

Archaeological Evaluation
Land west of Fortune's Gate,
Comrie, Perth and Kinross



Site of new house looking North West



25th February 2013

Introduction (Illus 1)

This archaeological evaluation on the site of a new house and garage on land west of Fortune's Gate, Comrie was carried out for Maurice and Gill McBride to satisfy the archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development, as noted by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust in the condition attached to Planning Application 12/01884/AML, dated 23rd January 2013. It was undertaken by the author on Friday 22nd February 2013 (Site Code COM01) weather conditions were cold and overcast.

Archaeological Background (Illus 2, 3)

The Roman fort at Dalginross has been known since the 18th century (named as 'Victoria' on General Roy's map, Illus 2). The fort is one of the 'glen-blocking' or Highland Line forts in use in the late first century AD however the complexity of the remains identified from aerial survey and the collection of Roman coins found in and around the site suggest that the fort was re-occupied during the Antonine and Severan periods of campaign and occupation.

Aerial photographic survey has revealed two phases of construction with what has been interpreted as two forts (an inner and outer) superimposed on top of each other. An alternative suggestion is that the outer defences form an annexe around the inner fort. A nationally significant monument, the majority of the fort is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Archaeological works carried out in 2005 on a housing plot to the south of the development site revealed important new information on a previously unidentified annexe to the fort (Fyles 2005) and further archaeological works carried out by this author in 2012 on a site at Penfillan, Braco Road, which lies to the South West of this site, located the line of the outer defences of the fort which proved to be up to 2m deep and 4m wide (Hall 2012). There was thought to be the potential for archaeological deposits associated with the fort or annexe to survive on this proposed development site.

Site Evaluation (Illus 4 and 5)

Three trenches were opened in the proposed development area representing a 5% sample of the area. They were located to avoid the position of several large trees that formerly stood on the site and a spoilheap.

Trench 1 (Illus 6)

This trench lay at the northern end of the site and measured 10m by 2m and ran on a E-W alignment. 0.30m of grey brown silty clay and frequent small stones was revealed overlying a compact orange brown gravel (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Trench 2 (Illus 7)

This trench lay at the middle of the development area, measured 21m by 2m and ran on a NE-SW alignment. At its north eastern end 0.27m of grey brown silty clay and frequent stones was revealed overlying an orange brown gravel (natural) at its south western end 0.30m of grey brown silty clay overlay orange brown gravel (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Trench 3 (Illus 8)

This trench lay at the southern end of the development area, measured 20m by 2m and ran on a SW-NE alignment. At its western end 0.36m of grey brown silty clay was revealed overlying an orange brown gravel (natural) at its eastern end 0.27m of grey brown silty clay was revealed overlying an orange brown gravel (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Conclusions

This evaluation did not locate anything of archaeological interest relating to the Roman occupation of the area 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 Ian the machine driver for his help with this evaluation.

References

Fyles, C 2005 'Archaeological evaluation, Braco Road, Comrie' report prepared for developer
Hall, D W 2012 'Archaeological excavation Penfillan, Dalginross' report prepared for developer

Cartographic Sources (<http://www.nls.uk/maps>)

Roy, William General 1747-55 Military Survey of Scotland

Illustration List

Illus 1 Site Location marked in red (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2011. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illus 2 the Roman fort at Dalginross named 'Victoria' on William Roy's Military Survey of Scotland 1747-55 (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illus 3 Aerial photograph looking east showing cropmarks of Roman forts and temporary camp in foreground, site is shown with red arrow (© RCAHMS)

Illus 4 Plan of trench locations (based on supplied architects plan) Scale 1:500

Illus 5 General view of site looking north showing location of three trenches opened.

Illus 6 Trench 1 looking west showing natural orange brown gravel below grey brown silty clay

Illus 7 Trench 2 looking south west showing natural orange brown gravel below grey brown silty clay

Illus 8 Trench 3 looking North West showing orange brown natural gravel below grey brown silty clay

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Land west of Fortune's Gate, Dalginross, Comrie
PROJECT CODE:	COM01
PARISH:	Comrie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NN72SE 2
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	In close proximity to Roman fort at Dalginross
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NN 774 211
START DATE	22nd February 2013
END DATE	22nd February 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Three trenches representing a 5% sample of the development area were opened by machine. In all three a deposit of grey brown silty clay varying in depth between 0.27m and 0.36m was located overlying an orange brown gravel (natural). Nothing of archaeological interest was located.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Maurice and Gill McBride
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

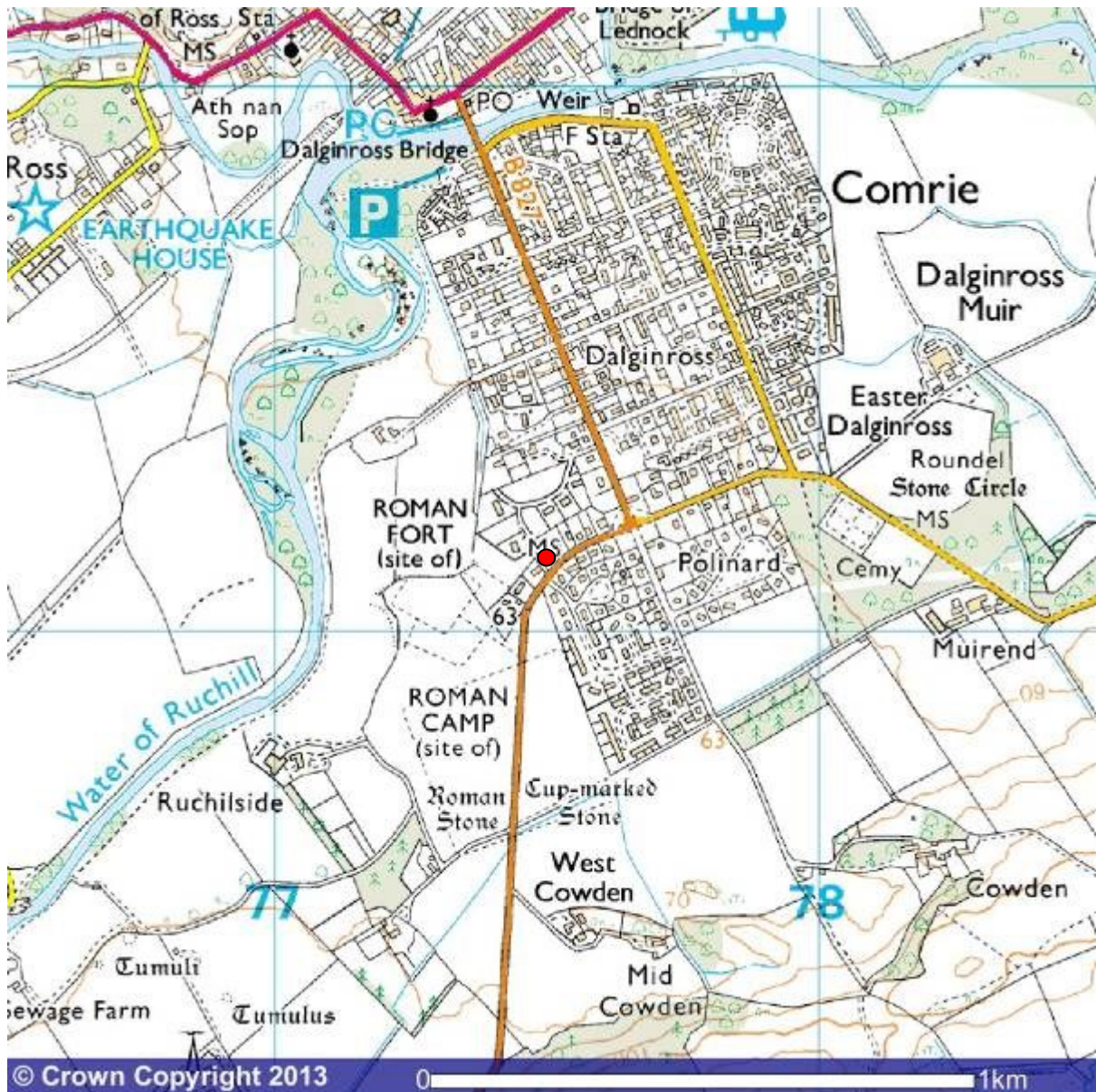


Illustration 1 Site Location marked in red (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2013. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)



Illustration 2 'Victoria' on William Roy's Military Survey of Scotland 1747-55 (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland), red dot marks approximate location of site.



Illustration 3 Aerial photograph looking east showing cropmarks of Roman forts and temporary camp in foreground, site is shown with red arrow (© RCAHMS)

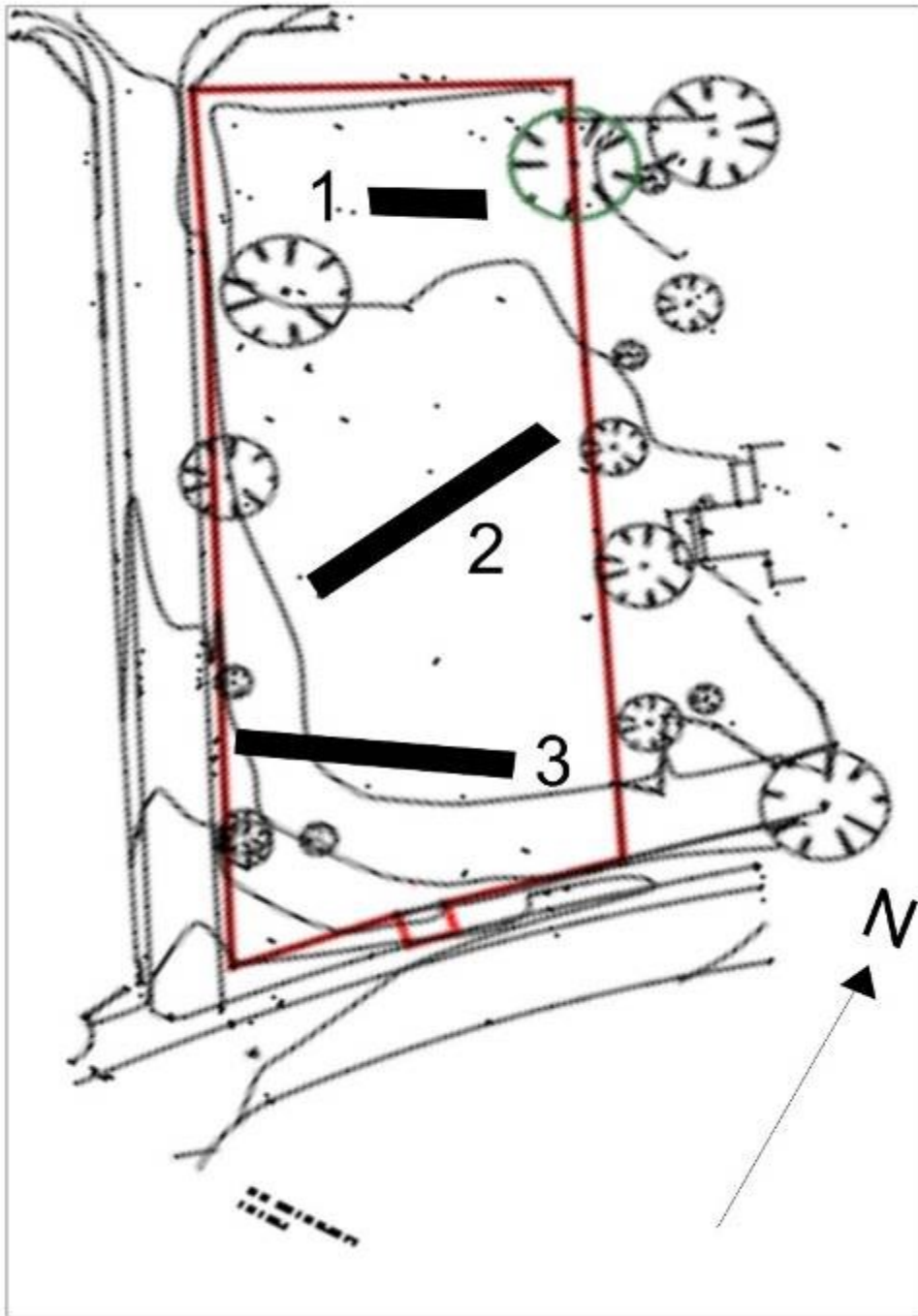


Illustration 4 Plan of trench locations (based on supplied architects plan) Scale 1:500



Illustration 5 General view of site looking North West showing location of three trenches opened.



Illustration 6 Trench 1 looking west showing natural orange brown gravel below grey brown silty clay



Illustration 7 Trench 2 looking south showing natural orange brown gravel below grey brown silty clay



Illustration 8 Trench 3 looking North West showing orange brown natural gravel below grey brown silty clay