



OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FOR THE RESEARCH AND PROTECTION OF UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE FROM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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Discoveries of the underwater cultural heritage often occur as the result of nearshore and offshore development projects, and in a number of cases, from onshore development projects on what was once submerged land. These include the placement of undersea cables and pipelines, harbour development projects, dredging, and coastal construction, to name a few examples. The types of resources encountered range from prehistoric sites, submerged settlements, maritime infrastructure from the past such as weirs, docks, shipyards, shoreside ship graveyards to shipwrecks. While there is a potential threat to resources as a result of development, strategies for maximising benefit include legal requirements for predevelopment surveys, archaeological mitigation, and in exceptional circumstances extensive projects that appropriately respond through detailed programmes of excavation, conservation, study and public presentation. This session examines the pragmatic role of development-led archaeology, the role of archaeologists and government, and mitigative strategies.