

Archaeological Evaluation
16 Argyle St,
St Andrews
SA 62



Illus 1: General of site, evaluation pit 01 in foreground, view S

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
16 ARGYLE ST
ST ANDREWS

SA62

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|------------|--|----|
| 2 | <i>Details of Work</i> | 4 |
| 3 | <i>Interpretation</i> | 9 |
| 4 | <i>Conclusions and Recommendations</i> | 9 |
| 5 | <i>References</i> | 10 |
| Appendix 1 | <i>Context Register</i> | 10 |
| Appendix 2 | <i>Photographic Register</i> | 11 |
| Appendix 3 | <i>Drawing Register</i> | 12 |
| Appendix 4 | <i>Finds Register</i> | 12 |
| Appendix 5 | <i>Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry</i> | 13 |
| Appendix 6 | <i>Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork</i> | 14 |

Illustration 1: Frontispiece; general of site, evaluation pit 01, view S

Illustration 2: Site location plan

Illustration 3: General of site showing concrete floor at N end , view N

Illustration 4: Plan of locations of archaeological evaluation pits

Illustration 5: Evaluation pit 01 post excavation, showing natural sand, view S

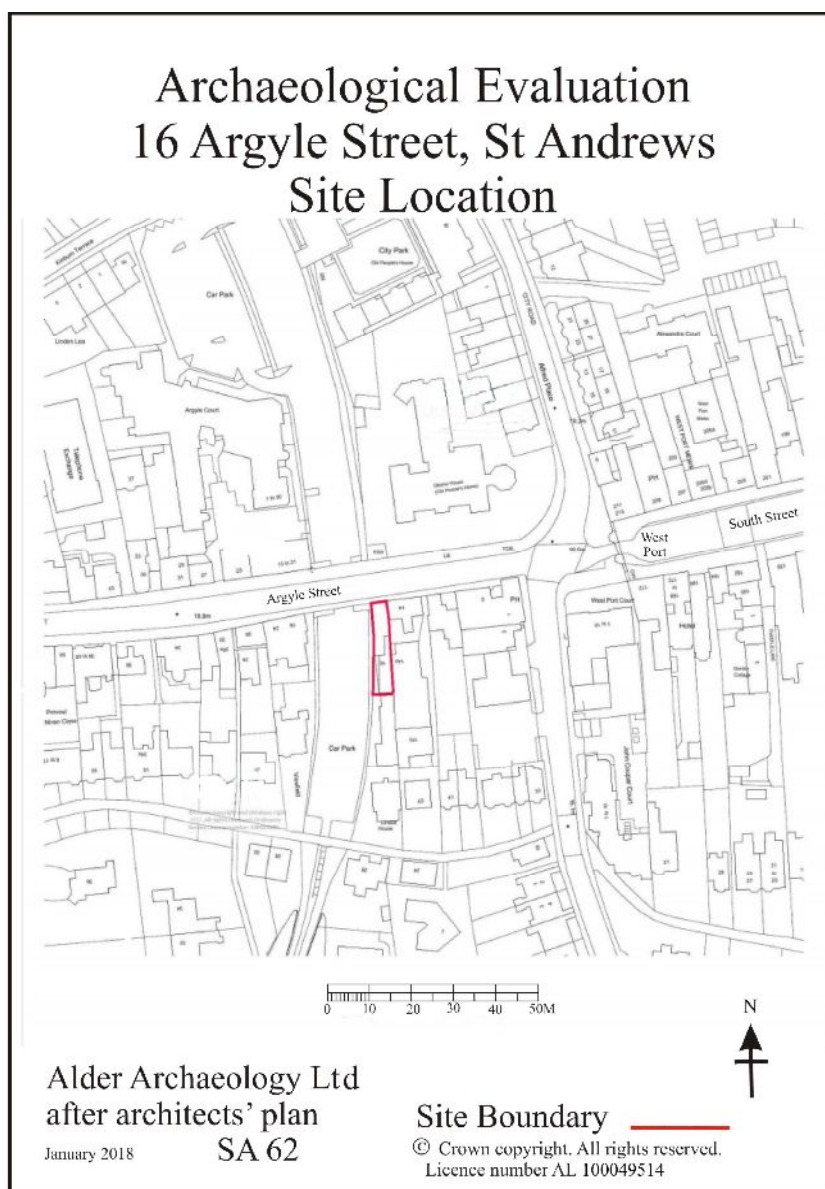
Illustration 6: Plan of evaluation pit 02 makeup, cuts and fills for services into natural

Illustration 7: Evaluation pit 03 showing concrete floor and makeup over natural, view NE

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Abstract

On the 23 January 2018 Alder Archaeology Ltd excavated three small archaeological evaluation pits (site code SA 62) on a narrow site at 16 Argyle Street St Andrews in advance of a housing development. The site was considered to have archaeological significance due to its location within the Argyle suburb, which had developed around the main western route into the town during the medieval period. The site is centred on NGR NO 50520 16517 and measures 31 X 7m, it had been cleared of a joinery workshop building. The site surfaces comprised a concrete floor on the S half and compacted dark sandy silt yard surface on the N half. The evaluation pits were located at both ends of the site and in the centre. Below the surfaces, the pits revealed the cuts and fills of modern services which had been laid into the natural orange brown sand. Nothing of archaeological significance was found. It was considered that any medieval archaeological deposits that may have existed on the site had been scarpd away during the modern period. No further archaeological work was recommended.



Illus 2: site location in the Argyle suburb of St Andrews

1.1 Introduction (Illus 2)

Alder Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the site of J. P. Gilmour's former joinery workshop building at 16 Argyle Street, St Andrews, centred on NGR NO 50520 16517, in advance of a housing development. During the medieval period an early suburb developed around the Argyle route which was the main road to the town's West Port and onto South Street. The proposed development area is located on the W side of a public car park. The car park has been constructed over the deep cutting of the former railway line which has now been backfilled and levelled. The work (site code SA 62) was undertaken on 23rd January 2018 in changeable weather conditions. The requirement was to excavate three evaluation pits, each 2 X 2m, one at each end and one in the centre of the site, covering approximately 10% of the available area. In the event the northern test pit was reduced to 1.20 X 1.60m due to the proximity of live services.

The work was designed to satisfy the archaeological condition on development application reference 17/01526/FULL.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this investigation was to establish the presence/absence, date, character and quality of any archaeological remains surviving within the development area. Special attention was to be paid to recording a deposit known as 'St Andrews garden soil' which is found in and around the burgh and in the Argyle suburb. This deposit appears to represent a uniform layer developed in the medieval period and containing abundant medieval pottery sherds.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this evaluation. Copies will be sent to the client, The National Record of the Historic Environment at Historic Environment Scotland, and Fife Sites and Monuments Record.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

This evaluation is the final part of a programme of archaeological work designed to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development.

1.5 Acknowledgements

Alder wishes to thank Graeme Marshall for his assistance and on site advice. Thanks are also due to Douglas Speirs, Fife Council Archaeologist for his advice and guidance throughout this project. The archaeological evaluation work was fully funded by the developer.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 2 and 4)

The proposed development site measures 31 X 7m and is aligned N-S. The site had been cleared of J. P. Gilmour's joinery workshop building leaving a slightly raised concrete floor at the site's S end and a compacted black silty sand yard surface at the N end. On the W side of the site's wooden boundary fence is a public car park. The car park has been constructed over the backfilled, deep railway cutting for the former Anstruther & St Andrews line which opened in 1887 and closed in 1965. The railway cutting had eradicated roughly one half of the site's original width on its W side, along with buildings on the frontage. A bridge was built to carry Argyle Street over the cutting. An historic stone built boundary wall forms the E boundary of the site abutted by buildings on the site's E side. The S boundary is formed by a standing building and the N boundary is the opening to the former yard from Argyle Street pavement.



Illus 3: General of site showing concrete floor at N end, view N

2.2 Archaeological Potential

The site lies on the south side of Argyle Street which is the westward continuation of South Street, some 80m, west of West Port. The site is outwith the town's walls, in the medieval suburb of Argyle, which was inhabited mainly by weavers, builders and related crafts. Historic map evidence (Wood 1820, OS 1854 and 1893) of the Argyle suburb shows that the frontage line along the street has been in a constant state of flux as individual buildings have encroached upon the carriageway. Some archaeological evidence regarding the suburb was found by the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust (SUAT) on three sites investigated during the 1990's.

At **33 Argyle Street** in October 1996 six trial holes were excavated and found deep garden or cultivation soils with medieval pottery at the site N end. A wall feature was found along with construction cuts made into the cultivation soil. A possible soakaway was recorded. A dump of building debris was found at the immediate rear of the frontage. On the immediate frontage possible evidence of an earlier street surface along with a frontage line and residual medieval pottery was found. On the same site in December 1996 further work on the frontage revealed a rough surface of disturbed cobbles and stonework indicating that formerly Argyle Street, at this location, was wider than it is at present (*DES* 1996, 50 and *DES* 1997, 40).

On the site of **50-52 Argyle Street** in October 1998 four trial trenches revealed significant archaeological features dating from the medieval period had survived at the rear of the property. The remains included a clay/ash floor, charcoal or soot deposits, walling, pits cut into natural and medieval garden soil. In the middle part of the site and the frontage, natural sand was encountered below previous floor levels. In November 1998 an excavation took place on the site which was the first real opportunity to look at the archaeology in the medieval suburb surrounding Argyle St.

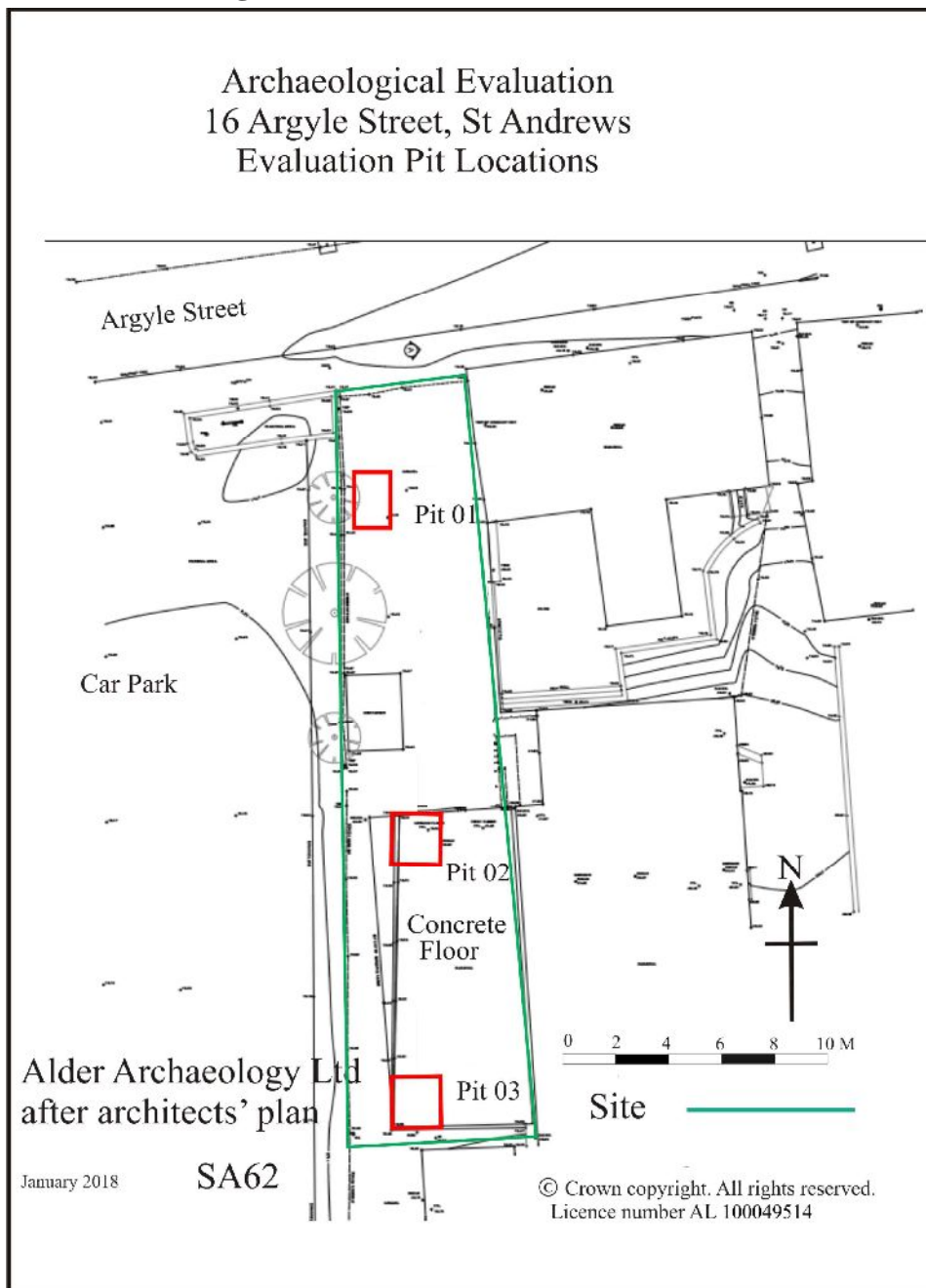
The archaeological evidence uncovered demonstrated that medieval occupation and activity in this backland site had been much more intense than had previously been expected. The entire width of the available site was investigated as it represented the backlands of two separate riggs. Below a black, post-medieval garden soil was an earlier dark brown garden soil which produced abundant pottery sherds representing a variety of medieval vessel types. On the east side of the site, evidence of medieval and later cultivation activity was identified. On the west side of the site below the cultivation level remains of more intensive activity were found. The east side of a medieval stone built structure 5 m in length was uncovered. The building contained a clay floor which had been heat affected and covered with charcoal. What this activity actually represented is yet to be determined. Adjacent to the building a series of deep cuts had been made into the natural sand which were interpreted as the remains of a kiln. From the kiln a small stone-lined gully opened out into a larger ditch (*SUAT* 1998 unpublished DSR).

A watching brief at **64 Argyle Street** in August 1996 on foundation trenches for a new joiner's workshop in the rear of the property showed that the site had been much altered by levelling in recent times. In the N part of the site natural sand was only 0.30m below the site surface while at the rear or S end it was more than 1.20m down below a levelling dump of silty garden soil. Only a few sherds of modern pottery were found in the garden soil. The absence of medieval pottery was considered surprising as the site is well within the medieval suburb (*DES* 1996, 50).

2.3 Archaeological Method

Three evaluation pits were excavated by a small tracked excavator. Each was intended to be 2 X 2m, but the pit at the N end was reduced to 1.20 X 1.60 due to adjacent services. Hand digging was carried out on various fills for services. The pits were archaeologically recorded and photographed. The pit locations were measured in by tape.

2.4 Results of Investigations



Illus 4: locations of archaeological evaluation pits

Evaluation Pit 01 (Illus 5)

Evaluation pit 01 was located at the N end of the site, 3.90m to the S of site's N edge and 1.85m to the E of the E kerb of the car park or 0.45m E of the site's W fence line. Compacted type 1 hardcore and sand (0101) was 0.10m thick over dark silty organic garden soil (0102), 0.10m thick. Below this was mid grey sandy garden soil (0103) up to 0.40m thick with some tree root disturbance especially on the W side. A cut (0105) for a modern drain extended N-S alongside the W baulk of the trench, filled with dark brown sandy silt (0104). Undisturbed natural loose orange brown sand was reached at a depth 0.60m and further excavated to a depth of 1.05m. A sherd of 19th century pottery

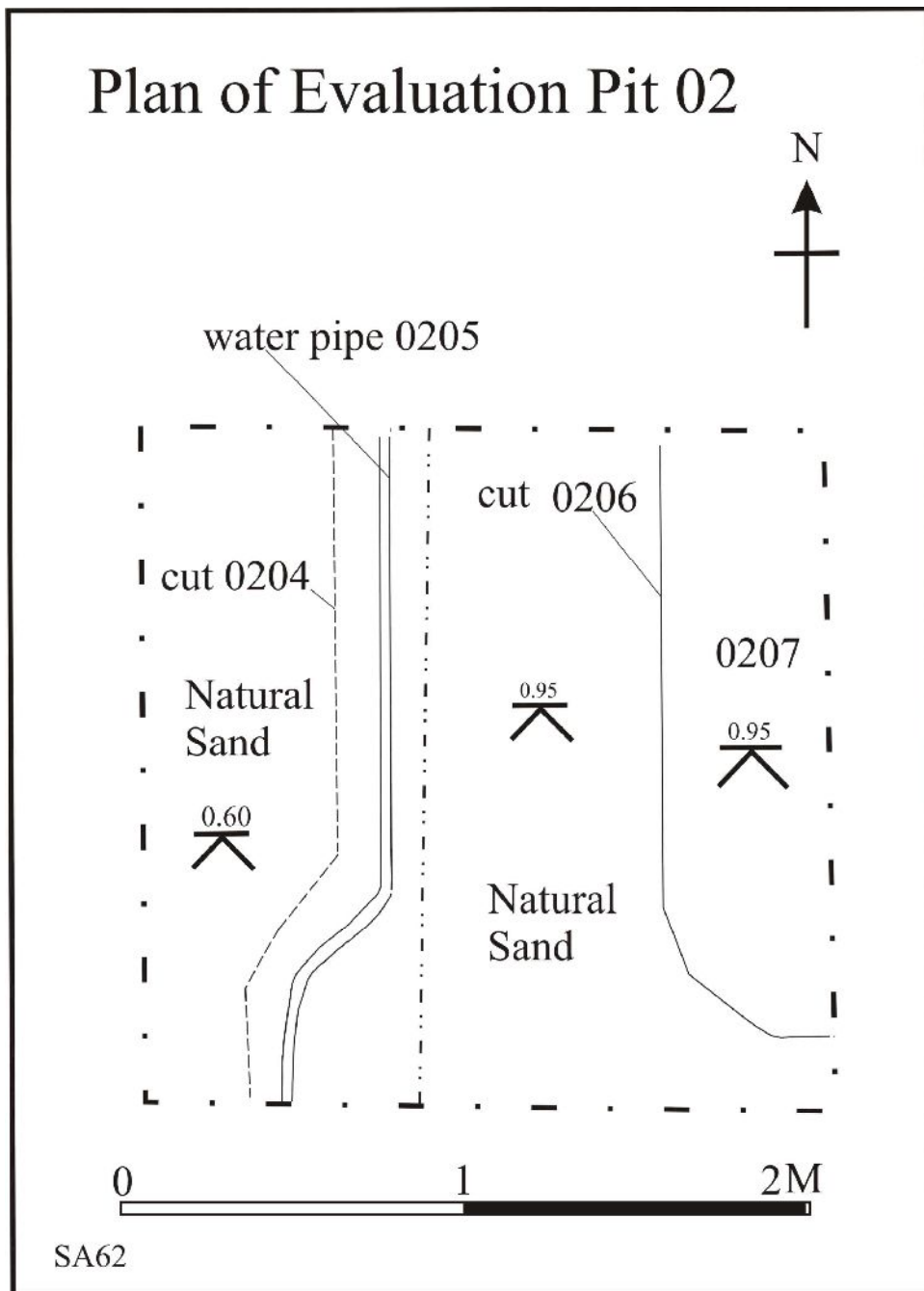
was found in the garden soil (not collected). Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this evaluation pit.



Illus 5: Evaluation pit 01 post excavation, showing natural sand, view S

Evaluation Pit 02 (Illus 6)

Evaluation Pit 02 measured 2 X 2m and was located mid site, 16.80m from the site's N edge and 3m to the E of the car park E kerb. Here the concrete floor (0201) of the brick building had been cut away to accommodate the pit. Below the concrete and its rubble make up (0202) in total 0.60m thick, was a further make up of silty loam (0203), 0.10-0.15m thick. Alongside the edge of the E baulk was the cut (0206) and fill (0207) of the W side of a modern trench (most likely for a large bore sewage pipe) which contained modern finds (not collected) and was not bottomed. A small bore water pipe (0205) extended across the trench N-S in cut (0204) 0.70m to the E of the pit's W edge. Undisturbed natural comprised loose orange brown sand with abundant cobble sized and smaller rounded sandstone rubble and was reached at a depth of 0.60m. The natural was excavated down to a depth of 0.95m on the pit's E side. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this evaluation pit.



Illus 6: Plan of evaluation pit 02 showing makeup and cuts and fills for services into natural sand (levels measured down from the site surface)

Evaluation Pit 03 (Illus 7)

Evaluation Pit 03 measured 2 X 2m and was located in the SW corner of the site, cut through the concrete floor. Below the makeup for the concrete was a deposit of grey/brown sandy silt with frequent rubble up to 0.45m thick, below which was a loose yellow 'beach' sand, possibly wind blown. In a sondage at the base of the pit further stony yellow/white 'beach' sand was encountered. The sand layers were considered to be natural. A lead cable was encountered running N-S along the W edge of the pit, at a depth of 0.40m. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this evaluation pit.



Illus 7: Evaluation pit 03 showing concrete floor and makeup over natural sand, view NE

3 Interpretation

3.1

The evaluation pits revealed only occasional 19/20th century pottery and small artefacts in various modern fills for services and makeup layers overlying and cut into deposits of natural sand.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The evaluation pits indicated that there are no significant archaeological deposits or features surviving on the site and that the medieval St Andrews' garden soil expected on the site either did not develop at this location or has been truncated. The most likely reason for the absence of medieval deposits would be scarping or truncation of the site during the construction of the deep cutting for the Anstruther & St Andrews railway in the 1880's, which formed the W edge of the site (today's car park).

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

Alder recommends that no further archaeological work is required on this site. However the final decision ultimately rests with the Fife Council archaeologist.

5 References

5.1 Cartographic

Wood, J (1820) *Plan of the city of St Andrew's*

Ordnance Survey (1854) Sheet 3 of 4 scale 1:1056

Ordnance Survey (1893) Sheet IX. 9. 20. Scale 1:500

Ordnance Survey (1893) Sheet IX. 10. 16. Scale 1:500

5.2 Bibliographic

Bowler, D (1996) '64 Argyle Street, St Andrews, Urban burgh site' *Discovery & Excav Scot* 1996, 50

Cachart, R (1996) '33 Argyle Street, St Andrews, Medieval suburb' *Discovery & Excav Scot* 1996, 50

Cachart, R (1997) '33 Argyle Street, St Andrews, Medieval suburb' *Discovery & Excav Scot* 1997, 40

Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust, 'Evaluation and Excavation at 50-52 Argyle Street' 1998, unpublished archive report, draft

Appendix 1 Context Register

| <i>No:</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Phase</i> |
|------------|---|--------------|
| | <i>Evaluation Pit 01</i> | |
| 0101 | Deposit, modern compacted hardcore type 1, 0.10m thick | |
| 0102 | Deposit, silty black organic upper garden soil, root disturbed and deeper on the W side | |
| 0103 | Deposit, bioturbated lower sandy garden soil 0.40 m max thickness with tree roots on W side | |
| 0104 | Deposit, sandy silt, fill of cut for modern drain on E side of pit | |
| 0105 | Cut for deposit 04 | |
| 0106 | Natural sand, loose yellow/orange, starts at 0.60m down from site surface | |
| | <i>Evaluation Pit 02</i> | |
| 0201 | Concrete floor on E and S sides of pit, 0.13m thick | |
| 0202 | Deposit, rubble bedding for concrete, 0.30m thick | |
| 0203 | Deposit, dark silty sand with some rubble, makeup below bedding 0202 | |

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 0204 | Cut for small guage water pipe N-S towards W side of pit | |
| 0205 | Deposit, black organic silty sand fill for cut 0204 | |
| 0206 | Cut, large for modern services on E side of pit, probably for large bore sewage pipe, cut through natural, not bottomed | |
| 0207 | Fill, for cut 0206, dark silty sand, modern finds with some rubble, not bottomed | |
| 0208 | Natural sand, wind blown 020-30m thick, over darker natural with rounded cobble sized and smaller inclusions, down to depth of 0.95m | |
| | <i>Evaluation Pip 03</i> | |
| 0301 | Concrete floor | |
| 0302 | Deposit, makeup of grey brown sandy silt, frequent rubble up to 0.45m thick | |
| 0303 | Deposit, yellow/orange beach sand below 0302 possibly wind blown up to 0.40m thick, natural sand | |
| 0304 | Deposit, yellow/white beach sand, in base of pit, natural sand below 0303 | |
| 0305 | Cable, N-S across W edge of pit at depth of 0.40m | |

Appendix 2 Photographic Register

| <i>Image No</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>View</i> |
|-----------------|---|-------------|
| 01-02 | General of site from S side of Argyle St | SW |
| 03 | General of building on W side of site | S |
| 04-05 | General of site | S |
| 06 | General of site | N |
| 07-10 | Start of evaluation pit 01 | SW |
| 11-13 | Evaluation pit 01 excavated | S |
| 14-16 | Excavating evaluation pit 02 | NW |
| 17-20 | Hand excavating evaluation pit 02 | NW |
| 21-23 | Evaluation pit 02 post excavation | N |
| 24-25 | Evaluation pit 03 post excavation | N |
| 26 | Evaluation pit 03 post excavation , showing part of historic wall on W side of site | NW |
| 27-28 | Evaluation pit 03 post excavation | SW |

Appendix 3 Drawing Register

| <i>Sheet No.</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Scale</i> |
|------------------|--|--------------|
| 1 | Sheet 01, plan of evaluation pit 01, post excavation | 1:20 |
| 2 | Sheet 01, plan of evaluation pit 02, post excavation | 1:20 |

Appendix 4 Finds Register

The only finds were modern artefacts which were not collected.

Appendix 5 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

| | |
|---|---|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | Fife Council |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | Archaeological Evaluation, 16 Argyle Street, St Andrews SA62 |
| PROJECT CODE: | SA62 |
| PARISH: | St Andrews and St Leonards Parish |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR: | Ray Cachart |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | Alder Archaeology |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Archaeological Evaluation |
| NMRS NO(S): | - |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Medieval suburb of St Andrews |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | None |
| NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures) | NO 50520 16517 |
| START DATE (this season) | January 23 rd 2018 |
| END DATE (this season) | January 23 rd 2018 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.) | None for this site |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | On the 23 January 2018 Alder Archaeology Ltd excavated three small archaeological evaluation pits (site code SA 62) on a narrow site at 16 Argyle Street, St Andrews in advance of a housing development. The site was considered to have archaeological significance due to its location within the Argyle suburb which, during the medieval period, had developed around the main western route into the town. The site is centred on NGR NO 50520 16517 and measures 31 X 7m; it had been cleared of a joinery workshop building. The site surfaces comprised a concrete floor on the S half and compacted dark sandy silt yard surface on the N half. The evaluation pits were located at both ends of the site and in the centre. Below the surfaces the pits revealed the cuts and fills of modern services which had been laid into the natural orange brown sand. Nothing of archaeological significance was found. It was considered that any medieval archaeological deposits that may have existed on the site had been scarped away during the modern period. No further archaeological work was recommended. |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | None |
| CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS: | - |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Developer |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: | Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | director@alderarchaeology.co.uk |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited) | HES (intended) |

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 that conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act. We undertake 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.