

Archaeological Watching Brief at
**WIERTON PLACE,
BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA, MAIDSTONE,
KENT, ME17 4JW**



NGR: 578106 149966
Site code: WBM-WB-21
Planning reference: 17/503852/FULL

Date of report: 22 April 2022
Revision **1.0**

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY
Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company
The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road
Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP
Tel: 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112
info@swatarchaeology.co.uk www.swatarchaeology.co.uk

© SWAT Archaeology 2022 all rights reserved

Conditions of Release

All rights including translation reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission from SWAT Archaeology.

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL	3
3.0 GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	3
4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3
5.0 MONITORED GROUNDWORKS	4
6.0 METHODOLOGY	5
7.0 RECORDING	6
8.0 PROJECT TIME-FRAME	6
9.0 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS	6
10.0 WATCHING BRIEF DIARY	6
11.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	7
12.0 ARCHIVE	7
13.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
Appendix 1 HER Form	8
PLATES	10
FIGURES	13

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site has planning permission (dated 16th August 2018) for the erection of 4no. new dwellings and associated external works. The Local Planning Authority's (Maidstone District Council) planning reference for the proposal is 17/503852/FULL.

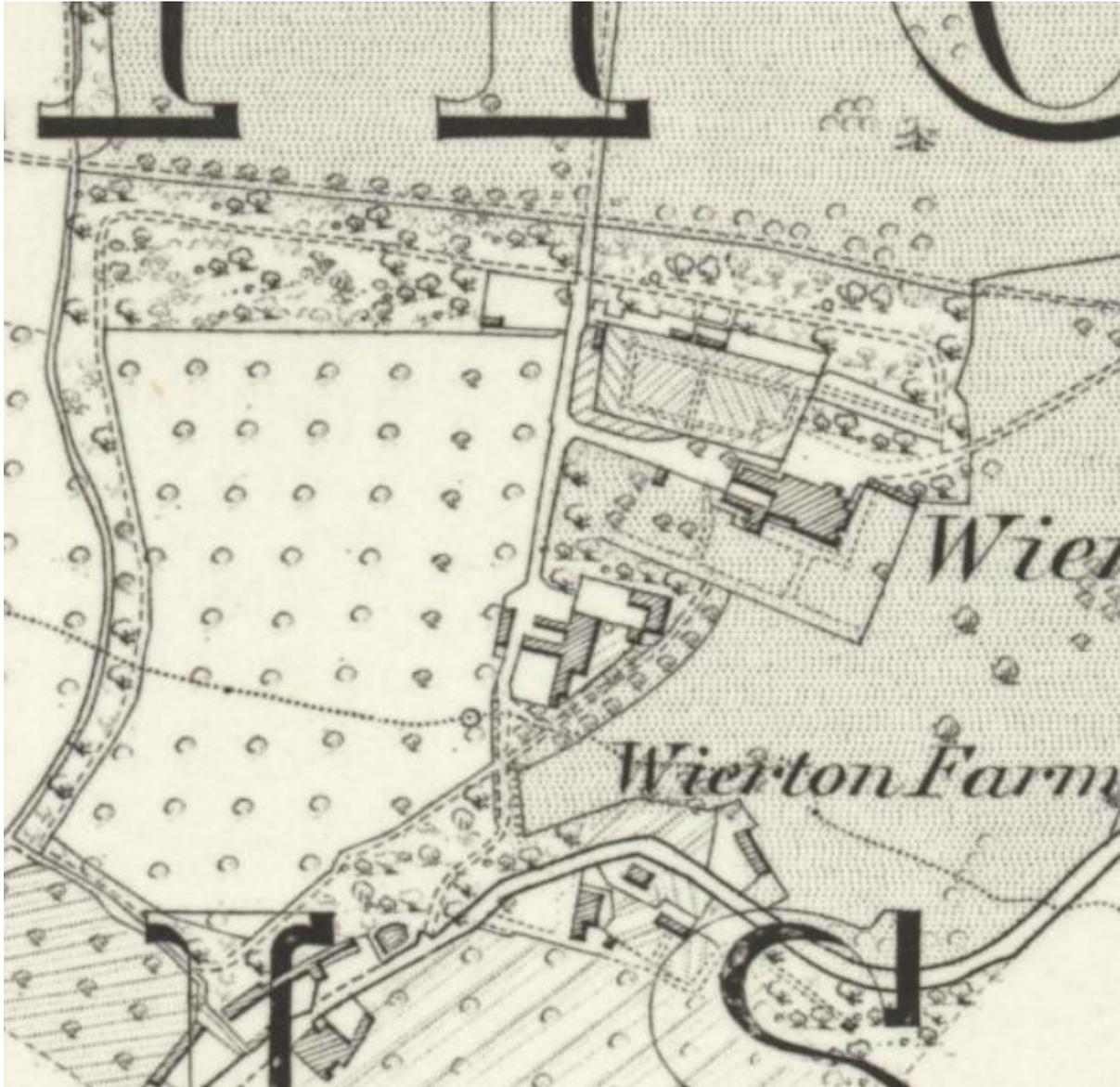
1.2 The following Condition (4) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring was attached to the planning consent:

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 previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: *To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.*

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

2.1 The Archaeological Potential at the site primarily relates to that of Wierton Place and the Post Medieval period. Wierton Place is a Grade II listed (1389637) mid-18th century country house that was altered in the mid-19th century. Wierton Place according to Hasted was built circa 1760 replacing an earlier house situated a little to the north, although the exact location of the earlier dwelling is unknown. The 19th century alterations included the construction of a range of extensive greenhouses attached to a wall and a garden building on the northern side of a walled garden, which are also Grade II listed (1373870). The area of the proposed development is to the north of the walled garden. During the second half of the 20th century, this area was subject to modern outbuildings adjacent to the northern wall of the walled garden with concrete hardstanding to the north. These modern buildings have recently been demolished leaving the concrete hardstanding. The area to the west was the larger house and deer park associated with Boughton Monchelsea place and further west the stately home of Linton Park. The line of the large houses sit on the edge of the Greensand scarp ridge of the North Downs. The area around is one that is rural and scattered farms and was in the late Post Medieval period one of orchards. North of Wierton Place between formal gardens and Back Lane was in the 18th century a wooded area and early historical mapping shows the area of the site was lightly wooded with a track running through the area.



Historical OS Map 1872

2.2 Little is known in respect of the Prehistoric period in the area. Given the rural nature of the immediate area, there has been limited opportunity of archaeological excavations. By Back Lane close to Marlpit Farm, which suggests that chalk quarrying occurred in the area, there are Iron Age earthworks (TQ 75 SE 154) circa 650m north of the site with more earthworks further eastwards along Amber Lane. These earthworks on the high ground form part of the Loose Oppidum. The whole earthwork was built in one period being the second quarter of the 1st century AD, just before the Roman invasion. There is evidence of iron working near Boughton Monchelsea. On this high ground to the north is a later Roman villa site near Park Farm (TQ 75 SE 1). The nearby River Medway was used extensively for ragstone quarrying with one such quarry at Boughton Monchelsea. At Langley to the north of the Site are known Roman cemeteries suggesting Roman activity was concentrated around that area. The HER indicates that the archaeological assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of **high** archaeological potential for the Post Medieval period, **low** for the Prehistoric period, and moderate for the Iron Age and Roman period, with **low** for all other periods. However, given that the majority of the area of the

PDA appears to have been built on, there is likely to have been a high level of disturbance and truncation on any potential archaeology. Any potential remains within the PDA should they survive in-situ will in the majority of the PDA not be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development.

3.0 GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the local geology at the PDA consists Hythe Formation - Sandstone And [Subequal/Subordinate] Limestone, Interbedded. There are no superficial deposits. The PDA sits just to the south of a band of Head - Clay, Silt, Sand And Gravel. However, the low resolution of the BGS mapping (1:50,000) means that it can be difficult to know the exact location of the boundaries of the superficial deposits.

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 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.

5.0 MONITORED GROUNDWORKS

5.1 The groundworks included levelling of the site and foundation trenches for the erections of four detached dwellings, plots 20-24 (Figure 2).

5.2 The archaeologist has clarified the extent of the works with the developer before work begins to ensure that they target their attendance in accordance with the development programme. The archaeologist was maintaining a diary and description of all works observed and these are included in this report.

6.0 METHODOLOGY

6.1 The archaeological contractor was monitoring the excavations of all groundworks.

6.2 The archaeologist has inspected the surfaces revealed. Any archaeological structures or features revealed will be recorded in plan and section as appropriate according to the requirements stated within approved specification.

6.3 All excavations were watched, examined and subsequently photographed using hi-resolution digital SLR camera. Additionally monitored areas were surveyed using a GPS RTK surveying kit achieving centimetre accuracy in relation to National Grid.

7.0 RECORDING

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

8.0 PROJECT TIME-FRAME

8.1 Archaeological watching brief was carried out between September and December 2021. A total of 6 mandays were allocated to oversee groundworks.

9.0 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

9.1 Archaeological watching brief was carried out on land at Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW. The groundworks included levelling of the site and foundation trenches for the erections of four detached dwellings, plots 20-24 (Figure 2).

9.2 Watching brief has exposed natural geology comprising yellow-grey clay-sand-silt with infrequent sandstone flecks capped by top soil and the most recent overburden.

9.3 No archaeological cuts, deposits or artefact were revealed during the course of archaeological watching brief.

9.4 A small quantity of modern dating evidence comprising glass shards, brick fragments and white glazed 'China' ware noted examined and discarded.

10.0 WATCHING BRIEF DIARY

10.1 15 September 2021 overburden clearance

10.2 16 September 2021 top-soil stripping

10.3 15 November 2021 foundations dig

10.4 16 November 2021 foundations dig

10.5 17 November 2021 foundations dig

10.6 December 2021 excavation of drainage and services

11.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

11.1 Watching brief carried out on land at Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW successively fulfilled the aims and objectives of approved specification and reveal common stratigraphic sequence comprising top-soil with made-up ground concealing natural geology.

11.2 No archaeological cut, deposits or artefacts were revealed during the course of archaeological watching brief.

11.3 Parent material (natural geology) was exposed at the depth varying from 0.35metres to 0.44metres below existing ground level.

11.4 General absence of archaeological finding in all examined spoils derived from excavations suggests that no significant archaeological remains are present within proposed development area and that further works won't be having any impact on archaeological resource therefore no further work is recommended in relation to this development.

12.0 ARCHIVE

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

12.2 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.

13.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

13.1 SWAT Archaeology would like to thank to the Developer for commissioning the project. The fieldwork was carried out changeably P Cichy and B Cichy.

13.2 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.

13.3 The archaeological contractor is to allow the site records to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time, during or after the evaluation, by the developer, and the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer.

13.4 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.

13.5 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: 22/04/2022.

APPENDIX 1 – HER FORM

Site Name: Wierton Place

SWAT Site Code: WBM-WB-21

Site Address: Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW

Summary: *Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned by The Client to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW. The archaeological programme was monitored by the Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council. The Archaeological Watching brief was negative throughout the entire course of investigation and recorded topsoil concealing natural geology.*

No further work is proposed

District/Unitary: Maidstone Borough Council & Kent County Council

Period(s): modern

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 578106 149966

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: September-December 2021

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

Geology: Hythe Formation - Sandstone And [Subequal/Subordinate] Limestone, Interbedded. Superficial Deposits are not recorded.

Title and author of accompanying report: SWAT Archaeology (P. Cichy 2022) Archaeological watching brief at the Caravan Storage Area, Otterham Quay Industrial Estate, Otterham Quay Lane, Upchurch, Kent ME8 7UX

Location of archive/finds: Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Plates



Plate 1: The site looking east prior to the clearance of overburden.



Plate 2: Looking south at commencing topsoil strip.



Plate 3: Showing the strip. Looking west.



Plate 4: Aerial view of exposed site.



Plate 5: Excavation of foundations. Looking east with one- and two metre scales.



Plate 5: Excavated foundations. Looking southwest with one- and two metre scales.

Figures



Figure 1: Site Location

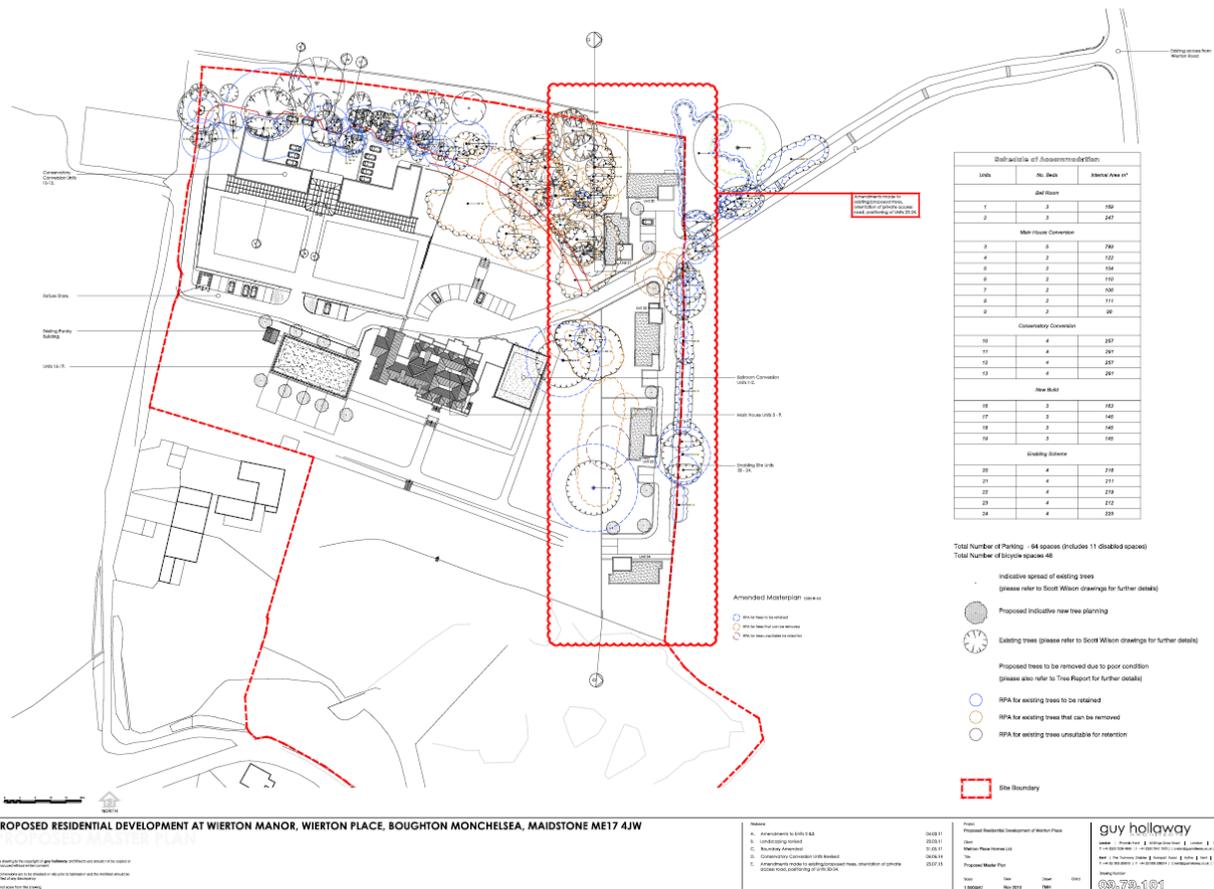


Figure 2: Proposed development