

**Land 220m North Of Easter Marcus Cottages, Finavon,
Forfar, Angus, DD8 3QH**

Report on watching brief



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ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: the house site showing shallow topsoil and trees; facing N

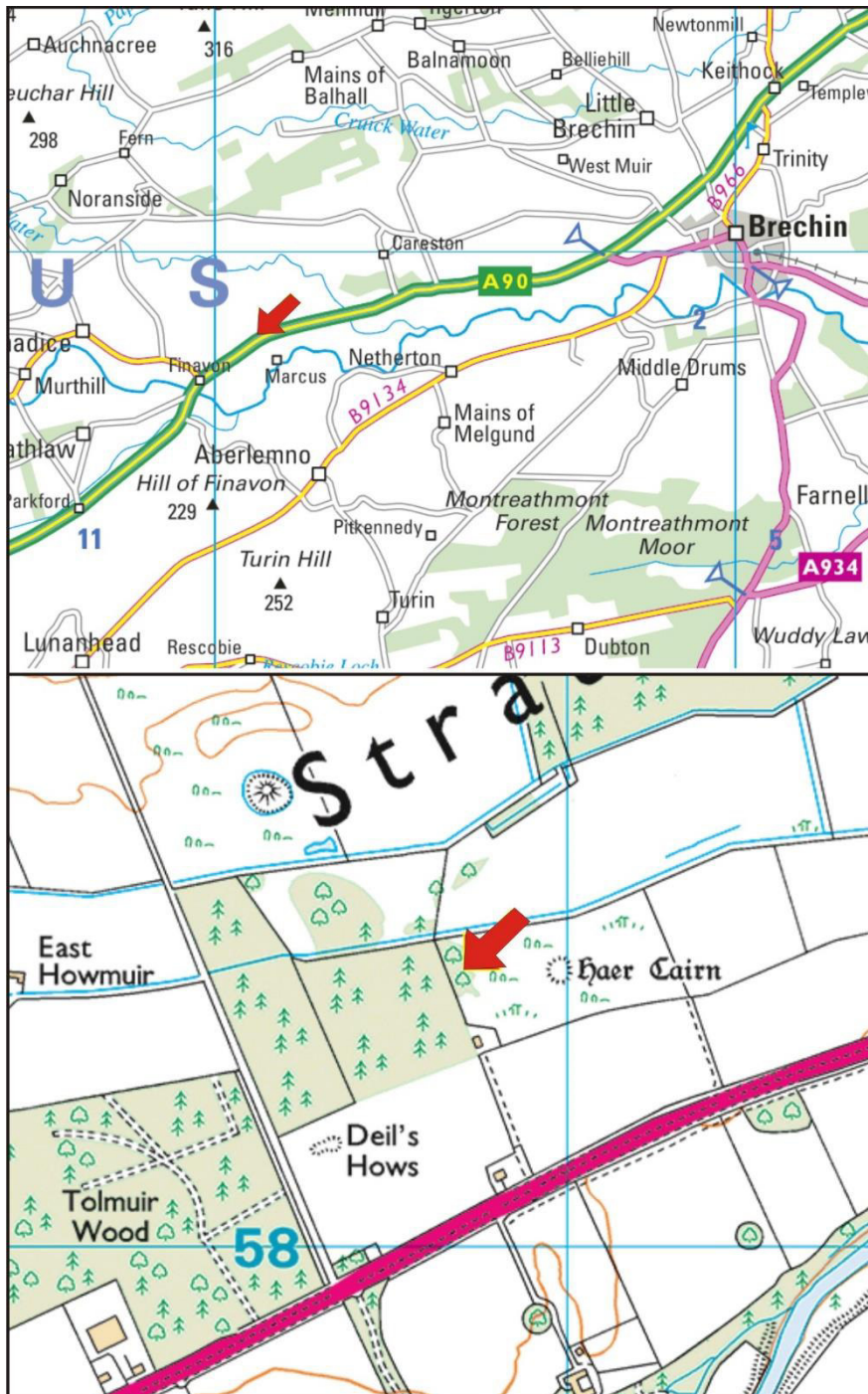
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SUMMARY

A watching brief was carried out on 8 January 2016. The site had previously been stripped of topsoil and strip foundations concreted. A walkover was carried out of the area of the foundations, surrounding field and spoil heaps. The topsoil which had been removed was c10-15cm thick and the area had been heavily planted with trees on the First edition OS map. Approximately 12 trees were removed by the current owner prior to the soil strip at this site. No archaeological features or finds were identified during the walkover/watching brief and as a result it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located on Land 220m North of Easter Marcus Cottages, Finavon, Forfar (Illus 1). It is centred on NGR NO 50828 58327, at 50-60m OD (Illus 1) and in the parish of Tannadice.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Leslie Melville. An Angus Council planning application 14/00358/FULL was approved on Fri 04 Jul 2014 and there is a requirement for a watching brief during ground disturbance.
- 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 2016)

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 100m to the E of the site is Haer Cairn (NO55NW 9; Illus 2, 3) 'Several rude stone coffins...containing human bones... were found c.1833 at a place called the Haercain in Howmuir Wood...there were no urns, and the remains were confined to the coffins' (Jervise 1853). Haer Cairn was a hillock or tumulus which was removed about 1830 and the site is marked by a hollow place in the wood' (Name Book 1861). It measures 38m N-S x 39.5m E-W and is generally c.1.0m high except on the west where it is only 0.2m high. Some spoil heaps give it an added height of 1.2m. The perimeter is clearly defined as a stony bank; but within is just a mass of spoil heaps. One large boulder lies on the west side of the cairn (RCAHMS 1983).
- 2.2 130m N of the site is Noranbank (NO55NW 40; Illus 2). Cropmarks 740m SE of Noranbank farmsteading (Maxwell 1978, 44) reveal what may be the wall-trench of a rectangular timber building measuring about 27m by 8m internally. Although this building may belong to the Neolithic period, its dimensions differ significantly from those at Balbridie (NO79NW 16; Ralston 1982, 238-49), and it could be of much later date.
- 2.3 400m NW of the site is Noranbank (NO55NW 5). An inverted urn with calcined bones upon sandstone slab was found by farmworkers on 2 June 1951 during ploughing operations. The site is a circular knoll - once planted - and the urn was found c.20' north of the centre of the mound, which was excavated by Wainwright and D B Taylor (Wainwright 1951, 1952). This bucket-shaped cinerary urn is in Dundee Museum (Acc. No: 1971-186; Coutts 1971).



Illus 2 Oblique aerial view centred on the cropmarks of the timber hall at Noranbank (NO55NW 40) with Haer Cairn (bottom centre) looking N with site outline in red (copyright Ian Ralston and RCAHMS)

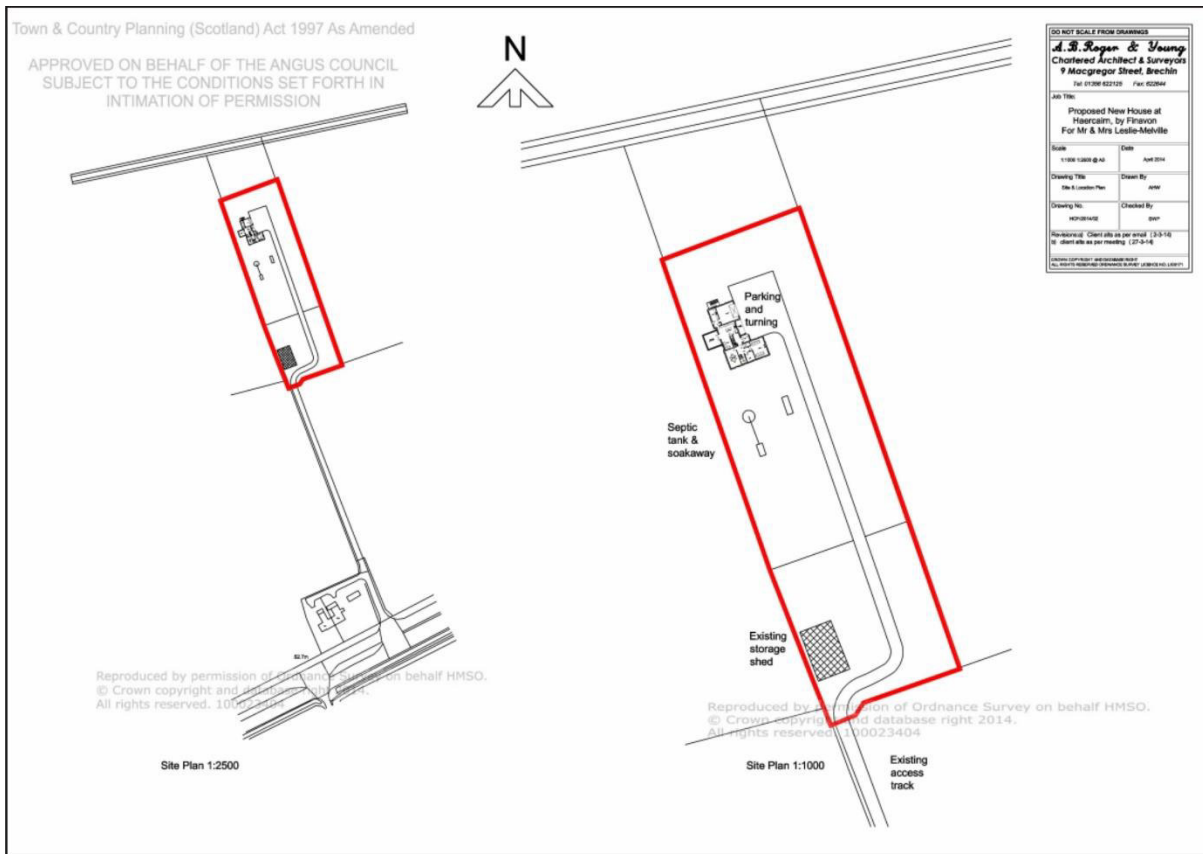


Illus 3 Remains of Haer Cairn from current site; facing E

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was carried out on 8 January 2016. The site had previously been stripped of topsoil and strip foundations concreted (Illus 4, 5). A walkover was carried out of the area of the foundations, surrounding field and spoil heaps (Illus 6). The topsoil which had been removed was c10-15cm thick and the area had been heavily planted with trees on the First edition OS map (Illus 7). Approximately 12 trees were removed by the current owner prior to the soil strip at this site.

No archaeological features or finds were identified during the walkover/watching brief and as a result it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.



Illus 4 Plan of new house (copyright AB Roger and Young Ltd)



Illus 5 Site of house with topsoil removed and foundation trenches dug and cemented; facing W



Illus 6 Spoil heap showing tree roots; facing N

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A watching brief was carried out on 8 January 2016. No archaeological features or finds were identified and as a result it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.

5 REFERENCES

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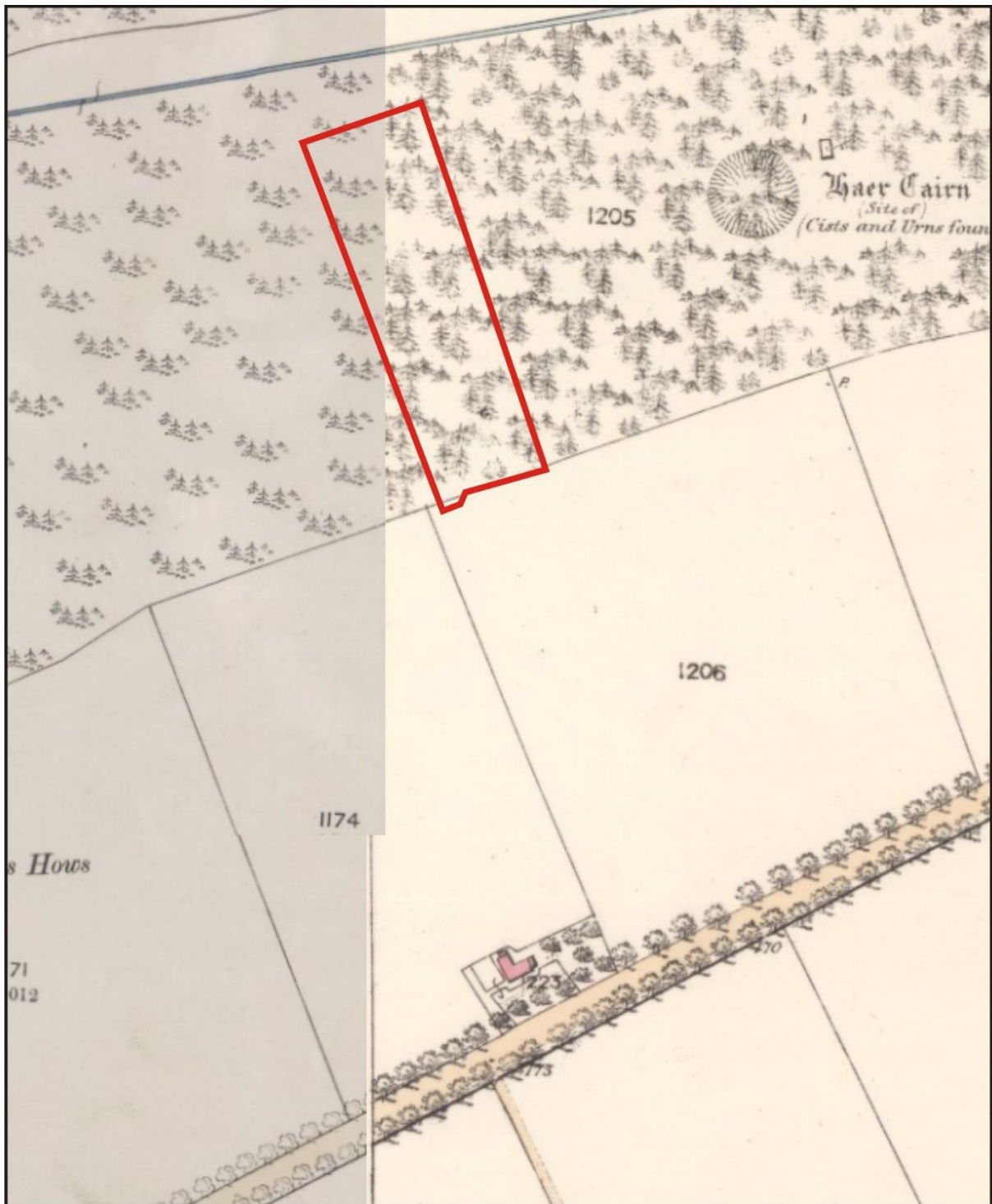
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APPENDIX 1 MAPS



Illus 7 First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Forfar Sheet XXXIII.1/2 (Combined/Tannadice) Survey date: 1861 Publication date: 1865 (copyright National Library of Scotland).

APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC_3743-4	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations showing shallow topsoil and type of trees removed from site	W
DSC_3745	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations showing shallow topsoil and type of trees removed from site	WNW
DSC_3746	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations showing shallow topsoil and type of trees removed from site	NW
DSC_3747-9	Field to W of site with felled trees	SW/W/NW
DSC_3750	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations showing shallow topsoil and type of trees removed from site	N
DSC_3751	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations showing shallow topsoil and type of trees removed from site	NE
DSC_3752-3	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations	ENE/ESE
DSC_3754-6	Area of trampled, waterlogged land N of house and track down to burn	
DSC_3757-59	Spoil heap	
DSC_3760, 62	Haer Cairn	E
DSC_3768-71	Area of cleared ground with concreted foundations	W, WNW, NW
DSC_3772-8	Spoil heap showing tree roots dug from house site	
DSC_3779-85	Haer Cairn and area to S of house site	



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DSC_3744.JPG



DSC_3745.JPG



DSC_3746.JPG



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