

**SITE NORTH OF DEN FARM,
FOCHABERS
MORAY**



- Archaeological Watching Brief -

Carried out 14th January 2014
by
Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2014-2

by
H K & 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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1. Background

1.1 A planning application for the erection of a new house on a site to the N of Den Farm, Fochabers, Moray was approved subject to an archaeological planning condition (Planning Ref: 13/01333/AMC). The condition (Condition 1) required the developer to secure the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during groundbreaking and development work

1.2 The Conditions were applied in the context of PAN (Planning Advise Note) 2/2011, SPP and SHEP.

1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Leslie Hunter, Chartered Architect, to undertake the work which was carried out 15th January 2014.

2. THE SITE

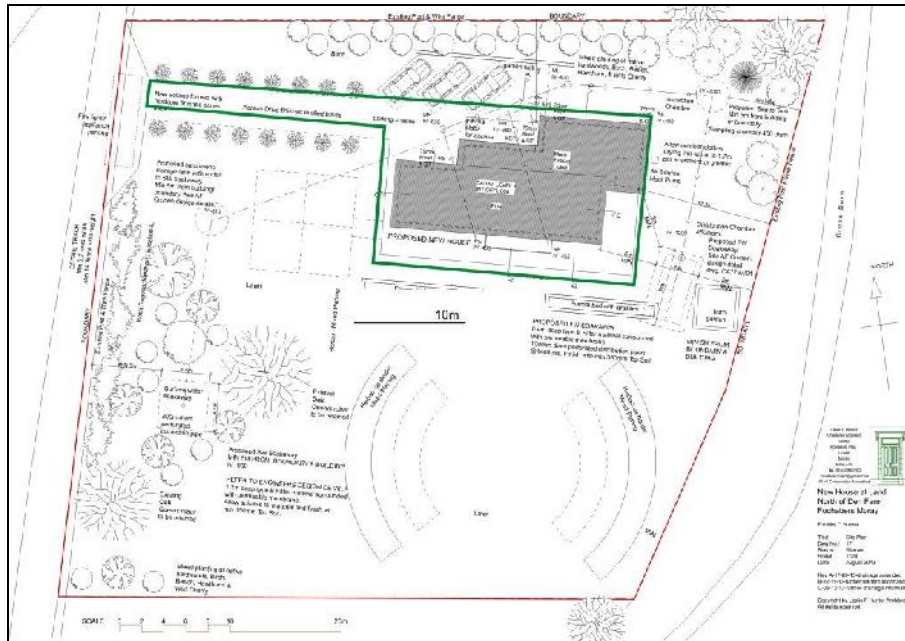
2.1 The site is located c.3km N of Fochabers and several hundred metres E of the B9104 and N of Den Farm [NGR: NJ 3572 6126; Parish: Bellie].



Illus 1: Location map with the site shown in red. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved License No.100049810

- 2.2 A short distance to the N of the site lies Roman Camp Gate, a cropmark site of at least five timber roundhouses where a limited amount of excavation was carried out in 1990 [NJ 3568 6172; NMRS No: NJ36SE 15].
- 2.3 To the S of the site are the remains of the pre-Reformation church of St Mary's and the Bellie Old Parish Church burial ground [NJ 3533 6101; NMRS No: NJ36SE 5]
3. The Watching Brief

3.1 The soil strip was carried out using a full-slew mechanical digger with a toothless ditching bucket. The area observed was confined to the footprint of the new house and the access route at the N end of the plot. The remainder of the plot was undisturbed as it is being used for recreational and gardening purposes.



Illus 2: Site Plan, with areas watched outlined in green

3.2 The house area was c.22.2m (E-W) x 12m (E-W), while the track access observed was c.2m wide x 22m long. The depth of topsoil removed varied from c.280mm at the E end of the site to c.300mm at the SW with much of the rest being slightly less than 400mm. The topsoil overlay reddish pebbly gravel on a raised gravel ridge.

3.3 No archaeological features or finds were observed.

4. Results



Illus 3: Soil strip in progress, looking W



Illus 4: Area stripped, looking NE

4.1 Although the site lies to the S of an area of intensive archaeological activity, no archaeological features or finds were evident during the watching brief.

Catalogue of Digital Photographs (Supplied to Archive)

1	View of soil strip, looking W
2	View of S end of site
3-4	Soil strip in progress
5-7	Area of soil strip, looking E
9-11	Area stripped, looking W, N, and NE respectively

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Moray
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Site N of Den Farm, Fochabers, Moray
PROJECT CODE:	MAS 2014-2
PARISH:	Bellie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	H K & J C Murray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Murray Archaeological Services Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NJ 3572 6126
START DATE (this season)	15 th January 2014
END DATE (this season)	15 th January 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was maintained during the soil strip prior to the erection of a new house. The site lies a short distance to the S of the cropmark site of Roman Gate Camp (NMRS No: NJ36SE 15) and N of the remains of the pre-Reformation church of St. Mary's and the Bellie Old Parish Church burial ground (NMRS No: NJ36SE 5). No archaeological features or finds were evident.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Leslie Hunter, Chartered Architect
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Hill of Belnagoak, Methlick, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 7JN
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cmurray@btinternet.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS. Report and photographs deposited in Aberdeenshire SMR