

Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Chart Court Farm, Pluckley Road, Little Chart, Ashford, Kent

Site Code CHART/WB/17



Report for Kent Planning Ltd
Date of report 16/01/2018

SWAT ARCHAEOLOGY

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Contents

1.0 SUMMARY.....	4
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	4
3.0 SCHEDULE OF VISITS.....	5
4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	5
4.1 PROPOSED GROUNDWORKS.....	5
4.2 CONFIDENCE RATING.....	5
5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	5
6.0 METHODOLOGY.....	6
7.0 RESULTS.....	6
7.1 GENERAL.....	6
8.0 FINDS.....	7
9.0 DISCUSSION.....	7
10.0 CONCLUSION.....	7
11.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	7
REFERENCES.....	7
APPENDIX 1 - KCC HER Summary Form.....	8

Plate 1. Aerial Photograph of site (Google 2015)

Plate 2. General view of site reduction

Plate 3. Site reduction

Plate 4. View of trenching

Plate 5. View of trenching

Plate 6. Completed trenching

List of Figures

Figure 1. Site plan and location of area watched

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Site Code CHAR/WB/17
NGR 593490 146551

Date of report: 16/01/2018



Plate 1. Aerial view of site (red target) showing the site prior to development.

(Google Earth 20/4/2015: Eye altitude 217m).

1.0 Abstract

1.1. From the 13th-14th 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 two detached garages to serve the Byre and Barn A at Chart Court Farm, Pluckley Road, Little Chart in Kent. (Fig. 1 & Plates 1-6).

1.2. The works were carried out on behalf of the land owner.

1.3. An Archaeological Watch was kept during the initial site work (Plates 2-6).

The archaeological work was undertaken in one phase.

Phase 1: The digging out of the footprint of the new garage buildings to about 1.80m below present ground level of about 67.50m aOD. The building foundations were to be concrete strip foundations once the trenches had been dug (13th-14th November 2017 & Plates 2-6).

1.4. The Archaeological Watching Brief was to watch for any signs of archaeological activity. In particular, any evidence of medieval archaeological activity associated with the known medieval archaeological sites in the area.

1.5. The Planning Application Number for the development is 17/00928/AS.

1.6. Although the archaeological potential has been highlighted by the WSI 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 south of the ruins of the Church of St Mary. The site itself is level at about 67.50m aOD (Figure 1).

2.2 Planning Background

Planning application 17/00928/AS was submitted to Ashford Borough Council the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Kent County Council Heritage and Conservation (KCCHC), on behalf of the LPA requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during the development work. The following condition (3) 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 Local 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 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 MIfA) and monitored the excavation works from 13th to 14th 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 to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks (CAT 2017).

4.2. The ground works were to excavate the foundation trenches (Plates 2-6).

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 is mapped as Hythe Formation- Sandstone and Limestone.

5.2. The PDA is situated approximately 120m south of the ruins of the Church of St Mary. The church is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade II listed building (Historic England List Entry Nos. 1004208 & 1329709). Edward Hasted (1798) records that the church was built by Peter de Bending during the reign of Henry II (1207–1272). The tower was built in 1500 by Sir John Darell. On 16 August 1944 the church was hit by a V1 bomb and has since been ruinous (HER No. TQ94 NW 144).

5.3 According to Hasted (1798), Little Chart belonged to Halethe who then sold the land to

Archbishop Ceolnoth in AD 839. Little Chart is mentioned in Domesday where it is recorded that it forms part of the holdings of Christ Church Canterbury. Ploughland, meadow, woodland and two mills are listed in this entry.

5.4 The situation of a church at this location has led to the suggestion that it marks the location of a deserted medieval village. However, to date, no evidence to support this has been found (HER No. TQ 94 NW 26).

5.5 Chart Court Farm is a dispersed multi-yard farmstead (HER No. MKE87229). Within the curtilage of the farmhouse lies a Grade II listed barn of probable eighteenth-century, or earlier, date (HER No. TQ 94 NW 228) and, a nineteenth-century Grade II listed oasthouse (HER No. TQ 94 NW 218).

5.6 Jennings's Farm, a post-medieval loose courtyard farmstead, is situated approximately 500m south-west of the PDA (HER No. MKE87215). Jennings's Farm Cottages are Grade II listed (HER No. TQ 94 NW 204). Just south of the farmstead lies the Grade II listed property of Jennings's Farmhouse, which is thought to be a late medieval hall-house (HER No. TQ 94 NW 230). A post-medieval field barn is also recorded on Nettlepole Lane (HER No. MKE87213).

5.7 Swallow Mill, an eighteenth-century watermill is located approximately 400m north of the PDA (HER No. TQ 94 NW 175).

5.8 The first edition Ordnance Survey map, dated 1871–1890, shows the PDA divided between woodland and arable land. By the time of the publication of the second edition (1897–1900) the route of the current road located to the south of The Byre was established. This map also depicts a building situated just within the PDA. A later building on a different alignment, but also situated within the PDA, appears on aerial photographs dating from 1940 to 2008 (CAT WSI 2017).

5.9 Further information on the above is provided in the County Historic Environment Record held in the Heritage, Environment and Planning, Enterprise and Environment, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XX (telephone 01622 221543).

6.0 Methodology

6.1. The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the Archaeological Specification compiled by CAT 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 13th-14th November 2017.

6.4. Excavation of the area was carried out by contractors using a 360 degree machine equipped with a toothed and toothless bucket necessary to remove the soil down to formation level (Plates 2-6).

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 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 General

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

7.2 The area surveyed is 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 site.

10.0 Conclusion

The Archaeological Monitoring has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the CAT 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 Mike Simmonds 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

CAT Archaeological Watching Brief (2017)

Appendix 1

Kent County Council HER Summary Form

Site Name: Development of land at Chart Court Farm , Pluckley Road, Little Chart, Ashford, Kent

SWAT Site Code: CHAR/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 permission for new detached garages 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: Ashford Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 593490 146551

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date of recording: November 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. (2018) Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Chart Court Farm, Pluckley Road, Little Chart, Ashford, 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: 16/01/2018



Plate 2. General view of site (looking west)



Plate 3. View of ground reduction (looking SW)



Plate 4. View of trenching (looking east)



Plate 5. View of the foundation trenches (looking south)



Plate 6. View of the completed trenches (looking SE)

Figure 1
Location of
Site



The Granary

68.2m

Court

St Mary's Church
(remains of)

Chart Court Oast

Pond

146500m

Pond

The Byre

Chart Court Farm

Site location

593300m