

Winchester City Council: Archaeology Standards

Standards for Archaeological desk-based assessments (DBA) (urban sites)

1. The DBA should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced archaeologist / archaeological contractor, in accordance with Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) guidance (<http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>) and based on up-to-date HER data, sourced directly from the relevant HER. The Heritage Gateway should not be used as the source for core data used in a DBA.
2. The Archaeological organisation appointed to compile the DBA shall:
 - consult the Historic Environment Record held by Winchester City Council
 - ascertain the anticipated solid and superficial geology of the site, from British Geological Survey/ Geological Survey of Great Britain maps;
 - examine, and interpret from an archaeological point of view (as far as is possible), any readily available geotechnical site investigation records (e.g. borehole or test pit logs);
 - examine and note details of published secondary documentary sources relevant to the site, e.g. the relevant volume of the *Victoria County History of Hampshire*; *Keene, D, A Survey of Medieval Winchester etc* (where published) and the Winchester Urban Archaeology Assessment (in prep);
 - examine aerial photographs and other photographic archives held in national and local repositories, together with relevant LIDAR data (e.g. Environment Agency data)
 - compile and submit for approval a Written Scheme of Investigation/Method Statement for intrusive investigations undertaken as part of the DBA (e.g. geoarchaeological boreholes to inform a detailed deposit model) to the Local Authority Archaeological Adviser for approval.
3. Geotechnical site investigation information and available geoarchaeological / archaeological deposit data should normally be included within the DBA report. This might be tabulated, but is better shown as a simple series of cross sections drawn across the site, showing the distribution and thickness of natural, potentially archaeological and modern made ground deposits. This is applicable to all sites but in particular can be useful in areas of deep urban stratigraphy. In these cases it can often be informative to include a more elaborate geo-archaeological deposit model as part of a desk based assessment.
4. The DBA will include reference to national planning guidance or legislation, Local Plan policies relevant to archaeological issues and to the development site, and the planning history of the development site to date.
5. The DBA will include a map regression exercise, reproducing copies of extracts of relevant historical maps at similar scales, showing clearly the site boundaries, and setting the maps out, clearly labelled, in chronological order from past to present.

6. Areas of archaeological potential on the site should be assessed including the type, likely depth, nature and depth of remains, variations in their estimated quantity and quality across the site. The topography of the site should be described and shown on plan. The academic and research potential of the remains should also be assessed in both the local and national context, and their local, regional or national importance.
7. The DBA will include an assessment of the degree of disturbance or destruction caused by erection of previous buildings, structures, or recorded ground excavations. Such disturbance may include basements, foundations, inspection pits, slab thickness, services, quarrying, etc.
8. Estimated boundaries of areas of potential archaeological survival and areas considered to have been destroyed on the site should be indicated on an OS plan of an appropriate scale.
9. The DBA should be compiled with reference to the recently issued Historic England Guidance on Preservation Archaeological Remains: Decision-taking for Sites under Development (Historic England, October 2016). Where necessary the DBA should include a Tier 1 hydrological assessment as set out in Appendix 3 – Water Environment Assessment Techniques of this guidance.
10. The impact of development proposals should be assessed, with reference to architects', engineers' and planning application/ project proposal drawings, as appropriate. Areas of proposed ground disturbance should be clearly indicated in plan and in section, where known.
11. Proposals and recommendations for further assessment or fieldwork, including where appropriate archaeological intervention, should be shown on a scaled plan in order to assess the survival, condition and nature of any monument or remains which are considered to survive on the site or in its immediate vicinity.
12. Where detailed information is available on the character and quality of archaeological remains on the site, the DBA should include suggestions as to how development proposals could be designed to minimise disturbance to surviving archaeological remains, e.g. through minimally-intrusive foundations designed to cause minimal damage to a surviving monument or archaeological remains, and not damage their integrity.
13. Areas where preservation *in situ* is to be achieved should be clearly marked. This should be accompanied by a method statement outlining details of safeguarding and preservation.
14. Draft versions of the DBA will be discussed with the Local Authority Archaeological Adviser/s and before the DBA is submitted with a planning application to ensure there is sufficient and correct information to inform a planning decision.