

Archaeological Monitoring of Land at Fairways, Thurnham Lane, Thurnham, Kent

Site Code THURN/WB/15



Report for Mr and Mrs Baldwin
Date of report 23/12/2015
Updated April 1st 2016

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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

(Google Earth 20/04/2015: Eye altitude 312m).

1.0 Summary

1.1. From the 7th, 9th and 10th December 2015 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of a new house at Fairways, Thurnham Lane, Thurnham in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 2-6).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners Mr and Mrs Mark Baldwin.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the machine digging of foundations and service trenches (Plates 2-6).

The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Foundations and service trenches dug (Plates 2-6)

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.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is 15/504104/SUB.

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

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Planning Background

Planning application 15/504104/SUB was submitted to Maidstone Borough Council the Local Planning Authority (LPA). 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 (4) 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 been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works on 7th, 9th and 10th December 2015.

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 the heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the ground works “(KCC 2015).

4.2. The ground works were to excavate the foundation and service trenches (Plates 2-4).

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 map is Bedrock geology of Gault Formation- Mudstone. The geology revealed on site was sticky, grey black clay topped by dark brown humic topsoil.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area set to the south of the present house together with the creation of access and parking. The site itself is generally level at a height of about 71m aOD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with important Roman and Anglo Saxon activity including Roman quarries and trackway (TQ 85 NW 263), and an Anglo-Saxon burial ground to the north (TQ 85 NW 5). In addition there is Prehistoric activity to the south of the site (TQ 85 NW 256). In addition there are WW2 cropmarks to the west of the site (TQ 75 NE 158) and to the east a linear feature of unknown date (TQ 85 NW 37). There are a number of medieval and post-medieval farms and farmsteads in the vicinity of the PDA. In particular just to the north the remains of a outfarm (MKE 84889) and a farmstead (MKE 84888).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC and it also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIfA: Dec 2014).

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 in one phase according to the needs of the building contractors from 7th-10th December 2015.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed bucket necessary to remove the soil and cut the foundation trenches (Plates 2-4).

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 IfA Standards and Guidance, (CIfA: 2014), and methodology discussed with the 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 the Gault Formation overlaid by topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the topsoil.

8.0 Finds

No finds were retrieved.

9.0 Discussion

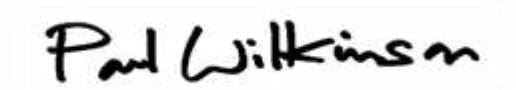
The development site is in an area of archaeological potential. No archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the KCC 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 Mr and Mrs Baldwin for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Paul Wilkinson.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr Paul Wilkinson, BA (Hons), PhD., FRSA., MCIfA.

References

HER data (KCC 2015)

CIfA (2014) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2015)

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Fairways, Thurnham Lane, Thurnham, Kent

SWAT Site Code: THURN/WB/15

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 new dwelling whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Monitoring 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: Maidstone Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 580166 156492

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Monitoring

Date of recording: December 2015

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Gault Formation

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2015) Archaeological Monitoring at Land at Fairways, Thurnham Lane, Thurnham, 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

Date: 23/12/2015

Plates



Plate 2. General view of site looking north-east



Plate 3. General view of site looking south-east



Plate 4. The site showing cutting of foundation trenches on the west side



Plate 5. Foundation trenches on the east side



Plate 6. Foundation trenches on the south side