

# Guidelines for the Transfer of Archaeological Archives to the Museum of Liverpool

INTERNATIONAL  
**SLAVERY  
MUSEUM**

Lady Lever  
ART GALLERY

Merseyside  
**maritime  
museum**

Museum of  
**Liverpool**

SUDLEY  
HOUSE

UK BORDER  
AGENCY  
NATIONAL MUSEUM

Walker  
Art Gallery

**World  
Museum**

*January 2020*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, which operates as National Museums Liverpool (NML), hereafter “the Museum”, is the approved Registered Museum for the deposition of archaeological archives in the Merseyside region. Following the Museum of Liverpool collecting policy, material can be accepted for deposition from anywhere outside Merseyside, but this would normally only be considered after alternative museums have been consulted.
- 1.2 Once in the collection, materials are managed by the Museum of Liverpool curatorial team. The Curator of Archaeology and the Historic Environment, Museum of Liverpool is the point of contact for collections, hereafter “The Curator”. The definition of The Curator as a manager of an archive repository in a museum is a standard and common use of the term (Lee 2015, 14; Brown 2011, 6-8), but differs from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) definition as “a person or organisation responsible for the conservation and management of archaeological evidence by virtue of official or statutory duty, including for example County, District or Council archaeological officers, and the national bodies, English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw (Wales), Department of Environment, Northern Ireland and Manx Heritage.” (CIfA 2014h).
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to set out minimum conditions of archives derived from archaeological fieldwork for acceptance by the Museum.
- 1.3 The Museum of Liverpool (MoL) holds the Regional Archaeology collection of archaeological material for all periods of human activity recovered from Merseyside and the region. It encompasses collections from a range of sources:
- archaeological excavations, survey and field-walking
  - metal-detecting finds
  - chance finds
  - building recording
  - graveyard recording
  - historic and recent private collections

The deposition of site archives from professional excavations in Merseyside 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.

‘Regional archaeology’ may be primarily defined as that of Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire south of the Ribble. Where finds fall outside Merseyside, offers will be considered with other relevant local museums.

- 1.3 The Museum should be informed of a project at the earliest opportunity in the planning process (Brown 2011, 7; Lee 2015, 21). The project archaeologist should liaise with The Curator concerning archive procedures and storage requirements (EH 1991, Brown 2011, 7; CIfA 2014b; Lee 2015, 21). For larger projects The Curator 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 (EH, 2006, 9; Lee 2015, 14).
- 1.4 The Museum reserves the right not to accept any collections that fail to meet the minimum conditions set out in these guidelines.
- 1.5 These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the publications listed in the bibliography, and following MoRPHE guidelines (Lee 2015, 21). 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. Any inability to meet this requirement should be discussed with The Curator.
- 2.2 At the beginning of a project, the project archaeologist should obtain agreement in principle from the landowner for the finds to be donated to the Museum (Owen 1995; Brown 2011, 7).
- 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. The Transfer of Title form can be obtained from the Museum, see Appendix 2.
- 2.4 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 Curator 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 of Liverpool will not accept 'permanent loan' or 'long term loan' arrangements. The maximum term of loan possible within the National Museums Liverpool procedures is three years. The Museum of Liverpool will only borrow excavation archives on loan if there is a direct research aim for a loan associated with the site.
- 2.5 The legal owner of the documentary archive must be ascertained before Transfer of Title is negotiated.
- 2.6 Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the Museum will acquire all copyright and intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the documentary archive. Exceptionally, where this is not possible, eg 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.
- 2.7 Human remains present particular ethical and legal considerations (Church of England and English Heritage 2005; DCMS 2005). The project archaeologist should discuss the implications with The Curator at an early stage.
- 2.8 The project archaeologist must follow the requirements of the Code of Practice of the Treasure Act 1996 (HMSO 1996, DCMS n.d.). 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 (Maritime and Coastguard Agency, n.d.)

## 3. ACCESSIONING

- 3.1 The Museum will assign an accession number for the archive before a project begins. Please contact The Curator 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 (paper archive, digital archive and/or finds archive), and a broad listing of the collection which is to come into the Museum. MoRPHE recognises that "at this

stage it is difficult to make an accurate forecast” but “experience with similar projects is the most useful guide” (Lee 2015, 16).

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 Curator should be contacted to discuss the marking of artefacts.

#### 4. **ARCHIVES**

4.1 The archive consists of: artefacts; faunal and environmental remains; drawings; photographic records; primary field records; post-excavation records including specialist reports; digital files on CD/DVD/hard drive; publication documentation (ClfA 2014b; ClfA 2014e; EH 1991; Lee 2015).

4.2 The project archaeologist should liaise with The Curator and invite him/her to site meetings throughout the excavation to ensure acquisition is planned into the Museum of Liverpool’s Collections Development Plan.

4.3 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 Decisions regarding the selection, retention and disposal of material must be agreed between The Curator, the legal owners, the project archaeologist, project designer, finds specialist and conservator concerned, “deciding which finds to retain should not be the sole responsibility of the project team and should be agreed with the site Monitor and final curator in the project design – although this may change and need to be discussed again during the course of the project” (Brown 2011, 30; SMA 1993; Owen 1995; Lee 2015; Brown 2011, 3).

4.5 The finds documentary archive and digital files should be ordered, fully indexed, cross-referenced and documented in accordance with standard procedures (Walker 1990; Lee 2015). Records should, where possible, be held on a computer database in a format agreed by The Museum. All databases will be backed up and have a hard copy.

4.6 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 The finds archive must be deposited in archive boxes. These need to be numbered in a running sequence Box 1, Box 2, etc. Each box must be labelled with its box number, and the box location of each find must be recorded on the finds database.
- 5.2 Cardboard boxes should be of acid-free material with stainless steel or phosphor bronze staples. The standard finds box size should be approximately 450mm long x 250 mm wide x 180 mm tall, with a full-depth lid. Oversized items should be packed in bespoke boxes, The Museum should be informed of such items before delivery.
- 5.3 Unless conservation requirements or practicalities dictate otherwise, all finds should be cleaned and marked.  
DO NOT clean metals on site;  
DO NOT wash pottery without prior consultation with the appropriate specialist;  
DO NOT clean fragile organic material.
- 5.4 Objects should be sub-numbered as small finds or, if necessary, in bulk groups. These sub-numbers of the main accession number should be marked onto the objects, and onto the bag in which they are stored (see 5.7 below). 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 programme going forward, so needs to be thorough, complete, and clear (see 7.6 below).
- 5.5 Objects should be boxed separately by material and type, and bagged in group by type within context.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 All sensitive artefacts should be boxed individually or in groups, either in polystyrene (crystal) boxes cushioned by plastazote or in other suitable materials, eg acid-free tissue paper. The Museum should be consulted on selecting and packaging sensitive material which requires specific environmental conditions (eg waterlogged wood and leather).
- **Metalwork** to be packed in appropriate boxes with silica gel and RH indicator strips in every box.
  - **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 special RH requirements).
- 5.8 Finds and containers must be marked with permanent ink as follows:
- Finds:** Mark finds 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. For more information see National Museums Liverpool Object Marking Guidelines, Appendix

**DO NOT** mark 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 Certain finds may be subject to consideration for deselection from the archive and reburial on site or disposal, see *Appendix 3: Selection, Retention and Disposal Guidelines*. The retention and deselection of finds will be individual to each site, and should be discussed with the curator before any material is disposed-of. Where finds recovered from excavation are disposed-of this should be recorded in the finds database, and those items marked as DISCARDED. The retention and disposal policy needs be discussed with The Curator in advance and described explicitly in the site archive documentation.
- 5.11 Excavated human remains from consecrated Church of England (CoE) under the CofE's Faculty Jurisdiction must legally be reinterred following recording and research. The Museum of Liverpool will collect paper and digital documentation and analysis associated with such finds. The Museum of Liverpool will consider acquisition of human remains from other contexts which have been professionally excavated and analysed, and reported through the Ministry of Justice. This will be undertaken with reference to the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England (APABE) to ensure a consistent approach to ethical, legal, scientific, archaeological and other issues surrounding the treatment of archaeological human remains and associated material culture.
- 5.12 All new acquisitions to National Museums Liverpool containing organic material must be frozen/quarantined unless otherwise advised by the relevant conservator. Any organic remains must be packed separately from other finds, and must be clearly labelled so they can be flagged for checks for need to freeze.

## 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. See NML Object Marking Guidelines, Appendix 2.
- 6.2 All drawn and written archives should be produced on plain (not coated) paper or film of neutral to mildly alkaline pH (Walker 1990; Ferguson and Murray, 1997). Where possible, the original documents should be archived. No faxes or dyelines should 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. Archival quality processing methods should be used - British Standard 5699 (Walker 1990). 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 on the slowest possible film from the recommended types and follow the processing recommendations (Ferguson and Murray 1997). They 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 archivally sound polyester sleeves.
- 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. 450 mm x 180 mm x 250 mm.
- 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.
- 6.8 The following should be transferred to the Museum:
- **The primary records in the archive** – including all site plans and section drawings, context and photograph registers.
  - **Two copies of a comprehensive index with cross references** to show the structure of the archive, contents of the archive and where it is boxed. Please ensure that the artefacts are cross-referenced in the paper archive. The elements in the archive should be marked in such a way that they are easily accessible. The Museum can give advice on how to do this.
  - **Two copies of the final report** (archive copy and user copy) which should detail National Museums Liverpool (Museum of Liverpool) as the destination of the archive.
  - **A hard copy of data presented in digital or magnetic form** on appropriate archive quality paper. Details of the data structure, and the software and hardware used to generate it, should also be deposited.
  - **Finds listing (if site has finds)** numerical list of all small finds / bulk finds, and details of any finds selected for destructive analysis, those items selected for dispersal or disposal, and those items that are stored elsewhere, and details of where they are stored.
- 6.9 Please remove all paper clips, staples and rubber bands before transferring the documentary archive to the Museum.

## 7. DIGITAL ARCHIVE

7.1 It is crucial that born digital information, including the reports, finds databases, context information, photographs and plans are available for use alongside the finds collection. It is recommended that the born digital archive from an excavation is deposited at a accredited and trusted digital repository, the Archaeology Data Service is the only accredited digital repository in the UK for heritage data. A Digital Object Identifier (DOI for the is digital archive must be provided before finds and paper archive can be deposited at the Museum of Liverpool. From 2021 it will be obligatory that born digital data is deposited with the ADS, and this should be included in costings for projects.

7.2 It is the responsibility of the project archaeologist to deposit a digital copy of all site reports and desk-based assessments with the National Monuments Record and Merseyside Historic Environment Record at Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service via OASIS. .



**Where a digital archive is being transferred to the Museum of Liverpool (until the end of 2020)**

7.3 The Museum archive accession number should be included in all file and folder names.

7.4 A digital copy of the final site report to be provided as .pdf and/or .doc / .docx Microsoft Word document.

7.5 All context listings should be provided in .mdb Microsoft Access databases.

7.6 For each site a single finds database should be provided in Microsoft Access, and as a minimum should include fields:

- Finds number
- Trench
- Context
- Form
- Type
- Material
- Period
- Total Number
- Weight
- Box

These should be populated in all cases where the information is obtainable from the object.

This database will form the basic record for individual finds which will be transferred to the Museum collections management programme.

7.7 The digital archive should contain digital images presented in digital (.jpg or .tif) format. The filenames should include the accession number and individual photograph number to reflect a photographic register also contained within the archive for cross-referencing purposes.

7.8 Site plans and section drawings should all be scanned and digitised using CAD and stored in .dwg format.

7.9 Object drawings should be scanned and digitised using drawing software and stored in standard file formats eg. .tif, .jpg, .bmp. In view of the rapid developments in this field, this aspect should be discussed with The Museum before deposition.

7.10 It is the responsibility of the project archaeologist to ensure that digital files are organised in a logical way which will be informative for future researchers using the archive.

7.11 **Do** delete folders that are not necessary or useable to the site. If a folder is empty, delete it.

7.12 **Do** name files in a way that makes them easily identifiable without having to open them. E.g. **Do not** name documents 'Read me'.

7.13 **Do** rename digital photographs either with a Photographic Database reference or a brief and specific description.

7.14 **Do not** save multiple versions of a document unless absolutely necessary. Any drafts should be deleted. Only save the final version, preferably with a PDF copy as well.

7.15 **Do not** save the same thing in multiple places as this wastes valuable drive space. E.g. If you have a historic image of a building or site, it should be saved only to 'Historic Images' within the Research folder. It should not also be saved in 'Site Images'.

7.16 **Do not** save copies of a document where it does not belong for your own ease of use - these are historic documents that should be treated as such. Think, '**would I do this with a physical file?**'

7.17 **Do** create your own folders specifically for the site if need be – but ensure they are named accurately. **Do not** give folders ambiguous titles, e.g. 'Text'

7.18 From 2021 it will be obligatory for digital data to be deposited with the ADS. Additionally, the Museum of Liverpool will still require a finds database in Microsoft Access.

## 8 COST OF STORING THE ARCHIVE

8.1 The Museum will expect to receive a one-off storage grant from the developer. The cost per box is to be reviewed annually. In 2020, this will be £100 per box. 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.

8.2 The Museum may waive any storage charge at its own discretion (SMA 1993).

## 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. The time period can be revised once the archive has been assessed. Please contact The Curator 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 Where digital data is going to the ADS (currently advisable, obligatory from 2021) a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is to be supplied before the finds and paper archive is transferred to the museum.

9.4 The whole archive should be transferred into the Museum in one batch. The Curator may request the find database in advance of deposition of the finds to enable smooth transfer of digital information onto the museum collections management system. The deposition of objects without the associated digital and paper archives is not acceptable.

## 10. CONTACT DETAILS

10.1 'The Curator' is the Lead Curator of Regional Archaeology and the Historic Environment at the Museum of Liverpool. The post-holder is Dr Liz Stewart. Contact:

Museum of Liverpool  
Pier Head  
Liverpool Waterfront  
Liverpool  
L3 1DG  
0151 478 4443  
[liz.stewart@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:liz.stewart@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

10.2 The Historic Environment Record for Merseyside is managed by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS). The Historic Environment Record Officer post-holder is Dr Ben Croxford. Contact:

Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Magdalen House  
Trinity Road  
Bootle  
L20 3NJ  
Tel: 0151 934 4958  
[Merseyside.her@eas.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Merseyside.her@eas.sefton.gov.uk)

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

**Accession Number:** a unique Museum number which identifies an archaeological activity .

**Archaeological Archive:** “All parts of the archaeological record, including the finds and digital records as well as the written, drawn and photographic documentation” (after Perrin 2002, 3, Brown 2011, 3). It is formed of two parts; The documentary archive – ALL records made during the project - and the material archive – all objects (artefacts, building materials or environmental remains) and associated samples (of contextual materials or objects) (Brown 2011, 4).

**Archive:** the project, site and research archive as defined by Historic England (2015), and will include all the documentation, photographs, computer information and material evidence from an archaeological project.

**Archaeological project:** Any programme of work that involves the collection of information about an archaeological site, assemblage or object” (Brown 2011, 3).

**The Archive Curator:** manager of the archive repository that will receive the project archive for long-term storage (after Brown 2011, 6). The curator ensures correct standards of storage and care and makes the archive available for use (Brown 2011, 8). In this document this term is referred to as “The Curator”

**“The Curator”:** Curator of Archaeology and the Historic Environment, Museum of Liverpool, National Museums Liverpool: the museum curator responsible for the long-term curation of the archive of excavations within Merseyside in the Museum of Liverpool.

**Conservator:** the person responsible for advising the project archaeologist and archive curator on the conservation requirements of the archive.

**DCMS:** Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

**HE** Historic England formerly **EH:** English Heritage

**HER:** Historic Environment Record

**CifA:** Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

**“The Museum”:** National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, which operates as National Museums Liverpool: the museum body responsible for collecting archaeological archives from excavations in Merseyside. These are managed at the Museum of Liverpool venue, one of seven NML Museums.

**MDA:** Museum Documentation Association

**Merseyside Historic Environment Record:** The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (formerly known also as the Sites and Monuments Record); a register of information about every archaeological ‘site’ and monument known in the Merseyside region.

**MGC:** Museums and Galleries Commission

**MoRPHE:** Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: Historic England guidance on archaeological and historic environmental project management and procedures.

**NML:** National Museums Liverpool

**NMR:** National Monuments Record

**Planning Archaeologist (Curator):** The ClfA defines the Curator as “a person or organisation responsible for the conservation and management of archaeological evidence by virtue of official or statutory duty, including for example County, District or Council archaeological officers, and the national bodies, English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw (Wales), Department of Environment, Northern Ireland and Manx Heritage.”

**Project Archaeologist:** the person or organisation responsible for carrying out the archaeological project and producing the archive.

**Project Designer:** the person who designs the archaeological project and who monitors its progress. In developer-funded projects, this category includes ‘**planning archaeologists**’ who prepare Project Briefs and monitor an archaeological project through the planning process to final deposition of the site archive, and the ‘**archaeological contractors**’ who contribute to the Project Design when drawing up their tender for a project.

**SMA:** Society of Museum Archaeologists

**SMR:** Sites and Monuments Record

**UKIC:** United Kingdom Institute for Conservation



APPENDIX 1

Certificate of Transfer



Art Galleries
International Slavery Museum
Merseyside Maritime Museum
Museum of Liverpool
World Museum

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 Board of Trustees of the National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, [operating under the title National Museums Liverpool (NML)]. I understand that NML may not be able to display the object(s) and that they will be used for any purpose NML considers 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 NML.

Description of object(s)

Donor:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Owner / vendor / personal representative of owner(s)

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Relevant recipients to confirm ownership are/are not attached. Throughout this document the use of the first person admits joint or corporate ownership of the object(s) listed.

Received by (NML):

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

PTO

**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 NML 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 for handling.

**Copyright**

**Please delete section 1 or 2 below, whichever does not apply**

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 NML

or

b) grant the Museum unlimited licence to use the intellectual property in accordance with the objectives of NML

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Data Protection**

For the purposes of UK and European Data Protection laws and regulations, NML 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 or electronic system.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*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 NML, so that the object can be used in research, exhibitions, publicity material or displays in accordance with the wishes of NML.*

## APPENDIX 2

**Marking and Labelling: How to do it right****Visibility**

<b>Making it visible</b>	<b>Making it invisible</b>
You should be able to find it without picking up fragile or heavy objects	It shouldn't be conspicuous when the object is put on display
It should be where you expect to find it	It should be of a suitable scale – findable but not disfiguring.
<i>If the object is in a box or wrapped the number should be repeated on the packaging material</i>	
<i>Mark each piece if it's likely to be dismantled</i>	

**Durability**

In case of accidental water damage it should neither disappear when wet or stain the object	
It should be difficult to remove it accidentally	
It should last – not fade away or rub off	It should be possible to remove it in the future without damage to the object
Choose the least porous part of a composite object	Avoid maker's marks and inscriptions. <i>Where they've stuck the price ticket over the ingredients list</i>

**Suggested Methods**

Object Type	Where?	How?
Archaeological bone or ivory	Select a position according to object	Permanent ink on tie on label
Archaeological metals - dry	If very friable mark container	Permanent ink on Tyvek label
Archaeological metals- wet	Select a position according to object	Permanent ink on Tyvek label
Archaeological wood - dry	Select a position according to object	Permanent ink on Tyvek label
Archaeological wood - wet	Within polythene bag containing object	Permanent ink on Tyvek label
Ceramic vessels and ornaments	Base, avoiding foot (reverse side if base inaccessible)	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Clay pipes	Bowl bottom or, if broken, on pipe stem as well	B67
Glass and enamels	Lower back or under the foot	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Leather objects with smooth firm	Underside or back	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67

surface (not books)		
Leather, soft sueded or napped, and untanned or semitanned skin	Loop through existing hole or mark container/packaging	Tie on acid free card or Tyvek label, permanent ink.
Lithics	If large enough to mark – area of smooth surface.	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Machinery and equipment	Right hand side, low down	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67 OR Paint OR tie-on label
Machinery and equipment	Right hand side, low down	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67 OR Paint OR tie-on label
Pottery sherds	Undecorated surface not on fracture break	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Stained glass	Mark as glass and enamels, on glass rather than leading	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67 OR tie-on label
Stone sculpture	Base, avoiding foot (reverse side if base inaccessible)	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Sub fossil bone/shells	On underside or matrix. Or painted no on outside of tube or plastic container	Acid free paper label, permanent ink, secured with starch paste
Tools	Near the handle junction, on metal part if there is one.	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67
Wooden objects, miscellaneous	Mark unpainted wood, underside, back, or inside edge	Paraloid B72+black or white drawing ink or marker+Paraloid B67

### Tying a label on the object

Choose white acid free paper, or card labels or Tyvek tags with soft white cotton string

Pros	Cons
Easy to get from conservation suppliers	pH (acidity) should be tested if you don't know where they came from
Easy to write on	(Tyvek is slightly more difficult)
Noticeable and easy to find	Easy to remove and lose
Can be written in pencil or pen	Paper labels may fall apart in a flood
	Fibres from cotton may stick to artefacts
	String may be nylon not cotton and deteriorate and harm object
	Cotton string may wick oil from object, oil may cause ink to run
	Paper/cotton labels are an insect food

	source
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## Writing on the object

### Tools

Metal pen, e.g. mapping pen or Rotring + Indian ink	Traditional & excellent in experienced hands	May scratch and blob
Brush	Kindest to most surfaces	Hardest to control
Felt tip/roller ball with pigment ink	Easiest to control	Ink may not be acid free or permanent

### ***Inks/Paints – do not write on paper or textiles with ink or paint***

Must be acid free pigment inks for durability.	White markers are hard to work with. Use titanium white acrylic paint with a brush for dark objects.
Or acrylic paints	Possibility of white base coat.
Need a barrier coat or will soak in to porous surfaces	
Pencils for paper -	Not too hard – see Suggested methods

### ***Barrier coat***

Paraloid B72 poly (ethyl methacrylate/methylacrylate)

Paraloid B67 poly isobutyl methacrylate

B72 20% in acetone is used as a barrier coat on the object. B72 has the best ageing characteristics of any barrier coating – it doesn't change colour and it stays soluble in solvents. It doesn't dissolve in white spirit. Acetone is a quick drying and not very dangerous solvent. But it can damage some types of objects.	B67 20% in white spirit is used as a top coat. B67 also has good ageing characteristics but yellows a little in time. It is used dissolved in white spirit to reduce the risk of the barrier coat of B72 being dissolved.
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### ***Materials***

Paraloid B72 20% solution in acetone

Paraloid B67 20% solution in white spirit

Permanent black markers or Rapidograph pens and permanent black ink

Permanent white markers

Acetone

Artists brushes or brush in cap containers

Paper towels

Cotton wool swabs

### ***Procedure***

Refer to the COSHH Assessment and check that you are working in a well ventilated area.

Select an appropriate area on the object's surface.

Fill the cap brush or an artists brush with the Paraloid B72 solution but do not overload it, to avoid drips.

For non-porous surfaces: With one steady movement move the brush in one direction to make a mark only slightly larger than the size of the number to be applied. Then leave it to dry, minimum 1 hour, but up to 24 hours.

For porous surfaces: The resin might permanently stain the material. Take advice from a conservator. If it is considered appropriate to proceed, it is important to build up enough lacquer to prevent the ink penetrating the surface. Apply at least three coats of B72, allowing it to dry before applying the next coat. Enough lacquer has been applied when it dries to a fairly consistent smooth dull sheen. *Hint: Try this out on a similar trial surface or even paper first then see if you can remove the number or if the ink has penetrated the surface.*

The ink should be applied in quite thick strokes with a pen appropriate to the size of number you want to write. Leave it to set for a minute before applying a top layer of the Paraloid B67. If the ink is applied too thinly the top layer of B67 will pull off or fragment a very fine ink line.

Only one layer of B67 should be necessary, spread lightly over the surface to avoid smudging of the ink below. You can add additional layers after the first is dry to give added protection against the number being worn away.

If you make a mistake wipe it off with a swab soaked in acetone.

**If you do not have Paraloid B67 for the top coat –**

Leave the B72 base coat and ink to dry for at least three days.

You might then be able to quickly apply a thin top coat of Paraloid B72 without disrupting the base coat and ink.

## **Museum of Liverpool archaeological collections**

### ***Collecting and the Regional Archaeology Collection***

The Museum of Liverpool collects archaeological site archives and chance finds from Merseyside and the region. The collection encompasses all periods of human activity, and all classes of finds. It is imperative that paper and digital archives from excavations are preserved alongside the finds to provide contextual information and ensure the archives are a valuable research resource for the future. This is outlined in the Museum of Liverpool 'Collection Development Plan.

The collection of finds for a museum collection sometimes needs to be selective due to the bulk quantity of finds recovered from some sites. The process of making selections about the retention of finds will be unique to each site, and material retained need to reflect the archaeology of the site, its evidence about the human past, and the story it tells. Decisions about retention and disposal need to be made with The Curator, and will relate to evidence encapsulated within the finds and their display and research potential. However, these Guidelines aim to provide some broad recommendations about the considerations which should be taken into account in deciding which materials should move forward to accessioning into the Museum of Liverpool collection and which should be recorded and dispersed/disposed-of. These guidelines draw from the advice of the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) and the archaeological process outlined in the Historic England MoRPHE guide. The SMA underline that there is a presumption towards the retention of the complete site archives and all finds (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993).

The procedure for the accessioning of archaeological sites into the Regional Archaeology Collection is usually undertaken in advance of excavation in order that all items in an archive (paper, digital and finds) can be marked with the accession number before deposition of the archive. All finds to be accessioned into the collection are encompassed in the transfer of title signed at this stage. Unexpected finds of Treasure or human remains made during the excavation will be subject to separate procedures (Treasure Act 1996; Historic England, 2016).

All finds recovered from a site will be recorded on a finds database, this may be as individual finds or bulk groups of types by context. Once selection, retention and disposal process is complete the database of finds selected for retention will be amalgamated into the SPECTRUM collections management system, Mimsy. While decisions not to retain items for the Museum of Liverpool Regional Archaeology Collection will take place before individual items are given an accession number we follow best practice in referring to the National Museums Liverpool disposal policy to inform decisions. Two of the key strands informing decisions to deaccession existing collections: "where the object is a duplicate of another item already owned by NML"; and "where the object is in the Board's opinion is unsuitable for retention in the collections and can be disposed of without detriment to the interests of students or members of the public" would be central considerations for not selecting items from an excavation to be accessioned.

The Museum of Liverpool Archaeology curatorial team, working closely with contracting units, takes the responsibility for selecting a representative and useful group of finds for accessioning and long term curation. This will result from a discussion of staff associated with the project. Finds not selected for the collection will be offered back to landowners.

These guidelines do not consider the potential disposal of items already individually accessions into the collection, which would be subject to the NML Deaccessioning and Disposal Procedure, and referring to national guidelines (Museums Association 2014).

### ***Principles for Retention and Disposal***

Considerations of selection, retention and disposal of archaeological finds will always be specific to individual sites. For some sites it may be appropriate to retain the complete archive, for others retention of large quantities of similar bulk finds would provide no identifiable additional research or display potential for the future. Disposal is therefore sometimes desirable, especially as there is a disparity, nationally, between the museum resource for storage and curation and the volume of material being excavated. In selecting objects for retention, the archaeology curatorial team should consider:

- Intrinsic significance
- Group and contextual significance
- Present and future research potential
- Present and future display potential
- Quantity of finds of same type within archive

(Society for Museum Archaeologists 1993).

The integrity of the site archive, and collecting a representative group of finds from a site is important.

#### *Intrinsic significance*

An object holds within it unique intrinsic significance, including date, rarity, story an object tells about the site, evidence about people's lives in the past, and the history of the region. Group and contextual significance will impact the significance of an individual object. Disposal needs to be considered holistically for the range of finds from the site, and the locality, considering how they together paint a picture of the place in the past.

#### *Group and contextual significance*

The significance of finds is sometimes associated with the location in which they are found – a type of find which may be common in one region is rare in another; or a find of a particular type may define a historic function of a site in a new way. On some sites it may also be important to collect finds with reference to their spatial distribution across the site or associated with features or structures.

#### *Research potential*

Archaeological finds which are collected into the Museum of Liverpool Regional Archaeology Collection will be retained for future research. It is often difficult to foresee the research potential for site archives in the future, as we cannot predict how research agendas, scientific techniques and potential means for reinterpretation of evidence will evolve. However, it is important to retain a large enough selection of material from a site to allow for a thorough understanding of the material culture represented on the site, to enable comparative analysis, and to allow for some destructive sampling in the future.

#### *Display potential*

Archaeological finds which are collected into the Museum of Liverpool Regional Archaeology Collection will be available for future exhibitions. The finds which can be used to tell stories about the region in the past, to explore the lives of people in the past and which will engage visitors effectively will be of great value in exhibition development in the future.

#### *Quantities of finds of that type within archive*

In many collections areas of collecting become 'closed' when a large sample of a type of object is represented in the collection. In the Museum of Liverpool's Urban History Collection, for example, the cargo handling and printing collections are closed as there are many examples of objects on these themes and it wouldn't be good use of resource to collect further. For the archaeological collection, consideration will be given to the extent of collecting of similar material, but the presence of similar material on different sites may present opportunities for comparative work on production and use of classes of finds which would benefit from ongoing collecting of similar materials.

#### *Sampling*



The project design for some archaeological excavations will set out methodologies for excavation which include a formal sampling strategy. In these cases all finds will be collected. The site project design will be collected as part of the paper and digital archive.

Suggested approaches for selection and retention of finds may be set out at the start of the project, but these can be adapted as the nature and extent of finds are revealed throughout the project (ARCHES, Section 4).

While the archaeology curatorial team would always initially presume towards retention of finds, it needs to be borne in mind that indiscriminate collecting of all finds from sites with bulk quantities of some classes of finds could be an irresponsible drain on museum resources.

### ***Finds categories***

The Society for Museum Archaeologists has published a detailed listing of types of finds and possible guidelines for selection and retention. That should be consulted in the process of making decisions on selection and retention of finds (SMA 1993, 24-39).

At a regional level there will be some classes of finds, and some emphases of period which will be at slight variance from the national guidelines, for example, the Society for Museums Archaeologists advises that, for Roman ceramics: "body sherds of coarse, wheel-made, mass-produced wares in identified fabrics may be considered for dispersal subject to the nature of the context and the sampling and recording procedures employed by the excavators, but this should be balanced with the need to retain key assemblages intact" (SMA 1993). The rarity of Roman ceramics in this region currently would be likely to cause us to collect any examples available from Merseyside.

While each site will be different, the likely selection criteria would be:

*Keep:* all lithics and prehistoric finds; all pre-AD1750 metal finds, all pre-AD1750 ceramics from stratified contexts, all ceramics pre-dating AD1650 from field-walking, post-AD1750 assemblages of ceramics which contribute to our understanding of manufacture, trade and/or consumption, tobacco pipe pre-dating AD1850 (stems may be discarded unless stamped), ceramic building material pre-dating AD1700 (unless in large quantities, in which case sample).

*Sample:* industrial waste post-dating AD1750, large (>100 sherds) assemblages of late (post-1800) darkwares, ceramics dating AD1650-1900 from fieldwalking, common non-ferrous items post-dating AD1750 (e.g. copper alloy buckles), ceramic building material AD1700-1900.

*Potentially discard:* badly corroded and/or unidentifiable iron objects post-dating c.AD1750, Industrial waste post-dating 1900, low denomination coins post-dating 1838, abraded ceramics from fieldwalking post-dating AD1800, all ceramics from fieldwalking post-dating AD1900, plastic and or similar items, all objects post-dating 1950 unless these can be demonstrated to contribute significantly to our understanding of the site and/or its context, tobacco pipe post-dating AD1900 unless typologically significant, ceramic building material post-dating AD1900.

### ***Collecting context***

It is presumed that a complete documentary archive will be deposited with the Museum in paper and digital format, which will be retained complete. The museum therefore undertakes to manage software upgrade and data storage format management in the long term - part of our documentation plan for retrospective documentation.

### ***Resources for Selection work***

The process of selection, retention and disposal is time-consuming, and may force site archives into a documentation backlog if there isn't the staff resource to undertake the work. It is important that the excavating company leads this process with detailed discussion and advice from the Museum of Liverpool archaeology curatorial team.

All archives must be prepared following the Museum of Liverpool Archives Deposition Guidelines. <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/archaeology/Archive-deposition-guidelines.pdf>

A one-off 'box fee' storage grant is charged against the deposition of an archaeological archive into the Museum of Liverpool collection. While this income will never be able to contribute to larger scale capital investments in storage infrastructure it is important that this finance is used effectively against costs associated with the collections.

### ***Means of disposal***

Care should be taken not to contaminate the archaeological record by indiscriminate disposal.

Finds not selected for retention will be offered to the landowner. Use in handling collections would be considered before reburial or other disposal.

For finds to be reburied, on larger long-term excavations reburial on site with backfill would be a preference. Permanent destruction by grinding to hardcore is appropriate.

### ***Recording Disposal***

All finds recovered from an archaeological excavation are processed in the post excavation phase of the project: cleaned, identified, and catalogued. Analysis is undertaken of the profile of finds, recording the proportions of different types of finds to aid the characterisation of the site in the final report.

A record of all finds will be retained as part of the site archive, especially in the finds access database, where finds which are disposed-of will be recorded and listed as 'DISCARDED'. Discarded finds will not have records created for them on Mimsy as they have not entered the collection. On Mimsy a note will be added in the site record to outline the stage of documentation of the site and any disposal which has taken place.

### **Society of Museum Archaeologists definitions of terms**

**Selection:** the process of determining which objects and records are to be retained

**Retention:** the inclusion of objects and records in an archive and/or muse collection, for long-term curation and use

**Dispersal:** the process of determining the next phase of use for objects

**Disposal:** the controlled abandonment or destruction of an object