

Site Code: 0417 HMA07
Client: Halliday Fraser Munro

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief undertaken at Howe Moss Crescent, Aberdeen.

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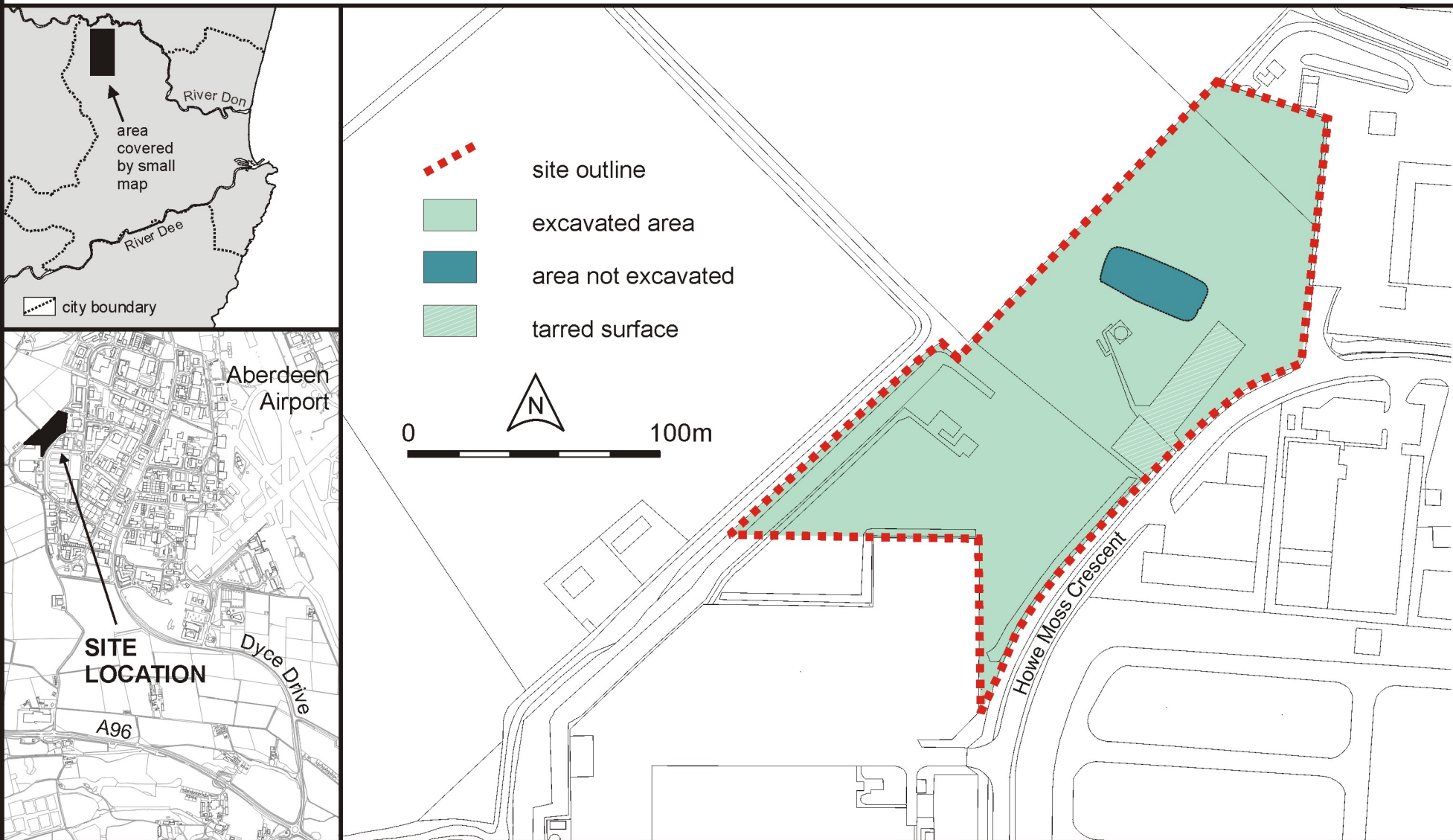
In 2007, Halliday Fraser Munro commissioned Aberdeen City Council Archaeology Unit to carry out an Archaeological Watching Brief on excavations associated with the construction of a new office development for Halliburton Manufacturing Services, Howe Moss Crescent, Aberdeen.

No features of archaeological interest were encountered during the watching brief; therefore this report recommends that further archaeological investigations are unnecessary



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fig. 1 Howe Moss Crescent, Aberdeen: site locations showing excavated areas



1. Introduction and Background

In October 2007 Stewart Buchanan undertook an Archaeological Watching Brief (on behalf of Aberdeen City Council Archaeology Department) at Howe Moss Crescent, Aberdeen (NJ 8655 1292), (see fig 1.), on excavations associated with the construction of a new office development. The work was commissioned by Halliday Frazer Munro, for their clients Halliburton Manufacturing Services.

The watching brief was commissioned in direct response to a Specification for Archaeological Evaluation written by Judith Stones, Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council (October 2007). 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*.

Historical and Archaeological Background

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

There are no known archaeological sites within the boundaries of this development, but it lies within a general area which is rich in evidence of past land use. This site lies within an area where very little systematic archaeological investigation has taken place in the past. In 1994, a watching brief on quarry development at Mill of Dyce, around 2500 metres north-west of the present site, uncovered evidence of possible Bronze Age features (*Discovery and Excavation Scotland* 1994, 22). About 800 metres south-east of the current site, archaeological evaluation in 2003 at Dyce Drive, in advance of development, recovered no archaeological features or finds. However, that work also confirmed that that area had been heavily landscaped at an earlier date, possibly during construction of Dyce Drive in the 1970s (unpublished report by Melanie Johnson, CFA, 2003: *Discovery and Excavation Scotland* 2003, 12). Some 700 metres to the north-west of the present site stands a well-preserved recumbent stone circle at Standingstones, while the site lies almost between two medieval churches, the 14th-century Chapel of St Mary at Stoneywood (NGR NJ 8663 1117) and the Chapel of St Fergus at Dyce (NGR NJ 8752 1541). Two important Pictish symbol stones at the latter location attest to its early origins. There are also a number of stray finds recorded from the general area within which the site lies, including a number of prehistoric flint tools, stone axes and carved stone balls.

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

2. Objectives and Methodology

The objectives of the Watching Brief are:

- To identify the location, nature and extent of any features or objects of archaeological importance that would be damaged or destroyed by the proposed groundworks.
- To record archaeological features located in situ to the highest professional standards.
- To propose arrangements for the safeguarding where possible, of any archaeological features or finds identified. These will need to be agreed with the Keeper of Archaeology, Aberdeen City Council.
- To make sure that the needs for archaeological conservation and recording are met without causing any unnecessary delay or disturbance to the development project.

To this end:

- All archaeological features and deposits encountered to be fully excavated by hand and recorded by using pro forma recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system.
- All plans, sections, profiles and elevations to be drawn at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate.
- Drawings to be made in pencil on permanent drafting film. The depth of all principal features and levels will be calculated in meters relative to Ordnance Datum. Plans, sections and elevations will be annotated with depths as appropriate. All features and sections will have photographs taken to produce a photographic record consisting of monochrome prints and colour slides (The latter will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland, Edinburgh).
- All archaeological work will be undertaken following guidelines recommended by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 1999).

Monitoring

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

Finds & Samples

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.

The post-excavation of finds will be processed by an approved archaeological contractor employing a recognized specialist.

Specialists in relevant subjects will be employed as appropriate to deal with archaeological artifacts recovered during work.

A bulk sample of deposits to be made where there is likelihood of organic or dateable remains, on-site factors to determine size of sample. All bulk samples to be submitted to an approved contractor who will submit relevant material reports on the results.

Any human remains which are encountered must initially be left in situ. Their removal will be a matter of discussion with the Keeper, Archaeology (who must be notified within 12 hours of their Discovery) and will comply with the provisions of Scots Law.

Reporting

A report on the findings of the work will be compiled following guidelines stipulated in the Aberdeen City Council's Specification for Archaeological Evaluation (A5/1608).

Copies of the evaluation should be sent to the Keeper of Archaeology, the applicant and the City of Aberdeen City Development Services - Planning. A summary of the work undertaken will be submitted to the Council for Scottish Archaeology's publication Discovery & Excavation in Scotland.

Archive Deposition

The project archive, including written, drawn and photographic elements (together with a summary of the contents of the archive) will be deposited with the National Monuments Record Scotland (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland). The archive will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the RCAHMS.

Operational Factors

The archaeological contractor will at all times follow and confirm to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other various regulations and the Codes of Conduct and Approved Practice and Standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists of 1999. All plant will be provided by the client.

Fieldwork

The watching brief was carried out between the 8th and 11th of October 2007.

3. Results

The site (NJ 8655 1292) is situated on a S/E facing hill near the western periphery of Aberdeen, on the N/W edge of the industrial estate around Aberdeen airport at Dyce. It is currently open ground and was farmland until recent times.



Plate 1. Looking S/E across site.

Topsoil was stripped by a combination of Bulldozer and 360° tracked plant, and was comprised of (on average) 0.40m of dark grey/brown sandy-silt of moderate compaction. Subsoil was a medium red/brown clay-silt of medium/firm compaction; there were few inclusions other than gravels and small stones in either soil.



Plate 2. Work in progress, looking N/E.

A Bund was created with the topsoil for the strip; the topsoil underneath the Bund was not

disturbed (see fig 1.). This area was later landscaped leaving the topsoil underneath the bund intact.



Plate 3. Bulldozer strip to subsoil, looking east.

No archaeological features were encountered during the watching brief.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

No features of archaeological interest were encountered during the watching brief; therefore this report recommends that further archaeological investigations are unnecessary at this site.

5. References

Specification for Archaeological Evaluation (October 2007). Judith Stones, Keeper of Archaeology ,Aberdeen City Council.

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

6. Acknowledgements

Jan Dunbar (Illustrations, fig 1.), Alison Cameron and Judith Stones of Aberdeen City Council Archaeology Department.