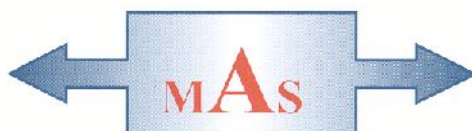


**DRIVEWAY REPAIRS  
CRATHES CASTLE  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Archaeological Watching Brief**  
Carried out between February and March 2015  
by  
**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2015-10**  
by  
H K Murray and J C Murray

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**DRIVEWAY REPAIRS  
CRATHES CASTLE  
ABERDEENSHIRE**

**-Archaeological watching brief-**

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

**1. Background**

1.1 In 2015 a major programme of maintenance to driveways and associated drainage was undertaken by the National Trust for Scotland at a number of properties, including Crathes Castle, Aberdeenshire.

1.2 Dr Shannon Fraser, archaeologist for the National Trust for Scotland, determined that it was advisable to commission a watching brief on those parts of the works that would involve excavation for drains and other features in areas that were not already known to have been disturbed.

1.3 At Crathes Castle there were two main areas of concern: the direct environs of the castle beside the S lawn and the S driveway which runs alongside a number of prehistoric sites, most notably those in the Warren Field.

1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by the National Trust for Scotland to undertake a watching brief on ground disturbance in the agreed areas and to record any finds or features that were revealed. The watching brief was carried out between February and March 2015.

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## 2. The Site

2.1 The works relate to a number of sites within the policies of Crathes Castle.

(a) Crathes Castle, Banchory, Aberdeenshire.

Parish: Banchory-Ternon,

NGR: NO 7341 9680

NMRS No: NO79NW 8

Canmore ID 36693

(b) Associated sites:

Overflow Car Park. NGR: NO 73599,96798

NMRS: NO79NW104. Canmore id:339709

Pit Alignment. NGR NO7375,9668

NMRS No: NO79NW18. Canmore id: 36671

Warren Field. NGR:NO 7393,9670

NMRS No: NO79NW17. Canmore id:36670

## 3 Methodology

3.1 All ground works in the areas agreed with Dr Fraser were observed with any potential features cleaned by hand, planned, photographed (Appendix 1) and recorded as appropriate.

3.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper 120 GPS and Glonass.

## 4 Results

All areas observed have been given a simple series of numbers. These do not relate to the contractors numbers. The location of observed drains is shown on Illus 8-9 with details in Table 1.



**Illus 1 Drain location 5 looking SE**



**Illus 2 Drain location 6, looking S**

**Table 1 Details of drain locations observed.**

Location No	Work observed	GPS	Stratigraphy	Archaeological features
1	L-shaped with 3m long drain (600mm wide, 400mm deep) to soakaway 5.2m long (550mm wide, 1.20m deep)	373544,796797 to 373546,796794 to 373551,796797	In soakaway natural at 1.2m below make-up of brown earth with many large stones and occasional red brick. Upper fill much tree root.	Frag. undiagnostic prehistoric pottery at 450mm below surface in made-up ground.
2	Curved drain, runs 6m E/W from road and then turns to run 6.3m SE. (W: 800mm. Depth:900mm)	From 373514,796678 to 373520,796676 to 373519,796689	C 700mm of topsoil with some dumping of bits of drain pipe, modern glass and stones in top 300-400mm. Natural = clay.	None
3	V shaped drain with straight section beside road (1.8m x 450mm wide x 300mm deep) with longer arm 2.5m long (W:500mm, depth: 600mm).	From 373510,796669 to 373511,796667	Topsoil 500mm over natural clay	None
4	V shaped drain with straight section beside road (1.8m x 450mm wide x 300mm deep) with longer arm 2.7m long (W:500mm, depth: 600mm).	From 373506,796643 to 373508,796641	Topsoil 450mm over natural clay	None
5	V shaped drain with straight section beside road (2m x 800mm wide x 500mm deep) with longer arm 3.2m long (W:450mm, depth: 700mm).	From 373513,796629 to 373516,796631	Topsoil 300mm over natural clay	None
6	T shaped drain with straight section 2m long (W:800mm, Depth 400mm) parallel to road and longer arm 3.5m long (W:500mm, depth 700mm)	From 373569,796619 to 373566,796618	Topsoil and made up soil to 700mm includes bits of tar at 400mm deep	None
7	L shaped drain. Straight arm by road 2m long (W: 800mm, depth 300mm), longer arm at right angles 3.17m long (W:500mm, depth:700mm)	From 373592,796620 to 373529,796624	700mm of humic topsoil over make-up of large boulders used to support the lower S side of road.	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> C wine bottle base in fill
8	Machining revealed this was the line of an existing soakaway filled with gravel	From 373613,796625 to 373614,796626		None
9	T shaped drain with straight section 1.4m long (W:600mm, Depth <	373688,796628. E/W trench 5m S of road	Due lack of communication by contractors this	

	1.3m) at right angle parallel to road and longer arm 1.9m long (W:600mm, depth 600mm)		was not observed	
10	T shaped drain with straight section 1.4m long (W:600mm, Depth < 1.3m) at right angle to road and longer arm 1.9m long (W:600mm, depth 600mm)	373743,796621 E/W trench 3.6m S of road	Due lack of communication by contractors this was not observed	
11	T shaped drain with straight section 1.4m long (W:600mm, Depth < 1.3m) at right angle to road and longer arm 1.9m long (W:600mm, depth 600mm)	373773,796613 E/W trench 4.7m S of road	Due lack of communication by contractors this was not observed	
12	T shaped drain with straight section 1.4m long (W:600mm, Depth < 1.3m) at right angle to road and longer arm 1.9m long (W:600mm, depth 600mm)	373807,796603 E/W trench 3.8m S of road	300mm topsoil and tree roots over fine natural sand	None
13	T shaped drain with straight section 5m long (W:700mm, Depth 700mm) parallel to road and other arm 5m long (W:700mm-1m, depth 1.2m)	373837,796594 E/W trench 5m S of road	Full depth of large stones and boulders used to make up lower S side of road edge	None
14	Drainage pot (W: 1.3m. Depth 1.1m) beside N side of drive with L shaped drain N/S arm 3.3m long (W: 600mm Depth 500mm). E/W arm 5.5m long (W: 600mm. Depth 1.2m)	From 373690,796637 to 373691,796638 to 373658,796640	600-800mm topsoil and tree root over fine natural sand. Stones beside road	None
15	Drainage pot (W: 1.6m. Depth 1.2m) beside N side of drive with T shaped drain N/S arm 2.7m long (W: 650mm Depth 600mm). E/W arm 4.6m long (W: 600mm. Depth 1.3m)	From 373748,796626 to 373751,796629 to 373746,796631	Beside road c700mm topsoil and tree root over reddish sand natural. At N end c 300mm topsoil and tree root over c 700mm large stones and boulders over yellow natural sand	None
16	Drainage pot (W: 1.5m. Depth 1m) beside N side of drive with T shaped drain N/S arm 3m long (W: 600mm Depth 500mm). E/W arm 5m long (W: 600mm. Depth	From 373837,796600 to 373840,796601 to 373838,796600	500-600mm topsoil and tree root over yellow sand natural	None

	1.2m)			
17	Drain on W side of S lawn by tarred pathway. Drain was excavated c12m NW of 2014 excavation trench 2 (Murray & Murray 2014). T shaped drain N/S arm 2.9m long (W: 700mm Depth 1.2m). E/W arm 5m long (W: 850mm. Depth 1.2m)	From 373370,796772 to 373374,796771 to 373371,796770	300-350mm grass and topsoil over hard stony yellow sand natural	None.



**Illus 3 Drain location 3 looking NW**

## 5 Discussion

### *Overflow car park to Warren Field section*

With the exception of one sherd of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery in location 1, there was no evidence of any survival of prehistoric activity in any of the observed locations along this section of drive. The sherd was near the Overflow Car Park, where evidence of Early Neolithic activity was found in 2005 (Murray, Murray & Fraser 2009, 71), however it was in dumped earth so this may have derived from the Overflow Car Park area, rather than indicating that the Neolithic activity extended to this point.



**Illus 4 Drain location 1 with Overflow Car Park in background, looking N**



**Illus 5 Drain location 14 looking N across Warren Field**

In general there was shallow topsoil over sand or clay natural. On the lower side of the drive there were stones and boulders used to support the road edge (locations 7, 13, 14).



A 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> –century bottle base in location 7 suggests this build-up was part of 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> –century driveway works.

The only areas where there was any depth of dumped material were locations 1 and 2; the material was of recent origin.

### *S lawn section*

Drain location 17 lay c12m to the NW of the wall (feature 26. Murray & Murray, 2015, 51-53) excavated in 2014 and interpreted as forming the W wall of a courtyard of L17<sup>th</sup> / E 18<sup>th</sup> –century date. The lack of any dumped material or building demolition debris (in drain location 17), both of which were common within the enclosed area of the courtyard, gives additional support to the interpretation of the excavated wall as a barrier between the area of activity and the surroundings.



**Illus 6 Drain location 17 in relation to castle and S lawn**



**Illus 7 Drain location 17 looking S (originally numbered T10)**

## References

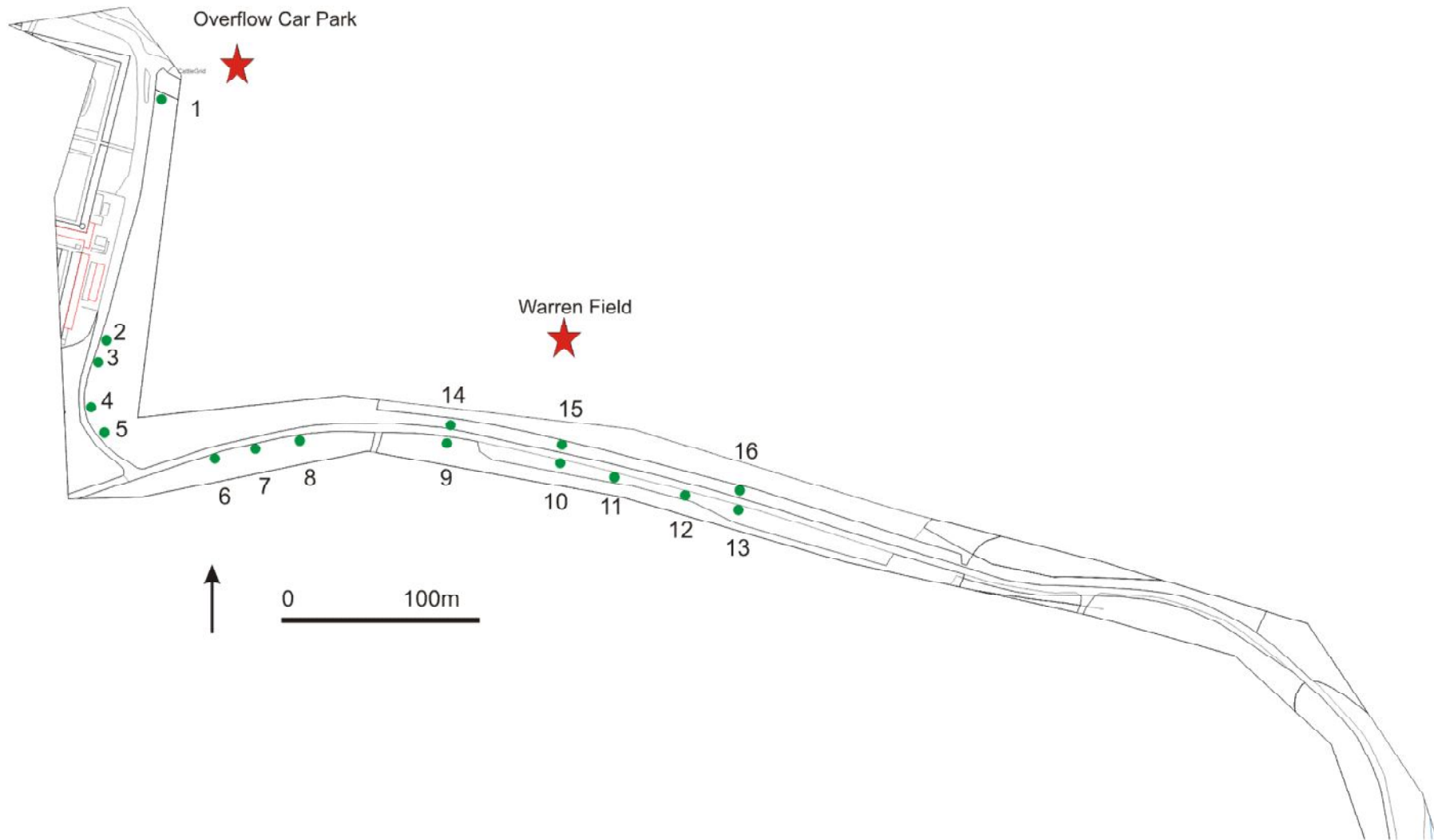
Murray, H K & Murray, J C 2015 *South Lawn, Crathes Castle, Aberdeenshire. Archaeological Excavation 2014*. MAS 2014-08. Unpublished report for NTS.

Murray, H K, Murray, J C & Fraser, S M 2009 *A Tale of the unknown unknowns: a Mesolithic pit alignment and a Neolithic timber hall at Warren Field, Crathes, Aberdeenshire*, Oxford: Oxbow Books.

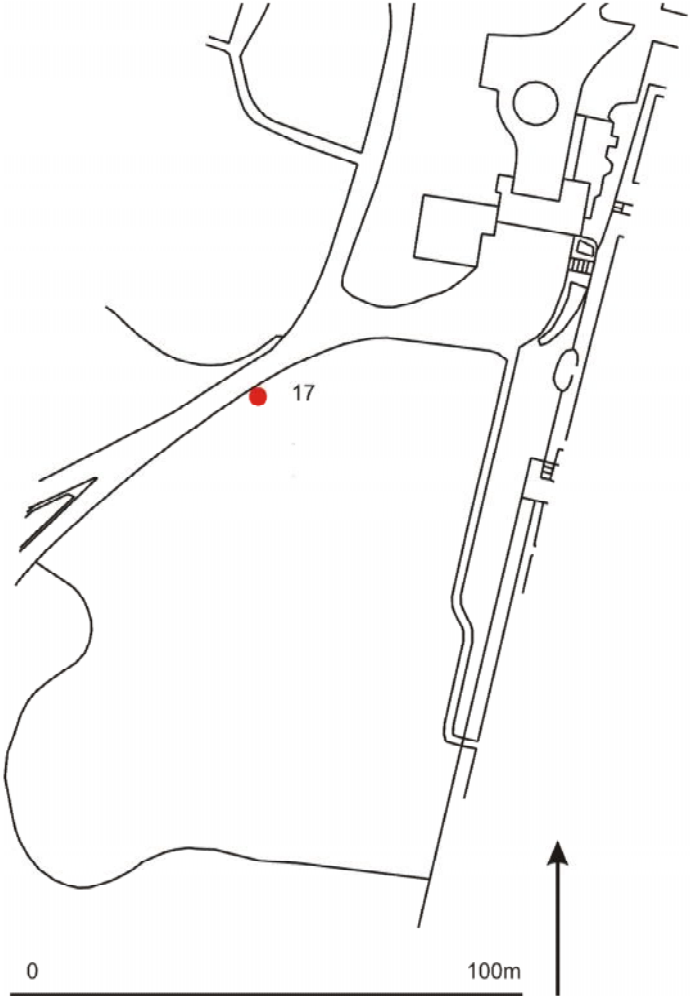
## Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record (to archive)

Digital frame number	Content
1-4	Drain location 3
5-8	Drain location 2
9-10	Drain location 5
11-14	Drain location 6

15-16	Drain location 7
17-18	Drain location 8
19-23	Drain location 4
24-28	Drain location 5
29-33	Drain location 14 (originally names T6)
34-40	Drain location 15 (originally names T7)
41-46	Drain location 16 (originally names T8)
47-48	View of drive looking W towards drain location 16
49-55	Drain location 1 (originally names T9)
56-67	Drain location 17 (originally names T10)
68	From drain location 17 SE to trench 2 of 2014 excavation (in process of re-turfing)



**Illus 8 Plan of drain locations in main driveway. Crown copyright: All rights reserved Licence No 10004140**



**Illus 9 Plan of drain location 17 in S lawn. Crown copyright: All rights reserved Licence No 10004140**