

## **Guidance and help for archaeological planning matters**

London has a long and rich heritage and many parts of the capital contain important remains of its past. Development works in historic buildings or on ground with buried archaeology can result in the loss of this heritage. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises this and sets out to ensure that remains of our shared past are managed when plans for new development are put forward.

GLAAS advises local councils on archaeological matters. We cover all of Greater London apart from the borough of Southwark and the City, both of which have in-house council archaeologists instead.

### **Finding out early**

To find out whether a site or project you have an interest in is potentially archaeologically sensitive, you can contact GLAAS and we can provide some advice before you make a purchase or planning application. Sharing details of the site location and your plans for the site will help us give the more accurate advice but for detailed professional assessment, a commercial archaeological contractor is better positioned to carry out the necessary research. GLAAS may recommend that you provide a professional assessment if important or complex remains are likely to be present. GLAAS also maintains the Greater London Historic Environment Record, a large database of known sites and investigations in the capital.

You may discover at the planning application stage that your site has archaeological significance as GLAAS advises planning authorities on the archaeological implications of formal planning applications and on the risk aspects of development in archaeologically sensitive areas. In some cases, GLAAS will advise that a planning application should not proceed until the site is better understood archaeologically. GLAAS may also advise instead that archaeological fieldwork be secured as a condition of a consent and measures are put in place before development can start.

### **Complying with archaeological requirements**

No matter how and when an archaeological issue comes to light, you will likely need to appoint an archaeological contractor or consultant to assist you. The ClfA can provide details of these and it is very useful to have one involved in your project from start.

<http://www.archaeologists.net/ro>

As a first stage, assessment of a site can involve a desk-based archaeological study to draw together knowledge of known potential, existing site impacts and the impact of the development proposals. If potential for remains can be identified, then a sample evaluation may be a second step involving fieldwork. Fieldwork needs to be agreed with GLAAS and monitored by us in order for it to form a reliable basis for planning decisions.

In many cases, field evaluation can show that no significant remains are present or will be affected. A number of investigations however will reveal important remains that a development could affect.

The planning system requires that developers record and advance understanding of any important remains before a council agrees to their loss through development. In practice this may mean wider archaeological excavation of a site. If very important remains are present, the council may require instead that they be preserved through ensuring that the design of any consented planning scheme respects them.

In less sensitive or smaller schemes, a watching brief involving a professional archaeologist monitoring development groundworks and recording any remains exposed may be appropriate instead.

Publicity and publication of results as well as housing the archive of finds are often also a key part of mitigating the archaeological impact of a development. GLAAS is often unable to advise that a development has been fully in compliance with a planning condition until these aspects have been secured. Finds and records from archaeological investigations in London are normally deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

Developers working as statutory undertakers or otherwise outside the normal planning system may also have archaeological obligations through legal powers and licensing. GLAAS can advise on this.

If you require an alternative accessible version of this document (for instance in audio, Braille or large print) please contact our Customer Services Department:

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