

Archaeological Watching Brief  
Marchmont Cottage, Meigle,  
Perth and Kinross



Development site looking east



16<sup>th</sup> May 2015

## **Introduction**

This archaeological watching brief was carried out for Mr Michael Boyd and Ms Tania Wasser to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development, as noted by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust in the Terms of Reference to Planning Application 14/01136/FLL, dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015. This work was carried out by the author on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 (site code MEG01). Weather conditions were bright with occasional showers.

## **Archaeological Background (Illus 1 and 2)**

Following consultation of the Perth and Kinross Historic Environment Record, PKHT consider the area of the proposed development to have archaeological potential. The present parish church at Meigle, dating to 1869 AD, occupies the site of its predecessor (c.1791 AD) and probably that of the medieval church, which is on record from 1178 AD. The sculpted stones found at Meigle Parish Church and in the surrounding burial-ground form one of the most important collections of Pictish sculpture in Scotland. Part of a Pictish cross-slab was discovered outside of the graveyard boundary, directly adjacent to the proposed development site. This collection of early medieval sculpture indicates that Meigle was important settlement, perhaps even an early monastic centre, in the Pictish period. It is assumed that the churchyard was the centre of this early medieval settlement and given the location of the development to the immediate west, there was the potential for discovery of related archaeological remains. On the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867 the development area is shown as being garden ground.

### **Archaeological Watching Brief (Illus 3 and 4)**

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust requested that all below ground excavations associated with the construction of a small new building in the front garden of Marchmont Cottage should be monitored by an archaeologist.

### **New Building Footprint (Illus 5 to 8)**

The stripping of the footprint for the new building revealed dark brown topsoil overlying natural broken red sandstone and clay across the whole area. This deposit was 0.10 m deep against the western face of the Meigle churchyard wall deepening to 0.30m at the eastern limit of the development area. At the northern end of the building footprint for a distance of 4.90m South the topsoil had been previously stripped off and a depth of 0.15 m of type 1 stones laid on top of natural presumably to act as a parking area. The churchyard wall was seen to be built directly on top of the natural ground surface (Illus 7 and 8). No archaeological deposits or features were located and the exposed section of graveyard wall did not contain any reused sculpted stones.

### **Recommendations**

Nothing of archaeological interest was revealed by the below ground excavations for the new building and it is recommended that no further archaeological work s are required. The final decision on the need and scale of any further work however rests with Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust.

### **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank James Drummond of SHS Construction for operating the machine to strip the footprint of the proposed building.

## **Illustration List**

Illustration 1 Site Location (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2012. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illustration 2 Site (red dot) as shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867 (©Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 3 Stripped building footprint (based on supplied architects plan) Scale 1:200

Illustration 4 Development site before commencement of ground works looking North

Illustration 5 Site foot print on completion of ground stripping and commencement of foundation trenches looking North

Illustration 6 North facing section of Northern foundation trench looking south, showing garden soil and laid type 1 stones on natural

Illustration 7 Fully exposed western face of Meigle churchyard wall looking south

Illustration 8 Fully exposed western face of Meigle churchyard wall looking east with church visible in background

## Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth and Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Marchmont Cottage, Meigle
PROJECT CODE:	MEG01
PARISH:	Meigle
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	<b>NO 3125 2997</b>
START DATE	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
END DATE	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	All below ground excavations were monitored for the construction of new building in the grounds of Marchmont Cottage which lies adjacent to Meigle churchyard on its western side. Nothing of archaeological interest was located.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr M Boyd and Ms T Wasser
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk

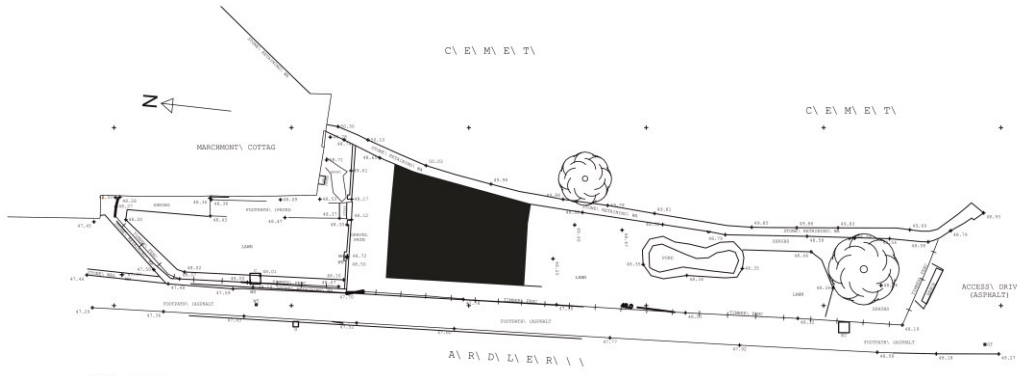


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Illustration 2 Site (red dot) as shown on First Edition Ordnance survey map of 1867 (©Trustees of the National Library)





Site\ Plan

Illustration 3 Stripped building footprint (based on supplied architects plan) Scale 1:200





Illustration 4 Development site before commencement of ground works looking North



Illustration 5 Site foot print on completion of ground stripping and commencement of foundation trenches looking North





Illustration 6 North facing section of Northern foundation trench looking south, showing garden soil and laid type 1 stones on natural



Illustration 7 Fully exposed western face of Meigle churchyard wall looking south





Illustration 8 Fully exposed western face of Meigle churchyard wall looking east with church visible in background