

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H

**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Teresa Vieira

Site Code: PCB15/250

(TQ 4412 5371)

**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ms Rebecca Rosner

by Teresa Vieira

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code PCW15/250

December 2015

Summary

Site name: Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham, Kent

Grid reference: TQ 44150 53735

Planning reference: SE/15/02439/HOUSE

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 2nd December 2015

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Teresa Vieira

Site code: PCW 15/250

Area of site: c. 36 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief at this site successfully examined the area which was to be most affected by the construction of a new garage. No archaeological finds or features were recorded, and it was obvious that the southern part of the site had been heavily truncated by sand extraction.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Maidstone Museum in due course.

This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 24.12.15
	Steve Preston ✓ 24.12.15

Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham, Kent An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Teresa Vieira

Report 15/250

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham, Kent (TQ 44150 53735) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the property's owner, Ms Rebecca Rosner.

Planning permission (SE/15/02439/HOUSE) and Listed Building Consent (SE/15/02440/LBCALT) has been gained from Sevenoaks District Council to construct a new double garage to the rear of the existing house. The planning permission was subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology and the historic environment, which required that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks associated with the new garage.

As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by Ms Wendy Rogers, the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer who advises the District Council on archaeological matters. The work was to be carried out to comply with the Kent County Council requirements for archaeological fieldwork, and in accordance with the generic specification for watching briefs prepared by Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Group (KCC 2011). The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira on the 2nd December 2015, and the site code is PCW 15/250.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Maidstone Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located about 500m south-west of the historic core of Westerham, Kent, on the outskirts of the town (Fig. 1). The southern part of the site is relatively flat, and is largely occupied by the house known as Pitts Cottage. The area immediately to the rear of the house is mostly paved. The ground rises sharply at the northern end of the site, where the rear part of the garden is terraced into a steep bank. As a result, the height above

Ordnance Datum varies from approximately 115m in the south to 117.5m in the north. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Lower Greensand (Folkestone Beds) (BGS 1971). The natural geology recorded during the watching brief consisted largely of light yellow sand, with an overlying deposit of mid orange brown sand and gravel.

Archaeological background

The Archaeological background of the site largely stems from the fact that elements of the existing house are believed date from around the 15th century, and there is the possibility that features dating from the late medieval and post-medieval periods may be present to the rear of the property. According to local legend, the name of the house (Pitts Cottage) and the adjacent property (Little Pits) stem from the fact that there were sandpits in the area at one time. The site is located to the south-west of the historic core of Westerham, which has Saxon origins and is first mentioned as *Westarham* in the late 9th century (Mills 1992). However, despite the long history of the town itself, the Westerham area has seen relatively little systematic archaeological investigation. An Iron Age hillfort is located about 1km south of the present site, at Squerryes Park, and the Roman road from London to Lewes is situated about 2km west of the town.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks in order to contribute to the heritage knowledge of the area. This was to involve the monitoring of ground reduction for a new double garage to the rear of the existing property. The fieldwork was to be carried out in accordance with Kent County Council's generic specification for watching briefs (KCC 2011), and the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Results

The area which was stripped for the new garage was approximately 36 sq m in size (Fig .3, Pls 1 and 2)). At the southern end of the footprint of the garage, natural yellow sand was exposed immediately beneath the paving stones. The northern part of the garage was to be sunk into the high bank which crosses the site, parts of which had previously been terraced to form a garden. The stratigraphy recorded through the bank consisted of 0.46m-0.60m of topsoil and 0.30m-0.55m of subsoil, overlying the natural geology. Two distinct deposits of natural geology were encountered, these being a layer of mid orange brown sand and gravel, up to 0.45m thick, which

overlay the light yellow sand found in the southern area. The original slope of the ground, sloping down from west to east, was apparent in the section dug through the bank.

It is clear from the results of the watching brief that the bank in the garden is probably the result of sand being extracted at some point from the southern part of the site. As a result, any archaeological deposits pre-dating the sand extraction would have been destroyed. Whilst any archaeological deposits beneath the bank itself may have survived, none were recorded during the watching brief.

Conclusion

The watching brief at this site successfully examined the area which was to be most affected by the construction of a new garage. No archaeological finds or features were recorded, and it was obvious that the southern part of the site had previously been heavily truncated by sand extraction.

References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 287, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth.
KCC, 2011, 'Specification for an archaeological watching brief in Kent', Kent Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, Maidstone.
Mills, A D, 1992, *English Place-names*, Oxford.
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London

Kent County Council SMR summary form

Site Name: Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham, Kent

Site address: Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham

Summary: The watching brief at this site successfully examined the area which was to be most affected by the construction of a new garage. No archaeological finds or features were recorded, and it was obvious that the southern part of the site had been heavily truncated by sand extraction.

District/Unitary:

Parish:

Periods: none

NGR: TQ 44150 53735

Type of archaeological work: Watching Brief

Date of Recording: 2nd December 2015

Unit undertaking recording: Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Geology: London Clay

Title and author of report: Pitts Cottage, High Street, Westerham, Kent: An Archaeological Watching Brief by Teresa Vieira

Summary of results by period (*from bottom up*): No archaeological finds or features were recorded

Location of archive and finds: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Maidstone Museum in due course.

Contact at Unit: Sean Wallis

Date: 24/12/2015

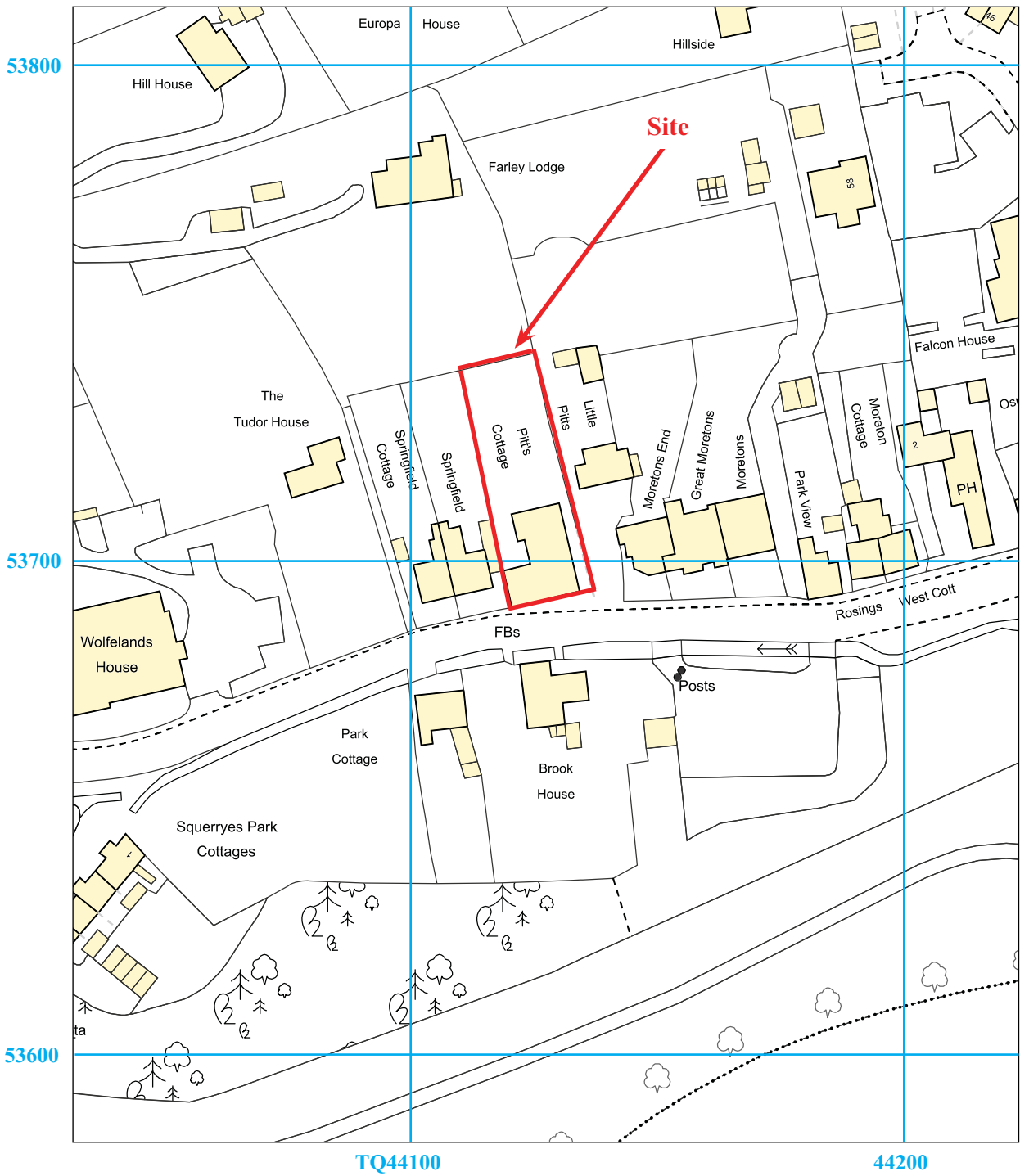


**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Westerham and Kent.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 148 at 1:12500
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
 SERVICES
 SOUTH



PCW 15/250



**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent, 2015**
Archaeological Watching Brief
Figure 2. Detailed location of site

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital mapping at 1:1250

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
SOUTH



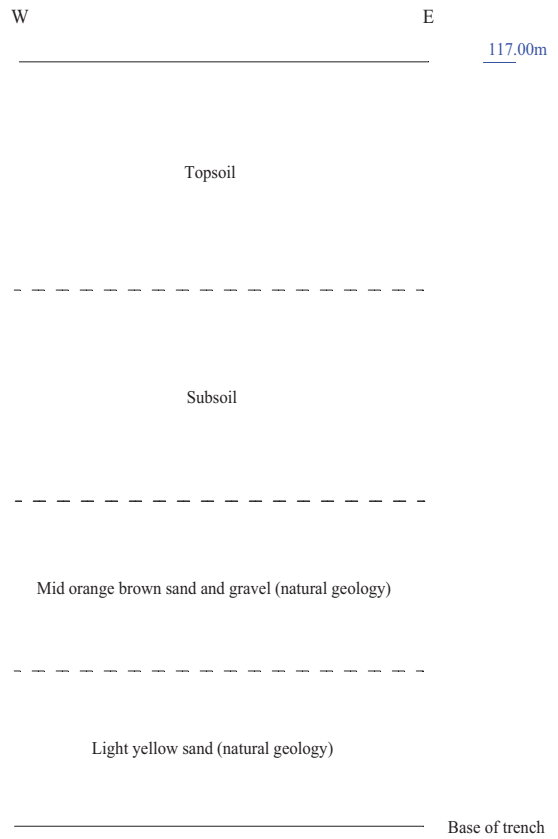
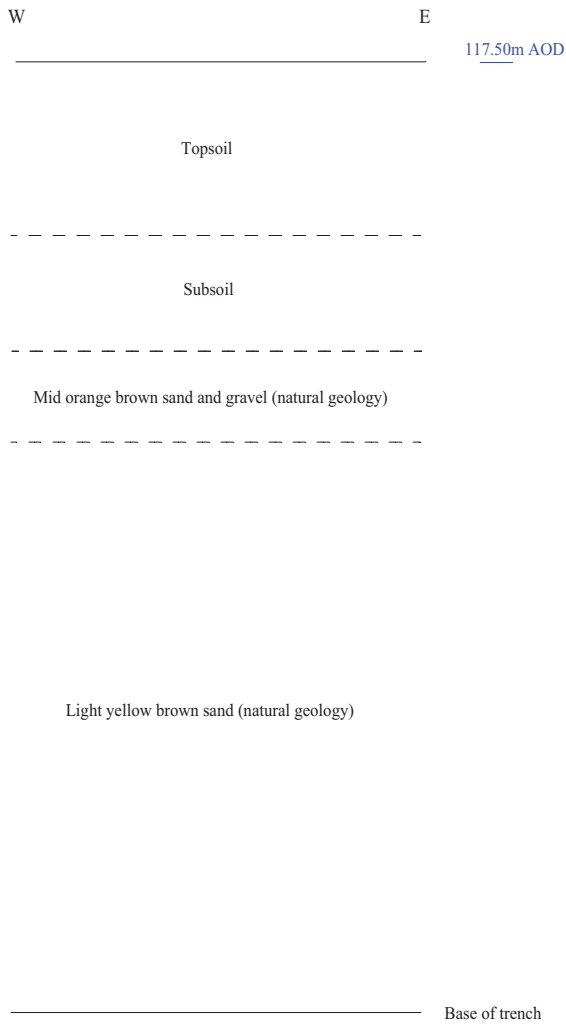
**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 3. Plan of site showing location of area monitored.



Stratigraphy in north-west corner

Stratigraphy in north-east corner



PCW 15/250

**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Representative Sections





Plate 1. NE corner looking north, Scales 2m and 1m



Plate 2. NW corner looking north, Scales 2m and 1m

PCW 15/250

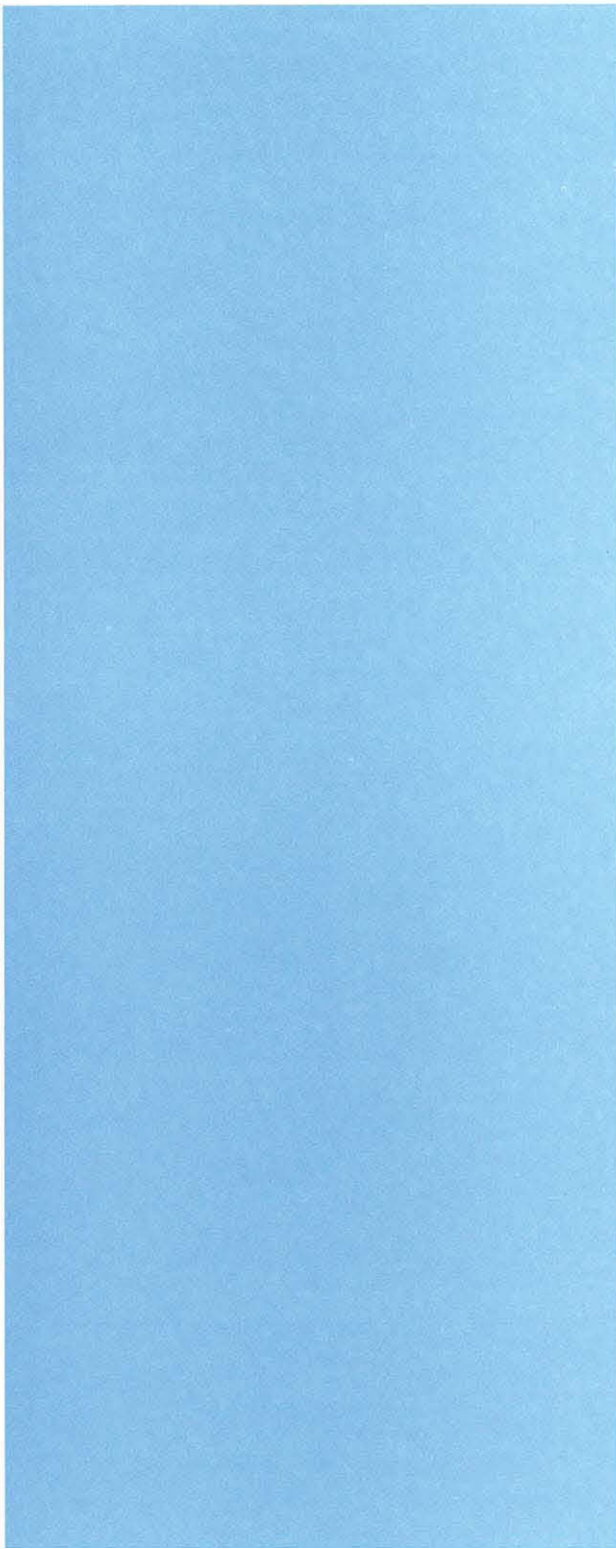
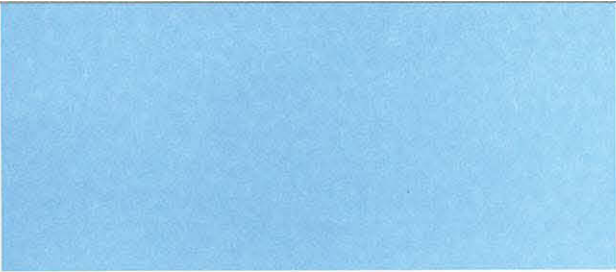
**Pitts Cottage, High Street,
Westerham, Kent, 2015**
Archaeological Watching Brief
Plates 1 and 2

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
SOUTH

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





TVAS (South)
77a Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton
Sussex, BN1 7HB

Tel: 01273 554198
Fax: 01273 564043
Email: south@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk