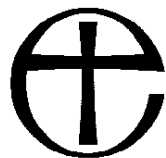


THE CATHEDRALS FABRIC COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

**PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE NOTE 3:
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
AND REPORT FOR CATHEDRALS
AND THEIR PRECINCTS**

**Issued by the Commission
October 2009**



Under the amendments to the Care of Cathedrals Measure which came into force on 1st January 2008, each Chapter is now required to arrange for its Cathedral Archaeologist to produce:

- (1) an assessment of archaeological matters relating to the cathedral church and its precinct, and
- (2) a written report, in consultation with the Cathedral Architect or Surveyor to the Fabric and Precinct Architect, containing recommendations on
 - (i) how those matters should be managed, and
 - (ii) the compilation and maintenance of archaeological records.¹

This is a one-off assessment and report, and should not be confused with the Quinquennial Report which is prepared by the Cathedral Architect or Surveyor of the Fabric in consultation with the Cathedral Archaeologist. However, the Cathedral Archaeologist will be expected to make subsequent annual update reports, and is advised to review the recommendations in the original document periodically (see below).

There is no prescribed form for this assessment and report, and they will vary considerably from cathedral to cathedral, according to the type and extent of the archaeological issues involved.

However, the following guidelines, which deliberately echo those for the structure of a Conservation Management Plan², may be helpful in setting out the parameters which an Archaeological Assessment and Report (AAR) should cover.

The AAR should aim to be between 2000 and 5000 words long, supported by references to other relevant documents (such as existing reports and assessments or Conservation Plans) and plans, maps and illustrations.

The following headings should be included:

(1) Introduction

This should briefly state the background to the compilation of the AAR and may also include details of how the archaeological resource is managed at present (for example, who is involved and in what capacity, approximate number of hours the Cathedral Archaeologist is contracted for, where archaeological archives and records are lodged, etc)

(2) Assessment of Archaeological Significance

A brief assessment of the archaeological significance of the cathedral and its entire precinct, including individual buildings, remains and other features of archaeological interest. These may include features which predate the cathedral, such as Roman or prehistoric remains.

These assessments can be expressed using the ‘ladder of significance’:

<i>Exceptional</i>	important at national to international level
<i>Considerable</i>	important at regional level or sometimes higher
<i>Some</i>	usually of local value but of regional significance for group or other value (e.g. a vernacular architectural feature)
<i>Local</i>	of local value
<i>Negative</i> or intrusive features	those which actually detract from the values of a site, for example a concrete boiler house.

It should be noted that a high grading does not necessarily mean that something must remain untouched, in the same way that a low grading does not indicate that something is necessarily expendable.

This assessment is best carried out on a gazetteer basis (illustrated with GIS maps and SMR references if available), preceded by a brief timeline to provide the chronological framework.

(3) Assessment of Vulnerability

An assessment of the issues currently affecting, or with the capacity to affect, this significance, including structural problems, development proposals, or lack of knowledge or understanding of specific parts or aspect of the site.

(4) Required Archaeological Work

A brief overview of what work is in hand or would be necessary to address the issues explored in the previous section. This should not be a wish-list, but should give a realistic appraisal of what might usefully be achieved and how this might be funded.

(5) References

An annotated list of documents, archives, publications and other material relating to the archaeology of the site. For records kept outside the Cathedral (i.e. at the local Records Office), this should include any details required in order to be able to access them. Where applicable the Reference section should also include SMR or NMR references, where these are not included in the main body of the text.

As the completion of the AAR is a statutory duty under the Measure, the Chapter should ensure that it makes sufficient resources, including payment, available to the Cathedral Archaeologist to carry out the work, and a copy of the AAR should be sent to the Commission.³

It is also the responsibility of the Cathedral Archaeologist to make an annual report to the Chapter detailing the progress made in carrying out the recommendations set out in the AAR and any other relevant archaeological matters.⁴

The Commission recommends that the AAR is reviewed every five years.

(AN & JE, October 2009)

¹ Section 14A(1): It shall be the duty of the Chapter of a cathedral which has appointed a cathedral archaeologist to arrange, within the period of two years beginning with the date of the coming into force of section 15 of the Care of Cathedrals (Amendment) Measure 2005 [1st January 2008] for the cathedral archaeologist to assess those matters of archaeological interest which relate to the cathedral church and its precinct, including buildings and remains within the precinct and, in consultation with the cathedral architect or surveyor of the fabric and the architect or surveyor appointed under section 20 of the Cathedrals Measure 1999 (if a different person), to make a report in writing to the Chapter containing recommendations on how those matters should be managed, and on the compilation and maintenance of archaeological records relating thereto.

² See, for example, 'Conservation Management Plans: Guidance for Major Churches' (Council for the Care of Churches, March 2007; available on churchcare.co.uk). The Commission has also issued guidance on Conservation Plans ('Advisory Note 4: Conservation Plans for Cathedrals', CFCE & AEC, August 2002).

³ Section 14A(1): A copy of the report shall be sent to the Commission.

⁴ Section 14A(2): The cathedral archaeologist shall, within the period of twelve months beginning with the date of the coming into force of section 15 of the Care of Cathedrals (Amendment) Measure 2005 [1st January 2008] and annually thereafter, make in consultation with the persons referred to in subsection (1) above a report to the Chapter containing an account of progress made in fulfilling the recommendations of the report (if made) referred to in subsection (1) above and any other matters which the archaeologist considers to be relevant to the archaeological interest of the cathedral church and its precinct.