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA and Stewart Brown of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Investigation of ground works involved in the construction of a housing development at land off Walkhurst Road, Benenden in Kent (Figure 1, AP 1 and Plates 1-14).

1.2. An Archaeological watching brief presence was kept during the access road and drainage, foundation and service excavations across the site. (Plates 1-14).

1.3. The archaeological work was undertaken in three phases.

Phase 1: Enabling drainage works on 20th August 2019 (Plates 1-4)

Phase 2: Access road (Plates 1, 2, 12)

Phase 3: Foundation trenches Plots 1-12 (Plates 6-11)

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief 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 and highlighted in the CgMs Written Scheme of Investigation Specification.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (16/504891/FULL).

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by the CgMs Desk based Assessment 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 land to the north of Walkhurst Road and opposite Rothermere Close. The 2016 aerial photograph shows that the site had been stripped for an access road

and car parking area and subsequently overgrown. The CgMs Archaeological Desk based Assessment considered the site to have a “generally low archaeological potential for evidence of significant settlement evidence dating to all past periods” (CgMs 2016).

2.2 Planning Background

The following Condition (18) 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 are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has 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. These details are required prior to the commencement of development to ensure that no items of historical interest are lost.

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson and Stewart Brown SWAT Archaeology) and closely monitored the excavation works on: 20th August 2019, 2nd September, 6th September, 7th September, 26th September, 15th October 2019.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

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

(4.2) The programme aims to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of and survival archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

4.2. Proposed Groundworks.

The ground works were to excavate the ground for services, drainage, road construction and house foundations (Plates 1-14).

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 Wadhurst Clay Formation- Mudstone. Superficial deposits are not recorded but shown on site to be brown silty loam (Plates 13,14).

5.2 The archaeological potential is contained within the CgMs Archaeological Desk Based assessment and WSI.

6.0 Methodology

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

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

6.3. Excavations within the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed and smooth bucket necessary to remove the topsoil and subsoil down to formation level (Plates 1-14).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Stewart Brown and 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 CfA Standards and Guidance, (CfA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Principal Archaeological Officer KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site was deposits of brown silty soil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site.

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

7.4 The timetable of watching briefs is:

20 th August 2019	Bell mouth access road	Plates 1,2
2 nd September 2019	Access road and trenches	Plate 12
6 th September 2019	Plots 6 & 7	Plates 7-11
7 th September 2019	Plots 3, 4, 5	Plates 9-13
26 th September 2019	Plots 8 to 10	Plates 13-14

8.0 Finds

No finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

The development site is in an area of low 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 CgMs 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 Walkhurst Road, Benenden, Kent

SWAT Site Code: BEN/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 housing development whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken to closely monitor the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site attendance and supervision which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

District/Unitary: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 581083 133023

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: 20th August to 15th October 2019

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Wadhurst Clay

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Watching Brief of land at Walkhurst Road, Benenden, 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: Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA



Plate 1. View of the access road and drainage (looking SW)



Plate 2. View of the access road (looking NE)



Plate 3. Manhole Pit NW corner- Plot 7



Plate 4. Drainage Pit (looking NW)- Plot 7



Plate 5. Plot 10 (looking NE)



Plate 6. View of Plot 10 & 11 (looking NE)



Plate 7. View of Trenches- Plot 7 (looking N)



Plate 8. View of trenches- Plot 7 (looking S)



Plate 9. General views of Plots 3, 4, 5 (looking NNE)



Plate 10. View of foundation trench Plot 8 (looking N)



Plate 11. View of foundation trench-Plot 9



Plate 12. View of access road (looking N)



Plate 13. View of excavated area- Plots 2, 3, 4 (looking N)



Plate 14. View of excavated areas Plot 6 (looking E)

Figure 1

