

**Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief  
Land Adjacent to Fetterangus Cemetery  
Fetterangus, Aberdeenshire, AB42 4ED  
Aberdeenshire Council Planning app APP/2016/3150**



**Report prepared by:  
Robert Lenfert, PhD, ACIfA  
Cameron Archaeology  
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Cover: View of a SE facing section during the soil strip.

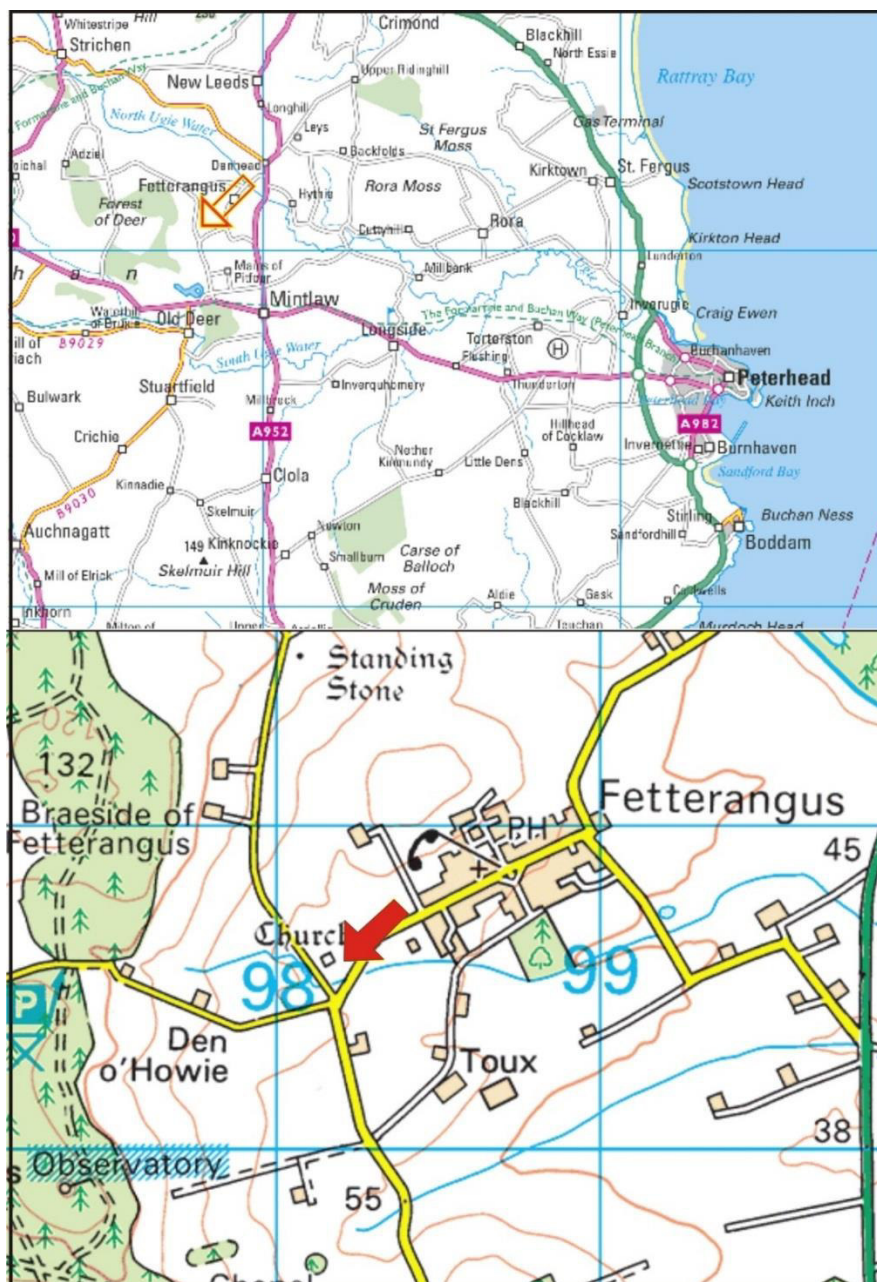
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## SUMMARY

On August 23rd, 2018 a watching brief took place in advance of construction of a pavilion adjacent to the current sports pitch on land east of Fetterangus, Aberdeenshire (AB42 4ED), and in close proximity to the local cemetery immediately to the N and E of the soil strip. No archaeological finds or features were noted, and it is recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is necessary at this time.

# 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located to the W of Fetterangus village and E of Fetterangus Church. It is centred on NGR NJ 98210 50582, at 65-70m OD in the parish of Old Deer.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Baxter Design for Fetterangus Community Association. An application APP/2016/3150 for change of use to form playing field, formation of car parking and erection of sports pavilion (part retrospective) was approved on 23.1.17 with a condition for an archaeological watching brief (condition 1).
- 1.3 All the archaeological work was 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

The Historic Environment Record (HER) and Canmore (HES) were consulted online within 1km of the proposed development.

- 2.1 There are three Scheduled Monuments within 1km of the proposed development. Fetterangus Church which is Remains of a church, built c.1120 and recorded in the 13th century. The church was dedicated to St Fergus and granted to the monks of St Thomas of Arbroath by Ralph le Neym about 1200. The grant was confirmed by King William the Lion. Only the foundations remain on which an enclosed burial place has been built. A holy water stoup has been set into the turf within the church. There are 17th and 18th century grave slabs nearby (Cowan 1967, 65). Also scheduled is the remains of Pictish I symbol stone (SMR NJ95SE0038) which stands at the entrance to the graveyard. Water worn slab of whinstone, the symbols are badly weathered and several cracks run across the face. Bears the cauldron symbol (triple disc with cross-bar); two double discs, one superimposed over arc of other; a possible Z rod (one disc may have a rectangle joined to it to form a mirror-case symbol); a curved line terminating in a scroll. Moved from original position and is now fixed to the inside of the graveyard wall of Fetterangus Church, to the right of the entrance (Allen and Anderson 1903, 3, 164). Remains of recumbent stone circle (SMR NJ95SE0003) at Gaval; one remaining stone, impossible to say whether in situ or has fallen and been re-erected. The area of the circle, complete until about 1844, may have extended to the E of the stone. Apart from the stone, there is no trace of the other remains of the circle. It was noted in 1928 that the other stones had been blown up with gunpowder some 55 years previously and the pieces removed to a road ditch a short distance away.
- 2.2 Adjacent to the church is Fetterangus cemetery (SMR NJ95SE0078). An evaluation was carried out at this site in August 2009 by MAS in advance of a proposed cemetery extension (Murray 2009, 27). Two trenches were excavated in proximity of the North side of the church. A single flint blade was recovered from a topsoil context, unrelated to any excavated feature - together with the previously recorded flint finds in this area it suggests there was prehistoric activity or settlement nearby. A number of sherds of medieval pottery, including rims and a handle, were also recovered from a feature which has been interpreted as an oven or kiln. They are dated within the range 13th-15th century, and would appear to represent domestic rubbish rather than kiln waste. Also observed was the remains of medieval or post-medieval rig and furrow cultivation. In November 2009 two further evaluation trenches were excavated, followed by small-scale excavation. No finds or features were recovered from the two new evaluation trenches. The excavation included re-opening parts of trenches 1 and 2, removing the section between them and extending several metres to S and W to check for any other associated features. During the November 2009 excavations three separate hearths/fire areas were identified; one of the features could be the base of an enclosed oven, while the other two features appear to be open hearths. Ovens and hearths of this type and size could be related to a number of domestic activities - as bread ovens, brewing places and grain drying kilns - but there was no direct evidence in the charcoal layers to give an indication of function. The lack of evidence of medieval structures or finds makes any extensive settlement in this area unlikely. It is possible that the hearths were associated with the building or possibly repair of the church.
- 2.3 Flint arrowheads are said to have been found 'in abundance' near supposed camp (OS NJ95SE002) in 1853 by the resident of Den of Howie (SMR NJ95SE0012). Six flint arrowheads were found in 1859 at Fetterangus (SMR NJ95SE0014). There is no further information about either groups of finds.

- 2.4 Remains of a group of kerb cairns, in a line c E/W centred on grid ref, found in recently cleared woodland near base of slope. A track meanders across these features from main access road (SMR NJ95SE0039). West-most cairn (1) is 3.5m in diameter with almost complete kerb of rounded, grey granite boulders, maximum 0.6m long; depression in interior. Cairn (2) lies 12m E; possible diameter 3m with two kerbstones still in position. Cairn (3) is c1.6m in diameter with three boulders in contiguous arc and one on opposite perimeter. Cairn (4) is c3m diameter; a nearly complete kerb of rounded boulders with straight sides set to interior; a low depression in interior.
- 2.5 Cropmark of ring ditches (SMR NJ95SE0030) at Gaval. At least one appears to be a double ring ditch.
- 2.6 Farmstead, still in use, possibly built on or near the site of earlier manor house for the Barony of Toux (SMR NJ95SE0035). It was also known as the Barony of Touchis or Touchie. The farmstead is depicted on the OS map of 1867 as being almost U-shaped in place with open court to the NE. Another L-shaped building lies on this side, almost forming a rectangular steading. Another building within an enclosure lies to the SW, and a small single building to the SE, and another to the north beside the road. By 1888 the NW side of the steading had been widened. The building to the south now appears to be attached to the steading. Only part of the building in the north appears to survive. The small building to the SE has now gone. The farm has since been added to and extended. Also at Toux is the site of small farmstead or croft (SMR NJ95SE0057); a small L-shaped building with an attached enclosure to the south, is depicted on both the OS maps of 1867 and 1888. Nothing is now visible at this location. At nether Toux is the site of a now destroyed farmstead that is depicted on the 1867 1st edition OS map (SMR NJ95SE00530). It shows a U-shaped range of buildings with an attached garden to the north. By the time of the OS 2nd edition map, 1888, the central wing of the range had been removed, leaving two separate rectangular buildings and the garden to the north is no longer shown. A new rectangular building with attached enclosure had been added to the SE.
- 2.7 There is the remains of an earthwork at Den O'Howe (SMR NJ95SE0002); all that remains of this supposed camp are slightly curved parallel ditches, c8m apart in the E and 12.5m apart in the W. The ditches have sharply defined sides and give the appearance of being fairly modern, but their purpose is not apparent. No trace of any continuation of the ditches, or of other works, could be seen in the adjoining fields.
- 2.8 Designed landscape, site of mansion house and possible site of manor. This may have been the site of Manor Place of Pitfour (SMR NJ94NE00390). The estate came in to the possession of the Ferguson family in the early 18th Century. 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 group listed B because of this. To the north of the house lay gasometers, the laundry with an ice-



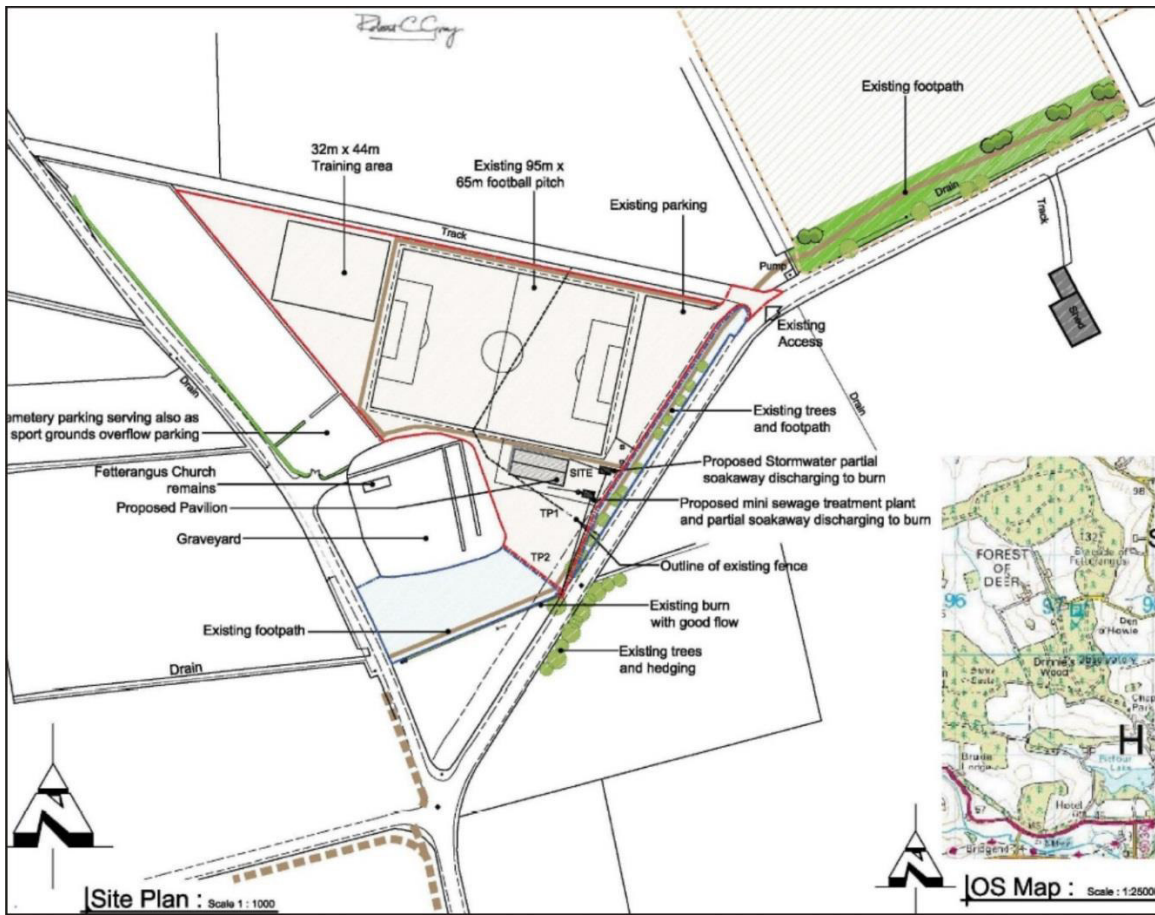
house to the rear (NJ94NE0139), stables (NJ94NE0160) and a riding school. To the west were the kennels and pheasantry. There were also sawmills at NJ9627 4930 with a lade leading from the west to it. To the west of the stable block is the remains of a game larder (NJ94NE0039). Other features include Bruxie Lodge (NJ94NE0123), West Lodge (NJ94NE0122), South Lodge (NJ94NE0143) and gatepiers (NJ94NE0147), South East Bridge (NJ94NE0156), North East Bridge (NJ94NE0162), North West Bridge (NJ94NE0129), Kennels Cottage (NJ94NE0130) and a boathouse folly (NJ94NE0131). A watching brief was carried out in 2016 (NJ94NE0165).

- 2.9 Early and OS maps (Illus 3-9) show the area as general agricultural land around the churchyard wall and there are existing playing fields within the proposed development area.

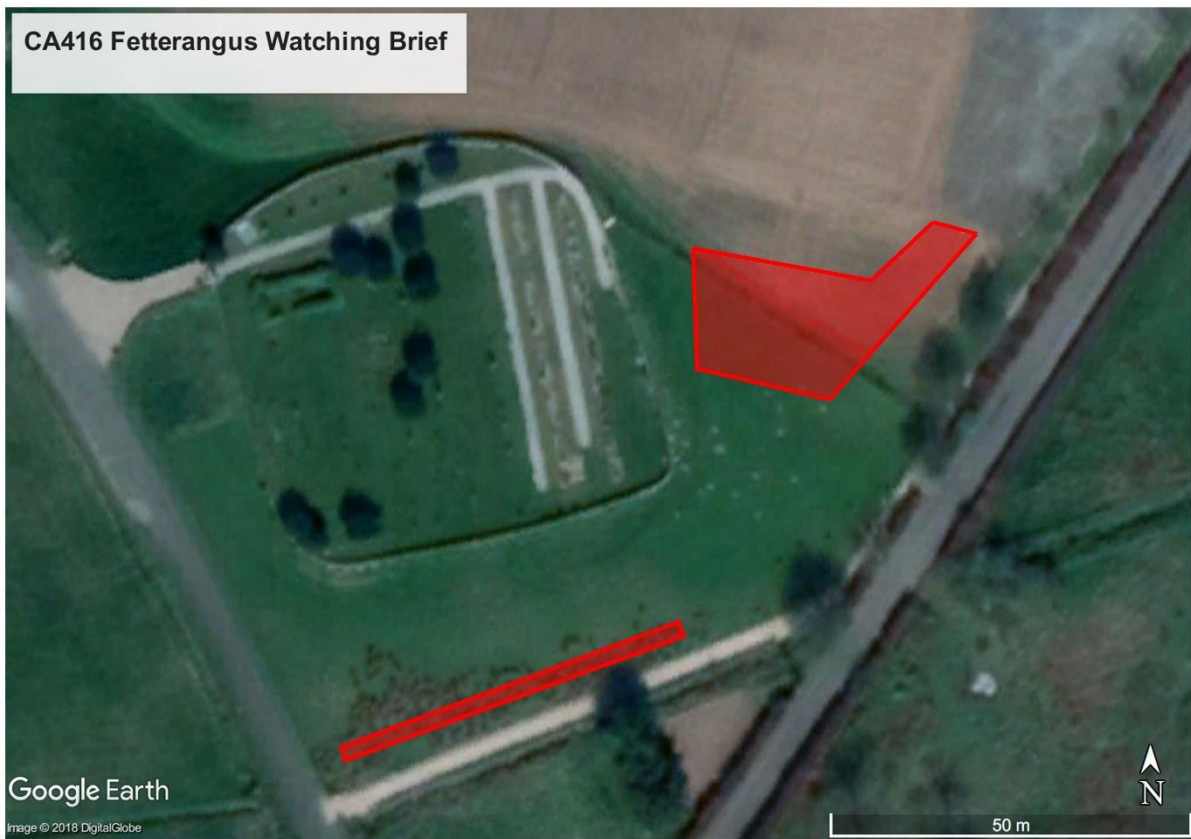
### **3 THE WATCHING BRIEF**

On August 23rd, 2018 a watching brief took place in advance of construction of a pavilion adjacent to the current sports pitch. The foundation area for the kiosk and area immediately surrounding the building (Illus 3), including the access extension off the current car park, were all stripped down to subsoil. An additional drainage corridor to the south was also excavated while the archaeologist was present.

The topsoil varied widely in depth, from 0.25m to just over 0.5m. In the main pavilion area, it comprised a yellowish-brown sandy silt with gritty gravels and occasional stone inclusions <0.25m/dia. The drainage trench to the south however was situated in lower, more boggy ground and revealed a comparatively richer organic layer that will most likely develop into peat if given ample time, along with more waterlogged gleys or blue-ish gray clay pockets, indicating that drainage has remained poor in this area for some time.



Illus 2 Site plan showing proposed development (copyright Baxter Design).



Illus 3 Location of actual areas stripped during the watching brief. The remainder of the site is comprised of levelled playing fields, and these areas will remain undisturbed. The elongated strip in the bottom of the aerial image will contain drainage (contains data copyright Google & Digital Globe 2018).

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Although the soil strip was virtually adjacent to the local Fetterangus cemetery, and thus the early 12th century church foundations set within the relatively modern graveyard (17th C), in addition to the prehistoric lithic finds immediately to the north, no archaeological finds or features were noted. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is necessary at this time.

## 5 REFERENCES

**Allen and Anderson, J R and J.** (1903) *The early Christian monuments of Scotland: a classified illustrated descriptive list of the monuments with an analysis of their symbolism and ornamentation.* Edinburgh.

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**Murray, HK.** (2009) *'Fetterangus Cemetery, Aberdeenshire (Old Deer parish), evaluation', Discovery Excav Scot, New, vol. 10, 2009.* Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England.

## 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Ryan Urquhart, Baxter Design for initiating this project and to Claire Herbert, Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service for her advice during this work.

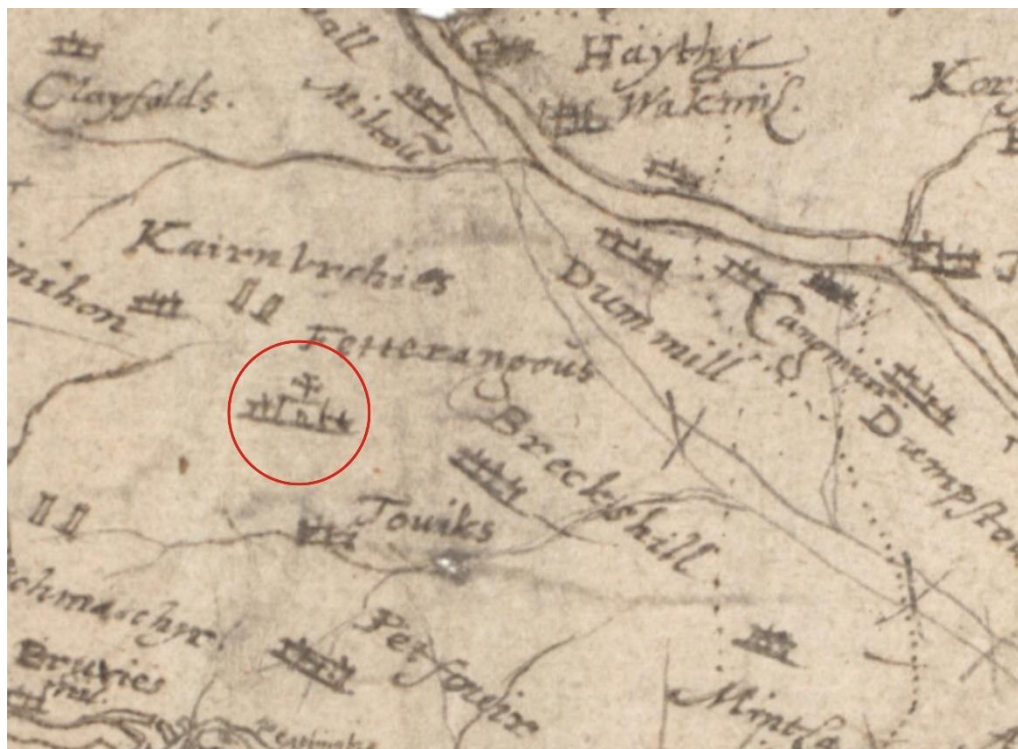


## APPENDIX 1

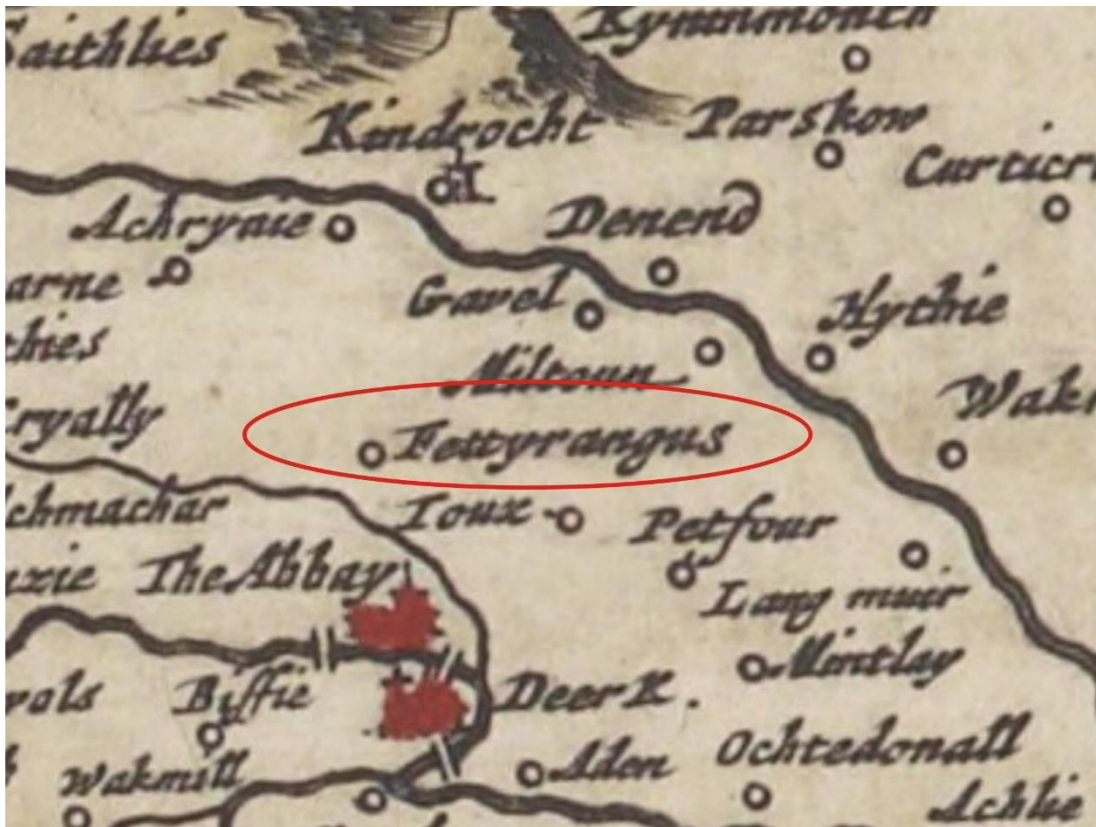
### Archaeological and historical sites within 1km of the proposed site (Aberdeenshire SMR online)

Dataset UID	Name	Details
NJ95SE0039	Den Of Howie	Kerb cairns
NJ95SE0030	Gaval	Ring ditches crop mark
NJ95SE0003	Gaval	Stone circle
NJ95SE0035	Toux	farmstead
NJ95SE0057	Toux	Farmstead or croft
NJ95SE0002	Den O'howe	Earthwork
NJ95SE0004	Fetterangus Church	Church
NJ95SE0053	Nether Toux	farmstead
NJ95SE0012	Den O'howe	flints
NJ95SE0038	Fetterangus Church	Symbol stone
NJ95SE0051	Fetterangus War Memorial	War memorial
NJ95SE0078	Fetterangus Cemetery	cemetery
NJ95SE0014	Fetterangus	arrowheads
NJ94NE0039	Pitfour	Designed landscape

## APPENDIX 2 MAPS



Illus 4 Pont c1583-96 showing approximate area of site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland).

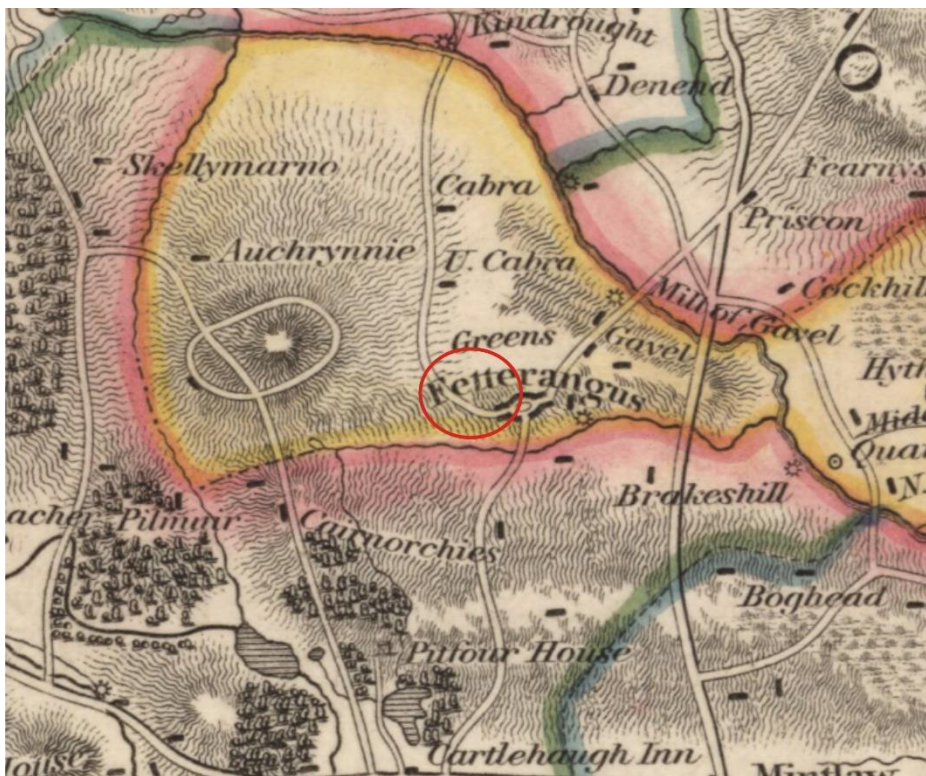


Illus 5 Gordon and Blaeu 1654 showing approximate area of site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland).



Illus 6 Roy Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-55 showing approximate area of site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland)

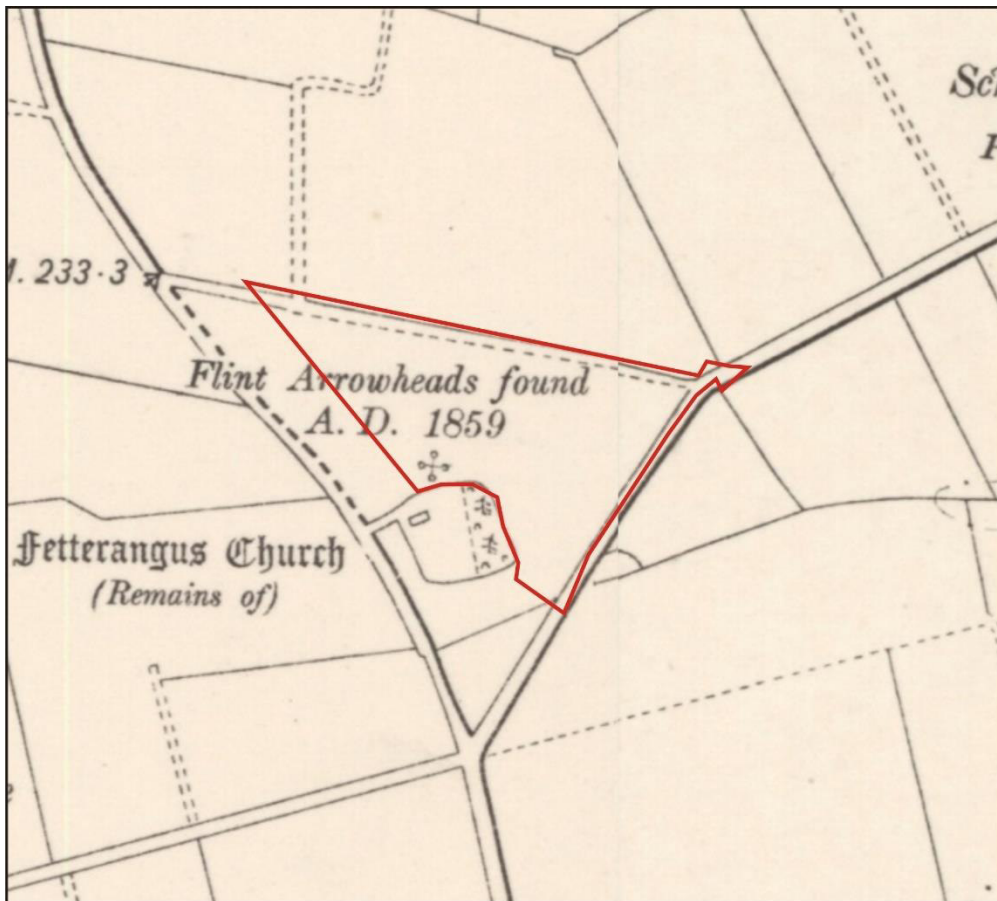




Illus 7 Thomson 1832 showing approximate area of site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland)



Illus 8 First Edition OS map showing site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland) Aberdeenshire, Sheet XIII (includes: New Deer; Old Deer; Strichen) Survey date: 1870 Publication date: 1874/Aberdeenshire, Sheet XIV (includes: Crimond; Longside).



Illus 9 Second Edition OS map showing site outlined in red (copyright National Library of Scotland) Aberdeenshire Sheet XIV.SW (includes: Longside; Lonmay; Old Deer)



Illus 10 1976 aerial photograph with site outline in red; facing N (Copyright HES NCAP) Date: 20 August 1976 Location: Fetterangus; Old Deer; Aberdeenshire; Scotland Coordinates (lat, lon): 57.544045, -2.020480

### APPENDIX 3 PHOTOS

Photo ID	Direction Facing	Comments
CA392-1	N	General view of site prior to soil strip
CA392-2	SE	Soil strip commencing
CA392-3	SE	Soil strip in progress
CA392-4	SE	Soil strip in progress
CA392-5	S	Soil strip in progress
CA392-6	SSW	Soil strip in progress
CA392-7	SSW	Soil strip in progress
CA392-8	SW	Soil strip for entrance track in progress (runs adjacent to current parking area which will remain as-is).
CA392-9	N	General view of main pavilion area after soil strip
CA392-10	E	General view of main pavilion area after soil strip
CA392-11	SW	Soil strip for entrance track in progress
CA392-12	NW	Section photo of soil strip for entrance track
CA392-13	SW	Soil strip for small SUDS and drainage pipe underway
CA392-14	NE	Soil strip for small SUDS and drainage pipe underway





CA392-1.jpg



CA392-2.jpg



CA392-3.jpg



CA392-4.jpg



CA392-5.jpg



CA392-6.jpg



CA392-7.jpg



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CA392-10.jpg



CA392-11.jpg



CA392-12.jpg



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