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**REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AND
EXCAVATION
AND DATA STRUCTURE REPORT (DSR)**



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SUMMARY

A watching brief and subsequent excavation was carried out between 2 and 15 July 2015 including excavation between 10-14th July. Trench 1 the substation and cabling within the Robert Gordon University quadrangle produced 29 burials (of which 25 were lifted) and a robber trench, possibly for the east wall of the Blackfriars church.

There is no further requirement for fieldwork at this site as the substation has been constructed and the cabling laid but a Post-Excavation Research Design (PERD) will be produced detailing the costings for the post-excavation and publication.

1 INTRODUCTION

The site is at NJ 93951 06375, in the parish of Aberdeen and at 15-20m OD. It is on the north side of the Administration block of Robert Gordon University on the north side of Schoolhill, Aberdeen. Aberdeen City Council Planning application P141541 for erection/installation of an electrical sub-station unit was approved on 24.2.15 with a condition (condition 1) for archaeological work to be carried out; Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (who cover Aberdeen City) require an archaeological evaluation of the proposed substation footprint and the new track for cabling.



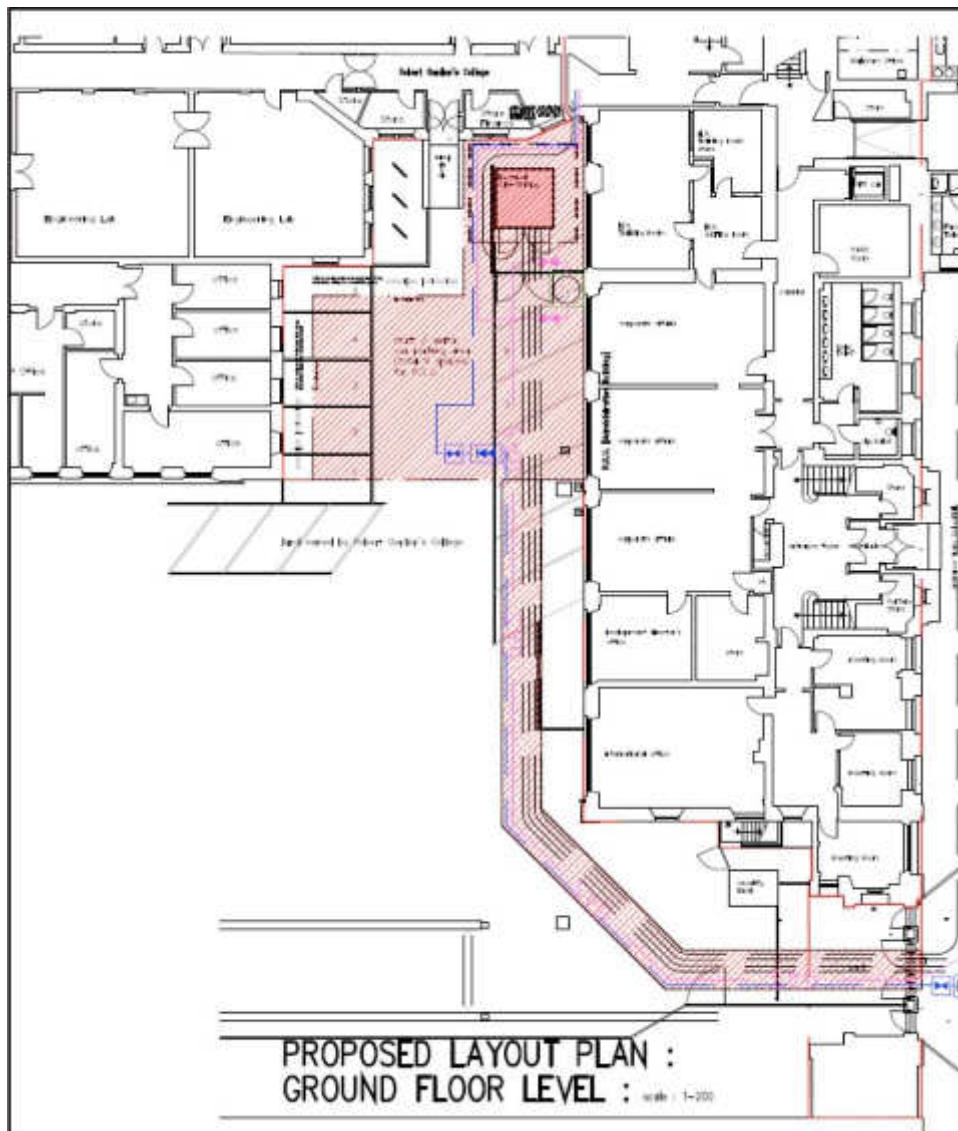
Illus 1 Site location (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2015).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This site is outwith the medieval 'ports' but archaeological work has shown that it was intensively occupied in the medieval and post-medieval period.
- 2.2 Robert Gordon's College and University are on the site of the Dominican friary (NJ90NW 27). The site of a Dominican house founded between 1230 and 1249 by Alexander II, who is said to have bestowed on it his palace and garden situated between Schoolhill, Blackfrairs Street, Woolmanhill, St Andrews Street and Harriet Street. The bounding wall of the property, 'very high but for the most part ruined', was extant in 1661, although both the monastery and its church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, had been completely destroyed by reformers in 1560. Excavations in 1833 revealed a south-facing building belonging to the monastery, as well as a stone-built grave 6' by 4' of unworked stones cemented with lime and containing three bodies, one of them apparently young. The site is now occupied by Robert Gordon's College (Easson 1957).
- 2.3 At 2-20 Harriet Street immediately east of the proposed development, cobbling and walls and medieval pottery were found during an excavation in 1977 (Stones 1977, 4; Murray 1982, 170; NJ90NW 118). A medieval pit was excavated at the rear of the Robert Gordon University Students' Union near the junction of Schoolhill and Harriet Street (NJ90NW 2614). It was at least 3.8m in diameter and survived to a depth of 1m; it contained a small number of sherds of medieval pottery. This pit lay in a previously untested portion of the site at 2-16 Harriet Street excavated in 1977: its presence suggests a slightly higher level of medieval survival than was reported at the time (Harding 2003, 12).
- 2.4 There are references in the 18th and 19th centuries to human remains being found on the site of Aberdeen Art Gallery. A cist (NJ90NW 169) was found at the site of the Art Gallery in 1883 (Wyness 1965, 292).
- 2.5 Excavations prior to the library extension at Robert Gordon's College ('Auld Hoose') found part of a ditch which may have been related to the fortification of the then Robert Gordon's Hospital by the Duke of Cumberland's troops when they were billeted there immediately before Culloden (Cameron 2000, 7). Fragments of human bone were found during this work and this may reflect the amount of ground disturbance and soil moving during the construction of this fortification.
- 2.6 In 2009 during landscaping in front of Robert Gordon College, 40m NW of the proposed site, traces of walls, disarticulated human bone, stone slates and window glass fragments were found relating to the Dominican Friary (Cameron 2009, 11).
- 2.7 Two test pits were observed in 2012 on the exterior of the north and east walls of the Art Gallery, close to the location of this proposed development. An earlier lime-bonded sandstone foundation was observed on the north wall and a stepped foundation on the east wall; medieval and post-medieval finds were recovered from mixed soils on the test pits (Hall 2013, 10) and a fragment of human bone (Hall pers comm).
- 2.8 A total area of 1,500 sq m was examined, encompassing a large backland site up to 10m from the street frontage, which was itself inaccessible because of listed building constraints. The site lay c 6m W of the site excavated at 42 St Paul Street (NJ90NW 86). Much of the late medieval/early post-medieval deposits had been scarped during 19th century development, but sufficient remained to allow some appreciation of the area to be made. It seems probable that this site was not developed so early or so intensively as 42 St Paul Street, suggesting that settlement developed gradually downhill from the

Broad Street-Castle Street centre of the burgh. A clay foundation running N-S probably represented a 13th-14th century boundary. No other early boundaries were recorded but were probably on the lines of modern property divisions and have long since disappeared. The bottoms of a number of earthfast posts may represent a medieval building near the frontage, but all other evidence of it had been obliterated. A number of medieval pits, of which three were very straight-sided and regular in shape, may have originally been storage pits. A post in the corner of one may suggest that this one at least had a superstructure as inferred from a similar example at 42 St Paul Street. A post-medieval (17th century) pit had been lined with thin strips of timber. Medieval finds included a bone knife handle and a fragment of decorated wood perhaps from a casket (Stones 1987, 16-17). Other waterlogged medieval sites have been excavated (for example Roy 2008, 11-12; Murray 1982, 110, 112).

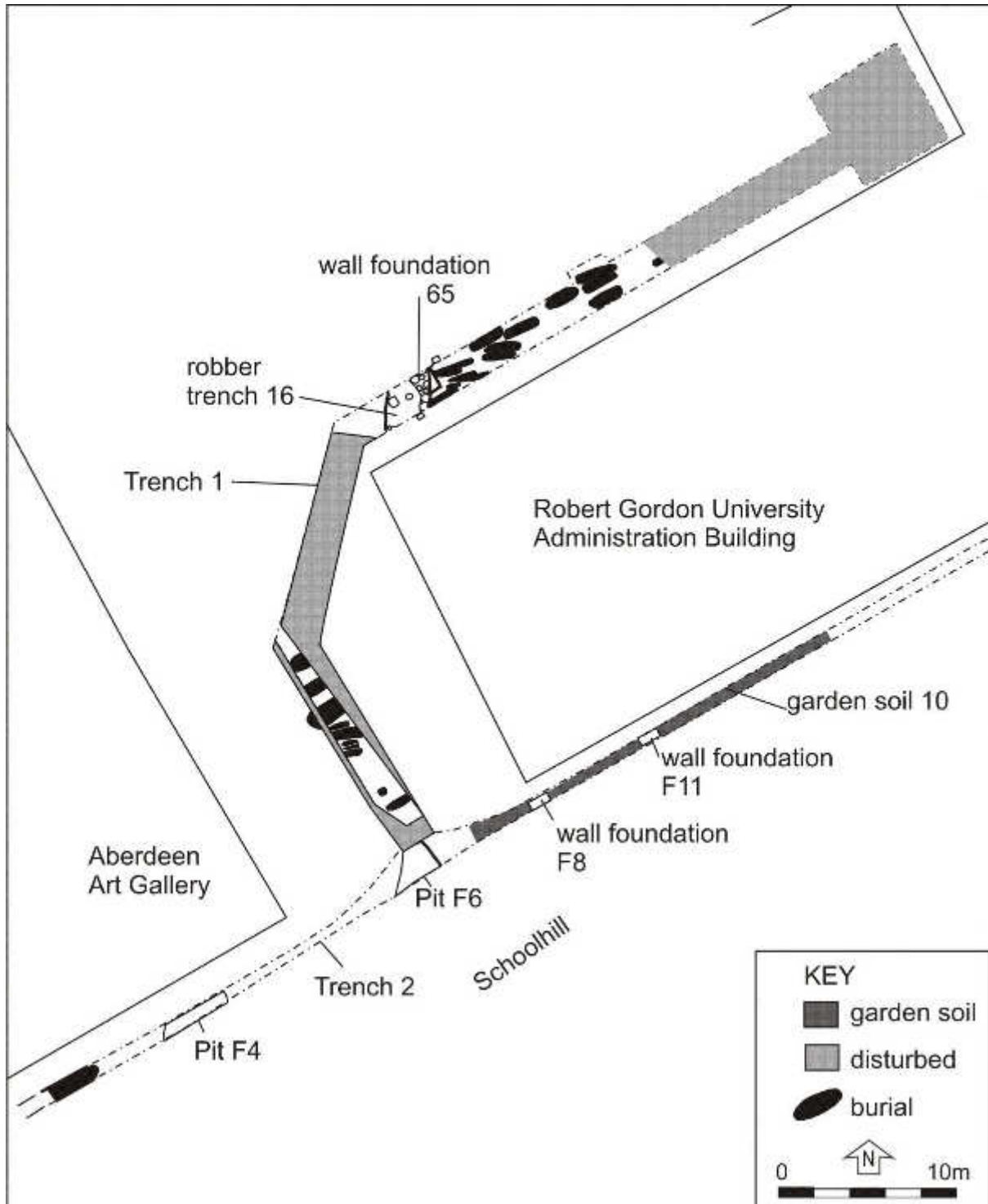
- 2.9 Ordnance survey maps show that the proposed substation base is to be located in an open area between buildings during the mid 19th and 20th centuries (Illus 5). The cabling trench runs along the line of the north wall of the 'Old Grammar School' (First Edition), later the 'Art Gallery and Industrial Museum Buildings'.



Illus 2 Plan showing area of proposed development with proposed substation (dark pink) and cabling trench (copyright Halliday Fraser Munro)

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF AND EXCAVATION

Two trenches were subjected to a watching brief and then subsequent excavation in Trench 1 between 2 and 15 July 2015 (Illus 2, 3). Trench 1 was the sub-station and cabling trench which was the subject of the WSI. During the watching brief of Trench 1 a pair of adult human tibiae were recovered during a small hand-dug test pit by SSE staff and as a result a watching brief was also carried out on this trench and the grave and pits were recorded.



Illus 3 Plan showing Trench 1 and Trench 2 with main features

Trench 1

This trench was excavated for a new substation on the NW and SW sides of the RGU administration building (Illus 3).

Robber trench 16 and wall foundation 65

A robber trench, 16, oriented N-S was 1.05m wide and a maximum of 0.4m deep (Illus 4). It was filled with loose mortar, stones and a small number of finds including stone roof tile fragments, mammal bones and a copper alloy pin. On the E side of the robber trench a number of stones bonded with light brown patchy clay (65) is probably the remains of the bottom of the foundation of the wall which had been left *in situ* when the remainder of the walling material was robbed.

The area E of this robber trench was filled with graveyard soils and burials (see below). The area of the trench W of 16 was very disturbed by services but two areas of disturbed human remains along with several floor tiles suggested that this was the interior of the structure.

These remains are interpreted as one of the walls of the Blackfriars friary and may have been the location of the E wall of the Blackfriars church due to the orientation, finds and the proximity of a number of burials to the E side of this wall (see below).



Illus 4 Robber trench 32 (right) with SK2 with head buried against the E face wall; facing SE

Burials

Twenty nine burials were identified and 25 of those were fully excavated during this project. The burials at the E area were discrete and did not cut into each other (Illus 5) whilst those immediately adjacent to wall foundation 65 were intercutting with multiple levels of burial.

The burials contained grey clay loam incorporating some of the natural subsoil which is a reddish brown waterwashed stone and compact sand. The most easterly burial (SK10; Illus 6) had been cut by an electric cable and the whole area to the E of this burial had been disturbed down to the level of the natural prior to this work. The fill of SK10 was a proportionally large amount of subsoil and it is interpreted as being towards the eastern boundary of the Blackfriars complex where the burials were less intense and there was therefore less graveyard soil.

There were few finds in the grave soils suggesting that the area occupied by the Blackfriars had not been intensely occupied before their arrival and had not been used for rubbish dumping.



Illus 5 Trench 1 SK8 (left foreground) SK9 (bottom right), SK7, SK6 and uncovering SK 11 (top); facing SW



Illus 6 SK10 showing poor condition of the bones partially due to burial in natural gravels; the burial was also cut by a trench for an electric cable (bottom left); facing SE

All the burials were oriented E-W or ENE-WSW (Illus 7) with heads to the W and WSW. All the burials were prone with extended legs and extended or flexed arms. Two burials had pillow stones placed beside the head and a large stone within the mouth (Illus 8). Ten of the burials were in coffins and wood-covered iron nails were recovered but no other wood was identified. No lace-ends, copper pins or twisted wires were found and no copper alloy stains on the bones suggesting that if shrouds were present they were not pinned using copper alloy objects. One copper alloy pin was recovered in good condition from the mortar of robber trench 16. No other objects were recovered from the graves and very little pottery and bone was recovered from the fills.



Illus 7 SK11 (foreground) aligned WSW-ENE with flexed arms and SK5 (top) aligned W-E; facing SE



Illus 8 SK13 detail of pillow stones on either side of skull and large stone in mouth; facing W

The SE leg of the trench also contained a number of W-E and WSW-ENE burials dug into the waterwashed pebble natural subsoil. The bone was generally in poor condition and a

number of services had disturbed the graves. A series of services in a trench along the NE edge of the trench had taken the feet end of most of the burials and a water pipe along the SW edge of the trench had removed the head end of several burials. One burial (SK24; Illus 9) had been cut through the upper body by this water pipe but extension of the trench revealed the skull remained on the SW side of the service trench. Two burials in this trench were left *in situ* in this trench as they were below the level of the excavation required for the cabling (Illus 10).



Illus 9 Uncovering SK24 (left) and SK25 (right) in trench under archway; these burials were poorly preserved and cut by several services; a trench for a water pipe can be seen running across the middle of the photo; facing SW



Illus 10 Four burials were left *in situ* as they were below the required trench depth; the spine of SK26 was joined by a root running down the hole for the spinal cord; facing NW

A very dark grey compact garden soil survived under the current car park surface at the E end of Trench 1. It contained 18th (and possibly early 19th) century pottery and clay pipes and was sealing the burial soils. It is presumably associated with the gardens of the Old Grammar School.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was excavated along the S side of Aberdeen Art Gallery and the RGU Administration building (Illus 3). SK1 was recovered from this trench under the pavement in front of the Art Gallery (Illus 11); it was oriented WSW-ENE and was 0.3-0.4m below the current pavement. It was in a shallow grave cut which has had been cut at the head end by a previous electricity cable trench and along the SE edge by a fibre optic cable which narrowly missed removing the burial. Garden soil was recorded around this burial and to the NE and two pits or cuts (F4 and F6; Illus 3) were also filled with garden soil. Cut into this garden soil were two parallel wall foundations (8 and 11; Illus 12) 0.8m wide and constructed of large granite fieldstones bonded with off-white lime mortar. They were 5m apart. These are interpreted as post-medieval and remains of the 'Old Grammar School' recorded on the 1st edition OS map (Illus 15). Survival of archaeological remains was surprisingly good considering the amount of services and development in the area.



Illus 11 SK1 under the pavement in front of Aberdeen Art Gallery; facing SE



Illus 12 Wall foundation 11; facing SE

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The excavated trenches revealed well-preserved remains of burials and structures dating to the medieval period when the Blackfriars occupied much of this land. Further research is required and a Post-Excavation Research Design will be produced detailing the costs of the post-excavation and publication required.

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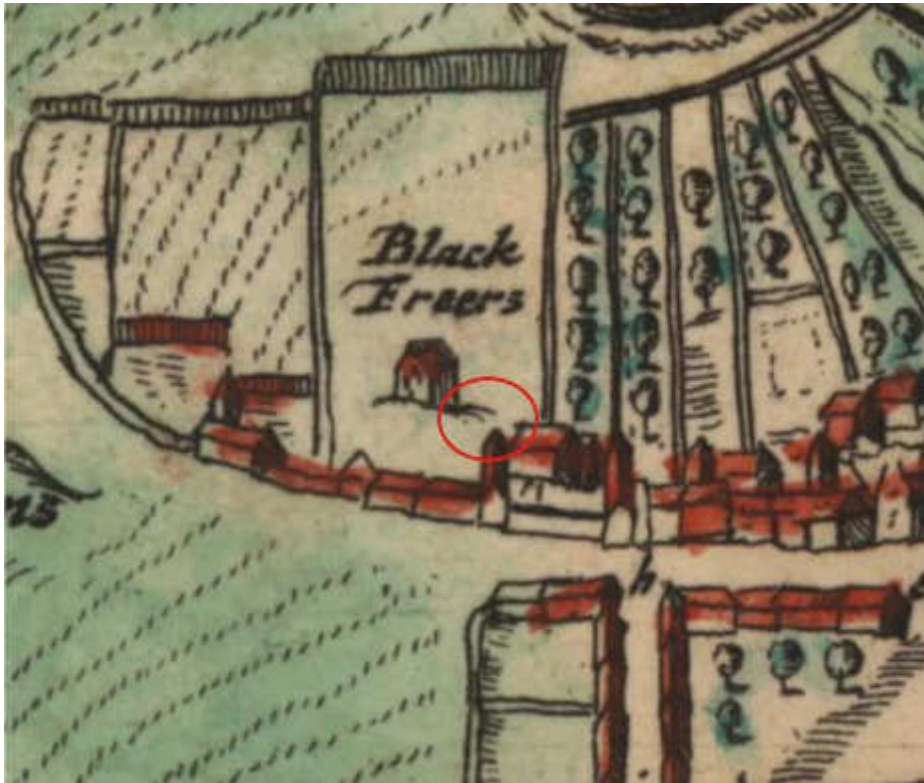
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APPENDIX 1 MAPS



Illus 13 Parson James Gordon's map of Aberdeen, 1661 showing approximate area of site circled in red (*copyright National Library of Scotland*).



Illus 14 John Wood map of 1828 with proposed site marked in red (*copyright National Library of Scotland*).



Illus 15 Ordnance survey maps with proposed substation base and cabling trench in red.
 (top) Aberdeen Sheet LXXV.11 (Old Machar) Publication date: 1869 (middle) Aberdeenshire 075.11 Publication date: 1902
 (top) Aberdeenshire 075.11 (includes: Aberdeen) Publication date: 1926 (copyright National Library of Scotland).

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXTS

| Context no | Trench | Description |
|------------|--------|---|
| 1 | 2 | Tarmac, type 2 |
| 2 | 2 | Grave 3 fill SK1 |
| 3 | 2 | Grave cut SK1 |
| 4 | 2 | Pit |
| 5 | 2 | Fill pit 4 |
| 6 | 2 | Pit |
| 7 | 2 | Fill pit 6 |
| 8 | 2 | wall |
| 9 | 2 | Stone and mortar in wall 8 |
| 10 | 2 | garden soil |
| 11 | 2 | wall |
| 12 | 2 | Stone and mortar in wall 11 |
| 13 | 1 | Black loam - 18th/19th century |
| 14 | 1 | Burial soil under 13 |
| 15 | 1 | Disturbed soil machined W of 16 |
| 16 | 1 | Robber trench, ? E wall church |
| 17 | 1 | Soil with disarticulated finger bones |
| 18 | 1 | Soil with floor tile and disarticulated bones |
| 19 | 1 | SK2 cut |
| 20 | 1 | SK2 fill |
| 21 | 1 | SK3 fill |
| 22 | 1 | SK4 fill |
| 23 | 1 | SK5 fill |
| 24 | 1 | SK6 fill |
| 25 | 1 | SK7 fill |
| 26 | 1 | SK8 fill |
| 27 | 1 | SK9 fill |
| 28 | 1 | SK10 fill |
| 29 | 1 | SK11 fill |
| 30 | 1 | SK10 cut into natural subsoil |
| 31 | 1 | SK9 cut into natural |
| 32 | 1 | fill of robber trench 16 |
| 33 | 1 | Wall foundation 65 |
| 34 | 1 | General burial layer around SK6/7 = 14 |
| 35 | 1 | Burial layer around SK2/3 = 14 |
| 36 | 1 | SK13 fill |
| 37 | 1 | SK13 fill |
| 38 | 1 | SK14 fill |
| 39 | 1 | SK15 fill |
| 40 | 1 | SK12 fill |
| 41 | 1 | Burial soil between SK 27 and Sk28 |
| 42 | 1 | Burial soil between SK 24 and SK25 |
| 43 | 1 | Burial soil between SK16 and SK25 |
| 44 | 1 | SK16 fill |
| 45 | 1 | SK17 fill |
| 46 | 1 | SK18 fill |
| 47 | 1 | SK19 fill |
| 48 | 1 | SK20 fill |
| 49 | 1 | SK22 fill |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 50 | 1 | SK23 fill |
| 51 | 1 | SK24 fill |
| 52 | 1 | SK25 fill |
| 53 | 1 | SK11 grave cut |
| 54 | 1 | Wall foundation 65 |
| 55 | 1 | SK6 grave cut |
| 56 | 1 | SK 7 grave cut |
| 57 | 1 | SK8 grave cut |
| 58 | 1 | SK10 grave cut |
| 59 | 1 | SK14 grave cut |
| 60 | 1 | SK12 grave cut |
| 61 | 1 | SK16 grave cut |
| 62 | 1 | SK24 grave cut |
| 63 | 1 | SK25 grave cut |
| 64 | 1 | SK21 fill |
| 65 | 1 | Stones in E edge of robber trench 16, remains of wall foundation |

APPENDIX 3 SKELETONS

| SK no (contexts) | Trench | Description | Coffin |
|------------------|--------|---|--------|
| 1 (2, 3) | 2 | Extended, supine E-W, upper body removed by previous electric cable, tibiae removed by SSE 3.7.15 | No |
| 2 (19, 20) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete, head against foundation N-S wall 16 | no |
| 3 (21) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | no |
| 4 (22) | 1 | Flexed, baby in fill above R shoulder SK11 | no |
| 5 (23) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | no |
| 6 (24) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | no |
| 7 (25) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | no |
| 8 (26) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | yes |
| 9 (27, 31) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | yes |
| 10 (28) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, cut by electric cables below pelvis | yes |
| 11 (29) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | yes |
| 12 (40) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, head only with frags of other bones | no |
| 13 (37) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete with pillow stones by skull and one in mouth | no |
| 14 (38) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete, legs angled to S | yes |
| 15 (39) | | Not used | |
| 16 (44, 61) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, upper body only very poor condition cut by service trench | no |
| 17 (45) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete SK slumped to N | yes |
| 18 (46) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | yes |
| 19 (47) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, complete | ?yes |
| 20 (48) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, upper body only, stone in mouth | yes |
| 21 (64) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, probably complete (skull removed in fill SK19?) | yes |
| 22 (49) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, legs only, rest cut by service trench | no |
| 23 (50) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, legs only, rest cut by service trench | no |
| 24 (51) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, middle of SK cut by service trench | yes |

| | | | |
|---------|---|---|----|
| 25 (52) | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, frags of arm only; head and foot ends cut by services | no |
| 26 | 1 | Not lifted | ? |
| 27 | 1 | Not lifted | ? |
| 28 | 1 | Extended, supine E-W, legs only, rest cut by service trench | no |
| 29 | 1 | Not lifted | ? |
| 30 | 1 | Not lifted | ? |

APPENDIX 4 SMALL FINDS

| SF no | Context | Description |
|-------|---------|-------------|
| 1 | 23 | Flint flake |
| 2 | 27 | Flint |

APPENDIX 5 THE OTHER FINDS

| Context no | clay pipe | pottery | mammal | bottle glass | window glass | shell | daub | floor tile | stone roof tile | brick | nails | flint | Cu alloy pin |
|------------|-----------|---------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------|------|------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| 1 | 1 | 10 | 12 | 1 | | 2 | | | 2 | 8 | | | |
| 13 | 5 | 22 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | 7 | | | |
| 18 | | | | | | | | 7 | | | | | |
| 20 | | 3 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 23 | | 2 | 6 | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 24 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 16* | | |
| 27 | | | | | | | | | | | 16* | 1 | |
| 28 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 3 | | |
| 29 | | 6 | | | | 2 | | | | | 3 | | |
| 32 | | | 4 | | | | | 1 | 3 | | | | 1 |
| 34 | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | | | | | | | | | | | 7* | | |
| 37 | | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 45 | | | | | | | | | | | 8* | | |
| 47 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | | | | | | | | | | | 3* | | |
| 51 | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| 64 | | | | | | | | | | | 8* | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| u/s | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Tr 2 u/s | | 3 | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| *iron nails with wood | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Illus 16 Face-mask jug from cleaning above robber trench 16



Illus 17 Floor tile from cleaning above robber trench 16



Illus 18 Large ceramic floor tile with worn green glaze



Illus 19 Finds recovered from black garden soil 13 sealing the burial soil below

This text was prepared after the 2009 archaeological work at the site but has not been published.

Introduction

The Dominican Friars formed one of four mendicant orders practising in the burgh of Aberdeen from the 13th century until their disbandment at the time of the Reformation. Their primary role in the community was as academics and scholars, learned men whose education served the burgh's inhabitants in a variety of ways; a role encapsulated in the term 'Friars Preachers' in contemporary documentation. Colloquially they were known as the 'Blackfriars' from the colour of their cloaks.

The Order was founded by St Dominic in the French City of Toulouse in 1215 and is believed to have made inroads in Scotland for the first time around 1230 (Cowan & Easson 1976, 114) when it formed part of the English Province. It was not until 1481, under James III, that the Dominican General Chapter was created a Province of Scotland. By this date the 'Observance' - an attempt by the Dominican community as a whole to return to the ideals of St Dominic - had been introduced to Scotland, although the community in Aberdeen was not a reformed house.

Aberdeen's Convent, created during the reign of Alexander I appears to have been founded between 1230 and 1249 although nothing from this period links the group of Friars with the plot of land on Schoolhill which by 1328 was receiving regular payments from the Exchequer (14 Jan 1328-29). The foundation of the Friary on the extreme north-west fringes of the burgh is consistent with the Friars' universal practice of acquiring land on the periphery of urban settlements. Unlike the houses of the Carmelites, Trinitarians and Franciscans though, which over time became surrounded by the growing burgh, the Blackfriars site remained on the fringes of the conurbation.

Documentary sources

The biggest hurdle in establishing a rounded picture of Aberdeen's Dominicans stems from the complete absence of any documentation from the Friars' own archive. That this must have existed cannot be disputed for the Friars undoubtedly possessed a cartulary of charters relating to their own possessions as exists, for example for the Elgin Convent, as well as a significant collection of written material. Foggie points out that the Friars must have compiled a book of charters which was portable and acceptable to show their title to land (2003, 162). An entry in the burgh charters (B Charters C1 52 Anderson, 114) details how an inventory of

the *writss and evidents* belonging to the Blackfriars was *carried south* by Friar Abercrombie at the time of the Reformation and thereafter lost until Sir Thomas Menzies, Provost of Aberdeen and Town Clerk recovered this in July 1617. Much must have been lost at the time of the dismantling of the Friars' house at the time of the Reformation although earlier documentation may have been lost during the time that Aberdeen was sacked by the English (Spearman).

The sources provide a tantalising glimpse of the financial standing of the Friars who were, at times, benefactors of the Crown. Gifts recorded include 80 merks for the convent in Aberdeen in (date) (Macfarlane 1995, 254) and another 80 merks to share with the Franciscans who were to use it on their garden and land (Aberdeen Register ii 311-312). Despite the Friars' role as men of God whose most visible duty in the burgh was the burial of the dead and the saying of prayers for the souls of the departed, the documentation which does exist relates almost entirely to property transactions on which the Friars depended for a large part of their income. The bulk of their financial assets came from the management of rents and lands owned by the community (either inherited lands or gifted properties or acquisitions assumed in lieu of non-payment of gifted rents) and from annuities gifted to the Friars in return for saying masses. They must also have received gifts in kind but no records of such income now exists.

Whilst the Friars' own records are conspicuous only by their absence, the civic records of the burgh of Aberdeen are particularly rich. The minutes of the Burgh and Guild Courts start in 1397 (Aberdeen's Council Registers) and give a flavour of many aspects of burgh life. The Dominican Friars acted as procurators for court cases, representing their clients in court and thus feature heavily. The Burgh's Register of Sasines also contain entries pertaining to the Friar's property interests. The vast majority of references to the Dominicans in the burgh's collections are collated in abbreviated form in P.J. Anderson's 'Aberdeen Friars'. Much of the original documentation survives in the collections of the University of Aberdeen due to the endowment of Marischal College, by its founder the fifth Earl Marischal with all the possessions of the Dominicans and Carmelites, following several changes in ownership, after the reformation.

Buildings

Pre-reformation

The Black Friars' convent and grounds occupied a semi-rural location beyond the Upperkirkgate which marked the north-western point of entry to the burgh; the community thus existed outwith the symbolic and physical boundary of the economic community. The size of the original holding can only be surmised - the earliest cartographic representation dating to long after the demise of the Friary - but appears to have been bounded by a stone wall. Structural damages to the Friars property was recorded in 1554 when an Alexander Rait was brought before the burgh court charged with wrongful digging of the earth belonging to the Black Friars under their stone wall in taking away of certain sand from the same so that the stone wall had fallen down as a result (Council Register XX1 683 15 June 1554). The extent of the plot, the style and type of buildings thereon and the activities carried out thereon would reflect the number of incumbents in the Friary. The sole indication as to the size of the Aberdeen community at any one time lists a Prior and 13 Friars in (date) (Cowan & Easson 1976, 116). Other pointers are less precise as in the case of a witness list for the Aberdeen Convent dating to 1486 (Foggie 2003 57). It is likely that the Friars' community was a fluid one with personnel coming and going as duties dictated as the Friars travelled across the Province and around the burgh and its hinterland.

In 1477 the community of St Andrews and St Monans in Fife was upgraded to conventual status and the terms of the crown grant included within it a list of the buildings and policies the Friars were expected to have. This included a church, cloister, cemetery, dormitory, refectory, bell tower, yard or garden and 'any other necessary offices'. It seems reasonable to suppose that the Aberdeen Convent comprised a similar range of buildings and certainly they must have possessed accommodation for visitors and a place for their collection of books, estimated at containing about 120-200 volumes (Foggie 2003, 239). The Friars also benefitted from the presence of a doocot (Foggie 2003 92) to provide supplementary meat for their diet. In 1458 an entry in the burgh council's minutes recorded that the Dominicans had been granted an allowance for repairs to their house (Council Registers VI pt ii 803) although the repairs are not itemised nor the cost listed.

Under Dominican Rule the Friars were expected to be self-sufficient. The garden and orchards around the convent would have supplied fruit and vegetables and the Aberdeen Convent certainly grew oats for these were eaten by the horses and cattle of one Thomas Modane and Sandy Robertson who were taken to court 26 August 1546 by the Friars for damages (Foggie 2003, 163). Whether or not the crops were grown on site or on one of the Friars' holdings elsewhere is not stated but the cultivation of oats implies the presence of storage barns, for as well as a staple of the diet, oats provided fodder for animals and oat straw could be used as a bedding material for stock. Given the wide area over which the

Friars travelled and their obligation to host visitors it is reasonable to assume that their walled enclosure also included stabling for horses. Fishing, too, was important as a source of food and the Friars appear to have been proficient at haaf fishing; a method of catching salmon that involved the fishermen standing in the water at the turn of the tide and catching fish in hand-held nets. Facilities for drying fish must also have formed part of the Dominican complex. Additional income was also provided by the renting out of haaf-fishing rights. Although Foggie asserts that most Scottish houses were occupied by fewer than 15 men at any one time (2003, 56) the Friars may have employed townfolk to till the land, tend to the gardens and animals and work in the buildings. Members of the Community also worked outwith their ecclesiastical roles to supplement the communal income as in the case of Alexander Lindsay OP who, in 1530, was commissioned to mend the town clock.

On 4 January 1560 the site of Dominicans was *destroyed by the reformers* (Anderson 1907, 97) and thereafter the indwellars of the town wer accused of taking away *the staines of the black frieris and quhyt friereis places* and destroying the kirks and the accommodation. (Foggie 2003, 164; Council Register XXIV 47). All incidental references to the Friars' buildings refer to their being stone-built and the townfolks' commitment to demolishing the same may have stemmed as much from a desire to acquire prime building materials as from reforming zeal

The Register of the Privy Council and Foggie 2003, 230 give lists of the places of the Friars as yet standing undemolished including Aberdeen but does not specify individual buildings within the Convent precinct.

Buildings post-reformation

In the immediate aftermath of the sacking of the Friary the Dominicans' property passed to the Crown. Thereafter the possessions of the Friars, which taken as a whole must have comprised a substantial portion of property within and without the burgh were passed between the burgh, the crown and burgesses in a series of land transactions. The Provost of Aberdeen related how, in 1562, Master Duncan Forbes received the *mailis, fermes and dewties of the crofts, riggs and rudes belonging to the Black Friars* from Mary Queen of Scots (B Charter, extracts 20 Jan 1562). On 17th February 1565/66 these same lands were then granted on a 19-year tack to Captain Hew Lauder who was confirmed in them in 1567 and then infetted the same to the Provost, Bailie, Council and Community of Aberdeen. The following year, a new tack, again for 19 years was granted to David Mar, Burgess of Aberdeen but in 1571 granted in feu to Captain Andrew Chisholm and renewed in favour of his daughter, Janet Chisholm. By 1581 the same lands had been granted in feu to William

Leslie but two years later a charter was drawn up conveying the same to the burgh to endow a Poor Hospital, although this was never ratified, the possession instead being granted anew to William Leslie. The definitive transaction came with the granting of a crown charter on 17 May 1587 when the possessions were granted to George, Fifth Earl Marischal and on 2nd April 1593 the same granted the properties of the Black Friars to found a *Gymnasium* which evolved into Marischal College.

This ever-changing legal state of affairs gives little indication of what was happening on the ground. Initially, the burgh took upon itself to collect the *fruits, duties, profits and emoluments of the Friars'* lands and to redistribute this wealth for the foundation of poor hospitals. Burgh officials also suggest that the Friars had tried to recoup their losses and accused them of selling off their assets. Those Friars who remained within the burgh- and there is no indication of how many this involved, nor where they resided - were awarded a annual grant for the remainder of their lifetimes.

At the time that the Earl Marischal was awarded the lands of the Friars, their possessions were listed in their entirety for what is the first time. Prominent amongst them is *The house of Gilbert Anderson called the Blackfriars Manse and Kirk* which appears to preserve the boundaries of the site of the Convent. This is also referred to as *The Black Friar's manor with houses, yards, etc in the Schoolhill between the Grammar School on the east, incroft on the west, highway on the south and the Loch on the north* and as such is the first time in the documentary sources that the boundaries of the Convent are delineated. Despite the wholesale sacking of the Friars' buildings, the inference is that the surrounding wall may have remained as a prominent property boundary on Schoolhill and as late as 1649 the widow of David Anderson of Finzeauch granted to the Council and Community *the Black Friar's Manse*, to maintain and educate ten poor orphans (B Charters M1 Anderson p.117). The incroft appears to form a subdivision of the conventual lands for it is described as *lying within the stone walls in the Schoolhill between the Blackfriar's Place*

Other properties are listed in the late 16th-century comprise a mixture of burgh and hinterland possessions which may, or may not, reflect the maximum extent of the Friars' holdings;

Sow Croft

Craigwell Croft

Fill the Cop Croft

Barbours Croft

Pringle's Croft

Two small adjacent crofts in the west territory

3 riggs beyond Crabstane

Rigg at Gallowgate head

2 riggs at Gallowhills

Rigg at the Links

Rigg in Futy

Rigg near Gallowgate head

Longrigg

8 rudes in Kintore

together with all lands, crofts, barns, dwelling houses and yards belonging to the Friars Preachers.

Blackfriar's holdings post-reformation

In 1732 a contract was drawn up between the Patrons and Governors of Robert Gordon's Hospital and the Marishcal College of Abertdeen concerning that croft of land with the houses and yards pertaining thereto which of old belonged to the Black Friars' manse' and was the first alienation of College property despite the stringent prohibition in the Foundation Charters (MC Charters Localities 1)

At the beginning of the 18th century, the site appears to have been unoccupied and was chosen by Robert Gordon as a suitable place to build a hospital and the site was acquired in 1730 with the building completed in 1732. The house stood in extensive gardens and incorporated a bowling green. No mention is made of creating these parterres afresh so there is a possibility that the Friars' garden was used as a template although the design of an 18th-century garden was very different from those of the previous centuries. The William Adam designed 'Auld Hoose' accommodated Cumberland's soldiers in 1745 and a hospital opened in 1750. The East and West wings were added in 1830-33 when the hospital needed to be enlarged to accommodate more boys and in 1881 Robert Gordon's College succeeded Robert Gordon's Hospital.

1971 pupils excavated a well which was believed to date from time of Fort Cumberland.

Cartographic evidence

The earliest cartographic representation of the burgh in which individual plots are delineated is Parson Gordon's map of 1661. Post-dating the sack of the Friary by over a century it non-the-less depicts a large walled plot running north from the street frontage at the western extremity of the burgh. In size it appears to be at least four times the area of the tenements to the west. The buildings on the street frontage appear not to relate to the land to their rear whilst a single, roofed, two-storey building is depicted as being 'Black Friars'. Gordon's written description however, states that the Dominican House was entirely vanished. This map and Paterson's map of 1746 still show the site as enjoying a semi-rural location. By 1789 however with Aberdeen's first detailed map of the burgh Gordon's Hospital is depicted as sitting at the rear of an enclosed and ornate garden.

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APPENDIX 7 PHOTOGRAPHS

| Photo no | Description | Facing |
|--------------|--|--------|
| DSC_0806-9 | Substation base location | |
| DSC_0810-15 | Substation base tarmac strip | |
| DSC_0816-26 | Substation base showing disturbed with services to natural subsoil | |
| DSC_0827-33 | Location shots | |
| DSC_0834-49 | Trench 2 SK1 discovery | |
| DSC_0850-60 | Trench 2 SK1 cleaning | |
| DSC_0861-62 | SK1 feet detail | S |
| DSC_0863-68 | SK1 | WSW |
| DSC_0869 | SK1 feet showing root detail | WSW |
| DSC_0870-76 | SK1 | WSW |
| DSC_0877-82 | SK1 location | |
| DSC_0883-87 | SK1 recording | |
| DSC_0888-903 | SK1 grave cut into natural gravels showing BT cables along S edge and SSE cables cutting through top of SK | |
| DSC_0904-6 | Tr 2 location | |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----|
| DSC_0907-9 | Tr 2 | |
| DSC_0910-26 | F4 Curved WSW edge of pit cut into natural subsoil | |
| DSC_0927-37 | F4 pit location | |
| DSC_0938-44 | F4 ENE edge showing natural gravels (left) and pit fill (right) | S |
| DSC_0945-53 | Tr 2 E of F4 | |
| DSC_0954-64 | Tr 2 hand dug trench through garden soils 10 E of RGU gate | |
| DSC_0965-99 | Tr 2 garden soils 10 on natural gravels with level rising to E | |
| DSC_0001-2 | Tr 2 location | |
| DSC_0003-6 | Wall foundation 8 | S |
| DSC_0007-14 | Wall foundation 8 and removal | |
| DSC_0015-24 | Wall foundation 8 in S section of trench | S |
| DSC_0025-36 | Tr 2 section from 8 to W with garden soil 10 | |
| DSC_0037-41 | Wall foundation 11 and removal | |
| DSC_0042-53 | Tr 2 E end showing natural gravels under pavement | |
| DSC_0054-57 | Tr 1 E end next to sub station base showing disturbed down to natural subsoil | |
| DSC_0058-61 | Tr 2 E end showing natural gravels under pavement | |
| DSC_0062-66 | Tr 1 E end next to sub station base showing disturbed down to natural subsoil | |
| DSC_0067-70 | Tr 2 E end showing natural gravels under pavement | |
| DSC_0071-73 | Tr 1 tarmac taken off on top of 13e black loam 18th C finds | |
| DSC_0072-81 | Tr 1 removing 13 to reveal burials underneath | |
| DSC_0082-3 | Robber trench 32 (right) and wall foundation 65 (left) | SE |
| DSC_0084 | Robber trench 32 | SE |
| DSC_0085 | Robber trench 32 (foreground) and Wall foundation 65 (top) | SW |
| DSC_0086 | Robber trench 32 (foreground) and Wall foundation 65 (top) | SW |
| DSC_0087 | Robber trench 32 (foreground) and Wall foundation 65 (top) | SW |
| DSC_0088 | Robber trench 32 (left) and wall foundation 65 (top centre) | NW |
| DSC_0089 | Robber trench 32 (left) and wall foundation 65 (top centre) | NW |
| DSC_0090 | Robber trench 32 | NE |
| DSC_0091 | Robber trench 32 (left) and wall foundation 65 (right) | WNW |
| DSC_0092-4 | Tr 1 prior to cleaning SKs with Art Gallery in background | WSW |
| DSC_0095 | Jan Dunbar, Robert Lenfert cleaning SKs | E |
| DSC_0096-7 | SK2 | SE |
| DSC_0098-9 | SK2 | NW |
| DSC_0100-108 | Jan Dunbar, Robert Lenfert cleaning SKs | |
| DSC_0109-111 | SK2 | SW |

| | | |
|-------------|--|-------|
| DSC_0112-3 | SK3 with SK2 (right) | WSW |
| DSC_0115-7 | Jan cleaning SK5 | NE |
| DSC_0118 | SK3 (bottom) SK2 (top) | SW |
| DSC_0119-20 | SK5 (right) Jan cleaning SK6 | NE |
| DSC_0121-25 | Jan cleaning SK6 | |
| DSC_0126-29 | SK7 (foreground) Robert cleaning SK9 with SK8 (top right) | NE |
| DSC_0130-34 | SK5, SK6, SK7, SK8 (bottom - top) | |
| DSC_0135-9 | SK4 | S |
| DSC_0140 | SK3 | S |
| DSC_0141 | SK3 (left) SK2 (right) | S |
| DSC_0142-3 | SK5 | N |
| DSC_0144-7 | Robber trench 16 (bottom) SK2, 3, 5 (top) | NE |
| DSC_0148 | SK6 | NW |
| DSC_0149-51 | SK6 with Jan cleaning SK11 after removing SK4 from above | WSW |
| DSC_0152 | SK7 | NE |
| DSC_0153-4 | SK7 | NW |
| DSC_0155 | SK7 | NE |
| DSC_0156-7 | SK8 | NE |
| DSC_0158 | SK10 cut by electricity cables (left) | SE |
| DSC_0159 | SK10 cut by electricity cables (bottom) | SW |
| DSC_0160 | SK10 with SK8 and Robert cleaning SK9 | SW |
| DSC_0161 | SK10 cut by electricity cables (left) | SE |
| DSC_0162 | SK10 cut by electricity cables (bottom) | SW |
| DSC_0163-6 | Wall foundation 65 (left) robber trench 16 (right) SK2 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0167-8 | Jan cleaning SK11 | SE |
| DSC_0169-70 | Jan cleaning SK11 with 16 and 33 (foreground) | SW |
| DSC_0171-3 | SK9 (bottom) SK8 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0174 | SK10 with electric cable trench | E |
| DSC_0175-9 | SK9 (left) SK8 (right) with SK7, Jan cleaning SK11 | SW |
| DSC_0180 | SK8 | SW |
| DSC_0181-2 | SK9 (left) SK8 (right) | SW |
| DSC_0183 | SK8 detail | SW |
| DSC_0184-5 | SK8 (bottom) SK9 (top) | NW |
| DSC_0186-8 | SK10 with electric cable (right) | NW |
| DSC_0189-90 | SK7, 8, 9 | W/SSW |
| DSC_0191-2 | Jan cleaning SK11 | |
| DSC_0193 | SK7 lifted and grave cut | NW |
| DSC_0194 | SK7 lifted and grave cut | NE |
| DSC_0196-7 | SK11 | SE |
| DSC_0198 | SK11 with SK5 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0199 | Jan about to lift SK11 | |
| DSC_0200 | SK11, SK5 (top right) SK6 (left) | |
| DSC_0201-2 | SK11 | |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------|
| DSC_0203-7 | SK5 inc details of skull (slate next to mouth is just stone in fill) | |
| DSC_0208 | SK9 grave cut | NE |
| DSC_0209-15 | SK9 grave cut showing coffin line in situ | SE |
| DSC_0216 | SK3 | SE |
| DSC_0217-20 | SK2 with head next to stone left in robber trench from E wall of church | SE |
| DSC_0221-2 | Jan lifting SK11 | |
| DSC_0223 | Abeer preparing to lift SK10 | NE |
| DSC_0224-5 | Grave cuts SK9 (left) SK8 (right) | NE |
| DSC_0226-7 | Grave cuts SK9 (bottom) SK8 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0228-35 | SK10 with electricity cabling cutting through NE (feet) end | |
| DSC_0236-8 | SK6 grave cut with Sk11 (top left) | NW |
| DSC_0239-40 | SK11 grave cut with disartic skull in edge of fill and SK 5 being lifted (bottom) | NW |
| DSC_0241-3 | SK5 grave cut | E |
| DSC_0244 | Grave cuts SK11 (left) SK5 (right) | NE |
| DSC_0245-9 | SK13 | N |
| DSC_0250-52 | Preparing to cut section back for SK14 | |
| DSC_0253-7 | SK13 | N/S |
| DSC_0258-66 | Jan and Robert lifting SK13 | |
| DSC_0267-84 | SK 13 skull details with pillow stones and stone in mouth including pillow stones after skull removed | |
| DSC_0285-6 | SK13 spine - scoliosis/DISH? | |
| DSC_0287-94 | SK material NW SK11 left in situ under baulk | |
| DSC_0295-7 | SK14 | NW |
| DSC_0298-310 | SK14 | SE |
| DSC_0312-23 | Tr 1 S arm with tarmac and modern material removed. SKs appearing | |
| DSC_0324-5 | Abeer uncovering SK12 | |
| DSC_0326-7 | SK18 (centre) with SK17 (left) SK20, 21 (right) | NE |
| DSC_0328-34 | SK18, 19, 20, 21 | SW |
| DSC_0335-6 | SK18 | SW |
| DSC_0337 | Abeer uncovering SK12 | NW |
| DSC_0338-9 | SK16 skull and grave cut | NW |
| DSC_0340 | SK16 skull and grave cut | SE |
| DSC_0341 | SK16 skull detail | SE |
| DSC_0342 | SK16 (foreground) SK25, SK24, SK12 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0343-5 | SK25 grave cut | SE/NW |
| DSC_0346-9 | SK12 | N |
| DSC_0350-5 | SK18 (centre) with SK17 (top) SK20, 21 (bottom) | N |
| DSC_0356 | SK19 with SK 20 (top) | SE |
| DSC_0357-60 | SK19 details | |
| DSC_0361 | SK19 with SK20 (left being uncovered) and SK17 (being lifted right) | S |

| | | |
|--------------|--|-------|
| DSC_0362-6 | SK16 being uncovered | SW/SE |
| DSC_0367 | SK20 | N |
| DSC_0368 | SK20 | S |
| DSC_0369-70 | SK17 (top) SK20 (bottom) | N |
| DSC_0371-2 | SK20 details | |
| DSC_0373 | SK17 (right) SK20 cut by SK21 (left) | SW |
| DSC_0374-7 | SK17 details | N/S |
| DSC_0378-82 | SK21 details | SW |
| DSC_0383 | SK17 (right) SK20 cut by SK21 (left) | SW |
| DSC_0384-7 | SK20 skull detail with stone in mouth | N |
| DSC_0388-91 | Robert lifting SK17 with SK20 and 21 (left) | SW |
| DSC_0392-5 | SK21 details | NW |
| DSC_0396-8 | SK14 grave cut | NW |
| DSC_0399-400 | SK14 grave cut | SW |
| DSC_0401 | Track off mini digger | |
| DSC_0402-4 | SK16 grave cut | SE |
| DSC_0405-11 | Jan lifting SK12 Robert uncovering SK22 | SE |
| DSC_0412-3 | SK22 | S |
| DSC_0414 | Jan lifting SK12 with SK22 (foreground) | NW |
| DSC_0415-20 | SK23 | NW |
| DSC_0421-6 | Robert uncovering SK24 Jan SK25 | SW |
| DSC_0427-30 | SK25 | SSE |
| DSC_0431-4 | Section of 16 robber trench | SE |
| DSC_0435 | Section grave cut SK2 | SE |
| DSC_0436 | Section NE of grave SK2 showing black loam 13 | E |
| DSC_0437 | NW section location SK11 | NE |
| DSC_0438 | NW section SW robber trench 16 | W |
| DSC_0439-45 | NW section 33 (right) and 16 (left) | NW |
| DSC_0446 | Robert uncovering SK24 (cut by water/sewer pipe trench) | S/SE |
| DSC_0447-52 | SK24 details | SE |
| DSC_0453 | Jan lifting SK24 legs | |
| DSC_0454-62 | SK26 spine with root down spinal column holes - lifted by machine bucket | NW |
| DSC_0463-7 | SK27 skull | |
| DSC_0468-9 | Robert digging sondage at SE end Trench 1 S arm - into cable trenches | |
| DSC_0470-3 | SK28 | NW |
| DSC_0474-501 | Recording sections and services after trench dug to final depth for services | |



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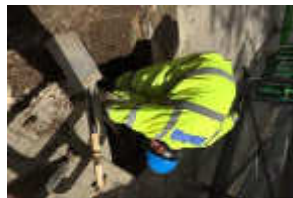
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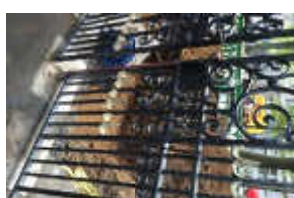
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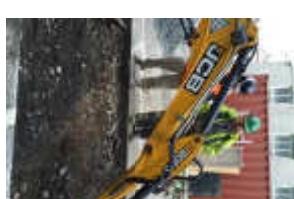
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