A.P.A.C. Ltd.

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

WATCHING BRIEF
WB/PML/17

Site of Portland Mill, Buxton Rd, Leek, Staffs

Prepared For:

CgMs Heritage

Planning Application No: SDM/2017/0165

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03 Nov 2017

Summary

This Written Scheme of Investigation has been drawn up by APAC Ltd acting on behalf of CgMs Heritage. It provides information on the works and methodologies to be employed by APAC Ltd during a watching brief on intrusive ground works on the site of Portland Mill, Buxton Road, Leek, Staffordshire, NGR SJ 98962 56642.

A planning application (SMD/2017/0165) was submitted for redevelopment of the site currently occupied by the 19th century silk mill. It identified that, owing to intrusive groundworks with the potential to impact upon the archaeological resource, a watching brief was required.

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Fig 1 General site location map

1 Introduction

This Written Scheme of Investigation has been prepared by Chris Smith MCIfA, Senior Project Officer, APAC Ltd, acting on behalf of CgMs Heritage, in response to a request for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out on the site of Portland Mill, Buxton Road, Leek, Staffordshire (Fig 1).

A planning application (Ref: SMD/2017/0165) for redevelopment of the site including demolition of existing buildings, retention of façade to Queen Street, erection of Retirement Living accommodation (49 units) with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure was granted approval. Condition 28 of the decision notice stated:

> *Prior to the commencement of development (including demolition and site clearance) hereby permitted, a written scheme of archaeological investigation ('the scheme') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide details of the programme of archaeological works to be carried out within the site, including a Level 3 Recording survey (Historic England – Understanding Historic Buildings – A Guide to Good Recording Practices May 2016 (or any other similar or replacement guidance), post-excavation reporting and appropriate publication and interpretation. The scheme shall thereafter be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details. Reason:- In the interests of recording the historic environment.*

2 Site Location and Description

The site, centred on NGR SJ 98962 56642, comprises a complex of brick built structures associated with the sites use as a former mill. The assessment area, covering a total of approximately 4400m², is located within the centre of the town of Leek at 198m above Ordnance Datum. It is bounded by the line of the A53, Buxton road, to the north, and residential streets of Queen Street to the south, Portland Street to the west and Brunswick Street to the east.

3 Brief Archaeological & Historic Background

The earliest phase of the silk mill located on the site is likely to date from the early 19th century, but has been extended on several occasions in the later 19th and 20th century. The silk manufacturer A. J. Worthington & Co. operated out of the mill for much of its history. The complex is shown on the 1838 plan of Leek as a 'Silk Factory. Messrs. Worthington & Coy".

Portland Mills in Portland Street and Queen Street (The site) is said to have originated in 1803 as James Goostrey & Co. James Goostrey was a silk manufacturer in Portland Street in the mid-1830s, presumably at the mill there described as new when it was offered for sale in 1832 (Baggs *et al*, 1996).

The silk mill is shown on the 50" OS map (1879) and had expanded by the time of the third edition 25" OS map (c.1920) when it is marked as Portland Mill.

Leek is itself a medieval market town, first granted a Royal Charter in 1214. Archaeological work undertaken within the town (Cane & Jaffa, 1986), consisting of an overall evaluation of archaeology in the town centre and involving the excavation of three small sites and a a series of trial holes, showed that the vast majority of pre 19th century archaeological levels were truncated, mostly by Post-medieval cellars. Two areas excavated produced 19th century deposits. Thus whilst there is a potential for pre-industrial archaeological remains being located within the assessment area this is deemed to be low.

4 Aims and Objectives

The general aims of an archaeological watching brief, as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014) are:

- To ensure that any buried remains located within the development area are fully investigated and recorded if revealed as a consequence of the site works;
- To provide an opportunity for the archaeologists present 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 of the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard;
- If such a find is made, representatives of both the client and the regional Development Control Officer/County Archaeologist will be informed and a site meeting organised, as appropriate.

Additional aims of the watching brief are to:

- Establish the presence/absence of archaeological deposits within the assessment area.
- Elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of any identified archaeological deposits.
- Produce a detailed record and report of the work undertaken so as any archaeological deposits are preserved by record

5 Scope of the Work

The archaeology of the assessment area as a whole, in its wider local or regional context, will be considered, although the watching brief will be confined to those areas which will be subject to intrusive groundworks deemed likely by the watching brief archaeologist to have an impact on the archaeological resource. All archaeological remains of potential interest will be considered, whatever their date.

Should a find be made which the watching brief archaeologist considers cannot be excavated and recorded to a sufficient standard within the confines of the watching brief then this area will be securely fenced off and a site meeting between representatives of APAC Ltd, CgMs and Staffordshire County Council historic environment team should be held at the earliest opportunity. Where appropriate the English Heritage Regional Science Advisor will be consulted. Such a meeting will determine what works are required to be undertaken to ensure that the archaeological feature is fully dealt with.

Any such meeting may result in:- an increase in on-site personnel (i.e. watching brief archaeologists) in order to have sufficient resources to deal with any archaeology, a decision to "Preserve *in situ*"; which will involve adequate cleaning of the feature to allow for suitable recording, or to undertake a fully resourced archaeological excavation.

In the event of artefactual remains of archaeological importance being recovered, resulting from ground works at the site, CgMs will be informed. Although the requirements for conservation of artefacts are unpredictable, APAC 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, services or advice arising from ground works, relevant parties will be contacted by APAC 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 assessment/analysis of such artefacts. Such specialist procedures or services may incur charges that will be borne by the developer. However, no specialist will be sought or post-excavation work undertaken without prior confirmation from CgMs.

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* with any necessary removal taking place under a Ministry of Justice exhumation licence. Should articulated human remains be encountered these will require recording and where they need to be removed for engineering reasons this will be undertaken under archaeological conditions and with sufficient resources in place to cover both excavation and post-excavation work. Any post-excavation work will not take place until the specific requirements have been agreed between SCC and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor.

6 Methodology

Watching Brief

A date for the proposed commencement of the watching brief work will be agreed with CgMs.

Staffordshire County Councils archaeological representative will be informed one week prior to work taking place.

An accession number for the project will be requested from the Potteries Museum and Art Galleries in Stoke-on-Trent and an OASIS record created prior to the commencement of the project.

A suitably qualified archaeologist will be on site to watch all ground disturbing work and to excavate and record anything of archaeological significance.

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

All remains of potential interest will be recorded and finds retained for processing, 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. Sufficient time will be granted to ensure that any archaeological feature is fully recorded to CIfA standards. The development program will not impede the archaeological process.

All contexts will be recorded on APAC Ltd pro-forma context sheets.

All finds will bagged by context with the finds retained for subsequent processing.

All on-site illustrations will be made on drafting film at recognised scales (1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate)

All photographs will be taken in *Raw or TIFF format using a high resolution (12MP+) digital camera

All required GPS survey will be carried out using a Geomax professional survey grade system.

All mechanical excavation will be undertaken with a size appropriate toothless (ditching/grading) bucket fitted to the machine.

All works were undertaken in accordance with the CIfA's (2014) *Standards and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* (2014) and current Health and Safety legislation

7 Analysis and Reports

Within three months of the completion of the fieldwork, a fully illustrated, watching brief report will be submitted to CgMs for approval.

Following approval, the report will be submitted to the regional HER (Stafford) in both digital and hard copy format.

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 assessment 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 watching brief results including any archaeologically significant features/deposits or potential features/deposits identified within each area
- 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.
- Other maps, plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate.
- A description of any finds and environmental samples collected (including any specialist reports)
- 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 with specific reference to the regional research framework for the West Midlands/Staffordshire.
- 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 watching brief will be published in a suitable local journal, with a record note presented to the appropriate national period journal(s).

8 Archive

In the event of artefacts being collected as a result of the on-site work, APAC Ltd will endeavour to persuade the legal owner of said artefacts (the landowner), to transfer them to a suitable local museum. In such a case, a suitable local museum will be notified of the intention to deposit the project archives with them.

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

If the archive has no artefacts then copies of the report will be deposited with the regional HER 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 watching brief.

Copies of the Written Scheme of Investigation and any relevant correspondence will be included.

The archives will be prepared accordance with MORPHE (English Heritage, 2006) with the records 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 watching brief and with the agreement of the landowner.

A synopsis of the project will be submitted to West Midlands Archaeology and all grey literature from the project will be uploaded onto OASIS.

9 Health & Safety:

The watching brief archaeologist 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).

Prior to the commencement of the project a Risk Assessment will be drawn up by APAC Ltd and circulated to all relevant parties.

All necessary personal 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.

10 Project Management

The work will be managed by Dr. Neil Phillips MCIfA with the on-site field work being undertaken by Chris Smith MCIfA. Changes to project personnel will be relayed to CgMs.

APAC. Ltd has current Public Liability (24765101CHC/000291) & Professional Indemnity (HU PI 9129989/1126) Insurance with Towergate.

11 Copyright

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

12 Bibliography & References

A P Baggs, M F Cleverdon, D A Johnston and N J Tringham. 1996. *A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 7, Leek and the Moorlands*, ed. C R J Currie and M W Greenslade, London. *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/staffs/vol7 - accessed 3 November 2017

Cane, J. and Jaffa, N. (1986). Archaeology in Leek; An Assessment of the Evidence. Birmingham Archaeological Field Unit, Unpublished Report No. 0011

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2014. *Standards and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief*

English Heritage. 2006. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment

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United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (Archaeology Section). 1990. Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (1990).



Fig 1: Map showing general location of assessment area with detailed site location inset

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