

**Land to the Rear of 75, Church Road, Oare, Kent.
An Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

(NGR 600656 163204)

Planning Ref: SW/05/0111

By

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Archaeology South-East

Archaeology South-East is a division of the University College London Field Archaeology Unit one of the largest groupings of academic archaeologists in the country. Consequently, Archaeology South-East has access to the conservation, computing and environmental backup of the college, as well as a range of other archaeological services.

The Field Archaeology Unit and South Eastern Archaeological Services (which became Archaeology South-East in 1996) were established in 1974 and 1991 respectively. Although field projects have been conducted world-wide, the Field Archaeology Unit retains a special interest in south-east England with the majority of our contract and consultancy work concentrated in Sussex, Kent, Greater London and Essex.

Based in the local community, the Field Archaeology Unit sees an important part of its work as explaining the results to the broader public. Public lectures, open days, training courses and liaison with local archaeological societies are aspects of its community-based approach.

Drawing on experience of the countryside and towns of the south east of England the Unit can give advice and carry out surveys at an early stage in the planning process. By working closely with developers and planning authorities it is possible to incorporate archaeological work into developments with little inconvenience.

Archaeology South-East, as part of the Field Archaeology Unit, is a registered organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists and, as such, is required to meet IFA standards.

Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Artlab Developments Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of 75, Church Road, Oare,, Kent (NGR 600656 163204). The work was carried out on the 13th and 14th November 2006.

The archaeological watching brief comprised watching the excavation of a rectangular 1.4m deep, 600mm in width, footing trench. A further 200mm deep trench extended from the footings to a 1 metre square sump 1 metre deep. The underlying natural gravels were encountered at a maximum height of 11.29 m OD towards the eastern end of the site, falling gently to 11.09 m OD to the southwest and 10.80 m to the northwest. A heavily truncated feature was recorded within Trench 1 underlying Roman material and has been previously recorded during an evaluation as Roman.

The Roman deposits were sealed by a substantial deposit of subsoil that was in turn sealed by the topsoil of the site. The modern ground surface varied from 12.18 m OD to the south to 12.07 m OD to the north.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Artlab Developments Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 75, Church Road, Oare, Kent (NGR 600656 163204). (**Fig 1**).

The modern ground surface varied from 12.12 m OD in the east of the site, to 12.07 m OD to the north. The height of the underlying natural sediments varied from 11.29 m OD in the east to 11.00 m OD in the north.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Deon Whittaker and Alice Thorne (Archaeologists) on the 13th -14th November 2006. The illustrations were produced by Justin Russell (Illustrator) and the project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post – Ex Manager).

1.1 Project History

An application for planning permission (Planning ref. SW/05/0111) was lodged by Artlab Developments Limited on behalf of their client ahead of possible development of the site. Following the application Swale Borough Council, acting on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council asked the applicant to determine the archaeological impact of the proposals prior to the determination of the planning. The proposed development on the site will consist of construction of a garage, along with associated services and access. The development had potential to impact upon deposits of Roman and Mediaeval date.

Consequently, David Britchfield, Archaeologist, KCC, produced a *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation* for Stage 1 archaeological work. Following the findings of this evaluation (Hart 2006), a watching brief was maintained, which is the subject of this report.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits at the site that were affected by the digging of foundation and service trenches. The objectives were to record the location, depth and type of deposits and features and to recover any artefacts.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Geology and Topography

The underlying geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey 1:50000 comprises head gravel drift deposits overlying Thanet Beds.

2.2 Archaeological Potential of the Site

The site in question lies c. 70 m west of a known Roman cemetery and its various associated findspots. This site has yielded a number of artefacts including a bronze armlet, samian ware pottery sherds and numerous cremations and therefore represents an area of considerable archaeological importance. Other archaeological sites of note in the immediate area include a temporary light railway built to serve Uplees explosives factory, post-medieval brickworks (TR 06 SW 207) and a church dating between the Norman Invasion and the 15th Century (TR 06 SW 6).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Archaeological Watching Brief (see Fig. 2)

The methodology comprised watching the excavation of a rectangular 1.6m deep, 600mm in width, footing trench. A further 200mm deep trench extended from the footings to a 1 metre square sump 1 metre deep. Before excavation took place each trench was CAT scanned to check for underlying services. The trenches were then excavated with a 5T tracked excavator fitted with a toothed bucket, held flat so as to produce a smooth surface for monitoring. The depth of the trench together with regular and substantial collapses prevented access. Artefacts were recovered by directing a ground-worker.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the standard context record sheets used by UCLFAU. Soil colours are recorded using visual inspection and not by reference to the Munsell Colour chart.

Archaeological structures, features and deposits exposed or excavated were planned in relation to the trench and the trench planned onto a copy of the Ordnance Survey map not smaller than 1:2500 scale.

The KCC Archaeologist was informed of progress on the site.

A full photographic record (black and white and colour slide) of the work was kept as appropriate and will form part of the site archive. All archaeological features were photographed. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South East office in Portslade and will be offered to a suitable museum in due course. All finds are the property of the landowner, but will be donated to a suitable museum.

4 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4.1 Stratigraphic Results (see Fig 3)

Trench 1 (T1)

A rectangular footing trench 6 metres by 6 metres. Width of the trench is 600mm, maximum depth of 1.4 metres. Natural head gravel deposits, comprising mixed mid yellow to mid grey sand and gravel (1/003), were encountered between 10.80 m OD and 11.00 m OD.

Contxt	Type	Description	Max Width	Depth
01	Deposit	Topsoil - Dark Greyish Brown	Site Wide	0-0.2m
09	Deposit	Same as (06) but redeposited	v. diffuse	0.2-0.5m
10	Deposit	Silty clay - Dark brown	2m +	0.5-0.58m
06	Deposit	Silty Clay - Mid grey brown	v. diffuse	0.58-0.73m
13	Deposit	Mixed - redeposited	v. diffuse	0.73-0.93m
05	Deposit	Clayey Silt – Dark Brown	v. diffuse	0.93-1.05m
04	Deposit	Clayey Silt – Dark Brown Fill of [07]	1300mm	180mm
07	Cut	shallow concavity -truncated	1600mm	1.05-1.23m
02	Natural	Silty sand - Mid orange brown	Site Wide	1.05-1.4m loe

In T1, contexts 1 through to 2 were cut by the prior evaluation trench [03], filled by backfill (08).

Trench 2 (T2)

This 200mm deep trench extended 3 metres north of the footing trench culminating in a 1 metre square by 1 metre deep sump trench. Natural gravel deposits, also comprising mixed mid yellow to mid grey sand and gravel (02) were encountered between 11.09 m OD and 11.29 m OD.

Context	Type	Description	Max Width	Depth
11 T2	Deposit	Topsoil – same as (01)	Site Wide	0-0.3m
12 T2	Deposit	Subsoil – same as (09)	1m @LOE	0.3-0.5m
14 T2	Deposit	Mixed - redeposited	1m @LOE	0.5-0.82m
02 T2	Natural	Silty sand- Mid orange brown	Site Wide	0.82-1m loe

The pit was a shallow cut 1.55 m by 0.60 m and 0.09 m deep [2/006] and was filled with a deposit of mid yellowish brown silty sand with frequent small-medium pebbles (2/005), clearly derived from the underlying natural gravel. This feature was at 11.09 m OD.

4.2 The Finds by Trista Clifford

A small number of finds were recovered from the evaluation of this site and are detailed in the table below.

Context	Pot	(g)	CB M	(g)	Bone	(g)	Shell	(g)	Flint	(g)	Fe	(g)	Glass	(g)	Clay Pipe	(g)
1	14	244	16	592	4	110	1	50	3	72	2	54	1	22	2	49
5	5	84			3	32	6	160	2	169						
6	3	56			1	96										

Table 1: quantification of finds from the site by count and weight in grams

Spot Dates

Context 5 AD70-120

Context 6 AD50-160

Roman Pottery by Anna Doherty

Eight sherds of Roman pottery weighing 140g were recovered from three contexts. Context [5] contains a bodysherd of a hard-fired medium fine greyware (SAND2) with moderate quartz mostly of around 0.1mm. Context [5] also contains a sherd of a coarser greyware (SAND1) with moderate to common quartz of around 0.4-0.6mm in a micaceous matrix. Both greyware fabrics are probably locally produced but neither is similar to the commonly traded wares of the North Kent / Thameside industry.

Context [5] also contains a sherd of a grog-tempered ware (GROG1) with common well sorted black and grey grog of 1-2mm. Although not containing visible sand inclusions, this fabric is greyer and harder fired than Late Iron Age tradition grog-tempered wares and may be an example of Patch Grove ware, which was first produced soon after the conquest and had probably declined by the end of the Trajanic period (Pollard 1988, 39, 64). Two sherds from a south Gaulish Dragendorff 18 platter are also present. Samian is unlikely to be found on rural sites before the Flavian period and this is a fairly late example of the form with out-flaring walls and no internal moulding and therefore probably dates to around AD70-100.

Context [6] contains three oxidised bodysherds probably from a flagon. The fabric (OXID1) contains moderate very fine calcareous inclusions of less than 0.1mm in a micaceous matrix with sparse red iron rich inclusions of up to 1mm. This vessel is almost certainly a North Kent / Thameside product dating to AD 50-160. No further work is required at

present.

Post Roman pottery

A collection of 13 sherds, weighing 218g was recovered from the topsoil, context [1]. Glazed red earthenwares dating to the to the mid 18th to 19th century predominate, the majority probably deriving from large bowls. Two small fragments of 18th century unglazed red earthenware, a fragment of brown glazed refined white earthenware dating to the 18th -19th century and a 19th century yellow ware fragment were also recovered. No further work is required.

CBM

Context [1], the topsoil produced a small assemblage of 16 fragments weighing 478g. Eleven fragments derive from peg or roof tile. Seven have a fairly consistent hard fired medium-coarse sandy fabric with frequent buff-coloured inclusions <0.5mm and occasional iron rich inclusions <0.5mm. Two pieces have a greyish white sandy mortar adhering. The remaining two fragments are of a fine sandy fabric with occasional larger quartz sand grains.

Four fragments derive from brick, and appear more abraded than the tile. The fabric is medium fired, abundant fine sand with few visible inclusions. The brick and tile can be dated to the mid 18th to 19th century.

A single fragment of 19th century drain was also recovered.

The assemblage holds no potential for further analysis.

Shell

A small collection of oyster shell, *Ostrea Edulis*, was recovered from two contexts; [1] and [5]. Three upper and three lower valves, with a total weight of 160g were recovered. None show signs of parasitical infestation or overcrowding, indicating an unmanaged resource.

Flint

Two worked flints were collected from context [1] and [5]. The side-struck flake from [1] has a small amount of retouch on both of the lateral margins. Neither flake is considered diagnostic.

Iron

A highly corroded nail stem of rectangular section and an amorphous corroded lump were recovered from context [1]. The iron is consistent

in date with the pottery from this context.

Clay Tobacco Pipe

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem dating to the 18-19th century were recovered from context [1].

Glass

A highly abraded fragment of brown bottle glass was recovered from context [1].

Stone

A large piece of burnt coal shale was recovered from the topsoil, context [1]. It is likely to be of 19th century date.

Bone by Gemma Driver.

A small assemblage of animal bone, consisting of eight fragments, was recovered from three contexts. Sheep and cow are represented. Context [1] produced four fragments including the distal end of a left sheep tibia, one cattle sized lumber vertebrae fragment, and a sheep sized rib and a long bone fragment. Context [6] produced a proximal fragment of a right cow metatarsal and context [5] produced three sheep sized long bone fragments. The assemblage holds no potential for further analysis.

Further work

Comparison of the grog-tempered and samian vessels with those from the nearby cemetery to perhaps get a clearer indication of any connection between the cremation and the cemetery

5 INTERPRETATION

- 5.1** This watching brief has provided further evidence for the survival of a feature, below the base of and truncated by the previous evaluation trench. Although heavily truncated by later agricultural activity, the depth of the footings for the current development has fully removed all archaeological deposits in the footprints of the structure.

The topsoil produced artefacts dating from the C18th -19th, with sterile underlying subsoil (09). The presence of a darker subsoil (10) below suggests that (10) may be a buried topsoil, sealed by subsoil (09) introduced from elsewhere.

Below the subsoil (10) lies a deposit containing Roman material dated to 50 – 160 AD although this overlies a band of redeposited material (13) and thus (10) may be a redeposit itself. If (10) is not redeposited then normal stratigraphic dating would constrain Context (10) to dates of 70 – 160 AD as the preceding Roman deposit (05) is dated 70 -120 AD.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** In, summary, this watching brief has provided further evidence for the limited survival of archaeological features within the area of the proposed development. These features include one Roman feature which survives below the base of the previous evaluation trench. Surviving stratigraphy suggest initial Roman activity with periodic redeposition.

The considerable depth of post-medieval subsoil and topsoil across the site, for instance, (up to 0.85 m in Trench 1) may be considered to provide some degree of protection to the underlying archaeological deposits. However, complete truncation of archaeological deposits, by groundworks up to 1.4 metres deep, has occurred.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hart, D. 2006. *Land to the Rear of 75, Church Road, Oare, Kent. Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpub. Report Number 2281. Archaeology South East, Ditchling.

Pollard, R.J. 1988. *The Roman Pottery of Kent*. Kent Archaeological Society: Maidstone

8 APPENDICES

8.1 SMR Summary Form

Site Code	CRO 06					
Identification Name and Address	Land to the Rear of 75, Church Road, Oare, Kent.					
County, District &/or Borough	Swale Borough Council, Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 600656 163204					
Geology	Head gravel deposits					
Arch. South-East Project Number	2281					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 19-20.04.06	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Artlab Developments Limited					
Project Manager	Darryl Palmer					
Project Supervisor	Diccon Hart					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB✓
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), were commissioned by Artlab Developments Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 75, Church Road, Oare,, Kent (NGR 600656 163204). The work was carried out on the 19th and 20th April 2006.</i></p> <p><i>The archaeological evaluation consisted of two evaluation trenches measuring 1.50 m in width and totalling some 19.00 m in length The underlying natural gravels were encountered at a maximum height of 11.29 m OD towards the eastern end of the site, falling gently to 11.09 m OD to the southwest and 10.80 m to the northwest. A total of three potential archaeological features cut into this underlying gravel. These included a heavily truncated Roman cremation deposit and undated shallow pit within Trench 2 and a further undated pit or posthole within Trench 1.</i></p> <p><i>These features were sealed by a substantial deposit of subsoil that was in turn sealed by the topsoil of the site. The modern ground surface varied from 12.18 m OD to the south and 12.07 m OD to the north.</i></p>						

OASIS FORM**OASIS ID: archaeol6-39758****Project details**

Project name	Church Rd Oare
Short description of the project	The archaeological evaluation consisted of two evaluation trenches measuring 1.50 m in width and totalling some 19.00 m in length. The underlying natural gravels were encountered at a maximum height of 11.29 m OD towards the eastern end of the site, falling gently to 11.09 m OD to the southwest and 10.80 m to the northwest. A total of three potential archaeological features cut into this underlying gravel. These included a heavily truncated Roman cremation deposit and undated shallow pit within Trench 2 and a further undated pit or posthole within Trench 1.
Project dates	Start: 19-04-2006 End: 20-04-2006
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Protected wrecks under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Methods & techniques	'Visual Inspection'
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT SWALE OARE 75, Church Road
Postcode	ME13 0XX
Study area	16.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TR 007 634 51.3336309160 0.881472235009 51 20 01 N 000 52 53 E Point
Height OD	Min: 10.09m Max: 11.29m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Diccon Hart
Project supervisor	Deon Whittaker
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	ARTLABS DEVELOPMENTS LTD

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum

Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land to the Rear of 75, Church Road, Oare, Kent.
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