

**NEW PETERHEAD COUNCIL OFFICES  
ST PETER STREET  
PETERHEAD  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Archaeological Watching Brief -  
Carried out 21<sup>st</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014  
by  
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2014-6  
by**

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**1. Background**

- 1.1 A planning application (APP/2013/1733) for the erection of new Council offices on St Peter Street, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, required that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the soil strip of the site (Condition 2).
- 1.2 The Condition was applied in the context of PAN (Planning Advise Note) 2/2011, SPP and SHEP, which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.
- 1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Aberdeenshire Council to undertake the work, which was carried between 21st April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014.

**2. THE SITE**

- 2.1 The site lies in a triangle between St Peter Street and Erroll Street in the centre of Peterhead.

Parish: Peterhead

NGR: NK 13101, 46175





Illus 3 Site before machining looking to W sector at junction of St Peter Street and Erroll Street

- 2.2 The earliest part of the town of Peterhead at Keithinch was established as a fishing village in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In 1587 it was granted burgh status as a burgh of barony, then becoming a royal burgh in 1593. From this time the town expanded W of Keithinch in the area centred on Broad Street. The St Peter Street/ Erroll Street area was fully developed in the 18<sup>th</sup>- 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Old Parish Church on Erroll Street, which lies adjacent to the present site, was built in 1806.
- 2.3 The 1868 Ordnance Survey map (Illus 4) shows all street frontages of the site built up, with an area of garden ground behind the Erroll Street buildings to the E of the pub which still remains at the perimeter of the present site.



Illus 4 Detail of site from 25"/mile OS map. Aberdeen sheet xxiii.7 (Peterhead) 1868 (Published 1872) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

- 2.4 By the Ordnance Survey map of 1900 (Aberdeenshire 023.07 and 023.03), most of the garden ground had been built up.
- 2.5 With the exception of the pub, all these properties had been demolished c 1970s (pers comm) to make way for the construction of a range of high rise flats which covered the whole footprint of the site. The flats were demolished c 2007 (date of demolition warrant). Since demolition it had been used as a temporary car park.

### 3. The Watching Brief

- 3.1 The soil strip was carried out using a full slew mechanical digger with a 2m wide bucket.
- 3.2 Over the footprint of the site there was < 200mm hardcore above a thick deposit of redeposited grey earth with much crushed stone and some brick. In most areas this went to a depth of between 0.6 and 1.0m on to natural clay, this was deeper on the Erroll Street frontage, which may have been cellared. Around the perimeter there was a concrete ring-beam at the pavement edges that would have been part of the construction of the flats and there were many re-enforced concrete piles dug into the clay in all areas, also from the flats. The fill all appeared to be clean backfill after demolition.



**Illus 5 NE sector. Post-demolition fill removed to natural clay. Piles from flats visible**



**Illus 6 NE sector. Piles and concrete ring beam from 20<sup>th</sup> C flats**



**Illus 7 W sector general. Red marks indicate concrete foundations in natural clay**



**Illus 8 W sector detail of fill**

3.3 No undisturbed ground was observed above natural.

- 3.4 No archaeological features or finds were evident.
- 3.5 After removal of the post demolition fill to the natural clay, levels were backfilled with clean hardcore to the level of the new building foundations. There is therefore no further archaeological potential in this site.



**Illus 9 NE sector showing clean hardcore put in to new building level**

## 4. Results

- 4.1 A watching brief was carried out during the soil strip for the new Council Offices at St Peter Street, Peterhead.
- 4.2 No archaeological features or finds were observed.
- 4.3 The site has no future archaeological potential.

<b>Photo number</b>	<b>Content</b>
1	Site looking to NE sector
2	Site looking to W sector at junction St Peter Street and Erroll Street



3	SE sector looking to Old Parish Church and Erroll Street
5	View across SE sector to Old Parish Church
6	General view of post-demolition fill NE sector
7	NE sector. Piles and concrete ring beam from 20 <sup>th</sup> C flats
8	NE sector detail of concrete ring beam for flats
9	W sector general. Removal of hardcore
10	NE sector. Post-demolition fill removed to natural clay. Piles from flats
11	W sector detail of post-demolition fill
12-13	W sector. Removal of post demolition fill
14	W sector detail of fill
15	W sector general looking E
16	W sector general. Red marks indicate concrete foundations in natural clay
17	W sector general
18	W sector detail of fill
19	W sector looking W
20-21	NE sector showing clean hardcore put in to new building level
22	SE sector to natural
23	SE sector detail of fill