

**Land to the South West of Baldarroch  
Crathes, Banchory, AB31 5JL, Aberdeenshire**



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## ILLUSTRATIONS

top Trench 2 facing E; bottom Trench 3 (foreground) showing area for proposed development facing SE

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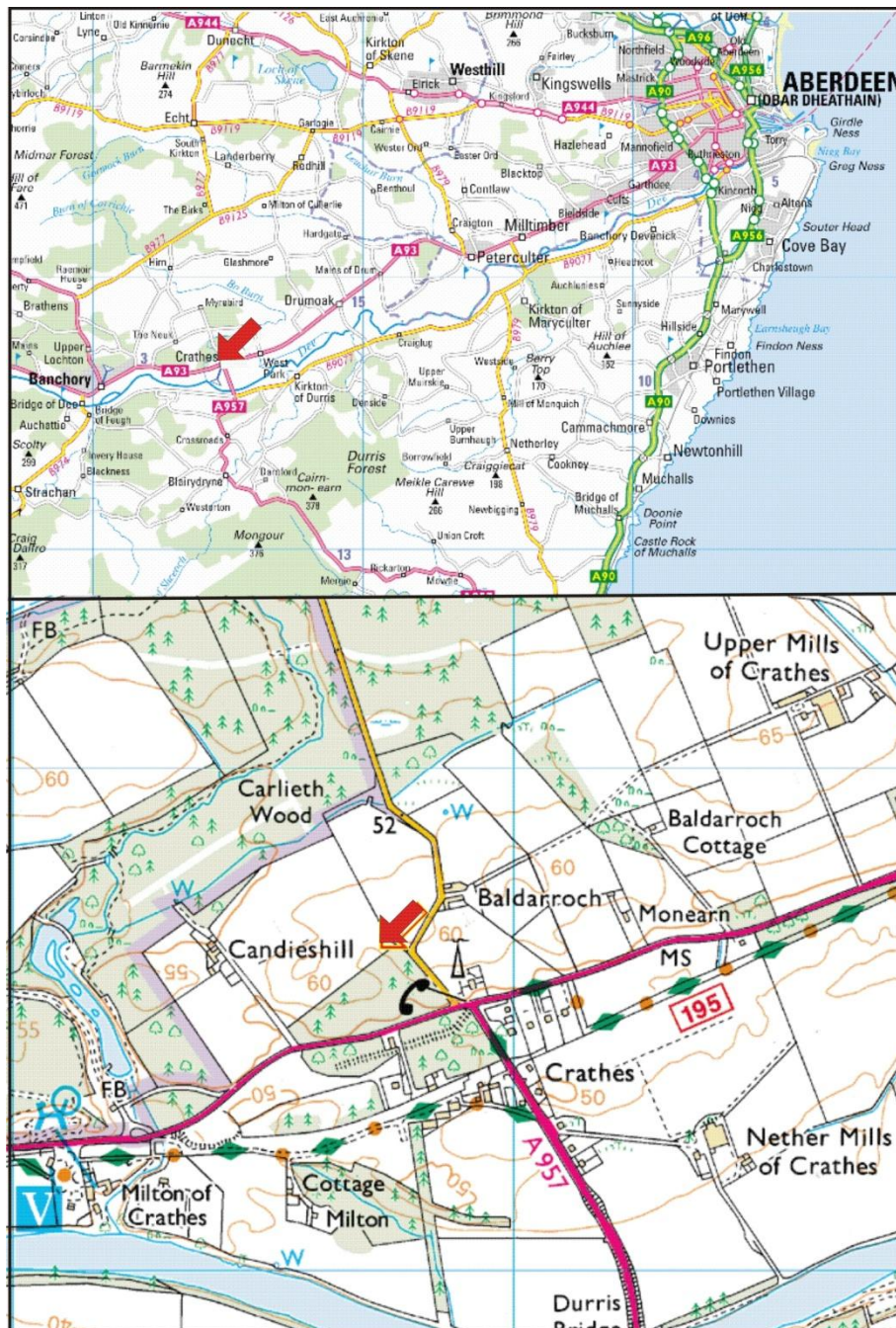
## SUMMARY

Three trenches totalling 7% of the proposed development area was evaluated on 10 March 2014. No archaeological finds or features were recorded and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during this development.



# 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The proposed development site, centred on NGR NO 74813, 96604, lies on the north side of the A93 just north of its junction with the A957 between Candieshill to the west and Baldarroch to the east. A planning application to Aberdeenshire Council (APP/2013/1160) for the erection of crematorium building was approved on 10.9.13 with standard archaeology condition (condition 1). Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service requires a 7-10% evaluation of the site.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by George Wood, Jigsaw Energy on behalf of Brian Smith Funeral Directors.
- 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.

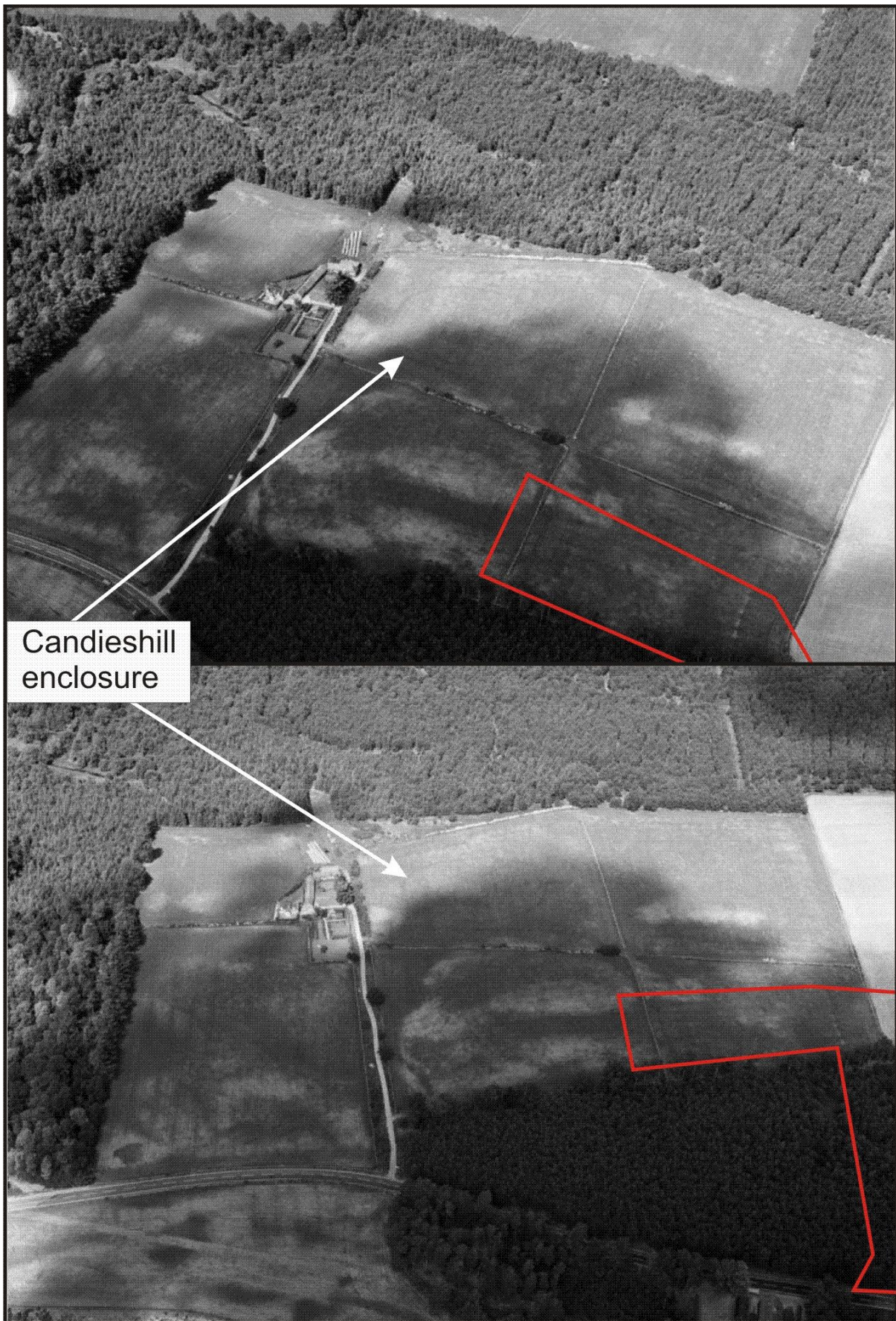


Illus 1 Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014)

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are two Scheduled Ancient monuments within 1km of the proposed site. 550m ESE of Crathes Castle is the site of a well-preserved Early Neolithic building (NO79NW 17) and a contemporary pit alignment (NO79NW 18). Both have been excavated. The building, which was about 24m long and 9m wide, proved to date to about 3800-3700 BC – the earliest neolithic. Identification of structural timbers shows that although oak was dominant, the builders were also using ash and willow or poplar in the main walls, and possibly hawthorn in one of the partitions. The evidence suggests that the building stood for some time before its deliberate destruction by fire. Flint and pitchstone artefacts, extremely fine pottery, very rare fragments of decorated wooden bowls, and grains such as barley, bread or club wheat and emmer wheat were all recovered from the building. Their varied distribution patterns may suggest functional differences between the different areas of the structure – differences which may also have had symbolic and ritual significance. Twelve large pits (up to 2.5m in diameter) and five smaller features were identified during excavation of the nearby pit alignment. In general, a thick deposit of charcoal was placed within each freshly-dug pit, followed by a slow, gradual infilling with soil as the spoil from digging eroded back in. Eventually, erosion stopped, with the pits remaining visible as dimples in the landscape. Later, people re-opened the pits, putting in material which again included large amounts of charcoal. Radiocarbon dates indicate that the pit alignment was created some 9,500-10,000 years ago, while the reworking of the site occurred some 4000 years later (Shannon Fraser, National Trust for Scotland newsletter).
- 2.2 200m WNW of the proposed site is an oval enclosure (NO79NW 29) in the field immediately ENW of Candieshill steading; it measures about 115m within its ditch (RCAHMS 1984; Illus 3).
- 2.3 Two wells depicted on the OS 1st edition map north and west of Candieshill. The shaped of the field boundary, forming a small rectangular inset, to the E of the E well, may indicate the former presence of a building here. The NW well is the only one which appears on the OS 2nd edition map and it is still marked on current OS maps.
- 2.4 The OS 1st edition 1867 map shows a small, almost square, unroofed building with attached enclosure, both abutting a field boundary north of Candieshill and with a pond to the W. Whilst the field boundary remains unchanged on the 2nd edition sheet, none of the other features appear on this map.
- 2.5 The site is close to the east boundary of the policies of Crathes Castle, a Garden and Design Landscape
- 2.6 The haughs of the river Dee in the Crathes are the find-spot for flint scatters (NO79NE24; NO79NW 11). 872 worked flints were found by Dr Grieve as a surface collection after ploughing and heavy rain. Further fieldwalking has been carried out over this river terrace site, and extending Eastwards across the A957 in 2008 by Prof. Sabnis with help from OFARS and James Kenworthy. Over 3000 worked flints have been collected, largely Mesolithic in date but also including a polished Neolithic knife/axehead, a broken leaf-shaped arrowhead and a small sherd of Neolithic pottery (Sabnis, Kenworthy and OFARS 2008).
- 2.7 700m SW of the proposed site on S-facing river terrace of the River Dee cropmarks of pits and possible enclosures, also curvilinear cropmarks (NO79NW 35; Feilden 1992, 37).
- 2.8 A barbed and tanged arrowhead was found near the Dee at Nethermills (NO79NE 29; Kenworthy 1980, 14). The barbed and tanged arrowhead of yellow-brown flint, 26mm long, probably 20mm wide originally, and 4mm thick, with one barb broken.





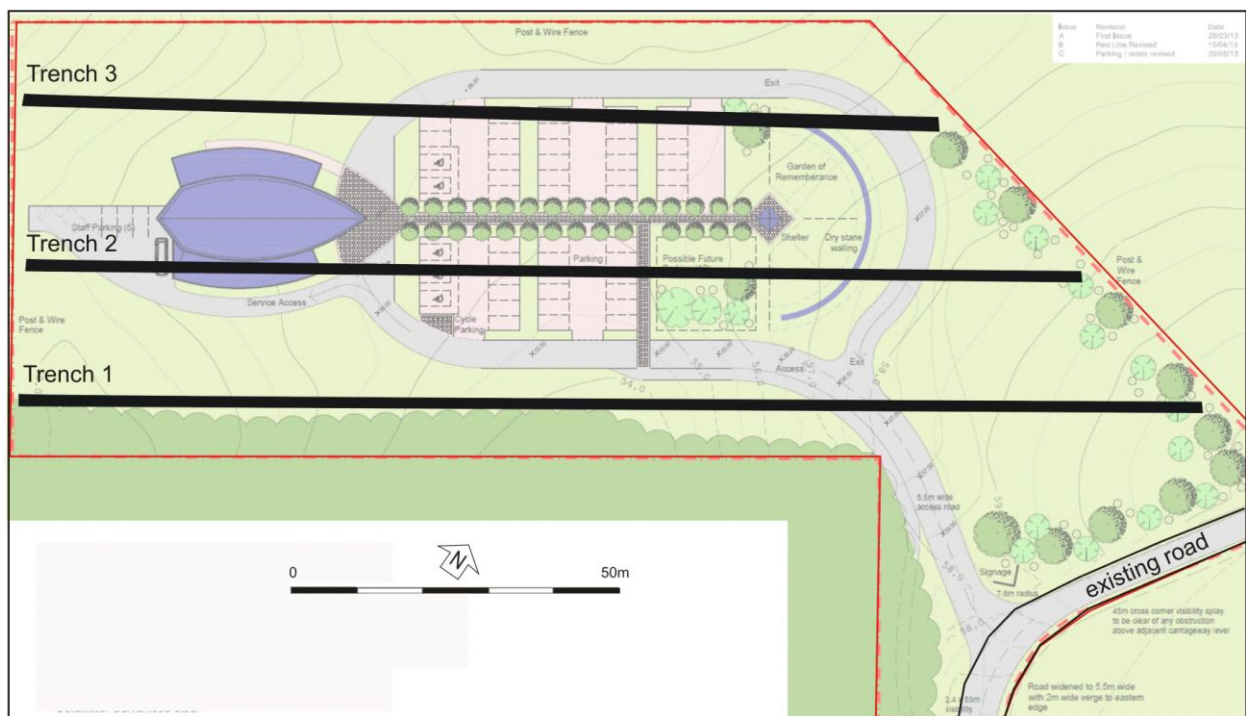
Illus 2 Aerial photograph showing Candieshill enclosure and approximate area of proposed site (in red) SC1013461/464 (*copyright RCAHMS*)



### 3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Three trenches totalling 7% of the proposed development area was evaluated on 10 March 2014. The topsoil was 20cm deep at the east and west end of the trenches and up to 70cm in the centre of Trenches 1 and 2. The field contained many large earthfast boulders some at ground level suggesting that the field not been subjected to intensive modern ploughing.

No archaeological finds or features were recorded and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during this work.



Illus 3 Site plan with excavated trenches (copyright wcp architects)

## 4 REFERENCES

**Feilden, R** 1992 'Milton Cottage (Banchory-Ternan parish): pits/enclosures', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 37.

**Kenworthy, J B** 1980 'Nethermills Farm (Banchory-Ternan p): barbed-and-tanged arrowhead', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 14.

**Murray, HK Murray JC and Fraser S** 2009 A tale of the unknown unknowns: a mesolithic pit alignment and a neolithic timber hall at Warren Field, Crathes, Aberdeenshire, Oxford Held at RCAHMS D.5.33.CRA

**RCAHMS** 1984 The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. The archaeological sites and monuments of North Kincardine, Kincardine and Deeside District, Grampian Region, The archaeological sites and monuments of Scotland series no 21 Edinburgh, 32.

**Sabnis, Kenworthy and OFARS, H and J** 2008 'Nether Mills Farm, Crathes, Banchory, Aberdeenshire (Banchory-Ternan parish), watching brief', *Discovery Excav Scot, New*, vol.9 Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England.

## 5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Claire Herbert, Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service; George Wood, Jigsaw Energy; Richard Dingwall and Sandra Greig, WCP Architects; Graeme and Gary Brown, A & S Brown.

## APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC_1542-47	Trench 1	W
DSC_1548-49	Trench 1	WNW
DSC_1550-56	Trench 2	W
DSC_1557-62	Trench 1 central deeper section	E
DSC_1563-68	Trench 1 central deeper section	W
DSC_1569-73	Trench 2 deeper central section	E
DSC_1574-78	Trench 2 deeper central section	W
DSC_1579-84	Trench 1 from west end	E
DSC_1585-91	Trench 1, right	ENE
DSC_1592-1604	Trench 2	E
DSC_1605-09	Trench 3	W
DSC_1610-14	Trench 3	E
DSC_1615-14	Trench 3 left, Trench 2, Trench 1	SE
DSCF6841-47	panorama	



DSC\_1542



DSC\_1549



DSC\_1550



DSC\_1561



DSC\_1568



DSC\_1569



DSC\_1574



DSC\_1584



DSC\_1585



DSC\_1597



DSC\_1598



DSC\_1609



DSC\_1610



DSC\_1620



DSCF6841



DSCF6842



DSCF6843



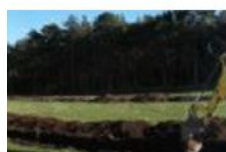
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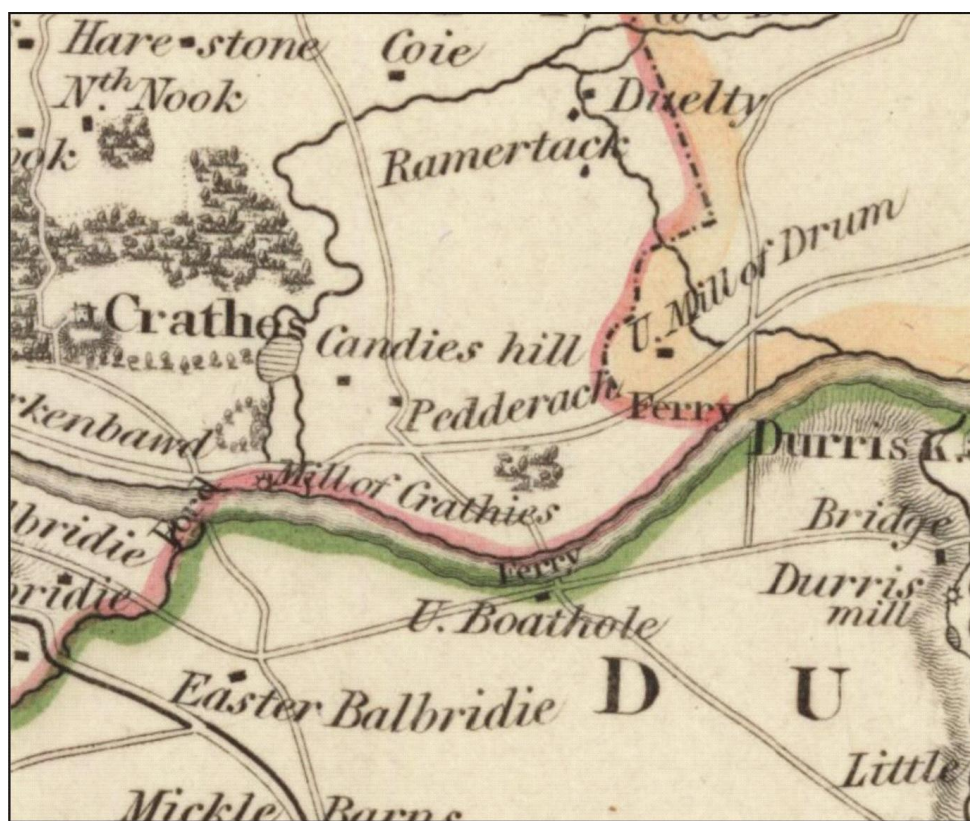
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## APPENDIX 2 MAPS

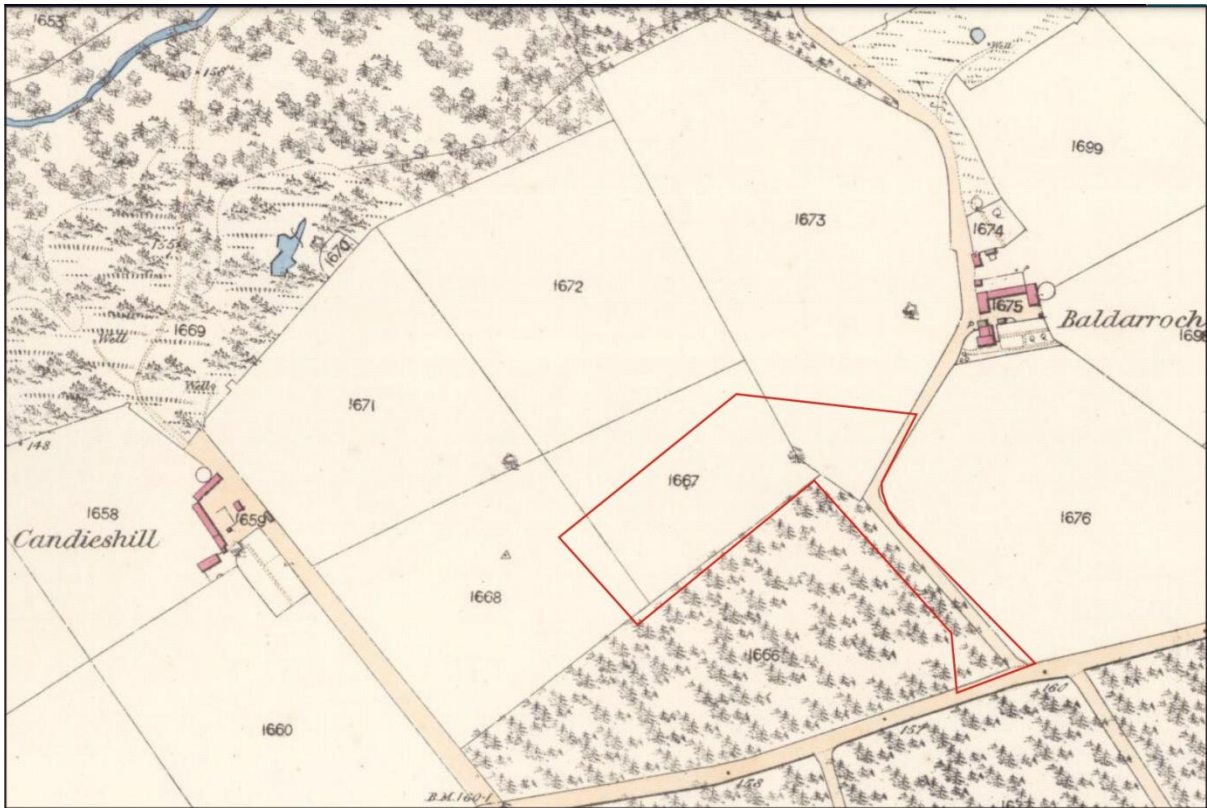


Illus 4 Blaeu Map of 1654; the proposed site is approximately where the 'Mils' of Mils of Drum (centre) (copyright National Library of Scotland)

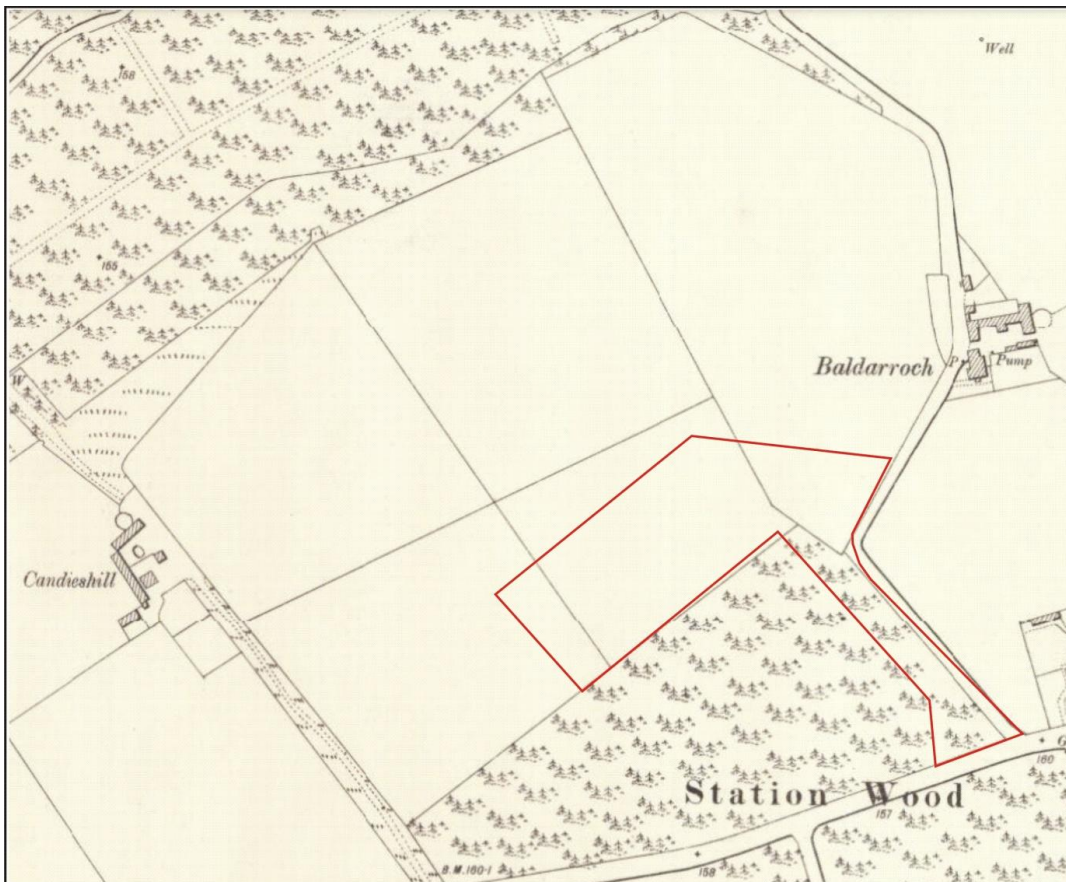


Illus 5 Thomson's Atlas of Scotland 1832 showing 'Candies Hill' (centre) (copyright National Library of Scotland)

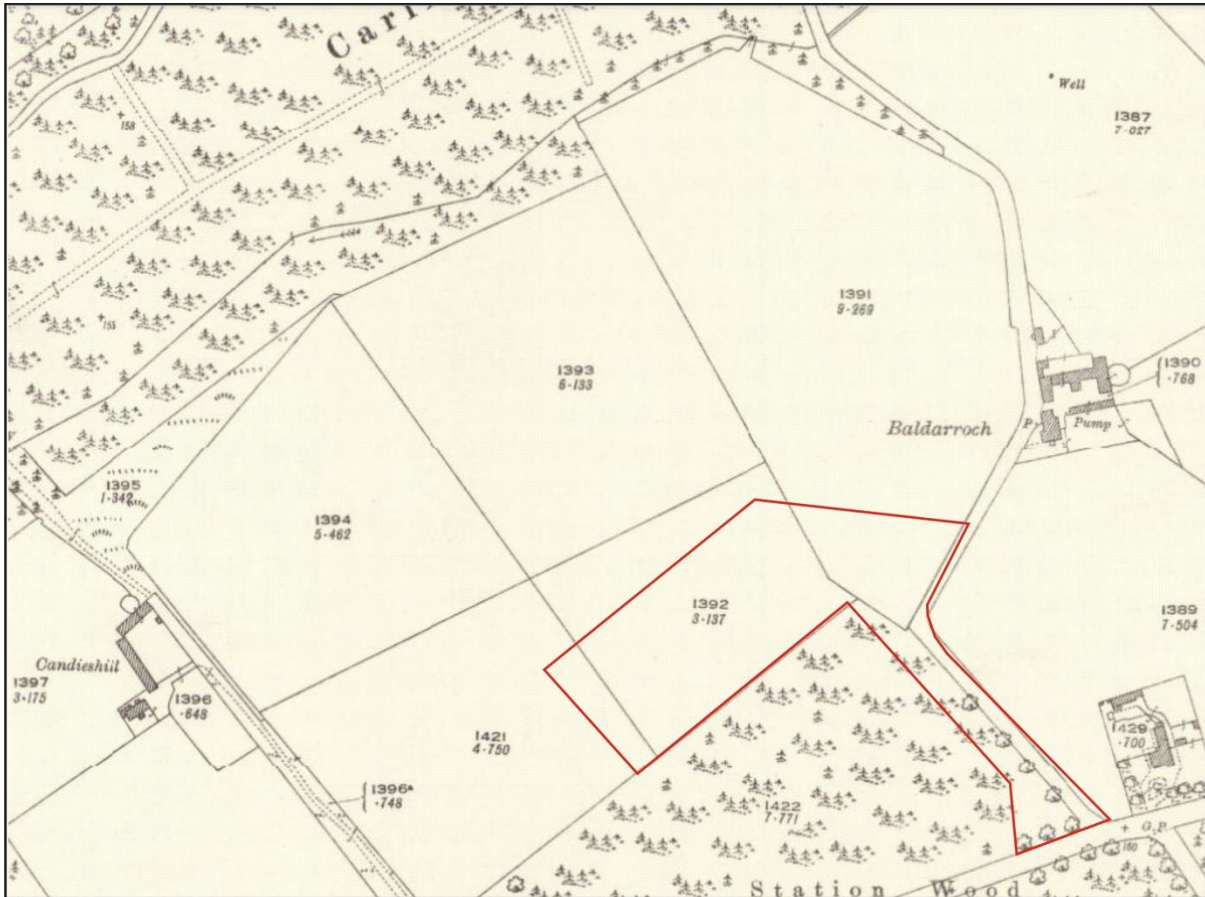




Illus 6 First edition OS map with proposed site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland) Kincardine Sheet VI.6 (Banchory Ternan) Survey date: 1864 Publication date: 1868



Illus 7 Second edition OS map with proposed site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland) Aberdeenshire, Sheet 094a.03 Publication date: 1900 Revised: ca. 1899



Illus 8 Third edition OS map with proposed site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland) Aberdeenshire, Sheet 094a.03 Publication date: 1925 Revised: ca. 1923 Levelled: 1899