



# Archaeological Trial Trenching and Evaluation at the Barkaway Site, Ospringe, Kent

**August 2017**

**SWAT Archaeology**

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NGR: 600349 160884

Site Code: BARK/EV/16

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# **Archaeological Trial Trenching and Evaluation at the Barkaway Site, Ospringe, Kent**

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## **1. Summary**

*In September 2013 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at The Barkaway Site in Ospringe near Faversham in Kent. The archaeological evaluation was in response to a request for pre-determination from Heritage Conservation, Kent County Council to a planning application for residential development submitted to Swale Borough Council in 2012. This application was subsequently withdrawn and new proposals now put forward.*

*Heritage Conservation at Kent County Council had concerns on the impact of the current proposed development on potentially nationally important remains associated with the medieval Maison Dieu hospital. This Archaeological Evaluation was carried out by SWAT Archaeology to a Archaeological Specification written by Heritage Conservation at Kent County Council and was designed to evaluate the importance of the site and what impact the development proposals would have in the submitted planning application.*

*The Archaeological Evaluation (SWAT 2013) was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2013) and in discussion with the Principal Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council. The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of 5 trenches which revealed that extensive medieval and post-medieval activity had taken place within the proposed development site. Extensive remains of the medieval hospital complex were located in Trenches Two, Four and Five. The medieval 'Pond' was located in Trenches One and Two. Further medieval activity was also observed in Trench 5 Figure 7).*

*The archaeological investigation by SWAT Archaeology had shown that significant archaeological remains (Trenches 4, 5) are to be found in the area of the proposed Block 1 (four terraced houses) at a depth of 620-700mm below present ground level.*

*In the area of Block 2 (two semi-detached houses) the archaeology revealed (Trench 3) is at a depth of 780mm below present ground level.*

*The present archaeological work was agreed with the Principal Archaeological Officer KCC to excavate 26 trial pits in the location of proposed piles on the site of the medieval hospital. Sixteen (TPs 1 – 16) were to be excavated in the western part of the site, seven (TPs 17 – 24) in the area of the Common or Great Hall in the eastern part of the site, two (TPs 25 & 26) in the site entrance and an exploratory pit (TP 27) in a previously cut trench in the north-east part of the site.*

*Trial Pit 4 could not be excavated because a tree presently occupies the trial-pit location and four trial pits (7, 15, 16 and 24) could not be fully excavated, TPs 7, 15 and 16 because any potential remains in their respective areas were found to have been destroyed by the installation of sewage and drain pipes and a water main, and TP 24 because it was inaccessible as the pile location lies within a still-upstanding building. The initial phase of archaeological work was carried out between the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016.*

*From 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 an additional 8 evaluation test pits were excavated that revealed that in some areas archaeological features were present within the trenches and pile locations were moved to ensure piling did not impact on the revealed archaeology (Figures 7-9). The natural geology was not encountered. The Archaeological Investigations and the additional work have therefore been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.*

## **2. Introduction**

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by N W Properties Ltd to carry out an archaeological trial trenching and evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (KCC 2016) and in discussion with Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer KCC. The archaeological works were carried out by SWAT Archaeology with Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA, Tim Allen MCIfA, Simon Holmes and Dan Quinlan, Dan Worsley in attendance.

## **3. Site Description and Topography**

The archaeological potential is based on the proximity of archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER. The site lies in an area of known archaeological remains most of which are encapsulated in an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (SWAT Archaeology July 2012). The site lies about 30m north of the scheduled monument of Maison Dieu a surviving element of the medieval St Marys Hospital, dating to 1234 (HER TR 06 SW 15). The site is located to the north of Ospringe Street and bounded on the west by Grove Place, to the north by Grove Close and to the east by the relatively recent development of houses named 'The Fairways. The area of the proposed development is a mix of grass, tarmac and gardens plus sheds, stables and including the butchers shop complex of 22 Ospringe Street.

## **4. Planning Background**

A planning application SW/13/0700 and SW/13/0701 (for listed building consent) had been made to Swale Borough Council. The proposed development comprises the demolition of outbuildings, the

conversion of a stable and cold store and the construction of eight new dwellings (Steve Banister Plan Ref: 2510/4A). The plan shows the proposed development in four blocks.

Block 1 was for four terraced houses fronting Ospringe Street in the south-east area of the site.

Block 2 was a pair of semi-detached houses fronting onto Grove Place in the north-west area of the site.

Block 3 was the conversion of part of the former butcher's premises of Barkaway.

Block 4 was a studio over a garage where now stands a brick stable.

Included in the original application package to Swale Borough Council was a Desk-based Assessment (SWAT Archaeology 2011) whereas Heritage Conservation at Kent County Council requested additional information to include an assessment of impact. However, the Principal Archaeological Officer KCC was informed that that foundation details have not as yet been designed.

The present Archaeological Specification written by Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer KCC was designed to evaluate the potential impact of piling on the archaeological remains based on the submitted piled foundation proposals for the updated development and is targeted against each of the areas to be piled.

The results from these test pits and evaluation will be used to inform KCC of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with the development proposals.

## **5. Archaeological and Historical Background**

An extensive review of the archaeological and historical background is contained in the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment by SWAT Archaeology (2011). In addition an archaeological evaluation was carried out by SWAT Archaeology from 6<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013. The evaluation produced archaeology which can be tied in with G H Smiths published account in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (Vol XCV 1979).

The 2013 evaluation

Trench 1 was located in the centre of the proposed development in an area designated as car-parking. On excavation it revealed the southern edge and possible north-east return of the medieval pond.

Trench 2 exposed part of the pond and the west wall of the Common Hall. This is the Common Hall partly excavated by Smith (B534). Smith describes the building as the main functional building of the hospital with external walls built of flint 0.85m in width and with ashlar detailing (Smith 1979: 92-94).

Trench 4 revealed an unknown building to the south of the Common Hall. Unfortunately it is not the 'Ruined Building' referred to in Smith's report, itself referring to the '*Survey of Kentish Estates 1571*'. Also exposed were cart wheel ruts over the demolished building.

In Trench 5 the excavation exposed both the west and east walls of the Common Hall, and perhaps the west wall of 'Ospringe Church or chapel, a theory reinforced by the finding of the rim of a large copper alloy bell. On the south side of the evaluation trench a number of east-west stone walls were exposed including one of about a metre width.

Trench 5 was machined to a depth of 0.75m (750mm) at the north-west and 0.85m (850mm) at the south-east end. The removal of the topsoil (300) and the subsoil (301) exposed a metallated surface (303) that had been truncated by a modern waste water pipeline [309]. Underneath the metallating was a layer of very clean re-deposited chalk (310). This sealed a layer of gravel and peg tile. The peg tile has been dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Numerous floor tiles dating from the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century of a pattern not found in Smith's excavations were retrieved from the demolition layers in Trench 5 (511).

The results of the excavation of the five evaluation trenches revealed that extensive medieval and post-medieval activity had taken place within the proposed development. Extensive remains of the medieval hospital complex were located in Trenches Two, Four and Five. The medieval 'Pond' was located in Trenches One and Two. Further medieval activity was also observed in Trench Five. The depth of revealed archaeology in Trenches 1-5 was between 48-60 cm below the present ground level (SWAT Archaeology Sept 2013).

## **6. Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the initial trial trenching and evaluation were to excavate 26 trial pits according to the agreed procedure on the location of proposed piles on the site of the medieval hospital. Sixteen (TPs 1 – 16) were to be excavated in the western part of the site, seven (TPs 17 – 24) in the area of the Common or Great Hall in the eastern part of the site, two (TPs 25 & 26) in the site entrance and an exploratory pit (TP 27) in a previously cut trench in the north-east part of the site.

Trial Pit 4 could not be excavated because a tree presently occupies the trial-pit location and four trial pits (7, 15, 16 and 24) could not be fully excavated, TPs 7, 15 and 16 because any potential remains in their respective areas were found to have been destroyed by the installation of sewage and drain



pipes and a water main, and TP 24 because it was inaccessible as the pile location lies within a still-upstanding building.

## 7. Methodology

The Archaeological Specification (KCC 2016) identified 26 pits for additional work in the form of an excavation and record. A 2.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and to expose the natural geology and/or the archaeological horizon. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the KCC Specification. A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC, Historic England, SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance.

## 8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the archaeological works from Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer KCC who gave invaluable advice during the course of the investigation.

## 9. Results

### *The trial pits (TPs 1 – 16) in the western part of the site.*

TPs 1, 2 and 3 (**Figs. Plan 1.3, Plan 1.1.5, 1.6. Plates 4, 5, 6, 13, 14**) exposed structural remains at an average depth of 0.82m below the present ground surface as described below. In TP 1 an approximately east-west aligned roughly mortared flint wall foundation (Context Recording Number 9) was abutted to the south by a crushed chalk layer (CRN 8) and abutted and slightly covered to the north by a compact brick earth-like deposit (CRN 7). The wall foundation was 0.24m wide and was also exposed at the same depth in adjoining Trial Pit 2 (**Figs. Section 3.5, Plan 1.5, Plate 6**), where, after following the same alignment for some 0.4m it curved out southward to form a semi-circle, although only about half of the semi-circle was exposed (crushed chalk layer 8 abutted the foundation in this trial pit to the south and west). It may be assumed with confidence that the foundation curved back to complete the semi-circle and resumed its east-west alignment because the eastern extension of the same wall foundation (CRN 9) was exposed, again at the same depth, in adjoining Trial Pit 3 (**Figs. Plan 3.6. Plates 4, 5**). Here, it had been cut through by a modern drain pipe, which allowed the structure of the wall foundation and the underlying deposit to be examined. The latter (CRN 10) consisted of a light-to-mid brown silty humic soil that was also present as a basal, primary deposit in the other trial pits (see below) in this area. The wall foundation was shown to be trench-built and laminated, consisting of a primary 30mm-thick chalk layer (CRN 17) lying beneath a 60mm-thick band of flint pebbles/gravel (CRN 16) lying beneath a 40mm-thick band of chalky clay-silt with pebble inclusions, this capped by CRN 9 as described below.

The upper fabric (CRN 9) of the wall foundation consisted of 70mm-thick closely packed flints roughly bonded with light grey-brown sandy mortar. Where it was better preserved, particularly in the curved section in TP2, the exposed inner (northern) side of the curve, which may have represented the base of the superstructure rather than foundation, was more neatly faced with flint ashlar work. In this trial pit and also in TP3, where the foundation had been intersected by a modern drain, the material underlying the foundation consisted of mid-to-dark brown silty humic soil (CRN 10) with occasional flint inclusions. This was interpreted as a natural colluvial or, possibly, an alluvial or mixed deposit, possibly a water-meadow deposit, and was also exposed in adjacent trial pits. Its depth below the present ground surface increased to the south from 0.85m (in TP5) to 1.1m and 1.15m (in TPs 12 and 13 respectively), suggesting that the topography has changed somewhat from the period of its deposition.

The light-to-mid brown soil underlay what appeared to be a substantial layer of large and medium-sized flint nodule and fragments (CRN 11), which was exposed in TPs 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 at depths of between 0.75m and 0.95m and varying between 0.18m and 0.32m in thickness (**Figs. Sections 1.10, 2.1, 2.4 2.6. Plates 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 15, 24-30**). The flint layer was perhaps too irregular to represent the remains of a cobbled surface and was interpreted as a localised levelling spread laid down to raise the ground level.

The flint layer was sealed in TPs 12, 13 and 14 (the south-westernmost pile locations) by a compact crushed chalk layer (CRN 12) of approximately 0.13m thickness and at a depth of 0.62m and 0.75m respectively, and a similar (if not the same) compact crushed chalk layer (CRN 12) was also present in TPs 5 and 6, where it directly overlay the basal light-to-mid brown silty soil (CRN 10) rather than a flint-dominated deposit. A similar chalk layer (CRN 13), also overlying basal light-to-mid brown silty soil, was exposed in TP 8, but in this case the chalk layer underlay a layer of mid-to-large flints (CRN 15), as it did in TP 12. The chalk layer (CRN 12) in TPs 5 and 6 was almost certainly the same as the chalk layer (CRN 8) exposed in TPs 1, 2 and 3, where it abutted the previously described wall foundation (CRN 9).

Crushed chalk is not viable as an exposed exterior floor surface as it degrades rapidly when exposed to the elements. It can therefore be assumed that the chalk layers described above, which all occupied the same approximate depth below the present ground surface, represented either parts of interior floor deposits, this probably being the case in TPs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, or represented the underlying setting deposits for an exterior flint-cobbled courtyard or roadway, as is perhaps more likely to be the case in the other trial pits. It should be noted here that, although detailed interpretation of these layers is not possible given the discontinuity of exposure, it can be observed that all the exposed chalk layers and the top of the wall foundation exposed in TPs 1, 2 and 3 on the northern margin of the site occupied the same approximate depth, indicating that this represented something close to the original, early thirteenth-century ground surface.

A band of brick earth-like sandy silt (CRN 14) overlay the compacted crushed chalk layers in TPs 5, 6, 10, 12, 13 and 14 and layers of flint nodules and fragments in TPs 9, 10 and 11. The brick earth-like

material varied in thickness from 0.08m (in TP 5) to 0.28m (in TP 5) and had frequent inclusions of roof-tile fragments and flint fragments, suggesting it was a demolition layer (or incorporated demolition materials) dating to the late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century, given that the *Survey of Kentish Estates* of c.1571 described the building complex (excepting the *Maison Dieu*) as being in ruinous condition during that period.

The deposit-sequence overlying the above discussed deposits and layers, recorded as CRNs 2 to 6, consisted of a sequence of probable levelling layers that varied considerably from one trial pit to another. A more complex sequence was evident in TPs 1, 2 and 3, this possibly the result of these pits' position adjacent to the boundary of the present site, now marked by a brick-built wall of probable nineteenth-century construction, and also possibly the result of construction and demolition associated with the structural remains evident in those trial pits.

A relatively thick layer (0.37m maximum) of mid brown humic clay-silt (CRN 6) overlay the wall foundation (CRN 9), the abutting chalk layer (CRN 8) and brickearth layers in TPs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 14. As it extended so widely over this area, and clearly much further, this layer was interpreted as a levelling layer, deposited to raise the ground level to match something like that of the area to east, in and around the location of the Great Hall. The thinner horizontal layers (CRNs 1 – 5) overlying this layer comprised relatively modern demolition, rubble and soil layers, along with a very recent demolition spread, this being the highest-lying deposit. None of these were considered to be of archaeological significance.

#### ***The trial pits (TPs 17 – 27) in the eastern part of the site.***

Of these test pits, eight (TPs 17 – 23) were excavated in the vicinity of building foundations previously identified by at parts of the Common Hall, which served the needs of the monks and patients of the hospital (Smith 1980, 'The Excavation at the Hospital of St Mary, Ospringe, commonly called Mason Dieu' in *Archaeologia Cantiana* XCV, 81-84).

The earliest deposits examined here were exposed in TP 17 and 20 in the form of dark brown silty loam (CRN 60) with infrequent flint inclusions (**Fig. Sections 3.2, 3.3. Plates 12, 17, 23, 23**). This material, which was more than 0.14m thick, produced (from its surface) six potsherds from two relatively small interventions, five of which sherds were of first-, second- or early third-century Roman-period type, one of which was of twelfth or thirteenth-century date, providing evidence of on-site or near-site Roman-period settlement. The dark brown silty loam underlay a 0.35m-thick, mid-brown slightly silty humic soil (CRN 50), which was similar to, if not the same as the lowest layer (CRN 10) exposed in TPs 3, 5, 6, 8 and 12 to the west. The interventions in TPs 17 and 20 produced two potsherd from this layer, both of late eleventh- or twelfth-century date, suggesting that the layer predated the construction of the hospital, thought to have been built in 1234 by order of King Henry III. This inference was supported by the presence of an immediately overlying laminated flint-cobbled layer (CRNs 30, 40 and 80), which was shown in Test Pits 20 and 21 to abut the western wall foundation of the building previously identified as the hospital's Common Hall (**Fig. Section 3.3.**

**Plates 20, 23, 35, 36**). Only the primary cobbling layer (CRN 30) produced pottery, in this case in the form of nine sherds, four of first-, second- or third-century date, again providing evidence of Roman-period activity on or near the site, and five of the twelfth, thirteen and fourteenth centuries, these undoubtedly domestic detritus from the use of the hospital. The compacted upper surface of the uppermost laminated flint cobbling (CRN 80) was also exposed in TPs 18 and 19, proving it to be extensive and continuous, and therefore almost certainly part of a courtyard or roadway adjoining the western wall of the Common Hall.

The western wall foundation (CRN 20), which consisted of flint nodules and fragments bonded with grey-brown sandy mortar, was approximately north-south aligned, was 0.75m wide and was exposed in TPs 21, 22 and 23 as a depth of 0.65m below the existing modern concrete-covered ground surface (**Figs 3.3. Plates 16, 18, 19, 20, 35, 36**). The interventions in TPs 22 and 23 were too limited in the area exposed to allow further investigation but the exposure in TP 21 was large enough to show that the wall foundation (or possibly the lowest part of the wall superstructure) to be abutted to the east by a band of orange-brown clay (CRN 90) that varied between 40mm and 0.12m in thickness and was interpreted with confidence as the internal floor layer within the Common Hall. However, the overlying presence of a thin spread of roof tile fragments, flints and crushed mortar (CRN 90), which also contained a fragment of medieval floor tile, suggested that the clay may have been a bedding layer for a tiled surface, the overlying debris almost certainly the result of the deterioration and eventual demolition of the building.

The identification of the clay floor as an internal floor or floor bedding was re-enforced by its exposure in an exploratory test pit (TP 27), some five metres to the south (**Fig. Section 3.4. Plate 31**). Here, the orange-brown clay floor bedding overlay a darker layer of compact clayey brown soil (CRN 91), with both layers containing moderate amounts of flecked charcoal and both overlying a shallow oven or, more likely a hearth, which consisted of a red-scorched clay lens (CRNs 92) sealing a 90mm-thick band of orange-brown clay (CRN 93), both abutting what appeared to be a crude supporting structure of packed flints (CRN 96). The hearth-like structure had been pieced by what appeared to be a stake-hole (no context number attributed) cutting down from the surface of the scorched clay lens. The underlying deposits (CRNs 94 and 95) consisted of, respectively, mid-brown silty soil and a flint-dominated silty clay layer of unknown origin.

Two test pits (TPs 25 and 26) excavated in the entrance way to the site exposed alternating layers of crushed brick, compacted crushed chalk, gravel and light orange-brown clay, the deposit sequence as a whole being 0.85m thick and immediately underlying the present concrete ground surface. Modern brick fragments retrieved from the lowest of these deposits indicated that the deposit sequence as a whole was of relatively recent origin and had been laid down to consolidate the entrance into the site.

The layers overlying the above-described structural remains and the associated abutting deposits in the area of the Common Hall were similar, if not identical, to those sealing the structural remains and their associated deposits in the western area of the site, and they clearly served the same function as general levelling layers which also acted to raise the ground level, presumably to create a new

formation level for the post-medieval structures that occupied the site until relatively recently. Consequently they were accorded the same context numbers (CRNs 1 and 2), although in the eastern area CRN 1 designated the present concrete hardstanding rather than modern demolition debris.

An additional 8 trial pits (TP 28-35) were excavated from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

**Test Pit 28** (Plate 37 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 28 had a length of 1.15m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 1.35m (9.27m aOD). The topsoil (2801) had a thickness of 30cm and comprised of very dark grey loamy soil, containing fragments of brick and gravel. This sealed a 37cm thick layer of compacted silty dark grey subsoil (2802) that contained occasional small chalk pieces. This overlay a layer of building debris (2803) that had a thickness of 22cm and comprised of fragments of peg tile mixed with light brown sandy, shelly mortar. This sealed a light orange-brown clay floor/surface (2804) that had a thickness of 11cm. The clay sealed a +30cm thick layer of dark grey clay.

**Test Pit 29** (Plate 38 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 29 had a length of 1.15m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 1.30m (9.33m aOD). The topsoil (2901) had a thickness of 23cm and also comprised of very dark grey loamy soil, containing fragment brick and gravel. This sealed a 45cm thick layer of compacted silty dark grey subsoil (2902) that contained occasional small chalk pieces. This overlay a layer of building debris (2903) that had a maximum thickness of 34cm and comprised of fragments of peg tile mixed with light brown sandy, shelly mortar. This sealed a fill (2904) of light grey-white sandy, shelly mortar, within an irregular shaped pit [2905]. The pit truncated a light orange-brown clay floor/surface (2906) at 9.41m aOD, which was also sealed by layer (2903). The clay had a maximum thickness of 9cm and it also sealed a +25cm thick layer of dark grey clay.

**Test Pit 30** (Plate 39 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 30 was excavated to facilitate the installment of new drainage. It had a length of 1.90m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 1.15m (9.36m aOD). The topsoil (3001) had a thickness of 30cm and also comprised of very dark grey loamy soil, containing fragment brick and gravel. This sealed a 20cm thick layer of compacted silty dark grey subsoil (3002) that contained occasional small chalk pieces. This overlay a layer of building debris (3003) that had a thickness of 26cm and comprised of fragments of peg tile mixed with light brown sandy, shelly mortar. This sealed a thin layer of shell fish (3004) that had a thickness of 8cm. The shell fish sealed a fill (3005) of dark grey silty clay that contained fragments of CBM, shelly mortar and domestic rubbish within an irregular shaped pit [3006]. The pit truncated a light orange-brown clay floor/surface (3007) at 9.67m aOD, which was also sealed by layer (3004). The clay had a maximum thickness of 7cm and sealed a 3cm layer of dark grey clay 'tread'(3008) that lay on the surface of a light grey shelly mortar floor (3009) at 9.57m aOD.

### **Test Pit 31** (Plate 40)

Test Pit 31 had a length of 2.20m, a width of 1.70m and was excavated to a depth of 55cm (9.93m aOD). A 9cm thick concrete slab (3101) sealed a 21cm thick layer of compacted silty dark grey subsoil (3102) that contained occasional small chalk pieces. This overlay a dark grey layer of clay (3103) that contained occasional CBM and mortar. This layer sealed a flint and ragstone wall [3104] that was bonded with light brown shelly mortar. The wall was encountered at 10.18m aOD, was roughly aligned N-S and had a width of 49cm and had a height of +17cm. The centre section of the wall was missing, the result of a Victorian post hole [3105] that measured 55cm x 49cm. The wall truncated a layer (3106) of crushed chalk (thickness unknown).

### **Test Pit 32** (Plate 41 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 32 had a length of 1.80m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 1.05m (9.58m aOD). A 4cm thick layer of Tarmac (3201) overlay a 8cm thick concrete slab (3202) that sealed a layer of compacted made up ground of silty dark grey clay mixed with brick (3203) that had a thickness of 56cm. This overlay a mid brown layer of clay (3204) that had a thickness of +32cm. This layer sealed an additional section of the flint and ragstone wall [3205] observed in Test Pit Four. The wall was encountered at 9.63m aOD.

### **Test Pit 33** (Plate 42 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 33 had a length of 2.50m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 70cm (9.50m aOD). A red, frogged brick floor (3301), 14cm in thickness, lay on a bedding layer of sand and coarse gravel (3302) that had a thickness of 13cm. This overlay the 30cm thick, mid brown layer of clay (3303) observed in Test Pit Five. The layer sealed a concrete clad service [3304] and a series of walls. The earliest Wall [3310] was severely truncated and the remnants comprised of light grey sandy, shelly mortar. The remnants occurred at 9.63m aOD and were aligned NE-SW. The wall was abutted by a contemporary light orange-brown clay floor (3309). The wall and clay floor were sealed by a 17cm thick layer of demolition debris (3308) that comprised of peg tile and light brown sandy, shelly mortar. This layer abutted and thus may have been contemporary with, a flint and ragstone wall [3305] that was roughly aligned N-S and was bonded with light brown shelly mortar. The wall occurred at 9.46m aOD, had a width of 80cm, a depth of +30cm and was parallel to the sections of wall observed in Test Pits 31 and 32. The wall truncated a flint and mortar wall [3310] and clay floor (3309) to the east and also truncated a chalk wall [3306] and [3307] to the west. The chalk wall was constructed from small pieces of chalk and comprised of two elements. The first [3306] was set at 090° from the main section, was aligned E-W and had a surviving length of 30cm, a width of +20cm and a depth of +17m. The second element was aligned N-S, had a width of 40cm and a depth +18cm. Both elements occurred at 9.62m aOD.

### **Test Pit 34** (Plate 43 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 34 had a length of 1.20m, a width of 1m and was excavated to a depth of 80cm (9.83m aOD). A 26cm thick layer of modern demolition debris (3401) overlay a 12cm thick crushed chalk

surface/layer (3402). This sealed a layer of dark grey clay (3403) that had a thickness of 26cm. The chalk and flint and ragstone walls observed in Test Pit Six was also encountered along the east half of the test pit (walls [3404] and [3405]) at 9.99m aOD.

#### **Test Pit 35** (Plate 44 Figs 7-9)

Test Pit 35 had a length of 1.20m, a width of 1.20m and was excavated to a depth of 1.15m (9.05m aOD). A 24cm thick layer of modern demolition debris (3501) overlay the 8cm thick remnants of the sandy gravel bedding layer (3502) observed in Test Pit Six. This sealed a chalk floor surface (3503) at 9.88m aOD, that had a thickness of 8cm and sealed a dark grey clay layer (3504) that had a thickness of 33cm. Beneath was a layer of demolition debris (3505) that comprised of peg tile and sandy, shelly mortar, which had a thickness of 17cm. This sealed the remnants of a clay floor (3506) at 9.30m aOD, that only survived to a thickness of 3cm. The clay floor lay on a deposit of compacted demolition debris (3507) comprising of mid and light grey sandy, shelly mortar. This overlay a layer of loose coarse mid grey silty sand and flint (3508) within which sat a very hard mortared flint 'pad' [3509] that was roughly rectangular in shape. It had a length of 58cm, a width of 42cm and a depth of +12cm. It occurred at 9.17m aOD.

## **10. Discussion**

The investigation produced new evidence suggesting that early Roman-period occupation and/or settlement activity took place on or near the site, and also confirmed the presence of medieval structural remains in the area of the Common Hall, the interior clay floor and western wall foundation of which were partly exposed, as was an adjacent flint-cobbled surface, almost certainly part of an adjoining courtyard.

In the north-west part of the site the investigation also demonstrated the presence of an east-west aligned wall foundation with an apse-like curve within it, the foundation being abutted to the south by a compact flint-cobbled layer that again almost certainly represented the remains of an adjoining courtyard.

Also of interest was an apparent modification made to the site's topography prior to the construction of the hospital and its ancillary buildings. The ground level of the western area of the site had clearly been artificially raised using substantial deposits of flint and chalk, presumably to create a level formation horizon from east to west prior to the construction of the hospital.

The additional 8 test pits revealed intact, partially intact and *in-situ* deposits exposed in all eight test pits. Test Pits 28, 29, 30 and 35 revealed a sequence of make-up layers of deposited materials that sealed a clay floor (contexts (2804), (2906), (3007) and (3506)) and a mortar floor (3009). The floor surfaces sealed a uniform thick layer of dark re-deposited clay.

The remaining test pits revealed a sequence of masonry walls (and an additional clay floor in test pit 33) leading off from the street frontage. The wall sections [3105] and [3205] were most likely part of the same wall. Whereas wall sections [3305] and [3405], formed part of another wall. It is most likely that both courses were part of the same structure, as they were parallel, aligned N-S and constructed from the same ragstone material. This probable structure truncated an earlier chalk wall [3306]/[3307] and a contemporary clay floor (3309) flint and mortar wall [3310]. Excavation of Test Pit 35 also revealed the remnants of an extremely hard, mortared 'pad' [3509] that sat within a deposit of loose coarse mid grey silty sand and flint (3508).

The proposed development can therefore be judged to pose a threat to significant remains contained within the test pits and it is recommended that the location of the piles be moved to preserve the archaeological remains present. To facilitate this, the piles were re-located to within the area circled (in blue) shown on Figure 9.

## **11. Finds**

Overall, 17 sherds weighing 261gms were recovered from the initial investigation. The overall assemblage, as recovered, is principally dual-period – Roman and post-Roman. For the first, the material recovered includes Early and Mid-Roman elements, the second embraces the Early-Late Medieval and Post-Medieval periods – the latter solely represented by roof-tile fragments. Despite these definite presences, the material is too slimly represented, per context, to apply genuinely confident dating. The Post-Medieval material from *Context 3* could be seen as intrusive, that from *Context 5* can only be broadly dated and that from *6* could be Mid or Late Roman if the Early Medieval sherd is intrusive (Appendix 1).

In the additional work no finds of significance were retrieved. The excavation of the test pits produced no pottery or other finds, except for peg tile present in layers (2803), (2903), (3003), (3005), (3103), (3308) and (3505).

## **12. Environmental Assessment**

A rapid bio-archaeological assessment was undertaken by SWAT Archaeology in connection with the ongoing archaeological investigations at the Barkaway site but no environmental samples were taken as the contexts revealed were in the main demolition rubble.

## **13. Conclusion**

The monitoring programme of excavation and record at the proposed development site revealed additional archaeological features and artefacts which have increased our knowledge of the Roman and medieval landscape of Ospringe. In particular the investigation produced new evidence suggesting that early Roman-period occupation and/or settlement activity took place on or near the



site, and also confirmed the presence of medieval structural remains in the area of the Common Hall, the interior clay floor and western wall foundation of which were partly exposed, as was an adjacent flint-cobbled surface, almost certainly part of an adjoining courtyard.

In the north-west part of the site the investigation also demonstrated the presence of an east-west aligned wall foundation with an apse-like curve within it, the foundation being abutted to the south by a compact flint-cobbled layer that again almost certainly represented the remains of an adjoining courtyard.

Also of interest was an apparent modification made to the site's topography prior to the construction of the hospital and its ancillary buildings. The ground level of the western area of the site had clearly been artificially raised using substantial deposits of flint and chalk, presumably to create a level formation horizon from east to west prior to the construction of the hospital.

#### **14. Acknowledgements**

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client, NW Properties Ltd for commissioning the project. Illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Allen MCI(A), Paul Wilkinson MCI(A), Dan Quinlan and the project was managed and report written by Tim Allen and Paul Wilkinson MCI(A). Additional works and reporting were undertaken by Simon Holmes and Dan Wolsey.

Paul Wilkinson

16/08/2016

#### **15. References**

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## **Appendix 1**

### **THE DATING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE CERAMIC ASSEMBLAGE FROM:**

#### **Barkaway Site, Ospringe, Kent**

#### **ASSESSMENT**

Overall, 17 sherds weighing 261gms were recovered. The overall assemblage, as recovered, is principally dual-period – Roman and post-Roman. For the first, the material recovered includes Early and Mid-Roman elements, the second embraces the Early-Late Medieval and Post-Medieval periods – the latter solely represented by roof-tile fragments. Despite these definite presences, the material is too slimly represented, per context, to apply genuinely confident dating. The Post-Medieval material from *Context 3* could be seen as intrusive, that from *Context 5* can only be broadly dated and that from 6 could be Mid or Late Roman if the Early Medieval sherd is intrusive.

#### **Recommendations**

1. None of the recovered material warrants full publication in its own right.
2. A larger body of material to date would be beneficial if the associated sequence requires tighter dating.

### **APPENDIX: CONTEXT-BASED POTTERY QUANTIFICATION AND DATING CATALOGUE**

**Primary quantification: 17 sherds (weight: 261gms)**

**Period codes employed:**

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ER	= Early Roman
MR	= Mid Roman
EM	= Early Medieval
M	= Medieval
LM	= Late Medieval
PM	= Post-Medieval

**Context dating:**

**Context: Surface of Courtyard (30) – SW Test-pit under (20) - 9 sherds (weight: 66gms)**

- 1 ER North Kent fine buff-pink ware (c.50/75-125 AD emphasis probably)
- 1 ER North Kent fine grey ware (c.75-125/150 AD emphasis)
- 1 MR North Kent Thames-side buff sandy ware (hard-fired, c.175-225 AD range)
- 1 MR North Kent fine grey ware (scorched, Monaghan 1987 Type 2A6 poppy-head beaker, c.175/200-225 AD emphasis)
- 1 EM NE Kent shell-tempered sandy ware (c.1150-1200/1225 AD emphasis)
- 1 EM NE Kent shell-tempered sandy ware (c.1175-1200/1225 AD emphasis)
- 1 M N or West Kent shell-tempered sandy ware (c.1175/1200-1250 AD emphasis probably)
- 1 M N or West Kent sandy ware (c.1200/1225-1250 AD emphasis)
- 1 M? Flemish Highly Decorated ware- fine variant (c.1250-1325/1350 AD range)

**and:**

- 2 M fragments Canterbury Tyler Hill sandy floor tile (weight: 89gms) – conjoining (one fairly large), part one chamfered edge remnant, dull green glaze, LC13-C14 AD probably
- 1 M Wealden-type buff moderately sandy roof-tile (weight: 46gms) – fairly large, split, worn, no edges, LC13-C14 AD *probably*
- 2 fragments LM>PM red moderately sandy roof-tile (weight: 29gms) – one small, one moderate-sized, no edges, fairly worn, c.LC15-C16 AD
- 3 fragments PM red slightly sandy roof-tile (weight: 33gms) – 2 small, one moderate-sized (part one edge remnant), slightly worn only, MC16-C17 AD

*Comment:* Mostly small elements, 1-2 moderate-sized. One LC12 AD element fairly heavily worn, remainder only slightly. However, if whole assemblage, including tile fragments was recovered as basically one assemblage from a single context the latter is dated by the tile.

**Likely date: C17 AD or later**

**Context: 50 - 2 sherds (weight: 119gms)**

- 1 EM Canterbury sandy ware (c.1075?1100-1150 AD emphasis *probably*)
- 1 EM NE Kent shell-tempered sandy ware (c.1100-1150/1175 AD emphasis probably)

*Comment:* Earliest entry is large and only slightly chipped and worn, second is small sized and rather battered. Difficult assemblage to date closely – the Canterbury element is a base sherd with firing

trends that could be anywhere within the date range given, the shelly ware element is thick-walled and probably from a large storage jar and more likely to be of C12 AD date..

**Likely date: Uncertain – initially broadly C12 AD**

**Context: Surface of alluvium, pit – NW Test-pit alluvial (60) under (50) - 6 sherds (weight: 76gms)**  
2 ER Romanising 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.50-100/125 AD emphasis probably; **same vessel**)

1 ER Romanising 'Belgic'-style grog-tempered ware (c.125-150/175 AD emphasis probably)

1 MR fine slightly sandy cream colour-coated ware (flagon, c.150-200/225 AD emphasis)

1 MR North Kent Thameside fine sandy ware (lightly scorched, c.150/175-225 AD emphasis)

1 EM NE Kent shell-tempered ware (c.1150-1200/1225 AD emphasis)

*Comment:* All moderate-sized elements, ER bodysherds all with fairly heavy unifacial damage, MR elements chipped and slightly worn. EM bodysherd fairly fresh

**Likely date: If not intrusive – later C12-C13 AD probably**

**Analyst:** N.Macpherson-Grant 6.2016

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