

OICH OLD SUSPENSION BRIDGE : EXCAVATIONS 1997

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The river Oich flows north-eastwards out of Loch Oich for a distance of six miles to enter Loch Ness at Fort Augustus. The old suspension bridge spans the river adjacent to where Abercalder bridge spans the Caledonian Canal. Telford and Jessop cut the Canal through the low land close to the River and on the SE side of it (Cameron 1972; 77). The bridge was built c.1850, probably by James Dredge. It is a double cantilever chain suspension bridge with coursed bullfaced rubble battered pylons linked by round-headed pedimented arches. The bridge had a wooden deck. (Hume 1977)

The excavation was undertaken in advance of groundworks to strengthen the iron poles anchoring the bridge to the ground. There were fifty two anchors, forty eight of which were exposed during the archaeological work. The anchors were tied to the bridge with a series of iron bars. These bars ran throughout the bridge and from the top edge of the bridge to ground level at anchors 3, 24, 36 and 43. At the top edge of the bridge were fifteen bars, with two going down to anchor 13 and another two to anchor 12. Eleven bars then continued to anchor 11, and so on along the length of the bridge. Above each anchor there was flexible joint (figs 2a and 3) where each bar had a space its own thickness between it and the next one, the bars running away from the bridge being to the outside. The combined effect of an extra bar and two bars running to the ground was that the number of bars decreased by one at each anchor point. The method of fixing the anchors was to bolt the bars running from the main line through an iron drum onto an imported granite block (fig 2b).

During the construction of the Caledonian Canal, granite was quarried locally for the construction of the locks in this area (Cameron 1972; 78) and although the source was said to have been exhausted, the small amount used in the construction could probably have been obtained from the waste.

The distance between the east and west lines of anchors increased the further they were from the bridge, approximately 5.10m by the bridge and 5.30m at the furthest excavated bases.

For the purposes of the site grid the bridge was aligned N-S and directions given in this report are on that basis, although the bridge and therefore the trenches were more accurately aligned NE-SW.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

2.1 THE NW LINE OF ANCHORS, COMPRISING BASES 1-13.

Anchor 1

This anchor was outside, to the N, of the excavated area and was therefore not investigated.

Anchors 2-5

One trench was excavated over these anchors, measuring 3.80m N-S, 0.70m in width and up to 0.35m in depth. The material removed was turf and topsoil over light brown sandy gravel and mid brown more compact gravel. There were occasional patches of ash and coal fragments. There were three iron nails, a large strip of iron and two pieces of 20th century pottery among the finds from the trench for bases 2-5.

Anchor 2

This fitting involved three prongs extending N from a 0.45m thick area of tar. The central prong ended with a bolt down onto bedrock. The outer prongs continued northwards beyond the trench.

Anchor 3

A two armed fitting with a crossbar joined the arms and extended beyond them. The arms were bolted to the bedrock at both sides, there were also hoops over both sides. There had been some excavation of the bedrock to tie the base in more securely.

Anchor 4

A two armed fitting with crossbar extending beyond both arms. Bolted to the bedrock at both sides. The bedrock had been dug into to a greater depth than at anchor 3, again securely tying the anchor to the bedrock.

Anchor 5

This was by far the most common type of anchor. The fixing consisted of a drum shaped piece of iron which seemed to have been built in three pieces (fig 2b). The inner section was 120mm by 120mm and 120mm high, the central section 130mm by 130mm and 120mm high and the outer section was 80mm by 80mm and 80mm high. On both the N and S sides of the fitting were extensions that appeared to be part of the central section, these arms were bolted into the main section. The whole fitting was bolted to a large sloping stone with four iron bolts, two at both front and back. Between the drum and the stone there was a 30mm thick tar layer, presumably to align and secure the fitting before it was bolted down. The bolt used here will be referred to throughout this account as "standard fitting" to avoid many repetitions of the description. Immediately to the S was a large flat stone and it was thought that this may indicate the southern limit of a laid surface.

Anchors 1-5 were all in one trench which measured 3.80m N-S, 0.70m wide and up to 0.40m deep. In the main the material removed was turf and silty topsoil although there were occasional patches of burnt silt.

Anchor 6

Standard fitting (see anchor 5). It was fixed to a flat stone that measured 0.57m N-S and between 0.30m and 0.55m in width. There was, as seen at anchor 5, tar between the anchor and the stone. There were flat sub angular-angular stones, perhaps indicating the original surface, throughout this area . This trench measured 0.80m N-S, 0.70m wide and up to 0.25m deep, the soil removed was turf and sandy loam.

Anchor 7

Standard fitting onto a flat stone measuring 0.38m N-S, 0.30m wide. There was tar fixing the fitting to the stone. There were flat stones in all parts of the trench except for the NE corner, further excavation may have shown them to be present in that area too. The trench measured 0.80m N-S, 0.58m wide and 0.18m deep, it removed turf and sandy loam.

Anchor 8

Standard fitting onto a flat stone measuring 0.40m N-S and 0.30m wide. There was tar between the anchor point and the stone. There were only traces of a slab surface to the S and E but further excavation may have shown them to be more extensive. The trench measured 0.65m N-S, 0.60m wide and was up to 0.20m deep, removing turf and sandy loam.

Anchor 9

Standard fitting onto a flat stone 0.45m N-S and 0.35m wide. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone. There were stone slabs in the N and E sides of the trench, elsewhere the surface reached was quite gravelly. The trench measured 0.75m N-S, 0.53m wide and 0.20m in depth. It removed turf and sandy loam.

Anchor 10

Standard fitting onto a flat stone measuring 0.45m N-S and 0.30m wide. There was tar fixing the anchor point to the stone. There were no slabs noted in this trench, the surface reached is gravelly. The trench measured 0.60m N-S, 0.55m in width and was up to 0.25m deep and removed turf and sandy loam. There was a large iron nail found in this trench.

Anchor 11

Standard fitting onto a flat stone measuring 0.60m N-S and 0.48m wide. There was tar fixing the anchor onto the stone. There was one stone slab, the rest of the surface reached was gravelly. The trench was 0.70m square and 0.23m deep it removed turf and some gravelly silt. A large iron nail was recovered from the gravel.

Anchor 12

Standard fitting onto a stone measuring .0.60m N-S and varying from 0.20m-0.40m in width. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone. The surface reached was gravelly. The trench was 0.70m square and 0.35m deep, it removed mainly silty loam but also some gravel.

Anchor 13

Standard fitting onto a flat stone measuring 0.55m N-S and 0.45m wide. There was tar holding the anchor to the stone. There were stones on the surface reached that could be described as either large gravel or small slabs, with the former slightly favoured. The trench measured 0.70m N-S, 0.60m wide and 0.35m deep, it removed turf, sandy loam and fine gravel. The lines for anchors 12 and 13 emerge from the same point at the top of the bridge.

2.2 *THE NE LINE COMPRISING ANCHORS 14-26.*

Anchor 14

This was the northernmost anchor on this line. This was a standard fitting onto a granite block measuring 0.50m E-W and 0.40m in width. There was tar between the anchor and the fitting. There were slabs present to the S and E of the trench. The trench measured 0.62m N-S, 0.60m wide and was up to 0.18m deep. The material removed was turf and topsoil. Three iron nails and an iron staple were recovered.

Anchor 15

A standard fitting onto an irregularly shaped granite block measuring up to 0.50m by 0.50m. There was tar fixing the anchor to the granite. Topsoil was removed from a trench measuring roughly 0.70m by 0.70m and 0.26m in depth, revealing slabs in most of the base.

Anchor 16

A standard fitting onto a sloping granite block measuring 0.52m N-S and 0.31m in width. At the N end there was a gap of 60mm between the anchor and the stone. There was tar fixing the anchor to the southern, flat part of the stone. Turf and topsoil was removed and there were flat slabs on the E, W and S sides of the surface reached.

Anchor 17

Standard fitting onto a flat granite block measuring 0.58m E-W and 0.52m in width. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone. The trench measured 0.84m N-S, 0.70m in width and up to 0.20m in depth. There was only topsoil removed and it was still present in the trench bottom.

Anchor 18

Standard fitting onto a flat lozenge shaped granite block, approximately 0.38m by 0.38m. There was tar present between the anchor and the stone. The trench measured 0.63m by 0.63m and 0.19m in depth, it only removed topsoil. There were slabs on the W side of the trench and rounded stones, possibly cobbles, to the S.

Anchor 19

Standard fitting onto a flat rectangular granite block measuring 0.59m N-S by 0.24m in width. There was tar bonding the anchor to the stone. The trench measured 0.80m N-S, 0.55m wide

and up to 0.18m deep. This trench removed only topsoil, there was a flat slab protruding into the NW corner of the trench elsewhere the topsoil was not bottomed.

Anchor 20

Standard fitting onto a flat granite block measuring 0.43m E-W and 0.40m in width. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone. The trench measured 0.70m by 0.70m and was 0.14m deep, there was mainly turf and topsoil removed and the bottom 30mm was stony silty loam. There were no slabs noted.

Anchor 21

Standard fitting onto subrectangular granite block measuring up to 0.49m N-S and 0.40m in width. There was tar between the anchor and the stone. The trench measured 0.78m N-S, 0.60m in width and up to 0.21m in depth. Only topsoil was excavated and the trench bottomed onto it.

Anchor 22

Standard fitting, but with two nuts on the E side, onto a granite block measuring up to 0.60m N-S and 0.35m in width. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone, the tar extended 50mm beyond the iron on the S side. The trench measured 0.80m N-S, 0.62m in width and 0.18m in depth. There was only topsoil excavated and this deposit was not bottomed.

Anchors 23-25

Anchors 23-25 were investigated in one trench measuring 3.45m N-S, between 0.50m and 0.70m in width and up to 0.55m in depth. The trench removed 0.12m of turf/topsoil, overlying 0.48m of gravel in coarse sandy silt. The gravel may have been river derived, it was not present in the southern 0.40m of the trench. There were plant pot fragments found under anchor 25, perhaps suggesting that the gravel is landscaping.

Anchor 23

Standard fitting onto an angular granite block measuring 0.55m N-S by 0.30m in width. There was tar fixing the anchor to the stone, there were additional stones surrounding the one holding the anchor. The stones may have been part of a surface or to give additional support. There was a rectangular iron plate, a piece of bottle glass, an iron nail, pitch and 20th-century earthenware recovered from this trench.

Anchor 24

The fitting was two rods inserted into a drilled granite block secured by a bolt and plate to the east and a bolt alone to the W. There is a seemingly unused drill hole under the central rod. There is a similar arrangement to the S of the SW row. Three fragments of 20th-century red earthenware plant pot, an iron nail and a lead plate fragment were recovered.

Anchor 25

This anchor point was not reached. Leading to it there are three elements consisting of a standard rod surrounded by two thicker, 40mm diameter as opposed to the usual 25mm, rods (fig 2c).

Anchor 26

This anchor was not investigated as it was not necessary for the groundworks.

2.3

THE SW LINE ANCHORS 27-39

Anchor 27

Standard fitting onto a subrectangular granite block, 0.40m N-S by 0.29m wide, that slopes down slightly to the SE, the anchor was drilled into the granite block. There was tar between the metal plate and the rock presumably acting as a fixing. The trench measured 0.78m N-S, 0.58m wide and up to 0.30m deep; it removed turf, topsoil and gravel. There were schistose/phyllitic blocks covered most of the surface reached.

Anchor 28

Standard fitting onto a granite block 0.50m square in size, the anchor dips down slightly to the south. There were angular pieces of granite, varying from 80-400mm in size, on the surface reached. There was a slight trace of tar fixing the anchor to the stone but this was not as apparent as it usually was. The trench measured 0.73m E-W, was 0.68m wide and was a maximum of 0.28m deep. The material removed was turf, topsoil, silty sand and fine mixed gravel and grit. There were stones, granite, on the surface reached.

Anchor 29

Standard fitting onto a granite block measuring 0.30m N-S and 0.40m wide. The anchor stone is part of a general surface of angular pieces of granite and this stone surface is largely covered with pitch containing some gravel, this is the material seen between the anchor and the stone in most trenches. The stones around the anchor are 120mm-200mm in size, and appear to be helping to hold the anchor in place. The trench measured 0.80m E-W, 0.63m wide and up to 290mm deep, it removed turf, topsoil, silty sand and compact gravel. An iron nail and a fragment of asphalt were recovered.

Anchor 30

Standard fitting onto a granite block measuring 0.41m N-S by 0.28m wide. The trench measured 0.89m N-S, 0.73m wide and up to 0.28m deep, it removed turf, topsoil and compacted grit and gravel. The surface reached was grit and gravel with angular granite and schistose stones, 120mm-200mm in size. There was tar fixing the anchor to the fixing stone and also splashed over the other stones on the surface. A square section iron nail and a clear fragment of bottle glass were recovered.

Anchor 31

The trench for anchor 31 measured 0.80m N-S, 0.65m in width and was up to 0.30m deep. The material removed was Historic Scotland sand, turf, topsoil, yellow/brown compacted sand and gravel and finally a solid surface of angular granite and micaceous schistose stones, 80mm-200mm in size. There was gravelly asphalt tying the plate to the anchor stone and also splashed over the stone surface. There was a standard fitting onto a granite block measuring 0.45m N-S and 0.34m wide.

Anchor 32

The trench for anchor 31 measured 0.84m N-S, 0.66m in width and was up to 0.30m deep. The material removed was turf overlying chicken wire laid by Historic Scotland, topsoil, yellow/brown compacted gravel and pebbles and finally a solid surface of angular granite and micaceous schistose. This was a standard fitting onto a subrectangular granite anchor stone 0.45m E-W and 0.40m wide. The anchor plate was fixed to the stone with tar. There were stones forming in a surface over most of the trench, these stones were approximately 50mm below the anchor stone.

Anchor 33

The excavated area measured 0.75m N-S, 0.70m in width and up to 0.40m in depth. The material removed was turf over chicken wire, tar gravel and asphalt in the SE corner, topsoil and pale brown gravel and grit. The surface reached was fairly level granite, and occasionally schistose, stones with occasional patches of mortar, forming a fairly consistent surface. The stones were 130mm-500mm in size. The anchor was a standard fitting onto a slightly worn roughly subrectangular granite block 0.34m N-S by 0.30m wide, the block was sloping slightly to the SE. There was tar fixing the metal drum to the stone.

Anchor 34

The trench measured 0.80m N-S, 0.70m in width and up to 0.44m in depth. The upper deposit was turf and it overlay gravelly asphalt, soft mid-dark brown clayey sand with some gravel, mid-pale compacted gravel and pebbles. The surface reached was angular granite and, occasional, schistose, stones with patches of pale brown mortar. The stones were ill fitted and between 120mm and 270mm in size. This was a standard fitting onto a granite block measuring 0.54m N-S and between 0.24m and 0.34m in width, dipping slightly to the S. Tar tied the fitting to the stone. There was an iron nail recovered from this trench.

Anchor 35

A trench 0.80m N-S, 0.76m wide and up to 0.40m in depth. The material removed was turf and topsoil, gravelly asphalt, dark brown sandy silt and gravel grit and pebbles. The last deposit was not completely excavated and therefor formed the finished surface. The anchor was a standard fitting onto a thin schistose stone, measuring 0.50m N-S and 0.14m in width,

that dipped down to the S. There was tar between the fitting and the stone. There was an iron nail and an iron loop recovered from this trench.

Anchor 36, 37, 38 and 39.

A trench 4.60m N-S, 0.60m-0.75m in width and up to 0.45m in depth. All the suspension rods in this area were below the present ground surface. Turf was removed and it overlay tar, dark brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles, compacted gravel grit and pebbles. All of these deposits overlay the rods for anchors 36, 37, 38 and 39. It would therefor seem that the soil was removed, the rods inserted and the soil then replaced. The deposits were not notably different in this trench. Two square section iron nails were recovered.

Anchor 36 was a standard fitting into an irregular boulder, measuring 0.56m N-S and 0.40m in width. There was no tar visible between the stone and the fitting.

Anchor 37 consisted of two rods bolted to an upright block of granite measuring 0.49m E-W, 0.16m thick and at least (not bottomed) 0.26m high. The rods were bolted with square iron washers, 130mm by 80mm by 20mm in size, on the north side. The upright stone acted as a support for the rods leading to anchors 38 and 39. There were two angular granite stones jammed against the anchor, on the N side. There was a drilled hole in the stone adjacent to the anchor has a drilled hole 45mm in diameter. The drilled stone measured 0.33m E-W and 0.26m in width and the other 0.26m N-S and 0.15m in width. The anchor points for 38 and 39 were not seen in the excavated area.

2.4

THE SE LINE ANCHORS 40-52.

Anchors 40, 41 and 42.

The area excavated measured 4.50m N-S, between 0.65 and 1.00m in width and 0.15m-0.45m in depth. All of the suspension rods were below the ground level. The material removed was broken concrete turf and silage, a smooth tarmac surface which respected anchors 40 and 41, pale brown fairly compacted gravel and pebbles, at the S end of the trench, below anchor 41, there was dark grey humic material, perhaps indicative of an old ground surface.

The hinge for rods 40 and 41 rested on a large irregular granite boulder measuring 0.60m E-W, 0.55m wide and 0.36m high. This was comparable to the set-up at anchor 37 to the W. The stone for anchor 42 was irregularly shaped and measured 0.50m E-W and 0.13m-0.40m in width, the anchor was glued to the stone with tar. There were no other stones visible.

Anchor 43

The trench measured 0.90m E-W, 0.70m wide and 0.25m in depth. The material removed was turf, soft dark brown sand and compacted mid brown gravel and pebbles. This was a standard anchor onto an irregular granite block 0.45m N-S and 0.35m wide. There was tar fixing the fitting to the stone. There were no other stones uncovered.

Anchor 44

The trench measured 0.68m N-S, 0.56m E-W and up to 0.30m in depth. The material removed was turf and topsoil, soft dark grey sand, mid grey/brown sand and compacted grit and gravel. A standard anchor onto a subrectangular granite block measuring 0.32m-0.40m E-W and 0.24m in width. There was only gravel at the base of the trench. No tar visible between the anchor and the stone.

Anchor 45

A trench measuring 0.63m E-W, 0.63m N-S and up to 0.36m in depth was opened around the anchor. It removed turf, topsoil, soft mid brown clean sand and compacted grit gravel and pebbles. The anchor was a standard fitting onto an irregular granite block measuring 0.45m E-W and 0.10m-0.35m in width, it was tipping down slightly to the E. There was a fragment of iron recovered.

Anchor 46

The excavated area was 0.64m N-S, 0.55m wide and up to 0.30m deep. Turf and topsoil overlay soft mid brown sand and compacted gravel and pebbles. The gravel and pebble deposit was also at the limit of excavation. This was a standard anchor onto an irregularly shaped granite block 0.40m E-W and 0.06m-0.40mm wide. The anchor was glued to the stone with tar.

Anchor 47

There was an area of 0.64m N-S, 0.55m in width and up to 0.30m in depth opened around this anchor. Turf and topsoil overlay soft mid brown sand and compacted granite and pebbles. The surface reached was granite, with the exception of one schistose, chocks measuring 0.10m-0.15m. The anchor was glued to a diamond shaped granite block, measuring 0.53m E-W and 0.46m in width, with tar.

Anchor 48

The excavated area was 0.61m E-W, 0.52-0.61m wide and up to 0.27m in depth. There was turf and topsoil over fine light brown sand that got fairly gravelly toward the base. The surface reached was angular granite blocks seen most in the southern part of the trench base. Standard fitting onto an almost square granite block measuring 0.44m E-W and 0.40m in width. There was no tar noted between the fitting and the stone.

Anchor 49

A trench 0.75m N-S, 0.62m in width and up to 0.32m in depth was opened. Turf and topsoil overlay fine brown sand getting gravelly at the base. This was a standard fitting onto an almost square granite block measuring 0.47m E-W and 0.44m in width. The fitting was bonded to the stone with tar. There was a large angular block that was seen at the N end of

the trench, this stone was 0.18m into the north end of the trench but was thought to be mostly outside as it was under the N, E and W baulks.

Anchor 50

A trench 0.61m N-S, 0.56m wide and up to 0.23m deep removed the same material as that described at anchors 48 and 49. The surface reached was mixed sand and gravel. This was a standard fitting onto a an irregularly shaped granite block measuring up to 0.50m N-S and 0.43m in width. There was tar bonding the iron fitting to the stone.

Anchor 51

The trench measured 0.72m N-S, 0.53m in width and up to 0.23m in depth. The material removed was as 48, 49 and 50. Standard fitting onto a subrectangular granite block 0.30m-0.40m N-S and 0.30m E-W, tar bonds the fitting to the stone. The trench bottomed onto mixed sand and gravel.

Anchor 52

The trench measured 0.72m N-S, 0.59m in width and up to 0.47m deep, the depth was usually 0.24m. Turf and topsoil gave way to fine light brown sand. This sand created a boundary between a dump of tarmac, in the NE corner, and a level tarmac surface. The latter partially overlies the metal fitting. Standard fitting onto a rectangular granite block at least, partially obscured by tar, 0.40m N-S and 0.28m in width. There was tar bonding the fitting to the stone. There were four iron nails recovered from this trench.

3.0 DISCUSSION

The excavation was in advance of groundworks to strengthen the iron poles anchoring the bridge to the ground. There were fifty two anchors, forty eight of which were exposed during the archaeological work. The distance between the E and W lines of anchors increased the further they were from the bridge, approximately 5.10m by the bridge and 5.30m at the furthest excavated bases. There was often white lead paint surviving on the anchors, the coat of paint was solid over the nuts, bolts and plate. This indicated that the anchors were painted *in-situ*.

3.1 THE NORTH SIDE OF THE BRIDGE

The West Line

The material removed in the trenches to the N and S ends of the W line, anchors 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12 and 13, was turf and topsoil over quite compact gravel. Trenches 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 removed turf and topsoil over sandy loam. There were large angular blocks, usually granite, in the bottom of trenches 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. There was one stone in the base of the trench for anchor 11 and those for anchors 10, 12 and 13 were possibly not excavated to a great enough depth to

see and slabs there may have been. There were no slabs at anchors 2, 3 and 4. There were iron nails recovered from trenches 2-5, 10 and 11.

The East Line

The material removed was only turf and topsoil in the trenches at anchors 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22. At 20 there was also a little silty loam. The trench for 23-25 removed turf and topsoil over 0.48m of gravel in course sandy silt. It was thought that this gravel may have been river derived landscaping. There were stone slabs seen at the base of the trenches at anchors 14, 15, 16, 18 and 19. Trenches 17 and 21 bottomed onto topsoil, it was therefore not known if there were slabs. There were iron nails found in trenches 14 and 22-25.

3.2

THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE BRIDGE

East Line

The material removed was generally turf and topsoil, silty sand and gravel. There were slabs at the base of the trenches at 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 but not those at 35 and 36-39. There were iron nails recovered from trenches 29, 30, 34, 35 and 36-38.

West Line

The material removed was turf and topsoil, sand and compacted grit, gravel and pebbles. Slabs were only uncovered in the trenches around bases 47, 48 and 49. There were iron nails found in trenches 45 and 52. It was thought that dark grey humic material seen in the trench for anchors 40-42 may have been an old ground surface, perhaps dating to the period immediately prior to the building of the bridge and the other works involved.

There was also chicken wire and turf, laid by Historic Scotland, over the tarmac road surface to the S end of the S side of the bridge. The tar had also been dumped around the site and is seen most prominently at trench 52. Local information is that there was no tarmac surface in the 1930's suggesting that it was laid after then. The road surface was only seen in the trench to investigate anchors 36-38. The hard packed gravel that is often seen was packed on and around the anchors and was therefore integral to the construction. This gravel may have formed, or been bedding for, the road surface.

On the S side a causeway had to be built out from the canal bank to obtain the necessary level; this was probably redeposited material originally derived from the cutting of the Canal around 1815.

It was thought the only areas where slabs were never laid, except the one the anchor was tied to, were the four or five furthest from the bridge on all four lines; 1-5, 21-25, 35-39 and 40-44. Although there were other trenches where granite slabs were not seen this was thought to be due to the excavation not continuing to the level that they were laid at.

There were thought to be two possible purposes for the laying of the slabs, as surfaces at both sides of the bridge or as chocks around the individual bases. The excavators on the N side of the bridge favoured the theory that they were indicative of a laid surface while those on the S

side thought the other explanation was more likely. The obvious solution would be to dig an E-W trench to join trenches at both sides and see if the slabs continue across the full width, this was not part of this brief.

If the slabs were a surface it seems this surface only extended back approximately 12 metres, not as far as the trenches furthest from the bridge. It is possible that the fact that there are no slabs around the outer bases is an indication that this is a surface, if they were chocks why would they not be put round the outer bases? It is possible that the lack of stones around these bases is because they are different fittings. The iron nails found could indicate that the wooden planking of the bridge continued onto the sides.

If there is to be definitive interpretation of the possible roadways then it is essential to investigate the area between the lines of anchor bases. This investigation was limited to trenches directly around the anchors and the stones that they were tied to and it is impossible to be confident about any interpretation. Photographs in the National Monuments Record Of Scotland (figs 2b and 2c) show that there was excavation of at least two of the bases in 1970.

4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Hume, J R 1977 *SDD List*

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