

Norwood Hall, Inchgarth Road, Aberdeen, AB10 7QD
Report on archaeological watching brief for ground disturbance for
new kitchen extension
Aberdeen City Council planning application P121685



Dougal Morgan
WCParchitects
for
Monument Leisure Ltd
c/o WCParchitects

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Illustrations

cover The area of the kitchen extension showing existing services and sand subsoil

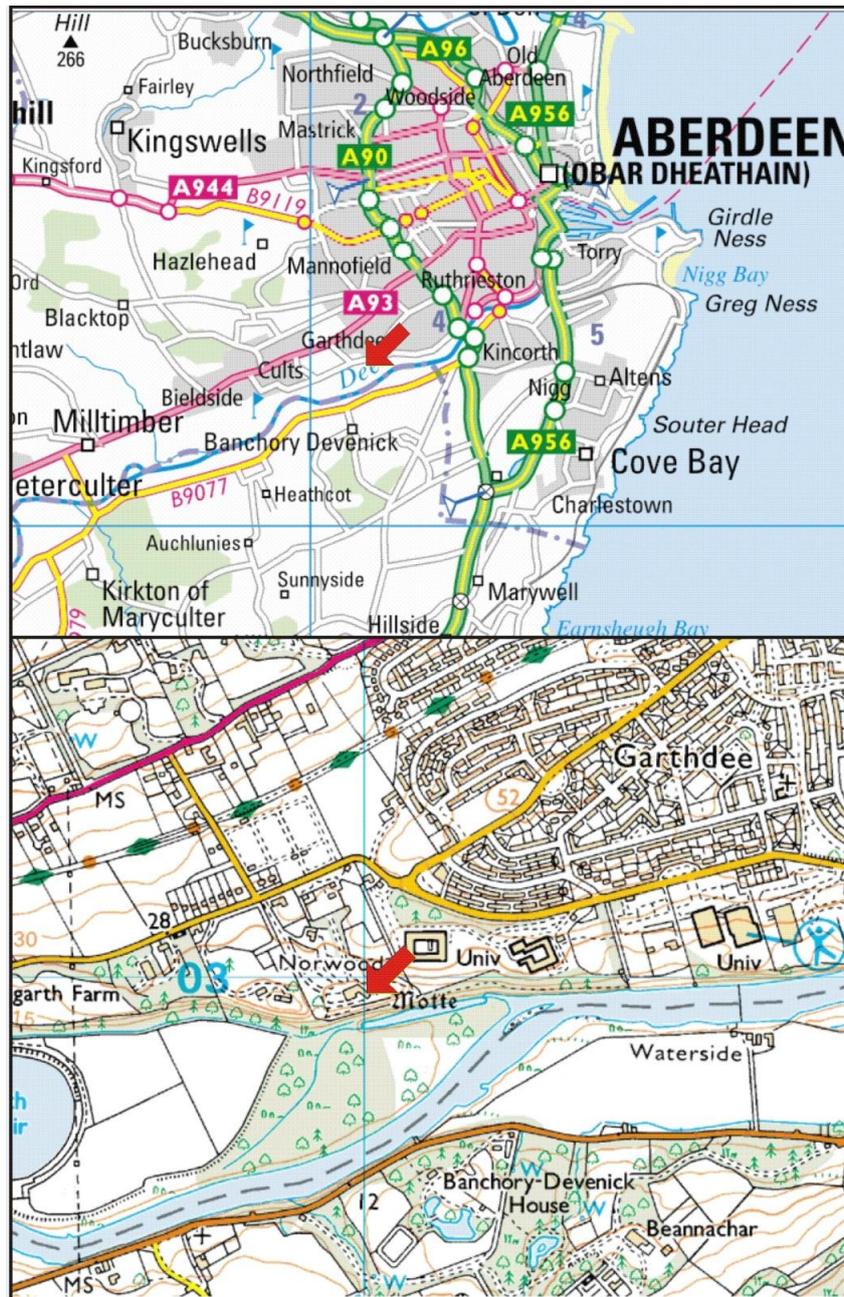
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Summary

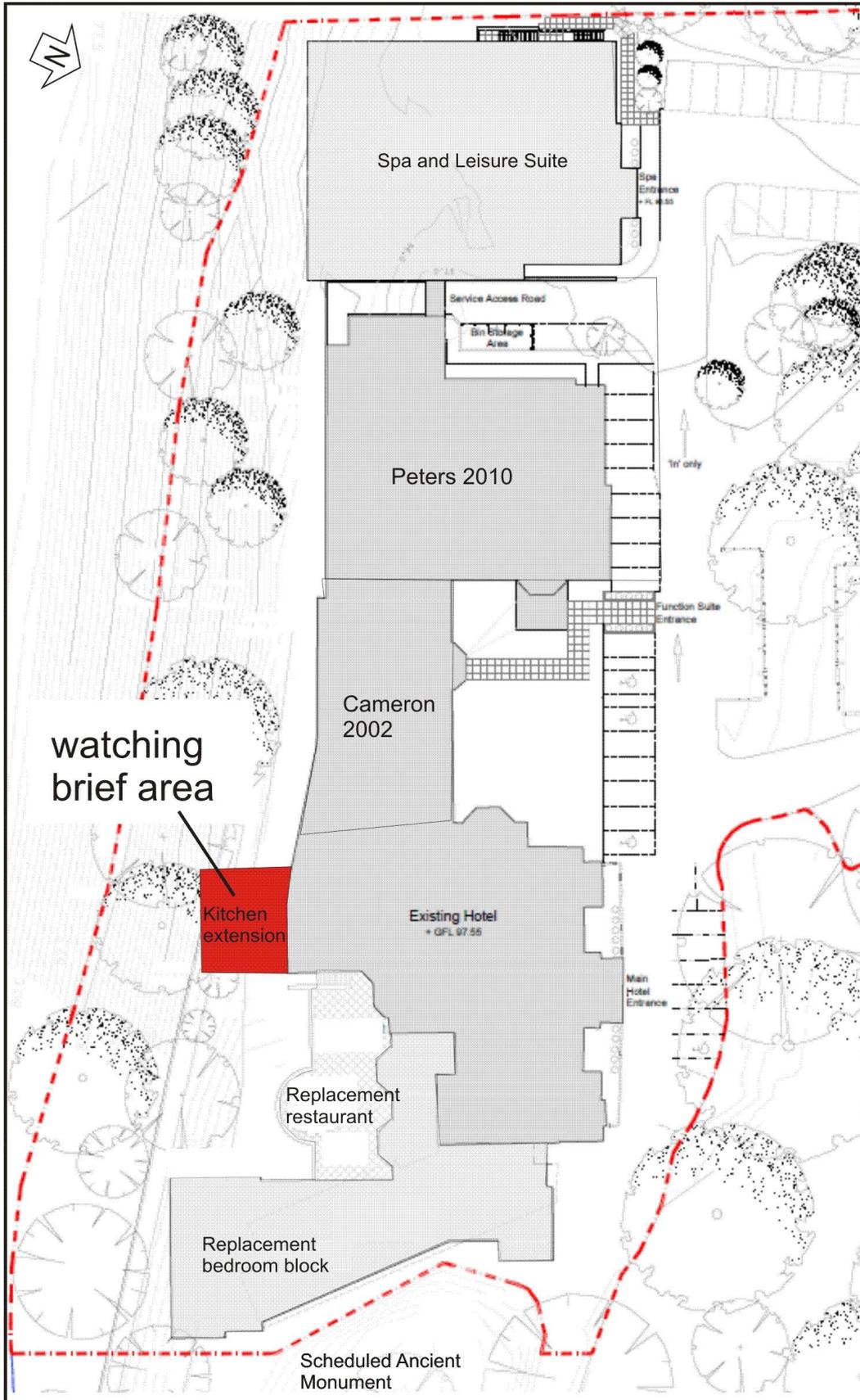
A visit to the site on 20.1.14 at the start of the ground disturbance for the new kitchen block revealed that the area was heavily disturbed by services dug into the sand natural subsoil. No archaeological deposits were observed. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the construction of the kitchen extension. Further work at the hotel complex is to be carried out and is covered by the Written Scheme of Investigation v3 (A Cameron 24 June 2013).

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located at Norwood Hall Hotel on the south side of Inchgarth Road, Aberdeen adjacent to the north bank of the river Dee. The site is at AB10 7QD, centred on NJ 91007 02964, at 15-20m OD and in the parish of Peterculter (Illus 1).
- 1.2 Aberdeen City Council planning application P121685 for erection of a two storey extension to the kitchen passed on 29.1.13 with standard archaeology condition (condition 1). This report relates to that planning application only: further work at the hotel complex is to be carried out and is covered by the Written Scheme of Investigation v3 (A Cameron 24 June 2013).



Illus 1 Location plan of site (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014)



Illus 2 Location of watching brief area for restaurant extension (copyright WCParchitects).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The proposed development is within 1.5m of a Scheduled Ancient Monument, Pitfodel's (or Pitfoddel's) Castle (NJ90SW 1). The motte comprises an irregular ovate mound c40m long by 25m wide, surmounted by a small mound with an artificial level top measuring 7m by 3m. The monument has a maximum height of 4.5m. No trace of a bailey was present. This may have been removed by landscaping around the motte (CFA 1992, 34-5). The mound was once larger, and is shown almost twice as extensive as it is today on the first edition of the OS map (Illus 3) in the grounds of Norwood House. The tradition of its use as the site of a castle was first recorded at that time. The mound has been landscaped on several occasions since: a broad terrace has been levelled into it on the E; a track cuts into its sides on the north and south. Illus 3 also shows that extensions to Norwood House. The mound may have been used as the site of an earthwork castle, but no trace of any defences is visible today. A small rectangular platform with a sharp profile is visible on the W of the mound, but this may be a garden feature of the country house. If a castle stood here, it was probably built by the Murrays of Colbyn, who obtained the barony of Pitfoddel de novo between 1389 and 1397. The barony passed to the Rede family in the 15th century and thence to the Menzies in the 16th century. In view of the date of the erection of the barony, the possibility of an earthwork castle is less likely than a stone-built tower-house (Robertson and Grubb 1857).
- 2.2 Norwood was built in 1859 and was reworked in 1881 by architect J Russell Mackenzie. Many of the interiors are by William Scott Morton, lavishly decorated with fine woodwork and stained glass. The three gables at the front of the house have pedimented roofs and Corinthian and Doric columns and pilasters framing the doorway and windows. Stone balustrades form balconies below the first floor windows. The house has been extended at several times including an extension into the original motte mound in the late 19th century (Illus 3).
- 2.3 Norwood was converted into Norwood Hall Hotel in 1972 by architects M F Beattie and W Cowie and in 1976 an extension was added to the east end of the hotel but no archaeological work took place at that time.
- 2.4 There have been several archaeological interventions at the site including a survey of the motte (CFA 1992, 34-5). In 2002 trenches were excavated between the existing hotel and the proposed spa and leisure suite (Illus 2) for an extension at the west of the hotel but no archaeological remains were found (Cameron 2002, unpublished report, Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit; site code E61). In 2010 a watching brief was maintained during the ground disturbance for a new extension and car parking but no archaeological remains were uncovered (Peters, 2010, ADS grey literature report aberdeen3-74862).

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

A visit to the site on 20.1.14 at the start of the ground disturbance for the new kitchen block revealed that the area was heavily disturbed by services dug into the sand natural subsoil. No archaeological deposits were observed.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the construction of the kitchen extension. Further work at the hotel complex is to be carried out and is covered by the Written Scheme of Investigation v3 (A Cameron 24 June 2013).

5 REFERENCES

Cameron, AS 2002 'Norwood Hall watching brief' unpublished report, Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit; site code E61.

Cameron AS 2013 Written Scheme of Investigation for Norwood Hall Hotel, v3, 24 June 2013.

CFA 1992 'Pitfoddell's Castle (Peterculter parish)', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 34-5.

Peters, 2010 'Report on an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with an extension at Norwood Hall Hotel, Garthdee, Aberdeen' (ADS grey literature report aberdeen3-74862).

Robertson, J and Grub, G 1847-62 Illustrations of the topography and antiquities of the shires of Aberdeen and Banff, Spalding Club: 4 vols. Aberdeen, 263-5.

Yeoman, P A 1988 'Mottes in Northeast Scotland', *Scot Archaeol Rev*, vol.5, 130.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Cameron Archaeology
45 View Terrace
Aberdeen
AB25 2RS
01224 643020
07581 181057
cameronarch@btinternet.com
www.cameronarchaeology.com
Company registration no 372223 (Scotland)
VAT registration no 990 4373 00

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



DSCF6734



DSCF6735



DSCF6736



DSCF6737



DSCF6738

Frame no	Description	Facing
DSCF6734	Kitchen extension area showing extensive services and sand natural subsoil	NW
DSCF6735	Kitchen extension area	N
DSCF6736	Kitchen extension area	NNE
DSCF6737	Kitchen extension area	NE
DSCF6738	Kitchen extension area	NE