



Archaeological Building Recording (Basic Analytical Record)

Standards & Guidance

1 Requirement for Archaeological Building Record

- 1.1 The document outlines a standard brief for a basic analytical archaeological building record.
- 1.2 A programme of analytical archaeological building recording is undertaken where additional information is required to understand the importance of a building to inform future change, or to record and advance understanding of its significance prior to its loss (wholly or in part).
- 1.3 SYAS should be consulted in advance of any building recording to agree a methodology. The specific recording elements required will be determined in respect to the importance of the building and, in relation to proposed changes, the scale of harm from future alterations.
- 1.4 Note: All references are correct at time of publication, and it is the responsibility of the undertaking body to review the guidance and ensure that they refer to the most current.

Professional Standards

- 1.5 Archaeological work should be carried out using appropriate expertise and the archaeologists undertaking the work should be adequately qualified. It is good practice to use professionally accredited experts such as a ClfA Registered Organisation¹. SYAS also maintain an open list of archaeological contractors who operate in the region.²
- 1.6 All archaeological work needs to comply with:
 1. the Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process;³
 2. the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's (ClfA) standards and guidance;⁴
 3. Historic England's guidance on managing archaeological projects (MoRPHE)⁵
 4. Historic England's best practice guidance relevant to the project.⁶

¹ A register of Registered Organisations is available online: <https://www.archaeologists.net/lookingforanarchaeologist>

² Available online: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/planning-development/south-yorkshire-archaeology-service>

³ SYAS 2018

⁴ ClfA 2020a

⁵ Historic England 2015a

⁶ Available online: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/find/a-z-publications/>

Written Scheme of Investigation

- 1.7 The undertaking body will be required to produce a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to set out a proposed scheme of works in sufficient detail to demonstrate the works will be appropriate and proportionate to the site and the anticipated level of impact.
- 1.8 The requirement and contents of a WSI on any given site should be confirmed with SYAS.
- 1.9 The WSI will be formed in reference to relevant standards, and as a minimum contain:
 1. Site location (illustrated on OS MasterMap or similarly detailed survey showing National Grid Coordinates);
 2. Context of the project (including planning background and consultations);
 3. Project timetable/ work stages;
 4. Strategy for seeking retention in-situ of identified features of importance;
 5. Monitoring arrangements;
 6. Description of the site identifying its condition etc.;
 7. Brief summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site and its environs;
 8. Aims and objectives with reference to the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework and other period specific or thematic research frameworks/strategies, as applicable;
 9. A table listing each building with the rationale for the proposed recording strategy and a plan that clearly shows their location within the site;
 10. Summary of the specific outputs of the project (including report, archives etc);
 11. Methodology for site investigation, sampling (where relevant), assessment, analysis and reporting;
 12. Strategy for the deposition of the project archive (including a selection strategy and data management plan produced in accordance with guidance below) and identification of the relevant repository;⁷
 13. Strategy for outreach, publication and dissemination of the results;
 14. Details of the competent person/persons or organisation undertaking the works.
- 1.10 Appropriate specialists should be consulted in formulating sampling strategies and methodologies specific to the site and project objectives., including whether site visits will be required for sampling of timbers, glass, plaster/mortar or decorative schemes as may be appropriate. Provision should be allowed to revise this strategy during the fieldwork as appropriate to account for unexpected discoveries.
- 1.11 A template “Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological building recording” is available for use⁸, providing additional guidance and allowing any deviations from these standards to be identified and justified.

⁷ The physical building record should be deposited with the local archives and digital records to a Trusted Digital Repository (CoreTrustSeal certified). The deposition of any artefacts should be agreed with SYAS on a case-by-case basis to identify the most appropriate repository.

⁸ See guidance for archaeological projects, available online: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/syas>

Selection Strategy & Data Management Plan

- 1.12 A proposed archive selection strategy must be included with the WSI, detailing the project-specific selection process, agreed by all stakeholders, for all records and materials arising from the work in creating the archive.
- 1.13 Where digital data is anticipated as an output of the project, the selection strategy must include a data management plan, setting out the methodology for data management from acquisition to deposition.
- 1.14 These should be produced in accordance with ClfA guidance.⁹

Monitoring

- 1.15 SYAS will be responsible for monitoring the contractor's work. The contractor must give a minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork in order that arrangements for monitoring can be made.
- 1.16 Minor changes to an agreed WSI must be submitted to SYAS for written approval. Major changes will require the preparation of an updated WSI for submission to the approving body (SYAS or planning authority as appropriate).

2 Aims

- 2.1 The principal aim of a historic building record is to examine a specified building, structure or complex, and its setting, in order to:
 1. inform the formulation of a strategy for the conservation, alteration, demolition, repair or management of a building, or structure, or complex and its setting *and/or*
 2. seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record, and then disseminate the results.
- 2.2 The work will be undertaken in reference to general aims and specific objectives formulated with reference to the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework¹⁰ and other period specific or thematic research frameworks/strategies, as applicable.
- 2.3 The level of detail included should be proportionate to the importance of any heritage assets affected and the impact of any proposed alterations.

3 Scope

- 3.1 The **Basic Analytical Record** shall comprise the following elements:
 1. A historic background forming a synthesis of previous work;
 2. A drawn record including floor plans;
 3. A photographic record of the exterior of the building(s) and its setting, the overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas, and important individual features, fixtures and fittings;

⁹ Available online: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit> & <https://www.archaeologists.net/digital>

¹⁰ Available online: <https://researchframeworks.org/syrf/>

4. Written report providing a detailed description of the building, analysis of its age, development and use, and an assessment of its importance within its local/regional/national context;
 5. Archive;
 6. Dissemination of results
- 3.2 The basic analytical record is broadly proportionate to Historic England's Level 2 survey as established in "Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice"¹¹, which contains more guidance for determining a project's scope.

Contingencies

- 3.3 Contingencies should be budgeted for and identified in the WSI, including, where relevant:
1. Carrying out scientific dating/analysis of structural timbers/paint/plaster/mortar of archaeological interest;
 2. Assessment and conservation of artefacts of archaeological interest;
 3. Return visits by the archaeological contractor during the development to survey areas which were inaccessible or where monitoring of demolition might provide important archaeological information;
 4. Publication of results.
- 3.4 The Historic England Science Advisor can be consulted in respect to advice on appropriate approaches to sampling strategies and any archaeological science components.

4 Archaeological Building Record: Brief and Standards

Preparation

- 4.1 Prior to commencing recording, the archaeologist should carefully examine all parts the site to familiarise themselves with the building(s), and identify evidence for its age, development and use. This will inform the positioning of sections, elevations and detail drawings; and the selection of photographic viewpoints.
- 4.2 Each building and room on the site will be assigned a unique reference to facilitate ease of description and enable records to be accurately located.

Historical Baseline Assessment

- 4.3 A historic baseline for the site will be produced through a synthesis of previous work, including reference to:
1. Data and grey literature held by the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Record;
 2. Historical and modern maps, including
 - (i) Pre-Ordnance Survey maps including enclosure, tithe surveys etc. where produced and readily available;
 - (ii) Ordnance Survey maps¹²
 3. Publications, including monographs and journals.

¹¹ Historic England 2016a

¹² Copies of the largest available scale map of each epoch should be reproduced, including the 1:63,360 Old Series (1840s); and 1:1,056 / 1:500 scale Town Plans (1850s and 1890s) for urban areas.

- 4.4 The history of the site should be established at a stage when it can inform the fieldwork.

Drawn Survey

- 4.5 The building record will include the following drawing types:
1. Measured plans of each floor, as existing (of no less detail than 1:100 scale);
 2. Phased drawings with successive phases of fabric shown by graded tone (dark to light) or colour;
 3. Diagrams interpreting the movement of materials (process flow) and/or people (circulation).
- 4.6 All hand-drawn and digital surveys will be annotated in the field to produce interpretative drawings showing the form and location of any fixtures, fittings, or structural features of interest such as: blocked doorways, windows and fireplaces, masonry joints, ceiling beams and other changes in floor and ceiling levels, historic furnishings, and extant or removed machinery or plant evidencing its former use. In some circumstances, in place of annotated survey drawings it may be acceptable to produce written notes and sketch plans from which final drawings can be produced.

Standards

- 4.7 A range of survey methods may be applied depending on the building, including survey by hand, total station, laser scanning, or photogrammetry. All measured survey will be undertaken in accordance with relevant guidelines and produced in accordance with Historic England drawing conventions.¹³
- 4.8 Where digital surveys already exist (e.g. 'as existing' architectural drawings), these may be suitable for adaptation and use but shall be checked, corrected and enhanced on site as necessary.
- 4.9 A drawing register will be maintained, recording the scale, location, date, subject, levels, and surveyor.

Photography

- 4.10 The building record should include the following:
1. A general view or views of the building(s) in its wider setting or landscape.
 2. The building's external appearance including oblique views to provide an impression of its size and shape, and view at right-angles to the plane of an elevation to capture individual elevations and structural details.
 3. Further views to reflect the original design intentions of the building(s) or architect as evidenced through historic research.
 4. The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas, including oblique views to provide an impression of its size and shape, and views at right-angles to the plane of an elevation to capture individual elevations and structural details.
 5. Any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use, with scale where appropriate.
 6. Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence.

¹³ Including Andrews *et al*/2015 and Historic England 2016b, 2017 & 2018.

7. Any dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers' plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building. A transcription should be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret.
8. Any building contents which have a bearing on the building's history (for example, a cheese press, a malt shovel)
9. Copies of maps, drawings, views and photographs, present in the building(s) and illustrating its development or that of its site. The owner's written consent may be required where copies are to be deposited in an archive.

Standards

- 4.11 Photographic recording can be produced in either film or digital medium.
- 4.12 Film photography will be undertaken using panchromatic black and white film no faster than ISO400, supplemented with colour slide film.
- 4.13 Digital photography will be undertaken in accordance with standards set by Historic England and the recipient archive.¹⁴ All digital photography will be undertaken using a high-quality camera recommended to have no less than an APS-C or DX size sensor of 10 megapixels and to be capable of generating images in TIF (v6) or unprocessed RAW format.
- 4.14 A tripod and task lighting will be used to improve image capture in low light conditions.
- 4.15 Wide angle, macro, telescopic, and shift lenses should be used, where required, to capture small spaces, small or high-level details, or to avoid converging verticals.
- 4.16 Metric scales of appropriate size should be discreetly placed in photographs to preserve a sense scale. Where colour is an important factor, colour control patches will be used.
- 4.17 A location plan and register recording the details of each image should be maintained, including subject, location, date, and photographer.

Structural Watching-Brief

- 4.18 Where required by SYAS, a structural watching-brief is to be undertaken by the archaeological contractor during the programme of works / demolition proposed.
- 4.19 The purpose of the watching-brief is to enhance the record produced of the buildings, through the enhancement of drawings, additional photography and written notes, and collection of samples or artefacts as may be required to achieve the aims and objectives of the project.
- 4.20 Watching-brief visits should be scheduled in consultation with the principal contractor to ensure that visits are made when relevant information is most likely to be accessible/visible, such as following the soft strip of the structures, and/or during their demolition.
- 4.21 The aims of the watching-brief, and a proposed timetable, should be included within the WSI, and confirmed in writing with SYAS in advance of development commencing.

¹⁴ Historic England 2015c. and Archaeological Data Service 2009

Artefact Recovery and Scientific Analysis

- 4.22 Once recorded in context (see para. 4.10, bullet-point 8), loose documentary or artefactual material of archaeological or historical interest should be recovered (with the permission of the landowner), packaged, and labelled appropriately. Fixed material, or loose material that cannot be removed, should be recorded on site and promptly reported to SYAS, i.e. during the fieldwork.
- 4.23 The location of glass, paint, or wallpaper of potential archaeological or historical interest, and timbers that might form suitable candidates for dendrochronological dating, should be recorded and advice sought from SYAS as to whether further analysis will be required.
- 4.24 Where required by SYAS, an assessment will be undertaken by a specialist to determine the suitability of such structural timbers for dendrochronological dating. Should the timbers be suitable, a scheme of sampling will be undertaken in accordance with a specification produced by the specialist, once this has been agreed by SYAS.
- 4.25 Where required by SYAS, an assessment will be undertaken by a specialist to determine the suitability of paint, plaster, and mortar for scientific analysis. Should the materials be suitable, a scheme of sampling will be undertaken in accordance with a specification produced by the specialist, once this has been agreed by SYAS.

Post-Fieldwork

- 4.26 Artefacts and samples will be returned for processing in accordance with best practice guidance.¹⁵ As a minimum all artefacts will be cleaned, weighed, counted, marked, boxed, and assessed by the relevant specialists.
- 4.27 Advice from appropriate specialists should be sought on the storage and conservation of unstable artefactual remains (e.g. paper, film, glass, metals, wood or leather).
- 4.28 The specialists will provide assessment reports describing the material, proposing selection for the permanent archive, and identifying recommendations for further detailed analysis and illustration in consideration of the project research objectives and any unanticipated research potential.

Reporting

- 4.29 A report will be produced, containing:
1. A non-technical summary;
 2. An introduction including background information (with planning application details, where appropriate);
 3. The original research aims and objectives;
 4. A discussion of the published sources relating to the building(s) and its setting, including an account of its history and an analysis of historic map evidence (map regression);
 5. A descriptive account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout);
 6. The results of any artefact recovery and scientific analysis where undertaken;
 7. A description of the importance of the buildings, their setting, and their contribution to the character of the surrounding area;

¹⁵ Watkinson and Neal 1998

8. A discussion of how the project has contributed towards research aims and objectives;
9. Supporting illustrations, including as a minimum:
 - (a) a detailed location map;
 - (b) all survey drawings;
 - (c) an overall phased site plan and phased floor plan(s) of each building;
 - (d) a selection of photographs of the site including exterior and interior views;
 - (e) select artefact illustrations or photographs, where relevant;
 - (f) reproductions of relevant historic maps and plans;
10. Supporting material, including as a minimum:
 - (a) full bibliography and other references;
 - (b) copies of all record photographs (excluding duplicates);
 - (c) photograph registers and location plans;
 - (d) specialist reports, where undertaken;
11. An archive index;
12. Acknowledgements identifying those involved in the project, including the contribution of SYAS.

5 Dissemination and Outreach

Public Engagement & Outreach

- 5.1 Archaeological work is undertaken for public benefit and SYAS encourage opportunities for public engagement to be integrated from the outset.
- 5.2 As a minimum on all building recording projects, the WSI will set out the steps taken towards establishing an engagement and outreach strategy. Where no measures are proposed, then the reason why must be clearly stated.
- 5.3 Measures to be considered include:
 1. Illustrated notices displayed during fieldwork around the site (with the client's agreement), explaining what work is in progress and why, to keep members of the public informed (minimum of A3 size, with font at a minimum size of 16 point);
 2. Social media or newspaper updates;
 3. Site tours and public talks (e.g. by presenting a paper at South Yorkshire Archaeology Day and talking to local societies);
 4. Digital interpretation;
 5. Popular publications;
 6. Permanent public information board; and
 7. Any other opportunities that might be relevant for a given site.
- 5.4 A bespoke strategy shall be produced for each site.

Dissemination of Results

- 5.5 A digital copy of the report must be supplied directly to SYAS for incorporation into the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Record. A bound physical copy must also be provided to SYAS, on request.
- 5.6 Where there is a physical archive, printed copies of reports will be included.

- 5.7 Copies of the report, or details on where it can be accessed, should be provided to any external specialists involved in the project and, where relevant, made available to the archaeologist responsible for any subsequent archaeological work at the site. This is to assist in the design and implementation of future projects.
- 5.8 The contractor should initiate or update an online OASIS form¹⁶ at commencement of the project. Details of the results and archive are to be added, along with a copy of all formal reports, upon completion of the project.

Formal Publication

- 5.9 A summary report of an appropriate length, accompanied by illustrations (at 300dpi resolution), must be prepared and submitted in digital format, for publication in *Archaeology in South Yorkshire* or an equivalent SYAS publication.
- 5.10 Where results warrant it, and following discussion with SYAS, formal publication in the form of a journal article or monograph should be produced.

Furthering Research

- 5.11 Provision must be made for updating the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework where the results of a fieldwork project contribute towards agenda topics. This is to be achieved by adding 'comments' to relevant research questions briefly summarising the results and providing a bibliographic reference to the relevant report¹⁷.

6 Project Archive Standards

General

- 6.1 Details of archiving arrangements should be confirmed with the client and landowner, and a budget allowed for to cover the final repository's expected deposition charge, if any.

Working Project Archive

- 6.2 All material (whether digital or physical) recovered or generated through the duration of the project will be appropriately and securely stored in a working project archive. This will be undertaken in accordance with the selection strategy and digital data management plan set out at the commencement of the project (see paragraphs 1.12-14).

Physical Records

- 6.3 Any physical documents or drawings will be indexed, collated, and stored in a secure location when not in use.
- 6.4 Film photography will be processed at regular intervals throughout the duration of a project.
- 6.5 Digital security copies will be made of physical records at regular intervals, to be stored and backed up in a secure location. Documents and drawings will be scanned at an appropriate resolution (no less than 300dpi for documents and drawings, 600dpi for photographic prints, and 4000dpi for negatives or slides) and to an appropriate format (e.g. a lossless

¹⁶ Via the OASIS online portal hosted by the Archaeological Data Service <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>

¹⁷ The research framework is accessible online: <https://researchframeworks.org/syrf/> - new users must register for a new account to add comments.

format, such as TIF, for scale drawings), and scans checked for quality.¹⁸ Standards adhered to should be included in the Data Management Plan. If digitised data is to form part of the final digital archive it should be treated as set out for Born Digital Records below.

Born Digital Records

- 6.6 All digital records will be treated in accordance with a project data management plan.¹⁹
- 6.7 Digital records will be routinely downloaded throughout the duration of a project, stored, and backed up in a secure location.
- 6.8 All digital records will be consistently labelled, files logically structured, and embedded with appropriate metadata (or have their metadata stored in an accompanying spreadsheet).²⁰

Final Archaeological Archive

Selection Strategy

- 6.9 On the completion of fieldwork, the relevant specialists and recipient archive will be consulted to update the selection strategy set out in the WSI in accordance with best practice guidance.²¹
- 6.10 This should consider all documents, finds, samples, and digital files generated during the project, including illustrations.
- 6.11 The aim of this process is to produce a project archive that allows a full re-examination and interpretation of all the results of the project whilst avoiding replication, repetition, or the retention of materials not considered germane to future analysis.

Archive Deposition

- 6.12 The final archive will then be assembled in accordance with Archaeological Archives Forum, ClfA, and archive guidelines.²²
- 6.13 Where necessary, agreement in principle for full transfer of title of artefacts to the recipient archive needs to be obtained at the earliest opportunity. Confirmation of transfer of title from the landowner and confirmation of assignment of copyright, along with a full archive inventory, will be submitted to the recipient archive.
- 6.14 The recipient archive will be licensed to use the donated material, in perpetuity, without restrictions; this licence will allow the archive to reproduce material, including for use by third parties, with the copyright owner suitably acknowledged.
- 6.15 It is preferred practice for generated material to be archived in its original medium (i.e. physical or digital). Digitising of physical records will only be considered where it retains the same level of accessibility and information as the original medium.
- 6.16 The physical archive will be deposited with the appropriate archive. A copy of the archive receipt will be provided to SYAS.

¹⁸ For further guidance see: [Digitisation at The National Archives](#)

¹⁹ ClfA guidance available online: <https://www.archaeologists.net/digidigital>

²⁰ Archaeological Data Service 2009

²¹ AAF 2011, SMA 2020 & ClfA toolkit for selection archaeology: <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit>

²² AAF 2011 & ClfA 2020b

- 6.17 The digital archive will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository (CoreTrustSeal certified). For archaeological archives this is presently limited to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) at the University of York. A link to the final digital archive will be provided to SYAS.

7 References

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