

The Commercial Archaeology Sector

The Commercial Archaeology Sector refers to that part of the economy that provides archaeological services to clients. These services are primarily required to assess the impacts and mitigate the effects of developments on archaeological cultural heritage. Commercial archaeological services are provided in both **pre-planning** (to support planning applications) and **post-planning** (to fulfil planning conditions) contexts. The sector comprises undertakings whose principal business involves one or a combination of the following archaeological activities:

- Assessments: including desk-top and fieldwork for Archaeological Impact Assessments, Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessments, Environmental Impact Assessments, and Built Heritage Impact Assessments.
- Surveys: encompassing geophysical survey, Geographical Information System (GIS) analysis, Lidar assessment, buildings recording, geomatics survey, drone survey, photogrammetry, and underwater archaeological survey.
- Excavations: comprising the identification, manual excavation, and recording of archaeological deposits, specifically through archaeological monitoring of groundworks, test excavations, and full excavation (archaeological resolution).
- Post-Excavation Services: the processing of artefacts and ecofacts, assessment and analysis of site records, artefact illustration, use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) or Geographical Information Systems (GIS) for digitising drawings, and the production and editing of final reports and publications.
- Specialist Services: highly specialised analysis including finds analysis and conservation, osteoarchaeology, zooarchaeology, environmental analysis, and archaeobotanical analysis.
- Consultancy: including advice to clients regarding archaeological risks, scope of services, detailed design input, procurement of services, cost and programme estimates, project management, liaison with the statutory authorities, planning compliance, public engagement, contract management and confirmation of archaeological deliverables.

Category of worker

Non-licensed Archaeological Workers are any workers employed in the Commercial Archaeology Sector who are not eligible to hold an archaeological excavation license but carry out one or a combination of the following activities;

- Desk-top Assessments: assisting in, or undertaking, Archaeological Impact Assessments, Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessments, Environmental Impact Assessments, Built Heritage Impact Assessments, Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments. This involves:
 - the undertaking of research (archaeological, historical, cartographic),
 - identifying impacts and effects of developments on archaeological heritage,
 - preparing mitigation recommendations,
 - production of figures,
 - liaison with design teams, contractors and statutory authorities,
 - writing and editing of reports.

- Surveys: Assisting in, or undertaking archaeological surveys, involving:
 - archaeological geophysical survey,
 - Geographical Information System (GIS) analysis,
 - Lidar assessment (including capture, processing and interpretation of data and visualisations),
 - historic buildings or features recording,
 - geomatics survey,
 - topographical surveys,
 - drone (aerial, water and underwater) survey,
 - photogrammetry (including capture and processing of images and production of digital data and visualisations),
 - underwater archaeological surveys.

- Archaeological Excavations: assisting, supervising or undertaking archaeological excavation, including monitoring of development works, test excavations, and archaeological excavations on land and under water to assess or preserve sites or shipwrecks by record, or to recover archaeological objects. These activities involve:
 - identification of archaeological deposits, features, historic human remains, and sites,
 - manual excavation of archaeological deposits, features, historic human remains, and sites,
 - forensic archaeological excavation of human remains,
 - metal detection (with required consents),
 - recording of archaeological deposits, features, and sites, including the production of scale drawings, written record, site registers, photography, photogrammetry, and 3D modelling,
 - survey of archaeological sites and landscapes (e.g. theodolite, total station, GPS, drone survey, multi-spectral or laser scanning),
 - underwater archaeological excavations,
 - recovery and logging of artefacts and samples in registers and labelling bags for same,
 - on-site processing of artefacts and samples,
 - set-up, maintenance, and removal of archaeological excavation site offices and welfare facilities.

- Post-Excavation Services: assisting in, or undertaking services to record, preserve, process, analyse and present the results of archaeological excavations, involving:
 - processing of artefacts and ecofacts (bone, charcoal, pollen, soil, insects)

- storage and remedial conservation of artefacts,
 - washing of artefacts and bones (where appropriate),
 - packaging, labelling and cataloguing artefacts and samples,
 - washing environmental samples,
 - sieving (wet and dry) soil samples,
 - flotation of soil samples to recover environmental samples,
 - cataloguing artefacts, samples, and excavation site records,
 - measuring and weighing artefacts and samples,
 - entering excavation site records into computer databases,
 - scanning, digitising and interpreting site drawings, plans and surveys using GIS, CAD, or other graphics software or digital tools used to represent or animate archaeological data,
 - analysing site records,
 - researching the results of archaeological excavations or specialist analysis,
 - preparing and transmitting artefacts, samples and site records to specialists,
 - preparing and transmitting artefacts, samples, site records and digital data to archives and final repositories (the National Museum of Ireland, the National Monuments Service, the Digital Repository of Ireland or any other final repository for artefacts, samples and records agreed with the Statutory Authorities),
 - preparing drawings, plates, illustrations and graphics for archaeological excavation reports, publications or presentations,
 - preparing or presenting the analysis or results of archaeological excavations at conferences, public events, on social media, or to traditional media,
 - writing, editing or reviewing reports, including specialist reports, post-excavation assessments, preliminary reports, stratigraphic reports, and final reports,
 - writing, editing or reviewing publications of the results of archaeological excavations.
- Specialist Services: providing specialist expertise in the preservation, analysis and interpretation of artefacts and archaeological objects recovered during archaeological excavations, from historic archives, or by chance discovery, involving:
 - ceramic artefacts analysis,
 - metallic artefacts analysis,
 - glass artefacts analysis,
 - organic artefacts (including fabric, leather, or wood) analysis,
 - human skeletal remains analysis,
 - zooarchaeology (animal) remains analysis,

- archaeoentomology (insect) remains analysis,
 - archaeobotanical remains (pollen, cereals, burnt wood) analysis,
 - dendrochronology (tree rings) analysis,
 - geoarchaeology (the application of earth-science techniques to analyse and interpret archaeological stratigraphy and deposits) analysis,
 - radiocarbon and other forms of scientific dating,
 - conservation of artefacts and archaeological objects.
- Consultancy services: assisting in or undertaking archaeological consultancy services for clients. These activities involve:
 - client liaison,
 - interaction with stakeholders, contractors, and other service providers,
 - participation in design teams,
 - liaison with the statutory authorities (NMS, NMI, Local Authority archaeologists),
 - analysis and strategies to manage archaeological risks,
 - preparing scope of archaeological services,
 - advising on procurement of archaeological services,
 - archaeological cost estimation,
 - preparing programmes for archaeological services,
 - preparing specifications and contract documents for archaeological services,
 - archaeological project management,
 - advising clients on planning compliance,
 - contract management for archaeological services,
 - review and confirmation deliverables for archaeological services comply with specifications and planning requirements.