

**Proposed new build dwelling, Westwood
326 Stoneywood Rd, Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 9JX**



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Proposed new build dwelling 326 Stoneywood Rd, Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 9JX

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on 12 May 2013. The Aberdeenshire Canal was recorded in two trenches on the site of a proposed new house. It is recommended that no further work is required at this site but this is subject to advice from Aberdeen City Council.

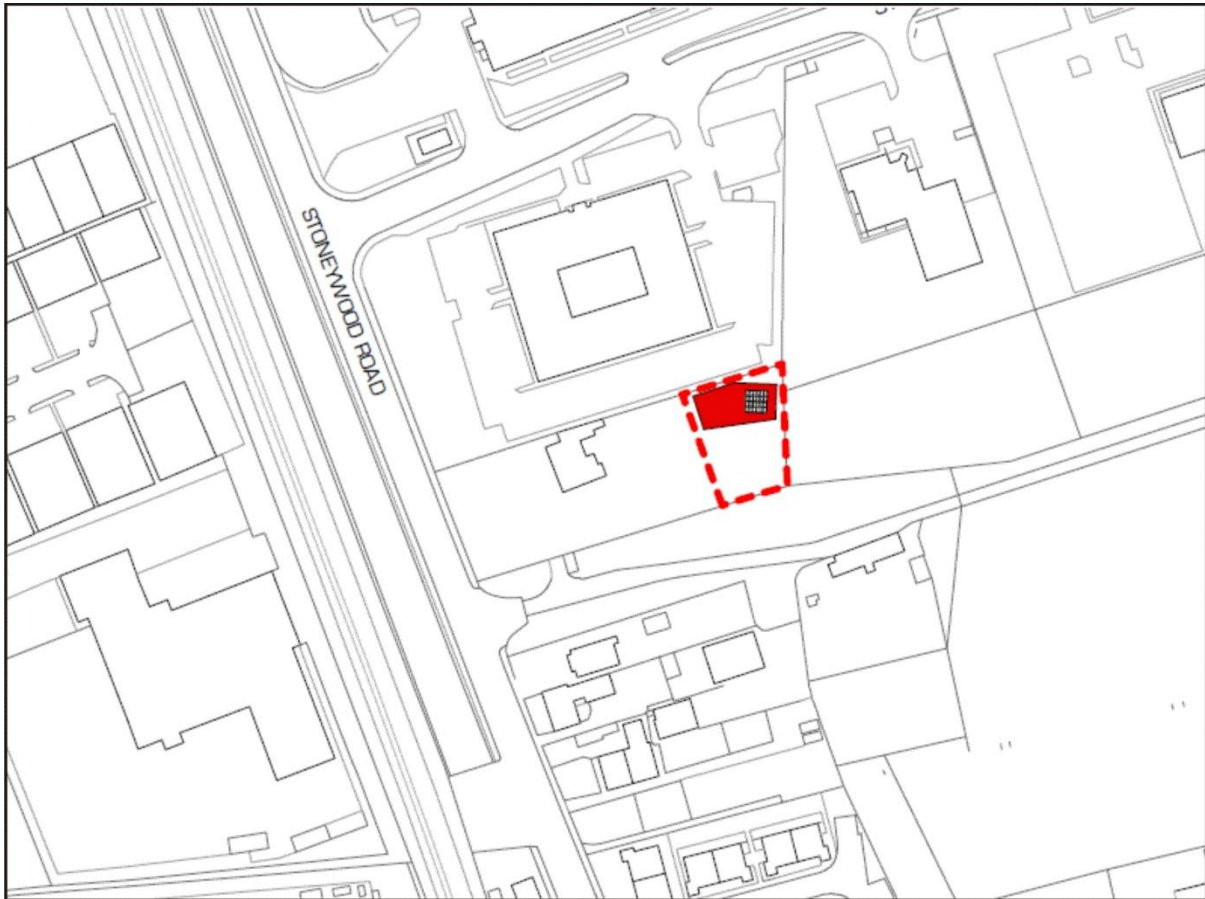
1 INTRODUCTION

The site is located on the east side of Stoneywood Road at the rear of No 326 (Westwood). The site is at AB21 9JX, centred on NJ 89142 11465, at 50-55m OD and in the parish of Newhills (Illus 1).

Aberdeen City Council planning application P121746 for a new build dwelling was passed on 2.5.13 with a standard archaeology condition (condition 1). This work was commissioned by Mr Iain Andrew. The archaeological evaluation was carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2011) 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 of site (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013)



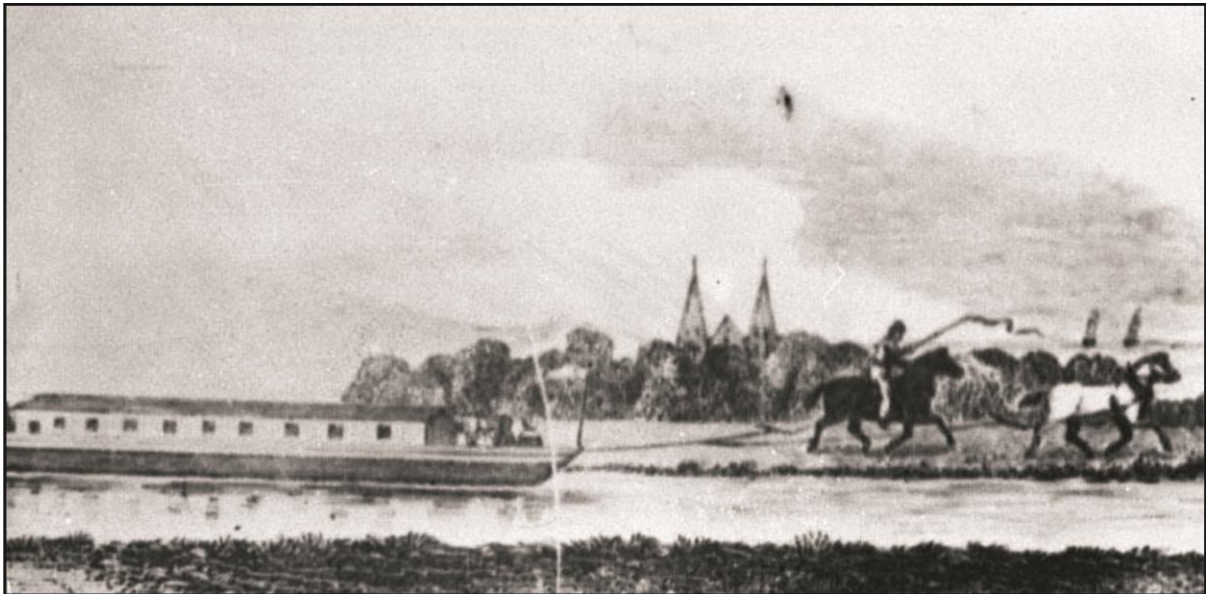
Illus 2 Location of proposed development (*copyright MAC Architects*)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

There are no known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed development except the Aberdeenshire Canal. The canal was opened in 1805 and closed in 1854; it carried goods from Aberdeen Harbour to Port Elphinstone and building materials including stone and lime from the country to the harbour.

Several archaeological sites in the area have uncovered remains of the canal. In 2001 a section was excavated at 275 Great Northern Road (Cameron 2001, 7) and in 2007 Murray Archaeological Services carried out an evaluation at 10-12 Canal Street (Murray 2007, MAS 2007-30). A canal bridge survives at the junction of Station Road and Great Northern Road (Illus 3) and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument as are other remains along the line of the former canal. In 2005 the canal was recorded at the new BP Headquarters (Buchanan 2005), and also in Victoria Road at the former Lawson's of Dyce (Cameron 2005, 11). In 2011 the canal was uncovered in a field immediately south of Stoneywood Terrace during an evaluation prior to a housing development (Cameron 2012).

The line of the canal survives on the First Edition Ordnance Survey in some areas but not at this location. A 'Plan of intended navigable canal from harbour of Aberdeen to bridge over River Don at Inverurie (Inverury) [Aberdeenshire Canal] 1796' (Aberdeen University MS 3175/RHP/31446) shows the line of the canal. Several texts on the canal include Pearson 1986 and Graham 1967. The canal was originally 5.2m (17ft) wide and 0.9m (3ft) deep. In the course of the first six years these dimensions were increased, over much of the distance, to 7m (23ft) wide and 1.2m (3ft 10in) deep (Graham 1967-8: 171). One image of the canal survives (Illus 3) showing horses on the towpath pulling a barge with St Machar's Cathedral in the background.



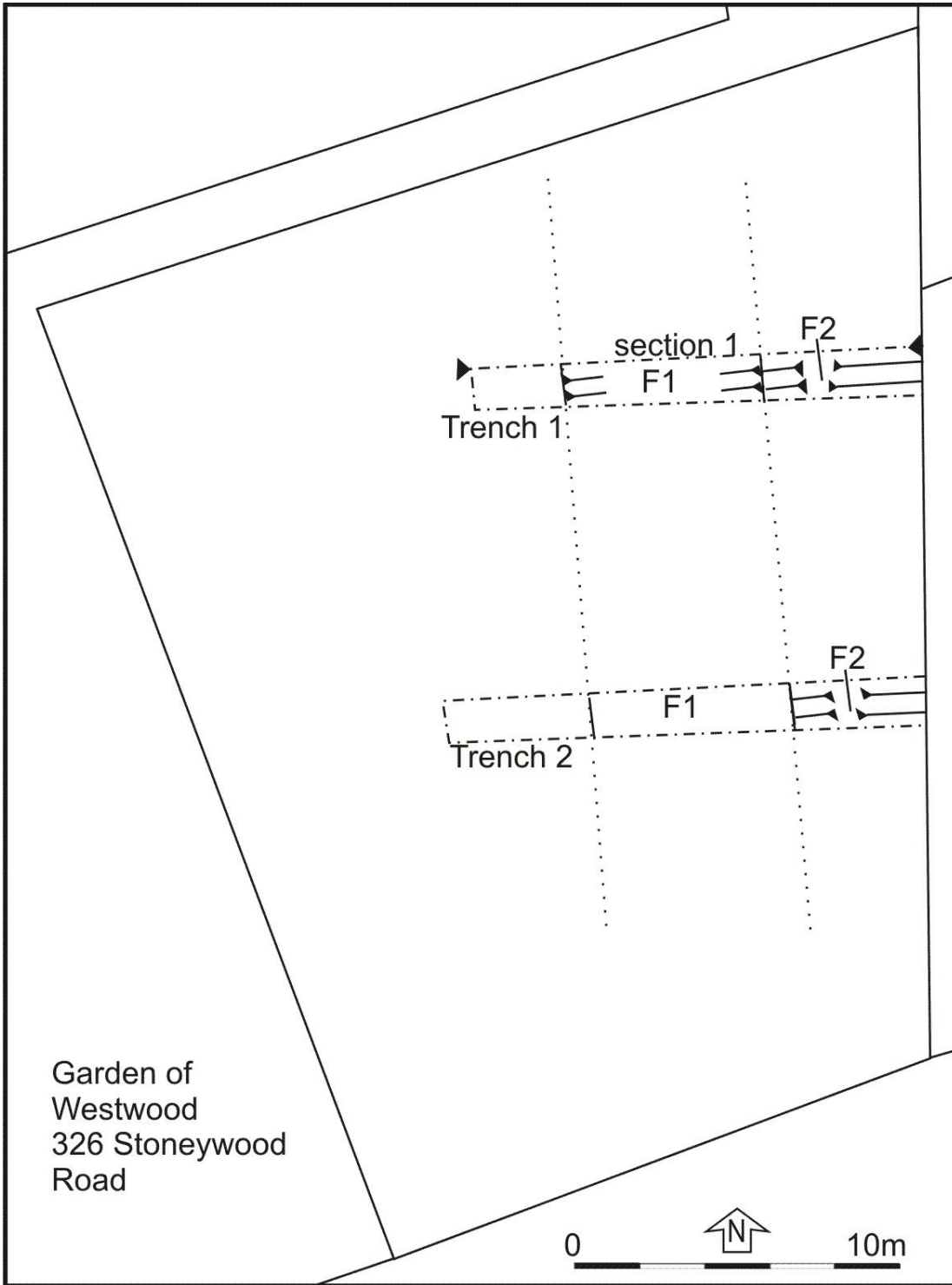
Illus 3 Aberdeenshire Canal in use in the vicinity of St Machar's Cathedral c 1810 (copyright SCRAN)

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

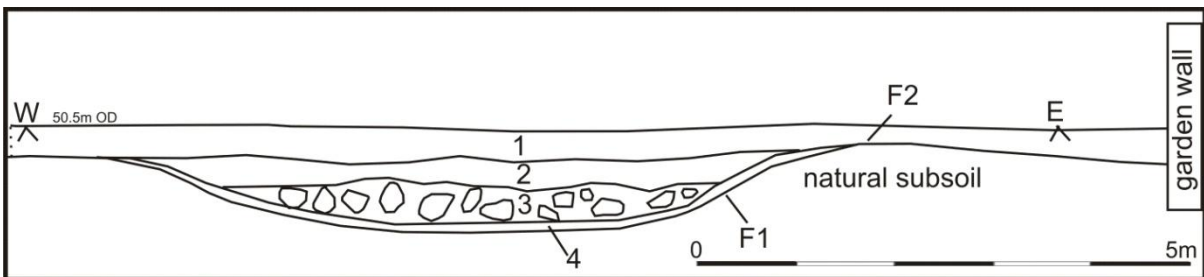
The archaeological evaluation took place on 12 May 2013 using a 13 ton wheeled JCB with a 1.5m flat edged ditching bucket. Two trenches were excavated and the line of the canal ascertained. In both trenches a shallow flat-bottomed cut feature (F1) was 6.1-6.2m wide and 0.7m deep (Illus 5) which appears to be the full depth of the canal. It had been lined with a 0.1m deep blue-grey clay layer. After going out of use the feature was first infilled with large granite fieldstones and soil and then capped with a layer of redeposited natural clay and gravel subsoil (Illus 6). No finds were recovered from the excavated sections of the canal.



Illus 4 Trench 1 south section showing canal, infill and towpath (left)



Illus 5 Plan 1 showing canal F1 and towpath F2

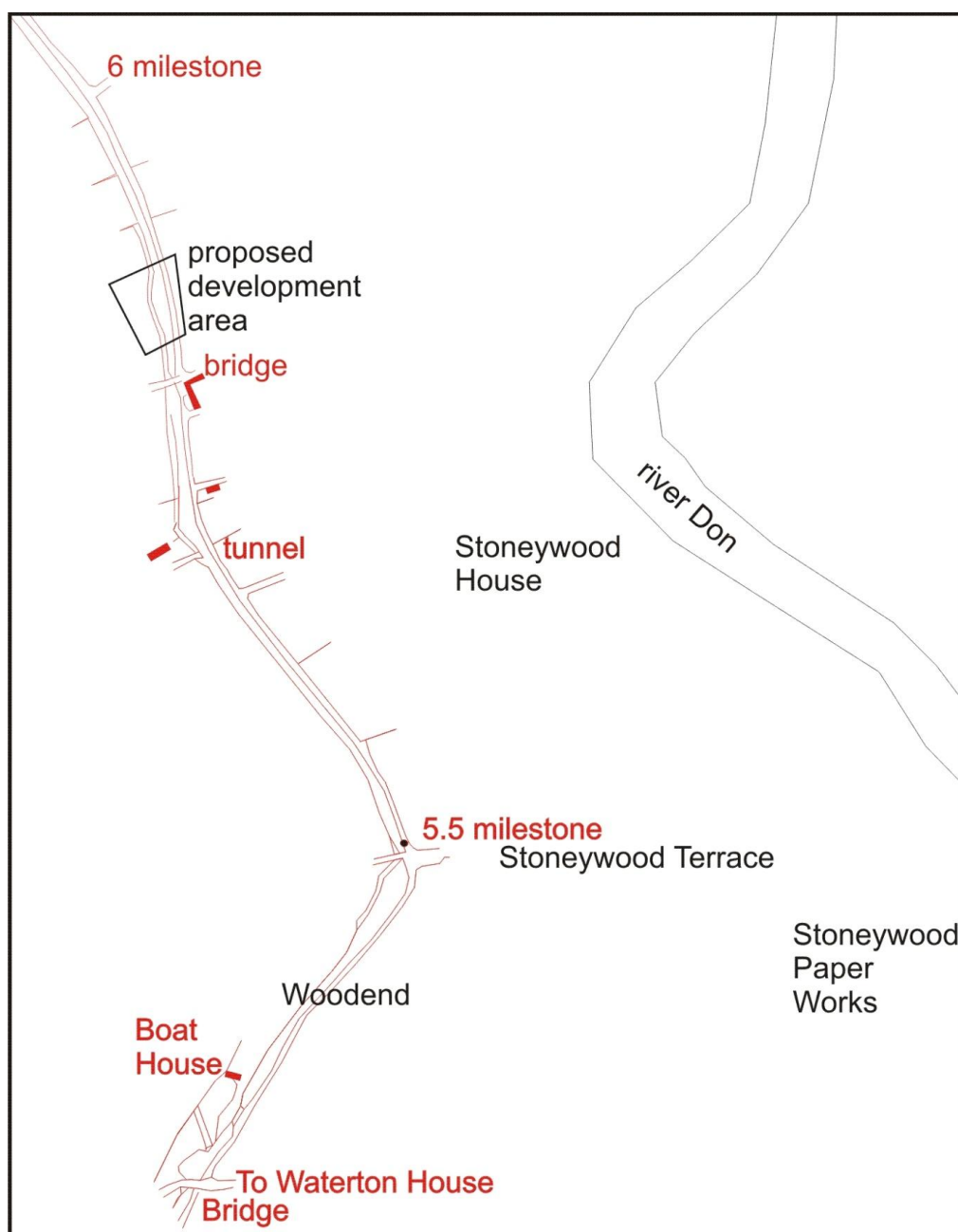


Illus 6 Section 1 showing canal F1 and towpath F2

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Aberdeenshire Canal was recorded in two trenches on the site of a proposed new house. The 1796 'plan of intended navigable canal from harbour of Aberdeen to bridge over River Don at Inverurie (Inverury)' shows that the canal widens slightly at the area of the excavation (Illus 7) but it is unlikely that this is a lock (as they are marked on the map) and the widening seems too short for a passing place. The remains at this site are narrower and shallower than the reported sizes of the canal (7 x 1.2m; Graham 1967-8: 171) suggesting either that there has been some truncation at this site or that this section of the canal was not widened and deepened as previously reported.

As the canal was recorded in the excavated trenches it is recommended that no further work is required at this site but this is subject to advice from Aberdeen City Council.



Illus 7 Proposed development area on 1796 plan of Aberdeenshire canal (in red) with placenames for reference in black). (copyright University of Aberdeen MS 3175/RHP/31446).

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Iain and Neil Andrew, Westwood, 326 Stoneywood Road; to Ian from McLeod Plant Hire and to Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council.

6 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Trench	Facing
DSC_6025-6028	F1 being uncovered	1	WNW
DSC_6029-6034	F1	1	W
DSC_6035-6039	F1 Section 1	1	N
DSC_6040-6045	F1 Section 1	1	NW
DSC_6046-6057	Tr 1 south trench section	1	SW
DSC_6058-6062	Tr 1 south trench section	1	NE
DSC_6063-6077	F1 fully excavated	1	E
DSC_6078-6080	Tr 1 south trench section	1	S
DSC_6081-6085	Tr 1 south trench section	1	SW
DSC_6086	Tr 2 location	2	SW
DSC_6087-94	Tr 1 south trench section	1	S
DSC_6095-6103	Tr 2 F1 - not excavated	2	W
DSC_6104-6113	Tr 2 F1 - not excavated	2	W
DSC_6114-6119	Tr 2 F1 - not excavated	2	E
DSC_6120-6121	Tr 2 F1 showing location with House (top left)	2	WNW
DSC_6122-6123	Tr 2 (foreground) and Tr 1 (background)	1 and 2	N
DSC_6124	Tr 2 (foreground) and Tr 1 (background)	1 and 2	NNW
DSC_6125-6129	Tr 2 (foreground) and Tr 1 (background)	1 and 2	N
DSC_6130-6134	Tr 2 (foreground) and Tr 1 (background)	1 and 2	NNE
DSC_6135-6137	Tr 2 (foreground) and Tr 1 (background)	1 and 2	NW
DSC_6138-6146	Tr 1 (foreground) Tr 2 (background)	1 and 2	S
DSC_6147-6153	Tr 1 (foreground) Tr 2 (background)	1 and 2	SW
DSC_6154-6158	Tr 1 (foreground) Tr 2 (background)	1 and 2	WSW
DSCF2413-2418	panoramas of garden with trenches	1 and 2	



APPENDIX 2 CONTEXTS

Context no	Trench	Description
1	1, 2	Topsoil 0.2-0.3m deep including planting pits and disturbance for market garden and tree roots
2	1, 2	Redeposited clay and gravel natural sealing top of infilled canal
3	1, 2	soil and fieldstones in base of canal; probably inserted for drainage purposes
4	1, 2	blue-grey puddled clay base of canal 0.1m thick on base and side of F1.
F1	1, 2	Canal 6.2m wide and 0.7m deep. Flat bottomed cut into natural clay subsoil
F2	1, 2	Tow path; rise in natural subsoil on east side of F1 probably representing the towpath of the canal