

TYNE AND WEAR SPECIALIST CONSERVATION TEAM

SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING OF FELL HOUSE FARM, NORTH WALBOTTLE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE5 1QL

Introduction

Planning permission has been granted for the conversion of vacant farm buildings to create 5 residential dwellings (1 block of 4 and 1 detached bungalow), demolition of existing farm house and erection of detached dwelling house, alterations to elevations, conversion of stone outhouse to provide storage, provision of bin stores and provision of 17 parking spaces.

Fell House Farm is shown on a plan of the Lordship of Newburn of 1767 (NRO Sant/Beq/9/1/1/24 and 25). It was presumably built to coincide with the enclosure of Walbottle Common. The present layout of the farm broadly coincides with historic Ordnance Survey maps.

In accordance with standard practice, it is recommended that a programme of recording is undertaken prior to conversion and demolition to provide a permanent record of the structures as-is and to identify important historic or architectural features. Background research will be required, which will involve visiting the Tyne and Wear Archives, Record Office and local libraries. The finished report will include recommendations for any further recording required.

Prospective archaeological surveyors must be able to recognise architecturally important features and place these within the chronological sequence of the development of the building. Experience of recording buildings is essential, and a proven track-record in this field must be demonstrated in the tendering process.

The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (2006) notes the importance of research as a vital element of development-led archaeological work. It sets out key research priorities for all periods of the past allowing commercial contractors to demonstrate how their fieldwork relates to wider regional and national priorities for the study of archaeology and the historic environment. The aim of NERRF is to ensure that all fieldwork is carried out in a secure research context and that commercial contractors ensure that their investigations ask the right questions.

The finished report must comply with English Heritage, 2006, "Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice" (revised and expanded version of Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England's 1996 document "Recording Historic Buildings – A Descriptive Specification (Third Edition)"), and must:

- Chart the historical development of the building or site and adequately explain and illustrate what is significant. Where possible significant parts and phases of development should be dated
- Aim at accuracy. The level of record and its limitations should be stated
- A record should make a clear distinction between observation and interpretation, thereby allowing data to be reinterpreted at a later date
- Be produced on a medium which can be copied easily and which ensures archival stability

The appointed archaeological contractor must be mindful at all times of the health-and-safety implications of working in historic buildings.

The survey is to be broadly in accordance with an English Heritage Level 3/4 recording.

The archaeological contractor will inform the County Archaeologist of the start date of the work to allow the CA to make a monitoring site visit.

The Survey

Surveys are made by direct measurement using tapes and rods and can be supported by Electronic Distance Measuring equipment (EDM or REDM theodolites) on larger and more complex sites.

Detailed measured survey may be augmented by other techniques designed to record detail such as photogrammetry and rectified photography.

The scale of the drawings derived from a survey must be appropriate to the building, typically 1:100 or 1:50 for plans, 1:50 or 1:20 for sections.

The finished drawing should be legible when reduced for publication, the degree of reduction being dependent on the level of detail required.

It is recommended that drawings aiming to convey historical understanding or to support historical interpretation adopt the drawing conventions set up in section 8 of English Heritage's 2006 guidance document.

All drawings must include metric drawn scales, with a north point on all plans.

The following tasks comprise the building survey.

1 *Site location plan*

2 *Produce accurate elevations and plans of each floor of the farm buildings and farmhouse with any phasing depicted in differential shading*

Outline elevations (not detailed measured survey) should be produced, based on the client's architect's drawings, or by a combination of sketching and some measured survey, sufficient to demonstrate phasing, proportion and location of historic features, such as existing windows and doors and blocked openings.

Structural phasing, changes in building material, evidence of any fixtures and fittings, features of historic significance (eg. Former fireplace openings, changes in internal levels) must be noted on elevations and plans. Historic fabric and features should be identified and numbered and presented in a table within the finished report (see para 7 below). The feature numbers should then be added to the plans.

Two possible formats are acceptable: CAD files from a package supporting AUTOCAD DWG files or exporting as DXF files; Drawing film, inked-in to publication standard and labelled with transfer lettering for reproduction on A4 size.

3 *Draw cross-sections through the principal structural units*

At least one cross-section at 1:50, based on architect's plans to illustrate the vertical relationships within a building (e.g. ceiling heights, differing floor heights, roof trusses). Drawings to the same specification, and in the same style, as the floor plan (Para 2 above).

4 *Scale drawings recording the form and location of other significant structural detail*

e.g. Timber or metal framing, roof structure

5 *Drawings to show the form/profile of any architectural decoration*

e.g. moulded doorcases, mullions, cornices, architraves with scale

6 *Produce a photographic record*

Photographs should be used not only to show a building's appearance, but also to record the evidence on which the analysis of its historic development is based.

All photographs forming part of a record should be in sharp focus, with an appropriate depth of field. They should be adequately exposed in good natural light or, where necessary, sufficiently well-lit by artificial means.

An experienced archaeological photographer should produce a record of the structure as is in b/w (which is preferable for permanent archival purposes) **and** colour print, (digital images are **not** acceptable in view of the currently unproven archival performance of digital data) with scale and a record number of the structural component clearly visible.

- General views of the buildings in their wider setting or landscape
- The buildings' external appearance – typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building to give an overall impression of its size and shape. Where an individual elevation embodies complex historical information, views at right angles to the plane of the elevation may also be appropriate
- Detailed close-up coverage of the buildings' external appearance – windows, doors, decorative detail, blocked openings, chimneys, etc etc
- Overall appearance of each room and circulation areas
- Close-up internal detail, structural and decorative – windows, doors, fireplaces, staircases, cornices, architraves, skirting boards, doorcases etc etc
- Any dates or other inscriptions, any signage, maker's plates or graffiti, which contribute to an understanding of the building or its fixtures or machinery. A contemporaneous transcription should be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret
- Any building contents which a significant bearing on the building's history

7 *Context list phasing tables, cross-referenced to the plans and photographs.*

A minimal recording methodology should number each feature on the photographic record, group the features by phase, and locate their position on the floor plans and elevation drawings.

8 *Survey report*

A report will be produced, detailing the recording methodology and outlining the structural sequence, as observed from the survey.

- Precise location of the building, by name, street, town
- National grid reference
- Date the record was made and name of the recorder
- Summary statement describing the building's type or purpose, materials and possible date(s) so far as is apparent
- An account of the buildings' plan, form, function, age and development sequence
- Room by room description and description of exterior
- Names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given if known
- An account of the building's overall form and of its successive phases of development, and of the evidence supporting this analysis
- An account of the building's past and present use, and of the uses of its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations
- An account of any fixtures, fittings, plant or machinery associated with the building and its purpose
- Any evidence for the former evidence of demolished structures or plant associated with the building
- Copies of other records of the building, or a note of their existence and location
- Relevant information from other readily available sources – from books, documents, plans, from other people who may be familiar with the building
- A note of the building's past and present relationship to its setting – e.g. its relationship to local settlement patterns, to a field system, man-made landscape, its part in a larger architectural or functional group of buildings, its visual importance as a landmark etc.
- A note of the significance of the building locally, regionally or nationally, in terms of its origin, purpose, form, construction, design, materials or status
- An assessment of the potential for further investigative or documentary work, and of the potential survival of below-ground evidence for the history of the building and its site
- Historic map regression
- Copies of archive plans of building
- Copies of historic photographs of the building
- Full bibliographic references and list of sources consulted
- Glossary of architectural terms likely to be unfamiliar to readers.

Documentary and cartographic records, plans and photographs relating to the building will be consulted at:

Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn, QEII Country Park, Ashington NE63 9YF (open Wed-Sun)

Tyne and Wear Archives at Blandford House, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JA (tel. 0191 2326789 ext 407)

Newcastle City Library local studies section, Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8PD (0845 0020336)

Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections, Palace Green
Section, Durham DH1 3RN (tel. 0191 3342932)

National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ (tel. 01793 414600)
www.english-heritage.org.uk/NMR

Useful websites:

<http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/sitelines> - **not** to be used instead of visiting the HER in person
because it is only updated every six months and does not include event data

www.sine.ncl.ac.uk

The report must have the following features:-

1. List of drawings, cross-referenced to a location plan or plans
2. Details of visits to the building undertaken by the contractor
3. Photographic prints and negatives in transparent plastic wallets suitable for storing in A4 ringbinders (all four copies require a full set of prints, but only one set of negatives is required and these should be included in the copy for the Archives)
4. A card cover with title, date, author, contractor organisation and commissioning client
5. Some form of secure binding, preferably of the spiral or ring type.
6. Recommendations for any further archaeological work required.
7. Copy of this specification

Four copies of the report need to be submitted:

- one for the commissioning client
- one for the planning authority (Lucille Alder, Planning Officer, Newcastle City Council)
- one for deposition in the Tyne and Wear County HER. A digital copy of the report is also required on CD by the HER (in a plastic case and not attached to the report)
- one for Tyne and Wear Archives – this is the copy with the negatives in it. Please send this to the HER as TWAS will collect reports from the HER on an annual basis

The report and CD for the HER and TWAS must be sent by the archaeological consultant or their client directly to the address below. If the report is sent via the planning department, every page of the report and all the photographs will be stamped with the planning application number which ruins the illustrations and photos. The HER is also often sent a photocopy instead of a bound colour original which is unacceptable.

OASIS

The Tyne and Wear County Archaeologist supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index/access to the large and growing body of archaeological grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded fieldwork.

The archaeological contractor is therefore required to register with OASIS and to complete the online OASIS form for their building recording at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Please ensure that tenders for this work takes into account the time needed to complete the form.

Once the OASIS record has been completed and signed off by the HER and NMR the information will be incorporated into the English Heritage Excavation Index, hosted online by the Archaeology Data Service.

The ultimate aim of OASIS is for an online virtual library of grey literature to be built up, linked to the index. The unit therefore has the option of uploading their grey literature report as part of their OASIS record, as a Microsoft Word document, rich text format, pdf or html format. The grey literature report will only be mounted by the ADS if both the unit and the HER give their agreement. The grey literature report will be made available through a library catalogue facility.

Please ensure that you and your client understand this procedure. If you choose to upload your grey literature report please ensure that your client agrees to this in writing to the HER at the address below.

For general enquiries about the OASIS project aims and the use of the form please contact: Mark Barratt at the National Monuments Record (tel. 01793 414600 or oasis@english-heritage.org.uk). For enquiries of a technical nature please contact: Catherine Hardman at the Archaeology Data Service (tel. 01904 433954 or oasis@ads.ahds.ac.uk). Or contact the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer at the address below.

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