

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at  
Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road,  
Maidstone, Kent ME15 7BT

Site Code GRAM/WB/17



Date of report 27/03/2018

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## 1.0 Abstract

1.1. From the 7<sup>th</sup> Feb to the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works involved in the build of three buildings at Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 1-16).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of Maidstone Grammar School.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the site reduction and foundation trenching (Plates 1-16).

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken in four phases.

Phase 1:

Archaeological watching brief on the ground reduction and trenching for the build of the Performing Arts Building (Plates 1-4) from 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017 to 11<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

Phase 2:

Archaeological watching brief on the trenching for the services to both the Performing Arts Building and the Science and Computing Building (Plates 5-6) from 12<sup>th</sup> February to 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

Phase 3:

Archaeological watching brief on the ground reduction and trenching for the services to the Science and Computing Building (Plates 5-6) from 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

Phase 4:

Archaeological watching brief on the ground reduction and trenching for the build of the Pavilion Building (Plates 12-16) from 5<sup>th</sup> November to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any signs of archaeological activity. In particular, any evidence of archaeological activity associated with the known archaeological sites in the area including the nearby findings of about 30m to the west of the Performing Arts Building a WWII Air Raid Shelter (TQ 75 SE 352), and 35m to the SW of the Performing Arts Building a WWII Anti Tank Ditch (TQ 75 SE 58) associated no doubt with the same feature located 250m to the SW of the Performing Arts Building (TQ 75 SE 57). 65m to the north of the proposed Pavilion post-medieval pits, ditches and features were found and 135m to the north of the proposed Pavilion the presumed site of a Roman villa found in 1870 (TQ 75 SE 18).

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is MA/17/502387.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by KCC Heritage Conservation the Archaeological Watching Brief on all phases of development failed to reveal any buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

## **2.0 Introduction**

2.1 The sites are located within the curtilage of the Maidstone Grammar School which seems to have been built in 1929 according to the dates impressed on the cast iron drain pipes. The Grammar School is located in the south-east area of Maidstone and to the east of the A229 (Loose Road).

The site itself is bounded by West Park Road to the east, Upper Road to the north, Barton Road to the north-west and Holtys Crescent to the south. The site itself is about 50m aOD on the west side of the site and 54m aOD on the east side. The NGR reference for the centre of the site is 576755 154790 (Figure 1).

### **2.2 Planning Background**

Planning application SW/15/509675 was submitted to Kent County Council the County Planning Authority (CPA). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the CPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (11) 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 County 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 been submitted to and approved by the County 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 (Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and monitored the excavation works from 7<sup>th</sup> February to 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

## **4.0 Aims and Objectives**

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

*“The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to knowledge of the archaeological landscapes of proposed development area; to record and investigate remains of archaeological significance that may be exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks” (KCC 2017).*

4.2. The ground works for all three buildings were to reduce the level of the footprint of the new build, excavate the foundation trenches and to connect services (Plates 1-16).

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 underlying geology at the site according to the BGS is Bedrock Geology of Hythe Formation- Sandstone and [subequal/subordinate] Limestone, interbedded. The Superficial Deposits are not recorded but the soils revealed on site were yellow brown silty sand with occasional gravel.

5.2. The application site consisted of an area of known important archaeological remains. In response to the planning application for the new dwelling the county archaeologist advised that the site lies near to known archaeological sites in the area including the nearby findings of about 30m to the west of the Performing Arts Building a WWII Air Raid Shelter (TQ 75 SE 352), and 35m to the SW of the Performing Arts Building a WWII Anti Tank Ditch (TQ 75 SE 58) associated no doubt with the same feature located 250m to the SW of the Performing Arts Building (TQ 75 SE 57).

65m to the north of the proposed Pavilion post-medieval pits, ditches and features were found and 135m to the north of the proposed Pavilion the presumed site of a Roman villa found in 1870 (TQ 75 SE 18).

## **6.0 Methodology**

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by KCC and it also complied with the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (CIfA: Dec 2017).

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 according to the needs of the building contractors from 7<sup>th</sup> Feb-14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2017.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothless bucket necessary to remove the soil down to formation level (Plates 1-16).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (Dr Paul Wilkinson MCifA).

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, (CifA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Senior Archaeological Officer KCC.

## **7.0 Results**

### **7.1 General**

No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site was deposits of silty sand overlaid by topsoil mixed with demolition material. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the sites which was swept with a Fisher CZ 3D metal detector.

7.2 The three areas watched are shown on Figure 1.

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

## **8.0 Finds**

No finds were retrieved.

## **9.0 Discussion**

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

## **10.0 Conclusion**

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the KCC Archaeological 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 Maidstone Grammar School for commissioning the project. Fieldwork was undertaken and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

## **References**

HER data (Historic England 2017)

CIfA (2017) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

KCC Archaeological Watching Brief (2017)

**Appendix 1**  
**Kent County Council HER Summary Form**

**Site Name:** Development of land at the Maidstone Grammar School, Maidstone, Kent

**SWAT Site Code:** GRAM/WB/17

**Site Address:** As above

**Summary:**

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Monitoring on the development site above. The site has planning permissions for three new buildings whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief 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)** 576755 154790

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

**Date of recording:** Feb/Nov 2017

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

**Geology:** Bedrock geology is Hythe Formation

**Title and author of accompanying report:** Wilkinson P. (2017) Archaeological Watching Brief on land at the Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, 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:** 27/03/18



Performing Arts building/Watching Brief



Plate 1. Topsoil strip (looking NE)



Plate 2. Topsoil strip (looking SE)



Plate 3. Subsoil strip (looking east)



Plate 4. Subsoil strip (looking NE)





Plate 5. Service trenching to Performing Arts Building (looking east)



Plate 6. Service trenching to Performing Arts Building (looking south)

Science and Computing Building/Watching Brief



Plate 7. Demolition strip (looking SE)



Plate 8. Trenching (looking south)





Plate 9. Foundation trenches (looking west)



Plate 10. Foundation trenches (looking east)



Plate 11, Foundation trenches (looking west)



The Pavilion Building/Watching Brief



Plate 12. Topsoil strip (looking east)



Plate 13. Topsoil strip (looking east)





Plate 14. Foundation trenching (looking south)



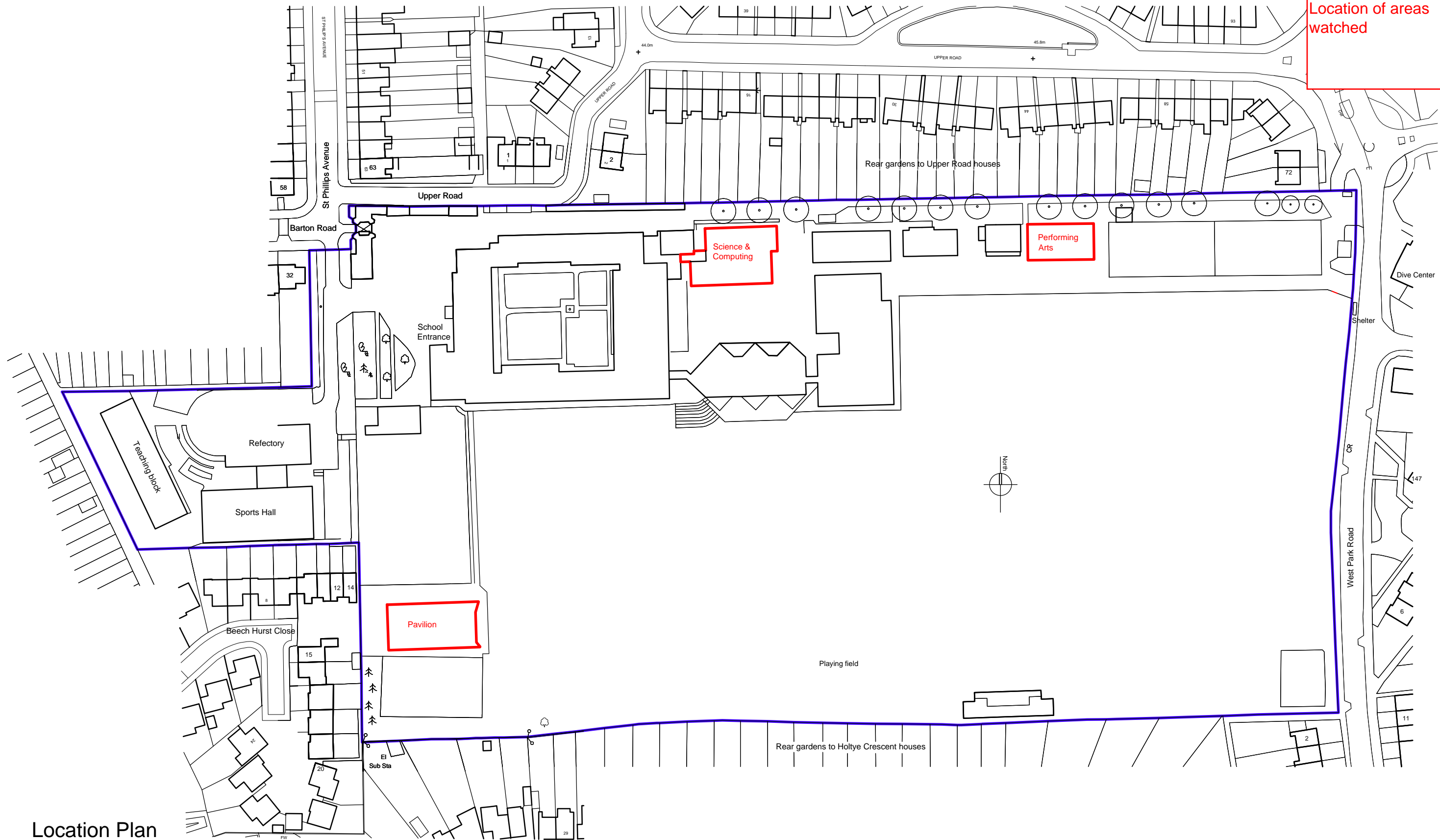
Plate 15. Foundation trenching (looking west)



Plate 16. Foundation trenching (looking east)



**Figure 1.**  
Location of areas watched

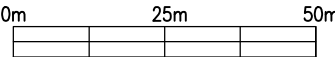


Location Plan

Rev.	Description	Int.	Date

Client	MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR
Job Title	BUILDING LOCATIONS

  
**CDP**  
 Architecture Ltd  
 22-23 North Lane, Canterbury  
 Kent, CT2 7EE  
 Tel: 01227 458181 Fax: 01227 451543  
 studio@thinkcdp.com www.thinkcdp.com

1:1250 scale bar  
  
 CDP original printed to scale.  
 Prints from PDF's could distort.

Drawing Title	LOCATION PLAN
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Scale	1:1250	Preliminary
Drawn	DB	Comment
Date	JAN 18	Planning
Checked		Tender
		Construction
		As built

741	:	L02
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