

**E&M West Buildings  
32-38 Union Street, Aberdeen,  
AB10 1GD**



**Cameron Archaeology  
30 November 2011**

# **E&M West Buildings 32-38 Union Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1GD**

## **CONTENTS**

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
3	THE WATCHING BRIEF	5
4	RECOMMENDATIONS	7
5	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
6	REFERENCES	7
	APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS	8

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

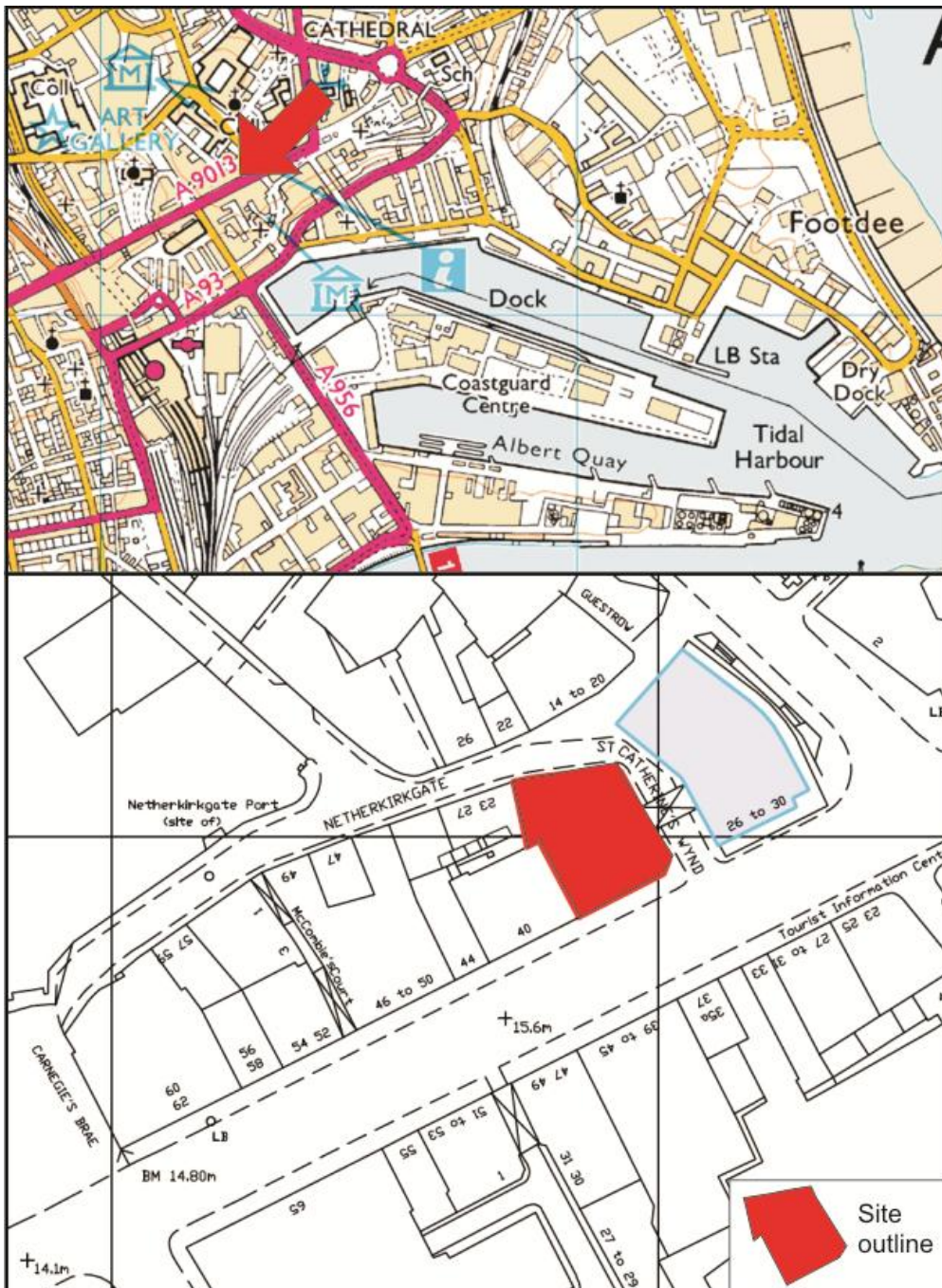
Cover	Trench 1 facing south (top) Parson James Gordon map extract showing site location (bottom)	
III 1	Location plan	3
III 2	Approximate location of proposed development	4
III 3	Trench plan	5
III 4	Trench 1 showing natural sand; facing S	6
III 5	Trench 2 showing natural sand; facing S	6

## **SUMMARY**

A watching brief was carried out on 27 September - 29 November 2011 to observe trenches dug below the floors of the former E&M Building, Union Street, Aberdeen. No archaeological finds or features were recorded and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during this development.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report details archaeological work at the former E&M West Buildings, 32-38 Union Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1GD. The site lies on the north side of Union Street, the south side of Netherkirkgate and the west side of St Catherine's Wynd. It is in Aberdeen parish, the NGR for the site is NJ 94289 06295. The work was commissioned by Kevin Duguid, Fitzgerald and Associates Ltd on behalf of C&L Properties Ltd and relates to Aberdeen City Council Listed Building consent reference P100435 with the standard archaeology condition (condition 1).



## III 1 Location plan

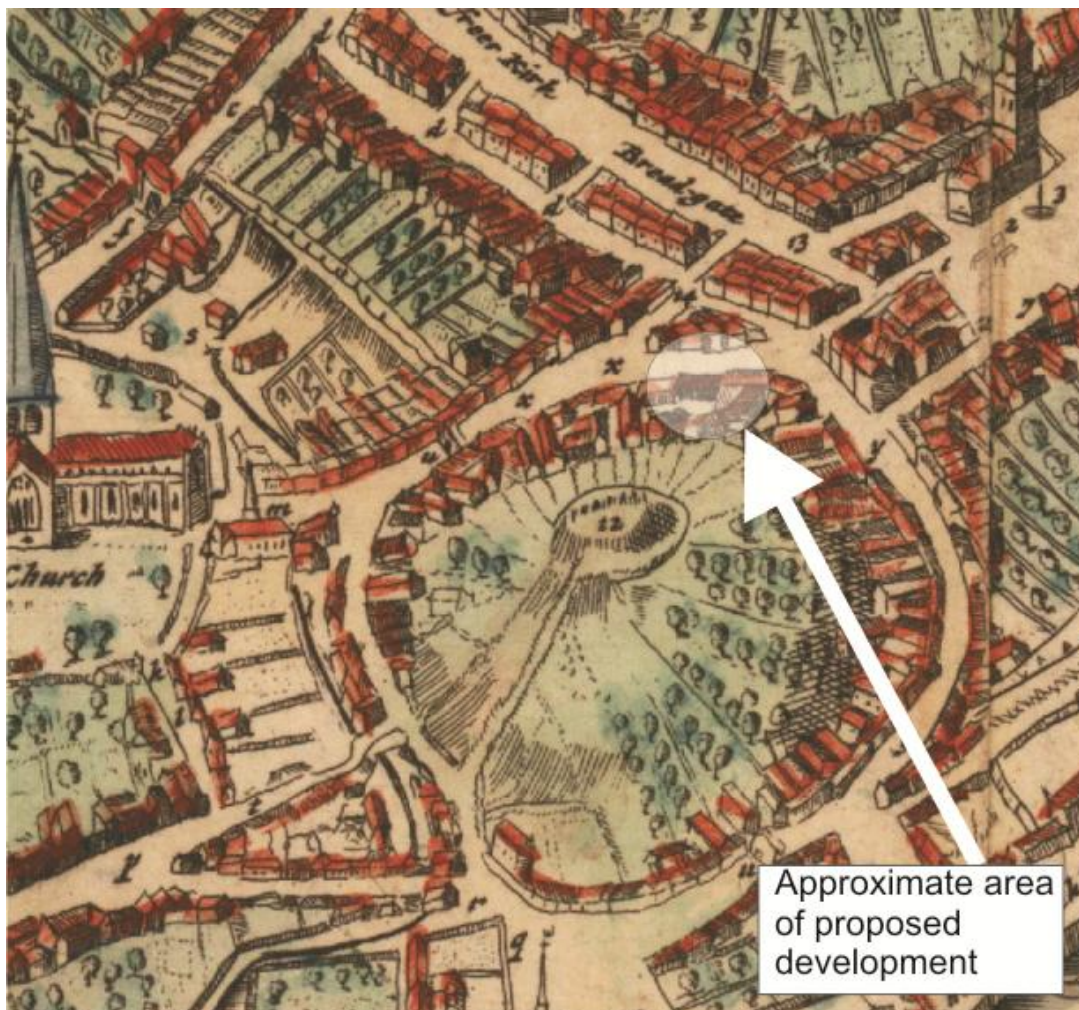
(Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010).



## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A large number of archaeological interventions have taken place in the vicinity of this proposed development. Scatters of flints found at excavations in 16-18 Netherkirkgate and the Green indicate that the area has been occupied for at least 8000 years. Netherkirkgate is known from the 15th century but excavations at 16-18 Netherkirkgate revealed that the area was developed by the 12th century (Cameron and Stones 2001, 39). It had been constantly occupied from that date and foundations of a number of structures survived as well as areas of middens and rubbish pits. Guestrow was cobbled by the late 14th to 15th century. Netherkirkgate port (or gate) was located at No 49 and was one of eight ports around the medieval burgh which protected the town at times of potential danger.

Other excavations in Broad Street and Queen Street also revealed intensive medieval occupation (Murray 1982). Waterlogged deposits included medieval wood, leather and textiles as well as building remains. Excavations in Shiprow to the south-east of the current site revealed a small 12th-century industrial complex.

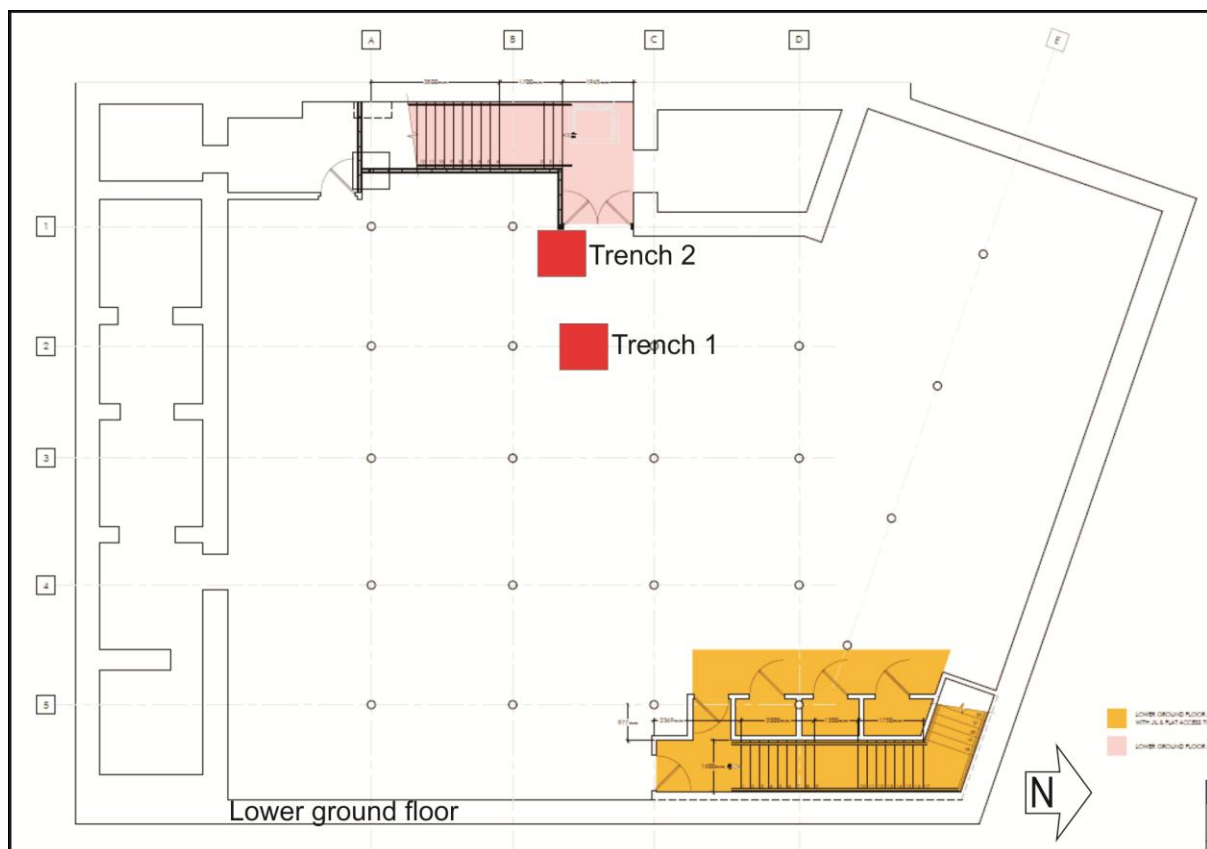


Ill 2 Approximate location of proposed development on Parson James Gordon's map of 1661 (*copyright National Library of Scotland*)

### 3 WATCHING BRIEF

A number of trenches below the floor of the former department store were planned to create foundations for the new building. Fewer trenches were required than first anticipated and one was eventually located within the former lift shaft which was rubble-filled.

Two trenches (Trenches 1 and 2; Ill 3) 1.3 x 1.3m in size were dug to a depth of 0.45m. Under the floor were 0.2m stones and poured tar waterproofing on top of natural beach sand natural subsoil. No archaeological finds or features were recorded in either trench.



Ill 3 Trench plan (copyright Fitzgerald & Associates Ltd)





Ill 4 Trench 1 showing natural sand; facing S



Ill 5 Trench 2 showing natural sand; facing S

## **4 REFERENCES**

Cameron, AS and Stones, JA 2001 *Aberdeen: an in-depth view of the city's past*. Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Monograph Series, 19. Edinburgh.

Murray, JC 1982 *Excavations in the medieval burgh of Aberdeen 1973-81*. Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Monograph Series, 2. Edinburgh.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required at this site; this is subject to advice from Aberdeen City Council.

## **6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks to Kevin Duguid, Fitzgerald and Associates Ltd, Brian Russell and Paul Buckley, Riverside Construction and Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council.

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# APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



DSC\_0470



DSC\_0471



DSC\_0472



DSC\_0473



DSC\_0474



DSC\_0475



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DSC\_0495



DSC\_0496



DSC\_0497



DSC\_0499



DSC\_0500



DSC\_0501



DSC\_0505



<b>Photo no</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facing</b>
DSC_0470-1	Trench 1	W
DSC_0472	Trench 1	S
DSC_0473	Trench 1	SW
DSC_0474-6	Building details - vault under Union St	S
DSC_0477	Trench 1	W
DSC_0478-9	Trench 1	S
DSC_0480-1	Trench 2	SSW
DSC_0484-5	Trench 1 (left) Trench 2 (right)	S
DSC_0486	Trench 2	SSW
DSC_0487-89	Trench 2	SSW
DSC_0490-97	Trench 1	S
DSC_0498-505	Trench 2	SSW