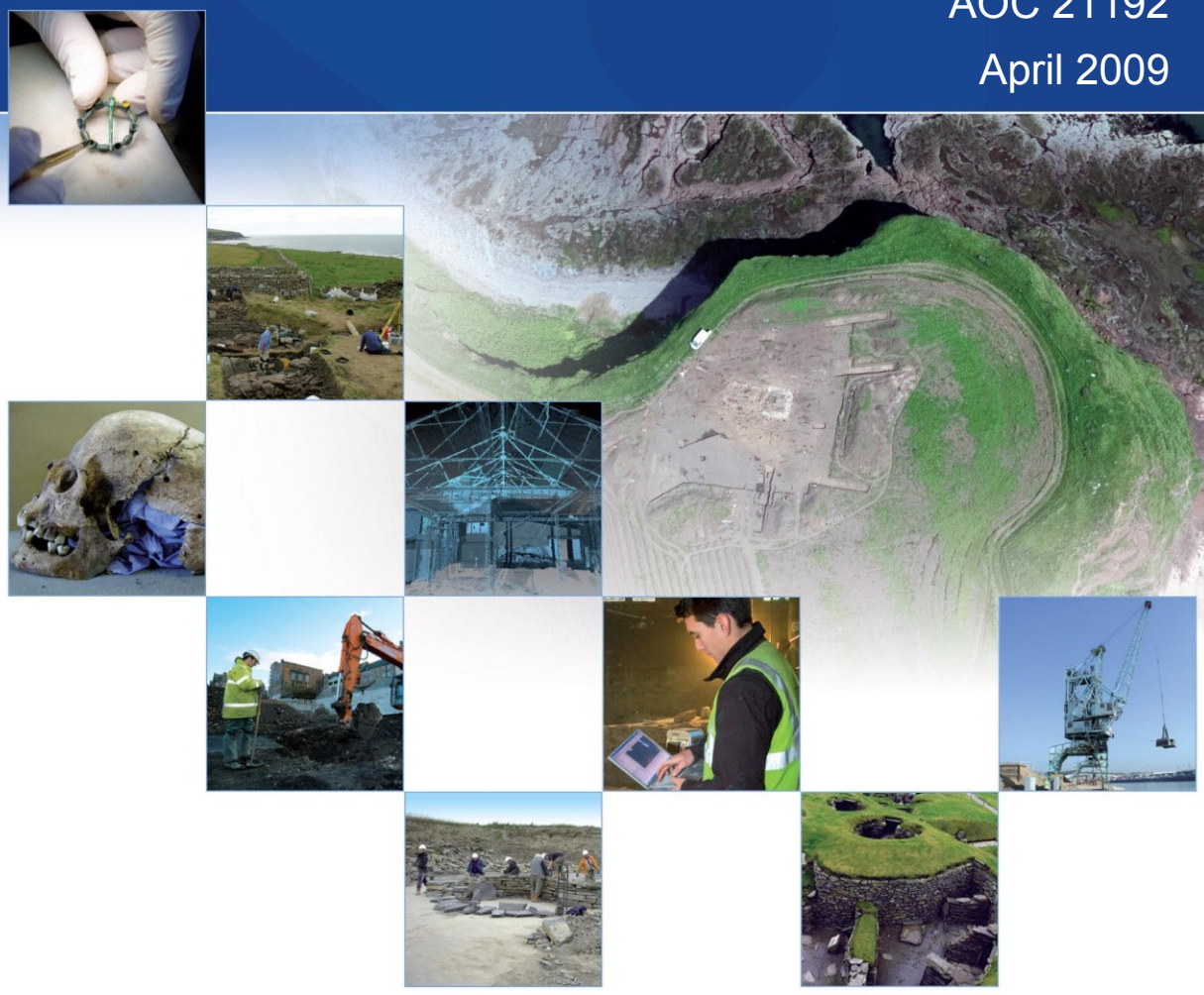
River Findhorn Site Investigation Trial Pits, Forres:

Watching Brief Report

AOC 21192

April 2009



AOC Archaeology Group

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River Findhorn Site Investigation Works, Forres:
Watching Brief Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	**Morrison Construction,** Moray Flood Alleviation, The wards, Elgin IV30 6AA
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NJ 02539 59796 – NJ 02361 59429, NJ 00988 58292 – NJ 01876 58908
AOC Project No:	21192
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Dates of Fieldwork:	29th September 2008, 6th & 7th October 2008 18th & 20th November 2008 19th February 2009 7th April 2009
Date of Report:	April 2009

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Final Report Stage:	**Date:**

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Abstract

This report represents the results of an archaeological Watching Brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the excavation Site Investigation Trial Pits (SI pits) prior to the construction of the Forres Flood Prevention Scheme. The work was completed on a number of visits between September 2008 and April 2009. In total 53 SI pits were monitored in a number of separate locations along the River Findhorn at Forres. Excavations to confirm location of a gas main were also monitored.

The watching brief confirmed the presence of river terrace gravels and revealed neither features nor artefacts of archaeological significance.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works comprising an archaeological Watching Brief was required by Morrison Construction during Site Investigation, (SI), works associated with the Forres Flood Prevention Scheme. The scope of the works was determined by Aberdeenshire Council as advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeen Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). These works were conducted in accordance with NPPG 5 (SOEnd 1994), PAN 42 (SOEnd 1994a) and SPP 23, and sought to determine the nature, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken on three separate areas of land (Locations Bend 3, FAS Haulage Track Route and Bend 2) (Figure 1-5). The first two areas were located on the western bank of the River Findhorn to the north-west of Forres, with Bend 2 on the eastern side of the River Findhorn also to the north-west of Forres. The Bend 3 area (NGR; NJ 02539 59796 – NJ 02361 59429), lies at approximately 10 m OD and is located to the immediate north-east of the hamlet of Broom of Moy. The area is bounded to the west by a landward track. The FAS Haulage Track Route (NGR; NJ 00988 58292 – NJ 01876 58908) has Trial Pits that are located along both sides of the rail line to the north of the A96 and varies between 30 m and 10 m OD. The third Site Investigation area (Bend 2) (NGR; NJ 0219659227 – NJ 02077 58896) contained the Trial Pits 114 to 118 and due to access difficulties this work was not undertaken till several months after the initial test pitting. Trial Pits B to E were added to the original test pitting programme at 'Bend 2'.

1.2.2 Three test pits were opened to accurately locate the position of a known live gas main service which ran through arable land immediately to the north of the train line and east of the River Findhorn (Bend 2).

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 The trial pit areas lie within a known archaeologically rich landscape. No previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the two areas.

1.3.2 Within the FAS Haulage Track Route location, human remains (NGR; NJ 0133 5844) and unenclosed settlement (NGR; NJ 010 585) of unknown date have been recovered from the area of Gallows Hill.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

i) to monitor ground-breaking works associated with the site investigation works and prevent the destruction of significant archaeological features prior to their recording;

ii) to undertake the immediate recording of isolated finds of moderately significant archaeological material that would be disturbed by the SI pits, with the intention that SI pits will be moved to allow preservation *in situ* where at all possible should the watching brief have identified any archaeological deposits;

iii) given the discovery of significant archaeological material in quantity that that will suffer an adverse impact from SI works (ie where preservation *in situ* is impractical), the recording of all archaeological features by means of a mitigation strategy to be formulated with ACAS.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The details of the archaeological works undertaken are laid out below, and were designed to fully meet the requirements of the local planning authority. The archaeological works consisted of the excavation of 44 Site Investigation (SI) Trial Pits within the locations of 'Bend 3' the 'FAS Haulage Track Route'. A few months later five Trial Pits were investigated within 'Bend 2' (Figures 2-5) with an additional four Trial Pits B-E also excavated within the Area defined as 'Bend 2'.

3.1.2 In February three test pits were excavated to accurately locate and define the exact position of a live gas main.

3.2 Watching Brief

3.2.1 All ground breaking work was monitored by an experienced field archaeologist. All test pits were excavated using an excavator equipped with both wide toothed and toothless ditching buckets. The watching brief ceased once the client's required level had been reached.

3.2.2 All monitoring was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures (Appendix 7, 7.1 to 7.29). Black and White print, colour slide and digital photographic shots were taken during the Watching Brief (Appendix 1).

4 RESULTS

4.1 The archaeological Watching Brief undertaken on the works in Bend 3 was completed over the 29th September and the 6th and 7th October 2008.The FAS Haulage Track Route was again undertaken over three days between 18th November and the 20th November 2008. The watching brief required for locating the gas main was conducted on 19th February 2009 with the final watching brief on 'Bend 2' observing excavation of Trial Pits 114 – 118 and Trial Pits B-E completed on 7th April 2009. The following summaries should be read in conjunction with the data presented in Appendices 1-2 and Figures 1 - 5.

4.2 SI Pits at 'Bend 3' (Figure 2)

4.2.1 The trial pitting programme in Bend 3 consisted of 14 pits being excavated on a low wooded terrace close to the River Findhorn. The Trial Pits were excavated to a depth of approximately 2.0 m and revealed a consistently thin leaf litter between 0.05 and 0.10 m in depth. Once this was removed, natural sands and gravels were encountered. In Trial Pits 101 to 107 the sand was pale orange in colour and largely mixed with medium sized water-worn cobbles. In Trial Pits 108 to 119 a deposit of silver sand ranging from 0.20 m to 0.40 m in depth was observed overlying the mixed sands and gravels. In Trial Pit 119 a buried ground surface of medium brown sandy silt was observed at a

depth of 0.50 m (Plate 1). This deposit was 0.10 m thick and separated the upper silver sands and the mixed sands and gravels.

4.2.2 The Trial Pits in Bend 3 appear to have been excavated through a river terrace in a relatively active riverine environment. No significant archaeology was observed within the deposits.

4.3 SI Pits at 'FAS Haulage Track Route' (Figure 3 – 5)

4.3.1 The Trial Pit excavations undertaken within the FAS Haulage Track Route occurred in a mix of pasture and ploughed land on both sides of the rail line to the north of the A96. The topsoil varied between 0.30 m to 0.50 m in depth and was a well sorted sandy loam with evidence of improvement in the form of Victorian ceramics and glass. Underlying the topsoil was a 0.10 m interface overlying alluvial drift geology of mixed sands and gravels. The water table was observed at between two and three metres in depth.

4.3.2 As with Bend 3 the excavations within the FAS Haulage Track Route occurred on river terraces. No significant archaeology was observed within the deposits.

4.4 Gas Main Test Pits (Figure 2)

4.4.1 Three test pits (A, B & C) were excavated in arable land to the east of the River Findhorn to locate the exact location of a known gas main. The topsoil varied between 0.31 m to 0.40 m in depth and was a well sorted sandy loam with evidence of improvement in the form of Victorian ceramics and glass. Underlying the topsoil was a 0.10 m interface overlying alluvial drift geology of mixed sands and gravels.

4.4.2 During the course of these exploratory works no significant archaeology was observed within the deposits.

4.5 SI Pits at 'Bend 2' including Trial Pits 'B-E' (Figure 2)

4.5.1 The trial pitting programme in Bend 2 consisted of 5 original pits, (114 -118) and an additional four pits, (B –E) being excavated on a terrace on the eastern bank of the River Findhorn. The Trial Pits were excavated to a depth of between 1.5 m and 3.0 m with most c.2.5 m. and revealed a consistently. Once thin leaf litter of between 0.05 and 0.10 m in depth was removed, a topsoil of a minimum 0.40 m was uncovered. In most test pits the topsoil was up around 0.7 m in depth which constitutes an unusually deep topsoil layer and in Test Pit B a depth of 1.8 m and Test Pit C at 1.0 m is suggests this area has seen acted as sediment trap presumably due to flood activity. Beneath these deep topsoil layers was observed typical mixed sands and gravels.

4.5.2 All of the Trial Pit excavations at Bend 2 encountered no significant archaeology was observed within the deposits.

5 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were identified. Further archaeological works may be considered necessary within the area of FAS Haulage Track Route in which known archaeological remains occur. This recommendation will require confirmation from Aberdeen Council Archaeology Service (ACAS).

6 BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

SOEnD 2008 *Planning and the Historic Environment SPP 23.* The Scottish Office Environment Department.

SOEnD 1994a *Planning Advice Note 42. Archaeology – the Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monument Procedures.* The Scottish Office Environment Department.

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Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Photographic Record

Black & White Print/Colour Slide 1

Frame	Area	Description	From
0-2	-	Registration shot	-
3	Bend 3	Trial Pit 102	W
4	Bend 3	Trial Pit 101	S
5	Bend 3	Trial Pit 103	E
6	Bend 3	Trial Pit 104	S
7	Bend 3	Trial Pit 100	W
8	Bend 3	Trial Pit 107	E
9	Bend 3	Trial Pit 106	E
10	Bend 3	Trial Pit 105	E
11	Bend 3	Trial Pit 108	E
12	Bend 3	Trial Pit 109	NE
13	Bend 3	Trial Pit 110	E
14	Bend 3	Trial Pit 111	E
15	Bend 3	Trial Pit 112	E
16	Bend 3	Trial Pit 113	W

Black & White Print/Colour Slide Film 2

Frame	Area	Description	From
1	-	Registration shot	-
2	FAS	Trial Pit 23	SW
3	FAS	Trial Pit 22	SW
4	FAS	Trial Pit 21	E
5	FAS	Trial Pit 25	W
6	FAS	Trial Pit 26	W
7	FAS	Trial Pit 27	W
8	FAS	Trial Pit 28	W
9	FAS	Trial Pit 29	W
10	FAS	Trial Pit 30	W
11	FAS	Trial Pit 24	E
12	FAS	Trial Pit 31	E
13	FAS	Trial Pit 20	NE
14	FAS	Trial Pit 18	E
15	FAS	Trial Pit 15	W
16	FAS	Trial Pit 12	E
17	FAS	Trial Pit 16	E
18	FAS	Trial Pit 10	E
19	FAS	Trial Pit 9	E
20	FAS	Trial Pit 8	E
21	FAS	Trial Pit 7	E
22	FAS	Trial Pit 6	E

Digital Photographs

Frame	Area	Description	From
1	-	Registration shot	-
2	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit 114	S
3	Bend 2	S Facing section of Trial Pit 114	S
4	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit 115	SW
5	Bend 2	NE Facing section of Trial Pit 115	NE
6	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit 116	SSW
7	Bend 2	SSW Facing section of Trial Pit 116	SSW
8	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit 118	W
9	Bend 2	W Facing section of Trial Pit 118	W
10	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit 117	S
11	Bend 2	W Facing section of Trial Pit 117	W
12	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit E	W
13	Bend 2	S Facing section of Trial Pit E	S
14	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit D	SW
15	Bend 2	SE Facing section of Trial Pit D	SE
16	Bend 2	General view of Trial Pit C	SW
17	Bend 2	SE Facing section of Trial Pit C	SE

APPENDIX 2

Trial Pit Record for 'Bend 3'

Trial Pit Number	Size (metres)	Maximum Depth (metres)	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil (Sands & Gravels)	Notes
100	1 x 3		0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	Fine yellow sand
101	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	
102	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	
103	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.45 m layer of fine yellow sand above sands and gravels.
104	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.45 m layer of fine yellow sand above sands and gravels.
105	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.45 m layer of fine yellow sand above sands and gravels.
106	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.45 m layer of fine yellow sand above sands and gravels.
107	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.05	0.05 – 0.45	0.40 m layer of silver sand above sands and gravels.
108	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	
109	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	
110	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.10	0.10 – 2.0	Silver sand and gravels with three visible horizons of darker stones, possible exposed surfaces.
111	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 - 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.25 m layer of silver sand over sands and gravels.
112	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.10	0.10 – 2.0	0.30 m layer of silver sand over sands and gravels.
113	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.15 m layer of silver sand over sands and gravels.
119	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	0.45 m layer of silver sand over sands and gravels. 0.10m Buried ground surface of med brown sandy silt.
120	1 x 3	2.0	0.0 – 0.05	0.05 – 2.0	1.0 m layer of silver sand over sands and gravels.

Trial Pit Records for 'FAS Haulage Track Route'

Trial Pit Number	Size (metres)	Maximum Depth (metres)	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil (Sands & Gravels)	Notes

02	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Orange sand 0.40 m – 0.60 m over pale yellow sand.
03	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 0.50 m.
05	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	1.10 m orange sand and gravels over silver sand and gravels.
06	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels.
07	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.10	0.10 – 3.5 m	Orange sand. Dug on trackway
08	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 3.00 m.
09	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 3.00 m.
010	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 0.50 m.
012	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.30 m – 0.40 m.
015	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 0.50 m.
016	1 x 3	3.5	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.40 m – 0.50 m. Water table noted at 2.5 m.
018	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.30	0.30 – 3.0	Sands and gravels. Interface visible at 0.30 m – 0.40 m.
020	1 x 3	4.0	0.0 – 0.30	0.30 – 1.0	Pale grey sand over sands and gravels.
021	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.50	0.50 – 1.10	Orange sands and gravels. Pale clay sands at 1.10 m.
022	1 x 3	4.0	0.0 - 0.40	0.40 – 3.0	Orange sands and gravels. Pale clay sands at 3.5 m.
023	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 - 0.40	0.40 – 3.0	Orange sands and gravels. Topsoil contains Victorian ceramics.
024	1 x 3	4.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 4.0	Sands and gravels. Interface at 0.40 - 0.60 m.
025	1 x 3	4.10	0.0 - 0.40	0.40 – 3.0	Orange sand. Silver sand and gravel at 3.0 m.
026	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 3.5	Silver sand.
027	1 x 3	4.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 4.0	0.70 m of silver sand overlying sands and gravels
028	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.30	0.30 – 3.5	Sands and gravels.
029	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.30	0.30 – 4.0	Sands and gravels.
030	1 x 3	3.0	0.0 – 0.30	0.30 – 4.0	Sands and gravels. Water table observed at 3.50 m.

031	1 x 3	4.0	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – 4.0	Sands and gravels. Interface at 0.40 - 0.60 m.

Trial Pit Record for locating live Gas Main

Trial Pit Number	Size (metres)	Maximum Depth (metres)	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil (Sands & Gravels)	Notes
A	2.9 x 1.6	c.1.2	0.0 – 0.31	0.31 – c.1.2	Grey/brown sand
B	2.8 x 1.6	c.1.2	0.0 – 0.40	0.40 – c.1.2	Grey/brown sand
C	2.9 x 1.6	c.1.2	0.0 - 0.35	0.35 – c.1.2	Grey/brown sand

Trial Pit Record for 'Bend 2'

Trial Pit Number	Size (metres)	Maximum Depth (metres)	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil (Sands & Gravels)	Notes
114	2.8 x 0.9	2.0	0.0 - 0.40	0.40 – 2.0	Light grey-brown sand turning more gravelly with depth
115	2.5 x 0.9	2.0	0.0 - 0.60	0.60 – 2.0	Light grey-brown sand turning more gravelly with depth
116	2.3 x 0.9	2.5	0.0 - 0.70	0.70 – 2.5	Light grey-brown sand turning more gravelly with depth
117	3.0 x 0.9	2.5	0.0 - 0.70	0.70 – 3.0	Light grey-brown sand turning more gravelly with depth
118	2.5 x 0.9	3.0	0.0 - 0.70	0.70 – 2.5	Light grey-brown sand turning more gravelly with depth

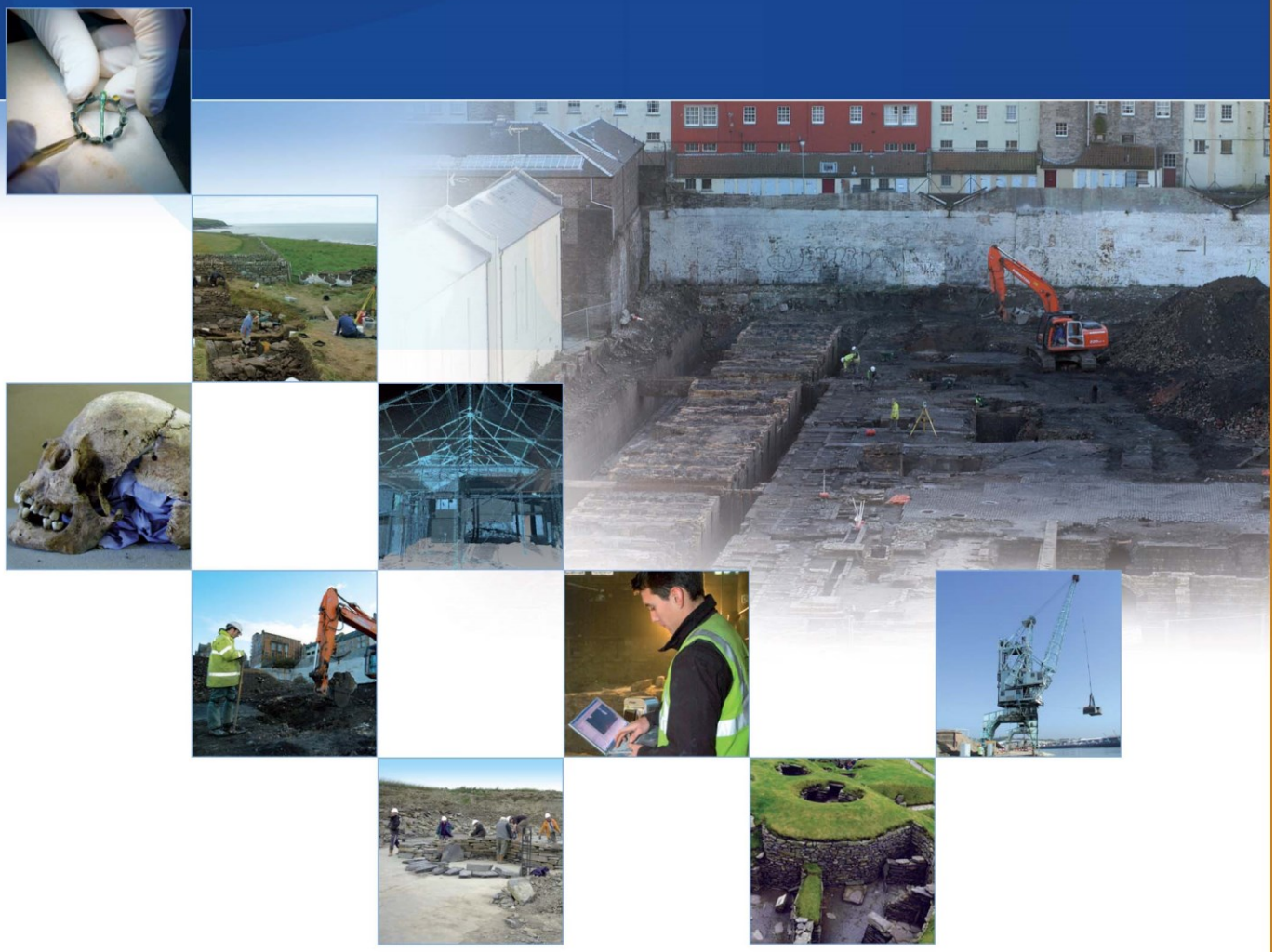
Test Pit Record for Additional 'Bend 2' Test Pits'B – E'

Trial Pit Number	Size (metres)	Maximum Depth (metres)	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil (Sands & Gravels)	Notes
B	2.5 x 0.9	2.75	0.0 – 1.80	1.80 – 2.75	Mid grey-brown sandy gravel with cobbles
C	2.8 x 0.9	2.0	0.0 – 1.00	1.00 – 2.4	Light grey-brown sandy gravel
D	3.0 x 0.9	1.5	0.0 - 0.75	0.75 – 1.5	Mid grey-brown sand with iron staining. Water table encountered at 1.5 m
E	3.5 x 0.9	3.0	0.0 - 0.80	0.80 – 3.0	Light grey-brown silty sand turning to a light brown sandy gravel after 1.5 m

APPENDIX 3

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Moray Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	River Findhorn Site Investigation Works, Forres.
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21192
PARISH:	Forres
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Rob Engl & Lindsay Dunbar
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S)	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 02539 59796 – NJ 02361 59429, NJ 00988 58292 – NJ 01876 58908 and NJ 0219659227 – NJ 02077 58896
START DATE (this season)	6th October 2008
END DATE (this season)	7th April 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	This report represents the results of an archaeological Watching Brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the excavation Site Investigation Trial Pits (SI pits) prior to the construction of the Forres Flood Prevention Scheme. The work was completed on a number of visits between September 2008 and April 2009. In total 53 SI pits were monitored in a number of separate locations along the River Findhorn at Forres. Excavations to confirm location of a gas main were also monitored. The Watching Brief confirmed the presence of river terrace gravels and revealed neither features nor artefacts of archaeological significance.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Possible archaeological watching brief on Haul Road Route
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	--
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Morrison Construction Ltd.
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocscot.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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