

Residential Development at Sauchen, AB51 7JU

Report on archaeological evaluation



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17 June 2013



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ILLUSTRATIONS

(top) Trench 1 showing 0.2m topsoil and sandy subsoil; facing NE
(bottom) flint core from Tr 2 context 200 SF1

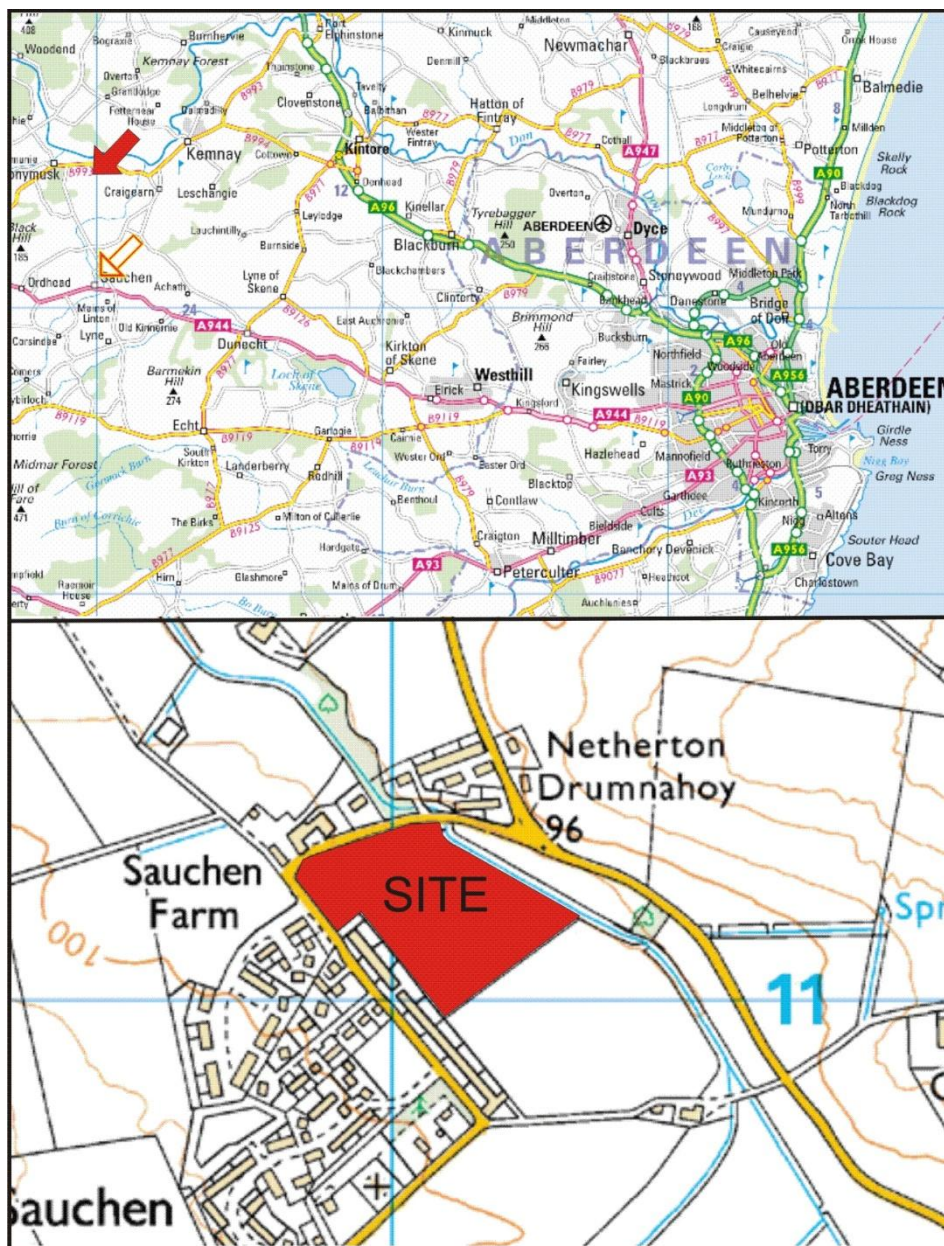
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SUMMARY

A 7% archaeological evaluation was carried out at the site on 10-11 June 2013. No archaeological features were identified as the site had shallow topsoil and sandy subsoil. One flint core was found in the topsoil of Trench 2. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during this current development.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Kirkwood Homes Ltd are proposing a residential expansion to the village of Sauchen, which lies 3 miles west of Dunecht and 10 miles west of Aberdeen. The site (see Illus 1) is located immediately to the east of the existing village and falls gently towards the Cluny Burn which runs along the site's eastern boundary.
- 1.2 The site is divided into two phases of development (Area 1 and Area 2; Illus 3) and this evaluation is for Area 1 only which is 3.5 hectares in size. The site is located at NJ 70066 11059, at a height of 90-100m OD in the parish of Cluny.
- 1.3 The work was commissioned by Allan Rae, Kirkwood Homes and this evaluation was carried out pre-application.
- 1.4 All the archaeological work was carried out in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Planning Advice Note (PAN 2/2011) and Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), which state that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed.



Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013)



Illus 2 Site layout (copyright Kirkwood Homes Ltd)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

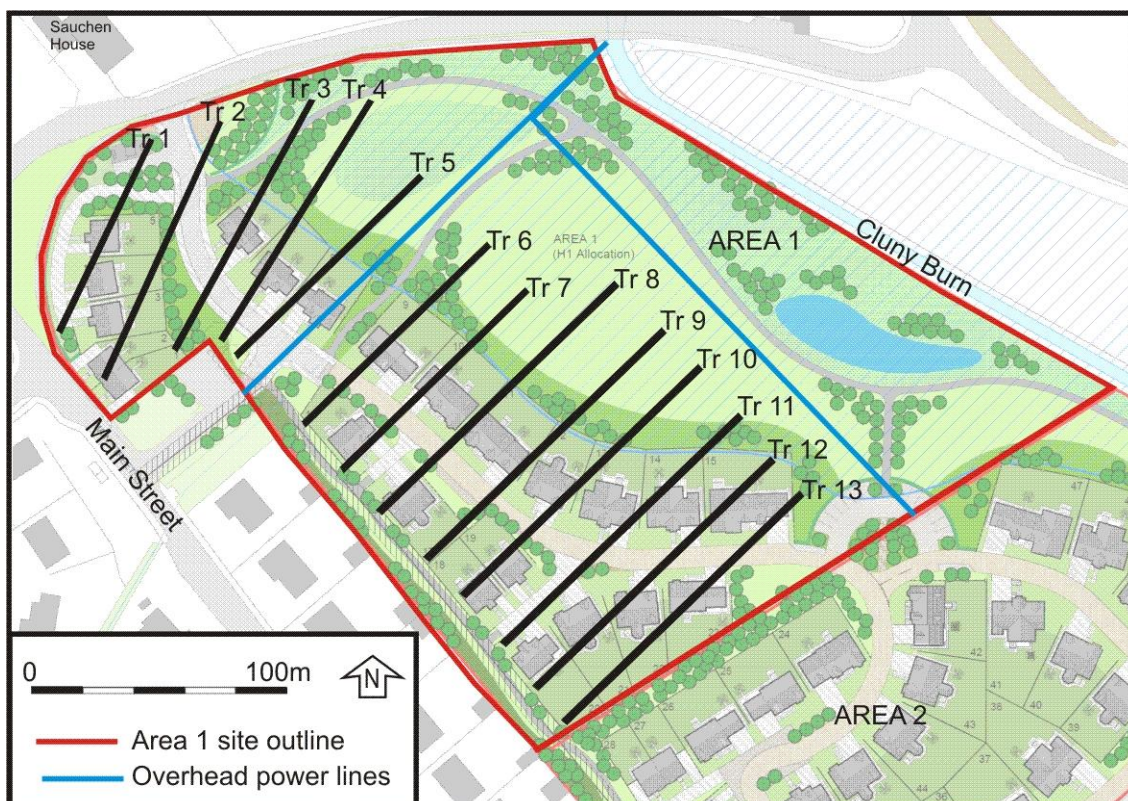
- 2.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 1km of the proposed development site and no known archaeological sites within the boundary of the proposed Area 1 and Area 2 development. There is a documentary record to a manor (NMRS NJ61SE12) in the area of this village (Bogdan and Bryce 1991, 28).
- 2.2 At the south edge of the site is the Mill of Sauchen, a watermill (NMRS NJ71SW92).
- 2.3 Immediately east of Netherton of Drumnahoy farmhouse is the site of a souterrain, discovered before 1854 (NJ71SW9). It was described as similar to that at Culsh (NJ50NW0001). Jervise (1875-9, 135) records that plague victims were buried here in 1666 and Colonel Fraser confirmed to Stuart (1855, 263) that on an estate plan of 1789 the area is marked 'pest graves' and was left uncultivated and bones have subsequently been found at this location. Colonel Fraser described the souterrain as having a narrow sloping ditch or path leading down to the entrance, of 3ft high by 2ft wide, the sides of which were formed by stone posts. There were rough steps, for about nine feet, to where there was a notch in the wall for door posts. The souterrain was about 51ft long, 4ft wide and 6ft high. It terminated in a circular chamber of about 6ft diameter. At the time of the discovery there was only 12ft of the roofing in situ. This was c 1ft below the surface. It was sited on a spur with commanding views to the south-east and west.

- 2.4 Areas of rig and furrow earthworks survive 1km NE of the current site at Cairnfold (NJ71SW 59 and NJ71SW 60) and also NNW of Sauchen in the grounds of Cluny Castle (NJ61SE 72 AND NJ61SE 73).
- 2.5 Sauchen does not appear on the early area maps such as Gordon's mid 17th-century A Map of East Coast of Scotland (which shows Cluny); Blaeu's Atlas of 1654 shows 'L Sachin' on the west side of a watercourse, presumably the Cluny Burn; , 'Drum na hoy' on the west side and 'Cluny' to the north. There are no features or sites within the proposed development site on the First, Second or Third Edition OS maps.

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

A 7% evaluation was carried out of the 3.5 hectare site on 10-11 June 2013 using a 25 ton tracked machine with a flat-edged ditching bucket. Thirteen trenches were excavated concentrating on the west side of the site as the east side is in the flood plain of the Cluny Burn and is not being developed (Illus 3).

Several modern pits were uncovered filled with sand and containing modern china and glass; these may have been dig for sand extraction or rubbish disposal. Several drains including stone drain F1 and ceramic pipes F7, F8 and F9 were recorded but all were modern. A trench up to 1.5m wide and running NNW-SSE across the field from Sauchen House may be associated with an electric supply as it crosses the field at the location of one of the overhead power cable poles. The topsoil in the field was generally light dry loam and a flint core was found in Trench 2 (Illus 7). The subsoil was sand and gravels with silt in the base of palaeochannel F5.



Illus 3 Plan showing trenches, the proposed development plan and the Cluny Burn



Illus 4 Trench 10 palaeochannel F5 the west bank of former line of Cluny Burn



Illus 5 stone drain F1 Trench 3



Illus 6 Trench 6 F3 (top) and F4 (bottom) showing china and glass (above ranging rod)



Illus 7 Two faces of the flint core from Trench 2 context 200.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A 7% archaeological evaluation was carried out at the site on 10-11 June 2013. No archaeological features were identified as the site had shallow topsoil and sandy subsoil. One flint core was found in the topsoil of Trench 2. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is require during this current development.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Allan Rae and Alan Thomson, Kirkwood Homes and Bruce Mann and Claire Herbert, Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service.

6 REFERENCES

Bogdan and Bryce, N and I B D 1991 'Castles, manors and 'town houses' survey', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 28.

Jervise, A 1875-9 Epitaphs and inscriptions from burial grounds and old buildings in the north-east of Scotland with historical, biographical, genealogical and antiquarian notes, 2v Edinburgh, Vol. 2, 135.

Stuart, J 1855 'On the earlier antiquities of the district of Cromar, in Aberdeenshire', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, vol. 1, 263.

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS





DSCF6243



DSCF6244



DSCF6245



DSCF6246



DSCF6247



DSCF6248



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DSCF6302



DSCF6303



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DSCF6308



DSCF6309



DSCF6310



DSCF6311



DSCF6312

Photo no	Description	Trench	Facing
DSC_6449-6467	Flint core SF 1 Tr 2 context 200	2	
DSCF6210	Trench 1 NE end	1	SW
DSCF6211	Trench 1 NE end	1	SSW
DSCF6212	Trench 1 NE end showing loose dry shallow topsoil (disturbed previously?) and loose sandy subsoil	1	SW
DSCF6213	machine	1	
DSCF6214	Sand-filled trench seen in all trenches	1	
DSCF6215	centre of Trench (with Sauchen House in background)	1	
DSCF6216	Modern plough marks	1	
DSCF6217	SW end with Sauchen House in background	1	
DSCF6218	SW end with Sauchen House in background	1	NE
DSCF6219	SW end	2	NE
DSCF6220	SW end	2	NE
DSCF6221	Sand and gravel bands in subsoil	2	NE
DSCF6222	Clay patch in natural	2	NE
DSCF6223	SW end of trench with stone drain and dump of glass and pottery	2	SW
DSCF6224	NE end	3	SW
DSCF6225	stone drain F1	3	SW
DSCF6226	SW end	4	NE
DSCF6227	stoney and sand natural subsoil	4	NE
DSCF6228	SW end sandy natural subsoil	4	NE
DSCF6229	trench complete	4	NE
DSCF6230	NE end	5	SW
DSCF6231	stone drain F1	5	NE
DSCF6232	stoney and sand natural subsoil	5	NE
DSCF6233	trench complete	5	NE
DSCF6234	trench complete	5	NE
DSCF6235	SW end of Trench	6	NE
DSCF6236	gravel subsoil	6	NE
DSCF6237	edge of old course of Cluny Burn	6	NE
DSCF6238	F3 and F4	6	NE
DSCF6239	modern pot and glass in F3 and F4	6	NE
DSCF6240	modern pot and glass in F3 and F4	6	NE
DSCF6241	modern pot and glass in F3 and F4	6	SW
DSCF6242	modern pot and glass in F3 and F4	6	SW
DSCF6243	panoramas from Tr 6		
DSCF6244	panoramas from Tr 6		
DSCF6245	panoramas from Tr 6		
DSCF6246	panoramas from Tr 6		
DSCF6247	F7	7	SW
DSCF6248	F7	7	SW
DSCF6249	F7	7	SW
DSCF6250	F7	7	NE
DSCF6251	F2	7	NE

DSCF6252	trench completed	7	NE
DSCF6253	SW end of trench	8	NE
DSCF6254	machine	8	NE
DSCF6255	panorama	8	NE
DSCF6256	F2	8	NNW
DSCF6257	F2 looking toward Sauchen House and overhead power cables	8	NNW
DSCF6258	SW end	8	NE
DSCF6259	panorama from Tr 8 F2	8	
DSCF6260	panorama from Tr 8 F2	8	
DSCF6261	SW end	8	SW
DSCF6262	septic tank	8	SW
DSCF6263	septic tank	8	SW
DSCF6264	sewer F8	8	SW
DSCF6265	NE end of trench	9	SW
DSCF6266	NE end of trench	9	NE
DSCF6267	NE end of trench	9	NE
DSCF6268	gravel subsoil	9	NE
DSCF6269	gravel subsoil	9	NE
DSCF6270	NE end	10	SW
DSCF6271	NE end	10	SW
DSCF6272	NE end	10	NW
DSCF6273	F10	10	SW
DSCF6274	F5	10	SW
DSCF6275	F5	10	SW
DSCF6276	F5	10	SW
DSCF6277	F5	10	SW
DSCF6278	F5	10	NE
DSCF6279	gravel in Cluny Burn base F5	10	NE
DSCF6280	NE end of trench	11	SW
DSCF6281	sand and gravel natural	11	NE
DSCF6282	F5	11	SW
DSCF6283	F5	11	SW
DSCF6284	NE end of trench gravel base of F5 Cluny Burn	11	NE
DSCF6285	SW end	12	NE
DSCF6286	sand and gravel natural	12	NE
DSCF6287	sand and gravel natural	12	NE
DSCF6288	F5	12	NE
DSCF6289	F5	12	NE
DSCF6290	NE end of trench	13	SE
DSCF6291	NE end of trench	12	ESE
DSCF6292	NE end of trench	12	SE
DSCF6293	NE end of trench	12	SE
DSCF6294	views from NE end Tr 12	12	N
DSCF6295	views from NE end Tr 12	12	N
DSCF6296	views from NE end Tr 12	12	NNW
DSCF6297	NE end of trench	12	NNW

DSCF6298	NE end of trench	12	SW
DSCF6299	F5	13	SW
DSCF6300	F11 sand band	13	SW
DSCF6301	F11 sand band	13	SW
DSCF6302	F11 sand band	13	SW
DSCF6303	panorama	13	
DSCF6304	panorama	13	
DSCF6305	F2	13	SW
DSCF6306	F2	13	SW
DSCF6307	F2	13	N
DSCF6308	Tr 13, 12, 11	13	NW
DSCF6309	panorama	13	NW
DSCF6310	panorama	13	NW/N/NE
DSCF6311	SW end of trench	13	NE
DSCF6312	SW end of trench	13	NE

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXTS

Context no	Description	Trench
F1	stone-filled trench 30cm wide	1, 2, 3
F2	1-1.5m sand-filled trench leading from Sauchen House across field to SE	all
F3	round gravel-filled pit, modern glass and pottery	6
F4	round gravel-filled pit, modern glass and pottery	6
F5	NNW-SSE palaeochannel, old course of Cluny Burn and flood plain	6-13
F6	NNW-SSE stone-filled trench 30cm wide	6
F7	SW-NE drain?	7
F8	SW-NE drain and septic tank	8
F9	SW-NE drain?	10
F10	round gravel-filled pit, modern glass and pottery	10
F11	sand-filled trench	12, 13
100	topsoil Trench 1	1
200	topsoil Trench 2	2
300	topsoil Trench 3	3
400	topsoil Trench 4	4
500	topsoil Trench 5	5
600	topsoil Trench 6	6
700	topsoil Trench 7	7
800	topsoil Trench 8	8
900	topsoil Trench 9	9
1000	topsoil Trench 10	10
1100	topsoil Trench 11	11
1200	topsoil Trench 12	12
1300	topsoil Trench 13	13