

Sites 10 and 11, Hopeman, Moray

Monitored Topsoil Strip

Data Structure Report

AOC Project 22253
OASIS No. AOCarcha1-135010

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Sites 10 and 11, Hopeman, Moray: Monitored Topsoil Strip Data Structure Report

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National Grid Reference (NGR):	NJ 149 686; NJ 154 687
AOC Project No:	22253
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeologically monitored topsoil strip in relation to two single house developments to the south of the town of Hopeman, Moray.

The topsoil strips both took place within separate areas of a farm approximately 500m apart along a rarely used track. Both plots were approximately 15m by 15m with a 5m to 6.5m access road/driveway to one side. The west site was situated next to a former limestone quarry, while the cairn site was situated approximately 100m north of a prehistoric cairn.

No significant features or artefacts were revealed during the archaeological works.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Grant and Geoghegan on behalf of their clients to undertake an archaeological monitored topsoil strip of two single house plots to the south of the town of Hopeman, Moray (Figure 1). The topsoil strips were undertaken in order to satisfy a condition set by Moray Council as advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeen Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). The works were conducted according to the terms of an *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2012) approved by ACAS and in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011).

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development areas (centred on NGR: NJ 149 686 and NJ 154 687) are less than 1km south of the town of Hopeman, Moray (Figure 1). The West site is situated on the edge of a small copse of trees enclosed to the south and west by a track way leading to Inverugie, and has an in-filled quarry to the north and east. The Cairn site is situated at the eastern end of the same track, within some existing woodland, with open farmland to the east (see Figure 2).

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 The proposed development areas lies to the south of Hopeman, within the grounds of Inverugie House (NMRS No. NJ16NE71). The surrounding environs contains a variety of prehistoric sites. The round cairn at Inverugie (NMRS No. NJ16NE6) as well as the cup and ring marked stone, Camus's stone (NMRS No. NJ16NE24) are evidence that the area has been in use since prehistoric times. Other burial sites (Tappoch cist - NMRS No. NJ16NW22; Westbank of Roseisle - NMRS No. NJ16NW65) and several cup and ring marked stones (NMRS No's NJ16NW35; NJ16NE92) lie within a few hundred metres to the south and east. Furthermore, possible prehistoric settlement enclosures (NMRS No's NJ16NE24; NJ16NE55; and NJ16NE56) lie within a few hundred metres to the south and west.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeologically monitored topsoil strip were:

- i) to monitor the Topsoil Strip of the proposed house plot of each development and prevent the destruction of significant archaeological features prior to their recording;
- ii) given the discovery of significant archaeological material in quantity that will suffer an adverse impact from the development (i.e. where preservation *in situ* is impractical), the recording of all archaeological features by means of a mitigation strategy to be formulated with ACAS.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The groundworks involved the topsoil stripping of a 259m² area at the Cairn site (Figure 2) and a 315m² area at the West site. Four environmental sampling test pits out with the building plot area were also monitored at the West site development area (Figure 3). Topsoil stripping was conducted by a JCB 3CX utilising a bladed ditching bucket. All excavation was monitored by an experienced field archaeologist and all recording was carried out according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard practices.

- 3.2 In addition to the main topsoil strip, a programme machine excavated test-pits was opened across the general development area of the West site.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Cairn Site (Figure 2)

- 4.1.1 The topsoil on the site measured between 0.35m and 0.4m in depth. The soil was a mid brown sandy silt with abundant root and frequent medium to large stone inclusions. There was evidence of modern burning in some areas with grey ash present close to remaining tree stumps (Plate 1). The subsoil was a mixture of pale yellow sand and orange sand with abundant small to large stone inclusions. Tree roots had caused serious disturbance to the top 0.1m of subsoil. No archaeological features were present within the stripped area which measured 16m by 16.5m.



Plate 1 - General view of Cairn site stripped with area of modern burning in foreground

4.2 West site (Figure 3)

- 4.2.1 The house plot was situated on a slope with approximate gradient of 1:17. The topsoil was a mid brown sandy silt, only 0.2m deep onto a light red sand with occasional limestone inclusions. A small pit [003] measuring 1.2m by 1.1m by 0.4m, containing 19th century ceramic was revealed at the NW corner of the plot.
- 4.2.2 The test pits were located around the house plot to determine the former location of the quarry. Each one revealed an imported topsoil covering made ground and dumped deposits to depths of 2m to 3.8m in places. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed within the house plot area or the test pits.



Plate 2 - North facing section of modern pit [003]

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed during the monitored topsoil strips of the Cairn and West sites. No further archaeological works are considered necessary within the stripped area. This recommendation will require confirmation by the Aberdeen Council Archaeology Service.

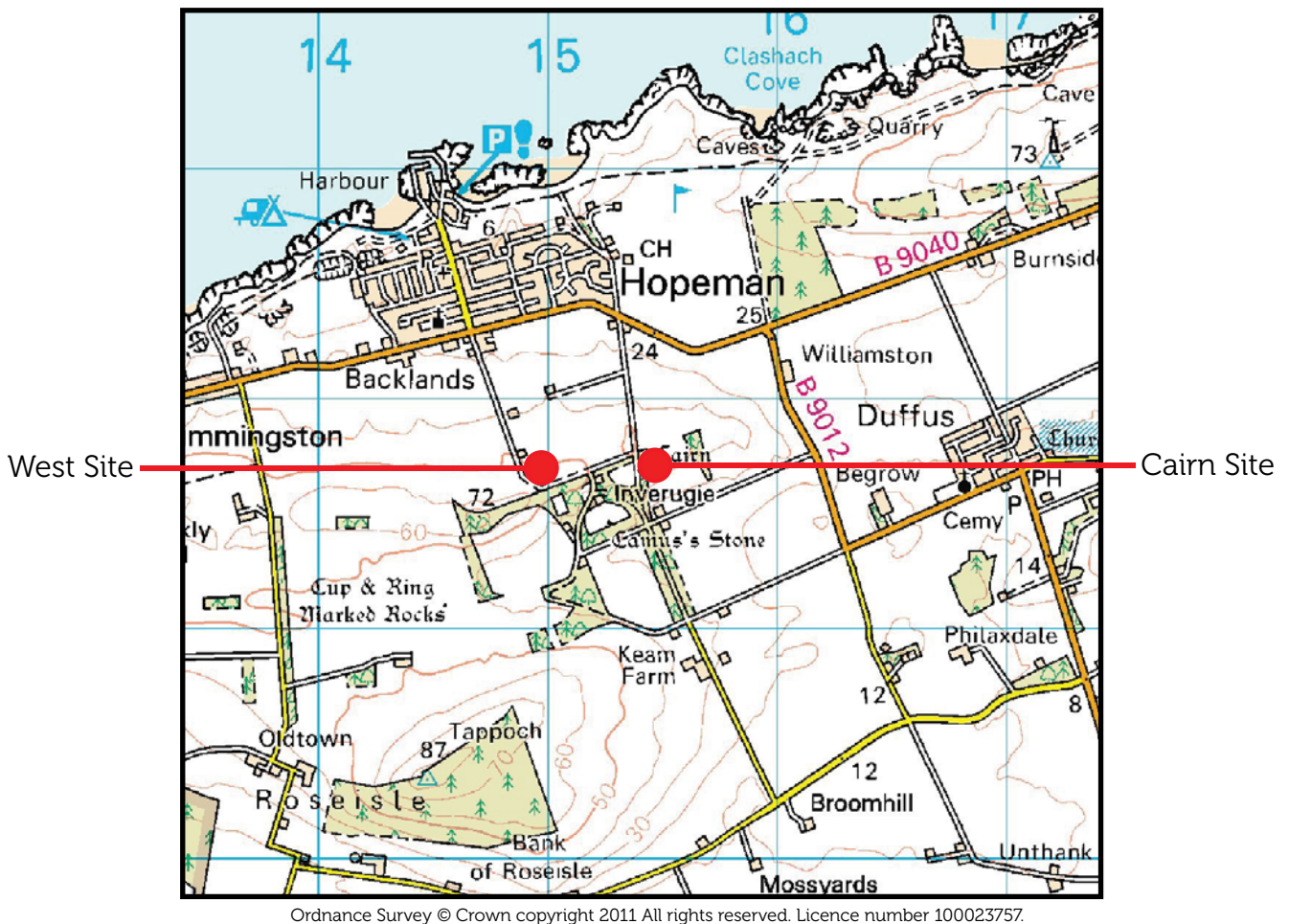
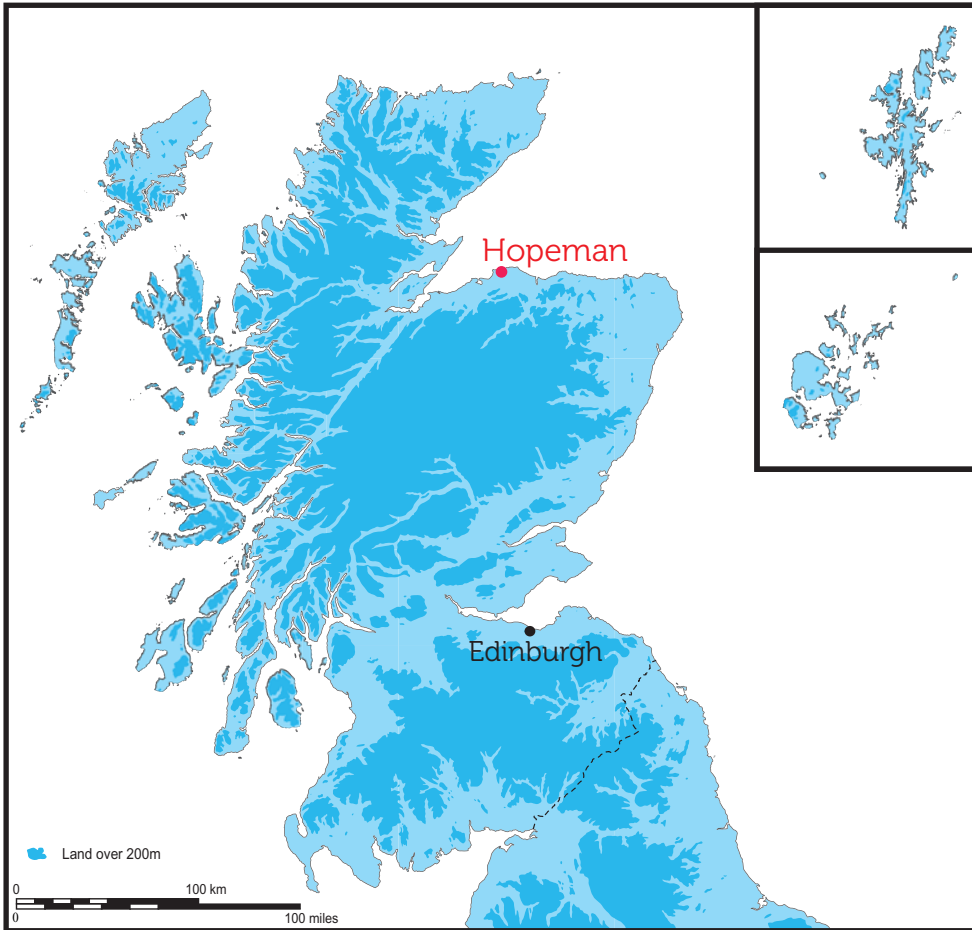
6 REFERENCES

Bibliographic References

AOC 2012 *Sites 10 and 11, Hopeman, Moray: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished AOC client report

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy*.

Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*.



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Figure 1: Location of the site at Hopeman, Moray



 Area subject to watching brief

Figure 2: Location of watching brief at the Cairn Site



Figure 3: Location of monitored topsoil strip & test pits at the West Site

**Sites 10 and 11 Hopeman, Moray:
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Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: TEST PIT DESCRIPTIONS

Test-pit 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1 m by 2 m
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Deposits and Depths</i>	Imported topsoil to 0.4m overlying dumped deposits of farm rubble and other material to 2m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light red sand
<i>Finds</i>	None

Test-pit 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1 m by 3 m
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Deposits and Depths</i>	Imported topsoil to 0.4m overlying dumped deposits of farm rubble and other material to 3m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light red sand
<i>Finds</i>	None

Test-pit 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1 m by 3.8 m
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Deposits and Depths</i>	Imported topsoil to 0.4m overlying dumped deposits of farm rubble and other material to 3.8m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Light red sand
<i>Finds</i>	None

Test-pit 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1 m by 3.5 m
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Deposits and Depths</i>	Imported topsoil to 0.4m overlying quarried limestone to 3.5m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Limestone bedrock
<i>Finds</i>	None

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Description and Interpretation
001	Mid brown sandy silt 0.2m thick. Topsoil
002	Light red sand with occasional limestone inclusions. Natural subsoil
003	Sub-circular pit with a vertical west side and a gradual sloping east side measuring 1.2m by 1.1m by 0.4m. Filled by deposit [004]. Industrial/modern pit
004	Mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent root inclusions and occasional stones Fill of Pit [003]

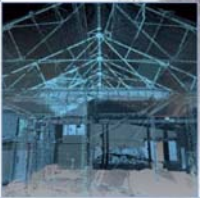
APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Digital Photographs

Frame	F. No	Description	From	Date
1-3		General view of west site pre-ex	Var	2/10/12
4		Access road post-ex showing disturbance	N	2/10/12
5		Test pit 1 post-ex	NW	2/10/12
6		Test pit 2 post-ex	NW	2/10/12
7		Test pit 3 post-ex	NW	2/10/12
8	[003]	N-facing section of pit [003]	N	2/10/12
9		Test pit 4 post-ex	NW	2/10/12
10		Building plot area cleaned	NE	2/10/12
11-13		Cairn site general view pre-ex	Var	2/10/12
14		Access road/driveway cleared	E	2/10/12
15		Tree root removed	NE	2/10/12
16		Cairn site area post-ex	SE	2/10/12

APPENDIX 6: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Moray Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Sites 10 and 11 Hopeman, Moray: Monitored Topsoil Strip
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 22253
PARISH:	Duffus
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Kevin Paton
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Monitored Topsoil Strip
NMRS NO(S)	NJ16NE73; NJ16NE6
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Limestone Kilns and Quarry; Prehistoric Cairn
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	Centred on NJ 149 686; NJ 154 687
START DATE (this season)	2 nd October 2012
END DATE (this season)	3 rd October 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeologically monitored topsoil strip was undertaken in relation to two single house developments to the south of the town of Hopeman, Moray.</p> <p>The topsoil strips both took place within separate areas of a farm approximately 500m apart along a rarely used track. Both plots were approximately 15m by 15m with a 5m to 6.5m access road/driveway to one side. The west site was situated next to a former limestone quarry, while the cairn site was situated approximately 75m north of a prehistoric cairn.</p> <p>No significant features or artefacts were revealed during the archaeological works.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Grant and Geoghegan
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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