

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
White House Farm
Higham, Kent**

NGR: TQ 7180 7225

Planning Ref: GR/2010/0779 and GR/2012/0110

**ASE Project No: 5581
Site Code: WFH12**

**ASE Report No: 2012145
OASIS ID: archaeol6-129753**



By Giles Dawkes BA MIFA

July 2012

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Paul Giles to conduct an archaeological watching brief on White House Farm, Higham, Kent during groundworks associated with the building of a new extension. The work took place on 2nd July 2012.

No archaeological deposits or features were identified and no finds were recovered. The natural chalk was encountered at around 36.2m OD. The area of the watching brief appeared to have been recently disturbed, more than likely during the 1980s renovations to the house.

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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 Paul Giles to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the building of a new extension at White House Farm, Higham, Kent (NGR TQ 7180 7225; Figure 1).

1.2 Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The farm house is located on the north side of Higham Hill with views over the marshes and the River Thames to the north. The ground slopes from south to north.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 map (Sheet 272, Chatham) the solid geology of the site is Upper Chalk.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The redevelopment consists of the construction of a two storey extension on the northeast corner of the house to provide an enlarged lounge at ground floor level, with a bedroom and ensuite shower room, together with previously approved minor alterations.
- 1.3.2 Gravesham Borough Council has a condition for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out on the planning consent for the development:
- 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.*
- 1.3.3 Accordingly, the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council produced a specification for the work (HCGKCC 2012) and all work was carried out in accordance with this and the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2008).
- 1.3.4 A separate condition was also added for building recording work and has been reported on in a previous report (ASE 2011).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention was to be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

1.5 Scope of the report

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on the 2nd July by Giles Dawkes. The historic building recording work is reported on separately (*ibid.*).
- 1.5.2 The fieldwork was managed by Andy Leonard (Project Manager) and the post-excavation analysis was managed by Jim Stevenson (Project Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The application site lies within an area of Bronze Age and Roman potential, with cropmarks showing possible Bronze Age ring ditches in the area. Romano-British cremation burials have been discovered at Peartree Lane, Shorne (KCC 2012, 1).
- 2.2 The area around Higham is also well-known as a Roman pottery production centre of national importance. Recent archaeological work by ASE has also identified Bronze Age, Early Anglo-Saxon and medieval occupation at Cliffe Woods to the north-east (Dawkes forthcoming).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 The groundworks were undertaken by a mechanical 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. All revealed surfaces were cleaned and inspected. The main contractor allowed the archaeological contractor reasonable time and resources to undertake inspection and/or recording as required.
- 3.1.2 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the specification (KCC 2011) and the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2008).
- 3.1.3 The excavation of new foundation trenches and a pad foundation (Figure 2) were monitored on the 2nd July.

3.2 Site archive

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited with Maidstone Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts / Context Sheets	3
Context Register Sheets	1
Photographic Record Sheets	1
Watching Brief Record Sheets	1
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	4

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

(Figure 3)

- 4.1 The natural chalk [003] was encountered at 0.5m below ground level at approximately 36.2m OD in both the foundation trenches and the pad foundations.
- 4.2 Overlying the natural was brown silt with frequent modern brick rubble fragments [002] up to 0.3m thick and topsoil [001].
- 4.3 No archaeological features or finds were exposed during the watching brief.

5.0 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The watching brief did not identify any archaeological deposits or finds. The area of the watching brief seems to have been recently disturbed, more than likely during the 1980s renovations to the house.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE 2011 *Historic Building recording at White House Farm, Higham, Kent*, unpublished report

British Geological Survey Sheet 272, Chatham 1:50,000 map

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 (revised ed.), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Dawkes, forthcoming, *Archaeological excavations on the Isle of Grain to Shorne Pipeline*, ASE monograph series

Heritage Conservation Group Kent County Council 2012 *Specification for an archaeological watching brief at White House Farm, Higham, Kent*, unpublished report

Acknowledgements

ASE would like to thank Paul Giles for commissioning the work and the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council for their guidance throughout the project. Illustrations were by Justin Russell.

Appendix 1: HER Summary Form

Site Code	WFH 12					
Identification Name and Address	White House Farm					
County, District &/or Borough	Higham, Kent					
OS Grid Reference.	TQ 7180 7225					
Geology	Upper chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5581					
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.	Excav.	WB. July 2012	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Paul Giles					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Giles Dawkes					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other ✓ Modern		
<p>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Paul Giles to conduct an archaeological watching brief on White House Farm, Higham, Kent during groundworks associated with the building of a new extension. The work took place on 2nd July 2012.</p> <p>No archaeological deposits or features were identified and no finds were recovered. The natural chalk was encountered at around 36.2m OD. The area of the watching brief appeared to have been recently disturbed, more than likely during the 1980s renovations to the house.</p>						

Appendix 2: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-129753

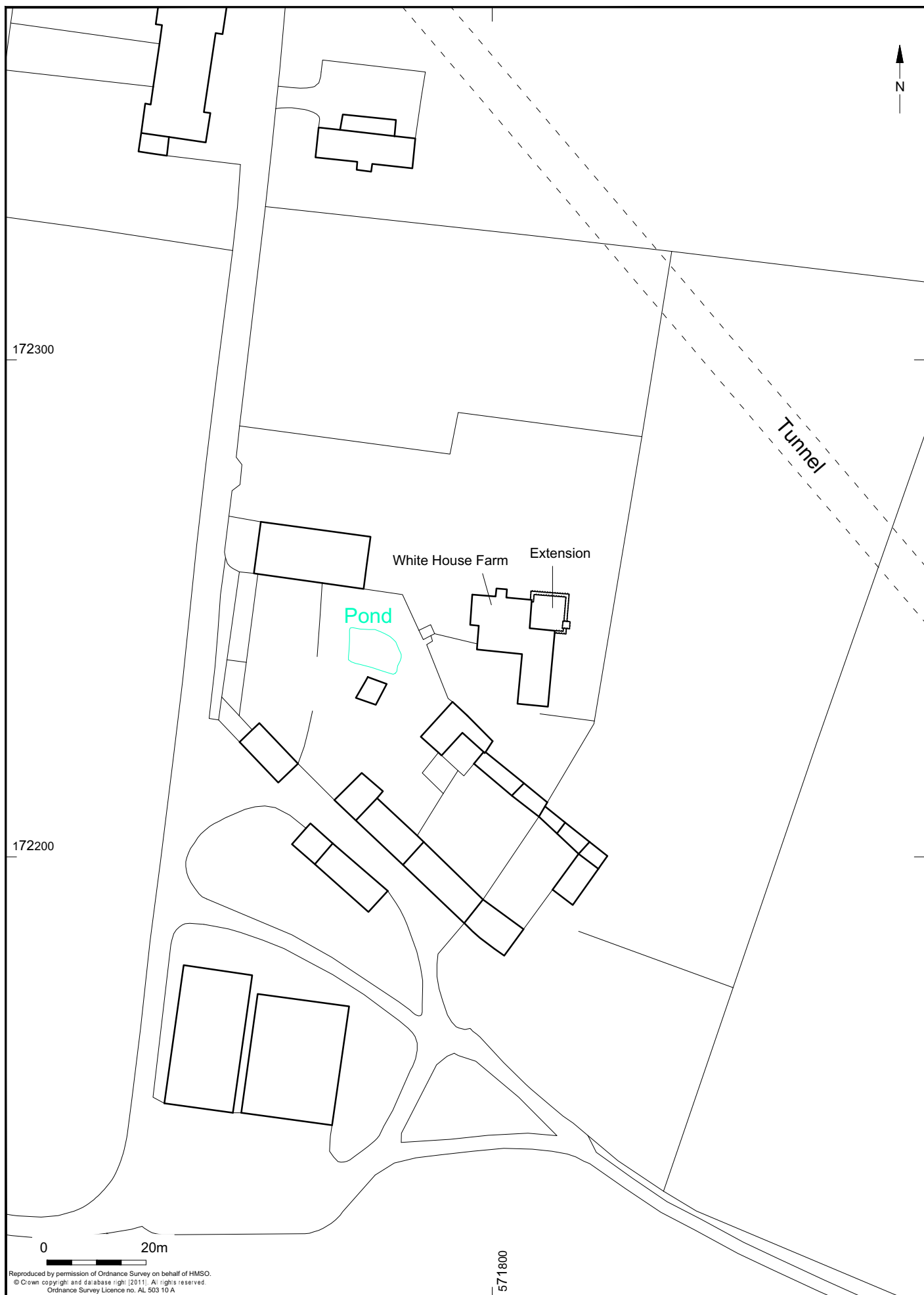
Project details

Project name	White House Farm, Higham
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Paul Giles to conduct an archaeological watching brief on White House Farm, Higham, Kent during groundworks associated with the building of a new extension. The work took place on 2nd July 2012. No archaeological deposits or features were identified and no finds were recovered. The natural chalk was encountered at around 36.2m OD. The area of the watching brief appeared to have been recently disturbed, more than likely during the 1980s renovations to the house.
Project dates	Start: 02-07-2012 End: 02-07-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	5581 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	WFH12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	KENT MEDWAY CLIFFE AND CLIFF WOODS White House Farm, Higham, Kent
Postcode	ME3 7JH
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 7180 7225 51 0 51 25 21 N 000 28 16 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 36.00m Max: 37.00m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Kent County Council Heritage Conservation Group
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard

Project supervisor	Giles Dawkes
Type of sponsor/funding body	Private
Name of sponsor/funding body	Paul Giles
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Digital Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Paper Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological watching brief at White House Farm Higham Kent
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Giles Dawkes
Other bibliographic details	2012145
Date	2012
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Entered on	6 July 2012



© Archaeology South-East		Whitehouse Farm, Higham	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5581	July 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012145	Drawn by: JLR		



© Archaeology South-East		Whitehouse Farm Higham	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5581	July 2012	Site plan	
Report Ref: 2012145	Drawn by: JLR		



© Archaeology South-East		Whitehouse Farm Higham	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 5581	July 2012	Plan of monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2012145	Drawn by: JLR		

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