

Site Meigle Museum

N.G.R NO 2872 4459

Project Description Watching Brief

Report

A watching brief was carried out on 30th September 1997 while two test pits were excavated in the vicinity of Meigle Museum. The exercise was intended to establish the nature and extent of archaeological deposits in the area at the S of the graveyard, where it meets the N wall of the museum, in advance of the erection of an extension to the building.

Test Pit 1

The first test pit was located 1m S of the E-W graveyard perimeter wall (NW section), some 8.5m W and 6m N of the NE corner of the present museum building. The trench measured 900mm N-S and 800mm E-W in plan, and was dug to a maximum depth of 700mm on its S side. A thick layer of topsoil overlay a similarly deep level of ash and cinder spread, sealing a thin (100mm) buried soil horizon. This in turn sealed 100-200mm of soil and yellow mortar debris, below which was identified a level surface of heavily mortared masonry, cut away on its S side to form an irregular E-W edge. The masonry comprised roughly squared red and white sandstone blocks in a yellow lime mortar, but the dimensions of Test Pit 1 did not allow for an interpretation of its function. However, as it was revealed at a depth in excess of 600mm, the masonry will not be disturbed by the construction of the museum extension.

Test Pit 2

The second test pit was located at the NE corner of the museum, against the N-S aligned garden wall which abuts the museum at this point. Test Pit 2 measured 1300mm E-W and 1100mm N-S in plan, and was excavated to a depth of 900mm. As in Test Pit 1, a deep topsoil horizon overlay an equal deposit of cinders and ash, with brick inclusions. Below the latter was a 150mm deposit of buried soil, sealing a thick deposit of orange-brown silt, forming a levelling horizon. None of the deposits revealed showed signs of a cut for the museum wall, which they are therefore presumed to post-date. The lowest layer revealed was a possible natural horizon, comprising yellow-orange silty sand.

No archaeological features likely to be disturbed by the extension works were revealed, as the site was seen to be characterised by substantial depths of levelling and otherwise later materials.

A full graphic and photographic record was made, and no finds were removed from the site.