

**Maidencraig (Land At), North of A944, Aberdeen, AB15 6AX**

**Aberdeen City Planning ref 181380/MSC**

**Data Structure report (DSR)**



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## SUMMARY

A 7% archaeological evaluation was carried out on 14-15 January 2019; the weather was sunny and damp. The site is on the N side Denburn valley on a S facing gentle slope at top of valley. Seven trenches, representing 5% of the total area of the development, were excavated using a 14 ton rubber duck with a 1.7m flat edged ditching bucket. The topsoil was heavy and clay rich and varied from 0.25m at the N and E of the site to 0.6m in the SW of the site. The subsoil was clayey gravel. Trenches 1-3 revealed NNW-SSE furrows and all trenches showed signs of modern plough scores.

No other archaeological features or finds were identified on this site and as a result it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current development.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located on the north and south side of Lang Stracht, Aberdeen. The site is at AB15 6NB, NJ 88872 06941 at 100-135m OD and in the parish of Aberdeen (Illus 1).
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Bancon. Aberdeen City Council planning reference 181380/MSC for 40 dwellinghouses is pending and there is a requirement for a 5-7% archaeological evaluation of this 2 hectare site.
- 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 2019)

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 One Scheduled monument is just over 1km NW of the current site. It is Roughs Cairn (Aberdeen SMR NJ80NE0006; HER NJ80NE 7) a well-preserved section of consumption dyke. A series of consumption dykes at Gillahill will be unaffected by this proposed development.
- 2.2 The site was occupied by cultivated fields on the First, Second and Third Edition Ordnance Survey maps (Illus 4-6). 'Whitemyres' and Oldmill' appear on John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland, 1832 but neither Whitemyres or Maidencraig are on 16th to 18th-century maps including Moll, Blaeu, Roy or Gordon.
- 2.3 The adjacent Old Whitemyres (Aberdeen SMR/NJ80NE0035; HES NJ80NE 41.01) is dated 1704 and the steadings date to the mid 18th century (Aberdeen SMR NJ80NE0047).
- 2.4 Immediately west of the current site a watching brief was undertaken during soil clearance over two areas, c62 x 58m and c70 x 30m, for horticultural buildings. The work recorded modern plough marks and surviving traces of rig and furrow cultivation (Aberdeen SMNR NJ80NE0499). No other archaeological features or finds were recorded. At some time in the recent past soil had been brought in from an unspecified source near Balmedie and spread over the area to a depth of c100mm (Mr A Cocker, pers comm.), and is now mixed in (Murray and Harding 2009, 12).
- 2.4 The medieval Mill of Maidencraig (Aberdeen SMR NJ80NE0016) lies south of the proposed development. The meal-mill at Maidencraig was built by the Town of Aberdeen in 1616 and known as the Newmill. It was burned down towards the end of the 19th century (Cruickshank 1959, 22).
- 2.5 An archaeological evaluation carried out in 2013 on previous phases of this development (Aberdeen SMR NJ80NE0521) failed to find archaeological finds or features (Cameron 2013, 11).

## **3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

A 7% archaeological evaluation was carried out on 14-15 January 2019; the weather was sunny and damp. The site is on the N side Denburn valley on a S facing gentle slope at top of valley. Seven trenches (Illus 2), representing 5% of the total area of the development, were excavated using a 14 ton rubber duck with a 1.7m flat edged ditching bucket. The topsoil was heavy and clay rich and varied from 0.25m at the N and E of the site to 0.6m in the SW of the site. The subsoil was clayey gravel. Trenches 1-3 revealed NNW-SSE furrows (see cover illus) and all trenches showed signs of modern plough scores (Illus 3).

No archaeological features were identified and no finds recovered.





Illus 2 Proposed development with location of evaluation trenches (*copyright Bancon*)



Illus 3 Trench 1 N end showing shallow topsoil and modern plough scores in subsoil; facing S

## 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No archaeological features or finds were identified on this site which had been very disturbed by centuries of agriculture including NNW-SSE furrows.

It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current development.

## REFERENCES

Cameron AS 2013 Maidencraig, Aberdeen archaeological evaluation. *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, Volume 14, 2013.

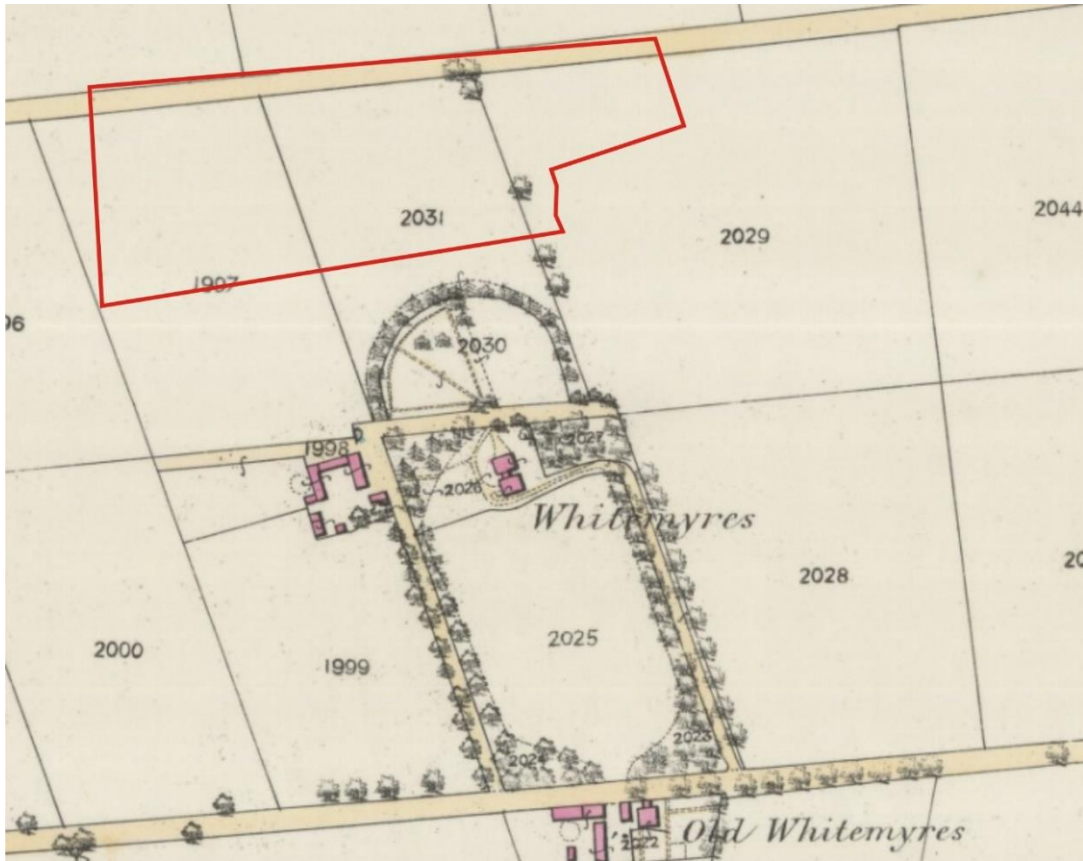
Cameron AS 2018 Maidencraig Phase 2N Written Scheme of Investigation

Cruickshank, J 1959 'Kingswells valley', *The Deeside Field, 2nd, vol.3, 22*.

Murray and Harding, JC and DI (2009) 'Whitemyres Farmhouse, Lang Stracht, Aberdeen City (Aberdeen parish), watching brief', *Discovery Excav Scot, New, vol.10* Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England.

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**APPENDIX 1 MAPS**

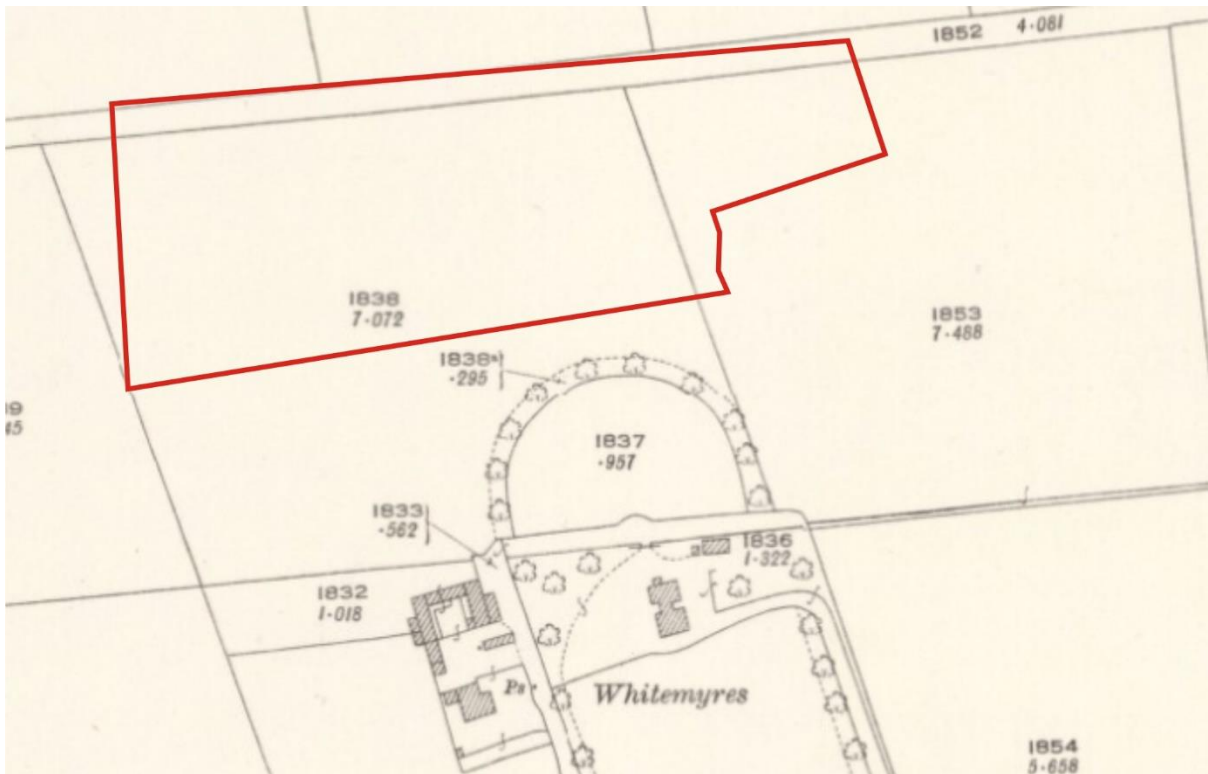


Illus 4 First Edition OS map with site outlined in red. Aberdeen Sheet LXXV.9 (Newhills) Survey date: 1867 (copyright National Library of Scotland)



Illus 5 Second Edition OS map with site outlined in red. Title: Aberdeenshire, Sheet 075.09 Publication date: 1901 Revised: ca. 1899.





Illus 6 Third Edition OS map with site outlined in red. Title: Aberdeenshire, Sheet 075.09  
 Publication date: 1925 Revised: ca. 1924 Levelled: 1899/1900.

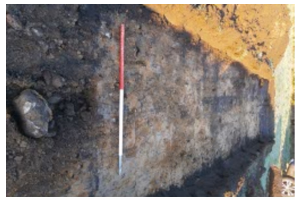
## APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
1140049	Trench 1 N end	S
1140050	Trench 1 N end plough scores	N
1140051	Trench 1 furrow	N
1140052	Tr1 S end	N
1140053	Tr2 N end	S
1140054	Tr2 modern plough scores	N
1140055	Tr2 S end	N
1140056	Tr 3 N end	S
1140057	Tr3 field drain trench	N
1140058	Tr3 S end	N
1140059	Tr4 N end	S
1140061	Tr4 S end	N
1140063	Tr 5 N end	S
1140065	Tr5 S end	N
1140066	Tr6 N end	S
1140067	Tr6 S end	N
1140068	Tr7 N end	S
1140069	Tr7 S end	N

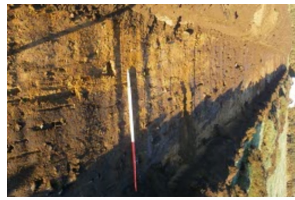




P1140049



P1140050



P1140051



P1140052



P1140053



P1140054



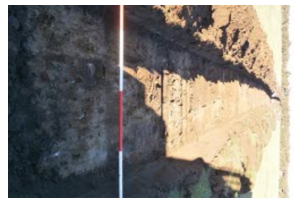
P1140055



P1140056



P1140057



P1140058



P1150059



P1150061



P1150063



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