

## Archaeology

### Background

Ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of workers is key. Within Archaeology works, a wide range of activities are carried out which are heavily labour intensive with large numbers of people working on site carrying out site walkovers to large scale excavations involving major groundworks. Of particular concern within Archaeology are; rigorous manual handling with potential to cause musculo skeletal disorders, inappropriate specification of PPE, utilities, ground conditions, contaminated sites, excavations, work at height and unexploded ordnance. Archaeology works requires entry into excavations and direct contact with soil/ground materials. Therefore, it is important that we ensure health safety and wellbeing is integral to all works carried out and sustained. In 2019/2020, 4 Riddors and 133 Near misses were recorded across the FAME community (Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers – across 92 respondents employed 2386 FTE positions).

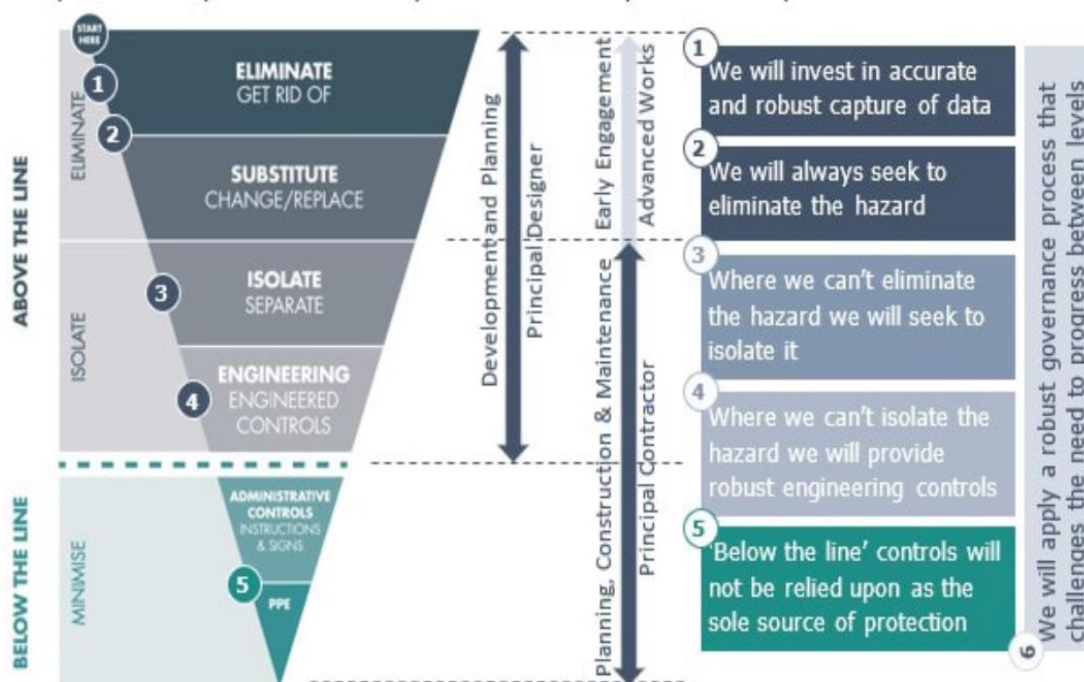
### Vision

To eliminate and/or reduce the incidences of Accidents/Incidents on Highways England projects and to educate and provide best practice standards for Archaeology. Focusing on the environment of the industry, which is labour intensive in all elements of weather, with a range of activity that is risk to the musculo skeletal system.

### Principles of Approach to be Adopted (incl Application of Hierarchy of Control)

#### Overview

As a supplier community we have agreed to adopt the following approach as a **common standard** .....following the principles of prevention and adopting a hierarchy of controls as described below, commencing from the earliest consideration of the design process. Creation of a Raising the Bar guidance for this subject. *This will require a review and update of all current processes and procedures.*



The principles of this approach are:

1. **We will always seek to identify and eliminate the hazard** in the design and planning of archaeological works. The location of excavations as set out for example in a 'written scheme(s) of investigation' (WSI) will be planned to avoid identified below and above ground non-archaeological hazards such as services, ground contamination, and environmentally sensitive features. Designing to minimize other key risk such as plant movement and spoil management often follows after the archaeological specific design has been set out. Collaboration is necessary and essential with other parts of the project design team in order to ensure hazard information obtained for other purposes can inform the archaeological works. It is not always practical for these hazards to be fully known or understood when the archaeological design is first prepared. The archaeological specific design and considerations cannot override health and safety requirements and will be modified to address hazards, as the risk they pose becomes understood.
2. **We will ensure that all hand tools are selected based on dynamic assessment of the hazards** and risks present on the specific site in question, taking into account the nature of the work being undertaken. The level of perceived risks – e.g., low risk of fire caused by utilities strike – will be balanced against the hazard presented by use of hand tools that are inappropriate for the work being undertaken – e.g., insulated shovels that are heavy and cumbersome, not suited for prolonged use, and which increase the likelihood of Musculo-skeletal injury. (DP)
3. **We will ensure that all edge protection is selected based on dynamic assessment of the hazards** and risks present on the specific site in question, taking into account the nature of the work being undertaken. The level of perceived risks – e.g., low risk of falls into excavations less than 500mm deep - will be balanced against the hazard presented by unnecessary use of edge protection fencing e.g., risks associated with transportation, loading/unloading and manual handling.
4. **We will ensure that the safety measures that eliminate and reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls** are selected as a result of dynamic assessment of the hazards and risks present on the specific site in question, taking into account the nature of the work being undertaken. Weather conditions and the process of archaeological excavation itself, create a constantly changing environment within which people move around as part of the daily work. Appropriate safety measures should be based on an understanding of the specific nature of archaeological work and a balanced assessment of the risk.
5. **We will ensure that all PPE is selected based on dynamic assessment of the hazards** and risks present on the specific site in question, taking into account the nature of the work being undertaken. The level of perceived risks – e.g., low risk of fire caused by utilities strike – will be balanced against the hazard presented by use of PPE that is inappropriate for the work being undertaken – e.g., heat exhaustion caused by flame retardant overalls worn in hot weather by people undertaking rigorous manual handling tasks.
6. To aid in the design of archaeological projects **we will ensure that all interested parties are educated** and aware of terms and concepts pertinent to safe working. For example, the differences between enclosed, restricted, and confined spaces and how/when these concepts are applied, and the appropriate mitigations in place while fulfilling the requirements of the archaeological brief.



#### Additional Documentation/Detailed Guidance

FAME's Technical Guidance Note on CDM: <https://famearchaeology.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/FAME-CDM-guide-Dec-2020-1.pdf>

FAME's 2018-19 Injury Survey report: <https://famearchaeology.co.uk/fame-health-and-safety-injury-survey-2018-19/>

#### Document Approval Record

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