

Linlithgow Palace Peel Replacement Bridge: Watching Brief, Data Structure Report

AOC 21769

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Linlithgow Palace Peel Replacement Bridge: Watching Brief: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	West Lothian Council County Buildings High Street Linlithgow EH49 7EZ
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NT 0031 7728
AOC Project No:	21769
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

AOC Archaeology Group were commissioned by West Lothian Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground-breaking works associated with the construction of a replacement foot bridge at Linlithgow Peel, Linlithgow, West Lothian, within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Linlithgow Palace and Peel (SAM 90201).

Following the unsupervised groundworks, AOC Archaeology visited site to inspect and record the nature of the ground disturbance and any possible adverse impact on the archaeological resource.

No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were observed, nor was any evidence for such remains apparent, suggesting that such archaeological material had been disturbed by the earlier groundworks.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by West Lothian Council to undertake an archaeological watching Brief during the construction of a replacement bridge at Linlithgow Palace Peel, Linlithgow. The scope of the works were set out by Historic Scotland in discussion with West Lothian Council in permitting Scheduled Monument Consent for the development. The works were to be carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2010) prepared by AOC Archaeology Group and approved by Historic Scotland and in keeping with the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act (AM & AAA 1979) in safeguarding the integrity of the Scheduled Linlithgow Palace and Peel (SAM 90201).

1.2 It was anticipated that the maximum impact on scheduled ground would be the intrusions created by the new bridge abutments

1.3 Unfortunately, due to an error in communications, the groundworks occurred without an archaeologist being present. In the absence of the monitoring of the actual ground breaking works, Historic Scotland requested that AOC Archaeology establish the depth of the natural subsoil within the foundation trenches for the abutments to determine the extent of the damage to any archaeological material that may have been present.

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development site is centred at NGR: NT 0031 7728 (Figure 1), on the site of an existing bridge (which was to be replaced) crossing Bell's Burn between Low Port Outdoor Education Centre and the Linlithgow Palace Peel. Low Port Primary School is located to the east.

1.3 Historical and Archaeological Background

1.3.1 Linlithgow Palace and Peel (Royal Park) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It was the site of a royal manor in the 12th century, later supplanted by a fortification known as 'the Peel', built in the early 14th century by Edward I of England. Following a fire which greatly destroyed much of Linlithgow, James I began the rebuilding of the palace as an imposing residence for Scottish royalty, also beginning the rebuilding of the Church of St Michael to the south of the palace; the earlier church having been used as a storeroom during the English occupation. Over the following century the palace developed into a formal courtyard structure, with significant additions by James III and James IV. James IV added the outer gateway and the elaborate courtyard fountain. The Union of the Crowns (1603) resulted in the Palace being used very little, although King James VI had the north range rebuilt between 1618 and 1622. Most of the palace buildings were destroyed by burning following a stay by forces under the command of the Duke of Cumberland in January 1746.

1.3.2 An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Historic Scotland in 2002 within the grounds of the Peel. The work consisted of geophysical survey and trial trenching. Despite limited dating evidence a number of early linear features were interpreted as the remains of the Royal Manor established by David I. A large defensive ditch, believed to have been excavated during Cromwell's occupation in 1650, was located surrounding the Palace and St Michael's Church, and in addition two previously unrecorded ancillary buildings were also discovered. A fragment of Roman mortarium was also recovered (Stronach 2002).

2. Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the work were:

- i) to undertake a watching brief during ground-breaking works associated with the new bridge and thus prevent the destruction of significant archaeological features prior to their recording;
- ii) to undertake the immediate recording of isolated finds of moderately significant archaeological material that would be disturbed by the bridge construction works (should the avoidance of the disturbance of archaeological material by the development works prove impractical);
- iii) given the discovery of highly significant archaeological remains in quantity that would suffer an adverse impact from the site investigation works (i.e. preservation *in situ* is impractical), The recording of all archaeological features by means of a mitigation strategy (Phase 2 and 3 works) to be formulated with Historic Scotland (via West Lothian Council);
- iv) to report on the results of the watching brief.

3. Background

- 3.1 Prior to the start of the construction works, a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2010) was approved by Historic Scotland.
- 3.2 AOC Archaeology was kept informed of the work schedule by West Lothian Council and was provided with details of the main contractor, Crummock. When AOC Archaeology Group contacted Crummock it was indicated that the work would take place the following week. Crummock stated that they would keep in daily contact with AOC Archaeology.
- 3.3 Due to a miscommunication between the main contractors, Crummock, and AOC Archaeology Group, ground breaking works commenced on Monday 23rd April 2012 without archaeological supervision.
- 3.4 AOC Archaeology Group contacted Crummock on Tuesday 24th April to establish when the work would be undertaken and were informed that it had taken place the previous day (Monday 23rd April). AOC Archaeology visited site on the morning of Wednesday 25th April to inspect the works and the material removed from the foundations.
- 3.5 AOC Archaeology reported the breach of Scheduled Monument Consent to Historic Scotland on Wednesday 25th April. 2012.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 Ground breaking works (re-excavation of the trench for the new bridge abutment) were inspected by a professional field archaeologist with ground reduction by means of a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. It was anticipated that the maximum impact on scheduled ground would be the intrusion created by the new bridge abutment. The monitoring was designed to cease once a clean natural subsoil surface had been reached.

5. Results

- 5.1 The archaeological works were carried out on 30th April, 2012 in generally fair weather conditions rendering good archaeological visibility.
- 5.2 The existing northerly foundation trench was inspected and its east and west-facing sections recorded. The trench was excavated through 1.0 m of made ground, comprising a combination of sand, gravel and sandstone (Plate 1). Artefactual material such as animal bone and bottle glass, was identified in section within the lower fills ([103] and [105]) confirming the anthropogenic working of the deposit.



Plate1: Northern foundation trench of Peel Bridge

- 5.3 The trench was extended to the east to determine at what depth the natural soil existed. Up to 1.60 m of made ground was removed, but the natural subsoil was not identified. At this point the water table was reached and the trench flooded.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 The archaeological works completed at the proposed site of the Peel Bridge have identified a series of anthropogenic deposits on the northern bank of the burn. Though the nature of the soils is inconclusive, the identification of 19th century bottle glass at the base of the foundation confirms their relatively modern re-working.
- 6.2 The natural subsoil was not encountered, with the development only impacting upon soils containing relatively modern material. No impact on natural subsoil was apparent. Taken together, it is unlikely that earlier archaeologically significant soil layers or negative features were damaged by the contractors' unobserved groundworks.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The archaeological works completed at the proposed site of the Peel Bridge have confirmed the absence of significant archaeological deposits within ground impacted by the development.

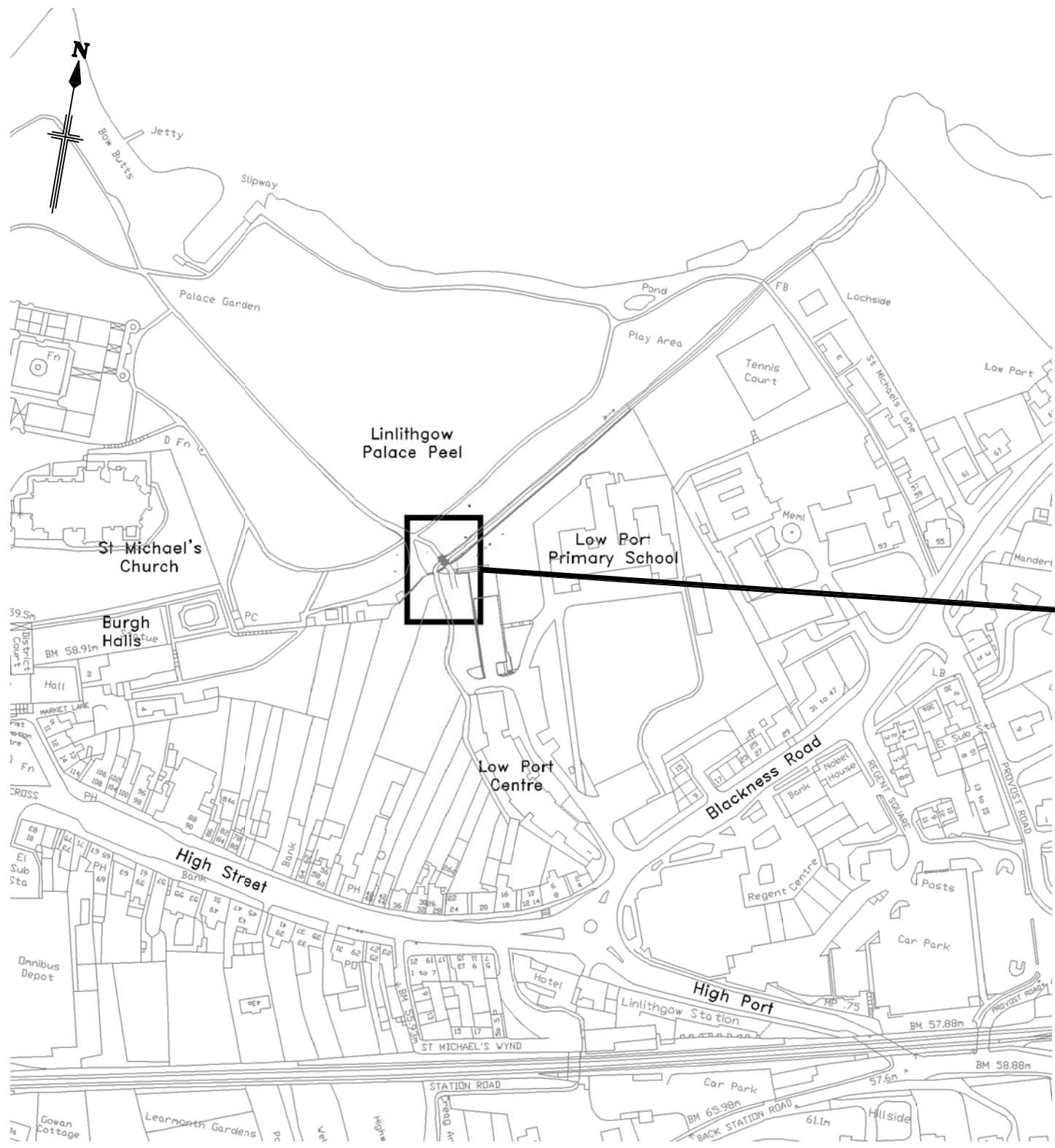
- 7.2 No further archeologically works are considered necessary. This recommendation will require confirmation by Historic Scotland.

8. Bibliography

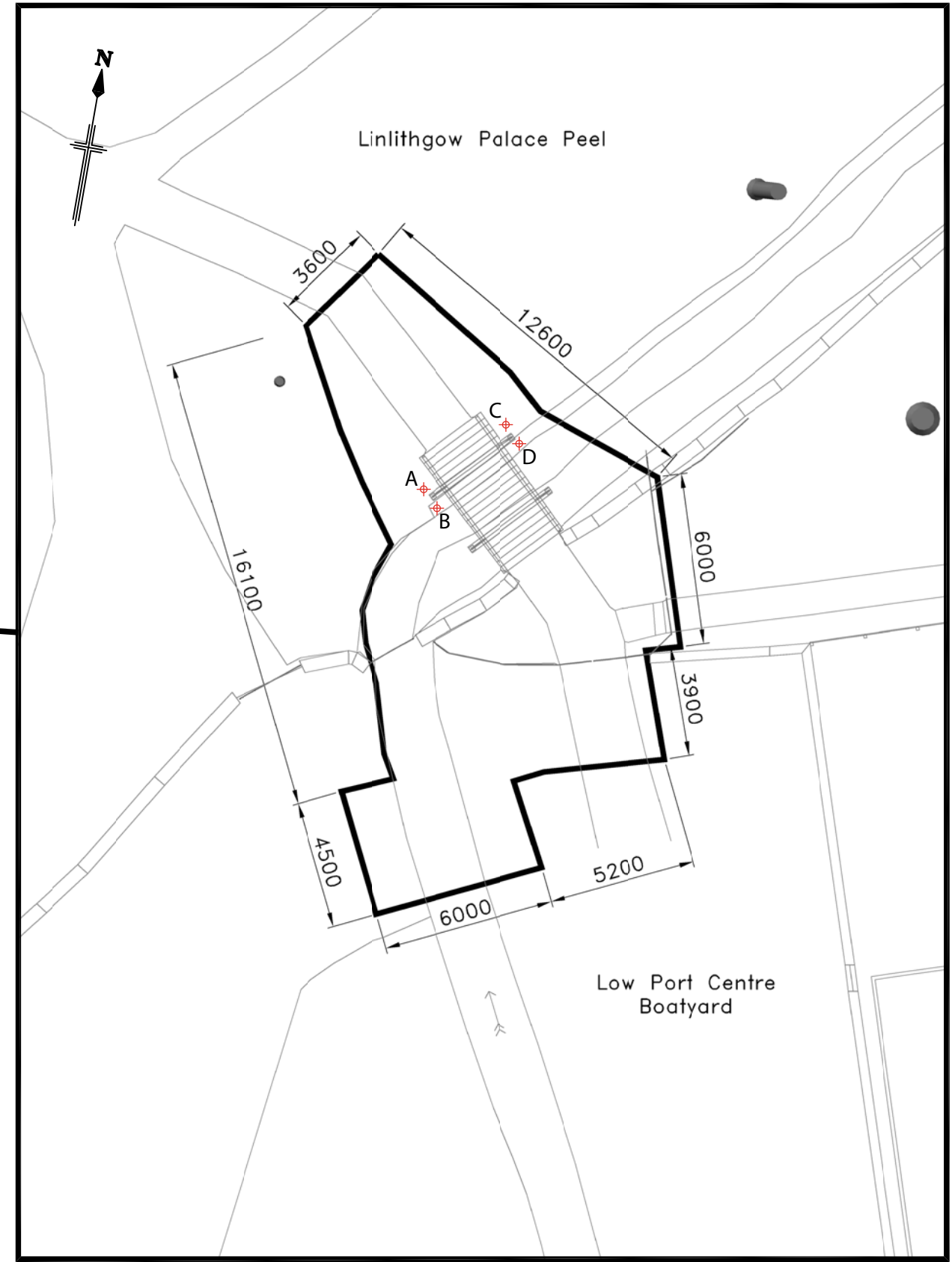
AM & AAA 1979 *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological areas Act 1979*.

AOC 2010 *Linlithgow Palace Peel Replacement Bridge, Written Scheme of Investigation (supporting document for SMC Application)* Unpublished AOC Archaeological Group Project Design (November 2010)

Stronach S, 2002 'Linlithgow Palace and Peel, West Lothian (Linlithgow Parish), Evaluation' *Discovery and Excav Scot*, Vol. 3, 117.



LOCATION PLAN
SCALE 1:2500



SITE BOUNDARY
SCALE 1:200

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Based on a drawing supplied by the client

Figure 1: Site location & location of monitored works



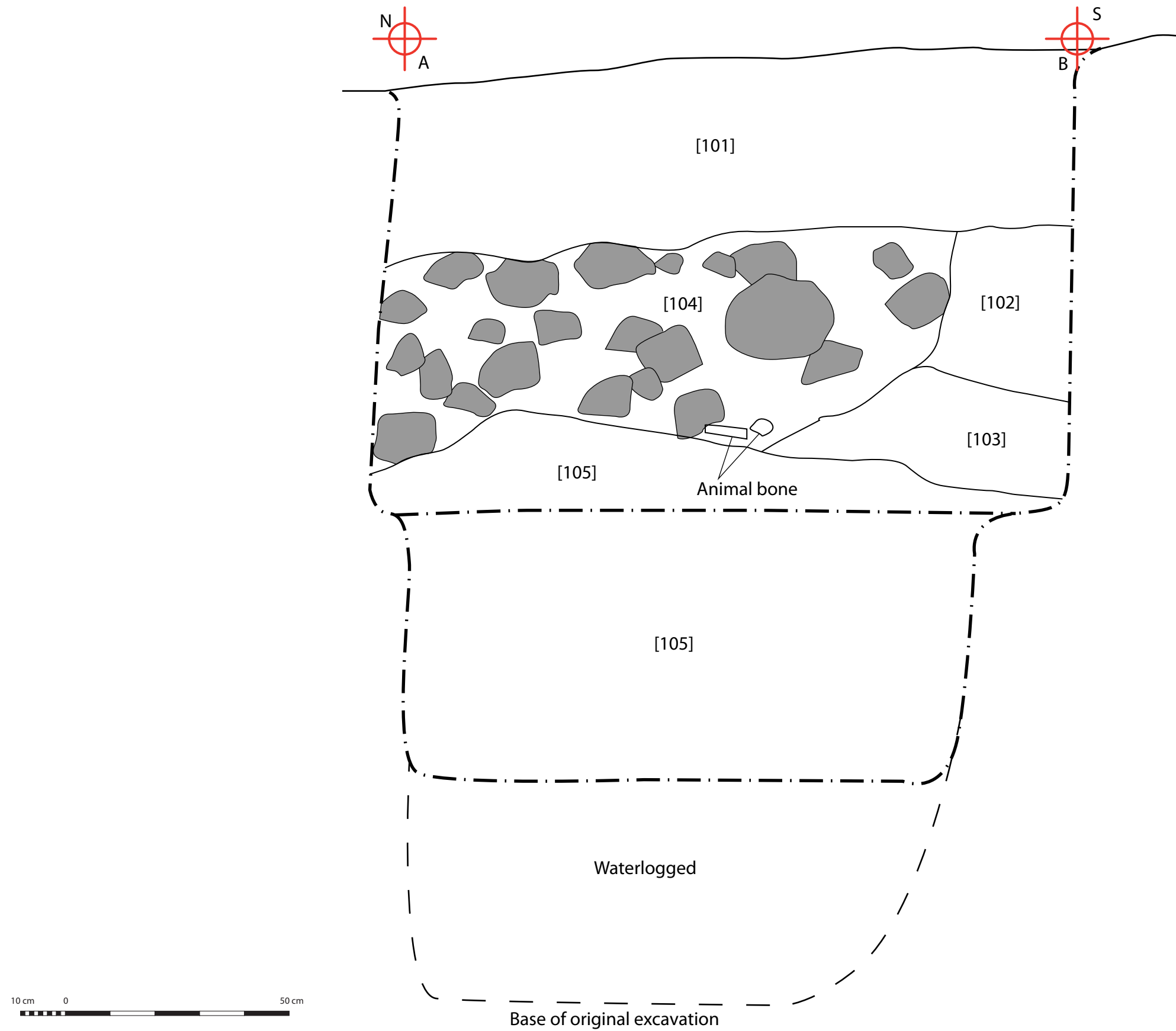


Figure 2: West facing section A-B

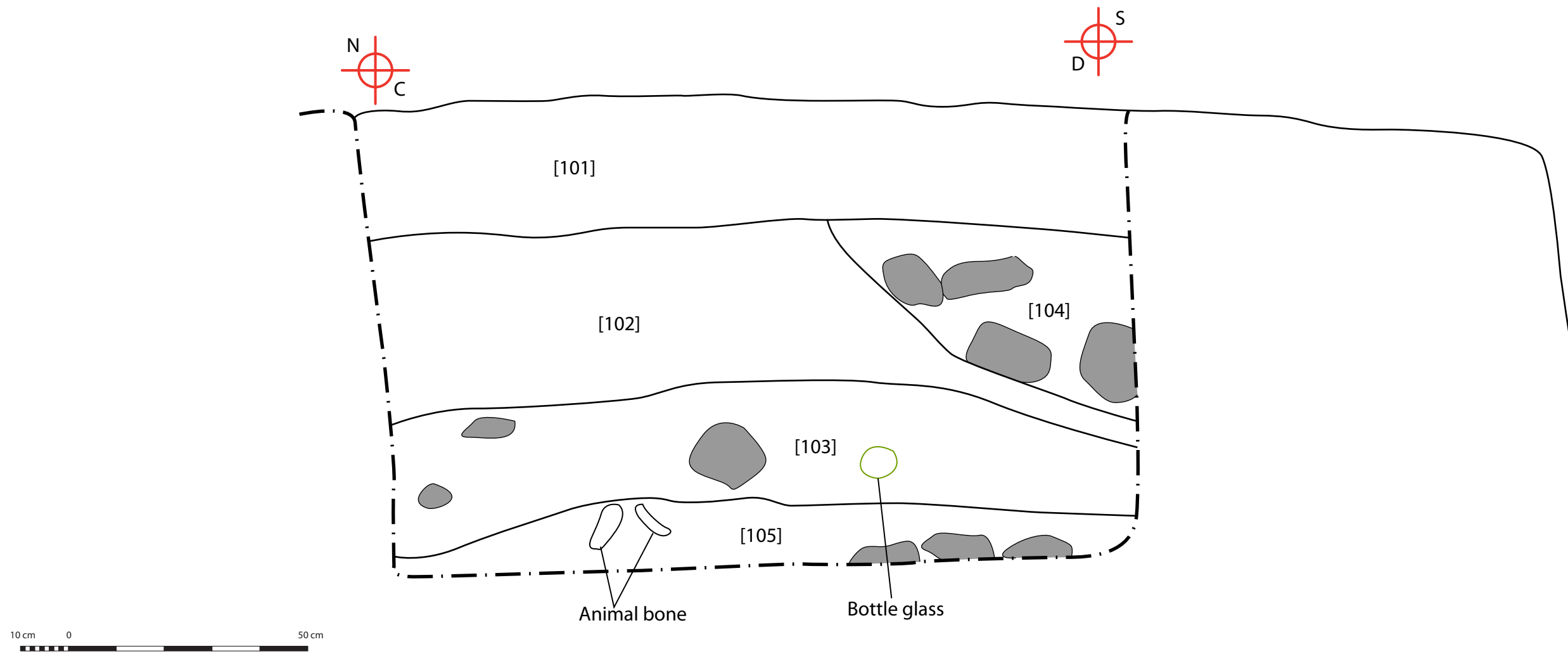


Figure 3: West facing section C-D

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Section 2: Appendices

Appendix 1: Context Summaries

Context	Description
101	Layer of topsoil comprising dark brown medium sand matrix. Overlying [102] and [104].
102	Deposit of mid brown sandy silt. Overlying [103], underlying [101] and abutted by [104]
103	Deposit of dark orange gritty sand. Underlying [102] and [104] and overlying [105].
104	Deposit of loose angular sandstone pebbles within a grey sandy matrix. Underlying [101] and overlying [102], [103] and [105].
105	Deposit of dark grey sandy silt. Underlying [103] and [104].

Appendix 2: Drawing Register

Drawing Number	Description	Scale
1	West-facing section through foundation trench	1:20
2	East-facing section through foundation trench	1:20

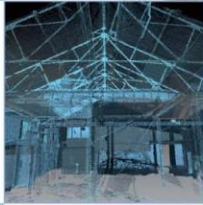
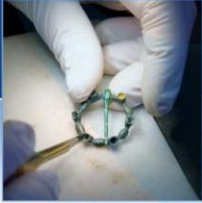
Appendix 3: Photographic register

Black and White Film 1

Frame	F. No.	Description	From
1	N/A	Registration	N/A
2	N/A	Working shot detailing foundation trench	S
3	N/A	Working shot detailing foundation trench	S
4	N/A	Detail of section through wall	S
5	N/A	Detail of soil material removed from foundation trench	E
6	N/A	Detail of stone material removed from foundation trench	E
7	N/A	Detail of foundation trench, with concrete poured into base	W
8	N/A	Detail of foundation trench, with concrete poured into base	E

Appendix 4: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Report Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	West Lothian Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Linlithgow Palace Peel Replacement Bridge
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21769
PARISH:	Linlithgow
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Lindsay Dunbar
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT07NW 9.04
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Royal Palace and Park
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 0031 7728
START DATE (this season)	30 th April 2012
END DATE (this season)	30 th April 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A foundation trench associated with the construction of a small foot bridge within the scheduled area of the Royal Palace and Park was excavated by contractors without archaeological supervision.</p> <p>The groundworks were subsequently inspected by AOC Archaeology Group with no significant archaeological deposits, features or small finds being observed; nor was there any apparent evidence suggesting that significant archaeological material had been disturbed by the unsupervised groundworks.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	West Lothian Council
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	edinburgh@aacarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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