

## **London Gateway**

### **Wreck Clearance**

#### **Procedures for Finds and Samples**

**DRAFT 21/09/07**

#### **1. SCOPE**

- 1.1. The finds anticipated in the course of the London Gateway Wreck Clearance fall into two principal categories
  - Finds that are of archaeological, historical or cultural interest.
  - Finds that are of no archaeological, historical or cultural interest.
- 1.2. All finds that are of archaeological etc. interest will form the material archive of the project. Decisions regarding recording, handling, treatment, disposal etc. will be informed by archaeological and archival standards. Records and photographs etc. of such finds will be incorporated within the project archive.
- 1.3. Finds that are not of archaeological etc. interest will be discarded by WA and handed to the PLA as soon as is convenient. Any records or photographs obtained by WA will be incorporated within the project archive, noting that the material was discarded.
- 1.4. Deposits (i.e. sediments) of archaeological/historical/cultural interest that do not comprise artefactual remains will not be considered to be 'finds' but may be subject to sampling. Any artefactual material subsequently discovered in the course of processing such samples will be treated as finds thereafter.
- 1.5. Both categories – finds of archaeological etc. interest and finds of no archaeological interest – are also likely to fall within one or more other categories to which additional legal provisions apply, namely:
  - 'Wreck'
  - Ordnance
  - Military aircraft
  - Human remains
- 1.6. Ordnance, military aircraft and human remains all warrant special procedures, which are detailed below.
- 1.7. 'Wreck' includes all forms of material lost or deposited from a vessel, including (elements of) hull, propulsion, fittings, cargo, personal possessions etc. 'Wreck' also includes material lost or deposited from aircraft.

- 1.8. It has been agreed that wreck that is not of archaeological etc. interest will be subject to the PLA's powers to dispose of wreck as set out in Section 120 of the Port of London Act 1968.
- 1.9. Wreck that is of archaeological etc. interest will be subject to the procedures relating to wreck in the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.
- 1.10. Finds that are not wreck include things deposited other than by a vessel or aircraft, including prehistoric finds deposited at the coast or on former landsurfaces, and (elements of) coastal, navigational and military infrastructure constructed on the shore or seabed.
- 1.11. For the purposes of these procedures, 'disposal' is taken to mean the handover of finds to the organisation or individual that is taking responsibility for their subsequent curation or care, which may be the owner or another party. 'Discard' is taken to mean that finds will not be subject to further curation or care, and may be dealt with as waste. WA regards itself as having professional responsibilities for any finds that it discovers up until the point of disposal or discard.
- 1.12. It is anticipated that the archive (finds; paper; digital) arising from LG Wreck Clearance will be deposited on the basis of agreement prior to fieldwork between the PLA and a recognised archival institution. WA will observe the requirements of the archival institution in numbering and ordering project finds and documentation in the course of fieldwork. It is anticipated that the archive will be deposited following implementation of the proposals for analysis and publication made in the post-excavation assessment.
- 1.13. Procedures for finds and samples will be guided by the IFA *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*, 2005[check], and guidance provided by the archival institution.

## **2. ORDNANCE, MILITARY AIRCRAFT AND HUMAN REMAINS**

- 2.1. Procedures for reporting ordnance, military aircraft and human remains will normally come into effect upon discovery, i.e. with the material still on the seabed, unless the character of the find only becomes apparent upon recovery.
- 2.2. Any finds that are suspected of being ordnance, firearms, explosives etc. will be reported immediately by WA to the PLA's River Regime and Environment Manager (PLA RREM). The PLA RREM will inform the Joint Services EOD Operations Centre. WA's subsequent actions will be guided by advice received from JS EOD.
- 2.3. Any finds that are suspected of being military aircraft will be reported immediately to the PLA RREM. The PLA RREM will inform the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA: Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre – SO3 Historic Casualty Casework). WA's subsequent actions will be

guided by *Crashed Military Aircraft of Historical Interest: Licensing of Excavations in the UK – Guidance Notes for Recovery Groups*, April 2007, and by advice received from SPVA. In the case of a military aircraft being investigated under licence, any human remains will be reported immediately in accordance with paragraph 14 of *Guidance Notes for Recovery Groups*, April 2007.

- 2.4. In the case of any other human remains, as of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007 the requirement for issuing and conditions attached to licences for the excavation of human remains is subject to legal review.
- 2.5. Until such time as the legal position has been clarified by the Ministry of Justice, WA will, in the event of discovery of human remains, immediately inform the PLA RREM. The PLA RREM will inform the Coroner, the Police and the Ministry of Justice via submission of an application form for [] 'Archaeological/Accidental/Site Investigation Licence regarding the disturbance of human remains'.
- 2.6. The human remains will initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Where a licence for their excavation is issued by the Ministry of Justice, the requirements of that licence will be followed.
- 2.7. Where the Ministry of Justice is unable to issue a licence and it is reasonably determined that the remains are likely to be subject to further unavoidable disturbance or deterioration, the PLA RREM will advise the Ministry of Justice of their intention to excavate the remains with due decency and in accordance with the general conditions formerly attached to licences issued for excavation of human remains under similar circumstances.
- 2.8. Should human remains be excavated and recovered, all excavation and post-excavation will be in accordance with the standards set out in the IFA *Technical Paper No 7 Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains* (IFA 2004).
- 2.9. The final placing of human remains following analysis will be subject to the requirements of the Ministry of Justice Licence.
- 2.10. As ordnance, military aircraft and human remains may also be of archaeological etc. interest, and constitute or be immediately associated with 'wreck', then the general procedures set out below will also apply, insofar as they are compatible with the special procedures set out above.

### **3. GENERAL PROCEDURES**

- 3.1. Except in the case of ordnance etc., military aircraft and human remains, the procedures set out here will generally come into effect upon recovery of the find to the surface.
- 3.2. Finds will normally be held by WA. For extensive assemblages and large, unwieldy or otherwise sensitive finds, provision may be made – by prior

agreement – for finds to be transferred to and held by an appropriate institution.

- 3.3. Finds that are not 'wreck' and which are of archaeological, historical or cultural interest will be held by WA pending decisions on ownership, disposal and/or discard. Normally, the owner of the seabed will be the owner of finds that are not wreck. WA will seek the permission of the landowner to donate finds that are not wreck to the organisation curating the archive.
- 3.4. Finds that are 'wreck' and which are of archaeological, historical or cultural interest are subject to the Merchant Shipping Act 1995. It is the PLA's responsibility to notify the Receiver about wreck that is of archaeological interest found or taken into possession of WA in the course of its services to PLA. WA will prepare a droit and a list of wreck on behalf of the PLA, to be signed and sent to the receiver by the PLA's River Regime and Environment Manager. Such droits and lists will be prepared and submitted periodically (e.g. monthly or at the close of the relevant phase of site investigations) by WA to the PLA RREM.
- 3.5. It is noted that owners have up to one year to make a claim to the Receiver in respect of wreck and it is anticipated that the Receiver will not generally make a decision about disposal in less than one year. However, WA will seek an earlier decision under Section 240 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 if the wreck is so perishable that early disposal (to a museum capable of providing active conservation, for example) will favour the survival of the find.
- 3.6. Pending the decision of the Receiver, wreck will be held by WA on behalf of the PLA. WA will, on behalf of PLA, comply with directions given by the Receiver. WA will inform the Receiver of any change in the location where the finds are held.

#### **4. HOLDING AND TRANSPORTING FINDS**

- 4.1. WA will provide and maintain suitable facilities onboard the diving vessel for a reasonable quantity of small and medium sized finds to be held passively. Generally, WA will keep finds onboard until there is a suitable opportunity to transport the material to its Salisbury base.
- 4.2. Where extensive recoveries are anticipated, additional onboard provision will be made.
- 4.3. If necessary, WA will set up a suitable temporary local facility onshore, within which the finds will remain the responsibility of WA.
- 4.4. WA will seek to transport finds between the diving vessel, any local facility, and WA's Salisbury base in the course of its normal operations. However, WA will arrange additional transport of finds if necessary due to volume, storage constraints, urgent treatment etc.

- 4.5. In the case of large, unwieldy or otherwise sensitive finds, special arrangements will be made for handling, storing, transporting etc. the find. Where possible, these arrangements will be made prior to the find being recovered from the seabed.
- 4.6. WA maintains facilities at its Salisbury base to hold passively a reasonable quantity of small and medium sized finds. This provision will be maintained for up to one year after recovery pending implementation of decisions on disposal/discard. WA may hold finds for more than one year after recovery if decisions and/or their implementation are delayed.

## **5. FINDS PROCESSING**

- 5.1. All retained finds will be registered in WA's Finds Management database and any special requirements noted. A monitoring and maintenance programme will be prepared and implemented.
- 5.2. All retained finds will be processed in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological material* (2005). All finds will be recorded and labelled appropriately.
- 5.3. Objects that require immediate conservation treatment to prevent deterioration will be treated according to guidelines laid down in *First Aid for Underwater Finds* (Robinson 1998). WA will make a full record of any treatment given and these records will form part of the archive.
- 5.4. Finds handling and initial processing will normally be carried out by WA's field staff, with telephone/email support from WA Finds Staff based in Salisbury. In the event that finds need to be assessed by WA Finds Staff onboard or at any local facility, or external advice is required onboard or at any local facility, WA will make appropriate provision.

## **6. CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. All material held by WA will be subject to a Conservation Assessment within four weeks after recovery to gauge whether special measures are required while the material is being held. This Conservation Assessment will be carried out by WA with advice from Wiltshire Conservation Centre and/or other appropriate specialists. In some cases it may be more appropriate to carry out all or part of the Conservation Assessment at an earlier stage - in advance of recovery, or onboard immediately following recovery, for example.
- 6.2. WA will implement recommendations arising from the Conservation Assessment for the duration that finds are held by WA.
- 6.3. Where no special measures are recommended, finds will be conserved, bagged and boxed in accordance with guidelines set out in the United Kingdom's Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guidelines No 2* (UKIC 1984).

## **7. SAMPLES**

7.1. Selection of palaeoenvironmental samples for processing will be undertaken on the advice of WA's Environmental Staff. Between 50% and 100% of samples will be processed. Processing and assessment of samples shall follow the following guidelines:

- Bulk samples selected for processing will be wet-sieved/floated and washed over a 500 $\mu$  mesh for the recovery of palaeobotanical and other organic remains, and refloated to maximise recovery;
- Non-organic residues will be washed through a nest of sieves of 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and 1mm mesh to maximise finds recovery;
- Both organic and non-organic residues will be dried under controlled conditions;
- The dried inorganic residues will be sorted for small finds or any non-buoyant palaeoenvironmental remains and scanned with a magnet to recover ferrous debris such as hammerscale;
- The dried organic fractions will be sorted under a light microscope to identify the range of species or other material on a presence/absence basis, the degree of preservation of the bio-archaeological material and the rough proportions of different categories of material present;
- In the event that waterlogged deposits are sampled, further processing will be undertaken as appropriate, including paraffin flotation to recover insect remains. Any such remains will be scanned to identify and assess their potential;
- All organic residues will be stabilised and preserved for storage.

## **8. POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT**

8.1. All assemblages (finds, samples and associated paper, drawn and digital archives) will be subject to post-excavation assessment within one year of recovery. The assessment of finds will include X-raying where necessary. The post-excavation assessment will address the potential for further analysis and publication, wider dissemination, retention/discard of finds, any further cleaning, stabilisation or other conservation measures required prior to deposition, and detailed arrangements for deposition of the entire archive.