Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Lane, Eastry, near Sandwich, Kent



NGR: 630680 155220

Site Code: SHE/EV/17

Planning Application: DOV/17/00267

August 2017

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Lane, Eastry in Kent. A Planning Application (DOV/17/00267) to develop this site for the erection of 3 no. detached dwellings, new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and associated car parking and landscaping went to Dover District 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 (KCC 2017) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The Archaeological Evaluation revealed the presence of a single, E-W oriented undated chalk block wall.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the developer 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 (KCC 2017, see Appendix 2) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Heritage Officer, Kent County Council. The evaluation was carried out on the 18th and 28th July 2017.

3. Site Description and Topography

The proposed development site is located on land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Lane, Eastry near Sandwich in Kent. The proposed development fronts onto Gore Lane to the east and is bounded by neighbouring residential properties (Sunhillow) to the south and (Halsted) to the north (Figure 1). To the west the site is bounded by farmland. The site currently comprises a mix of scrub and rough grassland bounded by established tree and hedges over

an area measuring 1,223sq.m. The Ordnance Survey grid reference for the site is NGR 630680 155220.

On the basis of current information from British Geological Society (online reference), the site lies on Bedrock Geology of White Chalk of the Margate Chalk Member. The superficial deposits are undifferentiated Clay and Silt Head Deposits. Ground levels are 15.65m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the centre of the site.

4. Planning Background

The land has planning permission (DOV/17/00267) for the erection of 3 no. detached dwellings, new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and associated car parking and landscaping was granted by the Local Planning Authority under planning reference number DOV/17/00267. On the basis of the present archaeological information, the Archaeological Officer for Dover District Council recommended that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological work in order to clarify the historical and archaeological elements within the site. Condition 12 of the planning permission states:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has 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.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

The Kent County Council Historic Environment Record (KCCHER) and KCC produced Specification (Appendix 2) has provided details of any previous investigations and discoveries. The potential of this area has been assessed in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains and Eastry is archaeologically important because of its location adjacent to the former Dover to Richborough Roman road and due to the settlement's significance in the early medieval period. The palace or 'Villa Regalis' relating to Egbert, King of Kent c.690 AD is thought, though not proven, to lie in the vicinity of St Mary's Church and

Eastry Court Farm. Four separate cemeteries dating from the early medieval period are also recorded in and around the periphery of the present village.

6. Aims and Objectives

According the KCC Archaeology Specification (Appendix 2), the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were to ensure that:

"The aim of the evaluation work is to determine whether any archaeological remains survive on site. Assessment of the results should provide guidance on what mitigation measures would be appropriate. Such measures may, for example, include safeguarding measures, further detailed archaeological excavation prior to development and/or an archaeological watching brief during construction work. This specification sets out the requirements for trial trenching on the site only. Further measures will be subject to other documents or specifications which will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The evaluation is thus to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site." (KCC 2017, Appendix 2).

7. Methodology

In accordance with the KCC Specification the evaluation consisted of 3 machine excavated trenches as shown on Figure 2. Each trench was machine excavated down to natural geological horizons. An additional allowance of 10m of contingency trenching was allowed for and could be activated following agreement with the KCC Archaeological Officer, if required.

Each trench was initially scanned for surface finds prior to excavation. Excavation was carried out using a 360^o mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, removing the overburden to the top of the first recognisable archaeological horizon, under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

Where appropriate, trenches were subsequently hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were 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. All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with KCC and CIfA standards and guidance.

A complete drawn record of the evaluation trenches comprising both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) was undertaken. The plans and sections were annotated with coordinates and aOD heights.

Photographs were taken as appropriate providing a record of excavated features and deposits, along with images of the overall trench to illustrate their location and context. 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.

A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. Layers and fills are identified in this report thus (100), whilst the cut of the feature is shown [100]. Context numbers were assigned to all deposits for recording purposes; these are used in the report (in bold). Each number has been attributed to a specific trench with the primary number(s) relating to specific trenches (*i.e.* Trench 1, 101+, Trench 2, 201+, Trench 3, 301+ etc.).

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was carried out on the 27/07/17 by the Principal Archaeological Officer for KCC, during which time all methodologies and results were discussed. It was agreed that further examination of a potential foundation/wall (see Trench 2 below) was to be carried out and recommendations that when producing the report of the evaluation particular attention is paid to the historic maps and aerial photographs to determine any building history on the plot (subsequently confirmed in an email, Simon Mason, 28/07/17).

9. Results

Three evaluation trenches (Figure 2) were excavated under constant archaeological supervision.

Trench 1, which measured 17.8m by 1.6m, was cut on a NNE/SSW alignment and was located in the eastern extent of the site while Trench 2, which measured 19.47m by 1.6m

was located in the southern area of the site, on a WNW/ESE alignment. Trench 3 measured 19.3m by 1.6m and was excavated in the eastern extent of the site. The evaluated area was therefore 90.51sq.m (7.4% of the total site area).

Trench 1 (Figure 3, Plates 8-10 inclusive)

The trench measured 1.6x17.8m. Trench 1 exposed the Margate Chalk geology intersected by several features which on investigation turned out to be periglacial. No archaeology was revealed.

- (101) Top-soil
- (102) Sub-soil
- (103) Rolling chalk/ head Pale orange brickearth
- (104) Solid chalk geology
- [105] Cut of natural geological feature (periglacial)

Trench 2 (Figure 4, Plates 11-13 and 18-19 inclusive)

Measured 1.6x19.47m

Trench 2 exposed solid chalk geology (204) capped by head deposit (203). Within the eastern extent of the trench a disintegrated chalk wall (207) was present (Figure 4) accommodated within construction cut [205]. The foundation trench was partially back-filled by context (206), comprising moderately compacted, dark-grey, clay-silt with moderate flint cobbles. Remaining areas of the evaluation trench exposed a modern water main and several shallow modern intrusions.

- (201) Top-soil
- (202) Sub-soil
- (203) Rolling chalk/head Pale orange brickearth
- (204) Solid chalk geology
- [205] Cut for wall construction

(206) back-fill. Dark grey clay-silt with infrequent flint cobbles.

(207) Wall deposit. Squared small to medium size chalk blocks. As a bonding material – clutch (chalky paste)

Trench 3 (Figure 5, Plates 14-17 and 20-21 inclusive)

Measured 1.6x19.3m

Within Trench 3, Head geology (303) was exposed with only small bedrock outcrop (304) in southern part of evaluation trench. Modern refuse pits, chalk and demolition dumps were exposed and investigated in this trench. Pit [305] was sub-oval in plan with vertical sides and flat base. Its backfill consisted of humic soil with modern demolition debris and glass.

Rubbish Pit [307] was sub-oval in plan with very steep sides and mainly flat base. Its back-fill context (308) comprised dark brown clay-silt with modern roof tiles, glass and crushed bricks.

Only modern and natural features were revealed in Trench 3

(301) Top-soil

(302) Subsoil

(303) Natural Orange brickearth

(304) Chalk bedrock

[305] Modern pit cut

(306) Back-fill of 305

[307] Cut of modern rubbish pit

(308) Back-fill of 307

(309) chalk and demolition dump

10. Finds

With the exception of modern material recorded within Trench 3, no archaeological finds were retrieved during this evaluation. All modern material was discarded following recording.

11. Environmental

No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were present during the evaluation.

12. Discussion

A consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising topsoil overlying subsoil which sealed the natural geology.

The only feature of archaeological interest was recorded in Trench 2 and comprised an E-W orientated chalk block wall. A cartographic assessment of the site has been carried out, with historic Ordnance Survey maps provided below (Figures 6-14 & Plates 1-6) and appears to be very little evidence to suggest the presence of a building or boundary wall since the late 19th century. This is confirmed by a very detailed map from Hasted's "History and Topographical Survey Of Kent" (dated to 1778). It is therefore possible that it predates the 18th century and certainly the 19th century, unless it is associated with a small temporary structure not present during surveys. The orientation of the wall is of interest, being perpendicular to, and therefore respecting, the adjacent Gore Lane. It is therefore recommended that any additional archaeological work, should it be necessary, takes into consideration historic maps pre-dating the 19th century which may provide an idea as to the provenance of the wall.

13. Conclusion

The evaluation trenches at the proposed development site revealed no significant archaeological features or artefacts.

The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification and identified intact structural deposits preserved *in situ* at a level of approximately 15.5m aOD within the southern extent of the site, adjacent to Gore

Lane. Development proposals, which comprise the construction of new domestic premises are therefore likely to impact on archaeological remains. Further archaeological mitigation, should it be necessary, will need to be determined in consultation with the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer and local planning authority.

This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work will be used to aid and inform the Archaeological Officer (KCC) of any further archaeological mitigation measures that may be necessary in connection with any future development proposals.

14. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks, are also extended to Ben Found, Senior Archaeological Officer and Simon Mason, Principal Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council for their advice and guidance. Site survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Peter Cichy. The report was prepared by Peter Cichy and edited by David Britchfield BA MCIfA. The project was managed by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

15. References

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Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)

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KCC Specification A and Manual Part B

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

SMA 1995. Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive, Society of Museum Archaeologists

Appendix 1 – KCC HER Form

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site at land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Road, Eastry, near Sandwich, Kent. The site has planning permission for residential housing whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) recommended to the LPA that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Evaluation revealed the presence of a single, E-W oriented undated chalk block wall.

District/Unitary: Dover District Council Period(s): NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 630680 155220 Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation Date of recording: July 2017 Unit undertaking recording: Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT. Archaeology) Geology: Underlying geology is Head Chalk

Title and author of accompanying report: SWAT Archaeology (2017) Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Lane, near Sandwich, Kent

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

Some undated chalk block foundations were found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson **Date:** 18/09/2017

Appendix 2 – KCC Specification

SITE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

<u>Specification for an archaeological evaluation of land adjoining</u> <u>Sunhillow, Gore Road, Eastry, near Sandwich, Kent CT13 0ED.</u>

1. Summary:

1.1 This specification sets out the requirements for an archaeological evaluation of land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Road, Eastry. The evaluation will comprise the excavation of 3 archaeological trial trenches in accordance with the attached indicative trench location plan. The results of the evaluation works will inform the scope of any further archaeological mitigation that may be required at the site, potentially including more detailed archaeological investigation ahead of development or the archaeological monitoring of the development groundworks. The works are being undertaken in response to proposals for the erection of 3 detached dwellings, new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and associated car parking and landscaping.

2. Site Location & Description:

2.1 The proposed development is to be located on land adjoining Sunhillow, Gore Road, Eastry, near Sandwich, Kent CT13 0ED (NGR 630680 155220 approximate site centre). The proposed development fronts onto Gore Lane to the east and is bounded by neighbouring residential properties (Sunhillow) to the south and (Halsted) to the north. To the west the site is bounded by farmland. The proposed future access for the development is to be off the lane towards Wells Fam, which lies on the southern side of Sunhillow. The site currently comprises mix of scrub and rough grassland, bounded by established tree and hedge-lines.

3. Planning Background & Nature of Development:

- 3.1 Planning permission for the "erection of 3no.detached dwellings, new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and associated car parking and landscaping" was granted by the Local Planning Authority under planning reference number DOV/17/00267.
- 3.2 The Local Planning Authority has placed the following condition (12) on the planning consent:

No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has 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. These details are required prior to the commencement of the development as they form an intrinsic part of the proposal, the approval of which cannot be separated from the carrying out of the rest of the development.

4. Geological & Topographical Background:

4.1 According to the mapping of the British Geological Survey the site, which is located at an elevation of some 15m aOD, is located on geology comprising an undifferentiated clay and silt Head Deposit which caps bedrock white chalk of the Margate Chalk Member. The village of Eastry is located on the northern edge of the North Downs dip-slope. In this part of Kent the dip-slope is dissected by a number of small dry valleys, which have led to the creation of the familiar rolling chalk downland, comprising south-west to north east trending ridges of higher ground, dissected by a series of parallel dry valleys. The site in question lies close to the point where one of these dry valleys breaks from the dip-slope, with the land falling away to the north and west.

5. Archaeological & Historical Background Potential

- 5.1 The archaeological potential is based on the proximity of archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER.
- 5.2 Eastry is archaeologically important because of its location adjacent to the former Dover to Richborough Roman road and due to the settlement's significance in the early medieval period. The palace or 'villa regalis' relating to Egbert, King of Kent c.690 AD is thought, though not proven, to lie in the vicinity of St Mary's Church and Eastry Court Farm. Four separate cemeteries dating from the early medieval period are also recorded in and around the periphery of the present village.
- 5.3 The proposed development site lies on the western edge of the modern-day village of Eastry and finds (recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme) of Romano-British and medieval dates have been found within the field immediately west of the proposed development site. Additionally the site is noted as lying in an area that is considered to have a moderate potential for Palaeolithic remains. Most Palaeolithic remains seem to be incorporated in Head deposits and as noted above the British Geological Survey identifies such Head deposits as possibly being present at the site in question.
- 5.4 Further information on the above can be found in the County Historic Environment Record which is held at the Heritage Conservation Group, Environment & Waste, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XX.

6. Specific Aims of the Archaeological Work:

6.1 The aim of the evaluation work is to determine whether any archaeological

remains survive on site. Assessment of the results should provide guidance on what mitigation measures would be appropriate. Such measures may, for example, include safeguarding measures, further detailed archaeological excavation prior to development and/or an archaeological watching brief during construction work. This specification sets out the requirements for trial trenching on the site only. Further measures will be subject to other documents or specifications which will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

6.2 The evaluation is thus to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on site.

7. Methodology:

- 7.1 The general methodology for the archaeological evaluation is set out in Part B of this specification.
- 7.2 The archaeological evaluation will comprise the excavation of 3 archaeological trial trenches within the proposed development site. An <u>indicative</u> trench location plan is attached at the end of this specification. The proposed evaluation trenches are intended to measure some 20m in length by 1.8m in width.
- 7.3 The Archaeological Contractor should confirm the nature and location of any constraints on-site prior to the commencement of excavation and if necessary amend the trench location plan accordingly. Particular attention will be paid to avoiding any services and/or trees that are to be retained or to avoid damage to the roots thereof. Any amendments to the trench design must be agreed in advance with the County Archaeologist and a revised trench plan submitted for approval.
- 7.3 Should significant remains be exposed it may be necessary to enlarge or extend the evaluation trenches to allow for further investigation of any significant features or deposits that may be encountered.
- 7.4 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork the Archaeological Contractor shall agree with the developer, or their agent, any fencing required during the works and requirements for reinstatement at completion. The Archaeological Contractor shall ensure that arrangements are in place for appropriate reinstatement prior to the commencement of any excavations.

8. Site Recording:

8.1 Site recording should be undertaken in accordance with the methodology outlined in Part B of this specification.

9. Site Reporting and Archiving:

9.1 Site reporting and archiving should be undertaken in accordance with the

methodology outlined in Part B of this specification.

9.2 A copy of the resulting report shall be offered to the Dover Archaeological Group.

10. Monitoring:

- 10.1 Site monitoring should be arranged in accordance with the methodology outlined in Part B of this specification.
- 10.2 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, following the completion and fieldwork and when submitting the report the Archaeological Contractor should complete and submit the relevant portions of the Fieldwork Notification Form (attached).

11. General:

11.1 Prepared by the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council July 2017



Figure 1: Site location map



Figure 2: Trench location



Figure 3: Trench 1 - plan and sections





Figure 4: Trench 2 - plan and sections



Figure 5: Trench 3 - plan and sections



Figure 6: Historic OS map from 1873, scale 1:2500



Figure 7: Historic OS map from 1898, scale 1:2500



Figure 8: Historic OS map from 1907, scale 1:2500



Figure 9: Historic OS map from 1938, scale 1:2500



Figure 10: Historic OS map from 1956, scale 1:2500



Figure 11: Historic OS map from 1969, scale 1:2500



Figure 12: Historic OS map from 1970, scale 1:2500



Figure 13: Historic OS map from 1977, scale 1:2500



Figure 14: Historic OS map from 1993, scale 1:2500



Plate 1: Google Earth aerial photograph from 1960



Plate 2: Google Earth aerial photograph from 1990



Plate 3: Google Earth aerial photograph from 2003



Plate 4: Google Earth aerial photograph from 2008



Plate 5: Google Earth aerial photograph from 2013



Plate 6: Google Earth aerial photograph from 2016

Plates



Plate 7: The site, looking south-west.





Plate 9: Showing representative section 1.1 in Trench 1. Looking east, one metre scale.



Plate 10: Showing Evaluation Trench 1. Looking North, one and two-metre scales.



Plate 11: Showing Trench 2, looking west. Almost entirely robbed-out wall (207) visible in foreground. One and two-metre scales.



Plate 12: Showing representative section 2.1 in Trench 2. Looking north-east, one-metre scale.



Plate 13: Showing Evaluation Trench 2. Looking east, one and two-metre scales. Modern intrusions visible in foreground.



Plate 14: Showing Evaluation Trench 3. Looking north, one and two-metre scales. Natural chalk outcrop visible to the left, modern refuse pits [305] and [307] in background.



Plate 15: Showing Evaluation Trench 3. Looking south, one and two metre scales.



Plate 16: Modern tile-spread in Evaluation Trench 3. Half-metre scales.



Plate 17: Showing representative section 3.1 in Evaluation Trench 3. Looking east, one metre scale.



Plate 18: Showing chalk wall (207) and its construction cut [205] revealed in Trench 2. Looking north-east, one-metre scale.



Plate 19: Showing section through wall construction cut [205]. Looking west, one metre scale.



Plate 20: Showing modern rubbish pit [307] in Evaluation Trench 3. Looking south, one metre scale.



Plate 21: Showing section through modern pit [307] and chalk dump (309) in Trench 3. Looking south, one-metre scale.