

Pitfour Lake, Mintlaw, Peterhead, Plot 4, AB42 4XD
Report on Archaeological watching brief and DSR



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ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: watching brief area; facing NE

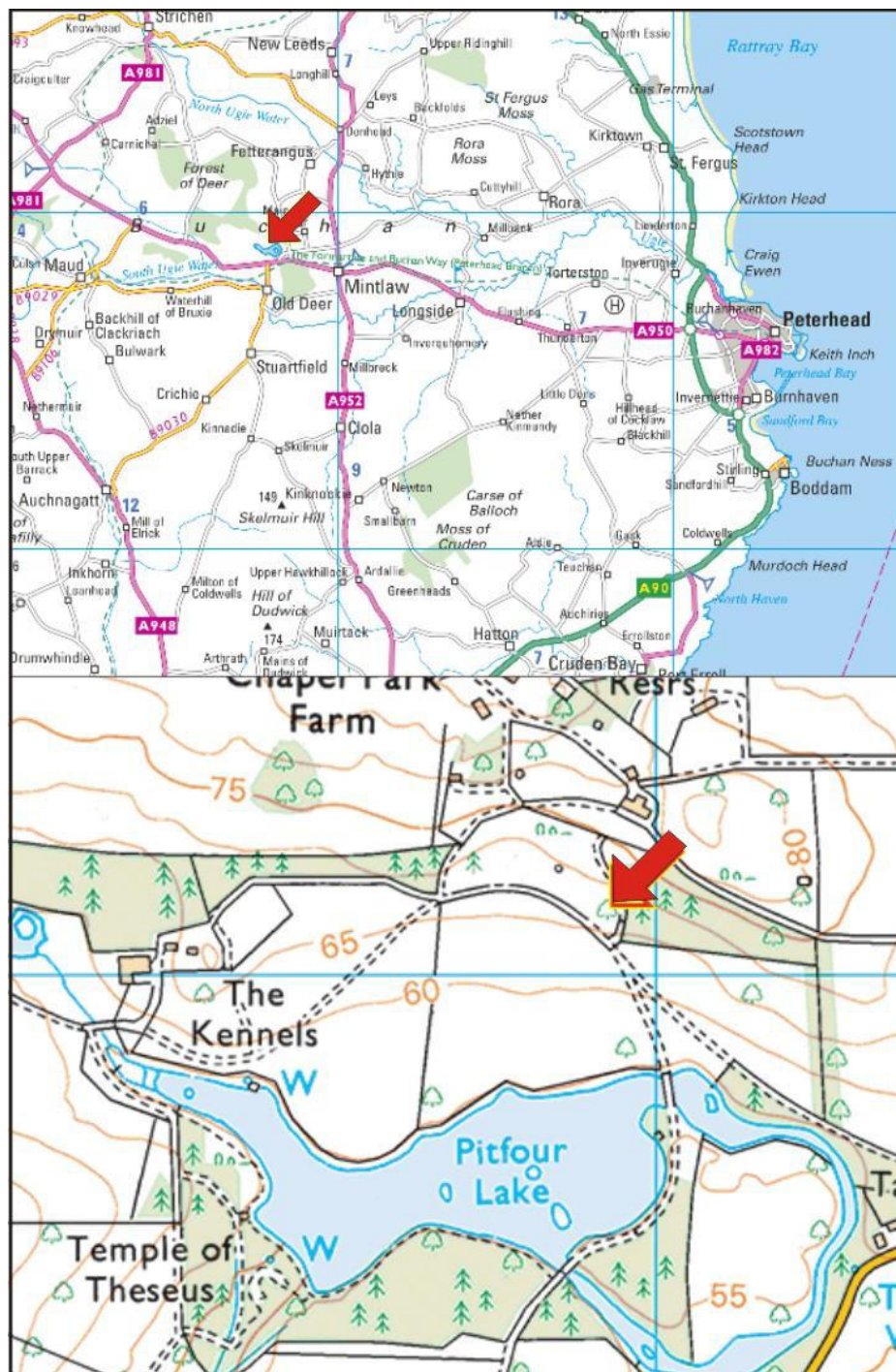
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SUMMARY

A watching brief was carried out on 11 July 2016 during the soil strip for a single house. No archaeological features were recorded and the only find was an early green glass wine bottle probably associated with the 19th-century house. No other finds were recovered and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the development at Plot 4 (Aberdeenshire planning application APP/2015/1377). There is potential for archaeological remains in other areas of the former estate, however.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located in the grounds of the former Pitfour House on the north side of Pitfour Lake. It is centred on NGR NJ 97930 49095, at 65-75m OD in the parish of Old Deer.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Alastair Rennie, Claymore Homes. An application to Aberdeenshire Council APP/2011/4145 for erection of 9 dwellinghouses was granted with standard archaeological condition (condition 8). A further application APP/2015/1377 relates specifically to Plot 4 for a single house development.
- 1.3 All the archaeological work will be 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 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 1km of the proposed development.
- 2.2 The proposed development is in the ground of the former Pitfour House (RCAHMS no NJ94NE 67), site of manor/ mansion house; possible site of Manor Place of Pitfour. The estate came in to the possession of the Ferguson family in the early 18thC. The original estate was enlarged by the acquisition of land at Inverugie, formerly owned by the Earl Marischal. The 'improving' Fergusons subsequently built one of the most magnificent mansions in the north-east designed by John Smith, with landscaped surrounding policies. The finished product was one of the show-pieces of Buchan. The earlier mansion house may have been an addition to the former manor or built on the site of the manor. The conservatory gallery was carried on Ionic columns with a protruding studio on Corinthian columns, which was added along the entire front of the house. When the house was demolished, the studio and gallery were removed to Kinloch House, near St Fergus. Although the house was demolished in 1927-30 and the grounds have suffered much from timber felling, the lake and its surrounding buildings still have great landscape and architectural value. All buildings associated with the house are listed B because of this. To the north of the house lay gasometers, the laundry (with ice-house to the rear), stables and a riding school. To the west were the kennels and pheasantry. There were also sawmills at NJ9627 4930 with a lade leading from the west to it. To the west of the stable block, itself a U-shaped building with central tower, is the remains of a circular game larder (Aberdeenshire HER).
- 2.3 Several of the buildings within the estate are listed. The Stables (NJ94NE 67.5) are listed B: John Smith, shortly after 1820. 2-storey (low 1st) U-plan, pinned rubble (formerly harled) with granite dressings, centrepiece segmental arch with 3 recessed panels over enclosed in antis and pediment with wooden Doric cupola over. Low-pitched roof (now asbestos) behind blocking course. The Game Larder (NJ94NE 67.15) Circa 1820. Single-storey octagon, harled with granite margins, apex of broad-eaved roof platformed with louvre. Dilapidated. The Laundry (NJ94NE 67.4) is listed C Circa 1820. 2-storey 5-window pinned rubble with granite dressings, centre bay projects; broad-eaved piend roof. The Chapel (NJ94NE 67.7) is listed C 1850-1 (as English Episcopal Chapel continuing); Crude gothic, roughly built of rubble, rectangular plan with 60' battlemented W. tower, wood tracery. The NE (NJ94NE 67.1) and SE (NJ94NE 67.2) and NW (NJ94NE 67.3) bridges date to before 1820. 3 low segmental arches with cutwaters granite ashlar built with square recessed panels at the spandrels. Fluted cast-iron post and chain parapets. The Temple of Theseus (NJ94NE 72) circa 1835 is a small Greek Doric Hexastyle temple with 34 granite- column peristyle; wood entabature; very finely detailed. The Boathouse (NJ94NE 67.8) is now listed C Probably before 1820. Single-storey artificial rubble-built ruin with gothic arches; granite dressings; landing area for boats. The Kennels (NJ94NE 67.14) are listed B Before 1820(?). Single-storey 2-window and centre distyle Doric Portico in antis. Rubble built with granite dressings (Historic Scotland online).
- 2.4 On the N side of the estate is Pitfour 'homestead moat' (NJ94NE 41). Air photography (CUCAP BVI 25, flown 29 July 1975 and AAS/77/10/SL/28, flown 8 August 1977) has recorded the cropmark of a rectilinear or rectangular enclosure among indeterminate cropmarks on a gentle slope at an altitude of 75m OD (Bogdan and Bryce 1991, 26).

2.5 On the E of the estate at mains of Pittfour is a rectilinear enclosure (NJ94NE 82). Air photography (AAS/82/12/S14/13-17, flown 20 July 1982) has recorded the cropmark of a rectilinear enclosure on a gentle slope at an altitude of 65m OD.

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was carried out on 11 July 2016 during the soil strip for a single house (Illus 2). The topsoil was 0.1-0.2m deep and heavy grey clay loam; the subsoil was orange brown clayey soil with some sand and gravel. There is evidence that the area had been tree covered and there were several tree boles in the natural subsoil. No archaeological features were recorded and the only find was an early green glass wine bottle probably associated with the 19th-century house.



Illus 2 Plan of watching brief area (copyright Baxter Design).

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A watching brief was carried out on 11 July 2016 during the soil strip for a single house. No archaeological features were recorded and the only find was an early green glass wine bottle probably associated with the 19th-century house. No other finds were recovered and it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the development at Plot 4 (Aberdeenshire planning application APP/2015/1377). There is potential for archaeological remains in other areas of the former estate, however.

5 REFERENCES

Aberdeenshire HER online

Bogdan and Bryce, N and I B D. (1991) *Castles, manors and 'town houses' survey*, *Discovery Excav Scot*, 1991. Page(s): 26

Historic Scotland Listed Buildings online

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITES
within 1km of the proposed site (RCAHMS and Aberdeenshire HER online)

RCAHMS id no	Name	Easting	Northing	OS NGR	Classification		
116840	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, NORTH EAST BRIDGE	398020	848853	NJ 98020 48853	BRIDGE		
116843	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, SOUTH EAST BRIDGE	397891	848623	NJ 97891 48623	BRIDGE (19TH CENTURY)		
116844	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, NORTH WEST BRIDGE	397284	848937	NJ 97284 48937	BRIDGE (19TH CENTURY)		
116847	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, LAUNDRY	397743	849253	NJ 97743 49253	LAUNDRY (19TH CENTURY)		
116848	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, THE STABLES	397981	849218	NJ 97981 49218	STABLE(S) (19TH CENTURY)		
116850	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, CHAPEL	398195	849121	NJ 98195 49121	CHAPEL		
116851	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, BOATHOUSE	397486	848860	NJ 97486 48860	BOATHOUSE		
116852	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, SOUTH LODGE	397802	848315	NJ 97802 48315	GATE LODGE		
116854	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, STATION LODGE AND GATEPIERS	398476	848729	NJ 98476 48729	GATE PIER(S), LODGE		
116855	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, NORTH EAST LODGE	398490	849290	NJ 98490 49290	LODGE		
116856	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, MIDDLE LODGE	398490	849020	NJ 98490 49020	LODGE		
116857	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, THE KENNELS COTTAGE	397405	849031	NJ 97405 49031	COTTAGE		
116858	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, GAME LARDER	397827	849260	NJ 97827 49260	GAME LARDER		
120933	ADEN HOUSE, NORTH LODGE	398487	848425	NJ 98487 48425	LODGE (19TH CENTURY)		

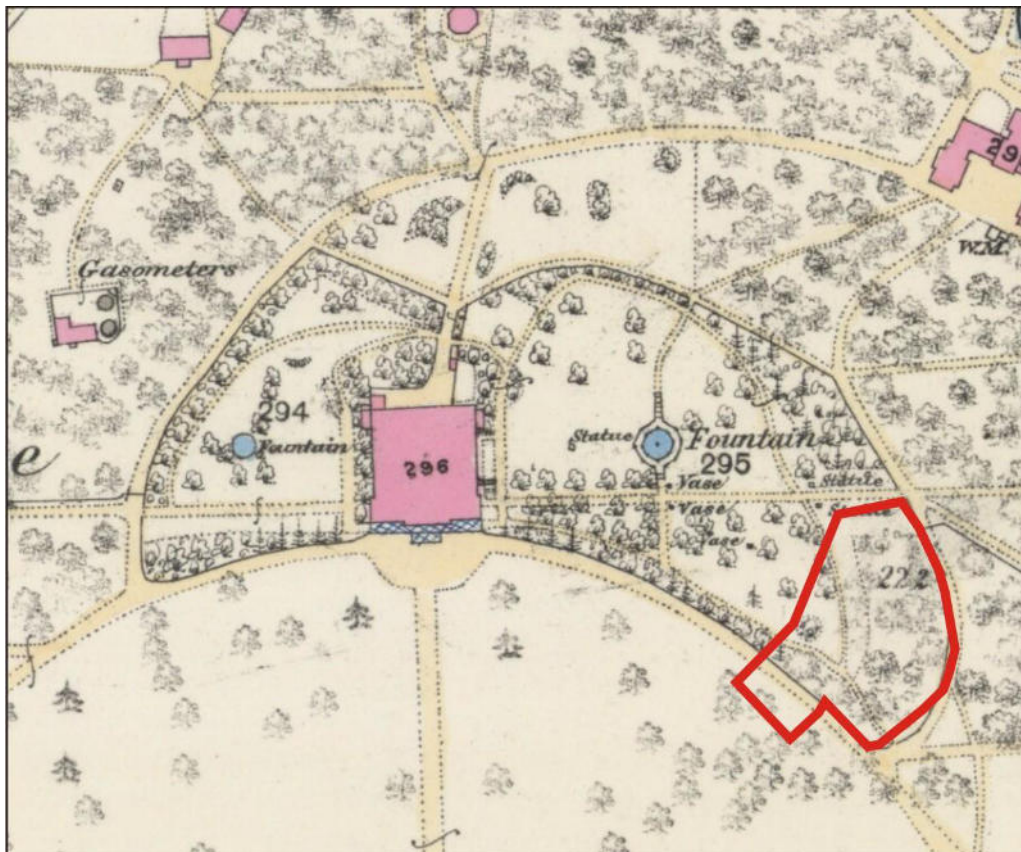
128960	CHAPEL PARK, PITFOUR HOUSE POLICIES	398110	849190	NJ 98110 49190	RIG AND FURROW	
132694	MAINS OF PITFOUR	398600	849200	NJ 98600 49200	RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE (POSSIBLE)	
178726	MINTLAW, 3 DUNSHILLOCK	398790	848740	NJ 98790 48740	HOUSE	
20573	PITFOUR, 'HOMESTEAD MOAT'	398010	849440	NJ 98010 49440	ENCLOSURE	
230375	SAPLINBRAE HOUSE HOTEL	397281	848381	NJ 97281 48381	HOTEL	
231319	CARTLEHAUGH	397942	848330	NJ 97942 48330	HOUSE, INN	
245461	OLD DEER, ROAD BRIDGE OVER DISUSED RAILWAY	397820	848190	NJ 97820 48190	TERM PENDING	
266142	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, SOUTH LODGE, MEMORIAL STONE TO WILLIAM PITT AND VISCOUNT MELVILLE	397820	848316	NJ 97820 48316	COMMEMORATIVE STONE	
266143	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, SOUTH LODGE, GATE PIERS	397812	848314	NJ 97812 48314	GATE PIER(S)	
77048	PITFOUR HOUSE	397816	849130	NJ 97816 49130	COUNTRY HOUSE	
80773	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, MINERAL WELL	397500	848630	NJ 97500 48630	WELL	
80774	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, TEMPLE OF THESEUS	397472	848693	NJ 97472 48693	FOLLY (19TH CENTURY)	
80775	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, OBSERVATORY	397349	849873	NJ 97349 49873	OBSERVATORY (19TH CENTURY)	
83972	SAPLINBRAE	397100	848500	NJ 97100 48500	CULTIVATION REMAINS, FIELD SYSTEM, PLANTATION BANK(S), RIG AND FURROW, ROAD(S)	

Aberdeenshire HER no	Site Name
NJ94NE0016	PITFOUR
NJ94NE0021	SAPLINBRAE
NJ94NE0027	WATERMEADOW
NJ94NE0028	MEADOW BANK
NJ94NE0029	MEADOW BANK

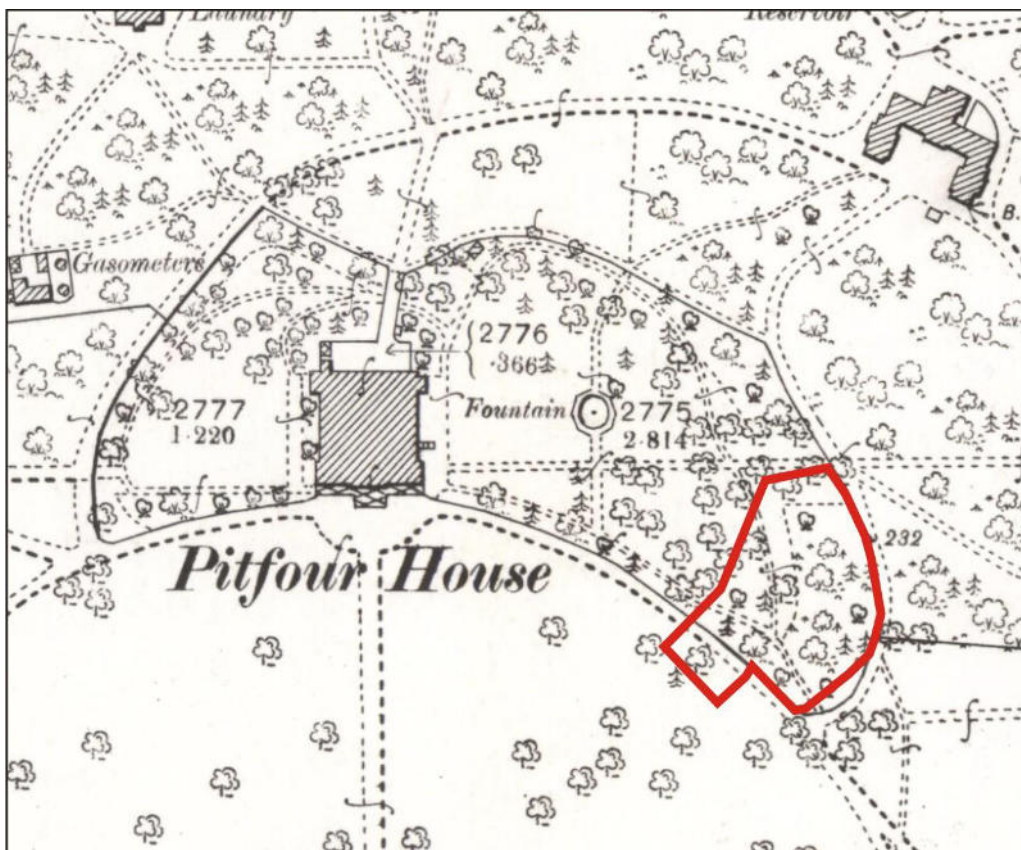
Aberdeenshire HER no	Site Name
NJ94NE0030	CARTLEHAUGH
NJ94NE0031	PITFOUR ROAD
NJ94NE0033	PITFOUR
NJ94NE0039	PITFOUR
NJ94NE0049	PITFOUR
NJ94NE0053	PITFOUR CHURCH
NJ94NE0052	CHAPEL PARK
NJ94NE0078	OLD DEER
NJ94NE0074	MAVISBANK
NJ94NE0076	WAULKMILL
NJ94NE0077	ADEN HOUSE
NJ94NE0048	PITFOUR
NJ94NE0050	DRINNIE'S WOOD OBSERVATORY
NJ94NE0054	MINTLAW STATION
NJ94NE0111	ADEN COUNTRY PARK
NJ94NE0112	ADEN COUNTRY PARK
NJ94NE0114	SAPLINBRAE
116840	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, NORTH EAST BRIDGE
116843	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, SOUTH EAST BRIDGE
116844	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, NORTH WEST BRIDGE
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77048	PITFOUR HOUSE
80773	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, MINERAL WELL
80774	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, TEMPLE OF THESEUS
80775	PITFOUR HOUSE ESTATE, OBSERVATORY
83972	SAPLINBRAE

APPENDIX 2 MAPS



Illus 3 First Edition OS map showing site outline in red (*copyright National Library of Scotland*) Aberdeen Sheet XIII.16 (Old Deer) Survey date: 1870 Publication date: 1874



Illus 4 Second Edition OS map showing site outline in red (*copyright National Library of Scotland*) Aberdeenshire 013.16 (includes: Old Deer) Publication date: 1902 Revised: 1901



Illus 5 1976 aerial photograph with proposed development outlined in red. NCAP-000-000-196-459 (copyright NCAP).

APPENDIX 3 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
DSC_2138-9	Watching brief area from the track	SW
DSC_2140-45	Watching brief area with field and Pitfour Lake in background	SW/WSW
DSC_2146-48	Natural subsoil W side of plot showing shallow topsoil and disturbance from tree boles and dumping	all
DSC_2149-58	Pitfour Lake and the Temple NMRS NJ94NE 72	
DSC_2160-69	Natural subsoil E side of plot showing shallow topsoil and disturbance from tree boles and dumping	SW/WSW
IMG5908-13	Site prior to soil strip showing uneven ground, boggy areas and disturbance from trees and previous agricultural works including tree felling	all
IMG5940-2	Chapel NJ94NE 67.7 converted to housing	



DSC_2138.JPG



DSC_2139.JPG



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