

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at 2
Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend,
Kent DA12 1LQ

Site Code WIND/WB/20



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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.....	8

Plates 1-8. General view of site reduction trench

List of Figures

Figure 1. Site plan and location of archaeological investigation area

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Archaeological Watching Brief at 2 Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent

Site Code WIND/WB/20
NGR 564800 173328



Street View of proposed development site (Google 2019)

1.0 Abstract

1.1. In July 2020 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA and Peter Cichy of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief of ground works involved in the construction of car parking spaces at NO. 2 Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend in Kent (Figure 1, SV.1 and Plates 1-8).

1.2. An Archaeological watching brief presence was kept during the excavations (Plates 1-8).

1.3. The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Watching demolition and excavation of ground to the front of the property (15th-16th July 2020).

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 SWAT Archaeology Written Scheme of Investigation Specification dated 01/06/2020.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Gravesham Borough Council (20/180963).

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by the SWAT Archaeology WSI Specification the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The site is located to the east of Windmill Street and to the west of the Windmill Hill and within the Windmill Hill Conservation Area in Gravesend in the County of Kent (SV 1, Figure 1). The NGR to the centre of the site is NGR 564800 173328.

2.2 Planning Background

The groundworks planned involved reduction of the front garden to construct vehicular access and provision of two car parking spaces

The following Condition (5) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring was attached to the planning consent:

No development shall commence 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 recorded. The Watching Brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification, which has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Peter Cichy SWAT Archaeology) and closely monitored the excavation works from 15th-16th July 2020.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

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

(3.1) 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. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

4.2. Proposed Groundworks.

The ground works comprise the construction of a vehicular access on to a classified road and provision of car parking spaces at 2 Portland Villas in accordance with the terms of application Ref: 20180963 (Plates 1-8).

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 Thanet Formation- Sand (Plates 1-8).

5.2 The archaeological potential was accessed from the (KCCHER) which has provided details of any previous investigations and discoveries. In addition the KCC HER data was consulted for this specification and the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential associated with the site of a Post-Medieval or earlier beacon. Just to the east of the application site is Windmill Hill and documentary evidence indicates that a post mill was constructed here at some point after 1787 (TQ 67 SW 1476). To the south was a WWII air raid wardens post (TQ 67 SW 1302) and in the near vicinity of the application site is a beacon site (TQ 67 SW 9).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Archaeological Investigations were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by SWAT Archaeology 'Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 2 Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LQ.

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 bucket necessary to remove the demolition material and subsoil down to formation level (Plates 1-6).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

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

7.2 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 high 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 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 landowner/developer for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken by Peter Cichy and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIFA.

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at 2 Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent

SWAT Site Code: WIND/WB/20

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 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: Gravesham Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 564800 173328

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: 15th-16th July 2020

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Sand- Soil deposits encountered on site were Silty Sand

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2020) Archaeological Watching Brief at 2 Portland Villas, Windmill Street, Gravesend, 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

PLATES



Plate 1. View of site (looking West)



Plate 2. View of site (looking NNE)



Plate 3. View of site (looking East)



Plate 4. View of site prior to site reduction (looking West)



Plates 5, 6. Views of site reduction and stepped foundations





Plate 7. View of site reduction and stepped foundations



Plate 8. View of site reduction and original retaining wall (looking West)



Plate 8. View of site after concrete foundations poured (looking NNE)



Metres
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
Scale: 1:1250



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Portland Villas
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1LQ

Plot centre co-ordinates: 564800,173328
Download file: SWAT_PortlandVillas.zip
Project name: SWAT_PortlandVillas