

Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief with option to excavate at the Oasis Academy, Romsey Road, Southampton

Application 12/00985/FUL

1 Summary

A watching brief will be held on groundworks for a new sports pitch and a record will be made of any archaeological deposits exposed. Should archaeological features be found they will be investigated and further recorded. Written records will be made, photographs will be taken, and any artifacts observed will be collected. Afterwards an illustrated report on the works will be written and submitted to Southampton City Council Historic Environment Team.

2 Background

2.1 This programme has been written to the recommended guidelines for archaeological projects laid down by English Heritage in *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (revised edition 1992). All work will be carried out in accordance with the *Code of Conduct* and "*Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*" (revised edition September 2001) issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists and the *Code of Conduct* and "*Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*" (revised edition September 2001) issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

2.2 A watching brief is defined 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. (IFA 2008)

2.3 The Southampton Archaeology Unit is an IfA Registered Archaeological Organisation.

3 Site Location and description

The site lies at grid ref 438111 115816 to the south the newly constructed Oasis Academy to the west of Romsey Road, on the north edge of Southampton (fig 1). The works comprise removal of the existing grass sports pitch and the construction of an all weather sports pitch with fence and lighting masts.

4 Planning background

The works are being carried out under Planning Application number 12/00985/FUL. Conditions 7 and 8 of the Conditional Approval require the completion of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

This document is that written scheme of investigation.

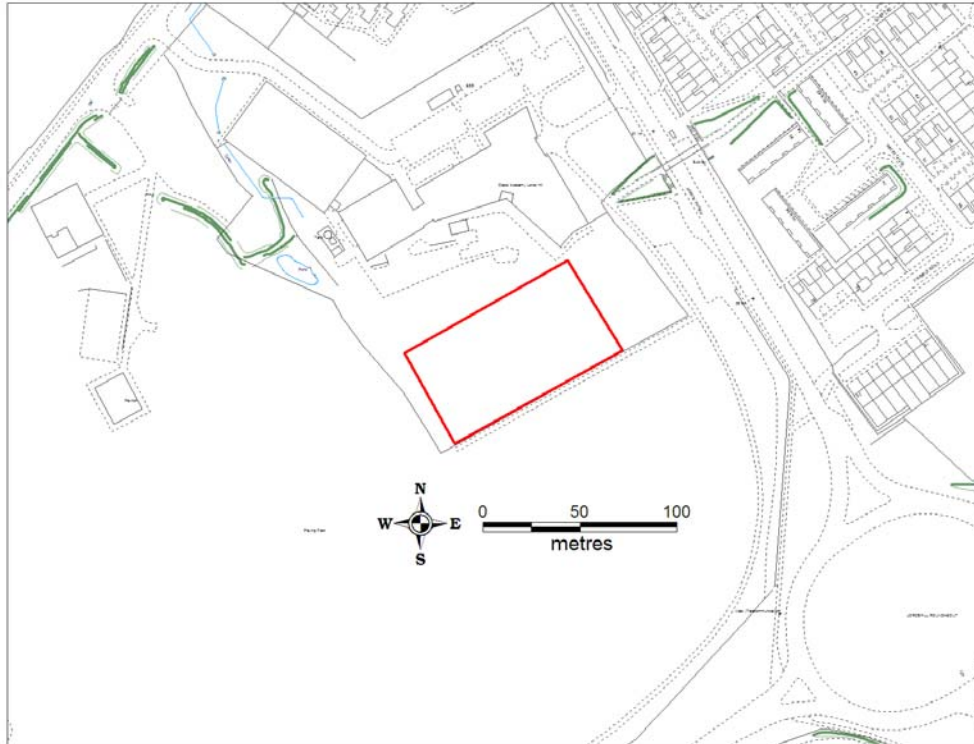


Fig 1 Site location. Red area indicates the extent of the sports pitch.

5 Archaeological and Historical background

5.1 The site lies in area 16 of the Local Areas of Archaeological Potential as defined in the City of Southampton Core Strategy 2010. Area 2 lies to the south; it includes scattered finds of prehistoric and later material, including a prehistoric earthwork known as Aldermoor Camp and 'part of an 8th-century boundary baulk between the estate of Millbrook and the monastic estate of Nursling' (White 1991, 8).

5.2 The area became part of Southampton in the late 20th century. Before then it was part of Nursling parish, held as two separate manors in the medieval period. Maps of the 17th and 18th centuries show no houses in the area and some use the legend Nursling Common for the vicinity (Corpus Christi Langdon Map A.O.337.A of 1615; Milne's Map of Hampshire 1791).

5.3 Chance finds have been made in the area and are recorded in Southampton's Historic Environment Record. They include Neolithic flint tools from Rosewall Road and Horsebridge Way, and a Neolithic flint scraper and burnt flints from Upper Brownhill Road. Prehistoric evidence has also been found to the north in Test Valley, such as flint flakes from Rownhams House.

5.4 Evidence of prehistoric settlements has been found in the surrounding area. At SOU 946, some 700m to the south remains of an Iron Age settlement, including twelve hearth-like features, were found. The pottery evidence suggests that the site was occupied between the 4th and 2nd centuries BC. At SOU 1162, some 300m to the south-east, prehistoric pottery and flints were found in test pits. Some 700m to the south a settlement of Bronze Age date was found during

groundworks for the new Ordnance Survey building; the adjacent area was later used for an Iron Age burial ground. Some 1400m to the south-west at SOU 1547 Bronze Age and Iron Age material was recovered.

5.5 A Roman road ran to the north of Southampton. The line survives as an embankment in Lordswood, to the northeast of the site and it has been suggested that its line is enshrined in Bakers Drove and Redbridge Lane just to the north of the site.

6 Purpose/aims of the fieldwork

6.1 To investigate the human use of the area, and to record the nature of the natural deposits.

7 Field methodology and timescale

7.1 The groundworks will consist of a level reduction for the sports pitch together with excavations for lighting masts and fence posts, and service trenches for power cables. A watching brief will be kept on this work. Should archaeological features be revealed enough will be hand excavated to ascertain the date and nature of the feature.

7.2 The archaeological work will be recorded using Southampton City Council's Archaeological Recording System, which has been used for many years in the area, and has been approved by the Historic Environment Team.

7.3 The archaeological contractor will inform the Historic Environment Team when the specified fieldwork has begun, and when it has been completed.

7.4 Project staff will be provided with a copy of the Scheme of Investigation.

7.5 The watching brief will not start until the Scheme of Investigation has been agreed with the Historic Environment Team.

7.6 The site code SOU 15617 has been allocated to the site from the Southampton City Council list. This will be used on all site records. The watching brief will have the necessary equipment. The minimum will be stationery, context record forms, cameras, film, photographic scales, tapes, safety equipment, and excavation equipment.

7.7 All archaeological personnel will report to the Site Manager (or equivalent) on arrival at the site. All site regulations will be observed. All statutory and site-specific health and safety regulations will be followed. Normally one archaeologist will attend the site during the excavation of the groundworks, but if groundworks are taking place in more than one area, or archaeological features need to be dealt with at the same time as the watching brief is continuing then further staff will attend as necessary.

7.8 If present, artefacts will be recovered from spoil and from the exposed sections. A context number will be allocated to all finds, even if this number is simply one allocated to unstratified finds.

7.9 Records will be as full as possible given the constraints of time, access, and safety. The minimum will consist of context sheets with sketch plans and

sections, and photographs. Archaeological features will be drawn to scale if necessary; plans at 1:20 and sections and profiles at 1:10. Drawings will be made in pencil on permanent drafting film. Photographs will be taken to show the archaeological features and the nature of the natural. Overall site photographs will be taken in order to locate trenches and features. The site code will appear in all photographs if practical.

7.10 Close liaison will take place between the Site Manager (or equivalent) and the archaeological observer to ensure that all groundworks are observed. The watching brief may be restricted to certain groundworks, or may cease, following consultation with the Historic Environment Team.

7.11 If burials are encountered by groundworks they will be cleaned and recorded and left in-situ and the Historic Environment Team will be contacted. No exhumation of remains will take place until a Ministry of Justice licence has been obtained.

8 Post-fieldwork methodologies

8.1 The exact form of the post-excavation process will depend on the nature of the site and the data obtained from it. The post-excavation programme will consist, at minimum, of the following.

8.2 Fair copies will be made of rough site notes and sketches. Photographs will be catalogued and cross-referenced to the recording forms when they have been returned from processing.

8.3 Once the site work is finished the finds will be assessed for conservation, x-raying, and specialist work in accordance with *Standards for the Creation, Compilation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives*, and a programme of archaeological analysis for the post-excavation stages will be drawn up.

8.4 Any X-radiography and conservation work will be carried out by the Southampton Archaeology Unit's conservator who is UKIC registered.

9 Report preparation and contents

9.1 Within four weeks of the end of the fieldwork a report of an appropriate standard will be written. The report will include the following: summary, introduction, aims and objectives, methodology, results, conclusions, archive location, appendices, figures, and references.

10 Copyright

10.1 Southampton City Council 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 provide 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 Scheme of Investigation.

11 Archive deposition

11.1 On completion of the report the site archive including the retained artefacts and a fiche copy of the paperwork and drawings will be deposited with Southampton City Council for curation in the City Council Museum Collection.

The Museum will charge the developer a fee to cover the deposition costs of the archive and its curation in perpetuity.

12 Publication

12.1 Two copies of the full report will be provided to the Client, one copy of the report will form part of the site archive, one copy will be sent to the Special Collections Section of the Central Library, and two copies will be sent to the Southampton City Council Historic Environment Team.

12.2 The archaeological contractor will supply Southampton City Council's Historic Environment Team with one copy of the full report in Adobe Acrobat format (pdf file), on disk, and a trench plan, registered to the National Grid; also a digital copy of trench plans and feature-distribution or phase plans (where phase plans are appropriate). The format will be MapInfo TAB. All report drawings and photographs will be included in the pdf file, and the *selecting of text and graphics* security option will be set at *allowed*.

12.3 At the appropriate time, a short report of the evidence will be sent for inclusion in the summaries compiled by relevant journals (these may include any or all of: *Hampshire Studies*, *Past*, *Britannia*, *Medieval Archaeology*, and *Post-medieval Archaeology*). The summary will be placed on the Hampshire Field Club's web site *Archaeology in Hampshire*.

13 Staffing

13.1 Work on site will be carried out by experienced archaeologists. The team will be supervised by an Archaeological Officer with a minimum of 10 years experience of the area. The project will be managed by Dr AD Russel BA, PhD, MIFA.

14 Health and Safety

14.1 The Health and Safety Policies of Southampton City Council apply to its entire staff wherever they work. The Safety Manager for the Archaeology Unit is Dr AD Russel BA PhD MIFA who can be contacted on 023 8063 4906.

15 Insurances

15.1 Southampton City Council's insurance, including public liability, covers its entire staff wherever they work.

16 Monitoring procedures

16.1 The project will be monitored internally by the Archaeology Unit Manager, and for the City Council by the Historic Environment Team.

17 Procedures for reporting unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries

17.1 Should unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries be made such as well preserved remains of buildings of the medieval period or earlier, the archaeologist on site will contact the Archaeology Unit Manager on 023 8063 4906. The Historic Environment Team will then be invited to visit the site and the Client will be informed of the findings.

AD Russel
Archaeology Unit Manager

Southampton City Council
18/02/2013