

GUARD ARCHAEOLOGY



**Old Melrose House, Scottish Borders
Archaeological Watching Brief
Data Structure Report
Project 4442**

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Old Melrose House, Scottish Borders
Archaeological Watching Brief
Data Structure Report

On behalf of: William Younger

NGR: NT 58790 34070

Project Number: 4442

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*This document has been prepared in accordance
with GUARD Archaeology Limited standard operating procedures.*

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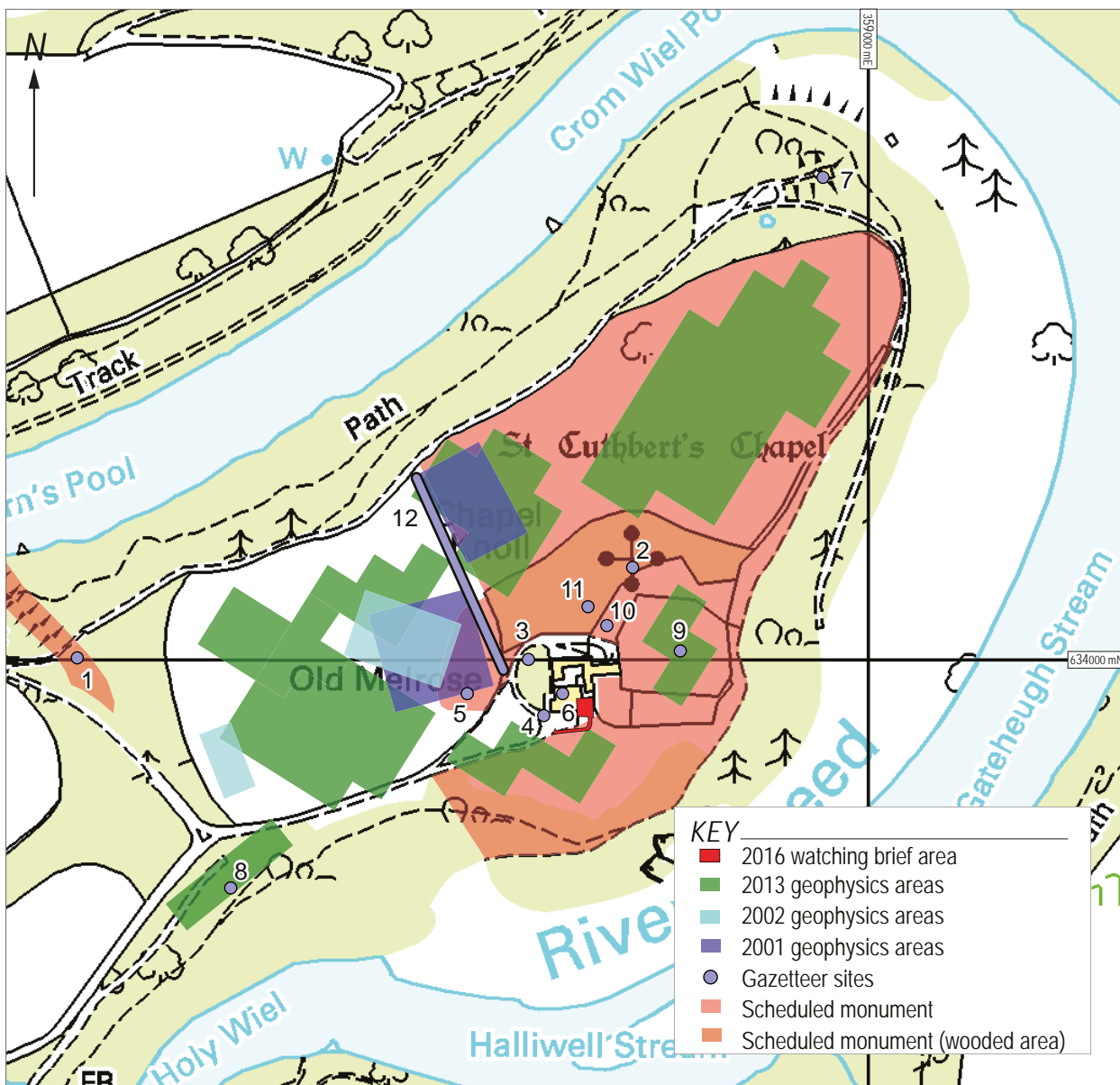
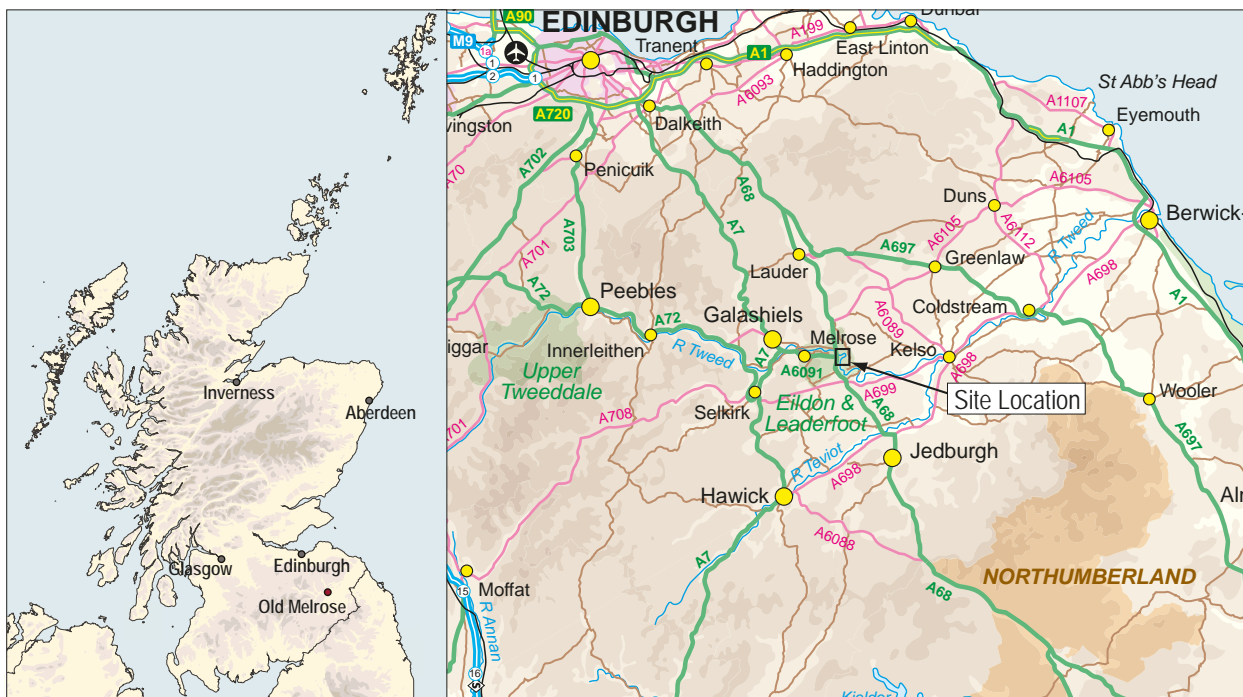


Figure 1:
Site location.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out during topsoil stripping for a new car park and access road located next a former gardener's cottage to the west of the walled garden at Old Melrose House in the Scottish Borders. The access road passed to the south of Old Melrose House, the southern part of which has been demolished and rebuilt in recent times. The watching brief was required due to the proximity of the location of the early medieval monastic settlement of Old Melrose and St Cuthbert's chapel (Figure 1).
- 1.2 Potential archaeological features uncovered within the car park area included a truncated gravel surfaces, possible garden features and a fragmentary human skull along with 14 additional fragments of bone some of which may be human bone. Spreads of demolition debris, possibly landscaping deposits, were found along the access road to the car park aligned east-west to the south of Old Melrose House.

Introduction

- 2.1 This data structure report sets out the results for the archaeological watching brief carried out during the construction of a car park and access road at Old Melrose House in the Scottish Borders and was undertaken to meet a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent required by Historic Environment Scotland. The new car park is located in the immediate vicinity of the site of St Cuthbert's Chapel and monastery, a Schedule Monument in the care of Historic Environment Scotland (Ref AMH/3536/1/1).

Site Location

- 3.1 The site of Old Melrose is about 2.5 km east of Newstead in the Scottish Borders and is centred at NGR: NT 58790 34070 (Figure 1). The study area occupies a promontory on the western bank of the River Tweed, with the river forming the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Trees and shrubbery line the perimeter of the survey area. The site is accessed from the A68 trunk road via a single track road leading to Old Melrose House. Apart from the grounds and gardens associated with Old Melrose House the current land use in the surrounding area is mainly pastoral farming.

Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The site of Old Melrose is associated with an early Christian monastic community that may have been founded in AD 635 by St Aidan, the first bishop of the Kingdom of Northumbria. The monastery is most closely associated with one of its priors, St Cuthbert, who is believed to have been a local Briton. The monastic community survived an episode of burning, carried out by Kenneth MacAlpin, King of the Scots, in the mid-ninth century, before the monastery was abandoned in the eleventh century. A chapel was later built on the site by the Archbishopric of Durham. An earthwork to the west of the Scheduled area is thought to be the remains of the monastery *vallum*.
- 4.2 There have been a number of desk-based research work previously carried out at Old Melrose (Hall 2005; Brennand 2007; Rennie 2013). There are twelve cultural heritage sites in the immediate area surrounding the development site at Old Melrose House. The locations of the recorded cultural heritage sites are illustrated on Figure 1.

Prehistoric and Early Historic Sites (8000 BC-AD 600)

- 4.3 There are no known prehistoric or early historic remains within the site. It has been speculated that the *vallum* (Site 1) 'may have its origins in the prehistoric or Romano-British periods' which would not prevent its later re-use (Brennand 2007, 38). However, no dates for this feature have been obtained via artefactual or botanical evidence. Similarities between the Old Melrose *vallum* and that at Iona can be seen in their bank and ditch construction and in the additional use of natural barriers that separate sacred space from the mundane (Campbell undated).

Medieval Sites (AD 600-AD 1600)

- 4.4 Derek Hall's 2005 assessment of Old Melrose gives the following information about the monastic settlement (Site 5) and St Cuthbert's chapel (Site 2):

The monastic settlement at Old Melrose was possibly founded from Iona during the episcopate of Aidan between AD 635 and AD 651. The monastery was burned down by Kenneth MacAlpin in AD 839 but, according to a twelfth century account which incorporates earlier source material, survived as a foundation pertaining to the bishops of Lindisfarne, one of whom (Edilwald) is credited as abbot of Melrose in AD 746 in a treatise on the Benedictine order. The monastery was deserted in 1074 when an attempt by Aldwin of Jarrow to restore it for the Benedictine monks failed, and was succeeded by a chapel dedicated to St Cuthbert (Cowan & Easson 1976). This chapel was built shortly after 1073; it belonged to Durham until between 1130 and 1133, when it was given to the Cistercians of Melrose by David I. To judge by the single fragment of this building that survives, a twelfth century corbel carved in the form of a grotesque face (Site 3), now in the museum at Melrose Abbey, the chapel must have been a building of some importance.

- 4.5 The chapel was burnt by the English in or before 1321, and it is mentioned again in an indulgence granted by the Pope. However, no mention of it is made in a list of dedications to St Cuthbert attributed to John Wessington, prior of Durham between 1416 and 1446. No structural remains of this chapel are visible, but foundations are reported to have been found in a flower bed skirting the south-east side of the Chapel Knoll, while three graves are said to lie under the lawn east of the south-east corner of Old Melrose House (Hall 2005, 3).
- 4.6 The Red house (Site 8) is believed to have been the porter's lodge at the entrance to the monastic settlement at Old Melrose, so named for the red sandstone blocks from which it was constructed.
- 4.7 An unbonded stone wall (Site 4) found during an archaeological watching brief (Toolis 2009) for the excavation of a soakaway close to Old Melrose House may date from the Medieval or post-Medieval periods.

Post-medieval and Modern Sites (AD 1600-Present)

- 4.8 Three cultural heritage sites, Old Melrose House (Site 6), the walled garden (Site 9) and Ravenswood summerhouse (Site 7) lie within the study area. Two roofed structures (Sites 10 and 11) lie to the west of the walled garden; the current condition of these buildings is not known. All of these structures are depicted on the Ordnance Survey First Edition map of 1863. Brennand reports that the estate of Old Melrose was in use from the mid-sixteenth century and that a house was built there in 1575. Improvements to the estate were carried out on the estate in the late eighteenth century and the country house was rebuilt in 1772 (Brennand 2007).

Mapping Evidence

- 4.9 The earliest of the maps consulted during the assessment was Gordon's manuscript map of ca. 1636-52, where Old Melrose is named as a small settlement. Pont and Blaeu's 1654 map also names Old Melross, but depicts what appears to be a significantly larger settlement. As Brennand explains, this may be due to the different scale of the maps. Moll's 1745 map erroneously names Old Mellros Abbey at the location of Melrose town. None of the above maps correctly depicts the meander of the River Tweed or the promontory where Old Melrose is located.
- 4.10 Roy's map of 1747-55 shows Old Melross on the promontory and structures at about the locations of Old Melrose House and Old Melrose Farm, each of which appears to comprise two buildings. No roads are noted on the promontory and the land to the south and south-west of Old Melrose House is agricultural, shown as rig & furrow cultivation marks. Stobie's 1770 map

depicts four buildings at the location of Old Melrose House, but none at Old Melrose Farm and, again, no roads or tracks are mapped.



Plate 1: Excerpt from Roy's 1747-55 map. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of The National Library of Scotland.

- 4.11 Some of the early nineteenth century maps add further detail of the roads on the promontory, as shown on Thomson and Johnson's 1822 map where a country house is also depicted, and Tennant's 1840 map, which additionally shows a ford joining the southern road on the promontory to that land on the south side of the River Tweed. Crawford and Brooke's 1843 map shows Old Melrose House and three un-named structures on the promontory, with woodland beginning to appear around the house and at the isthmus. However, it is only with the Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping that the structural features on the promontory are adequately mapped.



Plate 2: Excerpt from Crawford and Brooke's 1843 map. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of The National Library of Scotland.

- 4.12 The OS First Edition map of 1863 shows a network of roads and tracks on the promontory, including the driveway to Old Melrose House (Site 6) and the track to the summerhouse (Site 7). The shape of the area that has been the main focus of the 2013 geophysical surveys is shown much as it currently exists and, although present field boundaries are not depicted, a track (Site 12) is shown to run from west of the country house to the north, dividing the large field in two and a sheep fold is shown at the northern tip of the promontory. The walled garden (Site 9) and the paths around and across its interior are depicted, although the *vallum* (Site 1) is not shown.

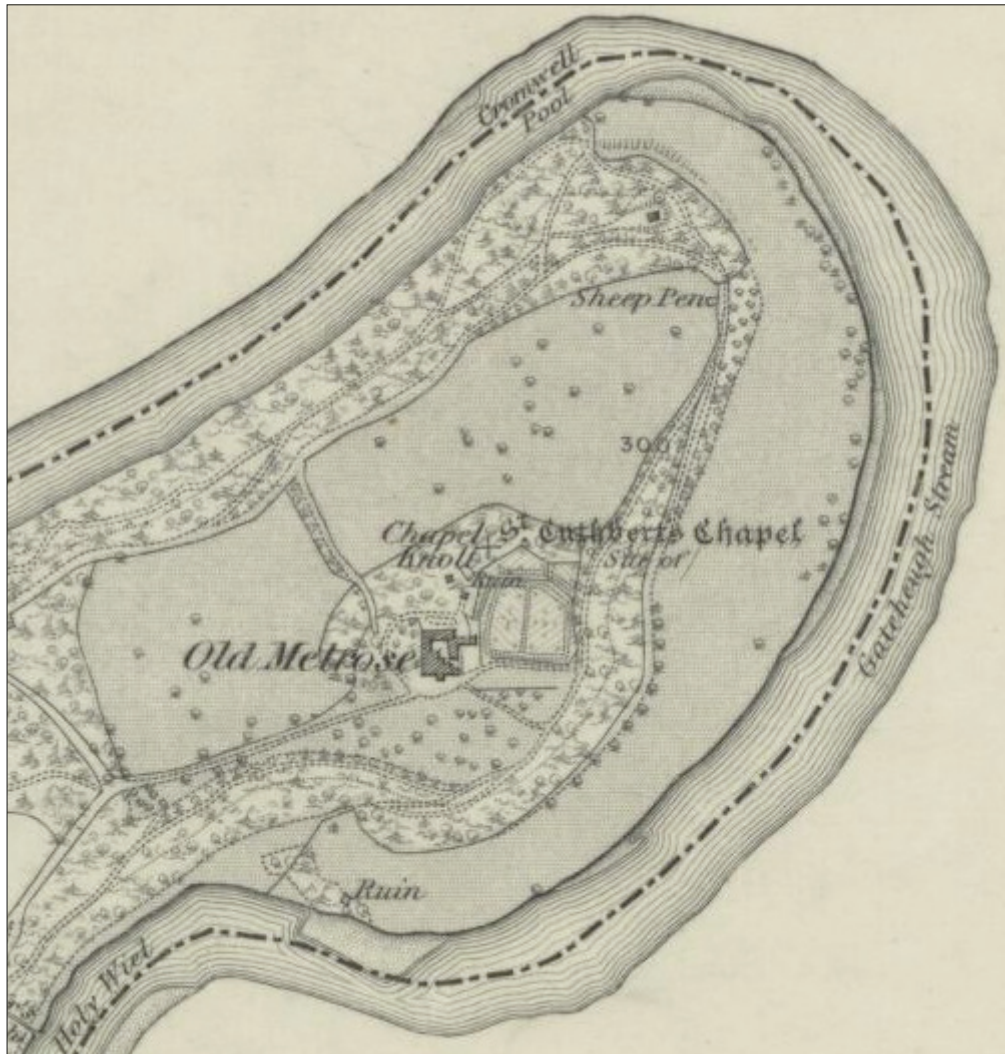


Plate 3: Excerpt from OS First Edition map of 1863, Roxburghshire, Sheet VIII. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of The National Library of Scotland.

- 4.13 On the OS Second Edition map of 1898, the location of St Cuthbert's chapel (Site 2) is noted and Chapel Knoll is named in the wooded area to the north of the walled garden. The track dividing the large field and the sheep fold is no longer in existence. The single change noted on the OS map of 1907 is the relocation of St Cuthbert's chapel from north of the walled garden to the wooded area immediately north of Old Melrose House. By 1921, two roofed structures have been built on the north exterior wall of the walled garden, and one has been built in the woods to the north of the walled garden. Five greenhouses are depicted; one within the walled garden, one immediately west of the garden and three in the open area north of the garden. A rectangular enclosure abuts the northern field boundary to the north-west of Old Melrose House; this structure was still in existence on the OS map of 1954.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 4.14 The only known intrusive archaeological investigation at Old Melrose comprised a watching brief in 2009 during the excavation of a soakaway pit (Site 4) to the south-west of a new extension to Old Melrose House. A single east/west aligned wall foundation measuring 6.8 m long, 0.60

m wide and 0.15 m deep, of un-mortared sandstone blocks, one course deep and wide and including one dressed stone block, was recorded. No finds were associated with this feature and the wall therefore remains undated. The wall foundations were immediately overlain by buried topsoil containing nineteenth and twentieth century finds and redeposited natural subsoil, probably indicative of modern landscaping work (Toolis 2009).

- 4.15 Prior to 2013, three phases of geophysical survey were undertaken at Old Melrose and Old Melrose Farm (Mudie & Poller 2002; Mudie & Rennie 2003; Hill 2003). The survey successfully located a possible structure and associated track/road at the location of the Red house, three linear features that may have been old walls or field boundaries, an old track and the remains of a twentieth century enclosure. This adds significantly to the results of previous geophysical surveys, which had located a road, an oval or elliptical enclosure and at least four old walls or field boundaries. There are now a number of archaeological features, largely of as yet unknown date, located at Old Melrose, which may relate to the historically significant Early Christian monastery that once stood here.
- 4.16 The pastoral use of the fields at Old Melrose means that field walking, which is a useful method of locating artefacts brought to the surface during ploughing, has not been possible at Old Melrose. However, several field surveys have been carried out at Old Melrose, including those by Ordnance Survey and RCAHMS; the main findings are summarised below;
- 4.17 Although no above-ground remains of the monastery or chapel are evident, substantial earthworks in the area of Chapel Knoll appear to indicate the possible location of St Cuthbert's chapel. In 1996, dressed and carved stones were evident on the garden walls and, although undated, may be from the chapel. Dressed stones were still visible in October 2013.
- 4.18 Backfilled trenches, possibly of some antiquity, were noted on the knoll in 2004 and 2006.
- 4.19 In 1961, the *vallum* (Site 1) was described as 'a wide broad ditch between two banks, an inner bank and an outer counterscarp, both pretty well spread' (Thomas 1961). The ditch is about 205 m wide and the bank is about 3 m wide and 1 m high. The remains of the *vallum* are visible in the woods to the north-west of the farm track that runs above the River Tweed, although there is no trace of any continuation of this feature to the south of the track.
- 4.20 The 1961 survey also suggested that the Red house (Site 8) may lie within trees to the south of the present road leading to the summerhouse.

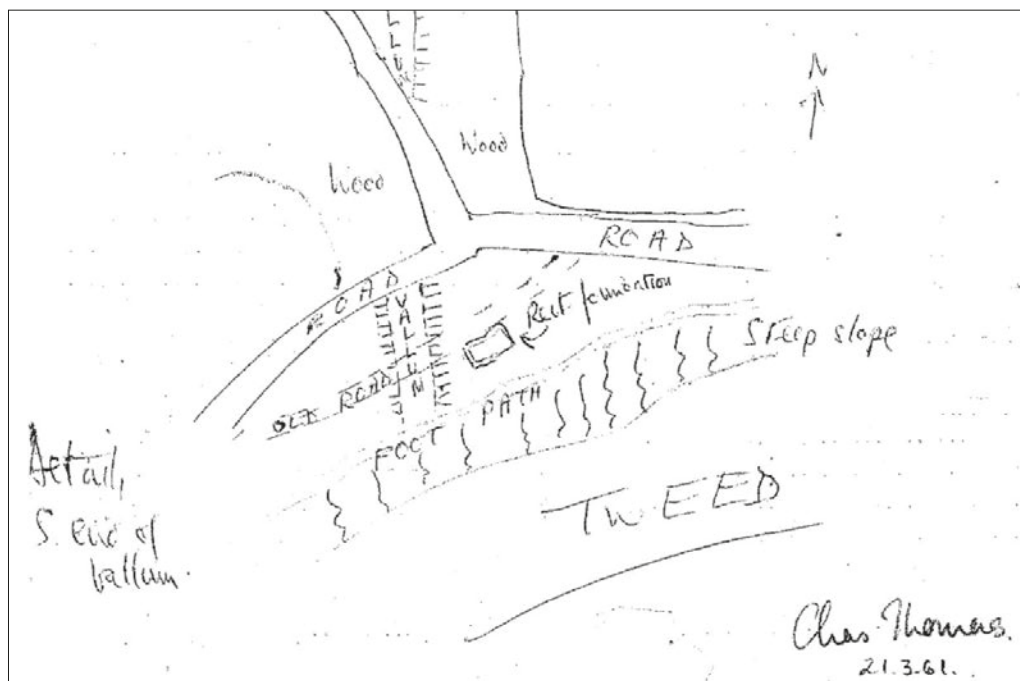


Plate 4: Charles Thomas' 1961 plan of the Red house location.

Aims and Objectives and Scope

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological works was to:
- To undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works in the area specified (Figure 2)
 - To undertake an appropriate level of recording of any significant archaeological remains encountered in order to determine the character, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits uncovered;
 - To mitigate any adverse impacts arising from the construction activities;
- 5.2 On completion of the watching brief, submit a data structure report to Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Officer.

Fieldwork Methodology

- 6.1 Both the fieldwork and report were carried out following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) guidance and standards of which GUARD Archaeology Limited is a Registered Organisation.
- 6.2 The proposed development area was photographed and a brief written description made prior to the commencement of all ground-breaking works.
- 6.3 The machine excavation of topsoil during the watching brief was carried out under archaeological monitoring. The topsoil was removed by a back-acting excavator using a smooth edged bucket (toothless ditching bucket) to the first archaeological horizon or, where none was found, to the required formation level for the parking area and access road. Due to undulating ground conditions and the variable depth of topsoil between 100 - 220 mm depth of topsoil was removed across the site. Where potential archaeological features were uncovered excavation ceased in that area. Any archaeological features encountered were cleaned by hand by the on-site Archaeologist to determine their character and extent.
- 6.4 Any archaeological features encountered requiring more than limited evaluation detailed above will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Should negative-cut features be encountered they will be fully excavated in order to determine their significance, date and function. A full record of excavated features will be made using a single context recording system using pro forma sheets, drawings and photographs.
- 6.5 Human remains were revealed during the excavation and were reported to the local police, the client and Historic Environment Scotland. The Police and the Scottish Borders Council Archaeologist visited the site and inspected the remains and determined that they were archaeological in origin. The human remains were accurately recorded, but left in situ, following discussions with the client and Historic Environment Scotland.
- 6.6 Further excavation was not undertaken given that the development formation level had been reached and the appropriate action deemed to be preservation in situ. The human remains were covered with a geotextile membrane and cushioned with an 80 mm layer of windust prior to construction of the car park.

Results

- 7.1 The summary of the results is outlined below and should be read in conjunction with the fuller context descriptions in Appendix A. The full details of the results can be found in Appendices A-B and are illustrated in Figure 3 and Plates 1-10.

7.2 Car Park Area (Figure 2 and 3, Plates 5-9)

7.2.1 The car park area located to the south of the present buildings and west of the walled garden measured 19 m by 16 m while the access road was approximately 45 m by 3m. Topsoil (001) consisted of loose brown silty sand with occasional small rounded and angular stones with inclusions of recent flower pot fragments, modern white earthenware and occasional fragments of bone and was up to 0.22 m deep. Below the topsoil were occasional discrete patches of fine gravel (002) that were only around 0.01 m deep and appeared to represent the remnants of a gravel surface or path truncated by later gardening practices and tree root bioturbation. Frequent degraded tree root fragments were visible in the topsoil (001) and the natural red and orange clay and gravel subsoil (003).



Plate 5: Concrete tile path 010, leading to garden shed, from the east.

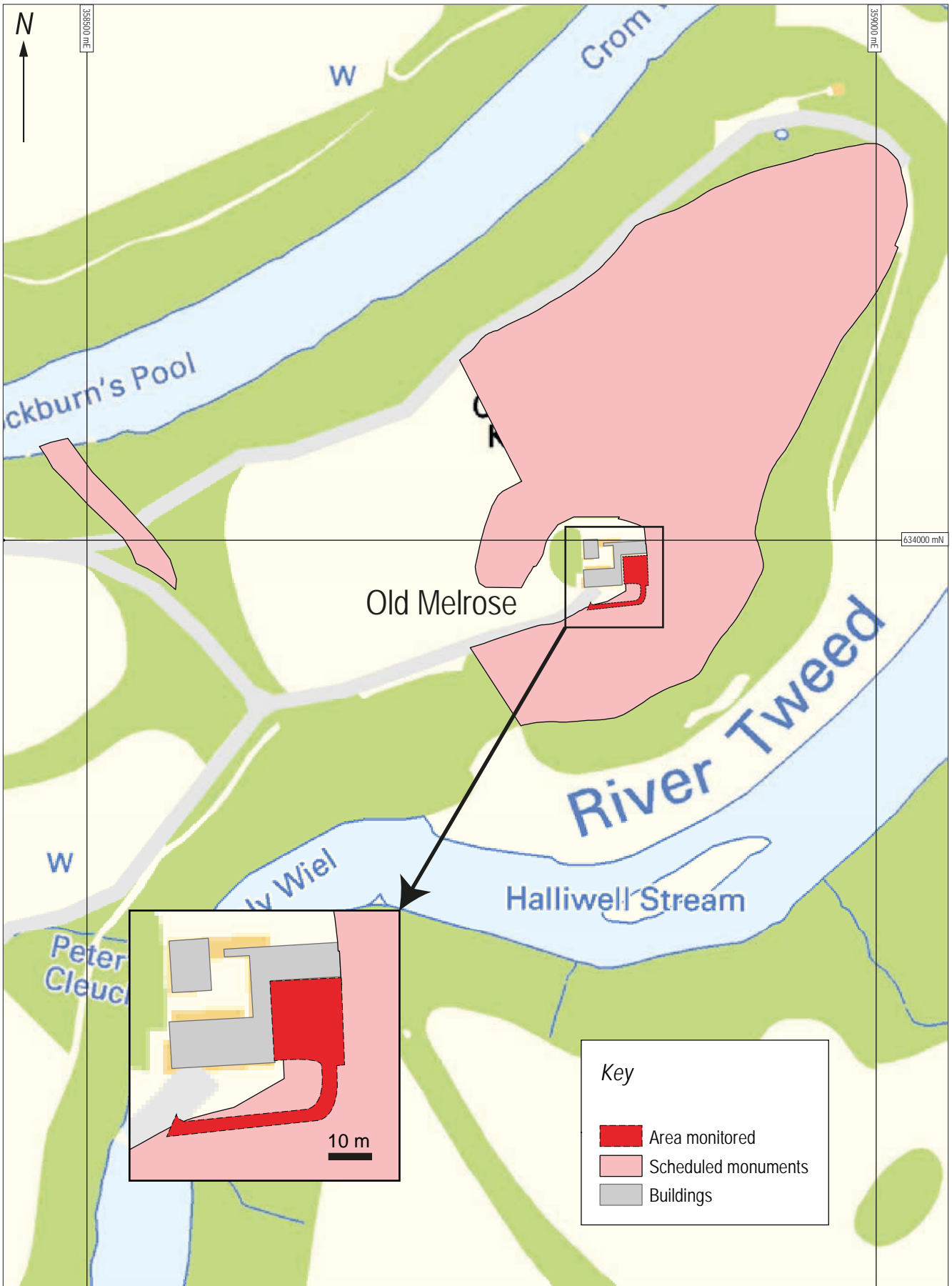
7.2.2 At the southern boundary of the car park a line of concrete tiles (010) was uncovered. The tiles measured 0.22 m by 0.22 m in size, were a single course wide and deep and were aligned east-west. The tiles ran out from the doorway of an outbuilding and were uncovered for a distance of 2.5 m. The tiles may represent the remains of a path.

7.2.3 Two paths or garden features were recorded in the car park area along with a possible rubble drain (007). The first path (008) comprised a band of orange clay measuring 1.1 m wide and formed three sides of a rectangle 10.6 m long x 10.3 m wide, the fourth side to the south was fairly indistinct. Within this clay band at the western end of the east-west section was what appeared to be a rubble drain or foundation (007) that had been cut into the clay. This consisted of a concentration of both rounded and angular stones in a line. The clay band (008) enclosed the second path or garden feature (009) which measured 1.1 m wide and formed three sides of a sub-square feature measuring 4.3 m long x 3.9 m wide. These features were seemingly natural bands of clay (003) distinguishable by having not been subject to disturbance by gardening or cultivation apart from (007). The enclosing stone walls all have numerous nails protruding from them probably for the purpose of training espaliered fruit trees or similar and would suggest along the with paths and features that this area had once been a formal garden.



Plate 6: The car park area after topsoil strip. Paths/garden features 008 and 009 visible as bands of orange clay, from the south.

7.2.4 Approximately one metre beyond the point where the possible rubble drain (007) within the clay band (008) stopped half way along the east-west band a fragmentary human skull (006) was uncovered below the topsoil. The skull was partially exposed by hand cleaning but did not appear to be part of an articulated inhumation. Further cleaning revealed a spread of dark, mottled grey/orange/brown sandy clay with charcoal flecks (005) around the immediate area



of the skull. But there did not appear to be a grave cut associated with the skull and the skull appeared to be disarticulated. A total of 14 additional fragments of bone were recorded in the car park area and the access road. The bones were left in-situ as several of the fragments maybe human remains but other fragments appeared to be animal or were too small to identify.



Plate 7: The car park area after topsoil strip. The position of human skull 006 is located towards the base of the vertically set 1 m ranging rod to the right of the doorway to the former gardener's cottage, from the south.



Plate 8: Skull 006, from the north. A degraded tree root is visible aligned diagonally NW-SE adjacent to the skull.



Plate 9: General view after covering the skull with sand and geotextile membrane and building up a protective layer of whindust, from the east.

7.3 Access Road Area (Figure 2 and 3, Plate 10)

7.3.1 Along the access road the topsoil (001) was up to 0.22 m deep and overlay a stony clay natural (003). Again the clay appeared to be mixed with topsoil and frequent tree roots. Three spreads of seemingly unstructured rubble (004) were uncovered along the track. The rubble comprised red and yellow sandstone fragments, occasional river cobbles and slate fragments with occasional lime mortar fragments and modern white earthenware pottery sherds (not retained). Gravel appearing as metalling was visible in the westernmost spread which may represent the remains of a track but these deposits were not investigated extensively. A service trench containing a pipe feeding a septic tank was also crossed the track in this area.



Plate 10: General view after topsoil strip along the access road, from the east.

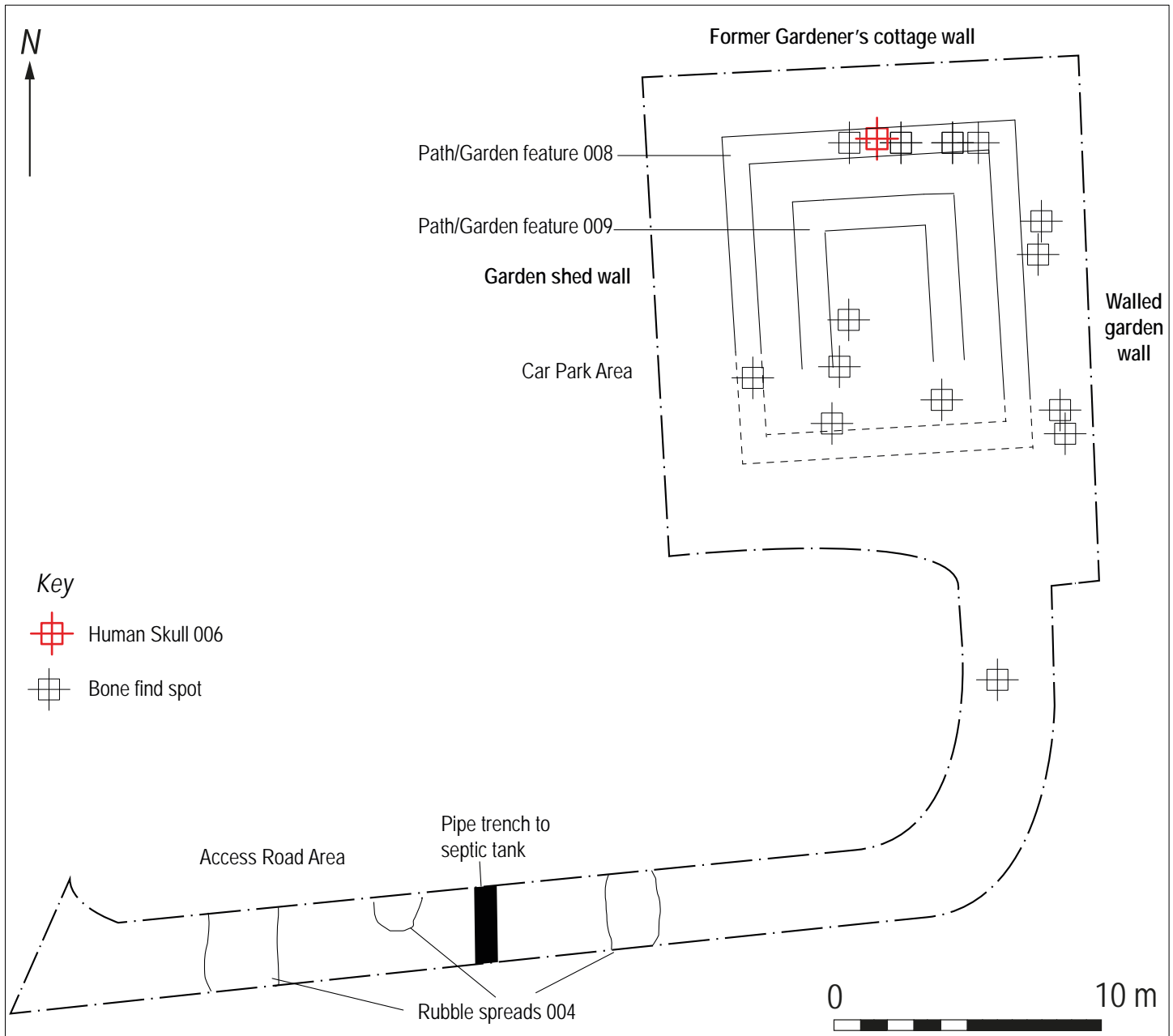


Figure 3: Plan of features recorded during watching brief

Discussion and Conclusion

- 8.1 The archaeological watching brief identified probable garden features and rubble landscaping deposits associated with the development of Old Melrose House and its policies. Disarticulated human remains were found concentrated in the area of the new car park next to the existing buildings west of the walled garden. This area appears to have been disturbed by continuous cultivation and the construction of formal designed gardens. It is likely that a cemetery associated with Old Melrose Monastery or St Cuthbert's Chapel was located nearby. Gardeners working in the walled garden have reported finds of bones discovered during the course of their work and more recently part of a human skeleton was uncovered during excavations below floor level in the north wing of Old Melrose House, a fragment of upper femur from this skeleton was retained to submit for radiocarbon dating when funds are available.
- 8.2 As all of the features recorded during the watching brief will not be impacted upon by the development they were left *in-situ* and the skull protected by geotextile and a layer of distinct sand and whinstone dust.

- 8.3 Given the limited nature of the investigations undertaken during the course of the watching brief it is anticipated that no further work will be required by Historic Environment Scotland. In addition the Police have intimated that they are content that the remains are of an archaeological nature.
- 8.4 GUARD Archaeology Ltd would stress that these recommendations are intended for guidance only and the final decisions on the nature and extent of any further archaeological work rest with Historic environment Scotland.
- 8.5 A summary of the project results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. A copy of this is included in Appendix C. The archive for the project, including a copy of the report, will be submitted to the National Monuments Records for Scotland within six months of the completion of all fieldwork.
- 8.6 The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> for this project (OASIS Reference: guardarc1-259834) will be completed within 3 months. Once the Data Structure Report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, the Scottish Borders Archaeologist will validate the OASIS form thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.

Acknowledgements

- 9.1 GUARD Archaeology Ltd would like to thank William Younger and Chris Bowles of Scottish Borders Council for their assistance. Thanks too, to Mr John Ewart and his son Malcolm who supplied and operated the plant. Technical support was from Aileen Maule and Clark Innes, administration support was from Jen Cochrane. The project was directed by Alan Hunter Blair and managed for GUARD by Bob Will.

**Old Melrose House, Scottish Borders
Archaeological Watching Brief
Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices



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Appendices

Appendix A: List of Contexts

Context No.	Area	Description	Interpretation
001	-	Deposit: A moist, loose dark brown silty sand with moderate inclusions of small sub-angular and sub-rounded stones 60 mm<>. Occasional flower pot fragments and white earthenware modern ceramic not retained. Measured up to 0.22 m deep	Topsoil
002	-	Deposit: A moist, firm grey/brown fine river gravel unsorted devoid of conspicuous inclusions. Measured up to 0.01 m deep.	Discrete areas of a truncated gravel surface below topsoil horizon 001, period uncertain
003	-	Deposit: A moist, firm orange clay with frequent small and medium sized yellow and red sandstone fragments. Occasional bone fragments protruding through the surface of the clay. Largely disturbed by gardening activity and tree root bioturbation.	Natural clay
004	-	Deposit: A moist, firm orange with brown mottling clay. Frequent inclusions of red and yellow sandstone fragments, stone size 350 mm x 280 mm x 120 mm<> occasional inclusions of water worn sub-rounded stones, slate fragments and lime mortar fragments and occasional fragments of white earthenware pottery not retained. Unexcavated discrete dumps of material visible along the access road strip.	Demolition debris possibly used as landscaping material filling undulations in natural topography. The most westerly deposit was considered a possible track but these deposits were partly superficially cleaned and unexcavated.
005	-	Fill: A moist, firm dark grey/orange/brown sandy clay with moderate inclusions of small sub-rounded and sub-angular stones 60 mm<> and moderate charcoal flecks. Unexcavated, forms an amorphous spread around skull 006	Possibly associated with skull.
006	-	Human skull.	fragmentary skull no evidence for grave cut
007	-	Possible rubble drain running parallel to wall across the car park area, contained frequent medium sized sandstone fragments visible along part of the east -west aligned section of the feature.	Possibly associated with formal garden associated with 008
008	-	Deposit: A moist, firm orange clay with moderate inclusions of small sub-rounded and sub-angular yellow and red sandstone fragments with occasional bone fragments protruding through the surface of this deposit. Unexcavated band of clay measuring 1.1 m wide and forming a rectangle 10.6 m long x 10.3 m wide.	Site of path/garden feature distinguishable by having not been subject to disturbance by gardening. IE undisturbed natural clay
009	-	Deposit: A moist, firm orange clay with moderate inclusions of small sub-rounded and sub-angular yellow and red sandstone fragments with occasional bone fragments protruding through the surface of this deposit. Unexcavated band of clay measuring 1.1 m wide and forming a rectangle 4.3 m long x 3.9 m wide.	Site of path/garden feature within the area of path 008, distinguishable by having not been subject to disturbance by gardening. IE undisturbed natural clay
010	-	A line concrete tiles 9" square x 1.5" deep and 2.5m long leading from the outbuildings a the southern boundary of the site probably part of a path	Service pipe?

Appendix B: List of Photographs

Frame	Area	Subject	Taken from
1	-	Registration	-
2	-	General view of yard area pre-excavation	SE
3	-	Concrete tiles (010) running from outbuilding	E
4	-	Gravel surface 002	E
5	-	Skull 006	N
6	-	Location shot of skull 006	S
7	-	General view of the access road after topsoil strip	E
8	-	General view of the yard area after topsoil strip	S
9	-	Path/garden feature 008 (east)	S
10	-	Path/garden feature 007/008 (west)	S
11	-	Path/garden feature 008 (south)	W

Frame	Area	Subject	Taken from
12	-	Path/garden feature 007/008 (north)	E
13-21	-	Yard area after topsoil strip to create panorama	S
22	-	Access road after topsoil strip	NE
23-24	-	Skull 006	N
25-27	-	Covering skull with geotextile membrane and whindust	E

Appendix C: Discovery and Excavation Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Scottish Borders
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Old Melrose House
PROJECT CODE:	4442
PARISH:	Melrose
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Alan Hunter Blair
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	GUARD Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT53SE 23
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Site of Old Melrose Monastery and St Cuthbert's Chapel
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Human remains
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 58809 33967
START DATE (this season)	8 th August 2016
END DATE (this season)	8 th August 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	Mudie, Poller & Rennie, <i>DES</i> 2002, 103, Toolis, <i>DES</i> 2009, 163
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological watching brief was carried out during topsoil stripping for a new car park and access road around the eastern edge of a former gardener's cottage and the immediate south of the walled garden at Old Melrose House. The watching brief was required due to the proximity of the Scheduled Monument of the early medieval monastic settlement of Old Melrose and St Cuthbert's chapel.</p> <p>Garden features a truncated gravel surface and a fragmentary human skull, were recorded along with 13 fragments of bone some of which maybe human bone, in the proposed area of car parking to the immediate west of the walled garden. Spreads of demolition debris, possibly landscaping deposits, were found along the access road to the car park aligned east-west to the east of Old Melrose House. The work was undertaken in accordance with the conditions of Schedule Monument Consent. Historic Environment Scotland and the Police were informed of the discovery of the skull and the decision was made to protect the remains and to leave them in situ under a protective layer of geotextile ad sand.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	William Younger
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	---
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	52 Elderpark Workspace, 100 Elderpark Street, Glasgow G51 3TR
EMAIL ADDRESS:	bob.will@guard-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS.

Appendix D: Written Scheme of Investigation

OLD MELROSE HOUSE, SCOTTISH BORDERS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

PROJECT 4442

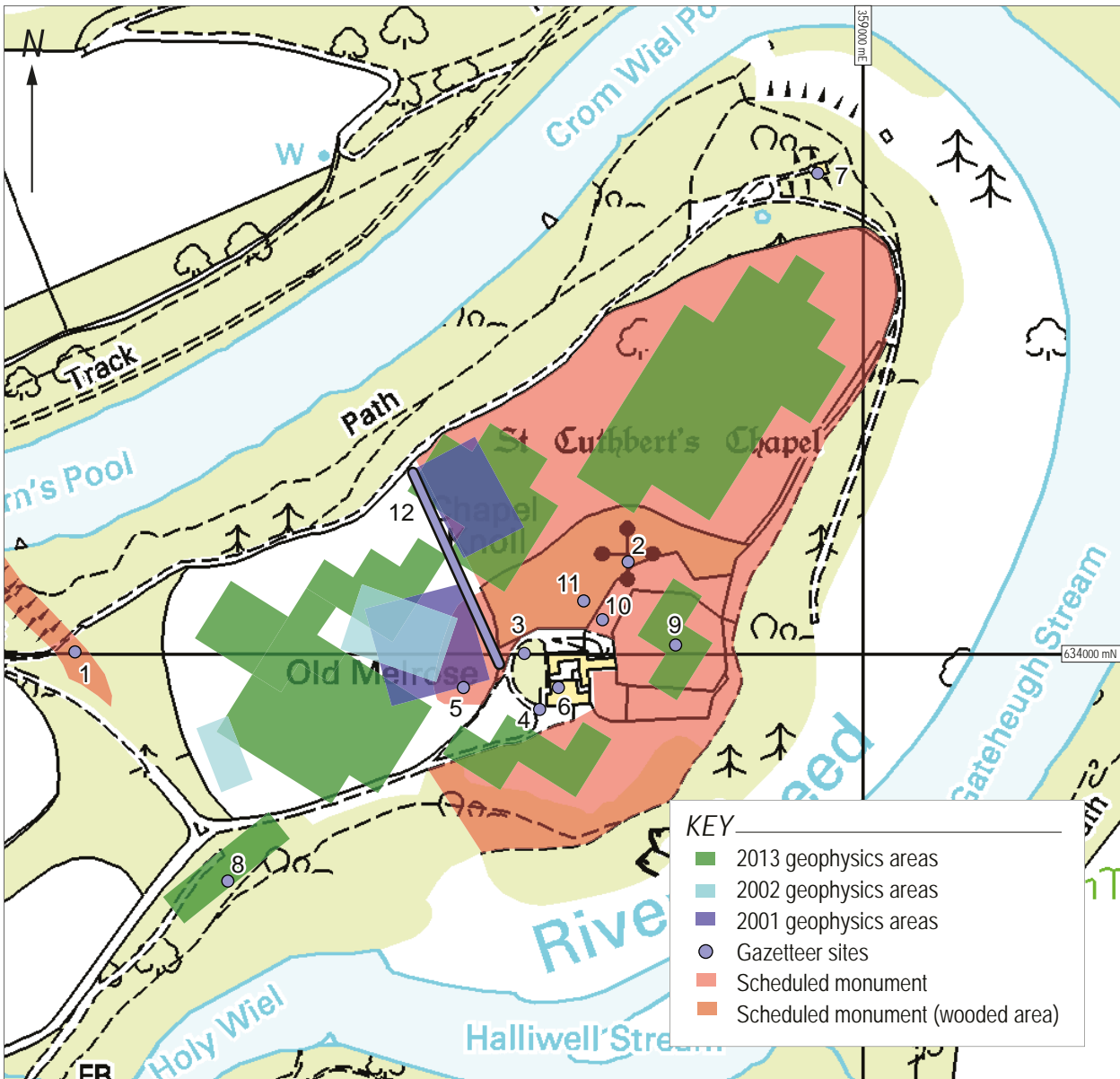
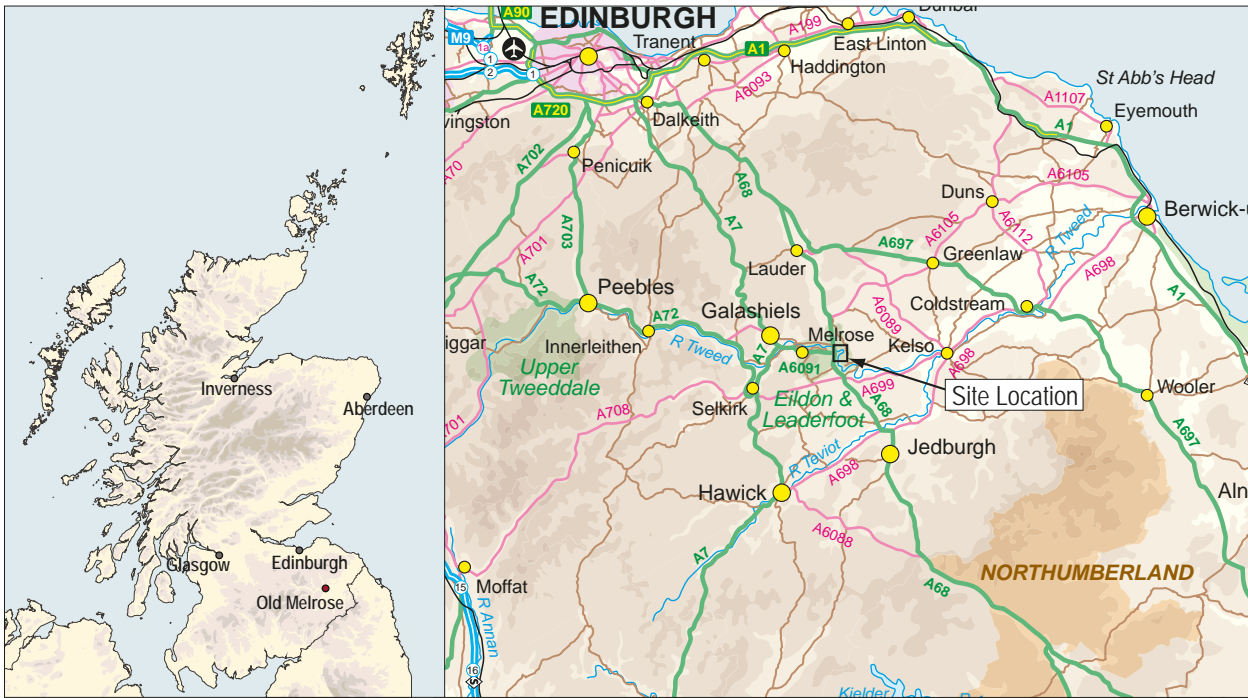


Figure 1:
Site location.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This document forms the archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for the watching brief that is required to monitor ground works during the formation of a parking area and access road at Old Melrose House, Melrose in the Scottish Borders. The buildings that form Old Melrose House are surrounded by the scheduled area relating to Old Melrose, St Cuthbert's Chapel and monastery site Scheduled Monument. This Written Scheme of Investigation has been developed in accordance with conditions applied by Historic Environment Scotland.

Introduction

- 2.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) sets out the methodology for the archaeological mitigation works required during ground works within Old Melrose and St Cuthbert's Chapel and monastery site in the Scottish Borders. The watching brief is required to meet a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent required by Historic Environment Scotland. An archaeological watching brief will be undertaken during the removal of topsoil across the proposed parking area and access road at Old Melrose House, Melrose. The watching brief will aim to establish the presence, nature, significance and extent of any archaeological remains. Should significant remains be identified and it is not possible to preserve them *in situ* these will be excavated and recorded within the limits of the trench to ensure their preservation through record.

Site Location

- 3.1 The watching brief area is located in the grounds of Old Melrose House on the eastern edge of the town of Melrose in the Scottish Borders (NGR NT 58821 33984). It lies within the protected Scheduled Monument Area of Old Melrose and St Cuthbert's Chapel and Monastery site. The site is accessed from the A68 trunk road via a single track road leading to the house itself.

Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The site of Old Melrose is associated with an early Christian monastic community that may have been founded in AD 635 by St Aidan, the first bishop of the Kingdom of Northumbria. The monastery is most closely associated with one of its priors, St Cuthbert, who is believed to have been a local Briton. The monastic community survived an episode of burning, carried out by Kenneth MacAlpin, King of the Scots, in the mid-ninth century, before the monastery was abandoned in the eleventh century. A chapel was later built on the site by the Archbishopric of Durham. An earthwork to the west of the Scheduled area is thought to be the remains of the monastery *vallum*.
- 4.2 There have been a number of desk-based research work previously carried out at Old Melrose (Hall 2005; Brennand 2007; Rennie 2013). There are twelve cultural heritage sites in the immediate area surrounding the development site at Old Melrose House. The locations of the recorded cultural heritage sites are illustrated on Figure 1.

Prehistoric and Early Historic Sites (8000 BC-AD 600)

- 4.3 There are no known prehistoric or early historic remains within the site. It has been speculated that the *vallum* (Site 1) 'may have its origins in the prehistoric or Romano-British periods' which would not prevent its later re-use (Brennand 2007, 38). However, no dates for this feature have been obtained via artefactual or botanical evidence. Similarities between the Old Melrose *vallum* and that at Iona can be seen in their bank and ditch construction and in the additional use of natural barriers that separate sacred space from the mundane (Campbell undated).

Medieval Sites (AD 600-AD 1600)

- 4.4 Derek Hall's 2005 assessment of Old Melrose gives the following information about the monastic settlement (Site 5) and St Cuthbert's chapel (Site 2):

The monastic settlement at Old Melrose was possibly founded from Iona during the episcopate of Aidan between AD 635 and AD 651. The monastery was burned down by Kenneth MacAlpin in AD 839 but, according to a twelfth century account which incorporates earlier source material, survived as a foundation pertaining to the bishops of Lindisfarne, one of whom (Edilwald) is credited as abbot of Melrose in AD 746 in a treatise on the Benedictine order. The monastery was deserted in 1074 when an attempt by Aldwin of Jarrow to restore it for the Benedictine monks failed, and was succeeded by a chapel dedicated to St Cuthbert (Cowan & Easson 1976). This chapel was built shortly after 1073; it belonged to Durham until between 1130 and 1133, when it was given to the Cistercians of Melrose by David I. To judge by the single fragment of this building that survives, a twelfth century corbel carved in the form of a grotesque face (Site 3), now in the museum at Melrose Abbey, the chapel must have been a building of some importance.

- 4.5 The chapel was burnt by the English in or before 1321, and it is mentioned again in an indulgence granted by the Pope. However, no mention of it is made in a list of dedications to St Cuthbert attributed to John Wessington, prior of Durham between 1416 and 1446. No structural remains of this chapel are visible, but foundations are reported to have been found in a flower bed skirting the south-east side of the Chapel Knoll, while three graves are said to lie under the lawn east of the south-east corner of Old Melrose House (Hall 2005, 3).
- 4.6 The Red house (Site 8) is believed to have been the porter's lodge at the entrance to the monastic settlement at Old Melrose, so named for the red sandstone blocks from which it was constructed.
- 4.7 An unbonded stone wall (Site 4) found during an archaeological watching brief (Toolis 2009) for the excavation of a soakaway close to Old Melrose House may date from the Medieval or post-Medieval periods.

Post-medieval and Modern Sites (AD 1600-Present)

- 4.8 Three cultural heritage sites, Old Melrose House (Site 6), the walled garden (Site 9) and Ravenswood summerhouse (Site 7) lie within the study area. Two roofed structures (Sites 10 and 11) lie to the west of the walled garden; the current condition of these buildings is not known. All of these structures are depicted on the Ordnance Survey First Edition map of 1863. Brennand reports that the estate of Old Melrose was in use from the mid-sixteenth century and that a house was built there in 1575. Improvements to the estate were carried out on the estate in the late eighteenth century and the country house was rebuilt in 1772 (Brennand 2007).

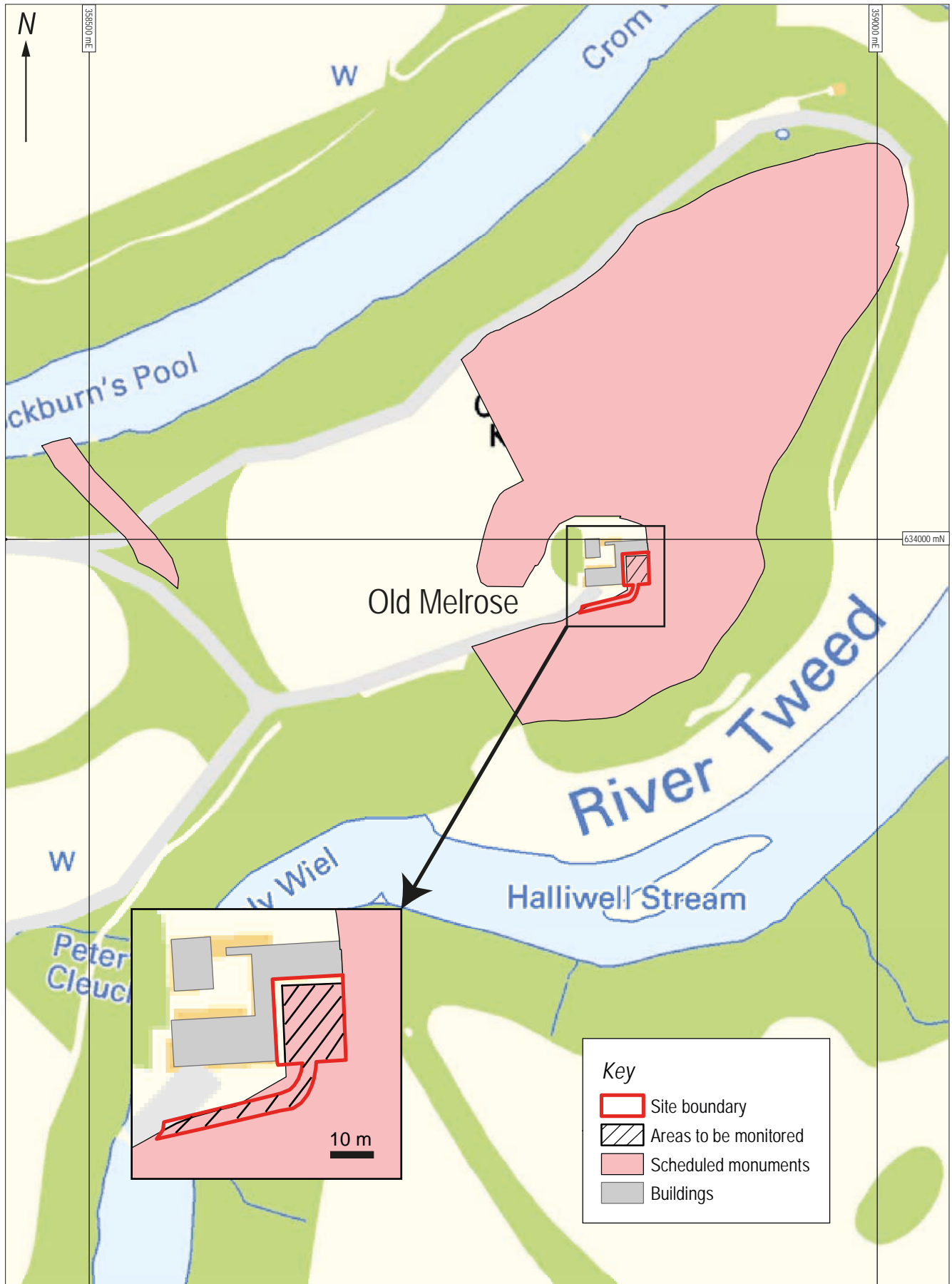
Mapping Evidence

- 4.9 The earliest of the maps consulted during the assessment was Gordon's manuscript map of ca. 1636-52, where Old Melrose is named as a small settlement. Pont and Blaeu's 1654 map also names Old Melross, but depicts what appears to be a significantly larger settlement. As Brennand explains, this may be due to the different scale of the maps. Moll's 1745 map erroneously names Old Mellros Abbey at the location of Melrose town. None of the above maps correctly depicts the meander of the River Tweed or the promontory where Old Melrose is located.
- 4.10 Roy's map of 1747-55 shows Old Melross on the promontory and structures at about the locations of Old Melrose House and Old Melrose Farm, each of which appears to comprise two buildings. No roads are noted on the promontory and the land to the south and south-west of Old Melrose House is agricultural, shown as rig & furrow cultivation marks. Stobie's 1770 map depicts four buildings at the location of Old Melrose House, but none at Old Melrose Farm and, again, no roads or tracks are mapped.
- 4.11 Some of the early nineteenth century maps add further detail of the roads on the promontory, as shown on Thomson and Johnson's 1822 map where a country house is also depicted, and Tennant's 1840 map, which additionally shows a ford joining the southern road on the promontory to that land on the south side of the River Tweed. Crawford and Brooke's 1843 map shows Old Melrose House and three un-named structures on the promontory, with woodland beginning to appear around the house and at the isthmus. However, it is only with the Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping that the structural features on the promontory are adequately mapped.

- 4.12 The OS First Edition map of 1863 shows a network of roads and tracks on the promontory, including the driveway to Old Melrose House (Site 6) and the track to the summerhouse (Site 7). The shape of the area that has been the main focus of the 2013 geophysical surveys is shown much as it currently exists and, although present field boundaries are not depicted, a track (Site 12) is shown to run from west of the country house to the north, dividing the large field in two and a sheep fold is shown at the northern tip of the promontory. The walled garden (Site 9) and the paths around and across its interior are depicted, although the *vallum* (Site 1) is not shown.
- 4.13 On the OS Second Edition map of 1898, the location of St Cuthbert's chapel (Site 2) is noted and Chapel Knoll is named in the wooded area to the north of the walled garden. The track dividing the large field and the sheep fold is no longer in existence. The single change noted on the OS map of 1907 is the relocation of St Cuthbert's chapel from north of the walled garden to the wooded area immediately north of Old Melrose House. By 1921, two roofed structures have been built on the north exterior wall of the walled garden, and one has been built in the woods to the north of the walled garden. Five greenhouses are depicted; one within the walled garden, one immediately west of the garden and three in the open area north of the garden. A rectangular enclosure abuts the northern field boundary to the north-west of Old Melrose House; this structure was still in existence on the OS map of 1954.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 4.14 The only known intrusive archaeological investigation at Old Melrose comprised a watching brief in 2009 during the excavation of a soakaway pit (Site 4) to the south-west of a new extension to Old Melrose House. A single east/west aligned wall foundation measuring 6.8 m long, 0.60 m wide and 0.15 m deep, of un-mortared sandstone blocks, one course deep and wide and including one dressed stone block, was recorded. No finds were associated with this feature and the wall therefore remains undated. The wall foundations were immediately overlain by buried topsoil containing nineteenth and twentieth century finds and redeposited natural subsoil, probably indicative of modern landscaping work (Toolis 2009).
- 4.15 Prior to 2013, three phases of geophysical survey were undertaken at Old Melrose and Old Melrose Farm (Mudie & Poller 2002; Mudie & Rennie 2003; Hill 2003). The survey successfully located a possible structure and associated track/road at the location of the Red house, three linear features that may have been old walls or field boundaries, an old track and the remains of a twentieth century enclosure. This adds significantly to the results of previous geophysical surveys, which had located a road, an oval or elliptical enclosure and at least four old walls or field boundaries. There are now a number of archaeological features, largely of as yet unknown date, located at Old Melrose, which may relate to the historically significant Early Christian monastery that once stood here.
- 4.16 The pastoral use of the fields at Old Melrose means that field walking, which is a useful method of locating artefacts brought to the surface during ploughing, has not been possible at Old Melrose. However, several field surveys have been carried out at Old Melrose, including those by Ordnance Survey and RCAHMS; the main findings are summarised below;
- Although no above-ground remains of the monastery or chapel are evident, substantial earthworks in the area of Chapel Knoll appear to indicate the possible location of St Cuthbert's chapel. In 1996, dressed and carved stones were evident on the garden walls and, although undated, may be from the chapel. Dressed stones were still visible in October 2013.
 - Backfilled trenches, possibly of some antiquity, were noted on the knoll in 2004 and 2006.
 - In 1961, the *vallum* (Site 1) was described as 'a wide broad ditch between two banks, an inner bank and an outer counterscarp, both pretty well spread' (Thomas 1961). The ditch is about 205 m wide and the bank is about 3 m wide and 1 m high. The remains of the *vallum* are visible in the woods to the north-west of the farm track that runs above the River Tweed, although there is no trace of any continuation of this feature to the south of the track.
 - The 1961 survey also suggested that the Red house (Site 8) may lie within trees to the south of the present road leading to the summerhouse.



Project Objectives

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological works is to:
- To undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works in the area specified (Figure 2).
 - To undertake an appropriate level of recording of any significant archaeological remains encountered in order to determine the character, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits uncovered;
 - To mitigate any adverse impacts arising from the construction activities;
 - On completion of the watching brief, submit a data structure report to Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Officer.

Watching Brief Methodology

- 6.1 The machine excavation of topsoil during the watching brief will proceed under archaeological monitoring. The topsoil and/or overburden will be removed by a back-acting excavator using a smooth edged bucket (toothless ditching bucket) to the first archaeological horizon or, where none was found, to the required depth. The final formation level for the parking area and access road should only necessitate the removal of 100 mm of topsoil. If archaeological features are uncovered excavation will cease in that area. Any archaeological features encountered will be cleaned by hand by the on-site Archaeologist to determine their character and extent.
- 6.2 Any archaeological features encountered requiring more than limited evaluation detailed above will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Should negative-cut features be encountered they will be fully excavated in order to determine their significance, date and function. A full record of excavated features will be made using a single context recording system using pro forma sheets, drawings and photographs. All archaeological features will be photographed and recorded at an appropriate scale. Sections will be drawn at 1:10, and plans at 1:20. All trenches will be accurately surveyed using a sub-metre GPS and located within the National Grid.
- 6.3 All archaeological finds will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Finds and animal bone will be collected as bulk samples by context. Significant small finds will be three dimensionally located prior to collection. All finds will be processed to MAP2 type standards and subject to appropriate specialist assessment. If necessary, conservation of finds will be appraised to allow for specialist study.
- 6.4 A representative section will be recorded for each trench denoting depth of topsoil, any stratigraphy present and the nature of the soil. This information will be logged in the day book together with a sketch drawn to scale and a photographic record of deposits.
- 6.5 Should human remains be revealed by the excavation, the local police, the client and Historic Environment Scotland will be informed immediately. Any human remains will be accurately recorded, but left *in situ*, pending the agreement of the police, the client and Historic Environment Scotland on an appropriate mitigation strategy.
- 6.6 Should significant archaeological remains be encountered, work will stop, the remains will be largely left *in situ* pending the agreement of the client and Historic Environment Scotland. Further excavation will not always be the appropriate course of action in all cases. Where excavation is granted, a WSI addenda will be produced detailing an appropriate scope of excavation (Stage 2) and Post-excavation design including scope of finds analysis, conservation and publication (Stage 3).
- 6.7 All elements of the fieldwork and any subsequent post-excavation work will be undertaken in line with the policies and guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists of which GUARD Archaeology Ltd is a *Registered Organisation*.

Report Preparation and Contents

- 7.1 A report detailing the results of the archaeological fieldwork will be submitted to the client within two weeks of completion of fieldwork and, subject to client approval, then submitted to Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Borders Council archaeology officer. The report will take the form of a Data Structure Report and will contain an analysis of the results of the watching brief. The report will include a full descriptive text that will characterise the date and extent of any archaeological deposits. It will also include plans at an appropriate scale showing the area subjected to monitoring, archaeological features and archiving lists of all finds, samples, field drawings and photographs.
- 7.2 If appropriate, the report will also include an addendum to this WSI for further archaeological fieldwork, should significant archaeology have been encountered.
- 7.3 The report will include the following:
- executive summary;
 - a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with at least an 8 figure central grid reference;
 - OASIS reference number; unique site code;
 - contractor's details including date work carried out;
 - nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details;
 - description of the site history, location and geology;
 - a site plan to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated;
 - discussion of the results of field work;
 - context & feature descriptions;
 - features, number and class of artefacts, spot dating & scientific dating of significant finds presented in tabular format;
 - plans and section drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale;
 - initial assessment of relevant finds/samples if appropriate;
 - recommendations regarding the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work such as excavation (Stage 2) and Post-excavation finds analysis, conservation & publication (Stage 3);
 - bibliography.
- 7.4 At least two copies of the report will be prepared for the client and a further one including a digital PDF copy sent to Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Borders Council archaeology officer.
- 7.5 The report will be presented in an ordered state and contained within a protective cover/sleeve or bound in some fashion. The report will be page numbered and supplemented with section numbering for ease of reference.

Copyright

- 8.1 Unless otherwise agreed copyright for any report resulting from the archaeological work undertaken as part of the project will be deemed the intellectual property of GUARD Archaeology Ltd.

Publication

- 9.1 A summary of the project results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. In the event of minor archaeological remains being encountered during the archaeological fieldwork, it is proposed that a comprehensive report submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, will form the final publication of the site. A copy of this will be included in the Data Structure Report.

Finds Disposal

- 10.1 The arrangement for the final disposal of any finds made in connection with the archaeological work, will be deposited in keeping with Scottish legal requirements as set out in the Treasure Trove Code of Practice published by the Scottish Government in December 2008. The laws relating to Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia* in Scotland apply to all finds where the original owner cannot be identified. This includes all material recovered during archaeological fieldwork. Accordingly, all assemblages recovered from archaeological fieldwork are claimed automatically by the Crown and must be reported to the Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel through its secretariat, the Treasure Trove Unit. In the event of the discovery of small finds, a filled-out copy of the form "Declaration of an Archaeological Assemblage from Fieldwork" and two copies of the pertinent Data Structure Report will be submitted to the Panel at the conclusion of the fieldwork. The Panel will then be responsible for recommending to the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer which museum should be allocated the finds. All artefacts will be temporarily stored by GUARD until a decision has been made by the panel.

Personnel and Liaison

- 11.1 The GUARD team will comprise the following qualified and experienced GUARD archaeologists:
- Project Manager: Kevin Mooney
 - Project Director (on-site Archaeologist): Alan Hunter Blair
 - Finds and Environmental Support and Conservation: Aileen Maule
 - Illustrator: Diarmuid O'Connor
 - Quality Assurance: Ronan Toolis
- 11.2 The GUARD Project Manager, Kevin Mooney, will be the point of contact for the archaeological works. A full CV for individuals concerned can be made available on request.

Monitoring

- 12.1 The proposed start date for the archaeological fieldwork has still to be confirmed. Once confirmed with the client, Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Borders Council archaeology officer will be informed of the site mobile phone number and the start date so that monitoring visits can be arranged.

Health & Safety and Insurance

- 13.1 GUARD Archaeology Ltd adheres to the guidelines and standards prescribed for archaeological fieldwork set down in the Institute for Archaeologists approved Health and Safety in Field Archaeology document, prepared under the aegis of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME). It is standard GUARD policy, prior to any fieldwork project commencing, to conduct a risk assessment and to prepare a project safety plan, the prescriptions of which will be strictly followed for the duration of all archaeological fieldwork. Copies of the resultant project safety plan and of GUARD's Fieldwork Safety Policy Statement may be viewed upon request.
- 13.2 GUARD Archaeology Ltd also possesses all necessary insurance cover, proofs of which may be supplied upon request.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sources Consulted

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