

# Archaeological Monitoring on land at Checksfield Farm, Preston Hill Lane, Tenterden, Ashford, Kent

Planning Application Number: PA/2022/2580

Site Code: CHECK/WB/23



Date of report 28/09/2023

## **SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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## **1. Summary**

*In late August 2023 SWAT Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Checksfield Farm, Tenterden in Kent. The works were commissioned by the landowner and carried out during the excavation of ground works associated with the new development of the removal of existing building and erection of replacement timber building to be used as ancillary annexe accommodation.*

*The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with an archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation provided by KCC Heritage.*

*Despite the potential for the presence and survival of archaeological remains, no archaeological features or finds were recorded during the archaeological monitoring works.*

## **2.0 Introduction**

The proposed development area (PDA) is situated on land to the rear of Checksfield Farm, Tenterden in Kent. The NGR to the centre of the site is 590199 133198 (Figures 1-2).

### **2.2 Planning Background**

The land has a planning permission for the removal of the existing building and erection of replacement building to be used as ancillary accommodation. The Local Planning Authority's (Ashford Borough Council) planning reference for the proposal is PA/2022/2580

The following Condition (9) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring was attached to the planning consent:

*(9) Prior to commencement of development 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 groundworks are observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.*

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

## **3.0 Schedule of Visits**

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA) and closely monitored the excavation works on the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

### **4.1 Aims and Objectives**

4.1. The specific aims of the archaeological work and objectives of the monitoring were therefore to:

- To ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the

appropriate publication of the project results, if required;

- To secure the analysis, long term conservation and storage of the project archive.

4.2 The specific archaeological requirements of the watching brief are summarised below;

- Monitoring of all ground works;
- Mitigation by a programme of archaeological excavation and recording in the event that additional archaeological remains are encountered;
- Post-excavation and publication, where required.

4.2. Proposed Groundworks.

The ground works were to excavate the ground for a pre-fabricated wooden cabin which would sit on the ground without any traditional foundations (Plate 7. Figures 1-3).

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 geology of the site according to the British Geological Survey is Wadhurst Clay Formation- Mudstone. The Ordnance Datum for the site is about 55m aOD.

5.2 The proposed development area (PDA) is within an Area of Archaeological Potential and a search of the KCCHER highlights that the site itself Checksfield Farm is a dispersed multiyard farmstead (MKE 81324. About 80m to the south is Maynards Farm a dispersed multi-yard farmstead and about 300m to the west is the site of Priory Farmhouse which is part of Finden Manor (TQ 93 SW 156).

## **6.0 Methodology**

6.1. The Archaeological Investigations were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Watching Brief Specification provided by KCC Heritage.

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. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (CIfA 2017).

6.3. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCI(A)).

6.4. Where possible some areas of excavation were subsequently closely examined with the intention of revealing any observed features in plan and section but no features were revealed.

6.5. 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.

6.6 Excavation of the area for the erection of a prefabricated timber building (Plate 7) was carried out by building contractors digging with a small machine (Plates 1-6). All areas of excavation were carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist and inspected and recorded by the archaeologist in attendance (See Table 1, below).

### **6.8 Timetable**

Archaeological monitoring was carried out on the following day;

<i>Task</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Archaeological monitoring	30th August 2023	Paul Wilkinson SWAT

**Table 1 Attendance Schedule**

## 6.9 Recording

6.9.1 A complete drawn record comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. Where appropriate, the plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights and form part of the site archive.

6.9.2 Photographs were to be taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated footings but no features or archaeological deposits were revealed. The record also includes images of the site overall. The photographic record comprises digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the project archive (Plates 1-6).

6.9.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Table 2 below. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (001), whilst the cut of any features is shown [100]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes.

6.9.4 Stratigraphic Sequence

6.9.5 The stratigraphic sequence recorded during the archaeological works remained relatively consistent across all areas of the site, comprising areas of subsoil. The following table provides detailed description of each stratigraphic context.

6.9.6

<i>Context Number</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
001	Topsoil	Overburden (Plates 1-3)

002	Brown sandy subsoil	Natural (Plates 2-6)
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*Table 2 Stratigraphic Sequence and Register of Contexts*

6.10. The site produced no archaeological features or deposits or finds and no environmental potential was recognised on site.

The Site Archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2017). 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 and CD for photo archive.

### **6.11 Results**

6.11.1 No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The natural geology encountered across the site was brown sandy subsoil. No archaeological features were revealed in the subsoil or natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the area watched (Figures 1-4). The site reduction was about 0.3 m deep with topsoil about 20cm thick. OD height across the PDA was about 55m aOD (Plates 1-6). Overall areas watched were the footprint of the proposed timber building (Figures 1-3).

### **7.0 Finds**

No finds were retrieved.

### **8.0 Discussion**

The development site is in an area of high archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

### **9.0 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.

## 10.0 Acknowledgments

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the landowner/developer for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

## 11.0 REFERENCES

ADS 2013. *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice*, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, updated 1st October 2020 *Standard and guidance: for watching Brief*.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, updated 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*.

SMA 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*, Society of Museum Archaeologists.

## Appendix 1 KCCHER Summary Form

**Site Name:** Development of land to the rear of Checksfield Farm, Preston Hill Lane, Tenterden  
Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** CHECK/WB/23

**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 the KCC Archaeological Officer 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:** Ashford Borough Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 590199 133198

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

**Date of recording:** August 2023

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

**Geology:** Bedrock geology of Wadhurst Clay Formation- Mudstone

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2023) Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Checksfield Farm, Preston Hill Lane, Tenterden, 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. Setting out and starting ground reduction (looking SW)



Plate 2. Ground reduction (looking West)



Plate 3. Ground reduction (looking West)



Plate 4. Ground reduction (looking SSE)



Plate 5. Ground reduction completed (looking North)



Plate 6. Water/sewage existing supply location (looking East)



Plate 7. Proposed style of build



Figure 1. OS map of site location at NGR 590199 133198

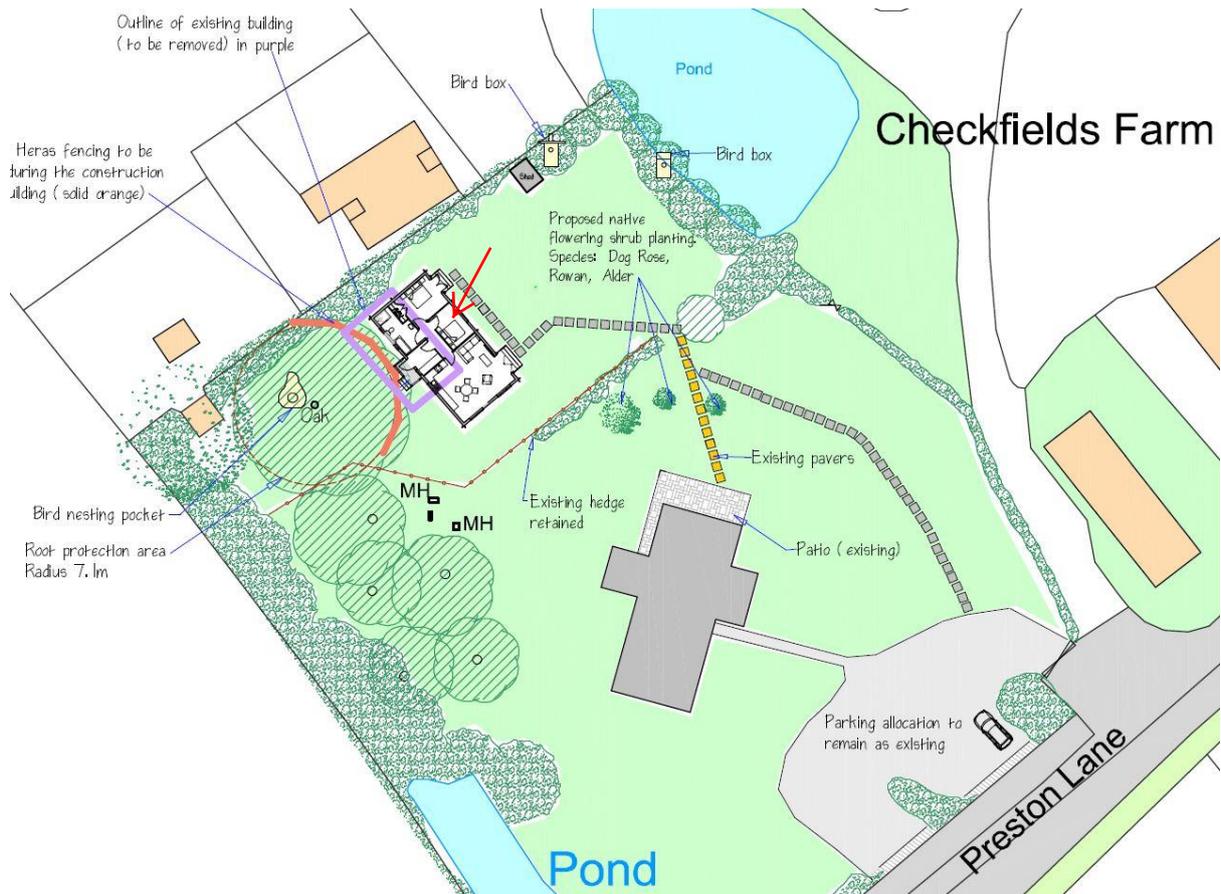


Figure 2. Proposed development (red arrow))



AP 1. Area prior to redevelopment- red arrow (Google Earth 2022)

