



TECHNICAL NOTE NO. 1- ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

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The national policy in regard to archaeological heritage and the assessment of archaeology in relation to Environmental Impact Assessment is laid out in *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* published by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands in 1999. In section 3.7.2 it states that archaeological monitoring may be appropriate where development works are taking place in the vicinity of known or suspected archaeological site; where unavoidable works in urban areas cannot be preceded by archaeological excavation; in respect of very small developments in urban areas; in order to ensure that known or suspected elements of the archaeological heritage in the location or vicinity of development are not damaged and in the circumstances where a development is of a scale or nature as to make it reasonable to consider its impact on as yet unidentified elements of the archaeological heritage. Examples of such development are laid out in section 3.6.2 and include developments likely to have a substantial impact on wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers, lakes, the intertidal zone, the sea bed, in the vicinity of large complexes of monuments, developments of extensive area or length and any development in respect of which an environmental impact statement is required.

The policy defines monitoring thus:

Archaeological monitoring involves an archaeologist being present in the course of the carrying out of development works (which may include conservation works), so as to identify and protect archaeological deposits, features or objects which may be uncovered or otherwise affected by the works.

It goes on to state the legal position that:

A person finding an archaeological object must not remove it or otherwise interfere with it unless he or she has reasonable cause to believe that it is necessary to remove it so as to preserve it or keep it safe. Section 23 of the 1930 Act (as amended) also requires that finds of archaeological objects be reported to the Director of the NMI within, at the latest, ninety-six hours. The finder is obliged to complete a prescribed form in respect of each archaeological object found.

The document goes on to define two types of Monitoring:

Unlicensed, which precludes the archaeologist from investigating any features and requires a notification to the National Museum of Ireland in the event of uncovering artefacts.

Licensed which: allows the archaeologist to investigate or preserve by record finds made in the course of development and removes the requirement to notify the national Museum