

Universal guidance for the investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest

Published August 2026



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1 Compliance with the Standard for investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest¹

- 1.1** The investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest may take place for many reasons and in many circumstances: the Standard and this guidance apply to all of them (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>).
- 1.2** The Standard must be met as a professional obligation. This guidance describes universally applicable good practice that should be followed by competent specialists for the investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest. It sets out how the profession currently anticipates that the applicable Standard will be met and the *Code of conduct* complied with. If the work undertaken fails to meet the Standard for the investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest because of the way in which it was conducted, that work is 'sub-standard'.
- 1.3** This guidance outlines the outcomes or products required by the Standard, how they can be attained, and against which performance can be monitored. The archaeologist is free to make a considered selection of appropriate established techniques and to develop new methods. However, it is strongly recommended that this guidance, and the clauses which are expressed using '**should**', are followed to maximise the likelihood of compliance with the Standard. Other clauses indicate permitted actions or identify advisable or desirable actions.
- 1.4** Due regard **should** also be given to the jurisdiction-specific guidance on the investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest to ensure the work undertaken is in accordance with the legislation and policy of the country or jurisdiction of the place of work.
- 1.5** Departures from the universally applicable or jurisdiction-specific guidance **should** be undertaken with caution. Clear justification is required, with the reasons formally documented, including information outlining how the different approach will still meet the Standard.
- 1.6** Professional practice is always evolving. New methods are being developed, and the circumstances in which work is commissioned and conducted are subject to changing legal, administrative and ideological perspectives. This information is subject to regular review, and comments on and recommendations for this guidance are welcome at any time.

¹ Reference to *buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest*: this is the chosen terminology for this Standard and the accompanying universal guidance. Its intention is to encompass all buildings and structures, whether non-designated or designated, which are suitable for or subject to archaeological investigation.

2 Project design

Within this guidance 'project design' is used as a universal term for the document that sets out how the work will be conducted. This document may be called something different depending on the jurisdiction of the work.

- 2.1** The project design author and/or project manager **should** be a Member (MCIfA) of ClfA.
- 2.2** The project design **should** be specific to the project under consideration, advocating practicable methods of investigation that are applicable to the type of buildings or structures to be investigated and/or recorded. Templates should therefore be used with care.
- 2.3** The project design **should** set out the proposed scheme of investigation in enough detail that all relevant parties can understand and agree what will be done, assess whether it is fit for purpose and check that it complies with any conditions or obligations. It **should** provide a benchmark against which the results of the work can be monitored and measured.
- 2.4** All those engaged in the project, including monitors and those commissioning work, **should** have read and understood the project design.
- 2.5** The proposed project team **should** have access to relevant expertise and appropriate reference material to understand the historical development and character of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest, including relevant research frameworks.
- 2.6** The project design **should** outline the research aims and the author **should** identify and examine all appropriate resources related to the buildings or structures.
- 2.7** The project design author **should** consider all available reasonable methods of investigation to assess and record the historic and architectural character and significance of the buildings or structures under consideration and decide upon the most appropriate to meet the purpose of the work, seeking specialist advice where necessary.
- 2.8** Wherever possible, non-intrusive methods **should** be considered as the first option, with intrusive techniques used only where necessary to achieve the purpose of the investigation and recording. The project design **should** scope the likely extent of fabric of architectural and historic interest that cannot be investigated without intrusive methods.
- 2.9** The project design **should** set out a dissemination approach which addresses where and how the answers to the project's research questions will be publicised to different audiences, both during and after implementation. The approach to dissemination and the level of detail reported **should** be proportionate to the complexity and anticipated significance of the asset and include a process for review.

- 2.10** Health and safety issues, public liability and commercial confidentiality, while important considerations, **should** not be used as a barrier to public engagement without clear justification.
- 2.11** Any variations to the project design **should** be circulated and understood within the project team and agreed in writing by all relevant parties.
- 2.12** It is advisable that the investigation and recording of buildings or structures of architectural and historic interest be governed by a written contract or agreement, to which the project design may usefully be annexed.
- 2.13** It is advisable to include statements on ownership of the paper and digital archive and copyright in a written contract or agreement.
- 2.14** The following **should** normally be included in the project design or accompanying documentation, subject to jurisdiction-specific requirements. There is no need to replicate in the project design any information adequately covered by a permit, licence, contract, etc provided it is available to relevant parties if required.
- a) non-technical summary
 - b) site location (including map) and descriptions
 - c) context of the project
 - d) relevant geological and topographical background
 - e) relevant archaeological and historical background
 - f) a statement on the relevant technical, research and ethical competences of the organisation or individual undertaking the work
 - g) research aims of the project, including explicit reference to existing research frameworks and objectives, where appropriate
 - h) methods of investigation, including scientific dating strategies, where appropriate
 - i) methods of recording, including spatial data collection standards
 - j) arrangements for immediate conservation and storage of artefacts, where relevant, in accordance with the Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>)
 - k) methodology for producing a post-fieldwork assessment and analysis of project data

- l) archiving strategy, including reference to data management plans, selection strategy and local repository requirements – in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>)
- m) publication, dissemination and engagement proposals detailing how the needs of relevant audiences will be met, including how the results may be usable for subsequent research
- n) copyright
- o) staffing (including specialists, both external and in-house), resources (excluding financial) and consideration of timescale
- p) a statement on compliance with relevant professional, ethical and technical standards (including data standards), legislation and appropriate guidance
- q) a tailored statement and plan detailing how public benefit will be delivered, including consideration of the potential for engagement and participation proportionate to the project
- r) health and safety considerations
- s) reference to the environmental protection policy (including carbon reduction plan) applying to the project
- t) arrangements for monitoring progress and compliance by regulators, clients and their agents
- u) contingency arrangements

3 Project execution

- 3.1** It is the responsibility of the archaeologist undertaking the work to define appropriate staff levels. Sufficient and appropriate resources (staff, equipment, accommodation, etc) **should** be used to enable the successful completion of the project in accordance with the project design. Any contingency elements **should** be clearly identified and justified.
- 3.2** Commissioning bodies and monitors **should** be advised that a reasonable degree of flexibility and professional judgement may be necessary to meet project objectives. It **should** be clear that the nature and scale of post-investigation analyses, publications and the archive will be tailored to the significance and research potential of the building or structure.
- 3.3** The potential of the data and material to answer the research questions identified in the project design **should** be assessed by competent specialists.

- 3.4** Building fabric recovered from site investigations **should** be assessed and reported on in accordance with *CIfA Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>).
- 3.5** The level of recording and analysis **should** be appropriate to the research aims and purpose of the project. For example, consideration **should** be given to opportunities afforded by researching archival records, drone photography, oral histories or scientific dating techniques to support the understanding and recording of the historical development and character.
- 3.6** Data generated from the investigation and recording **should** be included in the project archive in accordance with the archiving strategy, where applicable, and in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>).
- 3.7** The archaeologist undertaking the work **should** respect the requirements of the client or commissioning body concerning confidentiality, but **should** emphasise their professional obligation to make the results of the work available to the wider the community in accordance with the stated timeframe in the project design.
- 3.8** Subject to any reasonable contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the report **should** be submitted to an appropriate national or local record in accordance with the stated timeframe outlined in the project design.
- 3.9** The digital report **should** be made available online to ensure that the results of the project are readily available to support public dissemination, future research and/or decisions about the site or asset.
- 3.10** The report **should** normally include
- a) non-technical summary
 - b) the project design or appropriate reference to it
 - c) the aims, objectives and methods used, and any limitations, including any departure from the project design
 - d) An understanding of the historical development and character of the buildings or structures, including, where relevant, their setting
 - e) consideration of their national, local and typological context, where relevant
 - f) results, referring to the research aims in the project design and including research implications

- g) illustrations, plans and essential technical and supporting detail, with accurate spatial information sufficient to locate the areas of investigation
- h) conclusions, including consideration of any areas of anticipated significance that could not be sufficiently investigated, and the implications of any limitations
- i) any recommendations for further work that could add value to the understanding of historic character and significance
- j) archive locations (pre and post deposition if known)
- k) a list of all sources used
- l) copyright statement

3.11 Where a report is intended to inform an understanding of significance, a statement of significance **should** form a part of the report, distinct from points d) and e) above, informed by, and carried out in accordance with, any jurisdiction-specific guidance.

3.12 The report need not normally include all the data generated during investigations, but this data **should** be included in the archive, subject to the archiving strategy and in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (see <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>). The report and archive **should** contain enough detail to allow any further phases of work to be appropriately designed and planned.