

**SITE D, CLAYMORE DRIVE,  
ABERDEEN SCIENCE AND ENERGY PARK, ABERDEEN**

**REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**



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## **Summary**

*In June 2006, Douglas Garden, Knight Frank commissioned Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Archaeology Unit to carry out An Archaeological Watching Brief on a development at Site D, Claymore Drive, Aberdeen Science and Energy Park, Aberdeen*

*An archaeologist was not notified and was not present during excavations on this site in contravention of The Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief set out by the Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council (Stones 2008; Appendix 1).*

*It is impossible to say whether any archaeological features were encountered and destroyed before an archaeologist attended site. This is unacceptable from an archaeological perspective. We would recommend that the developer identifies why the contracted archaeologist was not contacted prior to excavations on site, using this information to establish a methodology that ensures the developer meets their responsibilities in future.*

## 1. Introduction and Background

In June 2006, Douglas Garden, Knight Frank commissioned Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Archaeology Unit to carry out An Archaeological Watching Brief on a development at Site D, Claymore Drive, Aberdeen Science and Energy Park, Aberdeen (see fig 1.).

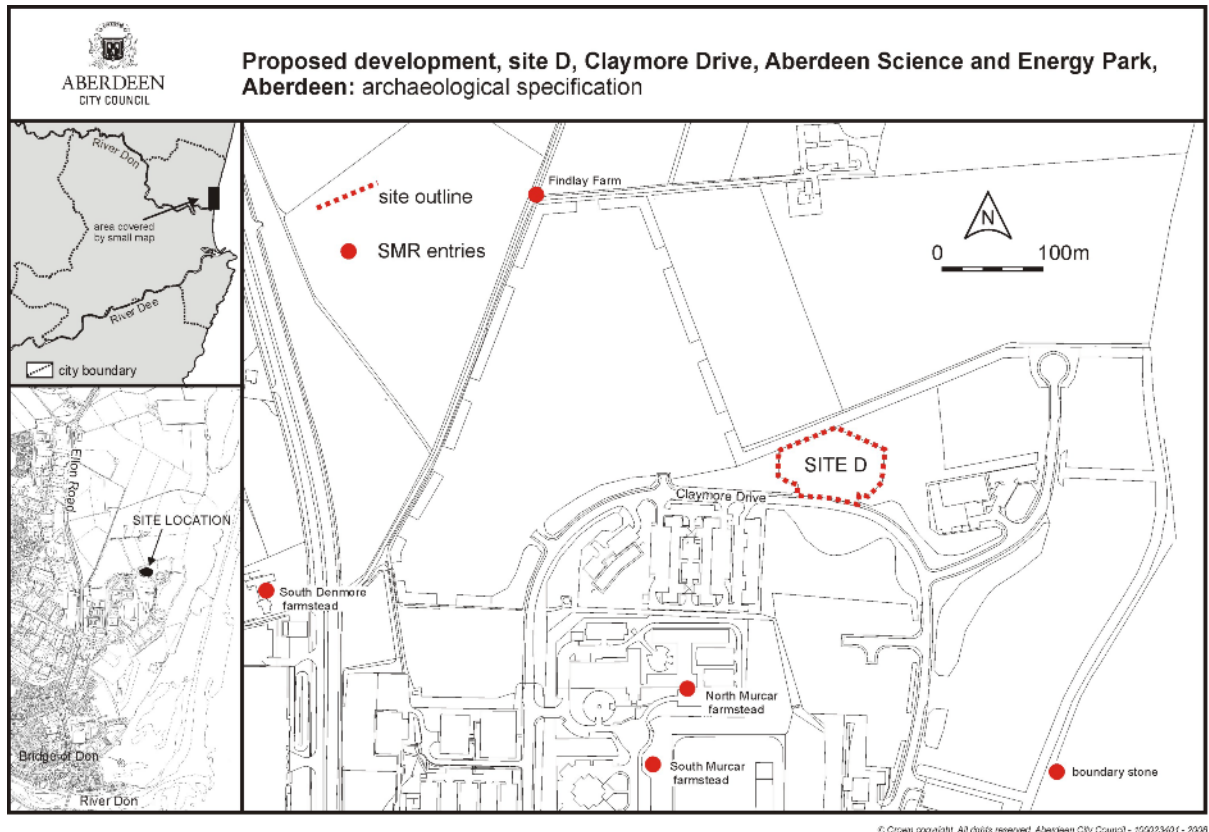


Fig 1 Site location

The watching brief was commissioned in direct response to a Specification for Archaeological Evaluation written by Judith Stones, Keeper of Archaeology, ACC (Stones, June 2008). This clearly sets out the parameters for the archaeological watching brief, namely, to identify and record any and all archaeological features encountered during sub-surface excavations and to take the appropriate measures to ensure that no harm comes to archaeological features that may be significant enough to be preserved *in situ*.

Stewart Buchanan was sub-contracted by the Council Archaeological Unit to carry out the archaeological work on their behalf.

## 2. Historical and Archaeological context

The following is an appraisal by the Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council (as set down in a Specification for Archaeological Evaluation (October 2007)) of the archaeological and historical factors that determined the rationale behind the current work.

*This site lies near the edge of the developed area on the northern fringe of Aberdeen, to east of Ellon Road. Known archaeological sites in its vicinity mainly reflect its recent agricultural focus in the recorded presence of former farmsteads and a boundary stone (see fig 1.). The apparent paucity of recorded historic sites may partly be the result of the almost complete lack of previous archaeological work in the area.*

No previous archaeological work has been conducted on the present site.

### 3. Fieldwork

An archaeologist attended site on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2008.

### 4. Results

An archaeologist attended site on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2008 to carry out an Archaeological Watching Brief. He was unable to carry out the watching brief because all planned sub-surface works had been carried out prior to his arrival on site (see plates 1-4). The site appeared to have been subject to a complete topsoil strip, followed by a scarp through areas of the subsoil as part of a leveling process. A large percentage of the exposed ground surface of the site had also been covered in a thick layer of chippings making any remedial archaeological assessment impossible.



**Plate 1.** Site D, view to east.



**Plate 2.** Site D, view to N/E.



**Plate 3.** S/E corner of Site D.



**Plate 4.** Site D. View S/E over scarped area.

There was no evidence for the existence or survival of any significant archaeological features.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

An archaeologist was not notified and was not present during excavations on this site in contravention of The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997(1) and The Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief set out by the Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council (Stones 2008).

It is impossible to say whether any archaeological features were encountered and destroyed before an archaeologist attended site. This is unacceptable from an archaeological perspective. We would recommend that the developer identifies why the contracted archaeologist was not contacted prior to excavations on site, using this information to establish a methodology that ensures the developer meets their responsibilities in future.

## **6. References**

Aberdeen City Council (June 2008). *The Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief, Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council.*

IFA (1999) *By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.*

## **7. Acknowledgements**

Jan Dunbar (Illustrations, fig 1.), Aberdeen City Council Archaeology Unit.

## **8. Illustrations**

Figure 1. Site location

## **9. Plates**

Plate 1. Site D, view to east

Plate 2. Site D, view to N/E

Plate 3. S/E corner of Site D

Plate 4. Site D. View S/E over scarped area

## **10 Appendix 1**

### **ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES CENTRAL AREA**

## **MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES**

### **Development at Site D, Claymore Drive, Aberdeen Science and Energy Park, Aberdeen**

#### Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief

#### **Summary**

This specification outlines the importance of this historic site and indicates the works which will be required to ensure that archaeological deposits are recorded and protected during development work.

#### **1.0 Site Location and Description**

The area of the site (NGR NJ 9520 1121) is shown on the enclosed map extract. It is at present open ground, separated from the road by an earthen bund. The ground within the site may have previously been disturbed by groundworks associated with the laying out of the Science and Energy Park..

#### **2.0 Planning Background**

The request for this watching brief is made in the context of National Planning Policy Guideline no 5, Archaeology and Planning, which states that archaeological remains should be regarded as part of the environment to be protected and managed. In paragraph 14, planning authorities are advised that they should ensure that archaeological factors are fully considered in both the development planning and development control processes. Paragraph 16 urges planning authorities to regard archaeological remains as a finite and often highly fragile resource vulnerable to needless or thoughtless damage or destruction. Paragraph 25 states that the implications of development proposals for ancient monuments and their settings should be considered at the outset of the development control process. It is appropriate for planning authorities to request, where appropriate, the prospective developer to arrange for archaeological fieldwork and ensure that relevant information on the cultural heritage is taken into account in any environmental assessment that may be necessary (paragraph 24).

#### **3.0 Historical and Archaeological Background**

This site lies near the edge of the developed area on the northern fringe of Aberdeen, to east of Ellon Road. Known archaeological sites in its vicinity mainly reflect its recent agricultural focus in the recorded presence of former farmsteads and a boundary stone (see attached map). The apparent paucity of recorded historic sites may partly be the result of the almost complete lack of previous archaeological work in the area.

#### **4.0 Requirement for Work – Watching Brief**

The initial scraping of topsoil at this site must be watched by an archaeologist, who must also record any finds or features identified in the topsoil or the underlying subsoil. If it becomes clear that earlier pre-development groundworks have already seriously disturbed the upper surface of the subsoil, then the archaeological watching brief can be called off, after discussion with the Keeper of Archaeology.



## **5.0 Timetable**

A timetable must be agreed for the various stages of work so that provision can be made for monitoring by the Keeper of Archaeology.

## **6.0 Staff Structure**

A list of key project staff with qualifications and experience will be submitted by the contractor. The use of unwaged staff will not normally be acceptable.

## **7.0 Health and Safety /PLI**

Such concerns and responsibilities are primarily a matter for the archaeological contractor who must submit evidence of conformity to the Health and Safety at Work Act and possession of public liability insurance to Aberdeen City Council.

## **8.0 Watching Brief**

- 8.1 An appropriate machine must be used to minimise damage to underlying archaeological deposits
- 8.2 All machine work must be carried out under the direct supervision of an archaeologist acceptable to the planning authority and the Keeper of Archaeology.
- 8.3 All excavation, both by machine and by hand, must be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appear to be worthy of preservation *in situ*.
- 8.4 Any human remains which are encountered must initially be left *in situ*. Their removal will be a matter of discussion with the Keeper of Archaeology (who must be notified within 12 hours of their discovery) and will comply with the provisions of Scots Law.

## **9.0 Recording Systems**

These must be specified and should include the structure for site record.

## **10.0 Monitoring Arrangements**

It is necessary for the planning authority to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the watching brief in order to ensure the proper execution of the specification and therefore conformity to the brief. Stages at which monitoring is appropriate will be agreed between the archaeological contractor and the Keeper of Archaeology. The possibility of random inspections should not be excluded.

## **11.0 Reporting Requirements**

Provision must be made for:

- 11.2 Specialist examination of animal and human bone and of any preserved or organic material.
- 11.3 Specialist conservation and examination of artefacts found during the watching

brief.

- 11.4 Preparation of plans, sections and finds drawings to publication standards.
- 11.5 The sorting and analysis of records and the production of a written report on the work, published in a manner appropriate to its scale.
- 11.7 The preparation of a catalogued archive and its deposition in the City Council's Sites and Monuments record and the National Monuments Record of Scotland within six months of the end of the watching brief.
- 11.8 Copies of the archaeological report should be sent to the Keeper of Archaeology, the applicant and the planning authority. A brief survey of results should be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, along with the appropriate fee. An OASIS report must also be provided.

## **12.0 Small finds**

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and Bona Vacantia and reported by the archaeological contractor to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel (Dr Alan Saville, National Museums of Scotland, Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JD) for disposal to an appropriate museum.

## **13.0 Timescale**

The watching brief report must be produced within four weeks of the end of the field work.

## **14.0 Further Information**

Additional information about the site, or this brief, can be obtained from the Keeper of Archaeology, Whitespace, 60 Frederick Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5HY Tel (01224) 523658.

## **15.0 Conclusion**

The watching brief is to be carried out in compliance with this brief and in the context of NPPG 5. The selection of any contractor will be subject to approval of the Keeper of Archaeology. Work should be carried out in close liaison with the Keeper of Archaeology.

June 2008.