

Method Statement for Planning Condition No.13

Planning condition No.13 states:

No development shall commence on site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

The proposed method statement to ensure compliance with the condition is as follows:

Archaeological Watching Brief

The archaeological contractor will liaise with the main contractor to establish the timescale over which the areas identified on the plan (those areas where the potential for archaeological remains to be revealed during top soil stripping and ground lowering). An archaeological watching brief should be maintained during the relevant stages of ground lowering by a qualified/experienced archaeologist. The archaeologist should, by reference to exposed ground surface or revealed sections, seek to identify the original ground surface, and if intact should seek to recognise and record any archaeological features revealed. The archaeologist should also seek to recover evidence that will confirm the date and character of any archaeological features identified. If an opportunity arises this should be by rapid hand excavation, although it is the nature of a watching brief that this might not always be possible. This should not unreasonably delay the works in progress. The archaeologists will also monitor the spoil arising from the works in order to supplement what is recorded with observations about the artefact content of the site in an effort to shed any light possible on the nature of the archaeological potential of the area prior to development.

If human remains are encountered the archaeological contractor (with the main contractor) will comply with current legislation, notifying appropriate authorities and gaining appropriate licences to continue. If Treasure within the meaning of the Treasure Act is found then the archaeological contractor will comply with the provisions of the Treasure Act

Archaeological Reporting

The works will be subject to an archaeological report that is appropriate to the results, which will be submitted to the client and to the HER in a timely manner. The report should describe the nature of the archaeological exercise (including its limitations) and present the results. It should be supported by plans showing both the location and the 'extent' of watching brief within the development, and the location of archaeological evidence encountered within the watching brief. It should describe the archaeological features and finds encountered and their interpretation. The archaeological contractor will need to include the details of their own recording and reporting procedures that they have used.

The contractor should contact the Hampshire Museum Service prior to undertaking the work to ensure that they fully comply with the standards and requirements of the Museum Service in relation to any site archive generated. This includes standards relating to the treatment of small finds.

Methodology

The controlled watching brief requires the archaeological consultant to be on site to inspect site preparation/reduced dig/site strip. The main areas of activity will be:

- The car park area,
- Building footprint,
- Sports pitch

These must be cleared using a toothless bucket down to formation level (Initially assumed to be approx -300mm) to produce a clean and clear surface for inspection and should not be tracked over until released by the archaeologist. The archaeologist should be present to recognise and record any archaeological remains revealed, and should be offered a reasonable opportunity to carry out the archaeological recording.

If the initial excavation (reduce-level dig) reveals no archaeological remains, each area will be released for further excavation, such as foundation trenches, if applicable. For instance, if upon reducing the levels below the building footprint (and nothing is found) it will then be permissible to continue with the foundation excavations and no further archaeological supervision should be required.

If no archaeology is found in the above 3 main areas, it is very unlikely that excavations outside those areas (ie drain runs that cross between them) will need supervision. Such decisions must be agreed and recorded by the archaeologist. However, if archaeology is found in the reduced dig, then foundations & drains will need supervision.

The contractor must not commence any excavations without first agreeing a programme with the archaeologist and must advise them in good time if there is to be any variation from the programme.

The contractor should manage the works in such a way that each area is commenced and completed promptly, in accordance with the programme, liaising with the archaeologist to ensure he/she is on site when the works are planned. All excavations to be supervised by the archaeologist as he/she advises.