

Standards for all Building Recording work in County Durham and Darlington

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Introduction

1.1 Durham County Council Archaeology Section (DCCAS) have produced a standard for archaeological projects, and this document is intended to cover building recording projects in a similar way. It is intended to cover all upstanding buildings and structures. In this document the word building will be used to cover both types of heritage asset.

1.2 The purpose of building recording projects is to record the existing character of the building along with any fixtures and fittings, with sufficient research to set the record in historic context, 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 circumstances of work can vary, and the amount of recording and research needed will vary according to the work being carried out on the building, as well as its significance. These levels of recording are outlined in Historic England (HE) guidance, with a range from Level 1 (the lowest) to 4 (the highest).

1.3 It is anticipated that this standard will be supported by various teams in Durham County Council, and Darlington Borough Council. This means that the contact for agreeing the Written Scheme of Investigation

(WSI) and other aspects of the project may vary. In this document the term “Curator” is used generically to reflect this role. Contact Details for the possible holders of this role are given in Appendix 2.

General Building Recording standards

2.1 It is expected that all building recording projects will be carried out according to best practice as set out in the following publications:

- A. Yorkshire, the Humber and the North-East: A Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process (SYAS 2011) (see Appendix 1)
- B. Standards and Guidance for archaeological work produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>
- C. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/project-management-for-heritage/>
- D. Historic England’s Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice 2016
- E. <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings/>
- F. Any other relevant HE Guidance <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/>
- G. Other relevant standards and guidance documents (see Appendix 2 for an indicative list of relevant standards)

2.2 Final methodology must be confirmed with the Curator prior to work commencing, via a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (See section 3)

2.3 The client must give the Building Recording contractor advance notice of scheme timetables and adequate notice of when their presence will be required on site. The anticipated extent of the work must be confirmed with the client in advance of tendering.

2.4 The line of communication on-site between the client and/or their representative and the Building Recording contractor must be clearly stated in advance. This is especially important with regards to who must be advised of any necessary stoppage time, if the scheme requires it (for example during recording of fabric uncovered during development).

2.5 It must be clearly agreed before the site works begin that the Building Recording contractor has access to all appropriate areas on site. If upon arrival on site it is found that areas expected to be accessible are not available for any reason, DCCAS should be informed as soon as possible.

2.6 It is the Building Recording contractor's responsibility to ensure they comply with all relevant Health and Safety legislation, guidance and best practice. DCCAS staff are not qualified to comment on any Health and Safety aspects of a WSI. Any issues regarding this are a matter to be worked out between the Contractor, the client and, if necessary, the Health and Safety Executive.

2.7 Project Monitoring: The Curator must be given two weeks (or in exceptional circumstances a minimum of 48 hours) notice in writing of the commencement of Building Recording work. During such works representatives of the Curator must be allowed access to the building at all reasonable times.

The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

3.1 A WSI should be produced for all Building Recording works. These must be agreed with the Curator before submission in support of a planning application or discharge of condition.

3.2 The WSI does not need to reiterate information included in this document. The WSI should focus on identifying the challenges and opportunities presented by an individual site, and how best to address them. It should also clearly identify any proposed variations from this document, along with the justification for them. If a point mentioned in this document is not specifically discussed, the standard in this document will apply by default.

3.3 The WSI should include:

- a) The background to the project including reasons for work
- b) Site location (including a map, detailed location plan and a central 10 figure National Grid Reference), site description, as well as all relevant site names and identifier codes (e.g. Planning Application

References). This should also clearly identify within the wider site which buildings or structures are to be recorded, and identify them in a way which is then used throughout the report (eg by numbering or otherwise identifying the buildings on a plan)

- c) The broad level of Recording proposed, based on HE guidance – ie Levels 1 – 4
- d) Details of what will be included in the Drawn Record: E.g. annotated sketches, annotated architects plans, measured elevations, floorplans, cross sections etc
- e) Details of what will be included in the Written record: level of background history intended, which sources to be consulted, etc
- f) Archaeological and historical background including any previous archaeological work on the site or nearby. This should include a critical discussion about what this implies for the Building Recording on the site to be investigated, and not merely be a list of information found out about the area.
- g) Aims and objectives of the project including specific research questions the project hopes to address, in line with published artefactual research frameworks, period specific research frameworks and more generally the North East Regional Research Framework <https://researchframeworks.org/nerf/> , and also HistBeke <https://researchframeworks.org/histbeke/> . Where relevant the Historic Farmsteads Preliminary Character Statement: North East Region (2006 Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-farmsteads-preliminary-character-statement-north-east/>) should also be referred to.
- h) Areas included or excluded from field work (e.g. unsafe areas). Curators expect producers of a WSI to carry out due diligence to ensure that the proposed methodology can be carried out on a site. This may necessitate a site visit in advance. Areas of work should also be shown on a plan of a suitable scale.
- i) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording, appropriate to achieving the stated aims of the project. This should consider the appropriateness of different techniques, depending on the site and type of remains expected.
- j) Capability statement on the staff to be used. This should give details of the skills and experience of the on-site manager, who should demonstrably be MORPHE trained as should the originator of the WSI. The appropriate certificates should be included as appendices in the WSI. If the on-site manager

is not known at the time of the WSI, this needs to be confirmed in writing to DCCAS at the same time as the they are notified of the proposed commencement of work.

- k) Arrangements for public engagement (see section 5 of this document)

- l) Contingency arrangements for all aspects of the project

- m) Details of expected on-site Staffing. We would recommend that details of staffing are included so the client is clear how many people will be on site and that the timetable is based on this level. This should make it clearer to the client if there are additional costs on a site due to increased staffing.

- n) The provision made for archiving of all site material, both digital and physical (see section 9 of this document)

- o) The provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation (see section 8 of this document)

- p) The author of the WSI should also be clearly identified

3.4 Techniques and technology are continually progressing. The WSI should consider if new techniques which are useful, but not routinely used at present, could be included in the project – for example the use of drones to access unsafe areas.

3.5 It is the Building Recording contractor's responsibility to ensure that a WSI has been agreed before starting work. It should be noted that there is a fee for agreement of a WSI, which will be levied on the Building Recording contractor who prepared it (see online charging schedule).

3.6 Planning conditions relating to WSIs will not be discharged until the WSI has been agreed with the Curator.

3.7 Tenders for the work must include a method statement, day rates and the following:

- a) Brief details of the organisation and the number of staff who are proposing to carry out the work including any relevant specialisms or experience

- b) The earliest date at which the work can begin, and the amount of notice required to initiate the work
- c) Details concerning proposed methods of recording and source material
- d) An estimate of how long the work will take broken down by time and cost in terms of data collection and report production (the anticipated extent of the work must be confirmed with the client in advance). The tender must include a breakdown of costs attributable to:
 - 1. travelling and subsistence
 - 2. fieldwork
 - 3. report production
 - 4. archive preparation & deposition - this is a requirement of all projects so should not be included as a contingency, but as part of the main tender
 - 5. administration
 - 6. relevant DCCAS fees – WSI and report agreement for example
 - 7. other

Contingency sums must be clearly allocated for the following:

- 1. publication
- 2. DCC monitoring visits

Building Recording Standards

4.1 Recording will generally be done in line with one of the Historic England Levels. Where this standard diverges from those levels, this Standard will be used, unless otherwise agreed in the WSI.

4.2 Photographs must be of archival quality; either as black & white print and negatives or as born-digital images. The Curators have no preference for which medium of capture is used, but if more than one medium is used, then appropriate archiving of all media must be carried out

4.3 Born digital images should be captured at a minimum resolution of 10 megapixels, in colour, and generically follow the advice in Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice Historic England 2015.

4.4 All analogue record photographs to be black and white, using conventional silver-based film only, 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.

4.5 Prints may be executed digitally from scanned versions of the film negatives and may be manipulated to improve print quality (but not in a manner which alters detail or perspective). All digital prints must be

made on paper and with inks that are certified against fading or other deterioration for a period of 75 years or more when used in combination.

4.6 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 eg 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 pointer; 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.

4.7 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. All drawings must be drawn on dimensionally stable media. Plans should be labelled with appropriate Context numbers. Born Digital documentation should be created in a suitable archival format, ready for deposition.

4.8 The written record should aim to build on the images, and not just describe what is in them, but add understanding of what is being shown.

4.9 Following the completion of recording the site must be left in a condition to be agreed with the client.

4.10 The Curator would expect to receive regular updates on site work, where projects have a duration of several weeks or more.

Public Engagement

5.1 All building recording projects should, where practicable, make provision for public engagement in the project, in some form as recommended in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 199.

5.2 Depending on the nature scale and duration of the project, this will vary from site to site, and should be detailed in the WSI, even if it is to state that practical limitations, or safety issues, prevent it (with justifications).

5.3 Options for public engagement include, but are not limited to:

- Open days on site to allow visitors to see, or be given tours, of the building

- Opportunities for volunteers to become involved in aspects of the project (see 6.4 below).
- Presentation of findings at public events, such as Durham County Councils Archaeology Day or other fora.
- Specially organized events to disseminate the results e.g. talks to local societies or at village halls, community centres etc.
- Presentation of results in non-academic publications, such as Archaeology County Durham Magazine, Current Archaeology, and British Archaeology.
- Use of blogs, or other social media outlets, for updates on progress.

5.4 Use of Volunteers. The use of volunteers on sites presents a range of opportunities and issues. It is anticipated that for most building recording projects, use of volunteers will not be possible. However, their use should be considered for the highest status building recording projects (Grade II* and I). The following should be borne in mind.

Volunteers must NEVER be used to substitute for professional staff on commercial projects, but only to allow additional work to be carried out i.e. extra recording above and beyond what is required in the WSI

To that end, it is recommended that a log is kept of volunteer contribution, so it is possible to clearly identify and demonstrate the additional value they have added to the project.

If volunteers are used in areas where it is reasonable to expect that on a commercial project this would involve staff time (e.g. digitizing plans or scanning documents), then any cost saving made in staff time must be clearly identified. This saving must then also be shown to have been spent in other aspects of the project.

Use of volunteers on sites can raise additional issues regarding Health and Safety. These must be considered at the planning stage of any project, and adequate provision made.

When it is proposed to use volunteers on a site, the anticipated use should be detailed in the WSI in terms of volunteer days. These days should be divided into on-site and off-site days.

5.5 Appropriate costings for these aspects of work should be built into the project.

The Report

6.1 For all projects initiated after March 2022, DCCAS will only require a PDF/A version of the report to be submitted to us.

6.2 The report is the culmination of the project, and in many cases may be the only product for dissemination of the results. The report is also the main document most people interested in a site will use to find out about the site. It is therefore important that the report:

Includes sufficient information so that its results and main conclusions are clearly demonstrated and evidenced.

Does not repeat significant proportions of the text verbatim in different sections.

Attempts to present the recorded remains in an engaging and readable manner. It is understood that aspects of the report will be more technical than others, but where appropriate, it should be possible to tell the story of the site in an engaging way.

6.3 A copy of the report must be prepared for the client. A PDF/A version must be sent to DCCAS for inclusion into the County Durham Historic Environment Record (HER) at:

Archaeology Section

Environment & Design,

Environment,

Neighbourhoods and Climate Change

Durham County Council

County Hall

Durham

DH1 5UQ

Digital version of reports should not be sent on CD or DVD, but by some form of file transfer. Once agreed, the final digital copy of the report will be obtained by DCCAS from OASIS.

6.4 The report must contain a title page listing site/development name and full address together with a general National Grid Reference, the date of the report, the name of the archaeological contractor and the developer or commissioning agent. The report must be page numbered and supplemented with sections and paragraph numbering for ease of reference.

6.5 The report must include the following:

- a) executive summary
- b) a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with at least an 8 figure central grid reference
- c) Relevant reference numbers (if available) – such as OASIS number, digital archive Digital Object Identifier reference; unique site code; museum accession number
- d) Contractor's details, including the author of the report, and exact dates the work was carried out.
- e) nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details and planning application no.

- f) description of the site location
- g) A site plan to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated, including a north arrow and scale bar
- h) A discussion of the results of field work.
- i) Discussion of how features and buildings have been grouped and phased together
- j) Plans and elevation drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale and including details of location on site, and orientation.
- k) Appropriate photographs of features, buildings and structures mentioned in the text.
- l) Discussion of how the work has contributed to the research objectives identified in the WSI, and how the site fits into the wider context of the site e.g. comparator sites locally, regionally and nationally, as appropriate.
- m) references
- n) bibliography
- o) list of sources consulted
- p) copies of historical maps cross-referenced to the text
- q) photographs, maps and plans to illustrate the report as necessary

6.6 Copyright: remains as agreed between the client and contractor. However, the DCC HER should be granted a licence to use the outputs of the work to fulfil their functions, which may include partial copying by third parties.

6.7 Contractors are advised to submit a copy of a report to the Curator for approval prior to its submission as part of a Discharge of Condition.

6.8 Conditions relating to reporting will not be discharged until all the relevant stages have been completed.

OASIS

7.1 The Curators supports the Online AccesS to Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) Project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of large-scale developer-funded fieldwork.

7.2 The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <https://oasis.ac.uk/form/> within 3 months of completion of the work. Contractors are advised to ensure that adequate time and costings are built into their tenders to allow the forms to be filled in.

7.3 An appropriately formatted copy of the final report must also be uploaded to OASIS within 3 months of approval by the Curator. This final version will be the version downloaded and included in the HER.

7.4 Conditions relating to reporting will not be discharged until all the relevant stages of OASIS have been completed.

Publication

8.1 All building recording projects must have time and budget allocation identified for publication unless it can be shown that further investigation and research will be taking place. This must be to a minimum standard to include a summary of the work, findings, dates, illustrations and photographs and references to where the archive has been deposited.

8.2 Editors of regional journals, such as the Durham Archaeological Journal or *Archaeologia Aeliana*, and/or other relevant journals must be contacted for information on outline publication costs, fuller figures may be worked out on completion of the project. A contingency sum for publication appropriate to the scale of the project must be set aside at the outset of work and included in the tender. Other forms of publication may be appropriate in certain cases, to be agreed with the Curator.

8.3 Where publication is required, conditions will not be discharged until the Curator has received written agreement from the planning permission holder that publication will be funded.

8.4 If you are archiving digitally with ADS, it is efficient to consider a related digital publication in the open access journal *Internet Archaeology* <http://intarch.ac.uk>. As well as taking a very broad range of formats, data and visualisations, such a publication can integrate with, and help further publicise, the digital archive. The journal editor can be contacted for information on publication costs.

8.5 **Publicity:** in cases where archaeological work is undertaken as a result of the Curators' recommendation and approval, either through the planning system or otherwise, then this should be acknowledged in any and all publicity (conventional and online) describing the results.

The Archive

9.1 Guidance on Building and Structure Recording Archives (BSRAs) was first introduced in 2016. This is now superseded by this document.

9.2 This guidance is only related to the treatment of archives arising from Standing Building and Structure Recording. It is intended to clarify the situation so Contractors can include appropriate information, and build in appropriate costs, when writing Specifications for work. Specifications which do not conform to this guidance will NOT be agreed.

9.3 For all born digital BSRAs (where the primary method of data capture is digital devices) the method of archiving is via the Archaeology Data Service archiving service. All born-digital data used to inform the results of the work, for example, digital photographs, plans and elevations (e.g. original CAD or digitised drawings) should be preserved. Digital photographs will need to be assessed for appropriate retention/discard. Guidance on the main data-types and their generation can be found in the [ADS Guides to Good Practice](#). Guidance on acceptable deposition formats and necessary metadata can be found in the [Guidelines for Depositors](#). Experience has shown that archives containing a very large number of files (eg circa 300 +) or large files (eg circa 100 mb +) can be more difficult to deliver for archiving, and we would advise early engagement with ADS if your archive is likely to meet these criteria.

9.4 For all hard copy BSRAs (ie prints, slides, negatives, paper etc) the archive should be deposited with the Durham County Record Office. Other local archives will no longer accept BSRAs.

9.5 Where BSRA is part of a wider archive eg a project including a watching brief 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 the Curator.

9.6 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:

Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>

Understanding Historic Buildings A guide to good recording practice English Heritage 2006
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/>

9.7 Contact should be made with the relevant Archive curators prior to the submission of the WSI so that the accession number for the site can be included, where possible.

9.8 Deposition must be in accordance with guidance for deposition provided by the relevant archive (please contact the relevant archive curators for further information). Failure to adhere to this guidance can mean refusal of the archive by the intended museum.

9.9 Contractors must ensure that suitable costs to cover archiving requirements are included in the original tender document. (See Charging Document)

9.10 Conditions relating to, archiving will not be discharged until all the relevant archiving stages have been completed.

DCCAS

23/03/2022

Version 3

Appendix 1 Indicative list of relevant Standards

References

Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation. Archaeological Archives Forum 2011.

<https://doi.org/10.5284/1000078>

Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice. Historic England. 2015

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage/heag059-digital-images/>

Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage. United Kingdom Institute of Conservation. 2015

Appendix 2 Curator Contacts

Durham County Council Archaeology Section

Archaeology Section

Heritage, Landscapes and Design Team

Environmental Services

Regeneration and Local Services

Durham County Council

County Hall

Durham

DH1 5UQ

03000 267012

archaeology@durham.gov.uk

Durham County Council Conservation Team

To be confirmed

Darlington Borough Council Conservation Team

To be confirmed