

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent**

**NGR: 582157 157002
(TQ 82157 57002)**

Listed Building Number: 1344338

**ASE Project No: 171141
Site Code: TWW17**

**ASE Report No: 2018066
OASIS id: archaeol6-309561**

By Gary Webster

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at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent**

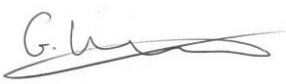
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**By Gary Webster
With contributions by
Isa Benedetti-Whitton, Trista Clifford and Emily Johnson
Illustrations by Antonio Reis**

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---|
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| Date of Issue: | February 2018 | | |
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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent on the 19th of December 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by OHES Environmental Ltd in advance of the mitigation of an oil leak.

A small pit was hand excavated through the concrete and tile floor of the pantry and dining room. A subsoil layer was identified beneath the concrete. No archaeologically significant finds or features were identified during the watching brief.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) were commissioned by OHES Environmental to undertake an archaeological monitoring exercise at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent (Figure 1). The site location was centred on NGR 582157 157002.

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 Whitehall is a Grade II Listed Building situated to the east of the village of Thurnham. The building is bound by Whitehall road to the south-east, with fields surrounding it in all other directions.
- 1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 2016) the underlying natural deposits are comprised of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation with no recorded superficial deposits.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 An archaeological watching brief was required for emergency excavation works that were undertaken to remove an oil spillage within the building, beneath the dividing wall between the pantry and dining room. The archaeological watching brief was a requirement by the KCC conservation officer, but did not fall under listed building consent. The site is within the jurisdiction of Maidstone District Council.
- 1.3.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by ASE in 2017. It was prepared in accordance with relevant Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). It outlined the methodology to be employed during the watching brief, and clarified that all work will be reported upon in line with guidelines set out in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE; Historic England 2015). The WSI (ASE 2017) was submitted to the client and the County Archaeologist at Kent County Council for approval prior to the commencement of work at the site. A copy of the WSI (*ibid*) was on site during throughout the work.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The broad aims of the watching brief, as outlined in the WSI (*ibid*), were:
- To define, insofar as possible, the date, character, form and function of any archaeological features observed on site.
 - To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed remediation works and to preserve by record any such remains
 - To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains
 - To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological and/or geoarchaeological deposits

- To be sufficient to enable the Conservation Officer to provide further advice to the client and to make an informed decision on the requirement for any further mitigation work that may be required.
- To make public the results of the work, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

1.4.2 With regards to the *South-East Research Framework* (SERF 2007), the following themes may be addressed by the watching brief exercise:

- An understanding of the multifaceted landscape (SERF Post-Medieval Themes, 1 – Rural Landscape and Settlement)
- The chronology and typology of farm buildings and other lesser noticed post-medieval agricultural features, such as dew ponds and sheepfolds (SERF Post-Medieval Themes, 1 – Rural Landscape and Settlement)

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief that was carried out on the 19th of December 2017. The work was carried out by Gary Webster (Archaeologist). It was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Andy Margetts (Post-Excavation Manager).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Here is the archaeological background as it appears in the WSI (*ibid*).
- 2.2 Previous archaeological work in Thurnham (ASE 2001) revealed an Iron Age enclosure to the north of the village.
- 2.3 The remains of Thurnham Castle (also known as Godreds Castle) are also located to the north of the village. This was an earthwork castle of 12th or 13th century origin containing surviving traces of masonry structures, including an early gatehouse. The castle commanded one of the few passes through the chalk downland block.
- 2.4 North of Thurnham Village is the site of Detling Airfield, established by the Royal Naval Air Service in 1916. The site was reactivated by the RAF in 1938 and was used during the early part of WW2 for anti-submarine patrols. The site was bombed throughout the war, in particularly in the September of 1940.
- 2.5 The building of Whitehall has Listed Building grade II status, and the Historic England entry is summarised below:

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: WHITEHALL

List entry Number: 1344338

Location

WHITEHALL, BROAD STREET

County: Kent

District: Maidstone

District Type: District Authority

Parish: Hollingbourne

Details

HOLLINGBOURNE BROAD STREET TQ 85 NW 1/129 Whitehall GV II

Farmhouse. C18. Ground floor red brick in Flemish bond, first floor tile hung. Gable ends tile-hung to high plinth. Plain tile roof, 2 storeys and garret. Half-hipped roof. Central brick ridge stack. Irregular fenestration of 3 leaded casements; two 2-light and central single-light. Small gabled brick porch beneath stack, with no outer door and ribbed inner door. Rear lean-to. Interior not inspected.

Listing NGR: TQ8306656654

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 All hand excavation associated with the mitigation of the oil leak was monitored by an archaeologist. Excavation involved the use of hand tools to remove part of the concrete floor and the deposit directly below, which was contaminated with oil. The area was excavated in the floor of the building and measured c. 1.26m by c.1m. It was excavated to a depth of 0.23m in total. The location can be seen in Figure 2.
- 3.1.2 Sufficient time was given for the archaeologist to inspect all deposits, and record all findings.
- 3.1.3 A series of holes was excavated into the exposed deposit to insert a material to absorb the oil.
- 3.1.4 All work was conducted in accordance with the preceding WSI (ASE 2017) as well as the relevant standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a; 2014b).

3.2 The Site Archive

- 3.2.1 ASE informed Maidstone Museum prior to the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Maidstone Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Context sheets | 3 |
| Section sheets | 0 |
| Plans sheets | 0 |
| Colour photographs | 0 |
| B&W photos | 0 |
| Digital photos | 41 |
| Context register | 0 |
| Drawing register | 0 |
| Watching brief forms | 1 |
| Trench Record forms | 0 |

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

| | |
|--|-------|
| Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box) | 1 bag |
| Registered finds (number of) | 0 |
| Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |
| Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides) | 0 |
| Waterlogged wood | 0 |
| Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

- 3.2.2 The finds and environmental samples ultimately deposited as part of the archive are dependent on specialist recommendations and regional archive requirements.

4.0 RESULTS (Figures 2 and 3)

4.1 Oil spill mitigation pit excavated 19/02/2018

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Max. Length m | Max. Width m | Deposit Thickness m |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 001 | Masonry | Floor Surface | 1.26 | 1 | 0.01 |
| 002 | Masonry | Concrete | 1.26 | 1 | 0.04 |
| 003 | Layer | Subsoil | 1.26 | 1 | 0.18 |

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

- 4.1.1 A compact, mid brownish grey sandy clay [003], with occasional chalk flecks was the only layer identified in the base of the excavated pit. It contained some degraded iron, likely used to stabilise the concrete which overlay it, a rabbit bone and the remains of some mortar.
- 4.1.2 It was overlain by a layer of concrete [002], which was topped with tile [001], forming the current floor surface.
- 4.1.3 No archaeological features were identified during the excavation.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 4). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014c).

| Context | Building Material | Weight (g) | Iron | Weight (g) | Bone | Weight (g) |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 003 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 314 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 2 | 13 | 1 | 314 | 1 | 1 |

Table 4: Finds quantification

5.2 The Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

- 5.2.1 Two pieces of white lime mortar collectively weighing 13g were recovered from [003]. It was a friable white lime mortar tempered with coarse translucent quartz. In isolation, mortar of this type cannot be dated as similar mortars were used in the medieval, post-medieval and Roman periods. The mortar has been discarded.

5.3 The Ironwork by Trista Clifford

- 5.3.1 A single iron spike measuring 280mm in length was recovered from context [003]. The spike exhibits adherent mortar on the surface at one end suggesting a structural use. It is modern in date. The object is recommended for discard.

5.4 The Animal Bone by Emily Johnson

- 5.4.1 One animal bone fragment was recovered during the watching brief, hand-collected from context [003]. The bone was identified as a right radius of a rabbit, with fused proximal epiphysis and the majority of the shaft present. At the proximal epiphysis was staining from the presence of an iron object.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 The excavations were only to a depth of 0.23m below the floor surface of the dining room and pantry. One identified deposit [003] was overlain by the concrete [002] and tile [001] which forms the current floor surface, and could represent an original subsoil. The natural geology was not encountered at any point during the watching brief.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 No groundworks, since the construction of the building, appears to have any impact on the stratigraphic sequence beneath the house. The exterior wall, which the pit abutted, did not appear to have any foundations below ground, unless they were set significantly forward of the internal face of the wall.

6.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

- 6.3.1 No archaeological features were identified during the watching brief.
- 6.3.2 A date cannot be given to the mortar, recovered from the layer underneath the floor [003] though it is likely from the construction of the standing farmhouse. The iron rod is most likely used for stabilising the concrete, and probably dates from the construction of the house. The rabbit bone is likely residual.
- 6.3.3 The finds are not archaeologically significant.

6.4 Consideration of research aims

- 6.4.1 As no significant remains were identified there is no scope to answer the research aims, although the absence of archaeological features has been confirmed.

6.5 Conclusions

- 6.5.1 All groundworks associated with the remediation of the area affected by the oil leak were monitored. No archaeological features were identified, and the recovered finds are not of archaeological significance. If archaeological remains are present, they were not disturbed by these works.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank OHES environmental Ltd for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project. The excavation was directed by Gary Webster and managed by Neil Griffin and Andy Margetts.

HER Summary

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----|--|----------------------|
| HER enquiry no. | | | | | |
| Site code | TWW17 | | | | |
| Project code | 171141 | | | | |
| Planning reference | | | | | |
| Site address | Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent | | | | |
| District/Borough | Maidstone | | | | |
| NGR (12 figures) | 582157 157002 | | | | |
| Geology | West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation | | | | |
| Fieldwork type | | | WB | | |
| Date of fieldwork | 19/12/2018 | | | | |
| Sponsor/client | OHES Environmental | | | | |
| Project manager | Neil Griffin | | | | |
| Project supervisor | Gary Webster | | | | |
| Period summary | | | | | |
| | | | | | Post-medieval/modern |
| Project summary (100 word max) | An archaeological watching brief was conducted at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent, NGR 582157 157002 on the 19 th December 2017. A pit measuring 1.26m by 1m to a depth of 0.23m was hand excavated in the floor of the pantry and dining room to mitigate an oil leak. Some rabbit bone and mortar was recovered from the layer beneath the floor surface, though they are not archaeologically significant. No features were identified during the watching brief. | | | | |
| Museum/Accession No. | | | | | |

Finds summary

| Find type | Material | Period | Quantity |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------|----------|
| Building Material | Mortar | Roman – Post Med | 2 pieces |
| Bone | Rabbit bone | - | 1 piece |
| Metal | Iron Rod | Post Med | 1 piece |

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-309561

Project details

| | |
|--|--|
| Project name | An archaeological watching brief at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent |
| Short description of the project | An archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent on the 19th of December 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by OHES Environmental Ltd in advance of the mitigation of an oil leak. A small pit was hand excavated through the concrete and tile floor of the pantry and dining room. A single layer was identified beneath the concrete. No archaeologically significant finds or features were identified during the watching brief. |
| Project dates | Start: 19-12-2017 End: 19-12-2017 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | TWW17 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | Listed Building |
| Current Land use | Other 2 - In use as a building |
| Investigation type | "Watching Brief" |

Project location

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | KENT MAIDSTONE THURNHAM Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent |
| Postcode | ME14 3LX |
| Study area | 1.26 Square metres |
| Site coordinates | TQ 82157 57002 51.282425337168 0.612292982458 51 16 56 N 000 36 44 E Point |

Project creators

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Name of Organisation | Archaeology South East |
| Project brief originator | ASE |
| Project design originator | ASE |
| Project director/manager | Neil Griffin |
| Project supervisor | Gary Webster |
| Type of | OHES Environmental |

sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Physical Archive recipient | MAIDSTONE MUSEUM |
|-------------------------------|------------------|

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Digital Archive recipient | MAIDSTONE MUSEUM |
|------------------------------|------------------|

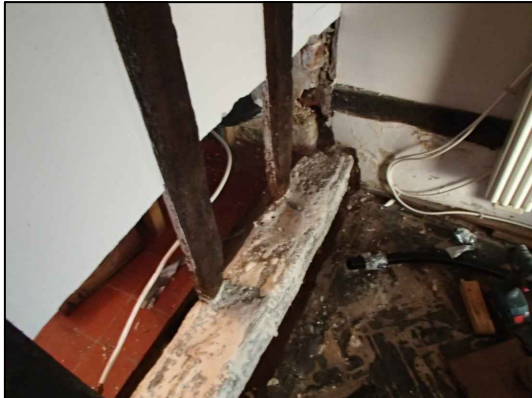
| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Paper Archive recipient | MAIDSTONE MUSEUM |
|----------------------------|------------------|



| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|---|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Site Location | Fig. 1 |
| Project Ref: 171141 | Feb 2018 | Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent | |
| Report Ref: 2018066 | Drawn by: AR | | |



| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|---|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Whitehall, Whitehall Road, Thurnham, Kent | Fig. 2 |
| Project Ref: 171141 | Feb 2018 | Location of monitored area | |
| Report Ref: 2018066 | Drawn by: AR | | |



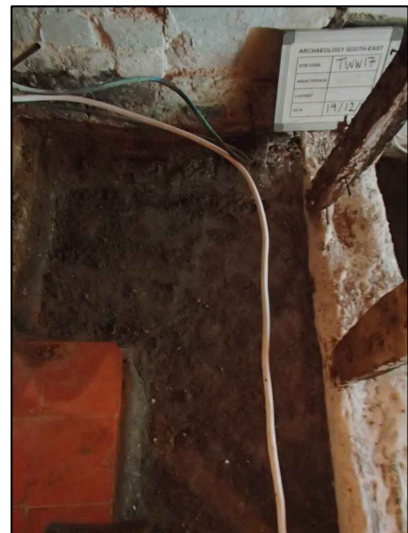
Area of pit looking north



Pit facing north



Pit looking east



Pit looking North East

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