

Site At Norry Hill, Glass, Huntly, Aberdeenshire Data Structure report (DSR)

Aberdeenshire Planning application APP/2018/2084



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ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: the N end of the soil strip showing the post and wire fence erected between the site and the archaeological sites to the E; facing S

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SUMMARY

A watching brief was carried out on 29 March 2019 after construction of a post-and-wire fence completely dividing the archaeological sites from the new track; the area was very disturbed by gorse burning and other agricultural practices and as a result no archaeological features or finds were recorded. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located some 8.25km WNW of Huntly, Aberdeenshire and is centered on NJ 43766 42025 at 307-341m OD in the parish of Glass.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Simon Jacyna for Aswanley. Aberdeenshire Planning application APP/2018/2084 for an extension to the existing forestry track was approved on 19.9.18 with a condition for a fence to be erected between the archaeological sites and the new track and an archaeological watching brief during all 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 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

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

2.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the site itself or within 1km. The nearest Scheduled Ancient Monument is Wood of Furlhead (SM3685), a sizable prehistoric settlement consisting of some 11 hut-circles and associated field systems, located approximately 6km NW of Norrie Hill.

Sites within or immediately adjacent to the project area

2.2 Norry Hill (NJ44SW0036/7/8). Clearance cairns, possibly post-Medieval and associated with nearby crofts, but their chronology remains ambiguous and may have prehistoric origins. The first (36) is set just outwith the project area; the second (37) is within the site area and the third one (38) straddles the ENE corner of the site boundary. All three consist of small cairns of angular stone and are briefly discussed in Section 3, below (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018a).

2.3 Poor Man (NJ44SW0009) was originally considered to be a burial cairn, but later inspection revealed a natural bedrock substrate, which exposed sections of topsoil show no signs of archaeological horizons. This site is discussed below (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018b).

Nearby sites

2.4 Greystone (NJ44SW0080) comprises three boundary stones set along a nearby boundary to the E delineating direction changes in the adjacent field system. The boundary stones are still in use and are shown on the OS maps from the 2nd edition map onwards. Four boundary stones are depicted on the 2nd edition OS map as lying on the lower SW facing slopes of Norry Hill. Three still stand at NJ4333 4197, NJ4343 41712 and NJ4347 4163 according to the 2006 map. The removed stone stood at NJ4350 4180 (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018c).

2.5 Norry Hill Farmstead (NJ44SW0040). Remains of farmstead, comprising the grass-covered footings of at least two buildings and a yard, but dumps of field clearance may obscure other features. The main building, set on a platform along the upper side of the yard, has two compartments; its N side is obscured by dumped stones. The second building, lies on the lower side of the yard and measures 9m by 4.6m overall; oval hollow dug into slope immediately SW of farmstead. This farmstead is notable as one of the few examples in the Deveron valley which does not appear on any earlier maps (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018d).

2.6 Westfolds Farmstead (NJ44SW0041). Ruins of farmstead still standing to gable height; most of buildings are set round a yard; a horse-mill lay at the rear of the NW range. It is shown on the OS maps from the 1st edition onwards. On the 1st and 2nd edition map a substantial mill lade is shown which crosses the north of Both Hill and finishes around the eastern side by Belnaboth Farmstead. The remains of this lade are still shown on the 2006 map (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018e).

2.7 Norry Hill Beaker Burial (NJ44SW0014). Beaker, flints and bones; discovered in an attic of the Brander Library, Huntly in 1979. A handwritten label reads 'urns, flints

found with skeleton in stone coffins at Cairnmore, Glass'; the exact cairn it came from is unknown but possibly NJ44SW0003; beaker suggests a step 4 category (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018f).

2.8 Norry Hill Cairn (NJ44SW0005). Cairn; 150m WNW of long cairn NJ44SW0004; grass-grown; denuded in size since 1972 when it was 17m in diameter and 2m high, otherwise appears to be relatively undisturbed (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018g).

2.9 Norry Hill Long Cairn (NJ44SW0004). Remains of a long cairn; grass-grown cairn tapers from 2-7m in breadth at the east end to 5m at the west end. The west part has been severely robbed, the mounds of quarried debris standing 0.7m in max. height, but the east end is largely intact and measures 2.5m in height on the uphill side and 4m on the downhill side. The south end has been destroyed by construction of a rectangular walled enclosure. Present appearance of cairn suggests that it is a composite monument with a round cairn built on its east end, but this may be result of robbing. Nonetheless at the east end, the upper part of cairn has a higher proportion of stone visible than lower part, possibly indicating the presence of a superimposed round cairn. The NE corner of the long cairn is very angular but probably due to result of later land-use around the cairn.

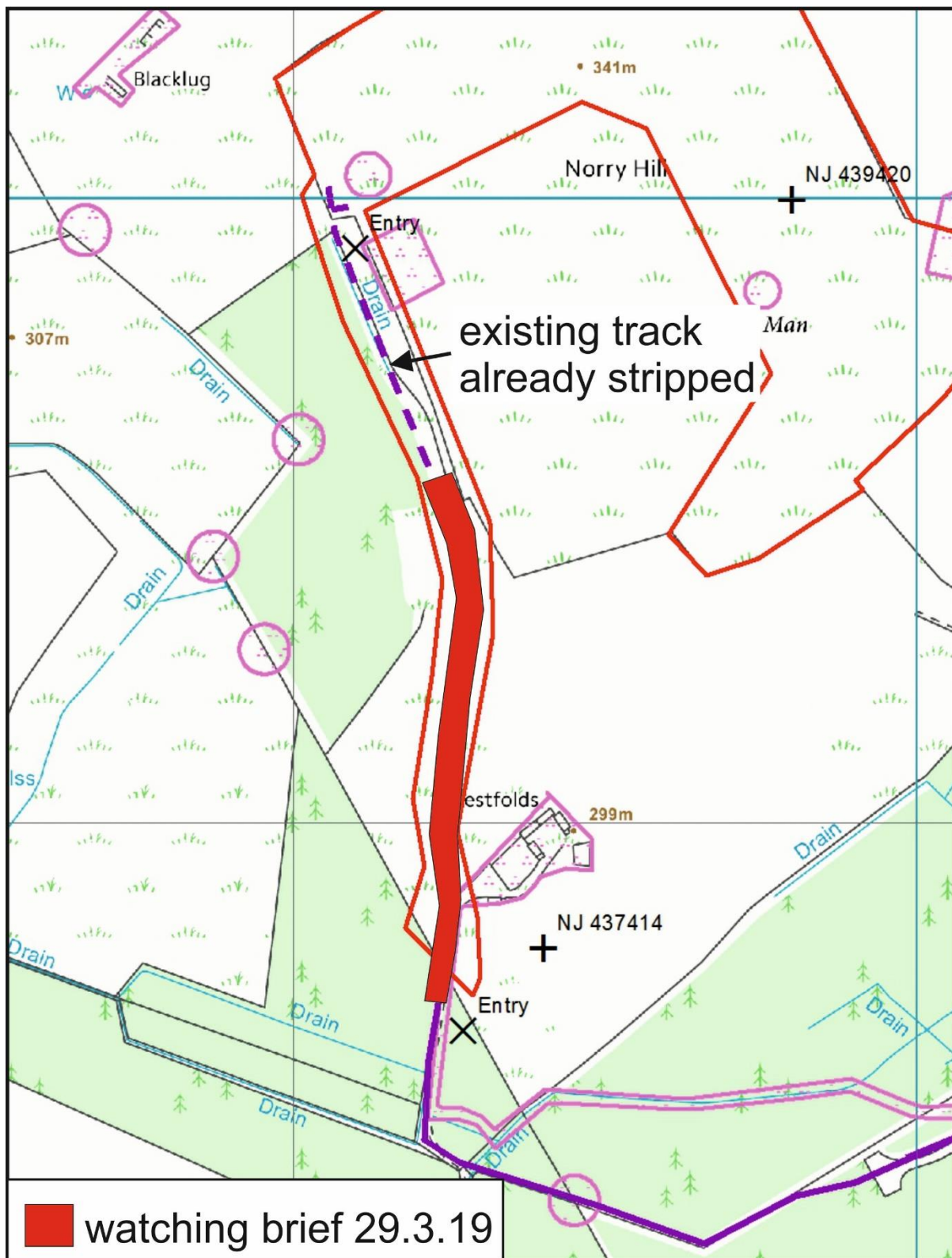
2.10 Hill of Davidston (NJ44SW0104). Desk based assessment and walkover survey carried out by CFA ahead of a proposed windfarm identified 40 sites within the proposed development area. They include 19 farmsteads, two of which were first depicted on an 1822 map, the rest first shown on the OS 1st edition map (1873), one with associated stack stands (see also:

NJ44SW0058, NJ44SW0017, NJ44SW0019, NJ44SW0021, NJ44SW0020, NJ44SW0024, NJ44SW0025, NJ44SW0023, NJ44SW0027, NJ44SW0084, NJ44SW0085), Thirteen clearance cairns of uncertain date were identified along the edge of currently improved pasture fields. The pattern of enclosure has changed little since the OS 1st edition but field boundaries are now mostly of post and wire. A possible cairn field has been recorded by RCAHMS (NJ44SW0026), and the 2009 survey found a further 17 possible cairns immediately to the east. Other features included three enclosures (NJ44SW0060), a mill lade the remains of which are still partially visible, two quarries and a disused pit (Aberdeenshire SMR 2018i).

2.11 A walkover was carried out (Lenfert 2018) and a plan of cairns and other archaeological features within the vicinity was completed (Illus 2).

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was carried out during the soil strip for the new track on 29 March 2019 (Illus 2) after construction of a post-and-wire fence completely dividing the archaeological sites from the new track. The soil was 0.1-0.3m deep and there was extensive evidence of previous agricultural works including field drains, water pipes and gorse burning. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.



Illus 2 Site plan showing watching brief area (copyright SAC Consulting)

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The area of the watching brief was very disturbed by gorse burning and other agricultural practices and as a result no archaeological features or finds were recovered. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required during the current planning application.

5 REFERENCES

Lenfert, R 2018 Walkover of Norry Hill, report lodged with Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology service and client.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Dataset	Dataset UID	Name	Classification
HERABER	NJ44SW0041	Westfolds	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0089	Parkhall	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0045	Balnacraig	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0097	Barefold	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0100	Greystone	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0079	Greystone	Enclosure
HERABER	NJ44SW0080	Greystone	Boundary stones
HERABER	NJ44SW0040	Norry Hill	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0078	Greystone	Croft
HERABER	NJ44SW0036	Norry Hill	Cairns
HERABER	NJ44SW0009	Poor Man / Norry Hill	Stony mound
HERABER	NJ44SW0038	Norry Hill	Cairns
HERABER	NJ44SW0037	Norry Hill	Cairn
HERABER	NJ44SW0039	Norry Hill	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0035	Blacklug	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0004	Norry Hill	Long cairn
HERABER	NJ44SW0014	Norry Hill	Beaker, flints and bones
HERABER	NJ44SW0005	Norry Hill	Cairn
HERABER	NJ44SW0043	Cairnmore	Farmstead
HERABER	NJ44SW0096	Both Hill	Boundary stones
HERABER	NJ44SW0104	Hill Of Davidston	Walkover
HERABER	NJ44SW0092	The Ward	Enclosure
HERABER	NJ44SW0028	Piketillum	Farmstead
RCAHMS	69263	Norry Hill	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69262	Norry Hill	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	17334	Glenshee	Cairn (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	17333	Glenshee	Enclosure (period Unassigned), Long Cairn (neolithic)
RCAHMS	69267	Cairnmore	Farmstead (period Unassigned), River Deveron, Parkhill, Cairnborrow
RCAHMS	279559	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned), Blacklug
RCAHMS	156295	Greystone	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279566	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned), Blacklug
RCAHMS	69258	Blacklug	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279568	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279569	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279567	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69269	Balnacraig	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69259	Norry Hill	Cairn (period Unassigned), Cairnfield (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69260	Norry Hill	Cairn (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279570	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69264	Westfolds	Farmstead (period Unassigned)

RCAHMS	279571	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69251	Piketillum	Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279572	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	17328	Westfolds, Poor Man	Natural Feature (period Unknown)
RCAHMS	279573	Westfolds, Stone	Boundary Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	69261	Norry Hill	Building (period Unassigned), Cairnfield (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	303054	Greystone	Stone (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279281	Greystone	Farmhouse (period Unassigned), Farmstead (period Unassigned)
RCAHMS	279287	Barefolds	Farmhouse (period Unassigned), Farmstead (period Unassigned)

APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
6672-3	Soil strip	N
6674-6	Gorse burning on natural subsoil	S
6677-8	Trench for water pipe to well in woods	NW
6679	Trench for water pipe	N
6680	Trench for water pipe	S
6681-2	Trench for water pipe	SE
6683	Gorse burning on natural subsoil	N
6686	Track already stripped at N of site	N
6688	N end of stripped track	S



DSC_6672



DSC_6673



DSC_6674



DSC_6675



DSC_6676



DSC_6677



DSC_6678



DSC_6679



DSC_6680



DSC_6681



DSC_6682



DSC_6683



DSC_6686



DSC_6688