

**Site Adjacent To Peathill Farm, Kinmuck, Inverurie
AB51 0NA
Data Structure Report (DSR)**



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ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: soil strip progressing; facing NE

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SUMMARY

A watching brief was carried out on 11 October 2020. The site is on a SW sloping field and the watching brief area was 35x30m in size. The topsoil was between 0.4m deep (at the NE and SW end) and 0.2 in the centre of the watching brief area. There were numerous large earthfast boulders over the entire area and there are many stones within the topsoil. In the centre of the watching brief area where the soil was shallow there were less stones and plough marks scored into the natural gravels. Two flints were recovered from the spoil heap at the SW end of the trench and one fragment of 13-14th century pottery from a stone hole at the NE end of the trench. Although no archaeological features were recorded, the flints and pottery indicate that this was a populated area from prehistory. A PERD will be prepared and a report on the flints will be prepared.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site (Illus 1) is located between Port Elphinstone and Hatton of Fintray just E of Balbithan House. It is centred on NGR NJ8200018801, at 75-80m OD in the parish of Keithhall And Kinkell.
- 1.2 The work was commissioned by Cobban Architecture. An application APP/2019/1540 to Aberdeenshire Council for erection of 2 dwellinghouses was approved on 4 March 2020 with the requirement for a WSI and watching brief, which can be done as a monitored strip in advance of development works or monitoring of the groundbreaking works required to enable the proposed development
- 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 2020)

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

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

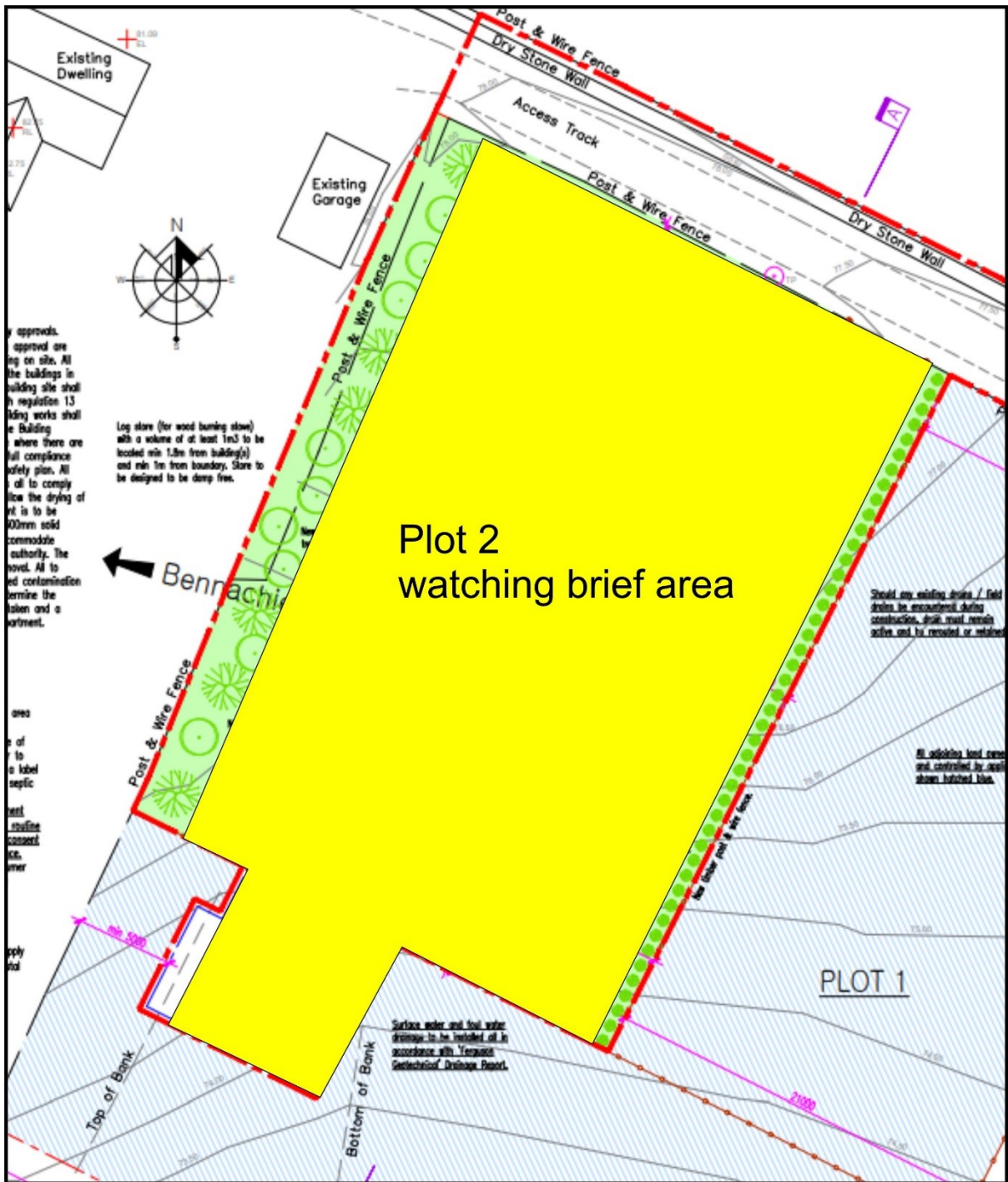
- 2.1 There is one Scheduled Monument within 1km of the proposed development. Peathill standing stone (SM41) is 0.3km NNE of the proposed development. It is the remains of stone circle (HER NJ81NW0002). Only one stone, of grey granite, now remains. An urn was found almost underneath the stone before 1866. No further information. Adjacent to the west is the remains of a tumulus or burial mound (Welfare 2011, 537).

In addition 1.1km SSW is SM12483 Greenlands Hut Circles and cairns at Balbithan Wood (HER NJ81NW0230) a site of up to 269 cairns (and hut circles) previously recorded by Forestry Commission Scotland. Of the cairns, 47 could not be located, and five were found to be either natural or a hollow way. A total of 181 were less the 5m in diameter, clustered in a way that suggests they are clearance cairns relating to medieval or post-medieval field systems. Thirty-one are between 5m and 10m in diameter, mostly located close to the smaller cairn clusters. Four cairns are between 10m and 20m in diameter (Cook and Engl 2005, 16; Cook and Kdolesa 2016, 19; Cook et al 2011, 17; Cook et al 2015, 24; Cook 2014, 21; Shepherd 2009, 22).

- 2.2 Opposite Peathill farm is the site of short cist (HER NJ81NW0007), found some time before 1866 and removed. It contained only a small quantity of 'burnt fatty matter and was of good workmanship, the stones being fixed together with hard cement' (possibly clay luting); oriented nearly N/S. Now no trace (OSNB, Book 12, 744).
- 2.3 Adjacent to the standing stone is the remains of a circular mound or tumulus (HER NJ81NW0008) in which three urns and cremated bone were found. The urns were removed but the bones were re-buried in the original spot. The tumulus is being ploughed down but the farmer has found nothing on the surface (OSNB, Book 12, 744).
- 2.4 Immediately ESE is Peathill farmstead (HER NJ81NW0152) which is still in use. On the 1st edition OS map it is shown as a shallow C-shaped steading with the court open to the WSW and an outshot to the east. A rectangular building, probably the farmhouse, is shown to the west. By the 2nd edition OS map there are two smaller buildings shown by the probable farmhouse. The 2005 map shows that the steading and farmhouse are still in use and have been modified. The smaller outbuildings are shown as disused.

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

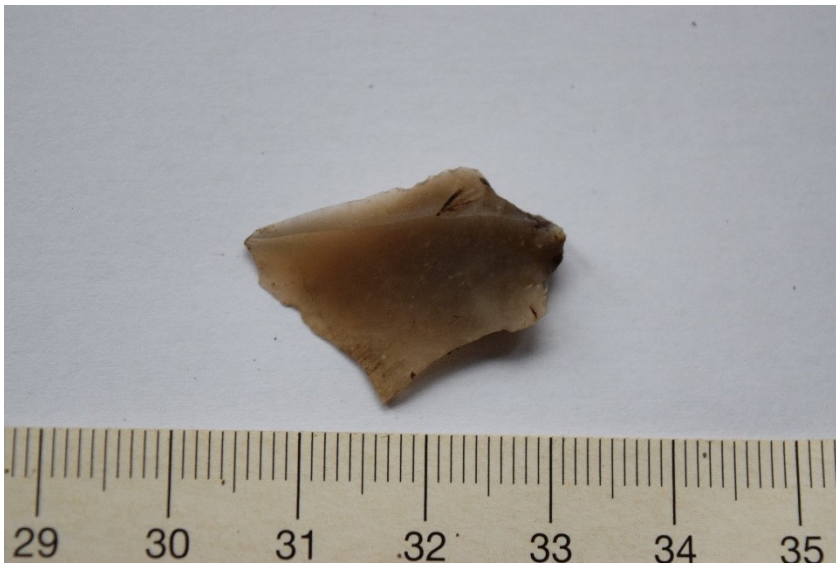
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Illus 2 Site plan showing watching brief area (copyright Cobban Architecture)



Illus 3 SF1 flint



Illus 4 SF2 flint



Illus 5 SF3 medieval pottery

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although no archaeological features were recorded the flints and pottery indicate that this was a populated area from prehistory. A PERD will be prepared and a report on the flints will be prepared.

5 REFERENCES

- Cook and Engl, Murray and R.** (2005) *'Kintore landscape project: Balbithan Wood (Kintore parish), hut circles'*, *Discovery Excav Scot*, vol. 6, 2005.
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- Welfare, A.** (2011) *Great Crowns of Stone: The Recumbent Stone Circles of Scotland.* Edinburgh.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Description	Facing
4494	Soil strip	NE
4495	Soil strip	SW
4496	Soil strip	E
4497	Soil strip	ESE
4498	Soil strip	E
4499	Soil strip	ESE
4500	Soil strip	NE
4501	Soil strip	SW
4502	Soil strip	SSW
4503	Soil strip	NNW
4504	Soil strip	NNW
4505	Soil strip	SW
4506	Soil strip complete	NNW
4507	Soil strip complete	NW
4508	Soil strip complete	NNW
4509	Soil strip complete	NNW
4510	Soil strip complete	NW
4511	Soil strip complete	W
4512	SF1	
4513	SF1	
4514	SF2	
4515	SF2	
4516	SF3	
4517	SF3	



DSC_4494



DSC_4495



DSC_4496



DSC_4497



DSC_4498



DSC_4499



DSC_4500



DSC_4501



DSC_4502



DSC_4503



DSC_4504



DSC_4505



DSC_4506



DSC_4507



DSC_4508



DSC_4509



DSC_4510



DSC_4511



DSC_4512



DSC_4513



DSC_4514



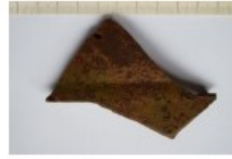
DSC_4515



DSC_4524



DSC_4526



DSC_4533



DSC_4534