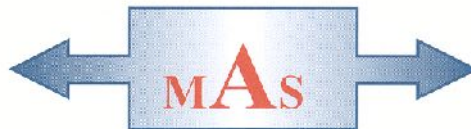


**WEST ROAD  
PETERHEAD  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**- Archaeological Evaluation -**  
Carried out 24th September 2014  
by  
**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2014-39**  
by  
H K Murray & J C Murray

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# WEST ROAD PETERHEAD ABERDEENSHIRE

## -Archaeological Evaluation-

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

### 1. Background

1.1 A proposal for a housing development at West Road, Peterhead, was approved (Planning ref:APP/2009/2512) subject to a planning condition stipulating that no work should take place before a programme of archaeological work was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation. The archaeological implications of the development were discussed with Bruce Mann, Archaeological Services, Aberdeenshire Council, who proposed that a 5% archaeological evaluation would be appropriate.

This proposal was made in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP).

1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Muir Homes Ltd to undertake the work, the field element of which was carried out 24th<sup>th</sup> September 2014.



**Illus 1 Location of site (red outline) Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100049810.**

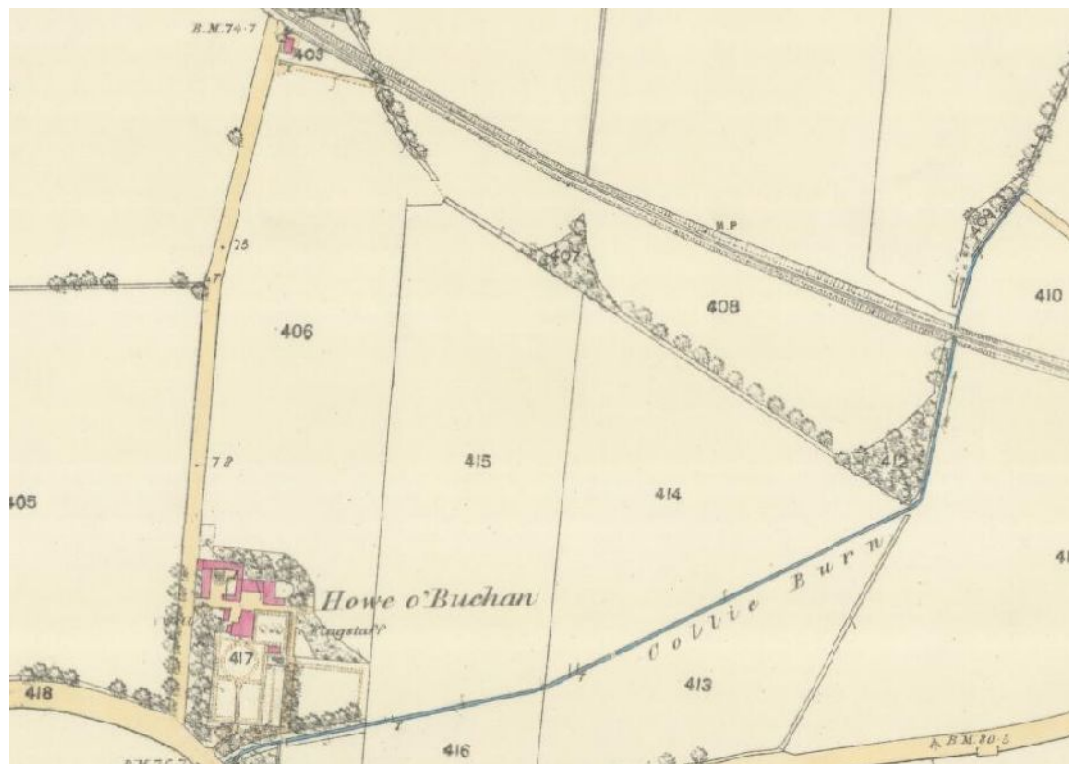
## 2. Desktop Survey

2.1 A search was carried out in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) through Canmore and Pastmap. The historic OS maps for the area were also consulted.

2.2 **Roy's Military map of Scotland 1747-55** shows most of this area to the W of Peterhead as cultivated with rig and furrow.

### 2.3 **Aberdeen Sheet XXIII.6 (Peterhead) 1868 (pub 1872)**

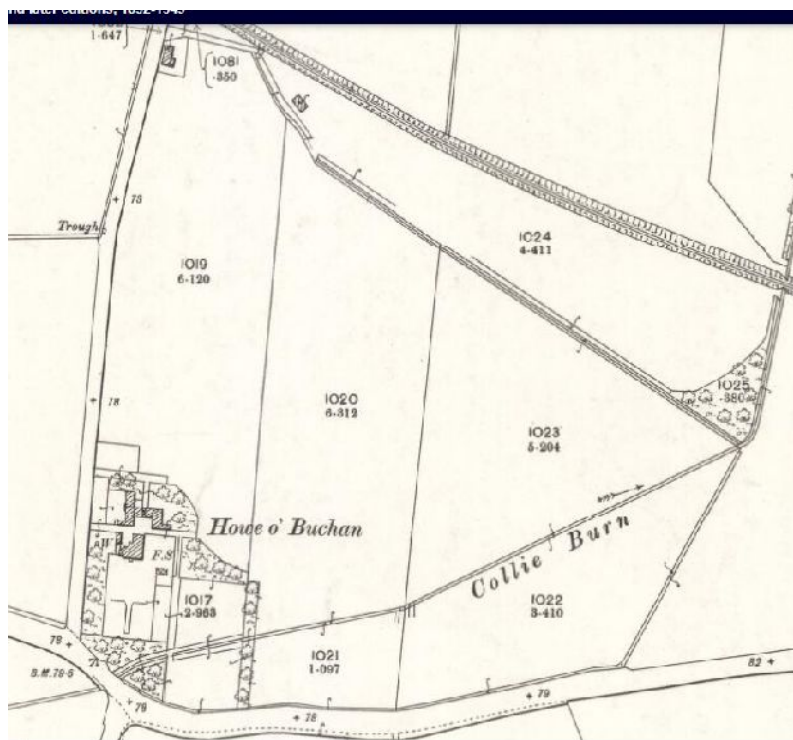
shows this area as improved land divided into three fields with the Collie Burn running through the E field.



Illus 2 1<sup>st</sup> OS map 1868 [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

### 2.4 **OS 25" Aberdeenshire, Sheet 023.06 1900 (pub 1901)**

shows the same layout as on 1868.



Illus 3 2<sup>nd</sup> OS 1900 [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

2.5 OS 25<sup>th</sup> Aberdeenshire, Sheet 023.06 1924 (pub 1926)

shows the area unchanged.

2.6 Aberdeenshire SMR

A cropmark site is recorded at Coplandhill (Aberdeenshire SMR: NK 14NW0032). The circular cropmark is noted as possibly archaeological but more probably agricultural. It was in the NE corner of the site which had been dug away during drainage works prior to the evaluation. It could not be assessed.

3. The Site

3.1 The site comprises land on either side of a new access road to the N of a new roundabout off the A950, Longside to Peterhead Road and E of the A90. It is bordered to the N by the old railway line, now the Buchan and Formartine footpath.

NGR: NK 1074 4653 (approx centre of site). Parish: Peterhead

3.2.1 At the time of the evaluation, the ground to the E of the new access road was considered to have been disturbed to an extent that there was no chance of



archaeological survival. The Collie Burn, which originally ran through this part of the site, had been re-routed through drainage, with damage to most of the area. The N half of the site was also covered by a large bund of topsoil (illus 6).

This was discussed with Bruce Mann, Archaeological Services, Aberdeenshire Council who agreed that no evaluation was possible in this area.



**Illus 4 Disturbed area E of access road**

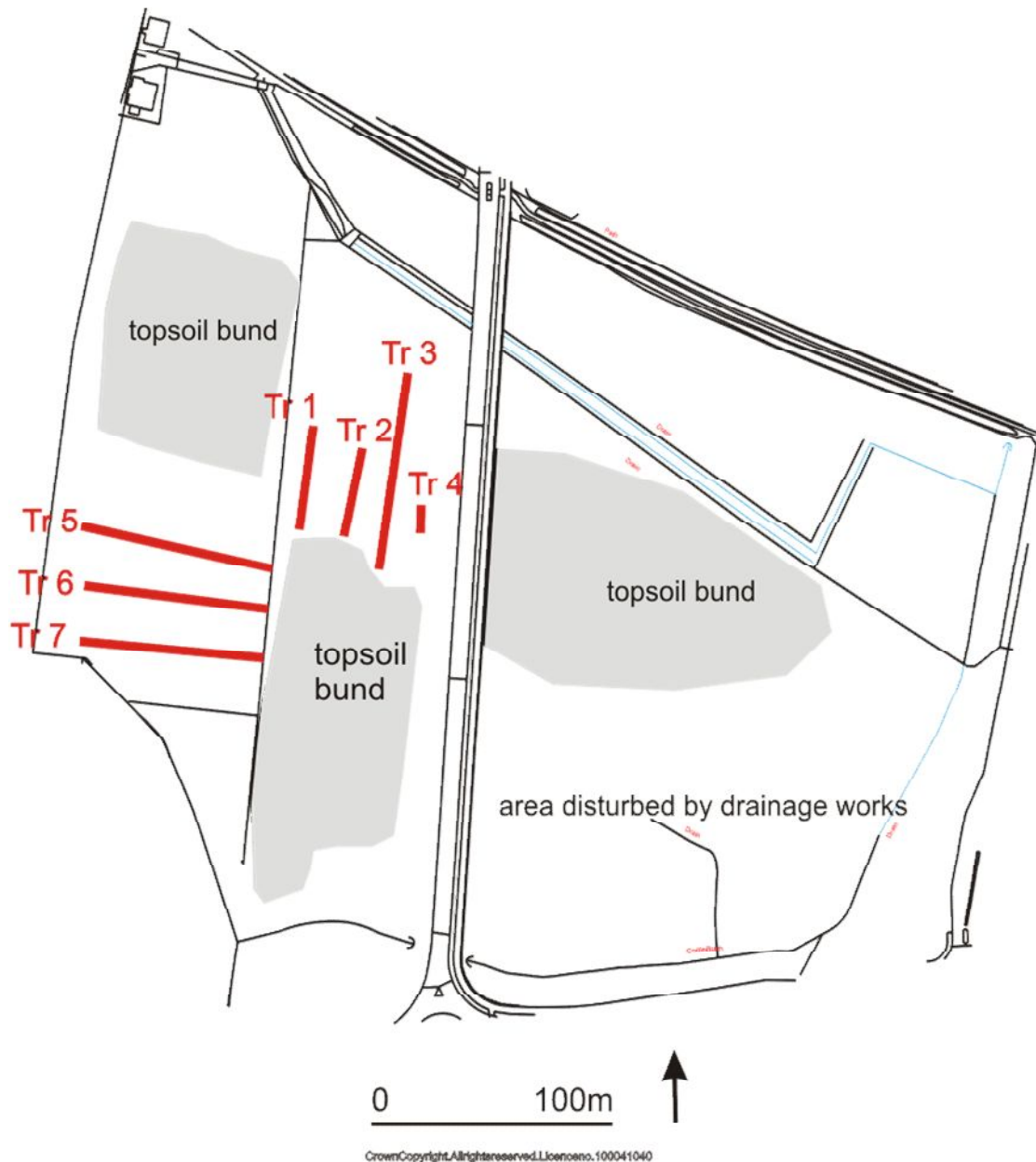
3.3 The ground to the W of the new access road was less disturbed but some 50% of the area was covered by large bunds of topsoil (illus 6). Evaluation trenches were excavated in the undisturbed areas; some had to be abandoned due to the rapid ingress of water.



**Illus 5 Looking at W area from access road, showing bunds of topsoil**

#### 4. Methodology

- 4.1 Seven evaluation trenches were excavated. Topsoil was removed using a full slew excavator with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible features were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 4.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper 120 GPS and Glonass.



Illus 6 Plan of trenches evaluated (red). Grey areas indicate ground covered by large bunds of topsoil.  
Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data, © Crown Copyright, All rights reserved. 2014. Licence 100041040



## 5. The Results

**Trenches 1-4** lay in the E field, E of a drystone dyke shown from the 1868 OS map onwards and W of the new access road.

### Trench 1

GPS N end: 410676,846589                      S end: 410670,846544

Orientation:    Approx N/S                      Length: 45m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 280-300mm topsoil at S end. N end flooded.

*Features:* None.

Trench abandoned when water ingress was too fast.



**Illus 7 Trench 1 looking N**

### Trench 2

GPS N end: 410696,846580                      S end: 410688,846541

Orientation:    Approx N/S                      Length: 40m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 350mm topsoil at S end. N end 200mm

*Features:* None.

Trench abandoned when water ingress was too fast.



**Illus 8 Trenches 1 and 2 looking N from topsoil bund**

Trench 3

GPS N end: 410714,846611                      S end: 410702,846522

Orientation:    Approx N/S                      Length: 90m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 350mm topsoil at S end. N end 400mm

*Features:* None. S end disturbed by formation of bund to S.

Trench abandoned when water ingress was too fast

Trench 4

GPS N end: 410719,846555                      S end: 410719,846542

Orientation:    Approx N/S                      Length: 13m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavily disturbed during formation of raised access road to E.

*Features:* None.

**Trenches 5-7** lay in the W field, W of a drystone dyke shown from the 1868 OS map onwards.

Trench 5

GPS E end: 410660,846528                      W end: 410581,846545



Orientation: Approx E/W Length: 81m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 300mm topsoil at E end. W end 500mm

*Features:* Modern N/S drains crossed lower, W end of trench. These were not logged as water ingress was rapid.



**Illus 9 Trench 5 looking W**

### Trench 6

GPS E end: 410659,846510 W end: 410580,846522

Orientation: Approx E/W Length: 79m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 300mm topsoil at E end. W end 400mm

*Features:* Modern N/S drains crossed lower, W end of trench at 410590,846522;  
410594,846521;410603,846519.

*Finds:* A small scatter of unworked flint pebbles and lumps were found at 410603,  
846519; 410596,846520; 410589,852521.

### Trench 7

GPS E end: 410657,846492 W end: 410578,846498

Orientation: Approx E/W Length: 79m Width: 2m

Stratigraphy: Heavy clay topsoil over thick natural clay.

Depth 280mm topsoil at E end. W end 400mm

*Features:* Modern N/S drains crossed lower, W end of trench at  
410587,846498;410596,846497

*Finds:* A small scatter of unworked flint pebbles and lumps were found at  
410587,846498;410597,846497.



**Illus 10** Trenches 5-7 looking W

## 6. Discussion

There were no archaeological features evident. The extremely wet nature of the ground which is generally in a low hollow suggests that it would not have been an ideal site for prehistoric occupation. The slightly higher ground to the SW where the house Howe o'Buchan is situated- or the higher ridge on the W side of the A90, would appear more attractive locations.

The small scatter of unworked flint nodules and chunks found in trenches 6 and 7 (with one small worn pebble in topsoil as an exception) were all located within the cuts of the modern drains or in the previously ploughed topsoil just on either side of the drains. As the drains had been infilled above the pipes with quarry pebbles, it is suggested that the flint had been brought in as part of the quarry material- many of the

local quarries in the Peterhead area being in flint-rich areas- the nearest quarries being near Boddam in the vicinity of the flint that was mined in the Neolithic.

## 7. Impacts and Mitigations

Impacts There was no evidence of surviving archaeology.

Mitigations None

This 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.

Photographs supplied to archive on CD

<b>Photographic catalogue</b>	
<b>Digital frame no</b>	<b>Content</b>
1-5	Trench 1 looking N
6-8	Trenches 1 and 2 looking N
9-10	Trench 3 looking N
11-12	Looking NW across trenches 1-3 with bund in background
13-15	Trench 5 looking W
16	Looking S across W field . Trench 5 in foreground
17-19	W field looking NW
20	E field. Trenches 1-3 looking N
21-23	W field trenches 5-7 looking W
24-25	E field trenches 1-3 looking N
26-31	E of road disturbed area
32	W of road looking NW