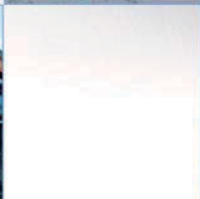
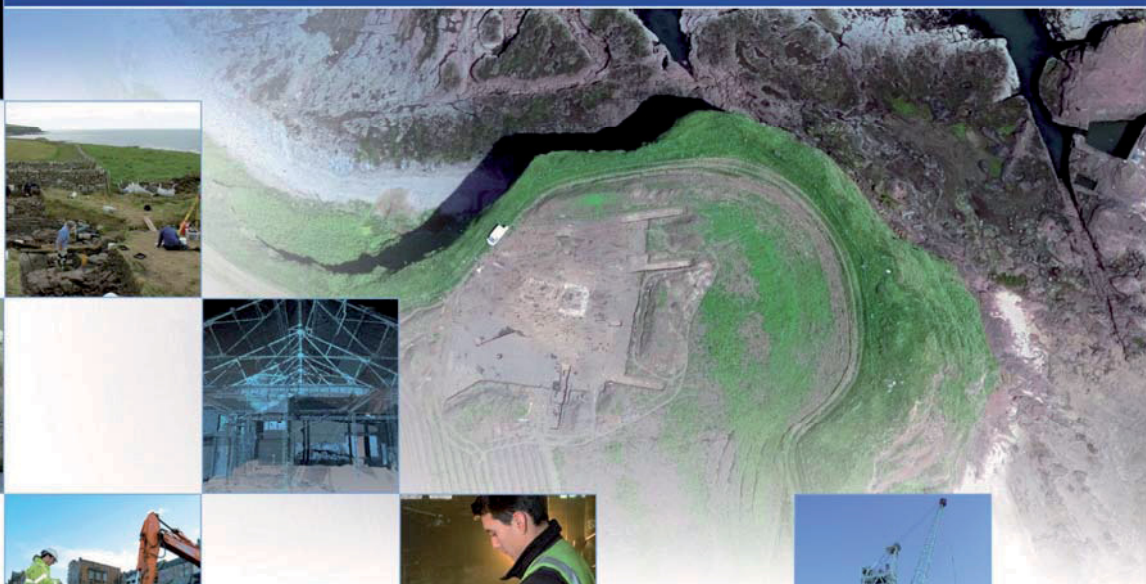


# Blackdog, Aberdeenshire Evaluation:

## Data Structure Report

AOC 21348

June 2009



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

## Blackdog, Aberdeenshire Evaluation: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	<b>Mr Colin Tawse</b> Kinharrachie House Ellon Aberdeenshire AB41 8PP
National Grid Reference (NGR):	<b>NJ 9588 1514</b>
AOC Project No:	<b>AOC 21348</b>
Prepared by:	<b>Victoria Clements &amp; Martin Cook</b>
Illustration by:	<b>Graeme Carruthers</b>
Date of Fieldwork:	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009</b>
Date of Report:	<b>6<sup>th</sup> July 2009</b>

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: Victoria Clements & Martin Cook      Date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009

Approved by: John Gooder      Date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009

Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft      Date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009

**Enquiries to:** AOC Archaeology Group  
Edgefield Industrial Estate  
Edgefield Road  
Loanhead  
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593  
Fax. 0131 440 3422  
e-mail. [edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com)



## Contents

	Page
List of illustrations .....	2
List of appendices.....	2
Abstract.....	3
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Development Background .....	4
1.2 Site Location.....	4
1.3 Archaeological Background .....	4
<b>2 OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3 METHOD.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. RESULTS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	7
4.2 Trench 21 .....	8
4.3 Trench 23 .....	10
4.4 Trench 24 .....	11
4.5 Artefacts .....	12
<b>5 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORKS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7 REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3: Context Register .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>APPENDIX 4: Drawing Register .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>APPENDIX 5: Finds Register.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>APPENDIX 6: Sample Register.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>APPENDIX 7: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT .....</b>	<b>26</b>

## List of illustrations

Figure 1: Site location and evaluation trench location plan

Figure 2: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map (1867) Aberdeenshire

Figure 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map (1909) Aberdeenshire

Figure 4: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition OS Map (1927) Aberdeenshire

Figure 5: Trench location plan

Figure 6: Location of features in Trenches 21, 23 and 24

Plate 1: General view of ring-ditch

Plate 2: South facing section through ring-ditch

Plate 3: General view of the centre of the ring-ditch

Plate 4: Detail of granite slab identified within topsoil

Plate 5: West-facing section through pit [2303]

Plate 6: General view of Structure [2417]

Plate 7: Detail of Bronze Age Thumb Nail Scraper

Plate 8: Detail of Prehistoric Rim Shard

## List of appendices

Appendix 1: Trench Descriptions

Appendix 2: Photographic Register

Appendix 3: Context Register

Appendix 4: Drawing Register

Appendix 5: Finds Register

Appendix 6: Sample Register

Appendix 7: *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* Report

## Abstract

---

This report represents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group as part of a programme of archaeological works at Blackdog, Aberdeen. The evaluation was commissioned by Mr. Colin Tawse. The works consisted of a 7% sample intrusive evaluation in two fields with trenching amounting to a total of some 7,840 m<sup>2</sup>. The evaluation area was situated on well drained land, centred at NGR: NJ 9588 1514.

The work was carried out in June 2009 and was conducted according to the terms of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2009) which was agreed by Mrs. Moira Greig of Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service.

The evaluation revealed three principal suites of features of archaeological significance comprising a probable Bronze Age ring-ditch, a roundhouse and three pits. Artefacts recovered from the features included prehistoric pottery sherds and flint.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Development Background

- 1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works was required by Mr. Colin Tawse in respect to a proposed commercial development comprising a Park and Ride Facility and Good Food Market at Blackdog, Aberdeenshire (NGR NJ 9588 1514). The proposed development consists of a greenfield site covering approximately 11.2 ha.
- 1.1.2 The proposed development lies within the administrative area of Aberdeenshire Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). A programme of archaeological works keeping with the policies outlined in PAN 42 and SPP 23, was previously been specified by ACAS. This work was designed to assess the nature, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.
- 1.1.3 The work was undertaken between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June and identified three mains groups of features, with associated small finds.

## 1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The proposed development area occupies an area of approximately 11.2 ha (centred on NGR: NJ 9588 1514) and is predominantly well drained agricultural land currently under grass. The site is bounded by agricultural land to the north, south and west and by a rifle range to the east (Figure 1).

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The proposed development is located in and around Blackdog, a hamlet that has grown up around the Blackdog Farm (NMRS: NJ91SE0006); a farm depicted on cartographic evidence from at least 1867 (Figure 2, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map). The Blackdog Farm changed little between the publication of the 1<sup>st</sup> (1884) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS Maps (1896), the farm comprising three adjoining buildings, accessed by a farm track. A single dwelling, Blackdog Croft was identified by the immediate east of the main road.



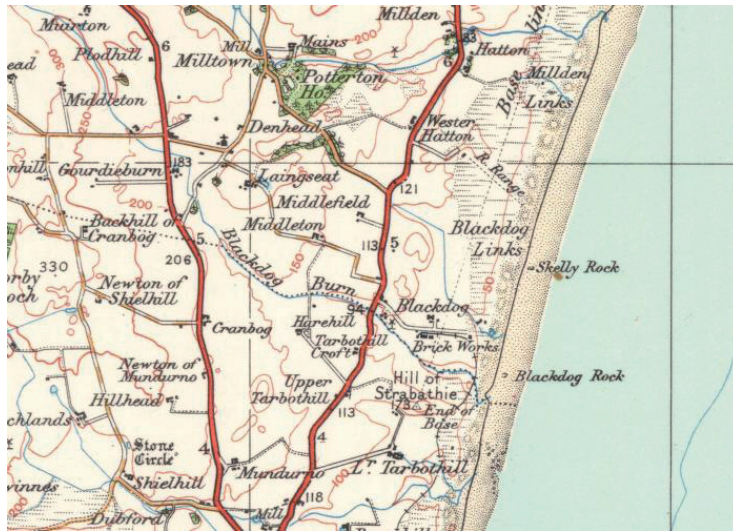


Figure 2: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map, 1867

- 2.2 The intervening years between the publication of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Maps witnessed the development of Blackdog through the foundation and construction of the Seaton Tile and Brick Works (NMRS: NJ91SE9) to the immediate south of the farm complex. The works operated on the site between 1898 and the 1920s, taking advantage of the local clay sources. The works itself comprised several buildings including two Hoffman kilns and an associated railway. By this stage a more substantial road had also been constructed to the site and farm. The actual land usage within the proposed development itself changed little over this period, remaining agricultural land throughout.



Figure 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map, 1909



**Figure 4: 1927 OS Map**

- 2.3 The proposed development area contained only two known sites; the still occupied Wester Hatton Cottages (NMRS NJ91NE0077) and the adjacent site of the now destroyed Fife farmsteads (NMRS: NJ91NE0077). The latter comprises a G-shaped range of steadings with a central courtyard and a small building to the north. A horsegang was attached to the range of buildings on the outside wall while a sub-rectangular garden lay to the south-west.
- 2.4 More generally, the area around the proposed development is rich in archaeological remains. As with much of Aberdeenshire, sites in the immediate vicinity identified from the aerial photography comprise a combination of evidence for funerary monuments, settlement and agricultural remains. For example, a possible prehistoric roundhouse (NMRS NJ91NE36) and a souterrain (NMRS: NJ91NE0046) lie to the immediate north-west of the development; while a series of possible Bronze Age Barrows (NMRS NJ91NE0012) lie to the west of the site. Evidence for rig and furrow (NMRS NGR: 9565 1513) was also identified to the north-west of the proposed development.
- 2.5 Although no archaeological investigations have taken place within the proposed development site, an archaeological evaluation in the field to the north-west identified linear and cut features excavated through the natural subsoil (NMRS: NJ91NE0074). Although no cropmark sites are known within the development area, the identification of both adjacent sites clearly demonstrates the potential persists for as yet unknown subsurface archaeological remains to survive within the development site's boundaries.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the evaluation were:



- i) to determine the character, condition, extent, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area;
- ii) to advise and implement an appropriate form of archaeological mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication, should significant archaeological remains be encountered that cannot be preserved *in situ*.

### 3 METHOD

- 3.1 The evaluation was achieved through the excavation of linear trenches using a tracked 360° excavator equipped with a 2 m wide ditching bucket. The evaluation comprised a 7% sample of the 11.4 ha development (Figure 1), totalling 7,840 m<sup>2</sup> (trench basal dimensions).
- 3.2 The trenches were of varying lengths and set on varying orientations. The precise location of the trenches was determined by AOC and confirmed by ACAS prior to the start of the evaluation. However, the trench location was altered in the field to take in to account the natural topography of the site, in agreement with Mr Bruce Mann of ACAS.
- 3.3 Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural drift geology was reached. Trial trenches were extended around specific archaeological features to determine their lateral extent (while remaining within the development area). All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist.
- 3.4 All significant archaeological features were cleaned and defined. A sample of each structure and isolated feature was excavated, sampled and recorded.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The evaluation was conducted between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009. The weather conditions during the evaluation were excellent and overall archaeological visibility was very good. In total, thirty-four trenches were excavated (Figure 5). The following should be read in conjunction with the data presented in Appendices 1 -7, Figures 1 - 6 and Plates 1 - 7.
- 4.1.2 The proposed development area was covered by a layer of topsoil, comprising a dark brown, soft silty loam, with moderate sub-angular and sub-rounded stones and very occasional fragments of white ceramic. The natural subsoil varied across the site, with sands, gravels and silt being identified. Two areas of modern disturbance were identified in Trenches 7, 8 and 31 and 32.
- 4.1.3 Features of archaeological significance were identified in Trenches 21, 23 and 24 and will be further discussed below. Evidence for rig and furrow agriculture was also identified, within Trenches 19, 20, 21, 34 and 35, but will not be further discussed.



**Plate 1: General view of ring-ditch**

## **4.2 Trench 21**

- 4.2.1 A single isolated ring-ditch was identified in Trench 21 (Plate 1). The feature comprised an oval unbroken ditch [2102], measuring 5.70 m north to south by 4.45 m east to west. The ditch (were excavated) was 0.82 m in width by 0.44 m in depth and comprised a steep sided cut running into a rounded base (Plate 2). The upper fill of the ditch [2103] comprised a dark brown soft sandy silt, with inclusions of moderate to large (0.10 m to 0.60 m diameter) sub-rounded and sub-angular



**Plate 2: South-facing section through ring-ditch**

stones. Occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional fragments of burnt bone were identified throughout. The lower fill of the ditch [2104] comprised a sandy silt, with moderate inclusions of sub-rounded and angular stones, and flecks of charcoal (but no burnt bone) throughout. The base of the ditch contained no obvious evidence for the base of post-holes and no post-pipes were identified within either of the fills (Plate 2). The mixed nature of the deposit led the excavator to suggest that the material may represent remnants of a slowly eroded bank. The identification of a series of large stones throughout the fill may represent the remnants of a denuded cairn or bank.

- 4.2.2 No other features such as a central pit or cist were identified within the ring-ditch, and no other features were identified around the feature (Plate 3).



**Plate 3: General view of Ring-ditch showing sterile centre**

- 4.2.3 Analogy with better preserved, excavated sites suggests that the feature forms the remnants of an Early Bronze Age ring-ditch, a type of burial monument previously identified at Upper Largie, Kilmartin (Sheridan 2008) and Newmills (Watkins and Shepherd 1980), but generally extremely rare in Scotland.
- 4.2.4 A flat slab of pink granite, measuring approximately 0.7 m long by 0.5 m wide was identified in close proximity, within the topsoil of Trench 20 (Plate 4). This is an oddity within the field; the stone identified generally comprising rounded and sub-rounded stone. It does not seem wholly unlikely that the stone may once have formed the side slab of a truncated cist.





**Plate 4: Granite slab identified in topsoil**

### **4.3 Trench 23**

- 4.3.1 Three pits or post-holes were identified within Trench 23 (Plate 5). The features, which varied in shape, size and form, all contained a single fill. The pits/post-holes comprised a single isolated feature [2306] and two other features, [2302] and [2304] located next to each other. No discernible shape or coherent structure was identified from the features, but two pieces of unglazed pottery recovered from pit [2304], suggest a later prehistoric date.



**Plate 5: West-facing section through pit [2303], which contained prehistoric ceramic**

#### 4.4 Trench 24

- 4.4.1 A series of closely spaced features were identified within Trench 24 (Plate 6). The features varied in size, shape and form. All contained a single fill and are thought to comprise elements of a single, larger structure, St [2417].



**Plate 6: General view of Structure [2417]**

- 4.4.2 In total, a probable arc of seven pits and post-holes were identified and recorded ([2302] to [2317]). Despite the upper portions of all the features being clearly affected by subsequent plough truncation, excavation of two individual pits revealed that they have survived relatively well. On excavation, feature [2415] measured 0.90 m in width by up to 0.33 m in depth. The fill comprised a large quantity of medium to large-sized stone inclusions suggesting that the feature may have been a large post-hole, the stones representing packers. A single fragment of prehistoric ceramic was recovered from the surface cleaning of feature [2409/10].
- 4.4.3 Analogy with better preserved, excavated sites suggests that the features may form the remnants of later prehistoric settlement, such as the post-ring of a roundhouse. The structure, measuring approximately 5 m in length, is comparable to known examples throughout Scotland, but specifically to roundhouses recorded on the large scale excavation completed at nearby Kintore (Cook and Dunbar 2008). The larger pits at the centre probably characterize the central, load bearing post-ring, while the smaller features may have supported smaller posts or internal pits. The later prehistoric ceramic recovered from the structure provisionally suggests a Later Bronze Age or Iron Age date for the structure.



## 4.5 Artefacts

- 4.5.1 Despite the obvious affects of plough truncation across the proposed development area, a small artefact assemblage was recovered, from both unstratified contexts and from parent features. As previously discussed, prehistoric undecorated ceramic was recovered from two different pits, [2305/06] and [2304/05]. The material has been used to provide a provisional date for the features spanning the later prehistoric period.
- 4.5.2 Two pieces of flint were recovered from the upper and lower fills of the ring-ditch. A probable thumbnail scraper (Small Find 04) was identified from the primary fill [2104] (Rob Engl pers.comm). A second piece of burnt flint (Small Find 03) was also recovered from the upper fill [2103].
- 4.5.3 Six individual pieces of flint were recovered from the topsoil across the site. All the flint recovered during the works was honey coloured, a colour particularly characteristic of the Buchan Ridge, an area to the immediate north of Blackdog, and demonstrating the use of local raw materials (Cook & Dunbar 2008, 226).



**Plate 7: Detail of Bronze Age Thumb Nail Scraper**



**Plate 8: Detail of Prehistoric Rim Shard**

## 5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The evaluation has demonstrated the detrimental affect that deep ploughing has on the underlying natural subsoil. Despite relatively deep topsoil, plough scarred natural subsoil was identified across the whole site. In addition, elements of the underlying gravel were found across the surface of the topsoil. While it is far from clear as to whether any archaeological features occurred across the majority of the site, it is clear how much damage has been done by modern agricultural practice. Bearing this in mind, the majority of the proposed development site appears to be archaeologically sterile, with neither significant archaeological features nor artefacts being identified.
- 5.2 Where unearthed, the archaeological features appear to form three discrete areas of archaeological survival. While it is clear that all of the features have been truncated by the later agricultural use of the site, those that survive are relatively intelligible: their form, shape and function being distinguishable. The recovery of prehistoric ceramic from the features within Trenches 23 and 24 provide us with a probable date for the parent structures within the later prehistoric period (Late Bronze / Iron Age). While no datable artefacts were recovered, the very specific shape and form of the uninterrupted ring-ditch suggests a funerary function and date in the Early Bronze Age.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORKS

- 6.1 The proposed development area comprises two main land parcels, Fields 1 and 2. Despite a comprehensive programme of trenching, the more northerly field, Field 1 was completely sterile of significant archaeological features. It is recommended that no further works are necessary in this part of the development.
- 6.2 Despite the plough truncation identified across the site, three discrete areas of archaeological significance were identified within the central area of Field 2. The features and possible structures identified during the evaluation works are very significant. Given the significance of the archaeological material within the context of the development proposals, two options remain open as per the guidelines set out in SSP23 (SG 2008) and PAN 42 (SOEnd 1994). Either the features are preserved *in situ* and remain unexcavated, or they need to be '*preserved by archaeological record*' – that is to say archaeologically excavated and recorded. '
- 6.3 The identification of the prehistoric ceramic and flint is, again, very significant. The material assemblage recovered from the site will require cataloguing and analysis by the relevant specialists.

## 7 REFERENCES

AOC 2009 *Blackdog, Aberdeen Archaeological Works: Written Scheme of Investigation*. AOC unpublished document.

Cook, M and Dunbar, L 2008 *Rituals, Roundhouses and Romans*, STAR Monograph 8.

Scottish Government 2008 *Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. Archaeology and Planning*.

Sheridan, JA 2008 Upper Largie and Dutch-Scottish connections during the Beaker period. In H Fokkens, BJ Coles, AL van Gijn, JP Kleijne, HH Ponjee & CG Slappendel (eds), *Between Foraging and Farming: An Extended Broad Spectrum of Papers Presented to Leendert Louwe Kooijmans*, 247–60. Leiden: Leiden University (*Analecta Praehistorica Leidensia* 40).

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

Watkins, T & Shepherd, I A G 1980 A Beaker burial at Newmill, near Bankfoot, Perthshire. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 110 (1978–80), 32–41.

1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Aberdeenshire (Sheet 1xviNE) 1884

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Aberdeenshire, (Sheet 1xviNE) 1896

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Aberdeenshire, (Sheet 1xviNE) 1909

4<sup>th</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Aberdeenshire, 1927



Figure 1: Site location







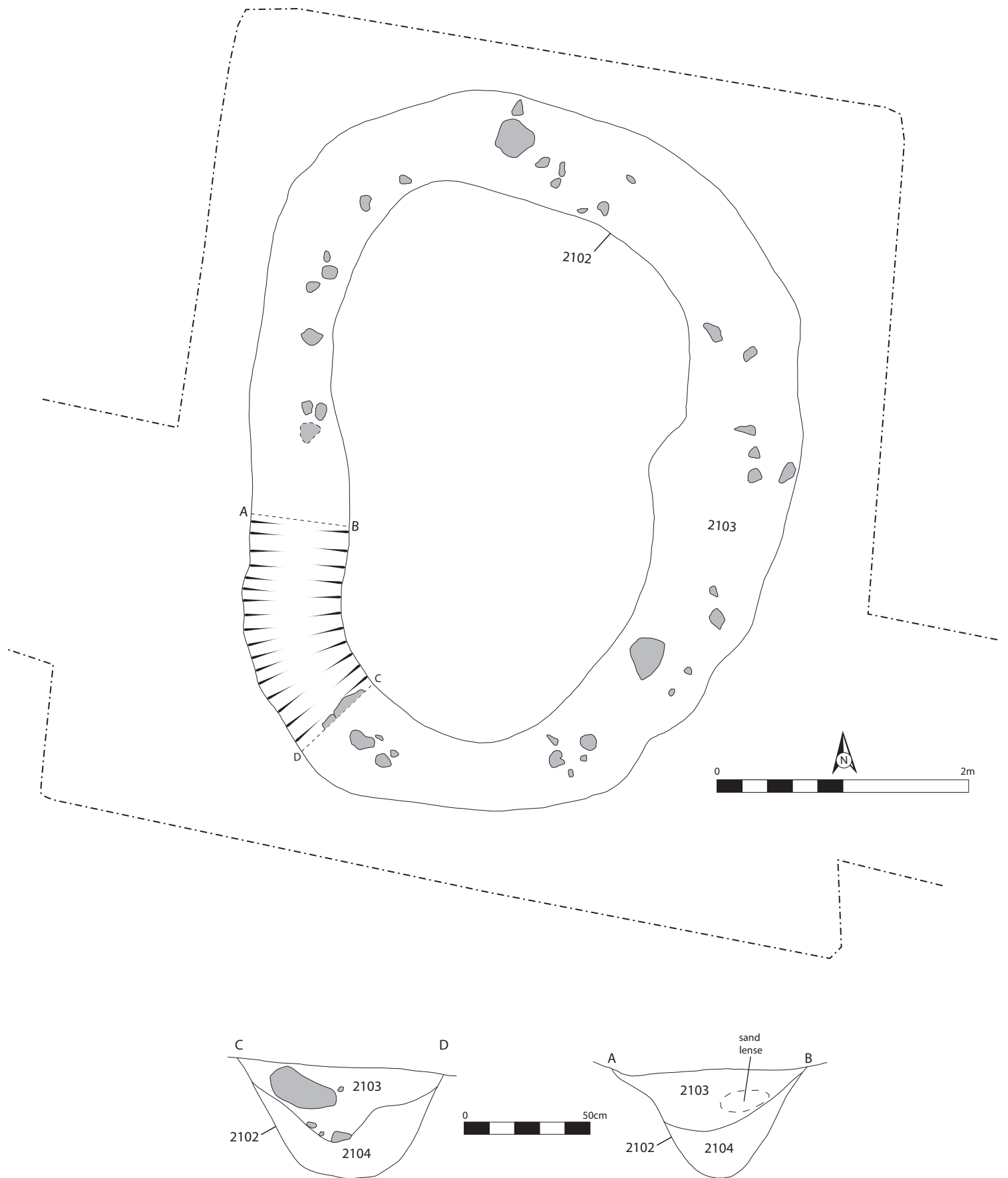


Figure 3: Plan and sections of feature 2102,  
Trench 21

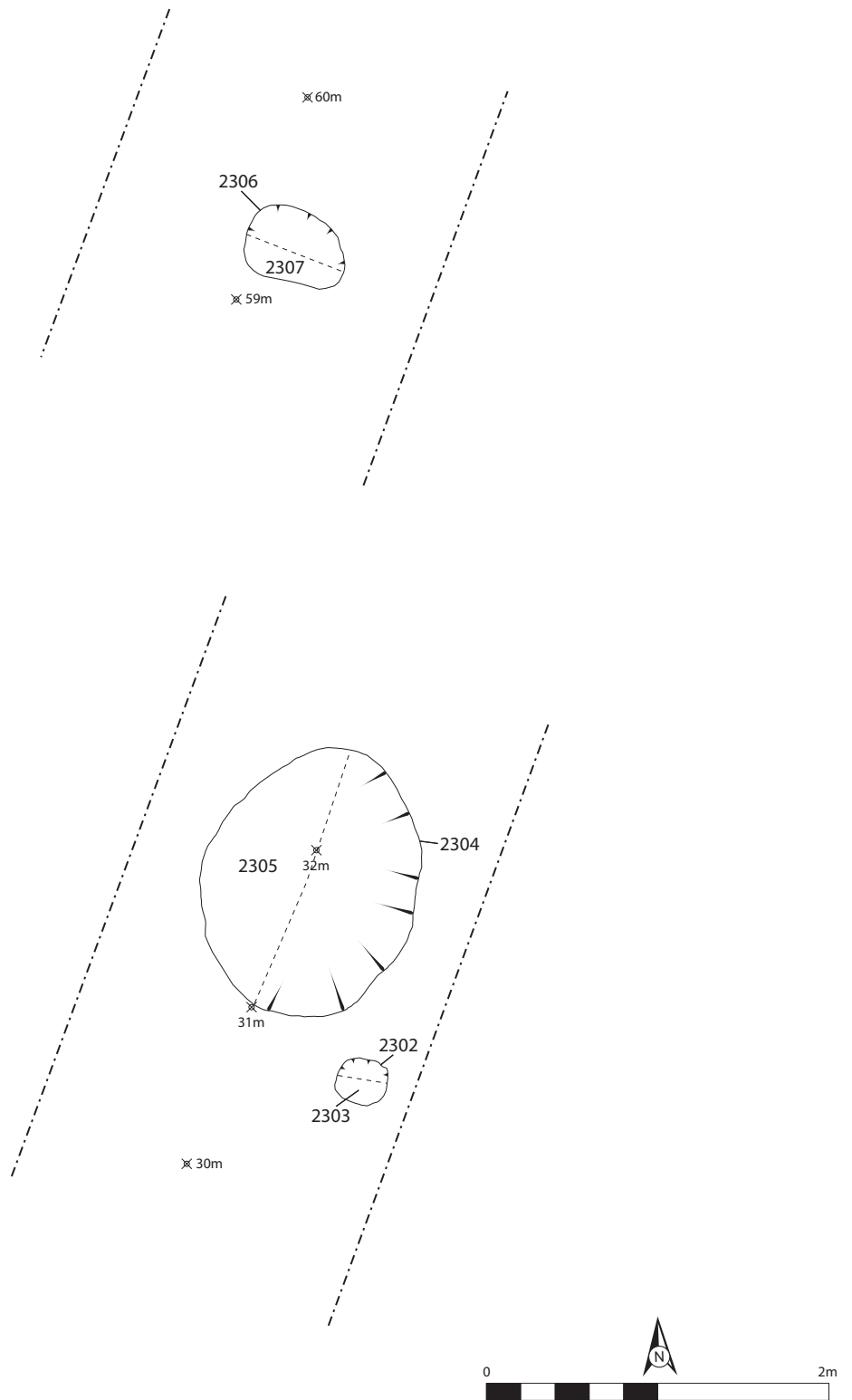


Figure 4: Plans of features in Trench 23

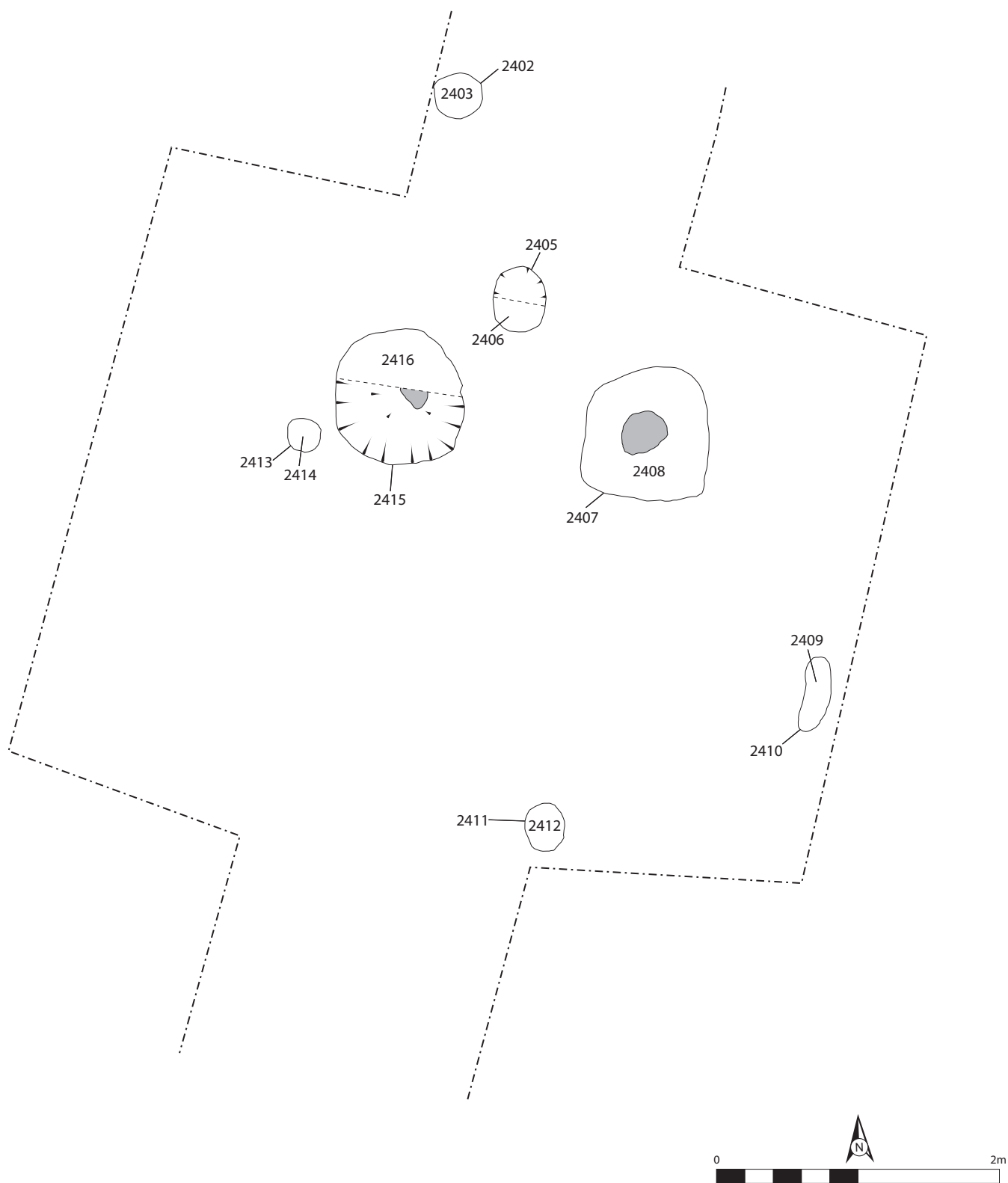


Figure 5: Plans of features in Trench 24

# **Blackdog, Aberdeenshire Evaluation: Data Structure Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

### Field 1

#### Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	242 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30-0.42 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.30-0.42 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light grey sand
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

#### Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	145 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30-0.42 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.30-0.42 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark red brown sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

#### Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	140 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark red coarse sand
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

#### Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	140 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.29-0.36 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.29-0.36 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark orange sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

#### Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	143 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.39-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.39-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark red sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.



**Trench 6**

<i>Dimensions</i>	140 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.22-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.22-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 7**

<i>Dimensions</i>	143 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.25-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.25-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 8**

<i>Dimensions</i>	143 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.25-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.25-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 9**

<i>Dimensions</i>	140 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30-0.36 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.30-0.36 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange sand.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 10**

<i>Dimensions</i>	135 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.29-0.42 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.29-0.42 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark grey sandy loam.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 11**

<i>Dimensions</i>	110 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.28-0.32 m

<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.28-0.32 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Grey brown sandy silty.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 12**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.28-0.41 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.28-0.41 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark grey sandy loam.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 13**

<i>Dimensions</i>	90 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.32-0.56 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.32-0.56 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark grey sandy loam.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 14**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.19-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.19-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark grey silty loam.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 15**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.23-0.28 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.23-0.28 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Dark brown silty loam.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Field 2****Trench 16**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.25-0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.25-0.50 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.

*Subsoil* Orange sand  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 17**

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.26-0.40 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.26-0.70 m  
*Significant Features* No significant archaeology.  
*Subsoil* Orange sand.  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 18**

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.26 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.26-0.60 m  
*Significant Features* No significant archaeology.  
*Subsoil* Orange Gravel.  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 19**

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.26 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.26-0.70 m  
*Significant Features* No significant archaeology.  
*Subsoil* Orange silt  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 20**

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.26 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.26-0.30 m  
*Significant Features* No significant archaeology.  
*Subsoil* Compact orange silt.  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 21**

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.27 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.27-0.35 m  
*Significant Features* Ring –ditch [2102].  
*Subsoil* Compact orange silt.  
*Finds* None observed.

**Trench 22**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange silt.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 23**

<i>Dimensions</i>	100 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.32 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	Three pits, [2302], [2304] and [2306]
<i>Subsoil</i>	Compact orange silt.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 24**

<i>Dimensions</i>	135 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.32 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	Structure [2417].
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange silt.
<i>Finds</i>	Prehistoric ceramic.

**Trench 25**

<i>Dimensions</i>	150 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange silt.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 26**

<i>Dimensions</i>	90 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange silt.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 27**

<i>Dimensions</i>	90 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.40 m

<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 28**

<i>Dimensions</i>	80 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26-0.30 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 29**

<i>Dimensions</i>	80 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.20 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.20 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 30**

<i>Dimensions</i>	80 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.20 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.20 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 31**

<i>Dimensions</i>	75 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.26 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	The area appears to have been disturbed by modern quarrying.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	None observed.

**Trench 32**

<i>Dimensions</i>	60 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.22 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.22 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	No significant archaeology.
<i>Modern Features</i>	The west end of the trench has been disturbed and contains modern bricks
<i>Subsoil</i>	Gravel.



*Finds* None observed.

### Trench 33

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.28 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.28-0.55 m  
*Significant Features* Rig and furrow identified aligned north-east to south-west across trench  
*Subsoil* Orange gravel.  
*Finds* None observed.

### Trench 34

*Dimensions* 100 m by 2 m  
*Orientation* E-W  
*Depth of Topsoil* 0.26 m  
*Depth of Excavation* 0.26-0.50 m  
*Significant Features* No significant archaeology.  
*Subsoil* Orange gravel.  
*Finds* None observed.

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register

Black & White Print and Colour Slide Film 1

Frame	Area/Trench	Description	From
1-2		Registration shot	
3	A Trench 2	General view Trench 2	S
4	A Trench 4	General view Trench 4	S
5	A Trench 5	General view Trench 5	N
6	A Trench 6	General view Trench 6	S
7	A Trench 6	View of silt trap at north end of Trench 6	N
8	A Trench 7	General view Trench 7	S
9	A Trench 9	General view Trench 9	S
10	A Trench 10	General view Trench 10	N
11	A Trench 12	General view Trench 12	N
12-13	B Trench 21	Pre-excavation shot of oval feature [2102]	N
14-15	B Trench 21	Pre-excavation shot of oval feature [2102]	S
16-17	B Trench 21	Pre-excavation shot of oval feature [2102]	W
18-19	B Trench 21	Pre-excavation shot of oval feature [2102]	E
20-21	B Trench 21	NW-facing section through oval ditch feature [2102]	NW
22-23	B Trench 21	S-facing section through oval ditch feature [2102]	S
24-25	B Trench 23	Plan of pits [2304] and [2302]	W
26-27	B Trench 23	View of pits [2304] and [2302]	S
28-29	B Trench 23	S-facing section through [2306]	S
30-34	B Trench 24	General plan of feature [2417]	Various
35-36	B Trench 24	S-facing section through [2415]	S
37-38	B Trench 21	Working shot of ring-groove [2102]	N

## Black &amp; White Print and Colour Slide Film 2 (and Digital)

Frame	Area/Trench	Description	From
1-2		Registration shot	
3-4	B Trench 21	Detail of ring-groove	N
5-6	B Trench 21	Detail of ring-groove	S
7-8	B Trench 21	Detail of ring-groove	E
9-10	B Trench 21	Detail of ring-groove	W
11-12	B Trench 21	Detail of ring-groove	S
13-14	B Trench 21	General showing plan and groove	S
15-16	B Trench 21	General showing plan and groove	NE

## APPENDIX 3: Context Register

Context Number	Type	Description
2100	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey brown sandy loam with moderate small to medium (0-0.30 m) sub-rounded and sub-angular stones throughout and very occasional fragments of modern white pottery. Max. 0.27 m thick. Overlies (2101).
2101	Layer	Very dark brown friable sandy silt with moderate small stones, forming b-horizon between topsoil (2100) and natural subsoil below. Very thin layer, max. 0.08 m thick only and not covering entire trench.
2102	Cut	Large roughly oval-shaped in plan, slightly asymmetrical cut of ring-groove feature. BST= sharp; Sides= very steep on both sides, slightly convex at very top before straightening out and becoming slightly concave; BSB= gradual in some areas, sharp in others; Base= flat. General profile appears to be a V-shaped ditch with a narrow flat base in the slot excavated. 1.8 m length slot excavated in SW corner. Total length of feature = 5.7 m, total width = 4.45 m, depth in slot = 0.44 m, width of ditch varies between 0.52 m and 1.10 m on surface. Very sharp distinct edges. Large sub-oval cut of ring-groove, still quite substantial but obviously truncated by ploughing. No features survive in centre of feature and there is no entrance. Possible prehistoric funerary function. Cuts natural subsoil. Filled by (2103) and (2104).
2103	Fill	Dark brown soft sandy silt (occasional lenses of light orange sand) with moderate small (0-0.10 m) sub-rounded stones and moderate medium-large (0.10-0.60 m) sub-rounded and sub-angular stones. The larger stones tend to occur in groups together but no evidence of post-pipes. Also moderate flecks of charcoal and occasional fragments of burnt bone. 1 (unworked?) fragment of flint recovered no other finds. Max. depth observed = 0.33 m). Secondary upper fill of ring-groove [2102], burnt bone may indicate possible funerary function. Lies over (2104) and under (2101).
2104	Fill	Very mixed fill of friable sandy silt, with patches of light orange sandier material but mainly dark brown sandy silt. Contains moderate small (0-0.10 m) sub-rounded and sub-angular stones, occasional sub-rounded medium (0.10-0.30 m) stones but not as many as (2103) and no large stones. Also flecks of charcoal but <i>not</i> burnt bone. Visible throughout slot excavated and presumed to fill entire feature. One fragment of unworked flint recovered, no other finds. Max. depth observed = 0.30 m. Primary fill of ring-groove [2102], lies over [2102] and under (2103).
2301		Topsoil identified across Trench 23, comprising a dark brown silty loam, with few inclusions.
2302	Cut	Cut of pit/post-hole, sub-rounded in shape, with steep sides running in to a

		flat base. Measuring 0.28 m in length by 0.18 m in depth. Filled by [2303].
2303	Fill	Fill of cut [2302], comprising very fine black sticky silt, with few inclusions of stone and evidence of root action.
2304	Cut	Cut of pit, sub-oval in shape with shallow sides running in to a concave base. Measuring 1.60 m by 0.25 m in depth. Filled by a single fill [2305]. Adjacent to pit [2302].
2305	Fill	Fill of cut [2304], comprising a dark brown, fine silt with few inclusions of small stones and a single piece of prehistoric ceramic.
2306	Cut	Cut of isolated pit, circular in plan, with shallow sides running in to a flat base. Measuring 0.45 m by 0.14 m in depth. Filled by a single fill [2307].
2307	Fill	Single fill of pit [2306]. Dark brown fine silt, no inclusions of stone, some gravel, root action evident. No charcoal visible.
2401	Topsoil	Topsoil identified across Trench 24, comprising a dark brown silty loam, with few inclusions.
2402	Cut	Cut of circular post-hole within St [2417]. Measuring 0.28 m in length. Filled by [2403]. Unexcavated.
2403	Fill	Fill of cut [2302]. Unexcavated.
2404		Number not used
2405	Cut	Cut of circular post-hole within St [2417] Measuring 0.360 m in length by 0.30 m in depth. Filled by [2406].
2406	Fill	Fill of cut [2405], comprising a dark brown silt with frequent inclusions of pebbles and root action evident.
2407	Cut	Cut of large pit within ST [2417]. Measuring 1 m in length. Filled by [2408]. Unexcavated.
2408	Fill	Fill of [2407] comprising a black silt with large stone inclusions. Unexcavated.
249	Fill	Fill of cut [2410], comprising a black silt. Unexcavated.
2410	Cut	Cut of oblong pit, measuring 0.50 m by 0.10 m in plan. Filled by [2409]. Unexcavated.
2411	Cut	Cut of circular post-hole within St [2417]. Measuring 0.28 m in length. Filled by [2412] Unexcavated.
2412	Fill	Fill of [2411], comprising a dark brown silt. Unexcavated.
2413	Cut	Cut of circular post-hole within St [2417], measuring 0.30 m in length. Filled by [2414]. Unexcavated.
2414	Fill	Fill of [2413], comprising a dark brown silt. Unexcavated.
2415	Cut	Cut of large pit/post-hole within St [2417]. Comprising a sub-rounded feature, with shallow sides running in to a concave base. Measuring 1.10 m in length by 0.33 m in depth. Filled by a single full [2416].
2416	Fill	Fill of pit [2415], comprising a single fill of dark brown sticky silty with frequent inclusions of stones, up to 0.20 m in diameter.
2417	Structure	General number assigned to series of associated features [2402-2415], thought to represent the remains of a roundhouse. Prehistoric pottery was recovered from the fill of one of the features. Measuring 4.60 m east to west by at least 5 m north to south.

## APPENDIX 4: Drawing Register

Drawing Number	Area	Feature Number	Description	Scale
1	TR 21	[2102]	Plan of ring-groove [2102]	1:20
2	TR 21	[2102]	NW-facing section of ring-groove [2102]	1:10
3	TR 21	[2102]	S-facing section of ring-groove [2102]	1:10
4	TR 24	[2405]	N-facing section of pit [2405]	1:10

5	TR 24	[2415]	S-facing section of pit [2415]	1:10
6	TR 23	[2302]	S-facing section of pit [2302]	1:10
7	TR 23	[2304]	N-facing section of pit [2304]	1:10
8	TR 23	[2306]	S-facing section of pit [2306]	1:10
9	TR 24	[2417]	Plan of structure [2417]	1:20
10	TR 23	[2302-2306]	Plan of features [2302-2306]	1:20

## APPENDIX 5: Finds Register

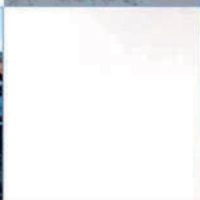
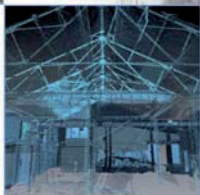
Find Number	Area	Context	Description	Material Code
001	TR 23	(2305)	2 sherds of pottery	CE
002	TR 24	(2409)	1 sherd of pottery	CE
003	TR 21	(2103)	1 fragment of (unworked?) flint	FL
004	TR 21	(2104)	1 fragment of unworked flint	FL

## APPENDIX 6: Sample Register

Area	Context	Sample Type	Volume (Litres)
TR 21	2103	SBS	20
TR 21	2104	SBS	10
TR 23	2303	SBS	10
TR 23	2305	SBS	10
TR 23	2307	SBS	10
TR 24	2406	SBS	10
TR 24	2416	SBS	10

## APPENDIX 7: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Blackdog, Aberdeenshire Evaluation
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21348
PARISH:	Belhelvie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Victoria Clements & Martin Cook
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Bronze Age Ring-Ditch, prehistoric roundhouse and pits
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Prehistoric pottery and flint
NGR:	NJ 9588 1514
START DATE (this season)	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2009
END DATE (this season)	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Prior to the proposed commercial development of an area of greenfield at Blackdog, Aberdeenshire, an archaeological evaluation was carried out. The 7% sample evaluation comprised the excavation of 34 trenches covering a total basal area of 7,840 m <sup>2</sup> . The evaluation demonstrated the detrimental affect of deep ploughing on the land but also revealed three discrete areas containing significant archaeological features; a ring-ditch, a roundhouse and some isolated pits. All of the features are dated by either artefactual material or analogy to excavated prehistoric sites.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	To be confirmed
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr Colin Tawse
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	C/o AOC Archaeology Group
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com



**AOC Archaeology Group**, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY  
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: [edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com)

[www.aocarchaeology.com](http://www.aocarchaeology.com)