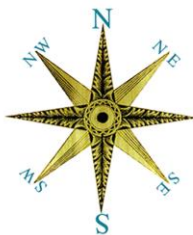


**LAND TO THE SOUTH OF WALLIS AVENUE
PARK WOOD, MAIDSTONE ME15
KENT
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**



May 2014

COMPASS



ARCHAEOLOGY

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF WALLIS AVENUE
PARK WOOD, MAIDSTONE ME15
KENT

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: WAL14
SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 78680 52065
PLANNING REF: MA/13/0566

COMPASS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

5-7 SOUTHWARK STREET

LONDON SE1 1RQ

Telephone: 020 7403 9660

Facsimile: 01932 346784

e-mail: mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk

May 2014

©Compass Archaeology Limited

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief on land to the south of Wallis Avenue, Park Wood, Maidstone, took place between February and April 2014. The work was carried out as a condition of planning consent for residential redevelopment of the site (Maidstone Borough Council Planning Application No: MA/13/0566; Condition no. 12). Monitoring of the groundworks focussed on the stripping of superficial deposits within the new build footprints, typically to a depth of about 0.4m to 0.5m and onto the undisturbed natural Head.

The site had potential for archaeological evidence, in particular – based on local finds to the west and southwest – of prehistoric and Roman date. Historic maps show that the site area was undeveloped until the 1960s, prior to that date being woodland and (in the 18th and early 19th centuries) open pastureland.

The watching brief did not reveal any finds or features of archaeological significance. The only evidence related to the most recent development and occupation of the site, from the mid 1960s to the present day.

A substantial area across the western part of the site – over 800 sq. metres – was monitored during machine stripping of the ground, to the level of or just into the natural silty clay Head. Exposed deposits were examined for any remains, in plan and section, and a substantial part of the area was subjected to metal detecting. Although not all groundworks were observed it is considered that this represents an adequate and appropriate response to the archaeological condition.

One particular observation concerns the extent to which the historic soil profile had been largely or entirely removed, evidently during initial development of the site in the early-mid 1960s. Outside areas of wholesale disturbance from the previous buildings the deposit sequence was quite straightforward, with either recent demolition material or a shallow imported topsoil overlying presumed 1960s made ground. This in turn overlay a residual subsoil grading into weathered natural, or more commonly came directly down onto the undisturbed silty clay Head. There is no doubt that this degree of truncation will have significantly reduced any archaeological potential on the site.

Contents		page
1	Introduction	1
2	Acknowledgements	1
3	Background	
3.1	Location, topography & geology	2
3.2	The Historic Environment Record	5
3.3	Historic map evidence	7
4.	Aims and objectives	
4.1	Archaeology and planning	10
4.2	Archaeological research questions	10
5	Methodology	
5.1	Fieldwork	11
5.2	Post-excavation and reporting	12
5.3	The site archive	12
6	The archaeological watching brief	
6.1	Summary of the findings	13
6.2	Area 1	14
6.3	Area 2	17
6.4	Area 3	19
6.5	Area 4	20
6.6	Area 5	23
6.7	Area 6	23
7	Assessment of the results and conclusion	25
8	Bibliography & references	26
Appendices		
I	Kent County Council HER summary form	27
II	OASIS data collection form	28

Figures	page	
<i>Front cover: the northwest corner of the site (Area 1) during machine stripping</i>		
1	General location, the site area marked in red	2
2	Closer view of the location, the site outlined in red	3
3	Geology map. The site lies within an extensive area of Hythe Formation sands and silts	4
4	Extract from <i>A Map of The Hundred of Eyhorne</i> , showing the site location in open countryside west of the village of Langley... 1798	7
5	The site outlined on the surveyors' drawing of 1797 for the First Edition Ordnance Survey of Kent	7
6	c 1870s 25-inch First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, with the site outline marked	8
7	1894-96 25-inch Second Edition OS Map, with site outline marked	8
8	1934-35 25-inch Revision OS map, site outline marked	9
9	1968-69 1: 2,500 Ordnance Survey, Plans TQ 7851 & 7852	9
10	Site area showing the recently demolished 1960s buildings and new development footprint	10
11	Site area showing the archaeologically monitored areas, overlaid on the 1960s and new development footprints	11
12	Plan of the western part of the site, showing areas observed and recorded during the archaeological watching brief	13
13	General view of machine stripping and metal detecting in the southern part of Area 1, looking NNE towards Wallis Avenue	15
14	The northern part of Area 1, looking northwest towards the junction of Longshaw Road and Wallis Avenue	15
15	Another view of the former front garden area, looking approx. north	16
16	Exposed section on the western boundary of the site, c 3m north of the southwest corner of Area 1	16
17	Exposed section on the southern boundary of Area 1, c 6m east of the southwest corner	17
18	General view looking northwest across the site, with clean natural deposits exposed across Area 2 in the foreground	18

19	Exposed section on the eastern side/north end of Area 2	18
20	General view looking east across the site towards Area 3	19
21	View of Area 3 during machine stripping, looking north towards Wallis Avenue	20
22	General view during stripping of Area 4, looking southwest towards Livingstone Walk	21
23	A further view of the northern part of Area 4 during machine reduction, looking northwest towards Wallis Avenue	21
24	Exposed section midway along the northern side of Area 4	22
25	Exposed section on the eastern side of Area 4, close to the northeast corner	22
26	The exposed southern section near the western end of Area 5	23
27	The western end of Area 6, looking approximately northwest towards Wallis Avenue	24
28	The eastern part of Area 6, looking northeast towards the boundary with Wallis Oak Avenue	24

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report presents a summary of an archaeological watching brief during redevelopment groundworks on land to the south of Wallis Avenue, Maidstone (Figs. 1 & 2 overleaf; site approximately centred at NGR TQ 78680 52065). The work took place as part of the planning process for the erection of 41 houses, 36 flats and a commercial/retail area, plus open areas, access roads and parking (Planning Application No. MA/13/0566; Condition 12).

The on-site watching brief was undertaken in several phases between the 7th February and 7th April 2014.

- 1.2** The site is located in an area with particular potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric and Roman date (see below Section 3.2). In later periods the site area appears to have lain in open or wooded land, certainly so from the 18th century to the 1960s (3.3 below).
- 1.3** Further to the condition of planning consent Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group advised that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during redevelopment groundworks on the site. It was agreed that this should focus on machine stripping of the overburden within the proposed redevelopment areas. Based on preliminary soil investigation it was anticipated that would expose the top of natural deposits, and any potential archaeological features cut into these (Hemsley Consulting 2013).

A Specification for an Archaeological Investigation... was produced by the KCC Heritage Conservation Group before the start of fieldwork, outlining the site background and required methodology.

- 1.4** A number of visits were made to monitor and record groundworks across the western part of the site (as noted above, 1.1). These revealed no archaeological remains or finds, and indeed indicated that the site had been extensively truncated by previous development works in the early/mid 1960s. Accordingly it was advised by the Heritage Conservation Group that the archaeological watching brief could be terminated.

2. Acknowledgements

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Andrew Bown of Denne Construction Limited, on behalf of Golding Homes. Further on-site assistance during the watching brief was given by Geoff Hill and the team from Denne Construction.

The archaeological measures on this site were supported by Wendy Rogers of the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council.

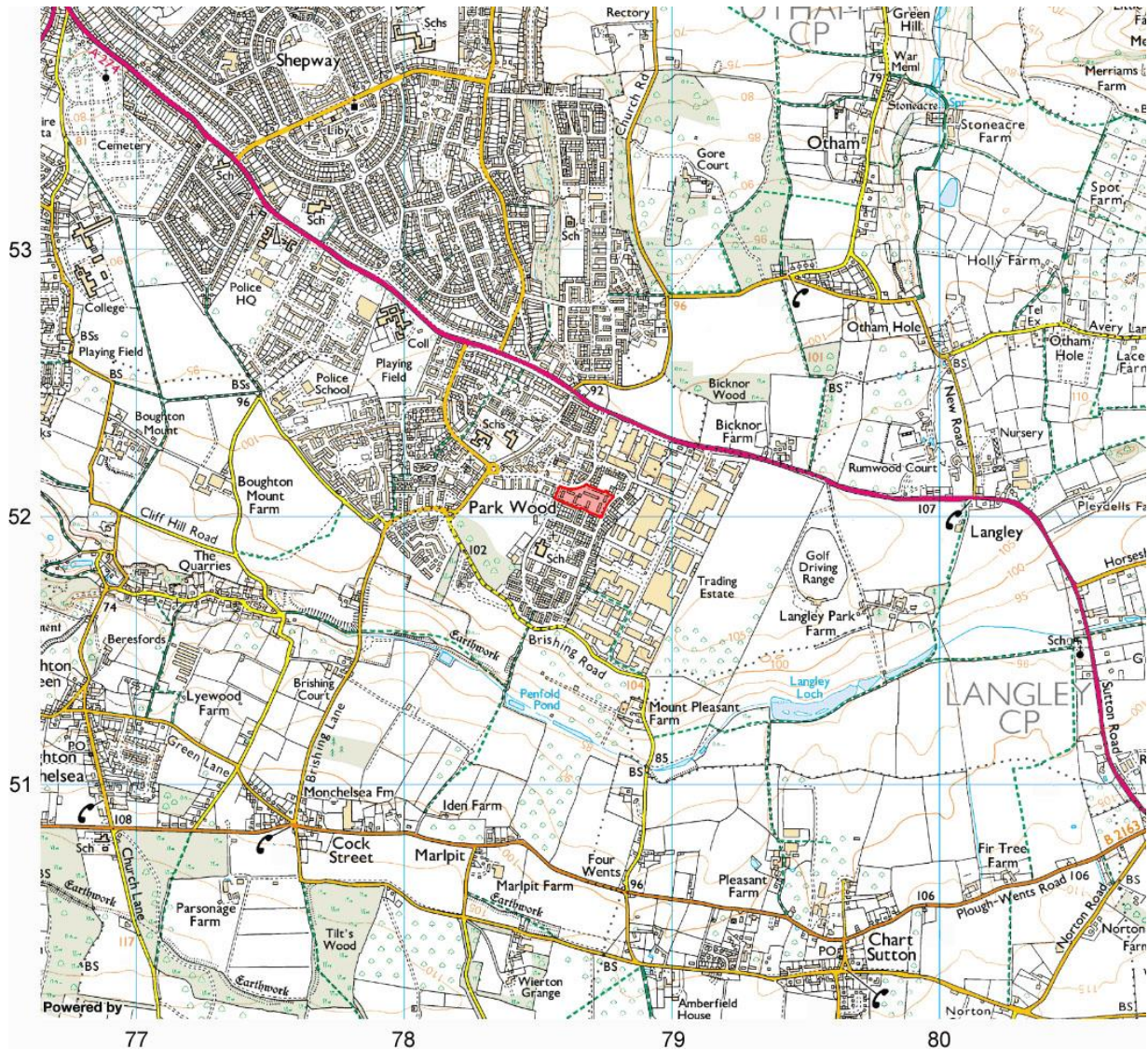


Fig. 1: General location, the site area marked in red

Reproduced from OS digital data with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of HMSO ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. (Compass Archaeology Ltd, license no. AL 100031317)

3. Background

3.1 Location, topography & geology

The site is located to the southeast of Wallis Avenue and some 4km to the southeast of Maidstone town centre, in a rectangle of ground otherwise bordered by Longshaw Road to the west, Bicknor Road to the east, Wallis Oak Avenue to the north and Livingstone Walk to the south (Fig. 2). This area was originally developed and the surrounding road network laid out in the early to mid 1960s, in an area of previously undeveloped land (3.3 below).

The development area measures approximately 180m to 200m (east-west) by 50m to 110m (north-south), an overall area of approximately 1.4 ha. The ground surface level

across the site is quite constant, at c 100.5 to 101.5m OD, with a very slight slope down to the north.

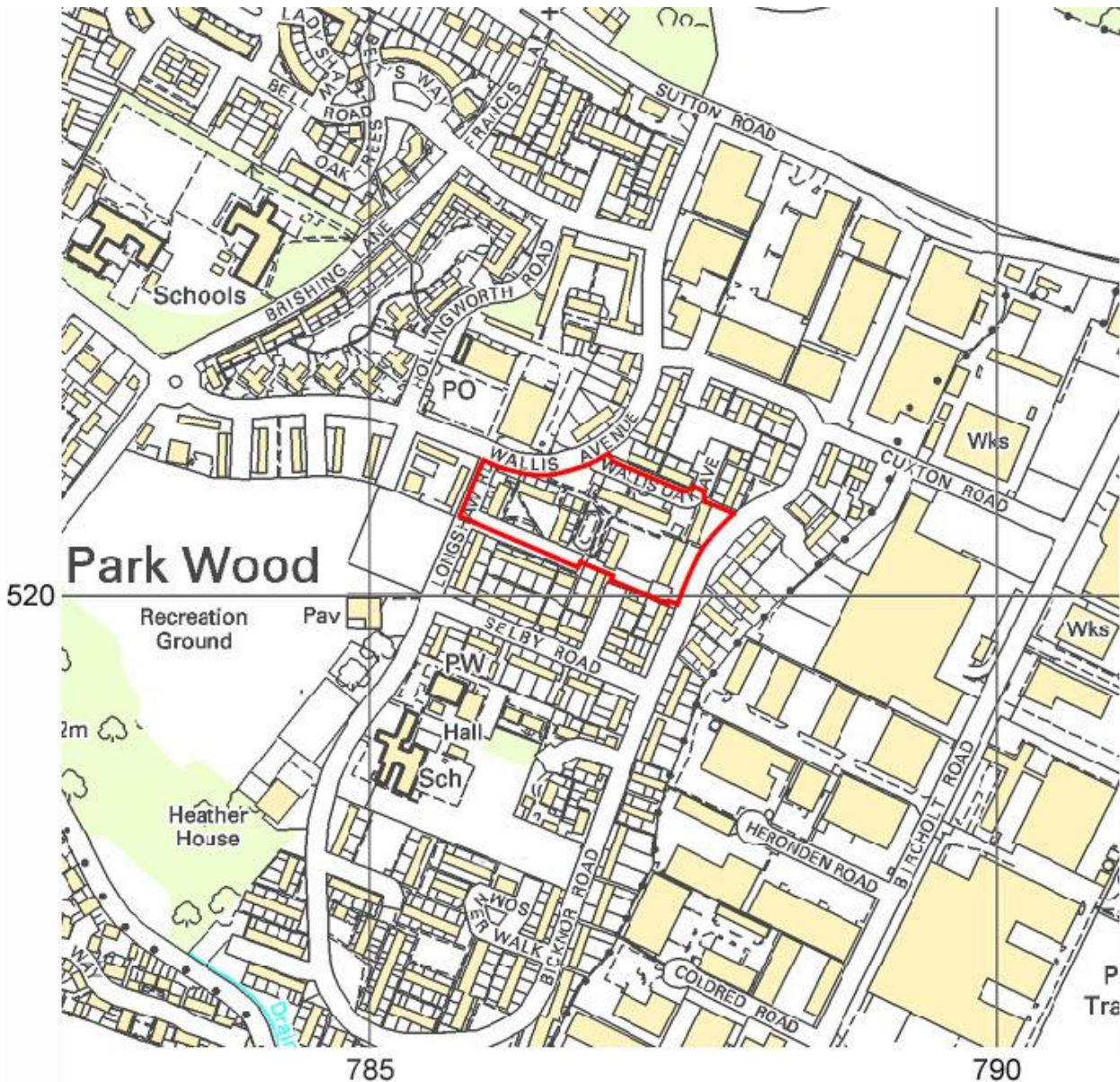


Fig. 2: Closer view of the location, the site outlined in red

Reproduced from OS digital data with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of HMSO ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. (Compass Archaeology Ltd, license no. AL 100031317)

The British Geological Survey (Sheet 288. Maidstone) shows that the site overlies Hythe Formation bedrock of the Lower Greensand Group (Fig. 3). This is defined as mainly fine- to medium-grained sands, sandstones and silts, locally pebbly: in Kent and eastern Sussex the formation includes alternate beds of sandy limestones (Ragstone) and glauconitic sandy mudstone.

The uppermost natural deposit was defined separately by a preliminary soil investigation (Hemsley Consulting 2013) and typically comprised some 2m to 3m of orange to reddish brown stiff silty clay with ragstone gravel, directly overlying the

Hythe Formation. This was considered to be Head (a poorly sorted and much more recent deposit formed mainly by solifluction, hillwash and soil creep). The material was noted to be somewhat siltier towards the western end of the site. A much earlier but similar description of this material is given by Hasted (1798, 346), who describes the soil of Langley parish as “mostly a red earth mixed with flints, not very fertile, it is very woody towards the east and west...”.

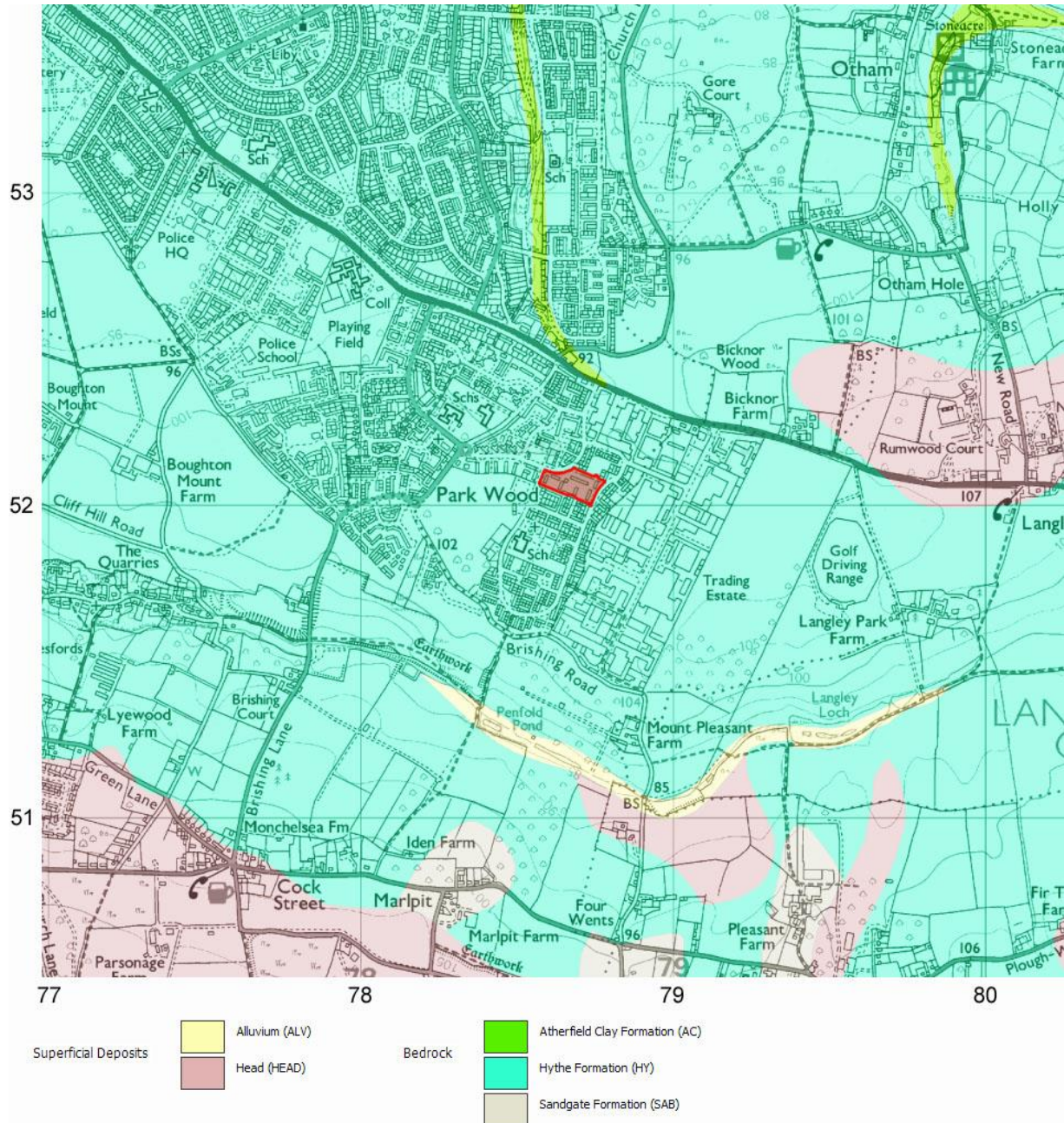


Fig. 3: Geology map. The site (marked in red) is within an extensive area of Hythe Formation sands and silts, although overlain (as noted above) by more localised Head

Reproduced from OS/British Geological Survey digital data with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of HMSO ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. (Compass Archaeology Ltd, license no. AL 100031317)

3.2 The Historic Environment Record

A search of the online Kent Historic Environment Record database was undertaken, using the map-search for a radius of 500m from three separate points on the site (approximate centre, SW corner and NE corner). The eight results listed below were produced: these are followed by a short general discussion, and a further section (3.3) detailing cartographic evidence for the more recent post-medieval history of the site.

HER no.	Description and record type	NGR (TQ)
TQ 75 SE 141	Multi-period occupation at East Field, Furfield Quarry, Boughton Monchelsea (MoLAS 2006). (1) Prehistoric worked flints found residually in later features. (2) Roman: two ditched enclosures and accompanying buildings that included a circular hut, a masonry building and two aisled buildings with large postholes. Also evidence of iron working and a kiln. Principal activity was in the middle years of the first century AD, declining rapidly after <i>c</i> AD 120. (3) Later activity limited to a large stone building of 19 th century date.	78320 51681
TQ 75 SE 20	Foundations of a Roman building, found in 1933 in a freshly ploughed field some 330m north east of the Brishing Roman bath-house (TQ 75 SE 1). Recorded as a concentration of larger ragstone fragments with pieces of Roman brick and tile, plus scattered potsherds (Romano-British & some probable Iron Age).	7835 5166
TQ 75 SE 101	Iron Age/Roman and undated features at Boughton Monchelsea (KARU 1996). (1) A large ditch containing Iron Age pottery in its lower fill and Roman pottery (AD 60-100) in the upper. Probably formed part of a larger sub-rectangular enclosure. (2) An undated hollow and possible stone wall footings.	7841 5160
TQ 75 SE 100	Two undated post-holes and a pit, discovered near Brishing Lane (KARU 1996).	7836 5161
TQ 75 SE 26	A partly polished Neolithic flint axe, found in 1968 on an allotment in Brishing Lane. Now lost.	7813 5209
TQ 75 SE 309	Briarwood, Sutton Road: Grade II listed building (No. 1225747). Probable 17 th century house, possibly with earlier origins. 2 storey plastered timber frame and thatched roof, half-hipped and gabled ends with large external brick stacks. Appears to be a 2-room plan with central entrance and possibly original central unheated service room. Small 18 th /19 th century outshuts on rear corners and central 20 th century porch.	7904 5225

HER no.	Description and record type	NGR (TQ)
TQ 75 SE 102	Boughton Monchelsea (KARU 1996). The corner of a small building with fragments of yellow stock-brick, plus a small ditch nearby. Both of probable 19 th century date and may relate to farming activity.	7831 5168 & 7830 5163
TQ 75 SE 156	20 th century land drains and pit of similar date, found on land south-east of Parkwood Industrial estate, Langley Park Farm West (CAT 2008).	79162 51779

3.2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

The first three entries noted above (TQ 75 SE 20, 101 & 141) relate principally to prehistoric and /or Roman activity. Moreover, all three are located in one fairly small area at Boughton Monchelsea, some 500m to the southeast of the site. A further entry (TQ 75 SE 100) is undated but is in the same area and may be associated. However, no finds or remains of these periods have been recovered in closer proximity to the present site.

The prehistoric entries noted above, although less significant, do suggest a continuity of activity from the Iron Age into the early Roman period (*cf.* TQ 75 SE 101). The Roman evidence itself clearly indicates some form of settlement, perhaps primarily agricultural with small-scale iron working, *etc.*

There is one further prehistoric record, to a Neolithic flint axe located just over 500m to the west of the site (TQ 75 SE 26). However, this appears to represent a chance find, with no other contemporary evidence in the area.

3.2.2 Saxon & medieval

There are no reference to finds or other evidence from these periods within the search area, although the village of Langley – just over 1 km to the east – first appears in the records in 814 as *Longanleag*, and as *Languelei* in the Domesday survey of 1086: the name derives from the Old English *lang leah* or ‘long field or woodland’ (Hasted 1798, 346; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langley). At this time the site itself was probably (as in its later history) either open pasture or woodland.

3.2.3 Post-Medieval

Four of the above entries relate to post-medieval features or buildings, although in three cases of quite recent (19th or 20th century) date. The only significant record is to Briarwood (TQ 75 SE 309) – a probable 17th century building on Sutton Road, some 400m to the northeast of the site, and in fact the nearest building to appear on the First Ordnance Survey of 1797 (Fig. 5 below).

3.3 Historic map evidence

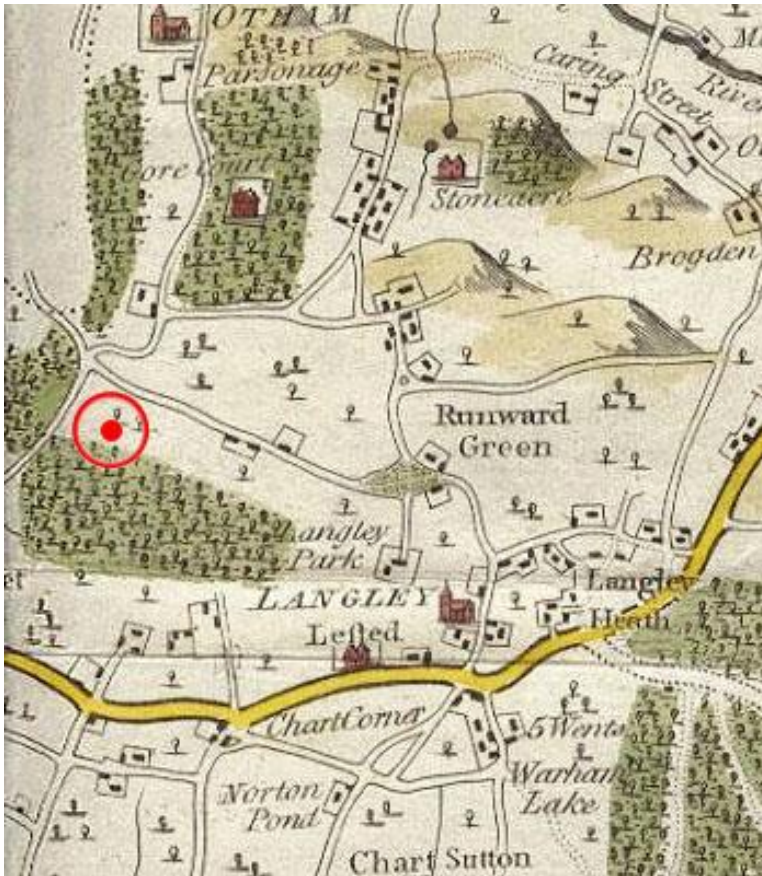
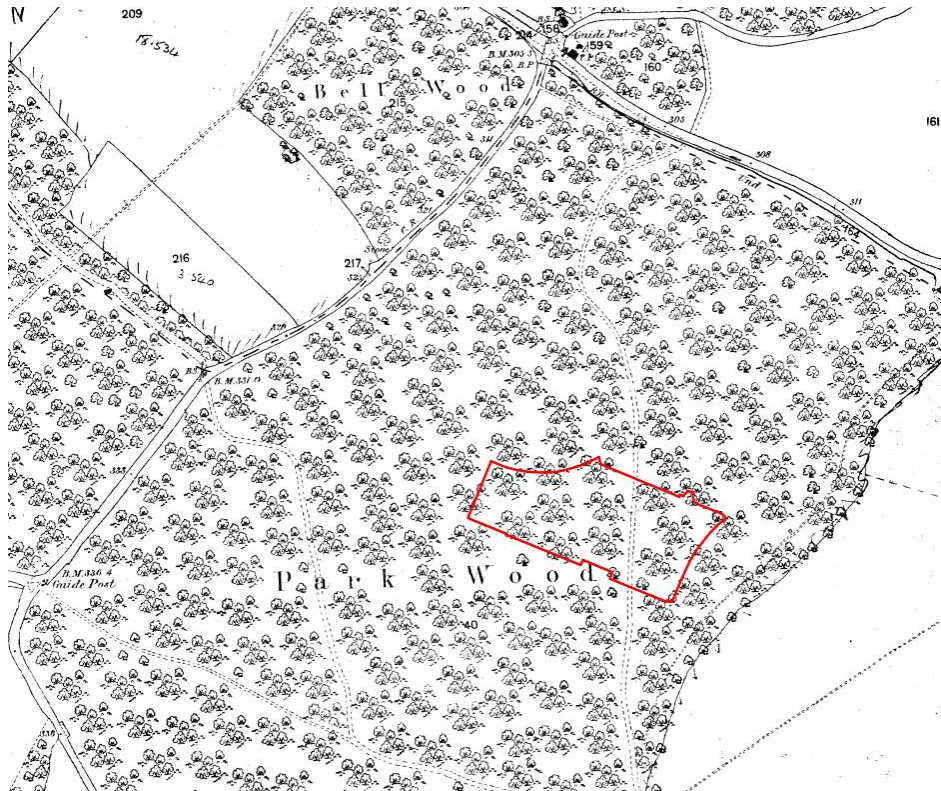


Fig. 4: Extract from A Map of The Hundred of Eyhorne, showing the site location in open countryside west of the village of Langley. This copy published in Vol 5 of Hasted's History and Topographical Survey of Kent, 1798



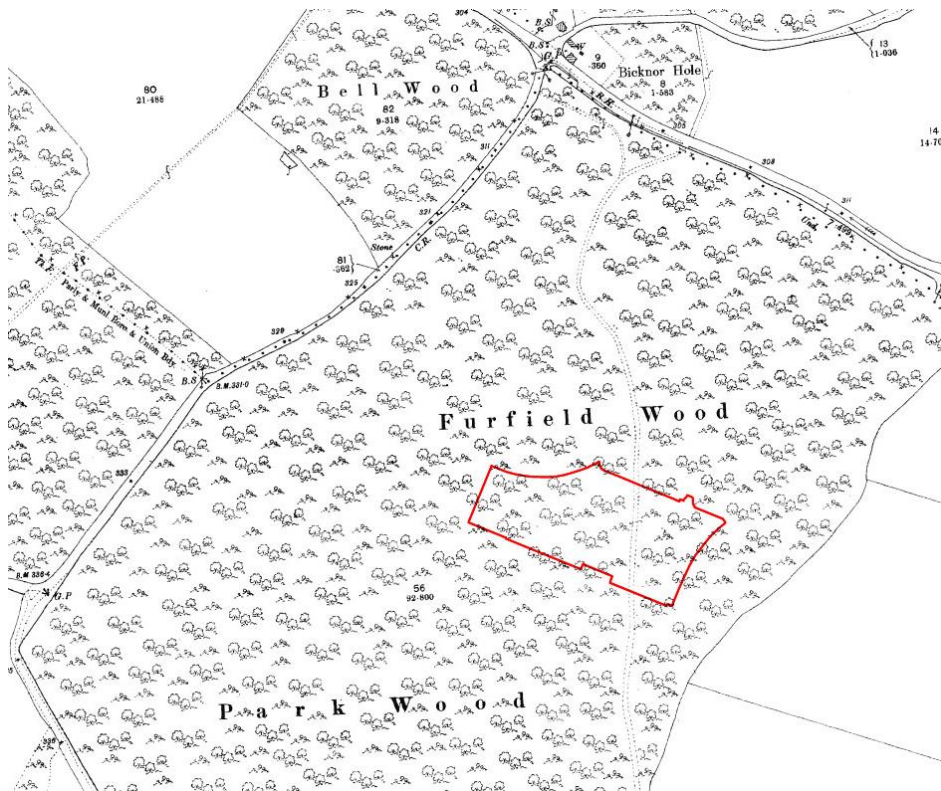
Fig. 5: The site outlined on the surveyors' drawing of 1797 for the First Edition Ordnance Survey of Kent (extract from OSD 117 Maidstone).

The landscape is entirely rural: the green colouration of the fields denotes untilled /pasture, with brown being cultivated. The nearest building lies on the road to the northeast, identifiable as the 17th century Briarwood (see above 3.2, HER ref. TQ 75SE 309)



161 Fig. 6: c 1870s 25-inch First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, with the site outline marked.

The woodland has now been extended northward as far as Sutton Road and entirely covers the site



14 14.702 Fig. 7: 1894-96 25-inch Second Edition OS Map, with site outline marked

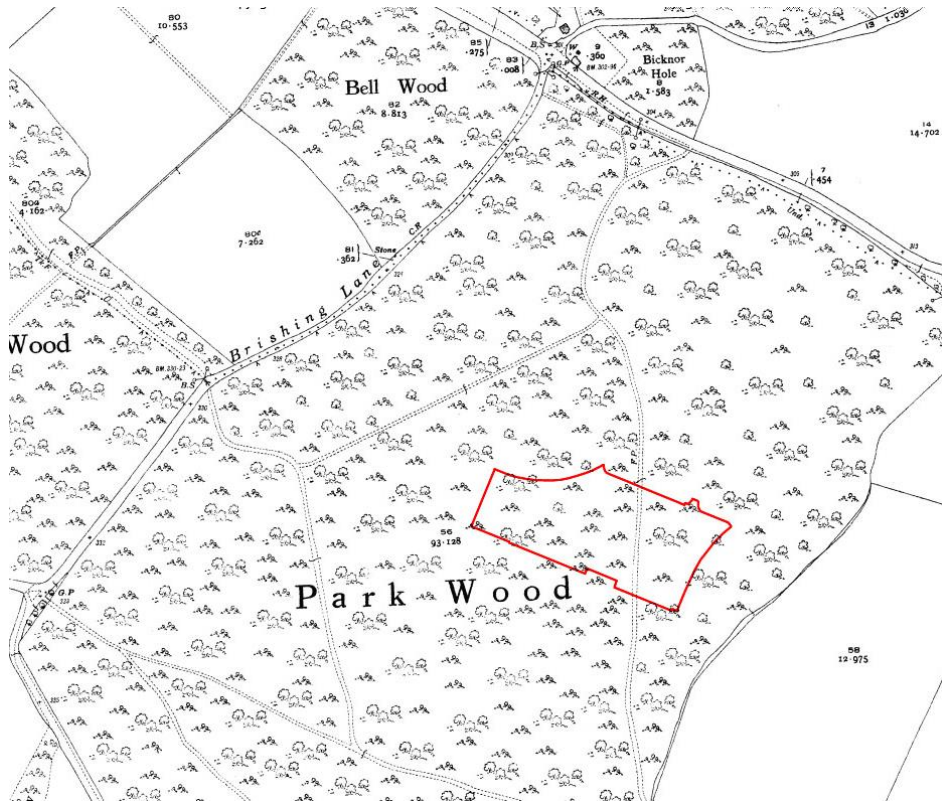


Fig. 8: 1934-35 25-inch Revision OS map, site outline marked and showing no change from the foregoing

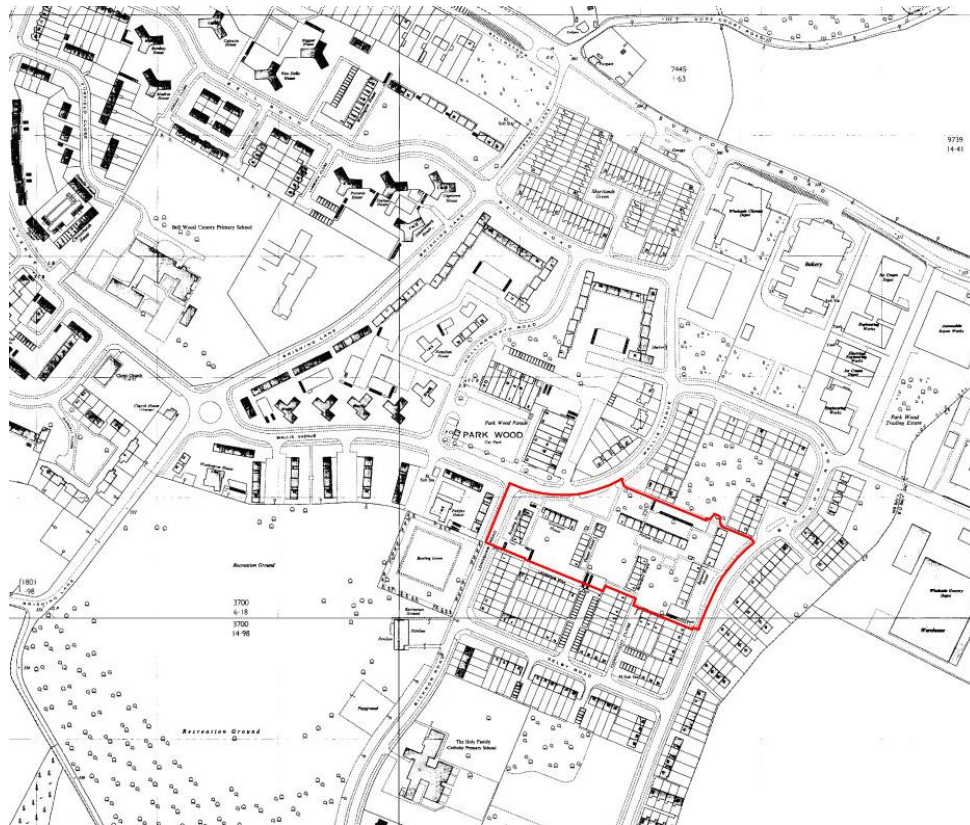


Fig. 9: 1968-69 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey, Plans TQ 7851 & 7852

The whole area has been recently developed, in the form in which it survived to the present day

4. Aims and objectives

4.1 Archaeology and planning

The new development involves the erection of residential houses and flats as outlined in Fig 10 below, plus a commercial/retail area, access roads and parking (Maidstone Borough Council Planning Application No: MA/13/0566). The archaeological watching brief took place as part of the planning process, further to a condition (No. 12) on consent for redevelopment, and as recommended by the Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group.

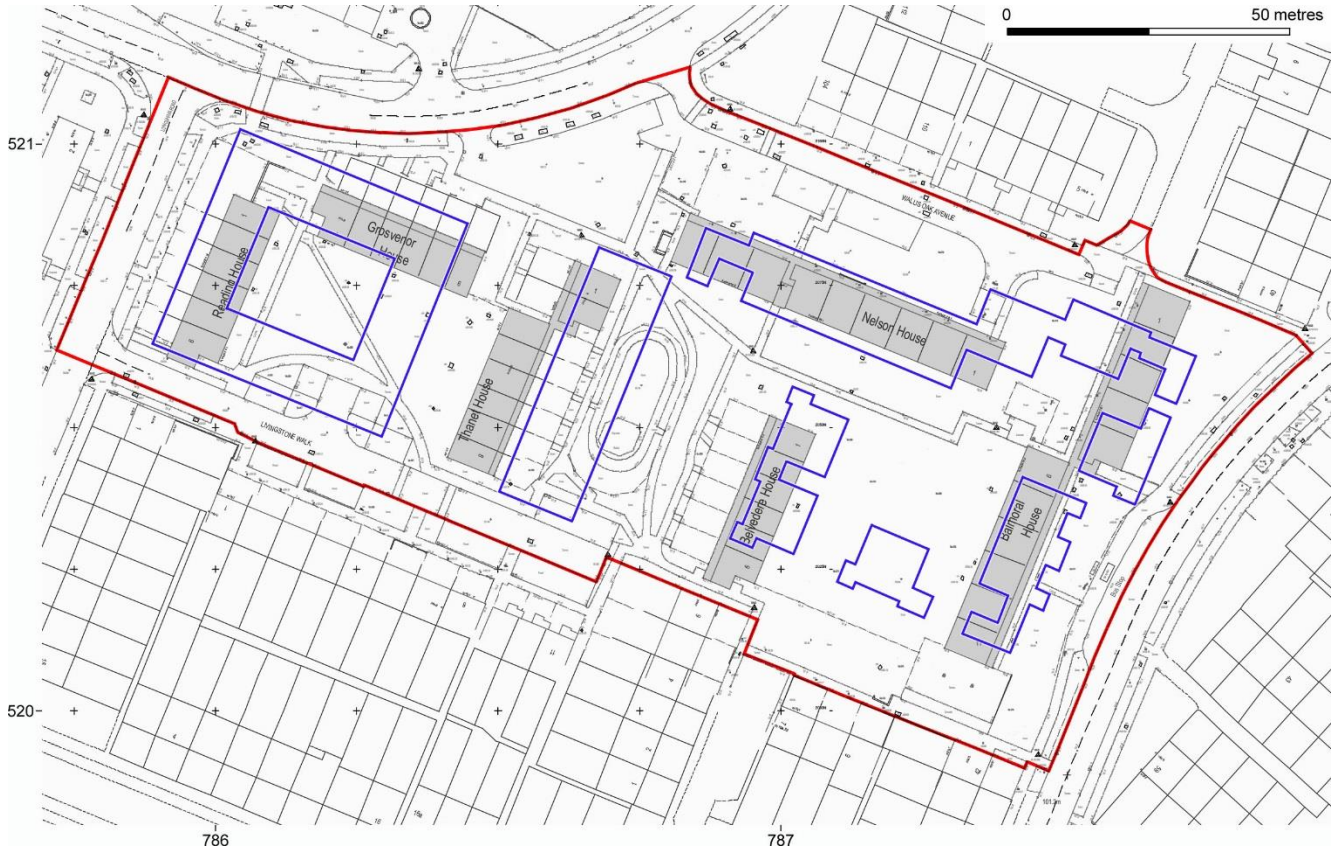


Fig. 10: Site area showing the recently demolished 1960s buildings (shaded grey) and new development footprint (outlined in blue)

Plan extracted from the Topographic Land Survey (Brotherton & Partners Dec. 2011)

4.2 Archaeological research questions

The background and objectives of the watching brief have been outlined in the preliminary Specification (Heritage Conservation Group... Dec. 2013).

As described above (3.2.1), there is potential for prehistoric and Roman finds and remains in the area, and possibly a continuity of agricultural activity from the Iron Age to the early Roman period. Any evidence for associated activity was therefore a particular objective of the watching brief.

In later periods the site was probably either open pasture or wooded (possibly both at different times, as in the last 200 years). Nevertheless, there is clear evidence for both Saxon and medieval settlement in the locality, so any finds or features dating to these periods – perhaps associated with agricultural activity – was also an objective. By the 18th century the site area covered parts of two large fields, but at some point during the first half of the 19th century these were given over to woodland: any evidence for this change was therefore also relevant to the watching brief.

5. Methodology

5.1 Fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with standard guidelines, including those of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008) and also the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations: all members of the fieldwork team have valid CSCS (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme) Cards. Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.



Fig. 11: Site area showing the archaeologically monitored areas (shaded orange), overlaid on the 1960s and new development footprints

Plan extracted from the Topographic Land Survey (Brotherton & Partners Dec. 2011)

Stripping of existing deposits was undertaken by a tracked 360° mechanical excavator using a ditching bucket. Modern topsoil, surfacing and made ground was removed to reveal the natural deposit, c.0.3m to 0.6m beneath the modern ground surface, which were then recorded and photographed. Any potential archaeological features were also cleaned, investigated and if necessary recorded.

The deposits during the watching brief were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and the areas monitored located in plan by taped measurement. The recording system used followed the MoL Site Manual for on-site work, by agreement the recording and drawing sheets being directly compatible with those developed by the Museum. The fieldwork record was supplemented throughout by digital photography. Levels were derived from a Topographic Land Survey (J Brotherton & Ptnrs. 2011), and related to an OSBM located on the southeast corner of No. 30 Selby Road. The Survey also included a grid based on a best fit to Ordnance Survey data.

5.2 Post-excavation and reporting

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of a report, and by ordering of the site archive. No archaeological finds or samples were recovered during the watching brief.

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group and Maidstone Museum.

Summaries of the fieldwork have been appended to this report using the Kent County Council HER summary form and the OASIS data collection form (see Appendices I & II).

5.3 The site archive

The records from the archaeological project (report plus written notes, drawings, photographs, *etc.*) will be ordered in line with standard guidelines for archive preparation and will be offered to Maidstone Museum. The records from the watching brief have been allocated the site code: WAL14.

6. The archaeological watching brief

6.1 Summary of the findings

Following demolition of the previous (1960s) buildings and removal of foundations and floor slabs the redevelopment footprints were stripped by machine to a depth typically between 0.4m and 0.6m. Excavation was generally to the top of or slightly into the natural Head deposit, removing recent demolition debris, modern topsoil, previous made ground and in some areas at least remnants of underlying subsoil.

The watching brief was undertaken through a series of visits whilst groundworks were taking place, and is described below in relation to the six separate areas that were monitored and recorded within the western/central part (Fig 12; sections 6.2-6.7). Areas 1-5 relate to the preparatory ground stripping works within the new development footprints – a total area of just over 800 sq. metres. Area 6 formed a more limited observation following demolition of the previous building, although also very largely located within the new build footprint.



Fig. 12: Plan of the western part of the site, showing areas observed and recorded during the archaeological watching brief (1-6)

Plan extracted from the Topographic Land Survey (Brotherton & Partners Dec. 2011)

During the course of the watching brief it became clear that the soil profile that would have formed when the site was open or wooded land had been largely (if not entirely) removed. This presumably took place during the original development of the area in the early-mid 1960s, as part of the initial clearance work prior to construction (see above, 3.3).

The deposit sequence was therefore quite straightforward, with either disturbed material left by very recent demolition or a shallow imported topsoil overlying a layer of made ground that is assumed to date to the 1960s. This last was most commonly a mixed clayey deposit with some gravel inclusions, on average about 300mm thick (less in some areas) and containing occasional fragments of modern brick and /or concrete tile. In many areas the clean natural Head deposit was exposed directly below this layer, although in a few places there was a remnant of fairly light-coloured and more or less sterile subsoil grading into the weathered natural.

6.2 Area 1

Area 1 covered the footprint of the western arm of the new apartment block. It measured some 41m north-south by *c* 10m in width from east to west, and was excavated to an average depth of 0.25m to 0.40m. Slightly more ground was removed to the south, reflecting the equally slight rise in the modern ground surface in this direction, from *c* 100.85m OD to 101.05m OD.

The uppermost level of the Head deposit was exposed throughout the western part of Area 1 – typically an orange to yellowish-brown stiff clayey silt with occasional ragstone fragments/gravel. The uppermost level of this was at *c* 100.80m OD in the south of the area, falling to about 100.65m OD at the northern boundary.

By contrast, in the eastern part of the area the ground was heavily disturbed by the previous building, which had formed an unbroken north-south block (Fig 14). To the west disturbance was confined to a series of discrete east-west lines, reflecting the location of service trenches connecting the former houses with Longshaw Road (Figs. 15 & 16).

No archaeological features or finds were recorded: Apart from the modern service trenches the only finds of any description were a few decimal coins, 1p and 2p plus one 5p piece, that were recovered by metal detector.



Fig. 13: General view of machine stripping and metal detecting in the southern part of Area 1, looking NNE towards Wallis Avenue and showing the exposed natural deposits



Fig. 14: The northern part of Area 1, looking northwest towards the junction of Longshaw Road and Wallis Avenue. Note the distinction between the disturbed area in the foreground (from the demolished buildings), and the former front gardens adjoining the site boundary where exposed natural is cut by a series of darker lines representing infilled service trenches



Fig. 15: Another view of the former front garden area, looking approx. north and again showing the darker lines of service trenches crossing from west to east



Fig. 16: Exposed section on the western boundary of the site, c 3m north of the southwest corner of Area 1 (0.4m scale). A shallow soil profile ($\leq 100\text{mm}$) overlies lighter yellow-brown made ground and thence either clean natural or – immediately left of the scale – a slightly darker band some 600mm wide representing an infilled service trench



Fig. 17: Exposed section on the southern boundary of Area 1, c 6m east of the southwest corner. Again the soil profile has been truncated, and here the clean natural deposit is sharply differentiated from the dark overlying made ground

6.3 Area 2

Area 2 measured approximately 11m in length (north-south) by 6m in width, and was excavated to a depth of between 300mm to 600mm – shallower to the south and deepest to the northeast. The reduced area lay largely within the new building footprint, although actually dug to form a temporary lorry access /hardstanding from Livingstone Walk.

No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed in this trench, with – as in Area 1. The level of the natural Head – an orange-brown stiff silty clay with occasional ragstone fragments – was fairly consistent, at about or just below 101.00m OD. To the east this was overlain by a remnant of sterile subsoil, otherwise truncated in previous development of the site (*cf.* Fig 19).



Fig. 18: General view looking northwest across the site, with clean natural deposits exposed across Area 2 in the foreground



Fig. 19: Exposed section on the eastern side/north end of Area 2 (0.5m scale).

The top c 100m of topsoil has been removed to expose a deeper deposit (c 300mm) of recent made ground with brick & concrete tile. This overlies a shallow (c 50mm) truncated subsoil, merging into weathered natural at c 101.00 m OD

6.4 Area 3

Area 3 covered a fairly small block of ground on the eastern side of the footprint of the new apartment block: maximum measurements in plan were c 5m by 5m, and the area was stripped by machine to a level of approximately 100.75m OD.

This reduction revealed nothing except natural silty clay (Fig 21). The whole exposed area had been truncated by modern activity, with the natural overlain by a layer of terram-type material, and thereafter fairly loose rubble and made ground.



Fig. 20: General view looking east across the site towards Area 3 (located just to the right of the tracked machine)



Fig. 21: View of Area 3 during machine stripping, looking north towards Wallis Avenue.

Recent and fairly loose made ground/rubble deposits directly overlie the exposed natural

6.5 Area 4

Area 4 lay roughly in the middle of the site, and within the central part of the footprint of the westernmost of the new housing blocks. Overall the area measured some 24m north-south by 14m east-west, and was excavated to an average depth of 0.5m (approx. 100.80m OD).

This excavation lay just to the east of the former building footprint, and within an area that had been partly garden and partly overlain by paths. As elsewhere however significant truncation was observed, evidently dating from the original 1960s development of the site. To the east there was some surviving subsoil /weathered natural, presumably the base of the original soil profile, but elsewhere made ground directly overlay natural silty clay Head (*cf.* Figs 24 & 25). The only feature observed was an electric cable, below and following the line of a former north-south path through the middle of Area 4.



Fig. 22: General view during stripping of Area 4, looking southwest towards Livingstone Walk and showing the undisturbed natural deposit



Fig. 23: A further view of the northern part of Area 4 during machine reduction, looking northwest towards Wallis Avenue



Fig. 24: Exposed section midway along the northern side of Area 4, showing c 200mm of made ground over the natural deposit (0.5m scale)



Fig. 25: Exposed section on the eastern side of Area 4, close to the northeast corner. Some 200mm of original subsoil appears to survive here, truncated and overlain by recent made ground

6.6 Area 5

A narrow strip of ground (c 14m east-west by 2.5m) was examined to the south of Area 4, and at the southern end of the new footprint where ground reduction had cut into *in situ* deposits. This enabled a complete section to be seen, from an undisturbed surface (in Fig 26 below at c 101.40m OD) through made ground and to the natural Head.



Fig. 26: The exposed southern section near the western end of Area 5 (0.5m scale). A shallow imported topsoil ($\leq 150\text{mm}$) overlies a slightly thicker layer of made ground, and below this the natural deposit at approximately 101.05m OD

6.7 Area 6

Area 6 represented an earlier stage of groundworks, following demolition and foundation removal within one of the previous building footprints (Nelson House). Although quite a large area (c 9m by 27m in plan) this was necessarily a more limited observation, concentrating on the surrounding sections where the ground had already been reduced by up to 0.5m. No archaeological features or finds were seen: it is likely the former building had already heavily disturbed the majority of this area (as previously seen on the eastern side of Area 1).



Fig. 27: The western end of Area 6, looking approximately northwest towards Wallis Avenue



Fig. 28: The eastern part of Area 6, looking northeast towards the boundary with Wallis Oak Avenue. Recently removed demolition concrete footings, etc., can be seen in the background

8. Assessment of the results and conclusion

The archaeological watching brief in the area south of Wallis Avenue revealed no finds or features of archaeological significance. The only evidence related to the most recent development and occupation of the site, from the mid 1960s up to the present day.

A substantial area across the western part of the site – over 800 sq. metres – was monitored during machine stripping of the ground within the new building footprints, to the level of or just into the natural silty clay Head. Exposed deposits were examined for any remains, in plan and section, and a substantial part of the area was subjected to metal detecting. Although not all groundworks were observed it is considered that this represents an adequate and appropriate response to the archaeological condition.

One particular observation concerns the extent to which the historic soil profile had been largely or entirely removed, evidently during initial development of the site in the early-mid 1960s. Outside areas of wholesale disturbance from the previous buildings the deposit sequence was quite straightforward and uniform, with either recent demolition material or a shallow imported topsoil overlying presumed 1960s made ground. This in turn overlay a residual subsoil grading into weathered natural, or more commonly came directly onto the undisturbed silty clay Head. There is no doubt that this degree of truncation will have significantly reduced any archaeological potential on the site.

9 Bibliography & references

Brotherton, J & Partners (Dec. 2011) *Topographic Land Survey*. Drawing ref: JOB - 11124 - Wallis Avenue - Phase 1-2-3 .fcw

Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2008 *Archaeological evaluation at land south-east of Parkwood Industrial Estate, Langley Park Farm West, Bircholt Road, Maidstone* (unpub. document)

Hasted, E, 1798 *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*. Volume 5: 323-4; 346-352

Hemsley Consulting, August 2013 *Wallis Avenue Phase 2, Park Wood, Maidstone, Kent. Site Investigation Report* (HC 4540)

Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, Dec. 2013 *Specification for an Archaeological Investigation at... Wallis Avenue Maidstone*

IFA, 2008 (rev^d) *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*

Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, 1996 *A Programme of Archaeological Work at Furfield Quarry, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone* (unpub. document)

Kent County Council, *Historic Environment Record* - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/ExploringKentsPast/>

Kent County Council, *Kent Landscape Information System* - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/klis/home.htm>

Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2006 *East Field, Furfield Quarry, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone* (unpub. document)

Ordnance Survey Maps. Various dates and scales.

Ruffell, A H. 1992 Correlation of the Hythe Beds Formation (Lower Greensand Group: early-mid Aptian)... *Proc. of the Geologists Assoc*, Vol.103, 273-91

Langley village: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langley,_Kent

Appendix I: Kent County Council HER summary form

Site Name: Land to the south of Wallis Avenue (Phase 2)	
Site Address: Land to the south of Wallis Avenue, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15	
Summary: Watching brief during preliminary groundworks for the construction of new residential houses and flats, carried out as a condition of planning consent (Application no. MA/13/0566).	
District/Unitary: Maidstone Borough	Parish: Langley
Period(s): Post medieval (20 th century)	
NGR: Groundworks monitored in the western part of the site, approx. between TQ 7859 5207 and TQ 7871 5208	
Type of archaeological work: Watching brief	
Date of Recording: 7 th February to 7 th April 2014 (periodic visits to site).	
Unit undertaking recording: Compass Archaeology Ltd	
Geology: Head deposit (c 2-3m thick) over Hythe Formation	
Title and author of accompanying report: Land to the south of Wallis Avenue, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15, Kent; An Archaeological Watching Brief. Potter, G.	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results</p> <p>Over 800 sq. m was monitored during machine stripping to the level of natural silty clay Head but no archaeological features or finds were recorded. The original soil profile had been largely or entirely removed, presumably during initial development of the site in the early-mid 1960s. Construction of the associated buildings had locally removed all deposits and cut into the underlying natural.</p> <p>Elsewhere the sequence was quite straightforward, with disturbed material left by recent demolition or a shallow imported topsoil overlying presumed 1960s made ground. This in turn overlay a truncated subsoil grading into weathered natural, or more commonly came directly onto the undisturbed Head.</p>	
Location of archive: Compass Archaeology Ltd., 5-7 Southwark Street, London SE1 1RQ (no retained finds)	
Contact at Unit: Geoff Potter	Date: 27 th May 2014

Appendix II: OASIS data collection form

OASIS ID: [compassa1-180264](#)

Project details

Project name	Land south of Wallis Avenue, Maidstone
Short description of the project	Watching brief during preliminary groundworks for the construction of new residential houses and flats, carried out as a condition of planning consent. Over 800 sq. m was monitored during machine stripping to the level of the natural silty clay Head but no archaeological features or finds were recorded. The original soil profile had been largely or entirely removed, evidently during initial development of the site in the early-mid 1960s. Construction of the associated buildings had removed all local deposits and cut into the underlying natural. Elsewhere the sequence was quite straightforward, with either disturbed material left by recent demolition or a shallow imported topsoil overlying presumed 1960s made ground. This in turn overlay either a truncated subsoil grading into weathered natural, or more commonly was directly over the undisturbed Head.
Project dates	Start: 07-02-2014 End: 07-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WAL14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	MA/13/0566 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	HOUSING ESTATE Modern
Significant Finds	COIN Modern
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE LANGLEY Land south of Wallis Avenue
Postcode	ME15
Study area	850.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 78680 52065 51.2391776139 0.56001713071 51 14 21 N 000 33 36 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 100.60m Max: 101.10m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	County Planning Archaeologist
Project design originator	County Planning Archaeologist
Project director/manager	Compass Archaeology
Project supervisor	Geoff Potter
Type of sponsor /funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor /funding body	Denne Construction Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Maidstone Museum
Digital Archive ID	WAL14
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Maidstone Museum
Paper Archive ID	WAL14
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land to the south of Wallis Avenue, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15, Kent. An Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Potter, G
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark Street, London SE1 1RQ
Description	In-house report (35 pages incl. illustrations) describing the results of the watching brief. Includes historical, archaeological, geological and topographical background to the site, details of the methodology used, photographs and plans of all areas monitored, and conclusions reached.