

**LAND ADJACENT TO CSN PRECISION ENGINEERING,
NEATH ABBEY
NEATH,
NEATH PORT TALBOT.**

NGR: SS 7450 9756 (CENTRED)

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION
FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

February 2021

Quality Assurance

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with
AMS's Quality Procedures (ISO 9001: 2015)

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Date: 11th February 2021

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Figure 1: Proposed Excavations

**LAND ADJACENT TO CSN ENGINEERING, NEATH ABBEY, NEATH
PORT TALBOT: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out details of the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological excavation on land adjacent to CSN Engineering, Neath Abbey, Neath Port Talbot (NGR: SS 7450 9756 (centred), in accordance with the general principles of GGAT and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).
- 1.2 Foundations Archaeology is certified to ISO 9001:2015 for quality assurance in the provision of archaeological and heritage services. The company is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and subscribes to that organisations Code of Conduct. All relevant CIfA Codes of Practice will be adhered to throughout the course of the project.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning consent (P2019/5304) has been granted for the erection of a Class A1 foodstore (1,899 sqm gross floor area), with associated access, car parking and landscaping. Attached to the planning permission are a number of conditions, with Condition 8 relating to archaeology as required by Planning Policy Wales and Policy SP21 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.
- 2.2 The geology within the site comprises ??? with superficial deposits of ??? recorded within the excavation area (BGS – on line viewer). The site is currently open ground and slopes down slightly from north to south towards the River Neath, at a height of approximately 8m AOD.
- 2.3 The proposed development is within an area of high archaeological potential. A Scheduled Monument (GM 215) in the form of a Roman fort (*Nidum*) is located approximately 200m northeast of the site. A vicus to the fort is known to the east of the monument and a road is known on the western side. It is possible that a vicus may exist on the west, or that the cemetery associated with the fort might also lie on this side. It is believed (N. Maylan pers com) that the Roman road should approximately run along the northeast-southwest aligned part of Llys-y-Coed and would cross the site in a straight line extrapolated from the end of that road.
- 2.3.1 The Roman settlement at Neath occupied a low plateau on the western bank of the River Neath and the first fort, covering approximately 3.3ha, was

probably constructed between AD 75 and 80. This was followed by the construction of a slightly smaller fort of 2.3ha between AD 80 - 90 which was continuously occupied until abandonment around AD 125. It was re-occupied between AD 140 and 170, and there is also evidence of a later military phase between AD 275 and 320.

- 2.4 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken across the site in 2008 by Foundations Archaeology. The evaluation identified well preserved archaeological deposits within Trenches 1, 2 and 3, in the northwestern half of the site. These consisted of a Roman road roughly aligned west northwest-east southeast, along with stone demolition rubble and cut features, which predominately dated to the Roman period. It was considered likely that the road was associated with the nearby fort. Within the site, the road was found to post-date a large linear ditch(es), which may have been part of an earlier phase of fortification.
- 2.5 A Cistercian Abbey (GM 006) lies slightly less than 1km to the southwest of the proposed development area. The Abbey was initially founded in 1130 by Savigniac monks and was absorbed by the Cistercian monastic order in 1147.
- 2.6 The site therefore contains the potential for archaeological features and deposits, predominantly dating to the Roman period onwards. This will not prejudice the works against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological investigation is to gather high quality data from the direct observation and recording of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains.
- 3.2 These aims will be achieved through pursuit of the following objectives:
 - i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site;
 - iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

3.3 The site investigations will also seek to address the following site-specific research objectives:

- v) What is the nature of the demolition rubble identified by the previous evaluation? Is there evidence for settlement within the site?
- vi) Could the earlier substantial ditch form part of an earlier phase of defences for the fort?

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Three areas totalling approximately 530sqm will be subject to excavation, as shown in Figure 1. Scope exists for minor amendments to the excavation area, should ground conditions require, however, any amendments will need to be approved by the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

4.2 All non-significant overburden will be removed to the top of archaeological deposits or natural, whichever is encountered first. This will be achieved through use of a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket, whilst under constant archaeological direction. Plant will be suitable for the task and the prevailing ground conditions. Thereafter, investigation will be conducted manually, by suitably qualified archaeologists.

4.3 Areas which contain complex and/or particularly significant deposits may need to be manually cleaned prior to planning and excavation. Where necessary, decisions relating to the extent of manual cleaning will be made in consultation with the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

4.4 All excavation will be undertaken manually. Archaeological investigation and recording will be required should archaeological deposits be encountered. In the event that unexpected and/or highly significant archaeological remains are discovered, the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust will be notified in order that an assessment of the remains and suitable provision for their recording may be made. Once the site has been fully excavated, a metal detecting survey will be undertaken across both the site and the spoil tips. Any metal finds located within the excavated area will be located by GPS.

4.5 Archaeological deposits and features will be subjected to the following sampling levels:

- i) structural features, or those relating to a specialised activity, such as funerary, hearths and industrial features, will be subject up to a 100% sample;

- ii) postholes and stakeholes that relate to specialised activities and/or are related to a recognisable building/structure will be subject to a 100% sample. Others will be subject to a 50% sample;
 - iii) a minimum 50% sample of all pits will be excavated;
 - iv) a minimum 10% of all linear features, will be excavated;
- 4.6 Each excavation context will be excavated, wherever possible, in such a way as to produce at least one representative cross-section of the deposit.
- 4.7 Decisions about the relative value of archaeological deposits and features will be made in consultation with the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.
- 4.8 Any human remains which may be encountered will initially be left *in situ* and reported to the appropriate authorities. If removal is necessary this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice guidelines and current archaeological best-practice.
- 4.9 Suitable contexts will be subjected to environmental sampling at an appropriate scale, in accordance with the Centre for Archaeology Guidelines *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recording to post-excavation; 2nd ed* (English Heritage 2011) and any specific requirements made by the environmental coordinator or suitable member of his team, who will visit the site as appropriate. Bulk environmental soil samples will be a minimum of 40 litres, and if appropriate up to 100%, will be taken from fills of well-dated or significant features or fills with good preservation of organic or burnt organic plant remains. Decisions regarding which contexts are suitable for environmental sampling will be made on site in consultation with the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust and the environmental coordinator. The Historic England Regional Scientific Advisor will be invited to visit the site as appropriate.
- 4.10 Appropriate contexts will be sampled in order to provide material suitable for C14 dating.
- 4.11 All artefactual and ecofactual remains, whether stratified or not, will be collected, bagged and labelled. Artefacts will be subject to preliminary study on site in order to help date archaeological features and contexts. All artefactual and ecofactual evidence will be treated in accordance with the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 4 (Finds Manual) and *First Aid for Finds*.
- 4.12 Normal conditions will apply with regard to finds ownership and the Treasure Act 1996.

5 STAFF

- 5.1 The field team will consist of a minimum of two experienced operatives, which may be supplemented by additional staff as required. The project will be directed by Mr. R. King BA, MCIfA who has wide experience of performing, monitoring and managing fieldwork projects of different periods throughout Britain. He is the Director of Foundations Archaeology and is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- 5.2 Specialists who are likely to advise and report on specific aspects of the project include Dr Rob Scaife (environmental coordinator), Dr Jane Timby, Paul Blinkhorn and Roy King (pottery), Dr Lynne Bevan (small finds, glass and metalwork), Kate Brayne of the Rudyard Consultancy (human bone), Matilda Holmes (bone) and Dr. Tim Young GeoArch (metalworking residue). Any other categories of specialist report will be provided by Museum of London Specialist Services.

6 SURVEY CONTROL

- 6.1 Horizontal survey control of the site will be by means of a coordinate grid, using metric measurements, relative to the National Grid. The geo-referenced site plan will be produced by use of a *Topcon FC-5000* global positioning system (GPS). Complex/detailed site plans will be drawn by hand, as appropriate. These will be tied into the site grid by use of the GPS.
- 6.2 Vertical survey control will be tied to the Ordnance Survey datum. Details of the method employed will be recorded.

7 RECORDING

- 7.1 All site recording will be undertaken in accordance with Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3 (Excavation Manual).
- 7.2 Each archaeological feature or deposit will be recorded by means of a measured plan at an appropriate scale. Spot heights will be taken on the deposit and their location recorded on the plan.
- 7.3 Cross-sections will be recorded by means of a measured drawing at an appropriate scale. The height of a datum on the drawing will be calculated and recorded. The locations of cross-sections will be recorded either on the site plans, or relative to the site grid. Cut features will be recorded in profile and plan at an appropriate scale and their location accurately identified.
- 7.4 All drawn records will be clearly marked with a unique site number and will

be individually identified. The scale of the plan will be recorded. All drawings will be drawn on dimensionally stable media. All plans will be drawn relative to the site grid and at least two grid references marked on each plan.

- 7.5 Each archaeological context will be recorded separately by means of a written description. The stratigraphic relationships of each context will be recorded. Foundations Archaeology pro-forma record sheets will be used throughout. An index will be kept of all record types.
- 7.6 A digital photographic record of the excavation will be compiled. Each excavation context will be recorded photographically prior to removal. All photographs will feature an appropriately sized scale.

8 POST-EXCAVATION

- 8.1 A typescript report will be prepared immediately site works are completed to fulfil the requirements set out in the specification. This will include a full written description and interpretation of the results, including specialist reports. The report will contain a front sheet which will detail the following: Site name, NGR, Site activity, Date and duration, Site code, Area of site, Summary of results, Monuments identified (referenced to the Thesaurus of Monument Types) and Location of the archive. All recording, cleaning and conservation of finds will comply with CIfA Guidelines for Finds Work.
- 8.2 As a minimum, the report(s) will include a full written description and interpretation of the results, including specialist reports. The report will contain a front sheet which will detail the following: Site name, NGR, Site activity, Date and duration, Site code, Area of site, Summary of results, Monuments identified (referenced to the Thesaurus of Monument Types) and Location of the archive. All recording, cleaning and conservation of finds will comply with CIfA Guidelines for Finds Work. The summary will be translated into Welsh and this translation will be included in the final report.
- 8.3 The report will be fully illustrated with drawings to an appropriate scale showing location, recorded features and deposits and section drawings. The report will be produced within six months of completion of fieldworks unless delayed by circumstances beyond the control of Foundations Archaeology. In some cases specialist reports (e.g. Radiocarbon dating) may take several months to be produced. In such circumstances an interim report will be provided, if required.
- 8.4 An indexed and internally consistent archive will be prepared in accordance with MAP2/MoRPHE and Foundations Archaeology's internal quality control systems, which are certified to ISO 9001: 2015. These standards

comply with *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1994). Arrangements will be made for the deposition of the finds and the site archive with Neath Museum and Art Gallery prior to the commencement of fieldwork. If space in the stores are available deposition will take place within 12 months of the completion of final site works.

- 8.5 Copies of the report will be supplied to the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust and an additional copy will be deposited with the site archive. The report will become a public document after a period not exceeding six months.
- 8.6 The report will be published in an appropriate form in a relevant journal(s) within 12 months from completion of fieldwork. An OASIS record will also be completed and submitted on completion of the project and the digital data will be deposited with ADS.
- 8.7 Copies of the photographs will be supplied to the HER as required.

9 MONITORING

- 9.1 An appropriate level of monitoring will be undertaken by the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

10 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 10.1 The project will be undertaken with regard to all relevant Health and Safety legislation, in accordance with the *Foundations Archaeology Health and Safety Manual* (2014).

11 INSURANCE

- 11.1 Foundations Archaeology carries appropriate levels of Public Liability, Employers Liability Insurance and Professional Indemnity Insurance. Copies of the certificates are available on request.

12 TIMETABLING

- 12.1 A reasonable period of notice will be required in order to agree monitoring arrangements for the archaeological representative of Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

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