

Grampian Custodial Unit, Kittybrewster, Aberdeen: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

AOC Project 22256

OASIS ID – aocarcha1- 146065

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief during ground breaking works at the site of Grampian Custodial Unit, Kittybrewster, Aberdeen.

An archaeological watching brief was required during the ground breaking works due to the possible survival of archaeological remains associated with the 18th Century Aberdeen to Inverurie Canal, which lay adjacent to the eastern boundary of the development.

No significant archaeological remains were noted during the ground breaking works.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Sweet (UK) Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground breaking works at the site of the Grampian Custodial Unit, Kittybrewster, Aberdeen. The development area consists of a small urban site covering approximately 1.54 ha, formerly occupied by industrial units. The watching brief was undertaken in order to satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority, Aberdeen City Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by Judith Stones, Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council. The works were conducted according to the terms of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2012) approved on behalf of Aberdeen City Council by Judith Stones and in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011).

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The development location is centred at NGR: NJ 932 082 (Figure 1). The development lies within the Great Northern Road Industrial Estate, on the northern edge of Aberdeen. The eastern boundary of the site is delimited by the Aberdeen to Forres railway, while the rest of the development is bounded by the industrial estate. The industrial estate is bounded by the Great Northern Road to the west and St. Machar Road to the north. At the time of the initial watching brief works in 2012 buildings associated with 19th Century railway sidings were present at the south end of the development, at the time of the later watching brief there were no buildings or structures present.

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 Although there are no known sites of archaeological interest within the development area, it lies within close proximity to the former location of the Aberdeen to Inverurie Canal, an 18th Century feature. The canal lay to the east of the site, and structures associated with the canal have been recorded to the immediate north. These structures comprise a canal bridge (NMRS; NJ90NW285.8 which carries the St. Machar Road, the boat house (NMRS; NJ90NW285.9) of the former canal, and the Lock Keepers Cottages (NMRS; NJ90NW285.10). The presence of the structures relating to the canal raised the possibility of identifying similar features within the development area (AOC 2012).

1.3.2 Cartographic evidence record that the site was occupied by railway sidings until the 1930's (AOC 2012).

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The nature and schedule of the proposed development required a watching brief to take place during the initial groundworks associated with the project. As such, Judith Stones requested that the initial monitoring works were undertaken to provide further information for the proposed additional mitigation works such as an evaluation.

2.2 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource from any adverse impacts created by the groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the site;

- ii) to liaise with Judith Stones, of the City of Aberdeen Council and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and/or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response for safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording if not.
- iii) To report the results of the watching brief.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 All ground breaking works in the southern fragment of the development were monitored. A carpark is to be built in the northern fragment of the development, and will not impact on the underlying material to any great extent. Bedrock was identified protruding from the various parts of this northern area.
- 3.2 The ground breaking works consisted of a number of trenches of varying lengths, excavated in 3 – 4m stages, which were excavated for the installation of foul and storm water drainage. A single Site Investigation pit was also excavated during this time.
- 3.3 All ground breaking works were carried out by 360° mechanical excavators using a number of differing widths of toothed buckets. The nature and depth of the made ground deposits overlying the natural deposits were recorded, as was the nature of the natural deposits.
- 3.4 Other ground breaking works were monitored during this time, within the area of the custodial building and the platform area, however these tended to stay within the made ground deposits, leaving the underlying natural deposits in-tact.
- 3.5 A digital photographic record was kept during the course of the works. This recorded specific ground breaking works as well as a general overview (Appendix 1).

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The excavated trenches were between 1m to 5m wide. The single Site Investigation Pit measured 10m x 10m.
- 4.2 The overlying, made ground deposits, were recorded as a general mix of demolition material at the south end of the development, whilst to the north they were recorded as recently deposited 'Type 1' material between 1.20m and 0.30m in depth. In the extreme north end below the platform area no made ground deposits or natural deposits were recorded, as this area had been stripped down to bare rock. In the south east corner and also along the western side, just to the south of the entrance, substantial fragments of in-situ reinforced concrete were recorded within and below the made ground deposits.
- 4.3 In general the natural deposits were recorded as light brown compact sands overlying rock. As stated above. No natural deposits above the rock were recorded at the extreme northern end of the monitored area.

- 4.4 The upper platform in the north-west corner consists mainly of mixed, made ground deposits from which outcropping bedrock was recorded.

5 CONCLUSION

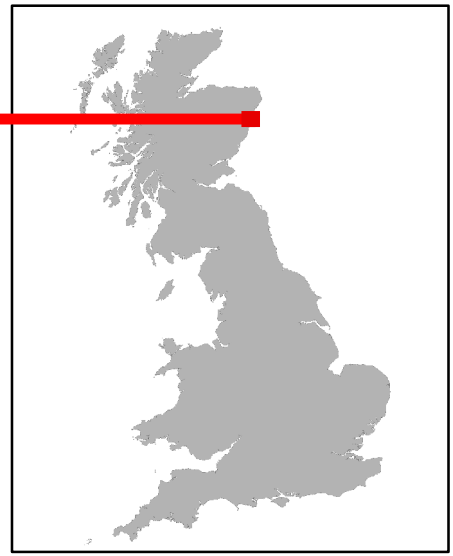
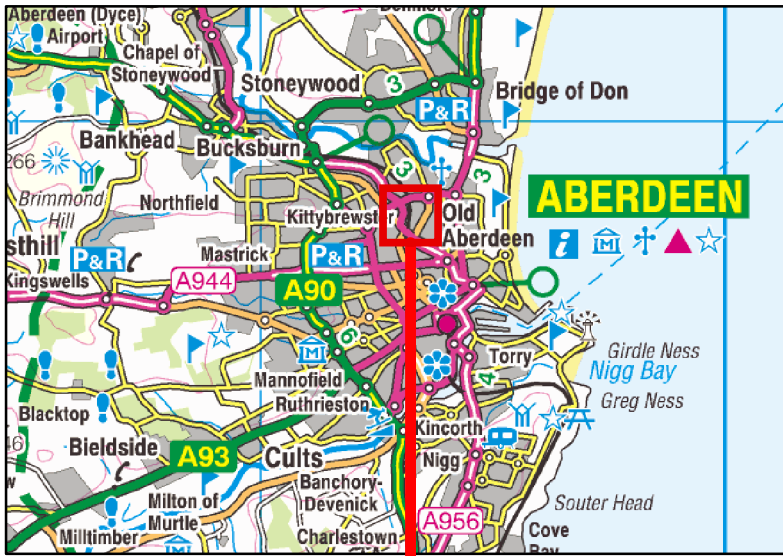
- 5.1 Neither significant archaeological features nor artefacts were identified during the works and it was agreed in consultation with Judith Stones that the works be brought to a conclusion.
- 5.2 Based on the negative result of the watching brief, no further works are considered necessary.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC 2012 Grampian Custodial Unit, Aberdeen. *Written Scheme of Investigation Unpublished Project Design*

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy*.

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



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Figure 1: Site Location Plan

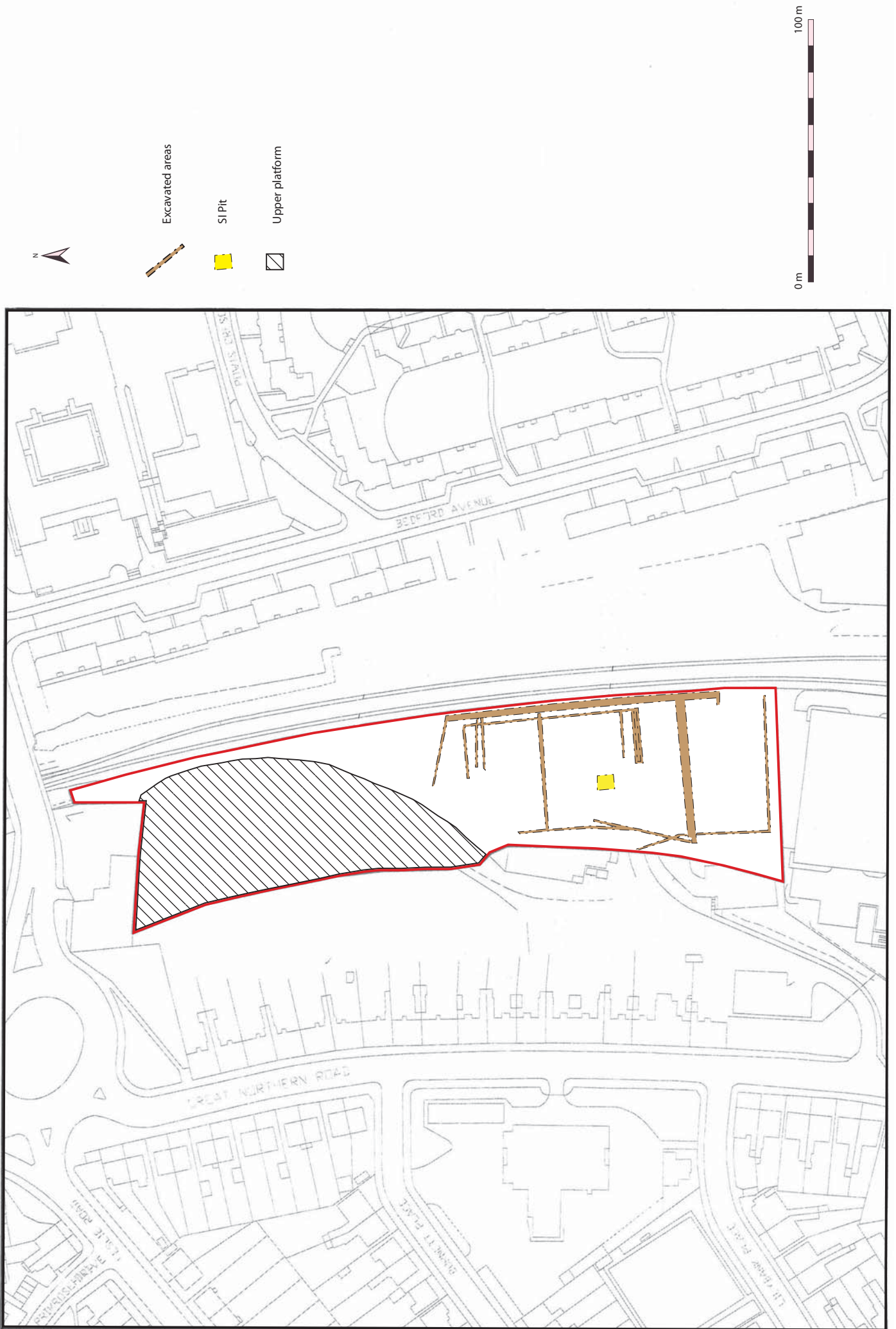


Figure 2 - Watching brief areas

**Grampian Custodial Unit, Kittybrewster,
Aberdeen:
Watching Brief
Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices

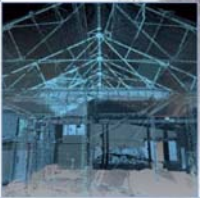
APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

Digital

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration shot	
2	Made ground in south east corner	W
3	Concrete base in south east corner	N
4	Existing pipe in south east corner	W
5	Drainage adjacent to site offices along north west side	N
6&7	Drainage works along southern boundary	W
8	Manhole along eastern boundary	NW
9	Concrete exposed along western boundary	N
10	Stripping vegetation from banking in north west corner	SE
11	Full extent of concrete along western side	N
12	Excavation of made ground on upper platform	S
13	Manhole construction along east side	E
14	Breaking out of old manhole on east side	W
15&16	Further landscaping of banking in north west corner	S
17	Opening of manhole at entrance along east side	W
18	Manhole along eastern side	S
19	Drain cut along north end	W
20&21	Trench across northern part of site	E
22	Manholes along eastern side	S
23&24	Foundation trench along eastern side	N
25	Trench across southern part of site	E
26	Foundation trench at north end of site	E
27&28	Foundation trench at south end of site	NE
29	Drainage works at south west	S
30&31	General view of site	NW
32	Drainage works along west side	S
33&34	General view of site (snow covered)	NW

APPENDIX 2: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeen City
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Grampian Custodial Unit
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 22256
PARISH:	Old Machar
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Alan Duffy
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S)	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 932 082
START DATE (this season)	8 th November 2012
END DATE (this season)	21 st March 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological watching brief was required during the ground breaking works due to the possible survival of archaeological remains associated with the 18th Century Aberdeen to Inverurie Canal, which lay adjacent to the eastern boundary of the development.</p> <p>No significant archaeological remains were noted during the archaeological works.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Sweet (UK) Limited
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Alan.Duffy@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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