

Great North Museum: Hancock

Archaeological Archive Deposition Policy

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1. Introduction

The Great North Museum: Hancock is the approved Registered Museum for the deposition of archaeological archives in the north east of England. The archive covers all periods of human activity recovered from the region encompassing the county of Northumberland, the city of Newcastle, the Roman frontier zone westward from the mouth of the River Tyne to the River Irthing. Following the collections policy of the Great North Museum: Hancock, hereafter known as “the museum”, material will not be accepted for deposition from anywhere outside of the collecting areas.

The deposition of site archives from excavations in the region with the museum is a formal requirement of planning permission where an archaeological assessment, watching brief and/or excavation of the site has been stipulated. For the purposes of this guide, the term “archive” will be used to include all finds and paper material.

Once in the collection, archaeological archives are managed by the museum’s archaeology curatorial team. The Keeper of Archaeology is the point of contact for collections, hereafter referred to as “the Keeper”.

The museum should be informed of a project at the earliest opportunity in the planning process. The archaeologists for Northumberland County Council and Newcastle City Council should liaise with the Keeper concerning archive procedures and storage requirements. For larger projects the Keeper will need to be involved at the project planning stage to enable strategies to be put in place for the storage of larger groups of finds.

The Great North Museum: Hancock does not collect archaeological archives in its own right. The museum acquires them on behalf of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT) and on behalf of Newcastle University. Archive deposits will only be acquired and accessioned at the behest of one of these institutions, and in accordance with the regulations set out in the GNM Acquisition and Disposals policy. The museum reserves the right not to accept any collections that fail to meet the minimum conditions set out in these guidelines or the GNM Acquisition and Disposals policy. The archive must be assembled in accordance with accepted good practice for its survival in perpetuity.

2. Acquisition

2.1 The museum will not accept an archive unless it can acquire a valid title to it. It is the responsibility of the project archaeologist to make arrangements for this. The legal owner of the documentary archive must be ascertained before Transfer of Title is negotiated. Any inability to meet this requirement should be discussed with the Keeper.

2.2 Once it has been ascertained that the landowner is the legal owner of any archive, the project archaeologist should obtain agreement from the landowner for the finds to be donated to the museum. Transfer of Ownership letter to be sent to landowner along with Transfer of Title form.

2.3 On completion of a project, the project archaeologist should ask the owner of the finds archive to confirm his/her donation of the finds archive by completing the Certificate of Transfer form.

2.4 In a situation where planning conditions do not directly stipulate transfer of archaeological archives to a museum repository and the owner does not wish to transfer all or part of the finds archive to the museum, the project archaeologist and the Keeper should advise on an acceptable alternative course of action.

Items retained by the owner should be fully documented, conserved and stored, and access agreed for research purposes. The museum will not accept 'permanent loan' or 'long term loan' arrangements and will only borrow excavation archives on loan if there is a direct research aim associated with the site.

2.5 Unless otherwise agreed in writing, SANT will acquire all copyright and intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the documentary archive on deposition. In the rare occasions where this is not possible, e.g. because the IPRs are vested in some other party, the museum will be granted unconditional licence to use the material for publication in any form or medium relevant to its legitimate activities, and the depositor will indemnify and hold the museum harmless from any civil liability to third parties for breach of IPR that may arise from such publication.

2.6 Human remains present particular ethical and legal considerations. Following the museum's Human Remains policy, the museum would not accept remains that are less than 100 years old. If it is thought that an excavation site may potentially yield human remains, the project archaeologist should discuss the implications with the Keeper at an early stage. It is the responsibility of the project archaeologist to ensure that a license is obtained from the Ministry of Justice if exhumation on Church of England land is required.

2.7 The project archaeologist must follow the requirements of the Code of Practice of the Treasure Act 1996. Property found in the sea or the seashore could be from a ship and is known technically as 'Wreck'. Wreck is not Treasure. All Wreck must be reported to the Receiver of Wreck via the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

3. Accessioning

3.1 The museum will assign an accession number for the archive before a project begins. The Keeper should be notified in order to identify the project as one likely to come into the museum collection, and start the process towards acquisition and accessioning.

3.2 In order to generate an accession number the Museum will require Transfer of Title for the archive, and a broad listing of the collection which is to come into the museum. While the museum accepts that it is difficult to make an accurate estimation at this stage, the project archaeologist's experience with similar projects should provide a useful guide for this stage.

The broad listing would include for example:

- Number of boxes of finds
- Key finds groups represented on the site
- Number of boxes of metalwork
- Estimated number of digital images
- Estimated number of boxes of paper archive, and its makeup.

3.3 Once generated the archive accession number should be cited in all documentation, correspondence and in all publications.

3.4 The documentary archive should be marked with the archive accession number, ideally as the record is created.

3.5 To save duplication of effort in marking individual artefacts, it is recommended that the archive accession number be used as the site code for marking and labelling the finds archive. This might not be appropriate for all archives, in which case, the Keeper should be contacted to discuss the marking of artefacts.

4. Deposition

4.1 The project archaeologist should supply the Museum with details concerning the volume of material and its nature as soon as is practical after completion of fieldwork.

4.2 The Museum should be involved in all decisions regarding conservation treatment of artefacts and the documentary archive. Agreed cleaning and other conservation treatments must be fully documented.

4.3 Decisions regarding the selection, retention and disposal of material must be agreed between the Keeper, the legal owners, and the project archaeologist.

4.4 The project archaeologist will be responsible for appropriate security, environmental conditions, and insurance of the material and documentary archive until it is transferred to The Museum.

5. Finds Archive

5.1 All finds should be cleaned and marked with the museum accession number where possible. However:

- metals should not be cleaned on site;
- excavators should consider whether it is conservationally sound to clean certain types of pottery- if uncertain, excavators should seek specialist advice.
- fragile organic material should not be cleaned.

5.2 Organic material, e.g. soil samples, should be processed with any required analysis to be completed before deposition. Bulk loads of raw organic material will either be refused by the Museum on deposition, or if deemed absolutely necessary a considerable charge will be incurred.

5.3 Objects should be sub-numbered as small finds, or in bulk groups such as flint. These sub-numbers of the main accession number should be marked onto the objects, and onto Tyvek labels to be kept in the bag in which they are stored. A full database of all finds by sub-number should be provided to the museum with the archive – this should provide one unique number for each object or group of objects. This database will form the basis of the object listing used in the museum collections management system so needs to be thorough, complete, and clear.

5.4 Objects should be boxed separately by material and type, and bagged in group by type within context.

5.5 All non-sensitive artefacts should be bagged in archival self-seal polyethylene bags with white panels. These should be clearly marked with information about the finds.

5.6 All sensitive artefacts should be boxed individually or in groups, either in polystyrene (crystal) boxes cushioned by plastazote or in other suitable materials, e.g. acid-free tissue paper. The museum should be consulted on selecting and packaging sensitive material which requires specific environmental conditions (e.g. waterlogged wood and leather). Metalwork should be packed in appropriate boxes with seal lids and non-indicating silica gel and RH indicator strips in every box, and especially fragile metalwork must be well supported for long term storage.

Bone artefacts and organic materials are to be packed in polystyrene (crystal) boxes within archival cardboard boxes unless they have special RH requirements.

5.7 Cardboard boxes for finds should be of acid-free material with stainless steel or phosphor bronze staples. The standard finds box size should be approximately 310mm long x 240 mm wide x 230 mm tall, with a full-depth lid. While the museum may accept boxes slightly smaller or larger than this, particularly oversized items should be packed in bespoke boxes. The museum should be informed of any such items before delivery.

5.8 Finds and containers must be marked with permanent ink:

- **Finds:** to be marked with accession number and small find number. Prior to marking seal the surface of finds prior to marking with an acrylic resin sealant Paraloid B72 to render the marking reversible and preserve the surface for future research. Protect the marking with Paraloid B69 sealant. Do not mark any metals.
- **Bags & Labels:** Accession number, site name, material type, context number, small find number or bulk find number. Place a tyvek label containing the same information in each bag.
- **Boxes:** Mark direct on lid top, lid end **and** base end - accession number, site name, material type, context numbers, box number with a label containing the same information inside each box.

5.9 Please do not overfill boxes. This can damage finds inside during transport and storage and will have to be remedied in the museum, and a further storage cost for extra boxes passed on to the contracting archaeologists.

5.10 Excavated human remains will only be accepted for deposition if they are within the scope of the museum's collecting policy:

1. Fall under SANT's collecting time period: from the Palaeolithic to 1600AD
2. Are from SANT's geographical collecting area: the county of Northumberland, the city of Newcastle, the Roman frontier zone westward from the mouth of the River Tyne to the River Irthing.

Excavated human remains from consecrated Church of England land will not be accepted and should be reinterred following recording and research. The museum will collect paper and digital documentation and analysis associated with such finds.

6. Documentary paper archive

6.1 The Museum archive accession number should be clearly marked on all documentary archives, including correspondence, finds data and in the final report.

6.2 All drawn and written archives should be produced on plain paper or film of neutral to mildly alkaline pH. Where possible, the original documents should be archived, faxes or dyelines should not be used in the archive.

6.3 Most site archive photographs will be digital, however, if the archive contains negatives, they should ideally be black and white, and contact prints should be provided for each photographic record image. The contact prints should be numbered in permanent ink to reflect a photographic register also contained within the archive.

6.4 Where physical photographs exist, colour photographs and slides should be numbered in permanent ink to reflect a photographic register also contained within the archive.

6.5 Negatives and photographs should be inserted into polyester sleeves suitable for archival use.

6.6 Site records and post-excavation records should be bound in ring binders, lever arch files or box-files as appropriate, and placed within archive boxes, approx. 410 mm length x

250 mm width x 180 mm tall. (l x w x h)

6.7 Site plans, section drawings and object drawings that will not fit A4 size, should be suitable for flat storage in A0/A1 sized plan chests or rolled into archive tubes. All plans should be marked with the accession number and site code.

7. Digital Archive

7.1 The museum does not accept digital archives for deposition. For digital archives, the project archaeologist should contact the Archaeology Data Service to consider deposition and calculate costs that would be incurred by the ADS.

8. Costs

8.1 The museum will expect to receive a one-off storage grant from the project archaeologist. After initial entry procedures, future on-costs of curation, research, display and interpretation will be borne by the museum.

This storage grant covers the entry costs of the archive into the museum and is required to secure its future. It enables the museum to provide the following:

- accessioning and cataloguing of finds into museum collections;
- storage in appropriate manner with level of security and environmental control appropriate to the nature of the material;
- accessioning and storage of paper, photographic and computer-generated archive.

Should the archive not meet the standards required for deposition, the depositor will be required to rectify the archive or pay for museum service staff time (if available) to process the archive to appropriate standards.

8.2 The costs will be reviewed during the 5 yearly policy review.

8.3 The museum may waive any storage charge at its own discretion. Exemptions from charges may be available under certain circumstances, for example excavations led by Newcastle University will normally not incur charges for deposition. The Keeper should be contacted to discuss any possible waivers.

9. Transfer of archive to the museum

9.1 The full archive should be deposited in the museum as soon as is practicable after the completion of the work, ideally within a year. Partial or fragmentary archives will not be accepted. The time period can be revised once the archive has been assessed. Please contact the Keeper in advance to arrange a suitable date for deposition.

9.2 The cost of transport, and any necessary insurance cover for the archive whilst in transit to the museum, will be the responsibility of the originator of the archive.

9.3 Every effort should be made to transfer the whole archive into the museum in one batch. The deposition of objects without the associated full digital paper archives is not acceptable.

10. Contact details

Keeper of Archaeology: **Mr. Andrew Parkin**

GNM: Hancock

Barras Bridge

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE2 4PT

0191 208 8867

andrew.parkin@twmuseums.org.uk

APPENDIX 1 Transfer of Ownership

Dear

Name of Project:

Thank you for agreeing to the excavation/fieldwork on your land. The purpose of this work is to increase the understanding of the archaeology of the region.

Part of this work is to ensure that any material evidence collected during the project is preserved and made accessible for present and future generations. It is important to preserve this evidence about the history of the region.

Government guidelines recommend that such material should be preserved in the correct physical and environmental conditions to protect it. Great North Museum: Hancock is the relevant museum for the deposition of archives in the north east, as it has the appropriate expertise and facilities to provide the services of preservation and access. The archive will include all plans, photographs, documentation, scientific information and material evidence from the site.

In view of the special requirements for the material evidence, and the costs involved in storage, it is advisable that it should be deposited for long-term curation in the Great North Museum: Hancock, the appropriate Registered Museum. On donation, excavation finds and documentary archives will be accessioned by the museum into the collections of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT), or if specifically requested, the collections belonging to Newcastle University. The finds may have no financial value but are of great value to researchers. The finds will remain your property until they are formally transferred to the museum. We therefore ask if you would agree to donate to the museum all the material evidence collected during the work. If you are happy to do this, would you please sign the enclosed form, retaining the pink copy for yourself, and returning the other copies to me.

After completion of the excavation/fieldwork, I will send you a Certificate of Transfer form to sign.

This will list the archive which you are formally handing over to the Museum.

Yours sincerely

Keeper of Archaeology
Great North Museum: Hancock



APPENDIX 2 Transfer of Title

Example of a TWAM Object Entry form to be filled out in triplicate.

MUSEUM OBJECT ENTRY FORM		TYNE & WEAR archives & museums
MUSEUM NAME: Tel. No.:	ENTRY NO.: 8500	
Received from: Address:	Owner (if different): Address:	
Tel no: Fax:	Tel no: Fax:	
E-mail:	E-mail:	
DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF OBJECT/COLLECTION (Please note obvious damage and any information e.g. when, where, or how was it found or used; names, dates and details of the people who made or previously owned or collected it, etc. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).		
Accession No: (Curatorial use only)		
Where found: Date found: CONDITION: <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Unchecked Total number of items:		
REASON FOR ENTRY (Please tick as appropriate and sign)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gift – I offer to give the object(s) listed above to the museum’s governing body <input type="checkbox"/> Bequest <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase – purchase price £..... <input type="checkbox"/> Loan (See condition 3 overleaf) Start date End date Insurance value £..... <input type="checkbox"/> Identification/enquiry – I leave the object(s) listed above for identification/enquiry and undertake to collect these on (See condition 2 overleaf)		
I confirm that the information given on this form is the correct to the best of my knowledge and that I accept the terms and conditions described overleaf.		
Signed: Date:		
TRANSFER OF TITLE/OWNERSHIP (To be signed only where an object or objects are being permanently transferred to the ownership of the museum/gallery. See condition 3 (overleaf) concerning museum acquisition.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> I, the owner , confirm that I have undisputed title to the object(s) listed above, with full power to dispose of the items and transfer such title to the museum’s governing body. <u>OR</u> <input type="checkbox"/> I the depositor , acting on behalf of the owner(s), confirm that the owner(s) have undisputed title to the object(s) listed above, with full power to dispose of the items and transfer such title to the museum’s governing body, and that I am authorised by the owner(s) to act on their behalf to that effect.		
The title in the objects listed above, and subject to the conditions overleaf, is hereby transferred to the governing body of the museum.		
Signed: Date:		
MUSEUM SIGNATORY Receipt of the object(s) described above is hereby acknowledged.		
Signed: Printed name: Date:		
RETURN OF OBJECT TO OWNER I, the depositor/owner, acknowledge the return of the object(s) described above in a satisfactory condition following		
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification/enquiry <input type="checkbox"/> The end of the loan period <input type="checkbox"/> Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums unable to agree to the gift, bequest, loan or purchase of the object(s)		
Signed: Date:		
Countersigned (for TWAM): Printed name:		
WHITE COPY – book (retained) PINK COPY – depositor/owner receipt YELLOW COPY – Documentation Office BLUE COPY – accompany object(s), send to Documentation Office with accession details or following return to owner		

APPENDIX 3 Certificate of Transfer

Certificate of Transfer of Ownership

I _____ am the legal owner/personal representative of the owner* of the object(s) listed and unconditionally transfer ownership of them to the collections of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT), which is cared for, stored and maintained by the Great North Museum: Hancock. I understand that the GNM: Hancock may not be able to display the object(s) and that they will be used for any purpose considered appropriate, including displays, exhibitions, handling collection, study and research.

I/we confirm that I/we will make no subsequent claim to ownership of the said object(s) against GNM: Hancock.

Description of object(s):

Donor:

Name _____

Address _____

Owner / vendor / personal representative of owner(s)

Signature(s) _____

Date _____

Received by (GNM : Hancock):

Name _____

Position _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Throughout this document the use of the first person admits joint or corporate ownership of the object(s) listed.

Handling Collections

I/we understand that the material may not become part of the permanent collections, but may be used for educational and/or display purposes, and that GNM: Hancock has the right to dispose of the object(s) (or any of them), when no longer required for those purposes and/or if they suffer such deterioration in condition as to render them unsuitable for display, research or handling.

Copyright

Please complete section 1 or 2 below.

1. I am the owner of the *intellectual property rights (if any) in the object(s) and:
(please initial whichever box applies)

a) transfer those rights to SANT

or

b) grant SANT unlimited licence to use the
intellectual property .

2. I am not the owner of the intellectual property rights in the object(s) which are owned
by:

Name _____

Address _____

*Intellectual property rights consist of four main areas: copyright, designs, patents and trademarks, as appropriate to the object(s) being acquired. It is usual to sign over such copyright as is held by the donor when donating an object to GNM: Hancock, so that the object can be used in research, exhibitions, publicity material or displays.

Data Protection Act 1998

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998, GNM: Hancock is permitted to disclose to third parties, for the purposes of study and/or research, such information relevant to the object(s) and appertaining to living persons as may be at any time stored in any manual system, computer and/or in any magnetic or electronic medium capable of being read by a computer.

Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

APPENDIX 4 Storage Charges

An initial admin charge of **£50** will be incurred at the beginning of a project to cover museum admin costs, including the provision of a museum accession number to the project archaeologist.

Box charges for depositing archival material with the Great North Museum: Hancock:

Deposit prices from 1st January 2017 will be **£95** for any deposit.

This fee includes the deposit of three boxes/plan rolls (any combination of documents box, finds box or plan roll).

Finds boxes must be acid free archival quality cardboard boxes with lids.

They should be no larger than 31cm x 24cm x 23cm (length x width x height)

Archive boxes must be acid free archival quality cardboard boxes with lids.

They should be no larger than 41cm x 35cm x 29cm (length x width x height)

Extra boxes deposited will be charged at a fee of **£30** per box. Extra plan rolls deposited will be charged at a fee of **£10** per roll.

APPENDIX 5 Basic procedural outline for archive deposition

Pre excavation

1. Project archaeologist to obtain agreement in principle with landowner for finds to go to museum.
2. Project archaeologist to notify museum about excavation and subsequent deposit.
3. TWAM object entry form (complete with new accession number for Project archaeologist) and accompanying Transfer of Ownership letter to Project archaeologist. Project archaeologist to fill in approximate expected objects.
4. Project archaeologist to send landowner Object Entry form to sign with accompanying Transfer of Ownership letter.
5. Landowner to sign entry form and retain pink copy of TWAM form. Yellow and blue copies to be sent back to museum, either directly or through the PA.

Post excavation

1. Project archaeologist to notify museum of volume of material that has been prepared for deposition.
2. Project archaeologist to send landowner Certificate of Transfer to formally complete the deposit donation to the museum.
3. The museum can then invoice the project the appropriate fee.
4. Project archaeologist to transport deposit to museum.