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Residential Development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. 3075

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Residential Development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trenching evaluation carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in advance of a proposed residential development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire (Fig 1) (NGR: NJ 81303 07726) (Planning Application No: APP/2013/1692). A Written Scheme of Investigation for an evaluation was produced by CFA and agreed by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeological Service. The work was commissioned by Stewart Milne Homes Ltd.

1.2 Background

Stewart Milne Homes have applied for consent for a housing development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 81303 07726) (Planning Application No: APP/2013/1692). The council required an advance archaeological evaluation of the application site. Following consultation with the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeological Service it was agreed that the evaluation would be phased. The first phase involved the evaluation of the northern half of the site (4.2ha). A 7% evaluation (2940m²) of the area was agreed. This would be extended to 10% (4200m²) only if complex archaeological remains that could not be understood by the 7% sample were uncovered. Following the evaluation of the northern area the requirement for the trenching in the southern area (where previous quarrying activity had taken place) was to be agreed and the strategy adopted to reflect the findings from the northern half.

1.3 Objective

The objectives of the project are to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological features or deposits within the proposed development area; to establish their vulnerability to the proposed development; and to propose mitigation measures.

2. METHODS

CFA follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance and Code of Conduct.

A series of 35 trial trenches to a strategy agreed with Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service were excavated (Fig. 1). Trenches covered an area of 2943m² (slightly over 7% of 4.2ha) and provided good overall coverage of the development site whilst taking in to account the presence on onsite constraints such as the High Pressure Gas main and other live services.

All trenches were excavated by machine under direct archaeological supervision to remove topsoil and modern deposits down to subsoil or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was reached first. All further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand.

The stratification of all excavated areas was recorded, whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

The locations of all trenches were recorded using industry standard electronic surveying equipment.

Trenches were backfilled on completion of excavation.

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

The evaluation area measured 4.2ha and comprised several former pasture fields separated by semi-collapsed dry stone walls. The northern half of the site was mainly flat; the southern half sloped gently to the south.

Thirty-five trenches (Figs. 1 - 4) totaling an area of 2943m² were excavated to give good overall coverage. Full trench descriptions are contained in Appendix 1. Context numbers are provided in bold and parentheses.

Topsoil (**001**) across the site ranged from 0.2m to 0.5m deep, although mainly it c. 0.4m. Natural varied from coarse firm stony sands and clays with extensive seams of gravel and shattered bedrock. Outcropping bedrock was also widespread. Sub-rounded boulders to 1m were frequent and occasional larger boulders were encountered. An extensive drainage system of rubble drains filled with loose voided stones and boulders was present across the site. Two clay drains were also encountered. No archaeological remains or deposits were identified.

Discontinuous deposits of peaty subsoil were present to a thickness of 0.1m in Trenches 9 and 24.

A small area in the east of the site had been recently covered by re-deposited topsoil (**003**) from an earlier building phase. This was identified in Trench 30.

4. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation has identified the northern half of the proposed residential development area as archaeologically sterile. Based on the results of this phase of work the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeological Service have agreed that no further work is required across the rest of the Broadshade 2 development area.

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 Aberdeenshire SMR.

A summary statement of the results of this evaluation will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* and an online OASIS entry submitted on completion of the project

Appendix 1: Trench Register

Trench No.	Dimensions (m)	Trench Depth (m)	Natural	Comments
1	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, angular gravel, shattered bedrock, boulders to 0.4m diameter	
2	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, occasional stones	5 x rubble drains
3	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, seams of bedrock, shattered bedrock and gravel, occasional boulders to 0.2m diameter	4 x rubble drains
4	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, frequent gravel, bedrock, boulders to 0.4m diameter	
5	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, frequent gravel, bedrock	1 x rubble drain
6	50 x 1.8	0.4	Coarse sand, frequent gravel, bedrock, boulders to 0.3m	1 x rubble drain
7	50 x 1.8	0.4	Clayey sand, angular gravel, bedrock	
8	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.5	Clayey sand, angular gravel, bedrock, boulders to 0.5m diameter	1 x rubble drain
9	50 x 1.8	0.2-0.6	Clayey sand, stiff blue clay, occasional boulders to 0.3m diameter	0.1m thick discontinuous layer of peat (002) 1 x clay drain 6 x rubble drains
10	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.5	Clayey sand, shattered granite, blue clay	1 x rubble drain
11	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.	Clayey sand, shattered bedrock, gravel, occasional boulders to 0.3m diameter	3 x rubble drains
12	50 x 1.8	40.3-0.4	Coarse sand, gravel, shattered bedrock	
13	45 x 1.8	0.2-0.3	Coarse sand merging to stony sand	
14	40 x 1.8	0.3	Coarse sand, frequent angular gravel, bedrock	
15	40 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, angular gravel, shattered bedrock, frequent boulders to 0.5m	
16	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.5	Sandy clay, occasional boulders to 1m diameter	
17	25 x 1.8	0.4	Sandy clay, occasional boulders to 0.8m diameter	
18	40 x 1.8	0.4	Sandy clay, occasional stones, boulders to 0.8m	1 x rubble drain
19	50 x 1.8	0.35	Sandy stony clay, rare boulders to 0.9m, bedrock	1 x clay drain
20	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, frequent stones to 0.3m, bedrock	4 x rubble drains
21	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Smooth clay, occasional stones to 0.3m diameter	2 x rubble drains
22	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Clayey sand, frequent stones to 0.2m, occasional boulders to 0.8m, bedrock	3 x rubble drains

23	50 x 1.8	0.35	Sandy clay, occasional boulders to 0.4m	7 x rubble drains
24	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Clayey sand, frequent boulders to 0.8m diameter	<0.1m thick discontinuous peat deposit (002) 4 x rubble drains
25	50 x 1.8	0.4	Grey clay, shattered bedrock, gravel	7 x rubble drains
26	50 x 1.8	0.4	Grey clay, shattered bedrock, gravel	6 x rubble drains
27	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, frequent stones, boulders to 0.4m diameter, bedrock	2 x rubble drains
28	50 x 1.8	0.4	Sandy clay, shattered bedrock, gravel, occasional boulders to 0.5m diameter	1 x rubble drain
29	50 x 1.8	0.2-0.3	Sandy stony clay, shattered bedrock, occasional large boulders > 1m diameter	
30	35 x 1.8	0.3-1.0	Stiff clay, occasional boulders to 0.5m diameter	0.4-0.5m thick layer of original surface topsoil (001) underlying 0.3-0.4m thick deposit of recently redeposited topsoil (003) 5 x rubble drains
31	30 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, bedrock, shattered bedrock	1 x rubble drain
32	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, bedrock, shattered bedrock	
33	50 x 1.8	0.3-0.4	Sandy clay, bedrock, shattered bedrock, occasional boulders to 0.3m diameter	
34	40 x 1.8	0.4-0.5	Stiff clay, shattered bedrock, boulders to 0.5m diameter	1 x rubble drains
35	40 x 1.8	0.4-0.5	Stiff clay, shattered bedrock, boulders to 0.5m diameter	2 x rubble drains

Appendix 2: Context Register

Context No.	Trench No.	Description
000	All	Natural
001	All	Topsoil
002	9, 24	Peat
003	30	Redeposited topsoil

Appendix 3: Photographic Register

Photo No.	Description	Taken From
1	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	S
2	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	NE
3	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	SE
4	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	N
5	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	NW
6	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	S
7	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	SW
8	Pre-excavation view of evaluation area	SE
9	Trench 1	E

10	Trench 2	E
11	Trench 2 detail of rubble drain	W
12	Trench 2 section of rubble drain	N
13	Trench 3	W
14	Trench 4	N
15	Trench 3 detail of rubble drain	S
16	Trench 5	N
17	Trench 6	N
18	Trench 6 detail of rubble drain	S
19	Trench 7	E
20	Trench 8	E
21	Trench 9 detail of clay drain	E
22	Trench 10	N
23	Trench 11	N
24	Trench 12	N
25	Trench 13	E
26	Trench 14	E
27	Trench 15	E
28	Trench 16	W
29	Trench 17	NE
30	Trench 18	N
31	Trench 19	N
32	Trench 18 detail of rubble drain	NW
33	Trench 19 detail of clay drain	NW
34	Trench 20	S
35	Trench 21	N
36	Trench 21 detail of rubble drain	NW
37	Trench 22	W
38	Trench 23	W
39	Trench 23 detail of rubble drain	SW
40	Trench 24	W
41	Trench 24 detail of rubble drain	SE
42	Trench 25	W
43	Trench 25 detail of rubble drain	SE
44	Trench 26	W
45	Trench 26 detail of rubble drain	SE
46	Trench 27	SE
47	Trench 27 detail of rubble drain	N
48	Trench 28	SE
49	Trench 28 large natural boulder	W
50	Trench 29	NE
51	Trench 29 detail of rubble drain	N
52	Trench 30	W
53	Trench 30 detail of rubble drain	S
54	Trench 31	NE
55	Trench 31 detail of rubble drain	E
56	Trench 32	N
57	Trench 33	N
58	Trench 34	E
59	Trench 34 detail of rubble drain	S
60	Trench 35	E
61	Trench 35 detail of rubble drain	S

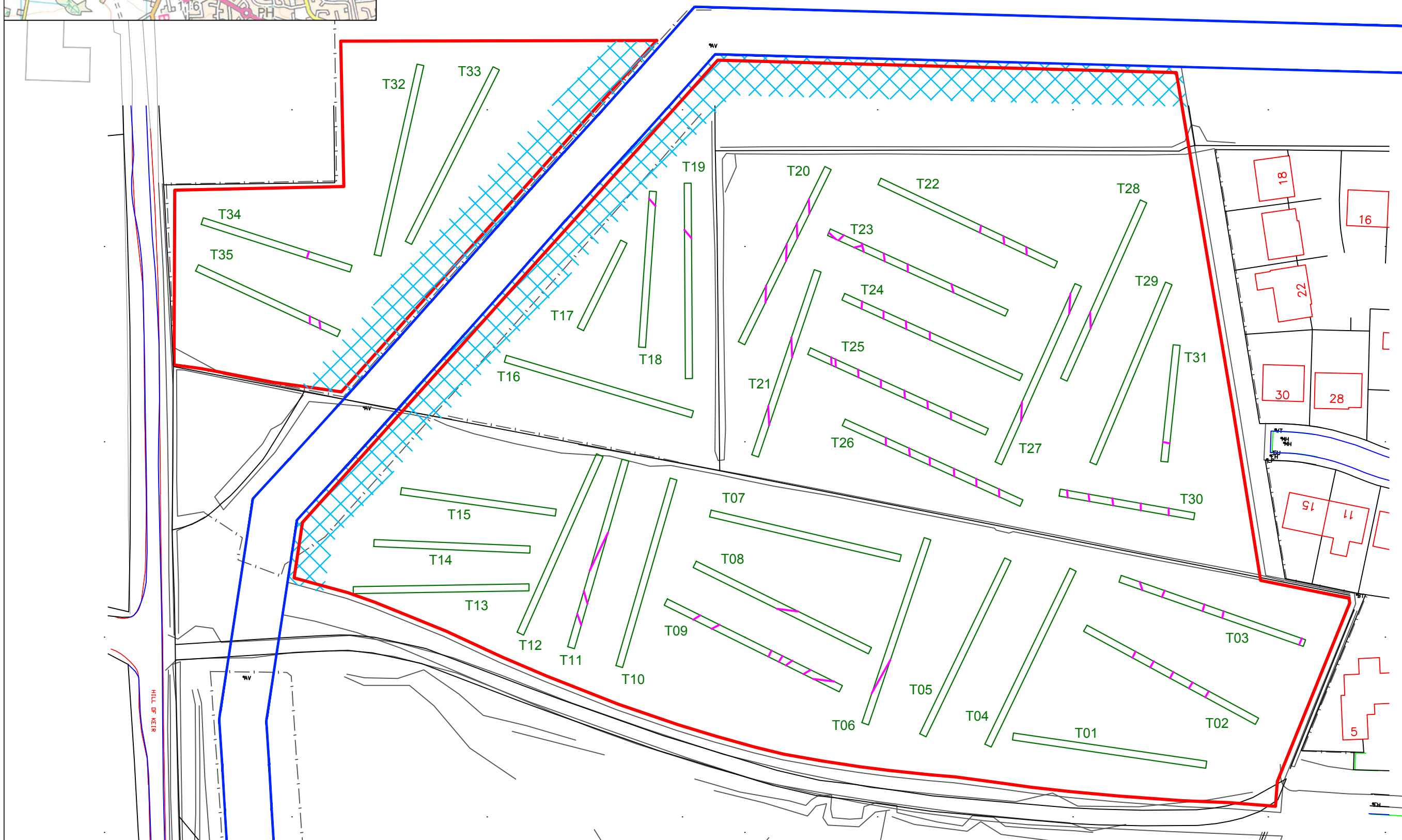
Appendix 4: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Residential Development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire:
PROJECT CODE:	BROS
PARISH:	Skene
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	S Mitchell
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 81303 07726
START DATE (this season)	September 2013
END DATE (this season)	September 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A trial trenching evaluation was carried out in advance of a proposed residential development. Thirty five trenches were excavated amounting to 2943m ² were excavated. No archaeological remains or deposits were identified.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Stewart Milne Homes Ltd
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	smitchell@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS, Reports lodged with SMR and NMRS.



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Trenches
- Gas Main
- ▒ Buffer for gas main
- Field drains



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Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

Title:
 Site Location map and plan of
 trial trenches

Project:
 Residential Development at
 Broadshade 2, Westhill,
 Aberdeenshire: Archaeological
 Trial Trenching Evaluation

Client:
 Stewart Milne Homes Ltd

Scale at A3:
 1:1000







Fig. 2 - Trench 20



Fig. 3 - Trench 24



Fig. 4 - Trench 33

Fig. No: 2-4		Revision: A	Project: Residential Development at Broadshade 2, Westhill, Aberdeenshire: Archaeological Trial Trenching Evaluation
Drawn by: TB	Checked: BG	Report No: 3075	Client: Stewart Milne Holes Ltd
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