

**MARYCULTER HOME FARM**  
**MARYCULTER**  
**ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Archaeological Watching Brief**  
Carried out 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
by  
**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2018-21**  
by  
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**-Archaeological Watching Brief -**

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1. Background
  - 1.1 In the light of proposals to build a new dwelling house and garage on land at Maryculter Home Farm, Maryculter, Aberdeenshire, (Ref: APP/2017/0534) it was decided that a programme of archaeological work should be carried out to assess the survival and nature of any archaeological remains on the proposed site.
  - 1.2 This work was undertaken in the context of Scottish Planning Policy (PAN 2/2011, SPP, HESPS).
  - 1.3 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned by Mr and Mrs MacInnes to undertake the work.
  - 1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared and submitted to Archaeology Services, Aberdeenshire Council, on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
  - 1.5 The soil strip was observed on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
2. The Site
  - 2.1 The site (illus 1) lies on a ridge above the S bank of the river Dee, and N of the B9077.



**Illus 1** Location of site. Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright (2002) All rights reserved. Licence number (100049810). Site indicated by red circle.



**Illus 2** Site plan courtesy of Gerry Robb, Architectural Design Services.

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Parish: Maryculter

NGR: NJ84582, 00126 (centre of site)

GPS: 384582, 800126

2.2 Prior to the soil strip the area was in grass and has been cultivated over a number of years.

### 3 Background

3.1 The site occupies an area adjacent to the archaeological cropmark site of a possible oval enclosure with a possible narrow ditch encircling the enclosure (Aberdeenshire SMR Ref: NJ80SW0029).

3.2 A short distance to the SW of the site lies Maryculter House Hotel, formerly Maryculter House (Aberdeenshire SMR Ref: NO89NW0007), the older part of which was probably built c.1618. There is doubt as to whether the house incorporates remains of the 13<sup>th</sup> century preceptory of the Knights Templar or whether remains from it were used in its construction.

3.3 The location of the site, on one of the gravel terraces above the river Dee, is also typical of the type of location chosen for settlement during prehistory, with Mesolithic and Neolithic activity identified from a number of similarly located sites in the vicinity ( for example: Nether Park Quarry (Murray & Murray 2018); Nethermills (Wickham-Jones et al 2016) or Garthdee Road (Murray & Murray 2015)).

### 4 Methodology

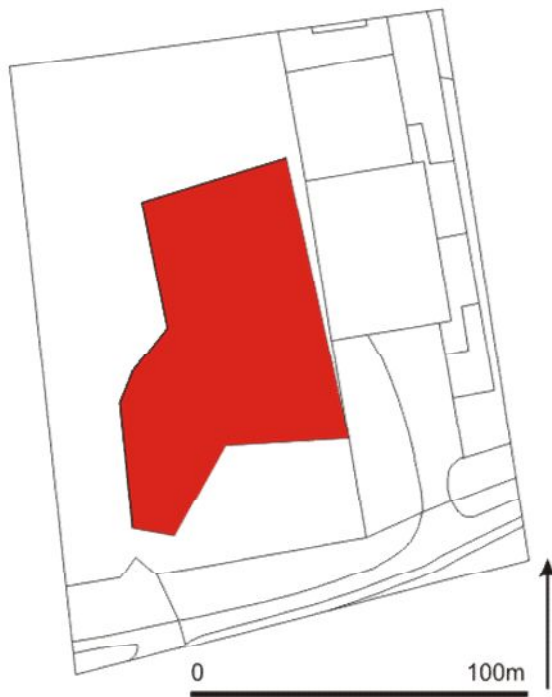
4.1 The cultivated topsoil was removed by a mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket. In accordance with the WSI any possible features were to be cleaned and excavated by hand.

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





**Illus 3 Site with topsoil stripped, looking N**



**Illus 4 Area of observed soil strip**

#### 4 Results of the Watching Brief

Depth of topsoil above natural: 300-350mm

Stratigraphy: Topsoil and deposited topsoil over compact stony gravel.

Features None

#### 5 Finds

None.

#### 6 Discussion

There was no evidence of any archaeological finds or features. On the basis of the observed soil strip there is no perceived need for any further archaeological investigation.

#### 7 References

Murray, HK & Murray J C 2015 'Mesolithic and Early Neolithic activity along the Dee: Excavations at Garthdee Road, Aberdeen', Proc Soc Antiq Scot, 144, 1-64.

Murray, HK & Murray J C forthcoming. 'Excavations at Nether Park, Aberdeenshire'.

Wickham-Jones, C et al 2016 'Archaeological excavations at Nethermills Farm, Deeside, 1978-81', Proc Soc Antiq Scot, 146 (2016), 7-55.

#### Appendices

##### Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographs

Digital frame number	Content
001-009	Soil strip looking N