

# Archaeological Watching Brief at The Lime Kiln Farm, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8QN



NGR:

Site code: LKF-WB-22

Planning reference:

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Revision **1.0**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during pond restoration works. Archaeological programme comprised monitoring excavation of two sondages, two ponds and vegetation removal within Pond 3 area which was not further excavated at this stage.

### **1.2 Site Description and Topography**

1.2.1 The site is located to the south-west from village Smarden and comprises rectilinear plot of land fairly parallel to The Cut Road. The site occupies flat and slightly undulated land, the slope gradually descends northwards.

#### **Geology**

1.2.2 The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the site is set on bedrock geology of Weald Clay Formation (Mudstone), a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 125 to 134 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period in a local environment previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

2.1.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is within an Area of Archaeological Potential and a search of the KCCHER highlights that the site has been identified by historical mapping.

### **2.2 Archaeological potential**

The site has a moderate potential for Medieval, Post-Medieval and Late Post Medieval remains. The potential for other periods was described as low.

## **2.3 HER record (immediate surroundings)**

2.3.1 Limekiln Farmhouse TQ 8641 30/70. Probably a C17 or earlier timber-framed building now refaced in pebbledash. Two storeys. Hipped tiled roof with pentice to south. Two casement windows. Listing NGR: TQ8694441309 English Heritage, List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (Map). SKE16160.

2.3.2 FARMSTEAD (Post Medieval - 1540 AD to 1540 AD) Dispersed multi-yard: Altered - partial loss of original form (less than 50%) Large modern sheds built beside the historic farmstead, the farmstead could still be in use. Forum Heritage Services, 2012, Kent Farmsteads & Landscape Project (Unpublished document). SKE18075.

2.3.3 FARMSTEAD (Post Medieval - 1800 AD to 1800 AD) Regular courtyard U-plan with detached elements. Farmhouse: Farmhouse detached gable end-on to yard. Position: Isolated position Survival: Altered - significant loss of original form (more than 50%) Notes: Large L range of linked buildings Forum Heritage Services, 2012, Kent Farmsteads & Landscape Project (Unpublished document). SKE18075. English Heritage, 2009, Historic Farmsteads: A Manual for Mapping (Unpublished document). SKE18076.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **3.1 General Aims**

3.1.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were 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 was made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

### **3.2 Project Specific Aims**

Project specific aims were to establish the original purpose behind pond excavation and to inspect and assess the remains exposed during pond restoration works.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

### **4.2 Fieldwork**

4.2.1 The archaeological contractor will monitor the excavations for all groundworks. Any excavation were undertaken using a flat bladed bucket and preferably in a single direction to enable archaeological remains to be recorded prior to disturbance from being driven over. If possible archaeological remains are encountered; machine excavation will cease to allow the remains to be investigated further.

4.2.2 The archaeologist has inspected the surfaces revealed. Any archaeological structures or features revealed were recorded in plan and section as appropriate. The main contractor allowed the archaeological contractor reasonable time and resources to undertake any inspection or recording required.

4.2.3 Further limited excavation may be necessary to clarify the extent and nature of some archaeological deposits. In this case, the archaeological contractor will undertake the excavation by hand.

4.2.4 If significant remains are unexpectedly encountered the archaeological contractor will inform the County Archaeological Officer and the developer immediately and further mitigation measures will be agreed.

### **4.3 Recording**

4.3.1 All archaeological contexts were recorded individually on context record sheets. A further more general record of the work comprising a description and discussion is included in this report.

4.3.2 A full colour (digital) photographic record of the work is kept and constitutes a part of project archive. The selection of photographic images which reflect the investigation and monitoring undertaken on this site is included in this report.

4.3.3 The site archive, include all project records and cultural material produced by the project and is to be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990). On completion of the project the Developer will arrange for the archive to be deposited in a suitable museum or similar repository to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

#### **4.4 Timetable**

4.4.1 The archaeological monitoring was undertaken on 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February. Site monitoring visits were carried out in all instances by an experienced archaeologist from SWAT Archaeology.

#### **4.5 Monitoring**

4.5.1 No curatorial monitoring visits were carried out during the course of watching brief.

### **5 RESULTS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

5.1.1 SWAT Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during pond restoration works. Archaeological programme comprised monitoring excavation of two sondages, two ponds and vegetation removal within Pond 3 area which was not further excavated at this stage.

#### **5.2 Archaeological Watching Brief**

5.2.1 The Ponds restoration works comprised machine-aided re-excavation of two large sub-oval ponds as indicated on Figure 1.

5.2.2 Excavations were carried out by two 22T tracked excavators of which one was equipped with extra-long arm allowing to reach the very bottom of the re-stored pond. Each machine was equipped with grading ditching bucket.

5.2.3 A backfill sequence revealed in Pond 1 comprised primary fill with deliberated backfill. Primary fill (103) comprised firm, blue-grey waterlogged silty-clay with infrequent calcined lime flecks and lumps. Deposit measured 0.33metre in thickness and was concealed by vast modern backfill context (104) comprising dark brown clay-silt with infrequent angular stones. That was capped by sub-soil (102) and top-soil (101) comprising moderately compacted dark brown clay-silt with infrequent angular stones.

5.2.4 Pond 2. A backfill sequence revealed in Pond 2 comprised primary fill with deliberated backfill. Primary fill (203) comprised firm, blue-grey waterlogged silty clay with infrequent organic remains comprising twigs and leaves. Deposit measured 0.52metres in thickness and was concealed by vast modern backfill context (204) comprising dark brown clay-silt with infrequent angular stones and abundant amount of modern building waste. That was capped by sub-soil (202) and top-soil (201) comprising moderately compacted dark brown clay-silt with infrequent angular stones.

5.2.5 Geoarchaeological test-pit was excavated throughout primary deposits revealed in Pond 2 but neither archaeological remains nor artefacts were revealed.

## **6 FINDS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

6.1.1 No finds apart from modern construction debris was revealed during the course of archaeological monitoring.

6.1.2 A landowner has carried out metal detecting in the immediate surroundings of the ponds and at their bases following machine excavation. A handful of artefacts were retrieved from top-soil but nothing came out of primary fills inside the ponds. The revealed by metal detecting items including silver coins are representing period from 1500 to 1940 AD. (Plates 13-15)

## **7 DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Archaeological Narrative**

7.1.1 Archaeological watching brief at lime Kiln Farm successively fulfilled aims and objectives of archaeological watching brief and recorded modern deliberated backfill deposits capping pond's primary fills which in turn were sealing off the natural geology.

7.1.2 Primary fill exposed in Pond 1 contained infrequent fragments of calcined lime stone what suggests that the pond was still open whilst located nearby lime kiln was still in operation.

### **7.2 Conclusions and Recommendations**

7.2.1 Lack of archaeological finding in all geological test-pits and in spoils derived from Excavated ponds suggest that no significant archaeological remains are present within restored aquatic features therefore no further work is recommended from heritage point of interest.

## **8 ARCHIVE**

### **8.1 General**

8.1.1 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics. The Site Archive will be retained at SWAT Archaeology offices until such time it can be transferred to a designated Kent Museum.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

9.1.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank for commissioning the project. The fieldwork was carried out by Peter Cichy.

9.1.2 On completion of the project, the archaeological contractor is to arrange for the transfer, subject to the landowners consent, of the documentary, photographic and material archive to SWAT Archaeology, and to ensure that the appropriate level of resources for cataloguing, boxing and long term storage are provided for a set fee until such times that designated museum in Kent can accept the archive.

9.1.3 Copies of all reports compiled as a result of the watching brief will be submitted to the developer as CD containing a .pdfA version. In addition a CD containing a .pdfA version of the report and a selection of site photos in jpeg format to be sent to the KCC Archaeological Officer and once approved sent to the KCC HER for inclusion in HER Records.

9.1.4 The work the archaeological contractor is to abide by the Code of conduct and the Codes of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The report was written by: SWAT Archaeology (Peter Cichy) The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8UP Date: 04/04/2022.

## **10 REFERENCES**

## APPENDIX 1 – HER FORM

**Site Name:** Archaeological Watching Brief at Lime Kiln Farm, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8QN

**SWAT Site Code:** LKF-WB-22

**Site Address:** Lime Kiln Farm, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8QN

**Summary:** *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during Pond restoration works at Lime Kiln Farm, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8QN*

*The Archaeological Watching brief was negative throughout the entire course of investigation and recorded modern made up ground capping pond's primary deposits which subsequently concealed natural geology.*

***No further mitigation is proposed***

**District/Unitary:** Ashford Borough Council & Kent County Council

**Period(s):** Late Post Medieval, Modern

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** NGR 587034 141344

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Watching Brief

**Date of recording:** February 2022

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

**Geology:** The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the site is set on bedrock geology of Weald Clay Formation (Mudstone), a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 125 to 134 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period in a local environment previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas.

**Title and author of accompanying report:** SWAT Archaeology (P. Cichy 2022) Archaeological watching brief at Lime Kiln Farm, Smarden, Ashford TN27 8QN

**Location of archive/finds:** SWAT. Archaeology. Graveney Rd, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

## Plates



Plate 1: Aerial footage 1960 showing Lime Kiln Farm and adjacent fields.

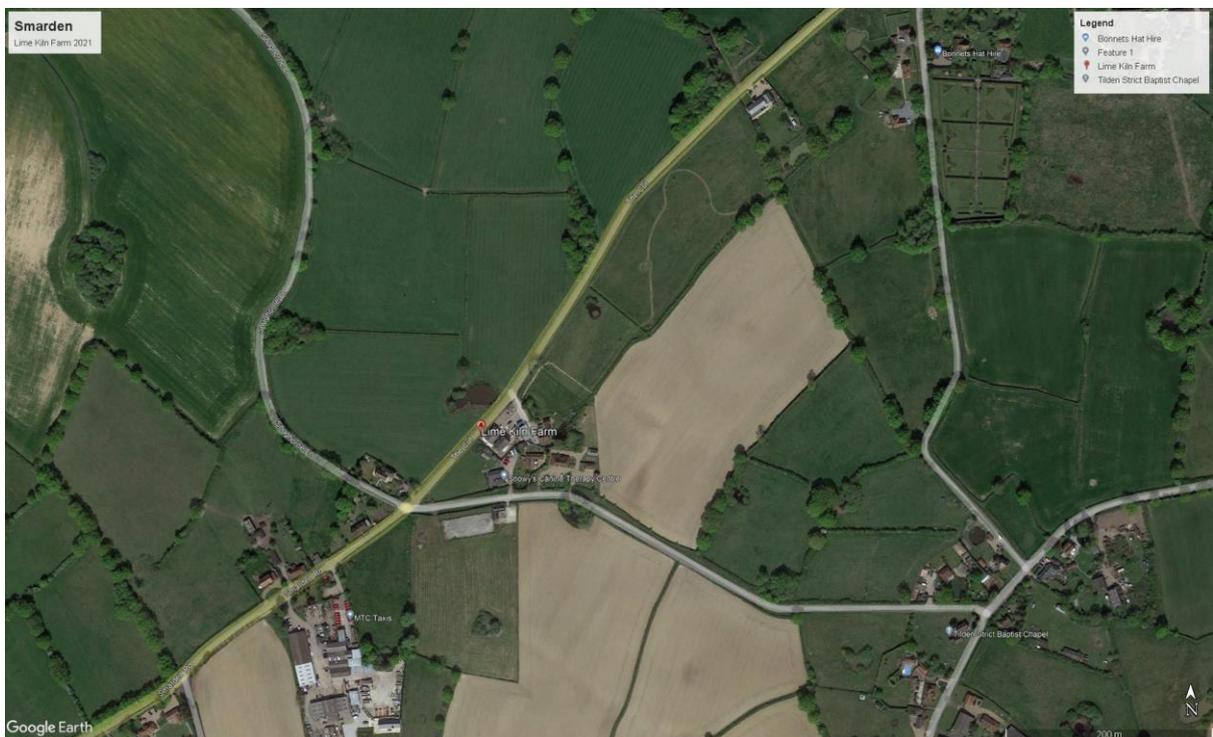


Plate 2: Aerial footage 2021 showing Lime Kiln Farm and adjacent fields.



Plate 3: A sondage was excavated first to establish the location of Pond 1. Lime Kiln Farm, eastern field, looking north with one- and two- metres scales.



Plate 4: Showing revealed primary fill in Pond 1. One and two metres scales.



Plate 5: Closer examination of excavated primary deposit revealed infrequent calcined lime stone (chalk). Red and white scale segments equal 0.2metres.



Plate 6: Showing nearly fully excavated Pond 1 in southern extent of the eastern field. Looking north with two-metre scale.



Plate 7: Showing a dug sondage to establish the location of Pond 2. Looking southwest with one- and two-metres scales.



Plate 8: Backfill sequence in Pond 2 consisted of relatively modern construction waste, including plastic pipes, brick fragments and ferrous objects. Two metre scale



Plate 9: Showing fully excavated Pond 2. Looking west with two-metre scale.



Plate 10: Geoaarchaeological test-pit was excavated through out waterlogged primary deposit in Pond 2. Two metre scale.



Plate 11: Showing primary infill sequence revealed in Pond 2. Looking north with two-metre scale.



Plate 12: Showing vegetation clearance around Pond 3. Backfill contained moderate amount of various metal debris. Further excavation was not carried out at this stage. Looking northeast with two-metre scale.



Plate 13: Revealed during metal detecting. High medieval silver coin dated to 1575.



Plate 14: Anassemblage of artefacts yielded during metal detecting of the field.



Plate 15: A handful of potential machine gun bullets were revealed during metal detecting



Figure 1: Ponds location