

**Conditions for the Acceptance of Archaeological Archives**

1. **Contacts**

The main contacts relating to the creation and deposition of archaeological archives at the Museum of Archaeology are:

**Curator (Museum of Archaeology and Durham Castle)**

Gemma Lewis [gemma.lewis@durham.ac.uk](mailto:gemma.lewis@durham.ac.uk)

0191 33 44139

**Collections Registrar**

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0191 33 45694

**2. Introduction**

These guidelines set out the requirements for the creation and deposition of archaeological archive into the Museum of Archaeology, Durham University which is the depository for material relating to Durham City as defined in 1974 when a number of civil parishes were combined. The depository for the remainder of the County is the Durham County Archaeological Archive. The civil parishes for Durham City are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bearpark | Belmont | Brancepeth | Brandon and Byshottles |
| Cassop-cum-Quarrington | Coxhoe, Croxdale and Hett | Durham City | Framwellgate Moor |
| Kelloe, Pittington | Shadforth, Sherburn | Shincliffe | West Rainton |
| Witton Gilbert |  |  |  |

These guidelines refer to standards relating to the conservation, organisation, labelling, marking, storage and the documentation of archaeological archives that are to be deposited with the Museum of Archaeology, as stated through the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Archaeological archive refers to all parts of the archaeological record, including finds, written, drawn and photographic documentation. The basis of all requirements is that that the documentary archive and the artefact are regarded as an integrated archive.

**Please note digital archives should be deposited with ADS, although we still require a copy for reference, research, interpretation and outreach. There is a charge for deposition to ADS which would need to be paid directly to ADS.**

These guidelines will be reviewed bi-annually and re-issued every 5 years.

Version 2.0 July 2020.

**3. The role of the Museum of Archaeology**

The Museum of Archaeology is an Accredited Museum. It meets standards for collection care and storage for museums in the UK and has policies in place to manage and care for the collection. The Museum of Archaeology on deposition will document and catalogue the archive. A unique record on our AdLib system will be created and a unique number will be given to each small find and bulk find – as defined by context number and material.

Each of these unique objects or groups of objects will be photographed, documented, labelled and marked. On larger sites this will mean that potentially hundreds of records will need to be created. The objects are also made available through the University’s online Discover system <http://discover.durham.ac.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do> .

The material will also be made available to researchers and for teaching and will be used for outreach and engagement with the public.

**4. Charging and standards**

There is a charge for depositing material. This is outlined by Durham County Council Archaeology Section [Charging Scheme document](https://www.durham.gov.uk/media/28525/Historic-Environment-Record-Charging-Scheme/pdf/HistoricEnvironmentRecord-ChargingScheme19-20.pdf?m=637025117619400000). The cost is reviewed annually.

This storage one-off charge cover the costs of storage and curation. It enables the Museum to provide the following:

* accessioning and cataloguing of finds into Museum collections.
* storage in appropriate manner with a level of security and environmental control appropriate to the nature of the material.
* accessioning and storage of documentary archive

After initial entry procedures, future on-costs of curation, research, display and interpretation will be borne by the Museum. This fee will be waived for volunteer archaeology groups. It is also one of the recommendations made by Historic England in response to the Mendoza Review (2017). Exemptions from charges may be available under certain circumstances e.g. volunteer group excavations, please contact us to discuss.

***The Museum of Archaeology reserves the rights to return archives or part of archive that are not considered acceptable, and/or to charge for work needed to bring the archive up to the necessary standards.***

**5. Pre-deposition Requirements**

Project archaeologists should read these guidelines during the preparation of the project design/written scheme of investigation (WSI) so that any archive and storage requirements and associated costs can be factored in to their tender (EH 1991, IFA 1994).

When it is determined that there will be an archaeological deposit, get in touch to get an accession number. This must be used throughout the archive. This number takes the form: DURMA(space)number: DURMA is our unique Museum identifier. The numbers are allocated in the order that requests for accession codes come to us- your project will just take the next one on the list e.g. DURMA.2016.123.

To save duplication of effort in marking individual artefacts, it is recommended that the archive accession number be used as the site code for marking and labelling the finds archive.

**6. Communication and notifications**

It is the responsibility of the archaeologist or archaeological unit to inform the Museum of Archaeology of any archaeological work taking place in Durham City.

The Museum expects and requires all depositors to adhere to the following minimum communication stages:

* Notification (during Project Planning)
* Project Review (during Field work and Post-excavation analysis)
* Project Completion and Deposition (during Preparation of the Archive)

The significance, complexity and size of the expected Archive must affect the level of communication required in addition to the basic requirements mentioned above. If it is a large project the Curator of Archaeology will need to be involved at the project planning stage.

The following additional communication points should be considered based on the nature and scale of the project:

* An invitation for the main Museum contact to visit a project during the data gathering stage i.e. in the field. Once it has been ascertained that there will be the creation of an archive**,** depositors are required to contact the Museum of Archaeology in advance of deposition, its best to contact us when conducting the fieldwork as well especially on large site to discuss retention and disposal.
* Involvement in the implementation or refining of the Retention and Disposal Strategy and consideration in the methods of dispersal.
* An agreement on the nature and scale of conservation work that is undertaken as part of the project.
* During an assessment of the need for, and possible nature of, public consultation as part of the project. This would occur at a stage permitted by client confidentiality.
* The Museum should be sent copies of any press releases issued during the course of the project and the Museum’s role should be acknowledged in all publicity.

**Please don’t wait until you are ready to deposit the archive to get in touch otherwise if your archive doesn’t meet our standards we may refuse the material. We encourage you to have regular contact with us during all phases of fieldwork, and we are happy to make site visits were helpful and necessary.**

Notifications can be made in writing by post or email to the Curator of Archaeology and should include:

* The Field Unit
* Project Manager's name and contact details
* Site Name
* HER Site number
* Grid Reference
* Parish
* Type/Period of Site
* Type of Fieldwork
* Starting Date
* Estimated quantity of material expected (standard boxes)
* Whether human remains are expected to be found

Archaeologists wishing to deposit material and paper archives should ensure that the HER is in receipt of, and has signed off, the relevant report before deposition is planned.

**7. Conservation**

The Museum should be involved in all decisions regarding conservation treatment of artefacts and the documentary archive. Any necessary conservation work for the long-term preservation of any part of the archive must have been completed by a professional conservator and be fully documented. The documentation of any conservation/reconstruction/scientific investigation should also form part of the archive. The Museum of Archaeology should be advised of the type and quantity of sensitive material in advance of any intended deposition.

**8. Ownership and Transfer of Title**

Archaeological material collected during archaeological investigation and excavation is the legal property of the landowner with the exception of objects legally defined as treasure and human remains, unless there has been a transfer of title. As a condition of acceptance, the Museum of Archaeology requires that the landowner transfers title to the Museum of Archaeology before an archive is deposited. Landowners should be informed by the archaeologist or archaeological unit at the beginning of a project that the Museum of Archaeology will require transfer of title as a condition of deposition.

A signed transfer of title from the landowner to the Museum of Archaeology should be acquired by the archaeologist or archaeological unit at the end of the investigation or excavation and should be accompanied by a detailed list of the finds and documentary archive.

Where the owner cannot be contacted, two letters stating in detail that the material will be transferred to the ownership of the Museum, as well as the potential need for dispersal/disposal of the material not selected for inclusion in the Preserved Archive, the letters should be sent by recorded delivery (at least 1 month apart) and copies of the letters along with proof of recorded delivery retained. If there is still no reply after a total of three months, the Museum may give consent for the Archive’s transfer, although replies received subsequently should be forwarded.

No archive will be accepted on a loan basis.

We reserve the right to refuse archives that do not meet these requirements.

**9. Copyright**

Unless otherwise agreed in writing the Museum will acquire all intellectual property rights (IPR) to the documentary archive. The Museum requires the rights to allow research, study, display, publish and provide public access to the Archives in its care. Therefore, the Museum only accepts Archives that are deposited with written licence to copyright in perpetuity.

In the rare occasions where this is not possible, the museum will be granted unconditional licence to use the material for publication in any form or medium relevant to its legitimate activities, and the depositor will indemnify and hold the museum harmless from any civil liability to third parties for breach of IPR that may arise from such publication or display.

**10. Data Sharing**

A data sharing agreement will be required for all archaeological documentary archives with the depositing organisation (i.e. the archaeological unit). This includes written statements regarding use and storage of personal data, which is important for GDPR**.**

**11. Selection and retention**

During larger investigations and excavations (a likely finds archive of 20 boxes or more) the Curator of Archaeology would prefer to discuss selection and retention whilst the project is ongoing or during post-excavation.

To help us catalogue and use the collection, please request finds specialists to the following bagging

* Bagging animal bone identified as of low significance, or unidentifiable separately
* Suggesting appropriate samples of industrial waste products such as iron slag (particularly form non-production sites) and bagging those separately.
* Bagging unidentifiable or plain clay pipe fragments separately
* Suggesting appropriate samples of bulk ceramic materials such as plain floor or roof tiles and bagging those separately.
* Bagging unworked, undiagnostic and unstratified stonework separately

**Please note we do not have the resources to accept**

* Waterlogged material-we will accept waterlogged material that has been conserved and is suitable for long term preservations.
* Unanalysed soil or other environmental samples.

**Please use the CifA Toolkit to help** <http://cifa.heritech.net/selection-toolkit/toolkit-overview>

**12. What to include in the Archive**

An archaeological archive consists of all written, drawn, photographic material and artefacts related to and generated by a specific project. For an average fieldwork project, this will consist of the following:

N.B this list is not intended to be exclusive - other material may be included depending on the needs of a specific project.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Required - physical\** | *Required - digital\** | *Not required* |
| Essential |  |  |  |
| Transfer of title form | X | X |  |
| Primary (non-repeatable) records |  |  |  |
| All record sheets (trench, context, sample, finds, skeletal, photographic, registers, etc.) | X |  | blank, unused forms |
| Site notebook/ daybook (or extracted pages) | X |  | scrap paper notes, unless  in a useable form |
| Original site drawings | X |  |  |
| Original site photographs (digital, b&w contacts, slides) | X | digital photos |  |
| Raw data (eg EDM survey, geophysical survey) |  | x |  |
| Project planning documents (e.g. project  brief, project design, practice manuals  and standards). |  | x |  |
| textual records (e.g. pro-forma for  data-gathering, notebooks, databases,  spreadsheets). |  | x |  |
| Secondary records and data |  |  |  |
| Archive index and box contents lists | X | X |  |
| Correspondence and management data (WSI, brief, SMC, tenders, project designs) |  | X | separate copy of brief if  included in report |
| Architect’s drawings | Only if annotated |  |  |
| Copyright licence | X | X |  |
| Record sheets prepared during post-excavation (eg finds recording sheets, conservation records) | X | X |  |
| Site matrix | X | X |  |
| Grey literature and interim reports - final version and any significant drafts | 1 copy | X |  |
| Assessment reports and updated project designs | 1 copy | X |  |
| Illustrations, photographs and x-rays generated during post-excavation | X | X |  |
| Unedited specialist reports in full | X | X |  |
| Specialist databases/spreadsheets or other data |  | X |  |
| C14 records and certificates | X | X |  |
| Publication text | X | X |  |
| Context, sample, finds etc registers |  | X |  |
| Photographic register |  | X |  |
| Security copy disc |  | X |  |
| Artefacts and ecofacts |  |  |  |
| All finds, except those disposed of in agreement with the landowner and/or depository | X |  |  |

**13. Storage requirements documentary Archive**

* All written archives should be produced on plain paper with a neutral to mildly alkaline pH using archive-standard pens or pencils (2b).
* Paperwork must be kept flat and together, in acid free folders and acid-free boxes with non-ferrous stitching.
* Sticky tape and metal paperclips should not generally be used; archival quality brass paper clips are acceptable.
* Packages or bundles of documents may be tied with archive tape or string, (masking tape is not acceptable).
* Photographic material, drawing film, acetates and paper must be separated.
* Photographic material, photographs, slides, negatives should be stored in an archive quality wallet
* Original documents rather than photocopies must be included in the archive.

**13.1 Drawings**

* Plans and sections should be stored on polyester-based film, or in archive quality paper folders and labelled with the site code and drawing number.
* Material should be kept flat rather than rolled.
* The archaeological contractor must provide appropriate acid-free boxes, wallets or folders in which to store the plans and sections, and other loose drawings.
* Oversized plans (not generally encouraged) may be rolled and stored in appropriate document tubes or wrappings (archival quality) these should be tied together with archive quality string (not masking tape).
* Object or conservation drawings should be labelled with the site code and the appropriate context and object numbers.

**13.2 Photographs**

* All prints should be stored in transparent archival quality polyester envelopes, in acid-free wallets, folders or boxes. Each print should be labelled with the site code in pencil
* Slides should be mounted and labelled (with a permanent, fade resistant marker) and stored in archival quality polyester punched hanging folders (archive quality should be on the sleeve).
* Stickers must not be used to label slides, or hanging folders or be mark directly in permanent marker.
* Negatives should be stored in archival-quality polyester divided punched files and stored separately from the prints in A4-size acid-free boxes. Negative-holders should be clearly labelled with site code and film code.

**13.3 X-rays**

* X-rays should be annotated with a unique x-ray number, usually part of a running sequence.
* X-rays should be stored in appropriately sized 75 micron polyester sleeve.
* The site code and context number should be annotated on to the polyester sleeve as well as the individual small find numbers.

**13.4 Labelling**

* Boxes are to be labelled with parish, site code, accession number, material and date of excavation.
* Self-adhesive box labels should have a strong, permanent adhesive. Labelling should be done in permanent black marker pen (not bio).
* A box label layout is available in publisher format.
* All box labels should include a list of contents.
* A contents list must be included in every box (and a copy of this included in the paper and digital archive, the latter in an editable form).

**14. Storage requirements material archive**

* Boxes should be of a standard size measuring 45 x 25 x 18cm (we do understand that sometime you need to use larger one, please ensure that these are acid free).
* The weight of individual boxes should be kept below 7kg.

**14.1 Bulk Finds**

* All finds with a stable surface should be cleaned, unless conservation requirements dictate otherwise.
* The Museum of Archaeology will not accept unprocessed soil samples or highly unstable items such as waterlogged organic material unless an arrangement has been made prior to deposition between the depositor and the Curator
* Ceramics, vessel glass, window glass, stonework, stone implements, animal bone to be marked discretely with Site number, context number in black or white permanent ink between layer of removable varnish (http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/media/documents/c1/a220/f6/LabellingAndMarkingMuseumObjectsFactsheet.pdf). All marking methods should be reversible.
* Ceramic building material, burnt flint, metalworking residue (slag) and shell is not usually marked with the exception of any material that is laid out for comparison, reference or display, however, in storage a Tyvek label should be in each box and bag.
* Animal bone and human bone should routinely be marked. However, the decision to mark these finds is made on a site-by-site basis, at the discretion of the Museum of Archaeology, based on size of the assemblage, preservation and perceived importance of the assemblage. Project archaeologists should be aware that the marking of bone is likely to be required on larger sites (multi-phase settlements, landscapes or urban sites) where the detailed study of animal bones will make a significant contribution to the understanding of behaviour on the site.

**14.2 Bulk Finds Packaging**

* Finds should be packaged in clean, polyethylene self-sealing bags with opaque ‘writeon’ strips; the most appropriate sized bag for the finds should always be used, and bags should not be over-filled. Any that cannot be closed will be rejected.
* Bones of small mammals, birds and fish should be placed separately in small polythene bags and stored in the same box as the rest of the animal bones.
* The bags should be labelled with the site code, context number, accession number, small find number (if appropriate) and any other important contextual information such as small find number, burial number for grave goods or spit number etc. Permanent, waterproof black marker pens should be used. The same information should be put on a tyvek label and placed inside the bag.
* All packaged bulk finds (ceramics, building materials, slag, flint, unworked bone) should be placed in acid-free boxes.
* No box should be heavier than 6kg (if boxes are deposited heavier than this you may be charged for additional boxes).
* Objects heavier than 6kg must be boxed separately and noted accordingly.
* Please **DO NOT** overfill boxes. This can damage finds inside during transport and storage and will have to be remedied in the Museum, and a further storage cost for extra boxes passed on to the project archaeologists.
* Artefacts too large or heavy for boxing, or which require specialist lifting, should be discussed before deposition.
* Details of the classification systems for ordering artefacts should be included in the site archive.
* All boxes must contain a list of contents, and this must also be supplied in an editable digital form.

**14.3 Small Finds-Cleaning and Conservation**

* All conservation should be carried out prior to the deposition of the archive by conservators with appropriate expertise, according to standard conservation practices as outlined by ICON (www.icon.org.uk).
* Conservation should be discussed with teh mseum.
* All iron finds, other than nails or items, should be documented through x-radiography before deposition, due to inherent instability.
* Conserved finds should be appropriately packaged (see below), and accompanied by any relevant documentation, including treatment record, X-radiographs and photographs. Silica Gel should be included in the packaging of metal small finds.

**14.4 Small Finds*-*Marking**

* Small finds should be marked with the accession number and small finds number. Prior to marking seal the surface of finds prior to marking with an acrylic resin sealant Paroloid B72 to render the marking reversible and preserve the surface for future research. Protect the marking with Paraloid B72 Sealant. <http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/media/documents/c1/a220/f6/LabellingAndMarkingMuseumObjectsFactsheet.pdf>
* **DO NOT** mark metals.

**14.5 Small Finds*-*Packaging**

* Finds should be packaged within clean perforated self-sealing bags; fragile items in need of support should be protected with the following materials, any variation is to be negotiated in advance of deposition: closed-cell polyethylene foam (e.g. Plastazote) sheets of polythene foam (Jiffy foam), acid-free tissue, polystyrene boxes (crystal boxes).
* Some fragile pottery and glass bulk finds may need special provision. Such objects should be cradled in appropriate acid-free tissue packaging or similar alternative materials.
* Metal finds should be placed in re-sealable perforated polyethylene bags.
* All metal objects should be deposited with environmental controlling agent (‘live’ silica gel).

**14.6 Small Finds*-*Boxing**

* All unstable finds should arrive at the store in micro-climates in 30 x 21.5 x 14 cm (Stewart 1224) Stewart boxes with an environmental controlling agent (‘live’ silica gel where appropriate).
* Metalwork should be boxed separately.
* All boxes must contain a list of contents, and this must also be supplied in an editable digital form.
* Boxes are to be labelled with parish, Site code, Accession Number, material, contexts/small find numbers/archive type and date of excavation.
* Labels should be on the box, not on the lid.
* Self-adhesive labels should have a strong, permanent adhesive. Labelling should be done with a permanent black fade resistant marker pen.
* There must also be a tyvek label inside the box.

**14.7 Human Remains**

* The Museum of Archaeology encourages the retention, rather than reburial, of human skeletal remains for future study.
* If human remains are included in the archive, a copy of the relevant licence for their excavation and retention must be included in the paper archive.
* Any reburial which has been implemented during excavation or following analysis should be noted in the archive.

**15. Digital**

Museums that are not specialist digital media repositories are advised to ensure that their digital archives are stored in trusted digital repositories (Brown, 2007). The Museum does not have the expertise, capacity or resources for the long term preservation and curation of born-digital data resulting from fieldwork projects.

Therefore, the Museum of Archaeology is working in partnership with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) to ensure the long-term preservation and curation of digital material from excavations. All briefs for archaeological work issued by Durham County Council will include a condition requiring digital archives to be deposited with ADS.

Deposition with a subject-specific, open repository, not only secures information for posterity, but increases the exposure of data to relevant audiences, increasing the likelihood of discovery and re-use. This maximises the public benefit ethos embodied within the National Planning Policy Framework. Furthermore, long-term preservation to enable the discovery and re-use of data is now a recognised and desired outcome for project funders including Research Councils, the Heritage Lottery Fund, and National Heritage Agencies.

Please note the Museum of Archaeology requires a copy of the digital deposit, and we are we are happy to have digital archive on memory sticks or CDs.

**15.1 Content and Coverage**

All born digital material should be included in the digital archive (Brown 2007, CIfA 2014). Content of digital archives will reflect the significance of the heritage asset(s), under investigation, in general this will be reflected in the intensity of investigation conducted.

For example, open area excavations or excavations of deeply stratified remains will often record significant archaeological remains, and involve the production of a rich digital archive encompassing material including, but not limited to, excavation and post-excavation reports, specialist (e.g. finds and environmental) databases, digital photography, plans, sections and maps (CAD/GIS), context databases and matrices. Equally, investigations yielding little or no significant archaeological features or finds will generate fewer of the aforementioned categories of data. You should be clear on the appropriate content and coverage of your collection and plan for deposition accordingly.

**15.2 ADS**

Depositing with ADS Potential depositors should contact ADS for information about depositing as early as possible during a project carried out in Worcestershire County or Worcester City. ADS staff are available to consult with potential depositors by e-mail or telephone during office hours (9-5 Monday to Friday). Contact details for ADS are Archaeology Data Service, Department of Archaeology, University of York, The King's Manor, Exhibition Square, York YO1 7EP Phone: +44 (0)1904 323 954 Fax: +44 (0)1904 323 939 Email: collections@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk Other resources for the use of potential depositors include a series of 'Guides to Good Practice' as well on line guidelines for depositors with templates to download and examples of how to deposit data. ADS guides include archiving digital aerial photography interpretations, excavation and fieldwork data, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and geophysics data. Guides can be found here <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors>

**16. Additional information**

Additional guidance and best practice can be found in a number of published documents.

Brown, D (2011) *Archaeological Archives, A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation,* Institute of Field Archaeologists and Archaeological Archives Forum.

http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf\_archaeological\_archives\_2011.pdf

Society for Museum of Archaeology Resources

<http://socmusarch.org.uk/training/smart-project/>

Appendix 1

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| --- |
| Museum of Archaeology  Licence to Copyright |
| Accepting Museum:  Address:  Telephone:  Email: |
| Site Name: |
| Accession Number: |
| The Depositor /Excavating Unit:  Address:  Telephone:  Email: |
| On behalf of the Depositor (named above) I confirm copyright ownership of the Documentary Archive associated with the site named. I grant the Museum (named above) a licence to exhibit, reproduce and publish these works individually or collectively in any media in accordance with the objectives of the Museum. Additionally I grant the Museum (named above) a licence to supply copies of these works individually or collectively to third parties for publication in any media with or without charge.  NOTE: 3rd Party Copyright materials have been identified within the Archive and are excluded from this licence to copyright.  Signed: Date:  Print Name: Position: |
| On behalf of the Museum of Archaeology, Durham University I accept the licence to copyright from the Depositor (named above) for the Documentary Archive associated with the Site named.  Signed: Date:  Print Name: Position: |

**APPENDIX 1 Transfer of Ownership**

Dear

**Name of Project:**

Thank you for agreeing to the excavation/fieldwork on your land. The purpose of this work is to increase the understanding of the archaeology of the region.

Part of this work is to ensure that any material evidence collected during the project is preserved and made accessible for present and future generations. It is important to preserve this evidence about the history of the region.

Government guidelines recommend that such material should be preserved in the correct physical and environmental conditions to protect it. The Museum of Archaeology, Durham University is the relevant museum for the deposition of archives for Durham City, as it has the appropriate expertise and facilities to provide the services of preservation and access.

The archive will include all plans, photographs, documentation, scientific information and material evidence from the site.

In view of the special requirements for the material evidence, and the costs involved in storage, it is advisable that it should be deposited for long-term curation in the Museum of Archaeology, the appropriate Accredited Museum. On donation, excavation finds and documentary archives will be accessioned by the museum into the collections. The finds may have no financial value but are of great value to researchers.

The finds will remain your property until they are formally transferred to the museum. We therefore ask if you would agree to donate to the museum all the material evidence collected during the work. If you are happy to do this, would you please sign the enclosed form, retaining the pink copy for yourself, and returning the other copies to me.

After completion of the excavation/fieldwork, I will send you a Certificate of Transfer form to sign.

This will list the archive which you are formally handing over to the Museum.

Yours Sincerely