

Archaeological Watching Brief
Royal Hotel
29-33 Castle Street
FORFAR
FF 15



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ROYAL HOTEL
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1	<i>Background</i>	1
2	<i>Details of Work</i>	1
3	<i>Interpretation</i>	5
4	<i>Conclusions</i>	6
5	<i>Bibliography</i>	6
Appendix 1	<i>Context Register</i>	7
Appendix 2	<i>Photographic Register</i>	7
Appendix 3	<i>Drawing Register</i>	8
Appendix 4	<i>Finds Register</i>	9
Appendix 5	<i>Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry</i>	10
Appendix 6	<i>Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork</i>	11

Cover Plate: Site location; work starting in pend and on pavement.

Illustration 1: Site location plan

Illustration 2: Location cable in pend and 'T joint' in Castle Street

Illustration 3: N facing section 1m in from pend

Illustration 4: E facing section of medieval ditch at 'T joint' on Castle Street

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ABSTRACT

Alder Archaeology was commissioned by energy supplier SSE to undertake an archaeological watching brief (Alder code FF15) on the excavation of a cable service trench and 'T joint' at the former Royal Hotel, 33 Castle Street, Forfar, NGR NO45577 50683. The work took place 28 March 2013, in good weather conditions. Excavation of the trench in the pend leading from Castle Street pavement to the rear of the hotel, revealed deposits below recent makeup and resurfacing containing finds of modern pottery, cobbles, large bore ceramic pipe fragments and one residual sherd of medieval pottery. Excavation on the pavement of Castle Street for the service 'T joint' revealed a medieval ditch feature aligned E-W, from which fragments of burnt bone and one medieval pottery sherd were recovered. The excavations for the cable service trench were completed on the day and no further archaeological work will be required.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

Scottish and Southern Energy commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological watching brief on excavations required for a new electricity connection into the pend for the Old Hair Salon at the Royal Hotel, Castle Street, Forfar. At the time of the watching brief the Royal Hotel was no longer operating. The area of excavation was in the historic core of the town, on the pavement and partly into the pend, centred on NGR NO45577 50683. The work (Alder site code FF 15) was undertaken 28 March 2013 in good weather conditions. The requirement was to monitor the excavation of a low voltage cable trench in the pend. Special attention was paid to identifying and recording any deposits or features relating to the medieval development of the historic burgh.

The archaeological work was advised by Bruce Mann of Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service for Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the archaeological monitoring was to establish and record the presence/absence, date, character and quality of any archaeological remains encountered in the excavations required for the new electricity connection. The results of this investigation will be used to inform future mitigation strategies for any proposed development within the vicinity of the watching brief.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this watching brief. Copies will be sent to the client, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Aberdeen Council Sites and Monuments Record.

1.4 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Les Anderson of SSE and Bruce Mann of Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service for Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus for their assistance and guidance throughout this project. The project was fully funded by SSE

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1)

The site is located at the Royal Hotel 33 Castle Street. Excavation took place on the pavement and in the pend leading to the rear car park of the hotel, centred on NGR NO45577 50683. This site is within the historic core of the burgh.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

This area is considered to be of high archaeological potential (Dennison and Coleman, 2000). It was considered that service excavations on the site could reveal evidence of medieval occupation in the form of deposits and features and dating evidence in the form of pottery sherds.

In 1994 trial work by SUAT at the rear of the Royal Hotel revealed the remains of the former buildings (stables). These remains were represented by a wall feature aligned north to south and large stone demolition rubble which had been used for infilling. Below the building remains and demolition material, at a depth of 0.70 m was a layer of silty loam with a maximum thickness of 0.50 m. The layer of silty loam contained some pottery sherds dating from 13-15th century and was interpreted as backlands cultivation or garden soil dating from the medieval period. Natural deposits were reached at a depth of about 1.10 m.

A watching brief by Murray Archaeological Services Ltd on the installation of an electric cable at Myre Road and Castle Street in 2008 found a truncated ditch-like feature at 41 Castle Street and surviving medieval levels at the base of a trench at 1-5 Castle Street which may indicate the presence of a long medieval ditch running N/S along the W side of properties fronting onto Castle Street

2.3 Archaeological Method

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on all excavation works required for the cable trench through the pend and the cable 'T joint' trench on the Castle Street pavement outside the pend. All significant archaeological deposits and features were investigated, given a context number and recorded. Sections were drawn at 1:10 and 1:20. A Nikon D50 digital camera was used for the photography.

2.4 Results of Investigations

Cable Trench

The cable trench, 0.50m deep and 0.40m wide, extended from the Castle Street pavement for a distance of just over 25m into the pend to a hairdressing establishment on the S side of the pend.



Starting excavation of cable trench in pend

The surface of the E part of the pend was paved with two lines of slabs with bricks (03) between and on either side. The bricks and slabs were set on a bedding of clean sand (02). The depth to the bottom of the bedding was 0.21m. Below the bedding was compacted sand (04), 0.22m thick, with a moderate amount of medium sized stone. Below compacted sand (04) was a deposit of darker sand/silty sand (05) at the base of the trench.

Between 8.50 and 9m into the pend from Castle Street a large stone was encountered with dimensions of 0.34 X 0.18m and 0.10m thick. At 9m another large flat stone was found, 0.10m thick. These stones were considered to be part of wall, possibly of a property predating the pend. At 14.60m a cast iron pipe crossed the trench at a depth of 0.25m. Modern ceramic pipes crossed the trench at 17.70m (manhole) and 23.40m.

Where the pend changed alignment at 13.20m in from Castle Street, a dark brown compacted silty loam (10) formed the lower deposit in the trench.

Deposit (11) appeared in the last 6 m of trench and comprised a soft black silty loam, at a depth of 0.30m. This deposit contained fragments of large bore ceramic pipe, 19th C brick and some cobbles. The cobbles appeared to be from a former cobble surface. No pottery was recovered from this deposit and it may have represented backfilling over a deeply buried major drain or sewer.



Excavated cable trench in pend

Natural deposits of sand as seen on Castle Street were not encountered in the cable trench.

Castle Street 'T joint' Excavation

The excavation for the service 'T joint' on the Castle Street pavement measured 2.20m N-S, 0.94m in width and 0.80m in depth. It bottomed onto natural orange clean gravel and sand. On the E side of the excavation was an electricity cable with a wooden covering which was laid in 1951 (SSE staff pers comment). The cables in the excavation ran N-S and bottomed

onto the natural sand and had eradicated archaeological deposits except for those exposed in the E facing section.



Location of 'T joint' in Castle Street, showing ditch feature

Evident in the W side (E facing section) of the excavation below the pavement bricks and modern makeup 0.30m deep was the profile of the N end of a ditch feature. It had a major fill (06) of brown silty clay 0.32m thick. A sherd of medieval pottery and 2 burnt fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposit (06). Below (06) was a fill of striated clay (07), 0.09m thick, from which a fragment of burnt animal bone was recovered. Below (07) was a lens of blue clay (08). The bottom or primary fill (09) was brown grey clay with charcoal flecks, 0.06m thick.



Detail of ditch in E facing section of excavation for 'T joint'

3 Interpretation

3.1

Cable Trench

The cable trench was excavated in the pend off Castle Street which is within an area considered to have high archaeological potential. Some evidence of former occupation were the wall remains found at 8.50 - 9m into the pend from the Castle Street frontage. This wall may be the rear wall of an earlier building fronting onto Castle Street which predated the pend.

Deposit 04, a lower deposit in the cable trench, yielded some evidence of previous activity from different periods of time with finds of one residual sherd of medieval pottery and later 19th century sherds. It also produced fragments of clay pipe stems 18th or 19th century. Of interest was a fragment of a figurine, a male figure dressed in 18th century style.

The base deposits were also of interest. Deposit (05) appeared to be disturbed ground most likely formed by the insertion of the pend and by disturbance caused by the insertion of unseen services buried below the trench floor. At 13.20m from Castle Street the dark brown silty loam (10) could well be disturbed garden or cultivation soil indicating the rear of properties that formally fronted Castle Street. Deposit (11) also a disturbed dark loam may well be a continuation of deposit (10) which has been dug through to put in a sewer.

Castle Street 'T joint' Excavation

The excavation for the 'T joint' revealed part of the N side of a ditch feature aligned E-W. The ditch remains were well sealed and the face recorded had not been disturbed. However the main part of the ditch within the excavation had been taken out previously when the electric cables had been inserted in 2008. The ditch revealed evidence of primary silting in its lower deposits and a sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the upper deposit, indicating that the ditch dated from the medieval period.

4 Conclusions

4.1 Conclusions

The watching brief on the cable trench in the pend off Castle Street showed that this was an area of high archaeological potential by producing evidence of earlier activity on the site in the form of one residual medieval pottery sherd and later finds of pipe stems and pottery. It is also considered probable that there has been much disturbance to any earlier deposits within the pend by the insertion of services (other than those encountered on the watching brief) which has mixed these deposits together. Wall remains and disturbed garden soil deposits could tentatively indicate a location for the rear of properties fronting Castle Street and the start of the backlands.

Excavation for the 'T joint' revealed that even buried below a busy street pavement and cut by underground services, archaeological features, in this case a medieval ditch, can still survive in good condition. The exact function of the ditch is undetermined, it may have been taking waste water from frontage properties out into Castle Street or it may have been marking the N boundary of an early property which was forward (more to the W) of the present frontage line.

In 2008 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd found a ditch like feature at 41 Castle Street and medieval levels at 1-5 Castle Street which may have indicated the presence of a long medieval ditch running N-S along the W side of properties fronting onto Castle Street. It may be that the E-W ditch found at the 'T joint' was leading into the long N-S ditch.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

The excavation required for the electric cable connection was completed on the day and no further archaeological work is required.

5 Bibliography

Cachart, R 1994 'Royal Hotel, Castle Street, Forfar' *Discovery Excav Scot* 1994, 82

Dennison, E and Coleman, R 2000 *Historic Forfar, The Scottish Burgh Survey*

Murray, J C 2008 'Myre Road and Castle Street, Forfar' *Discovery Excav Scot* 2008, 32

Appendix 1 Context Register

<i>No:</i>	<i>Description</i>
	<i>Pend</i>
01	Stone slabs forming surface, in Pend, 0.40 X 0.40m form two parallel lines with surface brickwork on either side of the lines of slabs
02	Deposit, loose, clean orange sand for bedding of slabs 01, 0.15m thick
03	Brick, surface on either side of the lines of slabs, bricks measure 0.19 X 0.09m and 0.06 thick
04	Deposit, sand compacted mid brown, moderate amounts of fragmented stone, and small pebbles, , darker with depth, original deposit, medium sized rounded and subrounded stones 0.22m thick, below sand of 02, finds pipe stems, pottery modern, glass
05	Deposit, sand darker than 04, modern glass (not collected), not bottomed, forms base of trench, 0.05m thick
10	Deposit, dark brown compact silty loam, lower deposit in trench where it changes alignment at 13.20m from Castle Street
11	Deposit, last 6 m of trench soft black silty loam, at depth of 0.30m frags of large bore ceramic pipe 19 th C brick, cobbles, no pottery found, possible backfill over deeply buried major drain or sewer
	<i>'T joint' (cable connection) on Castle Street Pavement</i>
06	Deposit, mid to dark brown silty clay in ditch, top layer of ditch infill, below makeup for modern pavement, 0.32m thick
07	Deposit, striated or layered brown and black silty clay, ditch deposit, below 06, 0.09m thick
08	Deposit, lens of blue clay, ditch silting, 0.04m thick, below 07
09	Deposit, brown grey clay with charcoal flecks, 0.06m thick, bottom deposit of ditch, below 08,
12	Cut for ditch only seen on W side, forming N end of ditch, gentle concave slope, upper part not well defined

Appendix 2 Photographic Register

<i>Image No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
01	Pend passageway interior general	W
02-03	Pend interior general	E
04	Pend interior general from Castle Street entrance	W
05	Rear car park of Royal Hotel	E
06	Pend start lifting slabs for cable service trench	E

07-08-09	Pend, start of cable trench excavation	E, SE
10-11	Pend, trench excavation	W
12	General of frontage of Royal Hotel	W
13	Pend, trench excavation	SW
14	Castle Street, start of excavation for services removing paving	S
15-17	General of Castle Street excavation	S
18	Castle Street excavation in progress	SE
19	Castle Street excavation in progress	SE
20-21	Pend, excavation of cable trench in	W
22-23	Castle Street excavation exposing cables complete	S-SW
24-25-26	Castle Street excavation detail	S-SW
27-28-29	Castle Street excavation, detail of archaeological ditch feature	SW-W
30	Castle Street excavation, general	SW
31-32	Pend, cable trench progressing	W-SW
33-34	Pend, cable trench W end	SW
35-36	Pend, cable to enter through existing hole in wall for a pipe	E
37-38	Pend, general of cable trench	W-E
39	Pend, excavation of trench outside fire door	SW

Appendix 3 Drawing Register

<i>Sheet No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Scale</i>
1	Context descriptions and general descriptions ; section 01 N facing section 1m in pend from Castle Street frontage at 1:10 and section 02 W facing section of the SSE trench on Castle St at 1:20; sketch plan of SSE trench no scale; location of pend	1:10, 1:20,
2	Description of ctx 11 and general notes	

Appendix 4 Finds Register

FF15 Royal Hotel Forfar, Finds List

Context	Material	Details
04	Pottery	1 body sherd medieval SWGW 5 body sherds TGE, white glazed 1 rim sherd TGE, white glazed 1 body sherd TGE, green/yellow glazed
04	Ceramic	1 fragment figurine (male figure dressed in 18th c style), glazed white with painted details in red/black/blue. Glazed white TGE
04	Glass	1 green bottle neck sherd
04	Clay pipe	2 stem fragments
04	Stone	3 quartz fragments, probably unworked
06	Pottery	1 sherd medieval black shelly ware with traces of white slip and brown glaze externally
06	Animal bone	2 calcined fragments from large mammal
07	Animal bone	1 calcined fragment from large/medium mammal

Appendix 5 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Angus Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Archaeological Watching Brief, Royal Hotel, 29-33 Castle Street, Forfar
PROJECT CODE:	FF15
PARISH:	Forfar
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Ray Cachart
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
RCAHMS NO(S):	NO45SE 226.01
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Core of medieval burgh
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Medieval pottery, ditch, burnt bone
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Excavation in pend centred on NGR NO45577 50683
START DATE	28 March 2013
END DATE	28 March 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	Cachart, R 1994 'Royal Hotel, Castle Street, Forfar' <i>Discovery Excav Scot</i> 1994, 82 Murray, J C 2008 'Myre Road and Castle Street, Forfar' <i>Discovery Excav Scot</i> 2008, 32
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Alder Archaeology was commissioned by energy supplier SSE to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of a cable service trench and 'T joint' at the former Royal Hotel, 33 Castle Street, Forfar, NGR NO45577 50683. The work took place 28 March 2013, in good weather conditions. Excavation of the trench in the pend leading from Castle Street pavement to the rear of the hotel, revealed deposits below recent makeup and resurfacing containing finds of modern pottery, cobbles, large bore ceramic pipe fragments and one residual sherd of medieval pottery. Excavation on the pavement of Castle Street revealed a possible medieval ditch feature aligned E-W, from which fragments of burnt bone and one medieval pottery sherd were recovered. The excavations were completed on the day and no further archaeological work will be required.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	SSE
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	

ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	RCAHMS (intended)
EMAIL ADDRESS:	director@alderarchaeology.co.uk

Appendix 6 Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork

6.1 Recording Methodology

Alder Archaeology employs a Single Context Recording System that allows full cross-referencing of stratigraphy, finds and environmental samples, as well as site-wide phasing. All features will be planned at scale 1:20, and sections drawn at scale 1:10. Sections and profiles will be drawn and all features will be photographed with metric scale included. Environmental samples will be taken from archaeologically significant contexts, if the analysis of these samples would aid significantly in the interpretation of any features identified.

6.2 Human Remains

If human remains are encountered they will be left in situ and the local police will be informed. If removal is required this will take place in compliance with Historic Scotland's Policy Paper *The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*.

6.3 Products and Reporting

A Data Structure Report will normally be prepared within a period agreed within the Written Scheme of Investigation/ Project Design, after the completion of the fieldwork. This forms the basic level of reporting. Further reporting may be required on the basis of discoveries made during excavations.

A copy of the report and the project archive will be deposited in the NMRS. Further copies will be sent to the client, LAAO and others, as appropriate.

6.4 Artefacts

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*. We will report such finds, if recovered, with supporting documentation to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel for disposal to the appropriate museum.

6.5 Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

A brief summary of the results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*.

6.6 General Conditions and Health and Safety

We adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.

Alder Archaeology Ltd has public liability insurance of £2,000,000. Details of this can be provided on request.

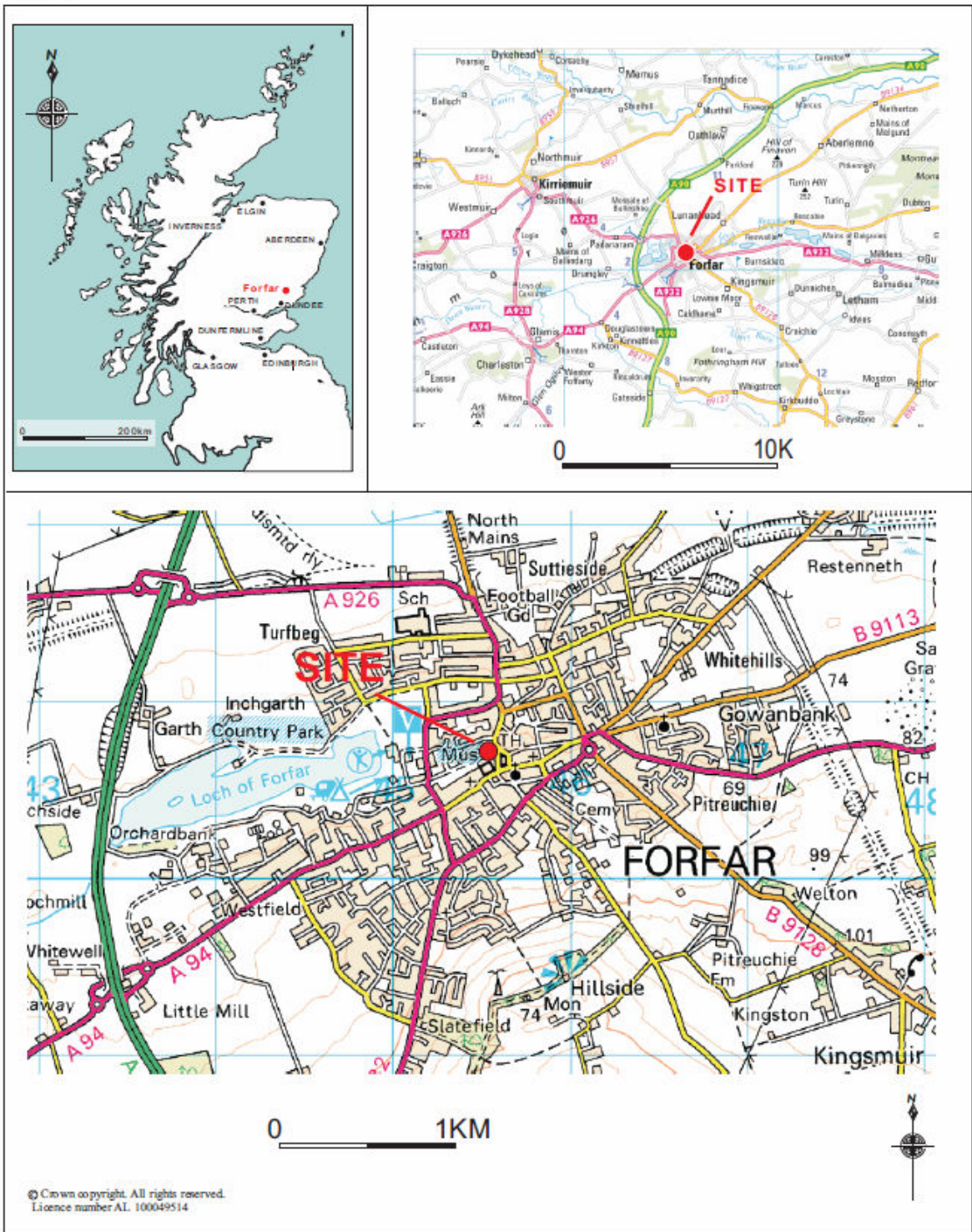
We operate a strict health and safety policy and conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act. We undertakes Risk Assessments on all fieldwork carried out.

Alder Archaeology representatives will at all times wear protective footwear, high visibility clothing and other appropriate clothing. Hard hats will be worn if there is active plant on site or at all times if the site is deemed a hard hat area.

If lightly contaminated deposits are uncovered disposable boiler suits and gloves will be worn. A source of clean water will be made available for staff to clean hands with. If the health risk posed by site contamination is felt to be too high all further archaeological work will stop in that area.

Illus 1

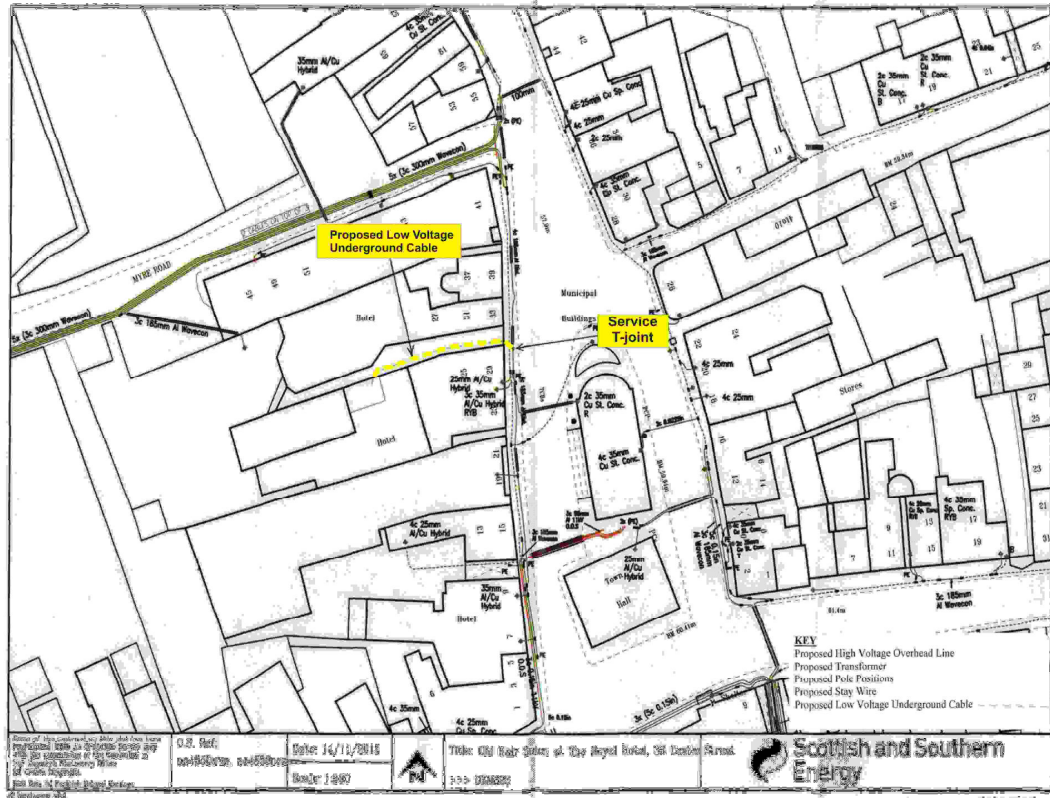
Site Location Plan



FF15

Illus 2 Location of low voltage underground cable in pend and service 'T joint' in Castle Street pavement

Illus 2 Location of low voltage cable in pend and service 'T-joint' in Castle Street pavement

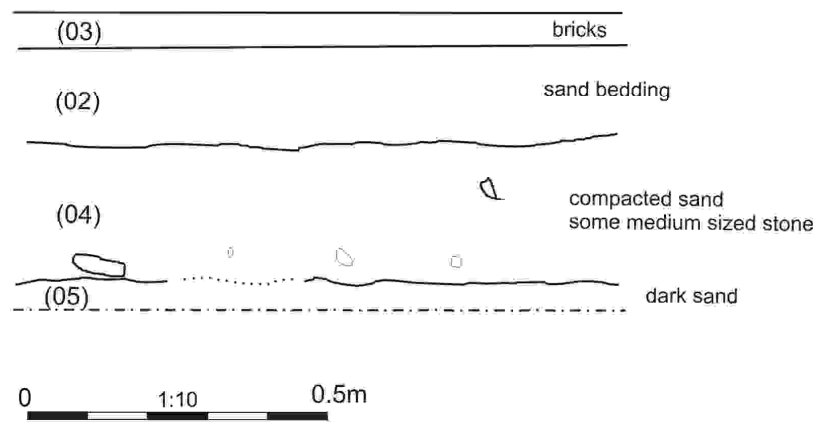


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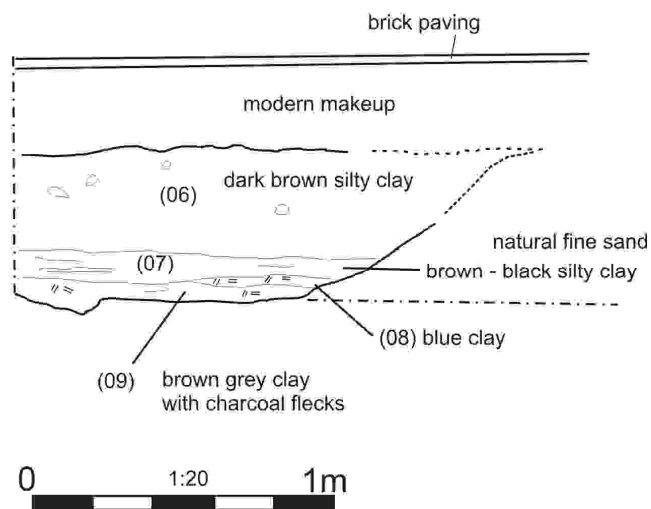
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Energy

Plan after Scottish and Southern Energy

Illus 3 N facing section 1m in from pend



Illus 4 E facing section of medieval ditch at 'T-joint' on Castle Street pavement



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