

**SITE EAST AND WEST OF CANMORE
PLACE
KINCARDINE O'NEIL
ABERDEENSHIRE**



Archaeological Evaluation

Carried out October 2015

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2015-32

by

H K Murray and J C Murray

H K Murray BA, PhD, MCIfA, FSA Scot

J C Murray BA, MCIfA, FSA Scot, FMA

Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN

Telephone: (01651) 806394 e-mail: cmurray@btinternet.com

**SITE EAST AND WEST OF CANMORE PLACE
KINCARDINE O'NEIL
ABERDEENSHIRE**

-Archaeological Evaluation -

H K Murray and J C Murray

1. Background
 - 1.1 A Planning Application (APP/2015/1117) was granted permission for the development of a housing estate, partly on a green field site and partly on ground behind a farm steading, to the East and West of Canmore Place, Kincardine O'Neil, Aberdeenshire.
 - 1.2 An archaeological condition was applied in the context of planning legislation (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.

The condition required that there should be a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council. This stipulated that no development should take place before the implementation of a 7-10% archaeological evaluation.
 - 1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Norman McIntosh, Roundhouse Architecture Ltd on behalf of the developer, Snowdrop Developments (UK) Ltd to undertake the work.

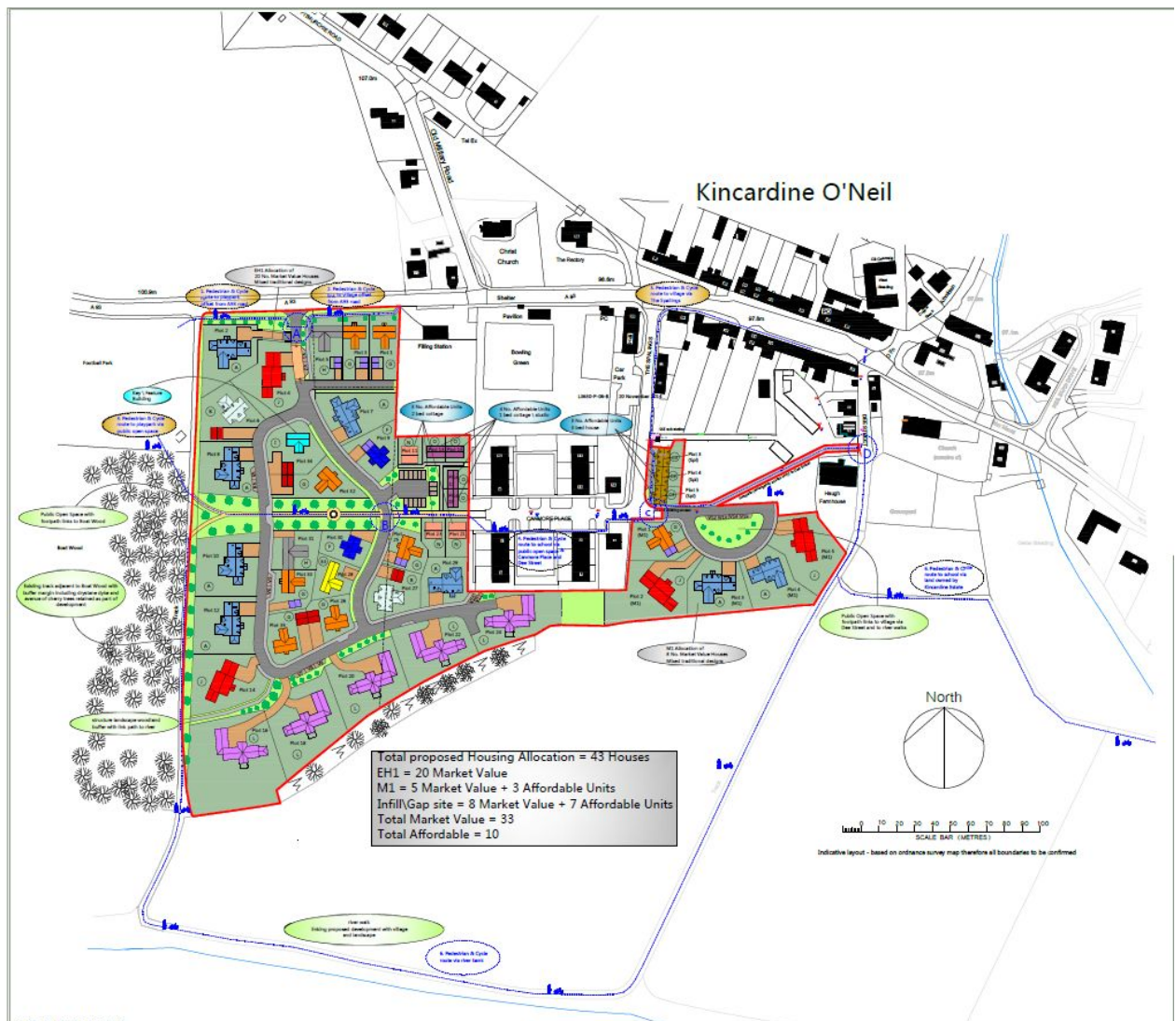
1.4 The evaluation was undertaken between 5th and 6th October 2015.

2. The Site

2.1 The evaluation area lay to the S of the village and the Deeside Road (A93) and N of the river Dee. Part of the E side of the site was bounded by the line of the old track down to the crossing over the Dee at Boat of Kincardine.

Parish: Kincardine O'Neil

NGR (central) NO 58900, 99600



Illus 1 Location of site. Courtesy of Roundhouse Architecture Ltd.

2.2 The site slopes gently down from c. 100m OD at the N side. To the W of Canmore Place it was a greenfield site that was in stubble at the time of the evaluation. To the E of Canmore Place it comprised very rough and disturbed ground to the S of the steading of the former Haugh Farm.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 The cultivated topsoil was removed by a full slew excavator with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible features were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 3.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper 120 GPS and Glonass.



Illus 2 General view of W end of site looking E towards Canmore Place.

4. Desktop survey

4.1 General background

The settlement of Kincardine O'Neil, may have Early Christian origins with an association with St Erchan. The Old Church, the ruins of which survive to the NE of the present site, was established by the early 13th century as, in 1231, it was given to a hospital for the poor.

A number of stone axes found in the 19th century in Kincardine O'Neil, attest to prehistoric occupation in the vicinity but no exact find spots are known. Prehistoric occupation is common along the gravel ridges on either side of the Dee.

4.2 Map evidence

Roy's Military map 1747-55

Roy shows the settlement of Kincardin O Neel (*sic*) on either side of the Deeside road and W of the Neil burn. The ground which includes the present site is shown as largely rig and furrow.

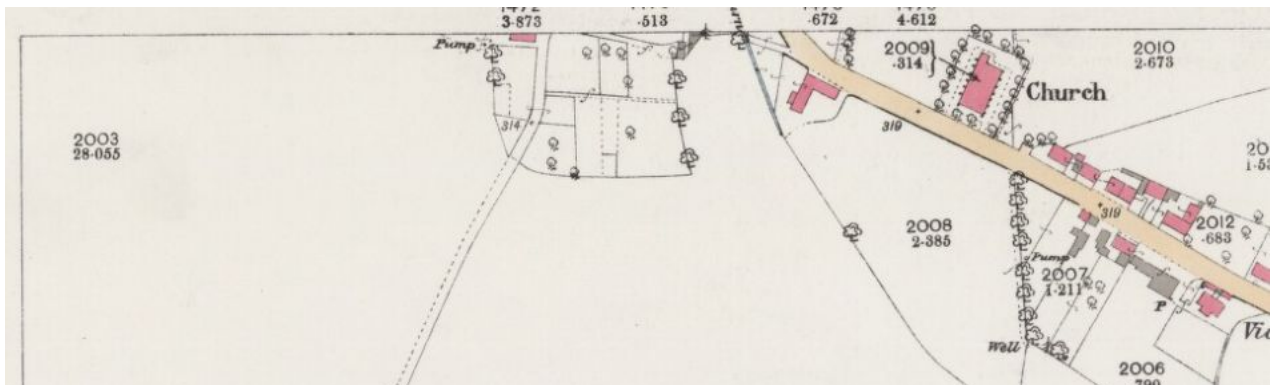


Illus 3 Roy Military map. 1747-55. www.nls.ac.uk

1st Ordnance Survey Map. 1866 (published 1869)

Aberdeen sheets lxxxiii.9 and lxxxiii.13

In 1866 the site was shown as cultivated ground.

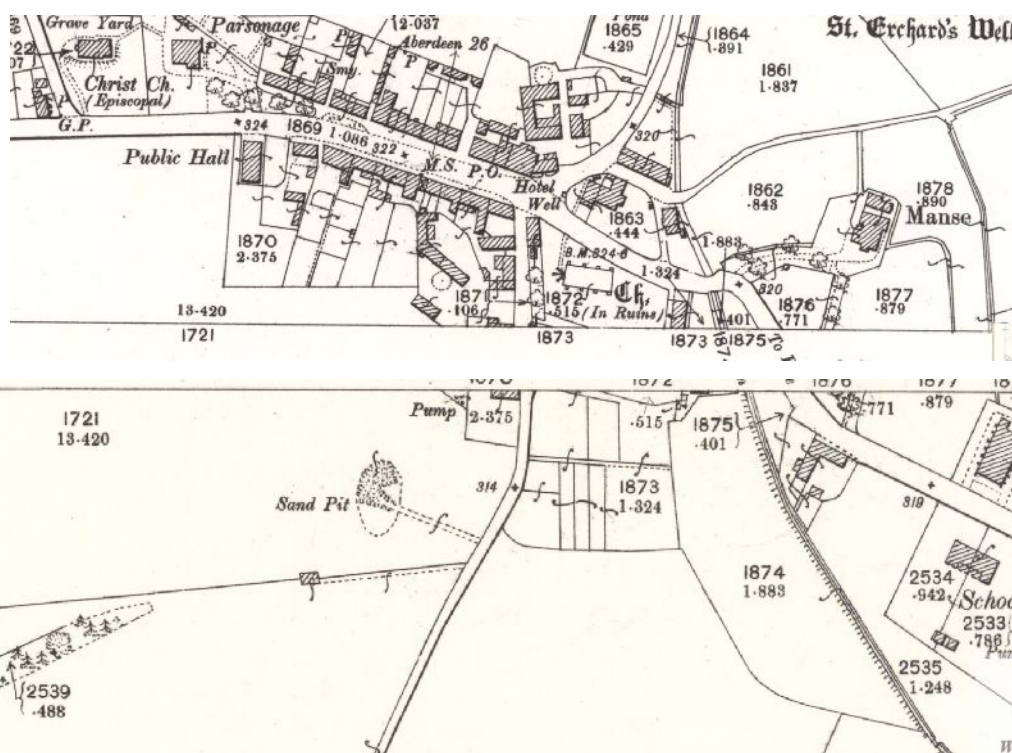


Illus 4 OS Map of 1866 (pub 1869) www.nls.ac.uk

Ordnance survey 1899 (published 1900)

Aberdeenshire sheets 083.09 and 083.13

By 1899 the E end of the site, S of the farm buildings is shown cut by a large sand pit.



Illus 5 Map of 1899 (pub 1900) www.nls.ac.uk

4.3 Associated sites

NMRS No	Aberdeenshire SMR	Site/feature
NO59NE 1	NO59NE1	Old Church
NO59NE 6	NO59NE0005	Medieval Hospital founded 1231
NO59NE 37	NO59NE0081	Village
NO59NE25	NO59NE 0022	2 stone axes
NO59NE 21	NO59NE 0019	Stone axe
NO59NE27	NO59NE 0024	Stone axe
NO59NE26	NO59NE0023	Stone axe

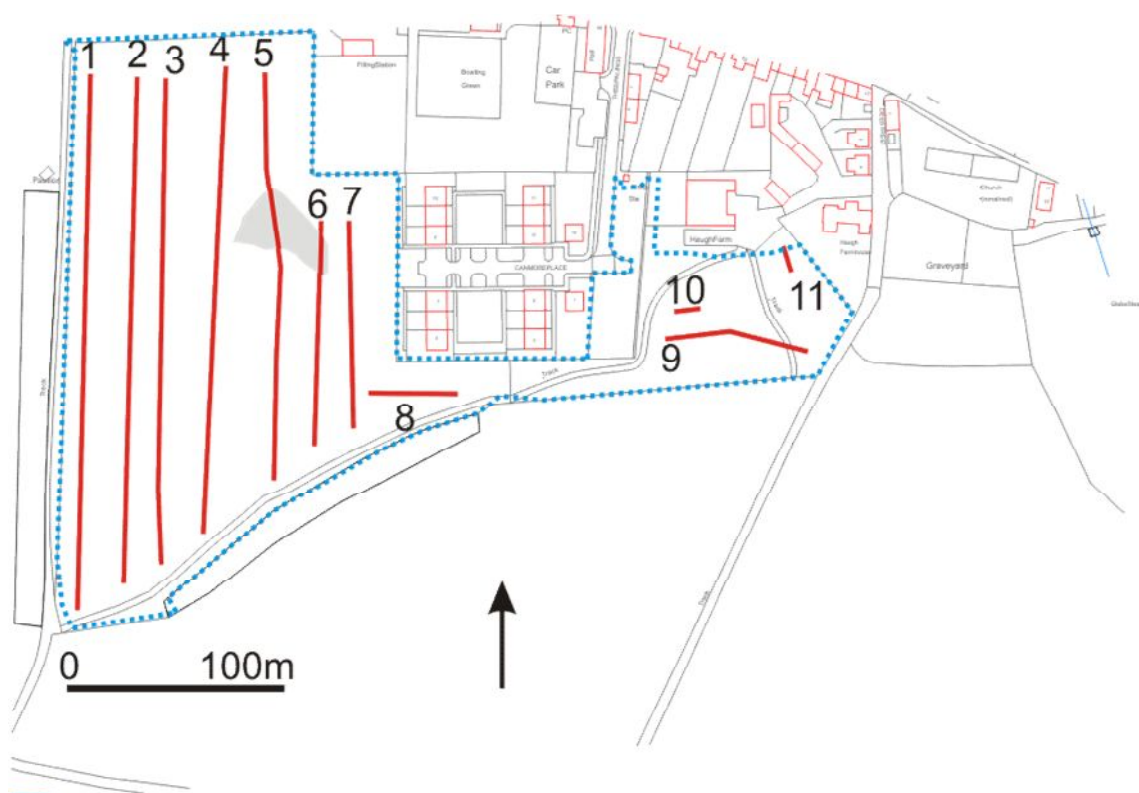
4 Results of the Evaluation

Eleven evaluation trenches were excavated in total (Illus 7). No evaluation could be undertaken in the area between E side of Canmore Place and the present boundary fence as this area is currently landscaped and in trees (Illus 6). The landscaping suggests there is little likelihood of archaeological survival.

The area to the E of the boundary, behind the former steading of Haugh Farm was very disturbed, with areas of dumping and deep trackways through it (Illus 8). This limited the possibilities of trenches but did confirm that much of the area had been significantly disturbed by a sandpit in use from the late 19th century (Illus 11).



Illus 6 E end of Canmore Place. Not trenched.



Illus 7 Plan showing location of trenches (red). The approximate site outline is shown as blue dotted line. Grey shading shows infilled natural dip. OS map reproduced Crown Copyright. Licence 100041040

Trench 1

GPS N end:358811,799682 S end: 358806,799434

Orientation: N/S Length: 248m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S: 350-400mm. Dips to 700mm c. 200m from S end. N: 500mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles. Boulders on central ridge.

Features: None.

Trench 2

GPS N end:358833,799682 S end:358826,799444

Orientation: N/S Length: 238m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S: 300-350mm, dips to 500mm. N end 350mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles.

Features: None.

Trench 3

GPS N end: 358846,799681 S end: 358844,799449

Orientation: N/S Length: 232m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S: 500mm. Dips to 700mm at 197m from S end. N end 300-400mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles.

Features: None.

Trench 4

GPS N end:358874,799686 S end:358863,799469

Orientation: N/S Length: 217m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S: 300-350mm. Dips to 700mm 133m from S end. N: 600mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles.

Features: None.

Trench 5

GPS N end:358891,799683 S end:358894,799492

Orientation: N/S Length: 192m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S: 300mm. Dips to 1m 140m from S end (358894,799624). N: 350-400mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles.

Features: None.

Trench 6

GPS N end:358917,799615 S end: 358913,799512

Orientation: N/S Length: 105m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S end: 400mm. Deepens to 1m at 35816,799597, rises to 500mm on a gravel ridge, then deepens to 1.2m between 358915, 799577 and 358914,799571. N: 500mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles.

Features: The dip in natural appeared to have been a natural hollow extending between trenches 5 and 6 and had been deliberately filled in, partly with stone, partly with topsoil (Illus 7: grey on plan).

Trench 7

GPS N end:358931,799518 S end: 358930,799615

Orientation: N/S Length: 97m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: S:550mm, deepens to 600mm. N: 300mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over dark orange/brown gravel with frequent pebbles. Sandy over gravel.

Features: None.

Trench 8

GPS E end: 358980,799535 W end: 358938,799535

Orientation: E/W Length: 42m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: 500-750mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over sandy gravel.

Features: None.



Illus 8 Looking E across land E of Canmore Place. Trench 9 on RHS. Medieval church ruin visible in centre background.

Trench 9

GPS E end: 359140,799554 W end: 359074,799560

Orientation: Approx E/W, with angled line. Length: 64m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: E end: 900mm. Rises to c 200-300mm at 359098,799562 (near angle of trench). To W of this point the ground had been cut away by a sand pit. This was only excavated to c. 1.3m.

Stratigraphy: Earlier pit infilled with 19th/early 20th-century rubbish layers covered by topsoil.

Features: Sand pit from 359098,799562 (angle of trench) to W end of trench. Also in Trench 10. Shown on 1899 OS map near the angle of trench but appears to have been extended W after 1899. The sand pit had been backfilled with dumped cinders and domestic rubbish including animal bone, glass and china of late 19th-20th-century date.



Illus 9 Trench 9 looking E showing dump layers at W end (foreground).

Trench 10

GPS E end: 359091,799574 W end: 359080,799573

Orientation: Approx E/W Length: 11m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: Only excavated to top of cinder/rubbish fill as in Trench 9.

Stratigraphy: As W end of trench 9.

Trench 11

GPS NW end: 359126,799606 SE end: 359133,799591

Orientation: NW/SE Length: 14m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: N: 900mm. S: excavated to 1.2m.

Stratigraphy: Water pipe and clay drain at 1.5m depth at 359129, 799600. Small amounts of modern rubbish (including plastic) and 19th/20th-century material such as a stoneware bottle in redeposited topsoil to this depth. Sandy gravel natural.



Illus 10 Trench 11 looking S

6 The Finds

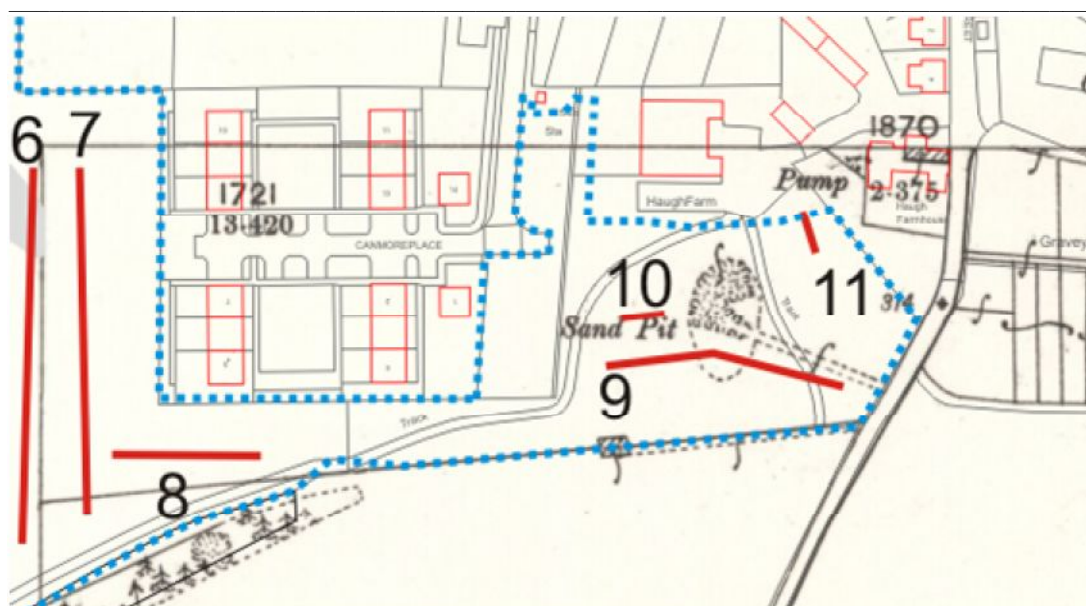
There were no finds apart from small quantities of L 19th and E 20th-century china and glass in the dumped material. Not retained.

7 Discussion

There were no archaeological finds or features in the W field. The map evidence suggests this has been in cultivation at least since the 18th century. A number of dips in the natural, including a large hollow across trenches 5 and 6, were natural in origin and appeared to have been levelled by infilling with topsoil.

Most of the E area, S of the farm steading appears to have been used as a sand extraction pit. This is not shown on the 1866 OS map (Illus 4) but is shown in 1899 (Illus 5, 9).

The 1899 extent of the pit is considerably smaller than its excavated extent so it can be assumed that extraction continued well into the 20th century. The pit was not fully excavated as it would have destroyed any earlier features. It had been filled with domestic material of late 19th and 20th-century date, including glass, china, animal bone, and large spreads of cinders.



Illus 11 Detail of plan showing trenches in relation to sandpit as shown on 1899 OS map.

8 Impacts and Mitigations

8.1 Impacts There were no finds and no evidence of surviving archaeology other than the 19th-20th century sand extraction pit.

8.2 Mitigations

- (i) On the basis of the evaluation there is no perceived need for any further archaeological investigation in the area.
- (ii) The lack of surviving archaeology within the evaluation area does not preclude the possibility of chance finds or archaeological discoveries outwith the evaluation trenches. Should such chance finds occur, then the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council, or Murray Archaeological Services Ltd, must be informed immediately so that an appropriate archaeological response can be formulated and agreed by all parties concerned.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record

Digital frame number	Content
1-3	General view of W area looking towards Canmore Place. Trench 1 in foreground
4-6	Trench 1 looking S
7-8	General views of E area looking E.
9-12	E area looking E. Trench 9 on RHS

13-14	Trench 9 looking E. Dump material in foreground
15	Looking NE from trench 9 to Trench 10 indicating extent of sand pit and dumping
16-17	Trench 10 looking E showing dump infill at W end)
18-20	Trench 8 looking W
21-22	Trenches 7 and 8 looking E
23-24	Trench 11 looking S showing dump levels over natural
25-27	E end of Canmore Place. This is part of development but could not be trenched.