

Land at House of Dun, Montrose, Angus,
AB45 3ES
Archaeological Watching Brief Report



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Land at House of Dun, Montrose, Angus, AB45 3ES

Archaeological Watching Brief

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SUMMARY

Despite the high potential for archaeological features to survive, given the close proximity of a probable prehistoric burial mound, and continued occupation of the land since 1375, no features or finds of archaeological interest were found during the archaeological monitoring of a trench and seven soakaways, excavated as part of civil engineering works along the entrance drive to the House of Dun.

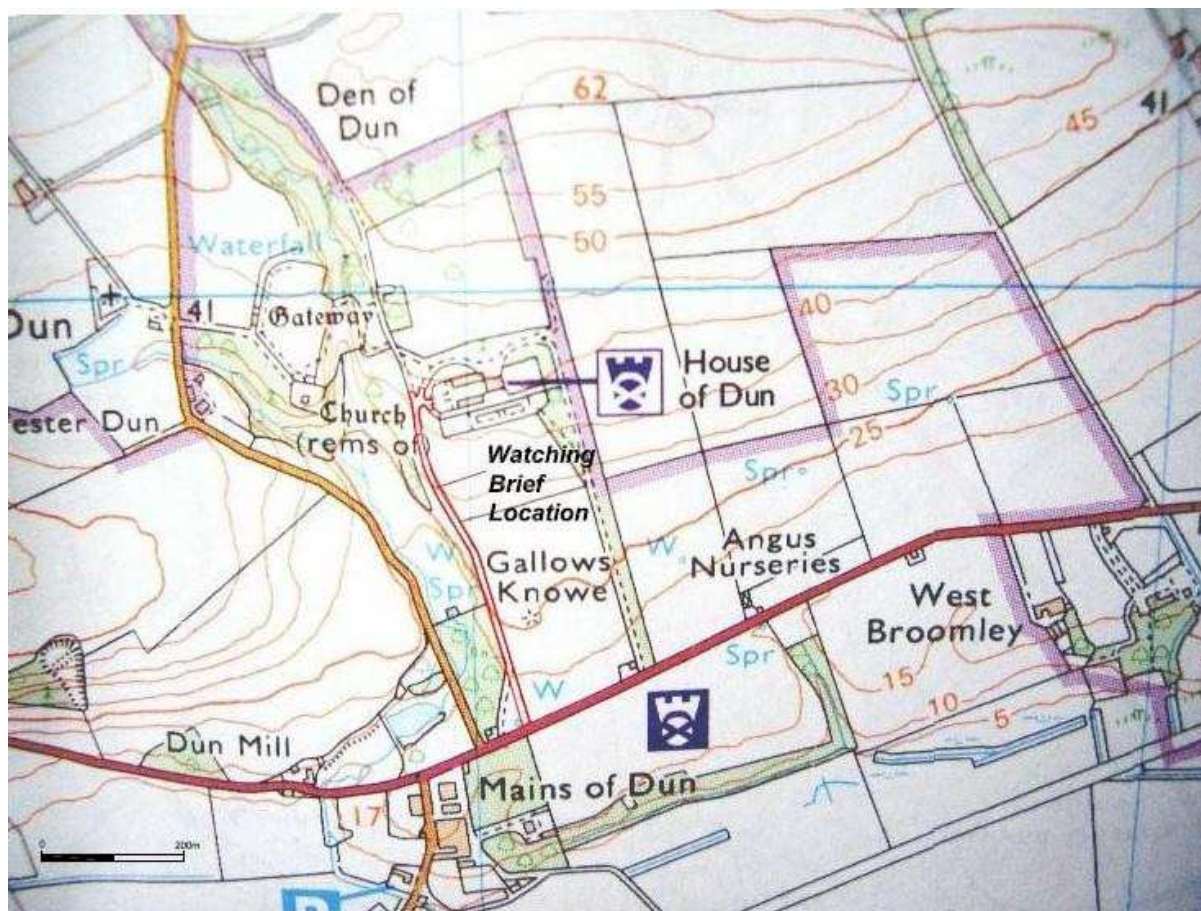
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1 INTRODUCTION

Civil engineering works were scheduled for the main entrance to the House of Dun, Montrose, Angus (Illus 1) at NO 6707 5953. As the works were located close to a known probable prehistoric and medieval landmark, an archaeologist was drafted in to monitor all excavations relating to the drainage.

The work was commissioned by Shannon Fraser, National Trust for Scotland.

The watching brief took place on between 25th January and 6th February 2012 and was carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note 42 (PAN 42) and Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), which state that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed.



Illus 1 Location plan (*Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010*)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Gallow's Knowe (site reference NO65NE) is an artificial, stony, flat-topped mound situated at the top of a rise. It is thought that it was originally built as a burial monument 3500- 4500 years ago over a central 'cist' containing a burial. Similar monuments of the period have contained numerous burials in and around the mound, as the original site continued in use over many years. Surveyors in the 19th century recorded the knowe as a medieval execution site, and its close proximity to the medieval Dun Castle, and to the main Brechin to Montrose road may further suggest it as a likely site of public execution. When the House of Dun was built in 1730, it was set within a formal landscape extending towards Montrose Basin. Early designs show a long vista, drawing the eye to the summit of Maryton Law on the opposite side of the Basin. The prehistoric burial mound would have made a good focal point, and a 1850s estate plan shows it planted with trees to make it more obvious and to add variety and interest to the landscape. Gallow's Knowe has never been excavated in modern times.

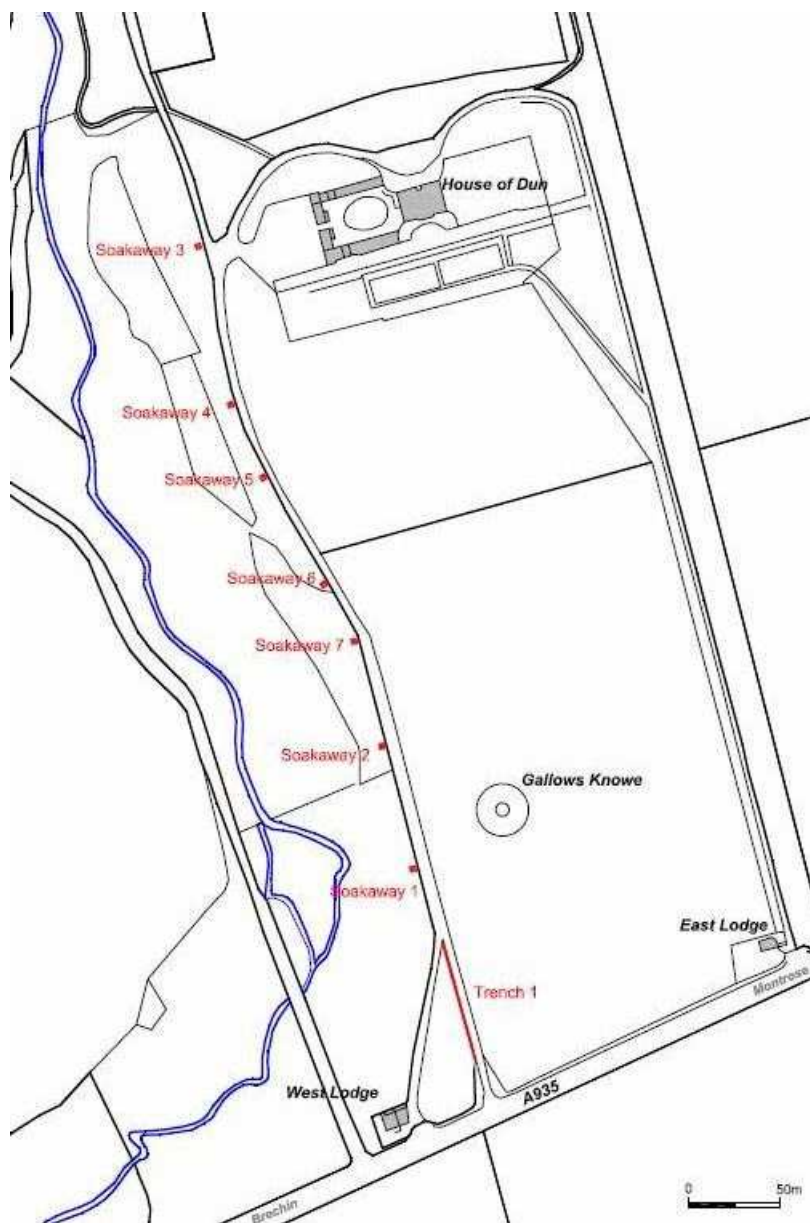
As well as being situated in close proximity to a probable prehistoric mound, the excavations are also taking place on land purchased by Sir Robert Erskine in 1375 (The National Trust for Scotland, 1992, 2). A 16th century tower house was built to the west of the driveway, quarter of a mile west of the present house. In addition to evidence of prehistoric activity being encountered during the works, medieval and post medieval finds may also be encountered.



Illus 2 House of Dun with Gallows Knowe in foreground

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

The watching brief took place between the 25th January and 6th February 2012. It monitored the excavation of a linear trench, at the southern extent of the entrance track (Trench 1; Illus 3) and 7 soakaway pits, located at intervals to the western side of the entrance drive (Soakaways 1-7, Illus 3).



Illus 3 Location Plan of Trench and Soakaways

Trench 1 measured 61m in length and was 1.2m wide and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.9m. The southernmost 2m of the trench revealed a mid brown loose granite deposit indicating made-up ground, suggesting the entrance drive was once wider than at present. A north-west south-east aligned plastic pipe ran across the trench at a depth of 0.3m within the made-up ground deposit. The rest of the trench revealed a topsoil of between 0.18 and 0.5m depth overlying an

orange-brown sandy silt (Illus 4). No finds or features of archaeological interest were revealed in Trench 1.



Illus 4 Trench 1 under excavation

A total of 7 soakaways were excavated for the new drainage channels to be inserted across the entrance drive. These were excavated to the west of the entrance drive. Soakaway 1 was the southernmost, was located 42m to the north-west of Trench 1, and was the closest to Gallows Knowe, which lay 44m to the north-east. Soakaway 2 was located 66m north-west of Saokaway 1; Soakaway 7 56m north-west of Soakaway 2; Soakaway 6 32m north-west of Soakaway 7; Soakaway 5, 64m north-west of Soakaway 6' Soakaway 4 40m north-west of Soakaway 5 and Soakaway 3 was located 85m to the north-west of Soakaway 4 and 65m west of the House of Dun courtyard wall (Illus 5). Each soakaway measured 3m by 3m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.4m In each, a dark-brown loose topsoil up to 1m deep was encountered above an orange sandy natural. No finds or features of archaeological interest were revealed during the soakaway excavations.



Illus 5 Soakaway 3- final depth

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

All excavations undertaken during the civil engineering works were monitored by this watching brief. This report outlines the results. No further work is planned, so it is unlikely that further archaeological mitigation will be required.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Willie Thompson of Renovo, Sandy Gill of Land and Building and all National Trust for Scotland staff for their help.

6 REFERENCES

The National Trust for Scotland, 1992, House of Dun; visitor's guide, *National Trust for Scotland, Glasgow*

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

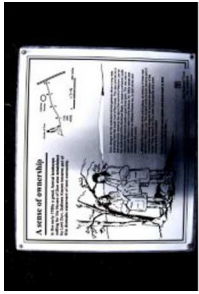
Photograph Number	Title	Direction Facing
9313	Information Panel along entrance drive	N/A
9314	Information Panel along entrance drive	N/A
9315	Information Panel along entrance drive	N/A
9316	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	N
9317	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	N
9318	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NE
9319	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NE
9320	Works at northern end of entrance drive	N
9321	Works at northern end of entrance drive	N
9322	View of Montrose Basin	SE
9323	View of Montrose Basin	SE
9324	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9325	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9326	Information Panel along entrance drive	N/A
9327	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NW
9328	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NW
9329	Southern extent of entrance drive	SW
9330	Southern extent of entrance drive	WNW
9331	Entrance drive	NW
9332	Entrance drive	NW
9333	Entrance drive, Gallows Knowe and House of Dun	N
9334	Entrance drive, Gallows Knowe and House of Dun	N
9335	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9336	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9337	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9338	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NW
9339	Snow drops to west of entrance drive	N/A
9340	Gallows Knowe	NE
9341	Gallows Knowe	NE
9342	Snow drops to west of entrance drive	SE
9343	Snow drops to west of entrance drive	SE
9344	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	SW
9345	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	SW
9346	Ice patches	N/A
9347	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NE
9348	Gallows Knowe and the House of Dun	NE
9349	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NE
9350	Location of Trench 1- pre-excavation	NE
9351	Excavating Trench 1	N
9352	Excavating Trench 1	N
9353	Pipe and made up ground deposit in Trench 1	NW
9354	Pipe and made up ground deposit in Trench 1	NW
9355	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NE
9356	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NE
9357	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NE
9358	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NE
9359	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9360	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW

Photograph Number	Title	Direction Facing
9361	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9362	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9363	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9364	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9365	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9366	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9367	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9368	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9369	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	SW
9370	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	SW
9371	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9372	Made up ground deposit at southern extent of Trench 1	NW
9373	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9374	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9375	Trench 1	SE
9377	Trench 1	SE
9378	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9379	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9380	Excavating Trench 1	N
9381	Excavating Trench 1	N
9382	Excavating Trench 1	N
9383	Excavating Trench 1	N
9384	Section through Trench 1	SW
9385	Section through Trench 1	SW
9386	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9387	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9388	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9389	Trench 1	SE
9390	Trench 1	SE
9391	Section through Trench 1	NE
9392	Section through Trench 1	NE
9393	Trench 1	SE
9394	Trench 1	SE
9395	Gallows Knowe from courtyard of House of Dun	SE
9396	Gallows Knowe from courtyard of House of Dun	SE
9397	Information Panel	N/A
9398	Excavating Trench 1	N
9399	Excavating Trench 1	N
9400	Excavating Trench 1	N
9401	Excavating Trench 1	N
9402	Trench 1	SE
9403	Trench 1	SE
9404	Trench 1	SE
9405	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9406	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9407	Backfilling Trench 1	SE
9408	Backfilling Trench 1	SE
9416	Gallows Knowe from courtyard of House of Dun	SE
9417	Gallows Knowe from courtyard of House of Dun	SE
9418	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9419	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9420	Trees by entrance drive to West Lodge	SW

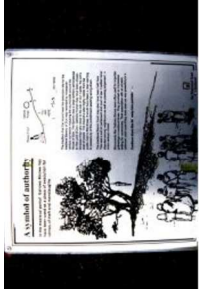
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9421	Pheasant	SW
9422	Excavating Trench 1	N
9423	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9424	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9425	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9426	Completed part of Trench 1	SE
9427	Completed part of Trench 1	SE
9428	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9429	Trench 1, with House of Dun in Background	NE
9430	Excavating Trench 1	N
9431	Excavating Trench 1	N
9432	Excavating Trench 1	N
9433	Excavating Trench 1	N
9434	Excavating Trench 1	N
9435	Excavating Trench 1	N
9436	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9437	Excavating Trench 1	NW
9438	Completed part of Trench 1	SE
9439	Completed part of Trench 1	SE
9440	North-western extent of Trench 1	NW
9441	North-western extent of Trench 1	NW
9442	Soakaway 1- topsoil removal	SW
9443	Soakaway 1- topsoil removal	W
9444	Soakaway 1- topsoil removal	S
9445	Soakaway 1- topsoil removal	S
9446	Soakaway 1- topsoil removal	S
9447	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	W
9448	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	SW
9449	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	S
9450	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	S
9451	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	SW
9452	Soakaway 2- topsoil removal	SW
9453	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	SE
9454	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	SE
9455	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	NW
9456	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	NW
9457	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	NW
9458	Soakaway 3 under excavation- topsoil removal	NW
9459	Soakaway 3- topsoil removal	E
9460	Soakaway 3- topsoil removal	E
9461	Soakaway 4 under excavation- topsoil removal	N
9462	Soakaway 4 under excavation- topsoil removal	NE
9463	Soakaway 4 under excavation- topsoil removal	NE
9464	Soakaway 4 under excavation- topsoil removal	W
9465	Soakaway 4 under excavation- topsoil removal	W
9466	Soakaway 4- topsoil removal	SW
9467	Soakaway 4- topsoil removal	SW
9468	Marking out Soakaway 5	NW
9469	Marking out Soakaway 5	NW
9470	Soakaway 5 under excavation- topsoil removal	SW
9471	Soakaway 5 under excavation- topsoil removal	NW
9472	Soakaway 5- topsoil removal	NW

Photograph Number	Title	Direction Facing
9473	Soakaway 5 - topsoil removal	NW
9474	Soakaway 5 - topsoil removal	NE
9475	Soakaway 5 - topsoil removal	NE
9476	General view down entrance drive	SE
9477	General view down entrance drive	SE
9478	North-west facing façade of House of Dun	SE
9479	North-west facing façade of House of Dun	SE
9480	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	E
9481	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	E
9482	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NW
9483	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NW
9484	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	WNW
9485	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	WNW
9486	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NE
9487	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NE
9488	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NE
9489	Soakaway 3 excavation- final depth	NE
9490	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	SW
9491	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	SW
9492	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	S
9493	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	NE
9494	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	NE
9495	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	NE
9496	Soakaway 4 excavation- final depth	NE
9497	Soakaway 4 location shot	NE
9498	Soakaway 4 location shot	NE
9499	Soakaway 7- final depth	SW
9500	Soakaway 7- final depth	SW
9501	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9502	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9503	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9504	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9505	Spoil heap from Soakaway 7	SW
9506	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9507	Soakaway 7- final depth	NW
9508	Location shot	NW
9509	Location shot	NW
9510	Soakaway 2	SW
9511	Soakaway 2	SW
9512	Soakaway 2	NE
9513	Soakaway 2	NE
9514	Soakaway 2 under excavation	NE
9515	Soakaway 2 under excavation	NE
9516	Soakaway 2 under excavation	SW
9517	Soakaway 2 under excavation	SW
9518	Soakaway 2 under excavation	SW
9519	Soakaway 2 under excavation	SW
9520	Soakaway 2 under excavation	SW
9521	Soakaway 2 under excavation	E
9522	Soakaway 2 under excavation	E
9523	Soakaway 2 under excavation	E
9524	Soakaway 2 under excavation	E

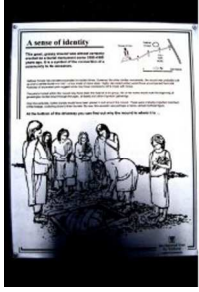
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9525	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9526	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9527	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9528	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9529	Spoil from Soakaway 2	NE
9530	Spoil from Soakaway 2	NE
9531	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9532	Soakaway 2 final depth	E
9533	Soakaway 2 final depth	NE
9534	Soakaway 2 final depth	NE
9535	Soakaway 1 topsoil removed	NE
9536	Soakaway 1 topsoil removed	NE
9537	Soakaway 1 under excavation- final depth	NNE
9538	Soakaway 1 under excavation- final depth	NNE
9539	Soakaway 1 under excavation- final depth	NNE
9540	Soakaway 1 under excavation- final depth	NNE
9541	Soakaway 1 final depth	NE
9542	Soakaway 1 final depth	NE
9543	Soakaway 1 final depth	NE
9544	Soakaway 1 final depth	NE
9545	Soakaway 1 final depth	NE
9546	Soakaway 1 final depth	NW



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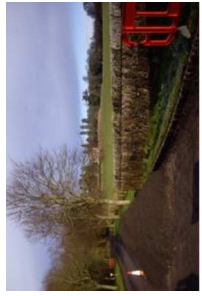
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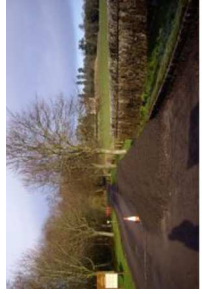
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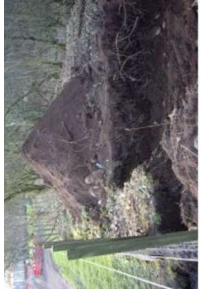
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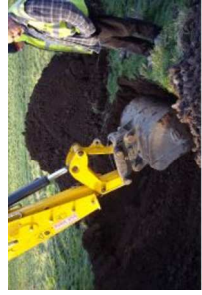
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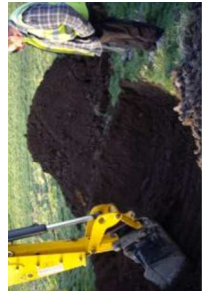
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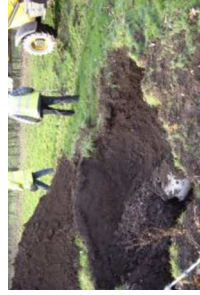
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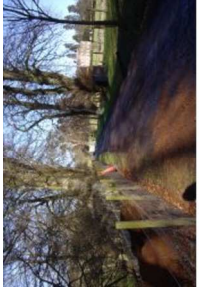
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