

REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, NORTH EDDIESTON, ABERDEEN



CAMERON ARCHAEOLOGY

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REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, NORTH EDDIESTON, ABERDEEN

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on 28th June 2010 for the soil strip for a soakaway associated with a replacement house at North Eddieston, Peterculter, Aberdeen. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report relates to an Aberdeen City Council Planning Application Ref No P090893. Conditional Planning Permission with Archaeological Condition (1) for a replacement house at North Eddieston was received on 25th September 2009. The new house replaced a prefabricated building which was recorded prior to demolition in 2009 by Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit.

The site (NJ 7867 0296) lies in the parish of Peterculter, immediately adjacent to and just within the boundary of Aberdeen on its western edge. The watching brief was carried out in an area of lawn and garden associated with the new house.

The work was commissioned by Mr & Mrs A Robertson, North Eddieston, Peterculter, Aberdeen, AB32 6XA.

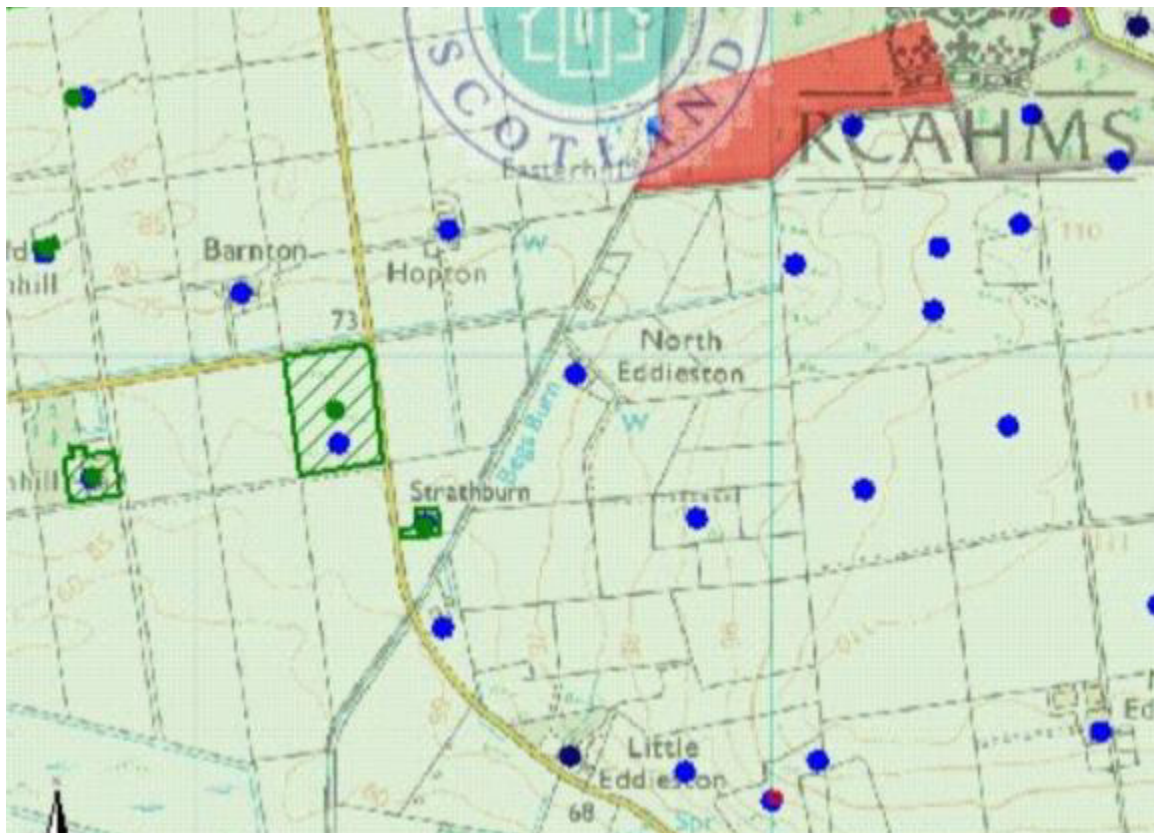


Ill 1: Site location

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The farm of North Eddieston is named on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867. William Alexander, in *Placenames of Aberdeenshire*, suggests that the name comes from the Scots 'Adie', meaning 'Adam' – hence 'Adam's town'. The settlement of Eddieston appears in the 1696 Poll Tax returns as part of the Lands of Drum, and is described as being one large village or hamlet, containing three tenant farmers, two subtenants, three servants, one weaver and four miscellaneous families, probably cottars. Presumably the three farms of North, Meikle and Little Eddieston developed out of that settlement at some point after 1696. From present evidence it is not possible to determine whether or not the existing farm of North Eddieston itself was predated by medieval or early modern settlement. Fieldwalking in adjacent fields as part of an assessment of Aberdeen's late medieval and early modern hinterland in 2001 provided a few sherds of pottery from within the date range 1500-1700 (Unpublished report, Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit, 2001).

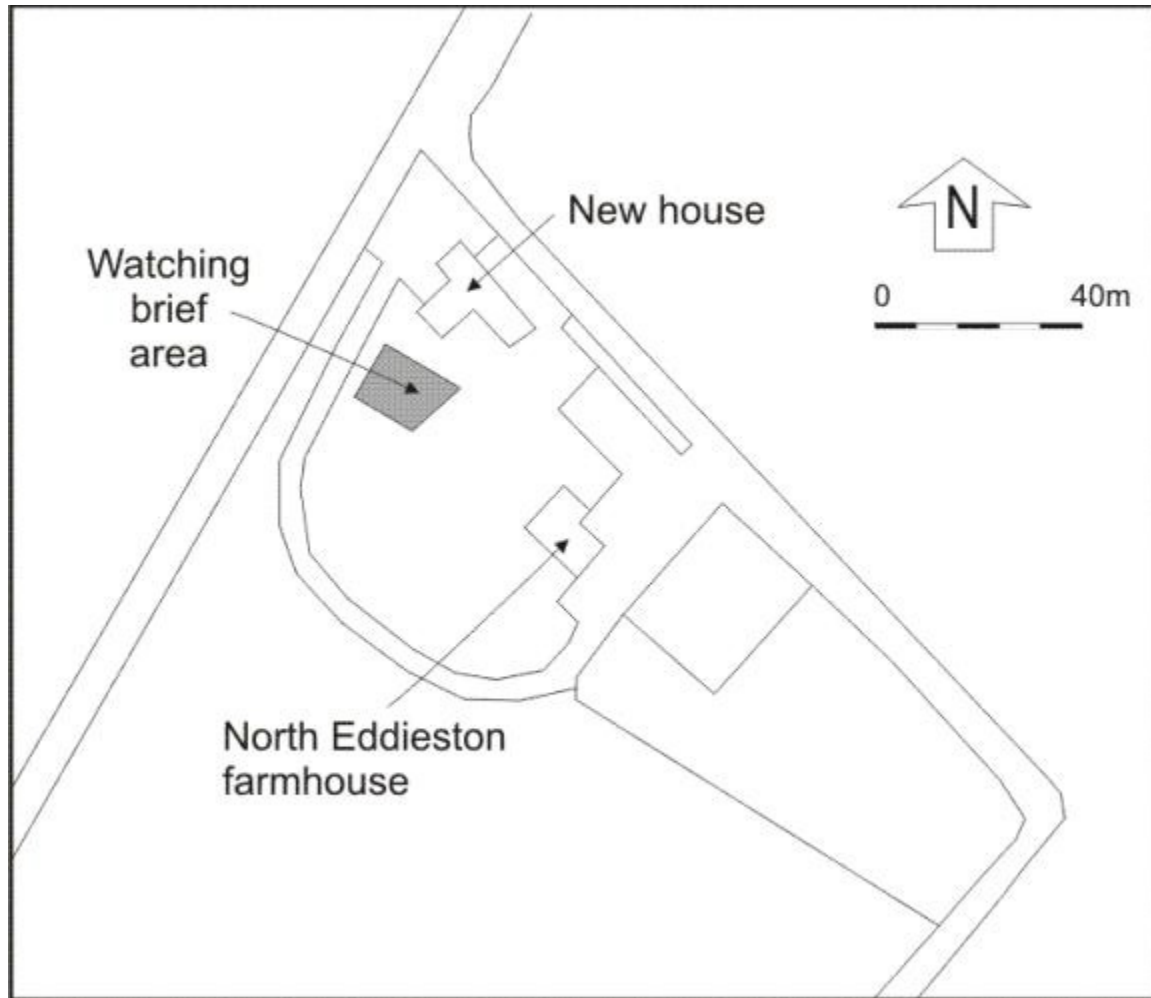
There are a number of known archaeological features and sites within the general area of North Eddieston which may be of prehistoric or later date. Almost 300m to the north of the present site is Easterhill an extended area of field systems with hut circles, thought to be of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age date and recently scheduled by Scottish Ministers as being of national importance (Ill 2 area in red). There are also several areas of rig and furrow and standing stones in the area (PASTMAP).



Ill 2: Pastmap extract showing archaeological sites around North Eddieston

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was carried out on 28 June 2010 (Ill 3). The soil strip of 11 x 9m was carried out using a wheeled excavator with a 1.2m ditching bucket.



Ill 3: Plan of watching brief area

The topsoil was 10cm deep at the west side of the area and 20cm deep at the east on top of a clayey sand stoney subsoil. Large boulders 30-40cm in size were common as well as smaller cobbles. The farmland around North Eddieston is very stoney and this area being at the bottom of a slope has always been damp and boggy. Several pockets of soil were investigated and were evidently stone holes. No archaeological finds or features were identified during the strip of the topsoil (Ill 4).



Ill 4: The soil strip (facing south)

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No further archaeological work is required during this current development. The final decision on the archaeological requirements at this site remains with Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Mr and Mrs Robertson, Dod, Davidson and Murison and Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council.

6 REFERENCES

Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit, 2001 'Aberdeen Hinterland Project'.

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



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DSCF8107



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APPENDIX 2: SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL, EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Development at North Eddieston Farm, Aberdeen Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

This specification gives an outline of the archaeological value of this site and indicates the works which will be required to ensure the recording of any remains that are revealed during development; and to ensure that an existing pre-fabricated building is recorded before demolition.

1.0 Site Location and Description

The site (NJ 7867 0296) lies in the parish of Skene, immediately adjacent to and just within the boundary of Aberdeen on its western edge. The site is within the curtilage of the complex of farm buildings. Part of it is formed of grass lawn adjacent to the farm house, while another portion supports a pre-fabricated structure which sits on an extended concrete apron. The development involves demolition of the pre-fabricated building, replacement of it, on a slightly extended footprint, with a new house and the formation of a large new soakaway adjacent to the existing house.

2.0 Planning Background

The request for this watching brief is made in the context of Scottish Government Planning Policy 23, Scottish Historic Environment Policies and Planning Advice Note 42.

3.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

The farm of North Eddieston is named on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867. William Alexander, in *Placenames of Aberdeenshire*, suggests that the name comes from the Scots 'Adie', meaning 'Adam' – hence 'Adam's town'. The settlement of Eddieston appears in the 1696 Poll Tax returns as part of the Lands of Drum, and is described as being one large village or hamlet, containing three tenant farmers, two subtenants, three servants, one weaver and four miscellaneous families, probably cottars. Presumably the three farms of North, Meikle and Little Eddieston developed out of that settlement at some point after 1696. From present evidence it is not possible to determine whether or not the existing farm of North Eddieston itself was predated by medieval or early modern settlement. Fieldwalking in adjacent fields as part of an assessment of Aberdeen's late medieval and early modern hinterland in 2001 provided a few sherds of pottery from within the date range 1500-1700.

There are a number of known archaeological features and sites within the general area of North Eddieston which may be of prehistoric or later date. For example, about 280 metres to the north east of the present site at Easterhill is an extended area of field systems with hut circles, thought to be of late bronze age or early iron age date and recently scheduled by Scottish Ministers as being of national importance. There is also an area of rig and furrow around 700 m to east of the present site, while several standing stones, some with cup marks, are recorded within the area, the nearest being some 400 metres to east of the North Eddieston development.

More extended details are available from the Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council (01224) 523658: judiths@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

4.0 Previous Archaeological Work

There has been no previous archaeological work at this site.

5.0 Requirement for Work – Building Survey and Watching Brief over Groundworks

The prefabricated building must be recorded by an archaeologist acceptable to Aberdeen City Council. The recording must be done to at least the standard of English Heritage level 1, including both the interior and the exterior of the structure. The survey report must be produced within four weeks of completion of the fieldwork. should be sent to the Keeper of Archaeology, the applicant and the planning authority. A brief survey of results should be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, along with the appropriate fee. An OASIS report must also be provided.

All groundworks associated with the planned soakaway must be watched by an archaeologist acceptable to Aberdeen City Council, who must record any features and finds that are recovered. For further details of the watching brief requirements, see paras 9-12 below.

6.0 Timetable

A timetable must be agreed so that provision can be made for monitoring by the Keeper of Archaeology.

7.0 Staff Structure

A list of key project staff with qualifications and experience will be submitted by the contractor. The use of unwaged staff will not normally be acceptable.

8.0 Health and Safety /PLI

Such concerns and responsibilities are primarily a matter for the archaeological contractor who must submit evidence of conformity to the Health and Safety at Work Act and possession of public liability insurance to Aberdeen City Council.

9.0 Watching Brief

9.1 An appropriate machine must be used to minimise damage to underlying archaeological deposits

9.2 All machine work must be carried out under the direct supervision of an archaeologist acceptable to the planning authority and the Keeper of Archaeology.

9.3 All excavation, both by machine and by hand, must be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appear to be worthy of preservation *in situ*.

9.4 Any human remains which are encountered must initially be left *in situ*. Their removal will be a matter of discussion with the Keeper of Archaeology (who must be notified within 12 hours of their discovery) and will comply with the provisions of Scots Law.

10.0 Recording Systems

These must be specified and should include the structure for site record.

11.0 Monitoring Arrangements

It is necessary for the planning authority to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the watching brief in order to ensure the proper execution of the specification and therefore conformity to the brief. Stages at which monitoring is appropriate will be agreed between the archaeological contractor and the Keeper of Archaeology. The possibility of random inspections should not be excluded.

12.0 Reporting Requirements for Watching Brief

Provision must be made for:

- 12.2 Specialist examination of animal and human bone and of any preserved or organic material.
- 12.3 Specialist conservation and examination of artefacts found during the watching brief.
- 12.4 Preparation of plans, sections and finds drawings to publication standards.
- 12.5 The sorting and analysis of records and the production of a written report on the work, published in a manner appropriate to its scale.
- 12.6 The preparation of a catalogued archive and its deposition in the City Council's Sites and Monuments record and the National Monuments Record of Scotland within six months of the end of the watching brief.
- 12.7 Copies of the archaeological report should be sent to the Keeper of Archaeology, the applicant and the planning authority. A brief survey of results should be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, along with the appropriate fee. An OASIS report must also be provided.

13.0 Small finds

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and Bona Vacantia and reported by the archaeological contractor to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel (Nicholas Holmes, National Museums of Scotland, Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JD) for disposal to an appropriate museum.

14.0 Timescale

The watching brief report must be produced within four weeks of the end of the field work.

15.0 Further Information

Additional information about the site, or this specification, can be obtained from the Keeper of Archaeology, Whitespace, 60 Frederick Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5HY Tel (01224) 523658.

16.0 Conclusion

The standing building record and the watching brief are to be carried out in compliance with this specification. The selection of any contractor will be subject to approval of the Keeper of Archaeology. Work should be carried out in close liaison with the Keeper of Archaeology.

October 2009