



SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF OF LAND AT WIERTON PLACE, BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 4JW

Introduction

- 1.1 This specification is concerned with an archaeological watching brief to be maintained on land at Wierton Place, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4JW (Figure 2, AP 1).
- 1.2 The NGR to the centre of the site is NGR TQ 78097 49970.
- 1.3 The site has planning permission (dated 16th August 2018) for the erection of 4no. new dwellings and associated external works. The Local Planning Authority's (Maidstone District Council) planning reference for the proposal is 17/503852/FULL.
- 1.4 The following condition (4) 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 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

- 1.5 In view of the groundworks involved in the development it has been decided that a watching brief is the most appropriate measure to satisfy the condition in the first instance. If significant remains are revealed during the watching brief, further archaeological measures may be required to secure mitigation on the site. This Watching Brief is for plots 20-24 as shown in Figure 2.
- 1.6 The watching brief should be undertaken during any ground investigation, reduction, excavation for paths, foundations, drainage and landscaping. The archaeologist should attend throughout the excavation of such works. The archaeologist should also attend and oversee any external alterations or alteration of existing buildings or structures that will be converted during the course of scheduled works. The archaeological contractor should complete record sheets for all areas of trenching observed noting ground conditions, soil deposits and archaeology and support these with a diary of site visits, observations and as minimum digital photographs of each area observed.
- 1.7 The archaeological contractor will have close liaison with the County Archaeologist and development contractor with regard to the frequency of visit and appropriate action to be taken.

2. The Archaeological Potential

- 2.1 The Archaeological Potential at the site primarily relates to that of Wierton Place and the Post Medieval period. Wierton Place is a Grade II listed (1389637) mid-18th century country house that was altered in the mid-19th century. Wierton Place according to Hasted was built circa 1760 replacing an earlier house situated a little to the north, although the exact location of the earlier dwelling is unknown. The 19th century alterations included the construction of a range of extensive greenhouses attached to a wall and a garden building on the northern side of a walled garden, which are also Grade II listed (1373870). The area of the proposed development is to the north of the walled garden. During the second half of the 20th century, this area was subject to modern outbuildings adjacent to the northern wall of the walled garden

with concrete hardstanding to the north. These modern buildings have recently been demolished leaving the concrete hardstanding. The area to the west was the larger house and deer park associated with Boughton Monchelsea place and further west the stately home of Linton Park. The line of the large houses sit on the edge of the Greensand scarp ridge of the North Downs. The area around is one that is rural and scattered farms and was in the late Post Medieval period one of orchards. North of Wierton Place between formal gardens and Back Lane was in the 18th century a wooded area and early historical mapping shows the area of the site was lightly wooded with a track running through the area (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Historical OS Map 1872

- 2.2 Little is known in respect of the Prehistoric period in the area. Given the rural nature of the immediate area, there has been limited opportunity of archaeological excavations. By Back Lane close to Marlpit Farm, which suggests that chalk quarrying occurred in the area, there are Iron Age earthworks (TQ 75 SE 154) circa 650m north of the site with more earthworks further eastwards along Amber Lane. These earthworks on the high ground form part of the Loose Oppidum. The whole earthwork was built in one period being the second quarter of the 1st century AD, just before the Roman invasion. There are evidence of iron working near Boughton Monchelsea. On this high ground to the north is a later Roman villa site near Park Farm (TQ 75 SE 1). The nearby River Medway was used extensively for ragstone quarrying with one such quarry at Boughton Monchelsea. At Langley to the north of the Site are known Roman cemeteries suggesting Roman activity was concentrated around that area. The HER indicates that the archaeological assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of **high** archaeological potential for the Post Medieval period, **low** for the Prehistoric period, and moderate for the Iron Age and Roman period, with **low** for all other periods. However, given that the majority of the area of the PDA appears to have been built on, there is likely to have been a high level of disturbance and truncation on any potential archaeology. Any potential remains within the PDA should they survive in-situ will in the majority of the PDA not be vulnerable to damage during the proposed development.
- 2.2 The British Geological Society (BGS 1995) shows that the local geology at the PDA consists Hythe Formation - Sandstone And [Subequal/Subordinate] Limestone, Interbedded. There are no superficial deposits. The PDA sits just to the south of a band of Head - Clay, Silt, Sand And Gravel. However, the low resolution of the BGS mapping (1:50,000) means that it can be difficult to know the exact location of the boundaries of the superficial deposits.

3. Objectives

- 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.
- 3.2 Particular attention will be paid to any 'garden' elements (layout of 18th century gardens, heating systems for greenhouses and garden walls, etc) including those potentially from the 20th century. This is due to the interest for this site being associated with the 18th century complex and the horticultural works.
- 3.3 Any external alterations or alteration of existing buildings or structures will require archaeological supervision/ monitoring.

4. Proposed Groundworks

- 4.1 The groundworks included levelling of the site and foundation trenches for the erections of four detached dwellings, plots 20-24 (Figure 2).
- 4.2 The archaeological contractor should clarify the extent of the works with the developer before work begins and ensure that they target their attendance in accordance with the development programme. **The archaeologist should keep a diary and description of all works observed as stated in para 1.5 and include such in their report.**

5. Method

- 5.1 The archaeological contractor will monitor the excavations for all groundworks. Any excavation should be undertaken using a flat bladed bucket and preferably in a single direction to enable archaeological remains to be recorded prior to disturbance from being driven over. **If possible archaeological remains are encountered, machine excavation will cease to allow the remains to be investigated further.**

- 5.2 The archaeologist will inspect the surfaces revealed. Any archaeological structures or features revealed will be recorded in plan and section as appropriate according to Section 6 below. **The main contractor will allow the archaeological contractor reasonable time and resources to undertake any inspection or recording required.**
- 5.3 Further limited excavation may be necessary to clarify the extent and nature of some archaeological deposits. In this case, the archaeological contractor will undertake the excavation by hand.
- 5.4 If significant remains are unexpectedly encountered the archaeological contractor will inform the County Archaeological Officer and the developer immediately and further mitigation measures will be agreed.

6. Recording

- 6.1 All structures, deposits and finds are to be recorded according to accepted professional standards.
- 6.2 All recording points used should be accurately tied into the National Grid, preferably by theodolite, and located on to the 1:1250 map of the area.
- 6.3 Plans indicating the location of all archaeological features encountered are to be drawn at an appropriate scale, located on the site plan and levelled with respect to OD. An overall site plan is to be maintained at a scale of 1:100.
- 6.4 All plans are to be accurately tied in to the site grid. All plans and sections are to be drawn on polyester based drafting film and clearly labelled.
- 6.5 All archaeological contexts are to be recorded individually on context record sheets. A furthermore general record of the work comprising a description and discussion of the archaeology is to be maintained as appropriate.

- 6.6 A full black and white and colour (digital) photographic record of the work is to be kept. The photographic record is to be regarded as part of the site archive. The archaeological contractor is to provide the KCC Archaeological Officer with a selection of photographic images which reflect the archaeological findings and investigations undertaken on this site.
- 6.7 All artefacts recovered during the excavations on the site are the property of the Landowner. They are to be suitably bagged, boxed and marked in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Conservation Guidelines nos. 2 and on completion of the archaeological post-excavation programme the landowner will arrange for them to be deposited in a museum or similar repository agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.8 The site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, is to be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990)*. On completion of the project the Developer will arrange for the archive to be deposited in a suitable museum or similar repository to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

7. Reporting

- 7.1 On completion of the archaeological watching brief the archaeological contractor will agree with the KCC Archaeologist a programme for the reporting of the results of the work. The reporting of the watching brief will be commensurate with the results but as a minimum must stand as a sufficiently detailed report on the archaeological monitoring to serve both future research and inform future planning decisions taken on the site.

Report circulation

- 7.3 Copies of all reports are to be provided to:

- the Developer
- the Kent Historic Environment Record
- the Local Planning Authority
- the project archive.

7.4 When submitting the report to the KCC County Archaeologist the archaeological contractor should provide written confirmation that the report has been submitted to the above parties.

7.5 If the archaeological contractor is required, contractually, to only submit reports directly to the developer or their agent, the archaeological contractor must inform the KCC County Archaeologist in writing that they have completed the report and to whom it has been forwarded to. The archaeological contractor must ensure that the developer is made aware of the need to circulate the report as in 7.3 above.

Reporting of watching briefs with limited remains

7.6 If the watching brief has resulted in limited archaeological remains being recorded then the archaeological contractor will complete the necessary post excavation works and produce a **'Watching Brief Report'** within 4 weeks of the completion of the watching brief (see sections 7.8 to 7.12 below).

Reporting of watching briefs with significant archaeological remains

7.7 If significant archaeological remains are recorded then within 3 months of completion of the watching brief the archaeological contractor will undertake an assessment of the results and produce a MAP2 **'Post-excavation Assessment Report'**. This report will set out a programme of post excavation works through to completion of a **'Full Report'** and **'Publication'** of the findings (see sections 7.13 to 7.17 below).

Contents of a 'Watching Brief Report'

7.8 The archaeological contractor may determine the general style and format of the Watching Brief Report but it must be completed in accordance with this specification. The report must provide sufficient information and assessment to enable the County Archaeologist and the Local Planning Authority to stand as a detailed report on the archaeological fieldwork for future research and to inform on any future planning decisions for the site.

7.9 Reports that do not provide sufficient information or that have not been compiled in accordance with the relevant sections of this specification will be returned to the archaeological contractor for revision and resubmission.

7.10 The report is to include as a minimum:

7.10.1 An **Abstract** summarising the scope and results of the archaeological watching brief.

7.11 An **Introduction** including:

- the location of the site including National Grid Reference;
- an account of the background and circumstances of the work;
- a description of the development proposals, planning history and planning reference together with the planning condition (where appropriate);
- the scope and date of the fieldwork, the personnel involved and who commissioned it;
- the nature of potential impacts arising from the proposals;

An account of the **Archaeological Background** of the development site including:

- geology, soils and topography;
- any known existing disturbances on the site;
- background archaeological potential of the site. This should include a summary of the known Sites and Monuments Record entries generally within a 500m radius of

the boundaries of the site. The HER entries should be quoted with their full KCCHER identifier (e.g TR 36 NW 12);

- summary of any previous phases of archaeological investigation at the development site;
- any constraints on the archaeological monitoring.

7.12 The **Methodology** employed during the watching brief must be detailed in the report. Simply referring to the methodology outlined in the specification is not acceptable. Any aims and objectives specified in the specification should be included as should any further objectives identified during the course of the watching brief. The frequency of monitoring visits, ground works observed and any constraints experienced while carrying out the monitoring should be detailed. This should include a diary of dates of observation and what development works were observed on those dates.

The report should include a quantification of the archive contents, their state and future location.

7.13 A description of the **Results** of the archaeological monitoring. This description must include for each area observed:

- the dimensions of the area observed;
- the nature and depth of overburden soils encountered;
- description of all archaeological features and finds encountered in each area observed, their dimensions, states of preservation and interpretation;
- a description of the geological subsoil encountered across the site;
- heights related to Ordnance Datum should be provided for each feature and deposit.
- for complex remains a Harris Matrix diagram should be provided.

7.14 The **Finds** recovered during the course of the watching brief should be described, quantified and assessed by artefact type within the report. The report should also provide an indication of the potential of each category of artefact for further analysis and research. For each category of artefact the report should describe the method of

processing, any sub-sampling, conservation and assessment undertaken. Where appropriate local reference collections will be referred to for descriptive and analytical consistency. Any implications for future archive, conservation or discard of the artefacts should also be detailed.

- 7.15 The report should include a table showing the contexts, classes and quantity of artefacts recovered, together with their date and interpretation.
- 7.16 The report must include an assessment of the **Environmental** potential of the site. Details should be provided of any environmental sampling undertaken in connection with the fieldwork and the results of any processing and assessment of the samples. The report should describe the method of processing, any sub-sampling and assessment. Any potential for future analysis of the samples or environmental remains recovered from the evaluation should be described. Implications for future archive, conservation or discard of environmental samples or remains should be detailed.
- The report should include, as appropriate, tables summarising environmental samples taken, together with the results of processing and assessment.
- 7.17 Any results from the watching brief involving the application of archaeological scientific techniques e.g. specialist dating should be included in the watching brief report.
- 7.18 An **Interpretation** of the archaeology of the site, including its location, extent, date, condition, significance and importance. This should include, even if no archaeology is identified as present on the site, description of areas of disturbance, non-archaeological deposits and changes in geological subsoil where appropriate.
- 7.19 A **Conclusion** with a summary of the archaeological results and how any archaeology observed relates to the development site. The effects of the development works on the archaeological remains should also be described. The report should highlight any areas of significant archaeological deposits that remain preserved within the development site. Particular note should be made of any variations in the depth of overburden covering any archaeological deposits revealed.

7.20 The report should include comments on the effectiveness of the methodology employed and the confidence of the results and interpretation.

7.21 Figures / illustrations – The report should include sufficient illustrations to support descriptions and interpretations within the report text. Figures are to be fully cross-referenced within the document text. As a minimum the report should include the following figures:

- a site location plan tied into the Ordnance Survey at 1:1250 or in the case of larger sites at 1:2500. The plan should also include at least two National Grid points and show the site boundary;
- a plan at 1:100 or 1:200 showing the layout of the development groundworks clearly indicating the areas observed. The plan should show significant archaeological features, coloured by phases or period as related to the development site. Where possible, projection of archaeological features outside of the areas observed should be included on the plan. This plan should also include two National grid points;
- plans of the features revealed in each of the excavation areas at a larger scale e.g. 1:20 or 1:50; such plans are to also illustrate areas of disturbance, change in subsoil and location of sections; The location of significant finds and samples taken should also be indicated;
- relevant section drawings and soil trench profiles as appropriate;
- illustrations and/or photographs of significant finds should be included where appropriate.

7.22 All report illustrations must be fully captioned and scale drawings must include a bar scale. Standard archaeological drawing conventions must be used. Plan and section illustrations must include the numbers of all contexts illustrated. North must be included on all plans and should be consistent. Sections must indicate the orientation of the section and the Ordnance Datum height of the section datum.

- 7.23 Black & White or Colour digital photographs should be included where appropriate to illustrate the archaeology of the site, the development operations or the range of soil profiles encountered. All photographs should be appropriately captioned.
- 7.24 The report will be submitted to the County Archaeologist in a bound hard-copy and in digital format. The digital copy will be supplied for preference in .pdf format or alternatively in .rtf format accompanied by digital copies of images, plans and maps in .bmp, .tif or .jpg format. The medium should be either on a PC-formatted floppy disk, on a PC CD-ROM (CD-R format only). Whichever software is used the digital files must be supplied in a PC readable format.

Contents of a 'Watching Brief Assessment Report'

- 7.25 The 'Archaeological Watching Brief Assessment Report' will follow the format and requirements detailed in 7.8 to 7.12 above.

In addition the report will include an assessment of the results of the archaeological monitoring and their potential to address both the original research aims and objectives of the project and any further research objectives identified during the course of the on-site and post excavation works.

The report will detail any further analysis necessary on the project records, artefact and environmental assemblages to achieve the research potential identified in the assessment. A justification should be included for each analysis proposed.

The report will set out a timetable for completion of analysis and reporting, detailing all individual tasks to be completed, resources required and the key personnel involved. The proposal should set out arrangements for monitoring of the post excavation process.

The report should include a synopsis of the proposed '**Full report**' and '**Publication**' and identify the likely destination of the publication.

8. General

- 8.1 The archaeological contractor is to allow the site records to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time, during or after the watching brief, by the developer, or any designated representative of the Local Planning Authority.

8.2 In undertaking the work the archaeological contractor is to abide by :

- all statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974;
- the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Code of Conduct*;
- the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.

8.3 On completion of the watching brief the archaeological contractor will prepare a consideration of the methodology used, including a confidence rating.

8.4 The archaeological contractor is to provide the County Archaeological Officer with a representative selection of digital photographs illustrating the archaeology of the site and the operations of the investigation. These will be deposited with the County HER and will be used for presentations on aspects of the archaeology of Kent. Prior to commencement of their works the archaeological contractor is to complete and submit to the County Archaeologist parts A and B of the Kent Archaeological Fieldwork, Notification and HER Form. Part C the Form should be completed and submitted at the completion of fieldwork and Part D with the final report of the works.

8.5 It is to be understood that photographs and notes taken by KCC Archaeological Officers in connection with the work that do not identify individuals or site locations may be used by KCC for outreach and publicity purposes, including on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter etc. The Archaeological Contractor should, **preferably in advance** of the works, raise with the KCC Archaeological Officer any concerns that they or their client may have over the use and dissemination of images or information for outreach purposes. In such cases the Archaeological Contractor and their client will agree a protocol with the KCC Archaeological Officer for the appropriate dissemination and use of images and information which balances the concerns of the contractor and/or client with the objective of ensuring that the people of Kent are kept informed of the archaeological discoveries in the county.'

**SWAT Archaeology (Based on Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Team pro-
forma). Dated 22nd December 2023**

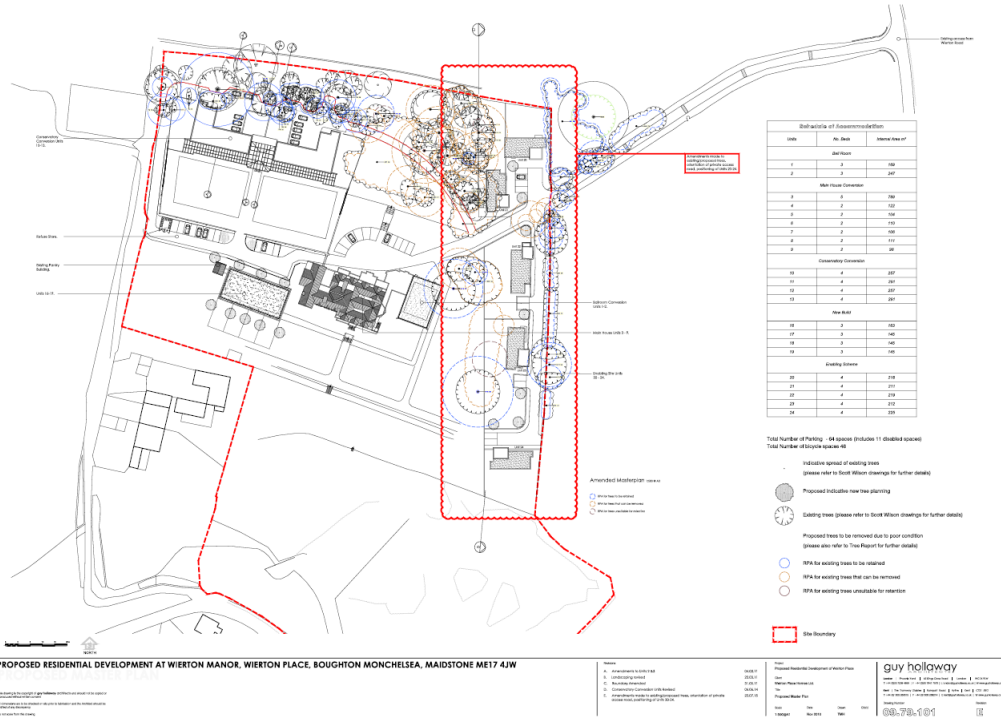


Figure 2. Location of site



AP 1. View of site 2022 (Google Earth)