

Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Kent



NGR: 556310 170023

Site Code: SPRING /EV/17

(Planning Application: DA/16/01691/FUL)

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1. Summary

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Kent on Tuesday 21st February 2017. A Planning Application (DA/16/01691/FUL) to develop this site for the erection of a residential house with associated car parking was sent to Dartford Borough Council, whereby the Council requested that a Condition on the planning permission for an Archaeological Evaluation to 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 (SWAT Specification A and KCC Manual Part B) and in discussion with the Senior Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council. The results of the excavation of 1 evaluation trench revealed no archaeological features (Figure 2). The natural geology of Clay with Flints was reached at an average depth of between 0.55m and 0.56m below ground level (BGL). Thus the Archaeological Evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the primary aims and objectives of the Archaeological Specification.

2. Introduction

Swale & Thames Survey Company (SWAT) was commissioned by the land owners 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 (SWAT & KCC 2017) and in discussion with Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer KCC. The evaluation was carried out on Tuesday 21st February 2017.

3. Site Description and Topography

3.1 The proposed development site lies to the south of the A2 and west of Farningham Wood Nature Reserve. It is situated to the east of the A225 and north of the village of South Darenth. The OS location is NGR 556310 170023 (Plate 1).

3.2 The underlying geology is mapped as Bedrock Geology of Seaford Chalk Formation with no Superficial Deposits recorded. The geology revealed on site was Clay with Flints at a depth of 19.46m aOD at the NE end of the evaluation trench. Ground levels are 20.02m aOD at the NE end of the evaluation trench.

4. Planning Background

4.1 Development proposals for this site comprise the build of a residential house and associated car parking. On the basis of present archaeological information, the Archaeological Officer for Dartford Borough 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 5 of the planning permission states:

Before commencement of any building operations on site, details of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be implemented as approved. To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with Policy B12 of the adopted Dartford Local Plan.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 The Kent County Council Historic Environment Record (KCCHER) has provided details of any previous investigations and discoveries. The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains and is defined in the WSI. To the west Iron Age and Roman occupation sites (TQ 56 NE 2). To the north-east a large prehistoric ring ditch (TQ 57 SE 110). To the east is the site of St Margaret's Chapel (TQ 57 SE 34) and to the north a Roman building and bath-house (TQ 57 SE 72).

6. Aims and Objectives

According to the SWAT Archaeological Specification, the aims and objectives for the archaeological work were:

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 Iron Age and Roman activity and in addition Early Medieval burials and Prehistoric Flint debitage.

The programme of archaeological work should be carried out in a phased approach and will commence with evaluation through trial trenching. This initial phase should determine whether any significant archaeological remains would be affected by the development and if so what mitigation measures are appropriate. Such measures may include further detailed archaeological excavation, or an archaeological watching brief during construction work or an engineering solution to any preservation in situ requirements.

7. Methodology

The initial evaluation comprised 1 machine excavated trench (25m x 1.8m) in a layout agreed with the Senior Archaeologist KCC. The trench was machine excavated down to the top of any significant archaeological horizon/level or to the top of 'natural' subsoil where no archaeological deposits have been found at a higher level.

8. Monitoring

Curatorial monitoring was available during the course of the evaluation.

9. Results

The one evaluation trench located in the footprint of the development site failed to expose any features of potential archaeological significance, and contained no cultural materials, or, indeed, anything indicative of associated and/or nearby human activity, such as charcoal or scorched daub flecking.

Trench 1

The plan is recorded in Figure 2 (see also Plates 1-4). The trench lay on an NE alignment and measured approximately 25m by 1.80m.

Undisturbed natural geology **(103)** was identified across the trench as yellow brown sandy silty clay with flint, at a depth of approximately 0.56m (19.46mOD) below the present ground surface at 20.02m OD at the NE end of the trench.

The natural geology **(103)** was sealed by a layer of mid brown to orange silty sandy clay with flint subsoil topped by subsoil **(102)** 0.40m thick and topped by tarmac about 0.16m thick.

10. Discussion

No archaeological features were exposed in the trench. However a modern plastic water pipe was exposed and identified (Plate 3). The proposed development can therefore be judged to pose no threat to any significant archaeological remains.

11. Finds

No finds were recovered.

12. Conclusion

The evaluation trench 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. A common stratigraphic sequence was recognised across the site comprised of tarmac **(100)** sealing subsoil **(102)** which overlay the natural geology of Clay with Flints **(103)**. Therefore, this evaluation has been successful in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the planning condition and the Archaeological Specification.

13. Acknowledgements

SWAT Archaeology would like to thank the client for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Wendy Rogers Senior Archaeological Officer KCC. Site survey and illustrations were produced by Bartek Cichy. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Allen MCIfA and the project was managed and report written by Dr Paul Wilkinson MCIfA.

Paul Wilkinson 02/03/2017

14. References

Institute for Field Archaeologists (IfA), Rev (2014). *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation*

KCC Specification Manual Part B

KCC and Historic England HER data 2016

SWAT Archaeology (2017) *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Kent*

KCC HER Summary Form

Site Name: Land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Kent

SWAT Site Code: SPRING/EV/17

Site Address: As above

Summary:

Swale and Thames Survey Company (SWAT) carried out Archaeological Evaluation on the development site above. The site has planning permission for residential development and parking whereby Dartford Borough Council requested that Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken to determine the possible impact of the development on any archaeological remains.

The Archaeological Evaluation revealed no archaeology.

District/Unitary: Dartford Borough Council

Period(s):

NGR (centre of site to eight figures) 556310 170023

Type of Archaeological work: Archaeological Evaluation

Date of recording: February 2017

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

Geology: Underlying geology is Clay with Flint

Title and author of accompanying report: Wilkinson P. (2017) Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Spring Gardens, Holmsdale Road, South Darenth, Kent

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

No archaeological features or finds were revealed

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

Contact at Unit: Paul Wilkinson

Date: 02/03/2017



Plate 1. View of site



Plate 2. View of site



Plate 3. View of trench (looking SW)



Plate 4. View of trench (looking NE)

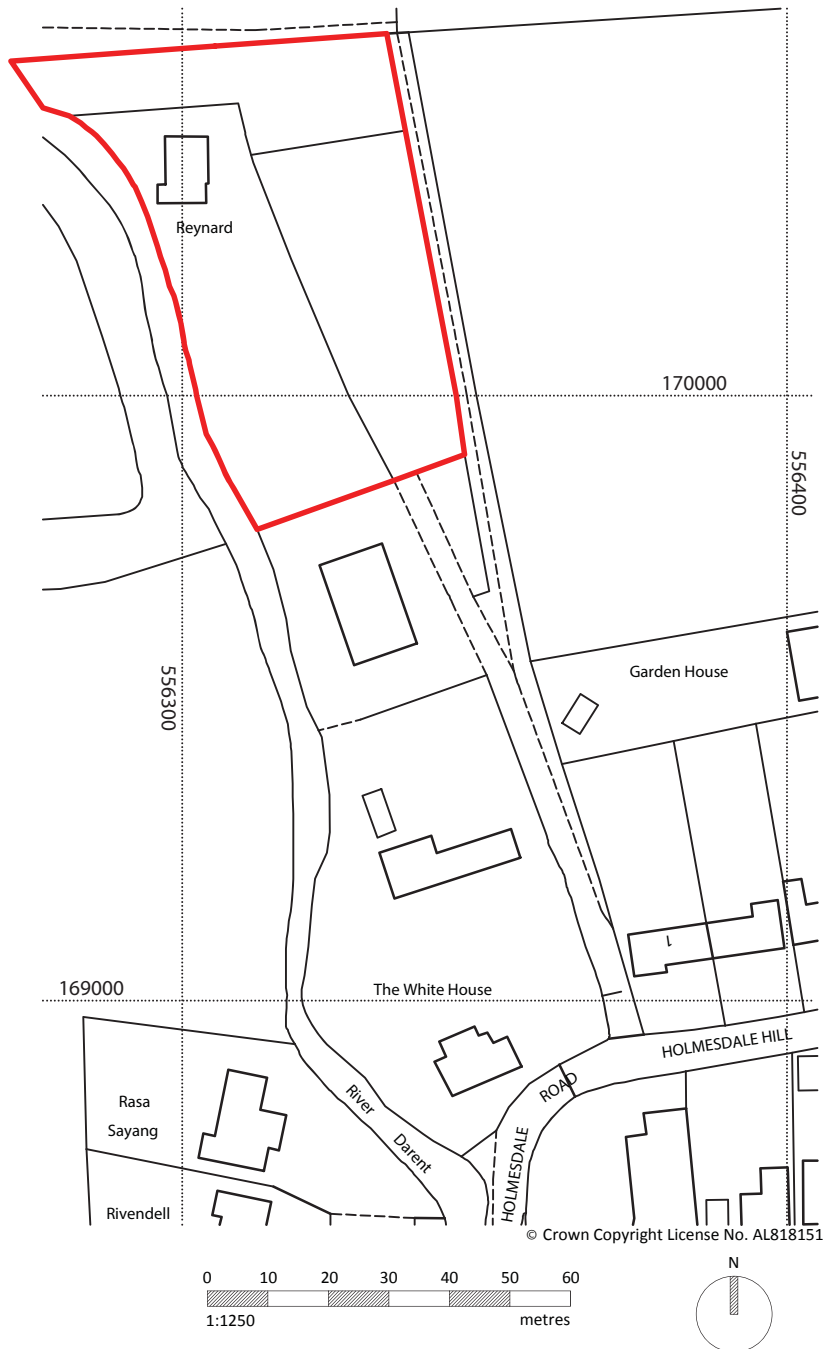
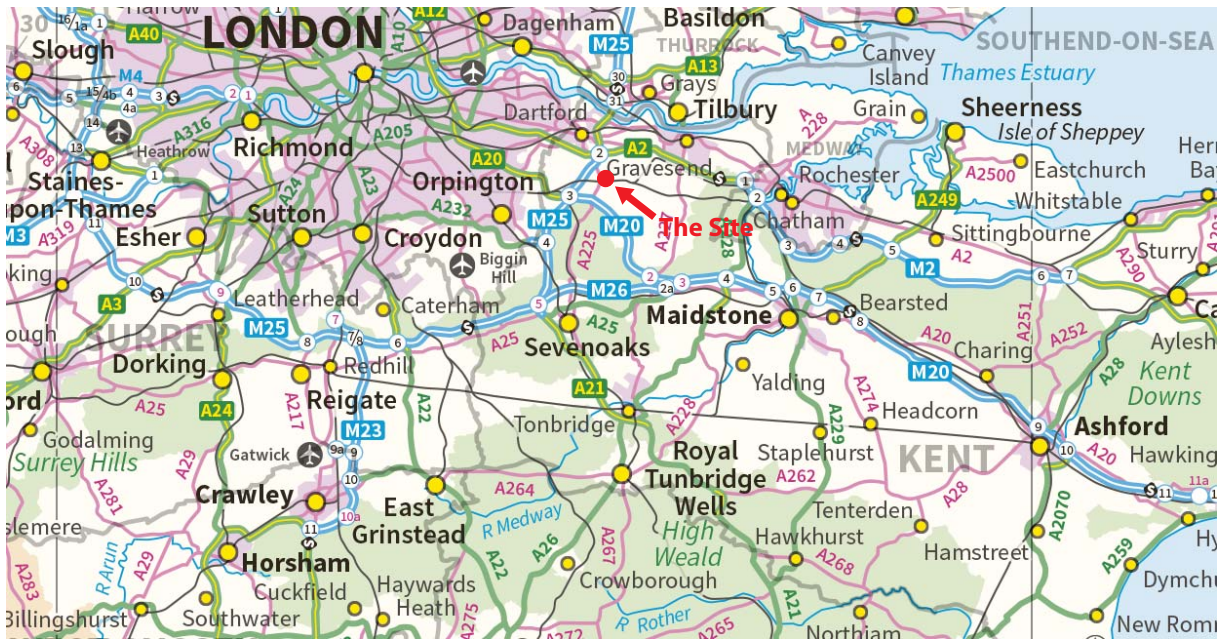


Figure 1: Site location map

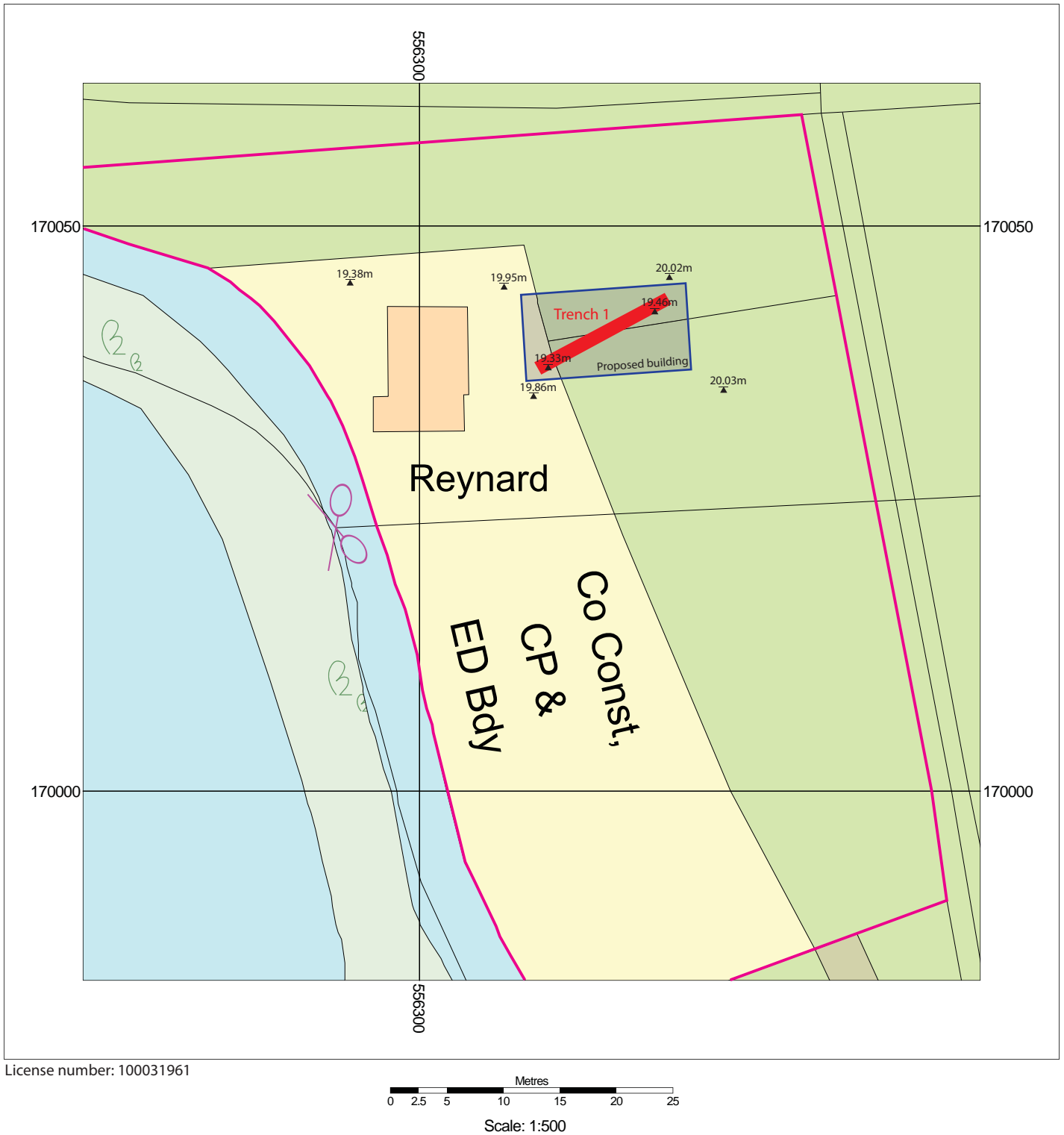


Figure 2: Trench location in relation to OS 1:500 map