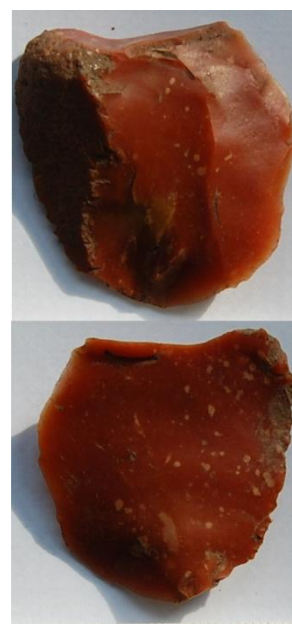


Archaeological Evaluation Report, Toors O'Ythan, Newburgh, AB41 6AA



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ILLUSTRATIONS

(top) panoramic of site from SE; (centre) shallow scoop F4 facing west; (bottom) scraper SF1

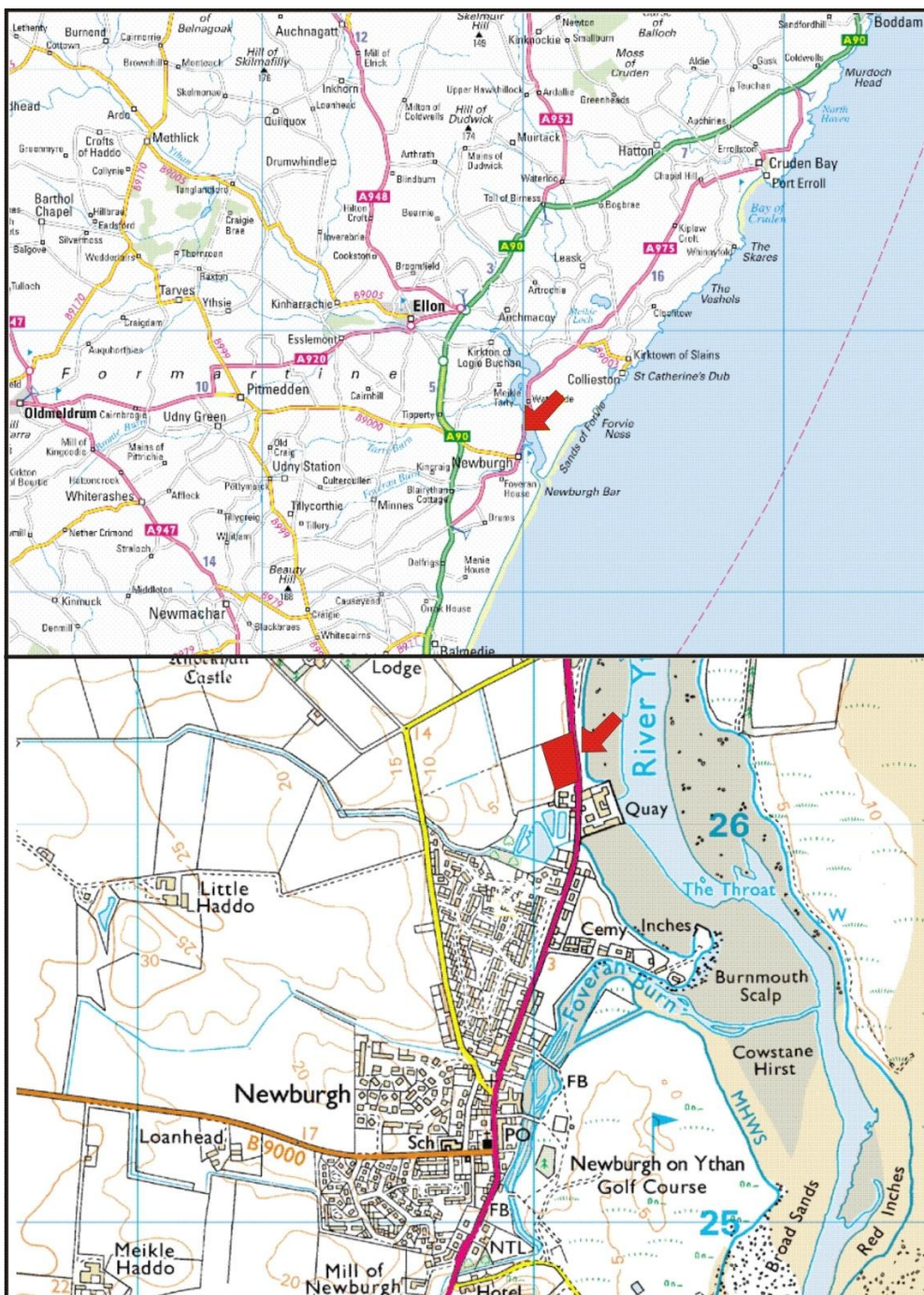
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SUMMARY

A 7% archaeological evaluation was carried out on 4 April 2013. The south of the site had been sand dunes and the east had been within the area of the Ythan. On the higher ground at the north-west of the site a shallow scoop containing a flint scraper was the remains of a small working area. A watching brief will be required during soil stripping on the west side of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located north of Newburgh on the west side of the B975 north of The Quay and Culterty House at NK 00069 26162, at 4-10m OD and in Foveran parish. It is a cultivated field 1 hectare in size.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Nicholas Schellenberg in response to a planning application APP/2012/3344 has been lodged with Aberdeenshire Council but is at the moment pending.
- 1.3 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)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

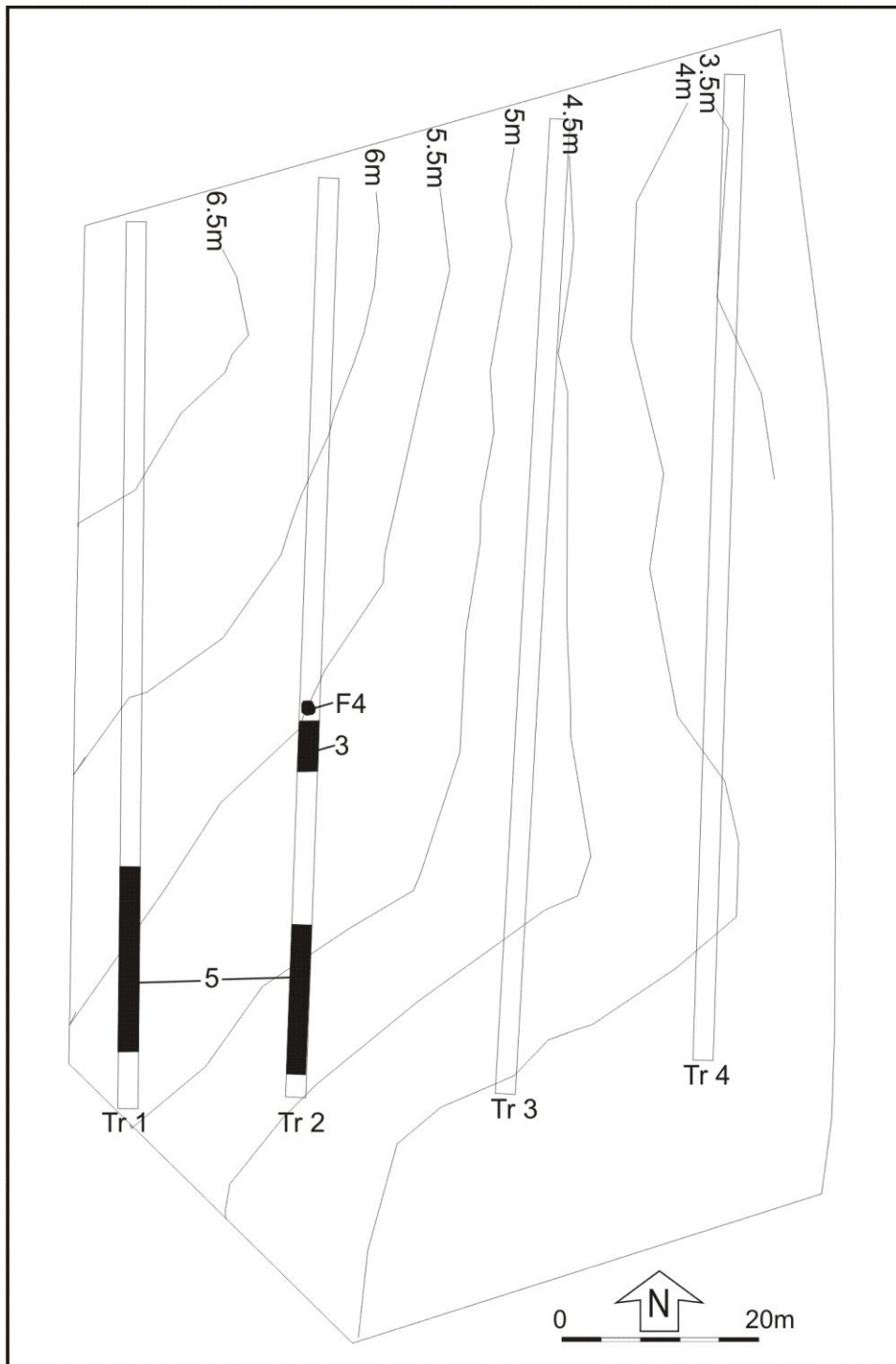
- 2.1 There are three Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 1km of the proposed development site; Knockhill Castle (NJ993264), Sands of Forvie cairns (NK011265) and Sands of Forvie hut circles and ring cairn (NK010263).
- 2.2 Knockhill Castle (NJ92NE2) is the remains of an L-plan towerhouse of 3 storeys with projecting staircase on the N side. Above the doorway in the re-entrant angle is a stone dated 1565. Basic fabric is 16th century, the re-construction is late 17th century, being confined to windows, internal details and probably the square projecting tower at the N side. It was accidentally burnt in 1734 when it fell into ruins. There is a vaulted ground floor, E vault intact, the W kitchen vault has fallen. A courtyard lay to the S, in the SE corner of which stood a circular tower with vaulted basement and shot-holes. The upper storey was a dovecot. Now only a stump remains. The castle also has Remains of a 17th to 19th century designed landscape (NJ92NE2; Shepherd 1994, 212).
- 2.3 Sands of Forvie contains the remains of a Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement (NK02NW2), consisting of the remains of a total of 31 huts. The floors were sunk into the sand underlying a heath surface, and covered with red clay or paving stones. The walls were formed by banking up the excavated sand and stabilising it with clay and turf to carry a stone kerb. Inside posts supported the roof timbers. The entrances were invariably on the E side. The small finds were discovered both within and outside the huts, indicating LBA/EIA date. Outside the huts amid a scatter of fire-cracked stones, traces of working places were discovered with small finds scattered around. The huts varied from 6-12m in diameter. Artefacts from the area include jet beads, bracelets, querns and pottery. Area is now generally obscured by drifting sand (Cowie and Shepherd 2003, 161).
- 2.4 Also at Sands of Forvie are the remains of ring-cairn, with outer kerb diameter c.6.40m; only its W half survives (NK02NW3). Stones vary in size, but generally the larger stones are found in the SW part of the circle. The inner kerb has a diameter of c.3.65m and is complete save for an arc of 1.21m in the NE. The inner kerb is sunk lower than the outer one by 0.15m, although their tops are on the same level. The area between the two kerbs is filled with rubble down to the level of the base of the outer kerbstones, with large stones at the bottom, resting on sand. In the centre area enclosed by the kerbs are four upright stones, forming a "four-poster", set in a layer of stained sand with carbon streaks; above was black earth with charcoal and a number of white quartz fragments at the base of the layer. Large quantities of burnt bone came from within the central square. Sherds of Late Bronze Age "flat-rimmed" ware were also found (Burl 2000, 420).
- 2.5 There have been several finds recovered from the Newburgh area including a lithic working site at Foveran Links (NK02SW 1) which was identified by a surface collection of flints. Several sites including shell middens and flint working sites are known from the area around the Ythan more than 1km from the current site. A flint was found in the S facing section of a disused quarry (NK02NW28). The flint came from a dark, buried soil horizon. The section is highly unstable and under-mined by rabbits. There appears to be a beach deposit on top of the buried soil. Three other finds from the Newburgh area include an axe hammer (NJ92NE 9) a wedge-shaped axe-hammer of diorite and donated to the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (PSAS 1893), three worked flints found in the 1920s (NJ92NE 11) which were in the Mrs Irvine collection at Barra Castle and a leaf-shaped arrowhead (NJ92NE 123) from Newburgh in Marischal Museum, Aberdeen (ABDUA: 17033).

- 2.6 Near the Ythan a collection of mostly unworked flints were found in an old bed of the river (NK02NW 5) in 1905, a flint core and blades (NK02NW 21) were recovered from below estuarine mud in 1958 (Kirk 1958, 30) and a flint flake (NK02NW 24) is in Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Z.32791).
- 2.7 Two midden mounds, mainly consisting of mussel shells, sit on a main post glacial raised beach. Found during a detailed topographical survey (NK02NW47) (Noble, Milek and Philip, G, K and E 2010, 28-29; Warren, G 1999, 10-11).
- 2.8 Chapel of the Holy Rood (NK02NW8) is the site of chapel, which belonged to the Abbey of Deer. In c.1890 a man was commissioned to level out the cemetery and the remains of the chapel were removed. The burial ground of the former chapel also contains the 18th Century Udney family burial vault. The vault is a small rectangular building with low walls and tall roof, straight skewers with skewputt, entrance raised and swept in roof and a tall blind gablet at the back. A few 18th Century stones are in the churchyard which is still in use (Shepherd 2006, 213).
- 2.9 Monksholme (NK02NW9) is the site of a hospital, or Monks Home, which was founded in c.1261 by Alexander Comyn, the Earl of Buchan, at Newburgh for six poor men and a chaplain. Monks from the Cistercian Abbey of Deer lived at the Monkshome. The site of the home was later occupied by an inn, where it is said that the Old Pretender lodged on his journey south from Peterhead in 1715. The inn was known as 'Monkshome' and was believed to be on the site of the hospital (Cowan and Easson 1976, 151).
- 2.10 Udney Links (NK02NW30), Newburgh Golf Course (NK02NW30) and Sands of Forvie (NK02NW31) both have areas of rig and furrow has been noted on aerial photographs.
- 2.11 Newburgh Mill (NK02NW18) is the site of a (now destroyed) 19th Century mill and quay, originally owned by Messrs Mitchell and Rae, recently demolished to make way for a residential development. The mill was a 3-storey brick building with segmentally arched windows and a flat kiln with vent. The granary building was a 3-storey, 19-window structure built with a pine frame with a centre row of cast-iron columns, clad in corrugated iron. It had a queen-post roof with an early automatic belt conveyor system within the posts. It had a concrete gable, and an interesting system of firebreaks between the kiln, mill and granary. The quay was part concrete faced, with some 1 and 2-storey rubble warehouses on it. It was set on a tidal islet with a causeway connection to the mainland. Newburgh's utility as a harbour has been prejudiced by unstable littoral sands and shallow and obstructed water (Graham 1979, 344).
- 2.12 A watching brief was maintained on this site in advance of the construction of a new wastewater pumping station in 2004 by Murray Archaeological Services. Two abraded sherds of medieval pottery were recovered during the top-soil strip, one of which was of Scarborough Ware dating to the 13th century; no other archaeological features or artefacts were encountered (NK02NW104; Murray 2004, 16).
- 2.13 A six-sided pill-box stands on the southwest side of the Ythan estuary near the road bridge. There is a blast wall at the west side (NK02NW93).
- 2.14 Map evidence includes 'Forvy K[irk]' on Pont (surveyed c 1583-1614) and Gordon (1636-52) shows 'Knockhall' and 'Fovern' (Appendix 4) and 'Fovern' and 'Knokhall' on Blaeu 1654. James Robertson's Topographical and military map of the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine 1822 and Alexander Gibb's Map of the north

eastern districts of Aberdeenshire, 1858 both show the proximity of the site to the shore on the mid 19th century before the construction of the B975 (Appendix 4).

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Four trenches totaling 7% of the proposed development were evaluated on 4 April 2013 (Illus 2). A soil bund and site entrance at the south end of the site reduced the area available for the evaluation. All trenches were excavated with a tracked slew with a 1.7m ditching bucket.



Illus 2 Plan of trenches with main features and contours

Trench 1

Trench 1 was 90m long. At the north end was ploughsoil on compact rusty brown gravel natural subsoil. At the east end a series of sand and organic lenses (Illus 3) up to 1m deep are the remains of sand dunes (5). Both the maps of Robertson 1822 (Illus 11) and Gibb 1858 (Illus 12) show that there was an inlet of the Ythan to the south of this development site and these dunes are probably associated with this inlet.



Illus 3 Trench 1 sand dune deposits 5, facing NW

Trench 2

Trench 2 was 95m long and at the south end of the trench were the remains of sand dunes (5). In the centre of the trench an area of buried topsoil (3) survived and immediately to the north was a shallow scoop, F4, 70 x 80cm in size (Illus 4). It was half sectioned (Illus 5, 6), contained two clay fills and was a maximum of 15cm deep. The upper fill may have been the remains of historic plough damage; the topsoil is 50cm deep above this feature so this is probably not a result of modern ploughing. In the top of the feature was a flint scraper (SF 1: Illus 7). The north end of the trench was as Trench 1, a compact gravel natural.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was 100m long and contained no archaeological features. The natural at the north was gravel and the south sandy clay. Undulations in the sand at the south end are natural dune features.

Trench 4

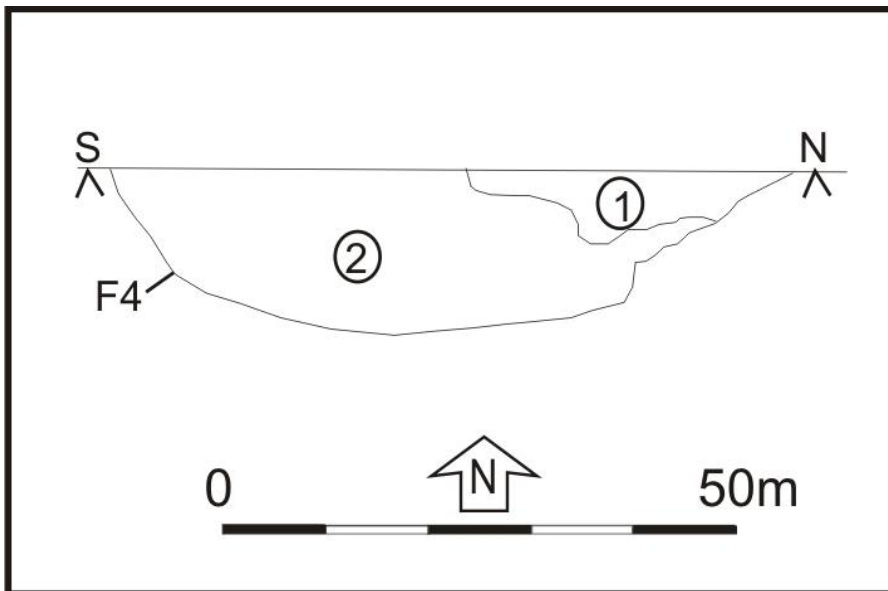
Trench 4 was 100m long and of a similar nature to Trench 3. At the south end there was also a soil-filled trench (F6) which contained 19th and 20th century china fragments. This was probably created by dumping soil at the SE end of the field to raise it in height, possibly during the formation of the B975 road.



Illus 4 Scoop F4 prior to excavation facing west



Illus 5 Scoop F4 half excavated facing west



Illus 6 Section through scoop F4



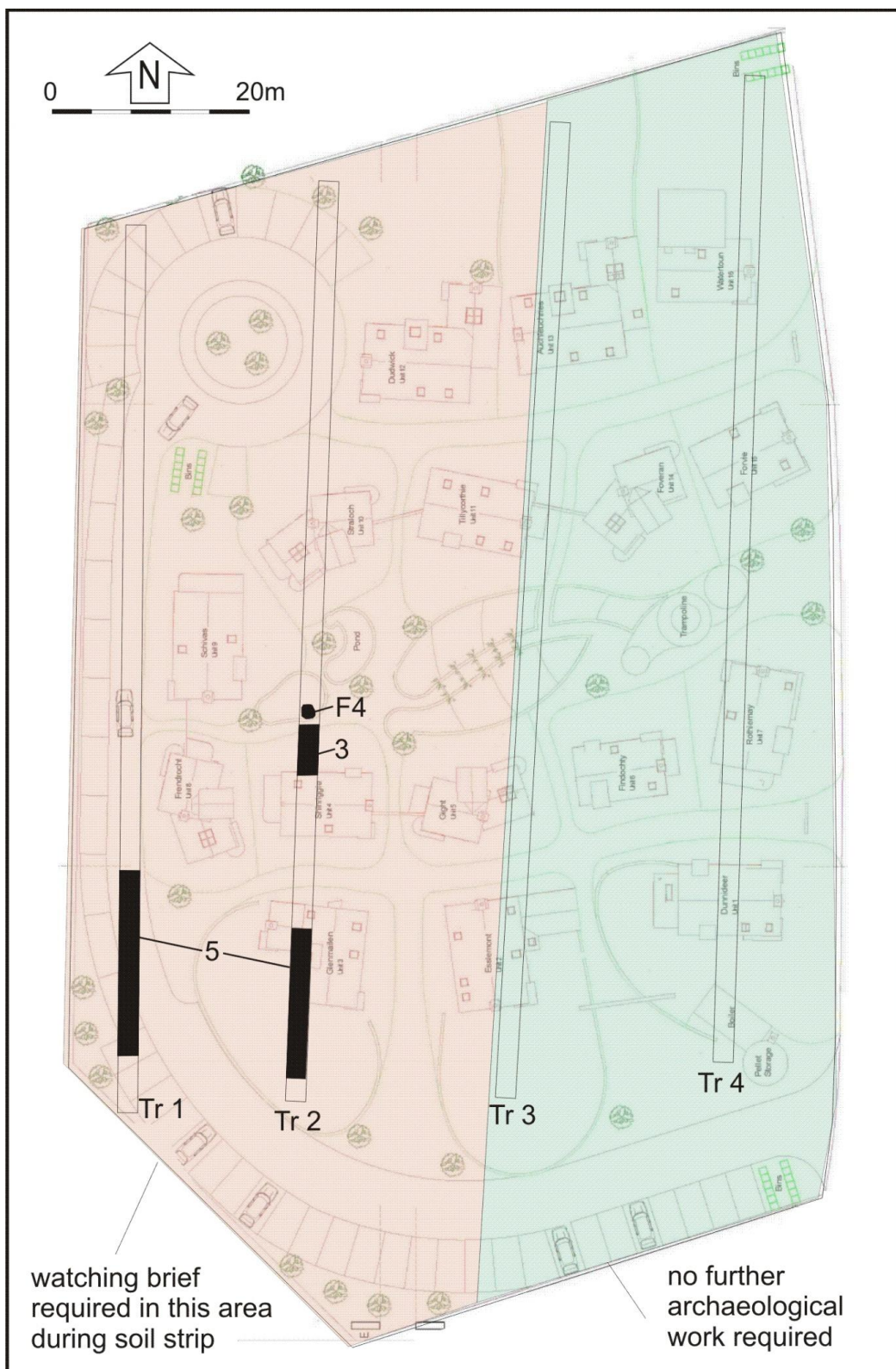
Illus 7 SF1 scraper from shallow scoop F4 (scale mm)

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The east half of the site had been within the area of the Ythan and therefore no archaeological features were recorded in Trenches 3 and 4. The south end of Trenches 1 and 2 had been sand dunes and one shallow scoop, F4, was found on the slightly higher ground north of these dunes. The feature contained a scraper and this had probably been a small working area for preparation of fish or animal products. No other finds were recovered from the trenches or spoil heaps suggesting that this was not an intensively used area.

It is therefore recommended that a watching brief be carried out during soil strip of the west half of the site to record any features or finds not included in this evaluation (Illus 8). There

are several areas in the centre of the site which will not be disturbed down to natural level.



Illus 8 Plan showing trenches and main features superimposed on plan of proposed development (copyright Crichton Wood Architects)

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6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Trench	Facing
DSC_5087-5100	Site from bridge over Ythan north of site		S/SSE
DSC_5101-5109	Site from B975		NW/W
DSC_5110	Site		WNW
DSC_5111	Site		NW/W
DSC_5112	Site		NNW
DSC_5113-5123	Trench 4 showing undulations in sand natural	4	N
DSC_5124-5128	Trench 4 showing undulations in sand natural	4	W
DSC_5129-5138	F6 upfill above natural subsoil	4	N
DSC_5139-5143	Trench 4 showing undulations in sand natural	4	NNW
DSC_5144-5149	Trench 4 showing undulations in sand natural	4	N
DSC_5150-5155	Trench 4 undulation in sand natural part excavated revealing sand under topsoil	4	W
DSC_5156-5160	Trench 4	4	S
DSC_5161-5163	Trench 4	4	SW
DSC_5164-5168	Trench 3	3	S
DSC_5169-5173	Trench 3 showing undulations in sand natural	3	N
DSC_5174-5178	Trench 3	3	N
DSC_5179-5184	Trench 3	3	N
DSC_5185-5194	Trench 2 sand dune deposits 5	2	N
DSC_5195-5199	Trench 2 sand dune deposits 5	2	N
DSC_5200-5204	Trench 2 sand dune deposits 5	2	E
DSC_5205-5209	Trench 2 buried topsoil 3	2	NNE
DSC_5210-5215	Trench 2 buried topsoil 3	2	N
DSC_5216-5220	Trench 2 F4 prior to cleaning and excavation with buried topsoil 3 (top)	2	S
DSC_5221-5230	Trench 2 buried topsoil 3 section	2	W
DSC_5231-5241	Trench 2 F4	2	W
DSC_5242-5246	Trench 2 F4 with SF1 in situ	2	W
DSC_5247-5271	Trench 2 F4 half excavated and section	2	W
DSC_5272-5281	Trench 2 F4 half excavated and section	2	S
DSC_5282-5286	Trench 2 showing compact gravel and north end	2	S
DSC_5287-5291	Trench 1 north end	1	S
DSC_5292-5297	Site from north end Trench 1		E/SE/SSE
DSC_5298-5302	Trench 1 north end showing compact gravel	1	N
DSC_5303-5312	Trench 1 showing south end sand dune deposits 5	1	S
DSC_5313-5317	Trench 1 showing south end sand dune deposits 5	1	SSW
DSC_5318-5322	Trench 1 showing south end sand dune deposits 5	1	NW
DSC_5323-5327	Trench 1 showing south end sand dune deposits 5 in section	1	W
DSC_5328-5337	Trench 1 from south end	1	N
DSC_5338-5341	Site from south end Trench 1		E/NE/NNE
DSCF2027	Craig Reid machine used in evaluation		
DSCF2029-35	Panoramas of site		



DSC_5100



DSC_5102



DSC_5107



DSC_5110



DSC_5111



DSC_5112



DSC_5113



DSC_5123



DSC_5124



DSC_5133



DSC_5134



DSC_5139



DSC_5149



DSC_5150



DSC_5160



DSC_5163



DSC_5164



DSC_5173



DSC_5174



DSC_5184



DSC_5185



DSC_5194



DSC_5195



DSC_5204



DSC_5205



DSC_5215



DSC_5216



DSC_5225



DSC_5230



DSC_5231



DSC_5246



DSC_5247



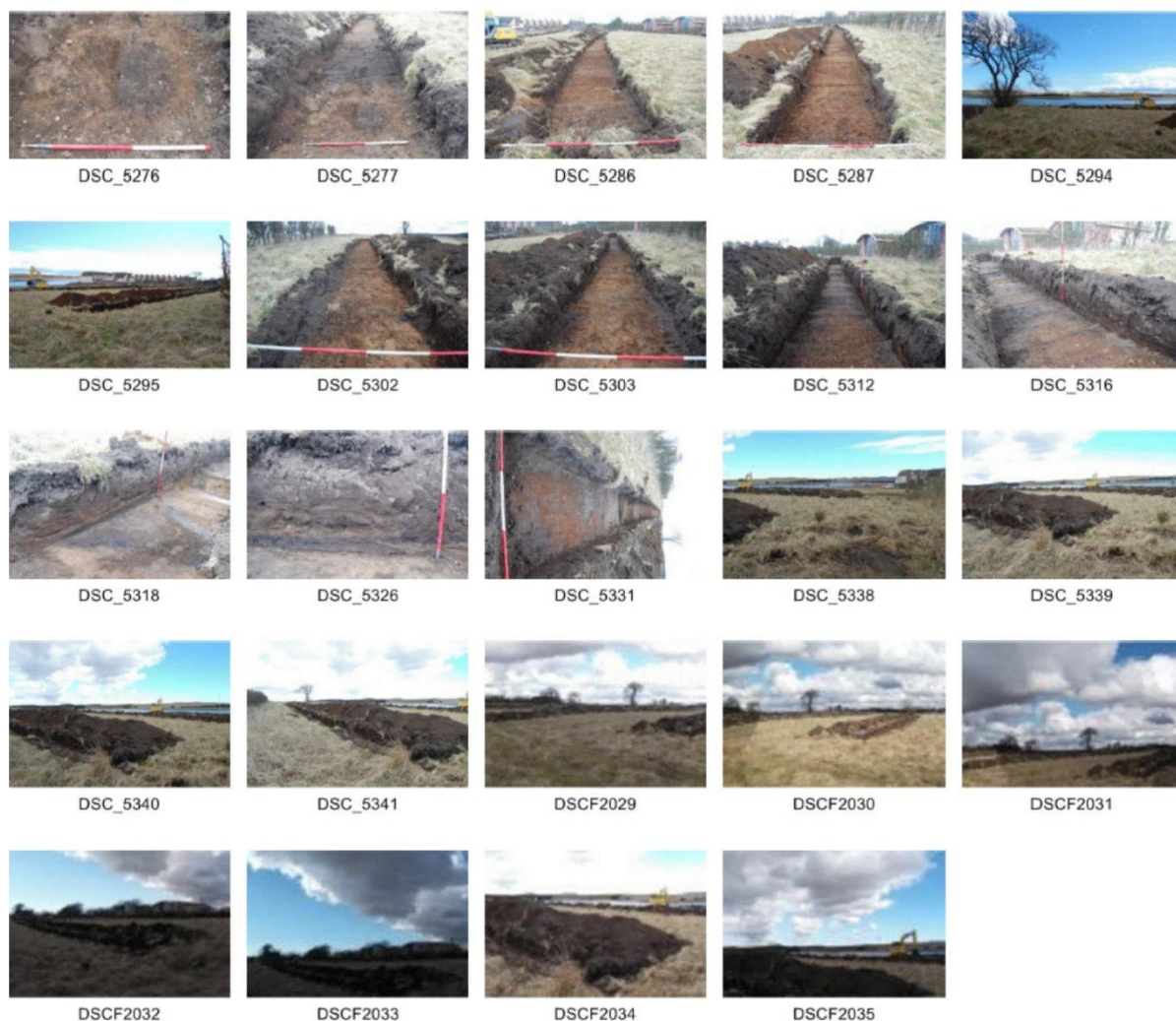
DSC_5248



DSC_5263



DSC_5264



APPENDIX 2 FEATURES

Context no	Trench	Description	Feature
1	2	Dark grey clay, sand and stone flecks - plough mark into top of F4?	F4
2	2	Medium grey sandy clay - primary fill of F4	F4
3	2	Black compact sandy loam - buried soil	
F4	1	Shallow scoop 70x80cm and max 15cm deep. Contains SF1 flint scraper	
5	1 and 2	Alternate layers sand and organic loam layers - sand dune	
6	4	Infill at SE end of site to level up field; contains 19th/20th century china. May be associated with construction of road B975.	
7	1, 2, 3, 4	Light sandy topsoil	

APPENDIX 3 SMR AND NMR SITES

SCHEDULED SITES

INDEX NUMBER	NAME	LOCAL AUTHORITY	NGRs
5577	Knockhall Castle	ABERDEENSHIRE	NJ993264
12520	Sands of Forvie, cairns 1115m SE of Waterside	ABERDEENSHIRE	NK011265
12541	Sands of Forvie, hut circles and ring cairn 1020m E of East Cottage	ABERDEENSHIRE	NK010263

SMR SITES WITHIN 1KM OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Site ref no	Site name	Description
NK02NW0037	WATERSIDE BRIDGE	Modern road bridge, still in use.
NK02NW0115	150 MAIN STREET, NEWBURGH	Buildings depicted on the OS 2nd edition map but which does not appear on the 1st edition.
NJ92NE0001	KNOCKHALL CASTLE	Remains of castle. An L-plan towerhouse of 3 storeys with projecting staircase on the N side.
NJ92NE0036	NEWBURGH	Burgh and town of Newburgh; on the spreading estuary of the Ythan, Newburgh was a significant port
NK02NW0008	CHAPEL OF THE HOLY ROOD	Site of chapel, which belonged to the Abbey of Deer.
NK02NW0009	MONKSHOME	Site of a hospital, or Monks Home, which was founded in c.1261 by Alexander Comyn, the Earl of Buchan
NK02NW0033	SANDS OF FORVIE	A flint was found in the S facing section of a disused quarry. The flint came from a dark, buried so
NK02NW0002	SANDS OF FORVIE	Remains of Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement, consisting of the remains of a total of 31 huts.
NK02NW0019	UDNY LINKS	An area of rig and furrow has been noted on aerial photographs.
NK02NW0015	NEWBURGH MILL AND QUAY	Site of 19th Century mill and quay, originally owned by Messrs Mitchell and Rae, recently demolished.
NJ92NE0077	1-2 BRIDGE TERRACE, NEWBURGH	Building depicted on the OS 2nd edition map. A photographic survey was carried out in 2011.
NJ92NE0052	KNOCKHALL CASTLE	Remains of a 17th to 19th century designed landscape.
NK02NW0053	NEWBURGH	A watching brief was maintained on this site in advance of the construction of a new wastewater pump.

NK02NW0039	INCHES	The remains of a 19th Century warehouse and small quay lie at the end of the small promontory.
NJ92NE0025	CROSS OF NEWBURGH	Market Cross; broken by a cart but site was well known.
NK02NW0020	SANDS OF FORVIE	An area of rig and furrow has been noted on aerial photographs.
NK02NW0016	NEWBURGH WAREHOUSE	A warehouse, probably 18th Century in date, stands near the landward end of a causeway.
NK02NW0003	SANDS OF FORVIE	Remains of ring-cairn, with outer kerb diameter c.6.40m; only its W half survives.
NK02NW0046	SANDS OF FORVIE	Two midden mounds, mainly consisting of mussel shells, sit on a main post glacial raised beach.
NK02NW0049	NEWBURGH	A six-sided pill-box stands on the southwest side of the Ythan estuary near the road bridge.
NK02NW0035	NEWBURGH GOLF COURSE	Remains of an area of denuded rig and furrow, visible in low light

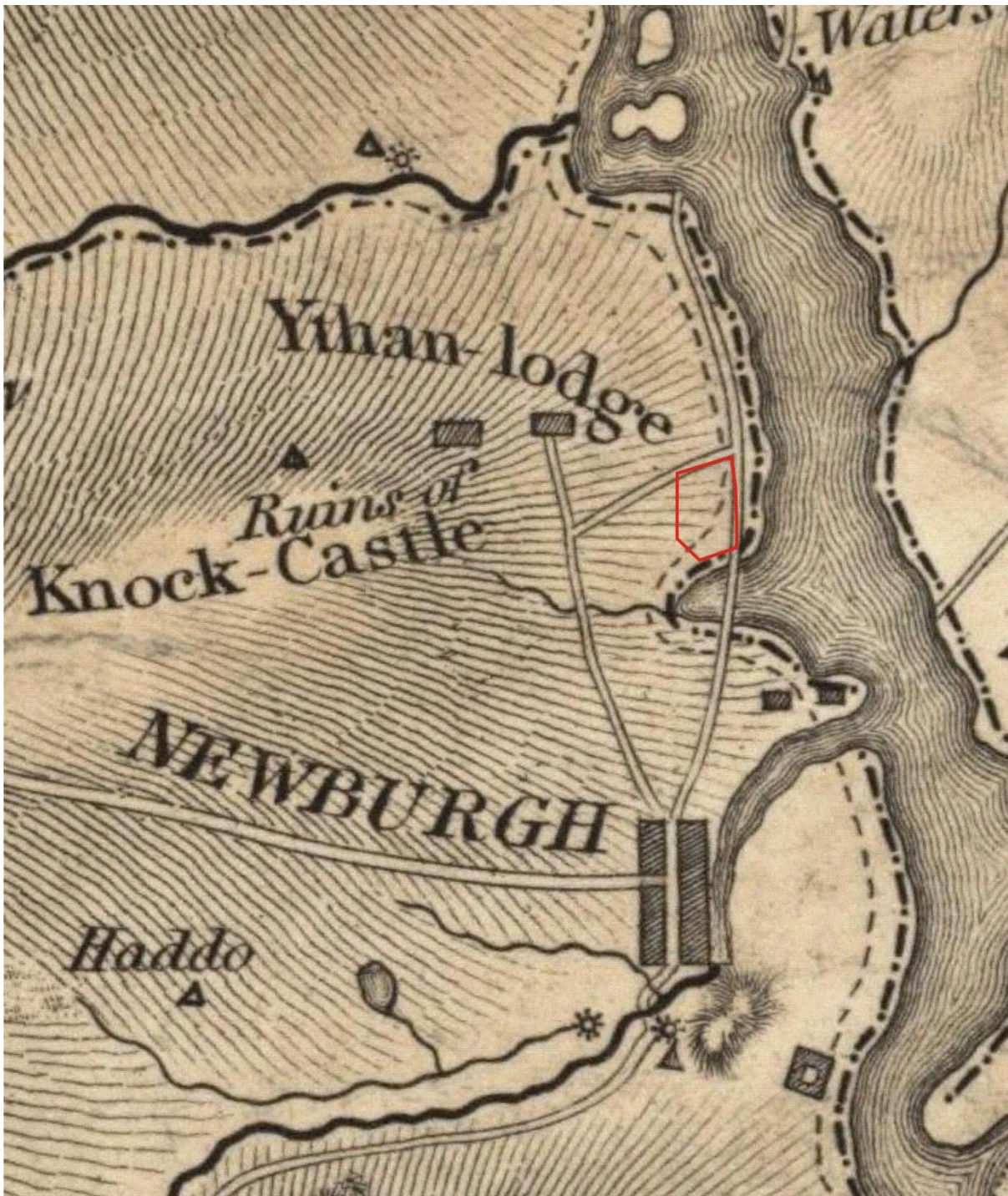
APPENDIX 4 MAPS



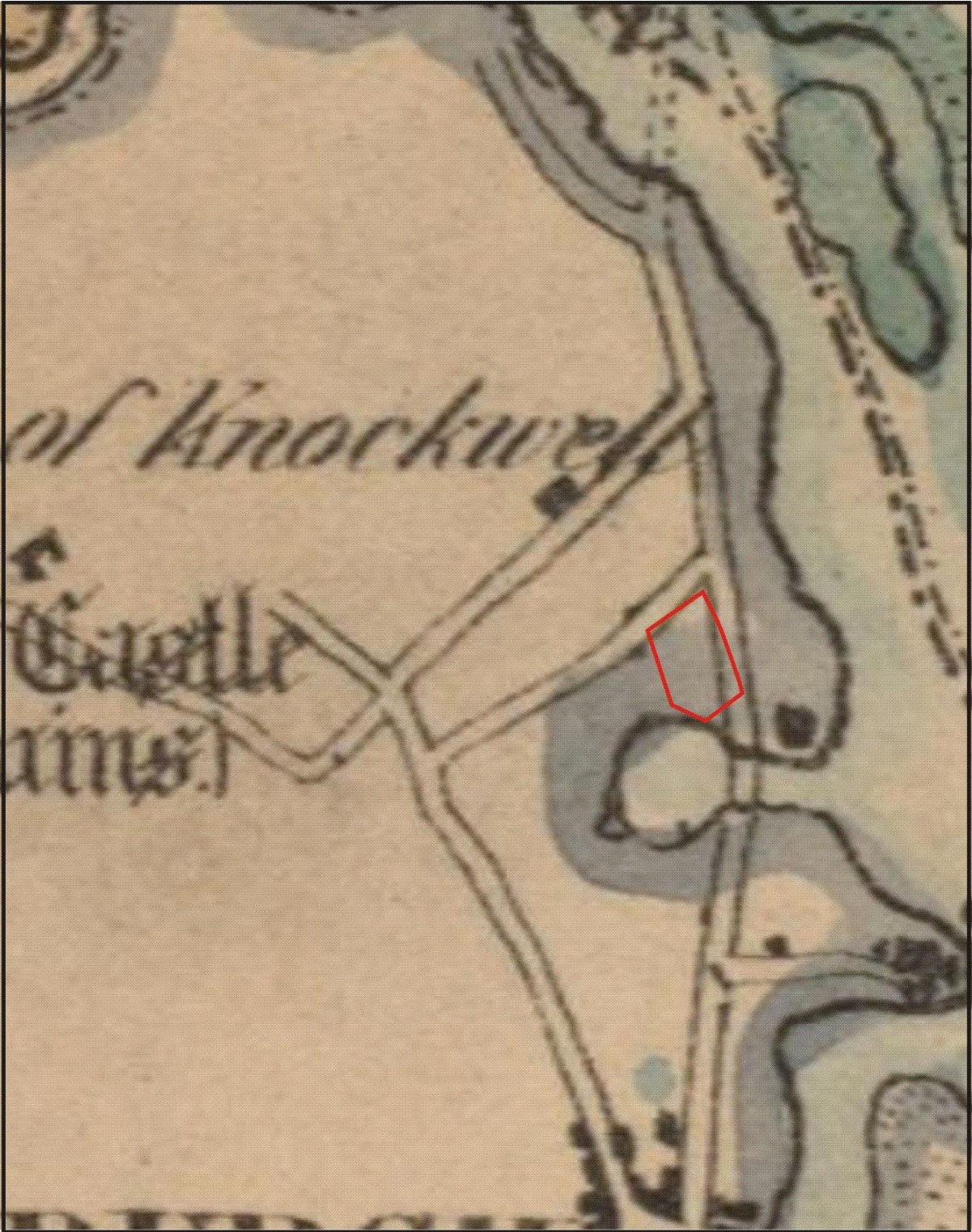
Illus 9 Robert Gordon, A map of Eastern Scotland, including basins of Rivers Don, Dee, Tay, Forth, and Tweed imprint c 1636-52 (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 10 Blaeu 1654 Duo Vicecomitatus Aberdonia & Banfia, una cum Regionibus & terrarum tractibus sub iis comprehensis / Auctore Roberto Gordonio à Straloch. Description of the two Shyres Aberdene and Banf (copyright National Library of Scotland).



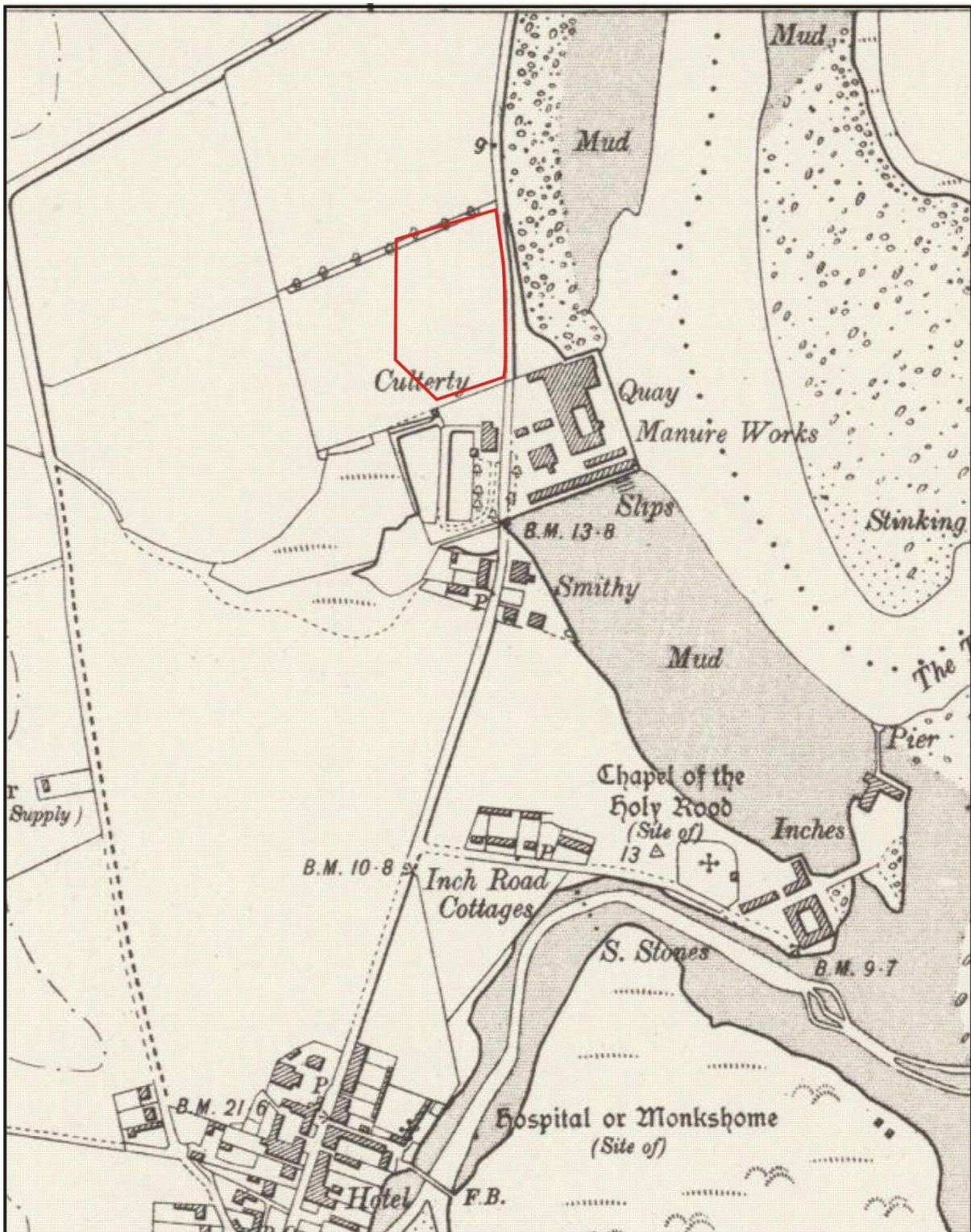
Illus 11 James Robertson Topographical and military map of the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine 1822 showing approximate area of site in red (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 12 Alexander Gibb, Map of the north eastern districts of Aberdeenshire, 1858 showing approximate area of site in red (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 13 Ordnance Survey First Edition showing approximate area of site in red. Title: Aberdeenshire, Sheet XLVIII Survey date: 1866-67 Publication date: 1870 (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 14 Ordnance Survey Second Edition showing approximate area of site in red. Title: Aberdeenshire Sheet XLVIII.SW Publication date: 1902 Date revised: 1899 (copyright National Library of Scotland).