

**METHOD STATEMENT
FOR AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

AT

**17 SOUTH GROVE,
HIGHGATE
LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN,**

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Gary Brown

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

**Unit 54
Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London SE4 2PD**

**Tel. 0207 732 3925
Fax. 0207 732 7896**

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 This Method Statement has been prepared by Gary Brown of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA), to detail a methodology by which an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken at 17 South Grove, Highgate, LB Camden. PCA's client, Salt Evans, is seeking planning permission to develop the site, and the watching brief is required in support of an existing planning condition.

1.2 All works will be undertaken in accordance with the following documents:

- This Written Scheme of Investigation (pending approval from the GLAAS Officer responsible for Camden)
- Archaeological Guidance Paper 2 *Written Schemes Of Investigation*
- GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Papers: 3: *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork In London* and 5: *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1990).

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited is a Registered Archaeological Organisation (number 23) with the Institute for Archaeologists and will operate within the Institute's 'Code of Practice'.

1.3 The Watching Brief will monitor intrusive groundworks associated with the construction of a new residential development on the plot.

1.4 A Watching Brief is required because the site lies in an Archaeological Priority Area as defined in the Borough's UDP. The site does not contain, nor is adjacent to, any Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

2 THE WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.1 The objectives of the exercise is to monitor and record excavation work associated the excavation of new basements and foundations within the development plot at 17 South Grove, Highgate. The groundworks will be undertaken by the client's groundworks contractor and will be monitored by a professional and suitably experienced archaeologist.
- 2.2 All works will be in accordance, with English Heritage Guidance Paper: 4 Archaeological Watching Brief; 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork, and in accordance with the IFA Code of Conduct.
- 2.3 A single archaeologist will be present during the groundworks exercise to examine the nature of the *in situ* and removed soils, to examine the soils for artefacts and to record the results. Provision has been made for the presence of an additional archaeologist if archaeological deposits are encountered requiring further examination and recording, so as to ensure quick recording. Provision has also been made for the taking and assessment of environmental samples.
- 2.4 If during the course of the groundworks it becomes apparent that either archaeological deposits do not exist or survive at the site PCA will inform GLAAS and request that the archaeological monitoring exercise is halted.
- 2.5 On completion of the fieldwork the site archive will be completed, an OASIS Form filled in and a short report completed if no, or very few archaeological deposits or features are encountered. If sufficient archaeological deposits or features are encountered, and are deemed to be of sufficient importance to the GLAAS Officer, then provision has been made to complete a fuller report.

3 GROUNDWORKS

3.1 Method Statement

3.1.1 The area of proposed groundworks will be broken out by the main sub-contractors. The spoil, make-up and any other “modern debris”, will be removed by the sub-contractor and monitored by an archaeologist, with absolute and relative depths recorded. The objective of the Watching Brief is to allow trained archaeologists to identify, record and retrieve (as far as possible) archaeological remains that may be uncovered in the course of a development programme. The contractors will allow the archaeologist/s sufficient time to record uncovered strata, and where required to investigate features by hand and in detail. If, in the opinion of the attendant archaeologist, archaeology of regional or national importance is uncovered, all site work will cease and the client and GLAAS will be informed. A site decision will then be made as to the most appropriate manner to take the works to completion.

3.1.2 The client has not advised PCA of any ground soil contamination at the site, but personal protective equipment (gloves, mask, suit) will be used as appropriate. In all matters of health and safety then the advice and instructions of the site contractors will be followed.

3.1.4 All gold and silver will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner according to the procedures relating to Treasure Act 1996. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

3.2 Access and Safety

3.2.1 Reasonable access to the site will be granted to representatives of the London Borough of Camden, other representatives of the Council, and English Heritage who wish to be satisfied, through site inspections, that the archaeological works are being conducted to proper professional standards and in accordance with the agreements made.

3.2.2 All relevant health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice will be respected. The groundworks contractor will be responsible for overall health and safety on the site including perimeter security, location, disconnection or avoidance of live services, provision of welfare facilities etc.

3.2.3 General good health and safety practice procedures will be followed. These include no smoking, drinking or eating in the vicinity of the excavation. Hands should be washed in

the facilities provided by the contractors prior to any smoking, eating or drinking. All staff will wear hard hats, Hi-Visibility vests and steel toe-capped boots on site.

3.3 Recording Systems

3.3.1 A unique-number site code will be obtained for the site from the Museum of London.

3.3.2 The recording systems adopted during the investigations will be broadly compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in the Borough. Where there is any doubt as to the appropriate recording technique the Museum of London recording manual will be used.

3.3.3 The site archive will be organised so as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Borough. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and exposed will be entered onto prepared *pro-forma* Single Context Recording Sheets will be used. Sample recording sheets, sample registers, findings recording sheets, accession catalogues, and the photography record cards will follow the Museum of London equivalents. This requirement for archival compatibility extends to the use of computerised databases.

3.3.4 A 'site location plan' indicating the site north and based on current Ordnance Survey data (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. The location of the OS bench marks used and the site TBM will also be indicated.

3.3.5 Some record of the full extent in plan of any archaeological deposits encountered will be made; these plans will be on polyester based drawing film, will be related to the site grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. 'Single context planning' will be used where deeply stratified deposits are encountered. Where possible the information should be digitised for eventual CAD application.

3.3.6 Sections will be drawn to a scale of 1:10 on polyester based drawing film.

3.3.7 The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections.

3.3.8 If the site complexity is such as to justify its use the 'Harris Matrix' stratification diagram will be used to record stratigraphic relationships. This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the excavations.

3.3.9 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies (on 35mm film), illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation.

3.4 Treatment of Finds and Samples.

3.4.1 Different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the deposit or feature under investigation. Close attention will be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. Sample size should be take into account the frequency with which material is likely to occur.

3.4.2 The strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits and structures (which can include soils, timbers, animal bone and human burials) will be developed in consultation with PCA's Environmental Consultant.

3.4.3 A high priority will be given to sampling river and other anaerobic deposits, such as peat, where organic materials may be preserved. Also the depositional history of any gravel deposits may be examined to determine whether they are man made or natural in origin.

3.4.4 Organic samples will be subject to appropriate specialist analysis. There may well be a requirement to submit timbers to dendrochronological analysis and to process some samples to provide Carbon 14 dating. Other forms of specialist analysis may also be appropriate (the project design and specification of works should specify the likely need for such analysis).

3.4.5 All finds retrieval policies of the Museum of London will be adopted and all identified finds and artefacts will be retained unless the Museum of London policy states otherwise.

3.4.6 All finds will be treated in a proper manner and will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's '*Conservation Guidelines No.2*' and the Museum of London's '*Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be Permanently Retained by the Museum of London*'. all metal objects will be x-rayed and then selected for conservation.

3.4.7 Before commencing the watching brief the archaeological organisation responsible for the works will confirm in writing to the GLAAS that arrangements are in hand to cover all

necessary processing, conservation, and specialist analysis and storage of finds and samples.

3.5 Reports and archives

3.5.1 The integrity of the site archive will be maintained. The finds and records will be available for public consultation where they are deposited, at the London Archaeology Archive Research Centre, Museum of London. Appropriate guidance set out in the Museum and Galleries Commission's '**Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections**' (1992) and the Society of Museum archaeologist's draft '**Selection and Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections**' (1992), will be followed in all circumstances.

3.5.2 If the finds are not to be donated to the appropriate Museum, arrangements will be made for a comprehensive record of all relevant materials (including detailed drawings, photographs and descriptions of individual finds), which can instead constitute the archaeological archive.

3.5.3 The minimum acceptable standard for the site archive is defined in the '**Management of Archaeological Projects 5.4**' and '**Appendix 3**'. It will include all materials recovered, (or the comprehensive records of such materials as referred to above) and all written, drawn, and photographic records relating directly to the investigations. It will be quantified, ordered, indexed, and internally consistent before transfer to the Museum of London. It will also contain a site matrix, a site summary and brief written observations on the artefactual and environmental data.

3.5.4 United Kingdom Institute for Conservation guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (1990) will be followed.

3.5.5 A short summary of the results of the work, even if negative, will be submitted to the Greater London SMR and NAR (using the appropriate archaeological report forms), and for publication in the appropriate academic journals including the 'Excavation Round-Up' of the **London Archaeologist**. Such publications will meet the minimum requirements set out in Appendix 7, '**Management of Archaeological Projects**' 1991, and derive from a 'phase 2 review' as defined in the same document. A more expansive publication may be required on the basis of the assessment report and English Heritage requirements.

4 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

- 4.1 It is imperative that all soil excavation will be monitored by an archaeologist in order not to cause unnecessary damage to any surviving archaeological deposits.
- 4.2 Accommodation, as well as welfare facilities, will be required for the Watching Brief archaeologist. These will be provided by the main contractor at or near the site.
- 4.3 The excavation will be monitored and possibly inspected by Kim Stabler, English Heritage (GLAAS).
- 4.4 The Health and Safety policies of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited will be followed and in accordance with all statutory regulations. Full acknowledgment will be made to existing site policies and procedures.
- 4.5 The archaeological works will be supervised by a member of staff who has undertaken a similar exercise on a number of occasions, and will last for the duration of the intrusive groundworks. Additional archaeologists will be supplied to the site if the resource is deemed to complex for a single archaeologist to undertake on their own.