

**27-27A CASTLE STREET
BANFF
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Archaeological Watching Brief -
Carried out 26th & 27th March 2012
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2012-11
by
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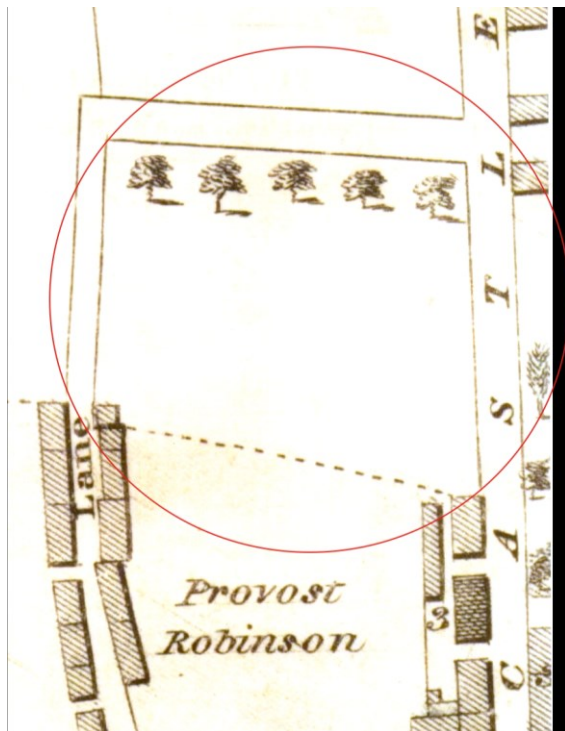
1. Background

- 1.1 Planning Applications before Aberdeenshire Council (APP/2011/4157 and APP/2011/4110) for the erection of two new accommodation units in the garden at the rear of 27-27A Castle Street, Banff, were granted permission subject to certain conditions. Condition 3 required that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during ground breaking works. The condition was applied in the context of PAN (Planning Advice Note) 2/2011, SPP and SHEP.
- 1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Mr & Mrs N Payne to undertake the work; the field element of which was carried out on 26th-27th March 2012.

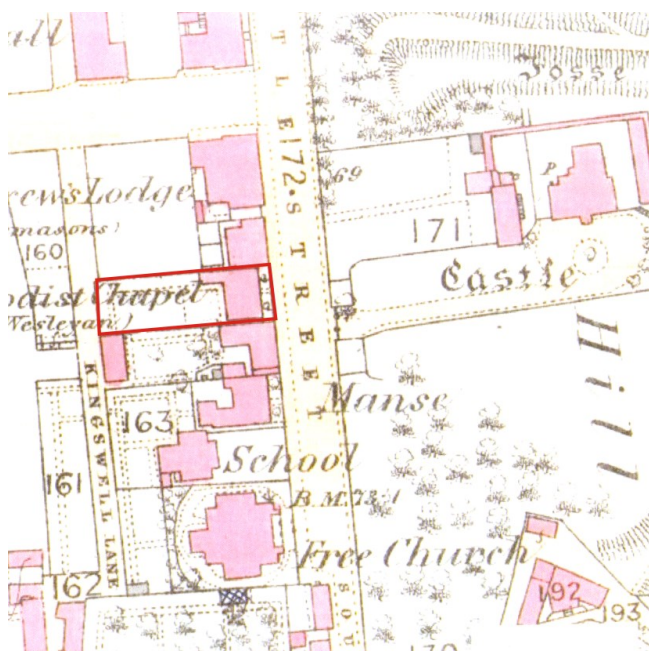
2. The Site

- 2.1 The site of the development lies to the rear of 27-27A Castle Street, Banff, in close proximity to Banff Castle. Little now remains of the late 12th/13th century castle of enclosure except the northern and eastern curtain walls and wide ditches and ramparts. Located on the E side of Castle Street, Banff [NGR: 68936 64201; NMRS No: NJ66SE 23.0; Parish: Banff], the site was scheduled as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 2001.
- 2.2 27-27A Castle Street is a Category C Listed Building (HB Number 21939) and is thought to have been built between 1820 and 1830 (NGR: NJ 68841

64176; NMRS No: NJ66SE 386. Parish: Banff). John Wood's map of Banff dated 1823 shows the site, which extends W from Castle Street to Provost Lane (now Stuart Street), to be open ground [Illus.1]. By 1866, the 25 inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map (surveyed 1866, published 1871) shows the area to have been built on, extending from Castle Street, W to Kingswell Lane, as it was then [Illus.2].



Illus 1 Detail of Wood's Map of Banff 1823 (www.nls.ac.uk) Area marked in red



Illus 2 Detail of 1st OS map of Banff of 1866 (pub 1871) (www.nls.ac.uk) . Plot marked in red

3 Methodology

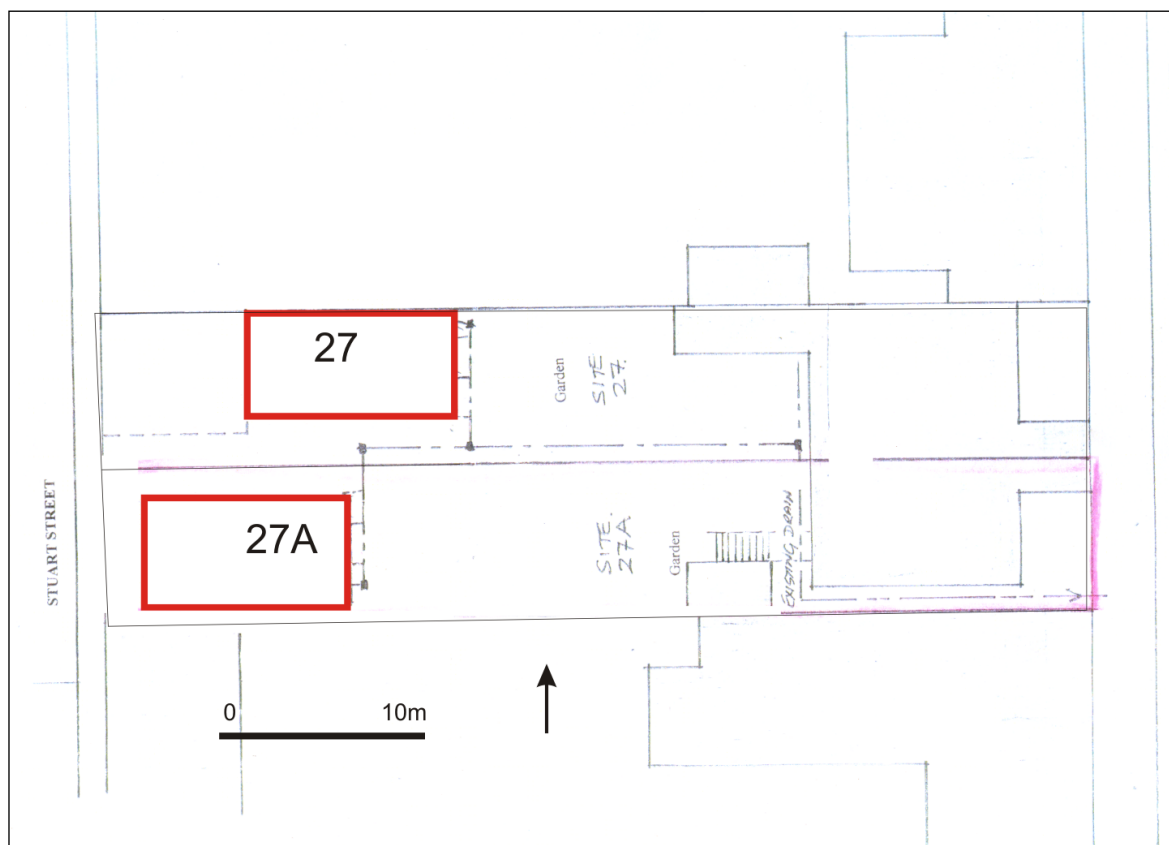
- 3.1 Initially a series of test holes were excavated by hand under archaeological supervision to assess the depth of topsoil.
- 3.2 Following this, topsoil was removed to the required depth by a full-slew mechanical using a toothless ditching bucket

4. The Work

- 4.1 The proposed accommodation units are situated in the garden to the rear of 27-27A Castle Street. The site is c.30m long (E – W) and 13m wide (N – S) A series of 11 test holes were excavated by hand to assess the depth of topsoil and the depth of the foundations walls on the N and S boundaries of the site. Each of the holes was c.400mm square and were excavated to a depth of c.800mm before natural sand was reached. The fill of each hole was a homogenous black fine garden soil to a depth of c.700-800mm overlying fine soft yellow-brown natural sand.
- 4.2 Two rectangular plots, each measuring c.9.5m x 5m were excavated to accommodate the single story units, each along the sides of the N and S boundary walls [Illus.3].

Site 27: is located parallel to the N boundary wall of the garden and c.6m E of Stuart Street. Of the 800mm depth of garden soil evident in the test holes, it was only necessary to remove c.600mm over the footprint of Site 27. This, again, proved to be homogenous black fine garden soil. Occasional small sherds of 19th century ceramic were evident and one sherd of unglazed pottery of possible medieval date was recorded.

No archaeological features or finds were evident.



Illus 3 Site plan with foundation plots marked in red

Site 27A: is located alongside the S boundary wall of the garden, c.2m E of Stuart Street. In this instance the full 800mm depth of garden soil was removed on to clean yellow-brown natural sand. Apart from a small midden deposit of 19th century ceramic, glass and some butchered bone at the W end of the plot, no other material was noted.

No archaeological features or finds were evident

5 Results

- 5.1 It is evident from the map evidence that the site of 27-27A Castle Street was open ground prior to c.1830 and, although in close proximity to the 12th/13th century castle, showed no evidence of activity or occupation in the medieval period.

- 5.2.1 It is also possible that much of the fine black garden soil might have been imported onto the site as part of the expansion of this area of Banff in the 19th century.
- 5.3 No archaeological features were evident during the ground works for the development.



Illus 4: Test hole in centre of 27A



Illus 5; Detail of test hole in 27A



Illus 6: Soil strip over Site 27, looking W



Illus 7: Soil strip over Site 27A, looking W

Appendices

Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record (on CD)

Photographic catalogue – 27-27A Castle Street, Banff

Digital frame no	Content
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1	Site Name Board
2	General view, looking E, of Site 27
3	Test holes by N boundary wall, Site 27
4	View of area of Site 27A, looking SE
5-6	General views of site, looking E
7-9	Test hole in centre of Site 27A
10-11	Soil strip over Site 27, looking W
12-15	Soil strip over Site 27A, looking W