

UNION RAILWAYS LIMITED

**THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION WORKS  
- AREA 16, GREAT WOOD, KENT**

ARC GWE 98

An Archaeological Evaluation

Contract No.S/300/0052

**museum of**  
**LONDON**   
Museum of London Archaeology Service  
February 1999

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**THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION WORKS - AREA 16  
GREAT WOOD**

ARC GWE 98

An Archaeological Evaluation

**Evaluation Report**  
Volume 1 of 1

Contract No. S/300/0052

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February 1999

**THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION WORKS, AREA 16  
GREAT WOOD, KENT**

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***

**SUMMARY**

*The Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) was commissioned by Union Railways Limited (URL) to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Great Wood, Kent (ARC GWE98). A total of twelve trial trenches were excavated in two areas in August 1998. The site was situated to the south-west of the M2, in the Civil Parish of Cuxton, Kent. The site was on North Downs Chalk geology and consisted of arable land with wooded areas.*

*The areas of the evaluation incorporated the northern side and part of the base of a dry valley. A deep colluvial sequence (over 3.00m) was recorded in the valley base but no archaeological features were encountered.*

## Table of Contents

### *SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT*

1 BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Geology, landscape and landuse	1
2 SPECIFICATION	3
2.1 Aims	3
3 METHODS	4
3.1 General	4
3.2 Survey	4
3.3 Excavation	4
3.4 Recording	5
4 RESULTS	6
4.1 General	6
5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS	7
5.1 Table 1: trenches without archaeological features	7
6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES	9
6.1 Table 2: Events dataset	9
6.2 Table 3: Context dataset	10

### SECTION 2 - STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS	11
9 BIBLIOGRAPHY	12

Kent SMR

## List of Tables

Table 1	Trenches without archaeological features	7
Table 2	Events dataset	9
Table 3	Archaeological context inventory	10

## List of Figures

Fig 1	Site location plan
Fig 2	Great Wood ARC GWE 98

## ***SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT***

### **1 BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) was commissioned by Union Railways Limited (URL) to carry out an archaeological evaluation at Great Wood between the 20/8/98 and the 25/8/98, on land adjacent to the M2 on the outskirts of Rochester, Kent (Fig 1). The evaluation forms part of a larger programme of archaeological investigations along the line of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), the aim being to assess the effect of the construction of the new railway upon the cultural heritage. This evaluation is within CTRL route window 18.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation consisted of two areas separated by woodland and incorporated the north-east side of a dry valley orientated from west to east. Area 1 contained five trenches (numbered 3084 Trial Trench (TT) to 3088TT) and Area 2 (in the dry valley) contained seven trenches (numbered 3089TT to 3095TT). The CTRL Project Grid co-ordinates for the centre of the site are E51523 N48176. Unless stated otherwise, all co-ordinates appearing on illustrations or in the text refer to the CTRL project grid.
- 1.1.3 The work was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by URL, detailing the scope and methods of the evaluation, including this report. The areas of the evaluation are shown on Fig 2.

#### **1.2 Geology, landscape and landuse**

- 1.2.1 The site was situated on North Downs Chalk bedrock (contexts [15] and [17]). Overlying chalk bedrock was a deposit of post-glacial 'clay with flints' (numbered [3], [5], [7], [9] and [11] in Area 1; [21], [23] and [25] in Area 2, trenches 3089TT to 3091TT and 3093TT). In trenches 3092TT to 3095TT (near and on the dry valley floor) much of the clay and flints deposit had been washed away and replaced with colluvial silts (contexts [14], [16], [30], [31], [32]). These colluvial deposits reached a depth greater than 3m in 3092TT.
- 1.2.2 The evaluation trenches were situated on arable land between wooded areas and consisted of two areas. The north-eastern area, Area 1, consisted of land sloping gently from north to south. This Area had recently been used for modern intensive agriculture. Area 2 was situated in a what appears to be a dry valley where a stream had drained from west to east. Area 2 covered the northern side of this valley, with 3029TT and 3093TT on or near the valley floor.

- 1.2.3 The following profile was recorded for the ground level from north-west to south-east across the site:

Area 1:

79.15m Ordnance Datum (OD hereafter) at 3084TT

75.59m OD at 3086TT

73.69m OD at 3088TT

Area 2:

64.70m OD at 3089TT

60.94m OD at 3094TT

51.53m OD at 3093TT

46.72m OD at 3092TT



## **2 SPECIFICATION**

### **2.1 Aims**

2.1.1 In general the works aimed to provide information to determine:

- The presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any subsoil deposits of archaeological interest which may be associated with, or in close proximity to, the surface concentrations of prehistoric flint recorded during the earlier URL Environment Assessment;
- The presence and potential of environmental and economic indicators preserved in any archaeological features or deposits;
- The local, regional and national importance of such remains, and the potential for further fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.

2.1.2 Specific to the evaluation at Great Wood were the following:

- To extend the archaeological knowledge of the area within the environs of the Cuxton Anglo-Saxon cemetery (ARC CXT 97) previously evaluated as part of the CTRL project.

### **3 METHODS**

#### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 A detailed Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by URL and agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The following text is intended only to amplify certain aspects of the evaluation methodology.

#### **3.2 Survey**

- 3.2.1 The trench locations were surveyed by MoLAS based on a trench location plan and co-ordinates supplied by URL. The trenches were accurately positioned using a total station and datalogger, traversing from a URL survey control. Due to the steep gradient in places, all four corners of each trench were surveyed in. The trenches have been plotted on Fig 2 from digital information provided by URL using an AutoCAD graphics programme.

#### **3.3 Excavation**

- 3.3.1 The trenches were excavated using a 360° tracked excavator, with a flat-bladed 2m wide bucket, to the surface of geology or to a maximum depth of 1.20m. In trench 3092TT the colluvial deposits were investigated in a sondage up to 3m deep. A sample area at each end of all trenches was hand cleaned to ensure that the stratigraphy could be accurately recorded. Where necessary greater lengths of sections and the bases of trenches were hand cleaned to determine stratigraphic relationships and geological features.

### **3.4 Recording**

- 3.4.1 Recording was by the standard Museum of London single context recording system but with modifications to adapt the system to the large area under evaluation. Specifically these adaptations concerned layers: where a layer was judged to be the same in two or more trenches (such as topsoil, subsoil and some uppermost geological deposits), the same context number was used. If there was any doubt as to the equality of a layer a new context number was issued. A trench sheet was completed for each trench, on the reverse of which a sketch plan and section (of the entire trench) was drawn using measurements and OD heights.
- 3.4.2 Levels above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches, each trench having a Temporary Bench Mark incorporated onto one of the survey marker pegs.
- 3.4.3 The evaluation showed negative archaeological results and a routine record of trenches after excavation was taken using a single-use 350mm camera and a Kodak Gold 800-2 colour film.

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 General**

- 4.1.1 No archaeological features were encountered. The only features recorded were two modern land drains in 3087TT and a probable tree bole in 3094TT.
- 4.1.2 Overlying the solid or drift geology was a subsoil deposit. This subsoil consisted of moderately compacted light yellow brown to light grey brown silty clay. Yellow brown subsoil was recorded in 3084TT and 3088TT; grey brown in the remainder of the trenches. Flint of all sizes was generally present in moderate amounts but was frequent in 3089TT.
- 4.1.3 At the north-western end of trenches 3092TT and 3093TT topsoil only was present, directly overlying chalk bedrock. In these trenches the subsoil represented the upper layers in a deep colluvial sequence (recorded to a depth greater than 3.00m in a sondage in 3092TT).
- 4.1.4 The topsoil attained a maximum thickness of 0.33m in trench 3089TT. In Area 1 it consisted of a green grey silty clay with humic material [1]; in Area 2 it was composed of light yellow grey silty clay [26] and chalk and light green-grey silty sandy clay [27].

## 5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Table 1: Trenches without archaeological features

Trench Number	Geology	Deposit	Topsoil	Current ground level (m OD)			
				North-east	South-west	South-east	North-west
3084TT	Clay with flints [9]	Yellow brown silty clay [8], 0.41m deep	[1] 0.28m deep	78.76	79.15		
3085TT	Clay with flints [7]	Grey brown silty clay [6], 0.13m deep	[1] 0.25m deep			75.94	77.38
3086TT	Clay with flints [5]	Grey brown silty clay [4], 0.14m deep	[1] 0.27m deep	75.34	75.59		
3087TT	Clay with flints [3]	Grey brown silty clay [2], 0.18m deep. Two field drains were present cutting this layer.	[1] 0.28m deep			73.77	74.78
3088TT	Clay with flints [11]	Yellow brown silty clay [10], 0.24m deep	[1] 0.28m deep	73.63	73.69		
3089TT	Clay with flints [25]	Grey brown silty clay [24], 0.13m deep	[27] 0.33m deep	64.62	64.98		
3090TT	Clay with flints [23]	Grey brown silty clay [22], 0.19m deep	[27] 0.27m deep			82.64	83.19
3091TT	Clay with flints [21]	Grey brown silty clay [20], 0.10m deep	[27] 0.21m deep	62.83	63.23		
3092TT	Chalk bedrock [15]	Yellow grey silty clay [14], 0.14m deep. A sondage extended down 3.00m revealing orange brown colluvial layers [31], [32] and [33]	[26] 0.14m deep			46.72	49.00

Trench Number	Geology	Deposit	Topsoil	Current ground level (m OD)			
				North-east	South-west	South-east	North-west
3093TT	Chalk bedrock [17]	Yellow grey silty clay [16], 0.16m deep	[26] 0.25m deep	51.53	45.56		
3094TT	Clay with flints [19]	Grey brown silty clay [18], 0.31m deep. Cutting layer [18] was an irregular cut [29] 2.80m x 0.12m deep filled with grey brown silty clay [28]. Interpreted as a tree bole	[27] 0.36m deep			64.98	64.62
3095TT	Clay with flints [13]	Grey brown silty clay [12], 0.05m deep	[26] 0.20m deep	57.78	57.71		

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES

### 6.1 Table 2: Events dataset

EVENT_NAME:Area 16, Great Wood
EVENT_CODE:ARC GWE 98
EVENT_TYPE:Evaluation
CONTRACTOR:Museum of London Archaeology Service
DATE:20/8/98-25/8/98
GRID:515230 481760
PROJECT:CTRL
COUNTY:Kent
DISTRICT:Rochester
PARISH:Cuxton CP
SMR:
SITE_TYPE:Cultivated Land 3 - Operation to a depth >0.25m
PERIOD:Surface geology
METHOD:Mechanical removal of topsoil
PHASING:None
ENVIRON:None
FINDS:None
GEOLOGY:North Downs Chalk bedrock overlain by clay with flints
CONTEXT_NUM:31
THREAT:CTRL
SAMPLE:1%
SUMMARY:The site was situated south-west of Rochester and incorporated the north-east slope and part of the base of a dry valley. A deep colluvial sequence was recorded in the valley base but no archaeological features were encountered.
ARCHIVE:Stored by URL at Aylesford
ACC_NUM:

## 6.2 Table 3: Context dataset

TRENCH	CONTEXT	TYPE	PERIOD	ASSOCIATION	COMMENTS
3084TT-3088TT	1	DEPOSIT			TOPSOIL
3087TT	2	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3087TT	3	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3086TT	4	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3086TT	5	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3085TT	6	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3085TT	7	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3084TT	8	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3084TT	9	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3088TT	10	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3088TT	11	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3095TT	12	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3095TT	13	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3092TT	14	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3092TT	15	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3093TT	16	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3093TT	17	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3094TT	18	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3094TT	19	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3091TT	20	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3091TT	21	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3090TT	22	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3090TT	23	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3089TT	24	DEPOSIT			SUBSOIL
3089TT	25	DEPOSIT			GEOLOGY
3089TT-3091TT, 3094TT	26	DEPOSIT			TOPSOIL
3092TT, 3093TT, 3095TT	27	DEPOSIT			TOPSOIL
3094TT	28	DEPOSIT			FILL
3094TT	29	CUT			TREE BOLE
3092TT	30	DEPOSIT			COLLUVIAL DEPOSIT
3092TT	31	DEPOSIT			COLLUVIAL DEPOSIT
3092TT	32	DEPOSIT			COLLUVIAL DEPOSIT



***SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE***

**7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS**

7.1 No archaeological remains or artefacts were encountered during the evaluation at Great Wood; modern land drains were recorded in trench 3087TT and also part of a possible tree bole in 3094TT. The site incorporated the north-east slope and part of the base of a dry valley (Area 2). A substantial depth of hillwash was present in the valley base, in trench 3092TT.

7.1.1 According to the evidence there is no potential for further archaeological work at this site.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Museum of London, 1994

*Archaeological Site Manual.*

URL, 1994, *Union Railways Limited, Channel Tunnel Rail Link: Assessment of Historic and Cultural Effects. Final Report.* (Four volumes. Prepared for URL by OAU).

URL, 1997, *Cuxton Anglo-Saxon Burial Fieldwork Report Phases 1-3*  
Archaeological Evaluation Report (Prepared for URL by MoLAS)

**Kent SMR Record Sheet**

<b>Site Name:</b> Thames Valley Archaeological Mitigation Works, Area 16, Great Wood											
<b>Site code:</b> ARC GWE 98											
<b>Summary:</b>  An evaluation of 12 trenches, commissioned by Union Railways Limited, was carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service in August 1998 at Great Wood, south-west of Rochester, Kent. The evaluation explored the area 500m north-west of a site evaluated in 1997, ARC CXT 97.											
<b>District:</b> Rochester upon Medway		<b>Parish:</b> Cuxton CP									
<b>Period(s):</b> 1.Modern											
<b>NGR Easting</b> 571500		<b>NGR Northing</b> 168300									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Type of Recording:</b></td> <td><b>Evaluation</b></td> <td><del><b>Watching-Brief</b></del></td> <td><del><b>Field-Walking</b></del></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>(Delete)</b></td> <td><del><b>Excavation</b></del></td> <td><del><b>Geophysical Survey</b></del></td> <td><del><b>Measured Survey</b></del></td> </tr> </table>				<b>Type of Recording:</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<del><b>Watching-Brief</b></del>	<del><b>Field-Walking</b></del>	<b>(Delete)</b>	<del><b>Excavation</b></del>	<del><b>Geophysical Survey</b></del>	<del><b>Measured Survey</b></del>
<b>Type of Recording:</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<del><b>Watching-Brief</b></del>	<del><b>Field-Walking</b></del>								
<b>(Delete)</b>	<del><b>Excavation</b></del>	<del><b>Geophysical Survey</b></del>	<del><b>Measured Survey</b></del>								
<b>Date of Recording: (From)</b> 20/08/1998		<b>(To)</b> 25/08/1998									
<b>Unit Undertaking Recording:</b>  Museum of London Archaeology Service, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB											
<b>Summary of Field Results:</b>  No archaeological remains were encountered.											
<b>Location of Archive/Finds:</b>		URL archive at Aylesford									
<b>Bibliography:</b>		Evaluation report									
<b>Summary Compiler:</b> Friederike Hammer			<b>Date:</b> 8/10/1998								



Fig 1 Great Wood site location plan Natinal Grid Reference TQ 571500 168200. Reproduced from the 1993 Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1193 Chatham map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office,

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