

**ECCLESGREIG GARDENS
ST CYRUS
ABERDEENSHIRE**



Archaeological Evaluation

Carried out August 13th 2013

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2013-25

by

H K Murray and J C Murray

H K Murray BA, PhD, MIFA, FSA Scot

J C Murray BA, MIFA, FSA Scot, FMA

Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN

Telephone: (01651) 806394 e-mail: cmurray@btinternet.com

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-Archaeological Evaluation -

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1. Background

- 1.1 A Planning Application (APP/2013/0203) was granted permission for the erection of houses on a green field site to the W of Invergarry Park, St Cyrus, Aberdeenshire.

An archaeological condition was applied to this application in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP).

The condition required that no development should take place before the implementation of a 5% archaeological evaluation.

- 1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Norman McIntosh of Roundhouse Architecture Ltd on behalf of Snowdrop Developments (UK) Ltd to undertake the work.

- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken on 13th August 2013.

2. The Site

- 2.1 The site lies to the W edge of St Cyrus village on a minor road on the W side of the A92.

Parish: St Cyrus. NGR: NO 7451, 6523 (centre of evaluation site)

- 2.2 The site was fairly level ground with gently rising ground to the W. Before excavation there was a visible NW/SE dip across the middle of the field. It was in grass at the time of the evaluation.
- 2.3 An lv cable and a concrete drain 400mm in diameter were known to run E/W across the centre of the site so a corridor was left between Trenches 1-5 and Trenches 6-8 (Illus 2: grey line).
Clearance was also left on the E side of the site because of overhead power cables.



Illus 1 General view across site looking S, Trench 7 in foreground

3 Methodology

- 3.1 The cultivated topsoil was removed by a full slew excavator with a 1.9m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible features were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 3.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper CX.

4. Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 Roy's Military Map of 1747-55 (www.nls.ac.uk) shows St Cyrus church and some settlement and cultivation to the E of the road (now A92) but there is no settlement or cultivation shown W of the road in the area of the present site. The 25" 1st OS map of 1864 shows the ground enclosed and in cultivation as a single field (Kincardine sheet xxvii.6 (St Cyrus) 1864, pub 1868). It is unchanged in 1901 (Kincardineshire 030.03 1901, pub 1904).
- 4.2 A number of documentary references exist to the sites of possible medieval manors in the area around the present site: Ecclesgreig House (Aberdeenshire SMR NO76NW0058), North Snadon (Aberdeenshire SMR NO76NW0060) and Mains of Woodstone (Aberdeenshire SMR NO76NE0025). Cropmarks to the S of the village indicate prehistoric activity in the area (Aberdeenshire SMR NO76SW0052).

5 Results of the Evaluation

Eight evaluation trenches were excavated in total (Illus 2).

Trench 1

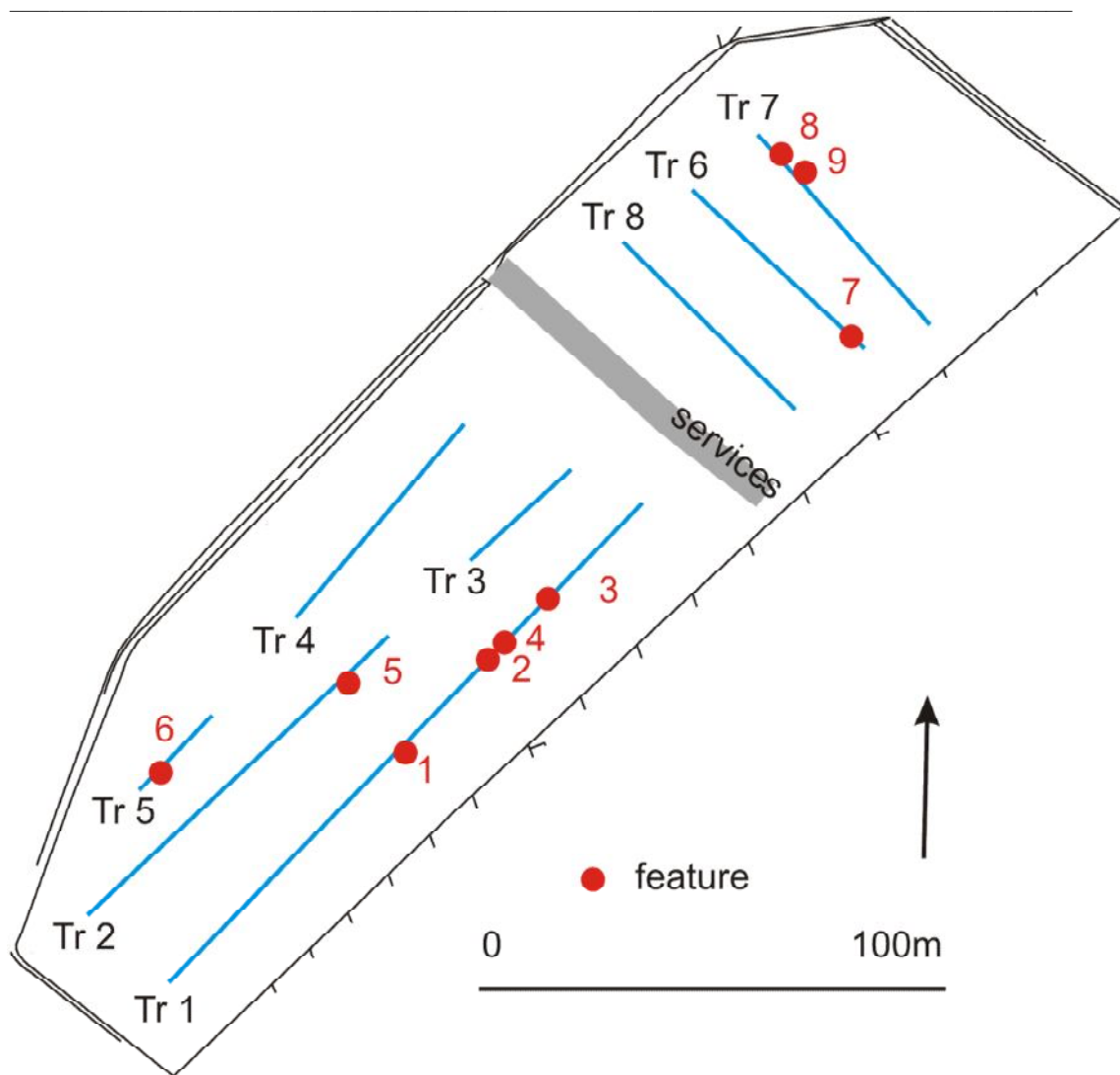
GPS NE end: 374538,765229 SW end: 374436,765125

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 145 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: At the NE end of the trench topsoil was c 300mm deep dipping to 600mm thickness at 374524, 765216, then gradually rising to the S to between 250 and 300mm thickness. In general the topsoil overlay orange stoney clay natural.

Features:

- 1 Stone drain 374484,765175
- 2 Stone drain 374506,765198
- 3 Stone drain 374516,765208
- 4 Patch of charcoal on the top of natural. There was no indication that this was of any antiquity and in the context of the considerable earth movements shown in Trench 2 it is probably fairly modern. 374504,765194.



Illus 2 The site showing all evaluation trenches (blue) and features (red). Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data, © Crown Copyright, All rights reserved. 2012. License No 1000410404

Trench 2

GPS NE end: 374484,765200 SW end: 374417,765140

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 90 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: For the S c 45m of the trench topsoil was between 300 and 450mm in depth. Gradually the level of the top of natural below the grass deepened to 1.7m at the N end of the trench. This was comprised of topsoil over a thick deposit of redeposited topsoil and redeposited natural. This incorporated several sherds of L19th or E 20th century stoneware and redware pottery and appears to have been a deliberate infill of a natural hollow. Below the infill at the deepest area there was c 40mm fine grey silt, interpreted as silt in the base of a wet hollow.

A stone drain (5) had been inserted below the infill deposit.

Features:

- 5 Stone drain between 374469,765190 and 374476,765194



Illus 3 Trench 2, N end looking N



Illus 4 Trench 2 W section detail at N end showing L19th/E 20th century infill. White tag (halfway up lowest white bar on ranging rod) indicates position of sherd of L19th/E 20th century redware pottery.

Trench 3

GPS NE end: 374523,765296 SW end: 374500,765217

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 30 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: Trench 3 was laid out to determine the N extent of the infilled natural hollow noted in Trench 2. At the S end the topsoil was only c 280mm in depth over natural, so this appeared to be to the S of the infilled hollow. At the N end of the trench the natural dipped to c 600mm below the present surface; this related to the natural dip visible across the site (see also Trench 1).

Features: None

Trench 4

GPS NE end: 374499,765247 SW end: 374462,765203

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 57 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: Topsoil at N end of the trench was c 300mm, sloping down to the S from 374480,765225 to 374466,765210 where natural was between 1m and 1.25m below the present surface. This was the W extent of the infilled natural hollow noted in Trench 2.

Features: None

Trench 5

GPS NE end: 374444,765184 SW end: 374428,765166

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 22 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: At the N end of the trench, the natural was at a depth of 700mm below present surface; this represents the infilled natural hollow noted in Trench 2. At the S end of the trench topsoil was c 330mm depth to natural.

Features:

- 6 A metal water pipe cut NNE/SSW across the trench between 374431, 765168 and 374433,765173. It was not live.

Trench 6

GPS NW end: 368402, 807975 SE end: 368370,807957

Orientation: NW/SE Length: 36 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over natural c 450mm deep on the W side nearer the fence but c 350mm deep for most of the trench.

Features:

- 7 Stone drain from 368370,807957 to 374581,765264

Trench 7

GPS NW end:368421, 807969 SE end: 368402,807913

Orientation: NW/SE Length: 56 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over natural c 450mm depth on the W side nearer the fence but c 350mm deep for most of the trench.

Features:

- 8 Stone drain 374566,765304
- 9 Stone drain 374570,765300

Trench 8

GPS NW end: 374533,765283 SE end: 374569,765249

Orientation: NW/SE Length: 51 m Width: 1.9m

Stratigraphy: Topsoil c. 350mm over natural.

Features: None



Illus 5 Trench 8 looking E

6 The Finds

There were no finds.

7 Impacts and Mitigations

Impacts None. No archaeological finds or features were identified in the evaluation.

Mitigations

1. The lack of surviving archaeology within the evaluation area does not preclude the possibility of chance finds or archaeological discoveries outwith the evaluation trenches. Should such chance finds occur, then the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council, or Murray Archaeological Services Ltd, must be informed immediately so that an appropriate archaeological response can be formulated and agreed by all parties concerned.

8 References

Roy. Military Map of 1747-55 on line at <http://www.nls.uk/maps>

Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic records

(Supplied to Aberdeenshire SMR on CD)

| Digital frame number | Content |
|----------------------|--|
| Ecclesgreig St Cyrus | |
| 1 | Trench 2 looking N |
| 2-4 | Trench 2, detail of W section showing L19/E 20 th century infill. Tag marks L19/E20th century pottery |
| 5-6 | Trench 8 looking E |
| 7-9 | General view looking S |
| 10-11 | Trench 1 looking S |
| 12 | General view looking NW |
| 13 | Trench 1 S end |
| 14 | General view looking SW |
| 15-17 | Trench 2 S end looking N |
| 18-20 | Trench 2 N (deep) end looking N |
| 21 | Trench 2 detail of E section showing L19/E 20 th century infill. Tag marks L19/E20th century pottery |