

**Burnland, Elrick
(Site 2, Phase 2)**

Evaluation

Data Structure Report

Prepared for: Gladedale (North East Scotland) Ltd
Gateway House
Luna Place
Dundee Technology Park
Dundee
DD2 1XZ

AOC Archaeology Project No: 20143

NGR: NJ 8124 0645

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Timing: Fieldwork March 2007
Report March 2007

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1 NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 AOC Archaeology Group undertook an archeological evaluation for Gladedale (North East Scotland) Ltd, in advance of a proposed residential development at Burnland, Elrick, Aberdeenshire.
- 1.2 Probable 19th century dry stone boundary dykes were present on the site but no significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 Gladedale (North East Scotland) Ltd commissioned AOC Archaeology Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a proposed residential development at Burnland, Elrick, Aberdeenshire.
- 2.1.2 These works were required as a condition on the planning application by Aberdeenshire Council, as advised on archaeological matters by Ms Moira Greig of Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). Ms Greig had recommended a programme of archaeological works in accordance with NPPG 5 (SOEnD 1994) and PAN 42 (SOEnD 1994a), in order to determine the nature, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area. Previous work comprised a Desk-Based Assessment of the entire development site (Scott 2006) and an evaluation of the Phase 1 (Site 1) area to the immediate north-east. The present work comprised an intrusive evaluation of 5% of Phase 2 (Site 2) of the development.

2.2 Location

- 2.2.1 The proposed development site is located on the south-west side of Elrick, Aberdeenshire (Figure 1). The Phase 2 site (Site 2) is presently covered by grass pasture with a boggy area to the north and east. It is centred at National Grid Reference NJ 8124 0645. The site is bounded to the south by woodland and a car park, to the east by an open playing field, to the west by the B979 and to the north by farmland. The site is gently undulating, and generally slopes down from south to north. It lies at a height of between 112 m and 106 m OD. The subsoil visible during the evaluation comprised sandy boulder clays and silty sands with common gravels and boulders, of glacial derivation. The total development site covers 12.93 hectares in total, with the Site 2 Phase 2 area covering 2.15 hectares (Figure 1). The present works were confined to Site 2 Phase 2.

2.3 Archaeological Background

2.3.1 Prior to fieldwork being undertaken a Desk based Assessment was carried out (Scott 2006). The Desk Based Assessment found no recorded sites of archaeological significance within Site 2 of the proposed development area, though a building was present in the adjacent car park, immediately south-west of the site. This cottage is marked on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (1869), but no remains are now visible. However, the surrounding area has numerous sites representing a variety of periods.

2.3.2 *Prehistoric & Roman (10000 BC-AD 410)*

Prehistoric activity in the area surrounding the site is indicated by various finds of Bronze Age cist burials and Beaker burials. Prehistoric pottery, flint blades and stone axes have been found in the area and a carved stone ball, possibly Neolithic, has also been found in Elrick. Prehistoric pottery and a blade were found at a small metalworking site of unknown date at Broadstraik Farm. Another metal-working site was discovered in the same area but is of uncertain date. A possible Roman road thought to be in the vicinity of Kirkton House has now been reclassified as the artefacts are more likely to be Bronze Age than Roman. Within the study area lies the site of the remains of Gask stone circle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. On top of the ridge between the Skene and Echt roads, about ten miles west of Aberdeen the stone circle has now been reduced to a single stone in an arable field.

2.3.3 *Medieval (AD 410-1700)*

The site proposed for development is located in the parish of Skene. King Robert the Bruce granted the original charter of the lands of Skene to Robert de Skene in 1317. Two of the farms in the vicinity of the development area may have medieval origins, since their names were recorded on some of the early maps consulted in the desk-based assessment. Whitestone and Cairnie Farms (Scott 2006 Figure 1) were both marked on General Roy's map of the area in c.1750 (Scott 2006).

2.3.4 *Post-Medieval and Modern (post-AD 1700)*

In the late 18th century the area was apparently wasteland, fit only for bearing trees. Attempts were made to improve the land during the first half of the 1800s by drainage and more of the land became enclosed during this period. Massive field boundaries known as 'consumption dykes' were built from the stones cleared from the fields. There are four consumption dykes near the southwest corner of the proposed development site, built in the 1800s. Map evidence shows that the dykes have remained in place since their formation. These drystone constructions are up to 5m wide on this site, and up to 2m high. Another conserved example of a section of consumption dyke can be seen at the roadside at nearby Kingswells. The bulk of the observed archaeological remains in the vicinity of the proposed development site date from the post-medieval period. These include numerous farmsteads and cottages, which were in existence from at least 1869, and no doubt, some of them are much earlier. Leddach Farm and Broadstraiks are shown on several early historical maps. The name Elrick first appears on maps from 1869 onwards, as the name of two farms, Easter and Wester Elrick. In 1803 the

turnpike road was built from Aberdeen in the east through Broadstraik/Elrick westwards. This road is now known as the A944 and borders the north edge of the proposed development site. The Old Toll House dates from this time and was in use until 1886. Broadstraik Inn was rebuilt in the 1800's, and was partly reconstructed in 1905. As recently as the 1960's Elrick was still a village of a few buildings strung out along the turnpike road. It was not until the 1970's that it underwent a massive population explosion, stimulated by the growth of the oil industry in Aberdeen.

- 2.3.5 Previous archaeological works in the vicinity include a Desk based Assessment and Archaeological Evaluation on the neighbouring Broadstraik Farm (AOC Archaeology 2001 & 2001a), as well as the evaluation of Site 1 of the Burnland Development (Roy 2006). These works failed to reveal any previously unknown features or artefacts of significant archaeological interest.

3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:

- i) to determine the character, extent and quality of any archaeologically significant remains in the proposed development area;
- ii) should significant archaeological deposits be discovered, to prepare a mitigation strategy compliant with NPPG 5 and PAN 42.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The area of the development (Site 2 Phase 2) was estimated as 2.15 ha. The programme of machine trenching was required to investigate a 5% (1,075 m²) sample of the proposed development area. Trenching was prevented in the eastern edge of the site due to the presence of electricity pylons.
- 4.2 The trial trenching aimed to establish the extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological features present. The trenches were of varying lengths and set on varying orientations (Figure 1).
- 4.3 Stripping of the overburden was by means of a JCB-type excavator and a 360⁰ excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket with 1.8 m and 2.2 m widths respectively. Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist.
- 4.4 All trial trenching was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures.
- 4.5 All significant archaeological features were cleaned and fully defined. These were then investigated in order to determine their character, function, nature, date and significance.

- 4.6 An adequate proportion of each feature selected for investigation was excavated, sampled and recorded to determine the character, function, nature, date and significance of the features sampled.
- 4.7 Finds or archaeological features readily demonstrable as being of 19th or 20th century date were not considered archaeologically significant.
- 4.8 No specialised re-instatement was undertaken. Trenches were backfilled with spoil and then compacted by driving over using the mechanical excavator.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken between 5th and 6th March 2007. A total of 7 trenches, between 1.8 m and 2.2 m wide (totalling 1,100 m²) was machine excavated. This equated to just over 5% of the Site 2 Phase 2 development area. The location of trenches was marginally affected by the presence of services in the eastern edge of the site.
- 5.2 The following should be read together with the various data gathered from the evaluation presented in Appendices 1-3 and Figure 1
- 5.2 The evaluation revealed topsoil comprising red brown slightly sandy silt, which was generally between 0.20 m and 0.35 m deep over the silty sand and sandy boulder clay subsoil. In the south-east of the site the topsoil was remarkably shallow, as little as 0.08 m in depth.
- 5.3 Stone dykes, between 1.8 m and 2.3 m in width and 0.5 m and 0.8 m in height were present over Site 2, running north/south, subdividing the area. These features were essentially small consumption dykes and were apparently of 19th century date; similar features are present over the rest of the development area and were encountered in Site 1 (Roy 2006). Stone-filled drains were present in most trenches, running in varied directions, though most commonly downslope towards the north. These contained 19th/20th century glass. Apart from this evidence for late post-medieval and modern cultivation, no significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The weather conditions in which the fieldwork was carried out were dry, with sunny and cloudy periods. Archaeological features and deposits would have been clearly visible against the subsoil and it is likely that the evaluation fully identified the archaeological potential of the development area.
- 6.2 Evidence for early modern cultivation was present in the form of dry stone boundary/consumption dykes and stone drains. These dykes were probably associated with enclosure and improvement of farmland in the first half of the 19th century, described in the Desk-based Assessment of the site (Scott 2006). They are illustrated on the 1869 1st Edition 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey map of

the area (Figure 1). Consumption dykes have also been recorded at Broadstraik Farm to the east (AOC Archaeology 2001a). The examples visible at Burnland were generally of a smaller scale. A topographical study was carried out of consumption dykes at Wellington Road, Cove, in Aberdeenshire (Wilson 2004), where it was possible that the substantial structures might cover earlier features such as cairns. The relatively small scale and likely late date of the dykes on the present site suggest, however, that further investigation beyond the recording carried out during the present evaluation is not merited. Beyond these features of early modern cultivation, no significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

7 REFERENCES:

7.1 Bibliographic References

AOC Archaeology 2001 *Broadstraik Farm, Aberdeenshire: Desk Based Assessment*. Unpublished AOC Archaeology Report. Edinburgh

AOC Archaeology 2001a *Broadstraik Farm, Aberdeenshire: Data Structure Report*. Unpublished AOC Archaeology Report. Edinburgh

Roy, M 2006 *Burnland, Elrick, Evaluation: Data Structure Report*. Unpublished AOC Archaeology Report. Edinburgh

Scott, L 2006 *Burnland, Elrick, Aberdeenshire: Cultural Heritage Desk based Assessment* AOC unpublished archive report.

SOEnD 1994 *National Planning Policy Guideline 5: Archaeology and Planning*. The Scottish Office Environment Department.

SOEnD 1994a *Planning Advice Note 42: Archaeology – the Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monument Procedures*. The Scottish Office Environment Department.

Wilson, D 2004 *Wellington Road, Cove: Data Structure Report*. Unpublished AOC Archaeology Report. Edinburgh

7.2 Cartographic References

Ordnance Survey 1869 First Edition map, Aberdeenshire sheet 74.10, scale 1:10,560.

APPENDIX 1: TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	200 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	360 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	W/E
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	W: 0.35 m; mid: 0.31 m; E: 0.15 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology but 2.3 m wide and 0.65 m high N/S-aligned stone dyke at 173.0 – 175.3 m from west end of trench; NW/SE-aligned stone-filled drains at 51 - 54 m; 117 – 121 m and 139 – 144 m from west end of trench; N/S-aligned stone drains at 66 m, 78 m and 103 m.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	90 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N/S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	N: 0.15 m; mid: 0.23 m; S: 0.20 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	S/N
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	S: 0.28 m; mid: 0.30 m; N: 0.28 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology but W/E-aligned stone-filled drain at 39 m from south end of trench
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay; light greyish brown sand to north
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	55 m by 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	S/N
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	S: 0.38 m; mid: 0.28 m; N: 0.25 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology but NW/SE-aligned stone-filled drain at 28 to 30 m from south end of trench
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay; reddish grey sand with boulders to north
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	55 m by 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	S/N
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	S: 0.25 m; mid: 0.30 m; N: 0.33 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology but W/E-aligned stone-filled drain at 51 m from south end of trench
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

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Trench 6

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2.2 m
<i>Total Area</i>	220 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	W/E
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	W: 0.24 m; mid: 0.30 m; E: 0.15 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology but 1.9 m wide and 0.8 m high N/S-aligned stone dyke at 63.4 – 65.3 m from west end of trench; N/S-aligned stone-filled drain at 15 – 16 m from west end
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light reddish brown/grey sandy boulder clay; sand with boulders to east
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 7

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2.2 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	S/N
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	S: 0.14 m; mid: 0.08 m; N: 0.10 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No archaeology
<i>Subsoil</i>	Sand with boulders
<i>Finds</i>	19/20 th century pot under stone dyke (not retained)

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Black and White Print Film No.1

No.	Area	Description	From
1-2	-	Registration shots	-
3-4	Tr. 2	General shot of Trench 2	N
5-6	Tr. 1	General shot of Trench 1 (E)	W
7-8	Tr. 1	General shot of Trench 1 (W)	E
9-10	Tr. 3	General shot of Trench 3	N
11-12	Tr. 4	General shot of Trench 4	S
13-14	Tr. 5	General shot of Trench 5	S
15-17	Tr. 5	Boundary dyke in Trench 5 (South-facing section)	S
18-19	Tr. 7	Trench 7; working shot	S
20-21	Site	Site from SW	SW

Colour Slide Film No.1

No.	Area	Description	From
1-2	-	Registration shots	-
3-4	Tr. 2	General shot of Trench 2	N
5-6	Tr. 1	General shot of Trench 1 (E)	W
7-8	Tr. 1	General shot of Trench 1 (W)	E
9-10	Tr. 3	General shot of Trench 3	N
11-12	Tr. 4	General shot of Trench 4	S
13-14	Tr. 5	General shot of Trench 5	S
15-17	Tr. 5	Boundary dyke in Trench 5 (South-facing section)	S
18-19	Tr. 7	Trench 7; working shot	S
20-21	Site	Site from SW	SW

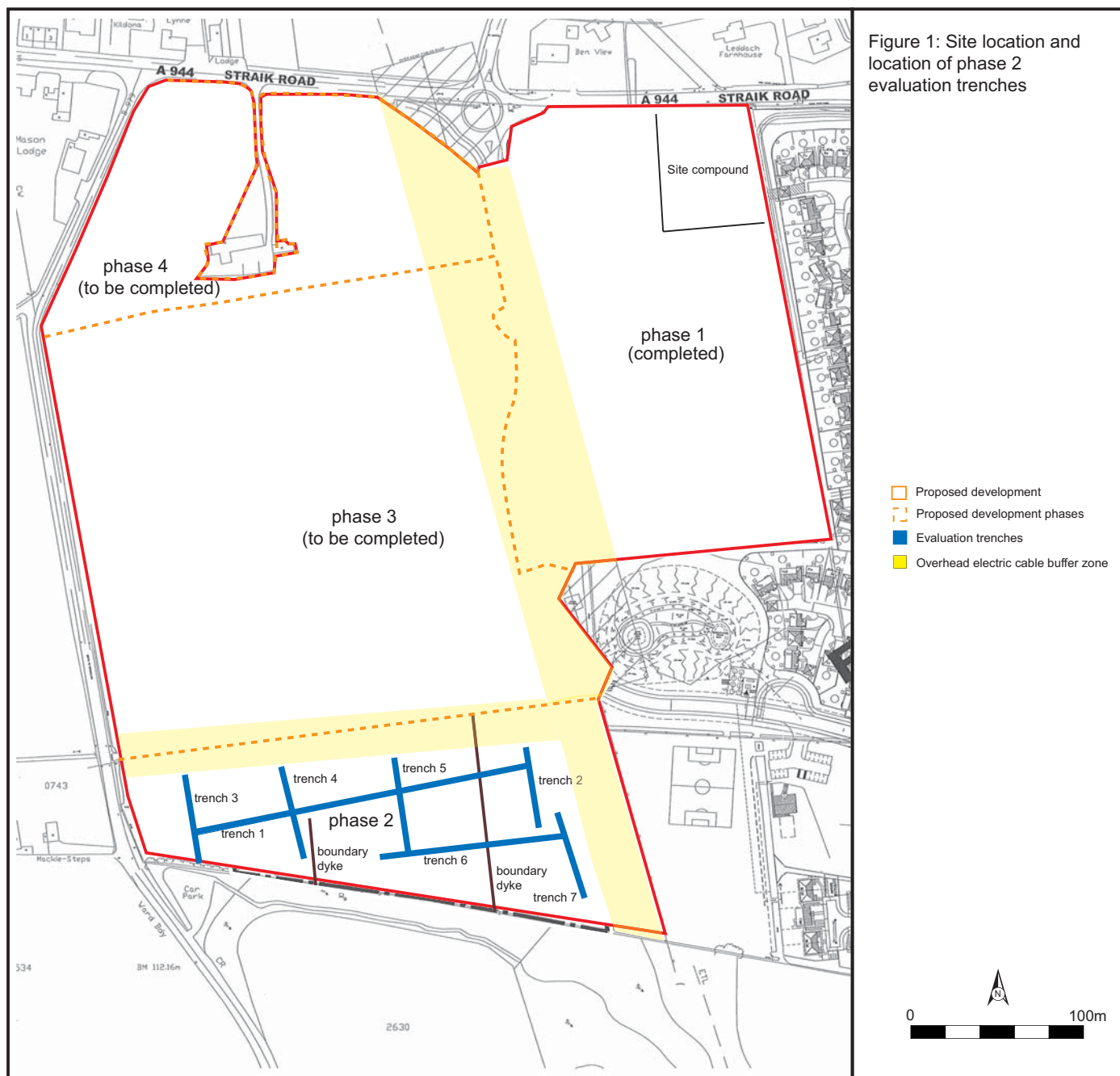
Digital Photographs

No.	Area	Description	From
1	-	South-facing section of dyke in Trench 6	S
2	Tr. 6	General shot of Trench 6	E
3	-	Registration shot	-
4	Tr. 5	General shot of Trench 5	S
5	Site	Site from SW	SW

APPENDIX 3: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Burnland, Elrick
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 20143
PARISH:	Skene
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Mike Roy
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Early modern dry stone boundary walls/consumption dykes
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 812 064
START DATE (this season)	5th March 2007
END DATE (this season)	6th March 2007
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	Roy, DES 2006, Burnland, Elrick, Aberdeenshire
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of a proposed residential development by AOC Archaeology Group at Burnland, Elrick (Phase 2). Seven trenches (covering an area of 1,100 m ² or just over 5% of the development area) were opened. Several early modern dry stone boundary walls were encountered. No other archaeological remains of any significance were encountered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Evaluation of phase 3 development area to north
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	--
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Gladedale (North East Scotland) Ltd
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	ronant@aoescot.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS





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