

**92 High Street
Sittingbourne
Kent**
Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Kalmax Properties Limited

CA Project: 770261
CA Report No: 15801

November 2015



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SUMMARY

Project Name: 92 High Street
Location: Sittingbourne, Kent
NGR: TQ905636
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 8 October 2015
Planning Reference: 15/504632
Site Code: HSSK 15

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of a new storeroom to the rear of the property at 92 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief, and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2015 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Chartplan (2004) Limited at 92 High Street Sittingbourne Kent, (centred on NGR: TQ905636; Fig. 1) at the request of Kalmax Properties Limited.
- 1.2 Planning permission for a store room to the rear of the property was granted by Swale Borough Council (SBC) (ref: 15/504632), conditional on a programme of archaeological work. Following consultation with Kent County Council, the archaeological advisors to SBC it was recommended that the programme of work should comprise of an archaeological watching brief to monitor groundworks during the course of the development.
- 1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and approved by Kent County Council prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014); The Specification for Archaeological Watching Briefs in Kent issued by the Heritage Conservation Group of Kent County Council (2015). and the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area is approximately 0.007ha. The site is bounded by a shop plot which fronts onto Sittingbourne High Street to the south and the Forum Mall to the north and east.
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Seaford Chalk Formation - Chalk. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 84 to 89 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Sittingbourne High Street lies within an area of archaeological potential, though there has been little significant archaeological investigation within the town itself. The origins of Sittingbourne are as a small market town growing up alongside

Roman Watling Street, now the High Street, though there is no evidence of Roman settlement within the town. However, there is ample evidence for prehistoric, Iron Age and Romano-British, Saxon and medieval settlement, and burial evidence, in the wider area beyond the town of Sittingbourne (SBC 2008).

- 2.2 The earliest records of a settlement on the Roman road at Sittingbourne date back to the 11th century. The neighbouring settlement of Milton Regis (now part of Sittingbourne) has its origins in the earlier Saxon period as the centre of a royal estate.
- 2.3 Sittingbourne became an important resting place for pilgrims on the way to Canterbury and is mentioned in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales written in the 14th century. However the parish church of St Michael is the only visible building which dates, in part, from the medieval period. Cloth making was the key medieval industry and from the later medieval period to the early 19th century a large number of coaching inns were established (SBC 2008).
- 2.4 In terms of archaeological evidence within Sittingbourne, several small scale investigations have been undertaken along the High Street. This included 70-74a High Street (Linklater 2007) where post-medieval wells and a cess pit were recorded. At 132a High Street monitoring of groundworks for a new dwelling recorded a medieval ditch and two undated pits (Ward 2002). At the rear of 51 High Street an archaeological watching brief was carried out on the excavation of six geotechnical test pits: no significant archaeology was recorded (Linklater 2003).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
 - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2015). The watching brief comprised the observation by a competent archaeologist of all intrusive groundworks, including the excavation of foundations and service trenches c.0.50m wide by up to 1.0m deep. Non-archaeologically significant deposits were removed by the contractors under archaeological supervision. Where mechanical excavators are used, they were equipped with a toothless bucket.
- 4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 The archive and artefacts from the Watching Brief are currently held by CA at their offices in Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the archive will be deposited with the relevant Country HER. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-6)

- 5.1 The natural geological substrate (**102**) consisting of light yellowish brown to light greenish brown silt clay was revealed at an average depth of 0.25m below the overlying modern made ground (**101**). The modern made ground (**101**) averaged 0.25m in thickness. This formed a subbase for the overlying modern concrete slab that was present within the yard area and which was broken out as part of the development groundworks.
- 5.2 No archaeological features or deposits were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area, the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that structural remains associated

with prehistoric, Iron Age and Romano-British, Saxon and medieval settlements known to occur in Sittingbourne and its environs either do not extend into the site, or that they may have been removed during previous Post Medieval and modern developments.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jeremy Clutterbuck. The report was written by Ray Kennedy. The illustrations were prepared by Leo Hartley. The archive has been compiled by Tom Rowley, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Damian De Rosa.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 30 October 2015

Canterbury Archaeological Trust, Linklater A. 2007 *An Archaeological Watching Brief During Groundworks Associated with the Development of 70-74a High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent.*

Canterbury Archaeological Trust, Linklater A. 2003 *An Archaeological Watching Brief During the Excavation of Six Geotechnical Test Pits in the Gardens to the Rear of 51 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent.*

Canterbury Archaeological Trust, Ward A. 2002 *An archaeological watching brief at 132a High Street, Milton Regis, Sittingbourne Kent.*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *92 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Swale Borough Council (SBC) 2008 *Sittingbourne Town Centre Character Area Appraisal and Management Strategy*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
1	101	Layer		Foundation	Made ground. Modern rubble debris in mid yellowish brown clayey silt		0.5	0-0.25
1	102	Layer		Natural	Light yellowish brown to light greenish brown silt clay brickearth		0.5	0.25+

APPENDIX B HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site Code.	HSSK 15
Site identification and address	92 High Street Sittingbourne ME10 4PH
County, district and / or borough	Sittingbourne, Kent
O.S. grid ref.	TQ905636
Geology.	The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Seaford Chalk Formation - Chalk. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 84 to 89 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Light brown silt clay brickearth natural was revealed during the watching brief
Project number.	770261
Fieldwork type.	Watching Brief
Site type.	N/A
Date of fieldwork.	October 2015
Sponsor/client.	Kalmax Properties Limited
Project manager.	Damian De Rosa
Project supervisor.	Jeremey Clutterbuck
Period summary	Modern
Project summary. (100 word max)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of a new storeroom to the rear of the property at 92 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief, and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered.

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	92 High Street. Sittingbourne, Kent, Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of a new storeroom to the rear of the property at 92 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief, and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered.
Project dates	02/10/15
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None
Future work	No
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	92 High Street. Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4PH
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.007ha
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	TQ905636
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	KCC
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Damian De Rosa
Project Supervisor	Jeremey Clutterbuck
MONUMENT TYPE	
None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	
None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
TBC currently at CA Andover	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	None
Paper	Context sheets, plans, Notes
Digital	Photos, Survey data
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 <i>92 High Street, Sittingbourne, Kent: Archaeological Watching Brief: CA Report</i> No: 15801. CA Project No. 770261	

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