



Archaeology and Heritage Standards

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1. Introduction

The purpose of these archaeology and heritage standards is to set out the requirements for managing our work activities to prevent damage or harm to archaeology and cultural heritage. A heritage asset is defined as a culturally historic non-renewable resource, often referred to as archaeology, listed buildings, ancient monuments, or historic structures.

Such items are potentially vulnerable to damage as a result of construction work and as such must be protected or effectively managed in line with legislation and best practice.

It is the responsibility of the Land & Planning Team to identify relevant archaeology and heritage requirements at the pre-construction stage. Where applicable, the Technical Department should obtain the relevant consents. This must be recorded through the pre-start meeting process. All relevant information / licences etc. must be filed in the Project Environmental Plan (green folder).

Construction teams should ensure adequate protection measures are in place prior to the start of works. Group Health, Safety and Environment Advisors will support construction teams throughout the build process, through regular site visits.

2. Definitions

Heritage Asset

Archaeological Sites and Monuments. For example:

- Areas or sites of archaeological interest
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)
- Industrial monuments (railways, maritime, commercial, bridges, aqueducts etc.)
- Statues, memorials, and civic monuments

Historic Buildings. For example:

- Listed and non-listed buildings of historic interest

Historic Landscapes and Features. For example:

- Conservation Areas (see below)

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- Historic landscapes including registered parks and gardens, cemeteries, and registered battlefields
- Historic street furniture or building plaques

Heritage Artefact

A heritage artefact is a human-made object, such as a tool, weapon, ornament, or trinket especially those with archaeological or historical significance.

Heritage Agency

Each UK country has an executive agency responsible for the preservation of the built environment and which advises on policy and provides permissions for works that could affect heritage assets. UK heritage agencies include:

- Historic England
- Cadw
- Historic Environment Scotland

Conservation Area

Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designated by local planning authorities. Refers to a planning conservation area and is not to be confused with a nature conservation area.

Conservation Area Planning Permission

Planning permission is required for complete or partial demolition of a building in a conservation area.

Listed Building Consent

Required for works to listed buildings (including demolition, alteration, and extension) under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Obtained from the relevant local planning authority.

Scheduled Monument Consent

Required for most works and other activities that physically affect a scheduled monument. Applications are made through the relevant heritage agency.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

This is a statutory assessment required for particular types of development under the Town and Country Planning Act. An EIA may require long-term environmental monitoring prior to planning consent being obtained (e.g., noise, traffic, ecology etc.).

An Environmental Statement is produced that compiles and summarises the environmental information relating to the development, including:

- A description of the development;
- Outline of alternatives and reasons for the choice made;

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- A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be affected, e.g., population, ecology, soil, water, air, climatic factors, archaeology & heritage, landscape, and their interrelation;
- A description of the likely impacts on the environment; and
- Measures to prevent or reduce environmental impacts.

The development must comply with the measures set out in the EIA.

Watching Brief

Where an archaeologist is employed to monitor the excavation of foundation and service trenches, landscaping, and any other intrusive work. We must undertake to give the archaeologist sufficient time to identify and record any archaeological finds and features.

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

Where development will impact on the significance of a heritage asset, a written scheme of investigation will be required to achieve the following aims:

- That any investigation, including recording and sampling, is carried out to professional standards and to an appropriate level of detail proportionate to the asset's likely significance, by an organisation or individual with appropriate expertise;
- The resultant records, artefacts and samples are analysed and where necessary conserved
- The understanding gained is made publicly available; and
- An archive is created, and deposited for future research.

3. Managing Heritage Assets

We must will take all reasonable and practical measures to ensure the protection of heritage assets that are encountered during works by adopting responsible practices and ensuring effective communication with regulatory bodies at the earliest possible stage.

For works that require planning consent (whether we have involvement in the planning application or not), there may be conditions applying to heritage assets that must be complied with. This may include the implementation of a written scheme of investigation or watching brief.

3.1 Heritage Asset Assessment

Prior to any works commencing, the potential impacts on heritage assets by our work activities must be assessed by referring to relevant pre-construction information and through completion of the environmental aspect & impact assessment form. This initial assessment must identify any control measures required to reduce the impact of our activities on any assets.

Refer to:

EMS form [002](#) – Environmental Aspect and Impact Assessment

We are responsible for assessing what is on the proposed site and ensuring the necessary steps are taken to meet legal and planning requirements.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may have been completed for the development which will include measures required to prevent or reduce environmental impacts. An EIA is different from the Environmental Aspect & Impact Assessment.

The requirements of any planning consent (including relevant recommendations from the EIA process) must be incorporated in the project controls. A written scheme of investigation or a

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watching brief may be required, which would be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

Information relating to presence of potential heritage assets should be obtained through consultation with, local authorities, and the relevant heritage agency. The [MAGIC](#) website provides searchable UK maps that can be used to identify heritage assets.

Where visual assessments, consultations or planning requirements suggest or confirm the presence of heritage assets within or adjacent to the site boundaries, we must ensure that a site evaluation has been conducted by a suitably qualified and competent person (e.g., an archaeologist). The report provided should:

- Define the character and extent of the heritage asset (providing a site plan if appropriate);
- Outline the sensitivity and importance of any heritage asset including any associated works activity restrictions; and
- Suggest options for protection or control measures to avoid or minimise potential damage to heritage assets.

Records of competencies of persons instructed to carry out any site evaluations should be retained.

When working in a conservation area certain activities will require planning permission. This should be obtained from the local planning authority for the following activities:

- Demolition of a gate, wall, fence, or other such structure over 1m high where it is next to a public right of way (footpath, road, bridleway etc.) or elsewhere, greater than 2m high;
- Demolition of an unlisted building with a volume greater than 115m³ (using external dimensions);
- External refurbishments; and
- Tree pruning or felling (any tree) - six weeks pre-notification

When conducting any works on a listed building (repairs, alterations, maintenance etc.), we must also ensure that a listed building consent is obtained from the local planning authority. This may also be required for works that lie within close proximity and may affect the 'setting' of a listed building.

Designers should be sensitive to the presence of known heritage assets and ensure control measures are fully considered to avoid any disturbance or damage.

3.2 Heritage Asset Protection

Where there are known or suspected heritage assets within or in close proximity to the works, all reasonable and practical control measures to prevent any damage to the assets should be employed.

Measures may include:

- Undertaking condition surveys, including taking photographs and notes of known heritage assets, prior to works commencing;
- Installing suitable, adequate, and effective means of segregating heritage assets from works activities e.g., fencing;
- Providing clear signage to highlight the presence or suspected presence of heritage assets
- Allowing site access to, and the supervision of, any person appointed to monitor site activities, such as top-soil stripping and excavations (the archaeological 'watching brief');
- Applying for a scheduled monument consent from the relevant heritage organisation if the

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asset is of national importance;

- Using toothless buckets to remove topsoil down to the natural subsoil to minimise the risk of damaging any heritage assets;
- Ensuring activities that cause vibration do not result in structural damage to known heritage assets within or near the works;
- Assessing whether dewatering might cause draw-down of water that could affect the preservation of heritage assets within or near the works; and
- Ensuring that all relevant site personnel are informed about the importance of protecting known or suspected heritage assets e.g., using site specific inductions and Toolbox Talks

Potential impacts and control measures must be communicated to all relevant staff and contractors. Control measures must be monitored to ensure they are in place, effective and well maintained.

Where the competent archaeologist working on the site suspects a potentially significant heritage artefact has been encountered:

- The operation that uncovers the artefact should be stopped to allow the find to be inspected by the monitoring archaeologist;
- If the suspected artefact proves to be insignificant, work may recommence; and
- If the artefact proves to be part of a significant find, all work should be stopped, and the find reported to the local planning authority.

It is generally only necessary to suspend the operation that has revealed the artefact. Suspension of all site operations will only be required if it has been established that the artefact encountered covers a much larger area.

3.3 Discovery of Unknown Heritage Assets

Where no heritage assets are known or suspected, they may still be present on site. The following may suggest the presence of an asset:

- Black or blackened material;
- Very old brick or tile fragments;
- Coins and pottery;
- Bone fragments and skeletons;
- Timber joists or post holes;
- Stone foundations; and
- In-filled ditches.

Any finds must be immediately reported to site management who should:

- Ensure no further works are carried out within the location of the asset discovery until authorised to do so by the relevant authorities;
- Report the find to the local planning authority;
- Segregate the area of the site from other activities; and
- Ensure that work restrictions in the area are communicated to all relevant site staff and, if necessary that the area is highlighted with clear signage

Site management should report finds to the local Group Health, Safety and Environment Advisor.

A competent archaeologist should be engaged to provide recommendations on significance and future working practices. A risk assessment and safe system of work must be provided as for any works on site.

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3.4 Discovery of Human Remains

Upon the discovery of any human remains, site management should contact the police and senior management immediately. The area should be made secure and no further works should be conducted in the area until police have conducted an assessment. If the remains are considered historical, an archaeological assessment by a competent person may be required.

3.5 Discovery of Treasure

Certain artefacts discovered on a site ("archaeological finds") are classified as treasure. These include:

- Coins, provided they are at least 300 years old when found;
- Objects other than coins, provided they contain at least 10% of gold or silver and are at least 300 years old when found; and
- Any object that is found in the same place as, or that had previously been together with another object that is treasure.

Objects from the foreshore are not treasure, but may be the property of the landowner, normally the Crown Estate.

All finds of treasure must be reported to the coroner for the district in which they are found either within 14 days after the day on which the find was made, or within 14 days after the day on which it was established that the find might be treasure.

4. Further Reading

- [Historic England](#)
- [Cadw](#)
- [Historic Environment Scotland](#)

Refer to EMS [guidance](#) - Archaeology & Heritage

Refer to EMS [guidance](#) – Environment Guide Getting Your Site Right

5. Toolbox Talk

Refer to EMS [TBT](#) - Archaeology

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