

Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief of Land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road and Parham Close, Canterbury, Kent



NGR: 615806 158866

Site Code: PAR/EV/16

(Planning Application: CA/13/01262/OUT)

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation and watching brief of land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road, Canterbury in Kent in October and December 2016. A Planning Application (CA/14/00032/FUL) to develop this site for the erection of terraced housing to Canterbury City Council, whereby the Council requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken in order to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT Specification A and CCC Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The results of the excavation of one evaluation trench revealed that Early Medieval and Medieval archaeological features were present within the trench (Figure 2). The natural geology of Clay and Silt was reached at an average depth of between 0.45m and 0.50m below ground level (BGL). The follow on Watching Brief confirmed the extent of the features (Figure 4). The Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specifications (SWAT 2016).

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the land owners to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the above site. The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within an Archaeological Specification (SWAT & CCC 2016) and in discussion with Rosanne Cummings Archaeological Heritage Officer, Canterbury City Council. The evaluation was carried out on the 21st October 2016 and revealed two features and the subsequent Watching Brief on the 8th and 9th December 2016 allowed the full planning of the exposed features (Figure 4).

3. Site Description and Topography

The site is located on ground to the west of the Roman road leading eastwards from Canterbury to Thanet. The site is situated on river gravel terraces leading down to the Great Stour.

4. Planning Background

Canterbury City Council gave planning permission (CA/13/01262/OUT) for development of land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road, Canterbury, Kent.

On the advice of Rosanne Cummings, Archaeological Heritage Officer (CCC) a programme of archaeological works in the form of an initial archaeological evaluation was attached to the consent:

(Condition 15) No development shall take place until the applicant or the developer, or their successor(s) in title has secured, firstly, the implementation of an archaeological evaluation of the site, to be undertaken for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of any buried archaeological features and deposits and to assess the importance of the same, secondly, implementation of any mitigation measures, including further archaeological work that may be required as a result of the evaluation, to safeguard the preservation of archaeological remains; and thirdly a programme of post-excavation analysis and publication of any matters of archeological interest. All archaeological works to be carried out in accordance with written programmes and schemes of work that have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

REASON: To ensure a proper record of matters of archaeological interest.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 The Archaeological record, both in and around the Proposed Development Area (PDA) is diverse. Archaeological investigation of the adjacent sites of 107 and 8-12 Albert Mews was undertaken in August and October-November 2006 prior to construction. The investigations recorded the outline of a segmented rectangular enclosure, represented by a series of linear intercutting ditches, of probable prehistoric date. There was little evidence for activity during the Roman period, but the western end of the site was occupied by a group of quarry pits bounded on the east by a pair of boundary ditches aligned at right angles to Sturry Road, all of which can be dated to the medieval period between 1150 and 1300. In addition a group of medieval refuse pits and timber structures were recorded all of medieval date. The main excavation area was across 1-7 Albert Mews.

5.2 No follow on work besides an evaluation was undertaken across the site of 8-12 Albert Mews. Additional investigations have been undertaken in February 2013 on a plot to the rear of Colton House, Parham Road. Detailed information is not available, but the investigations recorded a series of intercutting ditches delineating sections of enclosures, open in the early Roman period, second century AD, as well as number of other features including pits. Similar features of Roman and medieval date may be expected to occur across the adjacent land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road.

5.3 The underlying geology is mapped as Bedrock Geology of Thanet Formation- Sand, Silt, and Clay. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 56 to 59 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period. Superficial Deposits are Alluvium- Clay, Silty, Peaty, Sandy, Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (www.bgs.ac.uk/lexicon.cfm).

5.4 The OD height of the proposed site is about 12m AOD and the site is considered to be in the Gravel Terraces above the River Stour flood plain (Plate 1 & Fig.1).

6. Aims and Objectives

According to the SWAT Archaeological Specification, the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were to ensure that the:

The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation is to establish or otherwise the presence of any potential archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed development. Also to find out the depths of features below the surface, how much overburden and the extent of the depth of deposits themselves. In addition the dates and quality of any archaeological remains which will be achieved through a limited sample excavation of features. Human remains will not be excavated (see also CCC Evaluation Specification Part B: 4. Objectives).

7. Methodology

7.1 The Archaeological Specification called for an evaluation by trial trenching comprising a first phase of one trench within the footprint of the proposed housing development. A 2.5 ton 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and subsoil to expose the natural geology and/or the archaeological horizon. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the SWAT & CCC specification.

7.2 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits, and context recording numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes. These are used in the report and shown in **bold**. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC, SWAT and ClfA standards and guidance.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The evaluation has identified two archaeological features within the one trench (Figure 1 & Plate 5).

Trench 1

9.1 The plan is recorded in Figure 1 (see also Plates 2-5). The trench lay on an NE to SW alignment and measured approximately 13.5m by 1.20m.

Undisturbed natural geology (**102**) was identified across the trench as dark brown orange sandy silty clay, at a depth of approximately 0.50m AOD below the present ground surface at

12.56m AOD at the SW end of the trench. The natural geology was sealed by a clean layer of sandy silty clay **(101)** 0.25m thick, and above this topsoil **(100)**. Cutting into the natural geology in the SW area of the trench was a linear feature **[104]** infilled with a gritty dark grey brown sandy silty soil (Figure 3). Five pottery sherds recovered from this fill **(103)** are one sherd of EM-M Canterbury shell-tempered ware (c.1175-1225/1250 AD). Two M Canterbury Tyler Hill shell-dusted sandy ware (c.1200-1225/1250) both from the same vessel and two M Canterbury Tyler Hill shell-dusted sandy ware (c.1200-1225/1250), again both from the same vessel.

At the NE end of the trench a sub-circular pit was revealed of about 48cm in width and about 18cm in depth (Figure 3) infilled with a medium to dark grey brown sandy silty soil **(105)**. Two pottery sherds were recovered from the fill are again EM-M Canterbury sandy ware (c.1150-1200/1250 AD).

10. Discussion

With some archaeological sites in the vicinity of the development site it was expected that the evaluation may produce evidence of archaeological activity. In consultation with the Canterbury City Council Archaeological Officer it was agreed to expand the investigation into a Watching Brief (Plates 6-7) and the site was reduced revealing the medieval ditch running in a NW-SE direction and parallel with the postulated alignment of the Roman road to the SE. No more pits were uncovered in the strip map exercise.

11. Finds

Overall 7 sherds weighing 32gms were recovered during this excavation. Only two archaeological periods are represented- Early Medieval and Medieval. Both ceramic producing contexts **(103)** and **(105)** stem from features that represent a fairly narrow chronological frame of c.150 years at most and perhaps no more than 25 years. The three vessels from Context **(103)** have all been used for cooking with the earliest fairly heavily soot-blackened and its interior surface shell content leached out as a by-product of boiling water. There are no recommendations from Nigel Macpherson-Grant, the analyst for any further work.

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trench at the proposed development site revealed two archaeological features which were later during the watching brief phase of the works were planned in and photographed.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of topsoil **(100)** sealing alluvial silt **(101)** which overlay the natural geology **(102)** which had two 12th-13th century features cut into the natural geology. Therefore, this archaeological work has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the planning condition and the Archaeological Specification.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Rosanne Cummings Archaeological Officer, Canterbury City Council. Site excavation and survey was by Faye Wills and the project was managed and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Paul Wilkinson

27/01/2017

14. References

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2014). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

SWAT Archaeology (2016) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road and Parham Close, Canterbury, Kent*

CCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC and Historic England HER Data 2016

Canterbury City Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road and Parham Close, Canterbury, Kent

SWAT Site Code: PAR/EV/16

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief on the development site above. The site has planning permission for residential housing whereby Canterbury City Council requested that Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Evaluation revealed medieval archaeology.

District/Unitary: Canterbury City Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 615806 158866

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief

Date of recording: October and December 2016

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Alluvium and Clay and Silt

Title and author of accompanying report: SWAT Archaeology (2016) Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the rear of 107-113 Sturry Road and Parham Close, Canterbury, Kent

Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)

Two features, a linear and pit dating to EM and M were found and sampled.

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 27/01/2017



Plate 1. Location of trench



Plate 2. Trench 1. [104]



Plate 3. Excavated linear[104]



Plate 4. Feature [106]



Plate 5. Excavated trench (looking NE)



Plate 6. Watching Brief (looking SW) and below Plate 7

