

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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Cotton Street, Paisley.

Map Regression Report.

Report No. 1546

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological map regression assessment for a proposed development at Cotton Street, Paisley (NGR: NS 486 639) (Fig 1). CFA Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Westpoint Homes to undertake the assessment with the objective of:

- Identifying areas within the proposed development area where archaeological remains may survive. Within the context of this development remains associated with Paisley Abbey and the pre-burghal settlement are of prime consideration.

2. PLANNING AND LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

2.1 Cultural heritage resources relative to this assessment include:

- Archaeological features

2.2 Historic Scotland's Scottish Historic Environment Policy 1 – Scotland's Historic Environment (2007), sets out the Scottish Ministers' vision and policies for the historic environment. It states that the protection of the historic environment is not about preventing change. Ministers believe that change in this dynamic environment should be managed intelligently and with understanding, to achieve the best outcome for the historic environment and for the people of Scotland. The three key outcomes of this policy are to ensure that:

- 1) the historic environment is cared for, protected and enhanced for the benefit of our own and future generations;
- 2) there is increased public appreciation and enjoyment of the historic environment amongst all the people of Scotland and visitors to the country; and,
- 3) the historic environment's importance as a key asset in Scotland's economic, social and cultural success is recognized and skillfully harnessed.

Archaeological Features

2.3 Archaeological sites and monuments without statutory protection are curated by the local planning authority. NPPG 5 and PAN 42 provide national planning policy guidance and advice on the treatment of this resource. PAN 42 indicates that the principle that should underlie all planning decision-making is preservation of cultural resources, in situ where possible, and by record if destruction cannot be avoided. It is recognized in the document that preservation may not always be possible, and where damage is unavoidable various mitigation measures may be proposed.

3. METHODS

- 3.1 A list of all sources consulted during the assessment is provided in Section 6.
- 3.2 The purpose of this study was to ascertain, by a programme of map regression, the potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains across the proposed development area, with specific reference to remains associated with Paisley Abbey and the pre-burghal settlement.
- 3.3 Ordnance Survey maps and other early maps held by the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland were examined, to provide information on sites of potential significance and to assess historic landscape changes within the study area. The National Archives of Scotland online catalogue was also consulted.
- 3.4 Additionally up-to-date information was sought from the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and the online WoSAS SMR to identify known archaeological sites present within the proposed development area. Aerial photographs available on the SCRAN website were also examined.

4. Map Regression Results

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The proposed development area is situated within a rectangular portion of land that is formed by Cotton Street to the west, Mill Street to the east, Gauze Street to the north and the River Cart to the south. Paisley Abbey is located less than 100m to the west of Cotton Street and it is probable that the abbey precinct extended into the proposed development area. There is also the possibility that the pre-burghal settlement was located in this area (Martin O'Hare pers comm).
- 4.1.2 The current land use within the proposed development area consists of council office buildings and car parking facilities built in the late 1950s (Fig 1). This replaced a number of streets, tenement houses, shops, a presbyterian church and a parish school. The road alignment around the proposed development area was changed during this construction work therefore, it is difficult to plot the proposed development precisely against the earlier historic maps.

4.2 Cartographic Sources

- 4.2.1 The earliest map showing Paisley is Pont's map dating from between 1583 and 1596. It is of small scale but clearly shows the Abbey surrounded by a sub-rectangular precinct on the east side of the White Cart Water with the burgh of Paisley located on the west side of White Cart. This map is fairly schematic and no useful detail of the proposed development site can be identified. Gordon's map (1636-52) and Blaeu's map (1654) contain the same detail. Moll's map (1732) is less detailed than those previously mentioned, it, however, shows the Abbey precinct as ovoid. Roy's Military Survey (1774-55) shows the burgh of Paisley located on the west side of White Cart with the Abbey precinct shown as sub-rectangular. The scale of the precinct shown on this map would clearly place the proposed development site within the precinct. The precinct is shown as a landscaped area but no buildings are shown. None of these maps indicate that the area of the precinct had been encroached upon by settlement.
- 4.2.2 Ainslie's map (1796) is small scale so it does not contain a great level of detail however it is possible to see that settlement had spread to the east of the Abbey and probably encroached upon the area of the precinct. When compared with the later town plan (1867-8) (Fig 3) it appears that the streets depicted are Gauze Street, Cotton Street, Bank Street, Thread Street and Abbey Street. Thus the street pattern that survived through till the area was redeveloped in late 1950s was set sometime between 1774 and 1796. Ainslie's later map (1821) and Thompson's map (1832) show a similar level of detail.
- 4.2.3 The earliest cartographic source available with a moderately detailed depiction of the area of the proposed development is Wood's map (1828) (Fig 2). This map shows the street layout identified on the later town plan (1867-8) (Fig 3). This

shows the alignment of Cotton Street, Abbey Street, Thread Street, Gauze Street, Bank Street and Mill Street. The majority of these street names still survive within the current street layout around the site, but Thread Street no longer exists, having been removed during the redevelopment of the area in the late 1950s. Only significant buildings are indicated as separate structures on this map; within the development area the only building clearly depicted is the Presbyterian Church.

- 4.2.4 The Ordnance Survey Town Plan of Paisley (1867-68) (Fig 3) clearly indicates that the development site was a built up area of tenement lined streets including Cotton Street and Thread Street which both crossed the site and Mill Street which defined its eastern boundary and Gauze Street its northern boundary. Buildings lined these streets and there was a fair amount of infill behind the frontage properties. The *United Presbyterian Church* is indicated alongside Mill Street with a graveyard surrounding it on three sides with the parish school located to the north. The spot heights from the plan indicate that the development site sloped from Mill Street (c.13m OD) down to Cotton Street (c.8m OD).
- 4.2.5 Later Ordnance Survey maps, such as the 1938 (Fig 4) and 1952 editions, indicate that the footprint of the buildings and streets covering the site remained largely unchanged between the later 19th century and the mid 20th century. However, the 1952 edition shows that the *Clark Memorial Hall* was built in the graveyard to the north of the former *United Presbyterian Church*. It does not appear that any extensive building work was undertaken across the site after the late 19th century until the tenement buildings were demolished in the late 1950's.
- 4.2.6 The 1967 edition Ordnance Survey map depicts the northern end of the proposed development area as a blank space. The 1973 edition map shows both the Council office buildings and the Police Station. The layout of these buildings has remained unchanged since built.

4.3 Site Visit / Modern Topographic Survey

- 4.3.1 An assessment of the current topography suggested that the ground had originally sloped from Mill Street down to Cotton Street, this was confirmed by an assessment of the levels from the Town Plan, which when compared with the modern topographic plan show that the levels on Mill Street and Cotton Street appear to have altered little between 1867 and 2008. However, there has been extensive excavation between these streets to level the site for the construction of the majority of the current buildings. The formation level for the council offices and the attendant parking is at least 1m lower than the level of Cotton Street and 5m lower than Mill Street. In effect a wedge has been excavated from the natural slope to create a level platform. A comparison of levels from the Town Plan and the current topographic plan confirm that the current ground level in this lowered area is at minimum over 1m below the ground level that prevailed in 1867.

- 4.3.2 A site visit was undertaken on 18 September 2008. It was clear from the site visit that only three areas on site have any potential for archaeological survival (Fig 6). Area 1 has been built up above the level of Cotton Street (which is roughly at the level of the Abbey) by over 2m in places. This probably occurred during the construction of the current council buildings and there is a possibility that archaeological remains may have been protected by this. It should be noted that comparisons of levels from the Town Plan (1867-68) and the current topographic plan indicate that the level of Cotton Street has not varied in that time. Area 2 does not appear to have been heavily built over and is covered by hard landscaping. An assessment of the levels from the Town Plan and the current topographic plan indicates that this area may have been built up by up to 0.8m in places. Again there is the potential for archaeological remains to be preserved at or close to the surface. In Area 3 the Municipal Buildings are built from street level and do not have extensive basements. There is the possibility that archaeological remains may be preserved below these buildings or between their foundations.
- 4.3.3 Within Areas 1 and 3 there is a high chance that the construction of the tenements that once covered the site will have damaged if not removed any earlier archaeological remains. It is not known how the graveyard that once occupied Area 2 was dealt with when the site was redeveloped to make way for the council buildings, although the graveyard is not associated with the Abbey the possible presence of human remains makes this area sensitive. There is also a slight possibility that features or deposits associated with the Abbey could have survived this level of development.

4.4 Aerial Photography

- 4.4.1 Oblique Aerial photographs dating from the 1950s (Figs 5a & 5b) were examined. Two of these photographs clearly show the area of the proposed development covered by tenement buildings as shown on the maps. It is difficult to get a clear idea of the topography of the site from these but the ground does appear to slope down from Mill Street to the Abbey and down Mill Street towards the river.

4.5 NMRS /SMR

- 4.5.1 Neither the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) or the online WoSAS SMR contained records of known sites within the proposed development area.

5. SUMMARY and CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Map regression work indicates that the development site was part of the Abbey Precinct until built over during the expansion of Paisley sometime between 1774 and 1796. At this time the site was covered by a number of streets of lined with buildings. It is impossible to tell what buildings first lined the streets that covered the site although it was latterly covered by tenements. These streets were cleared in the late 1950's to make way for the construction of the buildings that now occupy the site.
- 5.2 A study of topography and levels has shown that in order to construct the Council Offices and the attendant parking a presumably natural slope between Mill Street and Cotton Street was benched out to create a level platform for construction. It is likely that this will have completely removed any archaeological levels in the development site, apart from the three Areas previously identified and discussed below.
- 5.3 Three areas, (1-3), have been identified where there is a possibility that archaeological remains relating to the Abbey and its precinct or a later graveyard may have survived development. However, two of these areas (1 and 2) may have been affected by the construction of tenement properties.

6. References

Photographic

Aerial photographs were obtained through WWW.SCRAN.ac.uk
Both are copyright of Newsquest (Herald & Times), reference 005183 and 005170.

Cartographic

Ainslie, J 1796 *Map of the County of Renfrew*

Ainslie, J 1821 *Ainslie's Map of the Southern Part of Scotland*

Blaeu, J 1654 *The Baronie of Renfrow*

Gordon, R 1636-52 *Barony of Renfrew*

Moll, H 1732 *The Shire of Renfrew with Cuningham. The North Part of Air*

Pont, T 1583-96 *Renfrewshire*

Thompson, J 1832 *Renfrew Shire*

Wood, J. *Paisley* 1828

Ordnance Survey, *Town Plan of Paisley*, 1:500 (1867-8)

Ordnance Survey, *Renfrewshire*, 6-inch to the mile (1864)

Ordnance Survey, *Renfrewshire*, 6-inch to the mile (1898)

Ordnance Survey, *Renfrewshire*, 6-inch to the mile (1924)

Ordnance Survey, *Renfrewshire*, 6-inch to the mile (1938)

Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:2500 (1952)

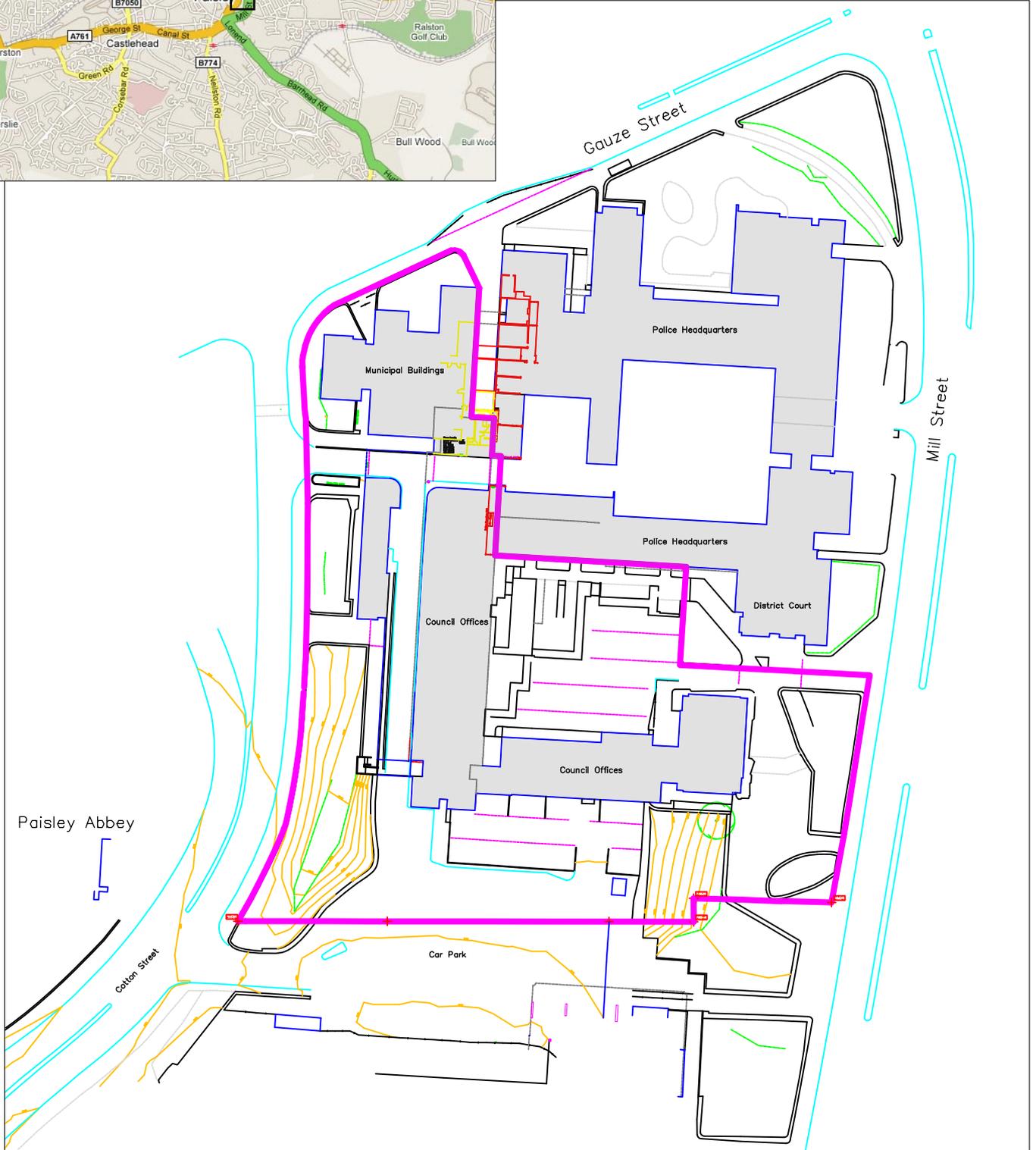
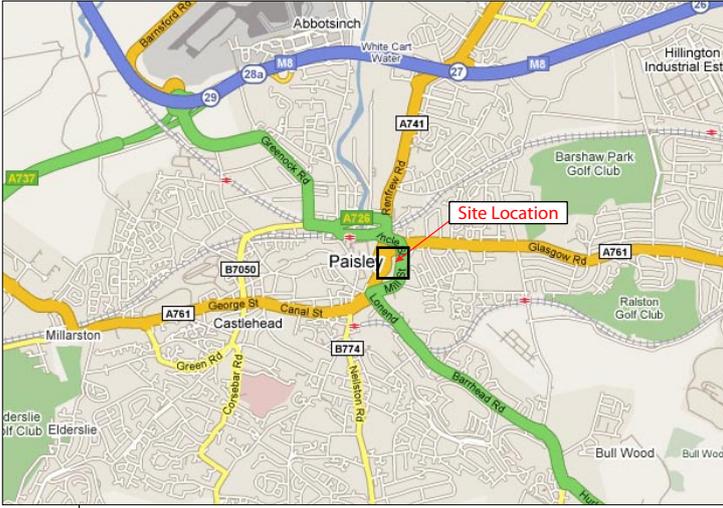
Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:1250 (1967)

Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:1250 (1973)

Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:1250 (1975)

Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:1250 (1984)

Ordnance Survey, *Paisley*, 1:1250 (1995)



Key:



Fig. No: 1

Revision: 0

Client: Westpoint Homes

Title:

Location Map with Proposed Development Area highlighted

Project:

Cotton Street, Paisley
Desk-based Assessment



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Scale: Main map - 1:1250

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Key:

Approximate Location of Proposed Development Area



Fig. No: 3

Revision: 0

Client: Westpoint Homes

Title:

Ordnance Survey Town Plan (1867-8)

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Scale:



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Key:

Approximate Location of Proposed Development Area



Fig. No: **4** Revision: **0** Client: **Westpoint Homes**

Title:
Ordnance Survey 1938 Map

Project:
**Cotton Street, Paisley
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Scale:



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Fig 5a - Aerial photograph showing the approximate area of the proposed development, looking east



Fig 5b - Aerial photograph showing the approximate area of the proposed development, looking north

Key:



Fig. No: 5

Revision: 0

Client: Westpoint Homes

Title:
 Aerial photographs of proposed development
 area in the 1950's

Project:
 Cotton Street, Paisley
 Desk-based Assessment

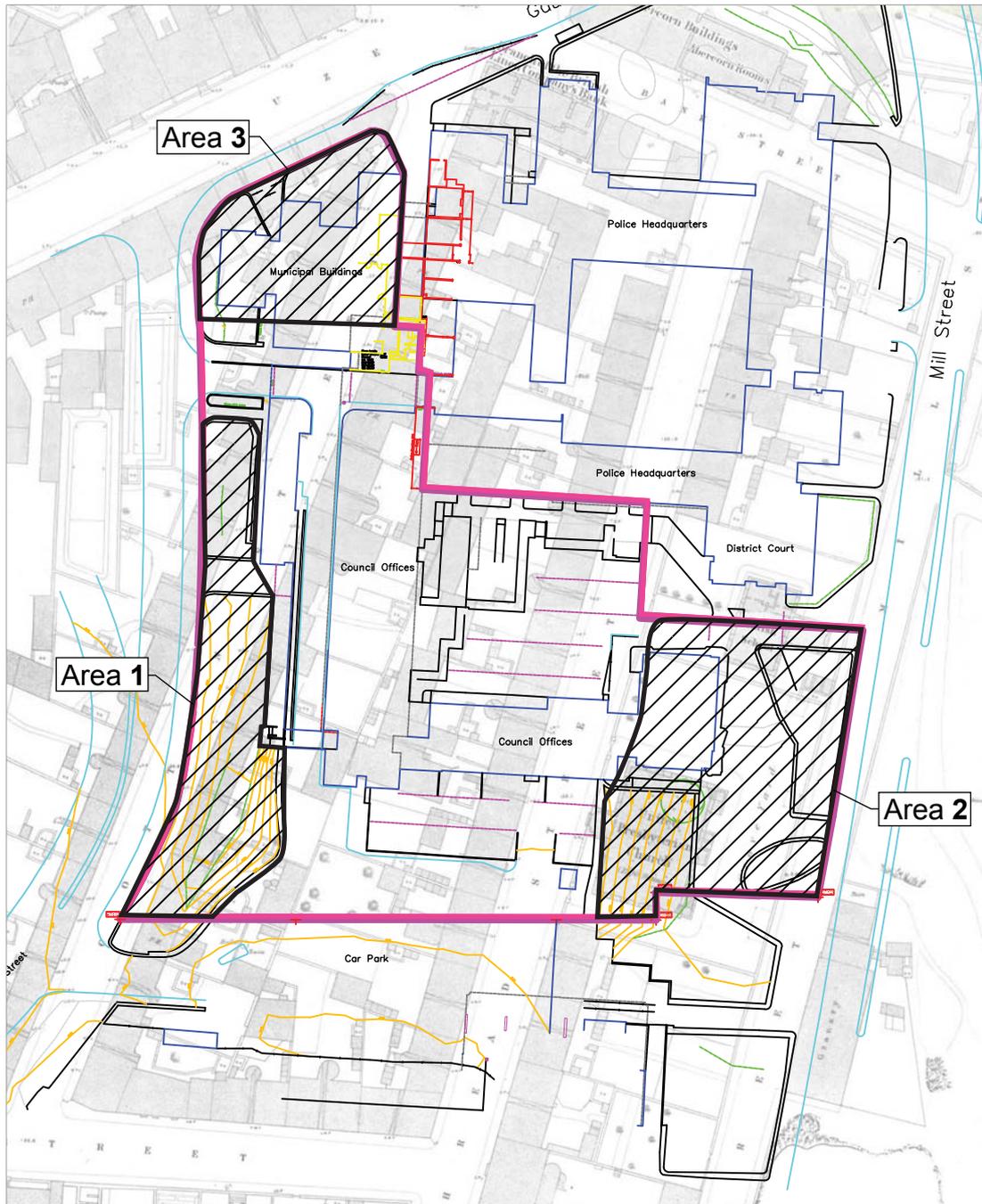
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 Area of Archaeological Sensitivity



Fig. No: **6**

Revision: **0**

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