

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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*Advice on Archaeology & Planning*

*Environmental Impact Assessment*

*Intpretation, Design & Display*

*Finds/ Environmental Analysis*

*Field Evaluation & Excavation*

*Historic Building Recording*


*Site & Landscape Survey*

*Geophysical Survey*

**75-81 High Street, Brechin**

**Geotechnical Investigations:  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Data Structure Report,  
No. 1851**

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This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd  
standard operating procedures.

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Fig. 3 General view of area of Trial Holes 3 and 4

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Fig. 5 Post ex shot of Trial Hole 1

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

- 1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in November 2010 during geotechnical investigations at 75-81 High Street, Brechin (NGR: NO 5981 6010, Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Angus Council.
- 1.1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project was produced by CFA. The WSI was based upon a specification supplied by the Archaeological Advisor to Angus Council, and is designed to fulfil the planning authority's requirements for mitigation during the re-development of a cinema at the site.

### **1.2 Background**

- 1.2.1 The site lies on the east side of the High Street, Brechin and is at present occupied by a derelict cinema built in the 1920s. Re-development of the site had originally included the refurbishment of the existing front two-storey structure and single storey wings with demolition of the auditorium and replacement with a new structure. Braik's Close was to be upgraded for car parking.
- 1.2.2 As part of the archaeological mitigation for the proposed re-development, a watching brief was required during ground breaking works for geotechnical investigations on the site.
- 1.2.3 The site lies within a conservation area within the historic medieval core of Brechin centred around the 13<sup>th</sup> century Brechin Cathedral and its 11<sup>th</sup> century round tower. Evidence of earlier structures have been found in a number of buildings on the High Street, including 15<sup>th</sup> century timber rafters at 68-79 High Street (Angus Council 2010).
- 1.2.4 No previous invasive archaeological fieldwork is known to have taken place within the proposed development site prior to the archaeological watching brief.

### **1.3 Objectives**

- 1.3.1 The project's aims and objectives were:
- To determine the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development and to propose mitigation measures where necessary.
  - To identify whether any remains relating to medieval Brechin extend in to the development area.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

- 2.1.1 CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs.

### **2.2 Watching Brief**

- 2.2.1 Trial holes (TH) were excavated using a drilling rig equipped with a 0.1m diameter core (window samples). A hand-dug pit measuring c. 0.4m in diameter by 1m deep was excavated at the pre-determined locations of the trial holes (Fig. 1) to enable coring to take place. All groundbreaking work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. All further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the watching brief was carried out by hand.
- 2.2.2 The stratification of all the trial holes was recorded, whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.
- 2.2.3 Spoil from the trial holes and the cores themselves were examined by hand, to characterise the deposits and for artefact retrieval (Fig. 2).
- 2.2.4 All trial holes were backfilled on completion of the work.

## **3. RESULTS**

### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 A summary table of all the trial holes excavated can be found in Appendix 1. Numbers in bold and parentheses in the following text are context numbers, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 2.
- 3.1.2 TH5 and TH7 could not be excavated due to access and space restrictions. The locations of TH1, 2 and 6 were changed slightly due to the presence of underground drainage and space restrictions.

### **3.2 Trial Holes**

- 3.2.1 Natural subsoil was reached at a depth of between 0.6 and 1.6m below the existing ground surface and was generally found to be a mid peachy-orange clay sand grading to a gravelly or cobble-rich clay sand in places.
- 3.2.2 All trial holes contained deposits of made ground of depths ranging between 0.4m to 1.6m. This was generally mixed deposits of brownish grey and orange grey gravelly sandy clay, sometimes with inclusions of crushed mortar, red brick and sandstone rubble and modern rubbish. These deposits tended to be deepest within the trial holes nearest the building (TH 1-4 and 8) (Figs. 3-4), and suggest that the ground level may have been reduced when the cinema building was constructed and then built up with infill.

- 3.2.3 In TH9, the made ground overlay two subsoil deposits (**004, 005**) of dark grey-black silt and mid orange-brown clay silt containing charcoal flecks and rootlets. These overlay the natural subsoil and may represent the remains of an old topsoil/ground surface. No finds were recovered from either of these deposits.
- 3.2.4 There were no other features or deposits of archaeological significance identified during the watching brief.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 A watching brief was conducted during geotechnical investigations around an old cinema building at 75-81 High Street, Brechin.
- 4.2 Subsoil deposits were identified within TH9 which may represent the remains of an old topsoil horizon. No other features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance were recorded during the watching brief.
- 4.3 A summary statement of these results in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 5) will be sufficient to disseminate the results of the watching brief. The project will also be reported via OASIS Scotland.
- 4.4 The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and copies of reports will be lodged with Angus Council Sites and Monuments Record.

#### **5. REFERENCES**

Angus Council 2010. Improvement Works to 75-81 High Street, Brechin several works. Specification of Consultancy Services.

## APPENDIX 1: Trial Hole Summary Table

Trial Hole	Depth (m)	Description
1	2	Made ground 0.55-0.6m deep onto natural subsoil. Contexts 018-019
2	3	Tarmac onto 0.8m of made ground onto natural subsoil. Contexts 015-017
3	3	Tarmac onto 1.1m of made ground onto natural subsoil. Contexts 011-014
4	3	Turfline onto 1.6m of made ground onto natural subsoil. Contexts 007-010
5	-	Not excavated due to access/space restrictions
6	3.9	Concrete onto 0.4m of subsoil/made ground onto natural subsoil. Contexts 020-022
7	-	Not excavated due to access/space restrictions
8	1.3	Topsoil onto 1.05m of made ground onto natural subsoil. Contexts 023-025
9	5	Tarmac onto 0.7m of made ground onto 0.65m of subsoil/possible old ground surface onto natural subsoil. Contexts 001-006.

## APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context No.	Trial Hole	Context/ Description
001	2, 3, 9	Tarmac 0.15m deep. Current road surface
002	9	Made ground 0.2m deep. Brownish grey stony clay and gravel
003	9	Made ground 0.5m deep. Brownish orange clay sand and gravel with crushed mortar inclusions
004	9	Subsoil-possible old topsoil or ground surface 0.3-0.35m deep. Dark grey black silt with rootlets and occasional pebbles
005	9	Subsoil-lower horizon of 004 0.25-0.3m deep. Mid-dark orange brown clay silt with occasional charcoal and gravel inclusions
006	9	Natural subsoil reached at 1.5-1.6m down. Mid brownish orange medium grained sand. Weathered bedrock at 4.6m down
007	4	Modern turfline 0.15m deep
008	4	Made ground 0.2m deep. Same as (002). Dark grey black stony clay and gravel
009	4	Made ground 1.4m deep. Same as (003). Mid brownish orange clay sand and gravel with some red brick inclusions
010	4	Natural subsoil reached at 1.5m down. Pinkish orange clay sand and gravel onto weathered bedrock
011	3	Made ground 0.2m deep. Mixed brick rubble and sandy clay
012	3	Made ground 0.4m deep. Possibly same as (002). Mid-dark brownish grey sandy clay silt with rubble inclusions
013	3	Made ground or subsoil interface 0.5m deep. Mixed mid brownish orange clay sand and gravel
014	3	Natural subsoil reached at 1.1m down. Mid peachy orange gravelly clayey sand
015	2	Made ground 0.35m deep. Demolition layer, sandstone rubble and crushed mortar with reddish brown sandy clay
016	2	Made ground 0.45m. Mid reddish grey clay sand mixed with sandstone rubble and mortar. 1 sherd of white glazed china recovered from deposit
017	2	Natural subsoil reached at 0.8m down. Mid peachy orange sandy clay and gravel
018	1	Made ground 0.55-0.6m deep. Brownish grey clay sand and gravel mixed with re-deposited natural subsoil
019	1	Probable natural subsoil reached at 0.6m down. Mid peachy orange clay sand with small to medium gravel cobbles
020	6	Concrete 0.15m deep. Concrete surface to rear of building
021	6	Subsoil/made ground 0.4m deep. Mixed brown grey silt and mid peachy orange natural clay sand
022	6	Natural subsoil reached at 0.55m down. Mid peachy orange fine to medium grained sand grading to gravels

023	8	Modern topsoil 0.15m deep. Dark brownish black sandy silt over gravel and plastic underlay
024	8	Made ground 1.05m deep. Mixed greyish orange pink clay sand and gravel with modern rubbish inclusions and brick rubble
025	8	Natural subsoil reached at 1.2m down. Mid yellow peachy orange coarse sand and gravel

### APPENDIX 3: Digital Photographic Register

Photo No.	Context/ Description	Taken From	Conditions
1	General shot of TH 9	W	Bright
2	General shot of area of TH 9	W	Bright
3	General shot of area of TH 9	W	Low light
4	Shot of 2-3m core removed from TH 4	S	Low light
5	Shot of TH 4	ESE	Low light
6	General shot of area of TH 4	SE	Low Light
7	Shot of 2-3m core removed from TH 3	N	Low Light
8	Shot of TH 3	SW	Low Light
9	General shot of TH 3	W	Low Light
10	Shot of 2-3m cores removed from TH 2	S	Dull
11	General area shot of TH 2	W	Dull
12	Shot of TH 2	W	Dull
13	General area shot of TH 1	E	Dull
14	Shot of TH 1	N	Dull
15	General shots of access creation into area for TH 5 & 6	S	O/C-Rain
16	General shots of access creation into area for TH 5 & 6	S	O/C-Rain
17	Shot of 2-4m cores from TH 6	NE	O/C
18	General area shot of TH 6	NW	O/C
19	Shot of TH 6	N	O/C
20	Shot of 2m core from TH 8	SE	Dull
21	General area shot of TH 8	N	Dull
22	Shot of TH 8	W	Dull

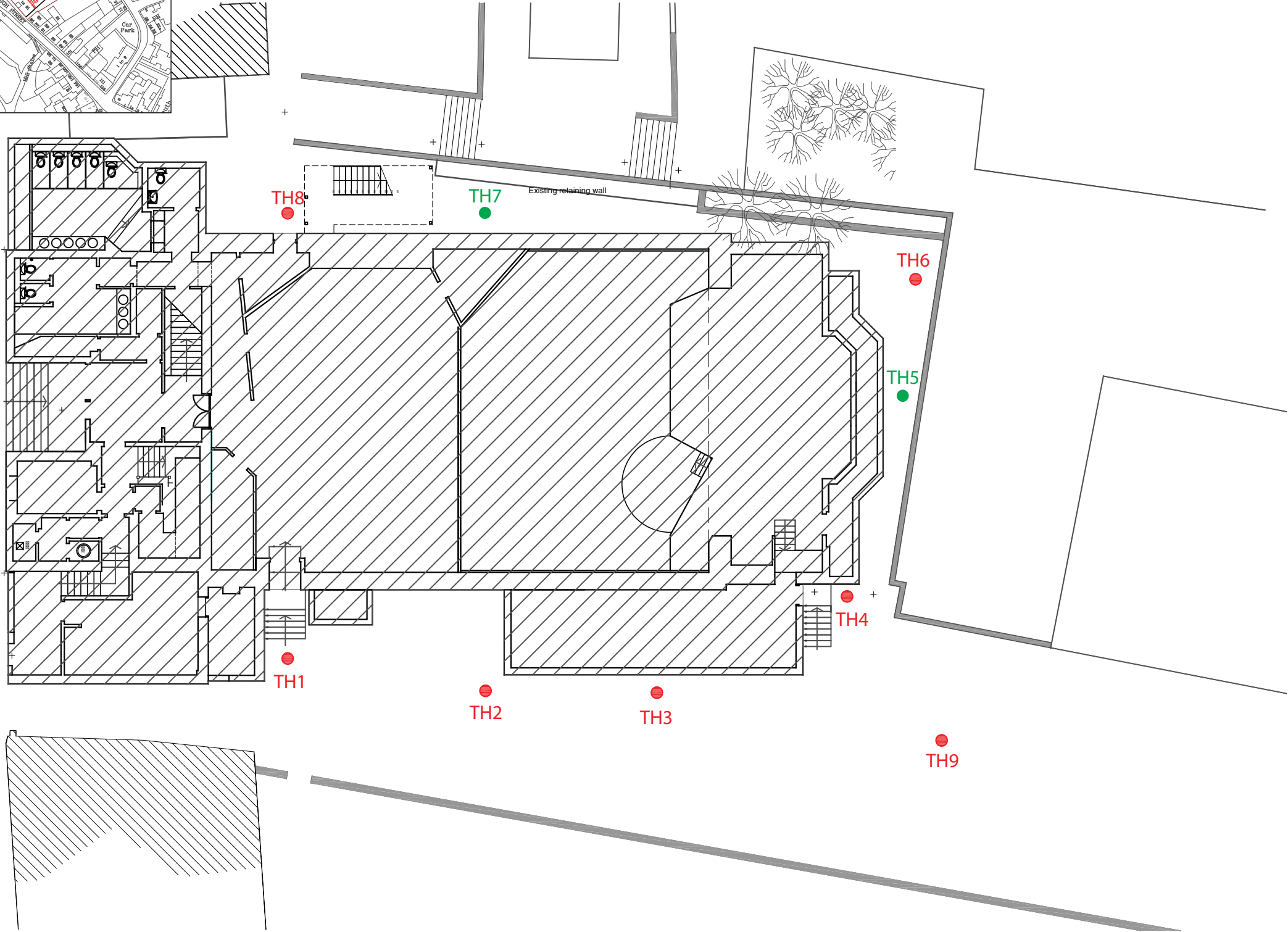
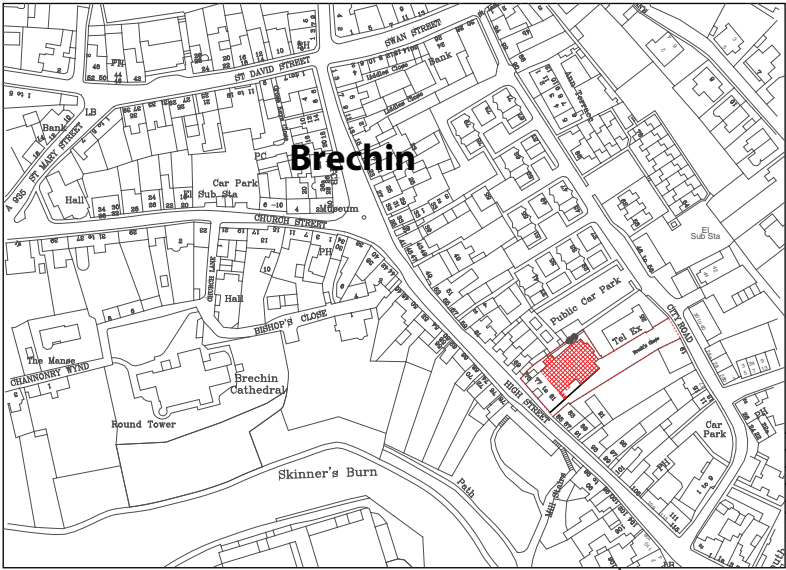
### APPENDIX 4: Drawings Register

Drawing No.	Context/ Description	Plan/Section	Scale
1	Sketch profiles of TH 1-4, & 9	S	1:20
2	Sketch profiles of TH 5 & 8	S	1:20



## APPENDIX 5: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Angus
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	75-81 High Street, Brechin
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	HISB
<b>PARISH:</b>	Brechin
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Helena Gray
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	None
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)</b>	NO 5981 6010
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2010
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2010
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground breaking works for geotechnical investigations on the site of a derelict 1920s cinema. The site lies within the conservation area of the historic medieval core of Brechin, close to the 13 <sup>th</sup> century cathedral and 11 <sup>th</sup> century round tower. The ground investigations consisted of the excavation of seven trial holes. Deposits generally consisted of made ground onto natural subsoil. Two subsoil layers were identified within TH9 overlying natural. These may represent the remains of an old topsoil horizon. No further artefacts, deposits or features of archaeological significance were encountered.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	Unknown
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Angus Council
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	National Monuments Record of Scotland Angus Council Sites and Monuments Record



- Key:
- Trial Holes
  - Trial Holes not excavated



Fig. No:	1	Revision:	A
Title:	Site location and location of Trial Holes		
Project:	75-81 High Street, Brechin, Angus		
Scale:	1:200 @ A3		
Client:	Angus Council		
Drawn by:	GC	Report No:	1851



Fig. 2 Photo of 2m and 3m core removed from Trial Hole 4




Fig. 3 General view of area of Trial Holes 3 and 4

Key:

Scale:

Fig. No:	2-3	Revision:	A	Client:	Angus Council
Title:					
Project:	75-81 High Street, Brechin, Angus				



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Fig. 4 General view of area of Trial Hole 1



Fig. 5 Post-ex shot of Trial Hole 1

Key:	Fig. No:	4-5	Revision:	A	Client:	Angus Council	 <div>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk</div>				
	Title:										
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