

Identification of Archaeological Features and Material: Guidelines and Procedures for Developers

1. Freshwater Mussel Shell Middens

Shell middens can be defined as an accumulation of freshwater mussel shell deposited by humans. The shells are concentrated in a specific locality, usually near or along the banks of rivers and frequently contain stone tools, pottery and bone remains. Shell middens may be of various sizes and depths, but an accumulation which exceeds 1 m² in extent, should be reported to an archaeologist.

2. Human Skeletal Material

Human remains, whether the complete remains of an individual buried during the past, or scattered human remains resulting from disturbance of the grave, should be reported. Frequently human remains are found buried on their side or in a sitting position with a flat stone capping and developers are requested to be on the alert for this.

3. Fossil Bone

Fossil bones may be found embedded in calcrete deposits at the site. Any concentrations of bones, whether fossilised or not, should be reported.

4. Stone Artefacts

These are difficult for the layman to identify. However, large accumulations of flaked stones which do not appear to have been distributed naturally, should be reported. If the stone tools are associated with bone remains, development should be halted immediately and archaeologists notified.