

Archaeological Evaluation
Hallhole Farm
Meikleour, Blairgowrie
PERTH AND KINROSS

BW04

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
HALLHOLE FARM, MEIKLEOUR
BLAIRGOWRIE**

BW04

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Illustration 1: Site Location Plan

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ABSTRACT

Alder Archaeology was commissioned by the Meikleour Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Hallhole Farm, Meikleour in advance of construction of three grain silos. The site, located at NGR NO 1794 3920 was considered to be archaeologically sensitive due to location adjacent to the SE side of Scheduled Monument (6952) at Coin Hill. The Coin Hill settlement comprises late prehistoric round houses and souterrains. The evaluation required the excavation of 6% of the available area which was achieved by the excavation and recording of three trenches each averaging 5m in length and 2m in width. The work (Alder site code BW04) was undertaken on 11th July 2011 in reasonable weather conditions. The excavations revealed nothing of archaeological significance. In one trench an unworked boulder was encountered which was considered to be an in-situ erratic and not of archaeological interest. The evaluation was entirely funded by the Meikleour Trust.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

The Meikleour Trust commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the site of the proposed erection of three grain storage silos adjacent to an existing grain storage building at Hallhole Farm, Meikleour, Blairgowrie.

The proposed development area is a green field site 420m² in size located at NGR NO 1794 3920. The work (Alder site code BW04) was undertaken on 11th April 2011 in reasonable weather conditions. The requirement was to evaluate 6% of the available area, that is 25.2m². In the event three trenches were excavated, an area of 31m². Special attention was paid to fact that the development site was located adjacent to the Scheduled Monument of Coin Hill (reference 6952) comprising late prehistoric round houses and souterrains. It was considered possible that buried archaeology from the Coin Hill settlement could extend into the area of the proposed development.

The work was designed to satisfy the archaeological condition on development application reference 11/00621, dated 21st April 2011.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this investigation was to establish the presence/absence, date, character and quality of any archaeological remains surviving within the development area. The site was considered to be archaeologically sensitive due to it being adjacent to the Scheduled Monument at Coin Hill.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this assessment. Copies will be sent to the client, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and the Perth and Kinross Historic Environment Record.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

This evaluation is the final part of a programme of archaeological work designed to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development for planning application 11/00621, dated 21st April 2011.

1.5 Acknowledgements

Alder Archaeology wish to thank Mr Sam Mercer Nairne of The Meikleour Trust and Sarah Malone of Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust for their assistance and guidance throughout this project.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1 and 2)

The site is a small rectangular open area measuring 15m E-W and 28m N-S located on the lower S slope of Coin Hill. The E side of the site is bounded by a large newly constructed grain storage building and on the S side it is bounded by a farm track. The N and W sides are potato fields. The adjacent grain storage building had been cut into

the hill slope and its footprint extends at least 3m into the E side of the development area, reducing the level on the site's E edge by about 1m.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

The proposed development is located in an area of archaeological potential. The development area is immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument (6952) of Coin Hill, unenclosed settlement W of Hallhole. There was the potential that archaeological remains associated with the unenclosed settlement might survive within the development area. Coin Hill comprises an unenclosed settlement of prehistoric date, visible as a series of cropmarks on aerial photographs. It comprises at least four ring-ditch houses, defined by circular ditches measuring up to 22m in internal diameter. At least two of these have dark cropmarks within their interiors which indicate the survival of internal deposits. At least one of the ringditches has a curving cropmark extending from the interior out through a broad gap in the ditch, which measures about 10m in length and represents a souterrain. There are a number of other cropmarks in the same field, consisting of pits, lengths of ditch, and less well-defined markings indicating the remains of associated structures. Taken together, these features represent the remains of a substantial later prehistoric settlement.

2.3 Archaeological Method

Three evaluation trenches (trenches 01, 02 and 03) were excavated by machine in the NW part of the site. They evaluated the area closest to the Scheduled Monument where it could be expected that archaeological deposits relating to the prehistoric settlement may have extended into the development site. The trenches were excavated down to natural deposits, hand cleaned and recorded.

For descriptive purposes in the text site N was taken as the northern edge of the development area.

2.4 Results of Investigations (Illus 3 and 4)

Trench 01

Trench 01 was located adjacent to the development site's N edge at its W end. The trench measured 5 X 2m and reached a sondage depth of 1.10m. Topsoil (0101) was dark loam, 0.30m thick followed by subsoil (0102), 0.25-0.30m thick with only a moderate amount of small to medium stone inclusions. Below the subsoil was a light brown natural silt (0103). The trench floor comprised the interface between the dark subsoil (0102) and the lighter silty natural (0103), reached at between 0.80m and 1.00m below the site surface. The interface showed evidence of tree root and rodent activity in the form of darker (mid to light brown) sub-circular lenses or fills of silt within the natural light brown silt of (0103) indicating rodent burrows/tunnels and silted root channels.

In the NW corner of the trench part of a large stone (0104) was revealed at the base of the subsoil at a depth of 0.80m. The exposed part of the stone measured 0.30 X 0.54m and was at least 0.40m in depth (not bottomed). It extended into the N and W sides of the trench. Excavation on the E side of the stone revealed that it was set within the natural silt (0103) and had no cut to indicate that it was of archaeological significance. The stone was considered to be a natural erratic, carried into position by glacial action.

A machine dug sondage measuring 0.80 X 1.60m was made into the trench floor to a depth of 0.40m. It revealed that the natural deposit (0103) was 0.20m thick below which was a further natural deposit of light grey clean sand (0105) at least 0.28m thick but not bottomed. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this trench.

Trench 02

Trench 02 was located 2.5m the S of trench 01 along the W edge of the site. It measured 5 X 2m and reached a sondage depth of 1.35m. The deposits in this trench were virtually the same as those of trench 01 except that no large erratic stone was found. The interface between the subsoil and the first layer of natural was the same as in trench 01, showing evidence of animal burrowing and root activity. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this trench.

Trench 03

Trench 03 was located to the SE of trenches 01 and 02. It measured 5.5 X 2m and reached a sondage depth of 1.35m. Again deposits in this trench were the same as those found in trenches 01 and 03. The lowest deposit within the sondage was a natural light brown silty clay rather than a grey sand as found in trenches 01 and 02. Nothing of archaeological significance was found in this trench.

3 Interpretation

3.1 The Evaluation Trenches

The evaluation trenches 01-03 were virtually identical with regard to the stratified layers, only in trench 03 was the bottom natural layer slightly different in that it comprised silt rather than sand. Trench 01 contained a large erratic stone, evidence of glacial activity, which was not observed in the other two trenches.

There was no evidence of any archaeological deposits or features, nor were there any finds. Even in the topsoil and subsoil where it would be expected to find some evidence of ploughing or manuring in the form of pottery sherds or glass fragments there were no finds.

There was no evidence of any archaeological activity associated with the late prehistoric settlement of Coin Hill extending into the development site.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The evaluation found no evidence of any archaeological features, finds or deposits relating to the late prehistoric settlement of Coin Hill or the remains of activity from any other period.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

No evidence of any archaeological remains was found within the 6% of the development area evaluated. Alder Archaeology therefore recommends that no further archaeological work is required on this site. The final decision however, with regard to the requirement for further work, rests with Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust.

5 References

Alder Archaeology Limited 2011 *Hallhole Farm, Meikleour, Blairgowrie, Archaeological Evaluation, Written Scheme of Investigation*

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust 2011 Terms of Reference for a Programme of Archaeological Works *Erection of three grain storage silos and associated conveyors and elevators at Hallhole Farm, Meikleour Blairgowrie*

Appendix 1 Context Register

<i>No:</i>	<i>Description</i>
	<i>Trench 01</i>
0101	Deposit, topsoil, dark loam 0.30m thick, moderate small stone
0102	Deposit, dark loamy silt, subsoil, 0.25-0.30m thick, occasional small stone
0103	Deposit, natural light orange yellow, silt below 0102, 0.20m thick
0104	Stone, unworked, smooth, part of erratic boulder extending into N and W section of trench, flattish top and side, 0.35 X 0.54m and at least 0.40m deep (not bottomed) non archaeological, at interface of 0102 and 0103
0105	Deposit, light grey sand, compacted, natural below 0103, at least 0.24m thick, not bottomed
	<i>Trench 02</i>
0201	Deposit, 0.30-0.40m thick, dark loam, moderate small stone
0202	Deposit, subsoil 0.30m thick, dark loamy silt, occasional small stone
0203	Deposit, natural, fine yellow brown silty sand, below 0202, occasional medium rounded stone
0204	Deposit, natural, compacted grey sand below 0203
	<i>Trench 03</i>
0301	Deposit, topsoil, 0.40m thick,
0302	Deposit, subsoil, slightly darker at base, occasional charcoal flecks 0.50 – 0.56m thick
0303	Deposit, natural, light orange brown silt or silty clay below 0302, 0.20m thick
0304	Deposit, light brown silt or silty clay, not bottomed

Appendix 2 Photographic Register

<i>Image No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
01-02	General of site	N
03	General of site	NW
04	General of site	N
05	Start of T01	SW
06	Start of T01	W

07	T01 deposit 0103, showing tree root and animal disturbance	SW
08-09	T01 stone, 0104, in NW corner of T01, detail	SW
10	T01 stone, 0104	W
11-12	T01 N facing section of sondage in base of trench	S
13-14	T01 General of trench floor	SW
15	T02 General starting to excavate trench	SW
16-17	T02 being excavated	S
18	T02 part excavated	S
19	T02 excavated with sondage	E
20	T02 S facing section of N baulk	N
21	T03 general, start of trench	SE
22	T03 excavated, showing floor of trench	SE
23-24	Excavated trenches location	N
25	T03 NW baulk of showing stratigraphy	NW
26	T03 SW facing section in sondage	NE
27	T03 general of floor of trench and sondage	SW
28	T03 general of floor of trench and sondage	SE
29	General E side of site showing footprint of adjacent building intruding onto side	S

Appendix 3 Drawing Register

<i>Sheet No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Scale</i>
1	Trenches 01-03 descriptions of stratigraphy ; plan 01 T01 general of 0103; plan 02, T01 of stone 0104; section 01, T01, N facing of sondage; plan 03, T02 general of 0203; plan 04, T03, general of 0303	1:100 and 1:20

Appendix 4 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Hallhole Farm, Meikleour
PROJECT CODE:	BW04
PARISH:	Caputh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Ray Cachart
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NO13NE.56
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Adjacent to Prehistoric Settlement
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Site centred on NGR NO 1794 3920
START DATE	11 July 2011
END DATE	11 July 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Alder Archaeology was commissioned by the Meikleour Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Hallhole Farm Meikleour in advance of construction of three grain silos. The site, located at NGR NO 1794 3920 was considered to be archaeologically sensitive due to location adjacent to the SE side of Scheduled Monument (6952) at Coin Hill. The Coin Hill settlement comprises late prehistoric round houses and souterrains. The evaluation required the excavation of 6% of the available area, which was achieved by the excavation and recording of three trenches each averaging 5m in length and 2m in width. The work (Alder site code BW04) was undertaken on 11 th July 2011 in reasonable weather conditions. The excavations revealed nothing of archaeological significance. In one trench an unworked boulder was encountered which was considered to be an in-situ erratic and not of archaeological interest. The evaluation was entirely funded by The Meikleour Trust.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	The Meikleour Trust
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	None
ADDRESS OF MAIN	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX

CONTRIBUTOR:	
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Director@AlderArchaeology.co.uk

Appendix 5 Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork

5.1 Recording Methodology

Alder Archaeology employs a Single Context Recording System that allows full cross-referencing of stratigraphy, finds and environmental samples, as well as site-wide phasing. All features will be planned at scale 1:20, and sections drawn at scale 1:10. Sections and profiles will be drawn and all features will be photographed with metric scale included. Environmental samples will be taken from archaeologically significant contexts, if the analysis of these samples would aid significantly in the interpretation of any features identified.

5.2 Human Remains

If human remains are encountered they will be left in situ and the local police will be informed. If removal is required this will take place in compliance with Historic Scotland's Policy Paper *The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*.

5.3 Products and Reporting

A Data Structure Report will normally be prepared within a period agreed within the Written Scheme of Investigation/ Project Design, after the completion of the fieldwork. This forms the basic level of reporting. Further reporting may be required on the basis of discoveries made during excavations.

A copy of the report and the project archive will be deposited in the NMRS. Further copies will be sent to the client, LAAO and others, as appropriate.

5.4 Artefacts

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*. We will report such finds, if recovered, with supporting documentation to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel for disposal to the appropriate museum.

5.5 Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

A brief summary of the results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*.

5.6 General Conditions and Health and Safety

We adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.

Alder Archaeology Ltd has public liability insurance of £2,000,000. Details of this can be provided on request.

We operate a strict health and safety policy and conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act. We undertakes Risk Assessments on all fieldwork carried out.

Alder Archaeology representatives will at all times wear protective footwear, high visibility clothing and other appropriate clothing. Hard hats will be worn if there is active plant on site or at all times if the site is deemed a hard hat area.

If lightly contaminated deposits are uncovered disposable boiler suits and gloves will be worn. A source of clean water will be made available for staff to clean hands with. If the health risk posed by site contamination is felt to be too high all further archaeological work will stop in that area.