

**CRAIGSTON CASTLE  
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT  
TURRIFF  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Archaeological Evaluation**

Carried out 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2017-22**

by

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

H K Murray BA, PhD, MCifA, FSA Scot

J C Murray BA, MCifA, FSA Scot, FMA

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

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

---

**CRAIGSTON CASTLE**  
**HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**  
**TURRIFF**  
**ABERDEENSHIRE**

**-Archaeological Evaluation -**

**H K Murray and J C Murray**

1. Background

- 1.1 A Planning Application (APP/2013/0656) was granted permission for the development of 14 dwelling houses on a green field site adjacent to Craigston Castle, Turriff, Aberdeenshire.

An archaeological condition (No 1) was applied to this application in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.

The condition required that there should be a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council. This stipulated that no development should take place before the implementation of a 5% archaeological evaluation.

- 1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Mantell Ritchie, Architects on behalf of Mr William Pratesi Urquhart.

- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

## 2. The Site

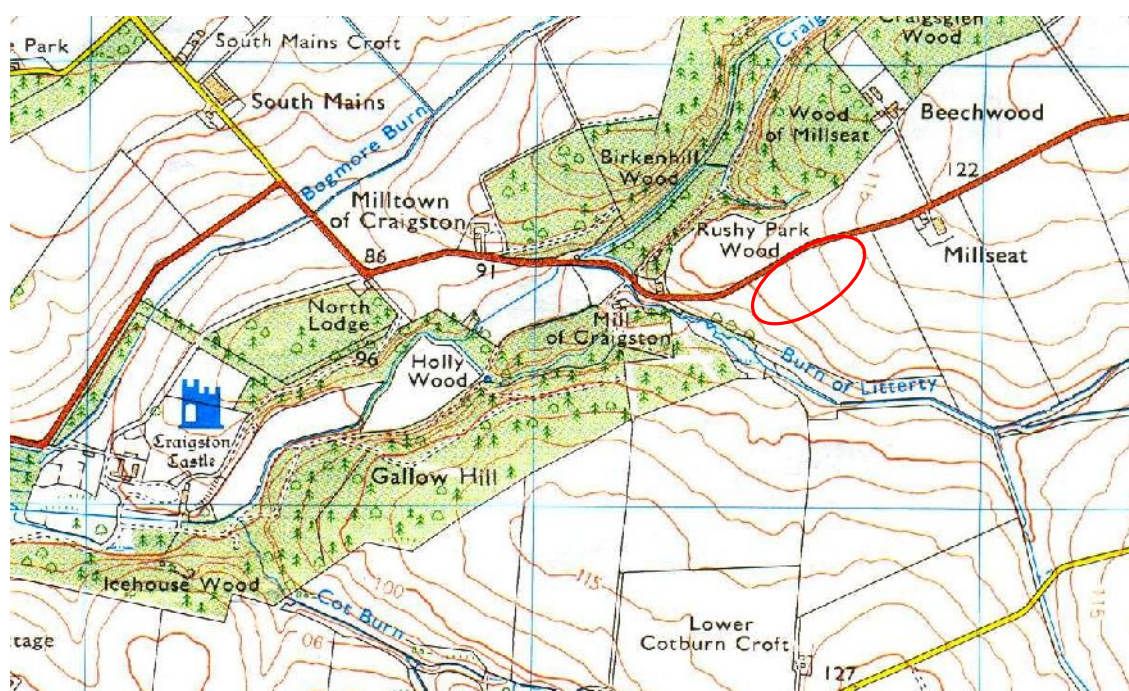
2.1 The evaluation area lay in a stubble field to the NE of Craigston Castle, S of the B9105 road (Illus 1)., in an area where prehistoric sites have been recorded in the wider landscape

The total area was approximately 2 hectares (Illus 3).

Parish: King Edward

NGR (central) NJ 7758, 5551

GPS: 377584, 855515

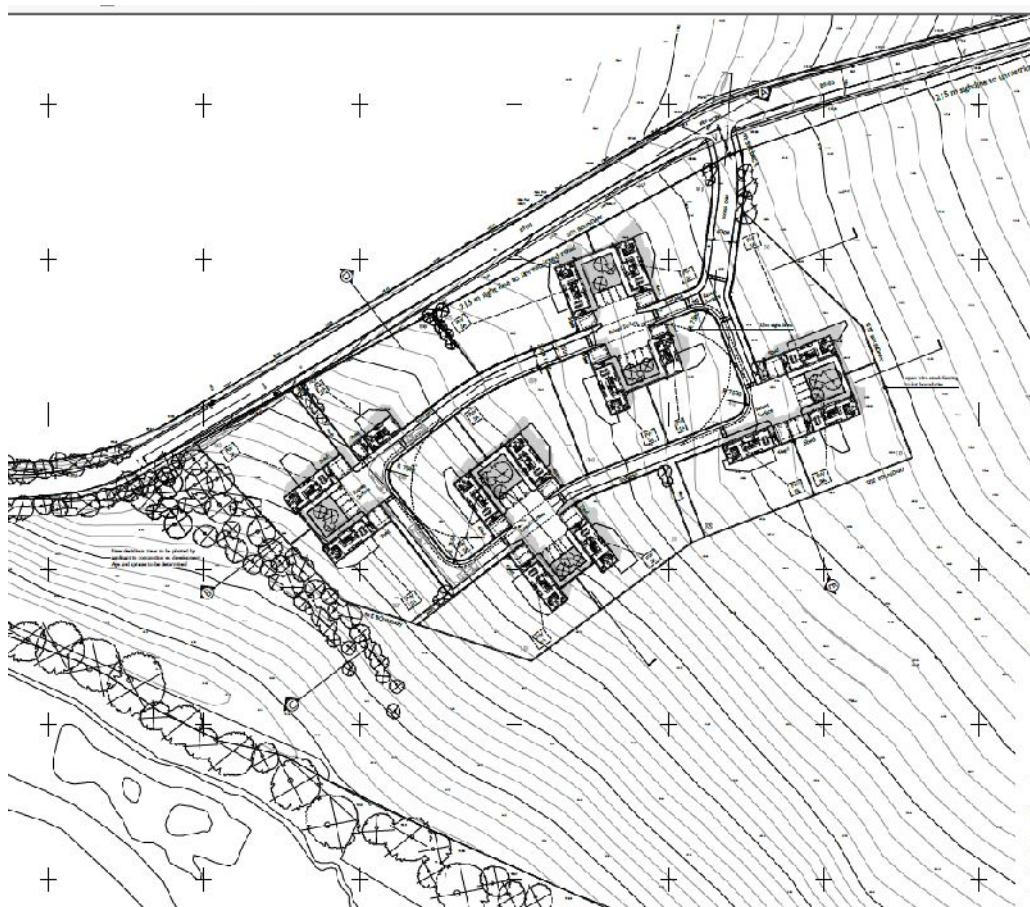


**Illus 1 Location of site. marked by red circle. OS map reproduced Crown Copyright. Licence 100049810**

2.2 The field, which was in stubble at the time of the evaluation, sloped gently to the SW towards the Burn of Litterty, E of its junction with Craigston Burn (Illus 1, 2).



**Illus 2** General view of site looking SW, down hill towards the burn



**Illus 3** General plan of proposed site <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/files/40FF8F2F5C2FF6BDAB051195B2ABCC91/pdf>

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1 The cultivated topsoil was removed by a full slew excavator with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible features were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 3.2 All mapping was done with a Magellan Mobile Mapper 120 GPS and Glonass.



**Illus 4 General view of site looking W**

### 4. Desktop survey

#### 4.1 Sites nearby

*North Mains of Craigston.* Cropmarks of a possible ring ditch (prehistoric settlement/house) are visible on aerial photographs (Aberdeenshire SMR Ref: NJ75NE0010).

*Glen of Craigston,* to the NE of the present site, the remains of a wooden boat were discovered in 1893. This logboat has more recently been dated to between

1890 and 1600 BC and is one of the earliest log boats in Scotland (Aberdeenshire SMR Ref: NJ75NE0027).

S of castle. *Craigston Castle*. Cropmarks. Aberdeenshire SMR Ref: NJ75SE0006.

#### 4.2 Map evidence

*1<sup>st</sup> Ordnance Survey Map*. Aberdeen sheet xi.4 1870 (published 1874). The 1870 map shows this as an open field with no features (Illus 5).



**Illus 5** Aberdeen sheet xi.4 1870 (published 1874). Site indicated by red circle. [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Ordnance Survey Map*

Aberdeenshire 011.04. 1900 (published 1902).

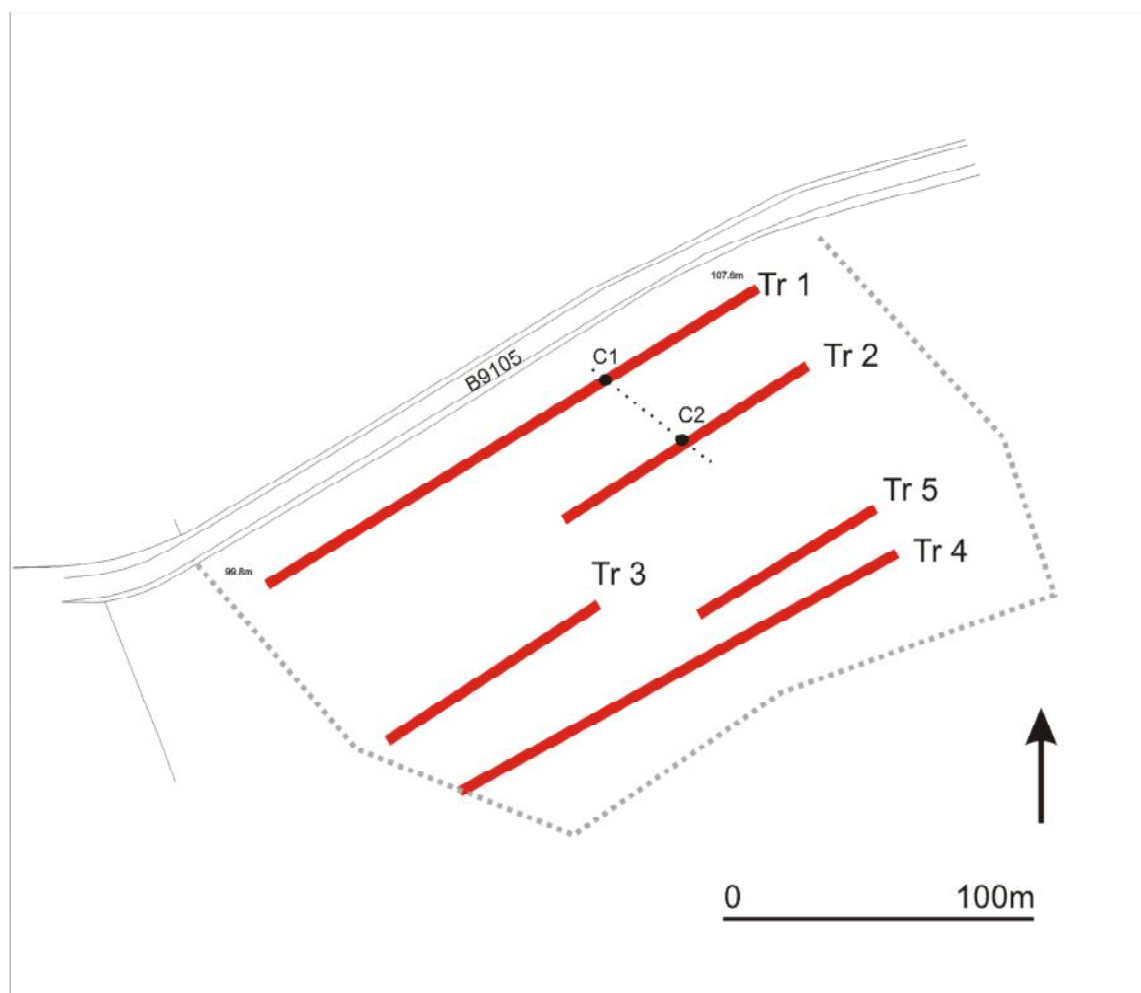
There is no change to the site by 1900, or on the 1926 map of the same area (Illus 6).



**Illus 6** Aberdeenshire 011.04 (published 1902). Site indicated by red circle. [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

## 5 Results of the Evaluation

Five evaluation trenches were excavated in total (Illus 7).



**Illus 7 Plan showing location of trenches (red). Approx site outline :grey dotted line. OS map reproduced Crown Copyright. Licence 100041040**

### Trench 1

GPS NE end: 377618, 855576 SW end: 377459, 855480

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 185 m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: NE end: 300mm. SW end: 350mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over orange stony clay natural.

### Features

C1: NW/SE stone drain across trench at 377568, 855548



**Illus 8 Trench 1, looking SW**

Trench 2

GPS NE end:377634, 855550                      SW end: 377552, 855500

Orientation: NE/SW                      Length: 95m    Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: 350mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over orange stony clay natural.

Features C2: NW/SE stone drain across trench at 377594, 855527



**Illus 9 Trench 2 looking SW**



---

Trench 3

GPS NE end: 377566,855474 SW end: 377499, 855430

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 79m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: NE end: 350mm. SW end : 300mm .

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over orange stony clay natural.

Features None

Trench 4

GPS NE end: 377663,855490 SW end: 377522, 855413

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 161m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: 350mm.

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over orange stony clay natural.

Features None



**Illus 10 Trench 4 looking SW**

Trench 5

GPS NE end: 377656,855503 SW end: 377598,855468

Orientation: NE/SW Length: 68m Width: 2.0m

Depth above natural: 350mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil over orange stony clay natural.

Features None

## 6 Finds

None.

## 7 Discussion

Although the site lies near an area of known prehistoric activity, there was no evidence of surviving archaeology in the areas evaluated.

## 8 Impacts and Mitigations

8.1 Impacts The evaluation did not yield any archaeological finds or features.

### 8.2 Mitigations

(i) On the basis of the evaluation there is no perceived need for any further archaeological investigation in the area.

(ii) The paucity 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.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record

Digital frame number	Content
1-3	Looking SW towards burn. Trench 1 in foreground
4-6	Trench 1, looking SW
7-9	Trench 2, looking SW
10-11	Trench 4 looking SW
12	General view looking SW to burn