

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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## **Hassendeanburn Bridge, Scottish Borders**

### **Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Report No. 3070**

## **CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

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standard operating procedures.

**Hassendeanburn Bridge,  
Scottish Borders**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in August 2013 on the footbridge at Hassendeanburn (Approx NGR NT 5443 1822) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by The Scottish Borders Council.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project was produced by CFA. The WSI was based upon documents provided by the Borders Council Archaeologist.

### **1.2 Background**

Scottish Borders Council received permission (Ref 09/00732/FUL) to construct a replacement footbridge at Hassendeanburn (approx. NGR NT 5443 1822). A condition for an archaeological watching brief on ground breaking was secured against the permission.

The replacement bridge was constructed in the vicinity of Hassendean Chapel. This had medieval origins, but the church was washed away in the later 18th Century. However, it was considered possible that remains associated with the church and the burial ground could be preserved on the west side of the river where the bridge abutment was to be built. For this reason, there was a requirement for the excavations on this side of the river to be monitored.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were:

- to conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (Watching Brief) to monitor topsoil stripping within the archaeologically sensitive area (west side of the river). There is an additional requirement to monitor excavations below topsoil to the formation depth as the sub-soils may be made ground or river alluvium which may cover or mask underlying archaeological deposits.
- to mitigate the effects of construction on any archaeological deposits or features identified through excavation and recording and produce a report on them.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs.

## **2.2 Archaeological Watching Brief**

Excavation was undertaken with a smooth edged ditching bucket and the ground was reduced to the formation depth on both sides of the footbridge. All ground breaking as monitored by a permanent presence archaeological watching brief.

## **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

While the WSI specified monitoring only on the west side of the footbridge, excavation occurred on both sides of the bridge while the monitor was on site. The excavation of both sides of the bridge's abutments was therefore monitored (Fig. 1).

Numbers in bold and parentheses refer to contexts (Appendix 1).

### **West Abutment (Figs 2-4)**

Excavation extended 1.8m N-S by 1.7m E-W on the south side of the trench and 1m on the north side of the trench. The stratification consisted of 0.45m of mid-brown sandy silt topsoil (**100**) over a light yellowish brown sand deposit (**101**) that extended to the bottom of formation depth, 1.5m below the current ground level. The sand deposit (**101**) contained fragments of charcoal and recent pottery, which was not retained, and abutted a curving wall (**105**). The wall (**105**) was constructed of worked sandstone and mortar. Some of the top capstones had been robbed out. The wall continued below formation depth and was preserved to height of at least 0.62m. The sand deposit (**101**) may have been placed to support the wall (**105**) and/or protect it from erosion.

### **East Abutment (Fig 5)**

The extent of the excavation was 1.7m N-S by 0.9 E-W on the north side and 1.3m on the south side of the trench.

The stratification consisted of 0.5m of midbrown silty sand topsoil (**102**) over mid-brown silty sand (**103**) that continued to the bottom of formation depth, 0.6m below the current ground level. Modern pottery and tile was found in context (**103**), but was not retained.

A concrete retaining wall (**104**), running roughly NE-SW, extended into the trench a few centimetres along its western edge of excavation; this wall overlay deposit (**103**).

## **4. CONCLUSION**

No definitive evidence of the medieval Hassendean Chapel or burial ground was found within the trench on the western side of the burn. A curving wall (**105**) of worked sandstone and mortar was revealed in this trench, but no material that could be used to date the wall was discovered. The wall was undoubtedly constructed to function as a retaining wall, and may well have been contemporary with the Chapel,

perhaps defining the edge of the burial ground. A later date must be considered equally possible.

A summary statement of the results of this evaluation will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 3).

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the Scottish Borders Council Sites and Monuments Record.

## APPENDIX 1: Context Register

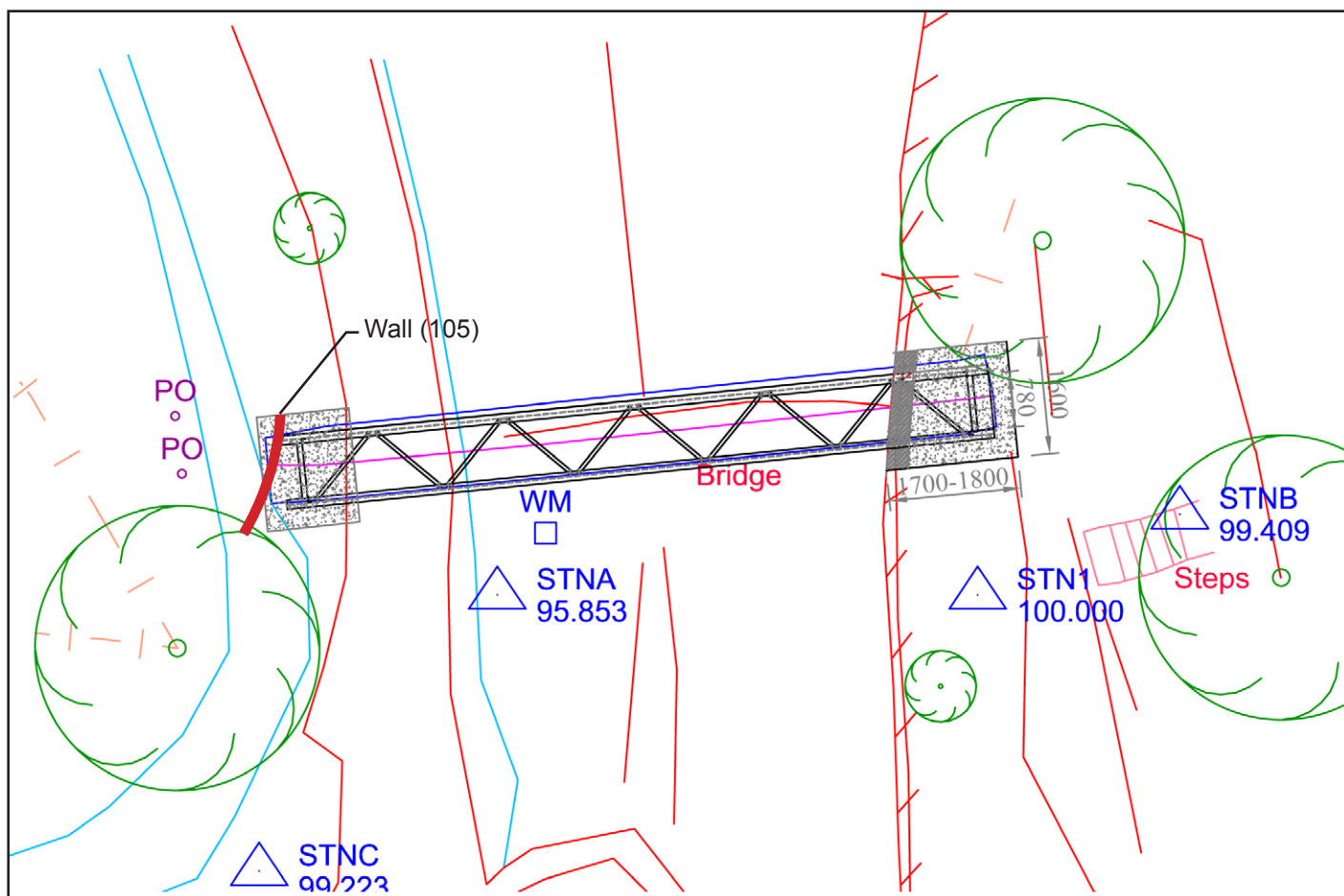
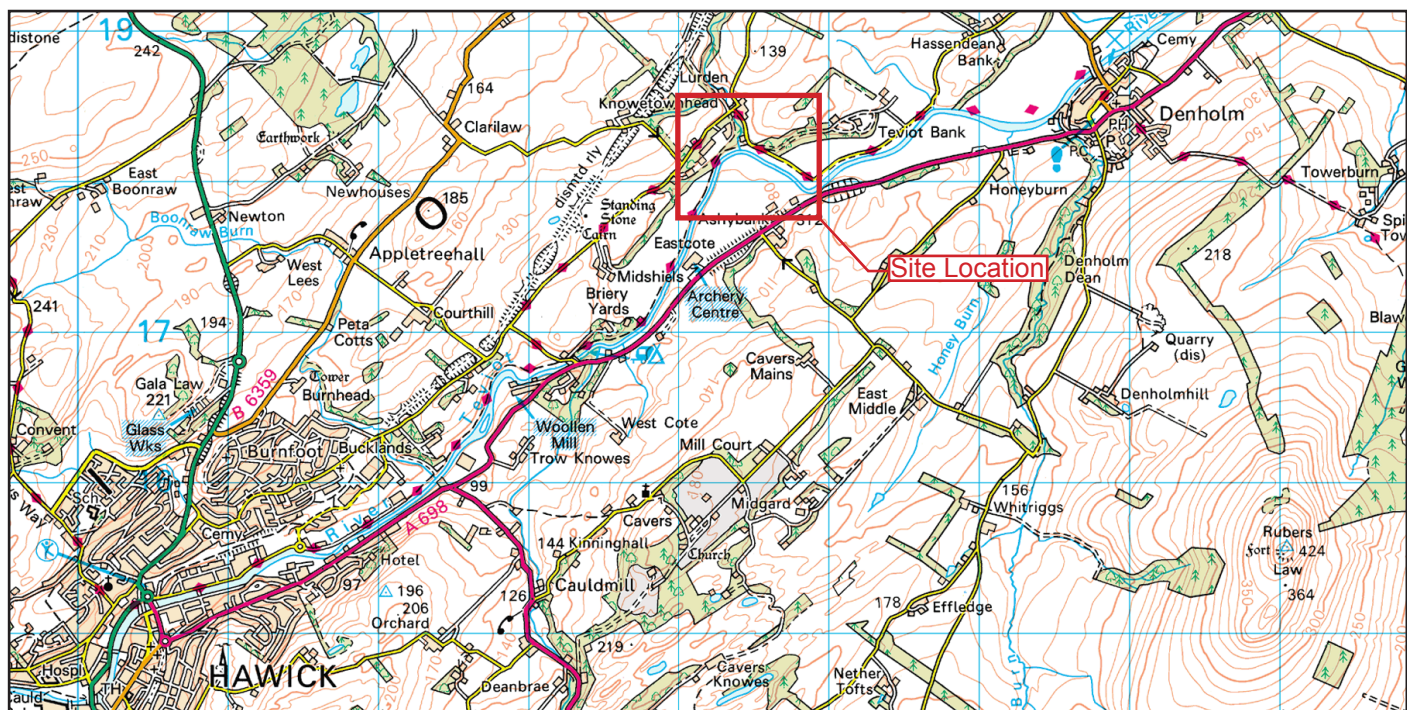
Context No.	Description
100	Westside topsoil
101	Westside subsoil, light yellowish-brown sand with occ. charcoal flecks, sandstone and mortar inclusions.
102	Eastside topsoil
103	Eastside brown silty sand with subrounded and angular pebbles, pot and tile inclusions
104	Eastside concrete retaining wall
105	Westside curving wall

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register (Digital)

No.	Description	From	Conditions
1	West side of bridge 1 <sup>st</sup> scoop	W	Dry
2	Compacted sand ( <b>101</b> ) below topsoil	S	Dry
3	Compacted sand ( <b>101</b> ) below topsoil	E	Dry
4	Compacted sand ( <b>101</b> ) below topsoil	N	Dry
5	Compacted sand ( <b>101</b> ) below topsoil	W	Dry
6	Walling, Wall <b>105</b>	E	Dry
7	Site shot- location of wall <b>105</b> in relation to bridge	S	Dry
8	Close-up of wall <b>105</b>	E	Dry
9	Wall <b>105</b>	E	Dry
10	Wall <b>105</b> curving to the NNW	SW	Dry
11	Wall <b>105</b> curving to the SSW	NE	Dry
12	Close-up of wall <b>105</b>	E	Dry
13	Planned footpath of concrete base	E	Dry
14	Wall <b>105</b> curving to the north, location shot	S	Dry
15	East side of burn, walling	W	Dry
16	Possible source of stone?	W	Dry
17	Wall continues along west bank	S	Dry
18	East bank- excavation of abutment footprint	W	Dry
19	East bank- excavation of abutment footprint with concrete wall <b>104</b>	W	Dry
20	Location of east bank footprint	W	Dry

### APPENDIX 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Scottish Borders Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Hassendeanburn Bridge, Scottish Borders
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	HASD
<b>PARISH:</b>	Minto
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Doug Rocks-Macqueen
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	N/A
<b>NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)</b>	NT 5443 1822
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2013
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2013
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	N/A
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>Hassendean Chapel and its associated burial ground once lay on the western bank of the Hassendeanburn. The Chapel had medieval origins and was washed away in the later 18th Century.</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the construction of the abutments for a new foot bridge at this location. No definitive evidence of the Chapel or burial ground was found. However, a curving retaining wall of worked sandstone and mortar was revealed, which may have been contemporary with the Chapel, perhaps defining the edge of the burial ground, although a later date must be considered equally possible.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	N/A
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Scottish Borders Council
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b> (intended/deposited)	<p>National Monuments Record of Scotland</p> <p>City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monuments Record</p>



Key:



Fig. No:

1

Revision:

A

Client:

Scottish Borders Council

Title:

Location Map

Project:

Hassendeanburn Bridge, Scottish Borders,  
Archaeological Watching Brief



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SW

Checked:

TN

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Fig. 2 - Western Bridge Abutment, post-ex



Fig. 3 - Western Bridge Abutment, post-ex



Fig. 4 - Western Bridge Abutment, post-ex



Fig. 5 - Eastern Bridge Abutment, post-ex