

1292 / INV

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

BEECHWOOD OFFICE PARK, INVERNESS

FOR

MORRISON CONSTRUCTION LTD

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30th May 1994

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT BEECHWOOD OFFICE PARK,

Introduction

It was a condition of planning consent for this site that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the excavation of foundations for the new office building proposed for this site. The author was contracted to carry out this work on behalf of the developers, Morrison Construction Ltd.

Background

The site lies on a level fluvio-glacial terrace a c30m OD. This terrace, a former beach line in post-glacial times, stretches extensively along the south side of Inverness. Its level terrain and easily worked soils have been extensively cultivated since prehistoric times. In recent years it has become a zone for the expansion of the town of Inverness with recent developments at Inshes, Balloan and Culduthel. A series of significant archaeological features have been recorded in this area with possible timber halls at Cradlehall, an early Iron Age palisaded enclosure at Balloan and an important stone burial cist at Culduthel.

The present site lies between a link road to Culloden continuing the line of the old A9 and the already extant offices at Beechwood OfficePark. The topsoil was removed from the site when the existing offices were built.

No archaeological condition was placed on the earlier office construction because the statutory legislation laid down in NPPG 5 ARCHAEOLOGY AND PLANNING was only introduced in 1994.

Watching brief

The site was first visited on Monday 2nd May and it was clear that the surface was obscured by building debris from previous construction work on the site.

Construction work began on Tuesday 24th May and periodic visits were made until the 26th May when the foundations were completed. A photographic record was made of the subsoil levels recorded in the trench sections.

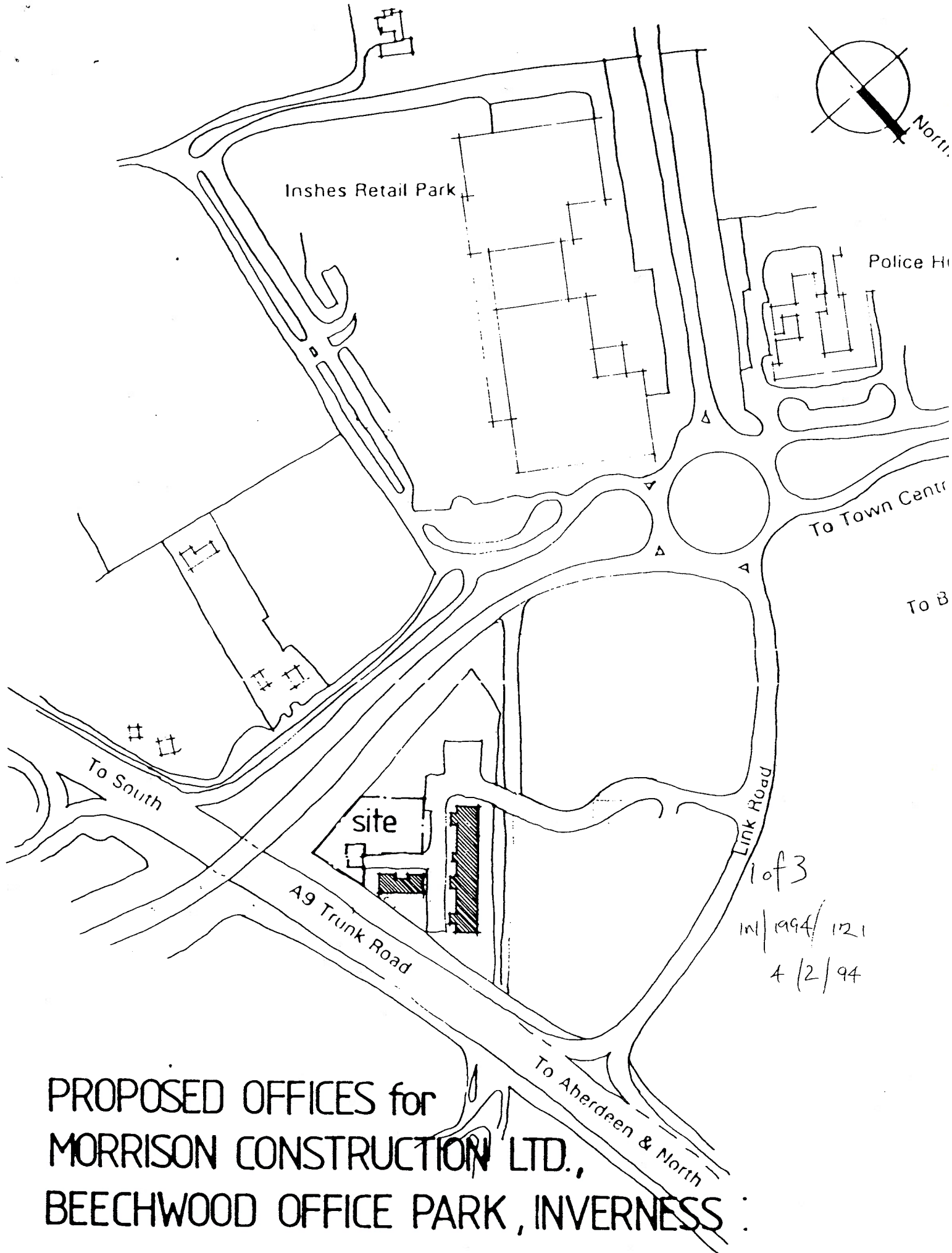
Results

No significant archaeological deposits were recorded in the area examined. A substantial cut was evident in the SW corner of the site, presumably connected with the building of the embankment for the road to Culloden over the present A9.

The subsoil was shown to be a series of sand and fine gravel lenses of a fluvio-glacial origin.

Recommendations

No further work is required in this area. It is suggested that no archaeological condition should be placed on the area of ground currently undeveloped and lying immediately to the W of this site.



PROPOSED OFFICES for
MORRISON CONSTRUCTION LTD.,
BEECHWOOD OFFICE PARK, INVERNESS :