

**Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief
Beannachar Camphill Community,
Banchory Devenick, Aberdeenshire, AB12 5YL**



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26-08-2018**

CONTENTS

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|----|
| 1 | BACKGROUND | 3 |
| 2 | ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND | 4 |
| 3 | THE WATCHING BRIEF | 6 |
| 4 | CONCLUSIONS | 8 |
| 5 | REFERENCES..... | 8 |
| | APPENDIX 1 | 9 |
| | APPENDIX 2 MAPS..... | 12 |
| | APPENDIX 3 PHOTOGRAPHS | 19 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: Soil strip in progress at Beannachar.

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| Illus 1 | Location plan (Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018)..... | 3 |
| Illus 2 | Site plan showing proposed development (copyright Straw Works)..... | 7 |
| Illus 3 | Area of soil strip in red. Current parking areas to W of main soil strip will remain as is. (contains data copyright Google & Digital Globe 2018). | 7 |
| Illus 4 | Pont's map of c1583-96 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland). | 12 |
| Illus 5 | Gordon's map of 1640 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland). | 13 |
| Illus 6 | Blaeu's map of 1654 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland). | 13 |
| Illus 7 | Roy's map of 1747-55 showing approximate area of proposed development (<i>copyright National Library of Scotland</i>). | 15 |
| Illus 8 | Thomson's map of 1822 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland). | 15 |
| Illus 9 | Garden's map of 1774 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland). | 16 |
| Illus 10 | Robertson's map of 1822 showing approximate area of proposed development (<i>copyright National Library of Scotland</i>). | 16 |
| Illus 11 | First Edition OS map showing site outline in red (copyright National Library of Scotland). Aberdeenshire LXXXVI.2 (Combined) Survey date: 1864 to 1866 Publication date: 1892 | 17 |
| Illus 12 | Second Edition OS map showing site outline in red..... | 18 |
| Illus 13 | Third Edition OS map showing site outline in red..... | 18 |
| Illus 14 | 2012 aerial photograph (copyright Google Earth Pro). | 19 |

SUMMARY

On August 21st, 2018, a watching brief took place during a soil strip for a 10x15m office building at the Beannachar Camphill Community near Banchory-Devenick. No archaeological finds or features were noted. Therefore, no other archaeological work is deemed necessary at this time.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located on the S side of the B9077 South Deeside Road and w of Tollochill Woods. It is centred on NGR NJ 91516 02465, at 25-30m OD in the parish of Banchory-devenick.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Jim Hornby, Beannachar. An application APP/2018/0012 for erection of office building to Aberdeenshire Council was approved on 12 January 2018 with archaeology condition for a watching brief or monitored topsoil (condition 1).
- 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 Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statement (HESPS) 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 2018)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is one Scheduled Monument within 1km of the proposed development. On the opposite side of the Dee (in Aberdeen City) is Pitfoddels Castle (HES NJ90SW 1) which is the remains of a medieval motte and bailey castle, which controlled a nearby ford across the River Dee. The motte, known as Castleheugh, comprises an irregular oval mound c.40m long by 25m wide, with regularly scarped sides. This is surmounted by a smaller mound with an artificial level top measuring 7m by 3m. The site as a whole stands to a maximum height of c.4.5m. The ground surface immediately around the motte is flat and grassed over. The presence of a bailey was recorded in 1961 but no trace of it is visible today; it may have been removed by landscaping around the motte. Originally Pitfoddels belonged to the Moray family, passing in the late 14th century to the Reids. In the early 16th century, it passed by marriage to the Menzies, and it was probably they who were responsible for erecting a late medieval stone-built castle within the bailey of the earlier motte. This castle was ruinous by the 18th century but the site remained in the hands of the Menzies until 1843.
- 2.2 The proposed development is within the 17th to 19th century designed landscape (HER NJ90SW0060) of Drumduan House (now Banchory House, HER NJ90SW0059). It is a small mansion house stands on the S side of the River Dee at an altitude of 15m OD with walled garden (HES NJ90SW 6.02, 6.03), home farm (HES NJ90SW 6.01), coach house (HER NJ90SW0064) and lodges to Drumduan House (E Lodge HES NJ90SW 25, N Lodge HES NJ90SW 27.01, W Lodge HES NJ90SW 26, S Lodge HES NJ90SW 6.02),
- 2.3 Within the grounds of Banchory House was the find spot of a Cist (HES NJ90SW0005, 6), probably Bronze Age, lies in the garden of Banchory House. A cist, thought to have been removed from higher ground in the immediate vicinity of Banchory House, is preserved in the garden of that house. At NJ 9134 0224, in the main garden of Banchory House, are two short cists, one of which is probably that referred to above. There are three reconstructed cists on the E side of a pond 250m SW of Banchory House. One came from Cotbank, near Ardoe, NJ80SE 28 and the other two were found at Clashfarquhar in 1817 and 1822 respectively, NO99NW 13. There is no other evidence for a cist having been found in the vicinity of Banchory House (Banchory museum, 17; McConnochie 1898, 158, RCAHMS 1984, 58).
- 2.4 Remains of what looks like a short cist and small ring cairn in Tollohill Wood (HER NJ90SW0050). A massive cap-stone, c.2m by 1.20m is still in situ and held in position by a ring of large stones angling inwards slightly. Only the N side slab of the cist and the kerb stones are missing, where it has been robbed in antiquity. A number of stones lie slightly downslope; stands proud and clear of vegetation.
- 2.5 What is probably a robbed cairn (HES NJ90SW 22) is situated on the NW edge of a terrace 90m WNW of Parknook cottage; it measures 17.5m in diameter but has been reduced to little more than a ring of cairn material 2m thick and 0.4m high. On the S, immediately beyond the edge of the cairn a massive slab of rock is visible but it is probably outcrop. About 20m ESE there is an oval heap of stones (measuring 2m by 3m), and there are two other possible heaps nearby. The robbed cairn is possibly all that survives of a cairn which is supposed to have stood 90m to the NE (NJ 9192 0212), but was removed before 1865 (OSNB, 2, 50; RCAHMS 1984, 49).
- 2.6 A lozenge-shaped spear-head, 4 1/4 ins in length, found at Tullohill, Banchory, was thought to be in the King's College Museum, Aberdeen (HES NJ90SW 9) but it's present whereabouts are unknown (Anderson and Black 1888, 362; Watt 1914, 20).

- 2.7 Denuded remains of a possible rectangular structure in Tollohill Wood (NJ90SW0051). A line of five large stones sit on edge with a spread of smaller stones to the E, scattered over 2.5m. Remains of a second wall appears to join this 'wall' again with a spread to the exterior. One upright large stone sits on the edge of this. Approximately 20m to the SW is another group of scattered stones with two uprights. Another denuded remains of a possible small rectangular building in Tollohill Wood (HER NJ90SW0052). Only two sides and part of a third survive. The remains are partly grass-covered (Grieg 1995, 34) and both were reported to Grampian Region's Archaeological Service by Mr Walker, 74 Broomhill Road, Aberdeen.
- 2.8 A tree-covered spur which runs in a N/S direction, with a steep slope at its N end, was locally believed to be a motte (HER NJ90SW0038; see First Edition OS map Illus 3). This not now thought to be a motte but possibly a moot hill (Yeoman 1988, 130). The site may be where the Proprietors of Banchory Estate in former days sat, and held their Courts of Justice (OSNB, 2, 49).
- 2.9 A monument was erected on the Tollohill (HER NJ90SW0063) to commemorate Prince Albert on his visit to Banchory House, the main house on the Banchory and Leggart Estate. He stayed at Banchory House in September 1859 whilst attending a conference in Aberdeen. Banchory and Leggart Estates form the largest landholding in the parish of Banchory-Devenick in Aberdeenshire. The monument and the network of woodland paths leading to it were restored and upgraded by the estate in 2005 as part of the Forestry Commissions WIAT (Woodlands In and Around Town) Initiative. The monument is in the form of a stone (granite) obelisk, and is inscribed: 'In remembrance of the visit of H.R.H. Albert Prince Consort to this spot XV sept MDCCCLIX'.
- 2.10 On the river Dee adjacent to Banchory-Devenick is the site of a possible bridge (HES NJ90SW 65; Harding 1997, 5).
- 2.11 To the W of the proposed development is Banchory-Devenick Church (HER NJ90SW0044; also known as St. Devenick's Church), built on the site of earlier churches. A post-reformation church is recorded as having been built on this site in 1642, but is said to have been built on an even earlier church site. St Devenick, an early Christian missionary is thought to have been buried on, or near, this site on 13 November 887 AD. The present church was built in 1822, and is oblong in plan, constructed of harled rubble with granite detailing stones including a base course, quoin strips and window and door surrounds. The East gable has a single large lancet window with intersecting tracery. The North elevation has a small hipped-roof extension used as a store. There are also small lancet windows at the West and East ends of the North elevation. Alterations were carried out in 1865 and 1925. To the S of the proposed development is St-Devenick's-on-the-Hill church (HER NJ90SW0025), a Former Free Church, built in 1843. The church of St Devenicks is a plain classic oblong shape with projecting porch surmounted by bell turret. There is dormer clerestory lighting. The west end of the church has a small attached vestry with a chimney. The walls are harled and there are granite window surrounds and skew stones. Within the churchyard is the Stewart Vault, small octagonal and in gothic style, built of ashlar with a domed roof and dated 1895. It lies adjacent to the burial ground. The church was converted to private flats in 1989.
- 2.12 On the N side of the river (in Aberdeen City) is Garthdee House, now Scott Sutherland School of Architecture (HES NJ90SW 87). Proposals for a phased redevelopment of the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture, The Robert Gordon University, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen required that an archaeological evaluation of the site be carried out

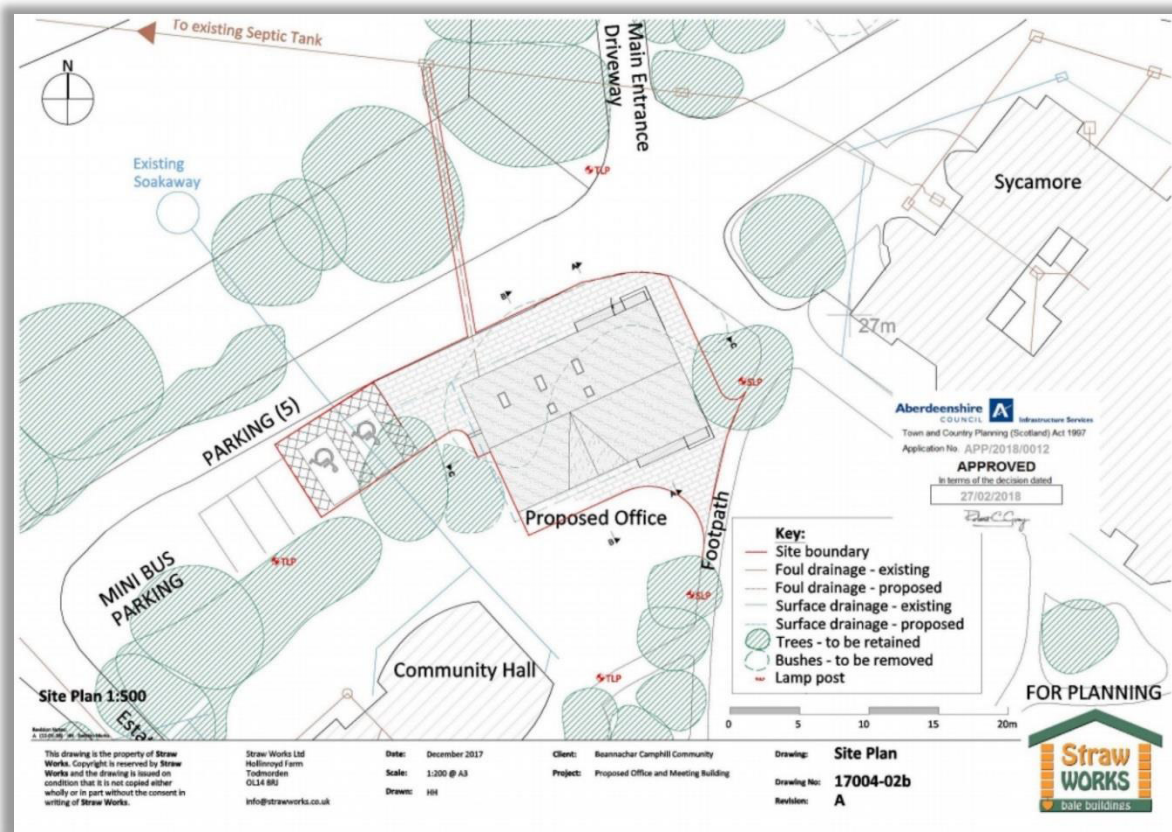
prior to the commencement of the development. The evaluation showed that all the topsoil and subsoil in the area of the development had probably been removed during the construction phases of the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture in the 1960's. No archaeological features or finds were evident where the evaluation was carried out (Murray 2006, 13). Also Kaim House (HES NJ90SW 85), Robert Gordon University Campus (NJ90SW 293). An evaluation was carried out 7 June–5 July 2010 on the eastern part of a development site at Garthdee Campus. The work was considered necessary due to the proximity of a previously excavated Neolithic structure (NJ90SW 268). A trial trench evaluation carried out 7–11 June 2010 revealed the remains of a building marked on an early 20th-century OS map. This building was probably associated with the gravel pit (NJ90SW 236) that is marked on the same map and which the evaluation trenches indicated had been used for modern landfill. A cluster of possible pits and features, one of which contained a flint blade of Early Neolithic date, were also recorded during the evaluation. A subsequent excavation on 5 July 2010 revealed that the possible pit features were tree boles. The discovery of the flint blade in the upper fill of one these features probably reflects the effect of bioturbation (Arabaolaza and Becket, GUARD).

- 2.13 The site is shown in countryside on the early maps (Illus 3-9), and part of the Banchory House Estate on the OS maps (Illus 10-12) and 2012 aerial photograph (Illus 13).

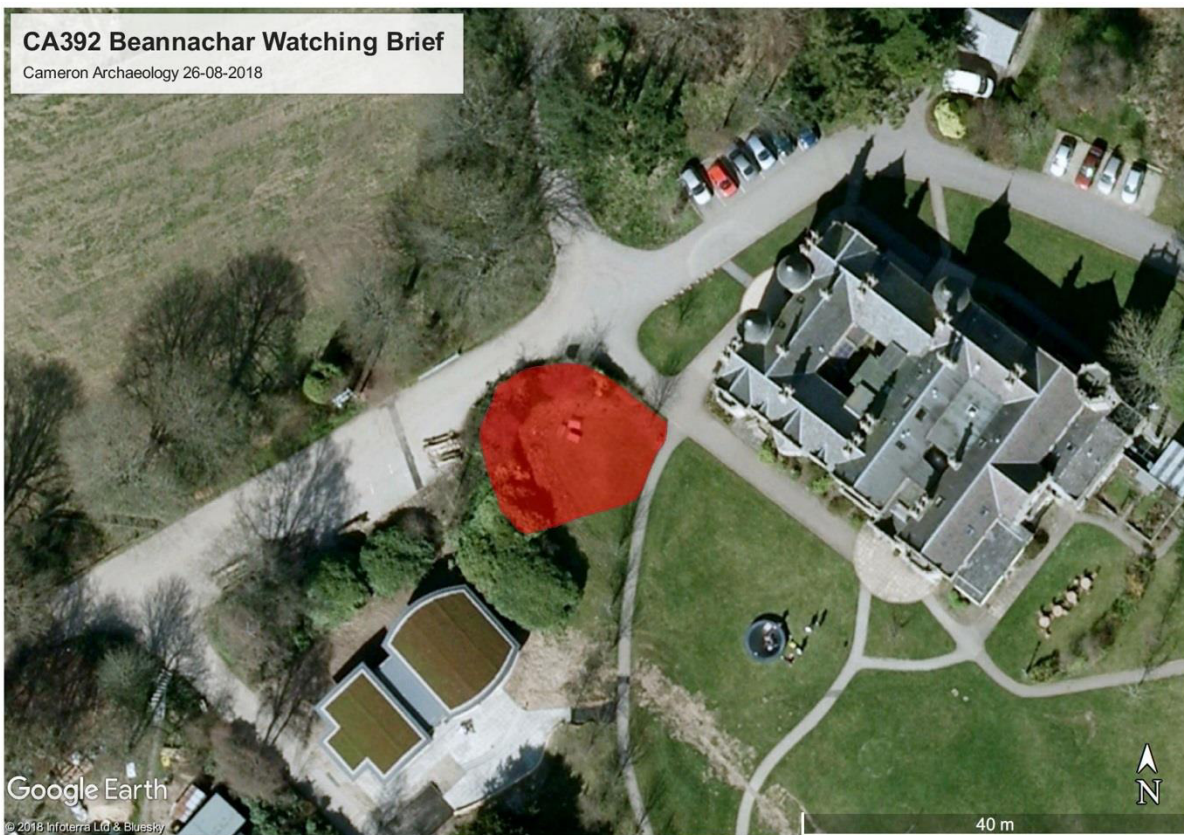
3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

On August 21st, 2018 a watching brief took place at the Beannachar Camphill Community near Banchory-Devenick, Aberdeenshire. This work was carried out in advance of construction of a new office building on the grounds. The area requiring the soil strip changed to some degree from the original plan, to solely accommodate the foundations and room for external scaffolding for the new structure, which measures 10x15m. The current parking areas to the west will remain as is and undisturbed. This change is contrasted between Illustrations 2 & 3, but overall there was little deviation from the original design.

The topsoil depth ranged from 0.2m to 0.6m overall – this reflects built-up areas of landscaping within the garden area. The subsoil partially comprised a yellowish-brown silty sand with moderate stony inclusions, typically >20cm/dia, but was also interspersed with a much darker reddish-brown sandy silt with gritty inclusions. The subsoil also contained darker areas of leeching from decaying vegetation and previous disturbance with the construction of the gardens. It also appeared that the original ground surface was levelled and likely lowered in this area at some point contemporary with, or after the initial construction of the present day Banchory House.



Illus 2 Site plan showing proposed development (copyright Straw Works).



Illus 3 Area of actual soil strip in red. Current parking areas to W of main soil strip will remain unmodified. (contains data copyright Google & Digital Globe 2018).

4 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological finds or features were noted, therefore no other archaeological mitigation is deemed necessary at this time.

5 REFERENCES

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6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Jim Hornby, Beannachar for initiating this project and to Claire Herbert, Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service for her advice during this work.

APPENDIX 1

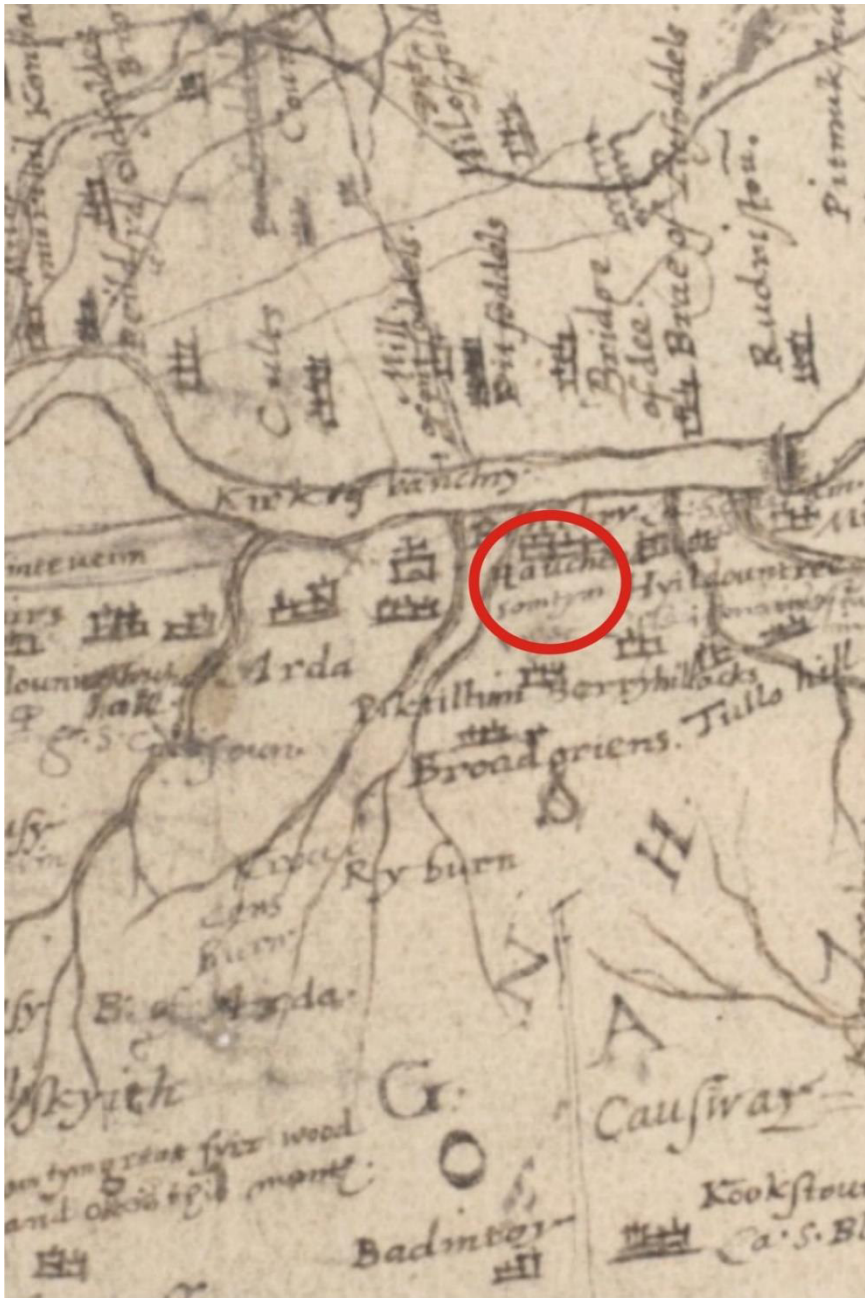
Archaeological and historical sites within 1km of the proposed site (HES and Aberdeenshire HER online)

| Dataset | Dataset UID | Name | Details |
|---------|----------------|--|---|
| HERABER | NJ90SW0044 | Banchory-devenick Church | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0018 | Banchory-devenick | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0060 | Drumduan House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0059 | Drumduan House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0025 | St Devenick's-on-the-hill Church | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0064 | Drumduan Coach House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0005 | Banchory House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0006 | Banchory House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0038 | Mote Hill | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0039 | Banchory House | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0022 | Tullohill Wood | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0052 | Tollohill Wood | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0003 | Parknook | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0050 | Tollohill Wood | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0004 | Tullohill | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0063 | Tollohill Monument | - |
| HERABER | NJ90SW0051 | Tollohill Wood | - |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90670 02476 | Banchory-devenick, St Devenick's Church | Burial Ground (period Unassigned), Church (period Unassigned), War Memorial (20th Century), Banchory-devenick Parish Kirk, Banchory-devenick Old Parish Church, War Memorial Roll Of Honour |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90819 03156 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Norwood, West Lodge | Gate Lodge (period Unassigned), Pitfodels, Norwood Hall Hotel |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91038 03186 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Gartdee House, West Lodge | Gate Lodge (period Unassigned), Scott Sutherland School Of Architecture, Garthdee House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91060 03130 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Campus | Building (period Unassigned), Blade (flint)(neolithic) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91060 03130 | Garthdee Road, Robert Gordon's Institute Of Technology | No Class (event) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91100 03290 | East Middleton | Cottage (period Unassigned), Croft (period Unassigned), Aberdeen, Auchinyell Road, North Garthdee |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91130 03060 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Gray's School Of Art | College (20th Century), Garthdee House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91376 03057 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Garthdee House | Villa (19th Century), Scott Sutherland School Of Architecture, Garthdee House Policies |

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------|--|---|
| RCAHMS | NJ 91380 03260 | Aberdeen, 4 Gaitside Terrace | Barbed And Tanged Arrowhead (flint) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91430 03120 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Garthdee House, East Lodge | Gate Lodge (period Unassigned), Scott Sutherland School Of Architecture, Garthdee House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91635 03060 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Kaim House | House (20th Century) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91837 03077 | Robert Gordon University | University (period Unassigned), Garthdee Campus |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90672 02438 | Banchory-devenick, St Devenick's Church, Watch House | Watch House (period Unassigned) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90676 02412 | Banchory-devenick, Old Schoolhouse | Schoolhouse (period Unassigned), Kirkton Cottage |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90683 02207 | Whin Cottage | Cottage (period Unassigned), School (period Unassigned), Former Female School |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90702 02957 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Drumgarth, Windmill | Windmill (period Unassigned), Inchgarth Road |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90870 02500 | Banchory House, West Lodge | Lodge (period Unassigned) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 90983 02973 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Norwood | Hotel (period Unassigned), House (period Unassigned), Pitfodels, Norwood Hall Hotel, Norwood House Hotel |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91000 03000 | Aberdeen, Garthdee Estate | General View, Pitmedden Road |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91030 02960 | Pitfoddell's Castle | Castle (medieval), Pitfodels, Pitfoddels Castle, Norwood House Hotel |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91080 02710 | Aberdeen, River Dee | Bridge (period Unassigned) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91140 02600 | Drumduan | Country House (period Unassigned), Banchory House, Drumduan House |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91187 01696 | St Devenick's On The Hill | Burial Ground (period Unassigned), Church (period Unassigned), Free Church Of St Devenick, St Devenicks- on-the-hill Parish Kirk |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91260 01706 | St Devenick's Churchyard, Stewart Vault | Mausoleum (period Unassigned), Stewart's Vault, Stewart Vault, St Devenick's Kirkyard |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91293 01868 | St Devenick's Manse | Manse (period Unassigned), Gregellen House |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91305 02678 | Drumduan, Lodge | Lodge (period Unassigned), Banchory House, Drumduan Lodge, Drumduan House, Lodge |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91330 02130 | Banchory House, Home Farm | Farmstead (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| RCAHMS | NJ 91350 02290 | Banchory House | Cist(s) (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91450 02350 | Banchory House, Walled Garden | Walled Garden (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91490 01900 | Banchory House, South Lodge | Lodge (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91540 02540 | Mote Hill, Banchory House | Moot Hill (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91561 02468 | Beannachar | Pictish Symbol Stone(s) (pictish), Banchory House |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91820 02040 | Tollohill Wood, Parknook | Structure (period Unassigned)(possible) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91830 02070 | Tollohill Wood, Parknook | Cairn (period Unassigned) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91920 02110 | Tollohill Wood, Parknook | Cairn (period Unassigned) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91940 02650 | Banchory House, East Lodge | Lodge (period Unassigned), Banchory House Policies |
| RCAHMS | NJ 91950 02350 | Tollohill Wood, Parknook | Cist (period Unassigned)(possible), Ring Cairn (neol/bronze Age)(possible) |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92000 02000 | Tollohill | Spearhead, Tullohill, Tullo Hill |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92000 03000 | Aberdeen, Kaimhill | General View |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92000 03000 | Bridge Of Dee | Axe Hammer |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92000 03000 | Bridge Of Dee | Inorganic Material(s) (bronze), River Dee |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92190 03120 | Garthdee, Gravel Pit | Sand And Gravel Workings (period Unassigned), Aberdeen, Garthdee Road, Kaimhill Farm |
| RCAHMS | NJ 92020 02130 | Tollohill Wood, Parknook | Structure(s) (period Unassigned)(possible) |

APPENDIX 2 MAPS



Illus 4 Pont's map of c1583-96 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 5 Gordon's map of 1640 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 6 Blaeu's map of 1654 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 7 Roy's map of 1747-55 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



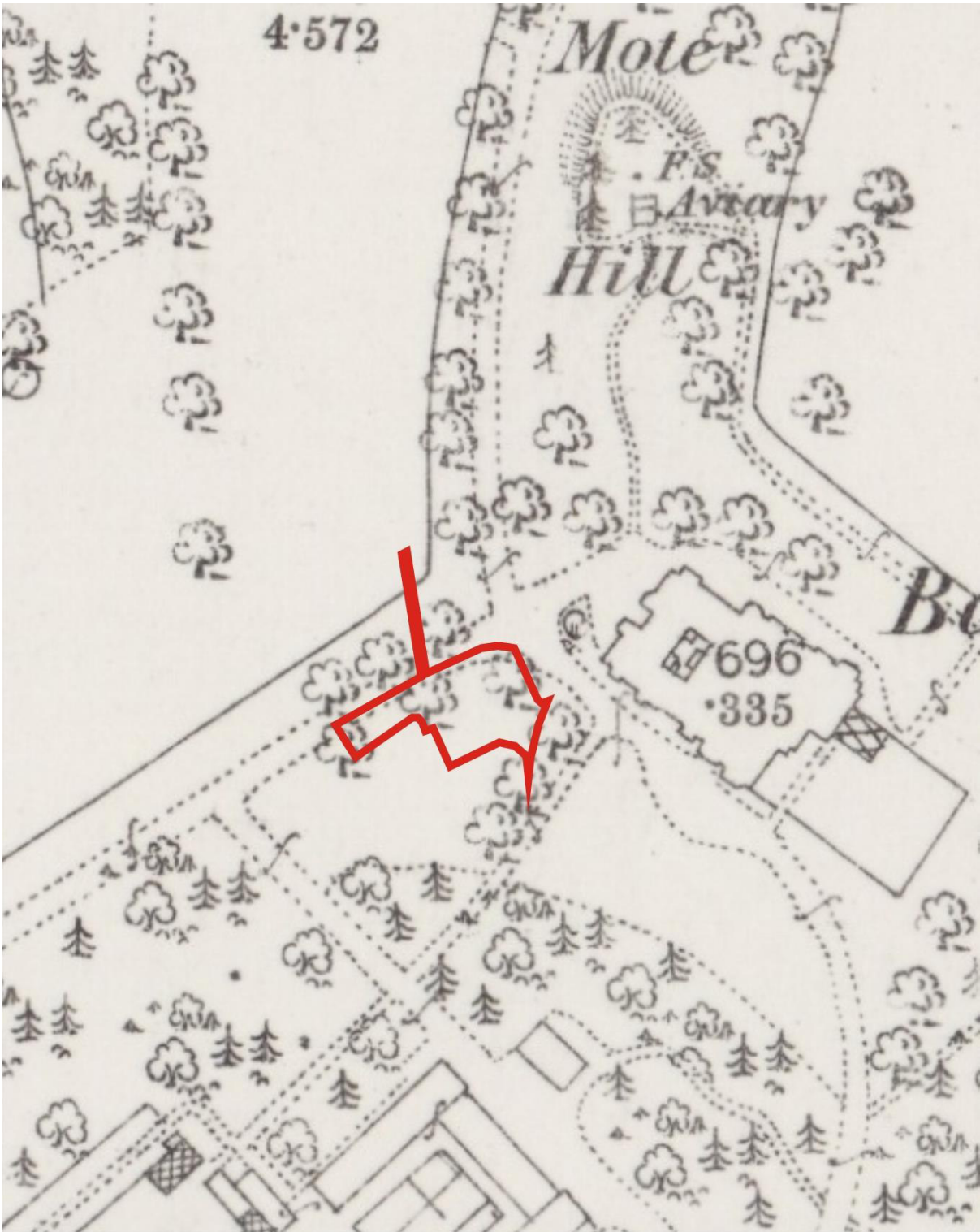
Illus 8 Thomson's map of 1822 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



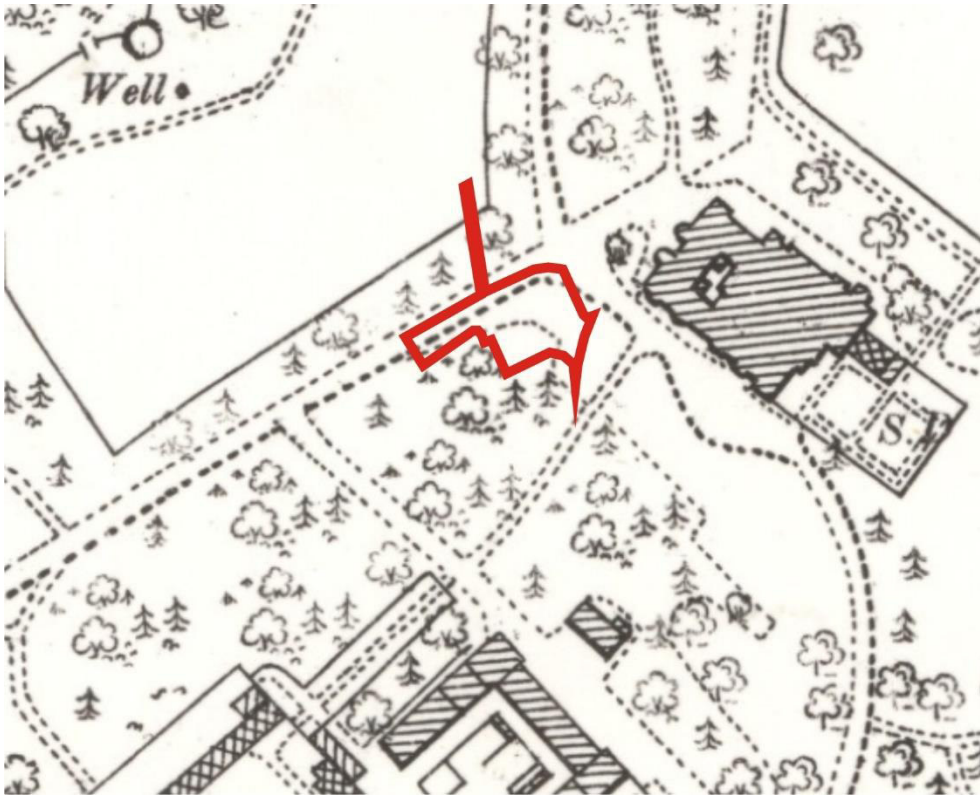
Illus 9 Garden's map of 1774 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



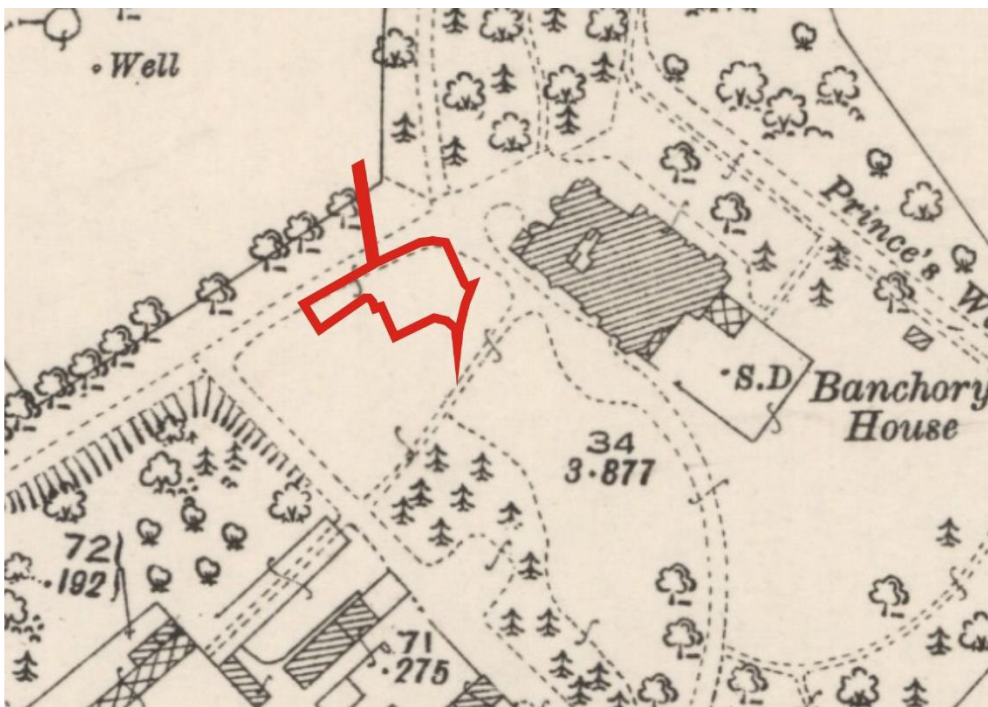
Illus 10 Robertson's map of 1822 showing approximate area of proposed development (copyright National Library of Scotland).



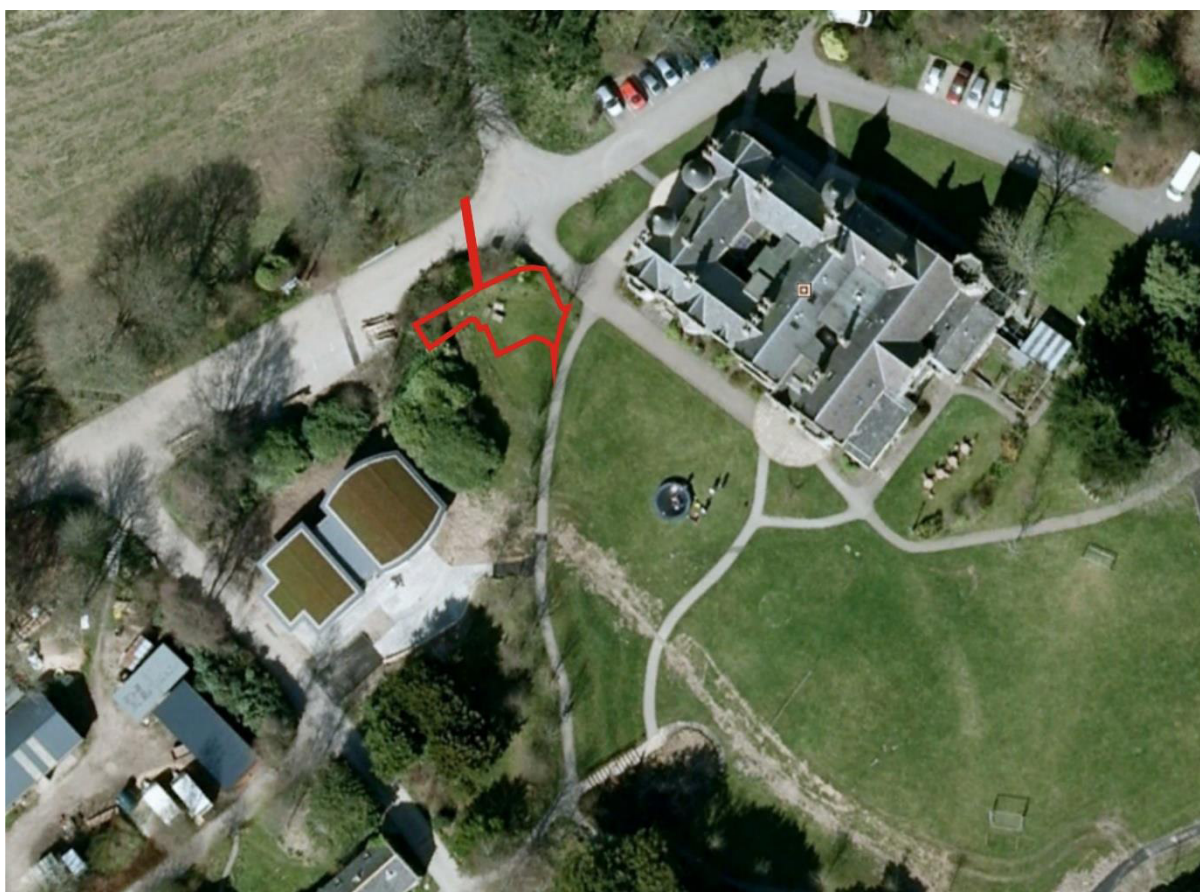
Illus 11 First Edition OS map showing site outline in red (copyright National Library of Scotland). Aberdeenshire LXXXVI.2 (Combined) Survey date: 1864 to 1866 Publication date: 1892



Illus 12 Second Edition OS map showing site outline in red (copyright National Library of Scotland). Aberdeenshire LXXXVI.2 (Aberdeen; Banchory-Devenick; Nigg; Peterculter)



Illus 13 Third Edition OS map showing site outline in red (copyright National Library of Scotland). Aberdeenshire LXXXVI.2 (Aberdeen; Banchory-Devenick; Nigg; Peterculter)



Illus 14 2012 aerial photograph (copyright Google Earth Pro).

APPENDIX 3 PHOTOGRAPHS

| PHOTO ID | Direction Facing | Comments |
|----------|------------------|---|
| CA392-1 | W | Area prior to soil strip |
| CA392-2 | NW | Area prior to soil strip |
| CA392-3 | N | Area prior to soil strip |
| CA392-4 | NE | Area prior to soil strip |
| CA392-5 | NE | Overgrown area of recent grass/turf clearing (2017-8) |
| CA392-6 | W | Soil strip in progress. Areas were closely inspected prior to dumper movement on surface. |
| CA392-7 | WNW | Soil strip in progress. |
| CA392-8 | WSW | Soil strip in progress. |
| CA392-9 | W | Soil strip in progress. |
| CA392-10 | WSW | Soil strip nearing completion |
| CA392-11 | W | Soil strip nearing completion |
| CA392-12 | W | Soil strip nearing completion |



CA392-1.jpg



CA392-2.jpg



CA392-3.jpg



CA392-4.jpg



CA392-5.jpg



CA392-6.jpg



CA392-7.jpg



CA392-8.jpg



CA392-9.jpg



CA392-10.jpg



CA392-11.jpg



CA392-12.jpg