

Application CDN/24/0247 - Discharge of Listed Building Condition 3 (Archaeology) - Former Bauer Millett Site

Ian Miller <I.F.Miller@salford.ac.uk>

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To: Jennifer Atkinson <jennifer.atkinson@manchester.gov.uk>

Good afternoon Jen

RE: Application CDN/24/0247 - Discharge of Listed Building Condition 3 (Archaeology) attached to Listed Building Consent (LBC) 133760/JO/2022 - Former Bauer Millett Site, Albion Street, Manchester

Thank you for consulting GMAAS on the above application to discharge Condition 3 (Archaeology) attached to listed building consent 133760/JO/2022. Condition 3 requires:

- '1. A programme for post-investigation assessment to include:
 - (i) analysis of the site investigation records and finds;
 - (ii) production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological and historical interest represented.
2. Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance.
3. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.'

The application is supported by a post-excavation assessment report prepared by Salford Archaeology in March 2024, which adequately fulfils Part 1(i) of Condition 3. This comprehensive report summarises the findings from an extensive programme of archaeological excavation undertaken across the application site between May 2020 and July 2022, which uncovered a series of pits that have been dated provisionally to the prehistoric periods, overlain by a sequence of Roman layers and features. These included a substantial boundary ditch that may have been intended to denote the edge of the Roman settlement, together with three square enclosures, a rectangular enclosure, a putative Roman road, and a series of Roman gullies and pits that likely relate to the agricultural land that supported the Roman civilian settlement. An important assemblage of artefacts was also recovered from stratified contexts, with most of the material dating to the Roman period. In brief, the excavation proved to be one of the most significant carried out in Manchester city centre for several years and the resultant dataset has huge potential to throw fresh light on the current understanding of the extent, date and character of Roman Manchester.

As stated in the assessment report (page 133), the majority of the Roman material comprises pottery, ceramic building material, glass, metal work, industrial residues and animal bone recovered from well-stratified ditches, gullies, pits and occupation layers. These finds 'are of regional importance and warrants further analysis.' The assessment report similarly concludes that the assemblage of medieval pottery and certain other classes of material recovered from the excavation warrant more detailed analysis. It is also concluded that the results obtained from this detailed analysis will be presented in a monograph publication that sets the 2020-22 investigation in context with previous excavations in the locale to provide an updated account of Roman Manchester (Section 13.1). It is proposed that a final archive report is also prepared following completion of the analytical work that 'will build upon the results of the post-excavation assessment, incorporating any new data or insights gained through further research and analysis' (section 13.2).

GMAAS agrees with all of the conclusions drawn by the assessment report and advises that a final stage of detailed analytical work needs to be implemented before a recommendation to discharge Condition 3 in full can be made. Completion of the outstanding analytical work will enable a final report to be produced, as per Part 1(ii) of the condition, and a monograph publication prepared as an appropriate level of dissemination (Part 2 of the condition). Provision for archive deposition of the report and records (Part 3) has been made, although this cannot be implemented until the analytical work has been completed.

In view of the above, GMAAS is only able to recommend partial discharge of Condition 3 at this stage. However, GMAAS is aware that a second phase of the development is being brought forward, and this is likely to yield additional data for the Roman and later occupation of the site. This will need to be synthesised with the current dataset to provide a single publication narrative and integrated project archive. It is also acknowledged that the analytical work required and the resultant publication will take many months, if not years, to complete, and therefore GMAAS would be content to recommend full discharge of Condition 3 prior to completion if agreement and a binding commitment to undertake the outstanding tasks (analysis and publication) can be demonstrated, eg a contract / Purchase Order from the applicant to their archaeological consultant.

I hope that the above is acceptable, although I would be pleased to discuss further, if required.

With kindest regards

Ian



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Ian Miller BA FSA

Heritage Management Director
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
Centre for Applied Archaeology, Peel Building
School of Science, Engineering & Environment
University of Salford, Manchester M5 4WT, UK
T: +44(0) 0161 295 4467 / M: +44(0) 7533 252 442
i.f.miller@salford.ac.uk



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**SCIENCE, ENGINEERING
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