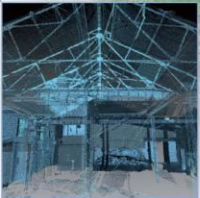
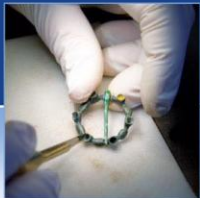


A92 Principle Road Improvements at Hawkhill and Courthill Bends: Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21934
Oasis ID aocarcha1-124101
27th April 2012



A92 Principle Road Improvements at Hawkhill and Courthill Bends: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	Angus Council Engineering and Design Services County Buildings Market Street Forfar DD8 3WR
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NO 6697 5069 to NO 6813 5232
AOC Project No:	21934
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Date of Fieldwork:	23rd February to 17th April 2012
Date of Report:	27th April 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Contents

	Page
List of illustrations	3
List of plates	3
List of appendices	3
Abstract.....	2
1 INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Location.....	3
2 OBJECTIVES	4
3 METHODOLOGY	4
4 RESULTS	5
5 CONCLUSION.....	6
6 BIBLIOGRAPHY	7
APPENDIX 1: Photographic Record	9
APPENDIX 2: Context Record	10
APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register	10
APPENDIX 4: Finds Register.....	10
APPENDIX 5: Sample Register.....	10
APPENDIX 6: <i>Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report</i>	11

List of illustrations

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Figure 1 | Location of the site at Hawkhill |
| Figure 2 | Topsoil Strip and Location of findspots |
| Figure 3 | Plan of Pit [001] Mid Excavation |
| Figure 4 | Section through Pit [001] |

List of plates

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Plate 1 | NE Extent of Topsoil Strip |
| Plate 2 | Flint Fragments Recovered from Ploughsoil |
| Plate 3 | Pit [001] Mid Excavation |
| Plate 4 | Fragments of Vessel 1 Showing Decorated Collar |

List of appendices

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | Photographic Record |
| Appendix 2 | Context Register |
| Appendix 3 | Drawing Register |
| Appendix 4 | Finds Register |
| Appendix 5 | Sample Register |
| Appendix 6 | 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report |

Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on behalf of Angus Council during ground-breaking works associated with improvements to the existing A92 between the Hawkhill and Courthill bends.

The archaeological works were undertaken along the full extent of the proposed development, due to the proximity of the Hawkhill ring ditches, a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

A single feature of archaeological significance was identified and fully excavated during the works. This pit contained prehistoric ceramic.

A post-excavation phase of works will be required in analysing the contents of the pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Angus Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground breaking works associated with improvements to the A92 Arbroath to Montrose Principal Road between the Hawkhill and Courthill bends.
- 1.1.2 The site lies within the administrative area of Angus Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). ACAS required a programme of archaeological works in accordance with *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2011) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011) to determine the nature, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 1.1.3 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2011) outlining the programme of archaeological works was agreed with ACAS in advance of the watching brief being undertaken.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The site is located north of Inverkeilour, overlooking Lunan Bay; the proposed route of the realignment left the current A92 at NO 6813 5232 and rejoined it at NO 6697 5069, running NE/SW.
- 1.2.2 The site is underlain by Andesites and Basalts of the Montrose Volcanic Formation. The drift geology is comprised of Devensian-Diamicton Tills (British Geological Survey).

1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The realignment works lie near the southern edge of the scheduled area of the Hawkhill Ring Ditches (SAM 6283; Scheduled December 1995). An archaeological watching brief in 1999 at the nearby Hawkhill Quarry recorded seven post-holes (NMRS NO65SE 37), reflecting a wider zone of archaeological activity. Slightly further to the north, aerial reconnaissance in 1988 and 1990 observed cropmarks of an unenclosed settlement and a palisaded enclosure (NMRS NO65SE 37). Further cropmarks to the north-east indicate a possible enclosure (NMRS NO65SE 39).
- 1.3.2 To the south of the existing road line indistinct cropmarks, recorded in 1990 by the RCAHMS, were subsequently investigated by excavation in 1999. Four trenches were excavated across the summit and sides of a prominent knoll, largely comprised of a bedrock outcrop. The north and north-west trenches revealed two ditches enclosing the knoll. A single ditch was revealed in each of the south-west and south trenches. The ditch within the south-west trench appeared either to terminate within the trench or to be of segmented construction and unfinished. No features were present within the interior of the enclosure(s) (NMRS. NO65SE 38). Nearby lay the cropmarks of an unenclosed settlement recorded during aerial reconnaissance by the RCAHMS in 1982. Excavations in 1999 and 2000 across a variety of cropmark features and geophysical anomalies revealed a roundhouse and souterrain. A third structure was also revealed – a complex, partly subterranean, roundhouse with substantial stone walls. It was oval in plan, measuring at least 12 m by 10 m externally and was situated on the edge of a terrace. This building had been cut into the

slope, with walls forming revetments around three-quarters of its internal circuit (NMRS NO65SE 25).

- 1.3.3 The course of the road re-alignment traverses a local landscape rich in later prehistoric settlement remains; as such there was a significant probability that associated ground breaking might encounter as yet unknown sub-surface archaeological remains.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource that may be disturbed by the proposed road improvement development works;
- ii) to liaise with ACAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and /or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 All ground breaking works associated with the development were monitored by an experienced field archaeologist. The ground breaking works were undertaken with a combination of tracked bulldozers and 360° tracked excavators equipped with 2.0 m toothless ditching buckets. The watching brief was halted when clean natural subsoil was observed. A digital photographic record was kept during the ground breaking works.



Plate 1 NE extent of Topsoil Strip

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The watching brief was undertaken between 23rd February and 17th April 2012 in generally fair weather conditions.
- 4.2 The watching brief monitored the removal of topsoil along the length of the road realignment scheme, as well as the footprint of a drainage pond located at NO 6711 5128. The topsoil consisted of loose mid reddish brown sandy silt with frequent inclusions of small rounded gravel, and measured between 0.40 m and 0.80 m in depth. The natural subsoil across the site comprised compacted red sandy clay with frequent small and large rounded stones. Two flint fragments (Small Finds 3 and 4) were recovered from the ploughsoil along the route of the road and their position was recorded using the DGPS system operated on site by NRS Group.



Plate 2 Flint Fragments Recovered From Ploughsoil

- 4.2 A single archaeological feature [001] was located within the footprint of the drainage pond. It consisted of a small, sub-circular pit that measured 0.51 long by 0.47m wide and 0.15m deep. The feature had been truncated to this level as a result of ploughing, having been afforded some protection by nearby outcrops of bedrock. On investigation, the fill [002] of the pit was found to contain 26 fragments of friable prehistoric pottery and fragments of burned stone. Analogy with excavated sites containing comparable ceramic material suggests that the feature may represent the remains of either a burial or a rubbish pit (see Cook & Dunbar 2008). No other archaeological features were encountered during the works.



Plate 3 Pit [001] Mid-Excavation



Plate 4 Fragments of Vessel 1 Showing Decorated Collar

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The archaeological works completed at Hawkhill have provided new evidence for prehistoric occupation of the area.
- 5.2 As the overwhelming majority of the site was archaeologically sterile, it is recommended that no further on-site works are necessary. However, a single feature of archaeological significance was identified and fully recorded. As per guidelines set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011), the archaeological feature present within the development area has been subject to full excavation and requires consequent post-excavation analyses. In order

to ascertain a fuller knowledge of the excavation results, a post-excavation research design will be prepared for approval by the planning authority's archaeological advisor.

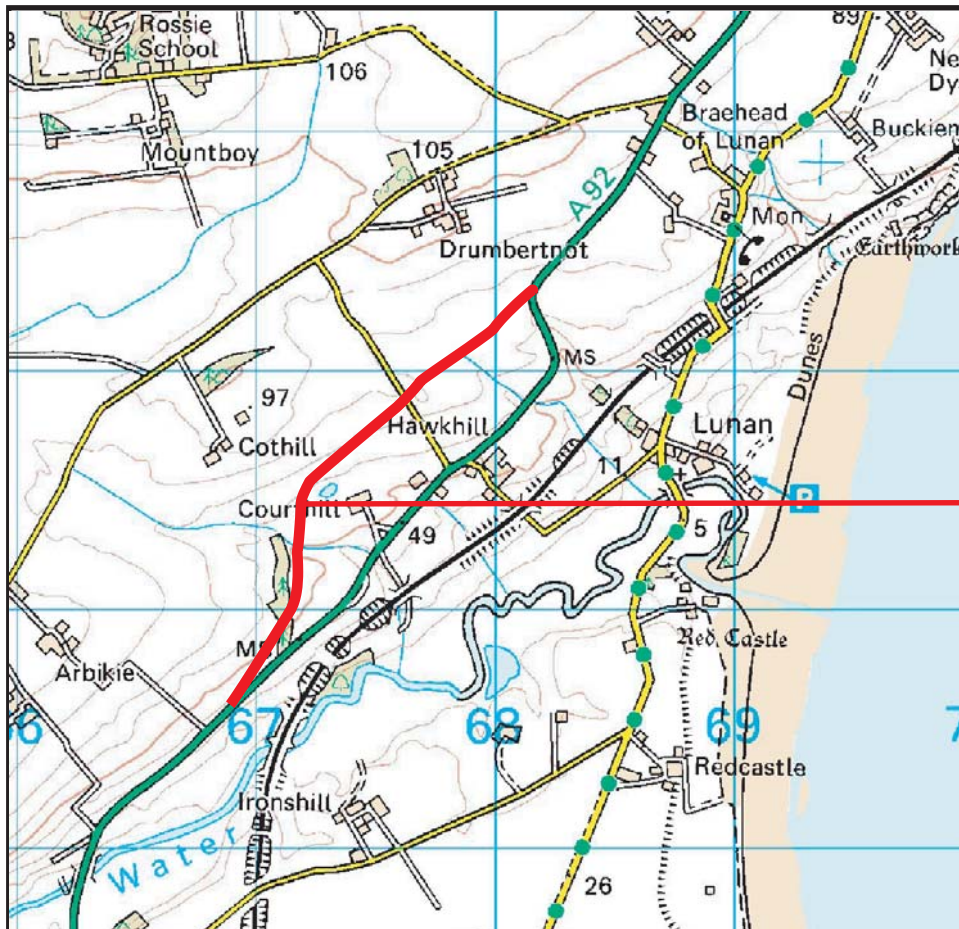
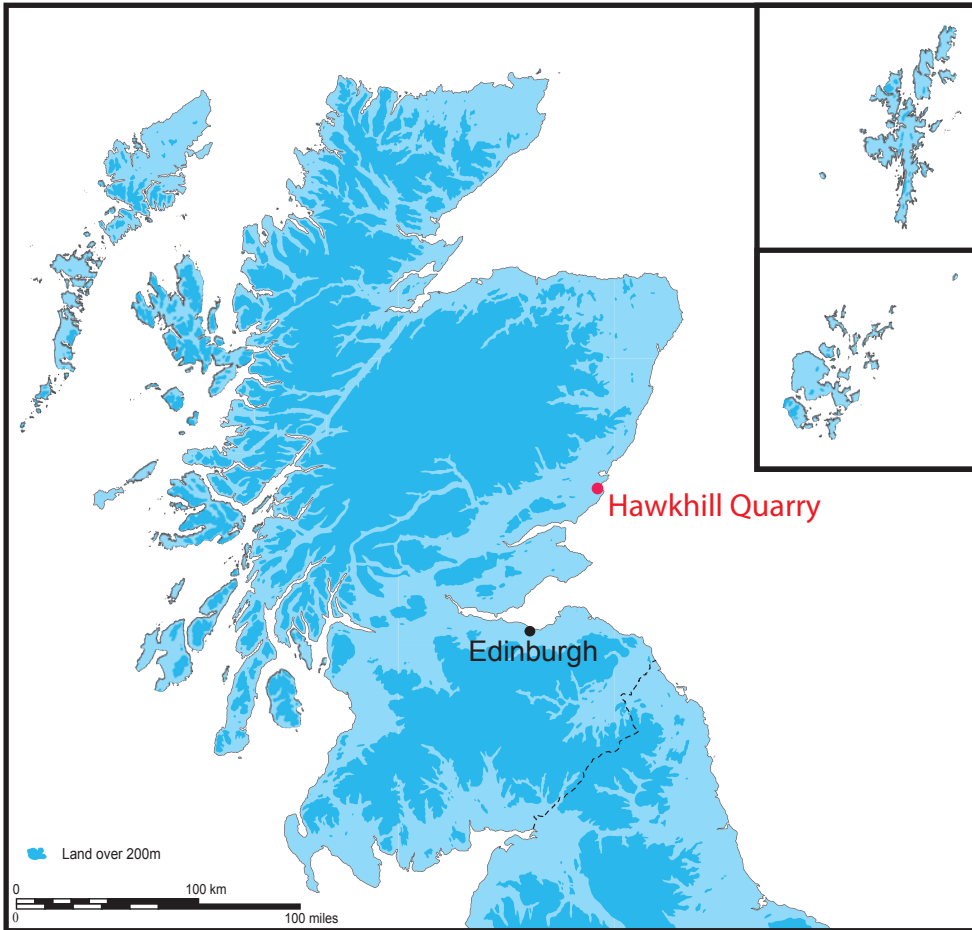
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Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy* (February 2010)

Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*



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Figure 1: Location of the site at Hawkhill

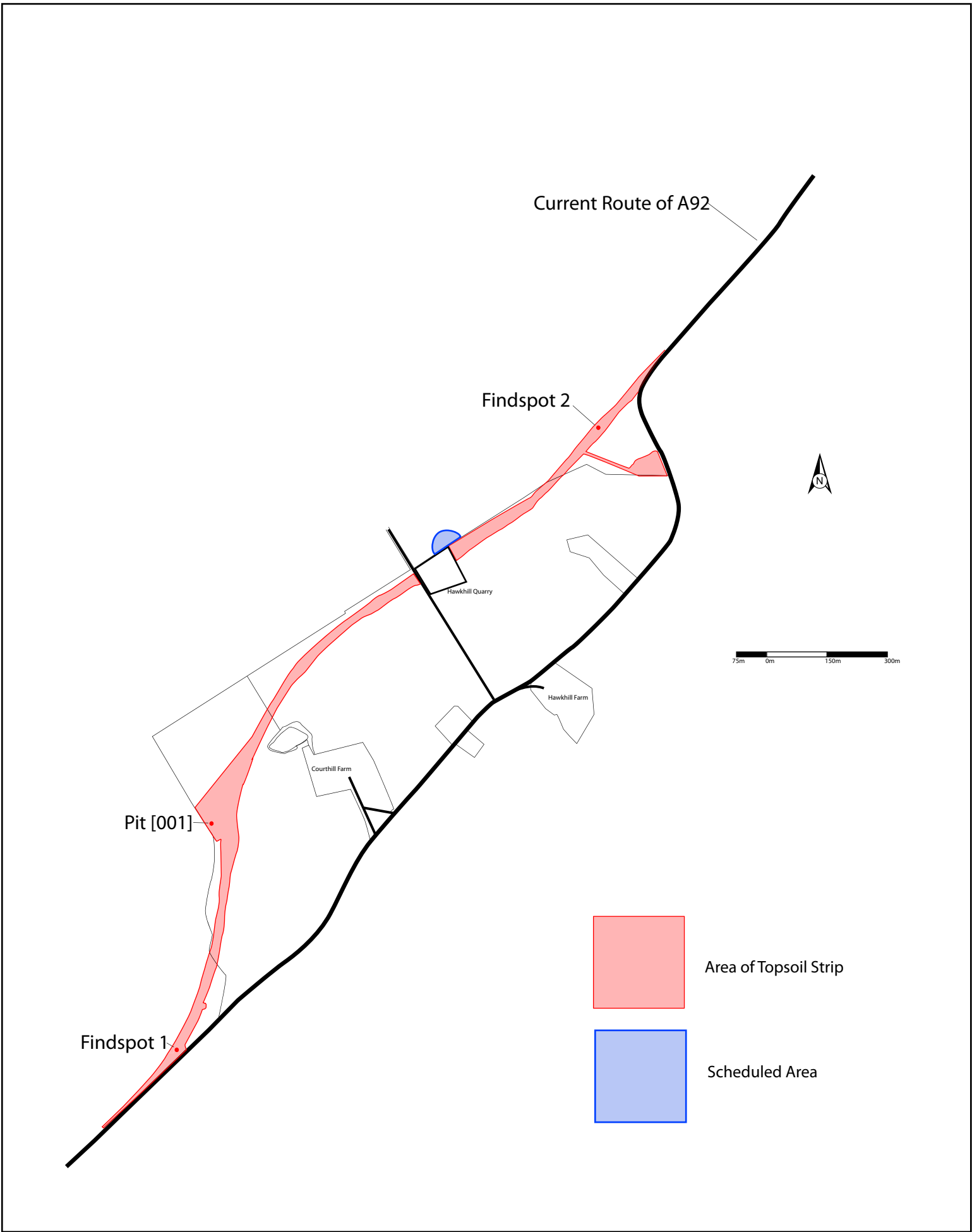


Figure 2, Topsoil Strip and Location of findspots

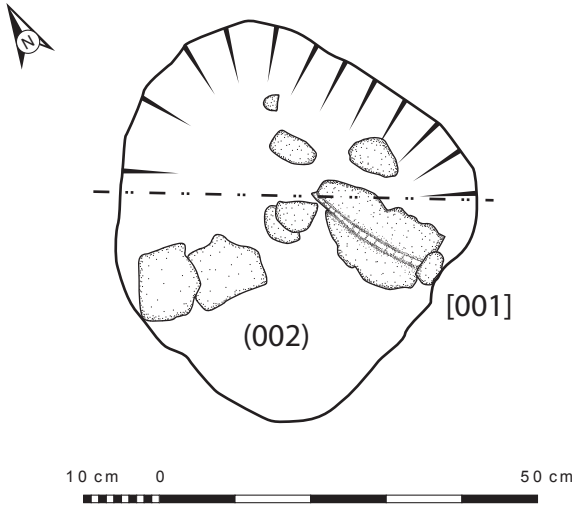


Figure 3, Plan of Pit [001] Mid Excavation

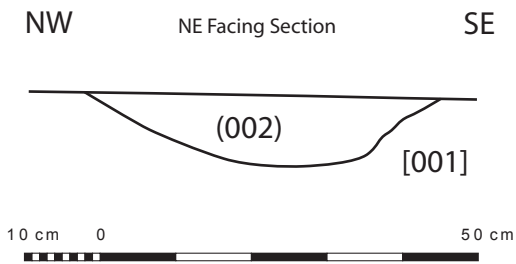


Figure 4, Section through Pit [001]

A92 Principle Road Improvements Watching Brief Data Structure Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Photographic Record

Black & White Print

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration Shot	-
2	Extent of Strip 23/02	SW
3	Extent of Day 1 Stripping	NE
4-5	Extent of Strip 27/02/2012	SW
6-7	Extent of Strip 28/02/2012	SW
8-9	Extent of Strip 28/02/2012	NE
10-11	Extent of Strip 29/02/2012	SW
12-13	Extent of Strip 01/03/2012	SW
14-15	Extent of Strip 01/03/2012	SW
16-17	[001] pre-excavation	S
18-19	[001] mid-excavation	S
20-21	[001] post-excavation	S
22-23	Extent of strip 05/03/2012	NE

Digital

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration Shot	-
2	Extent of strip 23/02	SW
3	Extent of strip 24/02	NE
4	Day 4 working shot	N
5	Day 4 working shot	N
6	Extent of Strip 26/02 strip	N
7	Extent of Strip 27/02	SW
8	Extent of strip 28/02	SW
9	Extent of strip 28/02	NE
10	Extent of strip 29/02	SW
11	Extent of strip 01/03	SW
12	[001] pre-excavation	S
13	[001] mid-excavation	S
14	[001] post-excavation	S
15	Extent of strip 05/03	NE
16	Extent of strip 17/04	S

APPENDIX 2: Context Record

Context	Structure	Description
(000)		Mid reddish brown silty-loam. Frequent small rounded stones (ploughsoil)
[001]	[001]	Cut of shallow sub-circular prehistoric pit
(002)	[001]	Fill of pit [002]. Dark reddish brown clayey loam, friable. Frequent pea gravel
(003)		Mid orangeish brown silty-sand – a moderately compacted subsoil

APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register

No.	Description	Scale
1	NE-facing section of [001]	1:10
2	Plan (mid-excavation) of [001]	1:10

APPENDIX 4: Finds Register

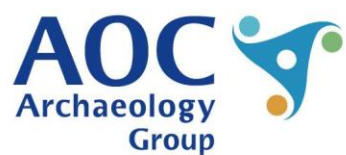
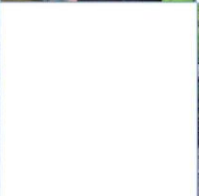
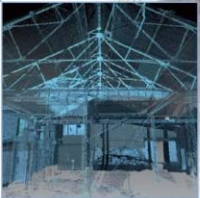
No.	Context	Description
1	(002)	Fragments of prehistoric vessel
2	(002)	Burned Stone
3	(000)	Worked Flint
4	(000)	Worked Flint

APPENDIX 5: Sample Register

Context	Quantity
(002)	15 Litres (100%)

APPENDIX 6: *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Angus
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	A92 Principle Road Improvements at Hawkhill and Courthill Bends
PROJECT CODE:	21934
PARISH:	Lunan
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Jake Streatfeild-James
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S)	NO65SE 37 NO65SE 38
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Pit of prehistoric date, ceramic assemblage
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 6741 5212
START DATE (this season)	23/02/2012
END DATE (this season)	17/04/2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the realignment of the A92 between Angus and Montrose. The new route runs through 2 km of farmland, near two known prehistoric sites: the ring ditches at Hawkhill Quarry (NO65SE 37) and an unenclosed settlement of Late Iron Age Date (NO65SE 38).</p> <p>Monitoring of the topsoil strip revealed a small sub-circular pit of prehistoric date, which was around 0.5 m in diameter. It had suffered plough truncation with a depth of only 0.15 m surviving. On investigation, the fill was found to contain a several sherds of friable, non-glazed prehistoric ceramic, some of which appeared to carry a decorated collar. Two flint fragments were also recovered from the ploughsoil.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	To be confirmed
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Angus Council
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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