

Brief for Archaeological Investigation at
The Sweyne Park School, Sir Walter Raleigh Drive,
Rayleigh



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Title: Brief for trial trenching and follow up excavation at The Sweyne Park School,
Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Rayleigh

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Planning Application

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Museum: Southend 01702 434449



This archaeological brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Historic Environment Advisor should be contacted to assess whether changes are required to the brief. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period.

The contractor is strongly advised to visit the site before completing their written scheme of investigation as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.

1. Introduction

This brief for an archaeological trial trenching exercise and follow on excavation has been prepared by the Historic Environment Advisor for the Rochford District area of Essex. The brief sets out the requirements for an archaeological programme on a new school building at the The Sweyne Park School. The proposed development comprises the construction of a new teaching block and alterations to elements of the present building. The archaeological work will only take place on the new build area.

2. Site Location and Description

The development site comprises an area of land within the present school grounds to the east of the main school (TQ8015591685). The site is currently part of the school playing field. Details of the planning application can be found on the Essex County Council Planning web site.

3. Planning Background

An application for the development of this site was submitted to Essex County Council in September 2020. A full archaeological condition was recommended to the District Council. The full archaeological condition is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and states:

Condition 1: No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until a programme of archaeological investigation has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Condition 2: No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the completion of the programme of archaeological investigation identified in the WSI defined in 1 above.

Reason for Condition 1: To ensure the developer and contractor understand what recording needs to be carried out.

Reason for Condition 2: To ensure any archaeological remains are fully recorded before development proceeds.

4. Archaeological Background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The Historic Environment Record shows the presence of multi-period occupation in the vicinity of the school site. To the north west of the site excavations have shown the presence of a Saxon burial ground with a large number of cremations and a small number of inhumations (EHER 45134) present. No evidence of settlement was identified in the excavated area although it is thought that this must be located in relatively close proximity to the site.

To the south east of the development area lies the site of a medieval church and chapel indicating the presence of medieval occupation nearby.

5. Requirement for Work

The archaeological investigation will consist of a single archaeological trial trench across the length of the proposed building (c. 38m).. A proposed trench plan should be included within the WSI. The archaeological work should aim to record the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.

Once the trenches are open and excavated a site meeting will be required to determine the excavation strategy if required. At this point the contractor will be required to provide a summary interpretation of the evaluation results with spot dating of the finds.

Particular attention is required on assessing:

- Saxon occupation
- Evidence of medieval or post medieval occupation, its nature and extent

6. General Methodology

- 6.1 A professional team of field archaeologists shall undertake the evaluation. The number of staff involved and the structure of the team shall be stated in the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 6.2 The archaeological contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 6.3 The contractor shall ensure detailed study of all mains' service locations and avoid damage to these.
- 6.4 All of the latest Health and Safety guidelines must be followed on site.
- 6.5 Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name shall be provided to the Historic Environment Advisor one week in advance of commencement of work.
- 6.6 A site code shall be obtained from the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council
- 6.7 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.

7. Trial trenching and excavation methodology

- 7.1 Machine stripping for the proposed development shall be undertaken to an agreed standard, using a toothless ditching bucket, and under the supervision and control of a professional archaeologist.
- 7.2 Details of the excavation strategy shall be provided within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 7.3 The contractor shall provide details of the site surveying, and finds recovery policy in the Written Scheme of Investigation. The site grid shall be tied into the National Grid.

- 7.4 Details of the site planning policy shall be given in the Written Scheme of Investigation. The normal preferred policy for the scale of archaeological site plans is 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.
- 7.5 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses). Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from the Historic England Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).
- 7.6 Should human remains be discovered the coroner will be informed and a licence from the Home Office sought immediately; both the client and the monitoring officer will also be informed.
- 7.7 The photographic record shall include both general and feature specific photographs, a photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. The photographic record shall be accompanied by a photographic register detailing as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.
- 7.8 The site and spoil heaps shall be checked by metal detector, with any finds recovered. A list of finds recovered by this shall be given in the report.
- 7.9 The IFA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*, and the *EAA Standards for Field Archaeology in the Eastern Region* document should be used for additional guidance in the production of the archaeological WSI, the content of the report, and the general execution of the project.

8. Finds

- 8.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed.
- 8.2 All pottery, and other finds where appropriate, shall be marked with the site code and context number.
- 8.3 The Written Scheme of Investigation shall include an agreed list of specialist consultants who may be required to conserve and/or report on finds, and advise or report on other aspects of the investigation.

- 8.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum (Southend 01702 434449) prior to the start of work, and confirmed to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 8.5 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor within four weeks of the end of the evaluation

9. Results

- 9.1 The report shall be submitted within a length of time (but not exceeding 4 months) from the end of the fieldwork, to be agreed between the developer and archaeological contractor. A single hard copy with a full digital copy as a single PDF shall be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 9.2 This report must contain:
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the fieldwork.
 - Location plan of trenches and/or other fieldwork in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each of the trenches shall be given 10 figure grid references.
 - A section/s drawing showing depth of deposits including present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
 - Methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion
 - Specialist reports,
 - The findings of the fieldwork should be discussed in consultation with the Research Agenda and Strategy for the Eastern Region (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011).
 - A concise non-technical summary of the project results.
- 9.3 An OASIS sheet shall be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor. This will be completed in digital form. A copy should also be e-mailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects in the Journal paul.gilman@me.com
- 9.4 Publication of the results, at least to a summary level and beyond if justified (*Essex Archaeology and History*) shall take place in the year following the evaluation. A copy of the final publication report as well as the full archive report shall also be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor.

10. Archive Deposition

- 10.1 The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum and confirmed in writing to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 10.2 If the finds and archive are to remain with the landowner a full copy of the archive shall be housed with the appropriate museum.
- 10.3 The full archive shall be deposited with the appropriate museum within 3 months of the completion of the report and confirmed in writing to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 10.4 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor at the time of deposition to the museum.

11. Monitoring

- 11.1 The Historic Environment Advisor will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. This will include the fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.
- 11.2 Notification of the start of work shall be given to the Historic Environment Advisor one week in advance of its commencement.
- 11.3 All excavated trenches must be inspected by the Historic Environment Advisor prior to their backfilling.
- 11.4 Any variations of the written scheme of investigation shall be agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor prior to them being carried out.

12. Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation

- 12.1 In accordance with Standards and Guidance produced by the IFA this design brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A WSI is required therefore in order to provide *the basis for a measurable standard* and for submission by the developer to the Local Planning Authority for approval.
- 12.2 Archaeological contractors shall forward a written scheme of investigation to the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council for validation **before** any work is undertaken on site. This validation is undertaken on behalf of the Planning Authority.
- 12.3 The involvement of the Historic Environment Advisor shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

- Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* East Anglian. Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 8
- Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* East Anglian. Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 14
- Medlycott, M. 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England* East Anglian. Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 24

For further information regarding the content of this brief and as part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this archaeological brief. Please address them to the author at the address below.

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