

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stallance Farm,  
Rectory Lane, Sutton Valence, Kent**

**PLANNING REF: MA/07/2280**

**NGR 581893 148853**

**Project No. 4224  
Site Code: SFS 10**

**ASE Report No. 2010034  
OASIS ID: archaeol6-74882**

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**Abstract**

*An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for a two-storey extension to the existing historic farmhouse. Deep deposits of made ground, presumably associated with landscaping of the immediate area were encountered. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA) was commissioned by Mr Gary Pankhurst to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane, Sutton Valence, Kent (NGR 581893 148853; Fig. 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The site lies in an isolated position on high ground at an elevation of c.90m to the south-east of the settlement of Sutton Valence. The Grade II listed farmhouse building forms part of a complex of structures, mostly agricultural in origin which command far-reaching views to the south.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey Sheet 288 (*Maidstone*) the underlying geology at the site is Atherfield Clay with Hythe Beds to the north and Weald Clay on the lower ground to the south.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Maidstone Borough Council for the erection of a two-storey extension to the existing farmhouse (planning ref. MA/07/2280). Following consultation between Maidstone Borough Council and the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (Maidstone Borough Council's advisers on archaeological issues), a condition was attached to that consent requiring that:

*'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.'*

*Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.'*

- 1.3.2 A Specification for the work was duly produced by the Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council (HCGKCC 2009). This document outlined the methodologies to be used during monitoring at the site, and in subsequent reporting of the results.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The objectives and aims given in the Specification (HCGKCC 2009) were:

*'to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through recording of any archaeological remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention will be made to the character, height below ground, condition, date and significance of deposits.'*

*Specific aims of the work are to identify the presence or absence of medieval and post-medieval occupation and land use.'*

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological monitoring of groundworks at the site carried out during March 2010. The work was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist) and managed by Dan Swift (Project Manager).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The site lies close to the predicted alignment of the Roman road between Maidstone and Lympne (HCGKCC 2009). In addition, the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record holds a number of entries for the area within a 1km radius of the site (Fig. 2).
- 2.2 The majority of entries refer to the cluster of historic buildings within the core of the village of Sutton Valence. The village also contains a heavily restored church and the remains of a medieval castle. The other known archaeological sites in the area consist of:

HER No. TQ 84 NW 1 – MKE 2792      Roman burial ground found during C19th. Now prob. beneath school.

HER No. TQ 84 NW 14 - MKE 2805      Iron Age gold coin. Gaulish import.

HER No. TQ 84 NW 22 - MKE 2813      Iron Age bronze brooch found in 1973. In Maidstone Museum.

HER No. TQ 84 NW 218 - MKE 28910      Sutton Place. Grade II listed building

- 2.3 The farmhouse itself is a Grade II listed building (HER No. TQ 84 NW 141 - MKE 27866). The HER entry reads:

*'Farmhouse. C17, with gable end only of an earlier house, and late C18 and early C19 alterations. Timber framed, clad with red brick in Flemish bond with occasional grey bricks. Plain tile roof. Rear of main range has mathematical tiles to first floor. Lobby entry plan of 3 timber-framed bays including stack-bay, with 2-bay cross-wing projecting forwards to right. 2 storeys and attics on stone plinth. Dentilled eaves cornice. Roof half-hipped to left. Wing roof hipped. Multiple brick ridge stack to centre and slender projecting stack to right side of wing. 2 dormers, one with triangular pediment, one hipped. Irregular fenestration of 3 windows; one 12-pane mullioned sash to first floor of 2-storey later C19 or C20 rectangular brick bay to left of stack, one 2-light leaded casement beneath stack and one recessed 8-pane sash to gable end of wing. Door of 4 fielded panels, 2 top lights and flat dentilled bracketted hood under stack, against junction with wing. Rainwater head dated CW1767 Interior: Exposed framing left gable end incorporates jowled posts and arch-braced tie-beam of an earlier*

*building, narrower than C17 house. Roof of staggered butt purlins with collars and re-used crown-post roof rafters. Newel staircase to attic.'*

- 2.4 A barn in the complex of buildings also has a Grade II listing (HER No, TQ 84 NW 111 – MKE 29676). The HER entry reads :

*'Barn. Early-to-mid C17. Timber framed, weatherboarded, on stone plinth with hipped C20 plain tile roof. 3 timber-framed bays, aisled front and rear, truncated to right. Central double doors with flat-topped canopy. Lean-to in front of aisle to left of doors. Lean-to to left end. Interior: arch-braced posts with cut jowls. Curved passing shores to aisles. Clapsed purlin roof with diminishing principal rafters, intermediate collars and almost straight windbraces. Addition to right not included'*

- 2.5 In addition, an archaeological watching brief was carried out at nearby College Farm, Boyton Court Road in 2008. No significant archaeological deposits were encountered (ASE 2008).

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Mechanical and manual excavations for the foundations of the new structure were monitored. All sections were examined for the presence of archaeological features, and all spoil was scanned for the presence of archaeological artefacts.
- 3.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East context record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.3 A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The site archive is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and will be offered to a suitable local museum in due course. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	4
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	-
Bulk Samples	-
Photograph	10 digital
Bulk finds	-
Registered finds	-
Environmental flots/residue	-

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

### 4.0 RESULTS (Figs. 3 and 4)

- 4.1 The excavation of strip footing for the new extension were archaeologically monitored. The excavation was undertaken by a Takeuchi TB125 360° excavator fitted with a 2ft (600mm) wide bucket, followed by limited manual

excavation. The trenches were a minimum of 600mm wide and a maximum of 750mm wide (owing to section collapse) and a minimum of 1.0m deep and a maximum of 1.5m deep.

- 4.2 The recorded stratigraphic sequence was uncomplicated and no archaeological features finds or ecofacts were recorded. The earliest encountered deposit was the 'natural' grey clay, context [04], encountered at a minimum depth of 1.3m. It was overlain by a deposit of mid-brown silty clay, context [03], which appeared to consist of 'natural' clay mixed with a garden soil. The deposit was a maximum of 350mm in thickness. It was in turn overlain by context [02], a mid-greyish brown silty clay, which contained a high density of crushed brick rubble. It was a maximum of 700mm in thickness. The uppermost deposit was context [01], a humic mid-brown silty clay topsoil, which was a maximum of 300mm in thickness.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION**

- 5.1 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered during the watching brief. Clearly the area of the new extension had been subjected to previous extensive ground disturbance/landscaping resulting in a great depth of made ground.
- 5.2 No evidence for the course of the Roman road was recorded and no material relating to historical use of the adjacent structure was forthcoming. The brick rubble encountered in Context [02] was of modern origin, containing machine made, commercially fired frogged bricks. Given the proximity of the historic structure, the complete absence of material culture such as pottery or clay pipes supports the view that the area has been heavily disturbed in recent times.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**ASE** 2008. *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Boyton Court Farm, Sutton Valence, Kent*. ASE Report No. 2008157

**HCGKCC** 2009. *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane in Sutton Valence*. Unpub. document

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Gary Pankhurst for commissioning the work and for his hospitality on-site.

### SMR Summary Form

Site Code	SFS 10					
Identification Name and Address	Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane, Sutton Valence					
County, District &/or Borough	Maidstone Borough, Kent					
OS Grid Refs.	581893 148853					
Geology	Atherfield Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4224					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other <i>Adjacent to Grade II listed building</i>		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. March 2010	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Mr. Gary Pankhurst					
Project Manager	Dan Swift					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for a two-storey extension to the existing historic farmhouse. Deep deposits of made ground, presumably associated with landscaping of the immediate area were encountered. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded.</i></p>						



**OASIS Form**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-74882**

**Project details**

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane, Sutton Valence, Kent
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for a two-storey extension to the existing historic farmhouse. Deep deposits of made ground, presumably associated with landscaping of the immediate area were encountered. No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded.
Project dates	Start: 18-03-2010 End: 19-03-2010
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SFS 10 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	4224 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	KENT MAIDSTONE SUTTON VALENCE Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane, Sutton Valence
Postcode	ME17 3BT
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 81893 48853 51.2093032201 0.604370387761 51 12 33 N 000 36 15 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 90.00m Max: 100.00m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Kent County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Dan Swift
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr Gary Pankhurst
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	MAIDSTONE MUSEUM
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'
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