

Archaeological
Desk-Based Assessment
Barnhill
Dumfries
Dumfries and Galloway

DM08

For Persimmon Partnerships (Scotland)

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BARNHILL
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<i>1</i>	<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Methodology and Approach.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Results.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Conclusions and Recommendations</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>References.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>Sites Identified in Desk-Based Assessment</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Appendix 2</i>	<i>Sites Outside the Study Area.....</i>	<i>6</i>

Illustration 1: Location of Sites

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ABSTRACT

Persimmon Partnerships (Scotland) commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment on the site of a proposed new housing development with associated infrastructure at Barnhill, Dumfries. The site is currently a field, bounded by fields to the north and west, a housing development to the east and three houses and a country road to the south. The proposed development covers an area of 22,000m² and is located to the north-west of Dumfries at NX 95077 76819.

The desk-based assessment recorded the presence of an oval or D-shaped enclosure, as well as two other possible enclosures within the proposed development area.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Persimmon Partnerships (Scotland) commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation on the site of a proposed new housing development with associated infrastructure at Barnhill, Dumfries. The site is currently a field, bounded by fields to the north and west, a housing development to the east and three houses and a country road to the south. The proposed development covers an area of 22,000m² and is located to the north-west of Dumfries at NX 95077 76819.

This programme of archaeological works has been undertaken in fulfilment of an Archaeological Brief prepared by Dumfries and Galloway Council Archaeological Service in advance of the proposed new housing development.

1.2 Objectives

The main aim of this desk-based assessment is to establish the land use of the site from available public sources. It is known that a cropmark site of an oval enclosure (I) with an entrance on its east side, visible from aerial photographs, lies within the development area (Dumfries and Galloway Historic Environment Record [hereafter DGHHER] MDG25350, Barnhill: Enclosure).

2 Methodology and Approach

Alder Archaeology Ltd abides by the Codes of Conduct and Approved Practice and Standards of the Institute for Archaeologists.

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

A rapid desk-based study of the proposed development area was undertaken, using the following sources:

- *The Map Library of the National Library of Scotland*: all Ordnance Survey and pre-Ordnance Survey maps of the area were examined.
- *The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)*: sites recorded by RCAHMS were examined.
- *Dumfries and Galloway Historic Environment Record*: DGHHER provided information on the cropmark sites in the proposed development area and adjacent fields.

3 Results

Italicised numbers in brackets are identifiers assigned as part of this study. Site locations are shown in Illus 1. A full gazetteer of sites identified in the Desk-Based Assessment is given in Appendices 1 and 2 at the end of this report.

3.1 Cartographic Sources

Early maps by Pont (c1583-96), Gordon (1644), Blaeu (1654), Roy (1747-55), Ainslie (1797), Thomson (1821) were examined.

All the early maps show a settlement at Barnhill, presumably the present farm of Barnhill or a predecessor.

The OS 'First Edition' and later editions show the site as one or more fields until 1933. The site continued to be used for farming thereafter, although two of the buildings to the south of the proposed development site had been erected by 1946.

3.2 Royal commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland

No sites within the proposed development area are recorded by the RCAHMS. The RCAHMS record one site in the field to the north of the proposed development area, a double-ditched enclosure (4).

3.3 Aerial Photographs

A vertical aerial photograph of the site in 1946 in the collection of the Ordnance Survey Air Photo Mosaics in the National Library of Scotland shows that the proposed development site was divided into three parallel strips.

The western strip shows two possible cropmarks in the north-west corner of the field: a squarish cropmark (2) just inside W boundary at a gap in the trees along the west boundary and a possible curvilinear cropmark (3) on its north side.

The middle strip shows the possible entrance to the enclosure (MDG25350), but the rest of this feature is not visible in the western strip.

In the field to the east of the proposed development area a double-ditched enclosure is visible as a cropmark (5)

Oblique aerial photographs by the RCAHMS in 1984 show the enclosure cropmark site (1) as well as the two enclosures in the adjacent fields (4, 5).

3.4 Dumfries and Galloway Historic Environment Record

DGHER record the enclosure cropmark site (1) as 'oval or D-shaped, penannular in shape, with an entrance on the east. The ditch terminals expand towards the entrance.'

DGHER also note the presence of a double-ditched enclosure (5) in the field to the east of the site that has been developed.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The search through the available records dating from Pont c 1583-96 revealed that the site had been used for agricultural purposes with no development. A study of the relevant aerial photos of the site however, revealed likely prehistoric occupation in the form of 3 cropmarks on the site. Of greatest significance is the main cropmark (1) which had been previously and flagged up in the Brief for a programme of

Archaeological Evaluation works issued for this site the Council Archaeology Service. The remaining two cropmarks (2) and (3) appear to represent enclosures to the NW of cropmark (1) but this interpretation is not certain.

4.2 Recommendations

It is recommended by Alder that the Evaluation, through machine trenching of the proposed application area, should focus on the north-west quadrant of the site and locate trenches across cropmarks (1), (2) and (3) in order to characterise their nature, form and extent. The results of this evaluation would then inform any mitigation strategy with regard to the proposed development of this site.

5 References

Dumfries and Galloway Archaeology Service *Brief for a programme of Archaeological Evaluation* Issued 6th January 2012

Cartographic

Ainslie, J 1797 'The Stewartry of Kirkcudbright.'

Blaeu, J 1654 'Nithia Vicecomitatus, The Shirifdome of Nidis-dail.'

Gordon, R 1644 'Nithsdail descried according to Mr. Timothe Pont his papers' (Gordon 62).

OS 1854 [First Edition] Kirkcudbrightshire, Sheet 27. 1:10560.

OS 1895 Kirkcudbrightshire [New Series], Sheet XXIX.4. 1:2500.

OS 1896 [Second Edition] Kirkcudbrightshire, Sheet XXIX.NE, 1:10560.

OS 1900 [Second Edition] Dumfriesshire Sheet XLIX.SW. 1:10560.

OS 1909 Edition of 1909, Kirkcudbrightshire, Sheet XXIX.4. 1:2500.

OS 1910 Kirkcudbrightshire, Sheet XXIX.NE, 1:10560.

OS 1933 Edition of 1933, Dumfriesshire Sheet XLIX.SW; Parts of Kirkcudbrightshire, Parts of Sheets XXI, XXII, XXIX. 1:10560.

OS 1949 Provisional Edition, Dumfriesshire Sheet XLIX.SW; Parts of Kirkcudbrightshire, Parts of Sheets XXI, XXII, XXIX. 1:10560.

OS 1951 Provisional Edition, Dumfriesshire Sheet XLIX.SW; Parts of Kirkcudbrightshire, Parts of Sheets XXI, XXII, XXIX. 1:10560.

Pont, T c1583-96 [Nithsdale; part of Teviotdale] (Pont 35).

Roy, W 1747-55 Military Survey.

Thomson, J 1821 'Northern Part of Kirkcudbright-Shire'.

Aerial Photographs

National Library of Scotland, Air Photo Mosaics, NX 97 N.E. (Dumfriesshire), 1946.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland, A22792, A22794, 1984.

Appendix 1 Sites Identified in Desk-Based Assessment

<i>No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Type of Monument</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>NMRS No</i>	<i>NGR</i>	<i>Current Condition / Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Statutory Designation</i>
1	Barnhill	Enclosure		Unknown	-	NX 9507 7683	Cropmark		None
2	Barnhill	Enclosure		Unknown	-	NX 950 768	Cropmark		None
3	Barnhill	Enclosure		Unknown	-	NX 950 768	Cropmark		None

Appendix 2 Sites Outside the Study Area

<i>No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Type of Monument</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>NMRS No</i>	<i>NGR</i>	<i>Current Condition</i>	<i>Distance from study area</i>	<i>Statutory Designation</i>
4	Sandy Wood	Enclosure		Unknown	NX97NE102	NX 95240 76940	Cropmark	20m	None
5	Barnhill	Enclosure		Unknown	-	NX 952 768	Cropmark	20m	None

Barnhill Dumfries

Illus 1 Location of Sites for Desk Based Assesement

