



**A.P.A.C. Ltd.**

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION  
FOR A  
PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK**

Level III Building Recording Survey

**Park Street Methodist Church, Blaenavon**

**Torfaen County Borough Council**

**Planning Application No: 17/P/0704/FUL**



## Summary

*This document comprises a Written Scheme of Investigation for proposed works to be undertaken at Park Street Methodist Church, Blaenavon.*

*The works proposed include, internal alterations, new side and rear extensions and a new vehicular access.*

*As part of the planning process, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) advised the planning department that the proposed work at the site could likely impact on archaeological resources.*

*This written scheme of investigation details an archaeological programme of work to be undertaken prior to any structural alteration or renovation.*

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## Introduction

This Written Scheme of Investigation has been prepared by Mr A Phillips, A.P.A.C. Ltd, in response to RE: Proposed side and rear extension, new vehicular access, internal alteration to convert ground floor to funeral home together with new first floor to accommodate Methodist church. Park Street Methodist Church, Park Street, Blaenavon, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 9AA, Pl.App.No: 17/P/0704/FUL.

A planning application for the work was applied for by ASQUITH DESIGN SERVICES acting as agents for Mr C, Brown client.

The proposed alteration, construction and renovation work will involve changes to the standing fabric of the existing building, all of which may impact on any archaeological resources present.

Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) were advised on this planning request by Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) Archaeological Planning Services (APS), who suggested that the planning approval should include a condition requiring a program of archaeological work.

GGAT expressed concern in that the nature of the proposed works will alter the standing fabric of a church situated within the “*Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, a World Heritage Site, (CADW ref: 984.)*”, and “*Additionally is also located in the Blaenavon Registered Historic Landscape, Specifically the Blaenavon Urban Core Character Area (HLCA001)*”

As a result of this, and in order to preserve, through recording, the original layout and design of the church, a condition has been imposed for a level III building recording survey.

GGAT suggested the wording of the condition should be similar to that set out in condition Welsh Government Circular 016/2014:

1.

*No works to which this consent relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted in writing by the local planning authority.*

*Reason: As the building is of architectural and cultural significance the specified records are required to mitigate impact.*

TOR0171/HB

This Written Scheme of Investigation has been compiled, based on information provided by (the agent) and the TCBC Planning Portal.



## Location of the Site

The location of the site is central to the town of Blaenavon, Monmouthshire, on Park Street, NGR 325122, 208883.

Travelling south east from Abergavenny along the A40, take the third turn off the Hardwick roundabout onto the A4042 Heads of the Valleys Road.

Take the first left along the slip road and 2<sup>nd</sup> left towards Llanfoist and continue towards Gilwern until passing under a skewed masonry bridge, after which is a left turn towards Blaenavon.

Upon reaching Blaenavon take the first turn at the roundabout onto the A4043, then the third turn at the second roundabout onto the B4246.

Take the right turn onto “High street” then the first left followed by the second right turn onto park street. Park street Methodist Church is on the left.

## Brief archaeological and historical background

Park Street Methodist church is located within the archaeologically sensitive area of the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, World heritage site (CADW 984), and Blaenavon Registered Historic Landscape (HLW (GT) 1), specifically the Blaenavon Urban Core Character Area, (HLCA001).

Information gained from the design and access statement for the Pre-app consultation: *17/PE/0239/PREAPP*, written by *B.S. Technical services*, in 2017, suggest:

*The building is a Wesleyan/Non-conformist chapel dating from 1885. It was designed by John Wills of Derby in the Lombardic Romanesque style. The foundation stone was laid on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1885 and the chapel opened on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1885. “Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. (BILWHS)”*

There is also some information added about “*a severe fire in 1922 which destroyed the Vestry, choir galley and organ.*” (*Ibid*). Which would suggest some of the internal structure of the church to be early 20<sup>th</sup> century reconstruction.

## Rational of the Project

The proposed development is for the extension and alteration of the existing church buildings ground floor to accommodate the funerary and its facilities.

Due to the alterations taking places to the ground floor, the first floor will be remodelled to accommodate the chapel including the relocation of the church organ.

Further work will also include the addition of a vehicular access in the churches boundary wall to accommodate the funerary vehicles.

The work will involve consolidation and alteration of present standing structures, the undertaking of which may well reveal previously un-recorded building phases or construction techniques, which may possibly increase the knowledge base of such buildings both locally and regionally.

In accordance with this design brief, the aim of the proposed work will be to:

Elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of any potential archaeological remains, extant in the development area.

Provide an information base from which to formulate mitigation strategies, in the event of significant archaeological resources being impacted upon within the development area.



Provide a detailed record of the work to allow for a report to be produced.

Provide a detail record of the work; in the event of significant archaeological resources being discovered, to allow for publication in a suitable academic journal.

Allow for the development to be monitored.

The above will be realized through a sequence of the following objective strategies;

- Brief Documentary Research
- A Level III building survey

## Scope of the Work

### Documentary research:

An amount of research has been undertaken to compile the historical background to the site from easily available sources and are detailed in the Heritage Justification Statement.

There is however, scope for further research in order to understand the site within the local context and therefore a 500km search of historical resources centred around the farm complex will be sought from the HER.

### A Level 3 building survey

A full definition of building survey 'levels' can be found in the Historic England Publication Understanding Historic Buildings A guide to good Recording Practice 2016. But the relevant sections are provided below:

#### 5.3 Level 3

Level 3 is an analytical record and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the buildings appearance and structure to support the analysis.

The information contained in the record will for the most part have been obtained through an examination of the building itself. If documentary sources are used they are likely to be those which are readily accessible, such as historic Ordnance Survey Map, trade directories and other published sources. The record will not normally discuss the buildings boarded stylistic or historical context and importance at any length. It may however, form part of a wider survey – thematic or regional, for example – one of a group of buildings, in which additional source material contributes to an overall historical and architectural synthesis. A Level 3 record may also be appropriate when the fabric of a building is under threat but time or resources for detailed documentary research, or where the scope for such research is limited.

## Procedures

### The building survey

The survey procedure will be undertaken to record aspects of both the interior and exterior of the building, as a whole.

Any structural features of interest will be recorded with descriptions.



Should such structures be of sufficient importance they will be drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20: where appropriate.

Photographic recording with included scales where possible, will be taken using a digital camera with 14 mg capability with images saved as Tiff files.

Measurements will be taken, where appropriate, with a Leica, Disto and related to the floor plan supplied by the by the client's architect.

A report will be produced, fully representative of information gathered from implementation of the Level 3 survey.

Once completed, a copy of the report will be submitted to the TCBC Planning for their approval and a further copy will be sent to GGAT..

## **Analysis and Reports**

Within three months of the completion of the fieldwork, fully illustrated reports will be submitted to the client, TCBC (planning), and GGAT Historic Environment Record.

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 evaluation 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 survey results including any archaeologically significant features.
- A discussion of the location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological features uncovered, together with a discussion of their relationship with known archaeology in the vicinity.
- Other maps, plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate.
- 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.
- 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 will be published in a suitable local journal, with a record note presented to the appropriate national period journal(s).

## **Archive**

In the event of artefacts being collected, the archaeological contractor will endeavour to persuade the legal owner of any artefacts, to transfer them 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 project code with all significant documents and packaging carrying this code number.

If the archive has no artefacts, then copies the report will be deposited in the Gwent Archives with the original copy retained by A.P.A.C. ltd.

A further copy of the archive will be sent to the RCAHMW.



The project archives will consist of all original records, and any documentation that relates to the building recording.

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

The archives will be prepared according to the Management of Archaeological Projects, Historic England, Second Edition, (2014) so the records will be 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 evaluation and with the agreement of the landowner.

A synopsis of the project will be submitted to CBA Wales.

### **Health & Safety:**

The Project Team 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).
- In accordance with the CDM Regulation, The Project Team will prepare a Risk Assessment in relation to the archaeological works prior to the commencement of the evaluation.

All necessary 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.

Project monitoring:

A.P.A.C. Ltd., understands that the project may require monitoring involvement. As a matter of courtesy, a copy of this written scheme of investigation will be sent to the monitoring authority (BBNPA).

### **Project Management**

Dr Neil Phillips, MCIFA. A.P.A.C. Ltd, will manage the project.

Dr N. Phillips has been active in archaeology since 1997, completing his 1<sup>st</sup> degree in 1999 followed by a research Phd in 2004. Dr Phillips started and has been director of A.P.A.C. Ltd since 2004. A.P.A.C. Ltd is an archaeological consultancy specialising in landscape archaeology and survey work.

Dr Phillips interests lie locally with the medieval period and industrial period although he has been involved in international Palaeolithic projects both in the UK as well as Europe and Africa.

Scibd currently carries a range of archaeological projects completed by APAC Ltd (search APAC. Ltd or Dr N Phillips).

APAC. Ltd has current Public Liability (924765101 CHC) and Professional Indemnity HU PI (9129989/1126) Insurance with Towergate.

### **Resources:**

- Project Director: Dr Neil Phillips. (Director; preparation of report text),
- Assistant (Finds & Survey): A.O. Phillips



**Bibliography and References:**

- English Heritage Management of Archaeological Projects (1991).  
Understanding Historic Buildings, *A guide to good Recording Practice*. 2006
- Chartered Institute of Archaeologists. Code of Conduct and the Code of Approved Practice for the regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology. 2014.  
Standards and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials. 2014.  
Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures, 2014
- GGAT Re: Proposed side and rear extension, new vehicular access, internal alterations to convert ground floor to funeral home together with new first floor to accommodate Methodist church. Park Street, Methodist Church, Park Street, Blaenavon, Pontypool, Torfaen Np4 9AA. Pl.App.No.: 17/P/0704/Ful
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