

**NEW NURSERY, MESTON WALK
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
OLD ABERDEEN**



**- Archaeological Watching Brief -
Carried out 1st August 2014
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



Report No: MAS 2014-10
by

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1. Background

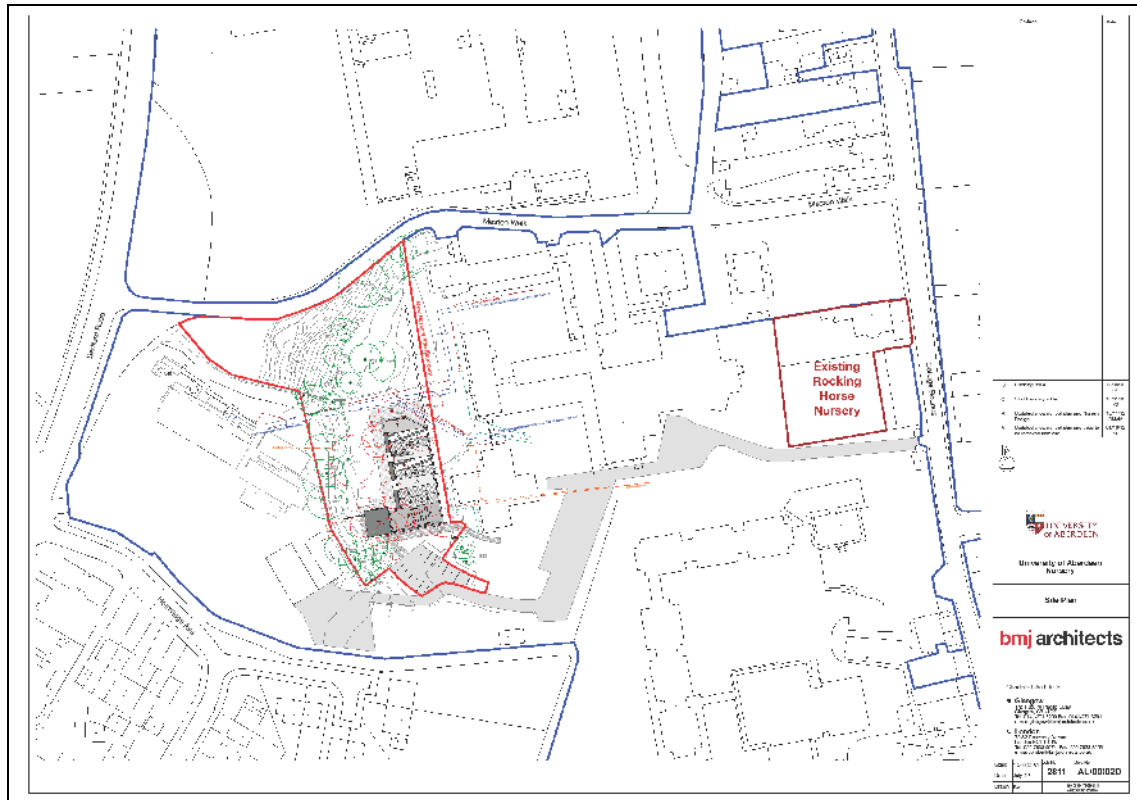
1.1 A planning application by the University of Aberdeen (Planning Ref: 130875) for the erection of a single story children's nursery with associated play structures at Meston Walk, Old Aberdeen required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in advance of the development.

1.2 The Condition (Planning Condition 1) 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.
Following discussions with Judith Stones, Lead Curator, Local History and Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council, it was determined that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during ground works for the development.

1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by the University of Aberdeen to undertake the work, which was carried out on 1st August 2014.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site of the new nursery is located on the S side of Meston Walk and W of College Bounds. Founded in 1495 by William Elphinstone, the earliest part of the university still extant is King's College, located on the College Bounds/High Street axis [NGR: NJ 9372 0826; NMRS No: NJ90NW 1167].
New Nursery: GPS: 393739 808071 (centre of site)
Parish: Aberdeen



Illus 1: Site plan showing the location of the existing nursery and new nursery to the W

3. The Watching Brief

- 3.1 Owing to a breakdown in communications, the major portion of the site had been soil stripped and refilled with aggregate prior to the archaeologist being notified. The total area of the site was c.48m (N-S) x 25m (E-W).
- 3.2 However, on the W side of the site, an area c.4m wide x c.35m (N-S) had not been covered over and it was possible to observe the ground surface below the

stripped topsoil. A depth of c.400-500mm of topsoil had been removed. Where it was possible to observe it, the underlying strata seems to be a made up dump of broken brick, stone and rubble. This seems to be accord well with observations undertaken in 2009 by Alison Cameron, then Assistant Archaeologist, City of Aberdeen Archaeological Unit of adjacent areas immediately N of the site excavated as part of the Old Aberdeen Heating Replacement (site code 0388) and the adjacent Halls of Residence on the E side of the site.



Illus 2: Strip on W side of site, looking N



Illus 3: Dump material below topsoil, looking N

4. Results

4.1 Although it was not possible to observe the major portion of the site, it seems likely from what was seen along the W side that the area generally was made-up ground of mixed rubble.

4.2 No archaeological features or finds were evident