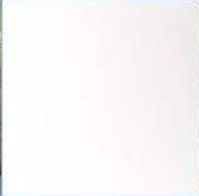


# Alford Academy Link Road, Alford, Aberdeenshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21917  
23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

## Alford Academy Link Road: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

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<b>On Behalf of:</b>	<b>Aberdeenshire Council Infrastructure Services Gordon House Blackhall Road Inverurie AB51 3WA</b>
<b>National Grid Reference (NGR):</b>	<b>NJ 992245</b>
<b>AOC Project No:</b>	<b>21917</b>
<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Alan Duffy</b>
<b>Illustration by:</b>	<b>Diana Sproat</b>
<b>Date of Fieldwork:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> July 2013 – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013</b>
<b>Date of Report:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013</b>

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

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**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013**

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**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013**

**Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013**

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## Summary

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*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on all ground-breaking works at the site of Alford Academy Link Road, Alford, Aberdeenshire. Approximately 30,000 square metres were monitored during the watching brief.*

*No significant archaeological remains were observed during the ground breaking works.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Aberdeenshire Council Infrastructure Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground-breaking works at the site Alford Academy in Alford, Aberdeenshire. The watching brief was undertaken in order to satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority, Aberdeenshire Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). The works were conducted according to the terms of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2013) approved on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council by ACAS 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 academy link road is located to the west of Alford and centred at NGR: NJ 992245 (Figures 1 & 2). The main element of the new link road is bounded to the north by the A944 trunk road, to the south by Greystone Road, by housing to the east and by open fields to the west. All of the fields in the area have been ploughed in the past, though are largely used for rough grazing. Only one field was under crop at the time of the monitoring.

### 1.3 Archaeological background

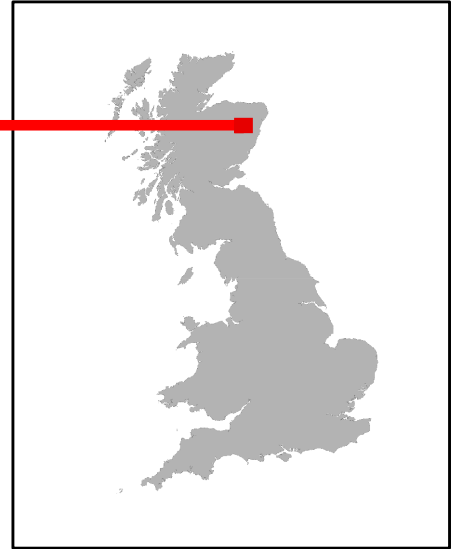
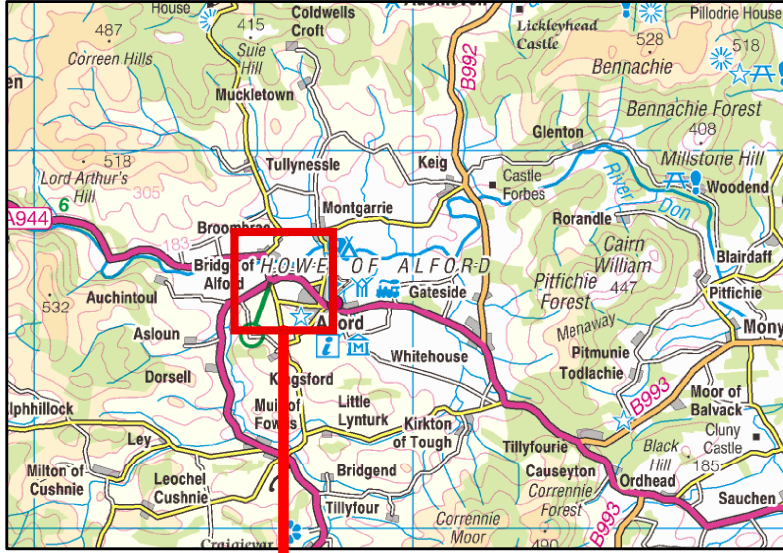
1.3.1 There are no known recorded upstanding or buried archaeological remains recorded within the immediate vicinity of the location of the link road. However, Historic Scotland's Inventory of Battlefields reveals that the new link road may occupy a battlefield ground.

1.3.2 The Battle of Alford (NMRS Ref: NJ15NE 14; NJ 567 162) took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1645, between the victorious Royalist Montrose and the Covenanting General Baillie. It is believed that Montrose sited his troops on Gallows Hill to the west of the new link road, with the battle occurring on lower lying ground to the north-east of Gallows Hill. Much of the evidence for this derives from 18<sup>th</sup> Century or later plans and studies, and much detail with regard to the dispositions of the opposing troops and details of the battle remain uncertain.

1.3.3 There is a 19<sup>th</sup> Century account of a skeleton with a sword and an Elizabethan shilling being found nearby Bloody Faulds. These artefacts appear to have been lost and their provenance is unclear.

1.3.4 A metal detecting survey carried out by AOC Archaeology in 2011 found no evidence for the Battle of Alford (Engl 2011). No metal finds associated with the battle were recovered by the metal detecting survey and





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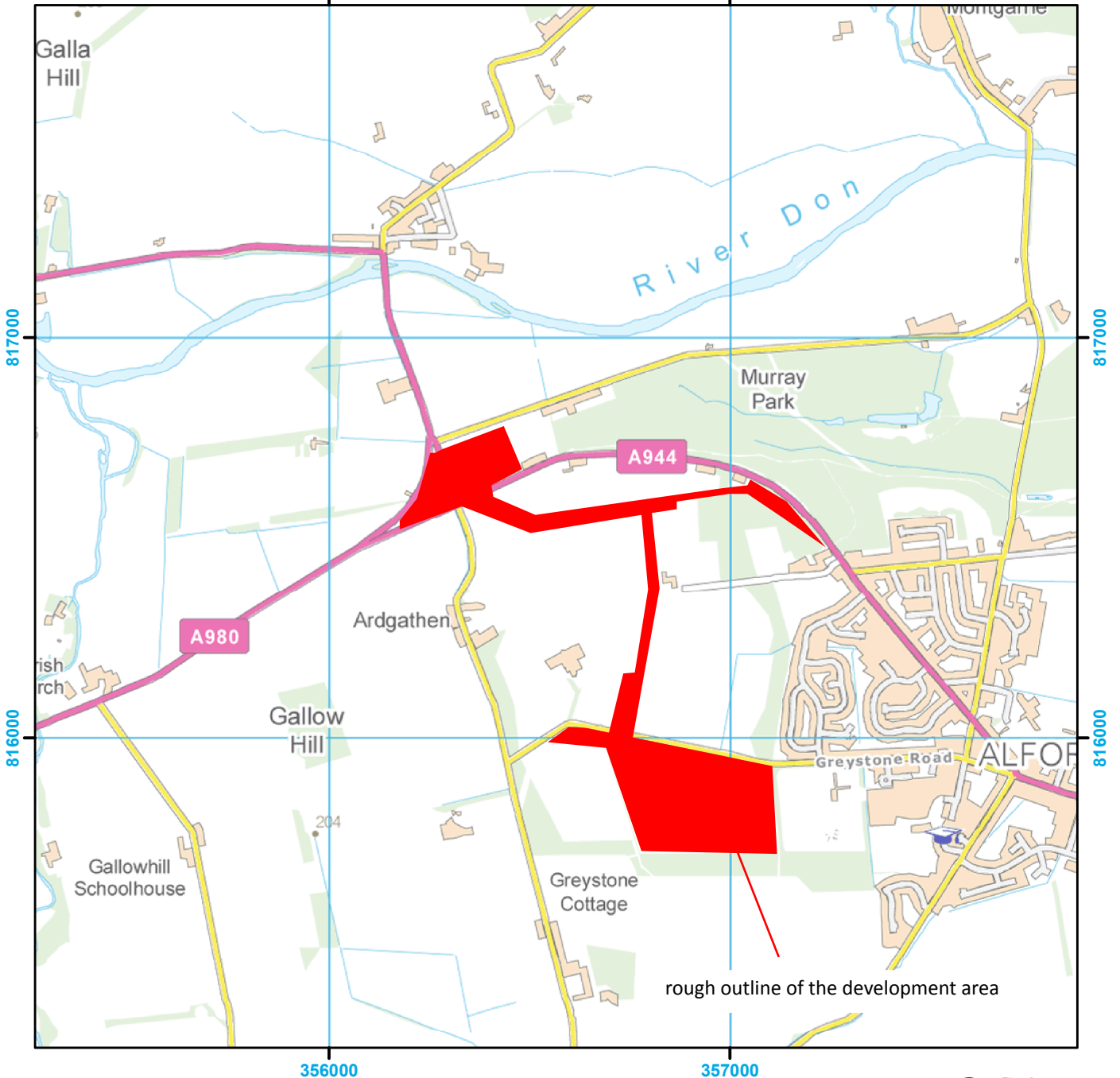


Figure 1: Site location plan

similarly no finds of archaeological significance from either earlier or later periods were recovered. This suggests that the area may have been 'swept' by amateur metal detectors.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 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 creation of the new road;
- 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 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 were carried out by 360° mechanical excavators using smooth bladed ditching buckets 2m – 2.20m wide. The nature and depth of the deposits overlying the natural deposits were recorded, as was the nature of the natural deposits.

3.3 The ground-breaking works were constantly monitored and the spoil was scanned for artefacts and ecofacts. The spoil that was left adjacent to the excavation areas, ie, that material that was not immediately removed to other parts of the development area, was also scanned by a metal detector.

3.4 A digital photographic record was kept during the course of the works. (Appendix 1).

## 4 RESULTS

4.1 In total approximately 30,062m<sup>2</sup> was stripped during the course of the works. This included the Link Road which measured 1500m x 17m, the Ponds at Murray Park and Greystone Road which measured 40m x 44m and 42m x 26 respectively, and the Swale which measured 85m x 18m.

4.2 The upper deposits were all recorded as brown soils, with the exception of the deposits at Murray Park and Field 8, both of which are located within an area of woodland, which were brown peaty soils. The upper soil deposits directly overlay natural geology with a sharp boundary. Occasional plough marks were noted at the upper surface of the underlying deposits, as were occasional field drains.

4.3 Soil depths were recorded between 0.20m and 0.45m. The underlying deposits were recorded as light brown sands and gravels with occasional very large glacial erratics.

4.4 Occasional modern ceramics and glass were noted during the ground-breaking works, although no significant archaeological remains were noted.

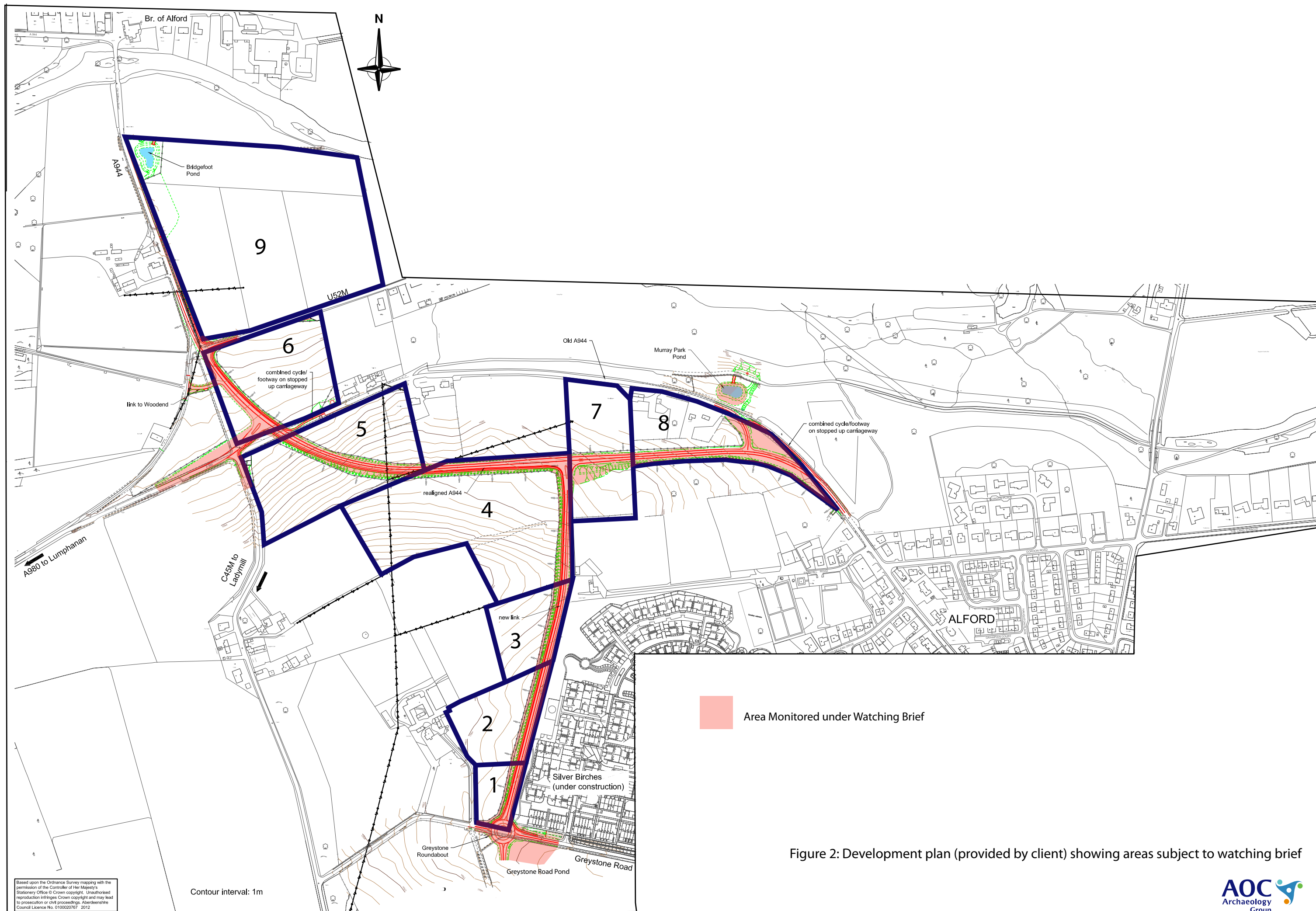


Figure 2: Development plan (provided by client) showing areas subject to watching brief

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## 5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Despite the relatively large area stripped during the course of the watching brief, no significant archaeological remains were discovered.

## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC 2013 Alford Schools Campus and Access Track Archaeological Watching Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation. Unpublished Client Report.

Engl, R 2011 Alford Schools Campus & Access Road: Metal Detecting Survey Report. Unpublished Client Report

Scottish Government 2010 Scottish Planning Policy.

Scottish Government 2011 PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology.

# **Alford Academy Link Road, Aberdeenshire: Watching Brief Data Structure Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

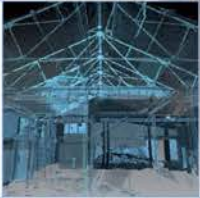
Digital

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration shot	
2-3	Field 1 – western side, post ex	S
4-5	Borrow Pit - post ex	SE
6	Field 2 – field drain	N
7	Field 2 – post ex	N
8	Field 3 – post ex	S
9	Field 4 –initial stripping	N
10	Field 8 – post ex, west end	W
11-15	Field 8 – soil stripping, east end	E
16	Field 4 – e-w section, soil stripping	E
17	Field 4 – n-s section, post ex	S
18	Fields 1, 2 & 3 - post ex	N
19	Field 4 – field drain	N
20-21	Field 8 – tree holes	W
22-23	Murray Park Pond – tree removal	S
24-25	Field 7 – post ex	W
26-27	Field 5 – soil stripping, east end	E
28-29	Greystone Road Pond – soil stripping	E
30-31	Greystone Road Pond – post ex	E
32	Field 6 – soil stripping	S
33	Field 6 – soil stripping	N



**APPENDIX 2: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report**

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Aberdeenshire Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME</b>	Alford Academy Link Road
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	AOC 21917
<b>PARISH:</b>	Alford
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Alan Duffy
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	AOC Archaeology
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S)</b>	NJ51NE
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Battlefield
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NJ 992 245 (centred)
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2013
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2013
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	Metal Detecting Survey
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was required during the ground breaking works associated with the construction of a new link road.  No significant archaeological remains were noted during the archaeological works.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Aberdeenshire Council
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
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<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b> (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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