# BARTY HOUSE NURSING HOME BEARSTED, KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

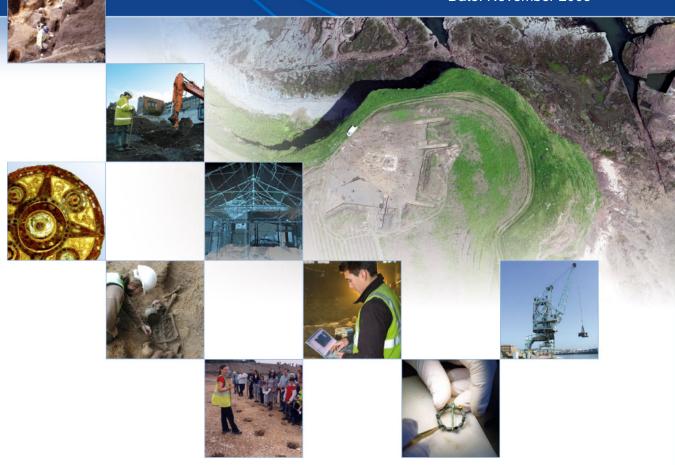
Planning Application Number: MA/05/1175

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 80796 55502

AOC Project no: 30134

Site Code: MNEMG:2008.38

Date: November 2008





# **Barty House Nursing Home, Bearsted, Kent Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

On Behalf of: **Chris Browne Builders** 

> 127 High Street Rainham Kent ME8 8AN

National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 80796 55502

**AOC Project No:** 30134

Prepared by: **Chris Clarke** 

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22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008 Date of Watching Brief:

**Date of Report:** November 2008

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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# **Non-Technical Summary**

Between the 22nd and 24th July 2008 an archaeological Watching Brief, on behalf of Chris Browne Builders, was carried out on a programme of ground reduction at Barty House Nursing Home, Bearsted. This involved landscaping to the rear of the Grade II Listed Building, using a 13 tonne tracked excavator.

Numerous features were identified during the course of the Watching Brief, comprising two phases of activity. The first phase of activity was dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, representing the subdivision of the land to the rear of the house, and the planting of trees or shrubs as part of a programme of decorative gardening. While the second phase of activity represents more functional use of the garden during the first half of the 20th century, associated with the presence of rubbish pits and the backfilled construction cut for a suspected World War II air raid shelter. Natural flinty sandy clay was observed across the full area of the site.

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The site is located in the east of Maidstone, in the Borough of Maidstone. It is bounded by Roundwell Road to the southwest, a trackway to the northwest, and fields to the northeast and southeast (Figures 1 & 2). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 80796 55502, is roughly square in shape, and covers a total area of approximately 1ha. The area of the watching brief is located to the rear of Barty House.
- 1.2 The site is currently occupied by Barty House Nursing Home, a commercial property with associated garden plots to both the front and rear of the property, primarily consisting of grass lawns. The development plan is for the construction of an extension to the rear of the property, in addition to landscaping parts of the rear garden area.

### 2. **Planning Background**

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Maidstone Borough Council. Archaeological advice to the council was provided by Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (KCC).
- 2.2 A planning application has been approved for a 25 bedroom extension and conversion of existing barn to a reception area (Ref nos. MA/05/1175). Planning permission to undertake the development has been granted subject to Condition 4 which states that:

'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 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 and approved by the Local Planning Authority.'

- 2.3 The site does not lie within an Archaeological Priority Zone and no Scheduled Ancient Monuments lie within the development area. Barty House is a Grade II Listed Building.
- 2.4 AOC Archaeology Group Ltd were commissioned by Chris Browne Builders to carry out the Archaeological Watching Brief in accordance with the specification issued by Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (KCC 2005). This document detailed how the Watching Brief would be undertaken.

### 3. **Geology and Topography**

- 3.1 The site lies on the Folkstone Beds (KCC 2005).
- 3.2 The site is located approximately 750m north of the River Len, south of the North Downs ridge. The site is on moderately east-west sloping ground, with the western boundary of the property at 50.35m Ordnance Datum (OD), and the eastern boundary at 44.50m OD.
- 3.3 No geotechnical investigations are known to have been conducted within the proposed development area.

### 4. **Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 4.1 Several sites of archaeological interest are known within the vicinity of the Barty House development. One is identified as a medieval moated hall 400m to the west of the site, while a Roman burial group is known to have been present 600m to the east (KCC 2005).
- 4.2 Barty House (also known in some sources as Bertie House) is a Grade II Listed Building, and has been listed by English Heritage since 1968. The house is of early 18<sup>th</sup> century construction, with later 19<sup>th</sup> century additions. The building utilises red brick, with a plain tile roof, and consists of two storeys and a basement. External features include a plain stone coped parapet, rubbed brick voussoirs and blind hoods with the first floor windows. The porch, with fluted Doric columns and rectangular fanlight, is thought to be associated with early 19<sup>th</sup> century additions to the building which included the red brick additions to the rear of the structure (Images of England – 173707).
- 4.3 Another listed building is know to be present a short distance to the north of Barty House, located within the Barty Farm complex. This structure is a Grade II Listed timber frame barn with thick red brick walls with an exterior Flemish bond. The roof is half hipped with plain tiles on a stone plinth. Internally the barn has 5 bays, aisled on both sides with the aisle posts resting wooden sills with brick bases. The barn has been identified to be of late 17th century construction (Images of England -173701).

### 5. Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The aims of the Watching Brief are defined as being:
  - To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
  - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
  - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
  - To enable the Archaeology Officer at Kent County Council to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
  - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.

### 6. Methodology

- Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 6.1 1994).
- 6.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
  - English Heritage Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - English Heritage Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998).

- English Heritage Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
- Institute of Field Archaeology Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IFA 1992).
- Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (IFA 1994).
- Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IFA 1997).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
- Council for British Archaeology First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1987).
- 6.3 The Watching Brief was carried out during ground reduction on the site.
- 6.4 A unique accession code for the project was obtained from the Maidstone Museum MNEMG:2008.38.
- 6.5 The Watching Brief was undertaken by the author, under the overall direction of Andy Leonard, Divisional Head of Fieldwork at AOC Archaeology Group.

### 7. Results

- 7.1 The natural deposit was observed across the full extent of the site, primarily consisted of a firm, dark brown, flinty sandy clay (039). The composition of the natural deposit did vary in the northwest corner of site forming a yellowish brown sandy deposit instead. In the northwest corner the natural deposit was recorded at its highest at 49.90m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), decreasing to 46.40m AOD in the southeast corner of site. This was consistent with a significant gradient in the site topography, with the ground rising up from the southeast to the northwest.
- 7.2 The earliest feature observed on site was an L-shaped ditch cut [007] located in the west corner of the site. Ditch [007] had an overall length of approximately 10.5m, 1m wide by 0.4m deep, and had a rounded concave profile. The ditch was filled by mid grey, silty sand (006), which contained fragments of 19th or 20th century pottery, glass and metal objects. It is thought that the ditch represented a pre-existing boundary division.
- 7.3 The alignment of ditch [007] was mirrored in the south-eastern area of site by ditch cut [029] & [031]. The ditch was significantly longer, reaching c25m in length on a predominantly northeast-southwest alignment, and did have a short return to the ditch which ran northwest for a further 3m before terminating. Ditch [029] was 1m wide, and reached a maximum depth of 0.15m, resulting in a wide shallow profile with an uneven base. This suggests that the ditch may have represented the alignment of a previous hedge row. The ditch contained a soft, mid grey, sandy silt deposit (028) & (030), containing fragments of pottery, glass and metal thought to be of a 20<sup>th</sup> century date.
- 7.4 Within the central area of site a row of small circular cuts [011], [013] & [015] was recorded on an southeast-northwest alignment. The cuts measured between 0.3m and 0.4m in diameter, with a maximum depth of 0.08m, with all three features possessing a concave profile. It is likely that this alignment of cuts represents a row of planting pits, rather than a row of postholes, due to the small

number of cuts within the alignment and their proximity to the rear of the 18th century house. The fills of the three cuts was similar, observed as a soft, grey, silty sand (010), (012) & (014), none of which contained any dateable finds.

- 7.5 A second alignment of six small circular cuts, also thought to be a row planting pits, were located in the central area of site [017], [019], [021], [023], [025] & [027], recorded on a northeast-southwest alignment. The cuts measured between 0.2m and 0.3m in diameter, and of those fully excavated, up to 0.2m in depth with a concave profile. All of the fills (016), (018), (020), (022), (024) & (026) were of a similar character consisting of a soft, mid grey, sandy silt deposit. The only dating evidence present was recovered from fill (018) in the form of a small fragment of clay tobacco pipe.
- 7.6 An additional two circular cuts were observed in the south corner of site [033] & [035], adjacent to one another. Both features were thought to be postholes, and were of a similar size of up to 0.4m in diameter and 0.2m depth, with gentle concave profiles. The fills (032) & (034) were also similar, characterised as a soft, dark grey, silty sand deposits, containing moderate Ceramic Building Material (CBM) flecks. No dating evidence was recovered from either of the two fills. The function of the two postholes is uncertain, but could associated with an isolated static feature within the grounds of the Georgian house.
- 7.7 Approximately 3m to the south of postholes [033] & [035] was a square vertically cut pit [038], 0.7m wide by 0.3m deep. Pit [038] was lined with corroded iron sheets (037) on both the base and sides of the cut, which contained dark brownish grey loose ashy fill (036). Fragments of CBM and pottery were recovered from fill (036), but these could not be securely dated. It is thought that pit [038] was cut and lined with iron for the deliberate purpose of disposing of hot ashes.
- 7.8 Another square pit [005] was located to the northwest side of site, adjacent to ditch [007]. Pit [005] was 1.5m wide, and had been vertically cut. The mid grey silty sand fill (004) of the pit contained frequent CBM, pot, glass and metal fragments, all of which dated to the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. All of the finds within pit [005] are thought to have been deliberately thrown away.
- 7.9 The latest feature identified on site was a suspected dismantled World War II air raid shelter, located within a construction cut to the northwest corner of site [009]. The cut was up to 10m in length and 9m wide, forming a roughly L-shape, and backfilled with a mixed grey/yellow, silty sand fill (008) containing frequent structural debris of corrugated iron sheets and brick fragments, in addition to a 1980s soft drink bottle. The soft drink bottle indicates, that the structure previously present within the cut had been demolished and backfilled during the latter part of the 20th century.
- 7.10 All features on site were sealed by a layer of grayish brown, silty sand subsoil (003) up to 0.20m thick, which was observed across the full area of the site. Subsoil (003) was in turned sealed by a sandy silt topsoil (002). In the west corner of site a limited patch of sandy clay modern made ground (001) was recorded as overlying topsoil. The made ground (001) measured 14m north-south and 7m east-west, reaching a maximum thickness of 0.55m, and contained frequent fragments of CBM and concrete.

### 8. **Finds**

8.1 A limited selection of finds was recovered during the course of the watching brief, primarily consisting of pottery and glass fragments, metal objects, and Ceramic Building Material (CBM) (Appendix D). The finds derived from five different contexts. Context (004) contained a range of both fragmentary and complete ceramic and glass vessels, including an English Stoneware cider/ale jar, glass tonic bottle, and a fragment of pink external glazed earthenware (art nouveau style?) pottery. All were thought to derive from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Several pottery fragments and a metal object were collected from context (006), the latest of which dated to the 19th or 20th century. A single fragment of undiagnostic clay tobacco pipe came from context (019). Context (030) contained two ceramic tile fragments, two fragments of 20th century window glass, and a metal object. Undated fragments of CBM and pottery derived from context (036). The assemblage is of limited significance, its value is primarily associated with spot-dating of contexts.

### 9. **Conclusions**

- 9.1 Natural deposits were identified as being present across the full area of site, varying in height from 49.90m to 46.40m AOD.
- 9.2 A range of features were identified during the watching brief undertaken to the rear of Barty House, located across the full area of where the works were undertaken. The features primarily consisted of posthole, planting pit, rubbish pit and ditch features. Dating evidence was collected from the majority of the features.
- 9.3 The earliest group of features contained finds associated with the 18th and 19th century features, consisted of planting pit alignments [011] and [017], both of which were located in the central northern area of the site. The characteristics of planting pits [011] & [017] are different, most likely representing two different episodes of planting, and are also at right angles to one another indicating they are orientated around the same garden layout.
- 9.4 The two groups of planting pits appear to lie within an area defined by ditches [006] and [029]. Each ditch was of significantly different character. Ditch [029] was very shallow in depth and ran northeastsouthwest across the majority of the site. In contrast, ditch [006] was deeper but only occupied a small area of the west corner of the site. Where their similarities lie is that both ditches are thought to delineate part of the same boundary by means of either a hedge [029], or an open ditch [006]. Judging by the alignment of the two ditches, both appear to partially enclose an area measuring 20m by 25m to the northern part of the site, possibly defining the overall garden parcel during the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 9.5 Pit [005] and construction cut [009] appear to represent a second later, more modern phase of activity. The range of finds recovered from square pit [005] clearly define it as an early 20th century rubbish pit. The size and shape of construction cut [009] and the building debris recovered from its fill (008) strongly suggest that it once contained an air raid shelter, so firmly place its use to World War
- 9.6 An additional group of features were recorded near the south corner of the site, incorporating two postholes [033] & [035], and small pit [038]. No dating evidence was recovered from these features, and they do not appear to be directly associated with the other features observed on site. It is thought that these features post-date the 18th century construction of Barty House, and are related to more functional aspects of the day-to-day operation of the house and any of its ancillary buildings.
- 9.7 Taking into consideration the layout of the features recorded during the watching brief at Barty House, and the dating evidence recovered, it appears that the features fall into two phases of activity. The first phase is dated to the 19th or early 20th century, is associated with the aesthetics and subdivision of the garden area to the rear of the newly constructed Barty House, consisting of a series of ditch boundaries and alignments of planting pits focused on the same location in the central

northern area of the site. The second phase, associated with the use of the land during the 20th century, represents a shift in focus from the marking of boundaries to the functional use of the garden, with the excavation of large rubbish pits and the construction of a World War II air raid shelter.

9.8 The features encountered during the watching brief represent activity contemporary to the occupation of Barty House between the 19th to 20th centuries. No features were observed during the course of the archaeological investigation that relate to the Roman or medieval activity known to be present within the vicinity of the site.

### 10. **Bibliography**

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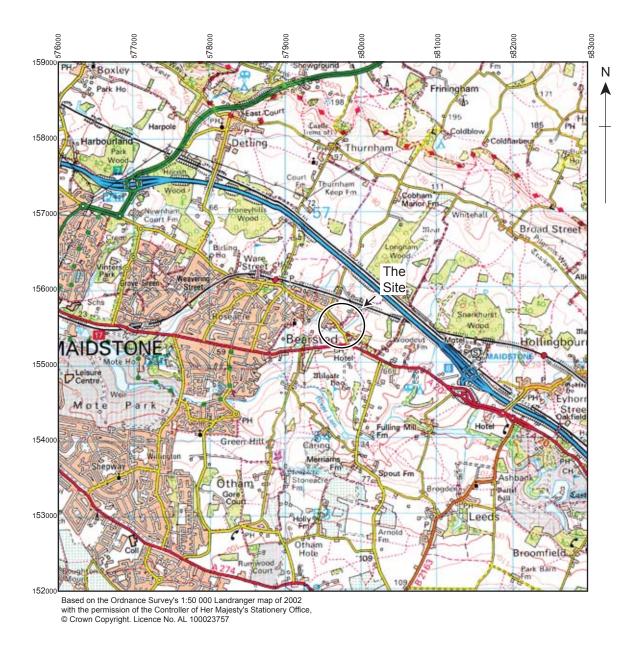
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500m 0 2 km 1:50 000

Figure 1: Site Location



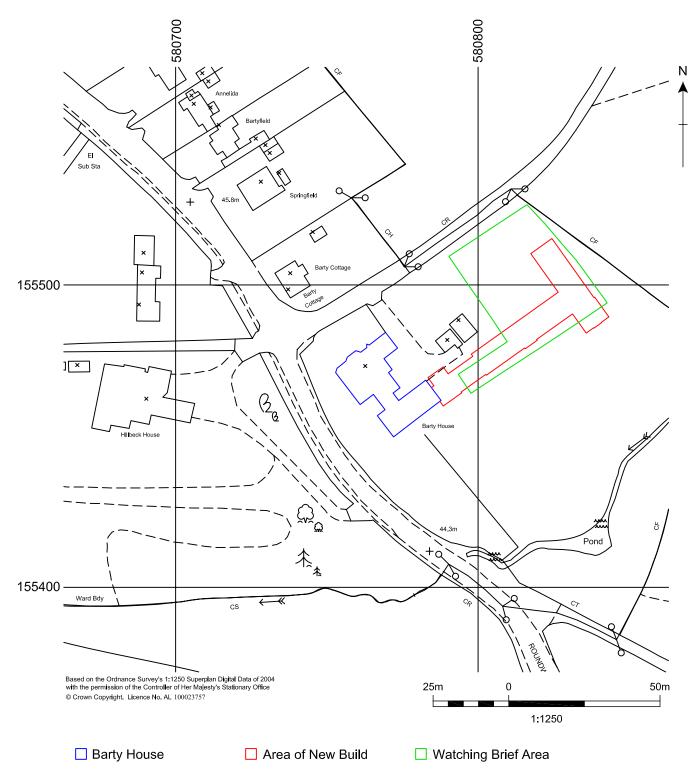


Figure 2: Detailed Site / Watching Brief Location



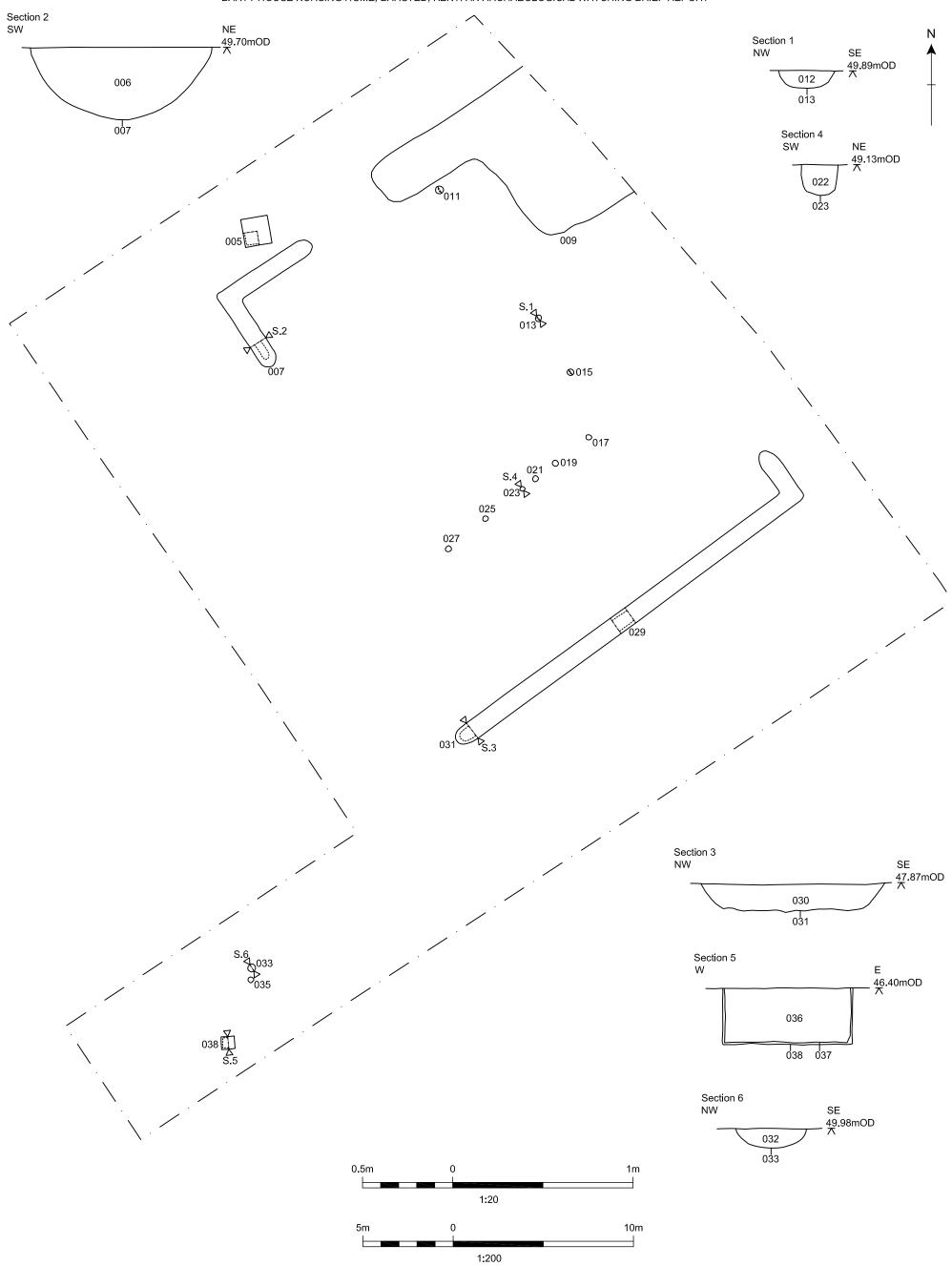


Figure 3: Watching Brief Area: Plan (1:200) & Sections (1:20)

# **Appendices** ACC Archaeology Group

# Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
001	Made Ground	14.00m	7.00m	0.55m
002	Topsoil	56.00m	42.00m	0.26m
003	Subsoil	56.00m	42.00m	0.21m
004	Fill of 005	1.50m	1.50m	N.F.E
005	Cut of Pit	1.50m	1.50m	N.F.E
006	Fill of 007	1.50m+	1.00m	0.42m
007	Cut of Ditch	1.50m+	1.00m	0.42m
800	Fill of 009	10.00m+	9.00m+	N.F.E
009	Construction Cut	10.00m+	9.00m+	N.F.E
010	Fill of 011	0.40m	0.40m	0.08m
011	Cut of Planting Pit	0.40m	0.40m	0.08m
012	Fill of 013	0.30m	0.30m	0.07m
013	Cut of Planting Pit	0.30m	0.30m	0.07m
014	Fill of 015	0.30m	0.30m	0.05m
015	Cut of Planting Pit	0.30m	0.30m	0.05m
016	Fill of 017	0.28m	0.28m	N.F.E
017	Cut of Planting Pit	0.28m	0.28m	N.F.E
018	Fill of 019	0.30m	0.30m	0.14m
019	Cut of Planting Pit	0.30m	0.30m	0.14m
020	Fill of 021	0.24m	0.24m	N.F.E
021	Cut of Planting Pit	0.24m	0.24m	N.F.E
022	Fill of 023	0.20m	0.20m	0.16m
023	Cut of Planting Pit	0.20m	0.20m	0.16m
024	Fill of 025	0.25m	0.25m	N.F.E
025	Cut of Planting Pit	0.25m	0.25m	N.F.E
026	Fill of 027	0.27m	0.27m	0.20m
027	Cut of Planting Pit	0.27m	0.27m	0.20m
028	Fill of 029	0.80m+	1.00m	0.10m
029	Cut of Ditch	0.80m+	1.00m	0.10m
030	Fill of 031	1.00m+	1.00m	0.15m
031	Cut of Ditch	1.00m+	1.00m	0.15m
032	Fill of 033	0.38m	0.38m	0.10m
033	Cut of Posthole	0.38m	0.38m	0.10m
034	Fill of 035	0.28m	0.28m	0.20m
035	Cut of Posthole	0.28m	0.28m	0.20m
036	Fill of 038	0.70m	0.70m	0.30m
037	Fill of 038	0.70m	0.70m	0.03m
038	Cut of Pit	0.70m	0.70m	0.30m
039	Natural	56.00m	42.00m	N.F.E

# Appendix B – Finds Report

# An assessment of the finds: Barty House, Nursing Home, Bearstead

Paul Fitz

The small assemblage is composed of a mixed range of finds, dominated by pottery and glass vessels.

Context (004) contained the most numerous finds including complete glass pots, small tonic or lotion bottles, and a near complete stoneware cider type jar. Amongst the other pottery is a pale pink colour coated piece which may indicate Art Nouveau influence, placing the context in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Context (006) can only be broadly dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the inclusion of a small sherd of blue & white transfer printed ware. Of potential interest are two small sherds a slightly abraded fine redwares with feint traces of a red colour coat. These though are post-medieval in date.

The only find from context (018), a small stem piece from a clay tobacco pipe, cannot be given a narrower date range within the post-medieval period.

Context (030) has what appears to be 2 small sherds of peg tile and three small window glass sherds which are quite fresh, indicating the context is no earlier than twentieth century.

Context (036) cannot be securely dated from the one brick piece and small stoneware sherd within it. The latter could be either a water pipe or pottery.

The primary value of the assemblage is for spot-dating, with negligible potential for further analysis. Whilst some of the glass vessels are conceivably of educational use at the receiving museum, discard is advised for most or all of the objects.

# Catalogue

004-2x complete clear glass pots 20thc

004-english stoneware cider/ale jar (incomplete)-20th C

004-small complete clear/green hued glass tonic bottle

004-small glass tonic/lotion bottle<complete>-20thC

004-wine bottle base(incomplete)

004-very fine white china x 2

004-plain white glaze,2 x stoneware, 1 x pastel pink external glazed coloured earthenware <art nouveau>?

006-english stoneware lid piece, blue/white transfer print ware, 2x plain redware with possible slip colour coat traces

006-iron fitting or possible blade piece

018-tobacco pipe stem-small, undiagnostic.

030- 2 x ceramic. Small, likely to be tile fragments

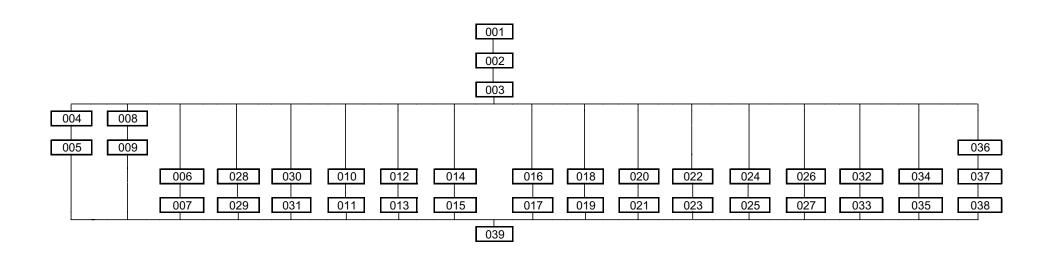
030-3 x small window glass sherds -20thC

030- Incomplete iron bar. 30mm squared, 140mm length-DISCARD

036-brick piece –no full dimensions. Traces of 'ash' mortar

036-small piece stoneware –unsure if pot or water drain piece

# **Appendix C – Matrix**



# Appendix D – Oasis Form

## OASIS ID: aocarcha1-50799

# **Project details**

Project name Barty House Nursing Home, Bearsted

Short description of the project

An archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on a programme of ground reduction at Barty House Nursing Home, Bearsted. This involved landscaping of the rear of the building. Numerous features were identified comprising two phases of activity. The first phase of activity was dated to the 18th and 19th century, representing the subdivision of the land to the rear of the house, and the planting of trees or shrubs as part of a programme of decorative gardening. While the second phase of activity represents more functional use of the garden during the 20th century, associated with the presence of rubbish pits and the backfilled construction cut for a World War II air raid shelter. Natural flinty sandy

clay was observed across the full area of the site.

Project dates Start: 22-07-2008 End: 24-07-2008

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated

project reference codes

30134 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference

codes

MA/05/1175 - Planning Application No.

MNEMG:2008.38 - Museum accession ID

Any associated project reference

codes

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Other 5 - Garden Current Land use

POSTHOLE Uncertain Monument type

Monument type PIT Uncertain

Monument type **DITCH Post Medieval** 

PLANTING PITS Post Medieval Monument type

Monument type PIT Modern

**CONSTRUCTION CUT Modern** Monument type

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Modern

Significant Finds CLAY TABACCO PIPE Post Medieval

Significant Finds GLASS Modern Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

**Prompt** Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

# **Project location**

Country England

Site location KENT MAIDSTONE BEARSTED Barty House Nursing Home, Bearsted, Kent

Postcode ME14 4HN Study area 1.00 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 80796 55502 51.2693852147 0.592037613468 51 16 09 N 000 35 31 E

Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 46.60m Max: 49.90m

**Project creators** 

Name of Organisation **AOC Archaeology** 

Project brief originator

Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

Project design originator

AOC Archaeology

Proiect

Andy Leonard

director/manager

Project supervisor

Chris Clarke

Type of sponsor/funding Developer

body

Name of

Chris Browne Builders

sponsor/funding body

**Project archives** 

Physical Archive recipient

Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery

MNEMG:2008.38 Physical Archive ID

**Physical Contents** 

'Ceramics', 'Glass', 'Metal'

notes

Physical Archive

To be held at AOC until ready to archive.

Digital Archive

recipient

Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery

Digital Archive ID

MNEMG:2008.38

**Digital Contents** 

'none'

Digital Media

available

'Images raster / digital photography', 'Text'

Digital Archive notes To be held at AOC until ready to archive.

Paper Archive

recipient

Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery

Paper Archive ID MNEMG:2008.38

**Paper Contents** 'none'

Paper Media available

'Context sheet', 'Matrices', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'

Paper Archive notes To be held at AOC until ready to archive.

**Project** bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Author(s)/Editor(s) Clarke, C.

Date 2008

Issuer or publisher **AOC** Archaeology

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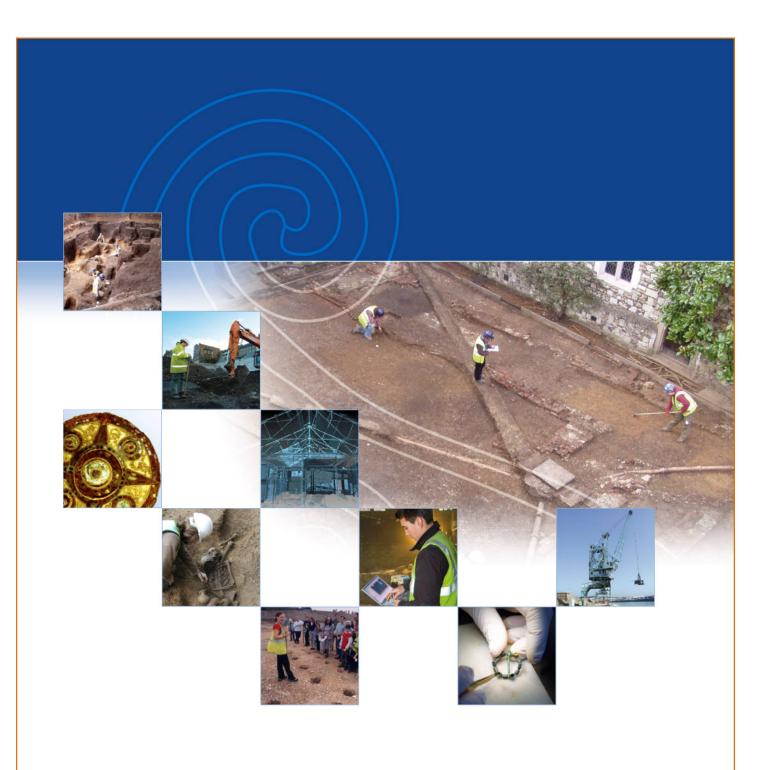
publication

London

Description A4 text and illustrations

Entered by Chris Clarke (chris.clarke@aocarchaeology.com)

Entered on 3 November 2008





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