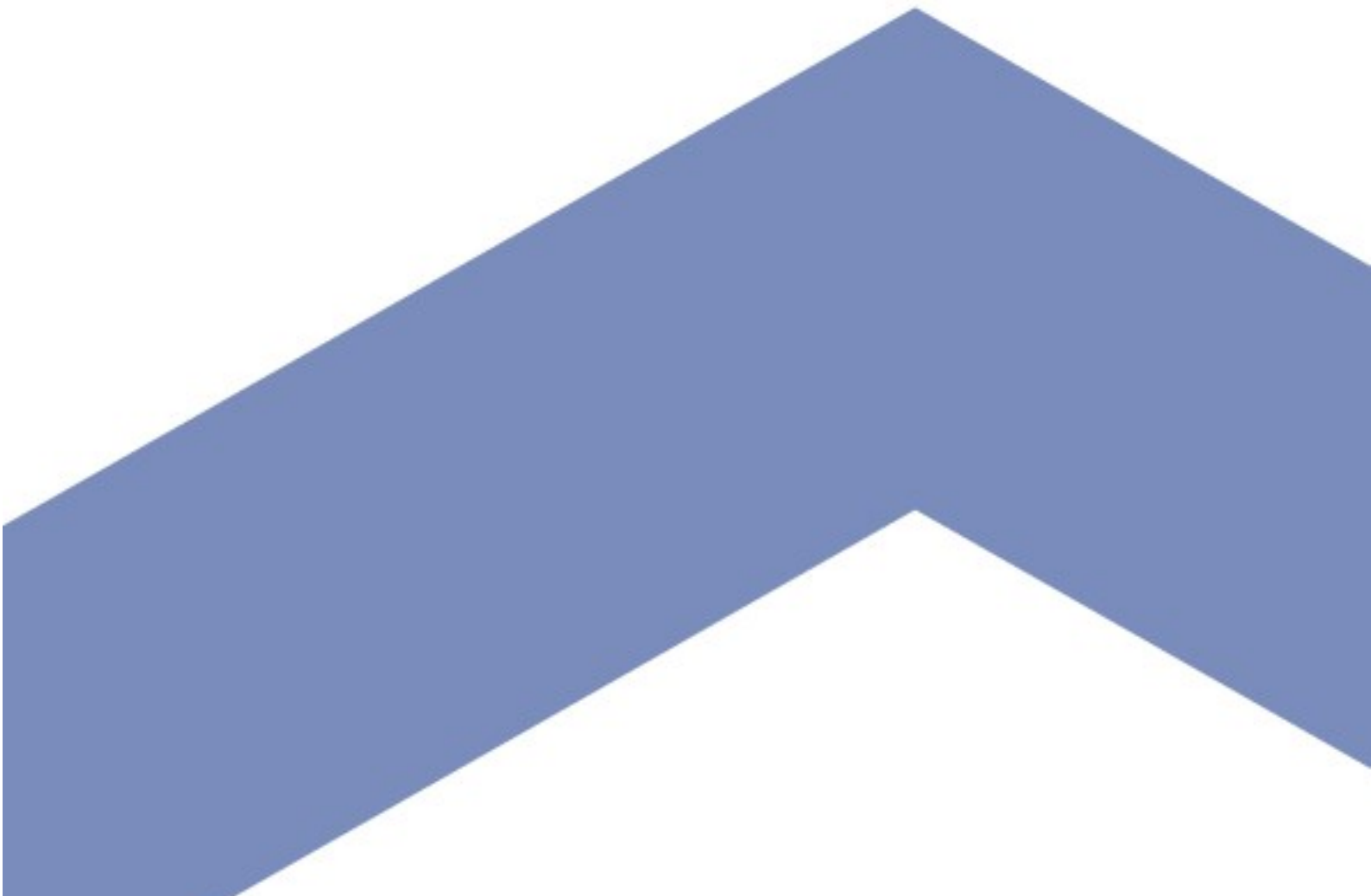


Staffordshire County Council

Archaeology Standard v2.0

April 2025



Contents

Version updates	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Staffordshire's Rich Historic Environment	4
3. About SCCHET	5
4. Brief Planning Policy Context.....	6
5. Our Archaeological Advice Service	7
6. Our Curatorial Service	8
7. Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER).....	9
8. Online Payment System	11
9. Model Briefs	12
10. Archive Deposition	12
11. Approved Archaeological Contractors.....	13
12. Useful SCCHET Resources	13
13. Our Response Times.....	13
14. Useful Contacts	14
Appendix 1 Model Briefs	16
Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment	
Geophysical Survey	
Archaeological Field Evaluation	
Archaeological Excavation	
Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	
Historic Building Recording	

Version updates

- V1 April 2024
- V2 April 2025; updated to reflect updates to NPPF

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to guide applicants, consultants, and contractors on how to engage with us and the archaeological process, and to set a minimum standard for typical archaeological projects carried out in the county of Staffordshire. It should be noted that SCCHET's remit covers the whole of the modern county apart from the City of [Stoke-on-Trent](#), which is a unitary authority, and the part of Staffordshire located within the [Peak District National Park](#), which has its own archaeology and historic environment advisors, although the [Staffordshire Historic Environment Record](#) (SHER) does also cover the Staffordshire part of the Peak District National Park. Guidance on proposals that may impact designated heritage assets (such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered battlefields, and registered parks and gardens) will be provided by the relevant local planning authority's conservation advisor and/or Historic England as appropriate (for more see Section 12 for relevant contact details).
- 1.2. This Archaeology Standard will guide applicants, owners, contractors on how to engage with SCCHET, from pre-application stage to discharge of condition, and will cover a wide range of topics including relevant legislation and policy, our curatorial charges, and archiving standards. Model Briefs for the most common non-intrusive and intrusive archaeological activities are included as appendices. These should be considered as the minimum standard required for such projects carried out in the county as part of the development management process or as a condition of Church of England Faculty (Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team currently provides archaeological advice to the Diocese of Lichfield Diocesan Advisory Committee. Their contact details can be found in Section 14 below). These should also be utilised as guidance to good practice for anyone undertaking other types of archaeological projects in the county, such as community or volunteer-led research projects.
- 1.3. Our Archaeology Standard will be updated periodically as legislation, guidance and/or our requirements change. As such, it should be considered to be an iterative and live document, meaning that contractors should utilise the current version (i.e. that on the SCC website) when preparing Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI) and Project Designs. See the Version Updates above for information highlighting any material changes.

2. Staffordshire's Rich Historic Environment

- 2.1. Staffordshire has a diverse range of historic landscapes, buildings, settlements, archaeological sites and monuments, which reflect the county's own distinct character. These range from a prehistoric ceremonial complex in the Trent Valley, to the stunning Lichfield Cathedral, to one of the most significant Great War landscapes in the country at Cannock Chase. The historic environment provides a sense of identity and belonging for its communities, is a valuable resource for education and enjoyment, and can also be seen as a positive force for regeneration and tourism in the county. It is our collective role to ensure that our diverse heritage assets are understood, recorded, protected, and, where possible, enhanced. Archaeological work in the county has a big role to play in telling the story of our shared heritage, whilst balancing the need for economic development and prosperity.
- 2.2. To support the government's commitment to sustainable development, SCCHET provides development management archaeological advice to the county's eight Local Planning Authorities:
- [Cannock Chase District Council](#)
 - [East Staffordshire Borough Council](#)
 - [Lichfield District Council](#)
 - [Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council](#)
 - [South Staffordshire Council](#)
 - [Stafford Borough Council](#)
 - [Staffordshire Moorlands District Council](#)
 - [Tamworth Borough Council](#)
- 2.3. Furthermore, we provide archaeological advice to [Staffordshire County Council](#), which is the Minerals and Waste, Education, and Highways planning authority for the county.
- 2.4. Under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) we now also have a statutory obligation to maintain and manage the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 2.5. As outlined in Section 1 above, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Peak District National Park Authority have their own archaeological planning advisors, and SCCHET do not have a planning or curatorial remit in those areas. However, HER searches and enquiries for the Peak District National Park should be made through the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record ([SHER](#)).

3. About SCCHET

- 3.1. SCCHET is a small team of historic environment professionals, including archaeology/historic environment specialists and the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) Officer. We form part of a multi-disciplinary department which also includes landscape, biodiversity and ecology specialists, rights of way, spatial information, country parks, rural development, and the Cannock Chase National Landscape (formerly AONB) Team. We also work closely with our planning, highways, property, and library and archives/museum colleagues.
- 3.2. As we are in a multi-tier county, we provide historic environment advice on planning applications received by the County Council as part of its role as the county's minerals, waste, highways and education planning authority, and we also provide archaeological advice to the county's eight districts and boroughs through Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and 'pay as you go' arrangements. We also monitor archaeological and historic building recording work, usually required as planning conditions, as part of our [Curatorial Service](#).
- 3.3. In addition to this development management function, SCCHET also supports the County Council in its responsibility as a statutory consultee for strategic planning matters, which includes preparing the Council's historic environment/archaeology response to consultations on Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and supporting our LPAs in the preparation of supplementary planning guidance, design guides, design codes, and with master planning. We also support the county council's and the county's local planning authority's engagement with HS2, including working with HS2 and their contractors, and Historic England, to ensure that the objectives of the Heritage Memoranda for [Phase One \(Area North\)](#) and, the now cancelled, [Phase 2a](#) are met in the county.
- 3.4. We also advise on the potential impact of land management proposals on the historic environment, such as Countryside Stewardship applications and forestry proposals, and liaise with utility companies and organisations such as the Environment Agency, who have minimal technical standards/commitments to best practice, on proposals that are deemed to be permitted development or not considered to be 'development' under current planning guidance.
- 3.5. We also maintain and manage the Staffordshire [Historic Environment Record](#) (SHER), and facilitate searches of the SHER for both commercial and non-commercial research purposes.
- 3.6. Additionally, we work closely with local and national heritage and non-heritage organisations, such as Historic England, the National Trust, the Association for Local Government Archaeological Officers, parish councils, NGOs and the

Staffordshire Conservation and Urban Design Forum through regular liaison meetings or other fora.

3.7. Furthermore, we also support with the management of the County Council's countryside estate, which includes numerous designated heritage assets, including much of Cannock Chase, which contains one of the most significant Great War landscapes in Britain and a Second World War RAF training camp. This work includes the production of condition surveys and specifying conservation and repair works (for example as part of Countryside Stewardship), liaising with stakeholders, and the development and delivery of discrete projects (of varying sizes) to assist with the understanding, care and interpretation of our sites and other sites not in our ownership. Recent projects have included [The Chase Through Time](#) project which we developed and delivered alongside Historic England and the Cannock Chase AONB, and the [Transforming the Trent Valley](#) project, where we supported the delivery of the cultural heritage elements of the project which are focussed on military heritage and heritage at risk. We also co-ordinate the Chase Through Time group of volunteers who assist with heritage management, condition surveys, research, and project work across Cannock Chase.

3.8. SCCHET currently comprises:

- Shane Kelleher - County Environment Specialist (Archaeology/Historic Environment) AKA **County Archaeologist**
- Suzy Blake – **Historic Environment Record Officer**
- Laura Pritchard – **Environment Specialist** (Archaeology/Historic Environment)

4. Brief Planning Policy Context

4.1. The historic environment forms a material consideration in planning as laid out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) which was issued by Government in March 2012 (most recently updated in 2024).

4.2. Section 16 of the NPPF outlines the policies for considering all aspects of the historic environment, including both designated and undesignated heritage assets, within the planning decision making process. Paragraphs 207 and 218 of the NPPF are particularly pertinent for above and below ground archaeology/heritage assets. Para. **207** states:

'in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to

understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’

Whilst Para. **218** states that:

Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

- 4.3. In order to meet the requirements of Para. 207, applicants are often required to submit a Heritage Statement, whilst in the case of where a proposed development site includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation, which could include geophysical survey, trial trenching, or, as is usual, a combination of both.
- 4.4. Archaeological works carried out in response to Para. 218 could include archaeological watching brief, historic building recording, or excavation.
- 4.5. In addition to national planning policy and guidance, each of the county’s planning authorities have their own local plans (previously core strategies) which outline historic environment policies specific to the authority. There is also a [Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire](#), which also includes specific historic environment-related policies. Furthermore, many communities in the county have their own Neighbourhood Plans which also include heritage-related policies.

5. Our Archaeological Advice Service

- 5.1. We strongly advise that applicants seek to understand the archaeological implications of their proposed development as early as possible in the process, ideally pre-application. This will help inform developing proposals and design, allow applicants to provide appropriate evidence that is able to inform planning decisions, shape mitigation strategies, and help avoid costly delays.
- 5.2. To support this, SCCHET provides a charged-for **Archaeological Advice Service**. This relatively inexpensive service will identify any known designated

and undesignated heritage assets (e.g. is the property or site scheduled, listed or within a conservation area; are there any other specific archaeological or historical associations) and assess archaeological potential (based on current available knowledge). Potential archaeological planning implications will also be identified.

- 5.3. Advice will be issued summarising the historic environment interests for the site/property, any need for further assessment, recommendations in relation to planning, and suggested wording for likely planning conditions. This advice can then be submitted to the local planning authority at planning application stage to demonstrate that the applicant understands the historic environment interests associated with any proposed development.
- 5.4. Our Archaeological Advice Service can also be utilised by archaeological consultants/contractors who would like us to review Archaeological Desk-based Assessments or other documents pre-submission.
- 5.5. We aim to respond to requests for archaeological advice within 15 working days, however this can often be expedited on request.
- 5.6. More details about the current cost of our Archaeological Advice Service, and how to pay, can be found [here](#)

6. Our Curatorial Service

- 6.1. Like many similar services across the country, we seek to recover the costs we incur in 'curating' archaeological fieldwork carried out as part of the planning process or otherwise (such as work carried out under permitted development rights). Our **Curatorial Service** is usually charged at a single fee per application (large, multi-phase developments may incur charges for each phase. Likewise for sites requiring a further mitigation stage), and the cost depends on the size of the development (as outlined below). The fee covers everything that we need to do, including site monitoring visits, to ensure that the archaeological works have been carried out in line with the industry standard and guidelines, and to ensure that the relevant planning conditions (where applicable) can be satisfactorily discharged.
- 6.2. Our Curatorial Service will include all, or a combination of (where deemed necessary/appropriate) the following:
 - Production of a brief/specification (if we determine that a site-specific Brief/Specification is required above and beyond the requirements outlined in our Model Briefs).
 - Review and approval of any Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI).
 - Liaison with local planning authorities.

- Liaison with archaeological consultants/archaeological contractors.
- Site monitoring visits.
- Review and approval of any submitted reports.

6.3. Our Curatorial Service fees depend on the size of the development as set out below:

- **Small Development** – Developments of up to 1ha in size and/or single historic building demolition/conversions/alteration works. Includes one site monitoring visit.
- **Medium Development** – Developments between 1ha and 15ha and/or multiple historic building demolition/conversions/alteration works. Includes one site monitoring visit.
- **Large Development** – Developments over 15ha. Includes up to two monitoring visits.

6.4. Further fees will be incurred for additional site visits (over and above those included in the fees for small, medium or large developments) or attendance at Local Planning Authority meetings.

6.5. For infrastructure projects (such as road, rail or pipeline schemes) please contact SCCHET to discuss requirements.

6.6. In certain circumstances (for example where a consultant/contractor requires us to review a WSI that they have produced to accompany a tender quote before our Curatorial Fees have been paid, or if we have determined that a site-specific Brief/Specification is required above and beyond the requirements outlined in our Model Briefs, and we are requested to produce this prior to our Curatorial Fees have been paid), applicants/consultants/contractors can pay specifically for this. However, please note that we will not be in a position to subtract this fee when our Curatorial Fees are eventually paid or provide a refund.

6.7. More details about the current costs of our Curatorial Service, and how to pay, can be found [here](#)

7. Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER)

7.1. SCCHET also manages the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER). The SHER is a database of over 21,000 archaeological sites and monuments, historic buildings, and historic landscapes across the county. It also has information on archaeological interventions/events (such as excavations and surveys) and provides an index to a wide range of sources on the county's historic environment.

- 7.2. For those undertaking **non-commercial research**, we recommend that the information on the SHER is accessed initially online via the [Heritage Gateway](#) and our [online mapping system](#). Requests for more detailed information or specialist research can also be accommodated. Please email our [Historic Environment Record Officer](#) to discuss your requirements.
- 7.3. Requests for **commercial HER searches** (e.g. to support the production of an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment or a Heritage Statement (see Section 9 below), as required by the NPPF) and property checks, should be submitted and paid for via our [Online Payment System](#). We provide two levels of commercial HER requests*:
- A **Basic Property Check** will assess an individual site or property against the HER and identify any associated designations or undesignated Heritage Assets (e.g. is the property or site scheduled, listed or within a conservation area etc; are there any other specific archaeological or historical associations). A certificate will be issued providing a summary of any relevant information. Where no known historic environment interests are identified this will be acknowledged on the certificate. No advice relating to the potential planning implications of any designations or associations will be provided as part of this service. If you require planning advice, or other curatorial services please see Sections 5 and 6 above.
 - **Full HER Data Requests** will include information on the following (where available and relevant): Monuments, Events, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, Conservation Areas, Historic Landscape Characterisation, Extensive Urban Surveys, Historic Environment Assessments and National Mapping Programme data. The data will be supplied as a series of detailed PDF reports plus associated GIS data or PDF mapping (as required) and will relate to a site/property plus the specified surrounding search radius (typically 1km). It would be helpful if, when submitting your request, you could specify what search radius you require and in what format you would like the HER data supplied.
- 7.4. Whilst the SHER is now largely a digital resource, we do still hold some 'physical' resources, and we welcome visitors to carry out research at our offices, although in order to ensure that we can provide access to all relevant information it is recommended that appointments be booked with the [Historic Environment Record Officer](#) at least 48 hours in advance, and you clearly outline what resources you hope to access.

- 7.5. More details about the current cost of SHER requests, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

*Please note that we do not provide HER data or planning advice for the Stoke on Trent Unitary Authority area, please contact [Stoke on Trent City Council HER](#) directly for such requests.

8. Online Payment System

- 8.1. SCC's [Online Payment System](#) should be used to order our Archaeological Advice, Curatorial Service, and HER searches*. Whilst the ordering system is relatively user friendly and intuitive, we have broken down the steps for each payment type below.
- 8.2. For each payment type, customers should visit SCC's [Online Order Page](#) and click on [Developer Advice Online Form](#) (on rare occasions customers may encounter issues with Cookies. This can often be solved by going directly to the Developer Advice Online Form rather than the Online Order Page and/or trying payment using an alternative device such as another computer/phone/tablet).
- 8.3. Input the relevant details on the Development Advice Order Form and ensure that you click on Historic Environment in Section 3. Then click on Next Step.
- 8.4. To order a **SHER data search or Basic Property search** (see Section 7 above for more), select the relevant option in Section 1 and click on the relevant options in Sections 2 and 3 to show that our Archaeological Advice or Curatorial Services are not required.
- 8.5. To order our **Archaeological Advice** (see Section 5 above for more), select the relevant option in Section 2 and click on the relevant options in Sections 1 and 3 to show that our HER or Curatorial Services are not required.
- 8.6. To order our **Curatorial Services** (see Section 6 above for more), select the relevant option in Section 3 (the size of the development usually relates to the area within the red line planning boundary), and click on the relevant options in Sections 1 and 3 to show that our HER or Archaeological Advice Services are not required. Should **additional site visits** or meetings, over and above those included in our Curatorial Services fees, be deemed likely or necessary at this stage (it is worth discussing with the SCCHET first) there is an option to add these to your order in Section 4.

* Please note that our preferred method of payment is through SCCs Online Payment System. If card payment is not possible, please get in touch with us to discuss an alternative means of payment. Such an approach will need to be justified to our Finance Team colleagues and may delay the order.

9. Model Briefs

9.1. SCCHET has produced a series of Model Briefs (see Appendix 1) covering the most common non-intrusive and intrusive archaeological activities. These are included as appendices to this document and can also be provided individually on request. Our Model Briefs cover the following archaeological activities:

- Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments
- Geophysical Survey
- Archaeological Evaluation (including Trial Trenching)
- Archaeological Excavation (including Strip, Map and Sample)
- Archaeological Monitoring (i.e. Watching Brief)
- Historic Building Recording

9.2. These should be considered as the minimum standard required for such projects carried out in the county as part of the development management process or as a condition of Church of England Faculty. These should also be utilised as guidance to good practice for anyone undertaking other types of archaeological projects in the county, such as community or volunteer-led research projects.

9.3. We do not provide specific guidance on the production of **Heritage Statements** or **Heritage Impact Assessments** (or equivalent). However, some of our Local Planning Authorities do provide useful guidance on the production of these such as:

- [Lichfield District Council](#)
- [Stafford Borough Council](#)

Those tasked with producing such assessments should take note that the NPPF requires that a full search of the SHER should be carried out to support the production of this. Looking at the information on the Heritage Gateway website is not considered to be a full search of the HER as this resource is not comprehensive and not up to date. Failure to undertake a proper HER search may mean that the application will not be validated or that further information may be requested at application stage, which may cause delays to the determination of the application.

10. Archive Deposition

10.1. The collecting museum in Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG). PMAG have produced detailed guidance on the procedures that need to be followed prior to and following completion of a fieldwork project, their

requirements regarding archive deposition, and the cost of deposition in a useful [guide](#).

- 10.2. PMAG accept physical archives only. The digital archive should be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation.
- 10.3. PDF copies of final approved reports should be submitted to our [HER Officer](#) for inclusion on the SHER, and also uploaded via [OASIS](#) for inclusion on the ADS' [grey literature library](#).

11. Approved Archaeological Contractors

- 11.1. SCCHET are not allowed to recommend archaeological consultants or contractors, however, we do maintain a list of organisations who have previously undertaken archaeological work in the county or have expressed an interest in doing so. Copies of this list are available on request. Furthermore, the directories on www.archaeologists.net and www.bajr.org may also be useful in identifying a suitable contractor.

12. Useful SCCHET Resources

- 12.1. Over the years SCCHET has commissioned or carried out a number of studies and projects that should be used to support the production of Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments and Heritage Statements (where relevant) and add context to WSIs and reports. Such studies include the Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey ([EUS](#)) project and the Staffordshire Historic Environment Assessments ([HEA](#)), and various other [projects](#) covering subjects as diverse as minerals and aggregates, historic [farmsteads](#), historic milestones, water meadows and historic schools.

13. Our Response Times

- 13.1. Given the small size of our team, and our workload, we will not always be able to respond to enquiries straight away. However, it is our aspiration to respond to all new enquiries within 14 working days. If you require a response quicker than that please do make this clear in your email and we will do our best to accommodate this.
- 13.2. More specifically we aim to respond to/turn around the following within the outlined response times (please note that these are internal targets for 'standard' activities and may not always be met):
 - Commercial HER Searches – 10 working days

- Pre-application Archaeological Advice/Formal Archaeological Advice – 15 working days
- Production of bespoke Briefs/Specifications – 14 working days
- WSI reviews – 7 working days
- Report reviews – 14 working days

14. Useful Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Our preferred means of contact is via **email**. For general enquiries, or if you are unsure who to direct your query to, please send an email to her@staffordshire.gov.uk. If you know who to send your enquiry to please contact us directly using the following contact details:

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email: shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email: suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208. Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire's Conservation Officers

- Cannock Chase Council - developmentcontrol@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
- East Staffordshire Borough Council - dcteam@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk
- Lichfield District Council - design.conservation@lichfielddc.gov.uk
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council - planningapplications@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
- South Staffordshire Council - conservation@sstaffs.gov.uk
- Stafford Borough Council - conservation@staffordbc.gov.uk
- Staffordshire Moorlands - [Planning Contact Form \(staffsmoorlands.gov.uk\)](mailto:PlanningContactForm@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk)
- Tamworth Borough Council - planningadmin@tamworth.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: [0345 678 9000](tel:03456789000). Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Coroner

Staffordshire and Stoke Coroner's Office, Stoke Town Hall, Kingsway, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH 2LH. Tel: 01782 234777 Email:

staffordshireandstokecoroners@stoke.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.

Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK](#)

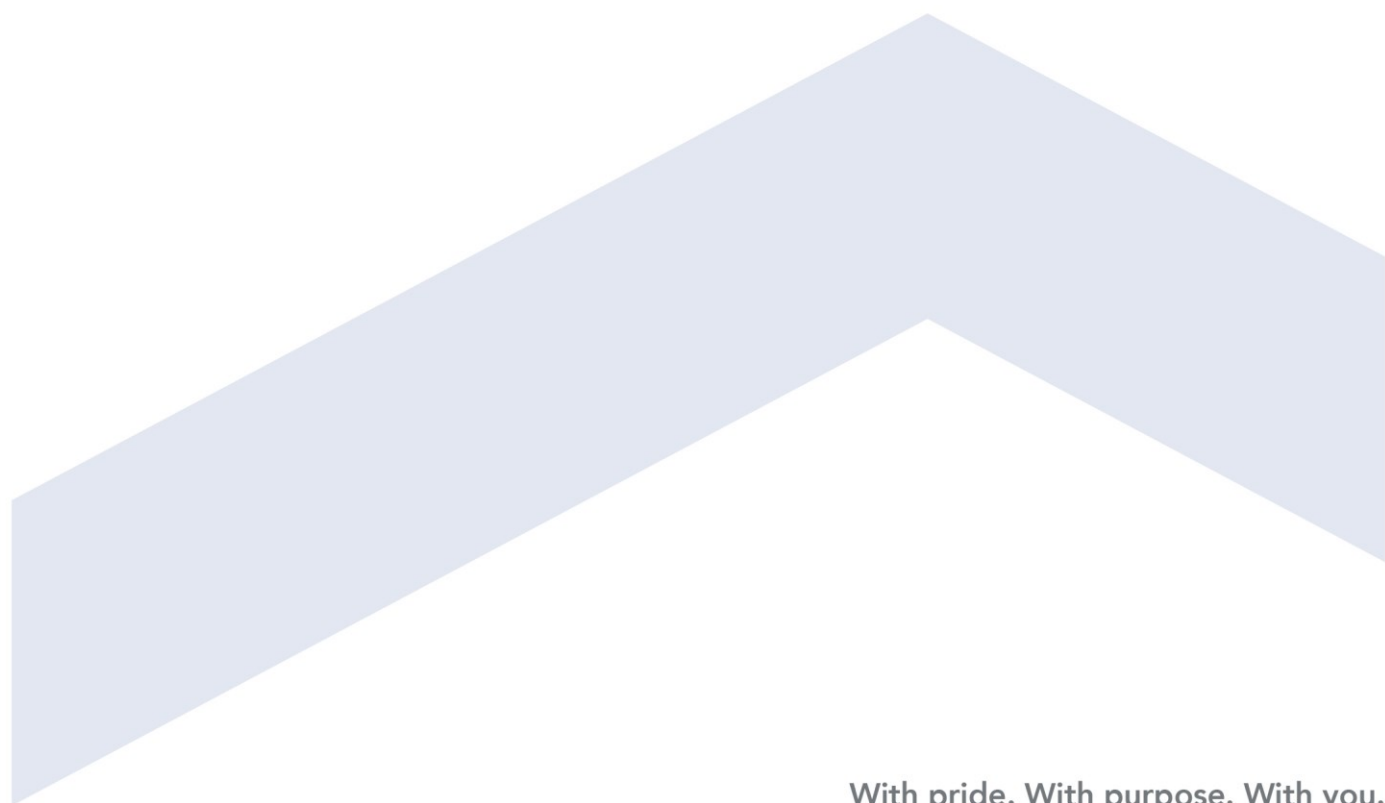
www.gov.uk

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Teresa Gilmore and/or Victoria Allnatt. Tel 0121 348 8225 or 07766 925251.

Email: PASTeam@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Appendix 1 Model Briefs



Model Brief

Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment
v2.0

April 2025

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment Aims	4
3.	Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment Guidelines	5
4.	Reporting	8
5.	Project Health and Safety	11
6.	References	11
7.	Contacts	13
	Appendix 1: Data Sources	14

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for historic environment desk-based assessment (HEDBA) in the county prior to the determination of a planning application. The term HEDBA applies to all types of desk-based assessment of the historic environment, including work to inform Environmental Impact Assessments.
- 1.2. A HEDBA is required where a development is likely to affect the significance of a known heritage asset, or has the potential to affect as yet undiscovered assets of archaeological interest.
- 1.3. For the purpose of a HEDBA, a Heritage Asset is a “building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.” The term “heritage asset” includes designated heritage assets and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012 (updated 2024), Annex 2: glossary).
- 1.4. A HEDBA is a programme of study of the historic environment within a specified study area or site on land, in the inter-tidal zone or underwater that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. The study area will vary by site and should be agreed in advance with SCCHET, although will generally cover the proposed development site plus a wider ‘buffer zone’, for example of 500m or 1km, surrounding the proposed site. The HEDBA will consist of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance; the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets; and the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate (CIfA 2020a).
- 1.5. In a development context, HEDBA will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so) and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made on whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact.
- 1.6. Should a proposed application site include, or have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, in order for SCCHET to provide informed advice to the LPA, an appropriate HEDBA is required (please note that a HEDBA will not always be required in such instances. It is recommended that

SCCHET is consulted as early as possible in the process to confirm whether a HEDBA will be needed and, if so, to discuss the scope). To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft HEDBA is submitted to SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) the HEDBA until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.7. The HEDBA will describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposed development, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) should be consulted, and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16, para. 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, (updated 2024). Utilising the Heritage Gateway website in lieu of a HER search is not acceptable as Heritage Gateway is not considered to be a full or up-to-date record of the information held by the SHER.
- 1.8. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a HEDBA by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO). The draft HEDBA will be submitted to the SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for comment/approval.
- 1.9. The HEDBA will comply with the methodology laid out in this Brief. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
 - CIfA. 2020a. [Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct](#)
 - English Heritage. 2008. [Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance](#)
 - Historic England. 2015a. [Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2](#)
 - Historic England. 2016a. [Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#)
 - Historic England. 2016b. [Preserving Archaeological Remains Decision-taking for Sites under Development](#)
 - Historic England. 2017. [The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 \(2nd Edition\)](#)

- Historic England. 2019. [Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets. Historic England Advice Note 12](#)
- relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)

1.10. In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in [The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment \(MoRPHE\)](#) (Historic England 2015b).

1.11. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment Aims

2.1. The purpose of a HEDBA is to gain an understanding of the historic environment resource in order to formulate as required:

- an assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study;
- an assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest;
- strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined;
- an assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land-use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings;
- strategies to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and their settings;
- design strategies to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and local place-shaping;
- proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not.

2.2. The HEDBA will be a holistic study combining archaeological desk-based assessment (CIfA 2020a) with historic building and landscape assessment (including assessment of historic hedgerows), where appropriate. It will consider the likely effects of development on extant heritage assets within and adjacent to the site, options for mitigating any negative impacts and also the potential of an historical understanding of the site to inform the layout and design of new development.

- 2.3. The results of the HEDBA will be used by SCCHET to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed scheme and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012 (updated 2024)).
- 2.4. The HEDBA must adhere to the standard set out by CifA (2020a); that is to determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. The HEDBA will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices that satisfy the stated aims of the project, and that comply with the *Code of Conduct* (2022) and other relevant regulations of CifA.

3. Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment Guidelines

3.1. The HEDBA will include:

- research from a range of publicly available sources and information held by the applicant. In line with (2024) guidelines, as a minimum, the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) should be consulted (please see note about use of the Heritage Gateway in Section 1.6 above), however all appropriate sources should be examined. A list of potential sources is provided in Appendix 1, but this is by no means exhaustive.
- a site visit with appropriate written/photographic record. Unless access is restricted, the archaeologist undertaking desk-based assessment should visit the study area to assess its character, identify visible historic features and assess possible factors that may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets. All assessments should include an explicit statement as to whether or not a visit has taken place and, if so, a description of the procedures used and any constraints to observation encountered.
- the production of a final report including assessments of heritage significance, development impact and suggested mitigation methods.

3.2. The assessment should:

- consult all relevant cartographic, documentary and photographic materials;
- summarise the topography, geology and current/most recent land use of the study area;
- identify and describe any standing buildings/structures of potential historic/archaeological interest together with an assessment of the

potential value of more detailed investigation/recording. Features of architectural or artistic interest should be noted;

- analyse the landscape history of the study area to identify the character of past land use and the survival of significant features, such as routeways, boundary features (including hedgerows), deliberately planted vegetation (such as historic parkland) etc. This should include consideration of the Historic Landscape Characterisation and Extensive Urban Survey data held by SCCHET, Conservation Area Appraisals and the Conservation Management Plans prepared for some extensive heritage assets (for example parks and gardens). Please note, whilst relevant elements of such previous studies may be included in the HEDBA, these documents should not simply be repeated verbatim in the report;
- consider the historic setting and context of significant heritage assets;
- summarise the documented archaeology of the study area, including the history of previous archaeological investigation in the area. Identify areas of recent or historic ground disturbance (including raising of ground levels) within the site. Services and other potential constraints on field evaluation should also be noted. Where previous studies have been prepared and are relevant, these may be referenced and elements incorporated in the report (whilst working within copyright restrictions and with permission from the author);
- assess the likely state of preservation and depth of burial of archaeological remains across the site (ground investigation data or deposit models should be used for this purpose if available);
- assess the reliability of the currently available information and identify any uncertainties;
- assess the potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains;

3.3 The above approach will allow the author of the HEDBA to:

- identify and describe all relevant designated and undesignated heritage assets and potential setting issues that may be affected by the proposed development, including; scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, conservation areas, and any other assets recorded in the SHER. The description should normally go beyond simply quoting published material such as a list description or the SHER entry, because it should enable the reader to understand the context of the proposals being assessed;

- assess the significance of the heritage assets identified to be potentially affected by the proposed development (see NPPF 2024, Annex 2);
- explore the nature, level and extent of that significance (Historic England 2015a). Significance may not always be clear from list descriptions or SHER entries. Close inspection of a building or site often reveals features previously unrecorded, and which sometimes fundamentally alter our understanding of a heritage asset. An assessment of the significance of historic assets should include consideration of the archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests pertaining to the heritage asset, their significance, and the extent to which that significance relates to different elements of the asset's fabric.
- assess the likely impact of the development on the significance of the potentially affected heritage assets. Assessment should describe the impact of the proposed development, and identify the potential impact of proposed or predicted changes on the significance of the asset and its setting, and the opportunities for reducing that impact. It should consider how the significance of the asset might be enhanced, and might suggest how loss of significance of one interest might be offset by enhancing that of another (e.g. through increased knowledge and public appreciation). Questions to bear in mind while writing this section may include some or all of the following:
 - Does the statement sufficiently explain why the proposals are necessary or desirable?
 - Does the proposal affect any views looking away from or towards the asset?
 - If any historic fabric is to be removed or altered, is its significance properly understood and explained in the document?
 - Are the design details of any proposed new work clearly described in the statement, to make up for any shortcomings in the submitted plans?
 - Has a variety of options been considered and why was this option chosen?
 - Are the works reversible in whole or in part?
 - If the proposed works will result in any harm, is the harm offset or outweighed by any public benefits?

- provide recommendations for an appropriate mitigation strategy, aimed at avoiding or reducing the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of heritage assets. It is appropriate to suggest potential means to minimise or mitigate negative impacts and reflect the area's historic character in new design. Sometimes, the mitigation of any adverse effects will have been worked through and resolved by amending or evolving the plans prior to submission, or there may be no mitigation measures necessary (e.g. when the intention of the works is solely to improve, repair or restore). However, for some categories of work it will be necessary to include a mitigation strategy that addresses the perceived impacts of the proposed development on the significance of the historic asset. This might include modification or explanation of methods and materials, incorporation of planting or hard landscaping schemes, or a scheme of archaeological or architectural investigation and recording. Please note that assessments of heritage interest/significance and recommendations will not be binding on SCCHE.

4. Reporting

- 4.1. The report will detail the methods and results of the HEDBA. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 4.2. The HEDBA will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2020a) *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment*.
- 4.3. The content of HEDBA reports will vary according to the scope of the proposals and the complexity or otherwise of the information available from existing sources; presentation may also be determined by the requirements of the body or person commissioning the work. The report will contain as a minimum the following elements:
 - **non-technical Summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language, the principal reason for the work, its aims and main results, and should include reference to the AAO, authorship and commissioning body;
 - **reference Numbers.** This will include an OASIS ID number (where relevant), and any other relevant references as appropriate;
 - **introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological background,

an outline of the nature of the work, any restrictions on reporting or access to relevant records, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;

- **location, geology and topography.** This should include a six-figure grid reference;
- **aims and objectives.** This should state the purpose of the HEDBA. Where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011);
- **legislation.** Summary of planning policy and legislation relevant to the project;
- **methodology.** This should include the methods used and the sources consulted. The methodology for assessing significance should be explained. Specialists should be identified where required (e.g. for historic building and landscape assessment, historic documentary study, etc.).
- **results.** This should outline, as a series of objective statements organised clearly in relation to the methods used, the known and potential archaeological interests by period and/or type. Their significance with reference to (included) supporting evidence should be indicated. This section should be appropriately illustrated with any relevant maps, plates, drawings, etc (see Section 4.4, below). This section should also include details of any buildings recorded as part of the assessment;
- **development or other impact.** This should outline the likely impact(s) of the development and other factors on the known or potential archaeological resource. If the precise impact cannot be evaluated, this should be stated;
- **conclusions.** It is appropriate to include a section which summarises and interprets the results, and puts them into context (local, national or otherwise). Other elements should include a confidence rating or statement on the reliability of sources used, or limitations imposed by particular factors. Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **recommendations.** Where the project is carried out within the planning process, the report should contain sufficient objective data to enable 'an informed and reasonable decision to be made', and should provide

recommendations for an appropriate mitigation strategy aimed at avoiding or reducing the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of heritage assets. This might include modification or explanation of methods and materials, incorporation of planting or hard landscaping schemes, or a scheme of archaeological or architectural investigation and recording. Any recommendations made in this section will not be binding on SCCHET but may be used to inform their advice to the LPA;

- **references.** A list of all primary and secondary sources, including maps and illustrations;
- **figures.** These may be within text or at the end. They should be clearly numbered and easily referenced. Most reports will need to include location plans for the development area, plans of the existing and proposed developments, and at least one figure showing known or potential archaeological interests within or affected by the development area. Any figures should be clearly numbered and easily referenced to the National Grid. Details of these are outlined below in Section 4.4;
- **plates.** Appropriate plates of features, buildings and structures mentioned in the text, and also a selection of photographs to show work in progress as appropriate. Where appropriate, photographs should contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the plate's caption;
- **appendices.** These should consist of essential technical and other detail to support the above. They may consist of a copy of the brief/specification for the work; summaries of sources of evidence consulted with reference to location, catalogue numbers, etc; transcripts or copies of documents (where copyright permissions exist or are attainable); project archive catalogue; list of consultees; index to site codes; OASIS form (where appropriate).

4.4. All figures should include accurate scales and a north arrow, and where appropriate, grid references. Figures to be included as a minimum are:

- detailed site location map;
- detailed site plan, preferably showing the proposed development;
- plan showing known heritage assets within the site and its vicinity;
- archive drawings/plans/maps (if available);
- copies of relevant historic sources (e.g. historic OS, tithe and estate maps, historic illustrations).

- 4.5. Ideally, to avoid unnecessary delays, the HEDBA will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment prior to submission. The HEDBA will become publicly accessible, as part of SHER, within six months of completion.
- 4.6. Where appropriate, the AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.
- 4.7. Conditions (where relevant) relating to reporting will not be discharged until all the relevant stages have been completed.

5. Project Health And Safety

- 5.1. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the HEDBA be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy. All staff undertaking site walkovers/ site visits as part of the project will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. This risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 5.2. The AAO will ensure that all site staff undertaking site visits are provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date.

6. References

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS%26GBuildings_3.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

English Heritage. 2008. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*. Available online at: English Heritage. 2008.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles>

Historic England. 2015a. *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning*

Note 2: Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/>

Historic England. 2015b. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Historic England. 2016a. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings/>

Historic England. 2016b. *Preserving Archaeological Remains: Decision-taking for Sites under Development*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/preserving-archaeological-remains/>

Historic England. 2017. *The Setting of Heritage Assets*. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (2nd Edition). Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

Historic England. 2019. *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. Historic England Advice Note 12. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/heag279-statements-heritage-significance/>

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Watt, S. 2011. *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research*. Available online at: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2285-1/dissemination/pdf/West_Midlands_cropped_final_copy.pdf

7. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email: shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email: suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208. Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Record Office

c/o Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire Place 2

Stafford ST16 2DH

Tel: 01785 278379

Email: staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk

Online catalogue: [Gateway to the Past - Staffordshire County Council](#)

Lichfield History Access Point

Lichfield Library

St Mary's (1st Floor)

Market Square

Lichfield

Staffordshire

WS13 6LG

Tel: 01543 334539

Email: lichfield.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

Burton Family and Local History Centre

Burton Library

Riverside

High Street

Burton upon Trent

Tel: 0300 111 8000

Email: burton.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Appendix 1: Data Sources

[Staffordshire Historic Environment Record](#) (Note: Heritage Gateway does not constitute a valid HER search). Contact her@staffordshire.gov.uk

[Staffordshire Historic Character Assessments and Extensive Urban Surveys](#)

[Staffordshire Record Office](#): Historic maps (both county and local), antiquarian sources and documentary records (including indexes to some collections held elsewhere), local history reference library

[Staffordshire Past Track](#)

[Archaeological Data Service](#)

[NHLE](#) designation data

[The Historic England Archive](#)

[National Collection of Aerial Photographs](#)

[Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs](#)

[Britain From Above](#)

[British Library](#)

[The National Archives](#)

[MAGIC](#)

[LiDAR Finder](#)

[National LIDAR Programme](#)

[Google Earth](#)

[UK Grid Reference Finder](#)

[BGS](#) for borehole and test pit logs, site surveys, geological maps, offshore surveys

[National Library of Scotland](#) for historic mapping, LiDAR and aerial photos

Public and private collections of artefacts and ecofacts,

Parish records

Estate collections

National and local museums

National and local libraries

Local archaeological and historical societies

Academic journals, monographs and other publications

Relevant information from landowners/developers

Site inspection/walkover survey

Model Brief

Geophysical Survey v2.0

April 2025

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Geophysical Survey Objectives	4
3.	Project Design	4
4.	Geophysical Survey Guidelines	8
5.	Monitoring.....	9
6.	Post-Survey Guidelines	9
7.	Reporting	10
8.	Deposition of Archive.....	13
9.	Outreach and Social Media	15
10.	Project Health & Safety	15
11.	References	15
12.	Contacts	17

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for geophysical survey required as a condition of planning consent granted by the local planning authority (LPA), or indeed geophysical survey work carried out pre-application or pre-determination. This document covers all geophysical survey methods.
- 1.2. A geophysical survey is the use of non-intrusive and non-destructive techniques to determine the presence or absence of anomalies likely to be caused by archaeological features, structures or deposits, as far as reasonably possible, within a specified area or site on land, in the inter-tidal zone or underwater. Geophysical survey determines the presence of anomalies of archaeological potential through measurement of one or more physical properties of the subsurface (CIfA 2020a).
- 1.3. Where the proposals form part of an approved planning application, or as part of pre-application discussions, SCCHET have advised that there is reason to believe that archaeological remains exist on the site, but there is not enough available information to determine their character, extent and state of preservation. As such, the archaeological implications of the proposed development cannot be adequately assessed on the basis of the available information, and it has therefore been recommended that a geophysical survey be completed to gather the necessary information. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024) more specifically Paragraph 207, which states that 'in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.
- 1.4. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a detailed project design by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO). The draft project design will be submitted to SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for

comment/approval prior to the commencement of site work. No archaeological work will commence on the site until approval of the project design has been received. To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft project design is submitted to the SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. Likewise, SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) project designs, or undertake any further curatorial work, such as monitoring visits or reviewing reports, until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.5. The amount of geophysical survey required will be dependent upon the nature of the site and the amount and quality of data from any previous investigations. The survey areas will be identified in the project design and agreed with SCCHET prior to the work commencing.
- 1.6. The AAO will have sufficient experience to prepare and undertake the geophysical survey or be in a position to appoint sub-contractors to complete said work. If the latter, this approach should be agreed with SCCHET in advance of appointing.
- 1.7. The results of the geophysical survey will be used by SCCHEC to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed development and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation.
- 1.8. The survey will comply with the methodology laid out and approved in the project design. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
 - CIfA. 2020a. [Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct](#)
 - European Archaeologiae Consilium (EAC). 2016. [Guidelines for the Use of Geophysics in Archaeology](#)
 - relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)
 - Or any subsequent revisions of the above.
- 1.9. In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* ([MoRPHE](#)) (Historic England 2015a).
- 1.10. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Geophysical Survey Objectives

- 2.1. The purpose of geophysical survey is to inform on the presence or absence, character, extent and, in some cases, apparent relative phasing of buried archaeology, in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, which may lead to one or more of the following:
- the formulation of a strategy to ensure further recording, preservation or management of the resource
 - the formulation of a strategy to mitigate a threat to the archaeological resource
 - the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.
- 2.2. Geophysical survey is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.
- 2.3. The geophysical survey should also identify areas of land where geological or recent deposits (e.g. disturbed ground, alluvium or colluvium) or modern features (e.g. pipelines, cellar activity) could be masking the detection of anomalies or have removed anomalies, and provide a detailed interpretative sub-soil map of the site, including archaeological anomalies and blank areas to enable the accurate location of trial trenching.
- 2.4. The results of the survey will be used by SCCHEt to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed scheme and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012 (updated 2024)).
- 2.5. The geophysical survey must adhere to the standard set out by CIfA; that is to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the nature of the detectable archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the *Code of Conduct* and other relevant regulations of CIfA (2020a) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey*. It will result in one or more published accounts and an ordered, accessible archive.

3. Project Design

- 3.1. A project design must be submitted by the applicant or, on their behalf, by their agent or archaeological consultant and approved by SCCHEt prior to any development commencing on site. The methodology for the archaeological

geophysical survey will be set out in the project design, including reference to the appropriate CIfA and scientific guidelines. The AAO will, in preparing the project design, consider the objectives identified within this Brief and, where appropriate, develop more detailed objectives. These should be based upon a wider appreciation of the archaeological context, an understanding of the topography of the site and its environs, and a review of [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011).

- 3.2. Any subsequent changes to the project design will need to be agreed with SCCHET prior to the change taking place.
- 3.3. The amount of geophysical survey required will be dependent upon the nature of the site and the amount and quality of data from any previous investigations. The areas to undergo geophysical survey will be identified and agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.4. The project design will cover the geophysical survey only; should further stages of archaeological mitigation (such as evaluation, excavation or archaeological monitoring and recording) be required based on the results of the survey then this work will be subject to a separate project design. This approach is supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 207 which states that ‘...local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’ in order to inform our understanding of significance (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024). Any mitigation which stems from the results of this evaluation will require the production of a separate project design.
- 3.5. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the HER). It should conform to the guidelines set out in the CIfA (2020a) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey* and should in particular specify:
 - a statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation;
 - non-technical summary;
 - legislative requirements;
 - the location, geology and topography of the site, to include a six-figure grid reference and site location plan tied to the national grid;
 - a consideration of site constraints, for example any designations, access issues, etc.;

- context of the project;
- the aims and objectives of the geophysical survey. Where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011);
- historical and archaeological background, to include consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. The following sources should be consulted as appropriate:
 - the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Please note that data extracted from the Heritage Gateway website does not constitute a valid HER search due to its partial nature
 - NHLE records of all designated heritage assets, e.g. scheduled, listed and registered heritage assets and conservation areas
 - readily available aerial and other photographic and remote sensing data evidence (e.g. LiDAR)
 - geological and soil surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - geotechnical/environmental/borehole data; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - land use surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011).
- details of the surveyed areas, to include a georeferenced plan;
- the methodology for site investigation and recording, including data collection and storage;
- the methodology for reporting and data presentation;
- the methodology for post-survey manipulation and assessment of all data and records;
- details of proposed staffing to complete the work. The work will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Details of staff numbers, their roles and relevant experience will be included within the project design, to include sub-contracted specialists. It may be necessary to provide SCCHET with staff CVs;
- the timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-survey works;

- publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met;
- details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive;
- collection and disposal strategy for all paper, graphic and digital materials;
- a data management plan which, as a minimum, will outline how digital data will be handled both during and after the project. It will describe the type of data used, how it is collected, organized, and stored, and what formats will be used. See Section 4.5 for further information;
- a statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate;
- a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards);
- a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project;
- a statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology;
- a statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project;
- copyright;
- health and safety considerations;
- environmental protection considerations;
- monitoring procedures;
- contingency arrangements (is appropriate);
- licence eligibility (where required);
- as a minimum, figures are to include a georeferenced site location plan and georeferenced survey area plan, both of which should be referenced to the OS National Grid and to the local topography (e.g. field boundaries). All figures must have a scale bar, north arrow and grid references.

3.6. The project design **must** be agreed with SCCHET **prior** to the commencement of the work. Once agreed, any changes to the project design will need to be

discussed with, and agreed by, SCCHET before implementation. It should be noted that there is a fee for agreement of a project design, which will be levied on the AAO who prepared it (see online charging schedule [here](#)).

- 3.7. Planning conditions relating to project designs will not be discharged until the project design has been agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.8. Copies of the approved project design must be available to staff during all aspects of fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment.

4. Geophysical Survey Guidelines

- 4.1. The location and size of the survey area(s) will be agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design. Where linear schemes (e.g. pipelines or roads) are being considered, an appropriate survey width should be agreed with SCCHET, although in general it is advised that in most circumstances a minimum transect width of 30m will be expected.
- 4.2. The survey grid should be independently re-locatable on the ground by a third party, by measurement to local permanent features, and/or using GPS/GNSS coordinates and should be correlated with the National Grid.
- 4.3. Consideration should be given to the application of the appropriate survey techniques, for example magnetometer, earth resistance, electrical resistivity or ground penetrating radar. The choice of survey technique and its application (e.g. survey intervals), should be based upon the aims of the project, the character of the anticipated resource, and the local site conditions, including geology, topography, current and past land use, and the size, date, nature, and likely responsiveness of targets.
- 4.4. All data should be captured to produce a data-set that is as uniform as possible. Instruments should be set up carefully and measurements collected with the highest possible quality to minimise the need for subsequent data treatment.
- 4.5. The AAO must have a Data Management Plan for image capture and file curation which meets the standards outlined by CIfA's (2019) [Dig Digital](#) guidance, *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011), ARCHES [Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe](#), and guidance from Historic England (2015b) [Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice](#).
- 4.6. If the data has been seriously compromised during collection, a return to the site to re-survey the affected areas should be considered.
- 4.7. Should the survey identify or indicate significant archaeological features, SCCHET must be notified at the first instance.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1. SCCHET will be responsible for monitoring the geophysical survey. Their role is to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with this Brief and approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies. A minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork must be given by the AAO to SCCHET so that arrangements for monitoring the fieldwork may be made.
- 5.2. The AAO must maintain regular contact with SCCHET and provide updates of the project's progress and facilitate the monitoring of the project at each stage, including post-survey.
- 5.3. SCCHET should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design.

6. Post-Survey Guidelines

- 6.1. The AAO will detail their approaches to the post-survey manipulation and assessment of all data and records recovered/made during the course of the geophysical survey in the project design.
- 6.2. All data should be treated to produce a data-set that is as uniform as possible. Any required manipulation of the data should be fully documented, whether to remove data artefacts or to enable interpretation of the data. A copy of unprocessed raw data must be retained and archived for quality control and to allow further processing if needed.
- 6.3. It is recommended that the archaeological interpretation of survey data is undertaken by competent archaeological geophysicist, with knowledge of the technique(s) employed, the characteristics of the data, and the archaeological and geomorphological conditions of the site. Consultation should also take place with other site specialists (e.g. landscape archaeologists, aerial photographers) or their reports, wherever possible.
- 6.4. The interpretation of geophysical data should try to distinguish anthropogenic from other causes of magnetic or other enhancement. A clear distinction must always be made between interpretation that is scientifically demonstrable, and interpretation based on informed speculation.
- 6.5. Geophysical data cannot be used as 'negative evidence' since the lack of geophysical anomalies cannot be taken to imply a lack of archaeological features. However, where relevant previous work is available, an assessment of confidence in the accuracy of the survey may be derived from the geophysical data. Such estimates have to be fully qualified and explained.

Where land use decisions have to be made in the absence of geophysical anomalies, additional evaluation techniques should be considered.

- 6.6. The site archive will be prepared in accordance with CIfA's (2020b) [Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives](#), and with reference to CIfA (nd) [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives](#). See Section 8 for further information on archiving.

7. Reporting

- 7.1. The approved project design will detail the content of the geophysical survey report. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 7.2. The geophysical survey report will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2020a) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey*.
- 7.3. The report will include the following:
- **non-technical summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language the principal reason for the work, its objectives, the dates the fieldwork was undertaken and main results. It should include reference to the AAO, authorship of the report and commissioning body;
 - **relevant reference numbers.** As a minimum this should include the AAO's unique site code and the OASIS ID number;
 - **introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological background, an outline of the nature of the work, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;
 - **location, geology and topography.** This should include written descriptions and a six-figure grid reference.
 - **site background.** This should set out a consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. This should include a baseline summary, including designated assets, archaeological potential and previous work(s) relevant to the archaeology of the site (e.g., previous surveys and excavations);
 - **aims and objectives.** This should reflect or reiterate the aims set out in the project design and where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt

2011). This should also include details of the monitored areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area;

- **methodology.** The methods used and reasons for this choice, including the detail of any variation to the agreed project design or specification, should be set out carefully and explained as appropriate. The methodology should also include the geophysical instruments used, their configuration and sample intervals, the method(s) of data capture, data processing and presentation;
- **results.** The format of this section will depend on the clarity and complexity of the results. A factual account of the survey results, followed by a section on their interpretation and discussion, can be used; alternatively, a blend of objective description and explanatory interpretation drawing upon supporting information from other sources may be presented. However, anomaly-by-anomaly narrative detail is often tedious and should be avoided. Nevertheless, this section should demonstrate that the archaeological potential of all anomalies located during the survey has been considered and the maximum use should be made of data plots and interpretation plans in this regard. Since the cause of anomalies often cannot be unambiguously determined based on geophysical measurements alone, the text should also be clear about the degree of uncertainty pertaining to inferences drawn from the results;
- **conclusions.** This will include a statement of findings and summary of significance and an assessment of achievement of the geophysical survey objectives. The conclusions should address the survey results with reference to the original aims and consider the results in their local and regional context. It is appropriate to include a section that sums up and interprets the results, and conclusions may be drawn, where necessary, about the need for future survey or research. Other elements should include a confidence rating on techniques used, or on limitations imposed by particular factors (e.g. weather or problems of access). Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **recommendations.** Any recommendations for further work will be clearly expressed in the report, following discussions with SCCHET;
- **archive.** Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive (see section 8 below);
- **references.** This should include all primary and secondary sources consulted, including maps and illustrations;

- **figures.** Details of these are outlined below in Section 7.4;
- **appendices.** These should contain essential technical and supporting detail. The project design should also be included for ease of reference, as should a copy of the OASIS form.

7.4. All figures should include accurate scales, a north arrow and grid references. Height data in mAOD should also be included where appropriate. Figures to be included as a minimum are:

- a detailed site location map;
- a detailed site plan showing all surveyed areas;
- survey grid location (1:2500 minimum);
- plot(s) of minimally processed data (1:1000 preferred minimum) ;
- minimally enhanced X-Y traces of magnetic data, where appropriate ;
- plot(s) of enhanced data (1:1000 preferred minimum), grey tone or dot density;
- interpretation diagram (1:1000 preferred minimum).

7.5. In the event of significant variation or conflict between the results of the geophysical survey and any subsequent fieldwork, the geophysical specialist will be required to review their data and prepare an addendum to their submitted report.

7.6. A fully illustrated draft version of the survey report will be produced within 4 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This document will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment. Once any comments have been appropriately addressed, a final report will be produced for submission to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) in PDF/A format. A digital copy of the report must also be supplied other bodies as appropriate, for example to the Historic England Regional Science Advisor.

7.7. The written reports will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, within six months of completion. The AAO will also be requested to submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal West Midlands Archaeology within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.

7.8. Where significant remains are identified, the AAO should make contingency for the publication of such results in an appropriate local, regional or national journal.

7.9. The AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.

8. Deposition Of Archive

- 8.1. Completion of the project is dependent on the compilation of an ordered and integrated project archive by the AAO. Given the primary digital character of the geophysical archive, reference must be made to guidance for geophysical survey projects provided by the European Archaeologiae Consilium (EAC) (2016) *Guidelines for the Use of Geophysics in Archaeology*.
- 8.2. The archive will also be compiled in accordance with this Brief, the project design, the CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*, the CIfA (2020b) *Standard and guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and with the guidelines of the chosen trusted digital repository. In the case of geophysical survey, all digital data used to inform the results of the work should be deposited with a trusted digital repository and thus made publicly accessible, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012, updated 2024). It is recommended that the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) (or another equivalent Trusted Digital Repository that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation) be used for digital archiving; for more information on digital archiving please refer to the [Archaeology Data Service website](#). The digital records will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice guidance (i.e. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011)). [Guidance](#) on selection of digital data for the archive is also available on the ADS website. Digital archives containing a very large number of files (e.g. circa 300 +) or large files (e.g. circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and early engagement with ADS would be advised if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.
- 8.3. It is widely accepted that not all the records (analogue and digital) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, to ensure that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establishing the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving museum. The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by *A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011, section 4). Reference should also be made to generic selection policies (SMA 1993) and CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*.

- 8.4. Arrangements for the deposition of the site archive will be made with the ADS **in advance** of commencement of fieldwork. The AAO will contact the ADS to discuss archaeological archiving requirements at the initial stage of preparation of the project design. Relevant contact details can be found at the end of this document.
- 8.5. Following agreement with the client, details of archiving arrangements will be incorporated into the project design. This will include confirmation that a budget to cover the museum's deposition charge has been allowed for. It is advised that early consultation with the museum will facilitate transfer of the material archive. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 8.6. The final report should clearly identify what comprises the site archive and where this archive has been/ will be deposited. An index to the archive should be included as an Appendix in the geophysical survey report.
- 8.7. The AAO should also ensure that the ADS guidance has been followed and that the ADS has been made aware of the date set for the deposition of the archive in advance of said deposition.
- 8.8. Archiving is expected to be carried out as specified, in a timely manner, unless further fieldwork is undertaken and it is agreed that the archives from the separate phases can be amalgamated. On completion of archiving, confirmation of deposition will be supplied to SCCHET.
- 8.9. The archives themselves should be prepared in line with the general guidance on archiving given in the following texts, as well as other relevant archiving texts:
- Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition)
 - CIfA. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*
 - CIfA. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
 - Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*.
 - Europae Archaeologiae Consilium (EAC) [guidelines](#).
- 8.10. Once deposition of the archive has been arranged, the AAO may retain, disperse or dispose of the primary hardcopy items as they see fit. Items may be retained for curation by the AAO, developer or applicant, or offered to a

third-party organisation for public use or as a teaching resource. The project design should state how primary hardcopy items will be treated.

9. Outreach And Social Media

- 9.1. Where possible and appropriate, and in consultation with the developer and the client, the AAO will seek opportunities to disseminate the results of the geophysical survey and engage with the local community through social media, press releases, open days and volunteer involvement, while considering issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

10. Project Health & Safety

- 10.1. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the geophysical survey be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy (either the contractors own policy or those of the principal contractor). Risk assessments must be carried out for each aspect of fieldwork. If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the project design can be varied in the interests of health and safety. SCCHET should be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases.
- 10.2. All staff working on the site employed by the AAO will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. The risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 10.3. The AAO will ensure that all site staff wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date. Similarly, the AAO will ensure that all staff members have been trained in the safe use of equipment which they are using and that all site works are carried out in accordance with safe working practices as defined in their own health and safety policy.
- 10.4. The developer must provide all information reasonably obtainable on contamination and the location of live services before commencement of the works.

11. References

ARCHES (Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: a European Standard). 2020. *Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. Available online at:

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/arches/Wiki.jsp?page=Main>

Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition). Archaeological Archives Forum. Available online at:

https://archives.archaeologyuk.org/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2019. Dig Digital. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey*. Available online at: https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIAS%26GGeophysics_3.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIAS%26GArchives_4.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

European Archaeologiae Consilium (EAC). 2016. *Guidelines for the Use of Geophysics in Archaeology*. Available online at: [https://www.europae-archaeologiae-](https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/files/ugd/881a59_fdb1636e95f64813a65178895aea87cf.pdf)

[consilium.org/files/ugd/881a59_fdb1636e95f64813a65178895aea87cf.pdf](https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/files/ugd/881a59_fdb1636e95f64813a65178895aea87cf.pdf)

Historic England. 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/>.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London. Available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

Watt, S. (2011). *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A Framework for Research*. Oxford, Oxbow Books. Available online at:
https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/wmrrf_he_2016/downloads.cfm.

12. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email:
shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email:
suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208.
Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspectors of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: 03456 789000. Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

HM Coroner for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire

Email: coroners@stoke.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.
Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK](#)
(www.gov.uk)

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Teresa Gilmore and/or Victoria Allnatt. Tel 0121 348 8225 or 07766 925251.

Email: PASTeam@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Model Brief

Archaeological Field Evaluation v2.0

April 2025

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	2
2.	Evaluation Objectives.....	4
3.	Project Design.....	5
4.	Evaluation Guidelines.....	8
5.	Sampling.....	12
6.	Artefact Collection	14
7.	Monitoring	15
8.	Post-Excavation Guidelines	16
9.	Reporting	17
10.	Deposition of Archive	20
11.	Outreach and Social Media.....	22
12.	Project Personnel and Health & Safety	23
13.	References	23
14.	Contacts.....	26

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for archaeological field evaluation required as a condition of planning consent granted by the local planning authority (LPA), or indeed archaeological evaluation work carried out pre-application or pre-determination. This document covers evaluation by trial trenching.
- 1.2. An archaeological evaluation is a programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which seeks to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts. It may form a single or final phase of work within a defined area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water (CIfA 2023a).
- 1.3. Where the proposals form part of an approved planning application, or as part of pre-application discussions, SCCHET have advised that there is reason to believe that archaeological remains exist on the site, but there is not enough available information to determine their character, extent, and state of preservation. As such, the archaeological implications of the proposed development cannot be adequately assessed on the basis of the available information, and it has therefore been recommended that an archaeological evaluation be completed to gather the necessary information. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024), more specifically Paragraph 207, which states that 'in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.
- 1.4. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a detailed project design by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO). The draft project design will be submitted to SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for comment/formal approval prior to the commencement of site work. No archaeological work will commence on the site until approval of the project design has been received. To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in

the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft project design is submitted to the SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. Likewise, SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) project designs, or undertake any further curatorial work, such as monitoring visits or reviewing reports, until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.5. The amount of trenching required will be dependent upon the nature of the site and the amount and quality of data from any previous non-intrusive investigations or nearby intrusive investigations. Where informative previous work (such as a geophysical survey) has been carried out, an appropriate level of trenching (to be agreed with SCCHET) will be targeted to test anomalies, apparently blank areas and any previously un-surveyed areas. Where no such work has been carried out, a minimum 4% sample of the site will be tested (exact amount to be agreed with SCCHET). The density of the trenching and a trench location plan should be included in the project design and agreed in advance with SCCHET prior to work commencing. All trenches should be laid out by the AAO. Any variations to this layout due to on site conditions will be agreed in advance with SCCHET. A suitable amount of contingency trenching should also usually be included to ensure that should anything of archaeological interest arise it can be appropriately characterised if not possible in the agreed trenching plan.
- 1.6. The AAO will have sufficient experience to prepare and undertake the preparation of the archaeological evaluation or be in a position to appoint sub-contractors to complete said work. If the latter, this approach should be agreed with SCCHET in advance of appointing.
- 1.7. The results of the evaluation will be used by SCCHET to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed development and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation.
- 1.8. The evaluation will comply with the methodology laid out and approved in the project design. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
 - CIfA. 2023b. [Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct](#)
 - relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)
 - Or any subsequent revisions of the above.

- 1.9. In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in [The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment \(MoRPHE\)](#) (Historic England 2015a).
- 1.10. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Evaluation Objectives

- 2.1. The evaluation must adhere to the standard set out by CIfA ([2023a](#)); that is to seek to determine, record and report on the nature, extent, preservation and significance of archaeological remains within a defined area. The scope of the work will be described in a project design that is fit for purpose and will be carried out by suitably competent persons in accordance with that design and the CIfA Code of conduct and give due regard to the guidance for archaeological field evaluation. All archaeological field evaluations will result in a report, published accounts where appropriate, and a stable, ordered, accessible archive.
- 2.2. The evaluation is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits. Evaluation is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.
- 2.3. The evaluation must be carried out sufficiently in advance of groundworks to allow the completion of a report on the evaluation, consideration of the results and discussions regarding the scope of any further archaeological works. The AAO will use this Brief to prepare a detailed project design for evaluation and post-fieldwork assessment and report preparation work.
- 2.4. The results of the evaluation will be used by SCCHET to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed scheme and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024), more specifically Paragraph 207 (see Section 1.3 above for more), and any mitigation or recording work arising out of the evaluation exercise would be in line with Paragraph 218 of the NPPF which states that 'local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'.

3. Project Design

- 3.1. A project design must be submitted by the applicant or, on their behalf, by their agent or archaeological consultant, and approved by SCCHET prior to any development commencing on site. The methodology for the evaluation will be set out in the project design, including reference to the appropriate CIfA and scientific guidelines. The AAO will, in preparing the project design, consider the objectives identified within this Brief and, where appropriate, develop more detailed objectives. These should be based upon a wider appreciation of the archaeological context, an understanding of the topography of the site and its environs, and a review of [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011).
- 3.2. Any subsequent changes to the project design will need to be agreed with SCCHET prior to the change taking place.
- 3.3. The project design will cover the evaluation only; should further stages of archaeological mitigation (such as excavation or archaeological monitoring and recording) be required based on the results of the evaluation, then this work will be subject to a separate project design. This approach is supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 207 (see Section 1.3 above). Any mitigation which stems from the results of this evaluation will require the production of a separate project design.
- 3.4. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the HER). It should conform to the guidelines set out in the CIfA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* and should in particular specify (where appropriate):
 - a statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation;
 - non-technical summary;
 - legislative requirements;
 - the location, geology and topography of the site, to include a six-figure grid reference and site location plan tied to the national grid;
 - a consideration of site constraints, for example any designations, access issues, etc.;
 - context of the project;

- the aims and objectives of the evaluation. Where relevant, reference should be made to [*The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research*](#) (Watt 2011);
- historical and archaeological background, to include consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. The following sources should be consulted as appropriate:
 - the [*Staffordshire Historic Environment Record*](#) (HER). Please note that data extracted from the Heritage Gateway website does not constitute a valid HER search due to its partial nature
 - NHLE records of all designated heritage assets, e.g. scheduled, listed and registered heritage assets and conservation areas
 - readily available aerial and other photographic and remote sensing data evidence (e.g. LiDAR)
 - readily available historic mapping such as Ordnance Survey and tithe maps (tithe maps for the county can be found on [*Staffordshire Past Track*](#))
 - geological and soil surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - geotechnical/environmental/borehole data; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - land use surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - [*The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research*](#) (Watt 2011).
- details of the evaluated areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area with a georeferenced plan;
- the methodology for site investigation and recording, including written records, photography, finds collection and sampling, retention and discard strategies;
- the methodology for post-excavation assessment and reporting;
- the contingencies made for full analysis and reporting;
- details of proposed staffing to complete the work. The work will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Details of staff numbers, their roles and relevant experience will be included within the project design, to include sub-contracted specialists. It may be necessary to provide SCCHET with staff CVs;

- the timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-excavation works;
- the contingencies made for full analysis and reporting;
- publication (where appropriate) and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met;
- arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts;
- details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive. This should include the unique reference number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- collection and disposal strategy for artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials;
- a data management plan which, as a minimum, will outline how digital data will be handled both during and after the project. It will describe the type of data used, how it is collected, organized, and stored, and what formats will be used. See Section 4.17 for further information;
- a statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate;
- a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards);
- a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project;
- a statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology;
- a statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project;
- copyright;
- health and safety considerations;
- environmental protection considerations;
- monitoring procedures;
- licence eligibility (where required);
- as a minimum, figures are to include a georeferenced site location plan and georeferenced trench location plan, both of which should be

referenced to the OS National Grid and to the local topography (e.g. field boundaries). All figures must have a scale bar, north arrow and grid references.

- 3.5. The project design **must** be agreed with SCCHET **prior** to the commencement of the work. Once agreed, any changes to the project design will need to be discussed with, and agreed by, SCCHET before implementation. It should be noted that (as outlined in Section 1.4 above) there is a fee for agreement of a project design and other curatorial duties, which will be levied on the AAO who prepared it (see online charging schedule [here](#)).
- 3.6. Planning conditions relating to project designs will not be discharged until the project design has been agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.7. Copies of the approved project design must be available to staff during all aspects of fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment. All fieldwork staff should be given an opportunity to read the project design in advance of fieldwork commencing. Copies of reports produced as part of previous stages of work on site (e.g. geophysical survey report) should be available to site staff.

4. Evaluation Guidelines

- 4.1. A total of 4% (subject to prior agreement with SCCHET) of the site will typically be evaluated, although this will be determined on a site-by-site basis (see Section 1.5 above for more). The location and size of the trenches will be agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design.
- 4.2. In some instances, prior to the excavation of each trial trench, the AAO will be required to sample the topsoil/ploughsoil for the recovery of unstratified artefacts. In such circumstances three sample locations will be required at each trench location (i.e. each end and centre). These could be excavated by machine or by hand and each would be a 0.5m x 0.5m test pit of the ploughsoil/topsoil depth. The samples could be sieved on site (6mm wire mesh) or retained for immediate sieving off site. The results, should substantial quantities of archaeological artefactual evidence be encountered, could mean that an amended trenching strategy be deployed to better understand the factors behind the evidence.
- 4.3. The attending archaeologist(s) should keep a record of the date, time and duration of site work, the number of staff concerned, and actions taken.
- 4.4. An amount of contingency trenching (to be agreed - see Section 1.5 above) should be allocated should archaeological features require further investigation as part of this evaluation. This contingency should only be used following discussion with the SCCHET.

- 4.5. The fieldwork strategy chosen will be selected to cause the minimum amount of destruction and will operate with due regard to health and safety regulations.
- 4.6. The location and size of the trenches will be agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design, however trenches are generally expected to be at least 1.8m wide. It is assumed that all trenches will be opened by machine, unless specifically stated otherwise. The AAO will determine an appropriate machine to be used depending on the prevailing site conditions. It is the AAO's duty to check the documentation of both machine and operator prior to work commencing.
- 4.7. An appropriate bucket will be used; normally this will comprise a toothless ditching bucket. In exceptional circumstances, for example in deposits of substantially stony/ rubbly or compact material, a toothed bucket may be used only to remove such deposits. Toothed buckets must not be used to dig through soft deposits.
- 4.8. All machining will be carried out under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. Machine excavation will proceed in level spits not greater than 0.1m until either the archaeological horizon or the natural geology is exposed. Where necessary, the base of the trench/surface of archaeological deposits will be cleaned by hand. Archaeological deposits should not be removed by machine except where such a procedure has been sanctioned by SCCHET. Under no circumstances will the machine be used to cut arbitrary trenches down to natural deposits.
- 4.9. If archaeological deposits are encountered, machining will cease and excavation will proceed by hand sufficiently to allow the identification and planning of archaeological features. Where archaeological features appear to be absent, sufficient work should be done to demonstrate this.
- 4.10. A suitable amount of weathering time should be afforded to the opened-up trenches to allow any archaeological features that aren't immediately apparent to present themselves. This would usually be 24 hours although this may depend on circumstances and/or weather conditions.
- 4.11. Where archaeological features are present, a sufficient quantity of said features will be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. The sampling of features by hand can only be finally decided in the field on the basis of their potential to contribute to project objectives and regional research agendas, however, the following guidelines indicate the level of work that is considered to be necessary: discrete features, such as pits and postholes, will be half-sectioned in the first instance; linear features will be sampled a minimum of 10% along their length (each sample section to be not less than 1m), or a minimum of a 1m sample section, if the feature is less than

5m long. Archaeological deposits will only be entirely removed where this meets the aims of the fieldwork, for example special features such as burials, structural remains, kilns, etc. Any work resulting in the 100% excavation of an archaeological deposit/ feature will be discussed in advance with SCCHET. Palaeochannels will be sampled for environmental evidence and for dating purposes. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and all finds recovered will be retained for analysis.

- 4.12. The deposits at junctions or interruptions in linear features will be sufficiently excavated for the relationship between components to be established. All termini will be investigated.
- 4.13. The stratigraphy of each trial trench is to be recorded using a pro-forma recording system, even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. The trenches, as excavated, and any features within them, must be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, scale drawings, and written descriptions using a single context recording system (either digital or paper based). The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scaled photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on pro-forma recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Following the identification of natural or the decision to halt further excavation for health and safety reasons, a full representative section of the trench will be recorded.
- 4.14. Depending on the scope and perceived archaeological potential of the site, it may be necessary to seek involvement from the appropriate specialist and/ or Historic England Regional Science Advisor in relation to the collection of palaeoenvironmental material, industrial residues or other relevant scientific material. SCCHET will normally recommend when specialist advice is required.
- 4.15. General recommendations for minimum standards for archaeological science work have been produced by Historic England. These guidelines can be downloaded from the [Advice and Guidance](#) section of the Historic England website.
- 4.16. Unless otherwise specified in the approved project design, it is anticipated that the trench locations and any features within them will be recorded to a horizontal accuracy of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ using a Real Time Kinematic (RTK) Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) in accordance with The Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Survey Newlyn Datum (ODN), as defined by the OS Active GNSS network and the use of a Virtual Reference System. Surface heights will be recorded using RTK GNSS. Ordnance Survey Benchmarks will not to be used. Where GNSS is used to locate trenches and features, the technique, equipment and transformation software to be employed during the survey and post-processing must be clearly identified within the project design.

The survey approaches should be guided by Historic England (2016a) guidance [Where on Earth Are We?](#).

- 4.17. An adequate photographic record (see the SCC County Archaeological Standard for more) of the site must be undertaken. This will include photographs illustrating the principal archaeological features and any finds discovered, both in detail and in context. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the site and the work undertaken. All photographs of archaeological detail will feature an appropriately sized scale. Digital photos must be of a quality not less than 12 megapixels in high resolution TIFF (uncompressed) format. Where traditional 'wet processed' black & white film and colour slide photography are proposed for use, arrangements must be made to ensure that they meet the appropriate professional standards for archiving and long-term storage.
- 4.18. The AAO must have a Data Management Plan for image capture and file curation which meets the standards outlined by CifA's (2019) [Dig Digital](#) guidance, the [Archaeological Archives Forum](#) (Brown 2011) the [Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe](#) (ARCHES 2020) and [Digital Image Capture and File Storage](#) guidance from Historic England (2015b).
- 4.19. Scale plans and sections must form part of the recording of the site in addition to written descriptions. All trenches will be planned at a minimum of 1:50, with individual features being planned at a minimum of 1:20 where additional detail is required. One representative long section of each trench will be produced, at an appropriate scale. Plans and sections of each feature excavated will be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20, depending on the size of the feature. All plans, sections and profiles will be tied to the OS National Grid. The mAOD heights of all trenches and principal features will be calculated (as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15) and the levels added to the post-excavation drawings.
- 4.20. Provision will be made to recover material suitable for scientific dating. Contingency sums will be made available to undertake such dating.
- 4.21. Further contingency provision will be made for additional specialist advice, e.g. for finds analysis and conservation.
- 4.22. Should significant archaeological features or finds be exposed during the work, SCCHE must be notified at the first instance. It may also be necessary to notify relevant specialists such as the Historic England Regional Science Advisor. The AAO will ensure that any such exposed elements remain undisturbed until their significance can be determined and to allow consideration of their retention *in situ*, or to devise an appropriate excavation and conservation strategy. There may be a need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure

adequate recording is undertaken. Where design modification is not practically possible the developer must allow sufficient time and financial resources for the full excavation, conservation, and curation of the archaeological resource before development commences.

- 4.23. The AAO will make clear in the project design approaches to securing the site during the trial trenching exercise.
- 4.24. Upon completion of excavation and recording, any necessary protection measures for archaeological remains will be completed prior to backfilling. Where significant archaeological remains are identified, and it has been considered that these would be best preserved *in situ* for more considered investigation during subsequent mitigation, the AAO will ensure that said remains are suitably protected before backfilling. An archaeologist will also be present during the backfilling of said remains. Historic England's guidance (2016b) on the preservation of archaeological remains can be found [here](#). The AAO should also clearly state in the project design the approach to reinstatement across the site and will, unless otherwise agreed, be responsible for the reinstatement of trenches. In general, trenches will be backfilled by replacing the excavated material in reverse order to which they were excavated. Once backfilled, the trenches will be levelled using the mechanical excavator. Photographs will be taken of each backfilled trench or group of backfilled trenches.
- 4.25. It may be appropriate to display illustrated notices around the site (with the client's agreement), to inform members of the public what work is happening, and why. Such notices will be a minimum of A3 size, with font at a minimum size of 16 point. SCCHET will normally advise when this is required and will approve of the notice before it is erected.

5. Sampling

- 5.1. The purpose of environmental sampling at the evaluation stage is to identify the range of environmental materials present, their preservation, significance, and distribution. An initial assessment of the site's palaeoenvironmental potential should be clearly laid out in the project design. The sampling strategy should be agreed by the project team, which includes the relevant specialists. Environmental sampling should be undertaken with reference to Historic England (2011) guidance [Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation \(second edition\)](#). Guidance documents to more specialised sampling methods can be found at [here](#).

- 5.2. Where appropriate, sampling for palaeoenvironmental remains at evaluation stage should look to answer the following questions, which should be addressed as part of the formal reporting stage:
- What types of biological remains are present?
 - What is their state of preservation, concentration and distribution across the site?
 - What is the significance in the local, regional and national context?
 - What recommendations are there for further palaeoenvironmental work on the existing sample/s or further recovery during any subsequent phase of fieldwork?
- 5.3. Where a site is considered to have significant palaeoenvironmental potential, it may be necessary to obtain specialist advice and undertake sampling in accordance with a programme agreed with the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other relevant specialist as appropriate. A contingency should be allowed for this.
- 5.4. For discrete features such as pits and postholes, sampling will normally involve half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features should be sectioned.
- 5.5. Individual complex features such as kilns or burials should be cleaned and recorded but retained *in situ* until advice can be sought from SCCHET and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other specialist as appropriate.
- 5.6. Samples will be taken using ten-litre plastic buckets (with lids and handles), or strong polythene bags (double bagged) secured at the neck, for the recovery of bulk environmental samples. All samples will be clearly labelled with the unique site code, context number and sample number as a minimum.
- 5.7. For non-waterlogged deposits, bulk samples will normally comprise 40 litres of sediment. Where contexts have a lesser volume, 10% of the context will be retained as a sample. Each bulk sample will contain sediment derived from a single context.
- 5.8. Where waterlogged deposits are encountered, sample sizes will usually be between 10-20 litres. Samples of this size are typically sufficient to recover a representative sample of macrofossils. Waterlogged samples will be protected from temperatures below 5°C and above 25°C and from wetting and drying due to weather exposure.
- 5.9. Where house floors or other buried land surfaces are encountered and sampled, appropriately sized monolith or Kubiena boxes will be used for the recovery of undisturbed samples for soil micromorphology and to sub-sample for

microfossils (e.g., pollen and spores, diatoms, ostracods). Where longer sequences are sampled, contiguous column samples will be collected for the retrieval of macrofossils (e.g., molluscs, plant remains and insects).

- 5.10. Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) should be collected by hand. Separate samples (c.10ml) should be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets). Reference should be made to the Historic England guidance (2015c) [Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice](#).
- 5.11. Processing of all bulk soil samples collected for biological assessment will be completed within two weeks of collection. Processing samples at the time of fieldwork will allow this sampling strategy to be updated and refined where necessary.
- 5.12. The AAO will be responsible for protecting all samples and finds, and for their transportation (including loading and unloading) to the processing facilities.

6. Artefact Collection

- 6.1. All spoil from the evaluation will be scanned visually for small finds and disarticulated human remains. Where possible, the spoil will also be scanned using a metal detector (set not to bias against iron) to recover metallic objects (buttons, nails, pins etc).
- 6.2. All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the Institute of Conservation (ICON) (2023) *First Aid for Finds* and the recipient museum's guidelines.
- 6.3. All stratified finds should be collected by context and, where appropriate, individually recorded in 3 dimensions. Unstratified finds should only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. Provision should be made for on-site conservation advice for the lifting and treatment of fragile objects.
- 6.4. If large quantities, bulky or finds requiring complex conservation are discovered on site, the AAO must contact the recipient museum at the earliest opportunity to enter into discussions regarding preservation and long-term storage of the archive.
- 6.5. All finds that are 'treasure' (in terms of the Treasure Act 1996) will be reported to the Coroner and the Staffordshire Finds Liaison Officer, and appropriate procedures then followed.
- 6.6. Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) (1993) in their document [Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections](#). The presence

of such materials within a context should always be recorded even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.

- 6.7. Waterlogged wood should be treated accordance with English Heritage (2010) [guidelines](#) and left *in situ* where this is practical and its long-term preservation is achievable.
- 6.8. Where human remains are unexpectedly encountered these must initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Where excavation is necessary, this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice, Diocesan, environmental health and other regulations, as appropriate. In certain situations, special arrangements may be required for the recovery of samples for DNA analysis. At sites known in advance to be cemeteries or to have the potential to contain human remains, provision should be made for site inspection by a recognised specialist. Further guidance is provided in [Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England](#) (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England 2017).

7. Monitoring

- 7.1. SCCHET will be responsible for monitoring the evaluation. Their role is to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with this Brief and the approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies. A minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork must be given by the AAO to SCCHET so that arrangements for monitoring the fieldwork may be made.
- 7.2. The AAO must maintain regular contact with SCCHET and provide updates via telephone, written descriptions, photographs and by any other means so that decisions regarding the progress and ultimate completion of the site may be made. Site visits may be arranged so that the above monitoring standards can be satisfied. Not all sites will require a site visit by SCCHET, although it is the decision of SCCHET, and not the AAO, as to the necessity of a site visit.
- 7.3. SCCHET should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design.
- 7.4. Trenches **must not** be backfilled until confirmation has been given by SCCHET.
- 7.5. Following the completion of fieldwork, the AAO should keep SCCHET regularly informed of the project's post-excavation progress.

8. Post-Excavation Guidelines

- 8.1. The AAO will detail their approaches to the post-fieldwork assessment of all finds, samples, features and records recovered/made during the course of the archaeological evaluation in the project design.
- 8.2. Any artefacts and ecofacts recovered during the evaluation should look to address the aims and objectives set out in the project design. For all categories of material recovered, including all finds and soil samples, an assessment by an appropriately experienced specialist will be undertaken. Basic site and stratigraphic information will be supplied to the specialists. Samples must be processed and sorted, and any artefacts recovered provided to the appropriate specialist(s) to be considered alongside the hand-recovered material. All assessment and analytical work must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced staff working to the requirements of this Brief, the methodologies laid out in the approved project design and in accordance with the CIfA (2022) *Code of Conduct* and other relevant CIfA standard and guidance.
- 8.3. All finds are to be cleaned according to accepted principles and in line with appropriate period/material guidelines. All finds are to be treated in accordance with current best practice guidance, including CIfA (2020a) [Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials](#) and the appropriate Historic England [Archaeological Conservation guidance documents](#). Advice should also be sought from *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 8.4. For ceramic assemblages, recording will be carried out in a manner compatible with existing typological series in the relevant local pottery reference collection.
- 8.5. The guidelines for handling Post-Roman Ceramics produced by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (2001) are also to be followed for relevant material.
- 8.6. All metal objects, whether ferrous or non-ferrous, will be weighed and catalogued. Contingency for x-ray should be included for any items where further identification is deemed necessary.
- 8.7. Where material suitable for scientific dating was recovered, sufficient dating will be undertaken only where it is needed to meet the aims of the evaluation.
- 8.8. Post-excavation assessment should look to enhance understanding of the character, extent and preservation of archaeological remains within and across the site and should inform discussions regarding the scope and nature of any subsequent archaeological mitigation.
- 8.9. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken and assessment has identified the need for further analysis, this will be completed drawing upon the contingency allowed.

8.10. The site archive will be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990) and the CIfA (2020b) [Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives](#) and with reference to CIfA (nd) [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives](#). See Section 10 for further information on archiving.

9. Reporting

- 9.1. The approved project design will detail the proposed content of the evaluation report. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 9.2. The evaluation report will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.
- 9.3. The specific requirements of the evaluation report will necessarily vary according to the scope of works, the nature of the results or other factors. However, as a minimum the report will include the following:
- **non-technical summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language the principal reason for the work, its objectives, the dates the fieldwork was undertaken and main results. It should include reference to the AAO, authorship of the report and commissioning body;
 - **relevant reference numbers.** As a minimum this should include the AAO's unique site code, the OASIS ID number and the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery;
 - **introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological background, an outline of the nature of the work, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;
 - **location, geology and topography.** This should include written descriptions and a six-figure grid reference;
 - **site background.** This should set out a consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. This should include a baseline summary, including designated assets, archaeological potential and previous work(s) relevant to the archaeology of the site (e.g., previous surveys and excavations);
 - **aims and objectives.** This should reflect or reiterate the aims set out in the project design and where relevant, reference should be made to *The*

Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research (Watt 2011). This should also include details of the evaluated areas, to include a written rationale for each separate trench;

- **methodology.** The methods used, including the detail of any variation to the agreed project design, should be set out carefully and explained as appropriate;
- **results.** These should be set out as a series of summary statements, organised clearly in relation to the methods used, and describe structural data, associated finds and/or environmental data recovered. Descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements. Technical terminology (including dating or period references) should be explained where necessary if the report is aimed at a largely non-archaeological audience. The results should be amplified where necessary by the use of drawings and photographs; and by supporting data contained in appendices (see below);
- **conclusions.** This will include a statement of findings and summary of significance and an assessment of achievement of the evaluation objectives. It may also be appropriate to present a phased interpretation of the site and consider the results in their local and regional context. Other elements should include a confidence rating on techniques used, or on limitations imposed by particular factors (e.g. weather or problems of access). Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **recommendations.** Any recommendations on further analysis or preservation work will be clearly expressed in the report, following discussions with SCCHET;
- **archive.** Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive (to include records, finds and digital data). This should include the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- **references.** This should include all primary and secondary sources consulted, including maps and illustrations;
- **figures.** Details of these are outlined below in Section 9.4;
- **colour plates.** These should be selected to show a selection of archaeological features and work in progress. All photographs should contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the plate's caption;

- **appendices.** These should contain essential technical and supporting detail, to include context registers, an index to the archive, all specialist reports (finds/ paleoenvironmental assessment, scientific dating, etc), and other relevant data, for example lists of artefacts or details of measurements, gazetteers, etc. The project design should also be included for ease of reference, as should a copy of the OASIS form.
- 9.4. All figures should include accurate scales, a north arrow and grid references. Height data in mAOD should also be included where appropriate. Figures to be included as a minimum are:
- detailed location map;
 - detailed overall site plan showing all trenches and features, as excavated; if appropriate, this plan will be phased and may comprise a separate plan for each phase and/ or area of the site;
 - all individual trench plans and trench sections (where they contain archaeology);
 - detailed plans of relevant features, as excavated;
 - detailed sections of relevant features, as excavated;
 - select artefact illustrations and/or photographs as appropriate.
- 9.5. A fully illustrated draft version of the evaluation report will be produced within 8 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This document will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment. Once any comments have been appropriately addressed, a final report will be produced for submission to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) in PDF/A format. A digital copy of the report must also be supplied other bodies as appropriate, for example to the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, if they have been involved in the project or the results merit it.
- 9.6. The written reports will become publicly accessible, as part of the SHER, within six months of completion. The AAO will also be requested to submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal West Midlands Archaeology within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.
- 9.7. Where significant remains are encountered, the AAO should make contingency for the publication of such results in an appropriate local, regional or national journal.
- 9.8. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken but where further analysis of material/ records from the evaluation is required, contingency will be made for the preparation and submission of a separate report on the results.
- 9.9. The AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.

10. Deposition Of Archive

- 10.1. Completion of the project is dependent on the compilation of an ordered and integrated project archive by the AAO, which may include paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data. This will be compiled in accordance with this Brief, the project design, the CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*, the CIfA (2020b) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and with the receiving museums guidance.
- 10.2. The receiving museum for Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG), who accept physical archives but not digital data. All digital data used to inform the results of the work, for example, digital photographs, original CAD or digitised drawings and survey data should be deposited with a trusted digital repository and thus made publicly accessible, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012, updated 2024). It is recommended that the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) (or another equivalent Trusted Digital Repository that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation) be used for digital archiving; for more information on digital archiving please refer to the [Archaeology Data Service website](#). The digital records will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice guidance (i.e. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011)). [Guidance](#) on selection of digital data for the archive is also available on the ADS website. Digital archives containing a very large number of files (e.g. circa 300 +) or large files (e.g. circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and early engagement with ADS would be advised if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.
- 10.3. It is widely accepted that not all the records (analogue and digital) and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, to ensure that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establishing the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving museum. The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by [A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation](#) (Brown 2011, section 4). Reference should also be made to generic selection policies (SMA 1993) and CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*.

- 10.4. Arrangements for the deposition of the site archive will be made with PMAG **in advance** of commencement of fieldwork. The AAO will contact the PMAG archaeological curator to discuss archaeological archiving requirements and to obtain a reference number at the initial stage of preparation of the project design. Relevant contact details can be found at the end of this document. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery's terms and conditions, and fees, can be found at [here](#).
- 10.5. PMAG will issue the AAO with a Project Initiation Form to record details of the project and predicted nature of the archaeology. Agreement should be reached on recording systems to be employed, to ensure compatibility with the museum's own documentation requirements, upon the manner of storage and presentation of finds, and upon the nature and contents of the written archive.
- 10.6. On receipt of a completed Projection Initiation Form, PMAG will assign a unique reference number for the project. **Reference to the number should be made in the project design** as evidence that the museum has been consulted before the project commences. During the project, when/if it becomes apparent that the project is not 'sterile', the museum will issue an accession number for the archive.
- 10.7. Where the evaluation is part of a wider archive, e.g. a project where other archaeological groundworks such as archaeological monitoring and recording / geophysical survey have taken place previously, it may be possible to use existing accession numbers to ensure that the site archive stays together. This should first be discussed with SCCHET and PMAG.
- 10.8. On completion of the evaluation (or extended fieldwork programme), every effort will be made to persuade the legal owner of any finds recovered (i.e., the landowner), except for human remains and any objects covered by the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009), to transfer their ownership to the museum in a written agreement. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 10.9. The final report should clearly identify what comprises the site archive and where this archive has been/ will be deposited. An index to the archive should be included as an Appendix in the evaluation report. The archiving process should follow that laid out in the approved project design and should identify which finds, samples and records have been retained and/or disposed of. This process should be in accordance with the *CifA Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020b).

- 10.10. The AAO should also ensure that the accepting museums guidance has been followed and that the museum has been made aware of the date set for the deposition of the archive in advance of said deposition.
- 10.11. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with in line with *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 10.12. The archives themselves should be prepared in line with the general guidance on archiving given in the following texts, as well as other relevant archiving texts:
- Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition)
 - CIfA. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*
 - CIfA. nd. *Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*
 - CIfA. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
 - Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*
 - UKIC. 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage*
- 10.13. Once deposition of the archive has been arranged, the AAO may retain, disperse or dispose of the primary hardcopy items as they see fit. Items may be retained for curation by the AAO, developer or applicant, or offered to a third-party organisation for public use or as a teaching resource. The project design should state how primary hardcopy items will be treated.
- 10.14. Where sterile archaeological projects have occurred, i.e. where the project has produced no material of evidential value, the CIfA (nd) [Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects](#) must be consulted.
- 10.15. Archiving is expected to be carried out as specified, in a timely manner, unless further fieldwork is undertaken and it is agreed that the archives from the separate phases can be amalgamated. The AAO must notify SCCHET upon deposition of both the physical and digital archive.

11. Outreach and Social Media

- 11.1. Where possible and appropriate to the nature and scale of the fieldwork, and in consultation with the developer and/or the client, the AAO will seek opportunities to disseminate the results of the evaluation and engage with the local community through social media, press releases, open days and volunteer

involvement, while considering issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

12. Project Personnel and Health & Safety

- 12.1. The evaluation should be carried out by suitably experienced professionals. The project design will contain details of key project staff and specialists who may contribute during the course of the works.
- 12.2. This brief and the approved project design will be made available to all project staff who will be encouraged to read it and familiarise themselves with the requirements of the project.
- 12.3. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the evaluation be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy (either the contractors own policy or those of the principal contractor). Risk assessments must be carried out for each aspect of fieldwork. If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the project design can be varied in the interests of health and safety. SCCHEP should be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases.
- 12.4. All staff working on the site employed by the AAO will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. The risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 12.3 The AAO will ensure that all site staff wears Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date. Similarly, the AAO will ensure that all staff members have been trained in the safe use of equipment which they are using and that all site works are carried out in accordance with safe working practices as defined in their own health and safety policy.
- 12.4 The developer must provide all information reasonably obtainable on contamination and the location of live services before commencement of the works.
- 12.5 Measures should be in place for wildlife egress from trenches left open overnight (for example the provision of fencing, or a plank or ramp to facilitate this).

13. References

Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England. 2017. Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian

Burial Grounds in England. Available online at:

https://apabe.archaeologyuk.org/pdf/APABE_ToHREfCBG_FINAL_WEB.pdf

ARCHES (Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: a European Standard). 2020. *Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. Available online at:

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/arches/Wiki.jsp?page=Main>

Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation (revised edition)*. Archaeological Archives Forum. Available online at:

https://archives.archaeologyuk.org/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2019. Dig Digital. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS%26G Finds_2.pdf

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIFAS%26G Archives_4.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023a. *Standard for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Standard%20for%20archaeological%20field%20evaluation.pdf>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023a. *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Universal%20guidance%20for%20archaeological%20field%20evaluation.pdf>

Historic England. 2010. *Waterlogged wood. Guidelines on the Recording, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/waterlogged-wood/>

Historic England. 2011. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (second edition). Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd>.

Historic England. 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/>.

Historic England. 2015c. *Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/archaeometallurgy-guidelines-best-practice/>.

Historic England. 2016a. *Where on Earth Are We? The Role of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) in Archaeological Field Survey*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/where-on-earth-gnss-archaeological-field-survey/>.

Historic England. 2016b. *Preserving Archaeological Remains. Decision-taking for sites under development*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/archaeological-science/preservation-in-situ/>.

ICON (Institute of Conservation). 2023. *First Aid for Finds*. London: ICON.

Medieval Pottery Research Group. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

SMA (Society of Museum Archaeologists). 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. Available online at: https://www.obs-traffic.museum/sites/default/files/ressources/files/SMA_Selection_Retention_Dispersal.pdf.

UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation). 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*.

Watt, S. (2011). *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A Framework for Research*. Oxford, Oxbow Books. Available online at: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/wmrrf_he_2016/downloads.cfm.

14. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email: shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email: suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208. Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: [0345 678 9000](tel:03456789000). Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

HM Coroner for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire

Email: coroners@stoke.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.
Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-exhume-human-remains)
(www.gov.uk)

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Teresa Gilmore and/or Victoria Allnatt. Tel 0121 348 8225 or 07766 925251.
Email: PASTeam@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Model Brief

Archaeological Excavation v2.0

April 2025

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Excavation Objectives.....	3
3.	Project Design	4
4.	Excavation Guidelines.....	7
5.	Sampling	11
6.	Artefact Collection.....	12
7.	Monitoring.....	13
8.	Post-Excavation Guidelines.....	14
9.	Reporting.....	15
10.	Deposition of Archive.....	18
11.	Outreach and Social Media	21
12.	Project Personnel and Health & Safety	21
13.	References	22
14.	Contacts	24

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for archaeological excavation required as a condition of planning consent granted by the local planning authority (LPA). This document covers all open area excavations.
- 1.2. An archaeological excavation involves a programme of intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water (CifA 2023a).
- 1.3. Previous archaeological evaluation work on the site has identified the presence of archaeological remains and SCCHET advise that the proposed development has the potential to irreversibly damage or permanently destroy the archaeological resource on the site. It has therefore been recommended that an archaeological excavation be completed to mitigate against the archaeological impact of the proposed development. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024), more specifically Para 218, which states that 'local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'. This work shall be undertaken and completed in advance of development commencing.
- 1.4. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a detailed project design by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO). The draft project design will be submitted to the SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for comment/formal approval prior to the commencement of site work. No archaeological work will commence on the site until approval of the project design has been received. To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft project design is submitted to the SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. Likewise, SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) project designs, or undertake any further curatorial work, such as monitoring visits or reviewing reports, until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.5. The amount of excavation required will be dependent upon the nature of the site and the amount and quality of data from any previous investigations. All areas where archaeological remains will be negatively impacted by the proposed development will be investigated. These areas will be identified in the project design and agreed with SCCHET prior to the work commencing. Any variations to this layout due to on site conditions will be agreed in advance with the SCCHET.
- 1.6. The AAO will have sufficient experience to prepare and undertake the archaeological excavation or be in a position to appoint sub-contractors to complete said work. If the latter, this approach should be agreed with SCCHET in advance of appointing.
- 1.7. The excavation will comply with the methodology laid out and approved in the project design. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
 - CIfA. 2023b. [Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct](#)
 - relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)
 - Or any subsequent revisions of the above.
- 1.8. In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in [The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment \(MoRPHE\)](#) (Historic England 2015a).
- 1.9. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Excavation Objectives

- 2.1. The aim of the excavation will be to examine the archaeological resource within the site within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyse and interpret the results, and disseminate them.
- 2.2. The principal objective of archaeological excavation is to ensure that the archaeology is adequately investigated and recorded before it is impacted by the proposed development. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024), more specifically Para 218 which states that 'local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive

generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'

- 2.3. The excavation must adhere to the standard set out by CIfA (2023a); that is to examine and record the archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. It will result in one or more published accounts and an ordered, accessible archive.

3. Project Design

- 3.1. A project design must be submitted by the applicant or, on their behalf, by their agent or archaeological consultant, and approved by SCCHET prior to any development commencing on site. The methodology for the excavation will be set out in the project design, including reference to the appropriate CIfA and scientific guidelines. The AAO will, in preparing the project design, consider the objectives identified within this Brief and, where appropriate, develop more detailed objectives. These should be based upon a wider appreciation of the archaeological context, an understanding of the topography of the site and its environs, and a review of [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011).
- 3.2. Any subsequent changes to the project design will need to be agreed with SCCHET prior to the change taking place.
- 3.3. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the HER). It should conform to the guidelines set out in the CIfA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* and should in particular specify:
- a statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation;
 - non-technical summary;
 - legislative requirements;
 - the location, geology and topography of the site, to include a six-figure grid reference and site location plan tied to the national grid;
 - a consideration of site constraints, for example any designations, access issues, etc.;
 - context of the project;
 - the aims and objectives of the excavation. Where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011);

- historical and archaeological background, to include consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. The following sources should be consulted as appropriate:
 - the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Please note that data extracted from the Heritage Gateway website does not constitute a valid HER search due to its partial nature
 - NHLE records of all designated heritage assets, e.g. scheduled, listed and registered heritage assets and conservation areas
 - readily available aerial and other photographic and remote sensing data evidence (e.g. LiDAR)
 - readily available historic mapping such as Ordnance Survey and tithe maps (tithe maps for the county can be found on [Staffordshire Past Track](#))
 - geological and soil surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - geotechnical/environmental/borehole data; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - land use surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011).
- details of the excavated areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area with a georeferenced plan;
- the methodology for site investigation and recording, including written records, photography, finds collection and sampling strategies;
- the methodology for post-excavation assessment and reporting;
- details of proposed staffing to complete the work. The work will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Details of staff numbers, their roles and relevant experience will be included within the project design, to include sub-contracted specialists. It may be necessary to provide SCCHET with staff CVs;
- the timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-excavation works;
- the contingencies made for full analysis and reporting;
- publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met;

- arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts;
- details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive. This should include the unique reference number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- collection and disposal strategy for artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials;
- a data management plan which, as a minimum, will outline how digital data will be handled both during and after the project. It will describe the type of data used, how it is collected, organized, and stored, and what formats will be used. See Section 4.15 for further information;
- a statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate;
- a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards);
- a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project;
- a statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology;
- a statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project;
- copyright;
- health and safety considerations;
- environmental protection considerations;
- monitoring procedures;
- licence eligibility (where required);
- as a minimum, figures are to include a georeferenced site location plan and georeferenced excavation area plan, both of which should be referenced to the OS National Grid and to the local topography (e.g. field boundaries). All figures must have a scale bar, north arrow and grid references.

3.4. The project design **must** be agreed with SCCHET **prior** to the commencement of the work. Once agreed, any changes to the project design will need to be discussed with, and agreed by, SCCHET before implementation. It should be

noted (as outlined in Section 1.4 above) that there is a fee for agreement of a project design, which will be levied on the AAO who prepared it (see online charging schedule [here](#)).

- 3.5. Planning conditions relating to project designs will not be discharged until the project design has been agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.6. Copies of the approved project design must be available to staff during all aspects of fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment. All fieldwork staff should be given an opportunity to read the project design in advance of fieldwork commencing. Copies of reports produced as part of previous stages of work on site (e.g. geophysical survey report or trial trenching report) should be available to site staff.

4. Excavation Guidelines

- 4.1. The location and size of the excavation area(s) will be agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design.
- 4.2. The attending archaeologist(s) should keep a record of the date, time and duration of site work, the number of staff concerned, and actions taken.
- 4.3. It is assumed that all excavation areas will be opened by machine, unless specifically stated otherwise. The AAO will determine an appropriate machine to be used depending on the prevailing site conditions. It is the AAO's duty to check the documentation of both machine and operator prior to work commencing.
- 4.4. An appropriate bucket will be used; normally this will comprise a toothless ditching bucket. In exceptional circumstances, for example in deposits of substantially stony/ rubbly or compact material, a toothed bucket may be used only to remove such deposits. Toothed buckets must not be used to dig through soft deposits.
- 4.5. All machining will be carried out under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. All topsoil or recent overburden and subsoil will be removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits not greater than 0.1m until either the archaeological horizon or the natural geology is exposed. Where necessary, the base of the excavation area/surface of archaeological deposits will be cleaned by hand. Archaeological deposits should not be removed by machine except where such a procedure has been sanctioned by SCCHET. Under no circumstances will the machine be used to cut arbitrary trenches down to natural deposits.

- 4.6. If archaeological deposits are encountered, machining will cease, and excavation will proceed by hand sufficiently to allow the identification and planning of archaeological features. Where archaeological features appear to be absent, sufficient work should be done to demonstrate this.
- 4.7. A suitable amount of weathering time should be afforded to the opened-up areas to allow any archaeological features that aren't immediately apparent to present themselves. This would usually be 24 hours although this may depend on circumstances and/or weather conditions.
- 4.8. Unless otherwise agreed with SCCHET, all identified archaeological features need to be investigated. This work will conform to the details as set out in the project design and agreed with SCCHET. The sampling of features by hand can only be finally decided in the field on the basis of their potential to contribute to project objectives and regional research agendas, however, the following guidelines indicate the level of work that is considered to be necessary discrete features, such as pits and postholes, will be half-sectioned in the first instance; linear features will be sampled a minimum of 20% along their length (each sample section to be not less than 1m), or a minimum of a 1m sample section, if the feature is less than 5m long. Archaeological deposits will only be entirely removed where this meets the aims of the fieldwork, for example special features such as burials, structural remains, kilns, etc. Any work resulting in the 100% excavation of an archaeological deposit/ feature will be discussed in advance with SCCHET. Palaeochannels will be sampled for environmental evidence and for dating purposes. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and all finds recovered will be retained for analysis.
- 4.9. The deposits at junctions or interruptions in linear features will be sufficiently excavated for the relationship between components to be established. All termini will be investigated.
- 4.10. The stratigraphy of all investigated areas is to be recorded using a pro-forma recording system, even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. The excavation areas, as excavated, and any features within them, must be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, scale drawings, and written descriptions using a single context recording system (either digital or paper based). The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scaled photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Following the identification of natural or the decision to halt further excavation for health and safety reasons, a full record of the stratigraphy of the area will be recorded.
- 4.11. Depending on the scope and perceived archaeological potential of the site, it may be necessary to seek involvement from the appropriate specialist and/ or

Historic England Regional Science Advisor in relation to the collection of palaeoenvironmental material, industrial residues or other relevant scientific material. SCCHET will normally recommend when specialist advice is required.

- 4.12. General recommendations for minimum standards for archaeological science work have been produced by Historic England. These guidelines can be downloaded from the [Advice and Guidance](#) section of the Historic England website.
- 4.13. Unless otherwise specified in the approved project design, it is anticipated that the excavated areas and any features within them will be recorded to a horizontal accuracy of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ using a Real Time Kinematic (RTK) Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) in accordance with The Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Survey Newlyn Datum (ODN), as defined by the OS Active GNSS network and the use of a Virtual Reference System. Surface heights will be recorded using RTK GNSS. Ordnance Survey Benchmarks will not to be used. Where GNSS is used to locate excavated areas and features, the technique, equipment and transformation software to be employed during the survey and post-processing must be clearly identified within the project design. The survey approaches should be guided by Historic England guidance (2016) [Where on Earth Are We?](#).
- 4.14. An adequate photographic record (see the SCC County Archaeological Standard for more) of the site must be undertaken. This will include photographs illustrating the principal archaeological features and any finds discovered, both in detail and in context. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the site and the work undertaken. All photographs of archaeological detail will feature an appropriately sized scale. Digital photos must be of a quality not less than 12 megapixels in high resolution TIFF (uncompressed) format. Where traditional 'wet processed' black & white film and colour slide photography are proposed for use, arrangements must be made to ensure that they meet the appropriate professional standards for archiving and long-term storage.
- 4.15. The AAO must have a Data Management Plan for image capture and file curation which meets the standards outlined by CIfA's (2019) [Dig Digital](#) guidance, the [Archaeological Archives Forum](#) (Brown 2011) the [Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe](#) (ARCHES 2020) and [Digital Image Capture and File Storage](#) guidance from Historic England (2015b).
- 4.16. Scale plans and sections must form part of the recording of the site in addition to written descriptions. All excavation areas will be planned at a minimum of 1:50, with individual features being planned at a minimum of 1:20 where

additional detail is required. Sections and profiles of each feature excavated will be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20, depending on the size of the feature. All plans, sections and profiles will be tied to the OS National Grid. The AOD heights of all trenches and principal features will be calculated (as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15) and the levels added to the post-excavation drawings.

- 4.17. Provision will be made to recover material suitable for scientific dating. Contingency sums will be made available to undertake such dating.
- 4.18. Further contingency provision will be made for additional specialist advice, e.g. for finds analysis and conservation.
- 4.19. Should significant archaeological features or finds be exposed during the work, SCCHET must be notified at the first instance. It may also be necessary to notify relevant specialists such as the Historic England Regional Science Advisor. The AAO will ensure that any such exposed elements remain undisturbed until their significance can be determined and to allow consideration of their retention *in situ*, or to devise an appropriate excavation and conservation strategy. There may be a need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. Where design modification is not practically possible the developer must allow sufficient time and financial resources for the full excavation, conservation, and curation of the archaeological resource before development commences.
- 4.20. The AAO will make clear in the project design approaches to securing the site during the excavation.
- 4.21. Upon completion of excavation and recording, any necessary protection measures for archaeological remains will be completed prior to any backfilling. Where significant archaeological remains are identified, and it has been considered that these would be best preserved *in situ*, the AAO will ensure that said remains are suitably protected before backfilling. An archaeologist will also be present during the backfilling of said remains. Historic England's guidance (2016b) on the preservation of archaeological remains can be found [here](#). The AAO should clearly state in the project design the approach to reinstatement across the site and will, unless otherwise agreed, be responsible for the reinstatement of the site. In general, areas will be backfilled by replacing excavated materials in reverse order to which they were excavated. Once backfilled, the excavation areas will be levelled using the mechanical excavator. Photographs will be taken of each backfilled area or group of backfilled areas.
- 4.22. It may be appropriate to display illustrated notices around the site (with the client's agreement), to inform members of the public what work is happening, and why. Such notices will be a minimum of A3 size, with font at a minimum

size of 16 point. SCCHET will advise when this is required, and will approve of the notice before it is erected.

5. Sampling

- 5.1. The sampling strategy should be fit for purpose and designed to meet the aims and objectives as stated in the project design. It should be agreed by the project team, which includes the relevant specialists, and will take into account the results of any evaluation or other previous work at the site. Environmental sampling should be undertaken with reference to Historic England (2011) guidance [Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation \(second edition\)](#). Guidance documents to more specialised sampling methods can be found at [here](#).
- 5.2. Where appropriate, sampling for palaeoenvironmental remains at excavation stage should look to answer the following questions, which should be addressed as part of the formal reporting stage:
 - What types of biological remains are present?
 - What is their state of preservation, concentration and distribution across the site?
 - What is the significance in the local, regional and national context?
 - What recommendations are there for any further analysis of palaeoenvironmental remains?
- 5.3. Where a site is considered to have significant palaeoenvironmental potential, it may be necessary to obtain specialist advice and undertake sampling in accordance with a programme agreed with the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other relevant specialist. A contingency should be allowed for this.
- 5.4. For discrete features such as pits and postholes, sampling will normally involve half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features should be sectioned.
- 5.5. Individual complex features such as kilns or burials should be cleaned and recorded but retained *in situ* until advice can be sought from SCCHET and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other relevant specialist.
- 5.6. Samples will be taken using ten-litre plastic buckets (with lids and handles), or strong polythene bags (double bagged) secured at the neck, for the recovery of bulk environmental samples. All samples will be clearly labelled with the unique side code, context number and sample number as a minimum.

- 5.7. For non-waterlogged deposits, bulk samples will normally comprise 40 litres of sediment. Where contexts have a lesser volume, 10% of the context will be retained as a sample. Each bulk sample will contain sediment derived from a single context.
- 5.8. Where waterlogged deposits are encountered, sample sizes will usually be between 10-20 litres. Samples of this size are typically sufficient to recover a representative sample of macrofossils. Waterlogged samples will be protected from temperatures below 5°C and above 25°C and from wetting and drying due to weather exposure.
- 5.9. Where house floors or other buried land surfaces are encountered and sampled, appropriately sized monolith or Kubiena boxes will be used for the recovery of undisturbed samples for soil micromorphology and to sub-sample for microfossils (e.g., pollen and spores, diatoms, ostracods). Where longer sequences are sampled, contiguous column samples will be collected for the retrieval of macrofossils (e.g., molluscs, plant remains and insects).
- 5.10. Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) should be collected by hand. Separate samples (c.10ml) should be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets). Reference should be made to the Historic England guidance (2015c) [Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice](#).
- 5.11. Processing of all bulk soil samples collected for biological assessment will be completed within two weeks of collection. Processing samples at the time of fieldwork will allow this sampling strategy to be updated and refined where necessary.
- 5.12. The AAO will be responsible for protecting all samples and finds, and for their transportation (including loading and unloading) to the processing facilities.

6. Artefact Collection

- 6.1. All spoil from the excavation will be scanned visually for small finds and disarticulated human remains. Where possible, the spoil will also be scanned using a metal detector (set not to bias against iron) to recover metallic objects (buttons, nails, pins etc).
- 6.2. All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the Institute of Conservation (ICON) (2023) *First Aid for Finds* and the recipient museum's guidelines.
- 6.3. All stratified finds should be collected by context and, where appropriate, individually recorded in 3 dimensions. Unstratified finds should only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular

intrinsic interest. Provision should be made for on-site conservation advice for the lifting and treatment of fragile objects.

- 6.4. If large quantities, bulky or finds requiring complex conservation are discovered on site, the AAO must contact the recipient museum at the earliest opportunity to enter into discussions regarding preservation and long-term storage of the archive.
- 6.5. All finds that are 'treasure' (in terms of the Treasure Act 1996) will be reported to the Coroner and the Staffordshire Finds Liaison Officer, and appropriate procedures then followed.
- 6.6. Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) (1993) in their document [Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections](#). The presence of such materials within a context should always be recorded even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.
- 6.7. Waterlogged wood should be treated accordance with English Heritage (2010) [guidelines](#) and left *in situ* where this is practical and its long-term preservation is achievable.
- 6.8. Where human remains are unexpectedly encountered these must initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Where excavation is necessary, this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice, Diocesan, environmental health and other regulations, as appropriate. In certain situations, special arrangements may be required for the recovery of samples for DNA analysis. At sites known in advance to be cemeteries or to have the potential to contain human remains, provision should be made for site inspection by a recognised specialist. Further guidance is provided in [Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England](#) (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England 2017).

7. Monitoring

- 7.1. SCCHET will be responsible for monitoring the excavation. Their role is to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with this Brief and the approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies. A minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork must be given by the AAO to SCCHET so that arrangements for monitoring the fieldwork may be made.
- 7.2. The AAO must maintain regular contact with SCCHET and provide updates via telephone, written descriptions, photographs and by any other means so that decisions regarding the progress and ultimate completion of the site may be

made. Site visits may be arranged so that the above monitoring standards may be satisfied. Not all sites will require a site visit by SCCHET, although it is the decision of SCCHET, and not the AAO, as to the necessity of a site visit.

- 7.3. SCCHET should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design.
- 7.4. Areas **must not** be backfilled until confirmation has been given by SCCHET, regardless of whether a site visit has been carried out or not.
- 7.5. Following the completion of fieldwork, the AAO should keep SCCHET regularly informed of the project's post-excavation progress.

8. Post-Excavation Guidelines

- 8.1. The AAO will detail their approaches to the post-fieldwork assessment of all finds, samples, features and records recovered/made during the course of the archaeological excavation in the project design.
- 8.2. Any artefacts and ecofacts recovered during the excavation should look to address the aims and objectives set out in the project design. For all categories of material recovered, including all finds and soil samples, an assessment by an appropriately experienced specialist will be undertaken. Basic site and stratigraphic information will be supplied to the specialists. Samples must be processed and sorted, and any artefacts recovered provided to the appropriate specialist(s) to be considered alongside the hand-recovered material. All assessment and analytical work must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced staff working to the requirements of this Brief, the methodologies laid out in the approved project design and in accordance with the CIfA (2022) *Code of Conduct* and other relevant CIfA standard and guidance.
- 8.3. All finds are to be cleaned according to accepted principles and in line with appropriate period/material guidelines. All finds are to be treated in accordance with current best practice guidance, including CIfA (2020a) [Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials](#) and the appropriate Historic England [Archaeological Conservation guidance documents](#). Advice should also be sought from *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 8.4. For ceramic assemblages, recording will be carried out in a manner compatible with existing typological series in the relevant local pottery reference collection.
- 8.5. The guidelines for handling Post-Roman Ceramics produced by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (2001) are also to be followed for relevant material.

- 8.6. All metal objects, whether ferrous or non-ferrous, will be weighed and catalogued. Contingency for x-ray should be included for any items where further identification is deemed necessary.
- 8.7. Where material suitable for scientific dating was recovered, sufficient dating will be undertaken only to meet the aims of the excavation.
- 8.8. Post-excavation assessment should look to enhance understanding of the character, extent and preservation of archaeological remains within and across the site and should inform discussions regarding the scope and nature of any subsequent analysis of materials.
- 8.9. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken and assessment has identified the need for further analysis, this will be completed drawing upon the contingency allowed.
- 8.10. The site archive will be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990) and the CIfA (2020b) [Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives](#) and with reference to CIfA (nd) [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives](#). See Section 10 for further information on archiving.

9. Reporting

- 9.1. The approved project design will detail the content of the post-excavation assessment report (PXA) which will be produced in line with ALGAO's [Advice Note for Post Excavation Assessment](#) (2015). The end result of the PXA is usually the production of an Updated Project Design (UPD), in which the original project objectives are reappraised by all authors contributing to the reconstruction and interpretation of the site's evidence. The UPD sets out strategies that will be used in the analysis of those aspects of evidence that will further inform on the character and significance of the site, responding to questions set out in regional or national research agendas. It will also put forward a retention policy to enable the value of the archive to be described and quantified, helping to define space and conditions necessary for its long-term storage and future use. The PXA will be used to quantify the resources necessary to undertake all this work, and these will be set out in tables and charts within the UPD. Task/analytical costs should not be included.
- 9.2. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 9.3. The report will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*.

9.4. The level of detail required in the PXA will depend on the quantity and complexity of data and the extent to which those factors have required additional study of the material in order to form a reliable assessment. However, as a minimum the report will include the following:

- **non-technical summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language the principal reason for the work, its objectives, the dates the fieldwork was undertaken and main results. It should include reference to the AAO, authorship of the report and commissioning body;
- **relevant reference numbers.** As a minimum this should include the AAO's unique site code, the OASIS ID number and the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery;
- **introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological background, an outline of the nature of the work, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;
- **location, geology and topography.** This should include written descriptions and a six-figure grid reference.
- **site background.** This should set out a consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. This should include a baseline summary, including designated assets, archaeological potential and previous work(s) relevant to the archaeology of the site (e.g., previous surveys and excavations);
- **aims and objectives.** This should reflect or reiterate the aims set out in the project design and where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011). This should also include details of the monitored areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area;
- **methodology.** The methods used, including the detail of any variation to the agreed project design, should be set out carefully and explained as appropriate;
- **results.** These should be set out as a series of summary statements, organised clearly in relation to the methods used, and describe structural data, associated finds and/or environmental data recovered. Descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements. Technical terminology (including dating or period references) should be explained where necessary if the report is aimed at a largely non-archaeological audience. The results should be amplified where necessary

by the use of drawings and photographs; and by supporting data contained in appendices (see below);

- **conclusions.** This will include a statement of findings and summary of significance and an assessment of achievement of the excavation objectives. It may also be appropriate to present a phased interpretation of the site and consider the results in their local and regional context. Other elements should include a confidence rating on techniques used, or on limitations imposed by particular factors (e.g. weather or problems of access). Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **recommendations.** Any recommendations on further analysis or preservation work will be clearly expressed in the report, following discussions with SCCHET;
- **archive.** Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive (to include records, finds and digital data). This should include the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- **references.** This should include all primary and secondary sources consulted, including maps and illustrations;
- **figures.** Details of these are outlined below in Section 9.5;
- **colour plates.** These should be selected to show a selection of archaeological features and work in progress. All photographs should contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the plate's caption;
- **appendices.** These should contain essential technical and supporting detail, to include context registers, an index to the archive, all specialist reports (finds/ paleoenvironmental assessment, scientific dating, etc), and other relevant data for example lists of artefacts or details of measurements, gazetteers, etc. The project design should also be included for ease of reference, as should a copy of the OASIS form.

9.5. All figures should include accurate scales, a north arrow and grid references. Height data in mAOD should also be included where appropriate. Figures to be included as a minimum are:

- a detailed location map;
- a detailed site plan showing all excavated areas;

- an overall site plan showing all archaeological features recorded. If appropriate, this plan will be phased and may comprise a separate plan for each phase and/ or area;
 - detailed plans of relevant features, as excavated. If appropriate, this plan will be phased and may comprise a separate plan for each phase and/ or area of the site;
 - detailed sections of all relevant features, as excavated;
 - select artefact illustrations and/or photographs as appropriate.
- 9.6. A fully illustrated draft version of the excavation report will be produced within 8 weeks of the completion of fieldwork (or longer if the complexity of the project merits it and this is agreed with SCCHET). This document will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment. Once any comments have been appropriately addressed, a final report will be produced for submission to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) in PDF/A format. A digital copy of the report must also be supplied other bodies as appropriate, for example to the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, if they have been involved in the project or the results merit it.
- 9.7. The written reports will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, within six months of completion. The AAO will also be requested to submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal *West Midlands Archaeology* within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.
- 9.8. Where significant remains are encountered, the AAO should make contingency for the publication of such results in an appropriate local, regional or national journal.
- 9.9. The AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.

10. Deposition Of Archive

- 10.1. Completion of the project is dependent on the compilation of an ordered and integrated project archive by the AAO, which may include paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data. This will be compiled in accordance with this Brief, the project design, the CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*, the CIfA (2020b) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and with the receiving museums guidance.
- 10.2. The receiving museum for Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG), who accept physical archives but not digital data. All digital data used

to inform the results of the work, for example, digital photographs, original CAD or digitised drawings and survey data should be deposited with a trusted digital repository and thus made publicly accessible, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012, updated 2024). It is recommended that the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) (or another equivalent Trusted Digital Repository that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation) be used for digital archiving; for more information on digital archiving please refer to the [Archaeology Data Service website](#). The digital records will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice guidance (i.e. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011)). [Guidance](#) on selection of digital data for the archive is also available on the ADS website. Digital archives containing a very large number of files (e.g. circa 300 +) or large files (e.g. circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and early engagement with ADS would be advised if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.

- 10.3. It is widely accepted that not all the records (analogue and digital) and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, to ensure that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establishing the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving museum. The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by [A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation](#) (Brown 2011, section 4). Reference should also be made to generic selection policies (SMA 1993) and CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*.
- 10.4. Arrangements for the deposition of the site archive will be made with PMAG **in advance** of commencement of fieldwork. The AAO will contact the PMAG archaeological curator to discuss archaeological archiving requirements and to obtain a reference number at the initial stage of preparation of the project design. Relevant contact details can be found at the end of this document. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery's terms and conditions, and fees, can be found at [here](#).
- 10.5. PMAG will issue the AAO with a Project Initiation Form to record details of the project and predicted nature of the archaeology. Agreement should be reached on recording systems to be employed, to ensure compatibility with the Museum's own documentation requirements, upon the manner of storage and presentation of finds, and upon the nature and contents of the written archive.

- 10.6. On receipt of a completed Projection Initiation Form, PMAG will assign a unique reference number for the project. **Reference to the number should be made in the project design** as evidence that the Museum has been consulted before the project commences. During the project, when/if it becomes apparent that the project is not 'sterile', the Museum will issue an accession number for the archive.
- 10.7. Where the excavation is part of a wider archive, e.g. a project where other archaeological groundworks such as archaeological monitoring and recording/ geophysical survey/ evaluation have taken place previously, it may be possible to use existing accession numbers to ensure that the site archive stays together. This should first be discussed with SCCHET and PMAG.
- 10.8. On completion of the excavation (or extended fieldwork programme), every effort will be made to persuade the legal owner of any finds recovered (i.e., the landowner), except for human remains and any objects covered by the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009), to transfer their ownership to the museum in a written agreement. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 10.9. The final report should clearly identify what comprises the site archive and where this archive has been/ will be deposited. An index to the archive should be included as an Appendix in the excavation report. The archiving process should follow that laid out in the approved project design and should identify which finds, samples and records have been retained and/or disposed of. This process should be in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020b).
- 10.10. The AAO should also ensure that the accepting museums guidance has been followed and that the museum has been made aware of the date set for the deposition of the archive in advance of said deposition.
- 10.11. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with in line with *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 10.12. The archives themselves should be prepared in line with the general guidance on archiving given in the following texts, as well as other relevant archiving texts:
 - Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition)
 - CIfA. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*

- CIfA. nd. *Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*
- CIfA. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
- Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*
- UKIC. 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage*

- 10.13. Once deposition of the archive has been arranged, the AAO may retain, disperse or dispose of the primary hardcopy items as they see fit. Items may be retained for curation by the AAO, developer or applicant, or offered to a third-party organisation for public use or as a teaching resource. The project design should state how primary hardcopy items will be treated.
- 10.14. Where sterile archaeological projects have occurred, i.e. where the project has produced no material of evidential value, the CIfA (nd) [Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects](#) must be consulted.
- 10.15. Archiving is expected to be carried out as specified, in a timely manner, unless further fieldwork is undertaken and it is agreed that the archives from the separate phases can be amalgamated. The AAO must notify SCCHET up on deposition of both the physical and digital archive.

11. Outreach and Social Media

- 11.1. Where possible, and in consultation with the developer and/or client, the AAO will seek opportunities to disseminate the results of the excavation and engage with the local community through social media, press releases, open days and volunteer involvement, while considering issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

12. Project Personnel and Health & Safety

- 12.1. The excavation should be carried out by suitably experienced professionals. The project design will contain details of key project staff and specialists who may contribute during the course of the works.
- 12.2. This brief and the approved project design will be made available to all project staff who will be encouraged to read it and familiarise themselves with the requirements of the project.
- 12.3. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the excavation be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy (either the

contractors own policy or those of the principal contractor). Risk assessments must be carried out for each aspect of fieldwork. If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the project design can be varied in the interests of health and safety. SCCHET should be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases.

- 12.4. All staff working on this site employed by the AAO will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. The risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 12.5. The AAO will ensure that all site staff wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date. Similarly, the AAO will ensure that all staff members have been trained in the safe use of equipment which they are using and that all site works are carried out in accordance with safe working practices as defined in their own health and safety policy.
- 12.6. The developer must provide all information reasonably obtainable on contamination and the location of live services before commencement of the works.
- 12.7. Measures should be in place for wildlife egress from archaeological excavations left open overnight (for example the provision of fencing, or a plank or ramp to facilitate this).

13. References

Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England. 2017. Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England. Available online at:

https://apabe.archaeologyuk.org/pdf/APABE_ToHREfCBG_FINAL_WEB.pdf

ALGAO. 2015. *Advice Note for Post Excavation Assessment*. Available online at: https://www.algao.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ALGAO_England_PXA_Advice_Note.pdf

ARCHES (Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: a European Standard). 2020. *Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. Available online at:

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/arches/Wiki.jsp?page=Main>

Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation (revised edition)*. Archaeological

Archives Forum. Available online at:

https://archives.archaeologyuk.org/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2019. *Dig Digital*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Available online at: https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS%26GFinds_2.pdf

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIAS%26GArchives_4.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023a. *Standard for Archaeological Excavation*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Standard%20for%20archaeological%20excavation.pdf>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023b. *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Universal%20guidance%20for%20archaeological%20excavation.pdf>

Historic England. 2010. *Waterlogged wood. Guidelines on the Recording, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/waterlogged-wood/>

Historic England. 2011. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (second edition). Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd>.

Historic England. 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/>.

Historic England. 2015c. *Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/archaeometallurgy-guidelines-best-practice/>.

Historic England. 2016. *Where on Earth Are We? The Role of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) in Archaeological Field Survey*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/where-on-earth-gnss-archaeological-field-survey/>.

ICON (Institute of Conservation). 2023. *First Aid for Finds*. London: ICON.

Medieval Pottery Research Group. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). National Planning Policy Framework. London. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

SMA (Society of Museum Archaeologists). 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. Available online at: https://www.obs-traffic.museum/sites/default/files/ressources/files/SMA_Selection_Retention_Dispersal.pdf.

UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation). 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*.

Watt, S. (2011). *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A Framework for Research*. Oxford, Oxbow Books. Available online at: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/wmrrf_he_2016/downloads.cfm.

14. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email: shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email: suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208. Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspectors of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: 03456 789000. Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

HM Coroner for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire

Email: coroners@stoke.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.

Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Teresa Gilmore and/or Victoria Allnatt. Tel 0121 348 8225 or 07766 925251.

Email: PASTeam@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Model Brief

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording v2.0

April 2025

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Objectives	4
3.	Project Design	4
4.	Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Guidelines	8
5.	Sampling	10
6.	Artefact Collection	12
7.	Monitoring	13
8.	Post-Excavation Guidelines	13
9.	Reporting	15
10.	Deposition of Archive	18
11.	Outreach and Social Media	20
12.	Project Personnel and Health & Safety	21
13.	References	21
14.	Contacts	24

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for archaeological monitoring and recording required as a condition of planning consent granted by the local planning authority (LPA).
- 1.2. Archaeological monitoring and recording is a formal programme of observation, investigation and recording conducted during works carried out for non-archaeological reasons, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. This will be within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water. This definition and Standard do not cover chance observations, which should lead to an appropriate archaeological project being designed and implemented, nor do they apply to monitoring for preservation of remains *in situ* (CIfA 2023a).
- 1.3. Where the proposals form part of an approved planning application, SCCHET have advised the LPA/applicant that there is reason to believe that archaeological remains exist on the site, and it has therefore been recommended that archaeological monitoring and recording be completed to inspect, record, and (if appropriate) sample any archaeological features/deposits/finds disturbed by groundworks associated with the development. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024), more specifically Para 218, which states that 'local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'.
- 1.4. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a detailed project design by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO). On occasion, for particularly small projects, SCCHET may permit this Model Brief to be used in lieu of a contractor's project design. Where a project design is deemed necessary, the draft project design will be submitted to SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for comment/ formal approval prior to the commencement of site work. No archaeological work will commence on the site until approval of the project design has been received. To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft project design is submitted to the SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. Likewise, SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) project designs, or undertake any

further curatorial work, such as monitoring visits or reviewing reports, until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.5. The scope of the archaeological monitoring and recording required will be dependent upon the nature of the site and the amount and quality of data from any previous investigations. All areas where there is potential for any surviving archaeological remains to be negatively impacted by the proposed development should be monitored during groundworks. If 'intensive' archaeological monitoring and recording is specified, monitoring will be required during all sensitive ground works (i.e. foundations, services, ground reduction and landscaping). When 'extensive' archaeological monitoring and recording is required, these areas will be identified in the project design and agreed with SCCHET prior to the work commencing. Our specific requirements are usually outlined in our consultation response to the LPA.
- 1.6. The AAO will have sufficient experience to prepare and undertake the archaeological monitoring and recording, or be in a position to appoint sub-contractors to complete said work. If the latter, this approach, should be agreed with SCCHET in advance of appointing.
- 1.7. The archaeological monitoring and recording will record, and (if appropriate) sample any archaeological features/deposits/finds disturbed by groundworks associated with the development
- 1.8. The archaeological monitoring and recording will comply with the methodology laid out and approved in the project design. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
 - CIfA. 2023b. [Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct](#)
 - relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)
 - Or any subsequent revisions of the above.
- 1.9 In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* ([MoRPHE](#)) (Historic England 2015a).
- 1.10 Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Objectives

2.1 The purpose of archaeological monitoring and recording is to:

- allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works;
- provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the archaeological monitoring and recording itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

2.2 The results of the archaeological monitoring and recording will be used by SCCHET to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed scheme and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012 (updated 2024)).

2.3 The archaeological monitoring and recording must adhere to the standard set out by CIfA (2023a); that is to record and report on the archaeological resource within a specified area, using methods that are described in a project design that is fit for purpose. The programme of work undertaken will be carried out by suitably competent persons in accordance with that project design and the CIfA Code of conduct and give due regard to the guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording. All archaeological monitoring and recording will result in a report, published accounts where appropriate, and a stable, ordered, accessible archive.

3. PROJECT DESIGN

3.1. A project design must be submitted by the applicant or, on their behalf, by their agent or archaeological consultant and approved by SCCHET prior to any development commencing on site. The methodology for the archaeological monitoring and recording will be set out in the project design, including reference to the appropriate CIfA and scientific guidelines. The AAO will, in preparing the project design, consider the objectives identified within this Brief and, where appropriate, develop more detailed objectives. These should be based upon a wider appreciation of the archaeological context, an understanding of the topography of the site and its environs, and a review of [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011).

- 3.2. Any subsequent changes to the project design will need to be agreed with SCCHET prior to the change taking place.
- 3.3. The project design will cover the archaeological monitoring and recording only; should further stages of archaeological mitigation (such as excavation) be required based on the results of the archaeological monitoring and recording, then this work will be subject to a separate project design. This approach is supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 218 (see Section 1.3 above).
- 3.4. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the HER). It should conform to the guidelines set out in the CifA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* and should in particular specify (where appropriate):
- a statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation;
 - non-technical summary;
 - legislative requirements;
 - the location, geology and topography of the site, to include a six-figure grid reference and site location plan tied to the national grid;
 - a consideration of site constraints, for example any designations, access issues, etc.;
 - context of the project;
 - the aims and objectives of the archaeological monitoring and recording. Where relevant, reference should be made to [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011);
 - historical and archaeological background, to include consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. The following sources should be consulted as appropriate:
 - the [Staffordshire Historic Environment Record](#) (SHER). Please note that data extracted from the Heritage Gateway website does not constitute a valid HER search due to its partial nature
 - NHLE records of all designated heritage assets, e.g. scheduled, listed and registered heritage assets and conservation areas
 - readily available aerial and other photographic and remote sensing data evidence (e.g. LiDAR)

- readily available historic mapping such as Ordnance Survey and Tithe maps (Tithe Maps for the county can be found on [Staffordshire Past Track](#))
- geotechnical/environmental/borehole data; historic and any current site data from the applicant
- land use surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
- *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011)
- details of the monitored areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area with a georeferenced plan;
- the methodology for site investigation and recording, including written records, photography, finds collection and sampling, retention and discard strategies;
- the methodology for post-excavation assessment and reporting;
- the contingencies made for full analysis and reporting;
- details of proposed staffing to complete the work. The work will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Details of staff numbers, their roles and relevant experience will be included within the project design, to include sub-contracted specialists. It may be necessary to provide SCCHET with staff CVs;
- the timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-excavation works;
- publication (where appropriate) and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met;
- arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts;
- details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive. This should include the unique reference number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- collection and disposal strategy for artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials;
- a data management plan which, as a minimum, will outline how digital data will be handled both during and after the project. It will describe the type of data used, how it is collected, organized, and stored, and what formats will be used. See Section 4.12 for further information;
- a statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate;

- a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards);
 - a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project;
 - a statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology;
 - a statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project;
 - copyright;
 - health and safety considerations;
 - environmental protection considerations;
 - Monitoring procedures;
 - licence eligibility (where required);
 - as a minimum, figures are to include a georeferenced site location plan and georeferenced archaeological monitoring and recording area plan, both of which should be referenced to the OS National Grid and to the local topography (e.g. field boundaries). All figures must have a scale bar, north arrow and grid references.
- 3.5. The project design **must** be agreed with SCCHET **prior** to the commencement of the work. Once agreed, any changes to the project design will need to be discussed with, and agreed by, SCCHET before implementation. It should be noted that (as outlined in Section 1.4 above) there is a fee for approval of a project design and other curatorial duties, which will be levied on the AAO who prepared it (see online charging schedule [here](#)).
- 3.6. Planning conditions relating to project designs will not be discharged until the project design has been agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.7. Copies of the approved project design must be available to staff during all aspects of fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment. All fieldwork staff should be given an opportunity to read the project design in advance of fieldwork commencing. Copies of any reports produced as part of previous stages of work on site should be available to site staff.

4. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Guidelines

- 4.1. The location and size of archaeological monitoring and recording area(s) will be agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design.
- 4.2. The attending archaeologist(s) should keep a record of the date, time and duration of all visits, the number of staff concerned, and any actions taken.
- 4.3. All groundworks, including hand excavation and any other excavation with machinery, within the areas to be monitored as identified in the project design will take place under the constant supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. Where machinery is used a toothless bucket will be required (unless agreed otherwise with the SCCHET) in order to ensure a smooth and flat surface. In exceptional circumstances, for example in deposits of substantially stony/ rubbly or compact material, a toothed bucket may be used only to remove such deposits. Toothed buckets must not be used to dig through soft deposits.
- 4.4. If archaeological deposits are encountered, machining will cease, and excavation will proceed by hand sufficiently to allow the identification and recording of archaeological features. Where archaeological features appear to be absent, sufficient work should be done to demonstrate this.
- 4.5. A record will be made of all archaeological features identified across the site. This work will conform to the details as set out in the project design and agreed with SCCHET. Discrete features, such as pits and postholes, will be half-sectioned (i.e. 50% excavated) in the first instance; linear features will be sampled a minimum of 10% along their length (each sample section to be not less than 1m), or a minimum of a 1m sample section, if the feature is less than 5m long. Archaeological deposits will only be entirely removed where this meets the aims of the fieldwork, for example special features such as burials, structural remains, kilns, etc. Any work resulting in the 100% excavation of an archaeological deposit/ feature will be discussed in advance with SCCHET.
- 4.6. The deposits at junctions or interruptions in linear features will be sufficiently excavated for the relationship between components to be established. All termini will be investigated.
- 4.7. The stratigraphy of all investigated areas is to be recorded using a pro-forma recording system, even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. The monitored areas, as excavated, and any features within them, must be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, scale drawings, and written descriptions using a single context recording system (either digital or paper based). The site archive will include plans and sections at an

appropriate scale, a scaled photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Following the identification of natural or the decision to halt further excavation for health and safety reasons, a full record of the stratigraphy of the area will be recorded.

- 4.8. Depending on the scope and perceived archaeological potential of the site, it may be necessary to seek involvement from the appropriate specialist and/ or Historic England Regional Science Advisor in relation to the collection of palaeoenvironmental material, industrial residues or other relevant scientific material. SCCHET will normally recommend when specialist advice is required.
- 4.9. General recommendations for minimum standards for archaeological science work have been produced by Historic England. These guidelines can be downloaded from the [Advice and Guidance](#) section of the Historic England website.
- 4.10. Unless otherwise specified in the approved project design, it is anticipated that the monitored areas and any features within them will be recorded to a horizontal accuracy of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ using a Real Time Kinematic (RTK) Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) in accordance with the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Survey Newlyn Datum (ODN), as defined by the OS Active GNSS network and the use of a Virtual Reference System. Surface heights will be recorded using RTK GNSS. Ordnance Survey Benchmarks will not to be used. Where GNSS is used to locate monitored areas and features, the technique, equipment and transformation software to be employed during the survey and post-processing must be clearly identified within the project design. The survey approaches should be guided by Historic England (2016) guidance [Where on Earth Are We?](#).
- 4.11. An adequate photographic record (see the SCC County Archaeology Standard for more) of the site must be undertaken. This will include photographs illustrating the principal archaeological features and any finds discovered, both in detail and in context. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the site and the work undertaken. All photographs of archaeological detail will feature an appropriately sized scale. Digital photos must be of a quality not less than 12 megapixels in high resolution TIFF (uncompressed) format. Where traditional 'wet processed' Black & White film and colour slide photography are proposed for use, arrangements must be made to ensure that they meet the appropriate professional standards for archiving and long-term storage.
- 4.12. The AAO must have a Data Management Plan for image capture and file curation which meets the standards outlined by CIfA's (2019) [Dig Digital](#) guidance, the [Archaeological Archives Forum](#) (Brown 2011), the [Standard and](#)

[Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe](#) (ARCHES 2020) and [Digital Image Capture and File Storage](#) guidance from Historic England (2015b).

- 4.13. Scale plans and sections must form part of the recording of the site in addition to written descriptions. All monitored areas will be planned at a minimum of 1:50, with individual features being planned at a minimum of 1:20 where additional detail is required. Plans and sections of each feature excavated will be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20, depending on the size of the feature. The AOD heights of all principal features will be calculated (as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15) and the levels added to the post-excavation drawings.
- 4.14. Provision will be made to recover material suitable for scientific dating. Contingency sums will be made available to undertake such dating.
- 4.15. Further contingency provision will be made for additional specialist advice, e.g. for finds analysis and conservation.
- 4.16. Should significant archaeological features or finds be exposed during the work, SCCHET must be notified at the first instance. It may also be necessary to notify the Historic England Regional Science Advisor. The AAO will ensure that any such exposed elements remain undisturbed and suitably protected until their significance can be determined and to allow consideration of their retention *in situ*, or to devise an appropriate excavation and conservation strategy. There may be a need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. Where design modification is not practically possible the developer must allow sufficient time and financial resources for the full excavation, conservation, and curation of the archaeological resource before development continues.
- 4.17. The archaeological monitoring and recording will operate with due regard to health and safety regulations.

5. Sampling

- 5.1. The purpose of environmental sampling during archaeological monitoring and recording is to identify the range of environmental materials present, their preservation, significance, and distribution. An initial assessment of the site's palaeoenvironmental potential should be clearly laid out in the project design. The sampling strategy should be agreed by the project team, which includes the relevant specialists. Environmental sampling should be undertaken with reference to Historic England (2011) guidance [Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation \(second edition\)](#). Guidance documents to more specialised sampling methods can be found [here](#).

- 5.2. Where appropriate, sampling for palaeoenvironmental remains at archaeological monitoring and recording stage should look to answer the following questions, which should be addressed as part of the formal reporting stage:
- What types of biological remains are present?
 - What is their state of preservation, concentration and distribution across the site?
 - What is the significance in the local, regional and national context?
 - What recommendations are there for any further analysis of palaeoenvironmental remains?
- 5.3. Where a site is considered to have significant palaeoenvironmental potential, it may be necessary to obtain specialist advice and undertake sampling in accordance with a programme agreed with the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other relevant specialist as appropriate. A contingency should be allowed for this.
- 5.4. For discrete features such as pits and postholes, sampling will normally involve half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features should be sectioned.
- 5.5. Individual complex features such as kilns or burials should be cleaned and recorded but retained *in situ* until advice can be sought from SCCHET and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor or other relevant specialist.
- 5.6. Samples will be taken using ten-litre plastic buckets (with lids and handles), or strong polythene bags (double bagged) secured at the neck, for the recovery of bulk environmental samples. All samples will be clearly labelled with the unique site code, context number and sample number as a minimum.
- 5.7. For non-waterlogged deposits, bulk samples will normally comprise 40 litres of sediment. Where contexts have a lesser volume, 10% of the context will be retained as a sample. Each bulk sample will contain sediment derived from a single context.
- 5.8. Where waterlogged deposits are encountered, sample sizes will usually be between 10-20 litres. Samples of this size are typically sufficient to recover a representative sample of macrofossils. Waterlogged samples will be protected from temperatures below 5°C and above 25°C and from wetting and drying due to weather exposure.
- 5.9. Where house floors or other buried land surfaces are encountered and sampled, appropriately sized monolith or Kubiena boxes will be used for the recovery of undisturbed samples for soil micromorphology and to sub-sample for

microfossils (e.g., pollen and spores, diatoms, ostracods). Where longer sequences are sampled, contiguous column samples will be collected for the retrieval of macrofossils (e.g., molluscs, plant remains and insects).

- 5.10. Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) should be collected by hand. Separate samples (c.10ml) should be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets) Reference should be made to the [Historic England guidance Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice](#) (2015c).
- 5.11. Processing of all bulk soil samples collected for biological assessment should be completed within two weeks of collection. Processing samples at the time of fieldwork will allow this sampling strategy to be updated and refined where necessary.
- 5.12. The AAO will be responsible for protecting all samples and finds, and for their transportation (including loading and unloading) to the processing facilities.

6. Artefact Collection

- 6.1. All spoil from the archaeological monitoring and recording will be scanned visually for small finds and disarticulated human remains.
- 6.2. All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the Institute of Conservation (ICON) (2023) *First Aid for Finds* and the recipient museum's guidelines.
- 6.3. All stratified finds should be collected by context and, where appropriate, individually recorded in 3 dimensions. Unstratified finds should only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. Provision should be made for on-site conservation advice for the lifting and treatment of fragile objects.
- 6.4. If large quantities, bulky or finds requiring complex conservation are discovered on site, the AAO must contact the recipient museum at the earliest opportunity to enter into discussions regarding preservation and long-term storage of the archive.
- 6.5. All finds that are 'treasure' (in terms of the Treasure Act 1996) will be reported to the Coroner and the Staffordshire Finds Liaison Officer, and appropriate procedures then followed.
- 6.6. Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) (1993) in their document [Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections](#). The presence of such materials within a context should always be recorded even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.

- 6.7. Waterlogged wood should be treated accordance with English Heritage (2010) [guidelines](#) and left *in situ* where this is practical and its long-term preservation is achievable.
- 6.8. Where human remains are unexpectedly encountered these must initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Where excavation is necessary, this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice, Diocesan, environmental health and other regulations, as appropriate. In certain situations, special arrangements may be required for the recovery of samples for DNA analysis. At sites known in advance to be cemeteries or to have the potential to contain human remains, provision should be made for site inspection by a recognised specialist. Further guidance is provided in [Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England](#) (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England 2017).

7. Monitoring

- 7.1. SCCHET will be responsible for monitoring the archaeological monitoring and recording. Their role is to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with this Brief and the approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies. A minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork must be given by the AAO to SCCHET so that arrangements for monitoring the fieldwork may be made.
- 7.2. The AAO must maintain regular contact with SCCHET and provide updates via telephone, written descriptions, photographs and by any other means so that decisions regarding the progress and ultimate completion of the site may be made. Site visits may be arranged so that the above monitoring standards can be satisfied. Not all sites will require a site visit by SCCHET, although it is the decision of SCCHET, and not the AAO, as to the necessity of a site visit.
- 7.3. SCCHET should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design.
- 7.4. Following the completion of fieldwork, the AAO should keep SCCHET regularly informed of the project's post-excavation progress.

8. Post-Excavation Guidelines

- 8.1. The AAO will detail their approaches to the post-fieldwork assessment of all finds, samples, features and records recovered/made during the course of the archaeological monitoring and recording in the project design.
- 8.2. Any artefacts and ecofacts recovered during the archaeological monitoring and recording should look to address the aims and objectives set out in the project

design. For all categories of material recovered, including all finds and soil samples, an assessment by an appropriately experienced specialist will be undertaken. Basic site and stratigraphic information will be supplied to the specialists. Samples must be processed and sorted, and any artefacts recovered provided to the appropriate specialist(s) to be considered alongside the hand-recovered material. All assessment and analytical work must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced staff working to the requirements of this Brief, the methodologies laid out in the approved project design and in accordance with the CIfA (2022) *Code of Conduct* and other relevant CIfA standard and guidance.

- 8.3. All finds are to be cleaned according to accepted principles and in line with appropriate period/material guidelines. All finds are to be treated in accordance with current best practice guidance, including CIfA (2020a) [Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials](#) and the appropriate Historic England [Archaeological Conservation guidance documents](#). Advice should also be sought from *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 8.4. For ceramic assemblages, recording will be carried out in a manner compatible with existing typological series in the relevant local pottery reference collections.
- 8.5. The guidelines for handling Post-Roman Ceramics produced by the Medieval Pottery Research Group (2001) are also to be followed for relevant material.
- 8.6. All metal objects, whether ferrous or non-ferrous, will be weighed and catalogued. Contingency for x-ray should be included for any items where further identification is deemed necessary.
- 8.7. Where material suitable for scientific dating was recovered, sufficient dating will be undertaken only to meet the aims of the archaeological monitoring and recording.
- 8.8. Post-excavation assessment should look to enhance understanding of the character, extent and preservation of archaeological remains within and across the site and should inform discussions regarding the scope and nature of any subsequent archaeological mitigation.
- 8.9. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken and assessment has identified the need for further analysis, this will be completed drawing upon the contingency allowed.
- 8.10. The site archive will be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990) and the CIfA (2020b) [Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer](#)

[and Deposition of Archaeological Archives](#), and with reference to CIfA (nd) [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives](#). See Section 10 for further information on archiving.

9. Reporting

- 9.1. The approved project design will detail the proposed content of the archaeological monitoring and recording report. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 9.2. The archaeological monitoring and recording report will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2023b) *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*.
- 9.3. The specific requirements of the report will necessarily vary according to the scope of works, the nature of the results or other factors. However, as a minimum, the report will include the following:
 - **non-technical summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language the principal reason for the work, its objectives, the dates the fieldwork was undertaken and main results. It should include reference to the AAO, authorship of the report and commissioning body;
 - **relevant reference numbers.** As a minimum this should include the AAO's unique site code, the OASIS ID number and the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery;
 - **introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological background, an outline of the nature of the work, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;
 - **location, geology and topography.** This should include written descriptions and a six-figure grid reference.
 - **site background.** This should set out a consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. This should include a baseline summary, including designated assets, archaeological potential and previous work(s) relevant to the archaeology of the site (e.g., previous surveys and excavations);
 - **aims and objectives.** This should reflect or reiterate the aims set out in the project design and where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt

2011). This should also include details of the monitored areas, to include a written rationale for each separate area;

- **methodology.** The methods used, including the detail of any variation to the agreed project design, should be set out carefully and explained as appropriate;
- **results.** These should be set out as a series of summary statements, organised clearly in relation to the methods used, and describe structural data, associated finds and/or environmental data recovered. Descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements. Technical terminology (including dating or period references) should be explained where necessary if the report is aimed at a largely non-archaeological audience. The results should be amplified, where necessary, by the use of drawings and photographs; and by supporting data contained in appendices (see below);
- **conclusions.** This will include a statement of findings and summary of significance and an assessment of achievement of the archaeological monitoring and recording objectives. It may also be appropriate to present a phased interpretation of the site and consider the results in their local and regional context. Other elements should include a confidence rating on techniques used, or on limitations imposed by particular factors (e.g. weather or problems of access). Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **recommendations.** Any recommendations on further analysis or preservation work will be clearly expressed in the report, following discussions with SCCHET;
- **archive.** Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive (to include records, finds and digital data). This should include the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 10 below);
- **references.** This should include all primary and secondary sources consulted, including maps and illustrations;
- **figures.** Details of these are outlined below in Section 9.4;
- **colour plates.** These should be selected to show a selection of archaeological features and work in progress. All photographs should contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the plate's caption;

- **appendices.** These should contain essential technical and supporting detail, to include context registers, an index to the archive, all specialist reports (finds/ paleoenvironmental assessment, scientific dating, etc), and other relevant data, for example lists of artefacts or details of measurements, gazetteers, etc. The project design should also be included for ease of reference, as should a copy of the OASIS form.
- 9.4. All figures should include accurate scales, a north arrow and grid references. Height data in mAOD should also be included where appropriate. Figures to be included as a minimum are:
- detailed location map;
 - detailed site plan showing all monitored areas;
 - overall site plan showing all archaeological features recorded. If appropriate, this plan will be phased and may comprise a separate plan for each phase and/ or area;
 - detailed plans of relevant features, as excavated. If appropriate, this plan will be phased and may comprise a separate plan for each phase and/ or area of the site;
 - detailed sections of relevant features, as excavated;
 - select artefact illustrations and/or photographs as appropriate.
- 9.5. A fully illustrated draft version of the archaeological monitoring and recording report will be produced within 6 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This document will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment. Once any comments have been appropriately addressed, a final report will be produced for submission to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) in PDF/A format. A digital copy of the report must also be supplied other bodies as appropriate, for example to the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, if they have been involved in the project or the results merit it.
- 9.6. The written reports will become publicly accessible, as part of the SHER, within six months of completion. The AAO will also be requested to submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal West Midlands Archaeology within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.
- 9.7. Where significant remains are encountered, the AAO should make contingency for the publication of such results in an appropriate local, regional or national journal.
- 9.8. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken but where further analysis of material/ records from the archaeological monitoring and recording is required, contingency will be made for the preparation and submission of a separate report on the results.

- 9.9. Upon completion of the project, the AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.

10. Deposition of Archive

- 10.1. Completion of the project is dependent on the compilation of an ordered and integrated project archive by the AAO, which may include paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data. This will be compiled in accordance with this Brief, the project design, the CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*, the CIfA (2020b) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and with the receiving museums guidance.
- 10.2. The receiving museum for Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG), who accept physical archives but not digital data. All digital data used to inform the results of the work, for example, digital photographs, original CAD or digitised drawings and survey data should be deposited with a trusted digital repository and thus made publicly accessible, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). It is recommended that the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) (or another equivalent Trusted Digital Repository that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation) be used for digital archiving; for more information on digital archiving please refer to the [Archaeology Data Service website](#). The digital records will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice guidance (i.e. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011)). [Guidance](#) on selection of digital data for the archive is also available on the ADS website. Digital archives containing a very large number of files (e.g. circa 300 +) or large files (e.g. circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and early engagement with ADS would be advised if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.
- 10.3. It is widely accepted that not all the records (analogue and digital) and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, to ensure that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establishing the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving museum. The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by [A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation](#) (Brown 2011, section 4). Reference should also be made to generic

selection policies (SMA 1993) and CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*.

- 10.4. Arrangements for the deposition of the site archive will be made with PMAG **in advance** of commencement of fieldwork. The AAO will contact the PMAG archaeological curator to discuss archaeological archiving requirements and to obtain a reference number at the initial stage of preparation of the project design. Relevant contact details can be found at the end of this document. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery's terms and conditions, and fees, can be found at [here](#).
- 10.5. PMAG will issue the AAO with a Project Initiation Form to record details of the project and predicted nature of the archaeology. Agreement should be reached on recording systems to be employed, to ensure compatibility with the Museum's own documentation requirements, upon the manner of storage and presentation of finds, and upon the nature and contents of the written archive.
- 10.6. On receipt of a completed Project Initiation Form, PMAG will assign a unique reference number for the project. **Reference to the number should be made in the project design** as evidence that the Museum has been consulted before the project commences. During the project, when/if it becomes apparent that the project is not 'sterile', the Museum will issue an accession number for the archive.
- 10.7. On completion of the archaeological monitoring and recording (or extended fieldwork programme), every effort will be made to persuade the legal owner of any finds recovered (i.e., the landowner), except for human remains and any objects covered by the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009), to transfer their ownership to the museum in a written agreement. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 10.8. The final report should clearly identify what comprises the site archive and where this archive has been/ will be deposited. An index to the archive should be included as an Appendix in the archaeological monitoring and recording report. The archiving process should follow that laid out in the approved project design and should identify which finds, samples and records have been retained and/or disposed of. This process should be in accordance with the CIfA *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020b).

- 10.9. The AAO should also ensure that the accepting museums guidance has been followed and that the museum has been made aware of the date set for the deposition of the archive in advance of said deposition.
- 10.10. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with in line with *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 10.11. The archives themselves should be prepared in line with the general guidance on archiving given in the following texts, as well as other relevant archiving texts:
- Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition)
 - CIfA. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*
 - CIfA. nd. *Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*
 - CIfA. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
 - Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*
 - UKIC. 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage*
- 10.12. Once deposition of the archive has been arranged, the AAO may retain, disperse or dispose of the primary hardcopy items as they see fit. Items may be retained for curation by the AAO, developer or applicant, or offered to a third-party organisation for public use or as a teaching resource. The project design should state how primary hardcopy items will be treated.
- 10.13. Where sterile archaeological projects have occurred, i.e. where the project has produced no material of evidential value, the CIfA (nd) [Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects](#) must be consulted.
- 10.14. Archiving is expected to be carried out as specified, in a timely manner, unless further fieldwork is undertaken, and it is agreed that the archives from the separate phases can be amalgamated. The AAO must notify SCCHET upon deposition of both the physical and digital archive.

11. Outreach and Social Media

- 11.1. Where possible and appropriate to the nature and scale of the fieldwork, and in consultation with the developer and/or the client, the AAO will seek opportunities to disseminate the results of the archaeological monitoring and recording and engage with the local community through social media, press

releases, open days and volunteer involvement, while considering issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

12. Project Personnel and Health & Safety

- 12.1. The evaluation should be carried out by suitably experienced professionals. The project design will contain details of key project staff and specialists who may contribute during the course of the works.
- 12.2. This brief and the approved project design will be made available to all project staff who will be encouraged to read it and familiarise themselves with the requirements of the project.
- 12.3. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the archaeological monitoring and recording be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy (either the contractors own policy or those of the principal contractor). Risk assessments must be carried out for each aspect of fieldwork. If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the project design can be varied in the interests of health and safety. SCCHET should be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases.
- 12.4. All staff working on the site employed by the AAO will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. The risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 12.5. The AAO will ensure that all site staff wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date. Similarly, the AAO will ensure that all staff members have been trained in the safe use of equipment which they are using and that all site works are carried out in accordance with safe working practices as defined in their own health and safety policy.
- 12.6. The developer must provide all information reasonably obtainable on contamination and the location of live services before commencement of the works.

13. References

Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England. 2017. *Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*. Available online at:

https://apabe.archaeologyuk.org/pdf/APABE_ToHREfCBG_FINAL_WEB.pdf

ARCHES (Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: a European Standard). 2020. *Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. Available online at:

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/arches/Wiki.jsp?page=Main>

Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition). Archaeological Archives Forum. Available online at:

https://archives.archaeologyuk.org/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2019. Dig Digital. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS%26G Finds_2.pdf

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIFAS%26G Archives_4.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023a. *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Standard%20for%20archaeological%20monitoring%20%26%20recording.pdf>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2023b. *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Universal%20guidance%20for%20archaeological%20monitoring%20%26%20recording.pdf>

Historic England. 2010. *Waterlogged wood. Guidelines on the Recording, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/waterlogged-wood/>

Historic England. 2011. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (second edition). Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd.>

Historic England. 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at: [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/.](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/)

Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/.](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/)

Historic England. 2015c. *Archaeometallurgy: Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/archaeometallurgy-guidelines-best-practice/.](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/archaeometallurgy-guidelines-best-practice/)

Historic England. 2016. *Where on Earth Are We? The Role of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) in Archaeological Field Survey*. Available online at: [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/where-on-earth-gnss-archaeological-field-survey/.](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/where-on-earth-gnss-archaeological-field-survey/)

ICON (Institute of Conservation). 2023. *First Aid for Finds*. London: ICON.

Medieval Pottery Research Group. 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post Roman Ceramics*. Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment.>

SMA (Society of Museum Archaeologists). 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. Available online at: https://www.obs-traffic.museum/sites/default/files/ressources/files/SMA_Selection_Retention_Dispersal.pdf.

UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation). 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*.

Watt, S. (2011). *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A Framework for Research*. Oxford, Oxbow Books. Available online at:
https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/wmrrf_he_2016/downloads.cfm.

14. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email:
shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email:
suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208.
Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: 03456 789000. Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

HM Coroner for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire

Email: coroners@stoke.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.
Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK](#)
(www.gov.uk)

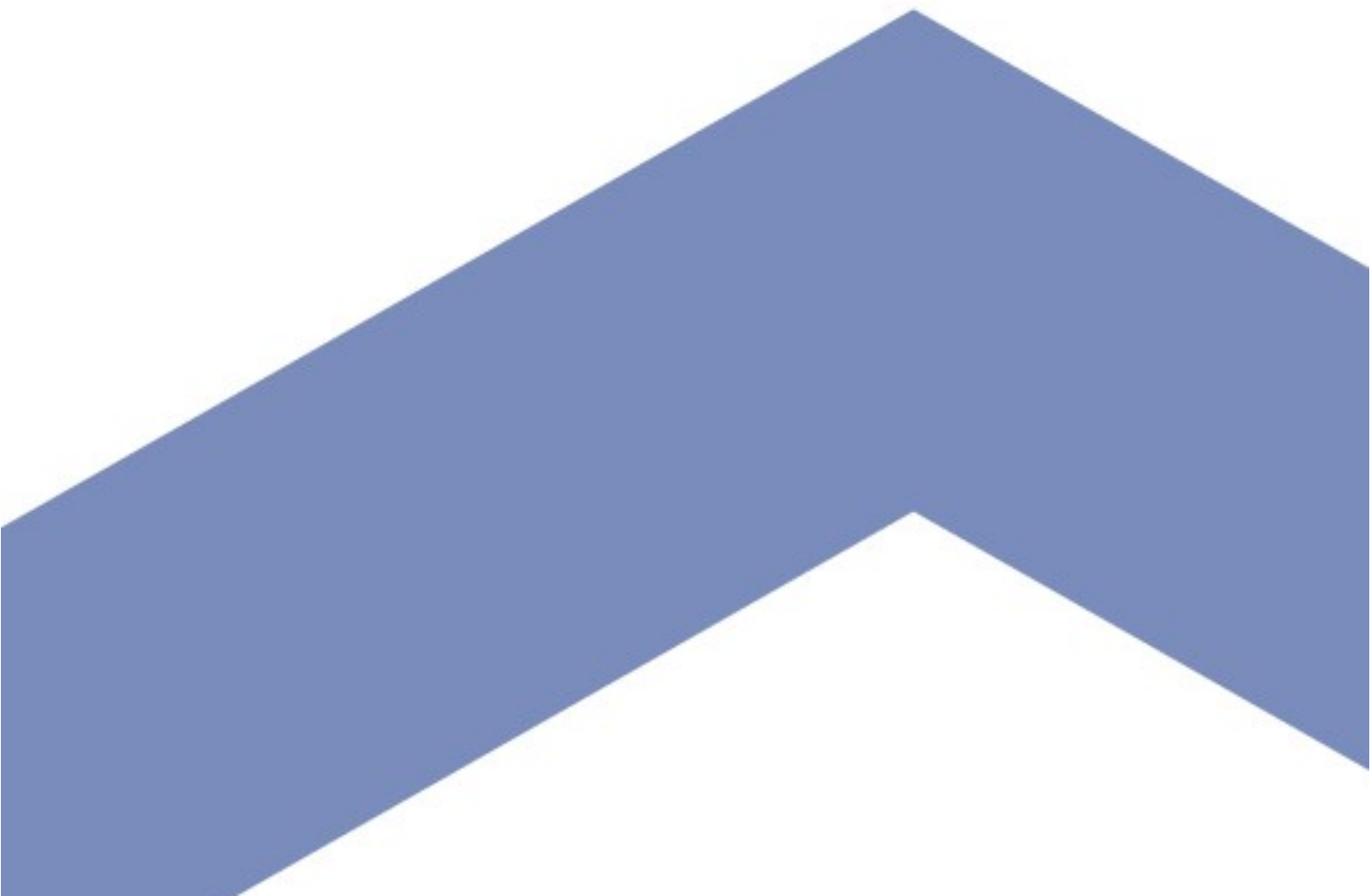
Portable Antiquities Scheme

Teresa Gilmore and/or Victoria Allnatt. Tel 0121 348 8225 or 07766 925251.
Email: PASTeam@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Model Brief

Historic Building Recording v2.0

April 2025



Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Historic Building Recording Objectives	4
3.	Project Design	5
4.	Historic Building Recording Guidelines	8
5.	Monitoring.....	12
6.	Post-Recording Guidelines	13
7.	Reporting	13
8.	Deposition of Archive.....	17
9.	Outreach and Social Media	20
10.	Project Personnel & Health And Safety	20
11.	References	20
12.	Contacts	22

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document, prepared by the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team (SCCHET), has been produced to set a standard for historic building recording in the county required as a condition of planning consent granted by the local planning authority (LPA) or undertaken to inform proposals for the sympathetic conservation a historic building. This document will cover all standing buildings and other structures; the term 'buildings' will be used throughout this document to refer to any type of structure.
- 1.2. Historic building recording is a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building, structure, or complex and its setting, including buried components, on land, in an inter-tidal zone or underwater (CIfA 2020a).
- 1.3. Where the proposals form part of an approved planning application, or as part of pre-application discussions, SCCHET have advised that there is potential for proposed works to permanently alter or damage the fabric and/or fixtures and fittings of a historic building, and it has therefore been recommended that an historic building recording be completed. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in [Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012, updated 2024). More specifically Para 218, which states that 'local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'.
- 1.4. This Brief has been prepared to inform the production of a detailed project design by an Appointed Archaeological Organisation (AAO)/or suitably experienced Historic Environment Professional (HEP). The draft project design will be submitted to the SCCHET (as advisors to the LPA) for comment/approval prior to the commencement of site work. No historic building recording work will commence on the site until approval of the project design has been received. To ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in the discharge of condition process, we strongly recommend, where possible, that the draft project design is submitted to the SCCHET for informal approval in advance of submission to the LPA. Likewise, SCCHET will not be in a position to approve (formally or informally) project designs, or undertake any further curatorial work, such as monitoring visits or reviewing reports, until our Curatorial Fees have been paid. More details about our fees, what they cost, what they cover, and how to pay, can be found [here](#).

- 1.5. The level of recording and research needed will vary according to the work being carried out on the building, as well as the perceived significance of the building. The level of historic building recording required will be agreed with SCCHET prior to work commencing and will adhere Historic England guidance as set out in [Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#), with a range from Level 1 (the lowest) to 4 (the highest):
- i. **Level 1** is essentially a basic visual record. This will usually comprise a photographic record supplemented by sketch plans (where deemed necessary) and basic information.
 - ii. **Level 2** is a descriptive record. Both the exterior and interior will be viewed, described and photographed. A scaled plan, and sometimes, depending on the specific requirements of the project, other drawings will be produced. The report will present conclusions on the building's development and use.
 - iii. **Level 3** is an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined. It will also include all drawn and photographic records in order to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis. The information contained in the record will for the most part have been obtained through an examination of the building itself but supplemented by further research.
 - iv. **Level 4** provides a comprehensive analytical record and is appropriate for buildings of special importance. Whereas Level 3 analysis and interpretation will clarify the building's history in so far as it may be deduced from the structure itself, the record at Level 4 will draw on the full range of available resources and discuss the building's significance in terms of architectural, social, regional or economic history. The range of drawings may also be greater than at other levels.
- 1.6. The historic building recording will be carried out in advance of any stripping out or demolition works.
- 1.7. The AAO/HEP will have sufficient experience to prepare and undertake the historic building recording or be in a position to appoint sub-contractors to complete said work.

- 1.8. The historic building recording work will comply with the methodology laid out and approved in the project design. The work will also be conducted in accordance with:
- CIfA. 2020a. [Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures](#)
 - CIfA. 2022. [Code of Conduct or equivalent \(e.g. IHBC Code of Conduct\)](#)
 - Historic England. 2016. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*
 - relevant English Heritage/Historic England [best practice guidance documents](#)
- 1.9. In addition, all stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in [The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment \(MoRPHE\)](#) (Historic England 2015a).
- 1.10. Relevant contact details are provided at the end of this document.

2. Historic Building Recording Objectives

- 2.1. The principal objective of a historic building recording is to record the existing character of a building along with any fixtures and fittings, with sufficient research to set the record in historic context, usually prior to conversion or alteration work, or demolition. It also aims to record any information that comes to light during any development works if older fabric is revealed. The level of recording and research needed will vary according to the work being carried out on the building, as well as the perceived significance of the building. The level of historic building recording required will be agreed with SCCHE prior to work commencing and will adhere Historic England (2016) guidance, with a range from Level 1 (the lowest) to 4 (the highest).
- 2.2. The results of the historic building recording will be used by SCCHE to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed scheme and the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigation. This recommendation is in line with government guidance as set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2012 (updated 2024)).
- 2.3. The historic building recording must adhere to the standard set out by CIfA (2020a); that is to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource associated with a specified building, structure or complex. It will draw on existing records (both archaeological and historical sources) and fieldwork. It will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with

the *Code of conduct*, and other relevant regulations and by-laws of CIfA or equivalent. The programme will result in a report, the production of drawings, and an ordered accessible archive.

3. Project Design

- 3.1. A project design must be submitted by the applicant or, on their behalf, by their agent or AAO/HEP and approved by SCCHET prior to any development commencing on site. The methodology for the historic building recording will be set out in the project design, including reference to the appropriate CIfA and scientific guidelines. The AAO/HEP will, in preparing the project design, consider the objectives identified within this Brief and, where appropriate, develop more detailed objectives. These should be based upon a wider appreciation of the archaeological/historic context, an understanding of the building and its environs, and a review of [The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research](#) (Watt 2011).
- 3.2. Any subsequent changes to the project design will need to be agreed with SCCHET prior to the change taking place.
- 3.3. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information (especially any existing reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in the HER). It should conform to the guidelines set out in the CIfA (2020a) *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* and should in particular specify:
 - A statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation;
 - Non-technical summary;
 - Legislative requirements;
 - The location, geology and topography of the site, to include a six-figure grid reference and site location plan tied to the national grid;
 - A consideration of site constraints, for example any designations, access issues, etc.;
 - Context of the project;
 - The aims and objectives of the historic building recording, including specific research questions the project hopes to address in line with relevant research frameworks such as *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011); the [Historic Built Environment Knowledge Exchange](#) and the English Heritage (2006)

[Historic Farmsteads Preliminary Character Statement: West Midlands Region](#) and other relevant documents;

- Historical and archaeological background, to include consideration of any previous work at the site and its immediate environs. The following sources should be consulted as appropriate:
 - The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER)
 - Records of all designated heritage assets, e.g. scheduled, listed and registered heritage assets and conservation areas
 - Aerial and other photographic and remote sensing data evidence (e.g. LiDAR)
 - Land use surveys; historic and any current site data from the applicant
 - *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011).
- Identify within the wider site which buildings or structures are to be recorded (if applicable), and identify them in a way which is then used throughout the report (e.g. by numbering or otherwise identifying the buildings on a plan);
- Areas included or excluded from recording work (e.g. unsafe areas). It is expected that the producers of a project design will carry out due diligence to ensure that the proposed methodology can be carried out in a safe manner. This may necessitate a site visit in advance.
- The level of recording proposed, based on HE guidance;
- The methodology for site investigation and recording, appropriate to achieving the stated aims of the project. This should include the written drawn, and photographic records, finds collection (where appropriate), and sampling strategies (e.g. for dendrochronology where deemed necessary) and should consider the appropriateness of different techniques, depending on the site and type of remains expected, as well as any scientific dating methods which may be employed;
- The methodology for post-recording assessment and reporting
- Details of proposed staffing to complete the work. The work will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Details of staff numbers, their roles and relevant experience will be included within the project design, to include sub-contracted specialists. It may be necessary to provide SCCHET with staff CVs;
- Timetable for completion of all site investigation and reporting works;

- The contingencies made for all aspects of the project;
- Report and record drawing preparation;
- Publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met;
- Arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts (where applicable);
- Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive. This should include the unique reference number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 8 below);
- Collection and disposal strategy for, where appropriate, artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials;
- A data management plan which, as a minimum, will outline how digital data will be handled both during and after the project. It will describe the type of data used, how it is collected, organized, and stored, and what formats will be used. See Section 4.7 for further information;
- A statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate;
- A statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards);
- A statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project (where appropriate);
- A statement on the research value of the results, referencing the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011);
- A statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology;
- A statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project;
- Copyright;
- Health and Safety considerations;
- Environmental protection considerations;

- Monitoring procedures;
 - Licence eligibility (where required);
 - As a minimum, figures are to include a georeferenced site location plan and, for projects covering multiple buildings, a georeferenced plan of recorded buildings, both of which should be referenced to the OS National Grid and to the local topography (e.g. field boundaries). All figures must have a scale bar, north arrow and grid references.
- 3.4. The project design **must** be agreed with SCCHET **prior** to the commencement of the work. Once agreed, any changes to the project design will need to be discussed with, and agreed by, SCCHET before implementation. It should be noted (as outlined in Section 1.4 above) that there is a fee for agreement of a project design and other curatorial duties, which will be levied on the AAO who prepared it (see online charging schedule [here](#)).
- 3.5. Planning conditions relating to project designs will not be discharged until the project design has been agreed with SCCHET.
- 3.6. Copies of the approved project design must be available to staff during all aspects of fieldwork and post-fieldwork assessment.

4. Historic Building Recording Guidelines

- 4.1. The recording must be undertaken in line with one of the Historic England Levels as outlined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016) and agreed with SCCHET prior to commencement of the fieldwork and clearly set out in the project design.
- 4.2. The attending archaeologist(s) should keep a record of the date, time and duration of site work, the number of staff concerned, and actions taken.
- 4.3. If a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (HEDBA) or Heritage Statement has not been produced or submitted with the application relating to the building(s), then it would usually be appropriate, prior to the commencement of the fieldwork, for the AAO/HET to undertake a programme of background research to supplement and inform the historic building recording. This should usually include, but is not limited to) a map regression exercise, a search of the [Staffordshire Past Track](#) website, and other readily available resources, such as the relevant Victoria County History volume, trade and postal directories, census returns, and other readily available primary and secondary sources including SCCHET resources such as [Historic Environment Assessments](#), [Extensive Urban Surveys](#), the [Staffordshire Historic Farmstead Survey](#), and any other relevant [projects](#) that SCCHET has commissioned or undertaken. This programme of background research should not constitute a formal (HEDBA) and should be proportionate to the complexity and significance

of the building and the level of recording required. In most cases a search of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) would also be appropriate. Utilising the Heritage Gateway website in lieu of a HER search is not acceptable as Heritage Gateway is not considered to be a full or up-to-date record of the information held by the SHER. The results of this desk-based research will be presented as part of the final report along with the results of the fieldwork. If a HEDBA/HS has previously been produced, the result of these should be summarised in the historic building recording report, and where appropriate/missible, included as an appendix.

- 4.4. Historic building recording projects usually comprise a combination of photographic, drawn and written records. The nature and extent of these will depend on the level of recording advised by SCCHET and any additional requirements identified for the project.

Photographic Record

- 4.5. An adequate photographic record of the building(s) must be undertaken. All photographs should be of high quality in clear focus, level, and include a discretely positioned scale of an appropriate size. Photographs must be taken from a suitable distance from the subject and framed to ensure that the subject clearly constitutes the principal feature of the photograph.

- 4.6. The photographic record should typically include:

- All elevations of the building, taken from vantage points as close to parallel to the elevation being photographed as is possible within the constraints of the site;
- General oblique views of the building's elevations and the building in its wider setting;
- General internal views of each room, discrete space or circulation area, from sufficient vantage points as to adequately record the form, general appearance and manner of construction in each area;
- Detailed photographs of all features of historic and architectural interest identified during the creation of the record. Examples of such features include doors, shutters, staircases, and decorative plasterwork;
- Detailed photographs of evidence of phasing, additions, and alterations to the building;
- The location and direction of each image should be recorded onto corresponding site plans and photographic registers (see below).

- 4.7. Digital photographs should be taken in accordance with Historic England's best practice guidance (2015b) on a digital SLR camera (DSLR -minimum 10

megapixels) in a RAW format converted to TIFF files for archiving. Please note, digital images from JPEGs, whilst acceptable for inclusion in the report, are not an acceptable medium for the project archive. Some post-processing is acceptable for report images, for example to remove barrel distortion or to produce High Dynamic Range images. However, the original images should always be included in the project archive.

- 4.8. Analogue photographs should be taken on 35mm format on silver-based black and white film (such as Ilford FP4 or HP5, or Delta 400 Pro (a recent replacement for HP5 in certain film sizes such as 220). Dye-based (chromogenic) films such as Ilford XP2 and Kodak T40CN are unacceptable due to poor archiving qualities).
- 4.9. . Complex or large elevations may require the use of medium format cameras.
- 4.10. The full photographic record, together with copies of the marked-up plans and photographic registers should be included in the project archive. Digital photography can only be used to supplement the photographic record; it must not form any part of the primary archive, unless a robust **Data Management Plan** (see below) is in place and this approach has been agreed with SCCHET as part of the project design approval.
- 4.11. A photographic register detailing (as a minimum) location, direction and subject of shot must accompany the photographic record; a separate photographic register should be supplied for each medium used, e.g. one for Black and white print, one for colour slides and/or one for digital images, as needed. The position and direction of each photograph should be noted on a copy of the building plan, which should also be marked with a north arrow; separate plans should be annotated for each floor of each building. If plans become cluttered with lines, then multiple copies of the relevant plan(s) should be produced to aid clarity.
- 4.12. The AAO must have a Data Management Plan for image capture and file curation which meets the standards outlined by CifA's (2019) [Dig Digital](#) guidance, the [Archaeological Archives Forum](#) (Brown 2011) the [Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe](#) (ARCHES 2020) and [Digital Image Capture and File Storage](#) guidance from Historic England (2015b).

Drawn Record

- 4.13. Depending on the level of record required, scaled plans, sections, elevations, and other drawings (or a combination of these), will form a key part of the

historic building record. Previously prepared architect's plans may be used as the basis of any historic building fabric recording, however, these must be of adequate scale and accuracy. These should be checked for accuracy and annotated with any additional information relevant to the historic building recording by the AAO/HEP. Any necessary adjustments or corrections must be made, and any irrelevant information should be removed. Otherwise, the required scale elevations, plans and other drawings should be prepared by the AAO/HEP themselves.

- 4.14. The methodology utilised to create the drawn record (for example, hand, REDM, rectified photography, laser scanning or photogrammetry) should be appropriate to the nature and complexity of the building and the requirements of the project. The proposed methodology should be justifiable and made clear in the project design. The archiving of digital capture techniques should be covered in the Data Management Plan and should be of a suitable archival format. Hand-drawn drawings should be produced on an appropriately archivable medium.
- 4.15. Drawings should be produced at an appropriate scale. More detail about scales and the appropriate drawing conventions can be found in Historic England (2016), however, plans should be no smaller than 1:100, whilst sections/elevations should be no smaller than 1:50.
- 4.16. As appropriate to the level of record required, all features of historic, archaeological and architectural interest (including phasing, alterations, architectural details, and machinery or other evidence of past use) should be included in the drawn record, particularly for features where a photograph isn't deemed to be sufficient.
- 4.17. All drawn records must be clearly marked with a unique site number and must be individually identified. The scale and orientation of the plan must be recorded, and all plans should include a north arrow.
- 4.18. The drawn record for buildings with complex developmental histories should include a phase plan to support the narrative provided in the report.

Written Record

- 4.19. Appropriate to the level of recording required, written records of both the interior and exterior of the building(s) will be made. The written record should aim to build on the photographic and drawn records, by not just describe what is in them, but adding understanding to what is being shown. Each separate room, discrete space, or circulation area will have an individual record sheet (or site diary) to include information such as materials, fixtures and fittings, phasing evidence and condition. Likewise, each elevation will have an individual

record sheet (or site diary) to record information such as materials, fenestration, plan form, roof form, and phasing evidence.

- 4.20. Where appropriate, contingency provision will be made for additional specialist advice, e.g. for dendrochronology and conservation, and to recover material suitable for scientific dating. General recommendations for minimum standards for archaeological science work have been produced by Historic England. These guidelines can be downloaded from the [Advice and Guidance](#) section of the Historic England website.
- 4.21. If the historic building recording works encounter historic fabric that contains palaeoenvironmental or datable elements, appropriate sampling and post-recording analysis strategies will be initiated, drawing from a contingency fund. This could include consideration of sampling of historic thatch and cob for plant macro-fossil analysis, dendrochronological samples for dating purposes, etc. Details of relevant specialists who may carry out such work, will be set out in the project design and a contingency fund for such an events will need to be considered at the planning stage of the project.
- 4.22. Should significant historical and/or architectural elements be exposed within the building by conversion/construction works, SCCHET must be notified along with the Planning Authority's Conservation Officer (in the case of a listed or locally listed building). Historic England should also be consulted with regard to developments affecting Grade I or II* listed building. The AAO/HEP will ensure that any such exposed elements remain undisturbed until their significance can be determined and to allow consideration of their retention *in situ*.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1. SCCHET will be responsible for monitoring the historic building recording. Their role is to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with this Brief and approved project design, to enable the need for modifications to the project to be independently considered and validated and to control and validate the use of available contingencies. A minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork must be given by the AAO/HEP to SCCHET so that arrangements for monitoring the fieldwork may be made.
- 5.2. The AAO/HEP must maintain regular contact with SCCHET and provide updates via telephone, written descriptions, photographs and by any other means so that decisions regarding the progress and ultimate completion of the site may be made. Site visits may be arranged so that the above monitoring standards may be satisfied. Not all sites will require a site visit by SCCHET, although it is the decision of SCCHET, and not the AAO/HEP, as to the necessity of a site visit.

- 5.3. SCCHET should be informed at the earliest opportunity of any unexpected discoveries, especially where there may be a need to vary the project design.
- 5.4. Following the completion of fieldwork, the AAO should keep SCCHET regularly informed of the project's post-recording progress.

6. Post-Recording Guidelines

- 6.1. The AAO/HEP will detail their approaches to the post-fieldwork assessment of all records and samples recovered/made during the course of the historic building recording in the project design submitted for approval.
- 6.2. Where material suitable for scientific dating is recovered, sufficient dating will be undertaken only to meet the aims of the historic building recording.
- 6.3. The site archive will be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990) and the CIfA (2020b) [Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives](#) and with reference to CIfA (nd) [Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives](#). See Section 8 for further information on archiving.

7. Reporting

- 7.1. The approved project design will detail the content of the historic building recording report. In order for the final PDF report to be widely accessible once uploaded to the HER, the report should be compiled with reference to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).
- 7.2. The historic building recording report will conform, as a minimum, to the requirements detailed in the CIfA (2020a) *Standards and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* and be in line with the guidance provided in Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings. A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016).
- 7.3. The level of detail required in the report will depend upon the requirements the project design and upon the professional judgement of the AAO/HEP. The report might contain as a minimum the following elements, depending on the nature of the site:
 - **Non-technical Summary.** This should outline in plain, non-technical language, the principal reason for the work, its aims and main results, and should include reference to the AAO/HEP, authorship and commissioning body;
 - **Relevant reference numbers.** As a minimum this should include the AAO/HEP's unique site code, the OASIS ID number and the unique

reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery;

- **Introduction.** This is to include acknowledgements, circumstances of the project such as planning background, a brief archaeological/historical background, an outline of the nature of the work, the dates the project was undertaken and by whom;
- **Location, geology and topography.** This should include a six-figure grid reference;
- **Site description.** Description of the structure, building or complex as found including archaeological interpretation of sequence, construction or function, use of materials. The description should use terminology appropriate to the architecture of the period. The results of any associated below-ground archaeological work should be incorporated into the site description.
- **Aims and objectives.** This should reflect or reiterate the aims set out in the project design and where relevant, reference should be made to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011). This should also include details of the recorded buildings;
- **Methodology.** The methods used, including detail of any variation to the agreed project design should be set out carefully, and explained as appropriate;
- **Documentary Research.** This section should include a presentation of map, pictorial, documentary or other research, setting out implications of source for understanding the archaeology of the site and its ability to inform. This should include a baseline summary, including designated assets, and previous work(s) at the site and its environs relevant to the aims of the project design;
- **Results.** Analysis and interpretation of the site, drawing together documentary, archaeological, technical, dating and other sources including a summary of specialist contributions in a description of the development and function of the building(s) through time. These should be set out as a series of summary statements, organised clearly in relation to the methods used, and describe structural data, associated finds and/or environmental data recovered. Descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements. Discussion of how buildings have been grouped and phased together (if appropriate). Technical terminology (including dating or period references) should be explained where necessary if the report is aimed at a largely non-

archaeological audience. This section should be appropriately illustrated with phased plans, cross-section drawing, internal and external scale elevations and plans, illustration – drawn and photographic – of elements of special architectural or historic interest, annotated architects plans, etc (see Section 7.4, below);

- **Development or other impact** (if appropriate). Implications for the archaeology of the site of any development, repair, demolition or management proposals;
- **Conclusions.** A summary of the results of the work, placing the site in its context (local, regional, national, international, archaeological, historical or technical in terms of setting, origin, purpose, form, construction, design, materials or status). The section should include a statement on the reliability of the sources, or any limitation imposed on the work. Where necessary, the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) should be made;
- **Recommendations.** Recommendations on further investigation or preservation work will be clearly expressed in the report, following discussions with SCCHET;
- **Archive.** Details of the arrangements made for deposition of the site archive (to include records, finds and digital data). This should include the unique reference number or accession number assigned to the project by the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (see section 8 below);
- **References.** A list of all primary and secondary sources, including maps and illustrations;
- **Figures.** These may be within text or at the end. They should be clearly numbered and easily referenced. Details of these are outlined below in Section 7.4;
- **Plates.** Appropriate plates of features, buildings and structures mentioned in the text, and also a selection of photographs to show work in progress as appropriate. All photographs should contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the plate's caption;
- **Appendices.** These should consist of essential technical and other details to support the conclusions, and may include for example, a copy of the project design, a copy of the HEDBA/HS, a table of individual archaeological contexts (if used, or gazetteer of site components), details of supporting technical or dating work, specialist contributions in full,

summaries of sources, copies of documents, project archive catalogue, list of consultees, index to site codes and OASIS form.

- 7.4. All figures should include accurate scales and a north arrow, and where appropriate, grid references. Figures to be included as a minimum are:
- Detailed site location map;
 - Detailed site plan showing all recorded buildings;
 - Detailed floor plans and elevations. These may be supplemented with ortho-rectified images;
 - Archive drawings/plans (if available);
 - Interpretive drawings
 - copies of relevant historic sources (e.g. historic OS, tithe and estate maps, historic illustrations).
 - Photo location plans for all format of photographs taken.
- 7.5. A fully illustrated draft version of the historic building recording report will be produced within 8 weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This document will be forwarded to SCCHET for comment. Once any comments have been appropriately addressed, a final report will be produced for submission to the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) in PDF/A format. A digital copy of the report must also be supplied other bodies as appropriate, for example to the Historic England Regional Science Advisor/the LPA's Conservation Advisor.
- 7.6. The written reports will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, within six months of completion. The AAO may also be requested to submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal West Midlands Archaeology within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.
- 7.7. Where the recorded building is deemed to be significant, the AAO should make contingency for the preparation and publication in a local, regional or national journal of the results, if deemed appropriate.
- 7.8. Where further fieldwork is not to be undertaken but where further analysis of material/ records from the historic building recording is required, contingency will be made for the preparation and submission of a separate report on the results.
- 7.9. The AAO must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>.
- 7.10. Conditions relating to reporting will not be discharged until all the relevant stages have been completed.

8. Deposition Of Archive

- 8.1. Completion of the project is dependent on the compilation of an ordered and integrated project archive by the AAO, which may include paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data. This will be compiled in accordance with this Brief, the project design, the CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*, the CIfA (2020b) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and with the receiving museums guidance.
- 8.2. The receiving museum for Staffordshire is the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG), who accept physical archives but not digital data. All digital data used to inform the results of the work, for example, digital photographs, original CAD or digitised drawings and survey data should be deposited with a trusted digital repository and thus made publicly accessible, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012, updated 2024). It is recommended that the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) (or another equivalent Trusted Digital Repository that has a [Core Trust Seal](#) accreditation) be used for digital archiving; for more information on digital archiving please refer to the [Archaeology Data Service website](#). The digital records will be securely stored in an appropriate format and media which can be maintained in perpetuity in their original form and in line with current best practice guidance (i.e. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011)). [Guidance](#) on selection of digital data for the archive is also available on the ADS website. Digital archives containing a very large number of files (e.g. circa 300 +) or large files (e.g. circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and early engagement with ADS would be advised if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.
- 8.3. It is widely accepted that not all the records (analogue and digital) and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, to ensure that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establishing the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving museum. The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by *A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011, section 4). Reference should also be made to generic selection policies (SMA 1993) and CIfA (nd) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*.

- 8.4. Arrangements for the deposition of the site archive will be made with PMAG **in advance** of commencement of fieldwork. The AAO/HEP will contact the PMAG archaeological curator to discuss archaeological archiving requirements and to obtain a reference number at the initial stage of preparation of the project design. Relevant contact details can be found at the end of this document. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery's terms and conditions, and fees, can be found at [here](#).
- 8.5. PMAG will issue the AAO/HEP with a Project Initiation Form to record details of the project and predicted nature of the archaeology. Agreement should be reached on recording systems to be employed, to ensure compatibility with the Museum's own documentation requirements, upon the manner of storage and presentation of finds, and upon the nature and contents of the written archive.
- 8.6. On receipt of a completed Projection Initiation Form, PMAG will assign a unique reference number for the project. **Reference to the number should be made in the project design** when submitted to the relevant planning officer as evidence that the Museum has been consulted before the project commences. During the project, when/if it becomes apparent that the project is not 'sterile', the Museum will issue an accession number for the archive.
- 8.7. Where appropriate, on completion of the historic building recording (or extended fieldwork programme), every effort will be made to persuade the legal owner of any finds recovered (i.e., the landowner), except for human remains and any objects covered by the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009), to transfer their ownership to the museum in a written agreement. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.
- 8.8. The final report should clearly identify what comprises the site archive and where this archive has been/ will be deposited. An index to the archive should be included as an Appendix in the historic building recording report. The archiving process should follow that laid out in the approved project design and should identify which finds, samples and records have been retained and/or disposed of. This process should be in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020b).
- 8.9. The AAO/HEP should also ensure that the accepting museums (PMAG and/or ADS) guidance has been followed and that the museum has been made aware of the date set for the deposition of the archive in advance of said deposition.

- 8.10. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with in line with *First Aid for Finds* (ICON 2023).
- 8.11. The archives themselves should be prepared in line with the general guidance on archiving given in the following texts, as well as other relevant archiving texts:
- Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (revised edition)
 - CIfA. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*
 - CIfA. nd. *Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*
 - CIfA. 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*
 - CIfA. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
 - Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*
 - Historic England. 2016. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*
 - UKIC. 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage*
- 8.12. Once deposition of the archive has been arranged, the AAO may retain, disperse or dispose of the primary hardcopy items as they see fit. Items may be retained for curation by the AAO/HEP, developer or applicant, or offered to a third-party organisation for public use or as a teaching resource. The project design should state how primary hardcopy items will be treated.
- 8.13. Archiving is expected to be carried out as specified, in a timely manner, unless further fieldwork is undertaken and it is agreed that the archives from the separate phases can be amalgamated. The AAO/HEP must notify SCCHET up on deposition of both the physical and digital archive.
- 8.14. Where the historic building recording is part of a wider archive, e.g. a project including archaeological monitoring and recording or other archaeological groundworks, the decisions on where to archive should be based on the principle of keeping the archive together. This may involve deviating somewhat from what is included here and should first be discussed with SCCHET.
- 8.15. Conditions relating to archiving will not be discharged until all the relevant archiving stages have been completed.

9. Outreach and Social Media

- 9.1. Where appropriate, and in consultation with the developer and the client, the AAO/HEP will seek opportunities to disseminate the results of the historic building recording and engage with the local community through social media, press releases, open days and volunteer involvement, while considering issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

10. Project Personnel & Health and Safety

- 10.1. The historic building recording work should be carried out by a suitably experienced professional historic building specialist. The project design will contain details of key project staff and specialists who may contribute during the course of the works.
- 10.2. This brief and the approved project design will be made available to all project staff who will be encouraged to read it and familiarise themselves with the requirements of the project.
- 10.3. Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements. As such it is crucial that each aspect of the historic building recording be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under a defined health and safety policy. Risk assessments must be carried out for each aspect of fieldwork. If the risk assessment indicates it is necessary, the requirements of the project design can be varied in the interests of health and safety. SCCHEP should be consulted and the proposed changes agreed in such cases
- 10.4. All staff working on this site employed by the AAO will be provided with a copy of the risk assessment and will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding site safety. This risk assessment will be reviewed at regular intervals and/or when a reportable incident or near miss occurs during site work.
- 10.5. The AAO will ensure that all site staff wears Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is appropriate to the project and that all PPE is in good condition and (where appropriate) in date. Similarly, the AAO will ensure that all staff members have been trained in the safe use of equipment which they are using and that all site works are carried out in accordance with safe working practices as defined in their own health and safety policy.

11. References

ARCHES (Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: a European Standard). 2020. *Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. Available online at:
<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/arches/Wiki.jsp?page=Main>

Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation (revised edition)*. Archaeological Archives Forum. Available online at:

https://archives.archaeologyuk.org/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. Available online at: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. nd. *Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives from Sterile Projects*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2019. Dig Digital. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS%26GBuildings_3.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*.

Available online at:

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIFAS%26GArchives_4.pdf

.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. Available online at:

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf>.

Historic England. 2006. *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statement – West Midlands Region*. Available online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-farmsteads-preliminary-character-statement-west-midlands/historic-farmsteads-west-midlands-part1/>

Historic England. 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Available online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>.

Historic England. 2015b. *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice*. Available online at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images->

[books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059- digital-images/.](#)

Historic England. 2016. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. Available online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings/>

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2012 (updated 2024). National Planning Policy Framework. London. Available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/16-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>.

ICON (Institute of Conservation). 2023. *First Aid for Finds*. London: ICON.

SMA (Society of Museum Archaeologists). 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. Available online at: https://www.obs-traffic.museum/sites/default/files/ressources/files/SMA_Selection_Retention_Dispersal.pdf.

UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation). 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*.

Watt, S. 2011. *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research*. Available online at:

https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2285-1/dissemination/pdf/West_Midlands_cropped_final_copy.pdf

12. Contacts

SCCHET Contacts

Shane Kelleher (County Archaeologist). Tel: 01785 276580. Email:

shane.kelleher@staffordshire.gov.uk

Suzy Blake (Historic Environment Record Officer). Tel: 01785 277281. Email:

suzy.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Laura Pritchard (Environment Specialist - Archaeology). Tel: 01785 2777208.

Email: laura.pritchard@staffordshire.gov.uk

Historic England Contacts

Historic England Regional Science Advisor:

Tom Elliot. Tel: 07407820807. Email: tom.elliott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England Inspectors of Ancient Monuments:

Nick Carter. Tel: 07867 158042. Email: nick.carter@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery Curator

Joseph Perry. Tel: 01782 232585. Email: joseph.perry@stoke.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag/collections/archaeology/deposition-of-archaeological-archives/>

Archaeology Data Service

[Archaeology Data Service](#)

Diocesan Archaeological Advisor

Dr Andy Wigley. Tel: 03456 789000. Email: andy.wigley@shropshire.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice exhumation licences

Coroners, Burials, Cremation and Inquiries Policy Team, Access to Justice, Justice Policy Group, Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.

Tel: 020 3334 5637. [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)