
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE BURGH

Since the first Scottish Burgh Survey of North Berwick was produced (Turner Simpson & Stevenson 1981), there have been two substantial updates. A general discussion of this, along with a record of all work in the intervening period, was provided in Derek Hall and David Bowler's work (Hall & Bowler 1997, 672–74), and an update to the Burgh Survey was undertaken by SUAT the following year (SUAT 1998). Table 1 provides a further expansion of this work, with all interventions and finds in the burgh core and area of the nunnery to date.

It should be noted that in the last decade, there has been an increasing amount of archaeological investigation within the burgh, ranging from watching briefs to full excavations. The main areas that have been investigated are two separate sites on Forth Street (illus 3, sites 1 and 2), the site of St Andrew's Old Church on the harbour (illus 3, site 3), various investigations in and around the site of the nunnery to the west of the burgh (not shown) and a number of smaller interventions on the High Street and Quality Street (illus 3, sites 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 19).

The work undertaken by Addyman Associates at St Andrew's Old Church since 1999 is undoubtedly the most substantial and is likely to provide important new information relating to the early origins of the burgh in particular. The results of this work are not currently published, but initial reports indicate that deposits predating the known 12th-

century church were identified (Addyman 2000, 27–8 and Macfadyen 2004, 45–6; illus 3, site 3).

Further work on the important structures in the medieval core was undertaken at the supposed site of an almshouse on Quality Street, near the junction with Melbourne Place (Mackenzie 1995, 50; illus 3, site 8). The site was heavily truncated due to the presence of underground petrol tanks, and no evidence to confirm or deny the existence of the almshouse was identified. However, thin layers of midden and garden soil of medieval date were identified.

There have been a number of smaller-scale interventions along the High Street (illus 3, sites 7, 12, 19, 4, 5, 6, 21) and St Andrew Street (illus 3, sites 22, 9, 10 and 20), which illustrate the nature of survival of deposits within the burgh. In many cases no substantial archaeological deposits were encountered, while in certain cases, evidence of medieval and post-medieval stratified deposits were identified. These tend to take the form of sandy midden deposits, sometimes interspersed with wind-blown sand deposits.

As the investigations have largely been within the extents of burgage plots (in gardens of existing houses or within the sites of demolished buildings), the results so far collected tend to relate to activities which would have taken place in the backlands, eg the kiln found on Forth Street, or the clay-lined pits found on the High Street.

Table 1 Previous interventions in North Berwick

| Excavations | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Location | Description | No. on illus 3 |
| Forth Street Lane | Trial trenching in 1993 by SUAT. Deposits were seen to a depth of 2.5m. Evidence of structures relating to the High Street frontage were seen, as were organic deposits, sealed by layers of wind-blown sand. A medieval drying kiln was also present. | 1 |
| 33 Forth Street | CFA excavation in 2003–04 identified 6 phases of activity, including several phases of midden deposit, wind-blown sand layers and stone structures. | 2 |
| St Andrew's Old Kirk | Early excavations and surveys of the old church undertaken in the 19th century and mid 20th century. Pilgrim badge mould recovered. | 3a |
| St Andrew's Old Kirk | Excavation of early church by Addyman in 2000 and 2004/5. Results not yet published but may include material of Anglian date, and certainly contains pre-medieval material. | 3b |
| 71 High Street | Excavation of plot by Addyman/David Connolly revealed up to 2m of deposits. | 4 |
| St Andrew's Blackadder Church | Excavation by SUAT revealed garden soil and cobbles to the south of the High Street. | 5 |
| Nunnery | Excavation by AOC uncovered 6 burials adjacent to the abbey and a structure | Not shown |
| Nunnery | Tile kiln excavated in 1930s. | Not shown |
| Evaluations | | |
| 83–7 High Street | Trial excavations by SUAT in 1987 identified two circular clay tanks. It has been suggested that they may have been for use during the malting process, however only minimal amounts of grain were found. | 6 |
| 18–24 High Street | SUAT trial excavations in 1990 identified organic medieval material to a depth of 2m and a clay bonded structure. There were also layers of wind-blown sand. | 7 |
| Dalrymple Garage, Quality Street | Investigations by SUAT in 1995 identified thin bands of midden and wind-blown sand containing 12th–13th-century pottery. | 8 |
| Abbey Church Hall | Excavation of structure known to have been ruined by the mid 19th century, along with cobbling belonging to pend. Structures overlay deep stratified deposits, including wind-blown sand. | 20 |
| St Andrew Street | Test trenches by the CFA identified at least two cist burials containing bone, and an iron knife and brooch. | 9 |
| 7–9 St Andrew Street | Trial trenching by CFA in 2003 identified a probable medieval buried garden soil. | 10 |
| East Lothian Yacht Club | Trial trenching by CFA in 2002 identified no remains of archaeological significance. | 11 |
| 19–21 High Street | Evaluation by AOC identified 18th-century building and associated garden soil, overlying deposits of unknown function to a depth of 2m. | 12 |
| Scottish Seabird Centre | Addyman Associates assessed the basement of the Scottish Seabird Centre | 13 |
| Law Rd/St Andrew St | Test trenching revealed deep deposits of sterile sand, thought to have been dumped here. No archaeological features were identified. | 22 |
| Old Abbey Road | CFA evaluation at proposed building site identified areas of medieval remains under layers of medieval demolition and garden soil. | Not shown |
| Watching briefs | | |
| 15 Westgate | SUAT watching brief identified 2m of garden soil with no other features of archaeological interest. | 14 |
| St Andrew's Churchyard | NMS monitoring of removed churchyard soil identified disarticulated human remains and a carved bone comb. | 15 |
| 2 Quality Street | SUAT watching brief in 1994 identified garden soil to a depth of 0.7m and a recent stone-lined well. | 16 |
| 7 Victoria Road | SUAT watching brief in 1995 identified mixed sand and early modern pottery. | 17 |
| St Andrew's Old Kirk | SUAT watching brief during consolidation work identified one inhumation and details about the construction of the early church. | 18 |
| 63–65 High Street | Headland Archaeology watching brief reached deposits containing medieval pottery and a surface at the bottom of a sondage. | 19 |
| 30 High Street | Watching brief by Headland Archaeology identified garden soil and wind-blown sand. | 21 |
| Old Abbey Road | CFA watching brief at site of previous evaluation identified medieval deposits, structures and artefacts. | Not shown |

