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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract St Andrews Cathedral and Priory (PIC035)

Boundary Wall Buttressing and Consolidation
Archaeological Excavation, January 2018
Report No. HES-PIC035-2018-01

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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

A programme of excavation work was undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in January 2018 within the Property in Care of St Andrews Cathedral and Priory, Fife (NGR: approx NO 5139 1659), as part of the Historic Environment Scotland Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off contract.

An unstable section of wall within St Andrew's Cathedral precinct is currently supported by temporary timber props; in order to avoid the removing and rebuilding of the wall, buttressing is required. The wall runs alongside the Pends Road from the Pends Yett to the Mill Port and harbour. It is not part of the precinct walls, but may nevertheless be a significant component of the monument, although its dating is ambiguous. This unstable wall will be supported by a piled buttress, requiring the excavation of six pile cap trenches. The archaeological work required involved the hand excavation of the pile cap trenches, in advance of the piling works.

A previous evaluation (Rayner and Savory 2017) carried out by CFA in October 2017 included an archaeological watching brief to monitor the drilling of two boreholes along with hand excavation of two trial trenches (TP1 and TP2) placed in order to identify the alignment of a stone drain which had been found in a previous phase of work. The drain was not found in either of the test pits and it can only be assumed that the drain did not continue along this alignment as projected. In addition, two boreholes were monitored in order to gain a broad understanding of the stratigraphic sequence of this part of the site. However, due to the methodology, only a very general understanding of the stratigraphic sequence was obtained.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the work, dated 20 December 2017, was produced by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) and approved by Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

1.2 Background

The detail contained within this section is based on information provided by HES (K Owen, document dated 06/05/14 and revised 22/08/17 by G Ritchie).

A religious foundation was possibly first established at St Andrews, or Kilrymont as it was then known, in the mid-8th century by Oengus mac Fergusa. It was focused on the veneration of relics associated with St Andrew perhaps brought there by the exiled Bishop Acca of Hexham in the early-8th century. This early religious settlement eventually included a number of churches including what later became St Mary on the Rock (Kirkheugh), St Andrews (St Rules), Holy Trinity (the parish church, which was later relocated to the burgh in 1415), St Leonard's and St Peters, all located on the headland. It seems likely that this early religious settlement would have been defined by some means, effectively a vallum cutting of the headland, and a predecessor of the later precinct wall that may have governed the eventual line of that wall.

In c.1124 the first attempt was made to supplant the existing bodies of clergy at St Andrews by Augustinian Canons. However it was not until 1140 that Augustinian

Canons were eventually introduced, and from 1160–1270 a new cathedral was constructed on the site. The priory is likely to have been enclosed by a masonry wall in the late 14th century when Pends Yett, the main gateway into the precinct, is believed to have been constructed. It seems possible that the lower portions of the surviving precinct wall, particularly on the N side of the precinct, may date to that period. The construction of the wall and the route chosen suggests that the priory was using this as an opportunity to make the precinct a more exclusive space. St Mary of the Rock (St Mary Kirkheugh), the church of a college of secular priests (possibly successors of the Culdees who refused to join the Augustinian priory in the 1140s, and perhaps continuing the rivalry with the cathedral chapter) appears to have been specifically excluded from the precinct, for it would have made sense to have used sea cliffs as the boundary at this point. In the early 15th century, the parish Church, Holy Trinity, was relocated outwith the precinct to the burgh. With parishioner's no-longer requiring access to this area of the precinct, access was further controlled within the precinct by closing off access beyond the cathedral. This effectively created a public outer court in front of the west facade and the north flank of the church, which were respectively the main processional entrance and the principal doorway for the laity. The precinct E and S of the cathedral became far more the exclusive space of the clergy who served the cathedral priory.

The precinct wall enclosed the cathedral, burial ground and the associated conventual buildings along with the church that came to be known as St Rules. The large area S of the Pends was the location for buildings relating to the domestic economy of the priory, with the Abbey Mill and its pond (situated where St Katherine's House now stands), several teind barns and a granary identifiable on Geddy's Plan along with the guest houses including the Hospitium Novum (The New Inns) of which the relocated entrance gate survives and many other now unidentifiable buildings. The open areas appear to have been used as garden plots. As noted, this wall was not part of the precinct, and it is not shown clearly on Geddy's map. Therefore it is not entirely clear whether it is medieval or not. There are, at least, three construction phases evident in the upstanding section, all of which are rubble built.

After the Reformation, the possessions of the archbishopric, priory and cathedral were annexed by the Crown. In 1840, the Office of Woods and Forests sold the all the ground south of Pends Lane within the precinct wall. The sale included 'The walls, gateway and towers' but provided that the University and their successors in title 'shall be bound not to take down, damage or demolish the foresaid walls, gateway and towers ... without the consent of the said commissioners.'

There have been several major clearance episodes at the site, beginning in 1826 when the Barons of the Exchequer undertook major clearance after taking responsibility for the cathedral. They cleared it to the original floor level and the earth was used in the construction of an embankment to combat coastal erosion. In the 1890s excavations were undertaken by Lord Bute with the intention of turning the buildings into a Catholic seminary. Between 1903 and 1905 excavations were undertaken by the St. Andrews Antiquarian Society. In 1908 a museum was constructed south of the chapter house, necessitating further excavation. This was extended in 1935. In 1957/58 the priory house and a number of smaller buildings were demolished, laying open the entire site.

Trial excavations were undertaken in 2001 by Kirkdale Archaeology to assess the impact of proposed works to the boundary wall. Three trenches were opened between the wall and the exposed monastic drain. Of the three trenches, the results from Trench 2 are most relevant to this assessment, running east from the end of the wall. Although the bank next to the wall has the appearance of re-deposited clearance material from the excavations, and its northern side may in fact mark the edge of 19th century Bute trenching, the results of the 2001 excavations suggest that it is in fact older than the wall. No dating evidence was found, but the stratigraphic sequence made it clear that the bank was built before the wall, and it contained large quantities of mortar which suggested that building was going on elsewhere at the same time. It was noted at the time of excavation that the general appearance of the wall suggested a post-medieval date. However, as noted above there have been at least three phases of construction. A stone drain was built before the wall and the bank, which was cut into a series of garden soils.

The excavators suggested that the bank might be related to 16th century siege-works, but highlighted the need for more thorough investigations. The wall acts as a support for the bank and respects the line of the road, the level of which has not changed much.

The results of the 2001 excavation concluded that the origins of the earthwork adjacent to the boundary wall may be the varying result of:

1. Up cast from the Bute excavations (c. 1890)
2. Gardens over the cleared priory buildings (early 19th century)
3. Gardens over ruined priory buildings (16th-18th century)
4. Fields within late priory (15th-16th century)
5. Earthworks associated with the siege of the castle (1546-47)
6. Traces of an earlier boundary (late 12th- late 14th century)

In 2017, CFA Archaeology Ltd undertook the excavation of two trial pits and the supervision of borehole drilling. This revealed that the drain, which was originally set to locate was not in the planned area and that the borehole drilling only assisted in the general understanding of stratigraphic sequence.

1.3 Objectives

The archaeological work comprised of:

- Archaeological hand excavation of six trenches at the pile cap locations.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance. Recording of all elements followed established CFA methods.

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

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

2.2 Excavation

Excavation by hand of six trenches was undertaken at the locations where pile caps will be inserted to form the stabilisation buttressing for the wall. Each trench measured c.1.7m x 0.8m x 0.6m deep. The trench locations were laid out on the ground in advance by HES staff (Fig. 1).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 General

The trench locations are shown on Fig. 1. Tree roots from two extant trees in the vicinity of the works were encountered in the trenches. Small roots were removed during the excavation but larger roots were left intact.

The context register is provided in Appendix 2; context numbers are in bold and parentheses. Context and photograph numbering continued sequentially from the previous phase of work (Rayner and Savory 2017).

3.2 Excavation

Pile Cap Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Pile Cap 1 measured 1.7m x 0.83m x 0.6m, running N-S. The Pile Cap trench had three contexts: uppermost was 0.2m of topsoil of a mid grey-brown sandy silt (**041**), followed by 0.2m of a mid to light greyish-brown sandy silt (**042**), and below that was light brownish-grey sandy silt (**043**) which continued beyond the formation depth. The root disturbance was extensive.

Pile Cap Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Pile Cap 2 measured 1.7m x 0.8m x 0.6m, running N-S. The Pile Cap trench had two contexts: topsoil (**037**) was 0.1m of mid greyish-brown sandy silt, below which was 0.1m of light grey-brown silt (**038**), while the lowest deposit, which appears to be bank

material, was 0.6m of mid grey-brown sandy silt (**039/040**) which continued beyond the formation depth. A large stone roof tile was found in **039**.

Pile Cap Trench 3 (Fig. 4)

Pile Cap 3 measured 1.7m x 0.8m x 0.6m, running N-S . The trench contained two deposits: the topsoil (**048**) was 0.1m of mid greyish-brown sandy silt below which was 0.5m of light greyish-brown sandy silt (**050**) which continued beyond the formation depth. Within this lower deposit was a lens of light yellowish-grey gravel (**049**).

Pile Cap Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

Pile Cap 4 measured 1.7m x 0.8m x 0.6m, running N-S. The trench revealed two indistinct deposits of heavily rooted soil: 0.35m of topsoil (**045**) and 0.45m of mid greyish-brown sandy silt (**047**) which continued beyond the formation depth. A 0.1m thick deposit of brownish-yellow sand was present against the base of the wall. The heavy rooting had caused a large amount of disruption to the deposits.

Pile Cap Trench 5 (Fig. 6)

Pile Cap 5 measured 1.7m x 0.9m x 0.6m, running N-S. The trench had one context, 0.5m of mid brown sandy silt (**052**) underlying topsoil (**051**). A spindle whorl came from (**052**).

Pile Cap Trench 6 (Fig. 7)

Pile Cap Trench 6 measured 1.7m x 0.9m x 0.8m, running N-S. Heavily rooted topsoil (**053**) overlay **057/058**, 0.35-0.5m of mid grey-brown silty sand. Beneath **058** was a stony, light grey-brown silty sand deposit (**061**) up to 0.25m thick and a deposit of angular stones with yellowish-grey mortar (**062**) up to 0.2m thick.

A modern plastic pipe within a cut was present (**055/056**). The trench also contained the cut of CFA Trench TP2 (**059**) (Rayner & Savory 2017).

4. FINDS by Christina Hills

A small number of finds were retained on site, all of which are post medieval in date.

Five sherds of post-medieval pottery in a variety of wares, were found in deposits **047**, **052** and **058**.

A spindle whorl was found in deposit **052** it is circular (34mm diam.) with a central hole (8mm diam.). The spindle whorl is stone, domed on one side and broken on the other.

One large stone slab was found in deposit **039**, it had a large perforation at one end and was 34x59cm in size, and had likely formerly been used as a roof tile.

5. CONCLUSION

An archaeological investigation was carried out through the excavation of six pile caps at St Andrews Cathedral in advance of piling activities designed to support an unstable wall. They were located in the area of the piling caps in advance of the piling works being undertaken to support the leaning wall. The trenches revealed little and most of the deposits found were banking material or heavily disturbed deposits due to the extensive rooting of nearby trees.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Record for the Historic Environment (NRHE) and copies of reports will be lodged with Fife Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 5) and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rayner, E and Savory, G 2017 *Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract. St Andrews Cathedral and Priory, Fife (PIC035). Boundary Wall Buttressing and Consolidation. Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief*. CFA Archaeology Ltd Report no. HES-PIC035-2017-01.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Facing
30	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	E
31	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	E
32	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	S
33	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	S
34	Pile Cap 2 excavation	S
35	Pile Cap 2 plan view	E
36	Pile Cap 2 plan view	E
37	Pile Cap 2 east-facing section	W
38	Pile Cap 2 east-facing section	W
39	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S
40	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S
41	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S
42	Pile Cap 1 plan view	S
43	Pile Cap 1 west-facing section	E
44	Pile Cap 1 west-facing section	E
45	Pile Cap 1 plan view	S
46	Pile cap 4 pre-excavation	S
47	Pile cap 3 pre-excavation	W
48	General views	W
49	General views	W
50	Pile Cap 4 plan view	E
51	Pile Cap 4 plan view	E
52	Pile Cap 4 with (044)	S
53	Pile Cap 4 with (044)	S
54	Pile Cap 4 east-facing section	W
55	Pile Cap 4 east-facing section	W
56	Pile Cap 3 plan view	S
57	Pile Cap 3 east-facing section	E
58	Pile Cap 2 roof tile	N/A
59	Pile Cap 5 pre-excavation	W
60	Pile Cap 6 pre-excavation	W
61	Pile Cap 6 east-facing section	W
62	Pile Cap 6 east-facing section	W
63	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
64	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
65	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
66	Pile Cap 6 plan view	W
67	Pile Cap 6 plan view	W
68	Pile Cap 6 south-facing section	N
69	General site shots from St Rule's Tower	SW
70	General site shots from St Rule's Tower	SW
71	Pile Cap 5 east-facing section	W
72	Pile Cap 5 plan view	W
73	General Site shots	S
30	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	E
31	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	E
32	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	S
33	Pre-ex view of Pile Cap area	S
34	Pile Cap 2 excavation	S
35	Pile Cap 2 plan view	E
36	Pile Cap 2 plan view	E
37	Pile Cap 2 east-facing section	W
38	Pile Cap 2 east-facing section	W
39	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S

Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Facing
40	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S
41	Pile Cap 2 wall elevation	S
42	Pile Cap 1 plan view	S
43	Pile Cap 1 west-facing section	E
44	Pile Cap 1 west-facing section	E
45	Pile Cap 1 plan view	S
46	Pile cap 4 pre-excavation	S
47	Pile cap 3 pre-excavation	W
48	General views	W
49	General views	W
50	Pile Cap 4 plan view	E
51	Pile Cap 4 plan view	E
52	Pile Cap 4 with (044)	S
53	Pile Cap 4 with (044)	S
54	Pile Cap 4 east-facing section	W
55	Pile Cap 4 east-facing section	W
56	Pile Cap 3 plan view	S
57	Pile Cap 3 east-facing section	E
58	Pile Cap 2 roof tile	N/A
59	Pile Cap 5 pre-excavation	W
60	Pile Cap 6 pre-excavation	W
61	Pile Cap 6 east-facing section	W
62	Pile Cap 6 east-facing section	W
63	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
64	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
65	Pile Cap 6 inc (044)	S
66	Pile Cap 6 plan view	W
67	Pile Cap 6 plan view	W
68	Pile Cap 6 south-facing section	N
69	General site shots from St Rule's Tower	SW
70	General site shots from St Rule's Tower	SW
71	Pile Cap 5 east-facing section	W
72	Pile Cap 5 plan view	W
73	General Site shots	S

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTER

Trench	Context no.	Fill of	Type	Description
Pile Cap 2	037		Deposit	Topsoil
Pile Cap 2	038		Deposit	Light grey-brown silty sand
Pile Cap 2	039		Deposit	Mid grey brown silty sand
Pile Cap 2	040		Deposit	Same as 039
Pile Cap 1	041		Deposit	Topsoil
Pile Cap 1	042		Deposit	Light grey-brown silty sand
Pile Cap 1	043		Deposit	Light brownish-grey silty sand
All	044		Masonry	Wall boundary
Pile Cap 4	045		Deposit	Topsoil, mid dark grey brown fine sandy silt
Pile Cap 4	046		Deposit	Brown yellow sand
Pile Cap 4	047		Deposit	Same as 045
Pile Cap 3	048		Deposit	Same as 041
Pile Cap 3	049		Deposit	Gravel, light yellow sand
Pile Cap 3	050		Deposit	Mid brown sandy silt
Pile Cap 5	051		Deposit	Same as 041
Pile Cap 5	052		Deposit	Same 050
Pile Cap 6	053		Deposit	Topsoil
Pile Cap 6	054		Deposit	Same as 053
Pile Cap 6	055	056	Deposit	Loose dark brown soil. Backfill of services
Pile Cap 6	056		Cut	Service trench cut
Pile Cap 6	057		Deposit	Mid brown grey silty sand
Pile Cap 6	058		Deposit	Same as 057
Pile Cap 6	059		Cut	Cut for CFA trench
Pile Cap 6	060	059	Deposit	CFA trench backfill
Pile Cap 6	061		Deposit	Sandstone cobbles in a light grey brown silty sand
Pile Cap 6	062		Deposit	Angular stones in a yellow grey sand mortar

APPENDIX 3: DRAWING REGISTER

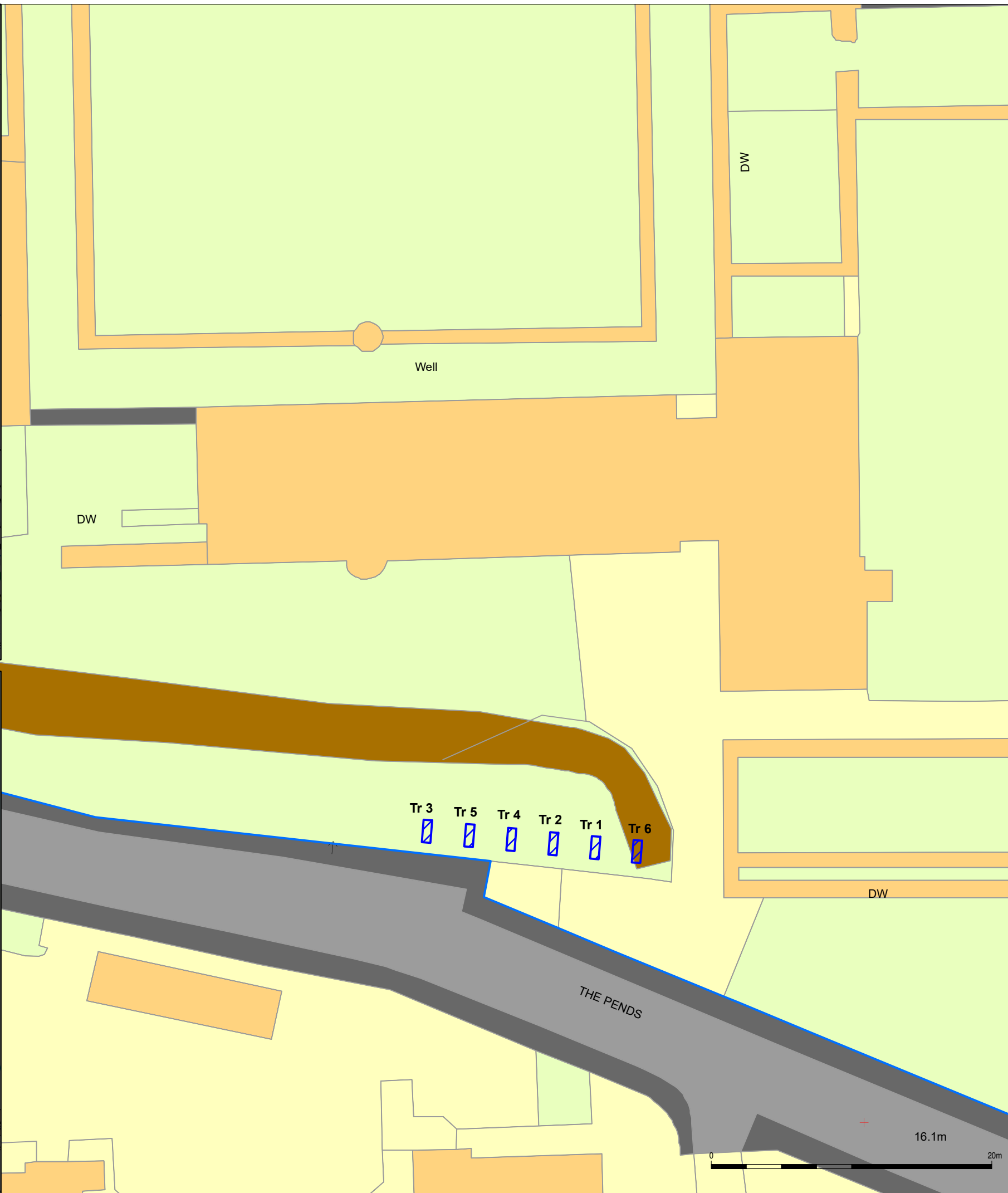
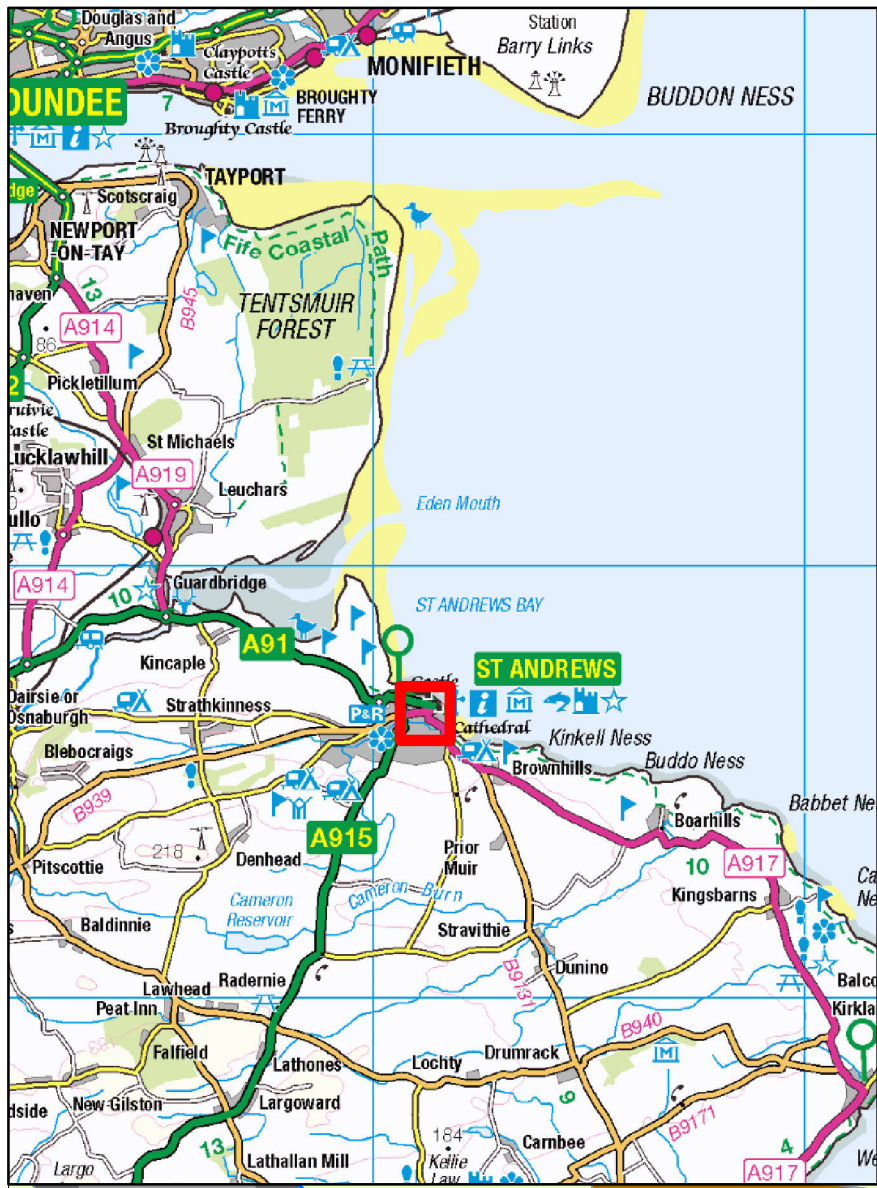
Dwg No.	Sheet No.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description/contexts
13	2	1:10	S	Pile Cap 2 East-facing section
14	2	1:20	P	Pile Cap 2 plan
15	1	1:10	S	Pile Cap 1 East-facing section
16	1	1:20	P	Pile Cap 1 plan
17	2	1:10	S	Pile Cap 4 East-facing section
18	2	1:20	P	Pile Cap 4 plan
19	1	1:10	S	Pile Cap 3 West-facing section
20	1	1:20	P	Pile Cap 3 plan
21	1	1:10	S	Pile Cap 5 East-facing section
22	1	1:20	P	Pile Cap 5 plan
23	2	1:10	S	Pile Cap 6 East-facing section
24	2	1:20	P	Pile Cap 6 plan

APPENDIX 4: FINDS REGISTER

Context	Find type	No.	Wt (g)	Notes	Spotdate
039	Stone	1	XX	Large rectangular stone (34x59cm). Large hole at one end.	
047	Pot	2	32	Glazed redware	Post Medieval
052	Pot	2	20	Red/grey gritty ware	Post Medieval
052	Stone	1	10	Spindle whorl. Circular stone (34mm diam.) with central hole (8mm diam.) domed on one side broken on other side. Possibly ceramic?	Post Medieval
058	Pot	1	6	Buff/grey ware	Post Medieval

APPENDIX 5: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Fife Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract: St Andrews Cathedral and Priory, Fife
PROJECT CODE:	MINA16
PARISH:	St Andrews and St Leonards
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Bethan Gray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological excavation
NMRS NO(S):	NO51NW 2.05
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Cathedral and grounds
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 51400 16593
START DATE (this season)	October 2017
END DATE (this season)	January 2018
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological investigation was carried out through the excavation of six pile caps at St Andrews Cathedral in advance of piling activities designed to support an unstable wall. The pile cap trenches were for piling works being undertaken to support an unstable wall. Each trench measured c.1.7m x 0.8m x 0.6m deep. The trenches revealed little and most of the deposits found were banking material or heavily disturbed deposits due to the extensive rooting of nearby trees.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Environment Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive be deposited with NRHE, report with Fife Council SMR.



Key:

- Excavation Area
- PIC Boundary

Contains Historic Environment Scotland data
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Title:
Location map and site plan

Project:
St Andrews Cathedral and
Priory, Fife.
Archaeological Excavation

Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Scale at A3:
1:300

Drawn by: SW	Checked: MJ	Date: 26/02/2018
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Report No:
3627

Fig. No:
1



Fig. 2 - Pile Cap Trench 1



Fig. 3 - Pile Cap Trench 2

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Report No: 3627		Fig. No: 2 - 3



Fig. 4 - Pile Cap Trench 3



Fig. 5 - Pile Cap Trench 4

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Fig. 6 - Pile Cap Trench 5



Fig. 7 - Pile Cap Trench 6

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Report No: 3627		Fig. No: 6 - 7

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