

**Archaeological recording of farm
buildings at Noke Farm,
Chipstead, Surrey**

NGR: TQ 279 561

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Report to Village Developments plc

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Summary statement

An archaeological programme of works was requested by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council following a planning condition being imposed on the site (RBBC ref P/01/01004/CAC). This condition was required to secure appropriate recording of the archaeological impact of the development. The planning condition states that Noke Farm lies within an area of high archaeological potential where finds of importance may be made. The farm site is given on the Surrey County Council Sites and Monuments Record (hereafter SMR) as a possible medieval moated site. It also lies within the Chipstead High Road Conservation Area, the farmhouse being a locally listed structure.

It is the intention of the archaeological programme of works to make a record of the existing farm buildings before alterations take place, and to carry out a watching brief on associated ground disturbance so that a proper record is made of any archaeological stratigraphy or features that are disturbed. The developer, Village Developments plc, asked C K Currie of CKC Archaeology to carry out the work in order to satisfy the above planning condition.

This report deals with the first phase of these works: to make a record of the farm buildings.

The farm buildings at Noke Farm appear to be a good example of 'model' farm construction, dating from a time of agricultural optimism between 1847 and 1869. Although the brick and timber buildings are not exceptional, they are good examples of their kind, and the barn extension and annex contains the remains of what appears to have been a steam-powered pulley system to assist in the movement of heavy materials. Two buildings have been identified as having been almost completely rebuilt in modern materials, and these were not identified for recording in the original brief. These may account for certain missing elements at this site that are typical of a 19th-century arable farmstead. Other than these the main ranges around the central courtyard appear to have been little changed since the mid 19th century.

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This report has been written based on the format suggested by the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1996). The ordering of information follows the guidelines given in this document, although alterations may have been made to fit in with the particular requirements of the work. All work is carried out according to the *Code of Conduct* and By-laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, of which CKC Archaeology is an IFA-registered archaeological organisation (reference: RAO no. 1).

1.0 Introduction (Fig. 1)

An archaeological programme of works was requested by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council following a planning condition being imposed on the site (RBBC ref P/01/01004/CAC). This condition was required to secure appropriate recording of the archaeological impact of the development. The planning condition states that Noke Farm lies within an area of high archaeological potential where finds of importance may be made. The farm site is given on the Surrey County Council Sites and Monuments Record (hereafter SMR) as a possible medieval moated site. It also lies within the Chipstead High Road Conservation Area, the farmhouse being a locally listed structure.

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2.0 Historical background (Fig. 2-3)

Noke Farm is a 19th-century structure built mainly of local flint and brick, with a series of contemporary outbuildings. It lay about 0.75km SSE of Chipstead cross roads, where the centre of the medieval settlement of Chipstead is generally considered to be located. This small parish, covering 2,419 acres in 1911, stands on the high downs ridge at a height of between 500 and 600 feet AOD (Powell 1911, 189). The present settlement patterns suggest that this was of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets rather than a nucleated village. The medieval church lies some 700m SE of the crossroads, and about 400m NE of Noke Farm, with little apparent historic development between them. The Surrey County Council SMR shows sparse coverage in the area. Nevertheless, from what little is known of the archaeology of the area there would appear to be prehistoric flint scatters in Shabden Park, 500m to the W, and a Romano-British site 500m NE near the medieval church. These sites suggest the possibility of further early remains in the area.

The name Chipstead is thought to derive from the Old English *ceapstede*, ‘place with a market’ (Ekwall 1960, 105), suggesting some ancient importance that is no longer obvious. Noke derives from ‘at the oak’, a common place name throughout England (ibid, 343). At the time of the Domesday Survey, the main manor of Chipstead was held by one William, ‘nephew of Bishop Walkelin’ from Richard FitzGilbert. Another smaller manor was held by Chertsey Abbey (Wood 1975, 8.27, 19.12). These entries suggest that Chipstead was a place of reasonably intensive settlement with 16 households and five slaves living there. The Surrey County Council SMR suggests that Noke Farm may have been the site of a medieval moated site (SMR number 948). In the 19th century a number of cottages were erected in the parish, giving it the atmosphere of a model village. More lately this has become increasingly suburbanised.

A series of unconnected linear ponds exist to the NE of the present Noke Farm. Local tradition attributes these to the site of Chipstead’s manor house. Noke is first known from 1692 when Lord Haversham settled it on his daughter on her marriage. Her husband went bankrupt in 1704, and the property was sold to Francis Porter, who settled it on his second wife, Mary Ann. She seems to have survived her husband by 57 years, bequeathing Noke to her kinsman, Dewey Parker, in 1777. Soon after it was sold to John Fanshawe, and became part of the Shabden estate. It was around this time that Pringle (1984, 32) has suggested that the old farm was pulled down as superfluous to the estate. However, there is no sign of buildings on any early maps of Surrey on either the present site, or on the conjectured ‘moated’ site (Margery 1974). A sale map of 1817 for the Shabden estate lists the surrounding fields as ‘Noke’, but shows no buildings present (SHC G85/2/1/2/8). Likewise the tithe survey (dated 1847 but copied from an earlier map of 1838-9) fails to show any structures on either site (SHC 863/1/22-23).

The 1st edition OS 25” maps show the present buildings, largely as they are today, had been built by the time this survey was undertaken in 1869 (sheet XXVI.4; see Fig. 2). The estate was owned by Lord Marshall, who entertained royalty at Shabden Park after the First World War. In 1936 it was sold to Surrey County Council, who converted the mansion into a hospital. Noke Farm was tenanted by Tom Kent for some years after this, until purchased by Peter Woodruffe. Simon Woodruffe, the son of Peter Woodruffe, continued to farm the land, mainly for cereals, until recently (O’Donnell 1999, 10, 22)

3.0 Strategy

The strategy for this work is outlined in the project design (Currie 2001), to which the reader is referred. Copies are to be found in the Surrey County Council Sites And Monuments Record (SMR).

4.0 Results

Noke Farmhouse is a flint building with brick quoins and a 19th-century appearance (Plate 3). Although it is not on the Department of the Environment’s *Register* of listed buildings, it has been locally listed by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (1995). The farm buildings that are due to be converted to residential use are to the SW. Originally these were brick buildings with slate roofs ranged around a courtyard. The open space of the yard was partly filled by a

rectangular building that has been recently rebuilt, and is intended for demolition. Further modern farm buildings and extensions have been added on the SE side of the original yard. These are also due for demolition. They are all of steel and breeze-block construction and have no architectural merit

The buildings to be retained, and hence recorded, are essentially single storey structures around the NW, SW, and SE sides. The exception is the SW side, which is divided by a large barn, the NE gable of which forms the central part of the SW range. This barn is seven bays in length with a three bay, two storey storage annex on the NE side and a tall extension on its SE side with partly open sides on the SE and SW (see Figure 4; plates 1-6).

4.1 The barn and storage annex (Figs 4-7; plates 1-6)

The description of the buildings will begin with the barn. This is a divided building. The seven bays on the SE side form the barn proper with the three bays at the NW end forming a separate building, probably a ground floor store room with granary or hay loft over. The barn end of the structure comprises timber-framed structure set on a brick plinth about one metre high. Over this the frame is covered in black weatherboarding. The roof is shallow pitched hipped variety covered in Welsh slate. There are modern single storey extensions on the SE corner and in the centre of the NW wall, blocking the former central door.

It would seem that the doors were originally situated on each side of the central bay. Both appear to have been of corrugated iron attached to a wooden frame on rollers. At some time fairly recently, the NW door was partly blocked by a brick single storey extension. The rolling door above the level of this extension was retained.

Inside the barn, the three bays on the SW side are open to the roof, and contain three grain silos and a drying machine. The central bay contains a grain pit covered in a heavy iron grid, similar to a cattle grid, to allow lorries and machinery to back on to it. This pit was put in by the present farmer about 15 years ago. Grain (mainly wheat) was pumped from the pit into the silos. The three bays on the NE side of the central bay contains three silos in a line against the NW wall. These fit into a space between the wall and a loft accessed by wooden stairs immediately to the right of the door. From this loft further steps rise on to a wooden walkway that extends the full length of the barn at tie beam level, giving views into all of the six silos in the barn.

The roof structure is copied in all the farm buildings to be retained, indicating that all these buildings were probably built together as a unit. The principal rafters are attached to the underside of the purlins, with the common rafters attached to the outer or upper side. There is a collar across the principle rafters. A straight diagonal brace supports the principle rafters on both sides, with the additional support of an iron strut on the SE side extending from the base of the brace to the join of the rafter at its junction with the collar. On the NW side of the barn the two vertical wooden struts of the wooden walkway act as vertical struts between the tie beam and the principle rafters, with the NW vertical strut taking the place of the iron tie beam. It is not certain if the roof was originally constructed in this form, or if it has been altered to accommodate the walkway. All the other roofs seen had diagonal wooden braces in

conjunction with vertical iron struts supporting each opposing sets of principle rafters (see Plate 5).

The three NE bays of the barn were divided into a two-storey structure by a brick cross wall. Internally this is supported by four posts that between them divide each bay into three equal sized areas. The outer walls of these bays are in brick, with two large sash windows, with flat arched heads, lighting each floor on the NW side. On the NE end there is an eight-light casement window on each side of a central door. In the upper storey this door opens to empty space, but it has an iron beam above it where a pulley system would have allowed hay bales or sacks of grain to be hoisted into the upper storey loft space. Along the SW wall of the upper storey cast iron brackets support the remains of the iron pulley system that was probably connected to the iron beam over the door (Plate 2). Remains of this machinery extend through the SE wall of the upper storey into the extension on the SE side of the barn, where possibly a portable traction engine could gain access to drive the pulleys.

4.2 The barn extension (Figs 4-7; Plates 1 & 4)

This extension is a square two storey structure, although it may not have been originally subdivided into floors, particularly if the pulley system was installed as an original feature. The lower 'floor' of the building is partly open to the elements on the SW and SE sides. The SE side has a large rectangular opening, divided by two large wooden posts (Plate 1). The lower 'storey' of the extension is of brick with the upper storey timber-framed, covered in black weatherboarding. The roof is a square hipped structure, with a roof design is similar to the barn, with diagonal braces extending from tie beam to rafters, with the additional support of vertical iron struts between tie beam and collar. The iron elements of a wheeled pulley system extend from the barn annex into the roof of this structure, suggesting that there was once access for a possible portable traction engine here to run the pulleys (Plate 4). This engine may have been set up just outside the building to prevent smoke accumulating within the building. The open nature of the lower part of this building may have been to help the steam and smoke to escape. In the upper storey in the SE wall there are two square windows covered with sloping wooden slats.

4.3 The rest of the SW range (Figs 4-7; Plate 6)

On the SE side of the barn annex there was a range of single storey brick units, with a slate roof. These were locked at the time of the author's visit. A smaller door at the SE end probably led into a store of some sort (possibly once a tack room). Next to this was a larger stable door, followed an even larger double door, probably giving access to a storage area. This larger door had windows either side. That on the SE side was blocked. Both had flat arches over.

On the NW side of the barn annex was a short brick range with a lower slate roof that that on the other side. The wall facing the courtyard was pierced by two stable doors. That on the SE side had a segmental arched head, whilst the other had a flat arched head.

4.4 The NW range (Figs 4-7, Plates 3 & 9)

This would appear to have been a long single storey range open to the courtyard. The back wall was in brick (Plate 3), and there were a line of wood posts on the courtyard side supporting the slate roof. The present farmers has left the posts *in situ*, but inside them he has built a breeze block wall pierced by doors to make stable accommodation for horses (Plate 9). The space between the new wall and the posts serves as a covered walkway. This range would seem to have originally been for storage of equipment.

4.5 The SE range (Figs 4-7; Plates 7-8, 10)

This is a rectangular brick building of a single storey now converted to stables, with breeze-block internal divisions. It may have once served as a cow shed, as it has a raised ventilation canopy set into its hipped roof (Plate 7). The interior has been completely gutted, and no original features were noticed, apart from possibly the roof, which, in its basic elements, follows the design found to be typical at this farm (see section 4.1; Plate 8). On the SE side was a range opening to the outside of the courtyard (Fig. 3). The original brick walls on the two ends are all that survive of the original structure. The space between these walls has been filled in by an iron and concrete structure with a corrugated roof of recent construction (Plate 10).

5.0 Discussion

The farm buildings here seem to have been constructed as a single phase at some time between 1847 and 1869, probably at the same time that the present farmhouse was made. The farm appears to have been mainly arable, with a large barn and grain storage facilities. Other outbuildings were constructed for storage, to house carts and for keeping horses and possibly a small herd of cows. The SE range may have been a cow shed, but if this is the case, the herd was not large, as the accommodation could not have much exceeded 20 cows. It is possible that this diversity was to exploit the poorer land on the farm unsuited to arable farming. Dairy farming was common in the area in the recent past.

It would seem that the machinery in the extension to the barn was designed to be worked by an engine of some sort from the start. This was probably a steam engine, judging from the open structure of the extension. It is probable that the engine was a portable traction engine that worked from just outside the unit. The open design would have helped dissipate any steam and smoke that might have blown into the building. All the buildings seem to have been constructed in a drive to create a modern up-to-date farmstead in the mid to later part of the century. The farm continued to operate as a mainly arable unit until recently, with a grain pit being installed in the barn in the last 15 years.

The earliest map of the complex, surveyed in 1869, shows buildings in the centre of the courtyard, and behind the SE range. Both positions contain largely modernised buildings of breeze block and steel today, suggesting that they have both been rebuilt. This may have occurred at the time that the former open NW range was refashioned with a breeze-block SE wall. This was undertaken by the present farmer, Mr Simon Woodruffe (pers comm). Apart from this there would appear to have been few changes to the original buildings.

At least two ranges of buildings (in the centre of the courtyard and at the rear of the SE range) have since been modernised and no longer retain their original form. It can not be said with certainty what purpose these buildings served historically, but they may account for some absences in a typical farm yard of this sort. Although the ground floor room on the NE side of the barn is currently used as a tack room, it seems to have been too large for this purpose, and was possibly used to store grain or fodder, as was the room above. It is possible the locked store room at the SE end of the SW range served as a tack room originally. It is next door to one of only two original stables to survive. The survival of such a small number of original stables suggests there should have been further accommodation for horses to run a contemporary arable farm. It is possible that the building in the centre of the courtyard once served at least partly as stabling. Within recent memory, the former open storage sheds of the NW range and the SE range have been converted to stabling to serve local leisure riding needs. The building behind the SE range is shown as a partly open range on historic maps, with the open side facing outwards from the farmyard. The corner building at the junction of the SW and NW ranges also shared this characteristic, although this has now been blocked by a breeze block wall. This suggests both buildings were used as cart sheds, although there would seem to be additional enclosed space of unknown use on the NE side of the SE range (see Fig. 3)

6.0 Conclusions

The farm buildings at Noke Farm appear to be a good example of ‘model’ farm construction, dating from a time of agricultural optimism between 1847 and 1869. Although the brick and timber buildings are not exceptional, they are good examples of their kind, and the barn extension and annex contains the remains of what appears to have been a steam-powered pulley system to assist in the movement of heavy materials. Two buildings have been identified as having been almost completely rebuilt in modern materials, and these were not identified for recording in the original brief. These may account for certain missing elements at this site that are typical of a 19th-century arable farmstead. Other than these the main ranges around the central courtyard appear to have been little changed since the mid 19th century.

7.0 Copyright

C K Currie (trading as CKC Archaeology) shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports or other project documents written by himself or his agents, under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* of 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides licence to the client and the local planning authorities for the use of such documents in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the project design, including research.

8.0 Archive

The archive for this work has been deposited with the County Museum Services. Copies of the report were lodged with the client, the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and the National Monuments Record in Swindon, Wiltshire.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are given to all those involved with this project. Mr D Goymer of Village Developments plc provided all the plans and arranged access to the site. Mr Simon Woodruffe, the farmer, discussed the site with the author and gave information about his own management of the buildings. Tony Howe of the Archaeology Section of Surrey County Council acted as monitor for the work on behalf of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.

10.0 References

10.1 Original sources in the Surrey History Centre (SHC):

SHC G85/2/1/2/8 Sale particulars & map of Shabden and Noke estate, 1817

Maps:

SHC 863/1/22-23 Tithe map & award for Chipstead 1847
OS 25" plan (sheet XXVI.4, c. 1870, 1896, 1913 & 1932 eds)

10.2 Original sources in print

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10.3 Secondary sources

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Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, *List of buildings of architectural & historic interest*, (RBBC 1995, 3rd ed)

Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), *Recording historic buildings. A descriptive specification*, London, 1991 (2nd ed, 1st ed 1990)

Appendix 1: catalogue of photographs taken

Photographs were taken in both colour slide and monochrome print. In the archive the colour slides are prefixed with the site code, followed by 'S' to indicate photograph type, eg (Site Code - NFC)/S/* (* indicating the photograph number). Monochrome prints are number NFC/M/*, following the same procedure as for slides.

1. E facing elevation of barn from SE
 2. ditto
 3. SW elevation of barn from S
 4. ditto
 5. NW elevation of barn with NW range and farmhouse beyond, from W
 6. ditto
 7. NW elevation of barn, close up, from W
 8. ditto
 9. NE elevation of barn with SW range from SE
 10. ditto
 11. SE range from W showing ventilation canopy
 12. ditto
 13. NW range with farmhouse beyond from S
 14. ditto
 15. NE side of courtyard from 'moated' area, from E
 16. ditto
 17. Barn extension from SE
 18. ditto
 19. Inside barn extension looking up at roof and pulley mechanism, from S
 20. ditto
 21. Inside barn, at loft level looking SW
 22. ditto
 23. Inside hay loft/granary (3 bay extension to barn) looking SW at pulley mechanism
 24. ditto
 25. Inside SE range showing ventilation canopy from SW
 26. ditto
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