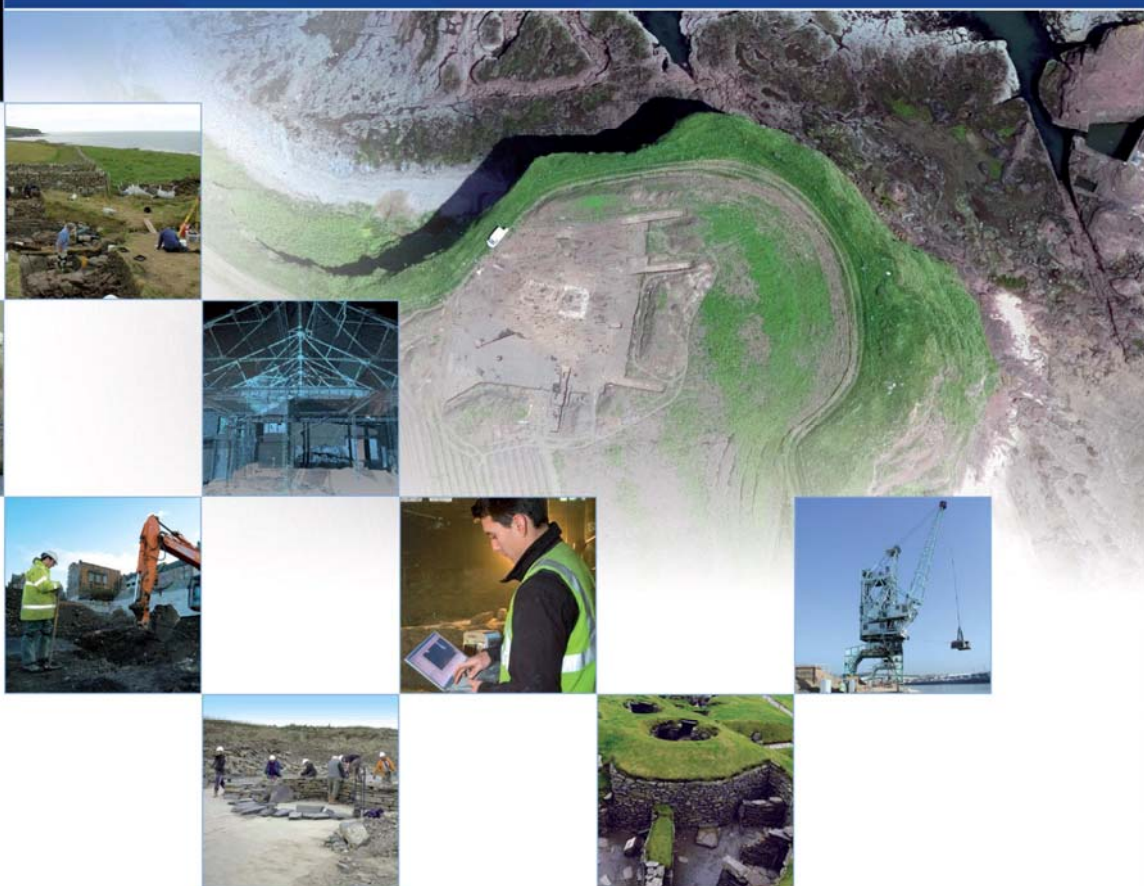


# Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray: Monitored Topsoil Strip Data Structure Report

AOC 22641  
Oasis No.1-170001  
January 2014



## **Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray: Monitored Topsoil Strip Data Structure Report**

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**On Behalf of:** C/O Grant & Geoghegan  
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**National Grid Reference (NGR):** NJ 3710 6195

**AOC Project No:** 22641

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**Illustration by:** Kevin Paton

**Date of Fieldwork:** 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Date of Report:** 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Approved by:** Martin Cook

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Draft/Final Report Stage:**

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014

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## **Abstract**

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An archaeologically monitored topsoil strip was required by Grant and Geoghegan, on behalf of their client prior to the development of a single residential dwelling adjacent to Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray (NGR: NJ 3710 6195).

The removal of topsoil between 0.30 – 0.45 m in depth over the development footprint including the house plot, garage and associated driveway revealed neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material.

No further works are recommended.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 An archaeologically monitored topsoil strip was required by Grant and Geoghegan, on behalf of their client prior to the development of a single residential dwelling adjacent to Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray. The work was required in response to a planning condition set by Moray Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by the Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service (ACAS). The works were conducted according to the terms of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2013) approved by ACAS and in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology (Scottish Government 2011).

## 1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development lies within a greenfield site, within the village of Auchenhalrig, on the north side of the unmarked road which runs through the village. Existing properties lie to either side of the development area which at present consists of an area of undeveloped greenfield.

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) shows that the development area itself is free of any known sites. However, around the development area a few sites are noted. To the north-east and the west lie two sites, NMRS No.s NJ36SE 42 & 44, both of which are described as natural hillocks. To the south-west is Auchenhalrig Farmhouse, NMRS No. NJ36SE 36. Slightly further from the development site, approximately 300 m to the north-west, lies site NMRS No. NJ36SE 30.10, which was an accommodation block that formed part of the much larger RAF Dallachy Airfield and military camp. The main airfield, NMRS No. NJ36SE30 lies a little over 1km to the north-west. The accommodation block close to the site consisted of officers and sergent's quarters, barrack huts, ablutions and latrines, as well as several other huts, however nothing is now visible in the field.

1.3.2 The Aberdeenshire Council's Archaeology Service's Historic Environment Records note three sites close to the development area. The Moray Sites and Monuments Record entry for the Auchenhalrig village, (SMR No. NJ36SE0037) notes that a manor house was said to have stood in this vicinity in the late medieval period, but the exact location is unknown. Also noted is that on the 1846 OS map Auchenhalrig consisted of a farm in the north which was orientated ne/sw, with three projecting ranges to the east. To the south was a small hamlet of about twenty houses, with numerous small enclosures, some of which were probably gardens. The two natural mounds mentioned above are also recorded by the HER as SMR No.s NJ36SE0037 & 49.

- 1.3.3 As a greenfield site there always exists the possibility of uncovering hitherto unknown archaeological features.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the Archaeological Monitored Topsoil Strip were:
- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource that may be disturbed by the proposed development works;
  - ii) to liaise with ACAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and/or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.

## 3 METHOD

- 3.1 The ground breaking works were carried out by means of a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Excavation was in shallow units/spits. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist.

## 4 RESULTS

- 4.1.1 The monitored topsoil strip incorporated the house plot, garage, a section of the driveway and a soakaway covering a total area approximately 200 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 4.1.2 The topsoil on site consisted of a greyish brown sandy clay with occasional rounded stones up to 0.45 m deep overlying a pale green and yellow sand subsoil. The eastern area of the dwelling appears to have been disturbed with a thicker deposit of soil and larger stones present. Two possible agricultural furrows aligned N-S and measuring 2 m wide by 0.03 m deep (max.) were revealed within the house plot containing modern or post-medieval ceramics.





**Plate 1. Topsoil stripping in access track area, from the south.**

## **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 No significant archaeological deposits were revealed. No further archaeological works are recommended. This recommendation will require ratification by ACAS on behalf of Moray Council.

## **6 REFERENCES**

AOC 2013 *Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray; Written Scheme of Investigation*, Unpubl  
AOC Archaeology Client Report

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy*.

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



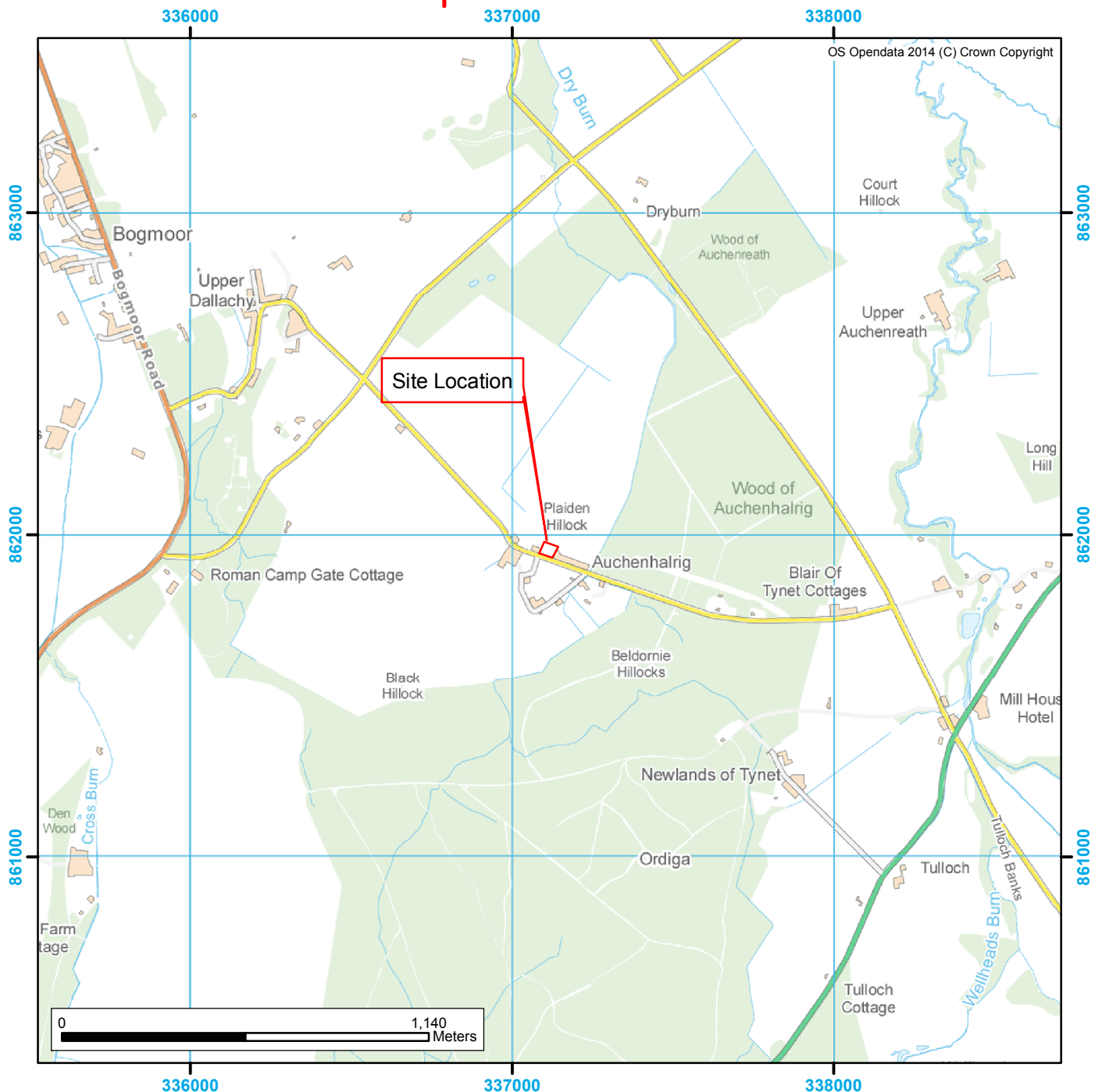
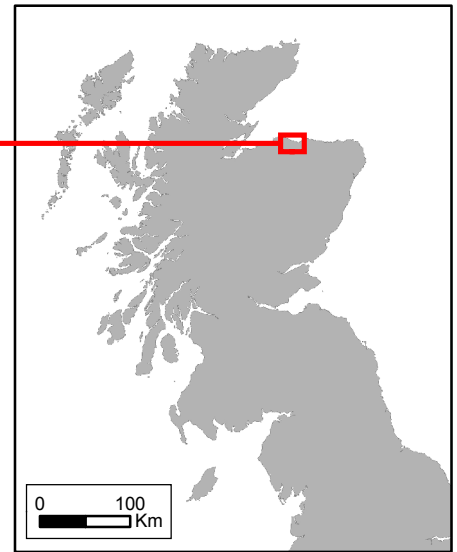
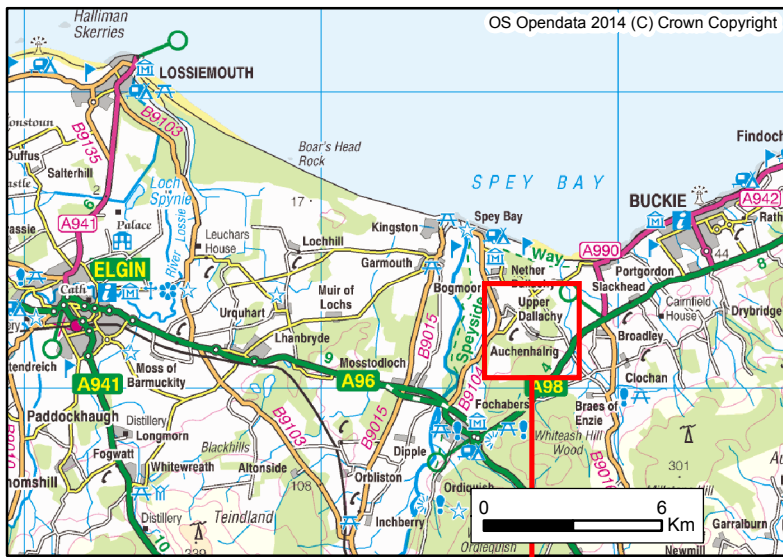
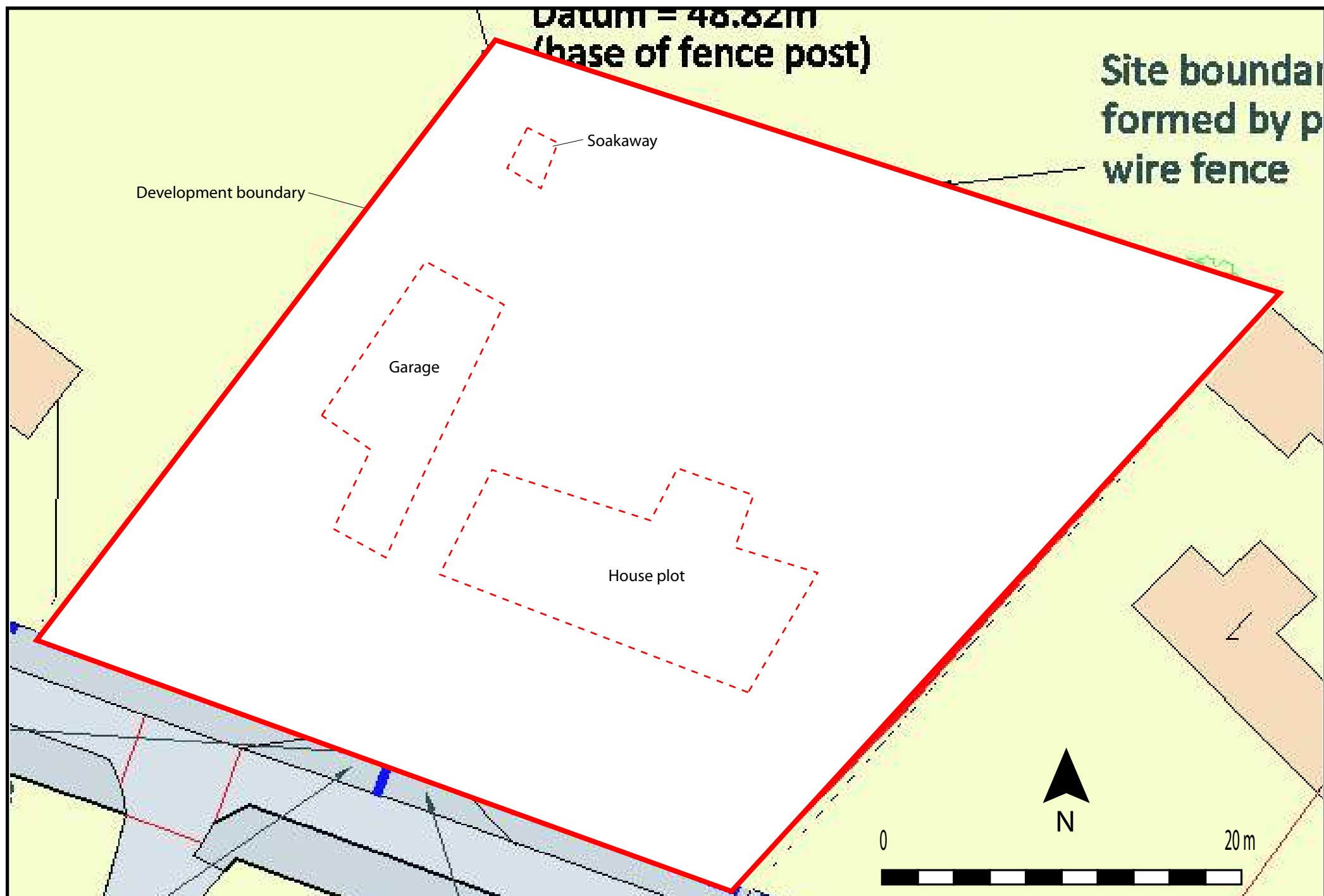


Figure 1: Site Location Plan



(Based on a drawing provided by the client)

Figure 2 - Monitored areas

# **Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray: Archaeological Monitored Topsoil Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

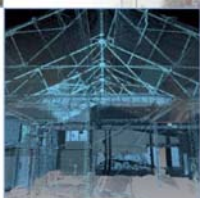
## APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

### Film 1 Digital

| Frame  | Description                          | From |
|--------|--------------------------------------|------|
| 1      | Working shot of house plot strip     | SE   |
| 2      | North side of house plot             | E    |
| 3      | General working shot                 | NE   |
| 4      | North side of house plot stripped    | E    |
| 5      | House plot stripped                  | E    |
| 6      | Stripping, revealing dumped material | SW   |
| 7      | Garage area                          | S    |
| 8      | Part of access track                 | S    |
| 9 - 10 | Garage area, working shot            | NW   |
| 11     | Garage and driveway                  | NW   |
| 12     | Soakaway area                        | NW   |

## APPENDIX 2: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>   | Moray Council  |
| <b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>   | Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray; Monitored Topsoil strip  |
| <b>PROJECT CODE:</b>  | 22641  |
| <b>PARISH:</b>  | Moray  |
| <b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>   | Alan Duffy   |
| <b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>  | AOC Archaeology Group  |
| <b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>  | Monitored Topsoil Strip  |
| <b>NMRS NO(S):</b>  | None   |
| <b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>   | None   |
| <b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>   | None   |
| <b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>   | NJ 3710 6195   |
| <b>START DATE (this season)</b>   | 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2014  |
| <b>END DATE (this season)</b>   | 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2014  |
| <b>PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES)</b>  | None   |
| <b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b><br>(May include information from other fields) | <p>An archaeologically monitored topsoil strip was required by Grant and Geoghegan, on behalf of their client prior to the development of a single residential dwelling adjacent to Auchenhalrig, Fochabers, Moray (NGR: NJ 3710 6195).</p> <p>The removal of topsoil between 0.30 – 0.45 m in depth over the development footprint including the house plot, garage and associated driveway revealed neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material.</p> <p>No further works are recommended.</p> |
| <b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>  | None   |
| <b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS:</b>  | N/A  |
| <b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>   | Grant & Geoghegan  |
| <b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>   | AOC Archaeology Group  |
| <b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>   | admin@aocarchaeology.com   |
| <b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b>   | Archive to be deposited in NMRS  |



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