

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
Whytegates, High Street  
Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1JG**

**NGR: TQ 53220 54494  
NGR: 553220 154494**

**ASE Project No: 5195  
Site Code: WGS 12**

**ASE Report No: 2012118  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-126531**



**By Dylan Hopkinson MA**

**May 2012**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Stephen Langer Associates on behalf of their clients Dr & Mrs R Hadden to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land at Whytegates, High Street, Kent during groundworks relating to the construction of a new dwelling. The work was undertaken between 14th March 2012 and 16th May 2012.*

*No archaeological artefacts or features were identified during the monitoring of these works which involved the reduction of ground-level and the excavation of wall foundation trenches. Lower Greensand - Folkstone Beds was identified across the site at a depth of around 0.50m below ground level.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) a division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA) at the Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Stephen Langer Associates on behalf of their clients Dr & Mrs R Hadden (hereafter referred to as the client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at Whytegates, High Street, Kent (NGR 553220 154494; Figures 1 and 2) during the construction of a new dwelling and garage on the site of a newly demolished house.

### **1.2 Location and Geology**

- 1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 series map for the area (Sheet 287: Sevenoaks) the underlying geology at the site is Lower Greensand - Folkstone Beds.
- 1.2.2 The site is situated directly to the east of central Sevenoaks on land between the High Street and Knole Park. The land is at a similar elevation to the High Street on the brow of the hill that overlooks Knole Park.
- 1.2.3 The site comprises a plot of land that was formerly a family house set within extensive gardens, on a generally level elevation.

### **1.3 Scope of the report**

- 1.3.1 This report provides an account of the archaeological watching brief. The work was undertaken between 14th March 2012 and 16th May 2012 by Dylan Hopkinson (Archaeologist).
- 1.3.2 The fieldwork was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Dan Swift (Project Manager).

## **1.4 Planning Background**

1.4.1 Planning permission has been granted by Sevenoaks District Council (Ref: SE/11/01052/FUL) for demolition of the existing dwelling to facilitate the erection of a replacement dwelling and new garage.

1.4.2 The Local Planning Authority has placed the following condition on the planning consent (Condition 10):

*“No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved 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 by the Local Planning Authority.*

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

1.4.3 A specification was produced by KCC (KCC 2011) which outlined methodologies to be used during monitoring at the site, and in the subsequent reporting and archiving of the results.

## **1.5 Aims and Objectives**

1.5.1 The general objective of the archaeological work was to record, interpret and report on any archaeological remains exposed during the groundworks to appropriate archaeological standards.

1.4.2 The watching brief was also designed to assess the past impacts on the site and to pay particular attention to the character, height/depth below ground level, condition, date and significance of any encountered deposits.

1.4.3 Specifically, the aims of the watching brief were to attempt to identify remains of medieval date.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 An evaluation of the archaeological potential of the site was undertaken as part of the specification (KCC 2011). This was based on the proximity of archaeological remains presently recorded in the HER and is summarised here with due reference. Further detailed information is provided in the County Historic Environment Record held in the Heritage, Environment and Planning, Enterprise and Environment, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XX.
- 2.2 The site lies between the High Street and the medieval and post-medieval deer park of Knole Park. Sevenoaks itself is known to be of medieval date but little archaeological evidence has been found to support this.
- 2.3 Recent evaluation work 140m west at a small site on Rockdale Road revealed medieval pottery in a linear ditch feature, interpreted as a property boundary.
- 2.4 A late fourth century Roman coin is also recorded as being found 100m north of the site (Kent SMR no TQ 55 SW 6).

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

- 3.1.1 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the specification (KCC 2011).
- 3.1.2 All groundworks were monitored down to the natural geology.
- 3.1.3 These works were recorded by an archaeologist to assess the level of archaeological survival.
- 3.1.4 All archaeological deposits were recorded using ASE standard context sheets, with colours recorded by visual inspection.
- 3.1.5 Section drawings of the excavated profiles were drawn at a scale of 1:10, sample section drawings of the overlying deposits were also drawn at 1:10 scale on plastic drafting film, and a full photographic record was made recording all features and contexts.
- 3.1.6 A single area of groundwork was monitored including general ground-level reduction by up to 0.30m and the excavation of wall foundation trenches to an additional depth of 0.90m.

#### **3.2 Site archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be offered to the local museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Context Sheets	6
Photographic Record Sheets	1
Photographs	13
No. of files/paper record	1

Table 1: Quantification of site archive



#### **4.0 RESULTS (Figure 2)**

- 4.0.1 No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered during the archaeological watching brief.

#### **4.1 Natural**

- 4.1.1 The natural deposits identified were firm yellowy orange sandy silt that was identified 0.50m below the current ground level across the site (006), these deposits were interpreted as the Folkstone Beds of the Lower Greensand.

#### **4.2 Overburden**

- 4.2.1 The natural was sealed by mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil up to 0.40m thick, and then by mid brown sandy silt topsoil up to 0.20m thick.
- 4.2.2 Along the northern and western margins of the monitored area the topsoil the had been replaced by rubble made ground as a make-up layer 0.08m thick overlain by a 0.10m thick tarmac drive (002 and 001).
- 4.2.3 In the central part of the monitored area where the previous demolished building was located a deposit of demolition disturbance was identified that was comprised of natural and subsoil mixed up with small amounts of demolition rubble (003). This disturbance was up to 0.80m thick and as such removed the original surface of the natural horizon. The impact of this disturbance is likely to have occurred during the construction of the previous dwelling as well as during the demolition.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION**

- 5.1 No artefacts or features were recorded at the site during the watching brief and no remains of medieval Sevenoaks were found.
- 5.2 The deposits observed were sterile and it is considered unlikely that any archaeological remains existed on the site prior to the construction of the previous dwelling.
- 5.3 The methodology was therefore successful in assessing the nature of archaeological survival on the site.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

KCC 2011. Specification for an archaeological watching brief in Kent

## **CARTOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

British Geological Survey 1:50,000 series map, Sheet 287: Sevenoaks

## **Acknowledgements**

ASE would like to thank Stephen Langer Associates for commissioning the work and Wendy Rogers of WSCC for her guidance throughout the project.

## HER Summary Form

Site Code	WGS 11					
Identification Name and Address	Whytegates, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1JG					
County, District &/or Borough	Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 553220 154494					
Geology	Lower Greensand - Folkstone Beds					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5195					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	<u>Excav.</u>	<b>Watching brief.</b> ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	<b>Shallow Urban</b> ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	<b>W.B.</b> 14-05-12 to 16-05-12	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Stephen Langer Associates					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson					
Period Summary	<del>Palaeo.</del>	<del>Meso.</del>	<del>Neo.</del>	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		<b>None</b> ✓
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Stephen Langer Associates on behalf of their clients Dr &amp; Mrs R Hadden to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land at Whytegates, High Street, Kent during groundworks relating to the construction of a new dwelling. The work was undertaken between 14th March 2012 and 16th May 2012.</p> <p>No archaeological artefacts or features were identified during the monitoring of these works which involved the reduction of ground-level and the excavation of wall foundation trenches. Lower Greensand - Folkstone Beds was identified across the site at a depth of around 0.50m below ground level.</p>						

**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-126531**

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**Project details**

Project name	Watching Brief, Whytegates, High Street, Kent
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Stephen Langer Associates on behalf of their clients Dr & Mrs R Hadden to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land at Whytegates, High Street, Kent during groundworks relating to the construction of a new dwelling. The work was undertaken between 14th March 2012 and 16th May 2012. No archaeological artefacts or features were identified during the monitoring of these works which involved the reduction of ground-level and the excavation of wall foundation trenches. Lower Greensand - Folkstone Beds was identified across the site at a depth of around 0.50m below ground level.
Project dates	Start: 14-05-2012 End: 16-05-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WGS 11 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	SE/11/01052/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

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**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT SEVENOAKS SEVENOAKS Whytegates, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1JG
Postcode	TN13 1JG

Study area	600.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 53220 54494 51.2684361417 0.196593190343 51 16 06 N 000 11 47 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0.50m Max: 0.51m

#### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Kent County Council
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin/Dan Swift
Project supervisor	Dylan Hopkinson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Architects
Name of sponsor/funding body	Stephen Langer Associates

#### **Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Survey'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet'

#### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Watching Brief Report: Whytegates, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1JG
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hopkinson, D.
Other bibliographic details	ASE Report No: 2012118
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Entered by	Dylan Hopkinson (dylan.hopkinson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	18 May 2012





© Archaeology South-East		Whytegates, High Street, Sevenoaks	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5195	May 2011	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012118	Drawn by: DJH		





© Archaeology South-East		Whytegates, High Street, Sevenoaks	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5195	May 2011	Monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2012118	Drawn by: DJH		

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