

AGENDA ITEM 6

HPS 17/1/17

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21 December 2016

Our Ref: **16-16-0641**

Martin Harding
Assistant Town Clerk
Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0GA

Dear Martin,

Swanscombe Heritage Park Footprints in Time

Thank you for your application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. I am the Grants Officer who will be dealing with your application, and it would be helpful if you could direct all enquiries to me, quoting your project reference number, shown above.

We will decide on your application at the next available meeting after the three month assessment period has passed, which is the period identified in the application pack. Your application has been provisionally allocated to a meeting that will take place on 1 March 2017.

We do what we can to assist and give guidance to applicants. However, we cannot make commitments on behalf of our Trustees. Only statements in writing which are specifically expressed as representing decisions of the Trustees can be taken as a commitment by the Trustees.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries arising from this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A large, dark, handwritten signature, likely belonging to Caroline George, the Grants Officer.

Caroline George
Grants Officer
Direct Line: 020 7591 6194
Email: CarolineG@hlf.org.uk

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Swanscombe Skull Site National Nature Reserve and Special Scientific Interest Visual Management Plan (Sheet 1)

In order to maintain access for scientists and diggers to the sediments at Swanscombe Skull Site NNR and SSSI, management of the vegetation is needed around the regularly used sections (excavations). Several sections are needed to access the whole geological sequence at Swanscombe. Sections 1 - 4 were opened in 2014 and extended in 2015. The GCR sections were first opened in the 1980's and GCR2 has been re-opened on occasions since. Sections 1 - 4 and GCR2 were protected by geotextile prior to backfilling.

Priority areas for vegetation management are shaded in yellow on the map below and are indicated on Sheet 2 of the Visual Management Plan. The sections (excavations) and their immediate surroundings need to be maintained with a light covering of herbaceous vegetation. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to establish as their roots will disrupt the very shallow and internationally important geology. Stumps must be cut, treated with herbicide, and left in the ground to decay in situ and not ripped out. Cut material can be stacked in habitat piles on the site well away from the areas highlighted in yellow. Any burning of arisings must take place outside the NNR/SSSI. Sections 1-4 are the first priority for management, followed by GCR1 and GCR2.

Section GCR2 is protected by a geotextile which has prevented deep rooted shrubs and trees from establishing. The scrub development at this section needs to be controlled periodically and trees should be cleared from within 3 metres of the section. Trees/scrub immediately downslope can be retained to prevent access.

Section 3 shows the layers of sand and gravel that scientists want to study at Swanscombe. Vegetation is overhanging the top of the section so it has to be exposed by hand. The lower part of the section was exposed by using a digger. The whole section along with the adjacent INQUA section needs to be made more accessible for scientists and diggers by clearing scrub and trees within 3m. Trees/scrub immediately downslope can be retained to prevent access.

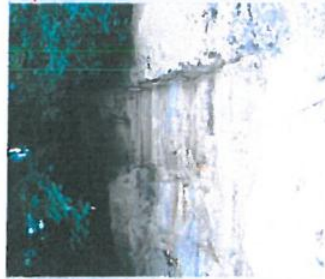
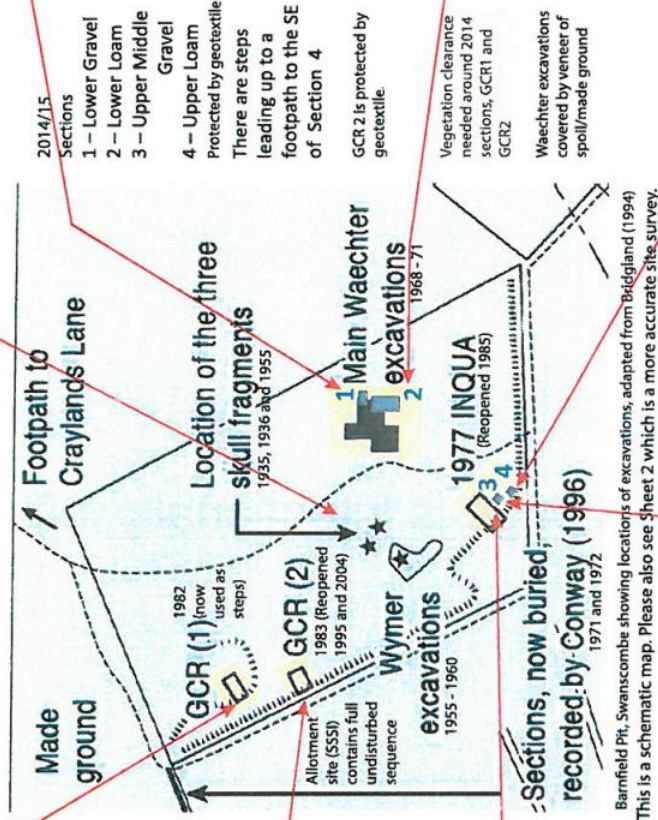
Looking towards Sections 3 and 4. Section 4 is fully surrounded by vegetation. Access to this area needs to be improved by removing some of the large trees and regularly cutting the understorey to avoid development of scrub and trees within 2m of the section. Trees/shrubs can be retained immediately in front (downslope) of the section to prevent access.



Section GCR1 is adjacent to the steps. Although the section itself is fairly clear, vegetation clearance around the section (within 3m) is needed to improve access.



Digger access for Sections 1 and 2. These sections are within the large depression created by the Waechter excavations (1968 - 1972). They provide access to the Lower Gravel and Lower Loam. This area should be managed as grassland to ensure access is maintained for scientists and diggers. Shrubs and trees within 2m of the sections should be removed.



Opening up the lower part of Section 3 using a digger. The upper part of the section is obscured by trees and scrub which should be cleared periodically, as should the area around the section (within 3m) to improve access.



Section 4. Digger access was not possible so it was cleaned by hand. There are a number of trees disrupting access which should be removed, as well as the trees within 2m of the section. Trees/scrub immediately downslope can be retained.



Section 1. This was exposed in 2015 using a digger. Vegetation is starting to encroach. Regular cutting of the surrounding area will help keep access clear for diggers and scientists.



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Delegates from the European Society of Human Evolution Meeting in September 2015 viewing Section 1. Section 2 can be seen in the background. At present this area is relatively clear but again it needs to be kept free of trees and scrub. Regular management is needed to maintain a light covering of herbaceous vegetation.

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