



A.P.A.C. Ltd.

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

WSI: WB/SKN/16

Blackbrook Manor, Skenfrith.

**Monmouthshire County Council
DC/2015/00978 & 00981**

Prepared by Dr N Phillips
9 February 2015



Summary

This document comprises a Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief to be undertaken during ground disturbance works necessary for the erection of a single storey extension.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) advised Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) that as the proposed work at the site could likely impact on archaeological resources, therefore, a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief should be imposed.

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Introduction

This Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief has been prepared by DR. N. Phillips, APAC Ltd, in response to a proposed programme of works for the erection of a single storey extension to an existing outbuilding.

The existing single storey outbuilding is part of Blackbrook Manor, (*Blackbrook House*), a Grade II, listed building: Cadw Building ID 2754, for which Listed Building consent for development work has been approved, with conditions, (DC/2015/00981).

Planning approval for a range of works to the building was applied for in August of 2015: DC/2015/00978, resulting in approval with conditions: DC/2015/00978).

The planning proposal application was noted by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, (GGAT) advisers to Monmouthshire County Council, (MCC) as having a potential for impact upon archaeological resources.

GGAT's assessment was based on records of prehistoric finds within the vicinity as well as 19th mapping which reveal previous configurations for the present building.

The location of the site within the triangle of 'The Three Castles' and general medieval land use should also be taken into consideration.

The relevant condition for this Written Scheme of Investigation as advised by GGAT was:

The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground disturbing works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority shall be informed, in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development of the name of the said archaeologist and no work shall begin until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed, in writing, that the proposed archaeologist is suitable. A copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to the local Planning Authority within two months of the fieldwork being completed by the archaeologist.

MON2188/JB.

DC/2015/00987 condition: 3

DC/2015/00981 condition: 6

In accordance with the CIFA standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, this Written Scheme of Investigation has been prepared to set out the programme of work to be covered by the watching brief; (CIFA 2014).

Location of the Site

The proposed site of the watching brief is centred on NGR 243037 220963, Blackbrook House, Near Skenfrith, Monmouthshire, NP7 8UB, fig 01.

Blackbrook House can be gained from Monmouth by taking the B4233 Rockfield Road and at a distance of 1.8 miles turn right onto the B4347 signposted to Skenfrith.

Continue for 5.2 miles to the junction with the B45121 then turn right and immediately left onto the B4347 towards Grossmont.

The lodge gates to Blackbrook Estate are on the left at a distance of 1 mile.

Brief archaeological and historical background

The advisory letter from GGAT to planning states that 'there is no record of any buried archaeological resource in the Vicinity of the proposed work, however there are two spot finds of prehistoric date within a 500m radius of the house, (MON2188/JB).



The estate also lies within the triangle of stone castles; Skenfrith, Grosmont and Whitecastle, known locally as The Three Castles' and therefore will have been subject to medieval land use.

The RCAHMW consent correspondence mentions that 'Blackbrook Manor was listed for its interest as a late Georgian country house of modest scale, on the site of a small medieval manor of the castle of Skenfrith,' (cor 377996, Suggett).

The property itself is actually recorded on the 1831 first series Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 36 but its configuration is better depicted on the later maps.

The later configurations are of some interest in that between the first edition Ordnance Survey of maps from 1882, (Monmouthshire V 6"), fig 02a, until the 1923 revision, the house is shown as a rectangular structure with an internal courtyard.

The less detailed 1956, 1: 25,000 Ordnance Survey map, SO42 fig 2b, however, shows a simple rectangular footprint, whereas the current structure, fig 02c, has a reduced main building with a narrow long building at the north west.

The proposed extension, fig 2c will again create a courtyard; albeit with three sides not four, but probably on the footprint and therefore any surviving remains of the earlier building.

Aims & Objectives

The proposed development is for the construction of a single storey extension to an existing building.

There is a distinct possibility that the excavation work may impact upon archaeological resources within the development area.

The aim of the watching brief is to establish the presence/absence of archaeological structures or other significant features within the works area.

Should any archaeological resources be revealed their presence will be recorded and a decision made as to any mitigation measures.

To carry out an archaeological watching brief to the standards laid down in the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists, Guideline for Watching Briefs 2014.

An archaeological watching brief:

The definition of an archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.

This definition and Standard do not cover chance observations, which should lead to an appropriate archaeological project being designed and implemented, nor do they apply to monitoring for preservation of remains in situ. A watching brief will preserve by record, within the resources available, any archaeological deposits uncovered during groundwork.

The watching brief will ensure that: in the event of archaeological resources of significance, being discovered and requiring treatment beyond the remit of the watching brief; then steps would be implemented to ensure that their treatment would be undertaken within the standards recommended by the CIFA.

Resulting from the watching brief, a report on the results will be produced, which will include a detailed summary of the methodology, site history, deposits/features/structures/artefacts uncovered and interpretation of the results.

(CIFA. 2014).



Scope of the Work

The archaeology of the application site as a whole, in its wider local, regional or national context, will be considered, although watching brief will be confined to those areas which will be directly affected by the development or some aspect of it.

Any remains of potential interest will be considered, whatever their date.

Procedures

The watching brief

At an agreed date, development work will begin, from which point an archaeologist will be on site to watch all ground disturbing work and to record anything of archaeological significance.

GGAT will be notified at least 2 weeks in advance, of the proposed date for commencement of the ground disturbance work.

The archaeology of the development site as a whole will be considered, if/when, any exposed archaeology is examined.

All remains of potential interest will be recorded and finds retained, regardless of date.

If archaeological features are discovered, work will cease in the immediate area until the archaeologist has been able to fully inspect the feature and determine its importance.

If in the opinion of the archaeologist, the archaeological feature can be rapidly recorded to the required standard in accordance with the watching brief guidelines this will be done.

If the archaeologist determines that the archaeological feature requires more investigation, and recording than he can undertake as part of the watching brief, both the client and (GGAT), will be informed and an 'on-site' meeting arranged as soon as possible.

Until the meeting has taken place, no work will be undertaken in the vicinity of the archaeological feature.

Such a meeting will determine what works are required to be undertaken to ensure that the archaeological feature is fully dealt with.

This may result in a decision to:

"Preserve in situ" which will involve adequate cleaning of the feature to allow for suitable recording

Or to undertake archaeological excavation to provide more information to allow for a decision to be made concerning further work.

In most cases, a detailed project design for this work will be prepared and submitted to the client and, (GGAT), prior to the commencement of the agreed work.

In the event of artefact remains of archaeological importance being recovered, resulting from ground works at the site, (GGAT), will be informed.

Although the requirements for conservation of artefacts are unpredictable, A.P.A.C. Ltd, will undertake to ensure that the minimum standards are achieved as in the UK Institute of Conservation's "Guidelines for the treatment of Finds from Archaeological Sites".

In the event of need for specialist procedures or services; arising from ground works, relevant parties will be contacted by the contractor, A.P.A.C. Ltd, and arrangements made for necessary post ex-work.

In consultation with specialist archaeological advisors, a decision will be made, as to steps necessary for conservation or investigation of such artefacts.



Such specialist procedures or services may incur charges that will be borne by the developer.

Although it is not expected that human remains will be found on the site, any occurrence will be dealt with by initially leaving in-situ and if removal is necessary, the appropriate Home Office permission obtained.

Analysis and Reports

Within three months of the completion of the fieldwork, a fully illustrated report will be submitted to the client, NCC (Planning), and GGAT.

Each report will contain the following elements: -

- A non-technical summary.
- A table of contents.
- An introduction with acknowledgements, including a list of all those involved in the project and the location and description of the study area.
- A statement of the project aims.
- The archaeological/historical background of the evaluation area, indicating past and present land use, accompanied by relevant maps, plans and photographs.
- A location plan and gazetteer of areas/sites of known or potential archaeological significance within the project area.
- A summary description of the evaluation results including any archaeologically significant features/deposits or potential features/deposits identified within the each trench.
- A discussion of the location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological deposits/features uncovered, together with a discussion of their relationship with known archaeology in the vicinity.
- Survey and excavation plans at appropriate scales. Each trench will be presented in the report with at least one plan (scale 1:20) and section (scale 1:10) as well as a photograph.
- Other maps, plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate.
- A description of the finds and environmental samples collected including an exposition of the methodologies employed, a statement on the presence or absence of material and an assessment of preservation. A summary interpretation of the finds including reference to any unusual or important features of the assemblage will also be included. Specialist reports will be included of important groups of finds, materials and samples.
- An interpretation of the results with a statement of the significance of any identified archaeological features/sites on a local, regional and national scale.
- An identification of any research implications arising from the work.
- A bibliography of sources consulted and a supplementary bibliography of any sources identified but not available for consultation.
- An index to the project archive and a statement of its location/proposed repository.
- A summary report on the evaluation will be published in a suitable local journal, with a record note presented to the appropriate national period journal(s).

Archive

In the event of artefacts being collected, the archaeological contractor will endeavour to persuade the legal owner of any artefacts, to transfer them a suitable local museum.

In such a case, Abergavenny Museum will be notified of the intention to deposit the project archives with them.

The project will be designated a project code with all significant documents and packaging carrying this code number.

If the archive has no artefacts, then a copy of the archive will be deposited in the Gwent Archives with the original copy retained by A.P.A.C. Ltd.

The project archives will consist of all original records, artefacts, ecofacts/samples and all documentation that relates to the evaluation; copies of the WSI and any relevant correspondence will be included.

The archives will be prepared according to the Management of Archaeological Projects, English Heritage, Second Edition, (1991) so the records will be fully ordered and indexed.



The archive will comply with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (Archaeology Section) Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (1990) the Society of Museum Archaeologists Towards An Accessible Archive (1995) and to the reasonable requirements of the designated Museum.

The archives will be deposited within twelve months of the completion of the evaluation and with the agreement of the landowner.

A synopsis of the project will be submitted to CBA Wales.

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A.P.A.C. Ltd hereby gives permission for the monitoring authority to use any documentation directly relating to the project as described in this WSI.



Health & Safety:

The Project Team will operate in accordance with the health and safety procedures as set out in:-

- The Health and Safety Work Act (1974) and related legislation.
- The Standing Conference of Archaeology Unit Managers Health and Safety Manual 2002).
- The Council for British Archaeology Handbook no. 6, Safety in Archaeological Fieldwork (1989).
- In accordance with the CDM Regulation, The Project Team will prepare a Risk Assessment in relation to the archaeological works prior to the commencement of the evaluation.

All necessary protective clothing and equipment will be used.

A First-Aid kit and Accident Book will be kept on site at all times, with a Health and Safety file.

Project monitoring: A.P.A.C. Ltd., understands that the project may require monitoring involvement.

A copy of this WSI will be sent to the monitoring authorities GGAT for their approval.

Project Management

Dr Neil Phillips, A.P.A.C. Ltd, will manage the project.

Dr N. Phillips has been active in archaeology since 1997, completing his 1st degree in 1999 followed by a research Phd in 2004. Dr Phillips started and has been director of A.P.A.C. Ltd since 2004. A.P.A.C. Ltd is an archaeological consultancy specialising in landscape archaeology and survey work. Dr Phillips interests lie locally with the medieval period and industrial period although he has been involved in international Palaeolithic projects both in the UK as well as Europe and Africa. Scibd currently carries a range of archaeological projects completed by APAC Ltd (search APAC. Ltd or Dr N Phillips).

APAC. Ltd has current Public Liability (924765101 CHC) and Professional Indemnity (RKK865819/1126) Insurance with Towergate

Resources:

- Project Director: Dr Neil Phillips. (Director; fieldwork and preparation of report).
- Specialist Consultant Archaeologist: Steve Clarke
- Archaeologist (Finds Specialist): Steve Clarke & A O Phillips
- Industrial (Dr T. Young)
- Fauna (F. Taylor)

**Bibliography and References:**

Craig Hamilton
Architects

Blackbrook House. Design And Access Statement In Support Of An Application For External Alterations To The South-Western Façade, A Courtyard Extension And Minor Internal Alterations.

Drawings:

Land Survey.	Existing	12959D/1.	July 2015.
Basement Plan.	Existing	12959D/2.	July 2015.
Ground Floor Plan.	Existing	12959D/3.	July 2015.
Elevations.	Existing	12959D7/5.	July 2015.
Site Plan.	Proposed	P-AD 01. Rev D.	July 2015.
Basement Plan.	Proposed	P-AD 02. Rev B.	July 2015.
Ground Floor Plan.	Proposed	P-AD 03. Rev E.	July 2015.
Elevations.	Proposed	P-AD 16. Rev C.	July 2015.

CIFA

Code of Conduct and the Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology 2014.

Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Watching Brief 2014.

Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological materials 2014

English Heritage 1991

Management of Archaeological Projects

GGAT

MON2188/JB. RE: Erection of a single Storey Extension, Replacement of Portico, Remodelling of South-Western Elevation, New Doorway to North-East Elevation, Minor Internal Alterations and Refurbishment: Blackbrook Manor, B4347. Nr Skenfrith. PL. App. No:2015/00978.

MCC

Planning Approval. DC/2015/00978

DC/2015/00978. Case Officer report Craig O Connor

Listed Building Approval. DC/2015/00981

RCAHMW

Application for Listed Building Consent: Blackbrook Manor. COR:377994. Suggett, R. 14/09/2015.

British Listed

Buildings

<https://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/>

Magic Maps

<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Old Maps.co.uk

<https://www.old-maps.co.uk/>

Promap

<https://www.promap.co.uk/>

Vision Of Britain

<https://www.visionofbritain.co.uk/>

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974