

Archaeological Evaluation of Land relating to the Annexe at Mersham manor, Church Close, Mersham, Kent

Site Code: MERSH -EV-19

NGR Site Centre 605213 139419

Planning Application Number: APP/E2205/D/18/3195488



SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company

The Office, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road

Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP

Tel; 01795 532548 or 07885 700 112

info@swatarchaeology.co.uk www.swatarchaeology.co.uk

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Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land relating to the Annexe at Mersham Manor, Church Close, Mersham in Kent. The archaeological works were monitored by the Kent County Council Senior Archaeological Officer.

The fieldwork was carried out in May 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification (SWAT Archaeology 21/08/2018) submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

The Archaeological Evaluation consisted of three trenches, which encountered a relatively common stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology with no archaeological features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Mersham Manor, Mersham in Kent (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 In mitigation of the potential impact that the development may have on the buried archaeological resource Kent County Council Heritage & Conservation (KKCHC), who provide an advisory service to Ashford Borough Council, requested that a programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological evaluation be undertaken to satisfy the planning condition 22 of the planning permission APP/E2205/D/18/3195488.

1.1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out in May 2019 in accordance with an archaeological specification prepared by SWAT Archaeology (21/08/2018), prior to commencement of works, and in discussion with Wendy Rogers Archaeological Officer at KCCHC.

1.1 4 Site Description and Topography

The application site comprises an area to north east corner of Mersham Manor but with the annexe relocated to the north further away from the house. The annexed area is centred at NGR 605213 139419. With Church Close to the north, the church boundary to the east and the Manor House boundary to the west and south.

The NGR to the center of the site is NGR 605213 139419 (Figure 1).

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is set on Bedrock Geology of Bedrock Geology of Hythe Formation – Sandstone and [subequal/subordinate] Limestone, Interbedded with Superficial Deposits not recorded.

The PDA is set at an average height of 68.00m AOD.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

Details of previous discoveries and investigations within the immediate and wider area may be found in the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record and have been summarised in the Specification produced by SWAT Archaeology (August 2018).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.2 Specific Aims (SWAT 2018)

2.2.1 The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork are set out in the Specification (SWAT 2018) were to:

2.2.2 *6.1 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. The aims of this investigation are to determine the potential for archaeological activity and in particular the Prehistoric activity and the adjacent Roman Road and also any later archaeological activity.*

2.3 General Aims

2.3.1 The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to;

- establish the presence or absence of any elements of the archaeological resource, both artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest across the area of the development;
- ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit if possible, character, date and quality of any such archaeological remains by limited sample excavation;
- determine the state of preservation and importance of the archaeological resource, if present, and to assess the past impacts on the site and pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any archaeological deposits.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the Specification (SWAT 2018 and KCC Manual of Specifications 'B') and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (CIfA 2017).

3.2 Fieldwork

3.2.1 A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated across the Site (Figure 1).

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

3.2.3 Where appropriate, trenches, or specific areas of 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 ClfA standards and guidance. A complete photographic record was maintained on site that included working shots; during mechanical excavation, following archaeological investigations and during back filling.

3.3 Recording

3.3.1 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. These are retained in the site project archive.

3.3.2 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 site project archive.

3.3.3 A single context recording system was used to record the deposits. A full list is presented in Appendix 1. 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. 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.).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 A total of three evaluation trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision.

4.2 Stratigraphic Deposit Sequence

4.2.1 A relatively consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the majority of the Site comprising a mix of topsoil sealing an intact subsoil of chalky marl (Trenches 1 & 2) overlaid in some areas of the site with orange brown sandy silt (Trench 3)

4.2.2 Appendix 1 provides the stratigraphic sequence for all trenches. Figure 1 provide a site plan and trench location plan while Plates 1-4 include selected site photographs.

4.3 Overview

4.3.1 The three trenches were located across the site to ensure full coverage of potential archaeological remains.

5 FINDS

6.1 No finds of any archaeological merit were recovered from the archaeological evaluation.

6 Discussion

6.1 Archaeological Narrative

6.1.1 The three trenches exposed geology but no archaeological features.

6.2 Conclusions

6.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. Development proposals are not likely to impact on archaeological remains.

6.2.2 This evaluation has, therefore, assessed the archaeological potential of land intended for development. The results from this work show that the proposed development is not likely to impact on any archaeological remains.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 General

7.1.1 The Site archive, which will include; paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

7.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises 1 file/document case of paper records & A4 graphics and will be retained by SWAT Archaeology until a Kent museum archive procedure is in place.

8 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

8.1.1 SWAT would like to thank the developer for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council, for her advice and assistance.

8.1.2 Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA supervised the archaeological evaluation and survey and illustrations were produced by Digitise This. Paul Wilkinson MCIfA produced the text for this report.

9 REFERENCES

ADS 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice

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

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives, Institute for Archaeologists

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014, *Standard and guidance: for field evaluation*.

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

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

Compiled by: SWAT Archaeology (PW). The Office, School Farm Oast, Faversham, Kent

Dated 25th July 2019.

Appendix 1: Trench Tables

Trench 1	Dimensions: 22m x 1.6m Depth: 0.40m Trench alignment: E-W E-end Ground Level: 69.20m AOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil mixed with tree roots	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.25
102	Grey brown, clayey sandy silt	Subsoil	0.25-40
103	Chalk	Natural	0.40-

Trench 2	Dimensions: 15m x 1.6m Depth: 45.0m Trench alignment: NW-SE NNW-end Ground Level: 69.15m AOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil mixed with tree roots	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.26
202	Grey brown sandy silt subsoil	Subsoil	0.26-45
203	Chalk	Natural	0.45-

Trench 3	Dimensions: 23m x 1.6m Depth: 46m Trench alignment: NNE-SSW NE-end Ground Level: 68.11m aOD		
Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil mixed with tree roots	Topsoil layer	0.00-0.25
302	Lenses of orange brown sandy silt	Subsoil	0.25-0.46
303	Chalk	Natural	0.46-

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Mersham Manor, Church Close, Mersham, Kent

SWAT Site Code: MERSH/EV/19

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has a planning application for the demolition and replacement of the existing annex whereby Ashford Borough Council requested that Archaeological works be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Monitoring consisted of an Archaeological Evaluation which revealed no archaeology.

District/Unitary: Ashford Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) NGR 605213 139419

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: September 21st May 2019

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Bedrock Geology of Chalk

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2019) Archaeological Evaluation of Land relating to the Annexe at Mersham Manor, Church Close, Mersham, Kent

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

No archaeology found

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson



Plates 1 & 2 (below). Trench 1



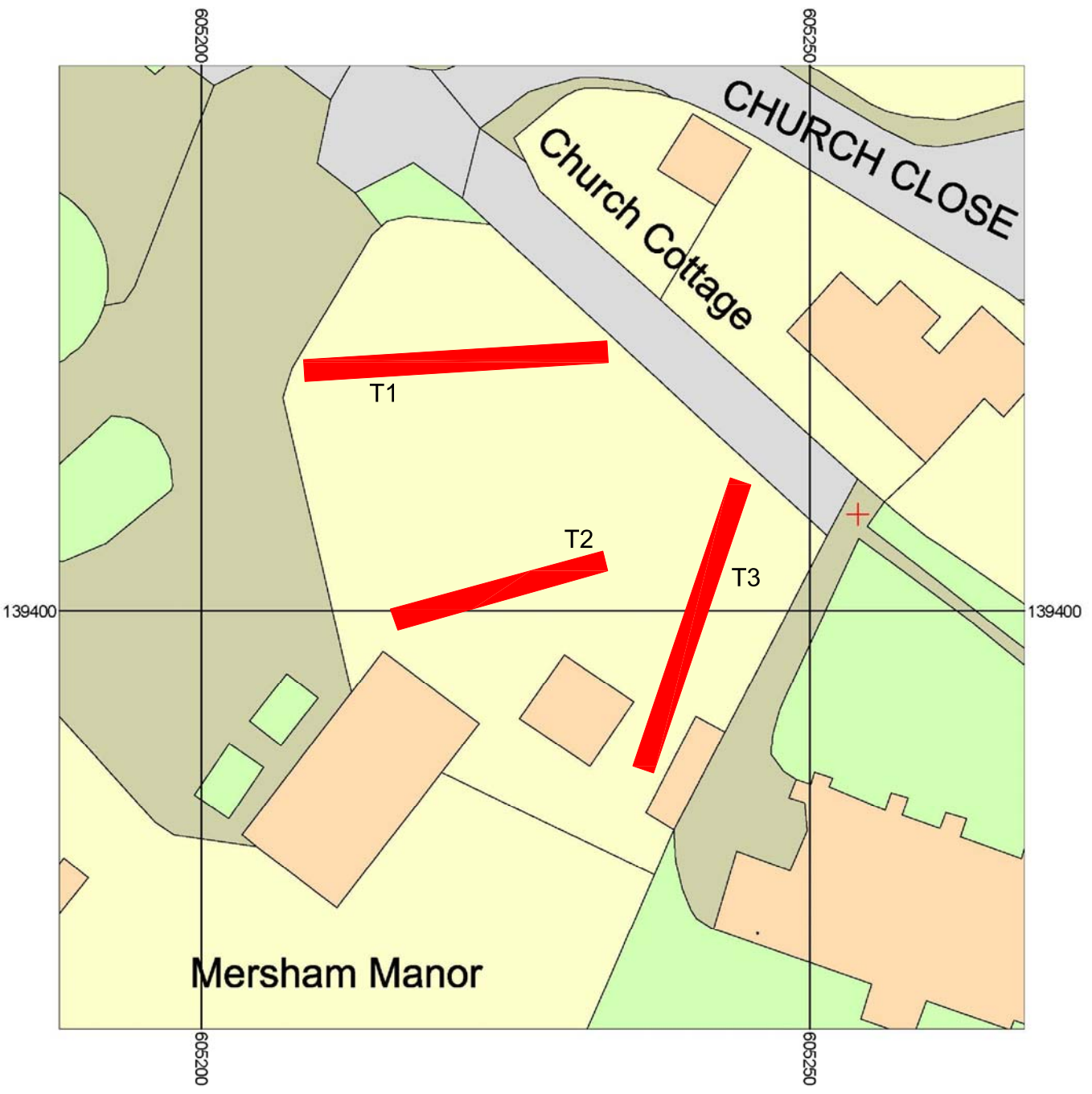
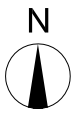


Plate 3. Trench 2



Plates 4 & 5. Trench 3





1:500@A4



Figure 1: Location of evaluation trenches 0m

50m