

Methodology for Removal of Existing Annexe Floor

The impact on potential archaeology has been explored through the design stages of the project and were discussed with Oxford Archaeology and Webb Yates to devise a suitable methodology to protect potential archaeology when removing the existing Annexe floor. An additional Watching Brief will also be prepared as part of the production information.

- The existing concrete slab will be cut out from a leading edge, taking out as much as is within the cutting machines reach (approx. 2-3m). The archaeologists will not need to be present for this process.
- A machine fitted with a bucket would then grade out the 'post-medieval' layer which would be under the control of an archaeologist. If any archaeology was found during this process, the process would stop for a hand dig to take place and excavate any finds. Oxford Archaeology believes that the likelihood of significant archaeology in this layer is of low risk as it seemed to be just garden soils as indicated by the trial pits. This process would then be repeated until the level for the new slab was achieved.
- A visual inspection of the ground level will be undertaken by the archaeologists after the removal of the slab to deal with any obvious archaeological deposits.
- The potential of soft and/or hard spots has the potential to destabilize the new slab, although this risk was considered to be negligible due to the fact that a slab has been compacting the ground underneath for over 60 years and we are not significantly altering the existing loading pattern. A geotextile and 50mm of compacted sand will be laid down underneath the proposed slab build-up. If necessary, it may be possible to provide reinforcement within the limecrete slab, or if required, the limecrete slab could be substituted for reinforced concrete.
- The lift pit and two locations around the new northern stair to the mezzanine require deeper excavation. These will be excavated under the control of an archaeologist. The lift pit will be excavated by machine, with any found deposits excavated by hand. At the two northern foundations, the size of pad footings will be kept to an absolute minimum to ensure the impact is as small as possible. These excavations are to be formed with traditional hand excavation in a similar manner to the lift pit.
- The three deeper excavations will be dug/piled at the same time as levelling off for the new slab, and then backfilled with an inert fill, which will be removed later. This will mean that the archaeologists can concentrate their time during one period, rather than having to come back at a later time.
- The new excavations around the north and west external face of the annexe to bring the soil away from the building were not considered to be wide or deep enough to have any impact on archaeology.
- A soakaway would be located approximately 5m from the building with a unit depth of 400mm installed at 850mm below ground level. The soakaway itself would be 1m x 0.5m.

Webb Yates & Donal Insall