

**Hillhead of Dess, Kincardine O'Neil,
Aberdeenshire, AB31 4QD**

Walkover survey report

NJ 57970 01592



**Alison Cameron
Cameron Archaeology Ltd
23 August 2013**

CONTENTS

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 2 | ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND | 4 |
| 3 | WALKOVER REPORT | 5 |
| 4 | RECOMMENDATIONS | 10 |
| 5 | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 11 |
| 6 | REFERENCES | 11 |
| | APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS | 12 |
| | APPENDIX 2 FEATURES | 16 |
| | APPENDIX 3 THE 1991 SURVEY | 19 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: Field clearance F23 facing west

| | | |
|----------|--|----|
| Illus 1 | Location plan of site | 3 |
| Illus 2 | Aerial photograph from 1998 showing clearly the field clearance | 4 |
| Illus 3 | Linear field clearance, F2; facing SW | 5 |
| Illus 4 | Plan showing features recorded during current walkover | 6 |
| Illus 5 | Field clearance F6 | 7 |
| Illus 6 | Field clearance F8 | 7 |
| Illus 7 | More recent field clearance (F37) is still visible but surrounded by thick gorse | 8 |
| Illus 8 | F48 earthfast boulder with drill marks | 8 |
| Illus 9 | Area of possible circular feature F43 facing N | 9 |
| Illus 10 | Area of possible circular feature F43 facing W showing 45° slope | 9 |
| Illus 11 | Proposed tree planting exclusion zones | 10 |
| Illus 12 | First Edition Ordnance Survey map showing area of walkover | 20 |

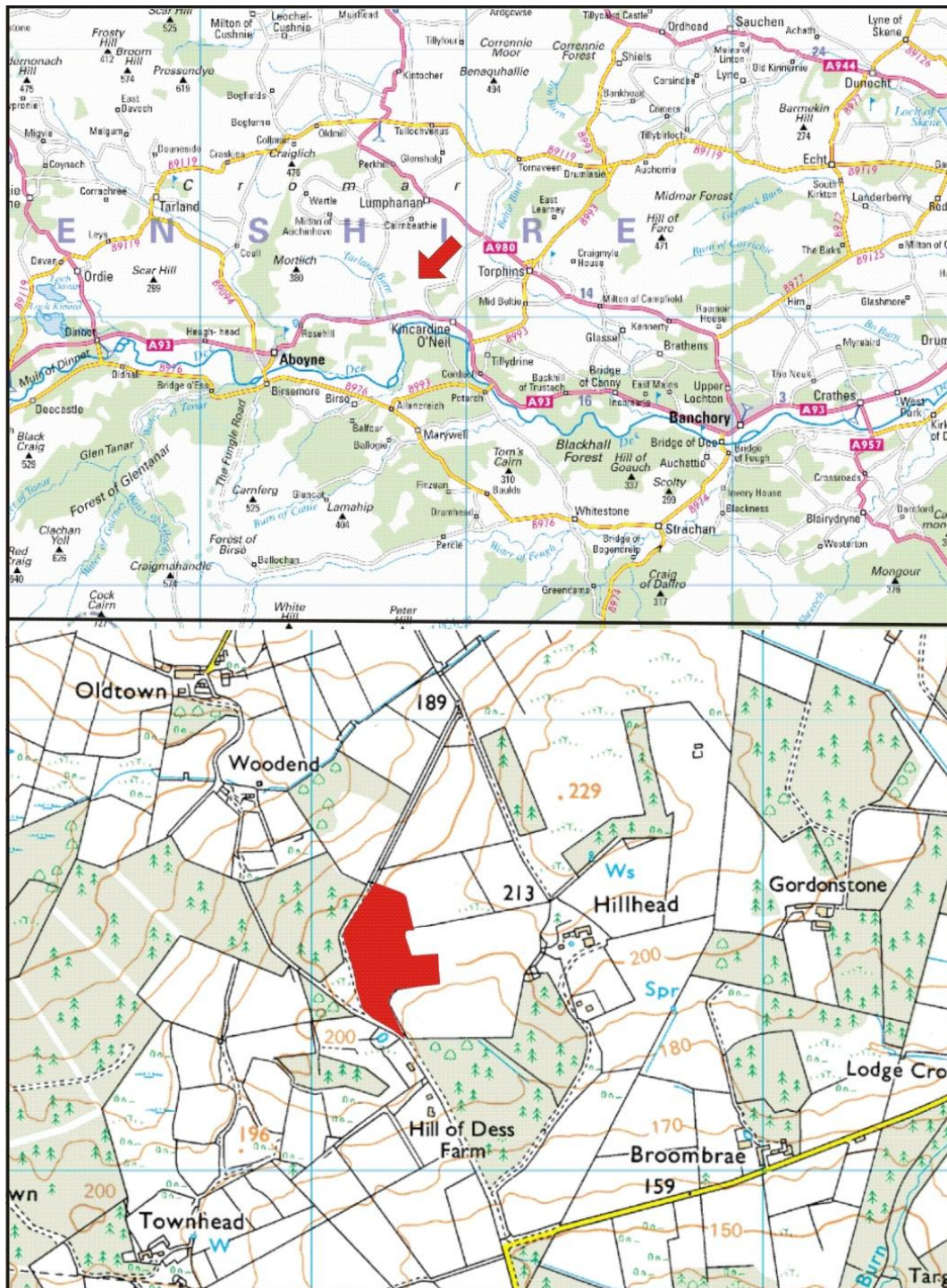
SUMMARY

A walkover was carried out at Dess prior to tree planting. The features recorded on a 1991 survey are still largely present although some have been disturbed by animal activity, gorse and waterlogging. Two possible circular structures would require further work to allow identification.

1 INTRODUCTION

The site is NNW of Hill of Dess Farm on the east side of a track to Woodend at AB31 4QD (Illus 1). The site is located at NJ 57970 01592 at 190-210m OD and in the parish of Kincardine O'Neil.

The work was commissioned by Bryan Massie, The Toll House, Craigo, Montrose, DD10 9JY for client Ian Hunter, Tillylair farms, Lumphanan, AB31 4QT.



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

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A survey was carried out in 1991 by CFA archaeology (CFA 1991, 35; Hamilton 1991) prior to forestry work. A large cairnfield and associated rig and furrow (Appendix 3) were recorded. In 1998 aerial reconnaissance revealed a possible hut circle in within the cairnfield (NJ50SE 25; Grieg 1998, 5). The First Edition Ordnance Survey map shows that the area was largely boggy in the mid 19th century but there are trees recorded at the north end of the area (Illus 11)



Illus 2 Aerial photograph from 1998 showing clearly the field clearance and rig and furrow; a possible hut circle was identified from this photo (AAS/81/2/R2/8; copyright NMRS)

3 WALKOVER REPORT

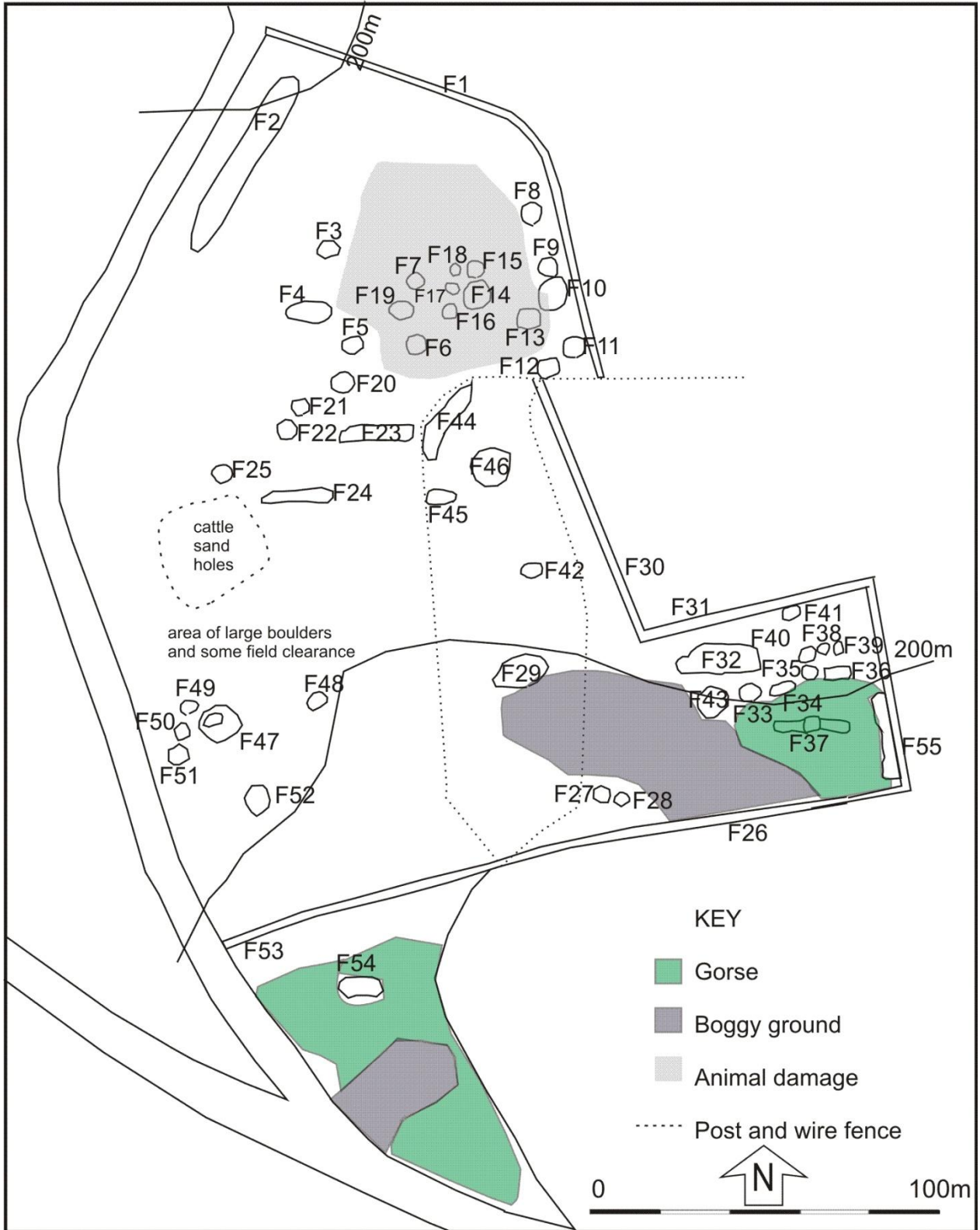
A walkover survey was carried out on 8 August 2013; the weather was mixed bright patches and light showers. The area has not been planted in trees but has been used for animals, primarily cows. The cairnfield recorded in 1991 is largely unchanged but the area has become covered in gorse and there are large waterlogged areas which limited access to some areas. The rig and furrow is no longer visible on the ground as the vegetation is thick in places and other areas have been badly damaged by cow activity.

Many of the field clearance heaps are grass covered (Illus 5, 6) and they are 2m-8m in diameter mainly consisting of small and medium boulders. There are areas of single large boulders amongst the clearance and this area also contains some large earthfast boulders such as F47. On earthfast boulder has drill marks where an attempt has been made to clear the land but in this case the attempt failed (F48; Illus 8).

A possible hut circle F43 (Illus 9, 10) is a circular area of stone c 8m diameter; the area is overgrown with grass and on a 45° slope making its identification as a possible hut circle uncertain. It may be the remains of an enclosure or a vaguely circular area of field clearance. Further work removing the undergrowth would help to ascertain this identification. On another circular feature (F46) is also completely overgrown and is almost certainly a circular area created by field clearance.



Illus 3 Linear field clearance, F2; facing SW



Illus 4 Plan showing features recorded during current walkover



Illus 5 Field clearance F6; many of the older field clearance are now partly covered in vegetation



Illus 6 Field clearance F8, one of many field clearance heaps are completely grass-covered



Illus 7 More recent field clearance (F37) is still visible but surrounded by thick gorse



Illus 8 F48 earthfast boulder with drill marks



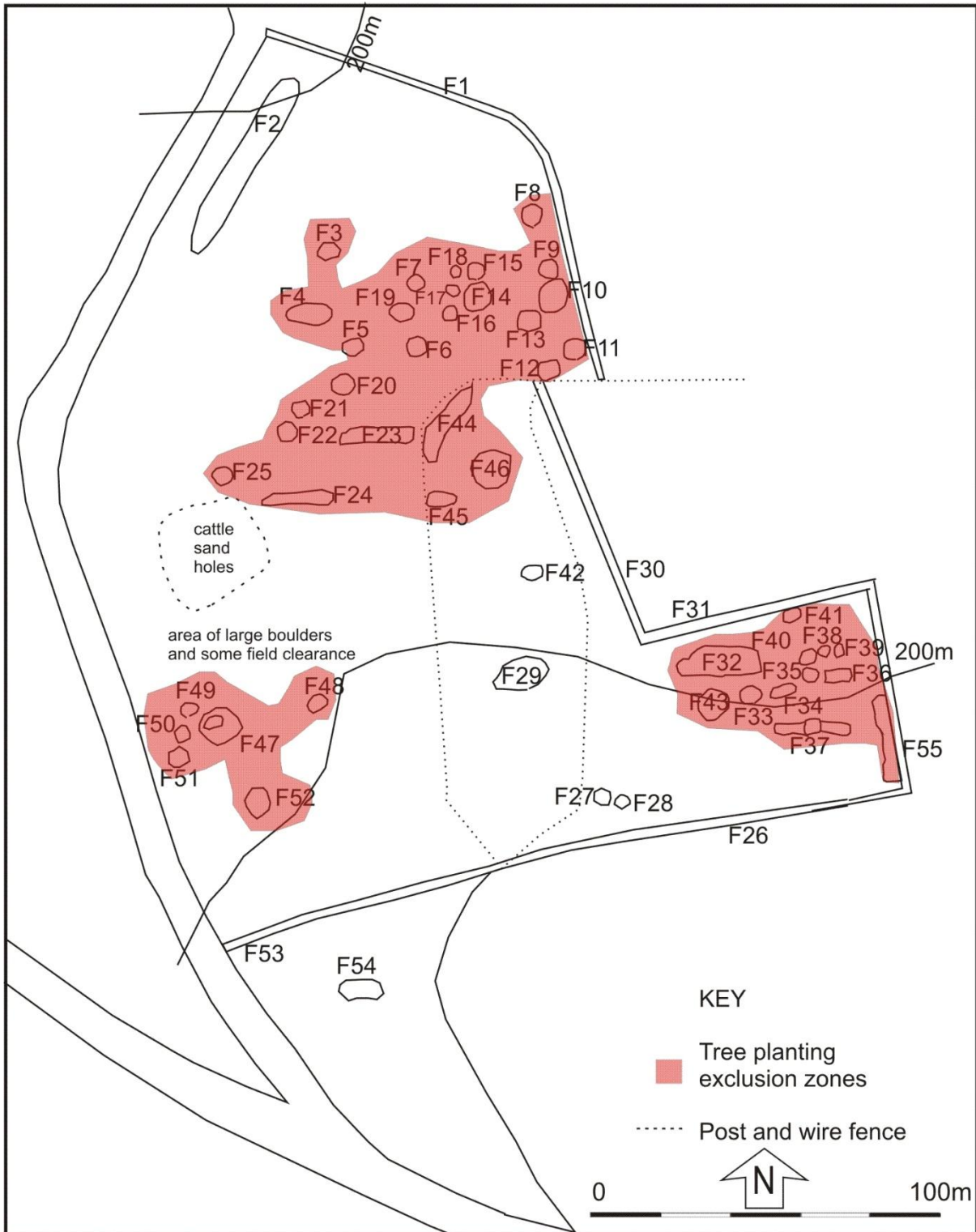
Illus 9 Area of possible circular feature F43 facing N



Illus 10 Area of possible circular feature F43 facing W showing 45° slope

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service require that fencing be erected around the main groups of features (in red below) and these should be left unplanted and that no planting should take place on other archaeological features (Illus 11).



Illus 11 Proposed tree planting exclusion zones

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The walkover survey was commissioned by Bryan Massie for Ian Hunter; thanks for Caroline Palmer, Aberdeenshire Council.

6 REFERENCES

CFA 1991 'Dess Estate (Kincardine O'Neil parish): cairnfields, banks and structures', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 35.

Greig, M 1998 Sites recorded during winter aerial reconnaissance, Aberdeenshire' *Discovery Excav Scot*, 5.

Hamilton, J 1991 A short notice forestry survey at Dess Estate, Aboyne, Kincardine, Deeside, Grampian, 1991/2.

Cameron Archaeology
45 View Terrace
Aberdeen
AB25 2RS
01224 643020
07581 181057
cameronarch@btinternet.com
www.cameronarchaeology.com
Company registration no 372223 (Scotland)
VAT registration no 990 4373 00

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

| Photo number | Feature | Direction facing |
|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| DSC_6860-2 | F1 | ESE |
| DSC_6863-5 | F2 | SW |
| DSC_6866-70 | F2 | NE |
| DSC_6871-73 | F2 | NE |
| DSC_6874-6 | F3 | ESE |
| DSC_6877-79 | F3 | NE |
| DSC_6880-82 | F4 | N |
| DSC_6883-85 | F5 | N |
| DSC_6886-88 | F6 | E |
| DSC_6889-92 | F6 | NE |
| DSC_6893-95 | F7 | N |
| DSC_6897-99 | view from N of F3 | SW |
| DSC_6900-2 | view from N of F3 | S |
| DSC_6903-5 | view from N of F3 | SE |
| DSC_6906-8 | view from N of F3 | W |
| DSC_6909-11 | view from N of F3 | SW |
| DSC_6912-14 | view from N of F3 | S |
| DSC_6915-19 | F8 | S |
| DSC_6920-22 | F9 | S |
| DSC_6923-25 | F10 | S |
| DSC_6926 | modern cattle disturbance | |
| DSC_6927-29 | F11 | S |
| DSC_6930-32 | F11 | NNW |
| DSC_6933-35 | F11 | NW |
| DSC_6936-39 | F12 | N |
| DSC_6940-42 | F13 | S |
| DSC_6943-45 | F23 | S |
| DSC_6946-48 | cattle disturbance next to F13/F14 | NW |
| DSC_6949-51 | F15 | NW |
| DSC_6952-54 | F16 | S |
| DSC_6956-58 | F19 | SW |
| DSC_6959-61 | F20 | SW |
| DSC_6962-67 | F22 | N |
| DSC_6968-70 | F23 | N |
| DSC_6971-73 | view from E end F23 | E |
| DSC_6974-76 | view from E end F23 | SE |
| DSC_6977-79 | view from E end F23 | SW |
| DSC_6980-82 | view from E end F23 | W |
| DSC_6983-85 | view from E end F23 | W |
| DSC_6986-88 | F25 | NE |
| DSC_6989-91 | cattle disturbance south of F25 | N |
| DSC_6992-94 | f25 | NE |

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|-----|
| DSC_6995-7001 | from south of site | N |
| DSC_7002-4 | from south of site | NE |
| DSC_7005-07 | west end F26 | NE |
| DSC_7008-10 | F26 | E |
| DSC_7011-13 | F27 | E |
| DSC_7014-16 | F28 | NE |
| DSC_7017-19 | From F29 | S |
| DSC_7020-22 | From F29 | SE |
| DSC_7023-25 | F29 | ESE |
| DSC_7026-28 | F29 | E |
| DSC_7029-31 | F30 | N |
| DSC_7032-34 | F31 | NE |
| DSC_7035-38 | F31 | N |
| DSC_7039-43 | F33 | N |
| DSC_7044-46 | F34 | W |
| DSC_7047-49 | F34 | N |
| DSC_7050-52 | F35 | W |
| DSC_7053-55 | F36 | S |
| DSC_7056-58 | F37 | S |
| DSC_7059-61 | F37 | W |
| DSC_7062-64 | F41 | N |
| DSC_7065-67 | from north of F39 | S |
| DSC_7068-71 | from north of F39 | SW |
| DSC_7072-74 | F42 | S |
| DSC_7076-79 | F43 | E |
| DSC_7080-82 | F43 area showing 45° slope | SE |
| DSC_7083-84 | views from F42 | S |
| DSC_7085-87 | views from F42 | SW |
| DSC_7088-90 | views from F42 | W |
| DSC_7091-93 | views from F42 | NW |
| DSC_7094-96 | views from F42 | N |
| DSC_7094-96 | views from F42 | NNE |
| DSC_7102-4 | F47 | W |
| DSC_7105-7 | F47 | SSW |
| DSC_7108-10 | F48 | N |
| DSC_7111-14 | F48 | SW |
| DSC_7115-17 | F49 | W |
| DSC_7118-20 | F52 | SW |
| DSC_7121-24 | F53 | ENE |
| DSC_7125-28 | F54 | SE |



DSC_6860



DSC_6865



DSC_6866



DSC_6870



DSC_6871



DSC_6876



DSC_6877



DSC_6882



DSC_6883



DSC_6888



DSC_6889



DSC_6895



DSC_6899



DSC_6900



DSC_6904



DSC_6908



DSC_6909



DSC_6914



DSC_6915



DSC_6920



DSC_6925



DSC_6926



DSC_6927



DSC_6932



DSC_6933



DSC_6936



DSC_6942



DSC_6943



DSC_6948



DSC_6949



DSC_6952



DSC_6958



DSC_6959

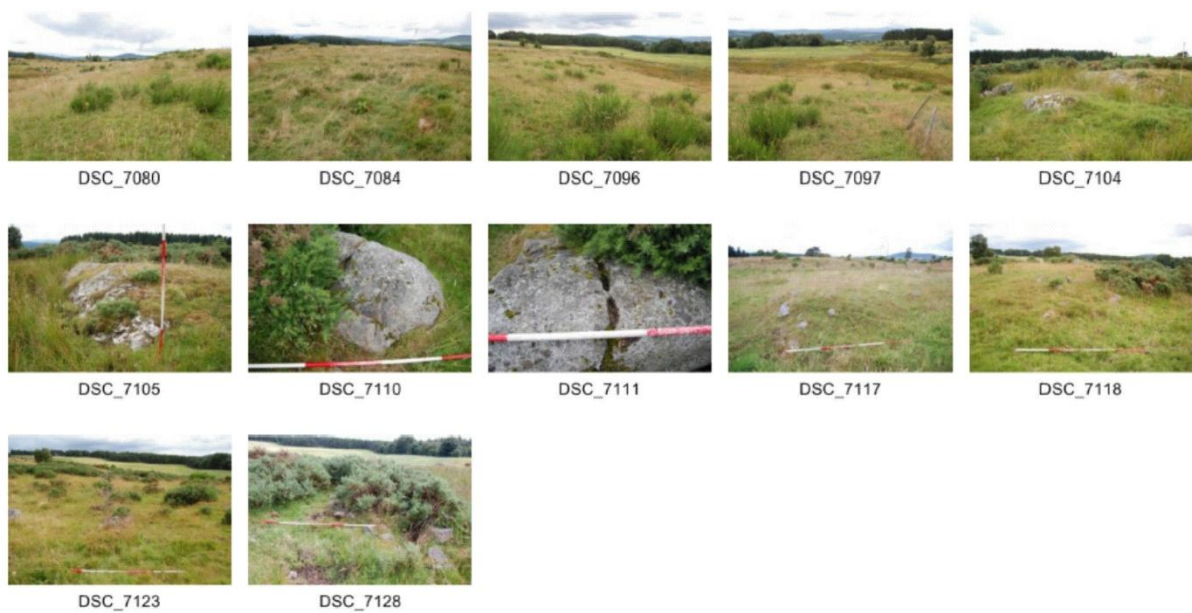


DSC_6964



DSC_6965



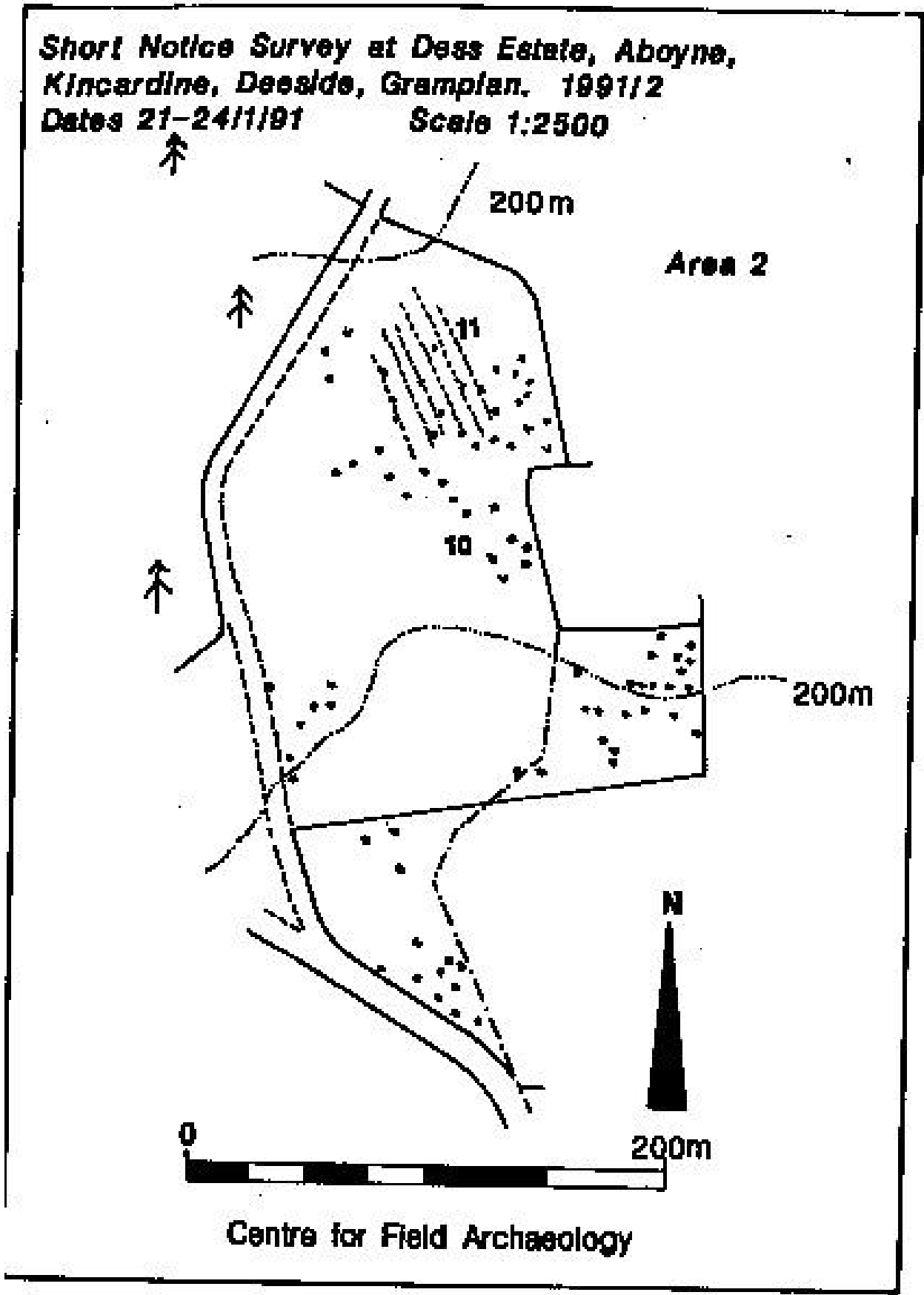


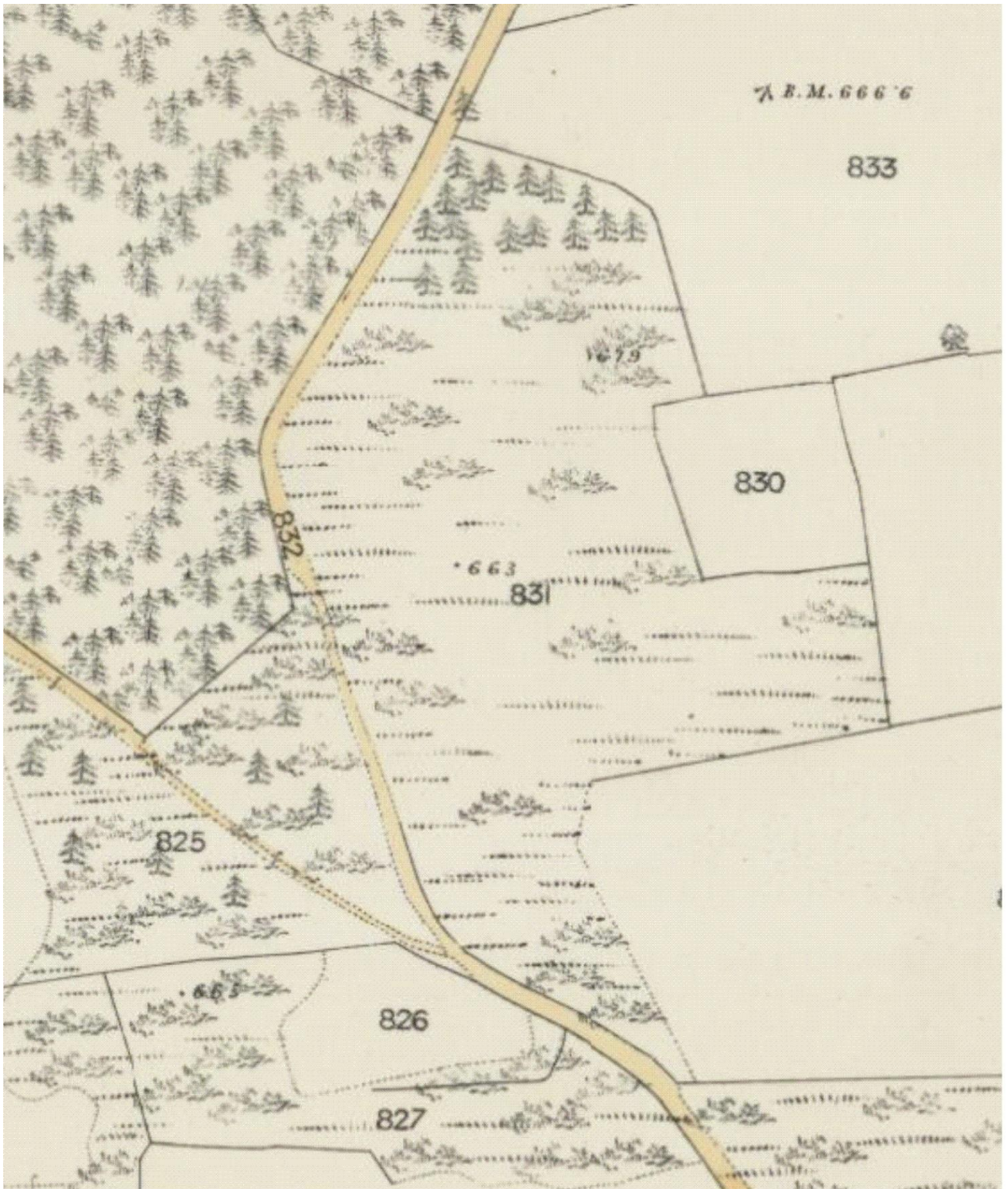
APPENDIX 2 FEATURES

| Feature | Description | Dimensions | NJ (centred unless otherwise stated) |
|---------|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| F1 | Stone field boundary, dry stone | 1m wide | 5813 0163 |
| F2 | linear field clearance, stones up to 1m diameter | 1m wide 50m long | 5813510615-5810501570 |
| F3 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x4m | 58143 01570 |
| F4 | field clearance, grass covered, large and small stones | 10x5m | 58136 01552 |
| F5 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58149 01544 |
| F6 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58168 01552 |
| F7 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58156 01560 |
| F8 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58199 01579 |
| F9 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58202 20163 |
| F10 | field clearance, not grass covered | 3x4m | 58201 01564 |
| F11 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58218 01546 |
| F12 | field clearance, grass covered, small stones | 3x3m | 58207 01548 |
| F13 | field clearance, large and small stones | 5x4m | 58200 01539 |
| F14 | field clearance, small stones | 4x4m | 58184 01580 |
| F15 | field clearance, small stones | 3x2m | 58186 01562 |
| F16 | field clearance, small stones | 3x3m | 58177 01551 |
| F17 | field clearance, small stones | 3x3m | 58180 01550 |
| F18 | field clearance, small stones | 3x3m | 58180 01560 |
| F19 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 3x4m | 5816501552 |
| F20 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 5x5m | 5814601536 |
| F21 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 4x4m | 58135 01528 |
| F22 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 5x5m | 58131 01525 |

| | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------|----------------------------|
| F23 | Old field boundary? linear stone feature | 3m wide 7m long | 58150 01525 |
| F24 | Old field boundary? linear stone feature | 2m wide 20m long | 58144 01500 |
| F25 | field clearance; heavily burrowed | 3x3m | 58113 01507 |
| F26 | drystone field boundary | 1m wide | |
| F27 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 3x4m 0.5m high | 58217 01416 |
| F28 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 3x3m 0.3m high | 58200 01415 |
| F29 | field clearance, large stones | 10x10m | 58190 01450 |
| F30 | drystone field boundary | 80m long 1m wide | 58226 01468-58300 01475 |
| F31 | Old field boundary? linear stone feature | 70m long 1m wide | 58226 01468-58215 01530 |
| F32 | linear stone field clearance | 25m long up to 5m wide | 58253 01452 |
| F33 | field clearance, small and medium stones | 3x3m | 58259 01445 |
| F34 | rectangular stone spread; small stones | 2m wide 6m long | 58268 01445 |
| F35 | field clearance, small stones | 3x3m | 58274 01450 |
| F36 | field clearance, large and small stones | 5x6m | 58282 01448 |
| F37 | field clearance, large and small stones 5x5m superimposed on linear stone clearance under gorse | 5x5m | 58276 01435 |
| F38 | field clearance, small stones | 3x3m | 58277 01459 |
| F39 | field clearance, small stones | 3x2m | 58280 01462 |
| F40 | field clearance, large and small stones | 5x5m | 58272 01457 |
| F41 | field clearance, small and medium stones; modern | | 58271 01469 |
| F42 | field clearance, large and small stones grass covered | 3x4m | 58198 01479 |
| F43 | Circular area surrounded by stone and grass bank. On 45° south facing slope. Very overgrown. Enclosure? Hut circle? | 8m diameter internally | 58250 01450 |
| F44 | field clearance, small stones grass covered | | 5817 0153 |
| F45 | field clearance, small stones grass covered | | 5817 0150 |
| F46 | field clearance, large and small stones grass covered | 10x10m | 58188 01506 |
| F47 | Large earthfast boulder surrounded by piles of older and modern field clearance | 10x8m | 58109 01435 |
| F48 | Large earthfast boulder with line of drill marks | | 58138 01441 |
| F49 | field clearance, small stones grass covered | 4x4m | 58114 01433 |
| F50 | field clearance, small stones grass covered | 3x2m | 58100 01430 |
| F51 | field clearance, small stones grass covered | 3x2m | 58100 01420 |
| F52 | field clearance, large stones | 8x6m | 58125 01400 |

| | | | |
|-----|--|---------|------------------------------|
| F53 | Linear stone clearance forming field boundary; this is not a set out and is not in a straight line. Joins at east end with F26 | 1m wide | 58115 01380 - 58190 58195 |
| F54 | oval field clearance | 8x3m | 58156 01372 |
| F55 | large stone field clearance along east boundary wall | 10x1m | 5829 0143 |





Illus 12 First Edition Ordnance Survey map showing area of walkover; there were trees at the north end of the site at that date

Aberdeen Sheet LXXXII.8 (Kincardine O'Neill)
Survey date: 1867 Publication date: 1870