An Archaeological Watching Brief at Spires Academy, Sturry, Kent

NGR 619710 161700

Site Code: SAC 10

Project No. 4577

OASIS No. archaeol6-85802

By

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ASE Report No. 2010199

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of geotechnical test pits at Spires Academy, Sturry (NGR 619710 161700). The work was undertaken in October 2010 and was commissioned by Carillion.

The watching brief identified two archaeological features both containing single finds of Roman date. These are potentially Roman cut features indicating some form of road side activity. However, equally the finds could be residual and the features may be of a later date.
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5. Finds
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Appendix 1 OASIS Form
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), was commissioned by Carillion to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of 14 geotechnical interventions at Spires Academy, Sturry, Kent (NGR 619710 161700), henceforth called the site (Figures 1 and 2).

1.2 Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The site lay in a plot of land to the east of the school buildings currently in use as a pasture. It was bounded to the south by Island Road and to the north and east by open fields.

1.2.2 The geology of the site is Head brickearth and gravel over London clay (BGS Map 273, 1974).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The ground works were undertaken in advance of a planning application to develop the site for a new school building. The site lies within an area of some archaeological potential. Therefore, a programme of archaeological works was commissioned by Carillion as best practice to observe these ground works.

1.3.2 The fieldwork was undertaken by Giles Dawkes and Greg Priestly-Bell (Senior Archaeologists). The project was managed by Andy Leonard (Project Manager) and Jim Stevenson (Post-excavation Manager).
2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 A Late Iron Age / Early Roman enclosure has been identified some 350m to the east of the site

2.1.2 The site lies to the north of a Roman Road. This is the route of Island Road, immediately to the south of the site.

2.1.3 A Saxon cemetery is known some 250m to the south-east and the village of Westbere to the south was the focus for Saxon and later settlement (Rady 2006; Barrett 2006).
3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The general aim of the archaeological work was to ensure that any artefacts or ecofacts of an archaeological interest encountered during the ground works were located and recorded to appropriate standards. Specifically, the main aims of the archaeological works was to establish the location, extent and date of any ground disturbance present and to ascertain at what depth any archaeological or potential archaeological horizons were encountered.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 The 14 geotechnical interventions were undertaken by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. The interventions were all 0.9m wide, 2.5m long and excavated to a depth of up to 3m. All test pits were monitored by an archaeologist.
4.0 RESULTS (Figs 2 and 3)

4.1 SAT01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>Max. Width</th>
<th>Max. Thickness</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.2 SAT02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>Max. Width</th>
<th>Max. Thickness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT02/1</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>Topsoil</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>0.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT02/2</td>
<td>Deposit</td>
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<td>Tr.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4.3 SAT03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Layer</td>
<td>Topsoil</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>0.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT03/2</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>Feature fill</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>0.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT03/3</td>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>Negative Feature</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>0.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT03/4</td>
<td>Deposit</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
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The north side of a negative feature was recorded in section (Fig. 3 section 2). Feature (SAT03/3) may have been a pit or ditch with steep concave sides and a flat base. Fill (SAT03/2) was firm grey silt and gravel with a find of a single fragment of abraded Roman ceramic building material.

The natural was orange brown clay and gravel.

4.4 SAT04

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.5 SAT05

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</tr>
</thead>
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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.
4.6 **CBR01**

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<tbody>
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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.7 **CBR02**

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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.8 **CBR03**

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</table>

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4.9 **CBR04**

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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.10 **CBR05**

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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.11 **TP01**

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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.
4.12 TP02

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<tr>
<td>TP02/3</td>
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<td>Negative feature</td>
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<td>0.4m</td>
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<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
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The east side of a negative feature was recorded in section (Fig. 2, Section 1). Feature (TP02/3) may have been a pit or ditch and had a steep concave side. The base was not seen. Fill (TP02/2) was firm grey silt and gravel with a find of a single fragment of Roman brick.

The natural was orange brown clay and gravel.

4.13 TP03

<table>
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The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.

4.14 TP04

<table>
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<th>Number</th>
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<th>Max. Thickness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TP04/1</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>Topsoil</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The natural was orange brown clay and gravel. No archaeological features or finds were identified.
5.0 **THE FINDS** by Sarah Porteus

5.1 **Introduction**

5.1.1 The finds have been weighed and quantified and recorded on pro forma recording forms and retained as part of the archive.

5.2 **The ceramic building material**

5.2.1 Fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered from two contexts. A single fragment of Roman brick (1/356g) in an under-fired fine sandy orange fabric with fine micaceous speckling and sparse cream silt streaks was recovered from context (TP02/02). The brick fragment had a thickness of 37mm and showed signs of having been heat affected on part of the upper surface. A second fragment of CBM (1/14g) recovered from context [SAT03/02] is in the same fabric as the brick and so of probable Roman date, it is however too abraded for form to be identified.

5.2.2 The assemblage holds no further potential for research but has been retained for comparison should further work be undertaken.
6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The watching brief identified two negative features both containing single finds of Roman date. These are potentially Roman cut feature, perhaps indicating some form of road side activity. However, the finds could be residual, which would not be surprising given the location of the site and the features of later date.
Bibliography

Barret, D., 2006 *Island Road, Hersden*, Canterbury’s Archaeology 29, 19-20

Rady, J., 2006, *Sewer Pipelines South of Island Road, Hersden*, Canterbury’s Archaeology 29, 20-22
Appendix 1
OASIS ID: archaeol6-85802

Project details

Project name Spires Academy

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of geotechnical test pits at Spires Academy, Sturry (NGR TQ 1971 6170). The work was undertaken in October 2010 and was commissioned by Carillion. The watching brief identified two negative features both containing single finds of Roman date. These are potentially Roman cut features indicating some form of road side activity. However, the finds could be residual and the features may well be of a later date.

Short description of the project

Project dates Start: 11-10-2010 End: 14-10-2010

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes 4577 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes SAC10 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland

Monument type PIT Roman

Significant Finds CBM Roman

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT CANTERBURY STURRY Spires Academy, Sturry

Postcode CT2 0NG

Study area 1.50 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 1971 6172 51.3414325446 -0.281123940142 51 20 29 N 000 16 52 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator Private Client

Project design Archaeology South-East
originator
Project
director/manager Andy Leonard
Project supervisor Giles Dawkes
Type of sponsor/funding body private client

Project archives
Physical Archive recipient Local Museum
Physical Contents 'Ceramics'

Digital Archive recipient Local Museum
Digital Contents 'Ceramics'
Digital Media available 'Database','Spreadsheets','Text'

Paper Archive recipient Local Museum
Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1
Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title An Archaeological Watching Brief at Spires Academy, Sturry, Kent
Author(s)/Editor(s) Giles Dawkes
Other bibliographic details 2010199
Date 2010
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication Portslade
Description Grey report
Entered by Giles Dawkes (gilesdawkes@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on 5 November 2010