

Stonefield Place, Inverurie,
Aberdeenshire, AB51 4ZD



Cameron Archaeology

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SUMMARY

Cameron Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Stonefield Place, Inverurie. Eight trenches were excavated totalling 7% of the available area. No significant archaeological remains were identified and no finds recovered.

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2 **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

50m north of the current site lies the Scheduled Ancient Monument the Brandsbutt Stone (NJ72SE 23), an Ogham inscribed Pictish stone. The Brandsbutt Class I stone is decorated with a crescent and V-rod and a serpent and Z-rod symbol, both incised, as well as being marked by a line of Ogham which are certainly contemporary with the symbols. In 1984 monitoring during house construction (NJ72SE 111) revealed that the Brandsbutt stone had been part of a stone circle. The excavation uncovered a pit, 1.6m long by 0.75m max wide by c.0.25m deep, containing mid brown clayey soil, some fire-cracked stones and several sherds of possible cinerary urn, an isolated cremation deposit, in a small pit c. 25cm in diameter, containing an unburnt flint flake. Other finds included the upper and lower stones of a rotary quern, a heavy stone mortar, with a deep sub-conical bowl, a small deposit of charred barley grains and a quantity of coarse medieval pot sherds and some slag. The finds were deposited to Inverurie Museum (Shepherd 1984a, 630-4; Shepherd 1984b, 11).

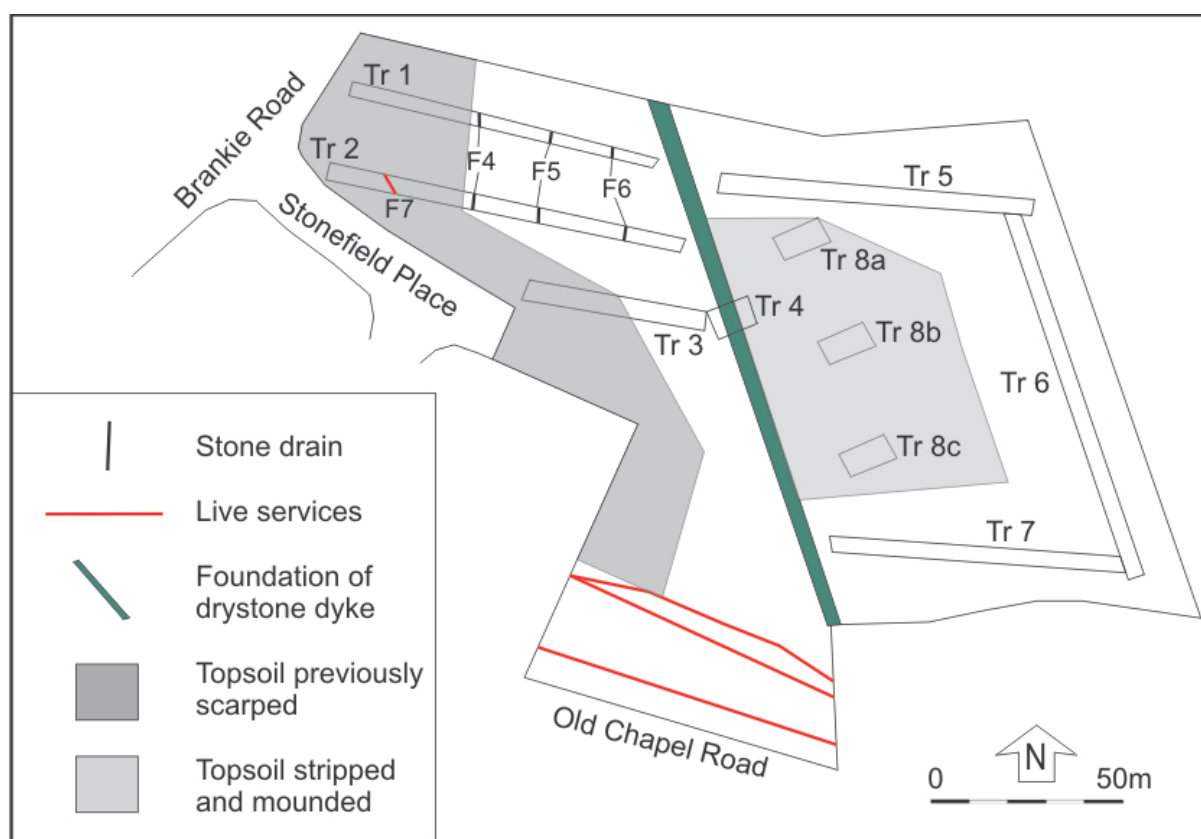
Other sites in the vicinity include sand and gravel workings (NJ72SE 267; NJ 7615 2253) is depicted on the 2nd Edition OS map (Aberdeenshire, 1901, sheet liv.NE) and its site now lies within a modern housing development. The farmstead of Brandsbutt (NJ72SE 283; NJ 7605 2246) is depicted on the 1st Edition OS map Aberdeenshire, sheet LIV, 1869) but has since been demolished. A possible ring-ditch at Highfield (NJ72SE 167; NJ 7570 2242) is recorded as a cropmark on a vertical aerial photograph on a slight NE-facing spur in arable ground at an altitude of 95m OD (NMRS, MS/712/87). Another oval cropmark (NJ72SE 166; NJ 7561 2214) is on a gentle E-facing slope in arable ground at an altitude of 100m OD. It may be of agricultural origin.

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Eight trenches (totalling 7%) were excavated in the available area (Ill 2). Known services (electric and water/sewage) at the south of the site were avoided and a cut for possible BT cables at the west of Trench 2 was avoided.

The west side of the site had been scarped to natural subsoil presumably when the houses and roads were built in the 1980s. A surface of compacted gravel had been laid at the west end of trenches 1 and 2 presumably as a compound for the works. Most of Trench 3 was backfilled with builder's rubble including unused concrete kerbing and sweet and crisp wrappers. The area around Trenches 8a-c was covered with mounds up to 1m high; small trenches in this area revealed that in the past the topsoil had been stripped from this area and mounded.

The area had been fields and was divided by a drystone dyke (F8), the foundation of which survives on the site. This was photographed and Trench 4 cut through this feature to record the foundation which was found to be poorly preserved. Stone drains in Trenches 1 and 2 (F4-6) were 25cm wide cuts into the natural subsoil filled with stones. Trenches 5, 6 and 7 at the east of the site had a shallow (0.15m deep) ploughsoil but no archaeological features were identified.



Ill 2 Plan showing trenches, features and disturbed areas



III 3 Trench 2 west end showing scarping and surface laid in recent past



III 4 Trench 2 facing west



Ill 5 Trench 3 showing modern rubbish just above the scarped natural subsoil



Ill 6 Remains of drystone dyke facing south-east



III 7 Trench 7 facing east showing clean natural subsoil and shallow ploughsoil



III 8 Mounding of topsoil around area of trenches 8a-c

4 ARCHIVE

The site archive will be lodged with RCAHMS.

5 REFERENCES

Shepherd, I A G (1984a) 'A Grampian stone circle confirmed', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, vol. 113, 630-4.

Shepherd, I A G (1984b) 'Brandsbutt, Inverurie: various antiquities', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 11.

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Appendix 1 PHOTOGRAPHS



DSC_0264



DSC_0273



DSC_0274



DSC_0283



DSC_0288



DSC_0294



DSC_0295



DSC_0300



DSC_0301



DSC_0302



DSC_0304



DSC_0305



DSC_0307



DSC_0312



DSC_0322



DSC_0326



DSC_0331



DSC_0337



DSC_0348



DSC_0357



DSC_0363



DSC_0372



DSC_0374



DSC_0383



DSC_0384



DSC_0386



DSC_0389



DSC_0390



DSC_0391



DSC_0392



DSC_0393



DSC_0394



DSC_0395



DSC_0403



DSC_0408



LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo no	Trench	Description	Facing
DSC0264	2	West end showing scarping of natural subsoil and platform or compound surface	N
DSC0273	2	From west end of trench	E
DSC0274	1	West end showing scarping of natural subsoil and platform or compound surface	N
DSC0283	1	From west end of trench	E
DSC0288	1, 2	Location	E
DSC0294	1, 2	Location	SE
DSC0295	1	F4	N
DSC0300	1	Location	NW
DSC0301	1	Location	N
DSC0302	1	Location	NE
DSC0304	1, 2	West end	N
DSC0305	2	Location	E
DSC0307		Location of trenches 1 and 2 from Brankie Road	E
DSC0312	2	F7	N
DSC0322	2	F7	NW
DSC0326	2	F4	N
DSC0331	2	F5	N
DSC0337	2	F6	N
DSC0348	2	From east end	W

DSC0357	1	From east end	W
DSC0363	1, 2	From NE	SW
DSC0372		Mounding Trench 8 area	S
DSC0374		Drystone dyke	S
DSC0383		Drystone dyke	S
DSC0384	1, 2	From SE	NW
DSC0386	3	W end	
DSC0389	1, 2	From SE	NW
DSC0390	1, 2	Location	N
DSC0391	1, 2	Location	NNE
DSC0392	3	Location	NE
DSC0393	1, 2	From SE	NW
DSC0394	1, 2	From S	N
DSC0395	3	From W	E
DSC0403	3	Scarping down to natural subsoil level	N
DSC0408	3	Crisp wrapper just above subsoil	N
DSC0414	3	From east end	W
DSC0420	4	Location	E
DSC0425	4	Location	E
DSC0431	4	Section through dyke foundation	N
DSC0446	3	Location (left)	W
DSC0462	5	Location	E
DSC0468	5, 6	Junction 5 (right) 6 (left)	W
DSC0475	6	Location	S
DSC0490	6, 7	Trench 6 (right) trench 7 (left)	NW
DSC0500	6, 7	Trench 6 (right) trench 7 (left)	NW
DSC0506	7	Location	SE
DSC0510	7	Location	E
DSCF9065	3	Concrete kerbing	N
DSCF9066	3	Detail of large earthfast boulder	N
DSCF9074	8	Mounding around trenches 8a, 8b, 8c	WNW
DSCF9075	8	Mounding around trenches 8a, 8b, 8c	W
DSCF9075	8	Mounding around trenches 8a, 8b, 8c	NW
DSCF9077	8	Mounding around trenches 8a, 8b, 8c	E

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXTS

Context	Trench	Description
1	1, 2, 3	Loose dark grey loam redeposited soil
2	1, 2, 3	Gravel surface laid when houses built 1980s for compound/surface
3	1, 2, 3	Ploughsoil at east end trenches 1-3
4	1, 2	25cm wide cut into natural subsoil filled with stones - stone drain
5	1, 2	25cm wide cut into natural subsoil filled with stones - stone drain
6	1, 2	25cm wide cut into natural subsoil filled with stones - stone drain
7	2	15cm wide cut into natural - service trench
8	4	Drystone dyke across site NW-SE
9	4, 5, 6, 7	Undisturbed topsoil 15cm deep
10	8	Topsoil stripped and mounded presumably in 1980s when houses being built