

**KINGS PAVILION, UNIVERSITY ROAD, ABERDEEN, AB24 3UB
WATCHING BRIEF FOR REPLACEMENT OF TENNIS COURT
FLOODLIGHTING**



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15 June 2014

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover top North end of north arm of trench with King's College in background; bottom the south arm of west trench showing location for lighting tower

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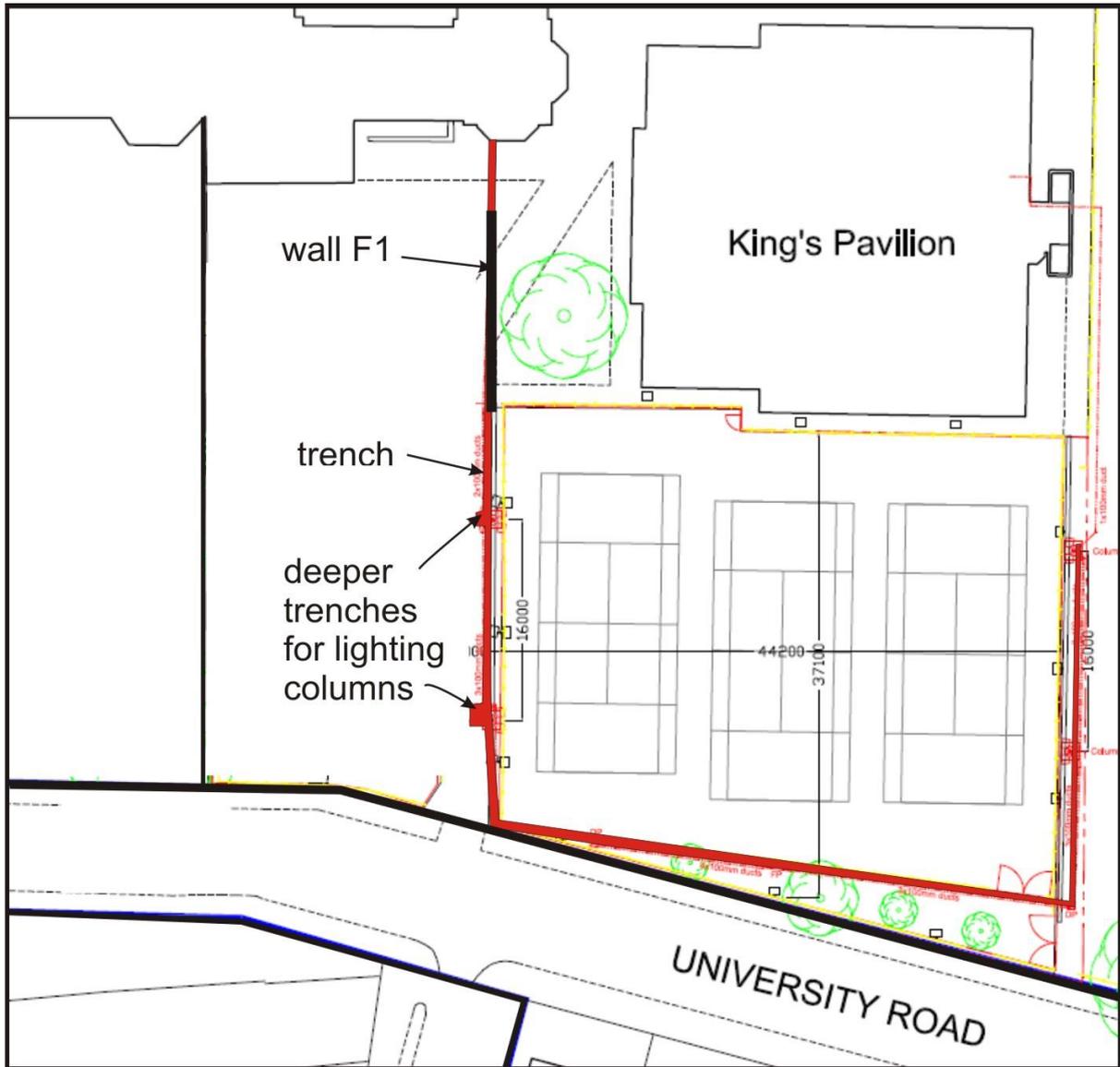
SUMMARY

A watching brief was maintained from 23 April-9 June 2014 during the excavation of the trench for the new lighting at King's Pavilion. The trench was typically 0.5m wide and 0.4m deep with deeper sections where the lighting columns were sited. The west arm of the trench contained a large stone wall foundation (F1) which is the remains of a boundary wall constructed between the First and second OS maps (1867-1900). The south and east arms of the trench contained a shallow layer of soil above sand natural subsoil. No other features and no finds were recovered and the trench is now complete and infilled.

2 BACKGROUND

There are many sites of archaeological and historic interest in the surrounding area of Old Aberdeen.

- 2.1 Several small trenches were opened up during the installation of floodlights on the west front of King's College chapel and library. The foundations of the 1832 library frontage were exposed. A drainage channel was discovered running parallel to this frontage and was thought to be associated with its construction. At the front of the site was a cobbled area which may be of fairly recent date (Stones and A S Cameron 1989, 18).
- 2.2 A watching brief was carried out in October 2004 during the installation of an electric cable through the lawn to the N of King's College Chapel. In a trench running between the High Street, Old Aberdeen and the Elphinstone Hall there was no evidence of any activity that might have been associated with the medieval frontage of the High Street - an area shown as garden ground on both Gordon's map of 1661 and the 1866-67 OS map of Aberdeen. In a second trench, running parallel to and E of the High Street to New King's Building, two walls and an area of flooring were uncovered, which are tentatively identified as relating to a 19th century professorial manse (Murray 2004, 8).
- 2.3 An archaeological excavation was carried out in December 2003 prior to the installation of a new organ in the chapel. Concrete flooring was removed and the ground excavated to natural level. In one trench a cut was revealed in the natural subsoil. The cut contained loose loam, stones and gravel, and a small number of iron nails with wood adhering. A fragmentary skeleton was cleaned. The grave had been disturbed, probably when the previous organ was installed, in 1959. Brick and stone supports were inserted under the floor during this time to add strength. It was ascertained that the burial took place in the chapel after its construction, thought to be around 1497-8 (Cameron 2004, 8-9).
- 2.4 NJ 939 081 Monitoring of trenches took place in August and September 2005 for the floodlighting of various University of Aberdeen buildings including King's College Chapel (NJ90NW 7; c 1500), New King's and Elphinstone Hall. The foundations of the chapel were recorded, including an X-shaped mason's mark on a sandstone block in the foundation of a buttress in the NE corner of the chapel. The foundations of the N wall of the chapel were 0.5-0.6m wide, whereas there was no foundation on the W side: the sandstone blocks were laid immediately onto the stone and gravel subsoil. A stone culvert was recorded adjacent to the W wall of the chapel; this was recorded in 1989 (DES 1989, 18) during a previous floodlighting scheme. One wall foundation was recorded in a trench in front of New King's; it was probably one of the walls of the brewery seen on the 1867 OS map (Cameron 2005a, 10).
- 2.5 In 2005 Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit monitored trenches for a new central heating system for King's College. A trench was dug just north of 52 College Bounds (Illus 2) and the area appeared to have been substantially disturbed, probably during the construction of 50-52 College Bounds (Cameron 2005b).
- 2.6 In 2012 building recording and a watching brief was carried out during refurbishment of 50-52 College Bounds (Cameron 2012, 10) and natural levels and garden soil were recorded.



Illus 2 Plan with excavated trench in red (copyright University of Aberdeen).

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was maintained from 23 April-9 June 2014 during the excavation of the trench for the new lighting at King's Pavilion. The trench was typically 0.5m wide and 0.4m deep with deeper sections where the lighting columns were to be sited (Illus 2).

The west arm of the trench contained a large stone wall foundation (F1; Illus 3) which is the remains of a boundary wall constructed between the First and second OS maps (1867-1900). The south and east arms of the trench contained a shallow layer of soil above sand natural subsoil (Illus 4). No other features and no finds were recovered and the trench is now complete and infilled.



Illus 3 West arm of trench Wall F1; facing NE



Illus 4 South arm of trench showing sand natural subsoil; facing NW

4 REFERENCES

Cameron, AS 2004 'King's College (Aberdeen parish), watching brief' *Discovery Excav Scot, vol.6*, p8-9.

Cameron, A 2005a 'King's College (Aberdeen parish), watching brief' *Discovery Excav Scot, vol.6*, p10.

Cameron, A 2005b Old Aberdeen Heating replacement (site code O388). Archive report available from Aberdeen City Council Sites and Monuments Record.

Cameron, A 2012 '50-52 College Bounds' *Discovery Excav Scot, vol.13*, 10.

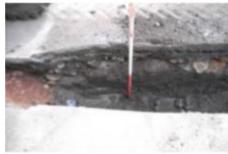
Murray, H K 2004 'King's College, University of Aberdeen (Aberdeen parish), watching brief', *Discovery Excav Scot, vol.5*, 8.

Stones and Cameron, JA and AS (1989) 'King's College, Old Aberdeen, drainage channel and cobbled area', *Discovery Excav Scot*, P18.

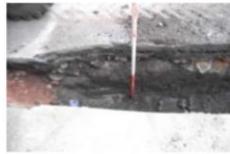
5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Peter Cape, University of Aberdeen for initiating this project, to Chap staff for their help during the work and to Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council for her advice during the project.

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



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DSC_0046



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