



A.P.A.C. Ltd.

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

**PROJECT DESIGN FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL, FIELD EVALUATION**

PD2: EV/ABG/15

Development to the rear of 21-23 Nevill Street, Abergavenny



Pre-Planning Application No: DC/2015/00070

Prepared for:

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By:

Dr N Phillips.



Summary

A planning application has been submitted for a proposed development involving demolition of existing buildings to allow for construction of new buildings.

During the planning process the site was identified as having potential archaeological resources that may be impacted by any development.

Unfortunately, as insufficient knowledge of that potential currently exists, planning approval was recommended for deferment awaiting archaeological evaluation.

This document comprises the project design for an archaeological evaluation to be undertaken at the site.

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Cover photograph: Site Image 1. Current site



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Introduction

This Project Design has been prepared by Dr Neil Phillips, A.P.A.C. Ltd, in response to a proposed programme of development work on a site to the rear of 21-23 Nevill Street, Abergavenny, NGR 329750 214250, fig 01.

The proposed work is to demolish two existing buildings; currently used for storage, in order to erect a new workshop and offices, with a further extension to a garage for more workshops.

A planning application for the proposed development was submitted to Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) by Morgan & Horowskyj (agents) acting for United Joinery, (client).

The application came to the notice of Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, Archaeological Planning Services GGAT (APS); who advises the council on such matters.

The GGAT (APS) response was that 'the proposal has an archaeological restraint' by reason:

The proposed development site lies immediately outside the line of the town wall at Abergavenny. It is within the archaeologically sensitive area and within the Conservation area. It lies 140m from the known area of the Roman fort of Gobanium and is thought to be in an area of the vicus or civilian settlement associated with this fort. The town walls were constructed in the Medieval period and the defences were reinforced by a ditch on the external aspect. This feature runs under the proposed development. It is known to have been constructed prior to 1241 and was extended during the Civil War Period. Where this feature has been encountered during previous archaeological work, it can be shown to be more than 10.5 wide and 2.4m deep. There may also be Civil War fortifications in the vicinity, as well as the remains of the medieval Suburbs.

MON2155/JB

GGAT (APS) therefore advised that the determination of any planning application should be deferred pending a report arising from archaeological evaluation work at the site citing Planning Policy Wales 7th Ed Section 6.5.1:

The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining a planning application whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled

(PPW 2014)

Also, Welsh Office Circular 60/96, Section 13:

Where research indicates that important archaeological remains may exist, the planning authority should request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before any decision on the planning application is taken.

(WOC 60/69).

The above decision was forwarded to the client and his agent and a Brief for Archaeological Evaluation requested for GGAT (APS).

The agent then contacted APAC. Ltd to undertake the evaluation and a contract was drawn up.

This document is the Project Design drawn up by APAC. Ltd, for the archaeological evaluation at the above site.

Site Location and Description

Abergavenny is a town in Monmouthshire, South Wales, easily reached from the A40 or the A465 heads of the Valleys Road, fig 01.

The site is to the west of the town centre and just north of Tudor Street which passes in front of the Police Station and Magistrates Court.

The entrance is off Baker Street, behind the Police Station and Magistrates Court carpark.

At present, the site is a works yard with a variety of storage buildings, open storage areas for building materials and unmarked parking areas.



The surface is mostly tarmacked and there is evidence of quite a few service runs.

Brief archaeological and historical background

Within the Abergavenny area, chance finds have produced evidence of man's presence since prehistoric times; however, much more is known of the Roman and Medieval periods from slum-clearances in the 1950s and 60s and ongoing developments in the 1970s.

A few of these later undertakings required archaeological excavations; those in the vicinity of the town, such as Cross Street and Castle Street produced a great deal of evidence relating to Roman Abergavenny (*Gobannium*) and the Medieval town and defences, (Olding 2004.).

Of specific relevance to this site is the line of the medieval town wall and its outer ditch; believed to date from the late 13th century.

The ditch is known from above excavations to have had a width of around 10m and there is a potential for early settlement to have existed close to the walls.

Documented work on the defences is known from the Civil war period and possible evidence of this later work may be revealed.

Rationale of the Project

The proposed development is for demolition of two existing buildings in order to erect a new workshop and offices, with a further extension to a garage for more workshops.

There is a distinct possibility that the work may impact upon archaeological resources within the development area.

Aims and Objectives

In accordance with this Project Design, the aim will be to:

Elucidate the character, distribution, extent and importance of any potential archaeological remains, extant in the development area; allowing for the production of a sufficiently detailed report to be used to inform and mitigate any associated development.

This will be realized through the following objectives:

The evaluation report will provide sufficiently detailed information to allow informed decisions to safeguard the archaeological resource, to be taken on the basis of its contents.

The evaluation will attempt to; specifically, establish the presence and extent of potential significant archaeological deposits, features and structures, which may be identified in the fieldwork.

The evaluation will attempt to recover enough information to enable assessment of the archaeological implications of the study area.

Resulting from the evaluation, a report on the results will be produced, which will include a detailed summary of the methodology, site history, deposits/features/ structures/artefacts uncovered and interpretation of the results.

Scope of the Work

The archaeology of the application site as a whole, in its wider local or regional context, should be considered, although the evaluation will be confined to those areas which will be directly affected by the development or some aspect of it.

Any remains of potential interest should be considered, whatever their date.



Methodology

The Evaluation will adhere to The Chartered Institute of Archaeologists standards and guidance for field evaluation 2014.

Documentary Research

Sufficient documentary research will be undertaken to complete the background history of the site in order to place the results of the evaluation in their historic context.

The following may be contacted towards this end:

- Abergavenny Museum
- Abergavenny Library
- Cadw (Cardiff)
- Current site data from the landowner
- Glamorgan Gwent Historic Environment Record (HER) (Swansea)
- National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth)
- Public Record Office, Ebbw Vale

Excavation

The timetable for the programme has not been determined but contingency plans will be in place to address potential delays such as for poor weather or unexpected discoveries.

The archaeological contractor will be responsible for securing information on any services within the evaluation areas and will take all reasonable precautions to avoid damage to such services.

The trenching strategy has been strategically placed with reference to the Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation GGAT (APS), and in order to maximise the archaeological potential of the work.

Trenching, will determine the nature, depth, survival and extent of any archaeological features identified.

Four 10m x 1.8m trenches are to be excavated within the designated parcel of land fig 02.

The trench numbers have been allocated by reason of accessibility but may be excavated in a different order.

Trench number 1 will be positioned to the north east of the site, angled at 90 to the position of the town wall allowing for 10m to be searched across any remains of the outer town wall ditch.

Trench number 2 will be positioned central to the site and will examine the area for the proposed north western foundation of the new building. It runs parallel and east of a known service trench.

Trench number 3 will evaluate the potential for surviving archaeology at the west of the site along the line of the proposed foundation trench for the garage extension.

The fourth trench will be positioned between two existing buildings, at a second point where any remains of a town wall ditch may be expected to survive.

All trenches will be excavated, with a mechanical digger fitted with a non-toothed bucket, to the first significant archaeological horizon, or natural surface; whichever comes first.

This will allow for the character, distribution, extent and importance of at least the minimum number of archaeological features to be understood.

Once either an archaeological horizon or natural surface has been encountered, mechanical excavation will cease and the trench will be cleared by hand for recording.



Parts of the trenches may be excavated to the base of any archaeological resource, in order to facilitate a better understanding.

Where deep excavation becomes necessary the sides of the trench will be stepped out to provide safe working conditions.

Any significant features and structures will be left in-situ.

Where archaeological deposits are found, the overall depth of such deposits will be tested to determine the extent, date, nature, condition and significance of the deposits.

In the event of human remains being discovered work will cease until The Ministry of Justice has been informed and the necessary permission to continue has been given.

Human remains identified will be left in situ with recording limited to the position of the grave, alignment, burial position and stratigraphic relationships.

Recording

Archaeological deposits will be recorded using pro forma context sheets in line with the MoLAS recording system that has been adopted by English Heritage's Central Archaeology Service.

All artefacts recovered during the project will be retained and related to the stratigraphic contexts from which they are derived with any typologically distinct and closely datable finds recorded 3 dimensionally.

All artefacts will be labelled, packed and stored in appropriate materials and conditions to ensure that no deterioration occurs in accordance with CIfA's, *Standard and Guidance the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and research of Archaeological Materials, 2014*.

A continuous photographic record will be taken using a digital camera system with a resolution of at least 10mp and images stored as both Raw and Jpeg.

Illustrative photographs will be included in the report with a full database of all the photographs included in the report appendices.

Any drawn record will comprise plans of the site at a suitable scale, trench plans at scale 1:20 and sections at scale 1:10.

A profile of the deposits in each trench will be recorded if significant, even where no archaeology is present.

No area will be back-filled, until GGAT (APS) has inspected it, unless written permission is granted in advance.

All trenching will be backfilled with the material excavated.

A protective membrane will be placed over trenching where significant archaeological remains are encountered.

Survey

A topographical survey will be undertaken of the site to locate it to National Grid datum.

The survey will also locate any relevant boundaries and any extant features, to accurately, facilitate any future work.

Continuous survey will continue throughout the evaluation trenching with all important finds or features recorded using a Topcon GPT 3007 REDM, Reflectorless Electronic Distance Measurement, Total Station.

The location of the evaluation trenches will also be marked at this time.

Surveyed data will be processed in CivilCad 6 and corrected to ground station Data.

Final processing will be done at the end of the work with all data being transferred into AutoCad for plotting and Adobe Illustrator for publication.



Assessment

Upon completion of the site, work an assessment of the site archive will be undertaken to include all written, drawn, and photographic records, artefacts and ecofacts/samples.

Resulting from the assessment a catalogue by context of all artefactual material found, quantified by number, weight, or both and containing sketches of significant artefacts will be compiled.

Artefacts will be assessed to provide dating, social, economic, and technological information. Special or unusual features will be highlighted and reference made to other material recovered from the immediate environs of the evaluation site

The requirements for artefact conservation will be assessed and discussed with a specialist conservator.

Any environmental or technological samples that are taken will be assessed in order to determine their significance and value for further investigation.

Specialist assessment reports on artefact assemblages and environmental samples may be deemed necessary.

A site matrix will be prepared to include all contexts identified during the evaluation.

Analysis & Report

Within three months of the completion of the fieldwork, a copy of the fully illustrated report will be submitted to the client, Monmouth County Council (planning), and GGAT Historic Environment Record.

The 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 evaluation results including any archaeologically significant features/deposits or potential features/deposits identified within the each trench.
- A discussion of the location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological deposits/features uncovered, together with a discussion of their relationship with known archaeology in the vicinity.
- Survey and excavation plans at appropriate scales. Each trench will be presented in the report with at least one plan (plan 1:20) and section (scale 1:10) as well as a photograph.
- Other maps, plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate.
- A description of the finds and environmental samples collected including an exposition of the methodologies employed, a statement on the presence or absence of material and an assessment of preservation. A summary interpretation of the finds including reference to any unusual or important features of the assemblage will also be included. Specialist reports will be included of important groups of finds, materials and samples.
- 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.
- Appendices to the report will include a copy of the Project Design.
- A summary report on the evaluation will be published in a suitable local journal, with a record note presented to the appropriate national period journal(s).



Archive

The archive will be prepared according to the Management of Archaeological Projects, English Heritage, Second Edition, (1991) so the records will be fully ordered and indexed.

The project archive will consist of all original records, artefacts, ecofacts/samples and all documentation that relates to the evaluation including copies of the Design Brief and any relevant correspondence.

The project is designated a project code: EV/ABG/15 all significant documents and packaging will carry this code.

The archive will be deposited within twelve months of the completion of the evaluation and with the agreement of the landowner.

A synopsis of the archive will be lodged with the Historic Environment Record.

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

In the event of the evaluation recovering archaeological archives:

The Archaeological Contractor will endeavour to persuade the legal owner of any artefacts, to transfer them to a suitable Museum.

Abergavenny Museum Service will be notified of the intention to deposit the project archive with the Town Museum.

Project management

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

Dr N. Phillips has been active in archaeology since 1997, completing his 1st 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.

Currently at ACIfA standard he is awaiting confirmation of MCIfA upgrade. Steve Clarke MifA of Monmouth Archaeology has agreed to cover him in this regard if the need arises.

Dr Phillips interests lie locally with the Medieval period although he has been involved in international Palaeolithic projects both in the UK as well as Europe and Africa as well as considerable Industrial based archaeology locally.

APAC Ltd is insured through 'Towergate Insurance' for Professional Indemnity and Public Liability

Staff

Dr. Neil Phillips.

Site Assistants (*If Required. To be arranged*).

Post ex

Mr A. O. Phillips.

Specialist services if required:

Mr S Clarke; ceramics

Dr T Young; metalwork

E Walker; Lithics

F Taylor; Fauna

Online research Ms F Farley,



Project Monitoring:

The Archaeological Contractor understands that the project may require monitoring involvement.

The Archaeological Contractor proposes:

- Progress meetings during the evaluation.
- A site meeting to confirm completion of the site works.
- Consultation to discuss the draft report and archive before submission of the final report.
- The Project Team will minute/distribute all monitoring consultations.
- The Project Team will provide the monitoring authority with progress reports during the evaluation programme (if requested).
- The Project Team will ensure all records are available upon request following the excavation programme as far as is reasonably practicable.

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APAC.Ltd, hereby give permission for the monitoring authority to use any documentation directly relating to the project as described in this Project Design following a period of 12 months after the evaluation is completed.



Bibliography and References:

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- MON2155/2015/JBHD. Brief for Archaeological Evaluation Rear of 21 Neville Street Abergavenny
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- Morgan & Horowskyj SPH/EW/1218(14) Re: Development To The Rear of 21-23 Nevill Street, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire.
- Ordnance Survey Block Plan centred on SO 2914. Stamped MCC Planing Section 21 Jan 2015
- Drawings: 1218-04-A United Joinery Yard, 21-23 Nevil Street, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. Survey – Site Plan and Store 2 plans and Elevations April 2014.
- 1218-04 United Joinery Yard, 21-23 Nevil Street, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. Design proposals – Site Plan/Roof Plan April 2014.
- Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992.

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Fig 01: Location



FIG 02 Trench Plans