



Template Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation

How to use this template: This template has been provided to assist with preparing a Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological mitigation. It sets out a recommended structure with descriptions of what should be provided under each section, including where project specific information is required and where a statement is required if the proposed programme of work diverges from the appropriate SYAS standards document.

NB If you use your own template, this document will still provide guidance on the project specific information required.

Written Scheme of Investigation: Overview of Contents

Section 1	Background <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site location• Context of the project• Timetable/work stages• Review points• Monitoring arrangement
Section 2	Site Information <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site description• Geological and topographical background• Archaeological summary
Section 3	Project Details <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards and Guidance• Aims and objectives of the project• Fieldwork rationale• Outputs and dissemination
Section 4	Fieldwork Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting Areas of Preservation <i>in situ</i>• Excavation
Section 5	Post-Investigation Assessment, Analysis and Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bespoke methodology, where required.
Section 6	Public Engagement, Dissemination & Publication <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy for public engagement and publication
Section 7	Archive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bespoke methodology, where required.• Archive deposition• Archive selection strategy
Section 8	Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify organisation undertaking the work, key project staff and specialists• Project directory
Appendix 1	Selection Strategy
Appendix 2	Data Management Plan
Appendix 3	SYAS Archaeological Mitigation Standards & Guidance

1 Background

Site Location

Provide a description of the site of sufficient detail that someone unfamiliar with the site could locate it, including national grid reference/s. Include a map showing the extent of the project area.

Context of the Project

Identify the purpose of the document and the nature of the archaeological project.

Describe why this project is being undertaken including any planning references.

Describe the archaeological significance of the site, as revealed by earlier stages of investigation, and the measures to be taken to mitigate the harm to that significance.

Identify any consultation that has been undertaken, e.g. with SYAS or the Historic England Science Advisor

Project Timetable

Detail the main stages of the project, e.g.:

- Pre-commencement works
- Fieldwork including preservation in situ and protection measures
- Outreach activities
- Post-excavation assessment/ analysis
- Reporting
- Archiving
- Publication and dissemination of results

Provide dates for each of the above stages, through to overall completion.

If this is not certain at the outset, or details change prior to commencement, then this information must be provided to SYAS in a written update once confirmed.

Review Points

Identify when the progress of the project towards addressing its aims and objectives will be reviewed, e.g.:

- Review of results during fieldwork stage: consultation to be conducted with SYAS and other stakeholders to monitor that the aims of the project are being met and to agree changes to methodologies and objectives as appropriate.
- Review on completion of post-excavation assessment stage: consultation to be conducted with SYAS and other stakeholders to confirm recommendations for

analysis, reporting, archiving and publication (requiring an updated project design where necessary).

Identify that minor changes to an agreed WSI will be submitted to SYAS for written approval; more substantial changes will require formal resubmission.

Monitoring Arrangements

Identify that SYAS will be responsible for monitoring the project and that the contractor must give a minimum of one week's notice of the commencement of fieldwork, in order that arrangements for monitoring can be made.

2 Site Information

Site Description

Provide a description of current land use and ground conditions.

Geology and Topography

Summarise the geological and topographical context of the site drawing upon the results of earlier stages of work, including:

- Description of the topography in relation to direction of slope, water courses, hilltops, and promontories;
- Description of archaeological stratigraphy and geology;
- Description of recorded burial conditions including how alkaline or acid the soil is;
- Observations on the implications of the geomorphology and burial conditions e.g. for artefact and ecofact survival, likely presence of deeply buried archaeological deposits, waterlogged deposits etc.

Archaeological Summary

Briefly summarise the archaeological and historical background of the site synthesising and referencing any previous stages of archaeological work such as a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and trial trenching. This should include results from other fieldwork in the vicinity of the site.

Detail the forms of archaeological remains expected, their significance, and how this changes across the site.

Detail the forms of material culture expected.

3 Project Details

Standards and Guidance

Identify the SYAS standards and guidance that this project will follow.

NB A copy of the referenced SYAS standards must be included as an appendix.

Aims and Objectives

Identify the project aims, e.g.:

- Why is this project being undertaken?
- What is the project hoping to achieve?
- What is the anticipated outcome?

Identify the project objectives, e.g.:

- What specific archaeological techniques are going to be used to accomplish the aims?
- What are the specific research objectives of the project (referencing the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework and other period specific or thematic research frameworks/strategies, as applicable)?

Fieldwork Rationale

Provide a table listing each mitigation area, the technique to be applied, the rationale for their location and their dimensions. This should be correlated with a plan that shows their location within the site. Areas excluded from further investigation, such as areas of preservation *in situ*, should be highlighted on the same plan.

Provide details of contingencies allowed for.

Outputs and Dissemination

List the specific outputs of the project e.g. report, physical archive, digital data etc.

Identify how information and knowledge generated by the project will be disseminated.

Identify how the project will incorporate public outreach, e.g.: site notices, site tours, use of volunteers, or talks. Where additional detail is required, this should be included as an appendix. This should be tailored to each site. A WSI containing insufficient detail on public outreach and engagement will not be agreed.

4 Fieldwork Methodology

Methodology for Protecting Areas of Preservation *in Situ*

NB The methodology for achieving preservation *in situ* is expected to be set out in a separate document.

Where archaeological remains are to be preserved *in situ* as part of the project, provide information to show how they will be protected during the programme of archaeological works, including:

- Location of areas of archaeological preservation; and

- Protection measures (such as exclusion zones and fencing) and how they will be monitored.

Methodology for Excavation

Where the approach within a mitigation area deviates from the SYAS standards, a bespoke methodology must be provided. Otherwise, state that you will follow the SYAS standards.

Set out a bespoke strategy for environmental/sediment sampling and scientific dating, detailing the expected types of samples you are going to take (palaeo-environmental, industrial, dating, and other specialist types), what material they will provide data on, and when and how they will be collected. Refer to the review points for how the approach will be adapted as the project progresses.

5 Post-Investigation Assessment, Analysis and Reporting

Where the approach deviates from the SYAS standards, a bespoke methodology must be provided. Otherwise, state that you will follow the SYAS standards.

6 Public Engagement, Dissemination & Publication

Set out any engagement and outreach strategy proposed, including the details of any specialists to be used, e.g. the community archaeologist(s).

Detail how the results of the project will be disseminated, including formal publication.

7 Archive

Where the approach deviates from the SYAS standards, a bespoke methodology must be provided. Otherwise, state that you will follow the SYAS standards.

Archive Deposition

Identify what material will be deposited with which recipient museum/archive and that the project will conform with its requirements.

Archive Selection Strategy

Summarise the details provided in the formal Selection Strategy and Digital Data Management Plan included as an appendix.

8 Staffing

Provide details of the competent person/persons, or organisation, including specialists, undertaking the project. If this is not known at the outset, or details change prior to commencement, then this information must be provided to SYAS in a written update once confirmed.

Identify whether the project staff have professional membership, or whether the organisation is Registered with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. Where formal professional accreditation is not held, then sufficient information should be provided to demonstrate competency, e.g. in the form of CVs.

Provide a project directory, listing contact details for relevant parties, e.g.:

- Manager of organisation overseeing the archaeological project;
- Lead site contact, responsible for carrying out the archaeological project.

Identify any other useful contacts e.g.:

- South Yorkshire Archaeology Service:
telephone: 0114 273 6354
email: syorks.archservice@sheffield.gov.uk
- Historic England Science Advisor:
Andy Hammon
telephone: 07747 486255
email: Andy.Hammon@HistoricEngland.org.uk
- Finds Liaison Officer for South and West Yorkshire:
Amy Downes
telephone: 0113 5350173
email: Amy.Downes@wyjs.org.uk

Appendix 1: Selection Strategy

An archive selection strategy must be provided. Templates are available through the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' 'Toolkit for Selection Archaeological Archives': <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit>.

Appendix 2: Data Management Plan

A data management plan must be provided. Templates are available through the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' 'Dig Digital' resource: <https://www.archaeologists.net/digidigital>.

Appendix 3: SYAS Archaeological Mitigation Standards & Guidance

A copy of the current SYAS standards must be included. This is available in the 'Guidance for archaeological projects' page of the SYAS website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/planning-development/south-yorkshire-archaeology-service/guidance-for-archaeological-projects>.