

Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief
42 Sarmatian Fold, Ribchester, Lancashire

For Rachel Stevens

Job Number 0518

NGR SD 6497 3511

North Star Archaeology

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Summary

A planning application has been submitted in order to construct an extension to 42 Sarmatian Fold, Ribchester, Lancashire SD648354(Ribble Valley Borough council planning app no 3/2017/1157) The extension will require wall footings to be excavated within an area of archaeological interest and is therefore subject to a scheme of archaeological monitoring.

The development site lies close to the area of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SM no LA 55 / National Heritage List Entry HA 1005110) and within an area which is known to contain archaeological remains. The site has the potential to contain archaeological remains associated with the Roman Fort and *vicus* settlement. These remains are likely to comprise the footprints of buildings and streets dating from the Roman period, and archaeological evidence in the form of features, deposits and artefacts associated with Roman settlement and domestic activity.

As the work is considered to have potential to affect the below-ground archaeological resource, Ribble Valley Borough Council requires an archaeological watching brief to monitor groundworks as condition 6 of the planning permission.

This document comprises a Written Scheme of Investigation setting out the schedule of works required in order to proceed with the planning application. This document is tailored to satisfy the requirements of Ribble Valley Borough Council and their advisors Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service, and following current professional standards (ClfA 2014). This document sets out project aims, fieldwork methodology, post-fieldwork methodology and archiving proposals.

Site Location

The development (SD 648354) comprises a piece of land to the side of number 42 Sarmatian Fold, which is a modern housing development adjacent to Preston Road. The development site lies close to the area of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SM no LA 55 / National Heritage List Entry 1005110), and within an area where archaeological remains have been previously encountered.

Project Context

The proposed extension measures 5.68m in length and 3.07 m in width. In order to excavate footings a trench measuring approximately 0.50m in depth, 0.50m in width will be required throughout the footprint of the exterior walls. The trench will be excavated using a mechanical excavator, supported by hand digging to remove significant items (e.g. rocks)

The development lies within an area of known archaeological potential, and condition 6 of the planning permission (3/2017/1157) requires appropriate archaeological works.

This written scheme of investigation sets out the details of an appropriate programme of archaeological works, based on information supplied to North Star Archaeology by the client in emails communications in May 2018.

Archaeological Watching Brief

The *Chartered Institute of Archaeologists* (2014) defines a programme of Archaeological Watching Brief as:

"...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."

The purpose of an Archaeological Watching Brief is further defined as:

"...to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works ..."

"...to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard..."

Project Aims

General

There is high potential for the survival of below-ground archaeological remains associated with the scheduled Roman fort and settlement. An archaeological watching brief programme to monitor the foundation trench has been identified by Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service as the most appropriate form of further investigation to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains. It may be possible to offer objective statements regarding the survival, extent, nature, character and location of any remains, dependent on the nature of observations made during the watching brief.

This proposed programme of archaeological watching brief will enable the preservation by record of archaeological deposits encountered during the works. It will also enable the identification of archaeological features, deposits or artefacts for which sufficient resources are not available to enable a suitable and satisfactory treatment within the scope of an archaeological watching brief.

Specific

Stratigraphic information will be recorded as detailed in the methodology below.

Finds including artefacts and ecofacts will be retrieved from stratigraphic contexts.

A photographic archive will be produced detailing the features and deposits encountered.

A fully illustrated report will be produced drawing together the results and conclusions of the programme.

The report will include consideration of the evidence within local and regional contexts, where appropriate.

Methodology

Evaluation Fieldwork Methodology

Mechanical Excavation

A mechanical excavator (JCB or similar type) will excavate the soils and deposits in the areas shown under permanent archaeological supervision. The excavating machine will be fitted with a toothless 'ditching' bucket in order to minimise damage to archaeological deposits and to allow inspection of exposed material. Hand-digging will also be supervised by the archaeologist on site. This will allow brief suspension of works in the event that archaeologically-sensitive or significant deposits or features are encountered. Deposits encountered during hand excavation will be examined for the presence of archaeological features, and to provide an objective description of the archaeological deposits or features.

Archaeological deposits, features and structures will be excavated in stratigraphic sequence to ensure that dating evidence is not contaminated by later deposits. The features and deposits will be cleaned using a trowel, or other appropriate hand tool dependent on the relevant subsoil, and recorded using pro forma recording sheets and drawn records.

Stratigraphic relationships will be recorded in instances where no archaeological remains have been noted.

Contingency Arrangements

In the event that archaeologically significant features, deposits, artefacts or structures are encountered which cannot be adequately dealt with within the remit of an archaeological watching brief, work may be temporarily suspended while Ribble Valley Borough Council and Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service are notified. Any further works necessary to deal appropriately with the remains will not be covered by the scope of this document. In some cases it may also be appropriate to preserve some classes of archaeological remains *in situ*.

Archaeological Recording

North Star Archaeology will use the appropriate *pro forma* recording sheets to retain all information for deposits, structures and features encountered during the course of the watching brief. These have been developed from various examples used by contractors and university institutions across the UK, and are principally designed to be used in conjunction with the Museum of London Archaeology Service's Excavation Manual (3rd edn).

Plan and section drawings, drawn at an appropriate scale (normally 1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections) will be produced to illustrate and record the positions and relationships of individual features and deposits.

High quality digital SLR cameras will be used for archiving purposes, with photographs of each context (with clearly visible graduated metric scale) creating a full photographic archive.

Artefacts

All archaeological material will immediately be retrieved and carefully stored in bags and boxes, numbered according to the originating context. All materials will be treated in accordance with UKIC (1998) guidance. Artefacts which are 18th century or later will be noted and discarded on-site.

Palaeo-environmental samples will only be retrieved in instances where this has been agreed in advance with Ribble Valley Borough Council, Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service and the client.

Any items which represent Treasure (including gold and silver objects or groups of coins or prehistoric metal objects) will be immediately retrieved provided that this does not conflict with either preservation in situ or damage the material. Where possible within the remit of archaeological watching brief the item(s) will be secured and immediately reported to the Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme for Lancashire and Cumbria.

Human Remains

Any human remains encountered must be treated with care, dignity and respect. The Burial Act 1857, the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981, and local environmental health regulations must be taken into account. If found, human remains must be left in-situ, covered and protected. The police, coroner, planning archaeologists and Historic England will be informed as soon as possible.

If it is agreed that removal of the remains is essential, Minerva Heritage Ltd will apply for an '*Authority to Exhume Buried Human Remains For Archaeological Purposes*' licence from the Home Office. Given the probable antiquity of any burials it is considered likely that the Home Office may grant a removal licence with only the consent of the landowner as a requirement. The final placing of the remains after scientific study and analysis will be agreed beforehand. The watching brief does not include for this contingency.

Post Excavation Methodology

The paper, material and photographic archive will form the basis for an assessment of its implications for local, regional and national research objectives, where appropriate. Quantification and assessment of the finds and stratigraphic data will allow a summary of their research potential to be presented.

Finds (artefacts and ecofacts) will be processed according to UKIC 1998, and examined by a recognised specialist, where necessary. Conservation of unstable object or material types will be discussed in advance with the recipient museum.

A full archive comprising the paper, photographic and artefactual material generated during the project will be collated and curated according to English Heritage MAP 2 (1991) and Brown (2007). The archive will be deposited with a local museum with the site owners' consent: an appropriate local museum will be identified and contacted as soon as practicable, in order that accession can be properly managed.

Report Writing, Editing, Illustration and Production

A short illustrated report will be produced according to ClfA guidelines (2014). This will include, as a minimum:

- Non-technical summary
- Introduction, to include acknowledgements, project circumstances, outline details of archaeological and geological background and site description
- Location Plan
- Aims and Objectives
- Methodology
- Objective statement of results
- Conclusion and statements regarding confidence in the conclusion
- Archive Location
- Photographic or other illustrations as appropriate
- Any supporting data in either tabulated or appendix form
- References and Bibliography

The report will be submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council, the Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service and the Lancashire Historic Environment Record within three months of completion of the project.

Publication and Confidentiality

The Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database will be updated on submission of the report and archive to the Lancashire Historic Environment Record.

Copyright

North Star Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the project design.

Timetable and Staffing Proposals:

It is envisaged that to monitor construction works for the foundation trench will take no longer than one day to complete. The watching brief project will be managed by Richard Buckle (BA), who has experience of managing and conducting this sort of project. The on-site archaeologist will be Richard Buckle.

Other Matters

Health and Safety

North Star Archaeology provides a Risk Assessment for each project. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the *Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers* (1997). A written risk assessment will need to be read and understood by any site staff prior to the commencement of work, and copies will be made available on request to all interested parties.

Project monitoring

Whilst the work is undertaken for the client, Ribble Valley Borough Council and the Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service will be informed of the work and its results, and will be notified a week in advance of the commencement of the fieldwork. Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with the Ribble Valley Borough Council and the Lancashire Archaeology Advisory Service in consultation with the client.

References

Allen JL and St John Holt A 1986 *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology*, Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM)

Brown D 2007, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archive Forum, London

English Heritage 1991, *Management of Archaeological Projects*, second edition, London

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014, *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief*, revised edition