



CIFA2021 ONLINE: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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SESSION TITLE

A very cunning plan: improving archaeology within the planning system

SESSION ABSTRACT

Large infrastructure projects, along with more traditional developments, provide the majority of work available to archaeologists today. The constantly changing framework of legislation and planning policy can be difficult to navigate and take valuable time away from conducting quality archaeological work. This session looks at good practice in archaeological consulting and contracting, from re-thinking the DBA to developing a research-based strategy for mitigating impacts of road and rail schemes and incorporating the historic environment into urban redevelopment and housing allocations. This session aims to present an overview of good practice and lessons learnt from planning-based archaeology, including the challenges of planning through Act of Parliament with HS2, consultative approaches to DCO applications with Highways England, the role of early engagement, and innovative approaches to programming archaeological works.

SESSION PROGRAMME

13:30 – 13:35	Introduction
13:35 – 14:00	High Speed Heritage <i>John Milward & John Halstead, HS2</i>
14:00 – 14:25	118 stories: learning from good practice - the evidence from the Cifa Archaeology and Planning Case Studies project <i>Jan Wills, BA FSA MCIfA</i> <i>Steward Bryant, BSc MA PhD FSA MCIfA</i>
14:25 – 14:50	Moving targets: Innovation and change in archaeological evaluation <i>Clive Waddington & Roger Doonan, Archaeological Research Services Ltd</i> <i>Jay Carver, 4AD Consultants Ltd</i>
14:50 – 15:00	Discussion and Q&A

15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 – 15:40	Discussion
15:40 – 16:05	PPG16 is no more <i>Sandy Kidd, GLAAS</i>
16:05 – 16:45	Discussion

SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

High Speed Heritage

Jon Millward & John Halsted, HS2

The High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Act 2017 disapplied the usual planning controls, replacing them with the new set of controls set out in the Act. This included the implementation of bespoke systems in relation to both archaeology and historic buildings.

This paper will discuss how this programme of work is being implemented and the mechanisms adopted to deliver heritage works, presenting case studies and drawing upon the experiences of the presenters in addressing heritage matters through the application of the Generic Written Scheme of Investigation: Historic Environment Research Delivery Strategy (HERDS) process and Schedule 18 (Listed Buildings) of the Act.

PPG16 is no more

Sandy Kidd, GLAAS

The NPPF, the new London Plan and the white paper proposals for planning reform provide an opportunity to change how archaeology engages with the planning system. How can we contribute more to place-making and social wellbeing? How do we enable and build on the best examples of research and public-focused projects? How do our thinking and practices need to change to deliver public benefit more clearly and consistently? This paper will explore how the commercial and public sectors can work together to support change by placing much greater emphasis on public engagement, place-shaping and collaborative or innovative research. Such an approach aims to support delivery of heritage policy and connect our activities to wider social, environmental and economic objectives to the benefit of both archaeology and society.

118 stories: learning from good practice - the evidence from the CIfA Archaeology and Planning Case Studies project

Jan Wills BA FSA MCIfA

Stewart Bryant BSc MA PhD FSA MCIfA

The Archaeology and Planning Case Studies Project was set up to help sector organisations respond to proposed changes in the planning system by collecting cases studies that illustrate how key aspects of current planning policy are implemented. The 118 cases studies include a broad range of development types, a geographical spread across all regions of England, and provide numerous examples of the successes, challenges, and occasional failures experienced by consultants, contractors and planning advisors.

This paper will briefly review the evidence of good or best practice in development-led archaeology, looking firstly at broad definitions, desirable outcomes and how they might be achieved. It will then go on to look at some examples of good practice in terms of planning policy implementation and professional practice covering planning advice, assessment and evaluation, and public value outcomes. The examples will also cover aspects of the personal and professional skills of the archaeologists involved including cross-sector collaboration, problem-solving and innovation.

We will also briefly consider the evidence from the Case Studies project in the light of the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' published in August 2020. This proposes major reforms which, if taken forward, could have wide-ranging implications for the way archaeology is dealt with in response to development proposals.

Moving targets: Innovation and change in archaeological evaluation

Clive Waddington, Roger Doonan* and Jay Carver***

**Archaeological Research Services Ltd*

***4AD consultants Ltd*

Evaluation of land parcels in advance of development remains a key area ripe for innovation in archaeology. Although there are a range of 'standard' techniques currently used, all have limitations and there is a need for widening the repertoire of site prospection/evaluation techniques to help speed up and better target invasive work such as evaluation and test-pitting and reducing the lag, if any, between evaluation and mitigation in certain circumstances. Geophysical survey followed by evaluation trenching remains the frequently most-used approach in the evaluation process. Despite this dominant role it has recognised shortcomings, notably their ability to detect a limited range of archaeological features/sites, varying performance across different geomorphological settings, susceptibility to intrusive and superficial contamination (e.g. 'green waste' for geophysics), and its tendency to find the same kinds of archaeology over and over again. Despite these shortcomings coupled with wider anxieties regarding the potential of so-called 'blank areas' to host significant archaeological remains, a conservative approach to change in evaluation strategies, especially in terms of the % coverage specified in evaluation trenching has held sway.

Recent technical and methodological innovations now allow for high resolution in-situ geochemical survey (HIGS) that can offer an independent, yet complementary, approach to prospection. The use of HIGS offers a significant increase in archaeologists' ability to characterise space by searching for anomalies and delimiting potential extent, type, and function of sites, whilst also providing the opportunity to identify areas of past human activity that are undetectable through geophysical survey or unlikely to be found by evaluation trenching.

In this paper, we explore the advantages of incorporating HIGS into prospection methodologies and the power of using a wide range of techniques in combination at an early stage in projects, and how this can inform decision-making in relation to evaluation and mitigation strategies. We explore how an integrated multi-proxy landscape prospection can bring better understanding of large land parcels and their archaeological potential, the better and earlier use of techniques in the evaluation process, speeding up of programme, potential cost reductions and better targeted and more appropriate mitigation that maximizes the archaeological dividend to produce public, client and archaeological industry benefits.