BRIEF FOR THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION OF LAND AT THE HARDWICK INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS
OLYMPIC WAY, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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Planning
Northamptonshire County Council
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Brief is valid for 6 months from the date of issue. If the project it describes is undertaken after that period the Brief should be referred to the County Archaeological Advisor for revision; no work should be undertaken until an updated Brief has been issued.

1.2 The background for this archaeological field evaluation is contained in the Brief for a Programme for the Archaeological Investigation of Land at the Hardwick Infant and Junior Schools, Olympic Way, Wellingborough Northamptonshire, (2nd June 2011) which accompanies this document, and which should be read in conjunction with it.

1.3 The archaeological field evaluation forms Stage I of the programme of archaeological investigation for the site outlined in the above Brief.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The evaluation of the site is designed to provide information that will allow the effective targeting of further investigation of the site prior to or during the early phases of its development.

2.2 The following information is required to allow the development of a strategy for further investigation of the site:

2.2.1 The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.

2.2.2 The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present.

2.3 The information required will be acquired through a programme of archaeological fieldwork as outlined below.

3 FIELD METHODS

3.1 In order to obtain the information outlined in 2.2 a programme of archaeological fieldwork will be undertaken.


3.3 The recording system employed will conform to these standards and the recording system employed will conform to these standards and will be approved by the County Archaeological Advisor before the project commences.
3.4 An integrated project archive (including both artefacts/ecofacts and project documentation) should be prepared upon completion of the project. Archaeological contractors should note that there is currently no archaeological archive depository able to accept material from this part of the county, although the issue is being actively addressed and it is hoped that suitable facility will be available within 3-5 years. Provision should therefore be made for retaining the project archive until such time as a suitable depository is available and arrangements have been made for the transfer of the archive. Provision should be made for the payment of a ‘deposit grant’ at the time of archive transfer towards the costs of archive curation in perpetuity. The rates and requirements currently employed by archive stores elsewhere in the country and by Northampton Borough Museum for its archive store should be used for guidance.

3.5 The archaeological contractor must be satisfied that all constraints on archaeological fieldwork are identified and appropriate measures to avoid damaging or illegal impacts must be put in place before the project commences. The constraints include the siting of live services, Tree Preservation Orders, public rights of way, contaminated land, areas of ecological interest and the habitats of protected species.

3.6 The field evaluation will have a single stage as outlined below.

3.7 STAGE I – TRIAL TRENCHING

3.7.1 A series of trial trenches will be excavated within the areas of ground disturbance outside the existing school footprint. These will include the footprint of the new building, any new access, the site compound and any other areas of potential ground impacts.

3.7.2 The trench sample area should be sufficient to identify and define the character and extent of any potential archaeological activity within the proposed development as a whole. Contingency provision will be made to allow for further investigation of any significant features or deposits that are encountered.

3.7.3 The trial trenches will be located to define and characterise likely areas of archaeological sensitivity and to confirm the absence of features in areas that appear to be blank. The trench layout and the deployment of the contingency allowance will be discussed with and agreed by the County Archaeological Advisor before they are implemented.

3.7.4 The trial trenches will be excavated under archaeological supervision by a suitable machine fitted with a toothless bucket with a minimum width of 1.8m.

3.7.5 Topsoil and other overburden will be removed by machine down to the top of natural subsoil or archaeological deposits, whichever is encountered first.

3.7.6 The spoil will be scanned for artefacts.

3.7.7 The trial trenches will then be cleaned by hand and the location of all features and deposits recorded at a scale of 1:50.

3.7.8 Sufficient of any archaeological features or deposits revealed will be excavated in order to provide the information required. All discrete features
will be half sectioned, where safe to do so but should in any case the sample should not be less than 50% of the whole. Excavation slots must be at least 1m in width. It should be born in mind that excavation must not compromise the integrity of the archaeological record. Investigation should be undertaken in such a way as to allow for the protection of the deposits through the application of mitigation procedures or through the opportunity for better excavation under the conditions pertaining to full investigation of a larger area.

3.7.9 Should a significant depth of stratified deposits be encountered it may be necessary for excavation to continue in a restricted area within the trial trenches in order to test the depth and nature of the stratigraphy. The location and scale of the deeper excavation will be dictated by the nature of the archaeological deposits revealed in the opening of the trenches and by other on-site conditions, paying particular regard to health and safety issues. The agreement of the County Archaeological Advisor must be obtained before such a strategy is implemented.

3.7.10 All excavated features and deposits will be fully recorded in accordance with the approved recording system. The primary photographic record will normally be compiled in 35mm black and white format. This will be supplemented by 35mm colour slide/print and digital format. The different mediums have their own strengths and that the use of a combination presents the best way of ensuring the optimum conditions for the survival of archival records. Further information on digital archiving can be obtained from the Technical Advisory Service for Images and Archaeology Data Service.

3.8.11 Guidance on sampling can be obtained from English Heritage (2002). A programme of bulk sampling to retrieve environmental and organic material will be undertaken as appropriate, from appropriate dated or undated deposits. The strategy for sampling must be outlined in the specification of works, and will be subject to variation as appears necessary during the evaluation, following consultation with the County Archaeological Advisor and the EH Regional Science Advisor or the project’s palaeoenvironmentalist.

3.7.12 All finds and other relevant material will be retained and removed from the site for post-fieldwork analysis.

3.7.13 Care must be taken in dealing with human remains and the appropriate Department for Constitutional Affairs and environmental health regulations followed. The County Archaeological Advisor and the local Coroner must be informed immediately upon discovery of human remains. Where human remains are encountered as part of the investigation, they should be left in situ and only removed if absolutely necessary. If they are removed, it is essential that the post-excavation assessment contains an analysis of the remains and a statement for the final deposition of the assemblage. The qualified statement must address future research potential, where applicable, and the options for reburial.

3.7.14 Project Managers are reminded of the need to comply with the requirements of the Treasure Act 1996 (with subsequent amendments). Advice and guidance on compliance with Treasure Act issues can be obtained from the Historic Environment Record (HER) office, and project managers are recommended to report any finds that could be considered treasure under the
3.7.15 All areas of ground disturbance will be accurately surveyed in and marked out prior to the commencement of work.

3.7.16 The trial trenches will not be back filled before they have been inspected by the County Archaeological Advisor or the agreement of that Officer has otherwise been obtained for the back filling of specific trenches.

4. POST-FIELDWORK

4.1 After completion of the fieldwork programme the data acquired will be analysed to a level which will provide the information required (see 2.2).

4.2 Bulk soil samples taken for environmental purposes (3.7.11) will be sieved and scanned.

4.3 All finds will be cleaned, marked, sorted and analysed in accordance with the approved recording system and the practices and standards described in *Preparation of Archaeological Archives; Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections* (1993), the IFA Standards and Guidance for Finds Work (2000) and *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (2007).

4.4 All medieval and earlier artefacts should be reported on by a suitably qualified specialist, named in the contractor's method statement or Specification. All Saxon and later ceramics should be classified in accordance with the Northamptonshire Ceramic Type Series.

4.5 All records and materials produced will be fully archived. The archive will conform to the standards outlined in *MoRPE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation, Appendix 1*.

5 REPORT

5.1 A report will initially be prepared on the results of the field evaluation.

5.2 It will describe the methods employed and outline the results in relation to the areas of information required (see 2.2) and conform to the standards set out in the Association of County Archaeological Officer’s *Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation* (1993) and the Institute for Archaeologist’s *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1999).

5.3 The report must contain sufficient detail to enable the results to be interpreted without recourse to the site archive. It will include tabulations of contexts and finds by context. It will also include a non-technical summary of the project and its results.

5.4 The results of this evaluation must be related to the archaeological and historical context of the surrounding area.
5.5 The report should also contain a consideration of the significance of the results of the evaluation, putting them into a local and regional context. It must not, however, contain any recommendations for dealing with the archaeological resources in the light of the plans to develop the site.

5.6 Unless other arrangements are made, 6 months after the submission of the report the information it contains will be entered into the Historic Environment Record; a publicly accessible database.

6 GENERAL

6.1 The fieldwork must be undertaken by a team of recognised professional competence and experience in this type of project. The project officer should have IfA membership or equivalent experience. The use of volunteers or unwaged personnel is specifically excluded unless they are additional to the core project staff.

6.2 Before commencing work the Project Manager must carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the site owner, Client and CAA in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised. A copy should be sent to CAA.

6.3 The Project Proposal should conform to the outline in MoRPhE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation and will contain information on the following:

- the size and qualification of the work force including names and experience of key personnel;
- details of staffing levels and the number of person days to be spent on each specific task;
- details of specialists, including qualifications, who are likely to have input into the project, whether they are in-house or contracted in;
- details of the recording system for fieldwork and post-excavation analysis;
- a timetable covering the whole project from setting up on site through report writing to deposition of the archive, including suitable allowance for bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the latter must be clearly indicated.

6.4 The Project Proposals will be submitted to the County Archaeological Advisor for vetting to ensure their conformity to this Brief before the contract for the project can be let.

6.5 The appointed archaeological contractor must consult (unless advised otherwise) the Historic Environment Record with the regard to the archaeological and historical background for the development site and surrounding area before submitting the Project Proposal in order to establish the archaeological context for the project.

6.6 Adequate arrangements must be made within a suitable time scale for the conservation of artefacts. Where fragile or unstable finds are recovered
appropriate steps must be taken to stabilise them. All conservation, including initial stabilisation must be undertaken by recognised, named specialists.

6.7 The site archive should be organised so as to be compatible with other modern archaeological archives produced in Northamptonshire. Artefacts, environmental and organic material must be labelled, processed and analysed in a manner compatible with the requirements of *Archaeological Archives* (2007).

6.8 Northamptonshire County Council supports the national stage of the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS III) project and would encourage archaeological contractors to support this initiative. In order that a record is made of all archaeological events within the county occurring through planning systems, the archaeological contractor is requested to input details of this project online at the ADS internet site. The OASIS reference ID should be cleared indicated on any reports.

6.9 The responsibility for monitoring the progress of the project throughout its life, to ensure adherence to this Brief and the maintenance of professional standards is undertaken by the County Archaeological Advisor. So that arrangements for monitoring can be made the County Archaeological Advisor will be notified of the archaeological contractor engaged to undertake the work and be given two weeks notification of the start date of the project in writing. Monitoring requirements will also be included in the project timetable with the agreement of the County Archaeological Advisor. Two copies of the report (one bound ‘hardcopy’, one digital) should be submitted to the CAA. The digital copy should include both the report text and all illustrations, ideally as a single electronic document. After approval, the report will be passed to the Northamptonshire Sites and Monuments Record to act as a permanent record of the investigation. Additional copies of the report will be required to support the planning application, and archaeological contractors should confirm the requirements of their client and the Local Planning Authority.

6.10 Any variation to the Brief or Project Proposal must be agreed with the County Archaeological Advisor before a revised programme of work is implemented.

6.11 It should be noted that a charge will normally be made for consulting the Sites and Monuments Record, and the project estimate should include an element for this cost.

6.12 It is the policy of Planning to ensure that the results of archaeological work in Northamptonshire are made available to the public through a variety of media. The Project Manager is encouraged, therefore, to provide a strategy for site presentation, which would include (where appropriate) the issue of press releases, articles to local and national media, an "open day" for visitors or a parish-based presentation of the excavated remains. All public outreach events must be conducted following consultation with and approval by, the Client. Planning request advanced notice of outreach events and reserve the right to publicise them on our website. In relation to the promotion of archaeological research, Project Managers are requested to provide a short article (where appropriate) for the Planning web site. The main aim of the article is to capture the attention and imagination of the general Northamptonshire public. The articles would ideally contain photographs of recognisable archaeological activity, such as settlement, burial and cultural artefacts.
REFERENCES


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Technical Advisory Service for Images Introductory Pack: Image Capture: Hardware and Software available online at www.tasi.ac.uk

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