

A BRIEF GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGY AND PLANNING IN SOUTHEAST WALES

HOW DO I FIND AN ARCHAEOLOGIST?

Archaeological remains are fragile and investigation even by trained professionals can lead to damage. It is essential that any archaeological work carried out as part of the planning process is undertaken by qualified personnel and normally these archaeologists will be Members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. There are numerous archaeological organisations in the United Kingdom who are experienced in undertaking work in the planning process. As in many professions the service that individual archaeological organisations can provide will differ depending on their size and experience. A full directory of archaeologists who are members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists is available from the Institute (<http://www.archaeologists.net>), however a further list of archaeologists who have stated that they are available to undertake work in Wales is available from The British Archaeological Jobs Resource (BAJR) website <http://www.bajr.org/whosewho/contractor.asp>

WHAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK MAY I BE ASKED TO COMMISSION

The Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) is the professional organisation for archaeologists. They issue Standards and Guidance for all types of archaeological work and these should be followed by anybody undertaking archaeological work in Southeast Wales. However, more detailed requirements may be needed to ensure that any work commissioned provides sufficient information for the impact of the development on the archaeological resource to be determined. It is therefore strongly recommended that applicants should request GGAT Curatorial to set a brief for any archaeological work required prior to the granting of planning consent. This service is provided free as part of our agreement with local authorities.

Professional standards for archaeological works are constantly under review. The following paragraphs will provide the reader with an outline of archaeological work, however more detailed advice stating the appropriate documentation and standards is available on the GGAT Curatorial web site.

WORKS PRIOR TO DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATION

DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

The purpose of desk-based assessments is to gain information about the known or potential archaeological resource within a given area or site (including the presence or absence, character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality of the potential archaeological resource), in order to make an assessment of its merit in context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource

- the formulation of a strategy for further investigation, whether or not intrusive, where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised

A desk-based assessment will normally require a professional archaeologist obtaining information from the Historic Environment Record (HER) and supplementing this information by searching for information at the Glamorgan Record Office, local libraries, and possibly the National Library of Wales. The information available from these sources will include historic documents, such as manorial records, historic parish surveys, leases, wills as well as cartographic material such as estate plans, tithe maps and Ordnance Survey plans. Information derived from previous archaeological investigations and historical overviews will also be gathered as well as analysis of information gained from aerial photographs and engineering records. The archaeologist will also need to visit the area so that any upstanding earthworks or other visible indications of archaeological features can be identified and also to provide a clear understanding of the topography of the site. Once all of the available information on the archaeological resource in the proposed development area has been collated the archaeologist may be able to determine the importance of the archaeological sites and the affect of the proposed develop on it. However, in some cases this will not be possible, as insufficient information on the archaeological sites has been identified. In this instance the archaeologist will recommend what further type of investigation will be required so that the determination can be made.

FIELD EVALUATIONS

The purpose of field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. This may involve a variety of investigative techniques including fieldwalking, evaluation trenching and geophysical survey in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy to mitigate any threat to the archaeological resource
- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research

A field evaluation is normally a more intense operation than a desk-based assessment. As such the work should be undertaken to a brief provided by GGAT Curatorial and should not take place until a detailed specification prepared by the archaeological contractor undertaking the work has been approved by GGAT Curatorial. The brief will outline the required works and these may include one or more of the following; earthwork survey, geophysical survey, field walking and trench excavation. The first three of these operations are most likely to be carried out in advance of the trench excavation in order to determine the exact location of the evaluation areas that will be investigated. A brief description of these operations is summarised below:

Earthwork Survey

In areas of agricultural land that have not been subjected to intensive ploughing archaeological remains may survive as earthworks. Surveying will normally consist of qualified archaeologists using electronic survey equipment to record the earthworks and from these results, producing detailed plans and profiles.

Geophysical Survey

Indications of human activity can be detected using scientific equipment. Geological conditions have a major impact on the quality of the results from such surveys and the type to be used will only be determined after appropriate on-site tests have been undertaken. Therefore such work needs to be undertaken by specialist personnel and the type of equipment and technique to be used should be approved by GGAT Curatorial prior to the commencement of any survey.

The main geophysical survey types are:

Magnetometry Survey, Resistivity Survey and Ground Penetrating Radar.

Field Walking

When a field has been recently ploughed artefacts can be recovered from the surface. Archaeological field walking requires a systematic search of the surface with location of all artefacts being recorded and plotted prior to their collection. Metal detectors can also be used during this work with all such finds being plotted in three dimensions.

Trench Excavation

Archaeological evaluation trench excavation is a physical intervention into the archaeological resource, as such it is an operation that causes damage to that resource and should not be undertaken without the explicit approval of GGAT Curatorial. It normally consists of a number of trenches being excavated by mechanical excavator (sometimes all of the trench will need to be hand excavated, especially if access to the site is limited) to the uppermost archaeological horizon. This is then 'cleaned' and exposed features sample excavated in order to determine their form and date. Where several overlying sequences of archaeology are identified (deep stratification) evaluation trenches can run to some depth. Samples of palaeoenvironmental material from suitable deposits may also be taken for analysis. It is normal practice for GGAT Curatorial to carry out a monitoring inspection during an evaluation trench excavation in order to ensure that any alterations to the approved specification are agreed, to provide local knowledge to the archaeological contractor, to discuss the results of the work and to ensure that the work is to the agreed standard. A report on this inspection will normally be made to the Council with copies being sent to the applicant and the archaeological contractor.

Reporting

All of the on-site works undertaken as part of the field evaluation will be followed by a phase of analysis and the production of a report on the work. This report will need to

be submitted to the Council before any determination of the planning application will be made.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE IS FOUND IN MY DEVELOPMENT AREA.

It is the intention of the Council to ideally preserve archaeological sites *in-situ*. Therefore if an archaeological site is discovered in an application area, the impact of the development upon it will be a material consideration in the planning process. If the archaeological site is of sufficient importance and the proposed development is determined to have a significant impact, then planning consent could be refused. However, this rarely happens, as there are a number of methods of designing developments that will preserve archaeological sites. In larger developments it is usual for public open space to be required and these can be designed to coincide with the archaeological features. If there are no upstanding earthworks it may be possible to position lightweight features such as car parks on top of the archaeological site and it may even be possible to construct lightweight rafted foundations in the soil covering the archaeological features. It is therefore likely that the applicant will be requested to provide more details on measures that are proposed to be used in order to protect the archaeological resource and reduce the impact of the development on it prior to the final determination of the application

CONDITIONS THAT MAY BE ATTACHED TO THE PLANNING CONSENT.

If planning consent is granted for development in an area where archaeological features are known to exist it is likely that conditions will be attached to the consent in order to ensure that the archaeological resource is protected or properly investigated. There are currently five standard conditions that are attached to planning consents in Southeast Wales:

Building Recording

There are two conditions relating to building recording which may be attached to any consent:

1. *“Development shall not begin until an appropriate photographic survey of the existing buildings on the site has been carried out in accordance with details to be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. The resulting photographs should be deposited with the Historic Environment Record, operated by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (Heathfield House, Heathfield, Swansea SA1 6EL. Tel: 01792 655208).”*

This condition comprises a limited level of building recording work, which can be undertaken by the applicant, **if the appropriate guidelines are followed**. In normal circumstances GGAT Curatorial will provide a guidance document detailing the

methodology that needs to be followed. GGAT Curatorial will always be available to discuss any details proposed to ensure that a suitable programme is proposed.

2. *“No site works shall be undertaken until the implementation of an appropriate programme of building recording and analysis has been agreed with the local planning authority, to be carried out by a specialist acceptable to the local planning authority and in accordance with an agreed written brief and specification.”*

This condition will comprise work done to one of four different levels of building recording, from limited survey work to full detailed structural survey and documentary research. In normal circumstances GGAT Curatorial will outline the level of building recording that they envisage being carried out, in their letter to the relevant council, recommending that the condition be attached to the planning consent. In general the applicant should engage a relevant specialist (e.g. building historian or relevantly qualified archaeologist) to inspect their proposed development plans and devise a suitable programme of building recording. GGAT Curatorial will not prepare the programme of building recording but are willing to discuss its contents with the appointed archaeologist in order to ensure that a suitable programme is proposed. In most cases this programme would comprise the recording work being undertaken both in advance of and during development.

Programmes of Archaeological Work

“No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.”

This condition can cover many different types of archaeological work, from a watching brief to full excavation. In normal circumstances GGAT Curatorial will outline the programme of investigation that they envisage being carried out in their letter to the relevant council, recommending that the condition be attached to the planning consent. In general the applicant should engage an archaeologist to inspect their proposed development plans and devise a suitable programme of investigation. GGAT Curatorial will not prepare the written scheme of investigation detailing the programme of investigation but are willing to discuss its contents with the appointed archaeologist in order to ensure that a suitable programme is proposed. In some case this programme could consist of a watching brief but also outline contingency arrangements in case complex archaeology is discovered.

Watching briefs

The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground disturbing works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The Local Planning

Authority shall be informed, in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development of the name of the said archaeologist and no work shall begin until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed, in writing, that the proposed archaeologist is suitable. A copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within two months of the fieldwork being completed by the archaeologist.

This condition is relatively self-explanatory. It requires the developer to engage a qualified archaeologist (see below for details of how to find an archaeologist) to carry out a watching brief. A watching brief consists of an archaeologist being present during the ground works required for the construction of the development, normally the excavation of foundation and service trenches. The archaeologist observes the excavations work and if archaeological features are revealed will quickly investigate and record them. In normal services this intervention will be rapid and will only lead to small delays, if any to the building programme. If in the rare event that complex archaeological features requiring more time and resources than are covered by the terms of the watching brief are revealed then the watching archaeologists will inform the LPA and GGAT Curatorial in order to determine any additional requirements. The IFA produce detailed Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs that should be followed by any archaeologist undertaking such work.

HOW DO I DISCHARGE THE PLANNING CONDITIONS?

A condition requiring a watching brief to be undertaken is partly met when the applicant informs the Council of the name of their appointed archaeologist. It is fully discharged once the watching brief has been carried out and a report on the work is submitted.

Discharging a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work is more complex. In the first instance the written scheme of investigation detailing the programme of archaeological work, produced by the applicant's archaeologist needs to be submitted to the Council. Once this has been approved, the on-site works outlined in the document will need to be undertaken. On completion of these works, either a final report can be produced, or in the case of excavations, a post-excavation assessment will be produced. In the latter case the works outlined in the assessment will need to be undertaken and then the final report produced. This process can take some time and it is recommended that the applicant should submit information at the end of each of the above stages to the Council (and through them GGAT Curatorial) in order for a partial discharge of condition notice to be issued. Only when the final report is submitted and, if deemed necessary, the publication of the results in a suitable medium has been agreed will full discharge be possible.

REPORTS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One of the principal aims of the Councils is that the results of any archaeological work in their areas are made available to the public. In many cases the results will be minor and the information will be provided in a short report to the council as part of

the planning process and another copy of this report should be sent to the HER for inclusion in that archive. The inclusion of a report in the HER allows it to be identified and consulted by the public. A short précis of the contents of the report should also be made by the archaeological contractor and submitted for publication in the Council for British Archaeology's *Archaeology in Wales*.

When larger works with more significant results are undertaken, the Council expects that the applicants will provide more information to the public during the works. The provision of information will depend on the work being undertaken and other restrictions such as health and safety; however it is likely that they will include regular press releases, the provision of information boards and ideally limited site access or viewing points.

Where large scale works with significant results are carried out it is expected that as well as the report for the HER and the précis for *Archaeology in Wales*, that a detailed report is prepared for inclusion in an academic journal such as *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, *Studia Celtica*, *Monmouthshire Antiquarian* or as a stand alone monograph. The requirement for such a report will be either identified prior to the site work commencing or on its completion. The costs of the publication of these reports will need to be met by the applicant.