

# Proposed Classroom Building, St Edmund's School, St Thomas's Hill, Canterbury

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Report

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92a Broad Street · Canterbury · Kent· CT1 2LU

Tel +44 (0)1227 462062 · Fax +44 (0)1227 784724 · email: admin@canterburytruStco.uk www.canterburytruStco.uk

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## **SUMMARY**

This report presents a provisional desk-based assessment constituting rapid archaeological appraisal of ground at St Edmund's School, St Thomas's Hill, Canterbury, Kent (centred on NGR 613338 159348; Fig 1). The report was commissioned by Jonathan Sargood of Hazle McCormack Young LLP in August 2016 in view of proposed redevelopment of the site for a new classroom building.

On the basis of previous work adjacent to the proposed development area and nearby, archaeological remains of regional significance may be preserved within the proposed development area.

A programme of archaeological watching brief on any demolition work, and evaluation of the area prior to development is recommended.

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of the place.
- 2.5 When determining planning applications, the following policies are especially pertinent:
  - 128. Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
  - 129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of the heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
  - 132. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

- 139. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.
- 2.6 The existence of the latter within a proposed development area can be partially investigated and to an extent predicted via desk-based assessment, but field evaluation and/or archaeological monitoring of groundworks are likely to be a planning requirement and should be expected.

# Local policy

2.7 Applying the same general principles on a local scale, the relevant Canterbury District Local Plan (Publication Draft 2014) policies are HE1 (includes Scheduled Ancient Monuments and buildings of local architectural or historic interest), HE2 (World Heritage Sites), HE4–5 (Listed Buildings), HE5–6 (Conservation Areas), HE12 (Historic Landscapes), and HE10 and HE11 (Archaeology). Policy HE 11 is particularly relevant:

'The archaeological and historic integrity of designated heritage assets such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites, together with their settings, will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. Development which would adversely affect them will not be permitted.

Planning applications, on sites where there is or is the potential for an archaeological heritage asset, must include an appropriate desk based assessment of the asset

In addition where important or potentially significant archaeological heritage assets may exist, developers will be required to arrange for field evaluations to be carried out in advance of the determination of planning applications. The evaluation should define:

The character, importance and condition of any archaeological deposits or structures within the application site;

The likely impact of the proposed development on these features (including the limits to the depth to which groundworks can go on the site); and

The means of mitigating the effect of the proposed development including: a statement setting out the impact of the development.

Where the case for development affecting a heritage asset of archaeological interest is accepted, the archaeological remains should be preserved in situ.

Where preservation in situ is not possible or justified, appropriate provision for preservation by record may be an acceptable alternative. In such cases archaeological recording works must be undertaken in accordance with a specification prepared by the Council's Archaeological Officer or a competent archaeological organisation that has been agreed by the Council in advance.'

## Research frameworks

2.8 The national and local policy outlined above should be considered in light of the non-statutory heritage frameworks that inform them. While the regional South East Research

Framework for the historic environment (SERF)<sup>1</sup> is still in preparation, initial outputs are available on-line and have been considered in preparing this report, in order to take current research agendas into account.

## 3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The PDA is situated on the brow of St Thomas Hill on or just above the 70m contour which extends westwards towards Kent College. The PDA is bounded to north by Giles Lane and beyond by extensive tracts of coppice woodland which here make up the Blean, and on the east by the campus of the University of Kent. The area lies at approximately 69mOD, sloping away steeply to the south and south-east.
- 3.2 BGS mapping shows bedrock geology as the London Clay overlain by remnants of 4th terrace river gravels which mantle the upper reaches of the north side of the Stour valley, although Holmes (1981, 62ff) has reclassified the 4th Terrace River Gravels as Head Deposits.

#### 4. DESIGNATIONS

4.1 The PDA does not affect or impact on any World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Battlefields, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or Registered Parks and Gardens. Two significant mid to late nineteenth century listed buildings, both Grade II, are, however, located immediately to the south-west, comprising St Edmund's School and the former headmaster's house to the school (National Heritage List Numbers 1242647 and 1242648). The setting of both heritage assets may be affected by the proposed development. Policy 129 of the National Policy Planning Framework applies to the setting of these designated heritage assets.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

- 5.1 This study is principally based on unpublished grey literature and published interim archaeological reports, little information being recorded on the Kent Historic Environment Record or the Canterbury Urban Archaeological Database. A list of sources consulted is given. These records have been assessed in terms of their particular relevance to the PDA and only significant evidence is cited in this report. Numbers in parenthesis refer to the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record.
- 5.2 It has been considered beyond the means of this project to pursue detailed questions requiring an in-depth study of primary documentary and cartographic sources. General historical context for archaeological findings is provided where applicable/significant in terms of results, and a survey of published and unpublished maps (including geology and contour survey) has been undertaken. A full list of maps consulted is provided in the list of sources at the end of the report. Only maps showing significant topographical developments are reproduced here.
- 5.3 Aerial photographic evidence was not considered relevant to this project. No pertinent geophysical surveys were available. Only photographs, images or results showing significant features or topographical developments are reproduced, the findings

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure and culture/heritage/south east research framework.aspx

incorporated with map regression, documentary evidence and archaeological sections of the report as appropriate and fully referenced.

5.4 All results of analyses are presented below in synthesis and in order of chronology.

Prehistoric (c 900BC – AD 43)

- 5.5 A group of three Lower Palaeolithic ovate handaxes recovered from a location to the west near Moat House, Rough Common in 1978 (at TR 12805940) seem likely to have been derived from head deposits (Roe 1978; Kent HER TR15NW266; see above for geology). On the east an expanse of head brickearth deposits infill an early water channel which drained off the Blean Uplands and which is now represented by a minor unnamed stream.<sup>3</sup>
- 5.6 South-west of the PDA a find was recorded in 1952 of a Neolithic stone axe recovered as a redeposited surface find (at *c* TR 13345921; Kent HER TR15MW29).
- 5.7 A number of archaeological investigations have been undertaken at various locations within the grounds of St Edmund's School between 1998 and 2007. The principal area investigated was located to the east of the PDA where excavations (centred on TR 61341594) were undertaken between April and June 2012 prior to the construction of an astro-turf games pitch. The excavations recorded evidence of a significant late prehistoric settlement. The archaeological features were recorded at the interface between the underlying natural gravels and an overlying 200mm deposit of subsoil. Three phases of occupation were identified (Fig 2), the earliest dated to the Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age period, circa 900-400BC, consisting of a series of linear ditches defining parts of field systems and two small structures with associated finds of metalworking slag residues and loom weights. During the mid to later Iron Age, 400BC-AD43, an elliptical enclosure with an entrance on the north-west was laid out across the settlement and a structure, a round house, defined by post pits and drip gully was erected within the enclosure. The base of a large pottery vessel found close to this building may have been a cremation burial, some other type of ceremonial or spiritual function or simply had a utilitarian use. The final phase of occupation related to a number of shallow pits and short ditch alignments. No evidence for Roman period occupation was recorded and presumably these features must date to the final phase of early to mid-first-century AD occupation of the settlement. Two sunken floored structures defined by post pits and stake holes (Fig 3) were also recorded, dating to the final late Iron Age occupation of the settlement (Lane 2012a, 2012b and 2014).
- 5.8 Ground reduction during evaluation of the Alps Car Park in 2007 had not required the removal of subsoils likely to have sealed any earlier late prehistoric features (Holman 2007, section 5.1). The further extent of the late prehistoric settlement could not therefore be traced across the area of the car park. That the settlement extends much further westwards is indicated by the recording between February and April 1998, at a location to the south-west during the cutting of a service trench (at TR 13475919), of a large oval pit containing flint tempered pottery of Late Bronze Age date and worked fire cracked flint (Priestley-Bell 1998) (Kent HER TR15NW595).

Romano-British (c AD 43-450)

5.9 No Romano-British archaeological remains are reported within the PDA or within a 500m radius of the PDA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html

*Anglo-Saxon (c 450 –1066)* 

5.10 No Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains are reported within the PDA or within a 500m radius of the PDA.

*Medieval (c 1066 – 1540)* 

- There is little archaeological evidence for the early and later medieval periods from the immediate vicinity of the St Edmund's School site. A late medieval/early post medieval rectangular tile kiln was discovered and subsequently excavated in 1957 at a location (at TR 13405910) just below the brow of St Thomas's Hill, to the rear of 1 The Close, on the west side of the Whitstable Road, opposite St Edmund's School. During the medieval period, between the 12th-15th centuries, an extensive pottery and tile industry existed in the area, straddling the 65-70m contours between St Thomas's Hill on the west and St Stephens's Hill on the east. Although the main focus of activity is on St Stephens Hill, where at least 4 kilns are known, the kiln found at The Close on the west side of St Thomas's Hill, suggests another focus of production. Associated features would have included large clay extraction pits, such as the one recorded within the grounds of St Edmund's School (centred on TR 13365922) during the monitoring work undertaken in 1998 (Priestley-Bell 1998). The kilns were located close to the principal medieval routes cutting across the Blean connecting Canterbury to the North Kent coast, on the west across St Thomas's Hill, which was connected to that on the east on St Stephen's Hill by Giles Lane.
- 5.12 The principal focus of medieval manorial settlement lay to the north at Hothe Court. Land at Hithe is recorded in 1279 and from the early fourteenth century was he principal manor in Blean, the land being transferred to Eastbridge Hospital in 1358-59 (Willson 2003, 19-21; Hasted 1799, 526). To the east, Beverley Farm is first recorded as a placename in 1214-15 and again in 1240 in the Assize Rolls (Wallenberg 1934, 501), the farm continuing to be occupied and worked until the early 1960s (Willson 2003, 22-25).

Post-medieval (c 1540 – 1960)

- 5.13 The area adjoining the astro-turf pitch on the west was investigated in May to June 2007 prior to the construction and laying out of the Alps car park. A series of six evaluation trenches exposed linear features interpreted as gullies of post-medieval date (Gollop 2007). A subsequent watching brief during construction recorded the same types of features, the fills containing peg tile (Holman 2007).
- 5.14 Buildings are shown flanking the east side of St Thomas's Hill from the later eighteenth century (Figs 4-5). St Edmund's College was established on the site with the construction of new buildings in 1854-55 which were further extended during the second half of the nineteenth century including the laying out of formal gardens immediately to the north-west and the construction of the headmaster's house in 1897. North of the college, at the junction of St Thomas's Hill and Giles Lane, a single building occupied a plot along the south side of Giles Lane in the early 1870s (Fig 6). From the 1890s through to 1960s this area continued to be developed with ancillary school buildings, most of which have either been demolished, replaced or incorporated with extensions into larger buildings (Figs 7-12).

## 6. Interim assessment

6.1 Should excavations for strip foundations and drainage be required there is a potential for the recovery of artefacts of Lower Palaeolithic and later date from the head gravel deposits recognised on the site.

- 6.2 The archaeological investigations carried out south of Giles Lane between 2007 and 2012 have demonstrated the presence of a significant late prehistoric settlement dating from the Late Bronze Age through to the end of the late Iron Age. It is likely that the settlement extended to the west and south-west. The development of the area north of St Edmund's School between St Thomas's Hill and Giles Lane from the later nineteenth century and in particular since the 1960s is likely to have impacted on buried archaeological remains. On-site assessment should enable the extent and impact of any truncation to be determined; nonetheless, it is quite likely that prehistoric remains of regional significance will be present within the PDA.
- 6.3 In the first instance, a programme of archaeological watching brief on any demolition or site investigation work incorporating groundworks should be undertaken, followed by archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area via the excavation of trial pits or trenches, in order to determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains, and assess their date, significance and state of preservation. This would ideally include a geoarchaeological assessment of the head gravel deposits. This work should be carried out in liaison with Canterbury City Council's Archaeological Officer.
- 6.4 Should archaeological remains be found a further programme of archaeological assessment and/or excavation to ensure either preservation *in situ* or preservation by record may be required prior to and during the development of the site. If required by a condition attached to a planning consent, the works should be undertaken in consultation with Canterbury City Council as Local Planning Authority.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents a provisional desk-based assessment constituting rapid archaeological appraisal of ground at St Edmund's School, St Thomas's Hill, Canterbury, Kent (centred on NGR 613338 159348; Fig 1). The report was commissioned by Jonathan Sargood of Hazle McCormack Young LLP in August 2016 in view of proposed redevelopment of the site for a new classroom building.
- 1.2 This assessment is a consultation document prepared for the client which may be submitted as part of a planning proposal (supplementing a heritage statement for example). It constitutes a pilot study assessing the potential for further research, either desk-based or in the field. Additional desk-based research and/or fieldwork may be requested by planning authorities or specified as conditions on any planning consent, although any request for further desk-based work should clearly demonstrate the benefits of such an approach as opposed to field evaluation, for example.
- 1.3 The objective of the current research, verbally agreed with the client and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), has been to view readily available existing evidence in order to assess the extent and nature of any heritage assets with archaeological interest within the Proposed Development Area (PDA), and thereby gauge the likelihood of heritage assets of archaeological interest being affected by development within the PDA. Research has been undertaken to an appropriate level of detail in response to funding limitations which affect the affordable scope and provisional nature of the study, as well as the particular circumstances of the proposed development.

#### 2. POLICY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

2.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with national and local policy regarding heritage assets and with reference to research frameworks.

# National policy

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG March 2012) sets out a series of core planning principles designed to underpin plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system. In terms of development proposals affecting known heritage assets, the following principle states that planning should:

Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

- 2.3 By definition the historic environment includes all surviving physical remains of past human activity. Heritage assets include extant structures and features, sites, places and landscapes. The European Landscape Convention definition of a historic landscape describes: 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors' (Council of Europe 2000: which came into force in the UK in March 2007; see research frameworks, below). Furthermore the historic landscape encompasses visible, buried or submerged remains, which includes the buried archaeological resource.
- 2.4 Policy 126 states that:

## **Maps and Plans Consulted**

Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) Canterbury Sheet 289 1:50000 Series Southampton, Ordnance Survey for Institute of Geological Sciences, National Environment Council, 1982

Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) Faversham Sheet 273 1:50000 Series Southampton, Ordnance Survey for Institute of Geological Sciences, National Environment Council, 1974

Andrews, J, Drury, A. Herbert, W. A topographical-map of the County of Kent sheet 9 Scale 2 inches to 1 mile. London, 1769

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An Entirely New & Accurate Survey Of The County Of Kent, With Part Of The County Of Essex surveyed Captn W. Mudge 1797, published London, W. Faden, 1 January 1801

Ordnance Survey Kent Sheet XXXV Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 1st edition. Surveyed 1872-73, published 30 April 1877

Ordnance Survey Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 2nd edition. Surveyed 1872, revised 1896, published 1898

Ordnance Survey Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 3rd edition. Surveyed 1871-72, revised 1906, published 1908

Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile Provisional edition. Surveyed 1871-72, revision of 1906 with additions in 1938, published 1946

Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile Provisional edition. Surveyed 1871-72, revision of 1906 with additions in 1937-38 & 1947, published 1950

Ordnance Survey Sheet TR15 Scale 1:25000 Provisional edition Surveyed 1906-37 and 1938-57, published 1961

#### References

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Priestley-Bell, G. 1998 *An archaeological watching brief at St Edmund's School, Canterbury*, Kent Hassocks, Archaeology South East (Report 1998/32)

Roe, D. A. 1978 Threee Lower Paleolithic handaxes from Rough Common, Canterbury in: *Archaeologia Cantiana* 74, 158-165

Wallenberg, J. K. 1932 The place names of Kent Uppsala, 1932

Willson, J. 2003 The University of Kent at Canterbury: an archaeological and historical desk based assessment and survey Canterbury Archaeological Trust Report 2003/77

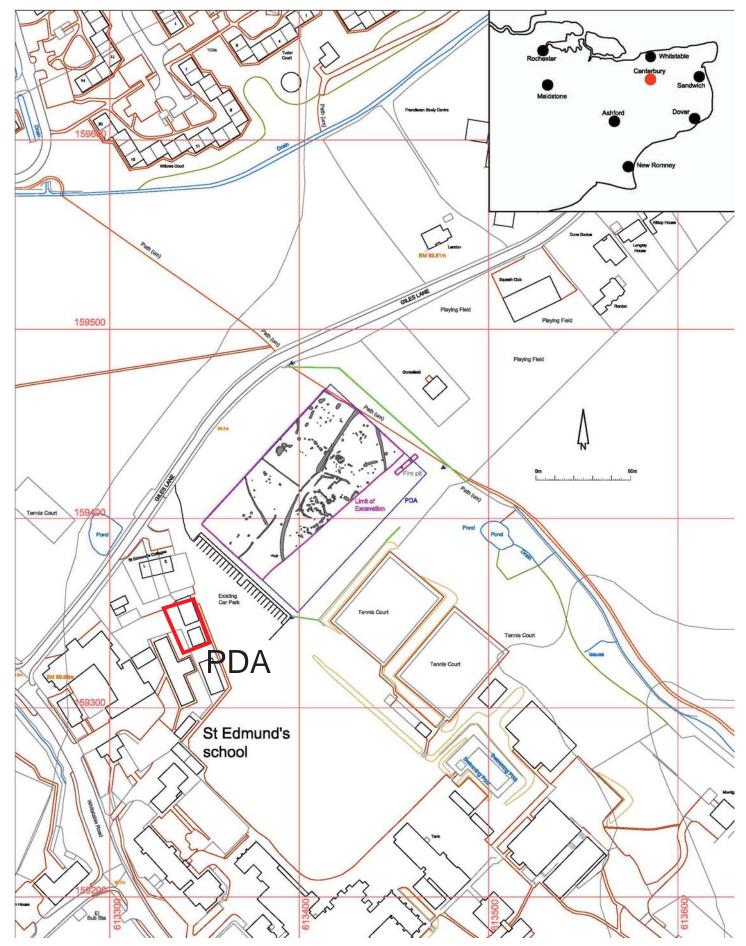


Fig 1. Proposed Development Area (PDA) showing location of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Settlement (source: Lane 2007b, Fig 1)

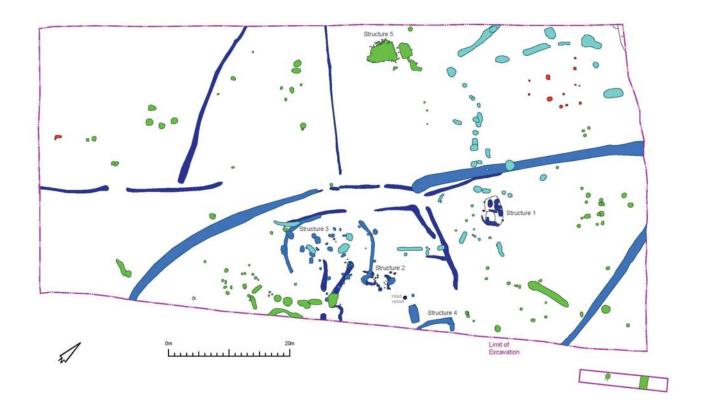


Fig 2. Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Settlement, Giles Lane (source: Lane 2007b, Figure 2)

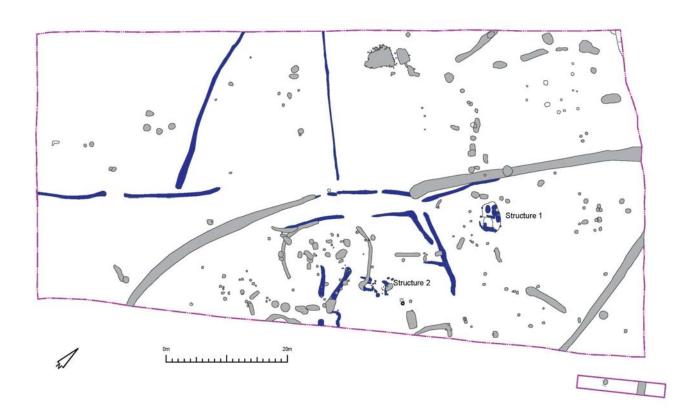


Fig 3. Later Iron Age Sunken Floored Buildings and other features (source: Lane 2007b, Figure 3)



Fig 4: Extract from Andrews, J, Drury, A. Herbert, W. A topographical-map of the County of Kent sheet 14 Scale 2 inches to 1 mile. London, 1769



Fig 5: Extract from An Entirely New & Accurate Survey Of The County Of Kent, With Part Of The County Of Essex surveyed Captn W. Mudge 1797, published London, W. Faden, 1 January 1801



Fig 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 1st edition. Surveyed 1872, published 30 April 1877

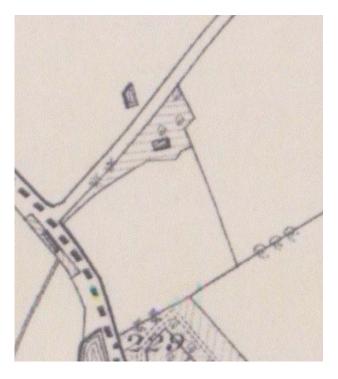


Fig 7: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 1st edition. Surveyed 1872, published 30 April 1877



Fig 8: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 2nd edition. Surveyed 1872, revised 1896, published 1898



Fig 9: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile 3rd edition. Surveyed 1871–72, revised 1906, published 1908



Fig 10: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile Provisional edition. Surveyed 1871–72, revision of 1906 with additions in 1938, published 1946



Fig 11: Extract from Ordnance Survey Plan Kent Sheet XXXV SW Scale 6 inches to 1 mile Provisional edition. Surveyed 187172, revision of 1906 with additions in 1937–38 and 1947, published 1950

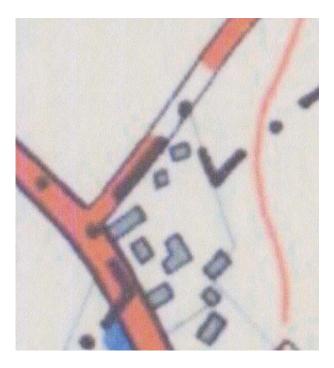


Fig 12: Extract from Ordnance Survey Sheet TR15 Scale 1:25000 Provisional edition Surveyed 1906–37 and 1938–57, published 1961