

Archaeological Evaluation
Proposed New Bridge at Amulree
Perth and Kinross

AJ01

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PROPOSED NEW BRIDGE AT AMULREE
PERTH AND KINROSS**

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<i>1</i>	<i>Background.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Details of Work.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Interpretation.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Conclusions and Recommendations</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>References.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>Context Register.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Appendix 2</i>	<i>Photographic Register</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Appendix 3</i>	<i>Drawing Register.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Appendix 4</i>	<i>Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Appendix 5</i>	<i>Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork</i>	<i>11</i>

Illustration 1: Site location plan

Illustration 2: Trench Location Plan

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ABSTRACT

Alder Archaeology Ltd was commissioned By R J McLeod (Contractors) Limited to undertake an evaluation on the site of a proposed new bridge on the A822 over the River Braan at Amulree, Perth and Kinross. The site of the new development is just E of the historic Amulree bridge and is centred on NGR NN 9010 3679. The development site was considered to be of archaeological interest as it encompasses the site of an historic ford over the River Braan, and it was also considered possible that the lost site of St Mary's Chapel, located somewhere on the N side of the river could be within the development area. The evaluation (Alder site code AJ01) was carried out during the period 2-3 December 2009. Evaluation trenches on the N side of the river revealed that a ramp of redeposited natural sandy gravel leading from the A822 down to the river was probably 19th Century and trenches on the S side of the river revealed only natural deposits of silt, gravel and a compact stony layer. Nothing that could be related to the historic ford or the site of St Mary's Chapel was found.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

R J McLeod commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the site of a proposed new bridge for Perth and Kinross Council at Amulree Perth and Kinross. The proposed development area, centred on NGR NN 9010 3679, encompasses the site of an historic ford crossing the River Braan just to the E of the present Amulree Bridge. The work, Alder site code AJ01 was undertaken during the period 2-3 December 2009 in mainly wet weather conditions. It was hoped to find and investigate the road surface or any other feature relating the ford which crossed the River Braan at this point and also possibly locate the site of the lost site of the St Mary's Chapel on the N bank of the river.

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. Of importance would be the investigation of any features or deposits relating to the historic ford crossing the River Braan and the lost site of St Mary's Chapel.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this evaluation. Copies will be sent to the client, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Perth and Kinross Historic Environment 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.

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust provides the archaeological planning service to Perth and Kinross Council following guidance set out in Scottish Planning Policy 23 *Planning and the Historic Environment*. Terms of Reference were provided by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and a Written Scheme of Investigation was provided by Alder Archaeology Ltd.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Joe Canavan of R J McLeod for his assistance and guidance throughout this project. Thanks are also due to Sarah Winlow for her input and on site assistance during this project. The work was funded by R J McLeod.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1)

The site of the new development is centred on NGR NN 9010 3679, just E of the historic Amulree bridge on the A822 that crosses the River Braan. On the N side of the development area the land comprised a steep ramp running down from the A822 to a

flat boggy area at the water's edge. Near the top of the ramp is a soakaway tank serving the house on the N side of the A822 (Tigh Na Bruich). On the S side of the river the area is a flat low lying flood plain with aprons of slightly higher firmer ground edged on its S side by a high steep bank, partly man made, close to A822. Parts of this area are exceedingly boggy and inundated with water.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

The place name Amulree is thought to derive from *Ath Maol Ruibhe*, Maolrubha's Ford, named after the 8th-century Saint Maolrubha. The ford of the River Braan was presumably not far from the present crossing, and may have attracted a settlement from early medieval times. In the medieval period there was a Chapel of St Mary on the N side of the crossing. It was last recorded in the 18th century, and its exact location is now unknown.

The existing bridge (B listed) stands a little to the W of the new crossing, and is presumed to be an 18th-century military bridge, though significantly altered. It stands at the junction of Cauldfeild's 1760s military road to Dunkeld and the 1730s Wade Road from Crieff to Dalnacardoch.

It was considered that the new bridge and its approaches were not known for certain to impact on any of these features except the military roads (still in use), but could expose a substantial area close to the historic crossing and the nucleus of the village, and could reveal evidence of some of these features of early settlement around the crossing.

2.3 Archaeological Method

It was initially envisaged that six machine dug evaluation trenches, three on each side of the river and each approximately 2 x 20m, would be located across the line of the new bridge approach roads. In the event, on-site discussions with Sarah Winlow of Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust allowed for a more flexible approach mainly due to substantial height differentials on the N side of the area which made excavation of long trenches impractical. On the S side of the river a soakaway pipe through the centre of the evaluation area made it difficult to excavate trenches across the area on an E-W alignment. The trenches were machine excavated, under archaeological supervision, with a smooth bladed ditching bucket and were cleaned by hand and recorded as per Appendix 6.1 below. The area evaluated on the N side of the river totalled 30m² and on the S side 91m².

2.4 Results of Investigations (Illus 2)

Trench (Sondage) 01

Trench 01 was really a sondage, measuring 2 X 1.5m, and was located on boggy ground at the base of the ramp that ran down from the A822. It was excavated into ground that had been stripped of vegetation. An upper deposit (0101) 0.20m thick of mixed topsoil and natural overlay a natural deposit (0102) of mixed sands, gravel and clay. Excavation continued to a depth of 0.56m. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this trench.

Trench 02

Trench 02 measured 11 X 2m, was aligned NNW-SSE and placed across the lower part of the ramp. The ramp material comprised redeposited natural sandy gravel (0204)

with a maximum thickness of 0.40m which sloped down and feathered out on the E side of the trench. Below (0204) was a natural deposit (0206) of sand. In a sondage in the centre of the trench the natural below (0206) comprised banded sands, not bottomed but at least 0.40m thick. At the trench W end, recently deposited crushed building rubble (0201) overlay a former garden soil (0208) which contained abundant 19th pottery sherds. The garden soil represented the former garden on the S side of the A822 for Tigh Na Bruich. The garden soil extended for a distance of 3.30m from the trench W end, abutting against and over the natural (0206). At the trench E end were large cobbles/small boulders (0202) forming a drain extending down the E side of the ramp. The cobbles were 1.20m across at the base and 0.30m in height, in a matrix of grey silt. The cobbles had been cut into the ramp deposits (0204) and into the lower natural grey clay (0203). These cobbles were considered to be part of the soakaway drain from the soakaway tank for Tigh Na Bruich located higher up on the N side of the ramp. No deposits or features that could be associated with the historic ford were found in this trench.

Trench (Sondage) 03

Trench 03 was located at the N end of the ramp by the A822. It measured 2 X 2.50m and reached a depth of 2.10m. This trench was cut through the redeposited natural sandy gravel of the ramp (0301) which was found to be 2m deep and bottomed onto natural clay and gravel. Pieces of wire and a sherd of 19th pottery found in deposit (0301) would probably date the ramp to the 19th century. No evidence of a formal roadway for a ford down to the river was found.

Trench 04

Trench 04, on the S side of the river measured 10 X 150m. In a 0.80m deep sondage at the trench N end turf and topsoil (0401) 0.20m thick overlay silty subsoil (0402), 0.10m thick. Subsoil (0402) overlay natural yellow green silt (0403), 0.14m thick, followed by stony green silt (0404), 0.23m thick over stony red brown silt (0405). This trench gave a good indication of the natural stratigraphy to be expected on this side of the river. No archaeological features were found in this trench

Trench 05

Trench 05 had natural stratigraphy similar to that of trench 04. Topsoil (0501), 0.14m deep lay over subsoil (0502), 0.35-0.44m thick. Below subsoil was a natural yellow green silt (0503) with a maximum depth of 0.38m. At 4m from the trench N end a modern steel rod (0505) crossed the trench cut [0506] into silt (0503). The function of the steel rod was not ascertained. At 5.75m from the trench N end a 4m long sondage was cut. At a depth of 1.20m a natural cobble layer (0508) was found below a silt deposit (0507). Silt deposit (0507) lay below (0503) and was 0.18m thick. The surface (0508) was formed from natural cobbles/small boulders, and was 0.10m thick over natural stony gravel mixed with clay. Upon further inspection it was clear that these cobbles formed a natural surface as they lay below clean silt (0503 and 0507)) and also the upper part of the cobbles was in a matrix of clean silt. There was no organic material over or between the cobbles as might be expected if this was part of a well used formal road surface for a ford. At the S end of the trench was a modern cobble field drain, cobbles (0511) and cut [0512], 0.50m wide. Overlaying the cobble field drain was another field drain containing sherds of modern ceramic pipe in a loamy fill (0509) in a cut [0510] 0.60m wide. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this trench.

Trench 06

The total length of trench 06 was 15.5m. The N half of the trench was located on ground slightly lower and boggier than trenches 04 and 05. The S half was on more stable, slightly higher ground. In the N part of the trench turf and topsoil (0601) was 0.10m thick over subsoil (0602), 0.19m thick. Below subsoil was a compacted yellow-blue gravel (0603). In the slightly higher and firmer area of the S end of the trench topsoil was formed by a loamy silt (0606) over a mid brown loamy silt the same as (0601) and followed by a natural deposit of blue grey silt (0604). Below (0604) at the trench N end was a natural clean layer of stone fragments (0605) at a depth of 0.40m. After excavation the N end of the trench rapidly filled with water. No archaeological features were found in this trench.

Trench 07

Trench 07 was 15m in length. Turf and topsoil (0701) were 0.22m in depth over subsoil (0702) 0.20m thick. Below the subsoil was a deposit of blue-grey natural silt (0703) 0.30m thick which overlay orange sandy silt containing cobbles and small boulders (0704). The trench was bottomed at 0.80m. No archaeological features were found in this trench.

3 Interpretation

- 3.1 Trenches on the N side of the development area found that the ramp down to the River Braan was formed from redeposited gravelly sand and reached a depth of 2m at the ramp's N end. Wire and a pottery sherd gave a probable 19th C date to this feature. The ramp was no doubt used to access the river and also the curling pond which was close by on the E side of the ramp. It was considered that the ramp was a much later addition to the historic ford and did not constitute part of the original crossing. Garden soil on the N side of the ramp represented the former garden of the house Tigh Na Bruich located on the N side of the A822. The drain on the E side of the ramp was considered to be the soakaway drain for the soakaway tank at the top of the ramp also belonging to Tigh Na Bruich. No formal features such as paving representing a crossing or the any features representing the Chapel of St Mary were found within the development area on the N side of the river.

Trenches on the S side of the development demonstrated the stratigraphy of the natural deposits of the riverine environment. A deep cobble layer in trench 05 was closely examined and found to be a natural deposit. No deposits or features representing the remains of an historic crossing were found within the development area on the S side of the river.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1** Alder Archaeology concludes that although the historic ford crossed the River Braan at the location of the new bridge site no remains of it were identified in the evaluation. No remains of the Chapel of St Mary were found. With regard to the ford it probably left no trace because its causeway or approach road was not a well-constructed cobble surface and when the crossing went out of use it was not long before the fast flowing and flooding waters of the River Braan washed out any trace of its existence.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

Both the N and S sides of the development area for the new crossing were sufficiently evaluated and no significant archaeological features, that could warrant further work, were encountered. The final decision with regard to further work will be made by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust.

5 References

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust *Terms of Reference for a Programme of Archaeological Works Amulree Bridge Amulree* Date of Issue 02/11/2009

Alder Archaeology Ltd *Amulree Bridge Renewal Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation* November 2009

Appendix 1 Context Register

<i>No:</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Phase</i>
	Trench (Sondage) 01	
0101	Deposit, mix of topsoil and natural 0.20m thick,	
0102	Deposit, natural sands and gravels 0.36m thick, not bottomed	
	Trench 02	
0201	Deposit, crushed building rubble, recently dumped for use in construction, over former garden soil 0208	
0202	Deposit large cobbles/small boulders forming a drain from a soakaway tank down the E side of the ram, 1.20m across the base and 0.30m in height, in a matrix of grey silt	
0203	Deposit, grey natural clay, cut by cobbles 0202 at trench E end, part of natural deposits, not bottomed	
0204	Deposit, redeposited natural sandy gravel forming the ramp down to the river maximum thickness of 0.40m which sloped down and featured out on the E side of the trench	
0205	Cut, for cobbles 0202, cut into natural clay 0203	
0206	Deposit, natural sand below ramp deposit, 0204, 0.50m thick,	
0207	Deposit in a sondage in the centre of the trench the natural below 0206 comprised banded sands not bottomed but at least 0.40m thick.	
0208	Deposit, a former garden soil, abundant 19 th pottery sherds, 0.30m thick at trench W end, below 0201 and over natural 0206	
0209	Deposit, humic loam, remans of topsoil over gravel 0204 at E edge of ramp at trench E end	
0210	Deposit, compacted ramp deposit 0204 mixed with some topsoil, created by machine tracking over ramp, 0.18 m thick	
	Trench 03	
0301	Redeposited natural sand forming ramp, 19 th C pot and pieces of wire, same as (0204), 2m deep bottoming onto natural clay and gravel, 0302	
0302	Deposit, natural caly and gravel below ramp material 0301, not bottomed	
	Trench 04	
0401	Deposit, topsoil 0.20m thick over subsoil 0402	
0402	Deposit, subsoil silty, 0.10m thick over natural 0403	

0403	Deposit, natural yellow green silt 0.14m thick	
0404	Deposit, stony green silt 0.23m thick	
0405	Deposit, stoney red brown silt not bottomed	
	Trench 05	
0501	Deposit, topsoil 0.14m deep over subsoil 0502	
0502	Deposit, subsoil 0.35-0.44m thick over 0503	
0503	Deposit, natural, yellow green silt max 0.38m deep	
0504	Not used	
0505	Steel rod, crossing the trench	
0506	Cut for steel rod 0505	
0507	Deposit, natural silt 0.18m thick, below natural 0503	
0508	Deposit, natural cobble surface at depth of 1.20m from surface, formed from natural cobbles/small boulders, 0.10m thick over natural stony gravel mixed with clay, these cobbles formed a natural surface as they lay below clean silt (0503 and 0507)) the upper part of the cobbles was in a matrix of clean silt.	
0509	Deposit, loamy fill with modern sherds of ceramic pipe, field drain fill, overlies earlier field drain cobbles 0511	
0510	Cut, 0.60m wide, for field drain 0509	
0511	Deposit cobbles large for a modern field drain, in cut 0512, 0.50m wide below later field drain 0509	
0512	Cut, for cobbles 0511, 0.50m wide	
	Trench 06	
0601	Topsoil, 0.10m thick over subsoil 0602	
0602	Deposit, subsoil, 0.19m thick below topsoil	
0603	Deposit, natural compact yellow-blue gravel	
0604	Deposit, natural blue grey silt	
0605	Deposit, stony natural, below 0604, at depth of 0.40m	
0606	Topsoil at trench S end	
	Trench 07	
0701	Topsoil, 0.22m, deep over subsoil 0702	
0702	Deposit, subsoil, 0.20m thick	

0703	Deposit, natural blue grey silt 0.30m thick below subsoil 0702	
0704	Deposit, natural orange sandy silt with cabbles and small boulders below 0703	

Appendix 2 Photographic Register

<i>Frames</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
01-02	General site N side	SW
03	General site N side, from ramp	E
04	General site N side, working at side of ramp	SW
05	Machining site N side	SW
06	Working site N side	SW
07	Working site N side trench 02	W
08	Trench 02 ramp make up	NE
09	Trench 02 drain for soakaway	N
10-11	Trench 02 general of trench and soakaway drain	NW
12-13	Trench 02 general of trench	NW
14-15	Trench 02 part of SW facing section showing garden soil	NE
16	Trench 02 general	NE
17	Trench 02 garden soil in section	NE
18	Trench 02, wildlife, on imported building rubble for development	N
19	General of site N side	E
20	General of site N bank from S bank over River Braan	NE
21-22	General of site S side	SW
23	Amulree Hotel	SW
24	General of site N side showing ramp	W
25	General of Amulree historic bridge, from site N side	SW
26	General of site from S side over River Braan	N
27	Amulree parish church built 1740's	W
28	General of River Braan from historic bridge	E

29-31	Excavating trench 01	NE
32-33	Excavating trench 03	SW
34-35	Excavating trench 03	NW
36	South site of area excavating trench 04	NW
37-38	General of excavated trench 04	NE
39	General, excavating trench 05	SW
40-42	Excavating trench 05	SW
43-45	Detail of 0508	NW
46	Detail of silt deposits above 0508	NW
47-49	Detail of 0508 in sondage	SE
50-52	General of trench 05	SW
53-54	Field drain cobbles 0511	SW
55-57	General of trenches S side of site	N
58-61	General of trench 06 being excavated	SW
62	General of trenches S side of site	N
63-64	General of trench 07 being excavated	SW
65	General of trenches S side of site	N

Appendix 3 Drawing Register

<i>Sheet No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Scale</i>
1	Trenches 01-03	1:100, 1:50, 1:10
2	Trenches 04-06	1:100, 1:10
3	Trench 07	1:100, 1:10

Appendix 4 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Proposed New Bridge at Amulree
PROJECT CODE:	AJ01
PARISH:	Dull and Little Dunkeld
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Ray Cachart
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Historic ford over River Braan at Amulree
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	19 th C ramp
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Site centred on NGR NN 9010 3679
START DATE	2 Dec 09
END DATE	3 Dec 09
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Alder Archaeology Ltd was commissioned By R J McLeod (Contractors) Limited to undertake an evaluation on the site of a proposed new bridge on the A822 over the River Braan at Amulree, Perth and Kinross. The site of the new development is just E of the historic Amulree bridge and is centred on NGR. The development site was considered to be of archaeological interest as it encompasses the site of a an historic ford over the River Braan, it was also considered possible that the lost site of St Mary's Chapel, located somewhere on the N side of the river could be within the development area. The evaluation (Alder site code AJ01) was carried out during the period 2-3 December 2009. Evaluation trenches on the N side of the river revealed that a ramp of redeposited natural sandy gravel leading from the A822 down to the river was probably 19th Century and trenches on the S side of the river revealed only natural deposits of silt, gravel and a compact stony layer. Nothing that could be related to the historic ford or the site of St Mary's Chapel was found.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Developer
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	None
ADDRESS OF MAIN	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX

CONTRIBUTOR:	
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Director@AlderArchaeology.co.uk

Appendix 5 Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork

5.1 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.

5.2 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*.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

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

5.6 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 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.