



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Department of Planning

Archaeological Assessments

This document provides guidance and advice to owners, occupiers and agents on conducting archaeological assessments. Unlike other areas of conservation, protecting the archaeology of a site is less about prohibiting development than it is about preserving the ability to record our archaeological heritage.

When a development proposal impacts a Historic Protection Area or a Listed Building the Development Applications Board may require the completion of a preliminary archaeological assessment, an Archaeological Management Plan or both.

Preliminary Archaeological Assessment

This is an assessment of the known or potential archaeological resources within a specific site in accordance with Section 6, Chapter 21, policy HSC.12 in the Bermuda Plan 2008. The objective is to identify the likely character, extent and relative quality of the actual or potential resource, taking account of the following six criteria:

- a. **Impact on resources:** Will the proposed work disturb the ground in any way and therefore alter or destroy potential archaeological resources?
- b. **Site Integrity:** Has the area where the proposed work is planned already been excavated or altered in a manner that reduces the research or public value of any archaeological resources?
- c. **Presence of materials:** Is there evidence of archaeological resources or historic structures on the property (e.g. ruins, information contained in old maps, photograph or archival records)?
- d. **Research Value:** How important would be the potential archaeological resources?
- e. **Rarity:** How unique is the site in question, in relation to the island's cultural heritage?
- f. **Public Value:** How important is the site in question, in relation to the island's cultural heritage?

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This work could be conducted through historic/archival research, site surveys, ground penetrating radar (GPR) surveys, aerial and historic photographs as well as Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis done by the property owner or an agent and not necessarily a qualified archaeologist or historian. A decision on whether an **Archaeological Management Plan** is required could therefore be reached fairly quickly in accordance with Section 6, Chapter 21, policy HSC.13 in the Bermuda Plan 2008.

Sources of Information

There are a number of sources to help in conducting a Preliminary Archaeological Assessment. These include the Bermuda National Trust, the Bermuda Maritime Museum, the Government Archives and the Bermuda National Library. Furthermore the 1901 Ordnance Survey Map (the Savage Map) is available on www.bermudamaps.bm.

Archaeological Management Plan

When required by the Board, the applicant shall submit an archaeological management plan, prepared by a qualified archaeologist or historian in conformity with professionally recognized standards for cultural resource management. The applicant or the authorized agent thereof shall confer with the Department of Planning prior to preparing any submission to define and agree upon guidelines for such report and plan, which may include one or more of the following:

1. **Field Evaluation:** a limited programme of non-intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or eco-facts within a specified site and, if they are present, defines their character, extent and relative quality.
2. **Watching Brief:** a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons in an area where there is a possibility where archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

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3. **Building Investigation and Recording:** a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building, structure or complex and its setting.
4. **Excavation:** a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, eco-facts and other remains within a specified site.
5. **Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials:** the process of retrieving, sorting, cleaning, marking, conserving, recording, analysing, interpreting and preparing for permanent storage all materials retained as a result of archaeological fieldwork and disseminating the results.

Such an archaeological management plan may, and if required by the Minister shall, also provide reasonable measures for further archaeological study, restoration, reconstruction, disposition of recovered artefacts to an appropriate public or private collection or museum, and *in situ* preservation of archaeological resources found within the site plan area.

Findings during Construction

Regardless of the nature and extent of the archaeological study required to accompany a development application, if at any time during excavation, site works or construction any artefacts or other evidence of archaeological significance are found construction must cease. The scope of work in terms of the archaeological findings will have to be re-evaluated and a subsequent course of action will need to be agreed upon between the applicant and the Department of Planning prior to resuming construction.