ARC EMM 98

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT. EAST OF MERSHAM.

Central National Grid Reference TR 0535 3920

Contract No. S/400/SP/0009/P484*

Environmental Statement Route Window 34
Volume 1 of 1

Canterbury Archaeological Trust
92A Broad Street
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UNION RAILWAYS (SOUTH) LIMITED

ARC EMM 98

Archaeological Evaluation Report. East of Mersham.

Central National Grid Reference TR 0535 3902
Contract No. S/400/SP/0009/P484*
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SUMMARY

An archaeological field evaluation of land to the east of Mersham, Kent was undertaken by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT), between the 18th and 25th January 1998. This formed part of a programme of archaeological investigations commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL).

The area under investigation was located to the north of the existing London to Folkestone railway. It was bounded to the east by open farmland, to the north by private housing, and immediately to the west by fields recently the subject of an archaeological excavation by CAT on behalf of URS and interpreted as a medieval metalworking site (ARC MSH 98).

A total of ten trenches was excavated, archaeological features being identified in two of these. The features were interpreted as a series of pits, and a large ditch. The ditch is believed to be the continuation of a ditch observed in the area previously excavated, and thought to represent the southern boundary to the site. The density of features encountered was low, and no direct evidence for metalworking was evident. Despite this the presence of the identified features tentatively suggests that the original limits of the medieval metalworking site continued eastwards into the study area.

SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) between 18th and 25th January 1999, on land to the east of Mersham, Kent (URL grid point 85250–85400E/19150–19300N, NGR TR 0535 3920: Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The evaluation was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS), and forms part of a larger programme of archaeological investigations along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL).

1.1.3 The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the effect of the construction of the CTRL upon the cultural heritage of the study area. A specification for the field evaluation was supplied by URL (1997). The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a written scheme of investigation prepared by URS and agreed with English Heritage and the County Archaeological Officer.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Topography

2.1.1 The evaluation site was centred on national grid reference TR 0535 3920 (URL Grid 85250–85400E/19150–19300N) and is located to the north of the existing London to Folkestone railway (Fig. 1)

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2.1.2 The western limits are marked by a tree-lined field boundary fence, which follows the line of an unmarked public footpath. Similar tree-lined fences enclose the site to the east, where open farmland is present and to the north where there is private housing. As limited to these boundaries, the study site is rectangular and in alignment with the railway, roughly north-west to south-east.

2.1.3 The current ground levels for the study site vary from 67m to 53m OD. The highest area of the site is to the west and north where the ground is relatively flat and appears to be part of a natural plateau. The ground slopes sharply down towards the south-east.

2.1.4 The evaluation site covered an area of 3.1 hectares, a sample of 1.5% was studied in the evaluation trenches.

2.2 Geology

2.2.1 The underlying solid geology of the site comprises of lower cretaceous lime and sandstones of the Hythe Beds, overlying Atherfield clays (British Geological Survey).

2.2.2 Where present any drift geology is likely to comprise of Loess soils, which in general mantle the Hythe Beds.

2.3 Current land use

2.3.1 The study site presently consists of one paddock of rough grazing under pasture to the west, and land currently grazed by sheep, to the east.

2.3.2 A fenced stream has cut a small gorge through the central area effectively splitting the site into two. An area of marsh has formed in the central southern and eastern part of the site.

2.3.3 Along with the marsh in the east a pond is present in the western area, located approximately halfway down the slope.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

3.1 Aims

3.1.2 The aims of the evaluation, as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, were to determine:

- the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the area of the evaluation;
- the presence and potential of environmental and economic indicators preserved in archaeological features or deposits;
- the local, regional, national and international importance of such remains, and the potential for further archaeological fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.

3.2 Archaeological background

3.2.1 An Environmental Assessment for the area under evaluation was prepared by the Oxford Archaeology Unit (URL 1994), this identified the area to the immediate west as having particular potential for early settlement. This area has recently been the centre of an excavation undertaken by CAT on behalf of URS (ARC MSH 98).

3.2.2 The excavation unearthed the remains of an early medieval (Norman) metalworking site with origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period, revealing a linear ditch or boundary, which ran along the southern edge of the site. The projected alignment of this ditch continued into the current area under evaluation. Further archaeological deposits associated with the early medieval period were excavated. Many of these contained evidence for metalworking activity and similar activity might be present in the study area.

3.2.3 A late medieval manor house and a church rebuilt in *c.* AD 1100 (with origins in the Anglo-Saxon period) lie *c.*100m to the north-west of the study area. Part of a medieval village east of the church and to the north of evaluation site was bulldozed in 1967 (URL 1994).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with those methods stated in the Written Scheme of Investigation.

4.1.2 During the course of the evaluation several variations were instructed following agreement between URS and the County Archaeologist. These are described below.

4.2 Surveying

4.2.1 The trench locations, specified by URS were established using a total station EDM utilising the permanent ground markers (PGMs) as supplied by URS. The trench location plan (Fig. 2) has been digitally plotted using an AutoCAD graphics programme.

4.2.2 All co-ordinates used in this report relate to the URS local project grid unless otherwise stated. A full list of Ordnance Survey National Grid trench co-ordinates, together with the conversion formula used to calculate them, is included in the site archive.

4.3 Excavation

4.3.1 Six evaluation trenches (each 30 m. long by 1.8 m. wide) were proposed to provide a 1.5% sample of the evaluation area. During the course of the work a number of variations to the size and orientation of the trenches was agreed with URS due to presence of vegetation and/or underground services. Four additional evaluation trenches (3635TT-3638TT) were excavated in addition to the original specification to further achieve the archaeological fieldwork aims. The final trench layout is illustrated in Fig. 2.

4.3.2 The trenches were excavated using a 360 degree hydraulic excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and under close archaeological supervision.

4.3.3 All undifferentiated topsoil, made grounds, and modern overburden/hard-standing were stripped down in spits of *c*.100 mm thickness, the subsequent plough and subsoil were removed in 50 mm thick spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or the upper surface of the 'natural' deposits were reached.

4.3.4 Following machine clearance, the base and long sections of the trenches were inspected and cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and any subsequent excavation carried out by hand.

4.4 Recording

4.4.1 In trenches in which archaeological deposits were identified one long section was drawn at a scale of 1:20, the base was planned at a scale of 1:50, and both were levelled with respect to OD.

4.4.2 A temporary benchmark was transferred from the Ordnance Survey benchmark (56.639m. OD) located on the railway bridge in Church Road.

4.4.3 All archaeological deposits were recorded on CAT *pro forma* context recording sheets. Any deposit that could be distinguished from those above and below was considered as a context, and recorded individually. These stratigraphic units were numbered sequentially and are shown below in square brackets, thus [100].

4.4.4 Those trenches found not to contain any stratified archaeological deposits were recorded on CAT *pro forma* trial trench recording sheets.

4.4.5 Photographic coverage employed colour transparency, and black and white print formats.

4.4.6 Where identified, all artefacts were retrieved from stratified archaeological contexts. Retrieval of finds from non-stratified deposits removed by machine was carried out on an opportunistic basis. Only one environmental sample from a pit fill was taken. A site code (ARC EMM 98) was provided by URS; all records can be referenced from this code.

5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The initial mechanical excavation revealed an identical upper sequence of deposits over the entire site, although there were localised variations from trench to trench in exact composition, depths and heights in respect to OD.

5.1.2 The sequence consisted of topsoil [+] overlying either, a layer of made-ground [++], or an accumulated or developed soil horizon (plough-soil/sub-soil), recorded as [4].

5.1.3 Detailed trench descriptions are presented in section 5. Summary of all contexts and finds is presented in Appendices I and II.

5.2 Trench results

Trench 3539TT

5.2.1 Removal of the topsoil and accumulated soil horizon [4] exposed the natural at depths of 0.30 – 0.70m below present ground level, +65.77m OD at the north-eastern end of the trench, sloping down to +64.91m OD at the south-western end.

5.2.2 The natural was recorded as being fractured sandy limestone (ragstone) and soft sandstone (hassock), presumably the upper surface of the Hythe Beds. A change was noted 3.50m from the south-western end of the trench where light yellow-green sandy clay was exposed. A small slot revealed that this ran under the upper stone deposit in the north, and was therefore also natural.

5.2.3 A thin interface layer, up to 0.08m in depth was present between the natural materials and the overlying plough soil. No cultural material was found to be present, and hand cleaning of the trench failed to identify any cut archaeological features.

Trench 3540TT

5.2.4 The removal of the topsoil and the plough-soil horizon, exposed the natural yellow clays at a depth of 0.46 – 1.03m below present ground level. From a level of +62.56m OD at the north-west end of the trench, the level of natural deposits sloped sharply down to +58.97m OD at the south-east end.

5.2.5 A large feature [5] partially exposed along the southern side, was evident cutting into the natural at the north-western end of the trench. Its exposed width was 1.38m and the visible length was 7.50m.

5.2.6 Feature [5] was sampled in two locations (Fig. 3). Several deposits were recorded as forming the fills, one of which [9] had a high percentage of daub and charcoal and was sampled. Two sherds of pottery were retrieved from layers [22] and [23]. As recorded the edges were sharp and even, and the base was flat.

5.2.7 Initially this feature was thought to represent a ditch terminus, but the positioning of a later trench 3638TT suggested that the feature did not continue over a linear distance. An alternative interpretation is that the feature is a pit, or series of intercutting pits as no direct correlation was recorded between the fills excavated in

the two slots – with exception of the highest fill [6] which possibly could be slumping.

5.2.8 Towards the south-eastern end of the trench a buried soil horizon [26] was evident above the natural. This consisted of a light greyish red/brown sandy clay with moderate black specking (manganese staining). A hand-excavated slot failed to identify any cultural material.

Trench 3541TT

5.2.9 Natural was exposed 0.31 - 0.40m below present ground levels (+56.73m OD) sloping down to +54.31m OD at the south-eastern end of the trench. It was recorded as softly compacted dull red sandy clay, with bands of brighter red and less sandy clay evident towards the south-eastern end of the trench.

5.2.10 The upper surface of the natural was hand cleaned and no cultural material was found. Similarly no cut archaeological features were identified. An interface horizon, recorded as [2], was identified in section overlying the natural clays, up to 0.10m in thickness. This deposit correlates to a similar interface horizon, recorded as [1] in trench 3539TT.

Trench 3542TT

5.2.11 The natural was exposed 0.12 - 0.16m below present ground level (+58.55m OD) at the north-east end of the trench sloping down to +56.26m OD at the south-west end (recorded as a stiffly compacted bright yellow clay).

5.2.12 Where exposed the upper surface of the natural was hand cleaned but no cultural material or cut archaeological features found. Most of the northern end of this trench was occupied by a large modern landfill pit.

Trench 3543TT

5.2.13 After the removal of up to 0.45m of made-ground, consisting of redeposited natural (quarry upcast?) and a heavy build up of plough-soil, natural clay similar to that seen in trench 3542 was exposed. It lay at +57.03m OD, and sloped down to +55.64m OD at the north-western end of the trench.

5.2.14 The build up of made-ground and underlying plough-soil was greater (over 1.40m deep) at the north-western end of the trench. It was evident here that a large unidentified feature was present to the west of the trench. Inspection of the trench failed to identify the presence of a cut, in either plan or section, and it is suggested that the slope in the natural clay is due to this feature being natural or geological in origin – such as a backfilled river course.

5.2.15 Both the natural and the plough-soil were discoloured blue-grey, the intensity of which increased to the south-eastern end of the trench. This was interpreted as the result of anaerobic reduction in a marsh environment. Marsh grass was evident growing at this end.

Trench 3544TT

5.2.16 The sequence recorded in this trench was the same as that seen in Trench 3543TT above. Natural was exposed under a lesser build up of made-ground and plough-soil, and the blue-grey staining of the clay was heavier at the north-western end of the trench.

5.2.17 The natural was present at 0.50 – 0.96m below present ground levels (+54.34m OD) sloping down to +53.90m OD at the north-western end of the trench. Again the natural was seen to slope down at a steeper angle at the north-west end of the trench, similar to that as seen in trench 3543TT, and it is therefore suggested that the same unidentified feature is present to the west of this trench. No cut was identified in either plan or section.

Trench 3635TT

5.2.18 The natural was exposed at a depth of 0.28 – 0.32m below the present ground surface (+66.12m OD) at the western end of the trench, sloping down to +65.36m OD at the east (recorded as fragmented limestone and sandstone). It was similar to that seen in trench 3539TT. No archaeological deposits were identified, or cultural material retrieved.

Trench 3636TT

5.2.19 The natural, exposed at 0.35 – 0.38m below the present ground surface (+65.22m OD) at the western end of the trench, sloping down to +64.64m OD at the east, was recorded as fragmented limestone and sandstone. Where the limestone and sandstones were removed they overlay a dull yellow light sandy clay, similar to that seen in trench 3539TT. No archaeological deposits were identified, or cultural material retrieved.

Trench 3637TT

5.2.20 The natural, exposed at 0.51 – 0.59m below the present ground surface (+64.04m OD) at the western end of the trench, sloping down to +62.72m OD at the east, was recorded as dull to bright yellow sandy clay. No archaeological deposits were identified, or cultural material retrieved.

Trench 3638TT

5.2.21 Removal of topsoil and plough-soil revealed natural yellow sandy clay at a depth of 0.30 – 0.48m below present ground levels, with a height of +63.50m OD at the north end of the trench sloping down to +61.28m at the south.

5.2.22 A linear feature was recorded running perpendicular to the trench orientation. A 0.70m wide slot through this feature along the eastern side of the trench revealed the presence of a ditch [19], a later re-cut [25], and two probable pits [20] and [21].

5.2.23 The earliest of the features, ditch [19], had a 'U'-shaped profile, with sharp sides and an elongated flat base, was 0.82m deep. The width of the ditch would have been approximately 2.50m. Of the deposits filling this ditch only [15] produced datable material - two sherds of pottery (1 Iron Age; 1 Medieval).

5.2.24 A re-cut [25] to ditch [19] was evident along its southern side. It had a 'U'-shaped profile with a concave base. The maximum recorded depth of the re-cut was 0.76m, and its width 1.80 - 2.10m. The fill [12] contained twelve pieces of post-medieval roof tile.

5.2.25 Partially exposed along the southern side of ditch [19] was a pit, recorded as [21], which had been slightly truncated by the later re-cut [25]. This pit had a width of 1.90m, and an exposed length from the eastern side of the trench of 1.12m. Excavation of a slot through [21] revealed the presence of two fill deposits [16] and [17], of which [17] contained one piece of post-medieval roofing tile. Cut [21] was 0.62m deep, had sharply sloping sides and a flat base.

5.2.26 The opposing northern side of ditch [19] was truncated by another feature [20]. This feature ran parallel to the ditch, and a length of 1.30m was recorded extending from the eastern side of the trench. Its maximum width was 1.08m. Excavation of a slot along the edge of the trench revealed that the feature had very sharp, near vertical edges and a narrow concave base. A maximum depth of 1.28m was recorded. The fill [18] consisted mostly of redeposited natural and contained one piece of early post-medieval glass.

SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

6 SUMMARY OF TRENCH RESULTS

6.1 Geology

6.1.1 The natural evident in the trenches placed in the higher zone to the north and west of the western area [3539TT, 3635TT – 3637TT], was a mixture of fragmented glauconitic sandy limestone and calcareous soft sandstone. This material represents an outcrop of the Hythe Beds.

6.1.2 The southern and eastern part of the site exposed light-coloured sandy Atherfield Clay (British Geological Survey) which became less sandy and more stiffly compacted in the lowest lying part of the site.

6.2 Geological features

6.2.1 The drop in the levels of the natural clay as seen in the north-eastern ends of trenches 3543TT and 3544TT, indicates the presence of a large feature to the east.

6.2.2 Although any interpretations made about this feature are open to debate, observations made in the field, most notably the lack of evidence for any cut in plan or section and the gentle nature of the slope, suggest that this may be a geological feature, possibly relating to the stream and the formation of the marshy areas.

6.3 Buried soil horizon

6.3.1 The deposit identified in trench 3540TT, recorded as [3], was initially interpreted as the remains of a possible buried soil horizon which had survived erosion due to its position part way down a slope. However the presence of dark flecking within the deposit, probably staining from manganese, or iron/manganese, may correlate to a similar deposit identified on the eastern and southern slopes of the Hythe Beds in the Mersham area.

6.3.2 The deposit was mapped as a principal variation of the Mersham Series Soils (Green and Fordham 1973) and has been identified with a similar deposit during investigations commissioned by URS at Mersham (ARC MSH 98).

6.4 Archaeological features

6.4.1 Archaeological features were found in two of the ten trenches (3540TT and 3638TT). The features consisted of a large pit like feature [5] in trench 3540TT, and a linear ditch, with a later re-cut, a pit, and undefined later feature [19, 25, 21, 20] respectively in trench 3638TT.

7 NATURE AND DATE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

7.1 Pit [5]

7.1.1 Feature [5] was only partially exposed along the southern side of trench 3540TT and its full extent and nature was never clarified, although at least one of its sides was more than 7.50m in length, and a depth of at least 0.80m was recorded. Although some charcoal and daub were present within the layers comprising the fill, the use of the pit cannot be ascertained beyond possible clay extraction or rubbish disposal.

7.1.2 Dating evidence consists of two prehistoric sherds of pottery, from layers [22] and [23], dated to the Iron Age. Analysis of a sample taken from layer [9] within this pit showed not only further smaller fragments of similar pottery, but also tile/brick and 2 grams of iron slag. No conclusive date can be drawn for this pit, but it is likely that the presence of the pottery is misleading, being possibly residual; the tile/brick is probably late medieval or post-medieval in date.

7.2 Linear ditch [19], and later ditch re-cut [25]

7.2.1 Ditch [19] (Trench 3638TT), had a flat-bottomed 'U'-shaped profile, and although truncated by the later re-cut, had a width in excess of 2.50m. The alignment is approximately west/north-west to east/south-east, and maybe a continuation of the boundary ditch identified on the southern limits of the adjacent Mersham excavation (ARC MSH 98) (Fig. 5). The ditch seen in this previous URS investigation had a similar profile.

7.2.2 One sherd of pottery found within fill [12] of ditch [19] suggested a twelfth- or thirteenth-century date. The one sherd of Iron Age pottery is again thought to be residual.

7.2.3 It is noticeable, both in the plan (Fig. 5) and from observations made during the evaluation, that the alignment of this ditch (as a continuation of the one previously identified) takes it on a direct course towards the pond located half way down the slope. Although the nature of the pond is unknown (i.e. natural or man-made), this suggests that the purpose of the ditch may be drainage as well as, or instead of, a boundary marker.

7.2.4 The later ditch re-cut [25], which follows the same alignment, would seem to be a direct continuation of a re-cut seen in the Mersham excavation. However in this case the high percentage of post-medieval peg tile suggests a later date.

7.3 Pit [21]

7.3.1 This pit was seen on the southern side of the ditch [19]. No direct stratigraphic relationship can be drawn between the two, but one piece of post-medieval roof tile suggests that pit [21] is later than ditch [19]. However, the pit was cut by the ditch re-cut [25].

7.4 Feature [20]

7.4.1 This feature was seen to cut through the present plough-soil horizon, and although the only artefactual evidence was a piece of green glass thought to be of early post-medieval date, it is likely this feature is much later.

8 IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

8.1 Survival and condition

8.1.1 The evaluation has indicated the presence of archaeological remains relating Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval activity in the area under investigation. All of these survived as sub-soil features and, in the main they were found to be cutting into the upper surface of the natural deposits. Significant archaeological remains were restricted to the southern slope of the higher western part of the area under evaluation.

8.1.2 Due to the small sample size exposed in the bases of the evaluation trenches a definite understanding of the archaeology is not possible at this stage. Similarly the constraints imposed by such 'keyhole archaeology' makes it difficult to determine the precise extent of any surviving archaeology. When working under these confines it is possible to miss important archaeological features and be misled by what was seen.

8.1.3 Truncation due to modern agricultural activity may have had an impact on the survival of any archaeological remains, indeed failure of the evaluation to identify further archaeological deposits on the higher ground, formed by the plateau of Hythe bedrock, could be a direct result of truncation by ploughaction; the depths of topsoil and plough-soil is noticeably shallower here.

8.1.4 The surviving artefactual evidence was mainly in the form of pottery sherds, and fragments of tile and glass, little bone was found and where present was in a very poor condition. Environmental indicators such as charcoal, daub, burnt clay, and other domestic refuse were only located in sufficient quantities from one feature [5], waste products associated with metal-working activities were also only identified in this feature.

8.2 Period

8.2.1 There was artefactual evidence for the following periods on the site:
Iron Age (*c*. 600 – 75 BC)
Early medieval (*c*.1050 –1300)
Post-medieval (*c*.1550-1900)
Modern (1900+)

Iron Age (c. 600 – 75 BC)

8.2.2 Only one feature, a pit [5] in trench 3544TT, contained pre-conquest Iron Age pottery. However small tile fragments, coupled with evidence for metal-working waste (see 7.1.2 above) suggests that these pottery sherds are residual.. The presence of this pottery may indicate that there was activity from this period in the near vicinity, and that it is possible relevant archaeological remains have been missed, or evidence in the form of horizontal stratigraphy has been removed by later truncation.

Early Medieval (c.1050 –1300)

8.2.3 Medieval activity on the site was restricted to the presence of the ditch [19] in trench 3638TT, and possibly the large pit [5] (trench 3544TT), no structural or occupational evidence was present.

Post-medieval (c.1550-1900)

8.2.4 Post-medieval activity on the site is provided by the later recut [25] of the medieval ditch [19], pit [21] (trench 3638TT), and possibly pit [5] (trench 3544TT)

Modern (1900+)

8.2.5 A large modern landfill pit was identified as occupying the northern end of trench 3542TT. The unidentified feature [20] in trench 3638TT was also thought to be of recent twentieth date as the profile of the feature could be quite clearly seen cutting the plough-soil horizon.

8.3 Rarity

8.3.1 The evaluation has indicated the presence of a ditch [19], possibly a boundary or drain, and although the dating evidence is non-conclusive it would appear to have its origins in the early medieval period. On a national or even regional basis the presence of the ditch is not significant, but taken locally, it would appear to provide evidence that the adjacent known archaeological site did extend at some time into the area under investigation.

8.4 Fragility and vulnerability

8.4.1 Evaluation work has confirmed that some archaeological features survive cut into the natural geology, overlain by topsoil. Any intrusive work undertaken in connection with the CTRL is likely to damage features and deposits of archaeological interest

8.5 Diversity

8.5.1 The archaeological remains, as evident in the form of cut features, identified two phases relating to settlement or agricultural activity from the early medieval period and later post-medieval. The post-medieval appears to represent the re-use of the earlier medieval features, and may therefore suggest a continuation of activity through these periods. Evidence for an earlier presence on the site, or near vicinity, may be provided by the residual Iron Age pottery.

8.6 Documentation

8.6.1 Saxon references to the village of Mersham are known from AD 734, 835, and 863. A Saxon will of AD 1040 states that 'John Siweard and his wife Edith gave a hide of land for a church at Mersham'. A Saxon cemetery was also found at Mersham but its exact location is not known (URS 1998).

8.6.2 In Domesday the village was owned as Demesne land by the Archbishop of Canterbury. This continued until it was handed over to the prior and the monks of Christ Church Canterbury in *c.* AD1200. After the Dissolution of the monasteries it was handed back to the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral (URS 1998).

8.6.3 The church was rebuilt c. AD 1100 and again in the second half of the fourteenth century (URL1994).

8.6.4 Quarrying to the east of the church in 1967 located part of what was thought to be the medieval village of Mersham (URL1994).

8.7 Group value

8.7.1 As stated above the evaluation trenches appear to have shown evidence that a known archaeological site of medieval date previously excavated by CAT on behalf of URS (ARC MSH 98), extended at one time into the western area of the land under evaluation.

8.7.2 Under the specific aims for the evaluation, as outlined under the archaeological potential for the study site, the evidence for the continuation of this site is possibly of local importance, although not of regional or national importance.

8.8 Potential

8.8.1 The potential of the site appears to be limited, although scope for further research regarding the medieval and later post-medieval features present on the southern slope of the high plateau to the west. Issues about the presence of further archaeological features around the slopes of the plateau, especially along the projected length of the ditch towards the pond, and the nature, date, and extent of the pond feature itself were not addressed during the evaluation.

8.8.2 The site has greater potential for providing information concerning the extent of the site to the west, the eastern limits of which remain unclear. The recent investigation by CAT on behalf of URS has identified the southern and western boundaries of the site, and possibly the northern boundary as well, though this may fall beyond the area under excavation/evaluation, and equate with the southern boundary of the church and manor house. A candidate for the eastern boundary has been suggested (Houliston *pers. comm.*) as the ditch seen running from the church southwards down to the southern boundary ditch (Fig. 5). It is true that the concentration of archaeological features is much greater to the west of this linear feature. However this does not explain the continuation of the ditch on the southern side into the area under investigation.

8.8.3 It remains a possibility that the gorge formed by the stream, that separates the two areas of the study site, may have served as an eastern boundary. However this was not clarified by the evaluation and the exact extent of the adjacent site remains unknown.

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APPENDIX I: EVENTS DATASET

EVENT NAME	East of Mersham
EVENT CODE	ARC EMM 98
EVENT TYPE	Evaluation
CONTRACTOR	Canterbury Archaeological Trust
DATE	18/01/99 to 25/01/99
GRID	URL Grid 85250 - 85400E / 19150 - 19300N.
PROJECT	Channel Tunnel Rail Link
COUNTY	Kent
DISTRICT	Ashford
PARISH	Mersham
SMR	
SITE TYPE	Cultivated land 3
PERIOD	Medieval and Post-medieval
METHOD	Mechanical removal of topsoil and selective sondages through 'natural' deposits, hand excavation and recording of archaeological features
PHASING	Medieval and Post-medieval cut archaeological features. Residual Iron Age pottery
ENVIRON	None
FINDS	Medieval, Post-medieval and modern (residual Iron Age pottery)
GEOLOGY	Loess soils overlying Cretaceous Lower Cretaceous Lime and Sandstone part of the Hythe Beds.
CONTEXT No's	25, + 10 trench sheets
THREAT	Channel Tunnel Rail Link
SAMPLE	1.5%
SUMMARY	Evaluation identified cut archaeological features of a medieval and post-medieval date, an apparent continuation of a settlement site excavated previously in an adjacent field.
ARCHIVE	Canterbury Archaeological Trust
ACC NUM	

APPENDIX II: ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Trench	Type	Association	Comments	Period
+	All	Deposit		Topsoil	Modern
1	All	Deposit		Developed/Plough soils	Modern
2	3541TT	Deposit		Interface horizon	Undated
3	3540TT	Deposit	Same as 4		Undated
4	All	Deposit		Accuulated/dveloped soil	Undated
5	3540TT	Cut	Filled by 6 – 11, 22 - 24	Unidentified pit feature	
6	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
7	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
8	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
9	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
10	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
11	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 15	No finds	
12	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 25	Roof tile	Post-med.
13	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 19	Upper fill, no finds	
14	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 19	No finds	
15	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 19	Lowest fill, pottery (2)	Medieval
16	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 21	Upper fill, no finds	
17	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 21	Lower fill, no finds	.
18	3638TT	Deposit	Fill of 20	Glass	Modern
19	3638TT	Cut	Filled by 13 - 15	Linear ditch cut	Medieval
20	3638TT	Cut	Filled by 18	Pit/Linear feature?	Modern?
21	3638TT	Cut	Filled by 16, 17	Pit to south ditch	Medieval
22	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	1 pot sherd	Pre-hist?
23	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	1 pot sherd	Pre-hist?
24	3540TT	Deposit	Fill of 5	No finds	
25	3638TT	Cut	Filled by 12	Recut for ditch 19	

APPENDIX III: FINDS CATALOGUE

Context No.	Material	Quantity	Weight	Comments	Find No.	Dsk
12	Bone	1	10		7	k
12	Glass	1	5	green bottle fragment	8	k
12	Post Med Roof Tile	12	725		6	d
15	Pottery	2	5		5	k
17	Post Med Roof Tile	1	25		3	d
18	Glass	1	60	dark green bottle fragment early post med?	2	k
22	Pottery	1	2		1	k
23	Pottery	1	5		4	k

APPENDIX IV: KENT SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD SHEET

Site Name: East of Mersham, kent.
Site Code: ARC EMM98

Distrct: Ashford **Parish:** Mersham

Summary: An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, between the 18th and 25th of January 1998, of land to the east of Mersham, Kent. This formed part of a programme of archaeological investigations along the route of the Channel Tunnel Link, and was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited. The area under investigation was located to the north of the existing London to Folkestone Railway. Immediately to the west was a field recently the subject of an archaeological excavation by CAT on behalf of URS.

Periods :(✓)	**Roman**	**Other** (specify)
Neolithic	**Saxon**	
Bronze Age	**Medieval ✓**	
Iron Age ✓?	**Post Medieval ✓**	
	19th Cent +	

NGR Easting	**NGR Northing**
TQ053500 (central)	TQ39200 (central)

Type of Fieldwork : (✓)	
Evaluation ✓	**Geophysical Survey**
Excavation	**Field Walking**
Watching Brief	**Measured Survey**

Date of Fieldwork (From)	**(To)**
18th January 1998	25th January 1998

Contractor:

Canterbury Archaeological Trust
92A Broad Street. Canterbury. Kent.CT1 2LU
Tel: (01227) 462062 Fax: (01227) 784724

Summary of Field Results:

A total of ten trenches were excavated, cut archaeological features being identified only in two of these trenches. These features were interpreted as a series of pits, and a large ditch. The ditch is believed to be the continuation of a ditch observed in an area previously excavated by CAT on behalf of URS (ARC MSH98), and thought to represent the southern boundary to this site (a medieval metalworking site). Although no direct evidence for metalworking was evident the presence of the identified features suggests that the original limits of the medieval metalworking site continued to the east into the study area.

Location of Archive/Finds:

Bibliography: CTRL evaluation report (ARC EMM 98)

Compiler: Adrian G. Gollop **Date:** 5th February 1999