

# Tesco, Courteney Road, Gillingham, Kent – Crest Packing Site: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

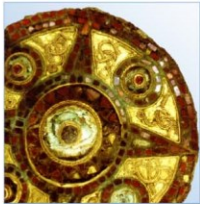
Planning Reference: MC2004/1681

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 7990 6220

AOC Project No: 30684

Site Code: COY10

Date: October 2010



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# Tesco, Courteney Road, Gillingham, Kent – Crest Packing Site: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**On Behalf of:** Pinnacle  
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Weyn Garden City  
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**National Grid Reference (NGR):** TQ 7990 6220

**AOC Project No:** 30684

**Prepared by:** Chris Clarke

**Illustration by:** Jonathan Moller

**Date of Fieldwork:** 15<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> October 2010

**Date of Report:** October 2010

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

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<b>Draft/Final Report Stage:</b> Draft	<b>Date:</b> October 2010

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Figure 2 Watching Brief Location on the Proposed Development Plan

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2010 AOC Archaeology Group undertook a Watching Brief at Courteney Road, Gillingham, Kent on behalf of Pinnacle Consulting Engineers. The work comprised the monitoring of ground reduction.*

*The watching brief revealed a limited sequence of deposits overlying the natural chalk which contained numerous periglacial features. Sealing the periglacial features was a layer of subsoil which had been horizontally truncated and replaced by two phases of re-deposited chalk deposition represented by layers. Modern features had been cut into the re-deposited chalk. The sequence was sealed by the recently installed concrete retaining wall. No features of archaeological significance were observed in the area monitored during the watching brief.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief at land at Courtney Road, Gillingham, Kent.
- 1.2 The site is located in central Gillingham, bounded by the A2 to the north, residential properties to the east, industrial units to the south and Courtney Road to the west. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 7990 6220, and is roughly rectangular in shape covering an area of approximately 7.12 hectares (Figures 1 & 2).

## 2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Medway Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Ben Found of Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group.
- 2.2 The site does not contain any Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings. It is not within a conservation area or within the zone identified within the Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey.
- 2.3 The proposed development comprises the extension to existing Tesco store to create an additional 2,475 sqm of shop space, the relocation of the petrol filling station, a revised service yard, new site access arrangements, a reconfigured car park, plus landscaping.
- 2.4 Planning permission to undertake the development was granted in 2009 (Ref. No.: MC2004/1681), subject to conditions. Condition 16 states:

*No development shall take place until the applicant, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason 16. To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.*

- 2.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared as a method statement for the archaeological works, which was approved by the monitor, Ben Found of Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group (AOC 2010).

## 3 Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey map for the area indicates that the southern part of the site is immediately underlain by Undifferentiated Head (clay, silt, sand and gravel) of Quaternary age. The underlying geology is Seaford Chalk Formation of the Santonian – Coniacian period. Geotechnical Investigations have shown that much of the site has been truncated to the chalk (Geotechnics 2004).
- 3.2 The site lies at around 85mOD, on high ground facing north towards the Medway, some 2.2km distant. The North Downs lie to the south of the site.

## 4 Archaeological and Historical Background

### The Prehistoric Period (500,000BC – AD 43)

- 4.1 The Palaeolithic period in Kent is represented in the archaeological record by flint finds, scatters and Lithic working areas. During this period periodic uplifting of the land and lowering of the river beds formed gravel terraces along the Thames and Medway estuaries; which were ideal for settlements. Examples of Palaeolithic finds are a large quantity of flint tools which were recovered from Sharpes Green in Twydall.
- 4.2 During the Mesolithic period, c.10,000 – 4,300 BC, climatic and geographical conditions were changing. The majority of evidence for settlement activity is concentrated around river shores and estuaries, as fish was a dominant feature in the Mesolithic diet. There is only limited evidence for Mesolithic activity within this part of Kent.
- 4.3 The Neolithic period saw the advent of farming, domesticated animals, pottery and polished flint tools. Neolithic findspots are recorded within the Kent Historic Environment Record, and Neolithic finds have been recovered from a “submerged forest” peat bed, exposed at low tide off the Grange.
- 4.4 Bronze Age finds have been found in and by the River indicating human occupation on the edges of marshes next to the Medway. One such find is a late Bronze Age axe from Hollingbourne Road, 1km north of the site. A socketed axe has been found to the northeast of the site.
- 4.5 Iron Age finds have been recovered within the vicinity of Gillingham, although extensive settlement activity has yet to be discovered.

#### **The Roman Period (AD 43 – AD 410)**

- 4.6 The site is located adjacent to Watling Street, the main Roman route from London to Dover, although it may have its origins in the prehistoric period. The site of the Tesco store is located between two Roman settlements; Rainham and the Roman city of Rochester. Occasional findspots of Roman date along its route suggest farming was also being carried out. The large number of Roman cemeteries in the vicinity of Gillingham is also evidence for extensive settlement in the general area in the Roman period. However, there are no findspots or settlement evidence associated with the road within 1km of the site.
- 4.7 Important Roman sites are known within the wider vicinity, however, such as a site at Grange Farm and a Roman Burial located on the cross roads of Watling Road and another Roman Road to the west of the site.

#### **The Early Medieval Period (AD 410 – AD 1066)**

- 4.8 The Saxon period is represented in the archaeological record by rich burials. It was following the departure of the Romans that Gillingham originated as a village, probably at the beginning of the second quarter of the seventh century. Its name derives from the Saxon for the village of Gylla's people. In 1779, Captain James Douglas exposed and excavated 86 burials, which is one of the largest Saxon cemeteries in south eastern England.
- 4.9 The original settlement was probably in the vicinity of the present parish church, and in the early medieval period, Kent was divided into seven 'lathes'. Gillingham lay in the lathe of Aylesford and was part of the diocese of Rochester which was formed in 604 AD by St Augustine. By 825AD the independent kingdom of Kent had become subservient to the West Saxon King Egbert. Subsequently Gillingham became known as the Hundred of Gillingham.
- 4.10 There is a single entry within 1km of the site which belongs to the early medieval period. A fairly complete skeleton with a broken Saxon pot was found when digging the foundations of the Central

Hotel between Woodlands Lane and Grange Lane. The remains are now held at Gillingham Museum.

### **Medieval Period (AD 1066 – AD 1536)**

- 4.11 The manor of Gillingham was part of the possessions of the Church of Canterbury long before the Norman Conquest, and remained part of the possession of the archbishopric until the third year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In the Domesday Book of 1080, it is described as having two demesnes, a mill, meadow land and pasture.
- 4.12 Gillingham appears to have developed little during the medieval period, although one house of mid 15<sup>th</sup> century date remains, Chapel House on the north of Watling Street to the west of the site. It was altered in the early-mid 16<sup>th</sup> century with further mid 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. It is a two storey timber framed structure with a half hipped tiled roof with left hand hipped cross range. It is currently divided into two properties. Chapel House is listed.

### **The Post Medieval (AD 1536 – AD 1900) and Modern (AD 1900 – Present) Periods**

- 4.13 During the reign of King Charles a fort was erected near the shore of the Medway, for the defence of the dockyard and navy residing here. In the noted expedition of the Dutch up this river, in 1667, there were four guns recorded, which could be used. It is now called Gillingham castle; it never was a place of much defence, and is now totally in ruins.
- 4.14 The development of Gillingham in post medieval period was facilitated by the coming of the railway and the growth of industries such as brickmaking, cement manufacture and agriculture. Maritime trade dominated Gillingham's economy, with five quays and a fleet of 27 ships transporting goods. The size and importance of the dockyard increased during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and was heavily utilized during WWI and WWII.
- 4.15 The site is located in part of a WWII camp called Hoath Lane Camp. This was likely to relate to Gordon Barracks to the west of the site. The main structures of Hoath Lane Camp were located to the south of London Road; however the area between it and London Road was considered part of the Camp.

## **5 Aims of the Investigation**

- 5.1 The aims of the watching brief were 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 any archaeological deposits.
  - To enable Ben Found, of Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
  - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the watching brief were:

- Determine the presence of any remains relating to activities carried out adjacent to the Roman Road and to establish to what extent these survive or have been truncated by later development
- Determine the presence of any medieval activity which may have continued this far from the centre of Gillingham.

5.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 6 Methodology

6.1 The watching brief was carried out between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and was focussed on observing the ground reduction taking place in the targeted watching brief area adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site (Figure 2).

6.2 An archaeologist was not present during the first phase of the ground reduction which consisted of approximately 35% of the targeted watching brief area. Ben Found was notified of this. A further 15% of the targeted area was monitored archaeologically. The remaining area, comprising the southern 50% of the targeted watching brief area was not disturbed during the course of the development (Figure 2).

6.3 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994).

6.4 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 for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
- Rescue/United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1998).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

6.5 Archaeological recording consisted of:

- Limited hand cleaning of archaeological sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
- The collection of dating evidence from in-situ deposits and spoil scans.
- A scaled photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
- A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits, where obtainable.



- 6.6 A unique site code, COY10, was created as the site identifier prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
- 6.7 The levels taken during the course of the watching brief were obtained from the main contractors survey data.
- 6.8 The watching brief was undertaken by Ian Hogg, Tara Fidler and the author, under the overall direction of Melissa Melikian; General Manager. The work was monitored by Ben Found of Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group.

## 7 Results (Fig. 3)

- 7.1 Modern Ground Surface = 76.90m to 74.57m OD

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
76.90m to 74.57m	0.00m	(100) & (110)	Concrete capping
74.07m	0.50m	(112)	Made Ground. Firm, light grey, compacted chalk.
76.40m to 72.42m	0.30-2.00m	(101)	Made Ground. Hard, white, compacted chalk.
75.60m to 71.57m	1.30-2.50m	(102)	Subsoil. Firm, mid brown, gravelly clay.
74.89m to 70.77m	2.00m-(NFE)	(103)	Natural. Hard, white, chalk.

- 7.2 The earliest deposit recorded was a hard white chalk (103), interpreted as the natural horizon. It was recorded at its highest at 74.89m OD in the eastern watching brief area, decreasing to a value of 70.77m OD adjacent to the western boundary of the site. The natural chalk (103) was also observed in section in the northwest of the watching brief area, where it had been reduced to a height of 71.92m OD by modern horizontal truncation.
- 7.3 In the watching brief area numerous periglacial glacial features were observed, the largest of which was observed in section in the eastern half of the area. Feature [114] had an irregular profile measuring 1.2m wide by over 1.10m in depth, and primarily filled by an orangey brown sandy deposit (113) with numerous flinty inclusions.
- 7.4 In the area monitored, chalk (103) was sealed by a firm, mid brown, gravelly clay (102) which contained frequent flinty inclusions. Deposit (102) was recorded as up to 0.90m thick and had a sharp yet undulating interface with the natural chalk. Inspection of this deposit led the interpretation of context (102) as a possible subsoil deposit. Overlying deposit (102) was a substantial layer of re-deposited compacted chalk (101) reaching a maximum depth of 2.30m in the southern part of the area monitored. Re-deposited chalk (101) was also observed overlying truncated natural chalk (103) in the northwest of the watching brief area. It appears the re-deposited chalk (101) was deliberately deposited to create a previously existing level ground surface.

- 7.5 Re-deposited chalk (101) was truncated in the western watching brief area by large concave sided pit [105] which measured over 4m wide by 1.55m deep. The pit contained a hard, light grey, compacted chalk fill (104) containing obvious modern debris.
- 7.6 In the eastern area re-deposited chalk (101) was sealed by a further layer of re-deposited chalk (112) up to 1.30m thick, made distinctive from the earlier re-deposit chalk deposit by its greyer, more mixed appearance. A modern ceramic drain (107), with its associated cut [109], fill (108) and brick manhole [111] was recorded truncated the later re-deposit chalk (112) adjacent to the eastern site boundary. In the area monitored the archaeological sequence was sealed by two recently installed concrete capping for a piled retaining wall [100] and [110]. To the northwest boundary of the area the sequence was sealed by the previously existing tarmac carpark surface (106).
- 7.7 No features or finds of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the watching brief.

## 8 Finds

- 8.1 No finds were observed during the course of the watching brief.

## 9 Conclusions

- 9.1 During the course of the watching brief on site the nature and extent of the archaeological potential was observed, in addition to the associated disturbance of this potential. A full sequence of deposits was recorded in the central part of the watching brief area.
- 9.2 Natural deposits were identified across the full extent of the targeted watching brief area, ranging in height between 70.77m AOD and 74.89m AOD.
- 9.3 The watching brief revealed a limited sequence of deposits overlying the natural chalk (103). The chalk had clearly been weathered with numerous periglacial features, including feature [114], observed throughout the chalk. Sealing these periglacial features was a layer of subsoil (102), representing part of the original soil sequence on site, although any previously existing soil horizons had been horizontally truncated and replaced by two phases of re-deposited chalk deposition represented by layers (101) and (112). Modern features had been cut into the re-deposited chalk. In the area monitored the sequence was completed by the recently installed retaining wall [100] and [110], while in the northwest area the sequence was sealed by the tarmac (106) of the previously existing carpark. No features of archaeological significance were observed in the area monitored during the watching brief.
- 9.4 The potential for archaeological preservation in the unmonitored area cannot be accurately established at this time.
- 9.5 No further work is recommended.

## 10. Publication and Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication will be restricted to a summary of results in the Kent Archaeological Round Up, and via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, and digital photographs will be deposited with Kent Museum Services at an appropriate time in the future.

## 11 Bibliography

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Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

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## Appendices

## Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
100	Concrete Retainer	50.00m	1.00m	0.50m
101	Made Ground/Re-deposited Chalk	200.00m	60.00m	2.30m
102	Subsoil	200.00m	60.00m	0.90m
103	Natural	200.00m	60.00m	5.00m+
104	Fill of Pit	4.00m	1.00m+	1.55m
105	Cut of Pit	4.00m	1.00m+	1.55m
106	Tarmac	50.00m	10.00m+	0.30m
107	Drain	0.22m	0.20m	0.22m
108	Fill of Drain	0.40m	0.20m	0.42m
109	Cut of Drain	0.40m	0.20m	0.42m
110	Retaining Wall	45.00m	1.00m	0.42m
111	Brick Drain	1.00m+	1.40m	0.45m
112	Made Ground	40.00m	15.00m	0.48m
113	Fill of Palaeochannel	15.00m	1.20m	1.10m
114	Cut of Palaeochannel	15.00m	1.20m	1.10m



## Appendix B – Oasis Form

**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-76711**

### Project details

Project name Tesco, Courteney Road, Gillingham

Short description of the project AOC Archaeology Group undertook a Watching Brief at Courteney Road, Gillingham, Kent . The work comprised the monitoring of ground reduction. The watching brief revealed a limited sequence of deposits overlying the natural chalk which contained numerous periglacial features. Sealing the periglacial features was a layer of subsoil which had been horizontally truncated and replaced by two phases of re-deposited chalk deposition represented by layers. Modern features had been cut into the re-deposited chalk. The sequence was sealed by the recently installed concrete retaining wall. No features of archaeological significance were observed in the area monitored during the watching brief.

Project dates Start: 15-10-2010 End: 27-10-2010

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes 30684 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes COy10 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### Project location

Country England  
Site location KENT MEDWAY GILLINGHAM new store , Courtenay Road  
Postcode ME8 0GX  
Study area 7.12 Hectares  
Site coordinates TQ 7990 6220 51.3298422069 0.582582470045 51 19 47 N 000 34 57 E Point  
Height OD / Depth Min: 70.77m Max: 74.89m

### Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology  
Organisation  
Project originator brief Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body  
Project originator design AOC Archaeology  
Project director/manager Melissa Melikian  
Project supervisor Chris Clarke  
Type of Developer  
sponsor/funding body  
Name of Pinnacle  
sponsor/funding body

### Project archives

Physical Archive No  
Exists?

Digital Archive TBC  
recipient

Digital Archive ID COY10

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography'  
available

Digital Archive notes To be held at AOC until ready to be archived

Paper Archive TBC  
recipient

Paper Archive ID COY10

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media 'Context sheet', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'  
available

Paper Archive notes To be held at AOC until ready to be archived

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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title TESCO, COURTENAY ROAD, GILLINGHAM, KENT - CREST PACKING SITE:  
A WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF

Author(s)/Editor(s) Capon, L

Date 2010

Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology

Place of issue or London  
publication

Description A4 text, 3 illustrations, 19 pages bound between plastic covers

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**Project  
bibliography 2**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title TESCO, COURTENY ROAD, GILLINGHAM, KENT – CREST PACKING SITE:  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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

Date 2010

Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology

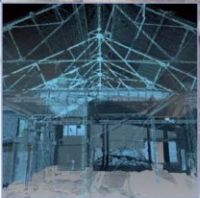
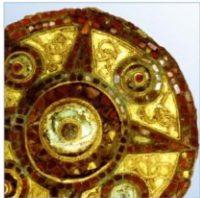
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publication

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Entered on 29 October 2010



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