

Archaeology

Planning Guidance Note

Introduction

East Dunbartonshire contains a wealth of historical sites and archaeological finds. The Council area includes a section of the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site and the Forth and Clyde Canal, as well as prehistoric monuments, medieval burghs and other archaeological areas.

Consideration of archaeological issues can be integral to many development proposals and should be considered as early as possible in the planning process.

Format of Guidance

All planning guidance notes are material considerations in the assessment of planning applications and shall be afforded significant weight in the decision making process. Failure to comply with Guidance Notes may be a reason for refusal of planning consent.

Where appropriate, this Guidance Note should also be read in conjunction with the Guidance Notes on Built Heritage and Antonine Wall World Heritage Site.

Planning Framework

This section sets out the policy context and background and examines how this document fits in with national and local policies.

East Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2 Policy HE4 – Scheduled Monuments and Other Archaeological Sites and Monuments states that in the first instance archaeological remains should be preserved in situ and that the Planning Authority will weigh the significance of the archaeological resources and of any impacts upon them and their settings against other merits of the development proposals in the determination of planning applications. Where there are known or presumed archaeological resources, the Planning Authority will expect an archaeological evaluation or report to be submitted with the application or may request one during the application process.

Policy Guidance

Whenever development is proposed which will result in the disturbance or removal of known or even presumed archaeological remains, deposits or features, it is vital for close co-operation between developers, and the Planning Authority's archaeological advisors. Developers can help by making sites available for the greatest possible time and by commissioning archaeological investigations.

In areas where there are known or presumed archaeological remains, the Planning Authority is likely to stipulate that a preliminary archaeological site

evaluation be carried out before any proposals, which might damage archaeological remains, are considered. This evaluation must be carried out prior to the planning application being determined.

The Planning Service may be able provide advice on the archaeological implications of development on sites and the likelihood of discovering archaeological remains. This may be done through its archaeological advisors or in consultation with other relevant bodies.

When determining a planning application, providing the Planning Authority has sufficient information, the case for the in-situ preservation of archaeological remains will be assessed. This will depend upon the individual merits of each case, and take into account the intrinsic significance of the remains.

Where appropriate, the Planning Authority will grant planning permission, but may also impose planning conditions to either secure preservation 'in situ', or 'by record' involving the excavation and recording of archaeological remains, followed by the analysis of materials recovered then, when appropriate, the publication of results. The character of these works must be agreed by the Developer with the Planning Authority in advance of the commencement of the development through a Written Scheme of Investigation (in effect an extended Method Statement incorporating known archaeological information and ground conditions).

It may also be stipulated, when granting planning permission, that the applicant makes arrangements for an archaeological 'watching brief' to monitor development groundworks and to record any archaeological evidence revealed. These arrangements must also be submitted to, and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works on site. The purpose of the 'watching brief' is to ensure that any agreed design measures to preserve archaeological remains in situ are correctly implemented on site, and also to allow investigation and recording of any additional unanticipated archaeological evidence that might be revealed during construction works.

It should however be noted that the Planning Authority may require regular liaison with its archaeological advisors and, if significant remains are identified during the development process, it may seek additional steps to ensure their protection.

Scheduled Monuments

Where a Scheduled Monument (protected under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979) is present within a development area, the grant of planning consent does not imply or constitute any grant of powers to disturb the scheduled area.

Separate Scheduled Monument Consent must be applied for from Historic Scotland, administered by them on behalf of Scottish Ministers. Should this be granted archaeological works may be required in addition to any required by the Planning Authority.

The Nature of Archaeology

In general there are seven broad categories of historic and archaeological sites that may be encountered:

- Upstanding remains: built features (such as buildings and engineering structures), elements of water-management systems (such as lades and dams), field boundaries and features such as funerary cairns, standing stones and stone circles;
- Earthworks: soil covered remains that can be seen as surface undulations at ground level. These can include ruined buildings or their foundations, banks, clamp kilns, mounds, ramparts, ditches, gullies and hollows;
- Buried features: soil covered remains, which have no visible trace at ground level (possibly revealed by aerial photography);
- Artefact scatters: scatters of potsherds, flaked stone tools, metal objects, animal bones and worked coarse stone;
- Managed woodland features: hedgerows, coppices, pollard trees, veteran trees, wood pasture and policy woodland;
- Palaeo-environmental deposits: raised mires, mire and blanket bog; and,
- Historic locations: these are locations that have strong historical or cultural associations but which often have minimal physical remains, such as battlefields and covenanter preaching sites.

Recognising the character of individual sites should not detract from the fact that they are all elements of landscapes which reflect the linkage and inter-relationship between them. Every site is an element of a larger whole.

Archaeological Standards and Techniques

The various stages of study are set out below and include the standards expected by the Council. Overall the Council expects that all archaeological work undertaken should be in keeping with the Standards and Guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists.

Desk-Top Study

Developers should, before an application is submitted, commission an archaeological 'desk-top study' by a professionally qualified archaeological organisation or consultant. In some cases the Planning Authority may request the developer to carry out such an assessment. The scope of assessment should include the archaeological, environmental, topographical and historic significance of the site as well as its local, regional or national context. Such pre-determination assessments may also be required to include an assessment of significant buildings on the site. Desktop assessments will need to involve study of:

- geological maps, modern topographic survey and data from any available trial pits/boreholes in the vicinity of the site;

- historic maps, images and documents held in museums, libraries or other accessible archives;
- statutory and non-statutory designations protecting archaeological and historical sites and monuments;
- unpublished research reports and archives;
- survey drawings of basement and ground floors of any buildings on the site; and,
- any other relevant information.

Areas of archaeological potential should be assessed for the type, extent, likely date, nature and depth of remains. Details should be provided of how the development can be designed to minimise disturbance of remains and an assessment of the importance of the resource in local regional, national or international terms. Consideration of the academic and research potential of the remains should also be included. The desk-top study should include plans showing:

- degree of disturbance by previous destructive processes on the site;
- areas of potential archaeological survival distinguished from areas considered to have been destroyed;
- the extent of known archaeological sites and designations (statutory and non-statutory);
- impact of proposed scheme; and ,
- proposals, where appropriate, for either pre-determination Field Evaluation or post-determination Archaeological Mitigation.

The assessment should consider ground adjacent to the proposed development to ensure sound consideration of the archaeological and historical potential of the ground. Further any assessment should also identify and consider the consequent impact on the setting of monuments of international or national significance in proximity to the proposed development.

Field Evaluation

Where archaeological remains are likely to exist and may be impacted upon by the proposed development the Planning Authority may also request the developer to carry out an archaeological field evaluation, working to a Method Statement which has been approved in writing by the Planning Authority by an approved contractor, before any decision is made on the planning application.

This need not normally be a time consuming or expensive operation and can involve a range of techniques including ground surveys and intrusive trial trenching. The evaluation may refer to possible discoveries hidden beneath the ground, as well as to upstanding historic buildings, visible ancient monuments, historic gardens or designed landscapes which are equally as important. In this way it is possible to determine the nature, form and extent of archaeological remains and/or heritage associated with the site, and therefore

the weight which ought to be attached to their preservation, and possible ways in which impact can be minimised or avoided.

In cases involving alteration or demolition of significant buildings the Planning Authority may require that applicants arrange suitable programmes of recording of the building to be carried out to a brief approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Applicants may be asked to provide more information on the scheme, such as the details of the foundations to be used, or they may be asked to carry out an evaluation. This can delay consideration of the application, and thus it is in the developer's interest that appropriate discussions are undertaken well before this stage.

If proposals are inadequately documented this may be a reason for refusal of consent.

The initial investigations will give some idea of the archaeological significance of any sites within a development area. Consideration must be given to the options for identifying and minimising damage to archaeological remains, even where this may conflict with development options. These needs may be reconciled and the potential for conflict reduced if the developer discusses preliminary plans for development with the Planning Department and archaeologists at an early stage.

Preservation of Unscheduled Archaeology

The Planning Authority will always prefer remains to be preserved 'in situ'; that is undisturbed. Accurate information on the nature, form and extent of the remains is critical to understand how this objective can be achieved. Preserving remain in situ does not automatically imply the exclusion of development, it is about avoiding adverse impacts on the remains.

Construction techniques may result in direct or indirect disturbance of the ground which is likely to cause an alteration to the physical, chemical or biological environment which can have a significant impact on buried deposits. The role engineers and archaeologists have to play in designing and implementing mitigation strategies, to reduce or remove the impact of engineering techniques on any in situ archaeological remains is critical.

Where important remains are known to exist, or there is a good possibility that they exist, developers should consider using a sympathetic design which avoids disturbing the remains altogether or at least minimises any damage. This could be done, for example, by raising ground levels, or by the careful siting of landscaped or open areas.

In addition, by giving particular attention to the design of foundations, piling, underpinning, new slab levels, service trenches etc, damage to archaeological resources can be minimised.

There are also techniques available for sealing archaeological remains underneath buildings or landscaping, thereby securing their preservation, even although they may remain inaccessible. Not only can schemes be designed around archaeological remains in order to ensure their preservation, but their presence may allow for an opportunity to create an interesting

heritage feature, a visually attractive scheme and perhaps even an investment. Conditions may be applied requiring appropriate public access be made available to any preserved remains.

Unscheduled Archaeological Mitigation

Where the preservation approach is not accepted by the developer, it will be necessary to demonstrate to the Planning Authority why this is not feasible. If destruction is agreed, even where the overall approach adopted is predominantly one of preservation, then any consent granted will be conditioned for unscheduled archaeology. The developer should liaise with the Planning Authority so that a programme of archaeological mitigation is agreed. All such programmes are orientated to ensuring a competent record is made of the remains being destroyed, through the involvement of archaeologists.

The most common technique used is archaeological area excavation where the known remains are hand excavated by an archaeological team to agreed standards. The sediments and structures excavated are described and the materials recovered from the site (samples, artefacts and records) detailed in an initial Data Structure Report. Thereafter a post-excavation programme is normally required to analyse the materials and then publish the results, normally in an academic journal. However, managed loss is a second best option, as excavation results in the total destruction of evidence from which future archaeological techniques could almost certainly extract more information than is currently possible.

Where appropriate the Planning Authority may also require a programme of public archaeology that would communicate the findings of the work in a non-academic manner to the local community. There may also be a requirement to facilitate public viewing or undertake open days for more significant sites during their excavation.

Where human skeletal material is an element of an archaeological site (such as a prehistoric burial) then the Developer must ensure that all appropriate legal safeguards are in place and that works are conducted in a manner that does not give rise to the offence of Violation of Sepulchre.

All archaeological work connected with a particular site should be recorded and published to an agreed standard; in conjunction with this all finds must be declared to the Treasure Trove Unit in accordance with their procedures and a competent archive from the works deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Until such documents are produced and materials deposited, any condition requiring preservation by record cannot be satisfied. It is thus important that the Developer ensures that these final stages of any archaeological mitigation are promptly and successfully delivered.