

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED
ASSESSMENT OF LAND AT 134 HIGH STREET,
WOULDHAM, ROCHESTER, KENT ME1 3UQ



Plate 1. William Peters Cement Works at Wouldham on the west bank River Medway in c.1860 with moored Thames Sailing Barges ready to be loaded with bags of cement

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE 3
2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	PAGE 3
3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES.....	PAGE 4
4.0 DISCUSSION.....	PAGE 4
5.0 PARAMETERS.....	PAGE 4

Plate 1. Photograph of William Peters Cement Works

AP 1. Aerial photograph of Wouldham

MAP 1. OS map 1853

MAP 2. OS map 1895

MAP 3. OS map 1938

Figure 1. KCC HER site plan

Figure 2. Location plan

Figure 3. Proposed development

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW BY EDWARD HASTED

WOLDHAM. Next to the parish of St. Margaret and liberty of Rochester, southward, lies the parish of Woldham, written in the Saxon charters, Wuldaham, in the succeeding Latin ones, Vuldeham, and in the record of Domesday, Oldeham.

This place is supposed to take its name from the Saxon words wolde, a plain open down or hill, free from trees and wood, and ham, a village or dwelling; in the like manner as those large open downs in the north are still called wolds, in opposition to weald, a low woody region. It is likewise described in several later grants by the name of Woldeham Monachorum, from its belonging to the monks of Rochester.

THE PARISH of Woldham lies on the eastern bank of the river Medway, something more than two miles from the city of Rochester, in a situation of a very different aspect, and far less pleasant than that of the country last described, though so few miles distant from it.

The village having the church in it, lies at the foot of the hills, very low, almost close to the river Medway (which is the western boundary of this parish) and from its contiguity to the marshes is accounted far from being healthy. In it there is a handsome sashed brick house, named Woldham house, built by Captain Robert Trevor, of the navy, since the residence of

George Guy, esq. About a mile northward, in a situation equally low, and about the same distance from the river, is the house of Starkey's, which, though now only a farm-house, has still a handsome appearance, being a strong building of stone, with gothic windows and door cases, of ashlar stone.

Hence, as well as from the back of the village, the hills rise to a great height eastward, as far as Nashenden, being mostly uninclosed, open downs, the soil of which is chalk, much covered with flints, being poor and unfertile, a dreary country.

About forty years ago, in digging a trench from Woldham house up to the open downs, there were found several instruments of an antique form like a wedge, or axe, usually called celts, which were chiefly of brass. This parish ought antiently to have contributed to the repair of the fourth pier of Rochester bridge.

(Edward Hasted 1798).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2020 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIFA of SWAT Archaeology carried out a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment of available data on land at 134 High Street, Wouldham near Rochester in Kent (Figure 2).

1.2 Historic mapping, aerial photographs and the HER records were studied and archaeological activity has not been recorded within 100m of the proposed development site (Figure 1).

1.3 The principal elements of the archaeological survey involved the creation of a record and description of any known archaeological and historical sites within the environs of the PDA (Proposed Development Area) together with an analysis and interpretation of the sites origins and historic development.

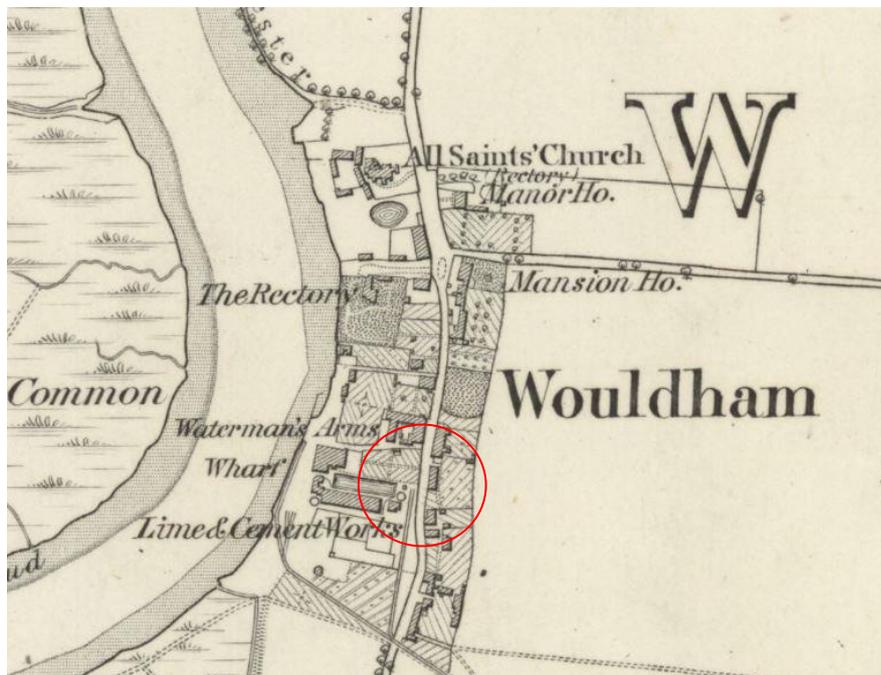
1.4 A review of Historic OS mapping has been made and the Pevsner Architectural Guide (*Kent, East and East Kent 2012*) was consulted as was the National Heritage Register for England (MAPS 1-3).

1.5 This report consists of a descriptive report accompanied by aerial photographs and annotated plans.

2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Location

The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is located in the centre of the village of Wouldham situated on the east bank of the River Medway. The village church-All Saints Church is situated to the north of the village with the Rectory just to the south. The village is famed for its historic Cement Works with the earliest opening in 1847 (*Lime and Cement Works*). Tramways connected the cement works to the quarries situated to the east of the village. The cement works were sold to Blue Circle in 1911 and the works finally closed in 1926. From 1999 a large area of allotments by the school was developed with a large housing estate and more recently Peters Village with over a 1000 houses was developed on the site of the cement works.

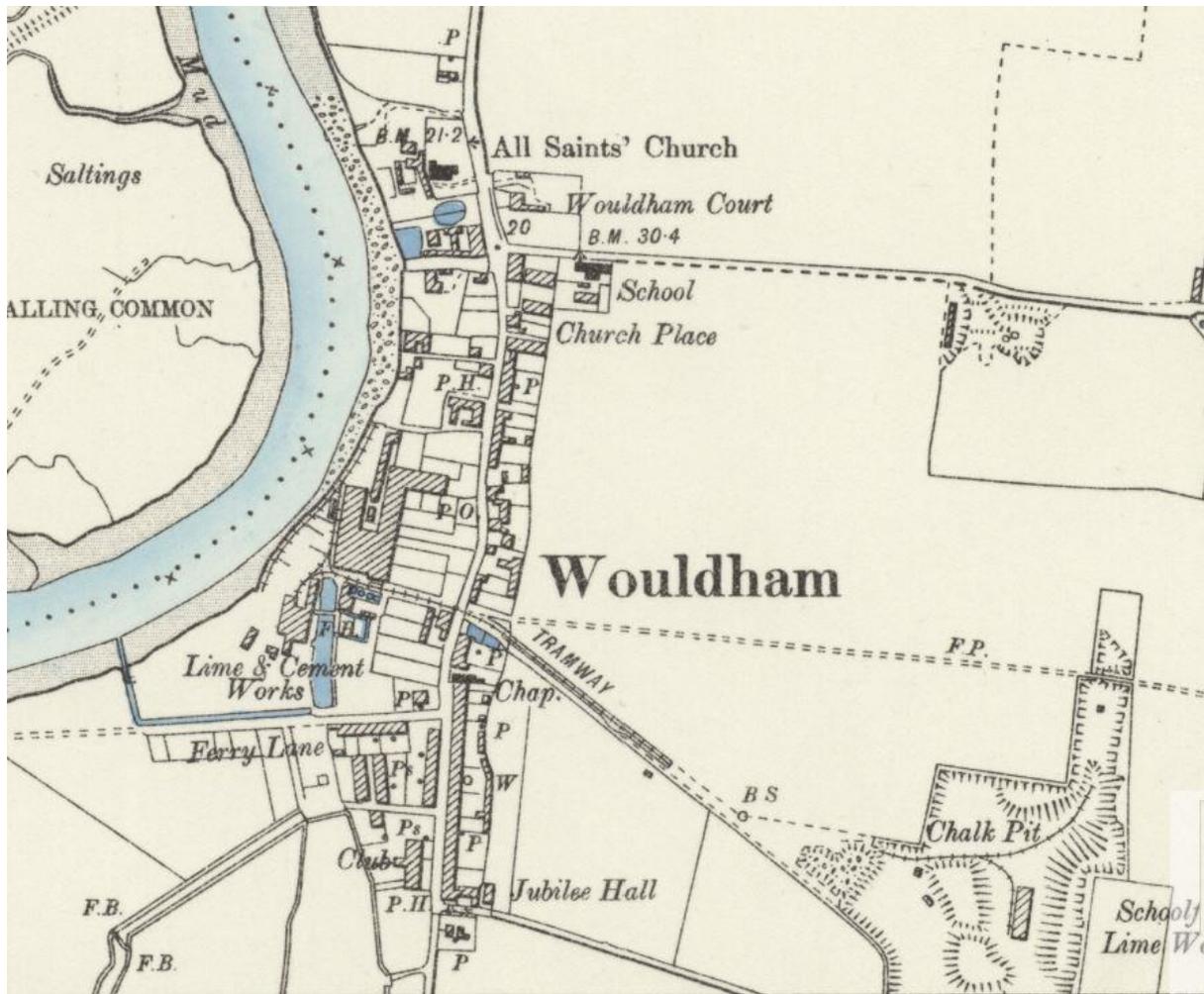


MAP 1. OS map surveyed in 1863

2.5 Historic Background

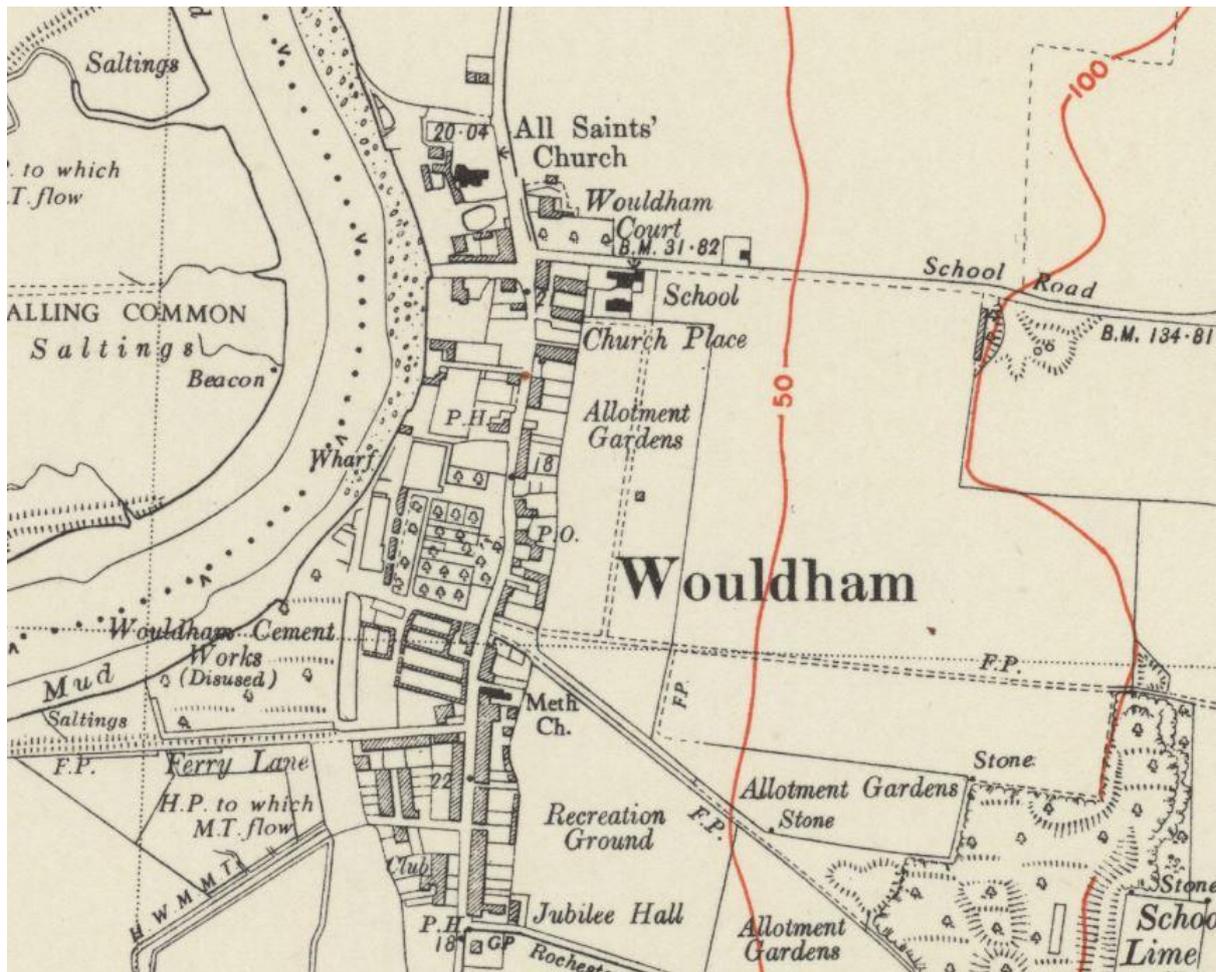
A rapid map assessment of OS historic mapping shows that in 1863 (MAP 1) the surrounding area of the PDA was the River Medway to the west and open fields to the east.

By 1895 (MAP 2) cement works were established with the Lime & Cement Works to the south and adjacent to the River Medway with associated TRAMWAY to and from the Chalk Pit located to the south-east of the village and adjacent to the School Lime Works.



MAP 2. OS map surveyed in 1895

The OS map of 1938 (below) shows a changing world with the Wouldham Cement Works (Disused) and the tramline no longer extant and large areas of land to the east of the village Allotment Gardens. There has been little development in the village until to 1999 when a large area of allotments by the school was developed with a large housing estate and more recently Peters Village with over a 1000 houses was developed on the site of the cement works.



MAP 3. OS map surveyed in 1938

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

3.1 The KCCHER records that 300m to the north of the PDA there is a cropmark of a rectilinear enclosure (TQ 76 SW 489).

About 400m to the north-east lime kilns still survive at School Farm (TQ 76 SW 77).

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 A review of the available data shows that major archaeological sites are not known within the 250m radius of the PDA and the proposed development will not impact on any known archaeological resource. However, it would be prudent to ensure that an Archaeological Watching Brief is maintained throughout the groundworks of the development and secured by Condition.

5.0 PARAMETERS

5.1 The archaeological survey was conducted using on-line data from Historic England and other agencies.

Dr Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCIfA., FRSA. Dated 17th November 2020



AP 1. Aerial image of the site in 2020 (red target)

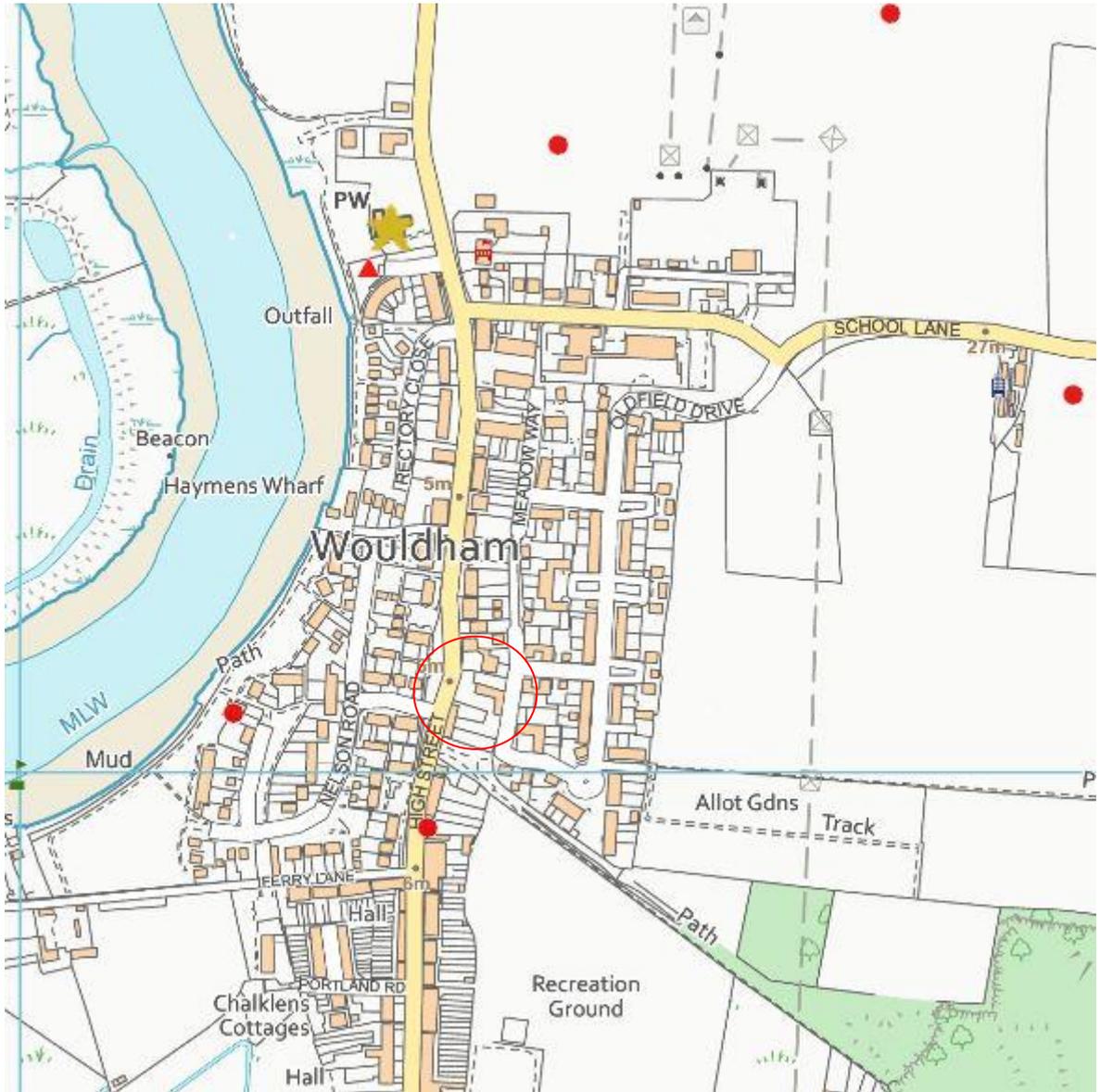
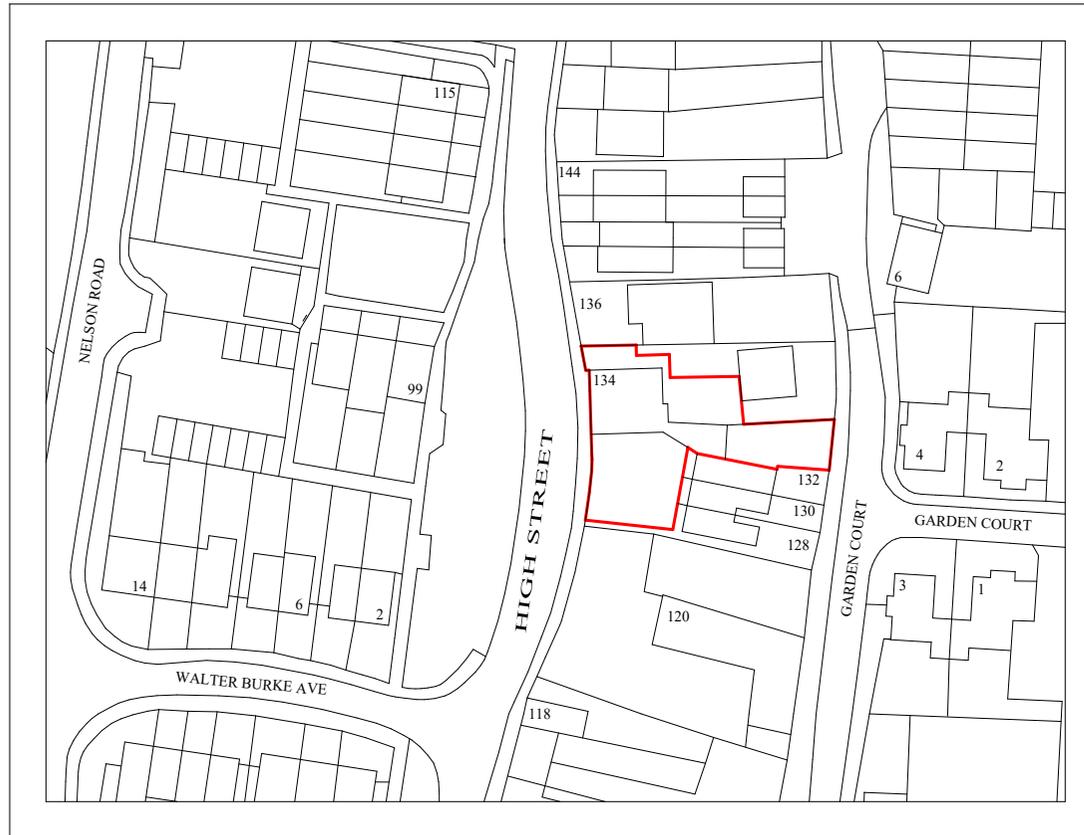


Figure 1. KCC HER data

LOCATION PLAN

134 HIGH STREET

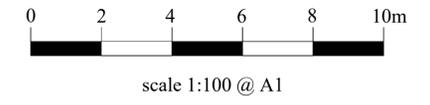
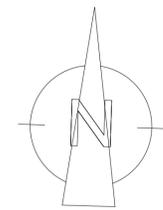
WOULDHAM



scale 1@1250 @ A4

HIGH STREET

GARDEN COURT



**ARCHITECTURAL
DESIGNS**
michael tamsett

Project Shop Conversion

134 High Street
Wouldham

Drawing Title
Proposed Block Plan

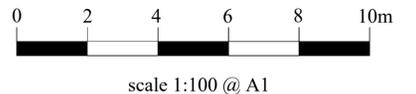
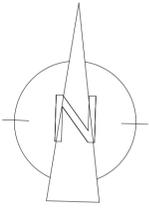
Client
Mr T Tee

Drawing No. 20/2302 **Scale** 1:100

Date August 2020

Drawn by Michael Tamsett

Page Size - A1 
m.tamsett@hotmail.co.uk
01795 554650



**ARCHITECTURAL
DESIGNS**
michael tamsett

Project Shop Conversion

134 High Street
Wouldham

Drawing Title
Proposed Block Plan

Client
Mr T Tee

Drawing No. 20/2303 **Scale** 1:100

Date August 2020

Drawn by Michael Tamsett

Page Size - A1  5000 mm

m.tamsett@hotmail.co.uk
01795 554650