

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

enabling archaeological archiving

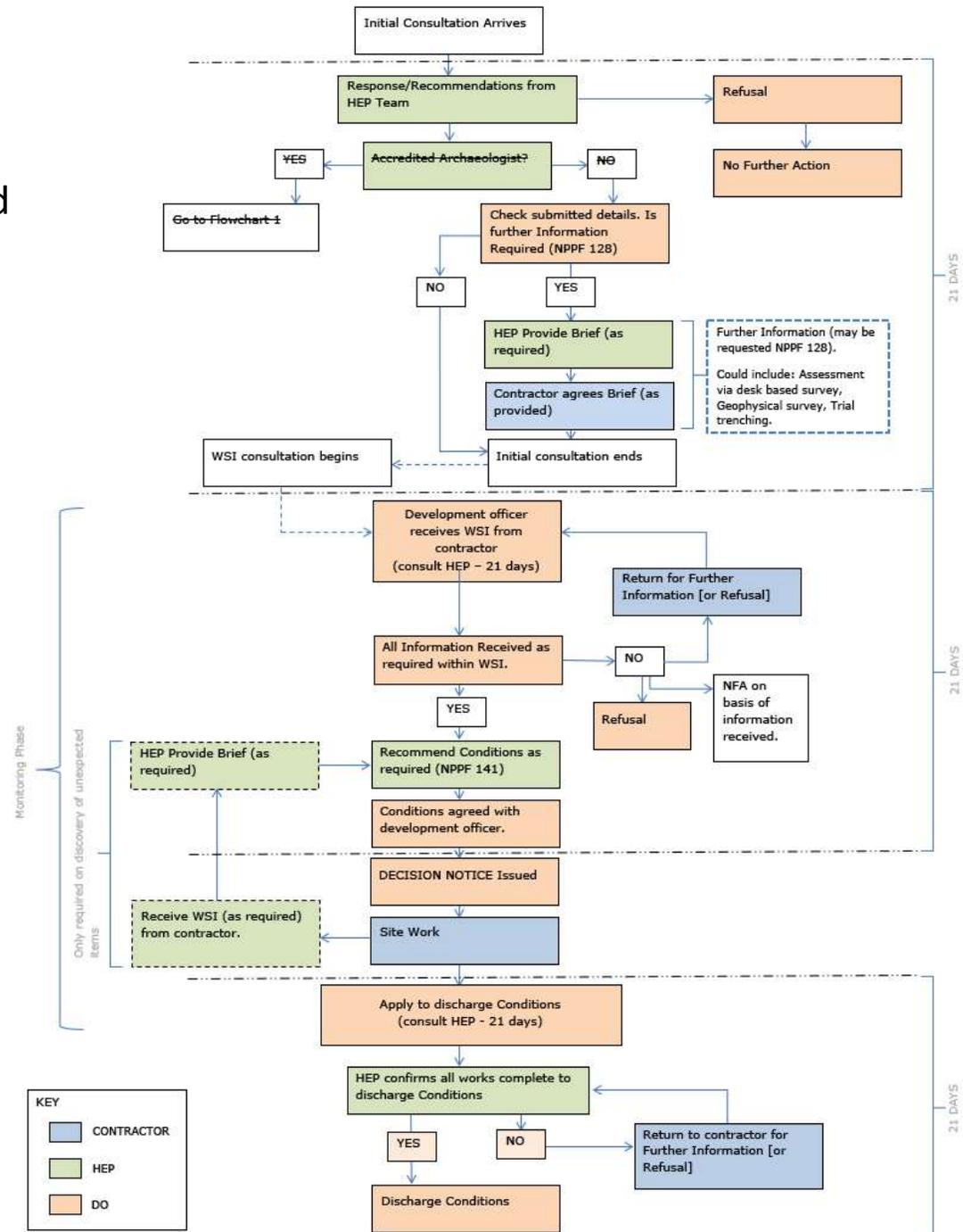


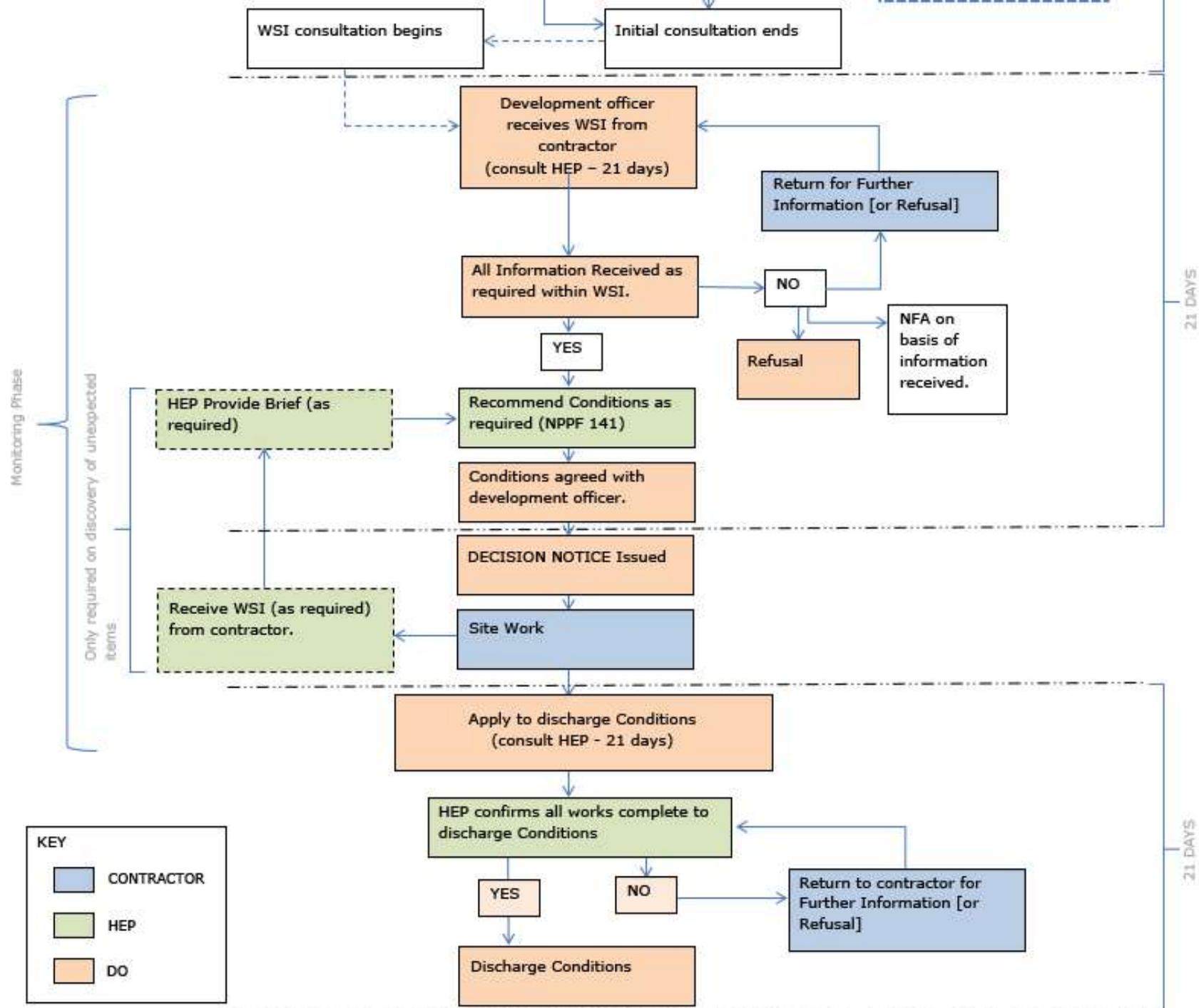
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- Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) - a written statement on the objectives of a project, including methods, timetable and resources. These form the framework for the execution of the project through to completion, set out in sufficient detail to be quantifiable, implemented and monitored.
- WSI produced in response to 'briefs' from DM Archaeologists
- Archaeological contractors submit WSI's in response
- In a planning context, the applicant or their agent should provide a WSI in response to the brief.
- It must have sufficient detail to satisfy the DM Archaeologist and is an appropriate response to the brief
- It is the basis of monitoring the archaeological aspects of the development
 - it must sufficient detail to provide a benchmark against which the results of the work may be measured
- It must be agreed by all relevant parties before work can commence.

Example of an Archaeological Flowchart showing processes and stages





CiFA standard and guidance: archaeological excavation (2014)

WSI's should contain:

- a) a statement on the technical, research and ethical competences of the project team, including relevant professional accreditation
- b) non-technical summary
- c) site location (including map) and descriptions
- d) context of the project
- e) geological and topographical background
- f) archaeological and historical background
- g) general and specific research aims of the project
- h) methods
- i) collection and disposal strategy for artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials
- j) arrangements for immediate conservation of artefacts
- k) post-fieldwork assessment and analysis of project data
- l) report preparation (method)
- m) publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met
- n) copyright
- o) archive deposition, including wherever possible identification of a recipient museum or other repository and its requirements
- p) timetable
- q) staffing
- r) a statement on the training and CPD built into the project, where appropriate
- s) a statement on compliance with relevant professional ethical and technical standards (including data standards)
- t) a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project
- u) a statement on the research value of the results, referencing the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to published research frameworks or agenda where available
- v) a statement on public benefits for the client or commissioner, if appropriate, and in the context of developer-led investigation a statement on adding value to the scheme from the heritage asset or its investigation by archaeology
- w) a statement on the potential public relations and/or corporate social responsibility benefits for the commissioning body arising from the project should be considered
- x) Health and Safety considerations
- y) environmental protection considerations
- z) monitoring procedures
- aa) contingency arrangements (if appropriate)

CiFA standard and guidance: archaeological excavation (2014) relevant points for archaeological archives

g) general and specific research aims of the project

i) collection and disposal strategy for artefacts, ecofacts, and all paper, graphic and digital materials

m) publication and dissemination proposals, detailing how the needs of different relevant audiences will be met

n) copyright

o) archive deposition, including wherever possible identification of a recipient museum or other repository and its requirements

p) timetable

t) a statement on public engagement and participation tailored to the project

u) a statement on the research value of the results, referencing the success of the project in achieving its initial or other research aims with reference to published research frameworks or agenda where available

z) monitoring procedures

Current practice

- Range of pre-WSI practice:
 - Briefs (occasionally)
 - Guidance & advice
 - Email / telephone discussions
 - Site visits
 - Reliance on existing relationships/knowledge with archaeological contractors
- Deposition of physical practice
 - Where stated usually 'local' collecting museum
 - Some DM Archaeologists request contractors get/seek acquisition or reference number before commencement of work (or as soon is feasible)
- Reports/grey literature
 - Nearly all require submission to OASIS
- Digital archive
 - Most require submission to ADS

WSI: Enabling archaeological archiving

Can WSI's be used to do this?

Yes, whilst each planning authority assesses the WSI's submitted by archaeological contractors, there are no region-wide standards or guidelines for archaeological archives for these WSI's.

Standards and guidelines will ensure that archaeological archives are considered more effectively at the beginning of the archaeological process.

WSI: Enabling archaeological archiving – What could be done?

- Standards, manuals and/or guidelines should be endorsed that address archiving procedures, data management processes, selection strategy, transfer of title, and recognised repositories
- Briefs and WSIs should specify the deposit of born-digital data within a Trusted Digital Repository and the assemblage and physical archive with a museum/public repositories that meet the required standards; and make realistic provision for the costs involved.
- A requirement that OASIS records must be created should be contained within the standards
- Development Management archaeologists must reference the standard in their briefs and/or guidance for archaeological interventions and monitor its implementation
- Referencing the regional research framework should be encouraged in WSI's
- Ensure that the significance of the selection strategy at all stages of archaeological work is fully recognized and documented by all parties
- Briefs and WSIs should specify opportunities for community engagement such as public open days and collaborations with local museums, funded by the developer
- CifA, FAME, ALGAO and SMA should endorse the standard framework, once agreed to ensure that they are adopted and implemented

WSI: Enabling archaeological archiving – Challenges

- Scope and agreement of standardised guidance across the region from all stakeholders
- Museums being willing to provide acquisition or reference numbers earlier
- Co-ordination between museums and contractors for public engagement
- Agreed broad principles for selection and retention that would be contained within WSI
- Monitoring the archival/deposition elements of the WSI – DM time and resources are under increasing pressure as Local Authority budgets are reduced