

Park Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

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ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

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Park Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: Yeoman McAllister Architects

National Grid Reference (NGR): NT 0940 8725

OASIS No: aocarcha1-176031

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

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Summary

AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Yeoman McAllister Architects on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the proposed development of two adjacent house plots on land to the north of Comely Park House, Park Avenue, Dunfermline.

After consultation it was considered preferable to evaluate the area through trial trenching. This was restricted to those areas subject to the watching brief. Five evaluation trenches were excavated totalling 43.0 linear metres.

The evaluation trenches revealed significant archaeological remains in the form of a sandstone path and two nursery beds of probable post-medieval date. Several residual medieval ceramics were recovered from one of the nursery beds. It is probable that the remains relate to the 18th -19th century estate of Comely Park House (NGR NT 0940 8725).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology was commissioned by Yeoman McAllister Architects on behalf of their client to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief during ground breaking works (Ref: 08/03485/WFULL) associated with the development of two adjacent house plots land to the north of Comely Park House, Park Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife. The site lies within the administrative area of the Fife Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the Fife Council Archaeological Unit (FCAU). A programme of archaeological works is required in keeping with best practice requirements outlined in current planning guidelines *Scottish Planning Policy* (2010) & *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development area is located on the western side of Dunfermline, but close to the core of the medieval burgh and to the east of Dunfermline Abbey (NGR NT 0940 8725). It occupies a corner site with Park Avenue to the north and New Row to the west, and is located north of and within the grounds of Comely Park House (within its walled garden).

1.3.1 Archaeological Background

1.3.1.1 The development site stands near the medieval core of Dunfermline and to the north of the Category C Listed Comely Park House, which is an 1892 remodelling of an earlier structure incorporating a house of 1785 with 19th century additions. The listing includes the house's associated boundary wall, walled garden and outhouses to the north (Listed Building HB No. 26022). The Listed Building report notes, '*the core of the building, a symmetrical 3-bay house, was erected in 1785 following the destruction of an earlier structure in a fire. It appears to have been extended to the N and partly to the E in the earlier to mid 19th century and had further been extended to the E and had a small lean-to added to N by 1892...In 1927 the building was sold to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, which has occupied it as offices since then. At one point in the early 19th century the house belonged to Dr Robert Stenhouse, who, in 1800, carried out the first vaccinations for smallpox.*' It also notes that '*New Row, Comely Park House Sundial*' is a late 18th century listed sundial in the grounds of the house, to the south of the development area (Listed Building HB No. 26023).

1.3.1.2 The house and its associated outhouse range appear on Wood's map of 1823, while the grounds to the north (within which the present development is located) is shown as an empty area (likely gardens associated with the house), surrounded by a roughly rectangular boundary, perhaps an early (larger) form of the present walled garden. The Ordnance Survey town plan of 1854 also depicts this rectangular area to the north of the house, though as the mapping is more detailed, it is clearly an area of gardens with occasional trees associated with the house. The Ordnance Survey mapping of 1894 depicts the insertion of Park Avenue to the north of the house, with the boundaries of the walled garden appearing largely as they do today. A large greenhouse structure is depicted on the south side of the northern wall of the garden, with smaller greenhouses in the north-west corner and a roofed structure in the north-east. A similar layout is depicted on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1915 and 1926.

1.3.1.3 To the west of the development area trial excavations were carried out in January 1993 on the west side of New Row and to the north of Priory Lane on the site of the old Lauder College (NMRS No. NT08NE 112; Coleman 1993). Excavation revealed the precinct wall of Dunfermline Abbey (NMRS No. NT08NE 1) which lies to the west of the site. Dunfermline Abbey is a Scheduled Monument (SM No. 90116). A further rescue excavation on the site of the former Lauder Technical College revealed a stretch of the precinct wall, probably dating from the 14th century and an earlier boundary ditch. Within one of the burgage plots laid out against the precinct wall were the remains of a medieval

corn-drying kiln and a structure thought to be a loom stance, dating from the early 19th century (Lewis 1995).

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 excavation and ground breaking works associated with the development of two adjacent house plots works at Park Avenue;
- ii) to liaise with Douglas Speirs, FCAU 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 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC Archaeology 2013) was agreed with FCAU which proposed the monitoring of all ground reduction and excavation works necessitated by the development of land to the north of Comely Park House, Park Avenue, Dunfermline (centred at NGR: NT 0940 8725). The client preferred that five trenches be excavated over the areas to be included in the watching brief. These trenches were undertaken in lieu of the watching brief. All ground reduction was undertaken under constant archaeological monitoring. Machine excavation was in shallow units/spits and ceased on the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil. Spoil was scanned for artefacts. Monitoring ceased once an archaeological sterile natural subsoil surface was observed.

3.2 All trenches were excavated with a 8 tonne tracked excavator using a 1.2 m wide ditching bucket. The trench details are summarised in Appendix 1. Machine excavation was conducted in shallow units/spits through the overburden to the upper surface of the underlying geological deposits. The trial trenching was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures.

4 RESULTS

4.1 The five excavated trenches revealed a topsoil of a well sorted, medium brown, clay loam 0.30 m to 0.70 m thick. This in-turn overlay a natural subsoil of yellow/brown boulder clay with occasional small boulders.

4.2 The excavation of Trench 2 revealed the remains of a substantial sandstone path. This feature was composed of large rectangular and sub-rectangular slabs of sandstone measuring 0.80 m by 0.40 m and 0.05 m thick. The path was uncovered at 15.6 m from the western end of the trench and was aligned north to south. The path appeared un-bonded and laid directly on the natural. The feature lay 0.70 m beneath the current ground surface.

4.3 A linear cut [006] 0.80 m wide and 0.20 m in depth was also revealed within Trench 2. The cut was aligned east to west and was flat bottomed with steeply sloping sides. The cut was filled with dark brown sandy clay [007] 0.20 m in depth. This contained several sherds of residual medieval pottery (SF 1). The cut is the probable remains of a post-medieval nursery bed.



Plate 1: Post-excavation shot of Stone Path Trench 2

- 4.4 A second linear cut was revealed within Trench 3. This was identical in form and dimensions to [006]. The feature was again filled with dark brown sandy clay [007] 0.20 m in depth. No small finds were revealed.



Plate 2: North facing section through Nursery Bed Trench 2

5 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The evaluation revealed limited significant archaeological remains in the form of the probable post-medieval path and nursery beds. Given the nature of the development being undertaken, it is probable that no further *in situ* deposits will be affected within the proposed area. No further archaeological investigations are therefore recommended. This will require confirmation by, and be at the discretion of, Mr Douglas Spiers of the Fife Archaeology Unit (FCAU).

6 REFERENCES

AOC Archaeology 2014 *Park Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife: Archaeological Watching Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished client method statement

Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. Archaeology and Planning. Scottish Government Nov.2008.

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011*

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Appendices

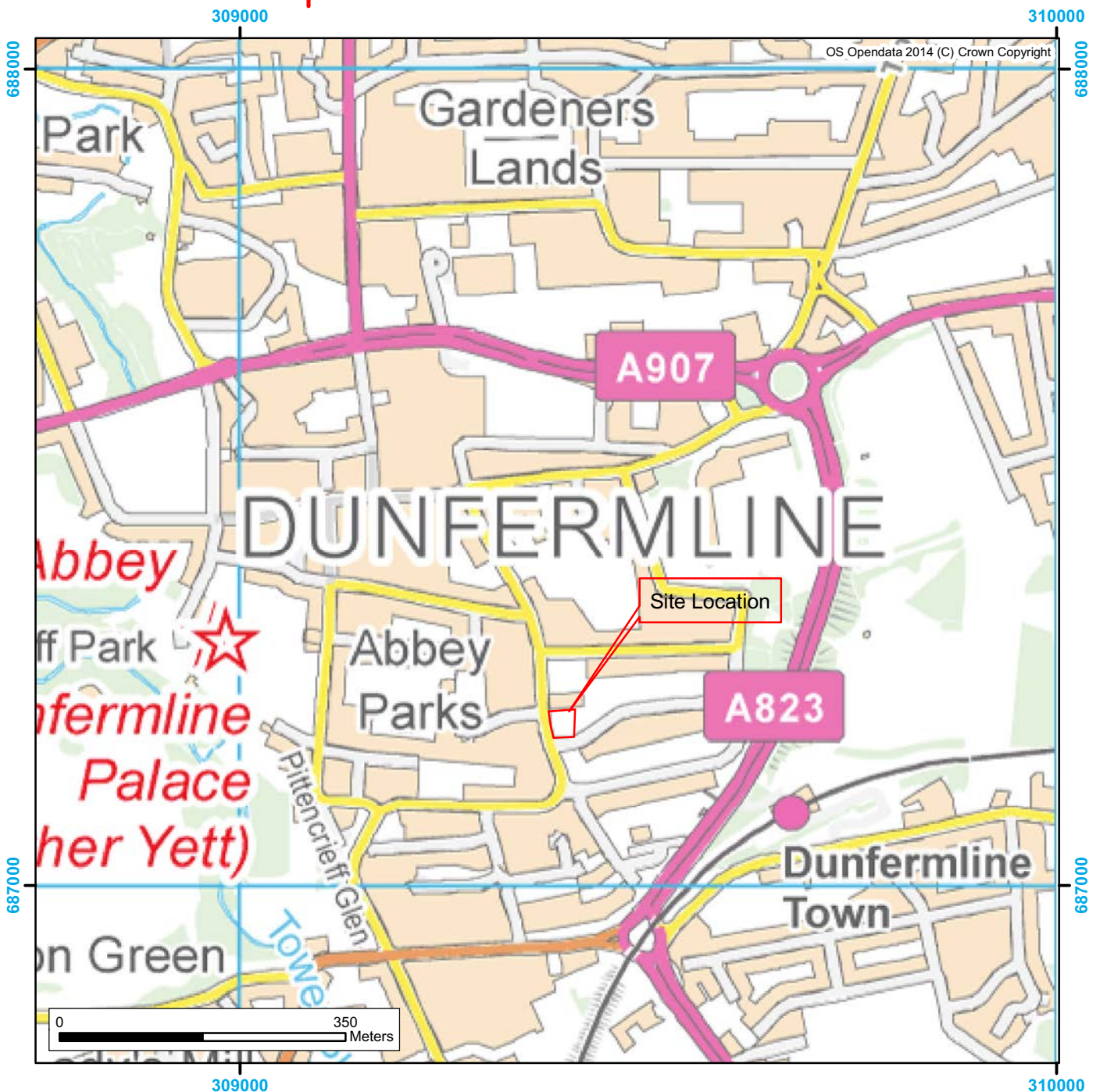
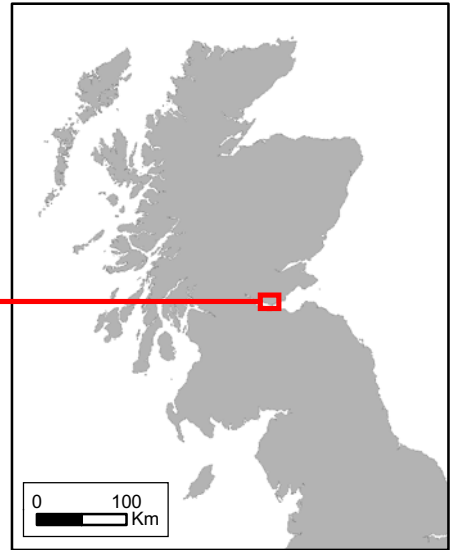
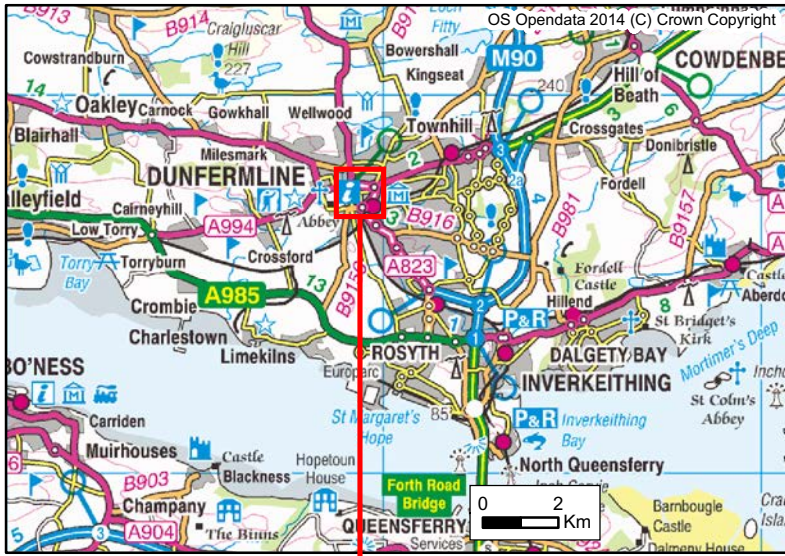
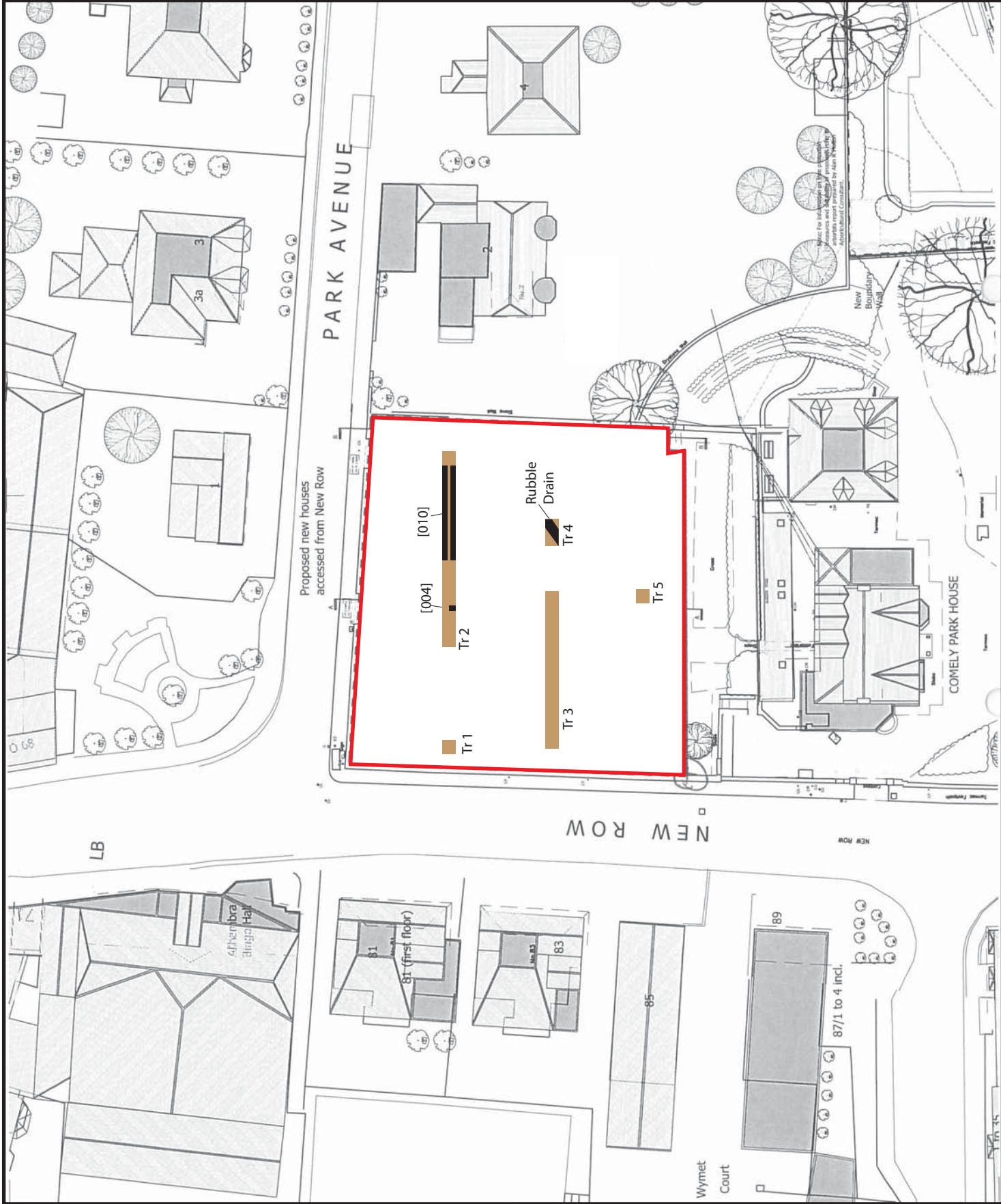
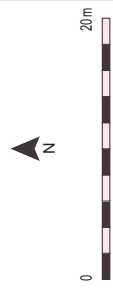


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Figure 2 -
Trench Location plan

- Development Area
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological features



APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

Trench 1

Dimensions	1.0m by 1.2 m
Orientation	N/A
Depth of Topsoil	0.60 m
Depth of Excavation	1.70 m
Depth of Made Ground	None
Features	None
Subsoil	Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay
Finds	White ceramics observed within topsoil

Trench 2

Dimensions	22.0m by 1.2 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m
Depth of Made Ground	None
Features	Stone path [004] and two nursery planting beds [006] & [010]
Subsoil	Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay
Finds	13 th – 17 th ceramics observed within [007]

Trench 3

Dimensions	15.6 m by 1.2 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.80 m
Depth of Made Ground	0.30 m (re-deposited natural)
Excavation Depth	1.30 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Yellow/brown boulder clay
Finds	None

Trench 4

Dimensions	2.5 m by 1.2 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.30 m
Depth of Made Ground	None
Excavation Depth	0.50 m
Features	Rubble drain
Subsoil	Yellow/brown boulder clay
Finds	None

Trench 5

Dimensions	2.0m by 1.2 m
Orientation	N/A
Depth of Topsoil	0.30 m
Depth of Made Ground	None (re-deposited natural)
Excavation Depth	0.30 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Yellow/brown boulder clay
Finds	None

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Digital Register

Frame	Trench	Description	From
1	-	Registration	-
2	-	View of site	SW
3	-	View of site	W
4	-	View of site	S
5	Tr.1	Trench 1 north facing section	N
6	-	View of site	S
7	-	View of site	E
8	-	View of site	NW
9	-	View of site	W
10	Tr.2	Trench 2 east facing section	E
11	Tr.2	Stone path	N
12	Tr.2	Trench 2 east facing section	E
13	Tr.2	Trench 2 west end of trench	W
14	Tr.2	Trench 2 south facing section [004]	S
15	Tr.2	East facing view through [006-010]	E
16-17	Tr.2	East facing view through [006] –[007]	E
18	Tr.3	West facing view	W
19	Tr.3	South facing view	S
20	Tr.4	South facing view	S
21	Tr.5	South facing view	S

APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT REGISTER

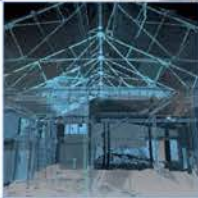
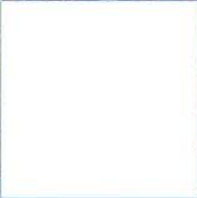
Context	Trench	Description
[001]	All	Topsoil – dark grey brown sandy loam 0.30 m -0.80 m in depth.
[002]	All	Sub-soil – Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay
[003]	2	Re-deposited natural - Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay 0.40 m thick.
[004]	2	Stone path – Single course of un-bonded sandstone slabs measuring 0.80 m by 0.05 m thick. Path 0.70 m below surface. Associated with former estate gardens.
[005]	-	Void
[006]	2	Linear cut. Aligned east to west. Dimensions; 1.00 m E/W by 0.80 m N/S. Runs parallel with [010]. Filled by (007). Nursery Bed.
[007]	2	Fill of [006]. Friable dark grey/brown sandy clay. Fill is 0.20 m in depth contains residual medieval ceramics (SF 1). Fill of Nursery Bed.
[008]	3	Re-deposited natural. Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay with occasional coal inclusions. Deposit 0.10 m in depth. Overlies (009)
[009]	3	Sub-soil – Yellow/brown sandy boulder clay
[010]	2	Linear cut. Aligned east to west. Dimensions; 1.00 m E/W by 0.80 m N/S. Runs parallel with [0006]. Filled by (011). [Nursery Bed.
[011]	2	Fill of [010]. Friable dark grey/brown sandy clay. Fill is 0.20 m in depth.

APPENDIX 4: SMALL FINDS REGISTER

Number	Context	Description
001	[007]	Medieval ceramic bodysherds x 4

APPENDIX 5: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Fife Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Park Avenue, Dunfermline
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 22682
PARISH:	Dunfermline
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Rob Engl
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Estate
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Post medieval stone path and nursery beds. Residual medieval ceramics
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 0940 8725
START DATE (this season)	6 th March 2014
END DATE (this season)	6 th March 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Yeoman McAllister Architects on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the proposed development of two adjacent house plots on land to the north of Comely Park House, Park Avenue, Dunfermline.</p> <p>After consultation it was considered preferable to evaluate the area through trial trenching. This was restricted to those areas subject to the watching brief. Five evaluation trenches were excavated totalling 43.0 linear metres.</p> <p>The evaluation trenches revealed significant archaeological remains in the form of a sandstone path and two nursery beds of probable post-medieval date. Several residual medieval ceramics were recovered from one of the nursery beds. It is probable that the remains relate to the 18th-19th century estate of Comely Park House.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Yeoman & McAllister
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ARCHIVE LOCATION	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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