ABRAMS ARCHAEOLOGY

DEVELOPERS GUIDE TO ARCHAEOLOGY

HELPING DEVELOPERS TO KEEP THEIR PROJECTS ON BUDGET AND ON TIME

Abrams Archaeology work with many types of developers. We understand that our specialist area of Archaeology is one of many technical disciplines which you need to liaise with and sometimes to contract to carry out work. We understand the importance of **budgets** and **timescales** to the successful completion of your project. Archaeology can be a risk to both of those.

We work across the UK, with many types of developers, on projects of a large range. This can include housing developments of many units or it can include the extension of one home. It can include large commercial property developments such as science parks or airports and it can include the redevelopment of derelict high street shops. We also work regularly on renewable energy projects and increasingly with Data Centre development.

Wherever we work we make sure that **our clients are informed** of the risks that archaeology can present and we ensure that our clients are advised of the routes which can be taken to understand that risk. Having **understood the risk** we can advise on the compliant ways in which to **face and reduce those risks.**

We are honest with our clients and this means **we can't make problems disappea**r. We can **explain what challenges archaeology can present** and we can explain **the ways in which those challenges can be best dealt with.** This includes looking in detail at proposals, at timescales and at the best ways in which the challenges for your project can be managed.

WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

Archaeology is the study of the physical remains of our past. There are periods of the human story which have no historical records, or for which records are scarce. Archaeology represents one of the main sources of information on these vast periods of time. Even when we have historical records, the information which can be understood via archaeological remains can deepen our understanding of the way people lived.

In the UK a lot of Archaeology is buried. It is possible to walk right over it without knowing it is there. This lack of visibility often means that remains are unknown. However, there are many ways to help predict the presence of archaeological remains and this is where we come in. We can help to identify known remains on a site and explain their relative importance. We can also help to predict the types of remains which may be on a site even where little or no work has previously happened on a piece of land.

Planning policy across the UK recognises the importance to our society of archaeological remains and the information they contain. This recognition underlies the ways in which archaeological work is done and, therefore, informs this guide.

WAYS WE CAN HELP

APPRAISAL & FEASIBILITY STAGE

We provide clear, early-stage advice when you are considering buying and/or developing land. This helps in identifying archaeological constraints and built heritage considerations from the outset. Our appraisals highlight potential risks and opportunities and this enables you to make informed decisions.

Services we offer:

- **Site Appraisal/feasibility reports**
- **Client team Q&A on Archaeological risk - sometimes it's a discussion and not a document that you need.**

Identify and reduce risk early

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

We help development teams navigate this important stage with confidence. Our policy-compliant assessments which Identify archaeological potential and site history and assess the likely impact of proposed development. This ensures your application is robust, defensible, and aligned with planning requirements.

Services we offer:

- **Archaeological Desk Based Assessment**
- **Environmental Impact Assessment**
- **Environmental Statement**
- **Design and agree a suitable scope of evaluation works to support the application**
- **Procurement and Management of Evaluation works**

Supporting successful planning outcomes

MEETING PLANNING CONDITIONS & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Once projects move on site, we manage the procurement and delivery of archaeological works on your behalf. We will define proportionate, cost-effective mitigation strategies. This can include the

investigation and recording of archaeological remains ahead of construction and it can include discussions on how to preserve remains while still completing the proposed building works.

Archaeology can introduce uncertainty to programme and budget — we minimise this by:

- Anticipating and then proactively managing risks as they arise
- Coordinating works efficiently with your wider programme
- Keeping you informed at every stage

Our focus is simple: reduce delays, control costs, and keep your project moving.

- **Scoping of proportionate mitigation works**
- **Written Scheme of Investigation**
- **Procurement and Management of Mitigation works**

Control risk during development - Contact us:

https://www.abramsarchaeology.co.uk/

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following topics have come up on various projects and we briefly cover them here so as to assure you that there is a process we follow in each case. If you have needed to ask these questions or if you do in the future – Abrams Archaeology can help you.

WHAT IS TREASURE?

Some types of objects are classed as 'Treasure'. What is and isn't ruled to be Treasure is complex and it varies within the UK. It includes certain types of precious metals (e.g. gold objects) and it covers other types of material and objects. There are specific steps to follow when potential Treasure is found and it is important to follow these for legal reasons and for reputational reasons. We understand the systems in each part of the UK and we can advise on the appropriate response for your site based on the location and what has been found.

WHAT IF HUMAN REMAINS ARE PRESENT?

There are well-established legal systems in the UK nations for the reporting of human remains on construction sites. These rules are there to ensure the dignity of those remains is respected, to protect the public from seeing these remains and to allow for the assessment of whether they are ancient or the result of recent foul play. We can help you stay compliant and to operate in ways which are respectful when human remains are disturbed by construction works.

THERE IS A SCHEDULED MONUMENT ON THE LAND WE ARE LOOKING AT. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR PROPOSALS?

Where proposed development works are within, or close to, a Scheduled Monument, it is necessary to obtain Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC). This will only be granted once the relevant body (depending upon which part of the UK the site is in) has considered the reasoning behind why any proposed works are needed. You should note the works do not need to be physically on the monument for advice to be taken. Such monuments have a 'setting' and it is important to define whether the proposals are in that setting and whether that may affect whether the proposal is viable or whether it needs to be amended in certain ways. We can help you identify whether Scheduled Monument Consent is needed and whether the setting of a monument may be affected or not.

THINGS TO AVOID

We are here to help. To that end, we note the following and encourage you to talk to us early.

Don't leave speaking to an archaeologist to the last minute
This builds pressure for everyone and means decisions are made more rapidly by people unfamiliar with a site location, with the people in the project team and with the specific archaeological risks present. None of these constraints enhances decision making. We will respond in such circumstances and will endeavour to rapidly get up to speed with your site and its challenges. However, we recommend seeking early advice to avoid these pressure points where possible.

Don't stop communicating over archaeology
Looking away from an issue like this is not helpful: it's really important to communicate openly and in a timely way. Then we can consider the best solutions in terms of timing and appropriate techniques. In this way we can have the most influence over timing and cost. This can often be about the best methodology and it can also be about the most cost effective team to do a piece of work.

How to get the Best out of the Situation

Contact us early and we can help to advise whether and when in a project cycle we can best help. With some projects there is a very low archaeological risk and with some the advice from the local planning authority will mean that no archaeological input is needed. We can spot this and we can also spot where archaeological risk does exist and what would be the best approach to understanding it and reducing it.

The importance of respectful and timely communication cannot be overstated. We hope you will feel able to ask for advice and we can then provide you with an honest response, guide you to the most appropriate type of archaeological work needed and a cost for that work.

If you need more information having read this guide find us here:

https://www.abramsarchaeology.co.uk/

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