

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, Kent

Site Code BELL/WB/20



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Archaeological Investigation on Land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, Kent

Site Code BELL/WB/20
NGR 590962 163556



AP 1. View of proposed development area (2018)

1.0 Abstract

1.1. From 8th-10th February 2020 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA of Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) carried out an Archaeological Investigation of ground works involved in the construction of a housing re-development on land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne in Kent (Figures 1, 2, AP 1 and Plates 1-6).

1.2. An Archaeological watching brief presence was kept during the foundation pads and underpinning excavations (Plates 1-6).

1.3. The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: Watching excavations for foundation pads and underpinning (8th-10th Feb 2020).

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief were to determine whether any significant archaeological remains had survived within the footprint of the proposed groundworks. In particular, any evidence of archaeological activity associated with the known archaeological sites in the area included on the KCCHER data and highlighted in the SWAT Archaeology Written Scheme of Investigation Specification dated 10/07/2019.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is Swale Borough Council (18/503615/FULL).

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by the SWAT Archaeology WSI Specification the Archaeological Watching Brief revealed no buried archaeological features and no archaeological finds were retrieved.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The site is located on land to the west of Bell Road and within a group of buildings fronting on to Bell Road (AP 1) and the NGR to the centre of the site is NGR 590962 163556.

2.2 Planning Background

The groundworks in involve the partial demolition of an existing extension and the build of nine one bedroom flats.

The following Condition (5) requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring 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 archaeological works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has previously 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.

3.0 Schedule of Visits

An archaeologist suitably experienced attended the site (Dr Paul Wilkinson SWAT Archaeology) and closely monitored the excavation works from 8th-10 February 2020.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1. The specific aims of the archaeological work were to:

(3.1) The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

4.2. Proposed Groundworks.

The ground works were to excavate the ground for underpinning and post pad foundations (Plates 1-6).

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 British Geological Survey is Bedrock Geology of Wadhurst Clay Formation- Mudstone. Superficial deposits are not recorded but shown on site to be brown silty loam (Plates 1-6).

5.2 The archaeological potential was accessed from the (KCCHER) which has provided details of any previous investigations and discoveries.

To the west at the rear of 21High Street were layers of archaeology including circular and rectangular pits (TQ 96 SW 319). To the north the Grade II * listed Church of St Michael dating from 1200AD to 1873AD (TQ 96 SW 1090).

Advice was sought from Simon Mason Principal Archaeological Officer KCC who writes that: [the site] 'is at the historic core of Sittingbourne close to the Roman road, the medieval church and on the banks of a stream that would have been attractive to early peoples. The site will have been affected by previous development and may have areas of survival of potential archaeology'.

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Archaeological Investigations were conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by SWAT Archaeology 'Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief of land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, Kent'.

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.

6.3. Excavations within the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed bucket necessary to remove the demolition material and subsoil down to formation level (Plates 1-6).

6.5. All excavation was carried out under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist (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 investigation work was carried out in accordance with current ClfA Standards and Guidance, (ClfA: 2017), and methodology discussed on a number of occasions with the Principal Archaeological Officer KCC.

7.0 Results

7.1 No archaeological features or finds were revealed or recovered. The subsoil encountered across the site was deposits of brown silty soil. No archaeological features were revealed in the natural geology and no archaeological finds retrieved from the site.

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 high archaeological potential. However, no archaeology was revealed on the development site.

10.0 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.

11.0 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.

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, Kent

SWAT Site Code: BELL/WB/20

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 housing development whereby Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC) 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: Swale Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 590962 163556

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: 8th-10th February 2020

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

Geology: Bedrock geology is Seaford Chalk- Soil deposits encountered on site were Clay/silt

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2020) Archaeological Watching Brief of land at 4 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, 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



Plate 1. View of the site (looking NE)



Plate 2. View of foundation pad trench (looking NW)



Plate 3. Foundation pad trench (looking NE)



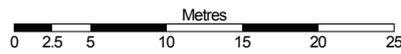
Plate 4. Foundation pad trench (looking NE)



Plate 5. Foundation pad trench (looking NE)



Plate 6. Foundation pad trench (looking NE)



Scale: 1:500

Bell Road
Sittingbourne



Supplied by: National Map Centre
License number: 100031961
Produced: 14/02/2017
Serial number: 1797944

Plot centre co-ordinates: 590962,163556
Download file: bell.zip
Project name: swat