

MERSEYSIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 2004 to 2009**

The Merseyside Archaeological Service acts on behalf of five local authorities (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton and Wirral) in providing an archaeological planning service and advice on sites of archaeological importance so that those local authorities can fulfil their responsibilities to archaeology in the planning process. There is one full-time established post, the Merseyside Archaeological Officer. In addition there is a part-time post (three days a week), the Archaeological Planning Assistant, for Liverpool and Sefton, currently funded until October 2005.

PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT

This agreement defines the services to be provided by the Merseyside Archaeological Service, hosted by National Museums Liverpool, to the five Merseyside Local Authorities. It stands alongside the formal five year Agreement for 2004-2009.

OBJECTIVE

To provide an effective local authority advisory service and enable greater access to knowledge on the local historic environment of Merseyside.

1. SERVICES

1.1 Merseyside Sites and Monuments Record

- 1.1.1 The Merseyside Archaeological Service (hereafter Service) will jointly maintain the Merseyside Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) with National Museums Liverpool (NML).

The Sites and Monuments Record is a cumulative archive of the archaeological knowledge within the five local authorities of Merseyside and includes historic environment information on archaeological sites, buildings, standing structures, historic landscapes, artefacts, excavations and results of archaeological activity performed by professional archaeological contractors and other. This information is held on computer (linked to GIS), on paper 1:10,000 map overlays and in a documentary archive.

The SMR is an ever-changing record as new information comes to light. It forms the basis for the archaeological planning advice given to the local authorities and requires continual enhancement.

- 1.1.2 Service staff priority will be to facilitate consultation of, and access to, the SMR for a range of planning and development related enquirers.
- 1.1.3 In order to improve archaeological knowledge in Merseyside, local, regional and national funding, as appropriate, will be sought for projects that will advance the enhancement and accessibility of the SMR.

1.2 Archaeological Planning Advice

The Service will provide development control and other archaeological planning advice.

1.2.1 Development Control

- i. The potential archaeological significance of development proposals will be assessed using the Sites and Monuments Record. Details of planning applications that may have archaeological implications will be requested from the weekly planning lists or may be automatically sent by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a result of consulting archaeological hazard maps.
- ii. Service staff will assess the impact and recommend a course of action within 21 days, or as otherwise agreed with the LPA, in cases where the archaeological importance of the site could be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.
- iii. The LPA will take due note of comments made by Service staff when making planning decisions. Should the LPA disagree with the advice or recommendations of Service staff, the Service will be informed and the matter discussed in order to resolve the issue.
- iv. The LPA will send the Service, at the same as it is issued to the applicant, a copy of the Planning Decision Notice for all sites on which the Service has recommended an archaeological response.

1.2.2 Other archaeological planning advice

- i. Where resources permit, Service staff will also provide support, advice and information to the LPA on:
 - Spatial planning - local authority development plans and frameworks.
 - Other land management briefs, strategies and initiatives
 - Appeals and Public Inquiries
 - Government consultations on proposed changes to legislation and policy that directly relates to or affects historic environment issues and the operation of the Service.
- ii. Initial archaeological planning advice will be given to other LA departments, public and private bodies where resources permit:
 - At the pre-application and consultation stages.
 - On the management and preservation of archaeological sites and monuments, from educational, tourism, and leisure perspectives.
 - For development which falls outside the planning system.

1.3 Archaeological Planning Conditions and Briefs

- 1.3.1 Service staff will prepare written archaeological Conditions and Briefs outlining the reasons and requirements for carrying out archaeological work.

1.4 Monitoring

- 1.4.1 Service staff will provide advice on the suitability of archaeological project designs, reports and other information submitted by a developer and/or their agent for the approval of the LPA.
- 1.4.2 Service staff will oversee for the LPA the implementation of archaeological work by monitoring fieldwork and reporting activities to ensure that the archaeology is dealt with to the highest professional standards to the level specified.
- 1.4.3 Monitoring will be undertaken against a written brief and project design, from implementation of the project to deposition of the final archive. It will entail site visits and reporting of recommendations to the local authorities.
- 1.4.4 Where it is apparent that monitoring of an archaeological project will involve a considerable amount of time and resources of Service staff, then Service staff will alert the LPA. The LPA and Service will agree on either re-allocation of existing or additional resources to fulfill monitoring requirements stated in the written brief supplied by the Service.

1.5 Site Visits

- 1.5.1 Service staff will carry out site visits:
- as required to inform the planning or other related advice given to the local authorities.
 - at their discretion when informed by public/private individuals & groups of the discovery of unexpected archaeological remains.

1.6 Attendance at Meetings

- 1.6.1 Service staff will liaise with local and national bodies and agencies together with attendance, where required, at local authority group meetings, to provide information and advice on archaeological matters.

1.7 Professional Standards

- 1.7.1 Service staff will operate in accordance with, and apply the standards stated in (and as subsequently revised), the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *By-Law Code of Conduct* (revised 2002) and the IFA *By-Law Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (revised 2002). Advice will be given with regard to current guidance (or as revised) in PPG16, other existing planning policy and archaeological legislation, the (IFA) Standards and Guidance for archaeological work.
- 1.7.2 The Merseyside Archaeological Officer will remain as the nominated member representative of the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and maintain Membership of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA). Other Service staff will obtain and maintain membership of the IFA as appropriate.

MAS 2004

Merseyside Archaeological Service: Business Plan 2004 to 2009

Key Objectives for 2004-05

1	Continue to provide planning and development control advice to all five local authorities.
2	Respond to planning related enquiries to Sites & Monuments Record.
3	Produce pan Merseyside Archaeology Supplementary Planning Guidance.
4	Respond to Unitary Development Plan reviews / Local Development Framework reviews.
5	Continuation of Merseyside Historic Characterisation project into Wirral, St Helens.
6	Continue to develop, contribute and advise on the SMR as resources permit.
7	Seek confirmation of the Archaeological Planning Assistant post for Liverpool and Sefton.
8	Contribute to the World Heritage Site by advising on implementation of Archaeological Management Plan (subject to funding from Liverpool).
9	Continue programme of report meetings and briefings sessions for planners and conservation officers etc.

Key Objectives for 2005-07

1. Continue to provide planning and development control advice.
2. Continue to respond to planning related enquiries.
3. Continuation of MHCP into Knowsley and Sefton, along with reports, archiving & completion.
4. Continue to develop SMR as resources permit.
5. Seek additional resources for the Archaeological Planning Assistant post to cover all 5 local authorities.

Key Objectives for 2007-09

1. Continue to provide planning and development control advice
2. Continue to respond to planning related enquiries
2. Continue to develop SMR as resources permit

MAS 2004

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