

A90 Finavon Junction, Angus: Archaeological Evaluation

Data Structure Report

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1 Overview

- 1.1 This Data Structure Report presents the findings of archaeological investigative works required by Jacobs for BEAR on behalf of Transport Scotland in respect to the proposed improvements to the A90 Finavon Junction, Angus. The archaeological works were designed to mitigate the impact on the archaeological remains within the development area.
- 1.2 The site (NGR: NO 493 573, OD 50m) is currently an arable field bounded to the south by the A90, to the south west by the South Esk River, to the east by the B957 and to the north by the old road to Tannadice House.
- 1.3 There are no known archaeological sites within the development area. However, within the same field there are cropmarks (NO45NE3.6) of an indeterminate nature. Within 200m of the site is the Gate lodge (NO45NE57.2) and lodge gates (NO45NE57.5) for Tannadice House (NO45NE57.0). To the east and north east of the site are the remains of a Roman temporary camp (NO45NE.21).
- 1.4 The findings presented below inform on the character of any archaeologically significant features within the proposed access road corridor. The character of any archaeological mitigation will need to be agreed with Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service who advise Angus Council.
- 1.5 Rathmell Archaeology Ltd was appointed by Jacobs on behalf of Transport Scotland to act with regard to the archaeological issues.

2 Project Works

- 2.1 The programme of works agreed with Angus Council commenced with an archaeological evaluation through a machine cut trench anticipated to extend to 210m along the centre line of the proposed road. In total 200m was excavated along the whole centre line of the proposed road, with the on-site works taking place on the 16th and 17th of January 2008.
- 2.2 Two bales of hay were placed at the end of the evaluation trench nearest the South Esk River, as per the requirements of Scottish Natural Heritage, to prevent any silt run off in to the river.
- 2.3 The majority of exposed features within the trenches were investigated and evaluated to determine archaeological significance, as stated in the agreed Method Statement. All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Scotland Policy Statements.

3 Findings: Desktop study

- 3.1 *Statutory protected sites*
 - 3.1.1 The desktop study did not identify the presence within the development area of any sites protected for their archaeological or historical merit under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 or buildings protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1997 (Historic Scotland 1998).
 - 3.1.2 Nor were any sites identified that have the confident potential to contain the burial of human skeletal material, and hence raise the difficulties of the crime of violation of sepulchre (the common law crime of unlawful interference with human remains).
 - 3.1.3 However, within 1000m to the southeast of the site is Finavon Castle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 2464; NMRS NO45NE18) a 17th Century L shaped tower house.



Figure 1a: Roy's Military Map 1747-55



Figure 1b: Thompson 1820



Figure 1c: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1865



Figure 1d: 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey 1897

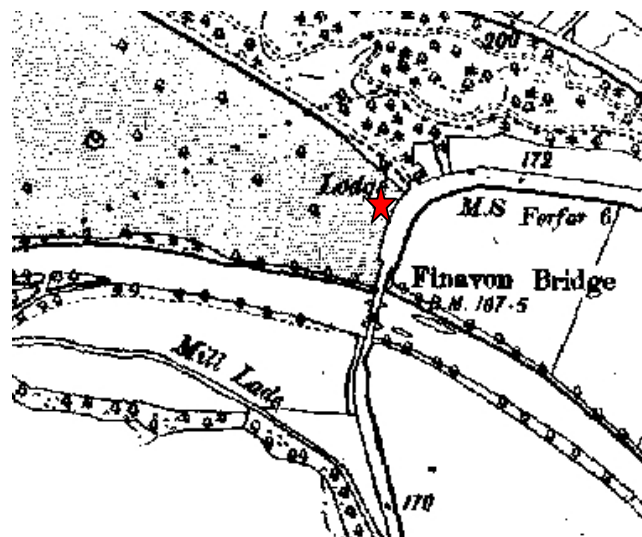


Figure 1e: 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey 1908

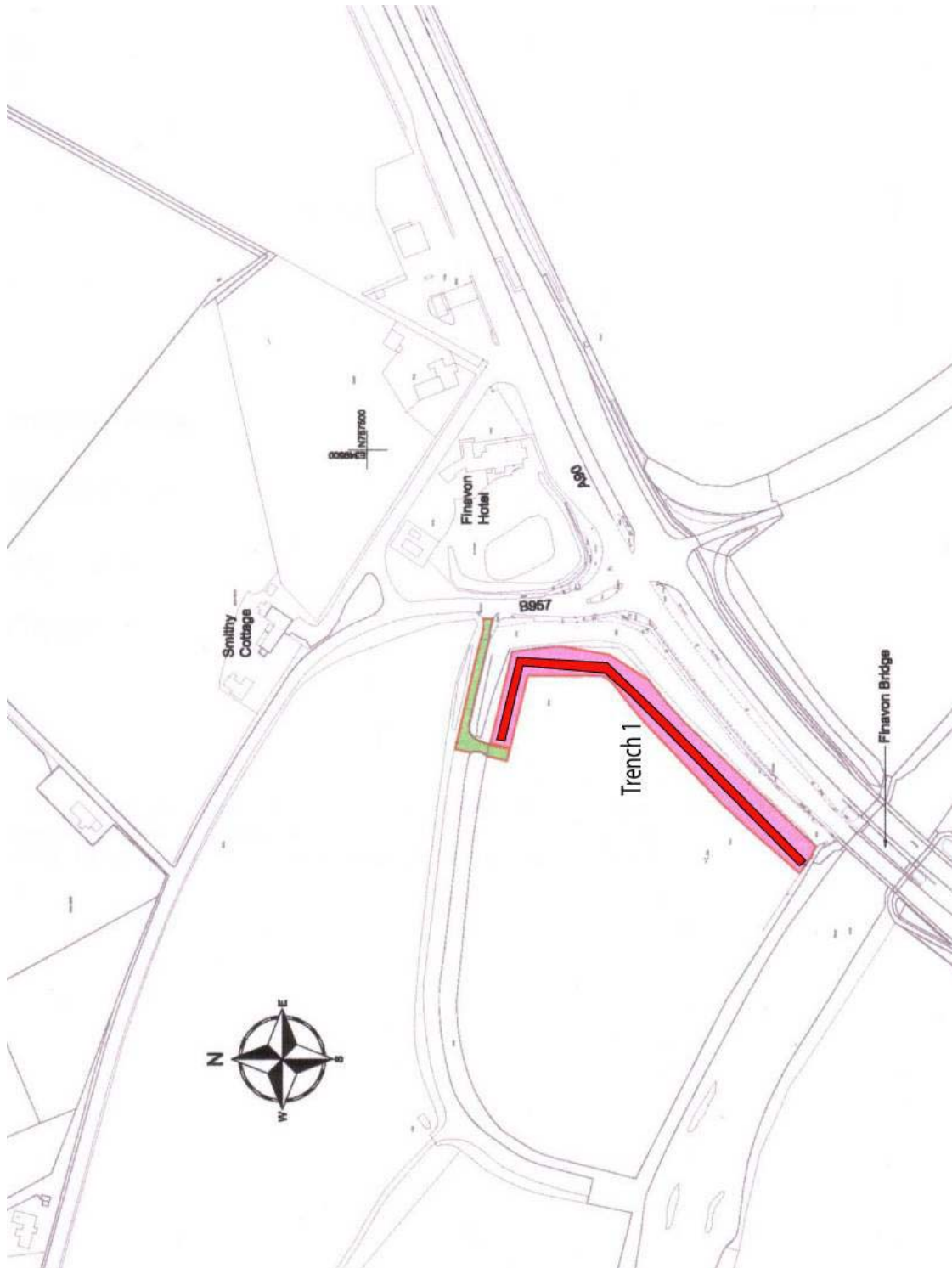


Figure 2: Trench plan as dug



Figure 3a: Trench from the West



Figure 3b: Trench from the South



Figure 3c: Trench from the North



Figure 3d: Trench from the North East

3.2 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 3.2.1 The National Monuments Records of Scotland (NMRS) show that within the same field as the site there are cropmarks (NO45NE3.6) of an indeterminate nature. Within 200m of the site is the Gate lodge (NO45NE57.2) and lodge gate (NO45NE57.5) for Tannadice House (NO45NE57.0).
- 3.2.2 To the east and north east of the site is the remains of a Roman temporary camp (NO45NE.21), which is described in 1973 as rectangular in shape measuring 420m from NW to SE by 360m transversely (c. 15ha), with two gates being recorded, on the NE and SE respectively, both guarded by a titulum (St Joseph 1973). However in 1987 when part of the fort excavated along with Marcus temporary fort, no titulum were observed (Halpin 1992).

4 Findings: Evaluation

- 4.1 The single evaluation trench showed a common stratigraphic sequence with topsoil (001) over varying subsoil (002) and (003). The topsoil was dark brown clay silt that varied in depth from 190mm to 300mm. The majority of the trench had a mid brown sand subsoil (002) evident, between +131m and +187m a gravel subsoil (103), of rounded and sub-rounded stones ≤50mm was present.
- 4.2 *Modern Features*
- 4.2.1 The only features present within the trench bed were plough scars (004) which were aligned WNW to ESE and in general measured 200mm wide and 50mm deep with a mid brown silt sand fill. The plough scars were present from +0m to +23.2m after which they petered out.
- 4.2.2 No field drains were present in the trench, though sherds of modern white glaze pottery were present within the topsoil.

5 Discussion

- 5.1 Given the general shallow nature of the topsoil in the site and the fact that the field in which the site is situated is heavily ploughed the lack of any features is of no great surprise, as any features will have been ploughed out. The absence of any material culture, other than the modern white glaze pottery, supports the absence of any archaeology.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The evaluation trench did not reveal any archaeological features or materials of archaeological significance. Consequently, we recommend that the most appropriate response is that no further archaeological works be carried out.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed improvements at the A90 Finavon Junction, Angus (NGR: NO 49392 57383). An evaluation was carried out from the 16th to the 17th January 2008. The evaluation comprised a single trench that followed the centre line of the proposed work.
- 7.2 There was a common stratigraphy along the length of the trench, with only two variations in the subsoil. No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were recovered although very occasional modern detritus of white glaze wares was noted in the topsoil of the trench.

8 References

8.1 Documentary

AMAA	1979	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
Comar, A	1834-45	' <i>Parish of Oathlaw</i> ', Statistical Accounts of Scotland
Halpin, E	1992	' <i>The Roman Temporary Camps at Marcus and Finavon</i> ' Proceeding of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 122, Edinburgh
Raiker, T	1791-99	' <i>Parish of Oathlaw</i> ' 2 nd Statistical Accounts of Scotland
SODev	1994	<i>National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning</i> , Scottish Office Development Department.
SOEnv	1994	<i>Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology</i> , Scottish Office Environmental Department.

8.2 Cartographic

1747-55	Roy's Military Map	Area around Fofar; Sheet 19/3b
1820	Thomson	North part of Angus Shire
1865	1 st Edition Ordnance Survey	Forfarshire Sheet
1897	2 nd Edition Ordnance Survey	Forfarshire Sheet
1908	3 rd Edition Ordnance Survey	Forfarshire Sheet

Appendix 1: Trench Details

Within this appendix a standardised set of data pertaining to the evaluation trenches is presented.

All measurement distances quoted along the trench measure based on the quoted orientation of the trench. See Figure 2 for trench locations.

Trench 1

Orientation:	West to east then swinging round to the southwest
Size:	200m by 1.8m (360m ²).
Topsoil depth:	190mm to 300mm.
Subsoil character:	Subsoil (102) mid brown sand and a gravel subsoil (103), of rounded and sub-rounded stones ≤50mm was present..
Modern features:	3 Linear plough scars (104).
Significant features:	None
Artefacts:	None.

Appendix 2: Registers

Context Summaries

No.	Trench	Interpretation	Description
101	1	Topsoil	Dark brown clay silt soil with moderate small stone inclusions and frequent rootlets
102	1	Subsoil	Mid Brown Sand with occasional small stone inclusions
103	1	Subsoil	Gravel of rounded and sub rounded stone ≤50mm
104	1	Plough Scars	Aligned WNW to ESE 200mm wide and 50mm deep with a mid brown silt sand fill.

Drawing Register

Sheet	No.	Title	Scale	Date	Author
1	1	Trench 1	1:100	16-17/01/08	DG

Photographic Register

Image	Description	From	Date
1	General Shot of Trench	W	16/01/08
2	General Shot of Trench	S	16/01/08

3	General Shot of Trench	N	17/01/08
4	General Shot of Trench	NE	17/01/08

Appendix 3: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Angus
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	A90 Finavon
PARISH:	Oathlaw
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Douglas Gordon
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 4939 5738
START DATE (this season)	16 th January 2008
END DATE (this season)	17 th January 2008
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed improvements at the A90 Finavon Junction, Angus (NGR: NO 49392 57383). An evaluation was carried out from the 16th to the 17th January 2008. The evaluation comprised a single trench that followed the centre line of the proposed work.</p> <p>There was a common stratigraphy along the length of the trench, with only two variations in the subsoil. No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were recovered although very occasional modern detritus of white glaze wares was noted in the topsoil of the trench.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	07086
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Jacobs
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to Angus Council and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.

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