

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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## **Borders Railway Project Site 625, Sheriffhall, Midlothian**

### **Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report**

**No. 2022**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in February-March 2012. The work was required in advance of the construction of the Borders Railway Project. Site 625 was a rectilinear enclosure within an area of undulating grassland to the south of Sheriffhall Farm and to the west of the track bed of the old Waverley Line (NT 3201 6780).

The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by CFA, based on mitigation measures approved by Andy Robertson, East Lothian Council Archaeologist which are identified in Table A4 in the *Cultural Heritage Management Plan* (Jones & Neighbour 2010). The area for evaluation is identified in the *Borders Railway Project Environmental Management System Manual* (McLuckie 2011). The site number (625) relates to site numbers in the Environmental Statement.

### **1.2 Background**

A number of what appear to be turf-formed banks can be traced within the site, including a rectangular enclosure. The area has attracted archaeological interest in the past, with the earthworks around Sheriffhall Steading being examined by Crawford, Callander and Craw in 1930. The former stated that they may be medieval but are not likely to be older and that there was nothing to justify any Roman origin. Elements of these earthworks, including the rectangular enclosure are shown on historical OS maps.

A well is shown on the modern OS map and this feature may be the 'Lady Well' which is shown (wrongly located) on the First Edition map (1854). The well is correctly located on the Second Edition map (1895). On the 1909 and 1912 maps, a track is shown leading from it to Sheriffhall Steading. The well is still shown in 1934 but the track is absent.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the project were:

- To determine the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- To propose mitigation measures where necessary.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

Work was conducted with regard to the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation and Code of Conduct*.

The total area available for evaluation around Site 625 evaluation was given as 27,000m<sup>2</sup>. This however included a portion of the tarmac cycle track and a stretch of the old Waverley Line that were not available.

Overhead electrical supply cables are present within the site. The north to south portion of these are shown on the service drawings but the continuation to the west (Fig. 1) is not similarly shown and these cables were a constraint to trenching in that area. Underground electrical cables are present in the area to the south of the Dean Burn and no trenching was conducted in that area.

Pipework and a septic tank associated with Sheriffhall run from the farm to the Dean Burn, between Trenches 8 and 10.

### **2.2 Evaluation Strategy**

Twelve trenches with a total area of 916m<sup>2</sup> were excavated within the evaluation area, this is less than 5% of the area provided above but with the previously unidentified onsite constraints it equates to c. 5%. The trenches were excavated using a tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

All trenches were backfilled daily after recording had been completed.

Samples of all features of archaeological interest were hand excavated in order to establish their likely date, nature, extent and condition.

All hand excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, by digital photography and by completing standard CFA record forms.

Trench locations were recorded using industry standard surveying equipment.

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

No archaeological remains were recorded in Trenches 5, 11 and these are not further discussed.

Numbers in bold and parenthesis are context numbers which are described in Appendix 1.

Surface features including a vestigial rectilinear enclosure surviving as earth banks, an earth field bank, a trackway and a well were present. The presence of these features confirms the details observed on earlier maps. The trackway led from the well towards Sheriffhall Steading. The location of the well and the terraced trackway leading to it from Sheriffhall are shown in Figs. 1 and 9. The well itself lay below power-lines so no evaluation took place. At the well, a stone kerb could be traced in the turf next to the track for a distance of 6m and the well itself is marked by a dressed sandstone block (Fig. 10).

#### *Trench 1 (40m x 1.8m)*

This trench (Fig. 2) was positioned on a south facing slope and crossed the bank of the rectangular enclosure. On the surface this bank (**110**) was around 2.5m in width and 0.2m in height. The bank was only discernible in the section due to its raised profile but no structure to the bank was observed as it was formed from topsoil material. There was no associated ditch.

Two pits (**101**, **103**) and a possible ditch (**107**) were recorded, cut into natural subsoil, this consisting of a yellow sand containing frequent cobbles.

Pit **103** (Fig. 3) was c. 0.8m in diameter x 0.1m deep. It had a primary fill of mottled grey-black silty sand with charcoal flecks and degrading, possibly heated stones (**106**). It had a secondary fill of brown silty sand (**105**). No finds were recovered. Pit **101** also had a diameter of 0.8m.

The ditch (**107**) crossed the trench and was 0.8m wide. It was 0.2m deep (Fig. 3). It had a primary fill of mottled grey-black silty sand with charcoal flecks (**109**) with a secondary fill of brown silty sand (**108**). No finds were recovered.

These features were sealed by a brown gravelly subsoil (**002**) with a depth of 0.7m. Several sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the subsoil in the vicinity of the pits. Deposit **002** was overlain by a brown silty sand topsoil (**001**).

#### *Trench 2 (50m x 1.8m)*

This trench was positioned on a south facing slope (Fig. 1) and crossed both sides of the rectangular enclosure. On the surface the enclosure banks (**201**, **202**) were around 2.5m in width and 0.2m in height (Fig. 4). The bank was only discernible in the section due to its raised profile but no structure to the bank was observed as it was formed from topsoil material. There was no associated ditch.

Natural subsoil consisted of a yellow sand containing frequent cobbles interspersed with bands of gravel (**003**). Natural was overlain by soil deposits as in Trench 1 with a maximum depth of 0.9m.

*Trench 3 (40m x 1.8m)*

This trench was located on level ground and crossed a substantial earth field bank (**303**) which had a width of 4m (Fig. 1). The bank was only discernible in the section due to its raised profile but no structure to the bank was observed as it was formed from topsoil material.

In the western end of the trench, the terminal of a slightly curving probable ditch was exposed. This feature (**301**) had a width of 0.6m and depth of 0.4m. It was filled (**302**) with a brown silty sand and gravel indistinguishable from soil layer **002** above. No finds were recovered and there was no environmental content.

Natural subsoil (**003**) consisted of a mixed sand and gravel. Soil deposits (**001, 002**) had a depth of 1m at the western end, increasing to 1.3m at the eastern end.

*Trench 4 (50m x 1.8m)*

A probable ditch (**401**) was recorded in this trench. This feature had a width of 1.4m and depth of 0.2m. It was filled with a brown silty sand and gravel (**402**) which merged with soil layer **002** above. No finds were recovered and there was no environmental content.

Natural subsoil (**003**) consisted of bands of sand and gravel, with deposits of cobbles and chunks of coal at the ESE end. Soil deposits (**001, 002**) had a depth of 0.3m-0.5m.

*Trench 6 (50m x 1.8m)*

The trench contained deep deposits, with between 1m-2m of soils overlying natural. No features were cut into natural subsoil. In the NW end of the trench, the surface of a possible trackway overlying the agricultural subsoil (**002**) was recorded. This consisted of a spread of small cobbles (**602**) and what may be a parallel field drain (**603**), filled with similar small cobbles (**604**) was recorded on the upslope side. The trackway surface had a width of 2.4m. Ceramics dating to the 18-19 century and a large horseshoe were recovered from its surface.

Natural subsoil (**003**) consisted of a firm and iron stained mixed sand and gravel.

*Trench 7 (34m x 1.8m)*

This trench was located (Fig. 5) on a slope leading NW from the summit of a small knoll and crossed the line of the enclosure bank. An obvious depression was present on the summit. The trench was excavated across one side of this feature

After the topsoil was removed a pit (**701**) was identified in the location of the surface depression, this obviously modern feature ran out of the trench but the exposed extent

measured 1.6m long x 0.6m wide by 0.1m deep. It was filled with topsoil material (**702**). No finds were recovered and there was no environmental content.

Natural subsoil (**003**) consisted of sandy cobbles on the summit of the knoll, with increasingly sandy deposits to the NW. Soil deposits (**001, 002**) had a depth of 0.1m-0.4m.

The enclosure bank was not visible in the section of the trench.

#### *Trench 8 (55m x 1.8m)*

This trench cut across the surface remains of the trackway leading from the well towards Sheriffhall Steading.

Made ground (**802**) along with deposits of stones (**803**) and building rubble/mortar (**801**) were present at the east end of the trench. At the west end of the trench deep soil deposits (**001, 002**) were present. The surface of the track was just beneath the turf and lay over the topsoil. It consisted of a spread of coal chips and blaes (**804**) with a width of 2.1m.

#### *Trench 9 (55m x 1.8m)*

This trench was located on the low-lying ground to the north of Trenches 8 and 10. Very similar deposits were recorded.

Overlying natural stained gravels was a deposit of brown soil containing frequent lumps of broken sandstone (**902**). This was overlain by a deposit of building rubble and mortar (**904**) and an extensive deposit of stiff greenish clay (**901**, Fig. 6). A deposit of mixed brown soil and yellow sand (**903**) was also present. All were sealed by a thin topsoil (**001**). The total depth of these deposits was 1.1m. Occasional modern finds, comprising ceramics, glass, slate, pantile and brick were present within deposits 902 and 904.

#### *Trench 10 (55m x 1.8m)*

This trench was located partly on the low-lying ground between Trenches 8 and 9. It also extended up the scarp towards Sheriffhall Steading parallel to Trench 8.

Very similar deposits were recorded on the low-lying ground to those in Trenches 8 and 9. The quantities of building rubble and mortar (**1002**) were greater in this trench than in either Trench 8 or 9, attaining a depth of 0.7m and extending over a distance of 15m. They appeared to lie within a 0.5m deep cut (**1001**), excavated into natural stiff sandy silt. Modern finds were again present in the made ground.

#### *Trench 12 (51m x 1.8m)*

This trench was located to the west of the rectilinear enclosure and the field bank which ran between Trenches 2 and 12, north towards Sheriffhall (Fig. 1). The edge of a ditch (**1201**) was recorded in this trench and it was extended to the east (Fig. 1) in



order to assess this feature. The terminal of a second ditch (**1204**) was recorded in the northern end of the trench.

Ditch **1210** was 2.2m wide and 0.8m deep with an irregular profile (Fig. 7). The base contained a deposit of cobbles (**1203**) and this was overlain by a gravelly soil (**1202**) similar to the subsoil (**002**) above. No finds were recovered and there was no environmental content. The ditch appeared to run parallel with the turf bank but the stratigraphy in the trench did not support any association between these features and the ditch was not recorded in Trench 3 to the north.

In the north of the trench, ditch **1204** was over 2.5m in length and 1m in width (Fig. 8). It was 0.3m deep. The single fill (**1205**) of brown gravelly soil contained neither finds nor environmental content.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Twelve trenches were excavated at Sheriffhall with a total area of 916m<sup>2</sup>. The area available for evaluation was constrained by tarmac cycle paths, modern services and wet areas adjacent to the Dean Burn.

A number of archaeological features were identified:

- An earth field bank was present as an upstanding feature. No finds were recovered from this bank and no evidence as to its date was forthcoming. This feature is shown on OS mapping.
- A rectilinear enclosure defined by earth banks was present on the site. No internal features or finds were recovered to date or provide a function for this feature. This feature is shown on OS mapping.
- The remains of a well shown on OS mapping was still present on site.
- A trackway in Trench 8 was known from OS mapping this survived just below the turf line and was visible on the surface.
- A trackway was identified in Trench 6 which appeared to run alongside the upstanding earth field bank. The trackway survived below the topsoil but overlay the agricultural subsoil.
- Two pits and a probable ditch were identified in Trench 1 cut in to the natural subsoil. These survived as only vestigial features and no dating evidence was recovered. However Prehistoric pottery was recovered from the sub-soil horizon overlying them.
- Undated sections of shallow ditch were identified in Trenches 3, 4 and 12.

Decisions as to whether any further work is required lies solely with Andy Robertson on behalf of the planning authority.

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 East Lothian Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement of the results of this evaluation will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2012*.

## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jones C and Neighbour T 2010 'Borders Railway Project: Cultural Heritage Management Plan' Version 5 Rev A

McLukie A 2011 'Borders Railway Project Environmental Management System Manual, Version 5 Rev A

### APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context no.	Trench	Description
001	-	Topsoil, brown silty sand
002	-	Subsoil, yellow-brown silty sand and gravel
003	-	Natural subsoil
101	1	Cut for probable circular pit
102	1	Light yellow-brown silty sand
103	1	Cut for probable circular pit
104	1	Mottled black and grey silty sand with charcoal flecks and degrading stones
105	1	Fill of Pit 103 - Light yellow-brown silty sand
106	1	Fill of Pit 103 - Mottled black and grey silty sand with charcoal flecks and degrading stones
107	1	Cut for possible ditch with terminal within trench
108	1	Fill of ditch 107 - Light yellow-brown silty sand
109	1	Fill of ditch 107 - Mottled black and grey silty sand
110	1	Enclosure bank, part of the rectangular enclosure. Grass over mid-brown silty sand
201	2	Enclosure bank, part of the rectangular enclosure. Grass over mid-brown silty sand
202	2	Enclosure bank, part of the rectangular enclosure. Grass over mid-brown silty sand
301	3	Cut of ditch with terminal within trench
302	3	Fill of ditch 301 - Mid-yellow-brown silty sand and gravel
303	3	Turf bank, part of the rectangular enclosure. Grass over mid-brown silty sand
401	4	Cut for shallow linear ditch
402	4	Fill of ditch 401 - Mid-yellow-brown silty sand and gravel
601	6	Deposit of stones in subsoil
602	6	Trackway surface, small-medium cobbles
603	6	Linear cut for drain alongside track.
604	6	Small-medium cobbles in 603
701	7	Cut for modern pit
702	7	Fill of 701 - Yellow-brown silty sand and gravel
801	8	Made ground mortar and stones
802	8	Redeposited natural subsoil. Stiff creamy-green clay-silt
803	8	Made ground loose angular stones
804	8	Track surface. Coal chips and blaes
901	9	Redeposited natural subsoil. Stiff creamy-green clay-silt
902	9	Wet brown sandy silt soil and stones
903	9	Mottled yellow sand
904	9	Made ground deposit, mortar and stones
1001	10	Cut for deposit 1002
1002	10	Made ground deposit of mortar, stones with very occasional brick, pantile, slate, 19C ceramics and glass
1201	12	Cut for linear ditch

1202	12	Upper fill of ditch 1201. Brown silty-sand and gravel
1203	12	Lower fill of ditch 1201. Cobbles with brown silty sand and gravel
1204	12	Cut for linear ditch
1205	12	Fill of ditch 1204 - Dark brown silty sand and gravel

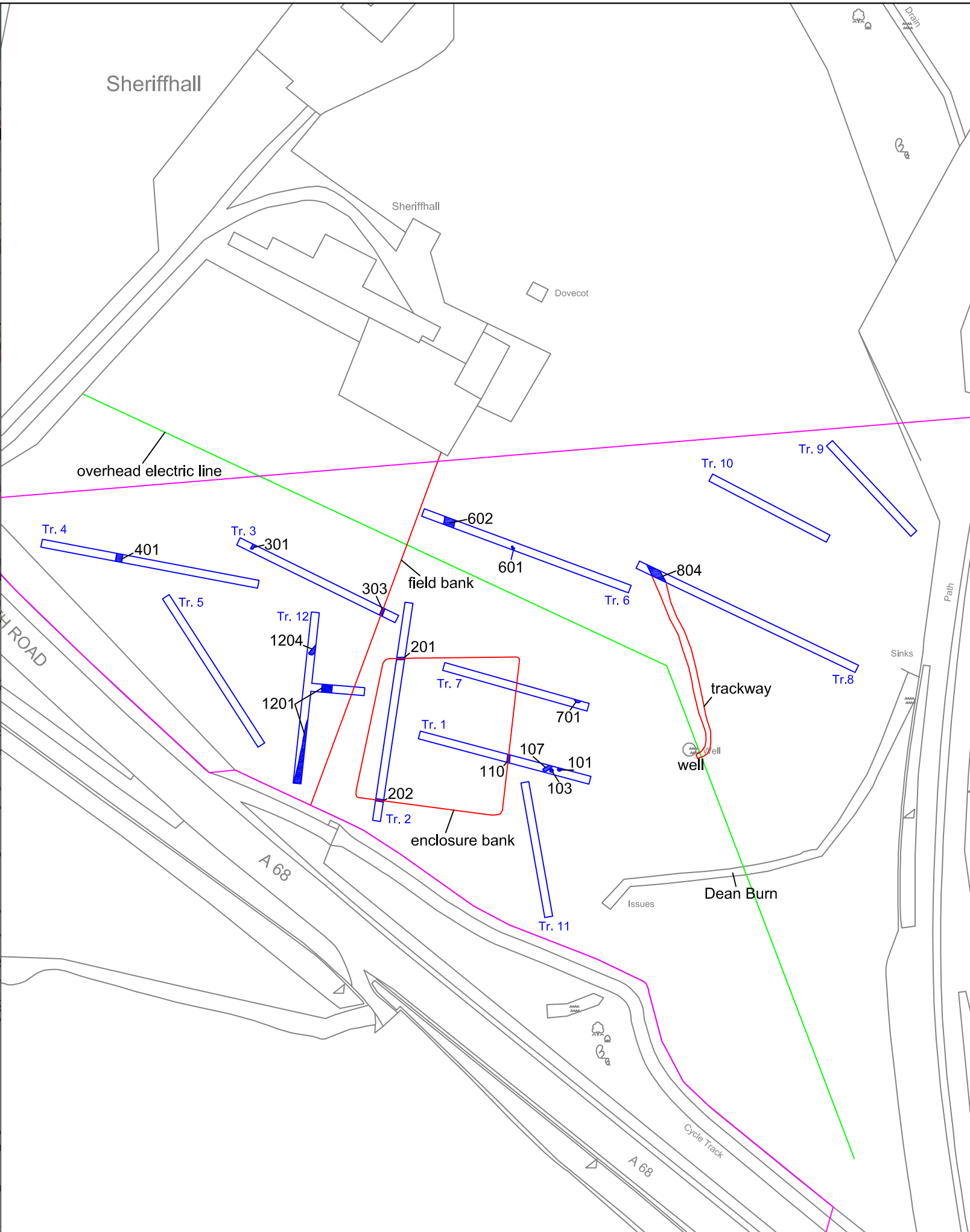
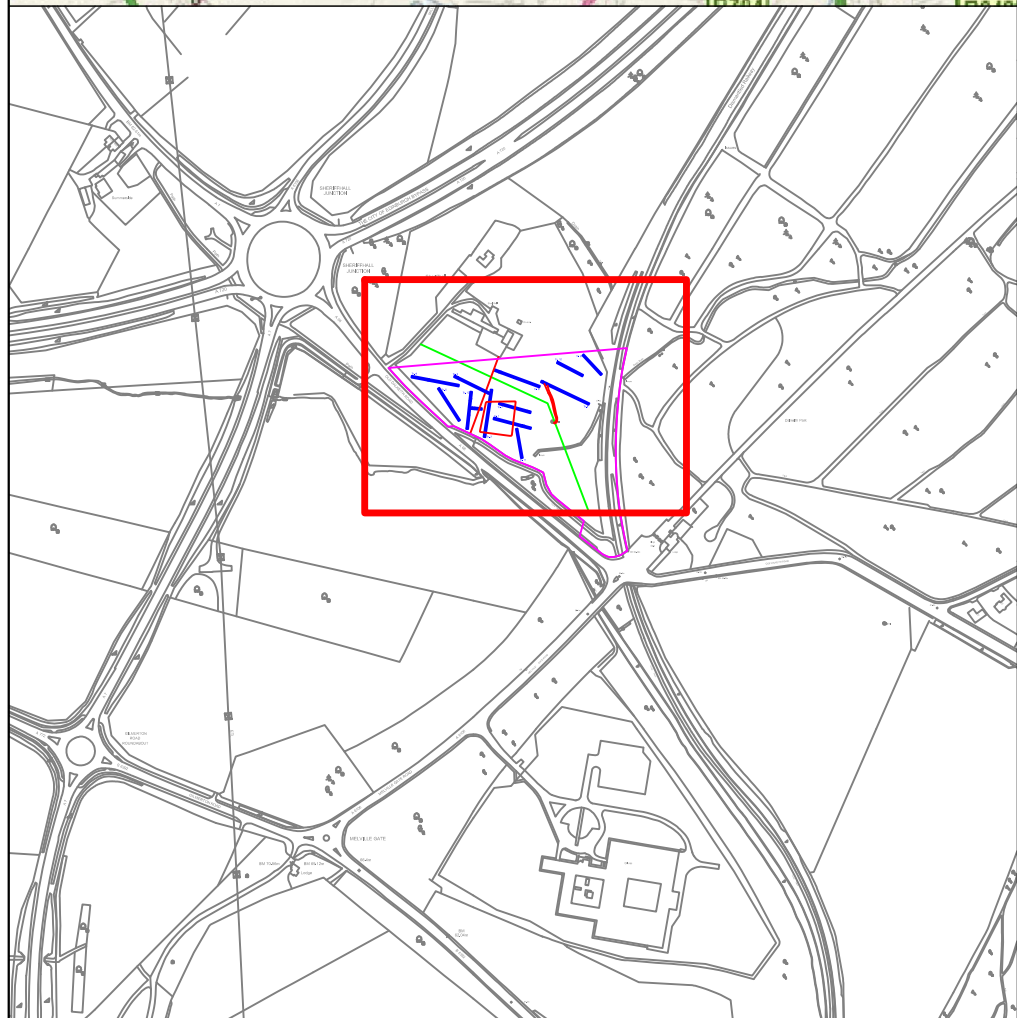
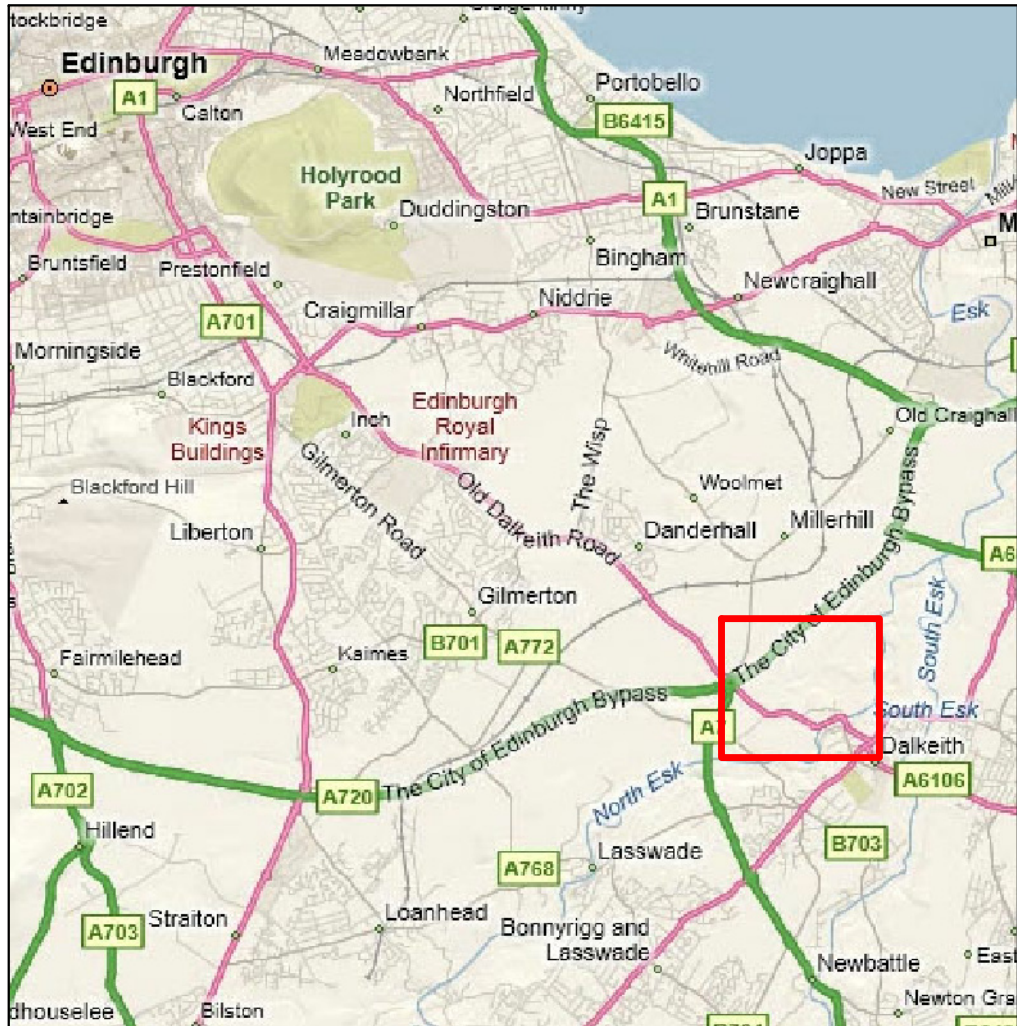
## APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo No.	Description	Taken from
1-28	General views of the access road and gate into field prior to arrival of the machine transporter	Various
29-34	General site views from the (Trench 7) knoll	Various
35	Trench 1 general view	E
36	Trench 1, features 101, 103, 107 close-up	E
37	Trench 1, features 101, 103, 107 close-up	W
38-39	Trench 1, section through pit 103 and ditch 107	SW
40-41	Trench 1, section through enclosure bank 110	NNW
42	Trench 2 general view	NNW
43	Trench 2, section through enclosure bank 202	ENE
44-45	Trench 2 general views	SSE
46-47	Trench 2, section through enclosure bank 201 and adjacent terrace	ENE
48-49	Trench 3, ditch terminal 301-2	S
50	Trench 3 general view	W
51	Trench 3 general view	E
52	Trench 3 general view	SE
53-56	Trench 3, ditch 301 section	SW
57-58	Trench 3, soil profiles	NW, SW
59	Trench 5, general view	SE
60	Trench 5, SW facing section at SE end	SW
61	Trench 5 general view	SSE
62	Trench 4 general view	WNW
63-64	Trench 4, ditch 401-2 section	NNE
65	Trench 4, general view	ESE
66	Trench 4, soil profile at W end	ESE
67-68	General site views	SE
69-70	Trench 6, general view	WNW
71	Trench 6, trackway 602	W
72-73	Trench 6, stones 601	WNW
74	Trench 6, stones 601	NNE
75	Trench 6, general view of the soils at ESE end	WNW
76-77	Trench 6, general view of the soils at ESE end	ESE
78-79	Trench 7, pre-excavation	NW
80-85	Site panorama from E end of trench 7	-
86-87	Trench 9, view of NW end pre-removal of made ground	SSE, S
88-89	Trench 9, SW facing section at NW end	WSW
90-91	Trench 9, views of the SW facing section	S, NW
92-93	Trench 9, general views	NW, N
94-95	Trench 8, soil profile at NW end	SW
96-97	Trench 9, general views	NW
98-99	Trench 8, soil profile at the scarp to the SE of the trackway 804	SW
100-102	Trench 8, trackway surface 804 and view towards Sheriffhall	S
103-104	View SE from Trench 8 along track towards well	N
105	Trench 8, general view	NW
106	Trench 8, mortar and stones 801	NW
107-108	Trench 8, stones 803	NW
109	Trench 8, stones 803	NE
110-111	Trench 8, general view	SE
112	Trench 7, general view	ESE
113	Trench 7, pit 701 section	SE

114	Trench 7, pit 701 section	SSW
115-116	Trench 7, general view	WNW
117-119	Trench 7 during backfilling	W, WNW
120-134	Trench 10, general views and NE facing section	Various
135-139	General views of the well stonework	Various
140	General view of the well	S
141-143	Trench 11, general view	S
144-145	Trench 11, general view	W
147-147	Trench 11, close-up and section	SSW
148-149	Trench 12, general view	S
150-151	Trench 12, extension to E	W
152-155	Trench 12, extension, ditch 1201 section	S
156-157	Trench 12, extension to E	E
158	Trench 12, ditch 1204 pre-excavation	S
159-160	Trench 12, ditch 1204 section	SSW
161-166	General views of the backfilling and backfilled trenches	Various

### APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register

Dwg No.	Sheet No.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description/contexts
1	1	1:40	Plan	Trench 1, 102-108
2	1	1:10	Section	Trench 1, pit 103 and ditch 107 section
3	1	1:20	Section	Trench 1, trench section through enclosure bank 110
4	1	1:20	Section	Trench 2, trench section through enclosure bank 201
5	1	1:20	Section	Trench 1, trench section through enclosure bank 201 and possible terrace 203
6	2	1:40	Plan	Trench 3, plan of NW end including ditch 301
7	2	1:20	Section	Trench 3, ditch 301 SW facing section
8	2	1:40	Plan	Trench 4 plan of W end including ditch 401
9	2	1:10	Section	Trench 4, ditch 401 N facing section
10	3	1:40	Plan	Trench 6 plan
11	3	1:40	Section	Trench 9 plan
12	3	1:40	Section	Trench 9 WSW facing section through deposits 901-4
13	4	1:40	Plan	Trench 8 plan
14	4	1:40	Plan	Trench 7 plan
15	4	1:20	Section	Trench 7, section through pit 701
16	5	1:40	Plan	Trench 10 plan
17	5	1:20	Section	Trench 12, S facing section through ditch 1201
18	6	1:40	Plan	Trench 12 plan
19	6	1:10	Section	Trench 12, section through ditch 1204



Key:

- Evaluation area
- archaeological feature
- Evaluation trench
- Uprighting feature



Fig. No: 1      Revision: A

Title:  
Location map and site plan showing evaluation trenches and features located during fieldwork

Project:  
ERM on behalf of Transport Scotland

Client:  
ERM on behalf of Transport Scotland

Scale at A3:  
1:1000







Fig. 2 General view of Trench 1



Fig. 3 Trench 1, section through ditch 107 and pit 103



Fig. 4 Trench 2, section through the enclosure bank


Key:	Fig. No:	2-4	Revision:	A	Client:	ERM on behalf of Transport Scotland	 <b>CFA</b> CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ. t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk	
	Title:							
Scale:	Project:							
	Borders Railway Project, Archaeological Evaluation, Site 625							
Drawn by:			GC	Checked:		LW	Report No:	2022



Fig. 5 Trench 7 pre-excitation showing the pit 701 on the summit of the knoll



Fig. 6 Trench 9, section showing the made ground 901 overlying older soil 902



Fig. 7 Trench 12, ditch 1201


Key:	Fig. No:	5-7	Revision:	A	Client:	ERM on behalf of Transport Scotland	 <b>CFA</b> ARCHAEOLOGY LTD CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ. t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk	
	Title:							
Scale:	Project:							
	Borders Railway Project, Archaeological Evaluation, Site 625							
Drawn by:			GC	Checked:		LW	Report No:	2022






Fig. 8 Trench 12 ditch terminal 1204



Fig. 9 View from the north of the trackway leading to the well at the trees



Fig. 10 Cut stone at the location of the well

Key:	Fig. No:	8-10	Revision:	A	Client:	ERM on behalf of Transport Scotland	 <p>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmillis Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk</p>
	Title:						
Scale:	Project:						Drawn by: GC    Checked: LW    Report No: 2022
	Borders Railway Project, Archaeological Evaluation, Site 625						