Advice on Commissioning Archaeological Work

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This advice note is intended to offer help and advice for applicants for planning permission on how to commission archaeological work.

1.2. This takes the form of a set of guidelines to guide an applicant through the process of commissioning archaeological work by providing information on:

- Why you are being asked to commission archaeological work.
- The types of archaeological work that you may be asked to commission.
- How you will know what types of archaeological work that you need to commission.
- How you can appoint an archaeologist to under the required work.
- How archaeological work will be monitored by the Local Planning Authority.
- What will happen after the completion of the archaeological work.

2. WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO COMMISSION ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK?

2.1. People have lived in the Clwyd and Powys area for at least 230,000 years, and the hand of man has helped to shape this landscape from prehistoric times to the present day. The people, down the ages, who called this landscape their home, lived, worked and died here, and the physical traces they left behind can tell us about their lives.

2.2. The Clwyd and Powys area has a wealth of archaeological heritage; we have archaeological sites of local, regional, national and international importance. Many of these are exceptionally well preserved, surviving as visible and upstanding features in the landscape or below ground archaeological remains.

2.3. The archaeological heritage of the Clwyd and Powys area makes an important contribution to the areas special qualities and sense of place.

2.4. The archaeological sites and remains within the Clwyd and Powys area have survived for many hundreds or thousands of years, they are a valuable but finite and non-renewable resource, which need to be carefully managed and conserved to ensure that they survive for current and future generations to enjoy.

2.5. One of the ways in which archaeological remains are carefully managed and conserved for the future is through the planning regime. The desirability of preserving archaeological remains and their setting is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application (Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 6, Para. 6.5.1).

2.6. This means that Local Planning Authorities in Wales have to take into account archaeological considerations and deal with them from the beginning of the development control process (WO Circular 60/96 Para. 10), and need to be fully informed about the nature and importance of archaeological remains, and their setting, and the likely impact of any proposed development upon them (WO Circular 60/96, Para. 15).

2.7. Archaeological works can be required prior to the determination of a planning application. Local Planning Authorities are able to request an applicant to provide further information on archaeological matters prior to determination. in order to help to define the character and extent of the archaeological remains that exist in the area of the proposed development; to indicate that weight which ought to be attached to their preservation; and to provide useful information for identifying potential options for minimising or avoiding damage (WO Circular 60/96 Para.13 and 15)

2.8. Archaeological works can be required as a condition following the determination of a planning application. If planning consent is granted for a development in an area where archaeological remains are known to exist, conditions will be attached to planning consent in order to ensure that the archaeological remains are protected or are carefully investigated and recorded. The Local Planning Authority needs to be satisfied that the applicant has made appropriate and satisfactory provision of the archaeological investigation and subsequent recording of the remains on site, and the publication of the results (Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 6, Para. 6.5.3).

3. TYPES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK THAT YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO COMMISSION.

3.1. Types of pre-determination archaeological works include:

DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

A desk based assessment is '…a *programme of study of the historic environment within a specified area that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. It consists of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate*' (CIfA 2014).
'

The purpose of a desk based assessment is to gain an understanding of the historic environment resource and the archaeological sensitivity of a site 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;
- strategies for further evaluation (intrusive and non-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 (CIfA 2014).

A desk based assessment will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

An archaeological field evaluation is '*…a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site …If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.* (CIfA 2014).

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

- The formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource;
- The formulation of a strategy to mitigate a threat to the archaeological resource;
- The formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research (CIfA 2014).

Non Intrusive Evaluation Methods

Non-intrusive field work is often undertaken after a Desk Based Assessment in order to gather further information about a site. Non-intrusive evaluation can take a number of formats, including:

- Fieldwalking

Where archaeological features survive below the ground surface within a field that has been ploughed, archaeological materials and artefacts are brought to the surface by the action of the plough and the stirring of the soil. Fieldwalking involves walking an area in a systematic way, along a grid of transects, to search for, locate, plot and retrieve the archaeological artefacts and materials.

- Geophysical survey

A range of scientific ground-based physical sensing techniques can be used to map or produce an image that is representative of subsurface archaeological features, by detecting buried archaeological features when their physical properties contrast measurably with their surround environment. This can involve a range of techniques, but the most commonly employed are Resistivity, Magnetometry and Ground Penetrating Radar.

- Topographical survey (sometimes called earthwork survey)

Some archaeological remains survive above ground as humps, bumps, depressions and hollows, especially in areas where the ground as not been previously disturbed by development, land improvement or ploughing; these are known as earthworks. A topographic survey allows earthworks to be measured and accurately plotted to produce detailed plans and profiles of the earthwork remains.

- Historic Building Appraisal/ Survey

A rapid inspection of the building and relevant data held in any local records systems in order to identify whether the impacts and implications of any proposals on the building, particularly on historic fabrics and features. This is often accompanied by a desk based assessment or a photographic survey.

Not all of these techniques will usually be employed at the same time; often only one or two techniques that are most appropriate to the site will be used. All of these evaluation techniques will need to be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional.

Intrusive Field Evaluation

Intrusive field evaluation, sometimes called trial trenching or trial excavation usually requires a number of trenches to be excavated by a mechanical excavator. These trenches will usually be positioned to maximise the retrieval of archaeological information and to ensure that the archaeological resource is understood. The trenches will be excavated by a mechanical excavator to the first archaeological horizon encountered, or to the natural substrate, whichever is observed first. The trenches will then be cleaned by hand to allow the identification of archaeological features, which will them be systematically examined and recorded. An evaluation will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional.

3.2. Types of archaeological work required as a condition of planning consent include:

WATCHING BRIEF

An archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of archaeological observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons, on a site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. A watching brief will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive. It allows 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 to be preserved by record (CIfA 2014). An archaeological watching brief will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional.

EXCAVATION

An archaeological excavation is a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork that examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, within a specified area or site. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published (CIfA 2014). The full excavation of archaeological remains is an option of last resort where no scheme for preservation *in situ* can be arranged. An archaeological excavation will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional.

BUILDING SURVEY

A building survey is a formal programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building, structure, complex and its setting, including its buried components. It should result in the production of drawings, an ordered archive and a report (CIfA 2014). Building survey can be undertaken at a number of different levels, the details of which will be determined and outlined by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in a brief supplied to the applicant. A building survey will need to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

A photographic survey consists of a photographic record of the building affected by the development accompanied by basic information of a buildings age and type. The survey should include all interior and exterior walls and features, and should pay particular attention to elements that will be removed, damaged, altered or covered up as a result of the development. Particular attention should also be given to important features such as existing and blocked up windows, doors, fireplaces, stairwells etc. The photographic survey can be carried out by the applicant as long as the appropriate guidance document is adhered to.

4. HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TYPE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS I NEED TO COMMISSION?

4.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust's Development Control Archaeologist is consulted on all planning applications and advises on the requirement for pre-determination and post-determination archaeological work required.

4.2. Archaeological work undertaken within the Clwyd and Powys area, commissioned as part of the planning process, will be undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by the Development Control Archaeologist issued on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

4.3. This brief will outline the type of archaeological works required, and should be used to obtain cost estimates and detailed specifications for the works from archaeological consultants and contractors (see the next section for more information).

4.4. The brief seeks to ensure that all archaeological work is undertaken to a satisfactory professional standard, and references the published Standards and Guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).

4.5. Should a condition requiring archaeological works be included in a decision notice the applicant should contact the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust's Development Control Archaeologist to request that a brief is produced for the archaeological work required. The brief will then be produced and sent to the applicant.

4.6. To contact the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust Development Control Archaeologist please contact:

Mark Walters
Development Control Archaeologist
Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
41 Broad Street,
Welshpool,
Powys
SY21 7RR

Email: markwalters@cpat.org.uk Phone: 01938 553670

5. HOW DO I APPOINT AN ARCHAEOLOGIST TO UNDERTAKE THE WORK REQUIRED?

5.1. The brief prepared and issued by the Development Control Archaeologist should be sent out to a maximum of 4 archaeological consultants or contractors, in order for them to produce an estimate of costs, and specification or project design to set out a schedule of works in sufficient detail so that the work undertaken will be quantifiable, implemented and monitored.

5.2. The specification/ project designs received must be sent to and approved by the Development Control Archaeologist.

5.3. Contractors or consultants should be appointed to undertake the work required based on the cost estimate provided and the content of the specification/ project design provided. The specification must address the brief supplied by the Development Control Archaeologist.

5.4. The appointed archaeologist must undertake the archaeological work required according to the brief and the appointed archaeologist's specification, as approved by the Development Control Archaeologist.

5.5. It is a requirement of all briefs that all archaeological work must be undertaken by staff of a competent and professionally recognised body (preferably one that is an Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Registered Organisation), or a suitably qualified and appropriately experienced individual.

5.6. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust does not maintain a list of 'Approved Contractors'. Information on professionally qualified archaeological contractors and consultants can be obtained from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, who maintain a list of approved archaeological contractors which can be found on their website http://www.archaeologists.net/ro. A list of CIfA Registered Organisations and Corporate Members of the Chartered Institute can also be found in the CIfA's Yearbook and Directory. Individual contractors may also appear on the British Archaeological Jobs Resource website here http://www.bajr.org/RACSmap/default.asp

5.7. It would be preferred that appointed archaeologists are corporate members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, and have a proven track record in archaeological fieldwork and publication.

5.8. Those commissioning archaeological work need to consider, and satisfy themselves, that the organisation or individuals approached to tender for the archaeological work required:

- Have the necessary qualifications and appropriate previous experience to be able to undertake the work required to satisfy the brief. This includes in all aspects of the required work, including post-excavation, reporting, publication and archiving, and not only to undertaking fieldwork.

- Can provide personnel (including sub-contractors) with appropriate skills, qualifications and CIfA membership grade for the tasks involved.

- Can meet the required timeframe and schedule for the works.

- Has a track record of undertaking similar scale projects.

- Has a track record of conducting archaeological projects within the region.

6. MONITORING ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

6.1. The Development Control Archaeologist may monitor the work of the appointed archaeologist, through all stages of the archaeological work, including fieldwork, post-excavation work and analysis, reporting, publication, and archive preparation and deposition.

6.2. The type of monitoring will depend on the nature of the archaeological work involved. Archaeological watching briefs will not usually be monitored by site visit; evaluation work will be monitored by site visit at least once; excavation will be monitored by site visits as many times as is necessary.

7. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK?

7.1. On completion of the fieldwork the appointed archaeologist should provide you with a draft report within one month of completion of the fieldwork. A copy of this draft report should be sent to the Development Control Archaeologist for approval. On approval a final report should be completed and forwarded to the Development Control Archaeologist and the Local Planning Authority.

7.2. When all work required by the brief and specification has been undertaken to a satisfactory standard the Development Control Archaeologist will write to you to confirm that the information provided is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the condition. A copy of this notice will be forwarded to the Local Planning Authority at the same time.