Project Code: SRDM08
Date: 10 April 2008

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation at Salters Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian

Client: Barr Holdings Ltd on behalf of Midlothian Council

April 2008

Headland Archaeology Ltd

13 Jane Street

Edinburgh

EH6 5HE

1 INTRODUCTION

The client has applied full planning permission for a primary school with vehicular access (ref 08/00084/FUL). The Heritage Officer for Midlothian Council requires a phased programme of works in order to mitigate any impacts upon archaeological remains that may exist on site. This document is a written scheme of investigation for an archaeological evaluation intended to complement and complete earlier evaluation work undertaken in 2000 (Stronach and Connolly 2000).

The evaluation will serve to confirm the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits or features within the development area and provide information on the character, extent, date and quality of those remains. Depending on the results there maybe a requirement for further stages of investigation to mitigate against the effects of the development either before or during construction as necessary unless those remains can be preserved within the development by design. Any further stages of investigation required will be detailed in separate project designs.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The development area is located north of Dalkeith, between the playing fields of St David's RC High School and the Thornybank Industrial Estate. At present it consists of open fields.

The evaluation undertaken in 2000 (Stronach & Connolly 2000) covered approximately two per cent of the development area, and located no archaeological remains earlier than the post-medieval period. However, a large number of prehistoric features were located in the field to the north, on an area of sands and gravel. Additionally, a scheduled cropmark (SAM 6203) is located to the west of the development area. The area of sands and gravel upon which the archaeological features were located is thought to extend into the development area and there may be some potential for prehistoric features to occur in areas where these deposits are present.

3 PROJECT DESIGN

3.1 Objectives

The objectives are:

- To evaluate the archaeological potential of the development area.
- To determine the presence/absence, character, extent and quality of any unknown archaeological remains.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Trial Trenching

The total area of the trenches will be equivalent to 8% of the available development area, taking into account the evaluation trenches already excavated. Therefore, the total area of trenches excavated in this evaluation will be equivalent to 6% of the development area of 24,385 m^2. This equates to 820 linear meters of trenching with a 1.8 m wide bucket.

Trenches will be excavated by a mechanical excavator, controlled by an archaeologist and equipped with a toothless bucket. The positioning of the trenches will be largely random with good, even coverage across the site but may also be subject to on-site factors, such as the need to avoid services known to cross the development area and local ground conditions. One evaluation trench will be excavated along the northern boundary of the development area, in proximity to the archaeological features located to the north.

Based upon the previous evaluation, trenches are not expected to exceed 0.4 m in depth. Trenches exceeding 0.75 m in depth will be fenced with 'netlon' fencing if left open overnight. If no archaeological remains are present in any deep trenches, they will be backfilled following completion of recording work.

Machine excavation will continue to the first significant archaeological deposit or undisturbed subsoil. Archaeological features will be excavated by hand. Deposits will be sufficiently excavated to address the objectives of the evaluation while preserving as much as possible *in situ*. Typical sample excavation would be 50% of discrete pits and postholes, 10% of linear features.

The trenches will be backfilled but not resurfaced or compacted as part of this contract.

3.2.2 Timescale

Subject to approval of this Project Design fieldwork will begin on Wednesday 16th April 2008. The evaluation will take three days to complete in the field, including backfilling time. A verbal report will be supplied to client immediately on completion and a written report will be supplied within four weeks.

3.3 Recording

All recording will be by Headland Archaeology Ltd standard method. All contexts, small finds and environmental samples will be given unique numbers. Bulk finds will be collected by context. Colour transparencies and print photographs will be taken. An overall site plan will be recorded at 1:1250 relative to the National Grid with 1:20 plans of individual features. The sections/elevations will be drawn at 1:10. Small finds will be 3D plotted where appropriate. All recording will be undertaken on pro forma record cards. Survey recording of all trench locations will be related to the Ordnance Survey grid.

3.4 Samples and Artefacts

Finds will be subject to standard Treasure Trove procedures. Archaeological deposits will be sampled systematically in bulk samples, a minimum of 10 litres but up to 30 litres if possible, will be taken for wet sieving and flotation. These will be processed and assessed as part of the contract. Bulk samples will be taken from any waterlogged deposits present for assessment of organic remains. Any organic artefacts that are retrieved during the excavation will be stored in appropriate conditions and assessed by a qualified archaeological conservator as a part of this contract.

3.5 Reporting and Archive

The results of the investigation will be presented in a Data Structure Report with an illustrated synthesis of the results and the impact of the development on the site, and an assessment of any further post excavation work that is required to complete the site. The required number of copies of the report will be sent to the client, Midlothian Council and the NMRS within two months of the completion of fieldwork.

A digital copy of the full report and DES entry falling within ADS/RCAHMS guidelines will be supplied to Midlothian Council as per reporting requirements, including 3-4 photographs in digital format and a georeferenced dxf giving the locations of all evaluation trenches etc.

An interim report will be prepared for submission to *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland* and the project details will be recorded via the OASIS system. The records of the archaeological works will be archived at the National Monuments Record of Scotland.

4 PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork will be managed by Simon Stronach and supervised by Mike Kimber. Palaeoenvironmental aspects of the project will be assessed by Dr Scott Timpany and Dr Stephen Lancaster who will be available to advise on-site if complex deposits are encountered. Sample processing, if appropriate, will be undertaken by experienced technicians, under the supervision of Dr Timpany. Julie Franklin will be responsible for the artefactual analysis. Simon Stronach is a full Member of the *Institute of Field Archaeologists*. Headland Archaeology is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the IFA and abides by the Codes of Conduct of the IFA. The company has all the necessary technical and personnel resources for the satisfactory completion of the investigation. CVs can be provided on request.

5 INSURANCE

Headland Archaeology Ltd is fully indemnified and all necessary insurances can be presented on request.

6 HEALTH & SAFETY

All of Headland's work is undertaken in accordance with current H&S legislation. A risk assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

7 MONITORING

Access will be afforded to representatives of Midlothian Council in order to monitor the progress of the works.

REFERENCES

Stronach, S & Connolly, C 2000 "Results of an archaeological evaluation at the proposed Schools Community Campus, Salters Road, Dalkeith". Headland Archaeology Ltd unpublished client report.