

unless it appears to be in danger of immediate damage or destruction. Leave all investigations to professional archaeologists.

Director of the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin.
Telephone 01-6777444.

28. Is there any further reading material which would be of use to me in relation to development and archaeology?

The following publications, along with further leaflets relating to planning, can be downloaded from the Department's website www.environ.ie:

- Irish Field Monuments
- Earthen Banks and Broken Walls
- A Guide to Protected Buildings
- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage
- Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation

The law governing the planning system is set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and in the associated Planning and Development Regulations.

The law governing the protection of the archaeological heritage is set out in the National Monument Acts (1930-2004). Copies may be obtained from the Government Publications Sales Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin or at www.irishstatutebook.ie.

29. Where can I find information on Protected Structures and Listed Buildings?

Information on the architectural heritage can be found in leaflet PL 12 in this series. This leaflet is available on the Departments website www.environ.ie under Publications or alternatively you may obtain a copy from Planning Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1 (01-8882000 or lo-call 1890 20 20 21).

The leaflets in this series are:

A Guide to Planning Permission	PL.1
Making a Planning Application	PL.2
Commenting on a Planning Application	PL.3
Building A House - The Planning Issues	PL.4
Doing Work around the House	
The Planning Issues	PL.5
Agriculture and Farm Development - The Planning Issues	PL.6
Planning for the Business Person	PL.7
The Development Plan	PL.8
Environmental Impact Assessment	PL.9
Making a Planning Appeal	PL.10
A Guide to the Building Regulations	PL 11
A Guide to Architectural Heritage	PL 12
Archaeology in the Planning Process	PL 13

Tá leagan Gaeilge den bhileog seo ar fáil.

PL. 13
August, 2006.

22. What is Archaeological Excavation?

Archaeological excavation is the systematic recording and removal of layers of soil, deposits, structures and artefacts by a qualified archaeologist. As excavation is destructive by its nature it must be carried out with meticulous care so that all information, whether its relevance is immediately obvious or not, will remain available after the site has completely disappeared. This is why it is termed preservation by record. Post-excavation analysis e.g. radio carbon dating, conservation of archaeological finds, the proper storage of archaeological objects and publication of the results of the excavation are all integral parts of the process.

23. Who carries out Archaeological Excavation?

Excavations for archaeological purposes are carried out by suitably qualified archaeologists acting under a licence, or in accordance with directions, issued by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Modern archaeological excavation is a highly skilled activity requiring much expertise in the recovery of the evidence and in its interpretation and publication. The intention is to get the maximum information about the past from the ground. Objects found in an excavation are important principally because of their recorded association with other objects, structures, layers or features. It is important that unqualified persons should not undertake archaeological excavation and if by accident a discovery is made everything should be left as it is without any further uncovering of the object or feature or any other disturbance of the immediate area until an official inspection has been made.

24. Where can I find an Archaeologist?

Many archaeologists and archaeological consultancies advertise in the Golden Pages and in other media outlets. The National Monuments Section compiles a list of archaeologists eligible to apply for excavation licences. This is available from the National Monuments Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2 (01-8882000 or lo-call 1890 20 20 21).

25. Who pays for the cost of meeting planning conditions relating to archaeology?

In line with national policy, the developer bears the cost in fulfilling any planning conditions relating to the assessment and mitigation of the impact of development works on archaeology.

26. Do I own artefacts uncovered during excavations on my site?

No. Any archaeological object found in the State and which has no known owner is, by law, the property of the State. This means that artefacts found during archaeological excavations are State property. The National Museum of Ireland receives artefacts recovered from authorised excavations, after the necessary post-excavation analysis and conservation works have been carried out.

27. If I discover a potential archaeological object or site on my property what do I do?

If you find a previously unknown archaeological object or monument on your property report it to the Director of the National Museum of Ireland or the National Monuments Section DEHLG giving your name, address and a brief description of the object or site and its location. You should leave the object or site where it was found

attached to a planning permission. If, however, the proposed application impacts on significant archaeology the planning authority may refuse planning permission.

17. What if the works I intend to carry out at or in the vicinity of a monument are exempted development?

Under the planning system many minor works do not require planning permission. These works are known as exempted development. However, if the type of works proposed affect a monument, which is a National Monument in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister or a local authority, or subject to a preservation order, or included in the Record of Monuments and Places then the owner or occupier undertaking the works must comply with the notification requirements under the National Monuments Acts (see pt. 6).

It should be noted that, if the carrying out of exempted development works involves the excavation of places, sites or features of archaeological interest which are protected by an objective in the county or town development plan or draft variation plan, then that development is no longer exempted.

18. Is there a standard buffer zone around monuments in the countryside within which development should not occur?

No. There are many factors which can affect the spread of archaeological material around a monument, including the type and condition of the monument, the landscape and the previous land use. The establishment of a buffer or fallow area around a monument, sufficient to protect the amenity and setting of the monument requires individual assessment. Each planning application is therefore examined on an individual basis.

19. What sort of additional information relating to archaeology does a planning authority request?

Usually detailed information assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on archaeology is requested. This is referred to as an archaeological impact assessment or simply an 'archaeological assessment'. It is carried out on behalf of a prospective developer by an archaeologist and is funded by the developer.

20. What is an Archaeological Assessment?

An archaeological assessment is the investigation of known, suspected or previously unidentified monuments, sites or areas of archaeological potential in order to assess the impact which the proposed development may have on them.

Each assessment should contain a description of the archaeology known to survive in the development area and of the types of archaeological features, not yet identified, which could possibly exist in that location. These should be evaluated in terms of the impact of the proposed works on known or predicted archaeology. Assessments may indicate that archaeological test excavation is required. The assessment procedure also proposes a strategy designed to deal with the possible adverse effects of the development works on archaeology.

21. What is Archaeological Test Excavation?

Archaeological test excavation is excavation of confined strips or areas of a site in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeology and to determine its nature and extent.

Archaeology in the Planning Process



This leaflet is a guide to understanding the procedures involved when proposing to carry out development work which might affect our archaeological heritage. It is intended as a practical guide and is not a legal interpretation of the legislation referred to.

1. What is Archaeology?

Archaeology is the scientific study of past societies, their cultures and their relationship with the environment through an examination of the material remains of our predecessors. The purpose of archaeology is to understand how humans in the past interacted with the environment, to formulate an explanation for the development of cultures and to preserve this history for present and future learning.

2. What are Archaeological Monuments?

Archaeologists use the word ‘monument’ to refer to man-made structures or to natural features altered by man. Monuments range in scale and complexity from the well-known passage tomb cemetery of Newgrange to relatively common ringforts. More visible monuments such as impressive castles, tower houses, abbeys and churches populate the countryside. Town defences such as town walls, ditches, gates and bridges survive within historic towns and sometimes even the houses, churches and market buildings of medieval times remain. Buried deposits are also significant archaeologically. These ancient rubbish tips and buried occupation sites often reveal as much information about our predecessors as extensive upstanding buildings.

3. Are all Monuments visible?

For many monuments there is no visible evidence. They may be mainly below ground, in which case archaeologists often refer to them as ‘sites’. Archaeological sites may have no visible surface features at all; the surface features may have decayed completely or been deliberately removed but archaeological deposits and features may survive beneath the surface. Such sites may sometimes be detected as crop-marks visible from the air or have their presence indicated by the occurrence of artefact scatters in ploughed land, but, in other cases, may remain invisible unless uncovered through ground disturbance. Wetland environments (e.g. peatlands) have a high potential to contain archaeological sites (including trackways, field systems, and settlement sites) which are either difficult or impossible to identify from surface examination alone.

4. What is the date range of Archaeology in Ireland?

The earliest archaeological sites in Ireland are slight traces of the temporary settlements of fishermen, hunters and gatherers that survive as scatters of stone implements (e.g. flint). These can date to the period following the end of the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago.

5. Why protect and preserve archaeological material?

The sites and monuments which survive not only enrich our landscapes and townscapes but are essential to understanding our past.

Only a portion of the material remains of our predecessors has survived, so it is vital that we manage what is left wisely. Since prehistoric people had no written record to leave behind we are dependant on the artefacts they did leave. All the material remains of past societies contribute to developing our understanding of such societies through archaeology. Archaeology attempts to achieve the

best possible level of knowledge and understanding of past societies by assembling all available evidence and analysing it.

6. Are Sites and Monuments protected under the law?

All archaeological monuments are protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004. The National Monuments Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government keeps a record of all known monuments and sites. These form the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). When the owner or occupier of a property, or any other person proposes to carry out, or to cause, or to permit the carrying out of any work at or in relation to a Recorded Monument, they are required to give notice in writing to the Minister 2 months before commencing that work. This time will allow the National Monuments Service to advise on how the work may proceed in tandem with the protection of the monuments in question.

For National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister or a local authority or which are subject to a preservation order the prior written consent of the Minister is required for any interference with the monument.

Separate controls apply in respect of archaeological works connected with approved road schemes.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) recognises that proper planning and sustainable development includes objectives for the protection of the archaeological heritage. Development plans may include such objectives, and conditions relating to archaeology may be attached to individual planning permissions.

7. What is the Record of Monument and Places?

The Record of Monument and Places (RMP) is a statutory list of all known archaeological monuments provided for in the National Monuments Acts. There are over 120,000 Recorded Monuments included in the RMP. The RMP consists of a published county-by-county set of Ordnance Survey maps on which monuments are marked by a circle and an accompanying book which specifies the type of monuments. It should be borne in mind that the circle does not necessarily define the extent of the site or monument.

The RMP is available in planning authority offices and in public libraries countrywide as well as in county and city/town museums. A complete set is also available for viewing in the Archive Unit, National Monuments Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, 6 Ely Place Upper, Dublin 2 on Mondays (by prior appointment only - telephone 01-8882000 or lo-call 1890 20 20 21). It is intended shortly to have details of all sites and monuments available online on National Monuments Service’s new website www.archaeology.ie.

8. How do I know if my development site includes a site, which is covered by a preservation order, or a site in guardianship or state ownership? National monuments in State guardianship or ownership have a notice on the site which states that the monument is a National Monument and is protected under the National Monuments Acts. If a Preservation Order is placed on a monument the owner/occupier is notified in writing.

9. How do I know whether my proposed development site lies within or close to a Recorded Monument?

You should firstly consult the RMP maps as described above. The RMP maps are organised on a county basis and you should be able to identify your development site within the relevant townland confirming whether or not your development site lies in proximity to a recorded monument.

10. If my proposed development site lies within or close to a site on the RMP where can I access more detailed information about it?

The Department’s Archive Unit RMP file contains all available information on each recorded monument in the State including details of location, map designations for the various editions of the Ordnance Survey and a list of published references. Where available, the field notes of State survey archaeologists and aerial photographs are included. As mentioned earlier it is intended shortly to have details of all known sites and monuments available online on National Monuments Service’s new website www.archaeology.ie.

Archaeological Inventories are published by the DEHLG. Inventories published to date include counties Cavan, Carlow, East and South Cork, Mid Cork, North Cork, West Cork, North Galway, West Galway, Laois, Leitrim, Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, South Sligo, North Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow. These are available in bookshops and county libraries.

The Urban Archaeology Survey comprises a report on settlements where a village, town or city had been granted borough status, prior to 1700AD. The survey is presented as a series of county volumes with text, maps and survey drawings of key structures and photographs.

All of the above Departmental records can be accessed at the Archive Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, 6 Ely Place Upper, Dublin 2 on Mondays (by prior appointment only - telephone 01-8882000 or lo-call 1890 20 20 21).

For maritime research, the Underwater Archaeological Unit of the Department can be contacted at 01-8882000 or lo-call 1890 20 20 21.

11. I’m considering applying for planning permission in relation to proposed works close to a monument in the RMP. Where can I get some advice in relation to my proposals in advance of lodging a planning application?

You should contact the relevant planning authority in the first instance. You may also wish to forward details of your proposed development as a pre-application enquiry to the Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2. Development Applications Unit will issue a response outlining any concerns from the Department’s perspective (note: a copy of this reply will also issue to the relevant planning authority).

12. Does anything extra need to be carried out for major developments?

Major development projects are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the relevant EU Directives. This requires a developer to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement setting out details of the project and the likely

significant effects, good and bad, of the development on the environment, including archaeology. It will set out any measures to be taken to avoid or moderate any adverse environmental effects.

13. If I am planning a development in proximity to a Recorded Monument do I have to notify the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government directly?

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations, a planning authority must refer all planning applications, which might affect or be unduly close to any archaeological site, monument or feature, to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

While the owner or occupier or any persons proposing to carry out work at or in relation to a recorded monument is required under the National Monuments Act to give notice in writing to the Minister, it is the practice of DEHLG to accept referrals from planning authorities as fulfilling the notification requirements.

14. What happens to my planning application if referred by a planning authority to DEHLG?

Development Applications Unit of DEHLG co-ordinates the Department’s evaluation of all proposals for development referred by Local Authorities. The planning application is examined with reference to known archaeological sources and an appraisal is made as to whether the development is likely to affect archaeology and to what degree. On the basis of this appraisal the Department may respond to the planning authority by requesting an archaeological assessment or by making a recommendation for the inclusion of planning conditions.

15. What sort of conditions relating to archaeology can be attached to a grant of planning permission by a planning authority?

Individual planning conditions may vary. However, where detailed information assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on archaeological material is available, the conditions will usually relate to the works required to lessen the impact of the development.

This may involve avoidance of archaeological monuments or features, excavation, or the preservation of the monument on site (known as preservation in-situ). Preservation in-situ refers to the actual physical preservation of archaeological sites and monuments including archaeological deposits, features and structures.

16. Could my planning application be refused on archaeological grounds?

In extreme cases, where serious archaeological damage cannot be avoided, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government may recommend that planning permission should not be granted. The final planning decision, however, rests with the planning authority. A refusal of planning permission, in such a case, would occur only when all other avenues to avoid adverse impacts on archaeology had been exhausted. Often, there is latitude within an individual planning application to allow for relocation or redesign to avoid impacting directly on archaeology. If the opportunity to amend or adjust the application to avoid archaeology is not possible during pre-planning discussions then conditions to lessen the impact of the development on archaeology, e.g. relocation of the development on the site or archaeological excavation, may be