

Archaeological Monitoring at  
Invicta Grammer School, Huntsman Lane,  
Maidstone, Kent

NGR: 577076 155868  
Site Code GEE/WB/13



Date of Report: 16/04/2013

Report for Owen Sheppard Gee

**SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY**

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**Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red circle Area 1, green circle Area 2) showing the site prior to development. (GoogleEarth 2013).**

## 1.0 Summary

1.1. From March 27th to the 5th April 2013 Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the redevelopment works at Invicta Grammar School for Girls at Huntsman Lane, Maidstone, Kent (Fig. 1 & Plate 1).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the owners and instructions received from Owen Sheppard Gee, Unit 2a, Briar Close, Wye, Kent.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the machine reduction of both sites Area 1 & Area 2. (Plate 3-4).

The archaeological work was undertaken in two phases.

Phase 1: Excavation of tarmac and topsoil for the new building platform.

Phase 2: Excavation of tree stumps and soakaway pits (Plate 5).

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any archaeological below ground impact.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is: MA/12/0529.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential was low to medium the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 Planning Background

Planning application MA/12/0529 for the erection of a new two storey classroom block and a three storey classroom block for Valley Park School was submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (8) was attached to the planning consent:

*No development shall take place until the applicant(s), 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 specification and timetable 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 attended the site and monitored the excavation works from March 27<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

### **4.0 Aims and Objectives**

4.1. The reason for the monitoring and recording, were to:

*“Contribute to knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the ground works. Particular attention will be paid to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.”*

4.2. The ground works were to excavate two platforms to enable piling and the construction of two classroom blocks and associated drainage and landscaping (Plates 3-4).

4.3. A full programme of proposed works by the contractor were made available to SWAT Archaeology before the on-site monitoring took place (Fig. 2).

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 map is Hythe Beds (BSG website 1: 50,000). The geology revealed on site (Area 1) was a mix of Hythe Beds, sand, silt & clay.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area of tennis courts adjacent to existing classroom blocks. The site itself is generally level at a height of about 34-35m aOD.

5.3. The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential associated with archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER. A WW2 anti-tank ditch was revealed in a Archaeological Watching Brief at the school (HER No: TQ 75 NE 49). In the vicinity of the development site have been found the remains of a Roman cemetery (HER No: TQ 75 NE 52) and a Belgic cremation (HER No: TQ 75 NE 71).

### **6.0 Methodology**

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC Heritage and it also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA: 1994, revised Oct 2008).

6.2. The works comprised the observation of all ground works, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

6.3. The Watching Brief was carried out in one phase according to the needs of the building contractors from March 27<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

6.4. Excavation of the two areas of development was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothless bucket (Plates 3, 4, 5).

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 watching brief was carried out in accordance with current IfA Standards and Guidance, (IfA: 2008), and generic methodology discussed with Archaeological Officers, KCC.

## **7.0 Results**

### **7.1 General**

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site Hythe Beds of stone, silt and clay overlaid by tarmac scrapings and crushed concrete pieces with no archaeological features revealed in the natural geology (Plate 3).

## **8.0 Finds**

No buried archaeological features were located in the Archaeological Monitoring phase and no finds were retrieved.

## **9.0 Discussion**

The development site is in an area of low to medium potential and the archaeological team were somewhat disappointed that no archaeology was revealed on the development site. Area 1 excavated down to the natural geology with no archaeology exposed whilst the Area 2 reduction was only down to below the tarmac capping of the relict tennis courts.

## **10.0 Conclusion**

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the 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 Owen Sheppard Gee for commissioning the project.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. It is enclosed within a thin, double-lined rectangular border.

Dr Paul Wilkinson, FRSA., MIfA.

## **References**

HER data (KCC 2013)

IFA (1994 & 2008) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2013)

## **Appendix 1**

### **Kent County Council HER Summary Form**

**Site Name:** Development site at Invicta Grammer School for Girls, Huntsman Lane, Maidstone, Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** GEE/WB/13

**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 a new build classroom buildings whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that Archaeological Monitoring be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of site visits which encountered no buried archaeological features or artefacts.

**District/Unitary:** Maidstone Borough Council

**Period(s):**

**NGR (centre of site to eight figures)** 577076 155868

**Type of Archaeological work:** Archaeological Monitoring

**Date of recording:** March/April 2013

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

**Geology:** Underlying geology is Hythe Beds, sand, silt and clay.

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2013) Archaeological Monitoring at Invicta Grammer School for Girls, Maidstone, 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

**Contact at Unit:** Paul Wilkinson

**Date:** 16/04/2013



## Plates



**Plate 2. General view of site (Area 2) with tarmac about to be excavated, facing north**



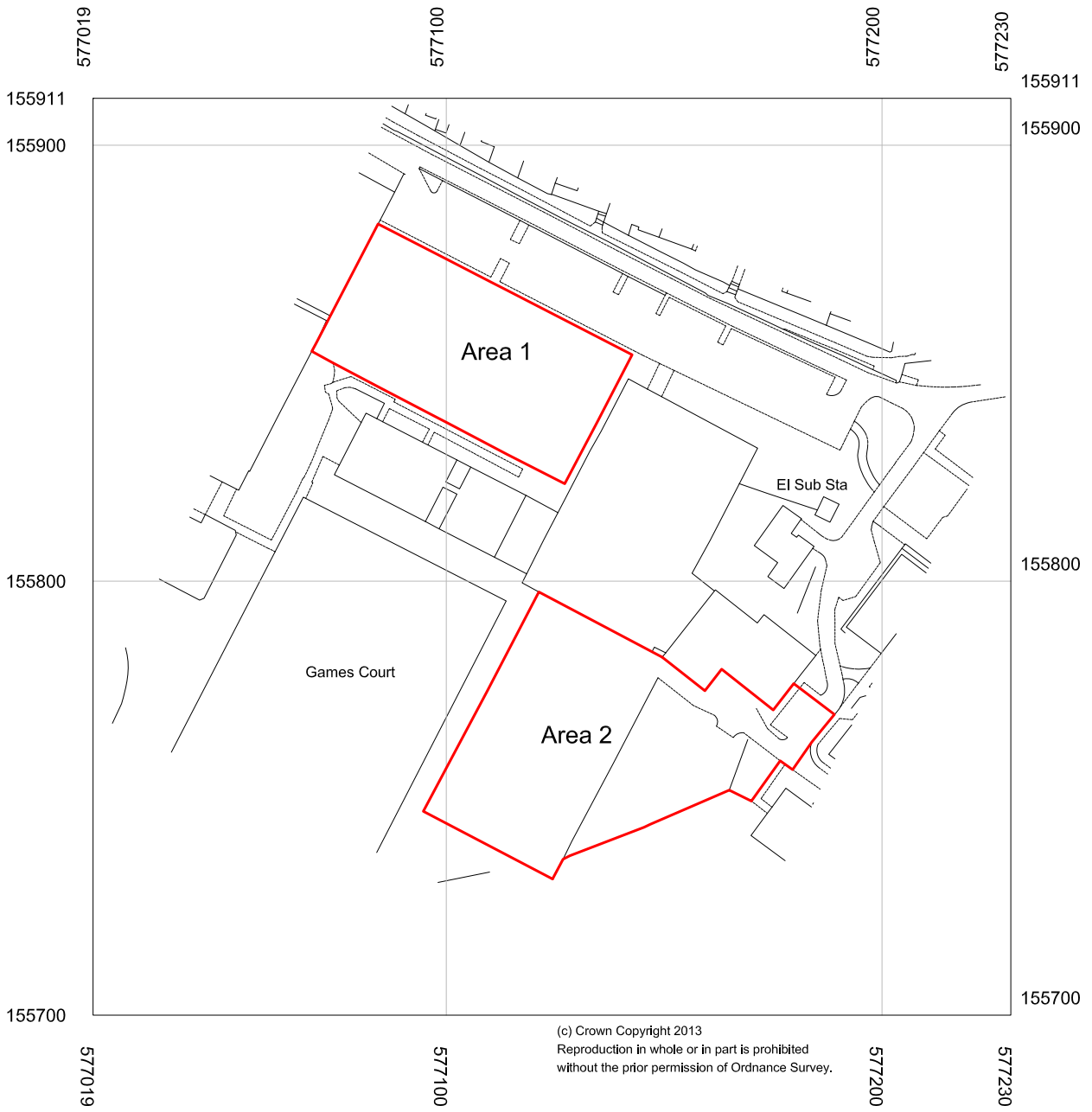
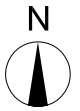
**Plate 3. The site showing ground strip (Area 1) facing north-west**



**Plate 4. Area strip (Area 2) showing depth of removal required (facing south)**



**Plate 5 Excavation of soakaways (Area 2)**



1:1500@A4



Figure 1: Location of Site

0m

150m

