

**RAINNIESHILL  
NEWMACHAR  
ABERDEENSHIRE**



**Archaeological Desktop and Walkover Survey**

Carried out 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019

by

**Murray Archaeological Services Ltd**



**Report No: MAS 2019-05**

by

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**-Archaeological Desktop and Walkover Survey -**

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1. Background

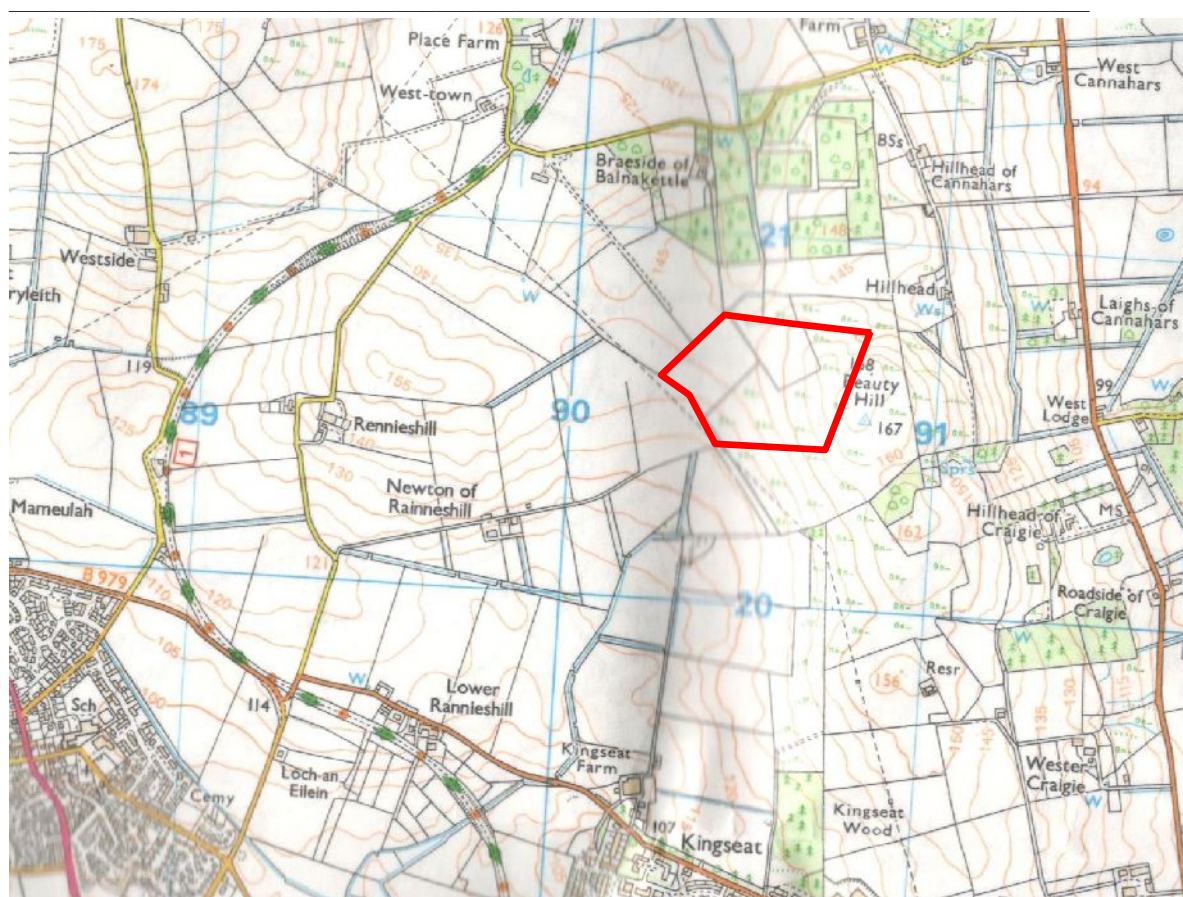
- 1.1 As part of the preparation for submission of a planning application for an aggregates quarry at Rainieshill, Newmachar, Aberdeenshire an assessment of the Historic Environment was carried out.
- 1.2 A desktop survey was undertaken, followed by a walkover survey of the site. This Walkover Survey was undertaken on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.
- 1.3 The archaeological work was undertaken in the context of planning legislation (PAN 2/2011, SPP, HESPS), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances.
- 1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Johnson Poole and Bloomer Ltd on behalf of JKR Contractors Ltd.

2. The Site

Grid Reference (central) NJ90599, 20570

Parish : Udney

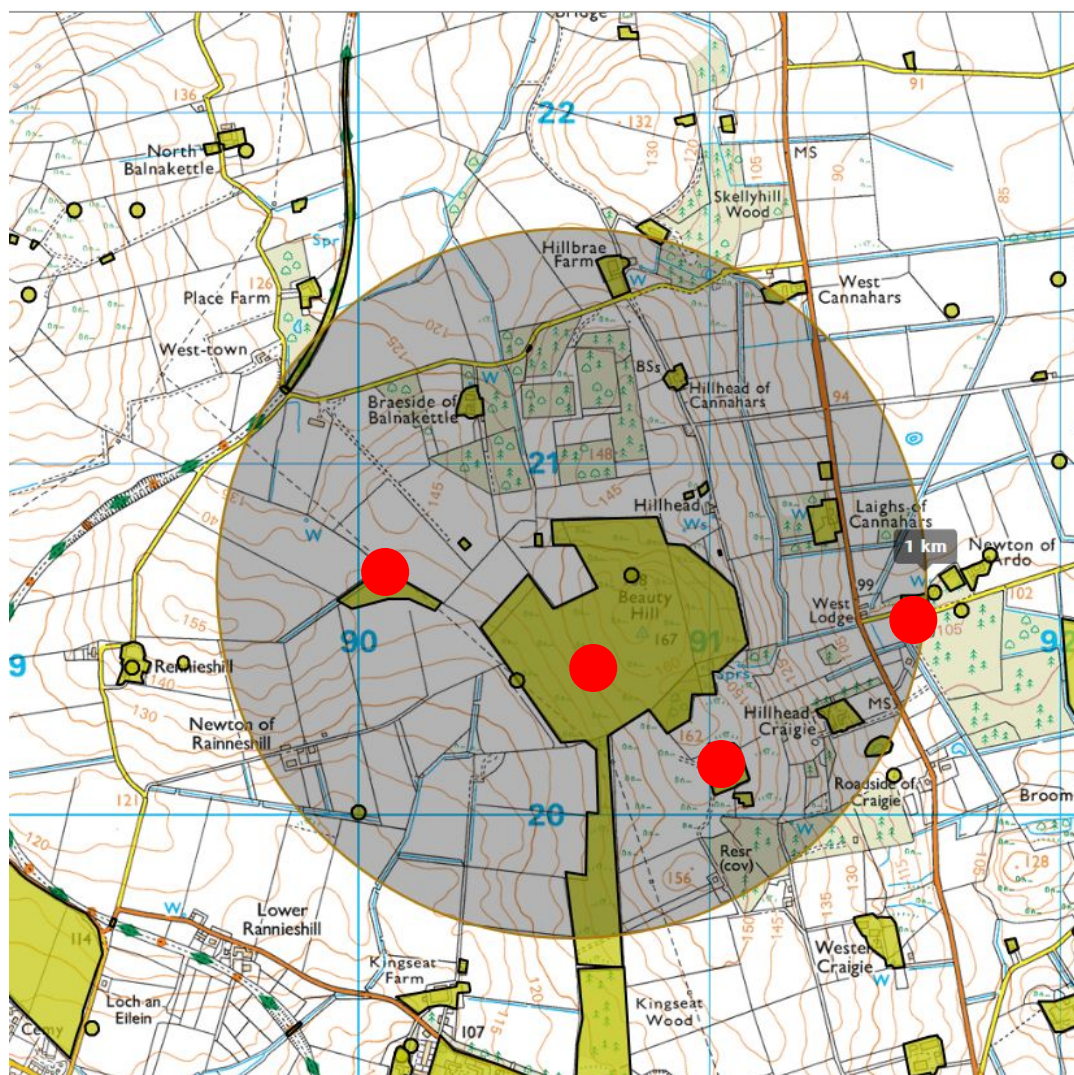
- 2.1 The site , which is also called Beauty Hill, is situated to the W of the B999 and c. 2km NE of Newmachar. It is directly S of Braeside of Balnakettle.



**Illus 1** Location of site indicated by red line. OS map 2007 reproduced Crown Copyright. Licence 100041040

- 2.2 At the time of the survey, the lower part of the proposed site was improved cultivated ground, with the upper part of the hill in rough grass with stony outcrops and some patches of gorse
- 2.3 The proposed site covers 13.9 hectares.
- 2.4 *Sites on the proposed site*
- i NRHE No: NJ92SW77 & Aberdeenshire SMR : NJ 92SW0017 Beauty Hill. Rig and Furrow centred on 9065 2043
  - ii Aberdeenshire SMR: NJ92SW0087 Beauty Hill. Earthwork. Described as ‘series of low mounds and banks in area without rigs’ and thought to possibly relate to the flagstaff etc (Illus 5).

## 2.5 Sites within 1km radius



Illus 2 Sites within a 1km radius (grey shading) of the centre of the proposed site. Sites indicated by green. Rig and furrow indicated by red dots. <https://pastmap.org.uk/map>

A search on Pastmap (<https://pastmap.org.uk/map> accessed 8/3/2019 ) revealed that there are 25 sites on the Aberdeenshire and NRHE sites and monuments records that lie within a 1km radius of the centre of the proposed sites A catalogue of the sites is in Appendix 2. They comprise:-

- 11 **farmsteads or cottages** that are shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century OS maps and most of which survive.
- 6 **quarry pits** most of which appear on maps from c 1900
- 2 **railway** related features
- 1 **earthwork**, possibly related to the flagstaff on Beauty Hill
- 4 **areas of rig and furrow**

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- 1 **Prehistoric** stone cup and 2 stone axes found in late 19<sup>th</sup> century in Logie Buchan parish. Exact findspot unknown.

Summary There is little known evidence of prehistoric activity in the 1km area around the site, but this may to some extent reflect a lack of archaeological field walking or evaluation in the area as in general this area of Buchan, near to the Ythan valley appears to have been well used throughout prehistory.

There is considerable evidence of medieval or post medieval rig and furrow cultivation which is also reflected by the considerable areas of cultivation shown on Roy's military map of 1747-55.

The remaining features all relate to the 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement of the area, with small quarries which are of late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century date and were probably used to quarry stone for the farmsteads. Two features relate to the dismantled railway of the former Great North of Scotland Railway's Buchan and Formartine line which was built in 1858, and shut in 1966.

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1 All mapping was done with an Ordnance Survey Aventura GPS.

### 4 Desktop Survey

- 4.1 A search was carried out in the Aberdeenshire Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council and in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS, now HES) through Canmore and Pastmap.
- 4.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps were consulted. The Ordnance Survey Name Book was consulted on-line at <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/ordnance-survey-name-books>
- 4.3 The British Newspaper archive was searched for references to the property. [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

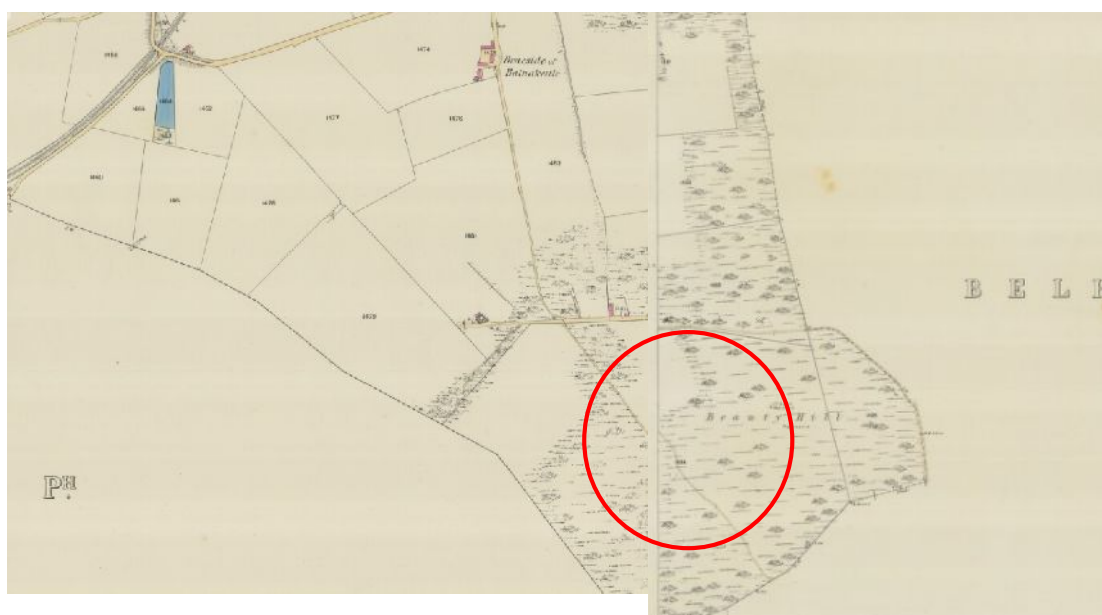
## 5 Documentary Background

**1747-55** Roy's Military Map of 1747-55 shows Raingshill (sic) as a cluster of buildings with the rig and furrow of cultivated ground extending up the lower W/SW slopes of the hill.



Illus 3 Detail of Roy's Military Map of 1747-55 Dallachy indicated by red circle. [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)

**1866** The 25"/mile OS maps Aberdeenshire LVI.5 (Udny) and LVI.6 (Udny) show cultivated ground on the lower slopes and scrub on the top of the hill.



Illus 4 Detail of 1886 25"/mile OS maps Aberdeenshire LVI.5 (Udny) and LVI.6 (Udny) (published 1868) [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk). Approximate area of site marked by red circle

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**1865-71** The OS Name Book described Beauty Hill as ‘Applies to a large hill feature a little south east of Braeside of Balnakettle’. Possibly owned by Kings College Aberdeen. (OS1/1/91/91 [www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk))

**1869** 12<sup>th</sup> Company 2<sup>nd</sup> ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers) held a competition match at the company’s range at Beauty Hill. (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 18<sup>th</sup> June 1869).

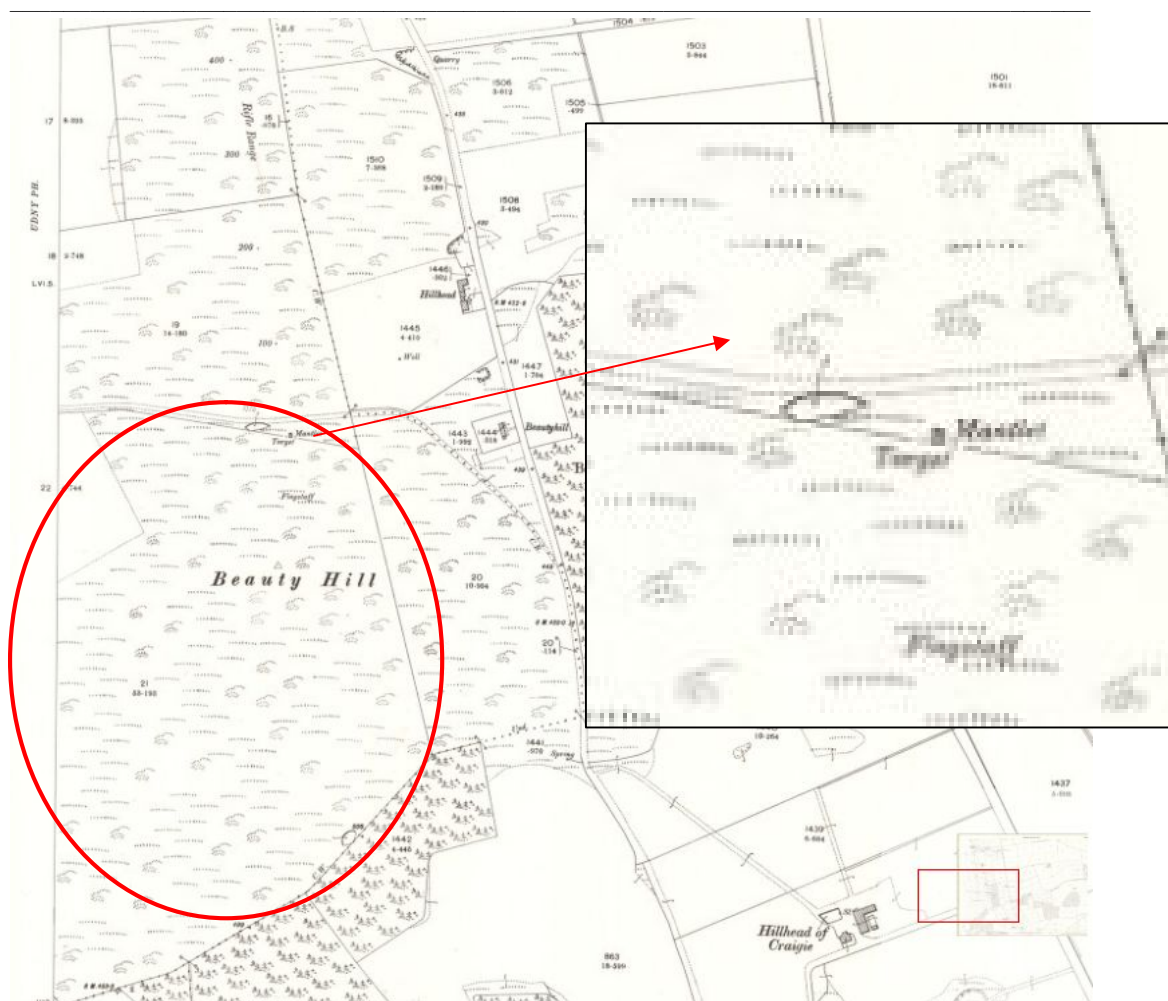
**1871** ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers) held a competition match at the range on Beauty Hill. (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 30<sup>th</sup> August & 11<sup>th</sup> October 1871).

**1872** ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers) held a competition match at the range on Beauty Hill. (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 11<sup>th</sup> September 1872).

**1876** ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers) held a competition match at the range on Beauty Hill. (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1876).

**1887** Jubilee bonfire and picnic for Queen Victoria’s jubilee on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1887 (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1887). The picnic seems to have continued for a number of years.

**1899** The 25”/mile OS map of 1899, published 1900 (Aberdeenshire LVI.6) shows little change, with the exception of a ‘target’ Mantel’ (screen) and flagstaff.



**Illus 5** Detail of 25”/mile OS map of 1899, published 1900 (Aberdeenshire LVI.6). [www.nls.ac.uk](http://www.nls.ac.uk)  
Approximate area of site marked by red circle. Inset shows rifle range

**1900** ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers) held a competition match at the range on Beauty Hill. (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 24<sup>th</sup> November 1900).

**1901** The annual New Years Day competition of the Culter-Cullen and Newmachar sections of C company 2<sup>nd</sup> VBGH took place at Beauty Hill range (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 4<sup>th</sup> January 1901).

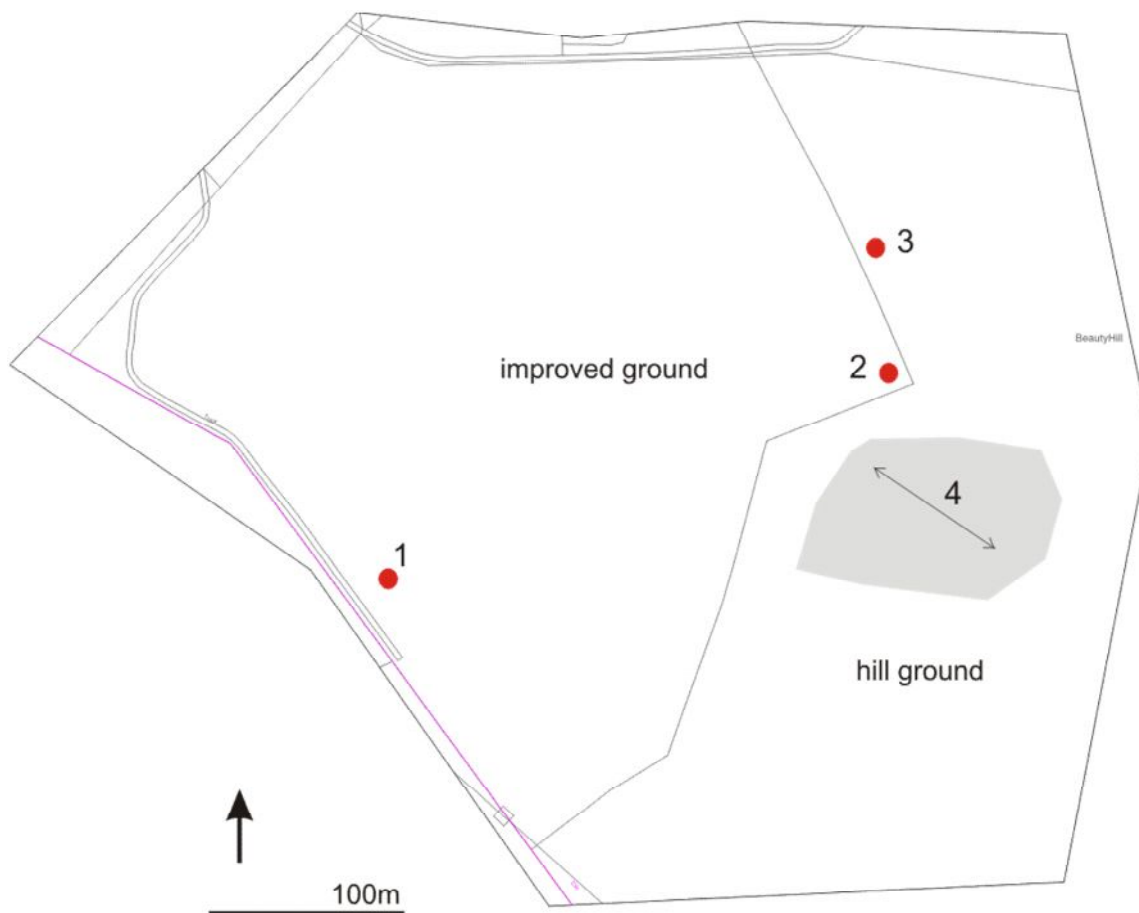
**1914** Competition match on range on Beauty Hill range (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 24<sup>th</sup> July 1914). [WW1 began on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914].

**1917** Rifle practice on Beauty Hill range (*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 21<sup>st</sup> September 1917).

**Post 1936** Triangulation point on pillar. The Ordnance Survey erected the first trig point pillar in UK in 1936.



## 6 Results of the Walkover Survey



**Illus 6 Plan of the walkover area with features numbered.**

### *Features*

*1 Small quarry pit*

NJ 90412, 20479. Small quarry pit and waste heap.



**Illus 7 Small quarry pit.**

*2 Field clearance*

NJ90701, 20589. Stone gatherings in corner of the improved ground, just beside modern post and wire fence. Recent.

*3 Field clearance*

NJ90679, 20656 Stone heap c 2m in diameter. This heap of stones was also near the new fence and appeared unstructured and more likely to have been fairly recent agricultural clearance rather than a cairn.



**Illus 8 Feature 3. Stone heap.**

#### 4 Rig and furrow

Between approximately NJ 90765, 20532 to NJ90661, 20507 (but possibly continuing further up the hill to the triangulation point).

The ridges of rig and furrow cultivation were apparent running NW/SE. the centres of the tops of the rigs were at 6 to 7.5m spacing and survived at best to c. 300mm height and between 3 and 4m in width.



**Illus 9 Rig and furrow photographed from NJ90661, 20507. Red arrows indicate rigs.**

## 6 Discussion

### *Rig and furrow*

The rig and furrow known from air photographs is clearly visible on the ground. The rig and furrow recorded from air photographs (NRHE No: NJ92SW77 & Aberdeenshire SMR : NJ 92SW0017) is clearly part of this feature- although centered at NJ 9065 2043, slightly S of the rig observed on the ground. Although described as medieval in the SMR it is equally possible that this rig system may be of post-medieval date.

### *Rifle Range*

There appears to have been a Rifle Range on Beauty Hill from at least 1869 to the end of WW1. Initially the range was created for the 12<sup>th</sup> Company 2<sup>nd</sup> ARV (Aberdeen Rifle Volunteers). The Volunteer Forces were created in 1859 after the Crimean War.

Eventually units became integrated in the Territorials. The 1899 OS map shows a Target, Flagstaff and Mantel (a bullet proof shield or screen) on the N flank of the field. No evidence was observed on the ground but it is likely these may have been ephemeral features. The SMR suggests that a series of low banks and mounds (Aberdeenshire SMR: NJ92SW0087) at NJ 9077 2068 may be related to the range. These could not be identified on site; however this area has considerable natural rock outcrop.

## 7 Impacts

7.1 An area of rig and furrow will be destroyed by the quarry. The extent, size and orientation of the rig and furrow is documented.

## Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographic record (photographs supplied to Aberdeenshire sites and monuments record).**

| <b>Digital frame number</b> | <b>Content</b>   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Rainnieshill, Aberdeenshire |  |
| 1-2                         | Looking E up hill across improved ground. From NJ 90312, 20686 |
| 3                           | Feature 1 at NJ 90412, 20479.                                  |
| 4-5                         | Feature 3 at NJ90679, 20656                                    |
| 6-10                        | Feature 4 rig and furrow, looking S NJ90661 20507.             |



**Appendix 2: Gazetteer of sites within 1km radius of approx. centre of proposed site.**

| Aberdeenshire SMR no | NRHE No   | Site name                 | OS grid ref  | Site type                            |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| NJ92SW0090           | NJ92SW81  | Newton Of Ardo            | NJ9158 2060  | Rigs                                 |
| NJ92SW0043           | NJ92SW32  | Laighs Of Cannahars       | NJ9133 2097  | Site of croft                        |
| NJ92SW0044           | NJ92SW33  | Hillhead Of Craigie       | NJ9148 2019  | Quarry c.1900                        |
| NJ92SW0104           | NJ92SW93  | Hillhead Of Craigie       | NJ9137 2027  | Farmhouse                            |
| NJ92SW0100           | NJ92SW90  | West Cannahars            | NJ9121 2148  | Farmstead                            |
| NJ92SW0097           | NJ92SW87  | Hillbrae Cottages         | NJ9084 2166  | Cottages                             |
| NJ82SE0046           | -         | North Balnakettle         | NJ8993 2161  | Section of railway                   |
| NJ92SW0096           | NJ92SW87  | Hillbrae Farm             | NJ9073 2153  | Farmstead                            |
| NJ82SE0011           | NJ82SE80  | West Town                 | NJ8979 2120  | Bridge over railway                  |
| NJ92SW0140           | NJ92SW115 | Braeside Of Balnakettle   | NJ9007 2063  | Rigs                                 |
| NJ92NE0032           | NJ92NE16  | Logie-buchan Parish       | NJ9000 2000  | Stone cups and 2 stone axes          |
| NJ92SW0098           | NJ92SW88  | Braeside Of Balnakettle   | NJ9031 2117  | Farmstead                            |
| NJ92SW0046           | NJ92SW35  | Braeside Of Balnakettle   | NJ9030 2076  | Site of cottage                      |
| NJ92SW0017           | NJ92SW78  | Beauty Hill               | NJ9073 2040  | Rig                                  |
| NJ92SW0047           | NJ92SW36  | Beauty Hill               | NJ 9045 2038 | Quarry hole                          |
| NJ92SW0049           | NJ92SW38  | Braeside Of Balnakettle   | NJ9048 2132  | Quarry                               |
| NJ92SW0045           | NJ92SW34  | Beauty Hill               | NJ9051 2078  | Site of croft                        |
| NJ92SW0087           | -         | Beauty Hill               | NJ9077 2068  | Earthworks, possibly relate to range |
| NJ92SW0099           | NJ92SW89  | Hillhead Of Cannahars     | NJ9090 2124  | Farmstead                            |
| NJ92SW0040           | NJ92SW29  | Hillhead Of Cannahars     | NJ9094 2090  | Quarry                               |
| NJ92SW0041           | NJ92SW30  | Hillhead                  | NJ 9098 2092 | Quarry                               |
| NJ92SW0088           | NJ92SW79  | Hillhead Of Craigie       | NJ9104 2013  | Rig and furrow                       |
| NJ92SW0042           | NJ92SW31  | Beautyhill                | NJ9103 2074  | Site of cottage                      |
| NJ92SW0048           | NJ92SW37  | Hillhead Of Westercraigie | NJ9110 2004  | Remains of farmstead                 |
| NJ92SW0103           | NJ92SW92  | Laighs Of Cannahars       | NJ9133 2083  | Farmstead                            |