

**NIGG CARAVAN PARK, ALTENS FARM ROAD,  
ABERDEEN, AB12 3FY**

**REPORT AND DATA STRUCTURE REPORT**



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Version 2 4 June 2014**

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cover (top) find spot of saddle quern in static caravan base (bottom) the saddle quern *in situ*; facing NE

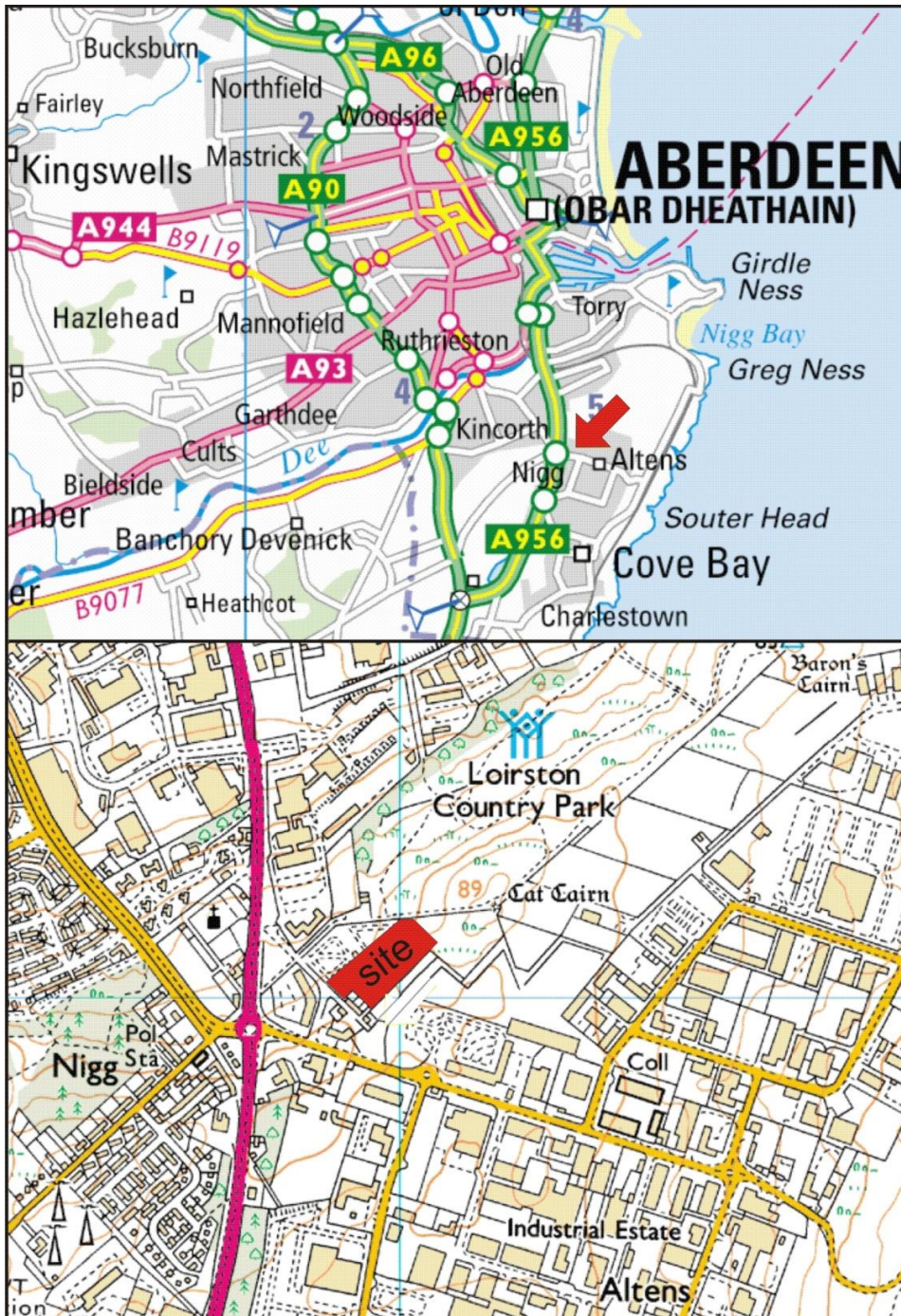
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## SUMMARY

Archaeological evaluations were carried out on 4 December 2013 and 4 June 2014. All trenches revealed that the site had been prepared prior to the caravan site being established and there are service trenches over much of the site. A 10% archaeological evaluation on the hill at the NE of the site revealed that the ground was very disturbed and the topsoil shallow. The broad dyke F1 was then removed and an archaeological watching brief maintained. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current development.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

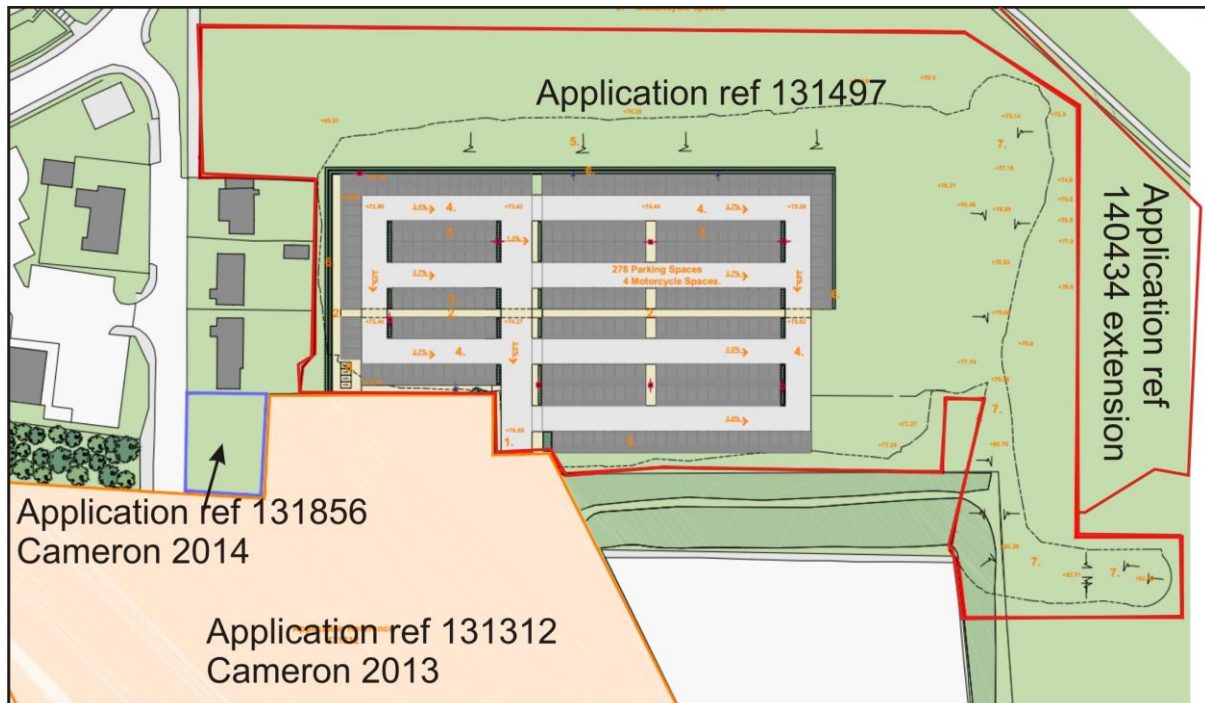
1.1 The site is at NJ 94993 02978 (centred), in the parish of Aberdeen and at 70-80m OD. Aberdeen City Council Planning application P131497 for proposed construction of 278 space car park with associated landscaping and lighting columns was passed by Aberdeen City Council on 28.11.13 with a standard archaeology condition (condition 2). A previous application for an adjacent office development at Hareness Road (P131312) has been assessed archaeologically (Cameron 2013). A further planning application P140434 is for a 595 space car park and this report includes the results of a 10% archaeological evaluation of this area.



Illus 1 Site location (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014).

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is on the north side of Hareness Road, at the east end of Altens Farm Road with a major oil service company on the east. The site is occupied by a caravan park and is filled with bases for the static caravans and services.



Illus 2 Plan of proposed development with site outline in red with relevant Aberdeen City Council planning application numbers and previous work at the site (*copyright Michael Laird Architects*).

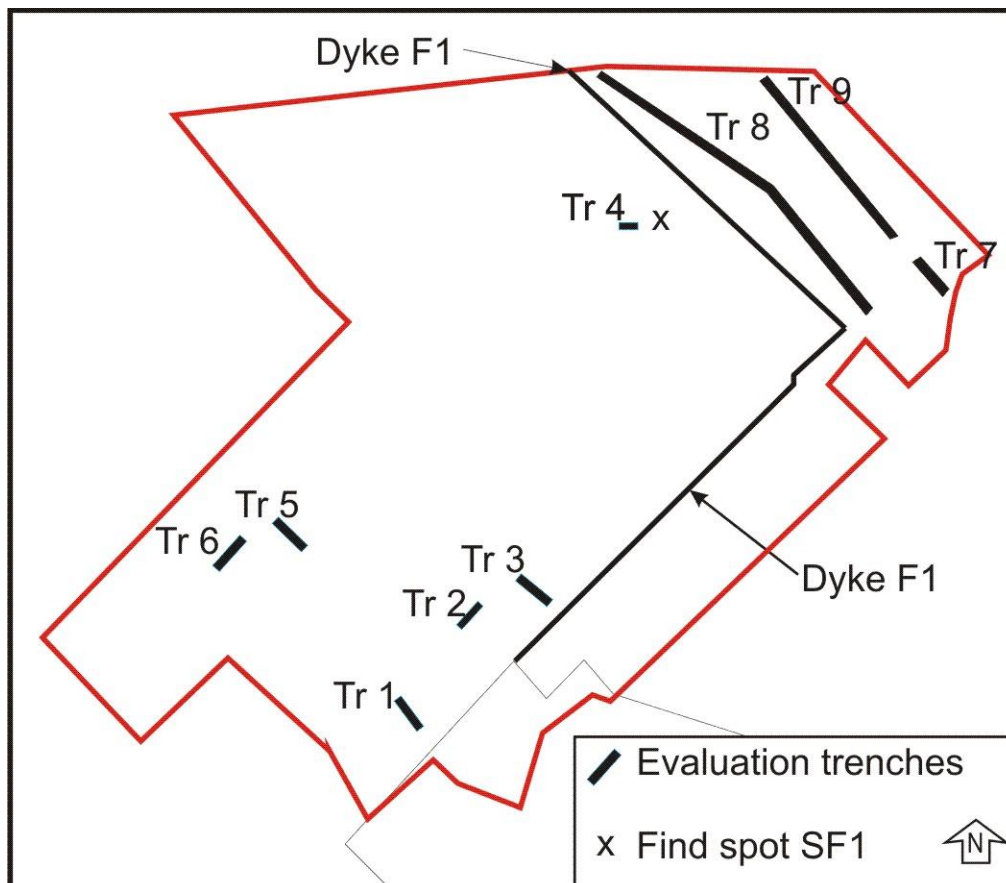
## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Within 1km of the current site are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Cat Cairn and a cairn and dyke 220m NE of Cat Cairn. There are several other sites of archaeological interest in the adjacent Loirston Country Park.
- 3.2 Cat Cairn (NJ90SE 5) is a monument which comprises the remains of a massive burial cairn of bare stones. The monument was first scheduled in 1978 but the boundary of the scheduled area was unclear: the present re-scheduling rectifies this. This massive stone-built burial cairn is situated on Tullos Hill, on a knoll at the SW end of an elevated ridge, at c.85m OD. Although mutilated, this roughly circular cairn measures c.20m in diameter and stands c.2.5m high. A raised 'platform' some 3m wide occurs on the N and S segments and may be an original feature. Another three cairns are located within the close vicinity, indicating that this monument may form part of a relict prehistoric funerary landscape. In particular, Cat Cairn and Baron's Cairn, which lie at the same altitude on knolls at either end of a single ridge, are likely to be associated. The scheduled area is a circle of diameter 60m centred on the centre of the cairn, to include the cairn and an area around it in which evidence relating to its construction and use may survive. The cairn forms part of a cairnfield occupying the area north and east of the current site and there are over 100 other archaeological features on the hill.

3.3 Loirston Country Park, cairn and dyke 220m NE of Cat Cairn comprises a burial cairn of probable Bronze-Age date and part of a consumption dyke of post-medieval date. It survives as a prominent circular mound of turf- and gorse-covered loose stones and two sections of adjoining low dyke, each with rubble infill. The cairn and dyke are located on open recreational ground on a low ridge, running NE-SW and overlooking Nigg bay, approximately 1.5km inland from the coast. The cairn measures approximately 18m in diameter at its widest and is approximately 3m high. It is roughly circular in plan and is partly obscured (in its centre and eastern side) by the removal of stones and overgrown whin and gorse bushes. The two sections of consumption dyke, adjoining the NE and SW quadrants of the cairn, are each approximately 4m wide, 5m long and 1.5m high. They are each formed by two inwards-leaning retaining walls (built using selectively-sized and graded stones) and joined by a rubble core. These sections are part of a longer, isolated consumption dyke whose overall length is roughly 50m.

#### 4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Archaeological evaluations were carried out on 4 December 2013 and 4 June 2014 and the removal of dyke F1 was observed on 29 May 2014.



Illus 3 Plan showing evaluation trenches, 'consumption' dykes F1 and F2 and find spot of saddle quern, SF1.

##### Trenches 1-6

Six trenches (Illus 3) were excavated across the area of the proposed development. All trenches revealed that the site had been prepared prior to the caravan site being established and there are service trenches over much of the site. A saddle quern was found reused in a small low wall built to provide the base for a static caravan (Illus 5-7).



Illus 4 Trench 3 showing natural subsoil with shallow redeposited topsoil and rubble; facing NW



Illus 5 Location of saddle quern (centre) in base for static caravan; facing NE



Illus 6 The saddle quern in situ; facing NE



Illus 7 Saddle quern SF1 found in a modern wall around a base for a static caravan

#### Trenches 7-9

A further evaluation of the NE area of the site took place on 4 June 2014 when Trenches 7-9 were excavated (Illus 8-9). The natural was reddish brown sand with numerous large

earthfast boulders and many stone holes filled with topsoil. The topsoil was shallow (0.1-0.2m) and there was much modern rubbish mixed into the topsoil. There were several tree bolls and many large roots surviving in the topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were recorded in these trenches.



Illus 8 Trenches 8 (left) and 9 (right); facing WNW



Illus 9 Trench 8 showing shallow rooty topsoil and scattered rubbish in the soil; facing NW

#### Dyke F1

Broad dyke F1 was to be removed and a watching brief was carried out on 29 May 2014. The dyke was cut into a trench in the natural subsoil 1.8m wide and the dyke was a maximum of 1.7m high (Illus 10). The dyke was constructed of large boulders in the base,

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a facing of medium sized stones and infilled with medium and small stones. No earlier deposits were observed during the removal.



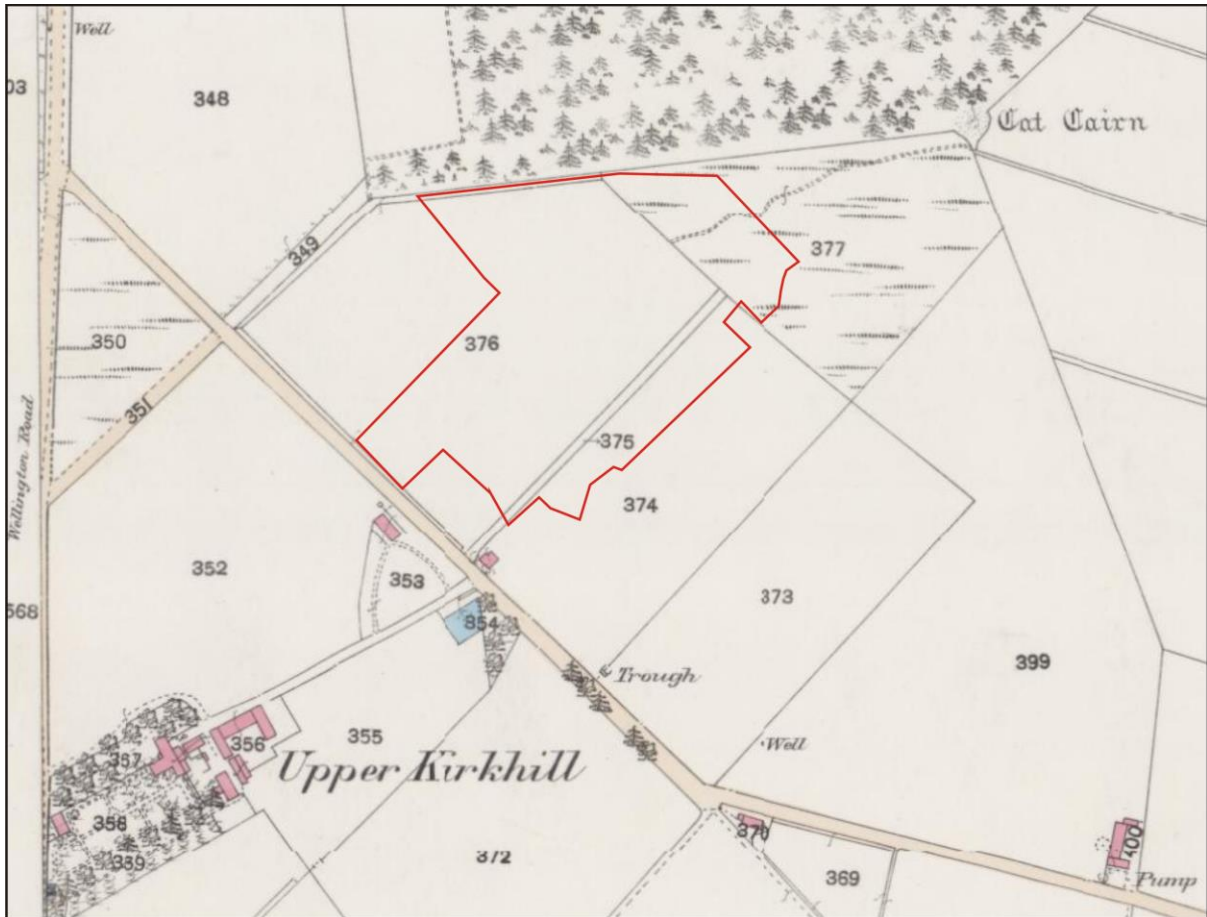
Illus 10 Section through Dyke F1; facing NE

#### 'Dyke F2

This NW-SE was recorded photographically. It consists of a line of large stones, mainly one stone deep and has no further structure. There are no facing stones or hearting stones. It is to be retained and incorporated with in the bund being created at the NE end of the site.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The site had a high potential for archaeological remains as it is close to the Tullos Hill cairnfield and 80m from Cat Cairn. However the amount of previous disturbance, services, static caravan bases, dumping and agricultural use of the area was substantial and no significant archaeological deposits were recorded. The saddle quern in the caravan base may have come from the area and is an interesting find. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current development.



Illus 11 First Edition OS map showing outline of site and dyke F1 shown as double line and F2 as a single line (Copyright National Library of Scotland) Kincardine Sheet IV.7 (Combined) Survey date: 1865 Publication date: 1868

## 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Gordon Blackwell, Argon Developments (North) Limited; Judith Stones, Aberdeen City Council; Gary and Stephen Brown, A&S Brown.

## 7 REFERENCES

Cameron AS 2013 Hareness Road, Altens, Aberdeen report on archaeological assessment. Report submitted to Aberdeen City Council.

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## APPENDIX 1 FEATURES

Feature no	Description
F1	Broad 'consumption' dyke on boundary between current caravan park and Hareness Road car park development site. 1.8m wide, up to 1.7m high constructed of medium and large granite fieldstones.
F2	c1.5m wide and 0.5-0.7m high; consists of line of large boulders, no facing stones, hearting or dyke structure

## APPENDIX 2 FINDS

Find no	Description
SF1	Saddle quern recovered from wall of static caravan base. 0.46 x 0.38 x 0.11m. Pink granite boulder with rounded base and shallow smoothed hollow on upper surface.

## APPENDIX 3 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC_9082-3	Trench 1	SSW
DSC_9084	Trench 1	SW
DSC_9085	Dyke F1 with Trench 1 (right)	SW
DSC_9086-7	Dyke F1 with Trench 1 (left)	NE
DSC_9088-9	Dyke F1 NE of Trench 1	NE
DSC_9090	Caravan park from Tr 1	SW
DSC_9091	Caravan park from Tr 1	NW
DSC_9092	Caravan park from Tr 1	N
DSC_9093	Caravan park from Tr 1	NE
DSC_9094	Test pit location NE of Trench 1 where sewer, water and electricity pipes were all breached and repaired	NW
DSC_9095-6	Trench 2 with washhouse (right)	NE
DSC_9097	F1 adjacent to Trench 2	SE
DSC_9098-9	F1 adjacent to Trench 2 showing Trench 3 (top)	NE
DSC_9100	Tr 3 location	NE
DSC_9101-3	Shower facilities with concrete water tank	NE
DSC_9104-5	Tr 2 backfilled	NE
DSC_9106-7	F1 detail adjacent to Tr 3	SE
DSC_9108-10	F1 NE of Tr 3	NE

DSC_9111-14	Caravan park details showing terracing for levelling static caravan bases and roadways	
DSC_9115-16	Location of SF1 saddle quern in small terracing wall for static caravan	NE
DSC_9117-27	SF1 in situ	NE
DSC_9129-34	NE corner of site caravans, terracing and roadways	
DSC_9135-36	F1 NE end showing increase in height with breeze blocks	NE
DSC_9137-44	NE end of site caravans, terracing and roadways	
DSC_9145	Tr 4 showing location of SF1	NE
DSC_9146-48	NE end of site caravans, terracing and roadways	
DSC_9149	Tr 4 showing location of SF1	NE
DSC_9150-65	central area of site caravans, terracing and roadways	
DSCF6625-7	central area of site caravans, terracing and roadways	
DSCF6628-31	Tr 1	SE
DSCF6632-35	Tr 1 location	SW
DSCF6636	shower block	NW
DSCF6637-39	Tr 2	NE
DSCF6640-42	Tr 2 location	
DSCF6643-46	Tr 3	NW
DSCF6649-51	Tr 4	
DSCF6652-53	SF1 location	NE
DSCF6656-57	Tr 5	SE
DSCF6658	Tr 5	ESE
DSCF6659	Tr 5 location	ENE
DSCF6660	Tr 6	SW
DSCF6661	Tr 6	SSW
DSCF6662	Tr 6 location	NW



DSC\_9082



DSC\_9083



DSC\_9084



DSC\_9085



DSC\_9086



DSC\_9087



DSC\_9088



DSC\_9089



DSC\_9090



DSC\_9091



DSC\_9092



DSC\_9093



DSC\_9094



DSC\_9095



DSC\_9096



DSC\_9097



DSC\_9098



DSC\_9099



DSC\_9100



DSC\_9101



DSC\_9102



DSC\_9103



DSC\_9104



DSC\_9105



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DSC\_9109



DSC\_9110



DSC\_9111



DSC\_9112



DSC\_9114



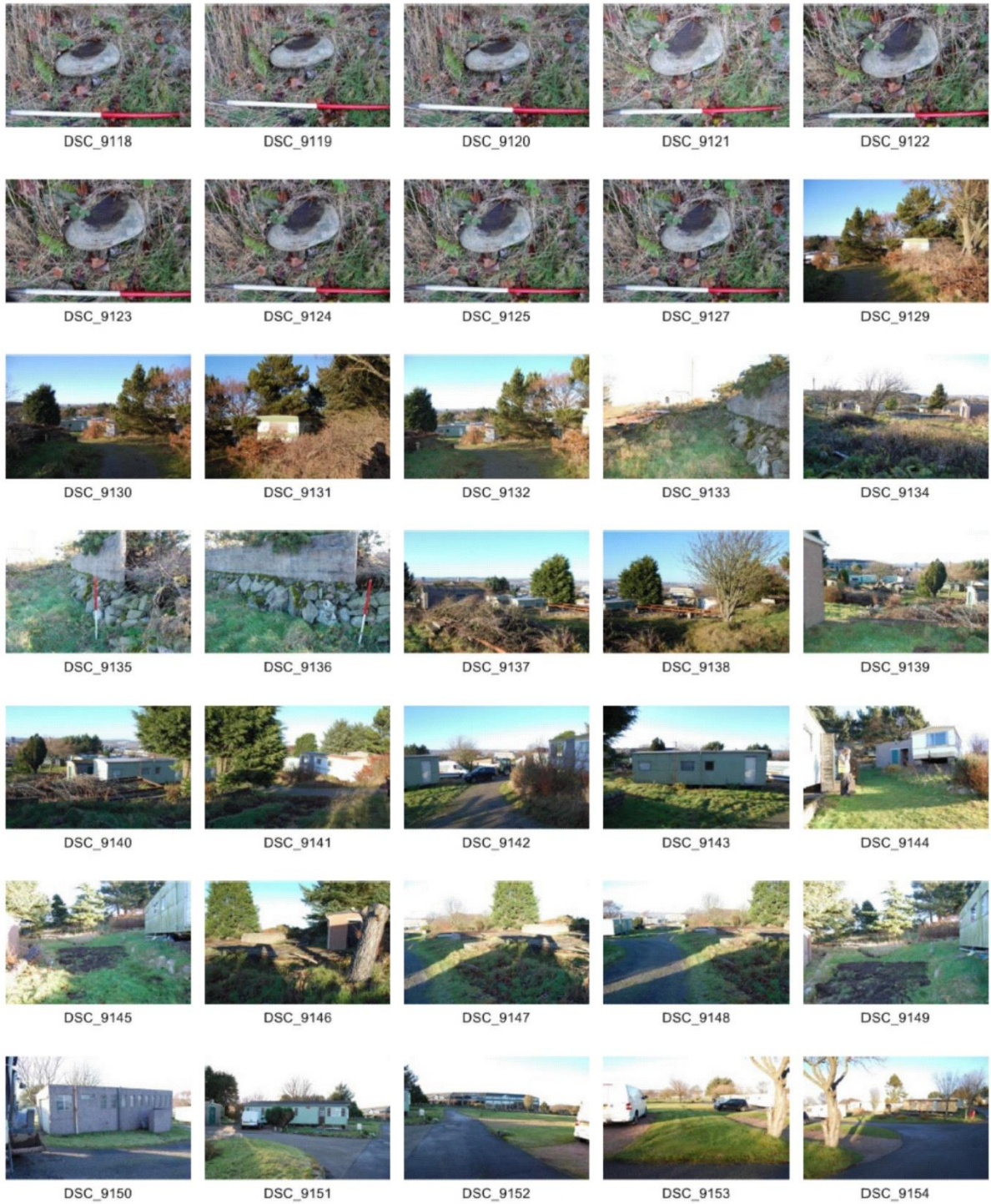
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DSC\_9155



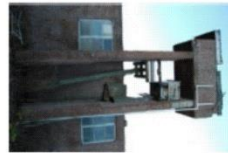
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DSCF6662

## Removal of dyke F1



P1010065



P1010066



P1010067



P1010068



P1010069



P1010070



P1010071



P1010072



P1010073



P1010074



P1010075



P1010076



P1010077



P1010078



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## Trenches 7-9



P1010224



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