

Archaeological Evaluation

Glenara, Westerlea, Alyth Road, Rattray, Perth and Kinross



Site looking South with Glenara in background



3rd August 2012

Introduction

This programme of archaeological works was carried out for Mr and Mrs R McWilliam to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development, as noted by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust in the Terms of Reference to Planning Application 10/01628/IPL, dated 4th July 2012. It was undertaken by the author on Thursday 2nd August 2012 (site code RATT01); weather conditions were sunny and warm.

Archaeological Background (Illus 1, 2 and 3)

The development site was considered to have archaeological potential as it is thought to contain the site of the Haer Cairn, a burial cairn removed in the 19th century. From the description in the Original Name Books of the Ordnance Survey, Haer Cairn appears to have been a burial monument dating from the earlier part of the Bronze Age (c 2000 –1400 BC). A characteristic of this type of monument are 'satellite burials' where later prehistoric cists or cremation burials focus on the larger burial monument. Until its demolition in the 1960's most of the site to be evaluated was occupied by buildings associated with Strathmore Hospital which was built c 1904 (see Illus 3).

Site Evaluation (Illus 4)

Four trenches were opened to provide a 5% sample of the proposed area of development, two of these in close proximity to the former position of the 'Haer cairn'. Where possible these trenches were opened in areas that were not occupied by former tarmac road surfaces belonging to the Strathmore Hospital.

Trench 1 (Illus 5 and 6)

This trench was aligned North East to South West and was 19.5m long by 1.8m wide. At its Southern end natural orange brown gravel and sand lay 0.20m below a layer of loose gravel. At its Northern end natural orange brown gravel lay at a depth of 0.50m and was sealed by a layer of loose orange brown silty clay and gravel (0.25m deep) and a layer of brown silty clay (0.25m deep). A narrow linear feature 100 was located and half sectioned. It was filled with dark brown silty clay and stones and appeared to be a former drainage trench associated with the Strathmore Hospital.

Trench 2 (Illus 7 and 8)

This trench was aligned South South West to North North East and was 9.60m long by 1.8m wide. At its South South Western end natural orange brown gravel lay at a depth of 0.38m below a layer of brown silty clay (0.28m thick) and a layer of turf (0.10m thick). At its North North Eastern end natural orange brown gravel lay at a depth of 0.52m below a layer of sandstone rubble and gravel (0.42m thick) and a layer of turf (0.10m thick).

Trench 3 (Illus 9 and 10)

This trench was aligned South South West to North North East and was 12m long by 1.8m wide. At its North North Eastern end natural orange gravel lay at a depth of 0.85m below a layer of brown silty clay (0.10m thick) which was sealed by a layer of bitumen (0.05m thick). The bitumen lay below a deposit of rubble and mortar 0.55m thick which was then sealed by a layer of turf (0.15m thick).

Trench 4 (Illus 11)

This trench was aligned West to East and was 5m long by 1.8m wide. Natural orange gravel lay at a depth of 0.60m below an orange brown silty clay (0.29m thick) and a dark brown silty clay (0.31m thick).

Conclusions

Nothing associated with the Haer burial cairn was encountered in any of the trenches opened. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 encountered a linear drainage trench, demolition rubble and a bitumen floor surface associated with the Strathmore Hospital buildings that used to stand on the site.

Recommendations

This evaluation did not locate anything of archaeological interest and it is recommended that no further work needs to take place prior to redevelopment, the final decision on the need for further work however rests with Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Frank McLeod the machine driver for his help with this evaluation.

Illustration List

Illus 1 Site Location (red circle) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2012. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illus 2 Location of the site of the 'Haer cairn' as marked on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1860 (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illus 3 Development site occupied by buildings of Strathmore Hospital as shown on Ordnance Survey Second Edition map of 1948 (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illus 4 Trench location plan, red dot indicates former location of 'Haer cairn', red line indicated boundary of area to be evaluated

Illus 5 Trench 1 fully excavated looking North North East

Illus 6 Detail view of South South Western end of Trench 1 showing line of linear feature 100 cut into natural gravel.

Illus 7 Trench 2 fully excavated looking West

Illus 8 Trench 2 fully excavated looking North West, demolished building remains visible in trench section.

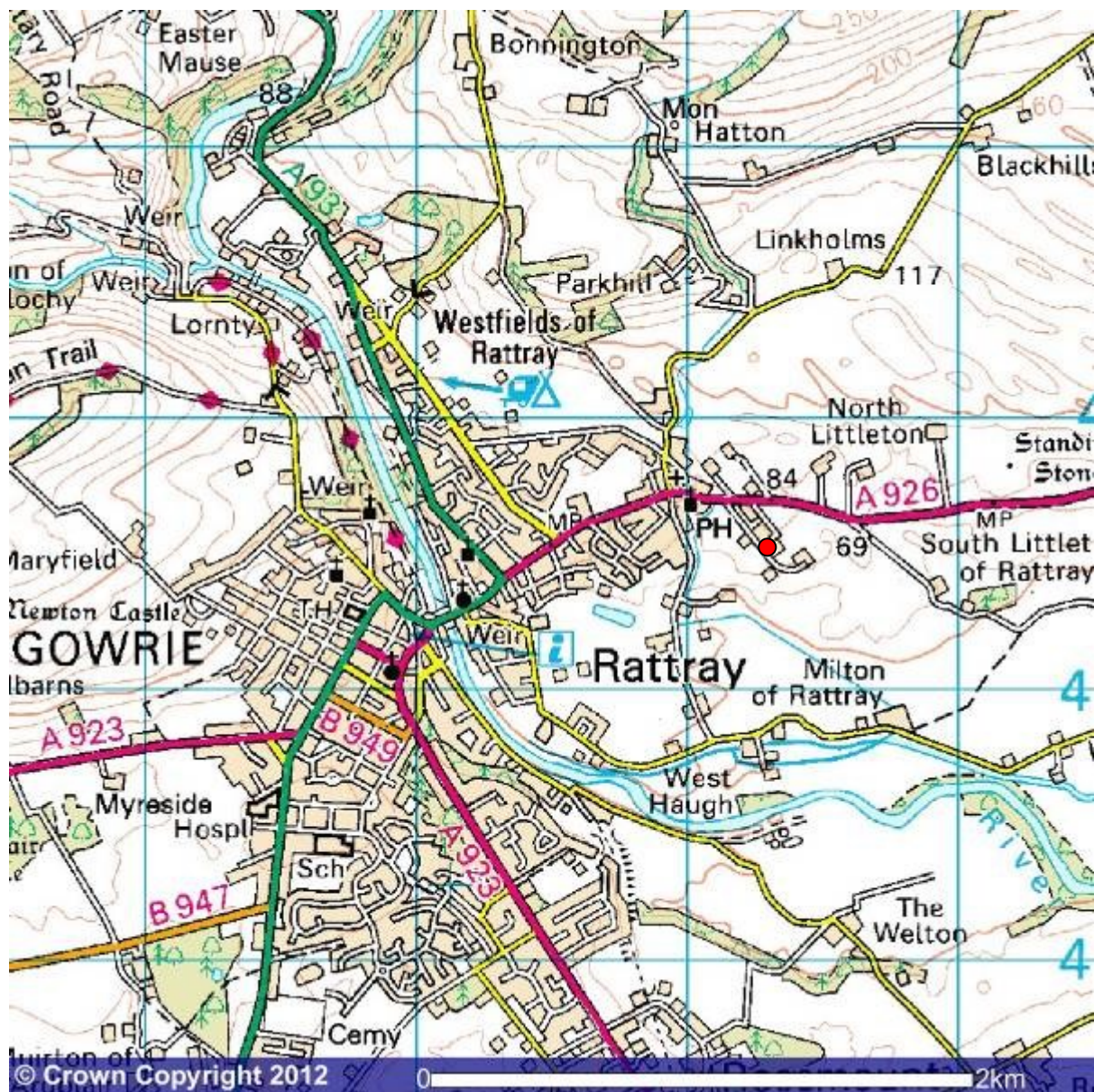
Illus 9 Trench 3 fully excavated looking North

Illus 10 Trench 3 looking North showing remains of demolished hospital building and bitumen floor in trench section (indicated by red arrow)

Illus 11 Trench 4 fully excavated looking North North West

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Glenara, Westerlea, Alyth Road, Rattray
PROJECT CODE:	RATT01
PARISH:	Rattray
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NO14NE 4
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Cairn, Cist
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NO 1926 4551
START DATE	2nd August 2012
END DATE	3rd August 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Four trial trenches representing a 5% sample of the site for a proposed new housing development were opened by mechanical excavator. The demolished remains of buildings relating to the Strathmore Hospital which formerly stood on the site were located in two of the trenches, nothing associated with the 'Haer' burial cairn which formerly stood in the vicinity was found.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr and Mrs R McWilliam
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk



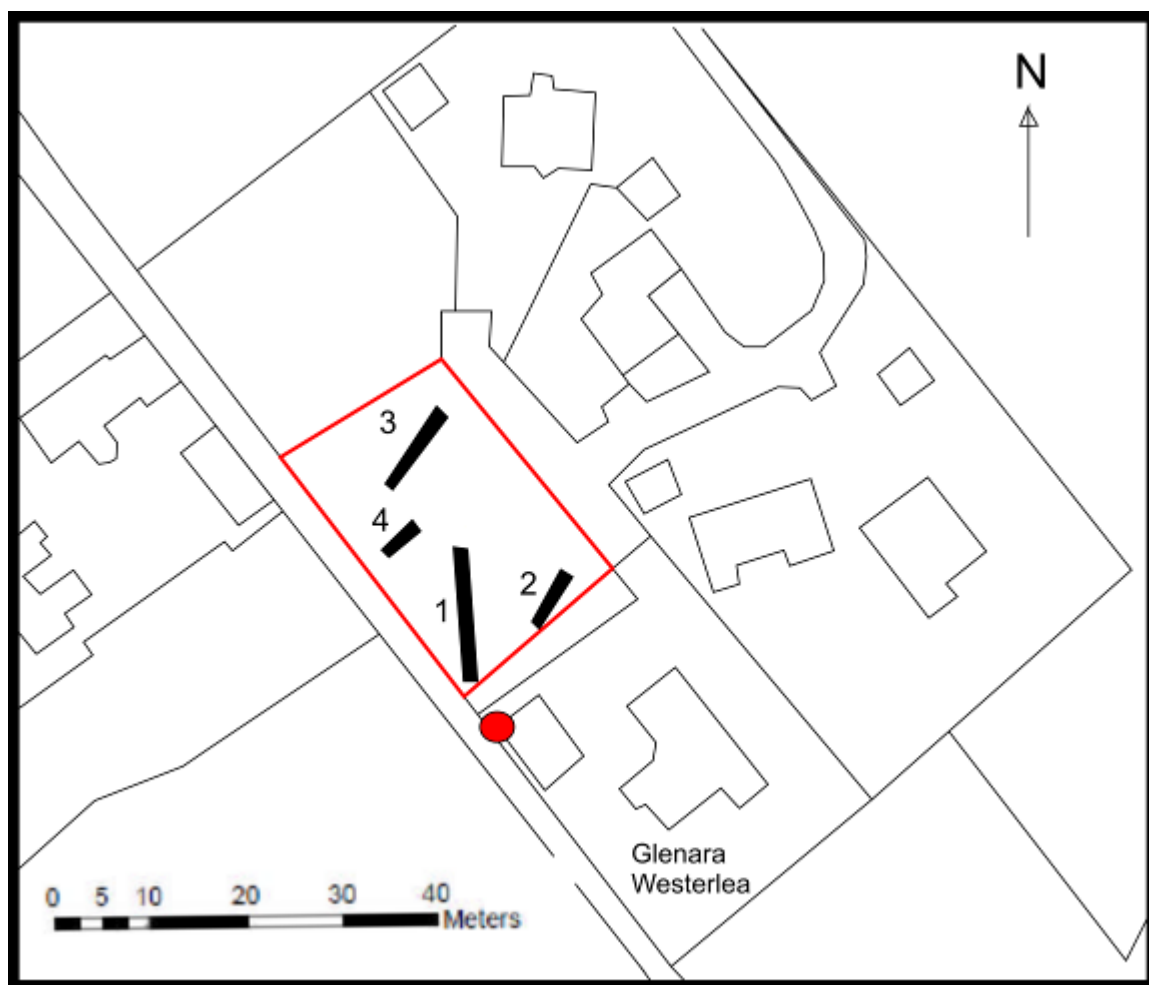
Illus 1 Site Location (red circle) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2012. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)



Illus 2 Location of the site of the Haer cairn as marked on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867
(© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)



Illus 3 Development site occupied by buildings of Strathmore Hospital as shown on Ordnance Survey Second Edition map of 1948 (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)



Illus 4 Trench location plan, red dot indicates former location of 'Haer cairn', red line indicates boundary of area to be evaluated



Illus 5 Trench 1 fully excavated looking North North East



Illus 6 Detail view of South South Western end of Trench 1 with red arrows marking edges of linear feature 100 cut into natural gravel.



Illus 7 Trench 2 fully excavated looking West



Illus 8 Trench 2 fully excavated looking North West, demolished building remains visible in trench section.



Illus 9 Trench 3 fully excavated looking North



Illus 10 Trench 3 looking North showing remains of demolished hospital building and bitumen floor in trench section (indicated by red arrow)



Illus 11 Trench 4 fully excavated looking North North West