

Report of Archaeological Watching Brief  
April 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2002  
Scotsburn, Moray  
NJ 272/599 (centred)

By  
Stuart Farrell  
B.A A.I.F.A F.S.A.Scot.  
April 2002

**Introduction**

This report is for an archaeological watching brief conducted for Posford Haskoning on behalf of Moray Council by the author for engineering test holes at Scotsburn, Moray for the Moray Flood Alleviation Scheme.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the following for their help during the work :

- Ms J Clarkson, of Posford Haskoning;
- Staff of Allied Exploration & Geotechnics Ltd for onsite works;
- Mr. I Shepherd of Aberdeenshire Archaeology Unit.

**Location**

See over.

**Archaeological Background**

The project of work lies close to the following site as recorded by Aberdeenshire Council Archaeological Service Records (formerly Grampian) provided on behalf of Moray Council:

NJ25NE 25 (NMRS n/a) at NJ 2718/5980 – Hatton – Cropmark. Noted from aerial photograph of 1976 to form a ring ditch and several pits with a number of linear crop marks and enclosures that may indicate later field boundaries.

A transcription of these crop marks has been provided by the Archaeology Service(see over).

**Objectives**

To conduct a watching brief on the excavation of the engineering test holes to record those features revealed by excavation work.

**Site Conditions**

Weather on the days of work (April 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> 2002) was generally bright and sunny. The site forms an area of pasture in two fields beside a burn.

## **Watching Brief Investigation**

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with accepted professional archaeological standards as published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999). Over the works period a suitably qualified archaeologist was on site to carry out observations and assessment of the area affected by the excavations.

## **Results**

A monitoring of the excavations revealed no archaeological features or deposits of interest only natural ground of sand and gravel. Results of test pits (as marked on plan - see over) were as follows:

Test Pit 203 at NJ 2720/5989 – topsoil to 300mm – no archaeological features revealed.

Test Pit 204 at NJ 2725/5987 – not inspected.

Test Pit 206 at NJ 2727/5984 – topsoil to 400mm – no archaeological features revealed.

Test Pit 207 at NJ 2715/5995 – topsoil to 300mm – no archaeological features revealed.

Test Pit 208 at NJ 2726/5975 - topsoil to 100mm – no archaeological features revealed.

Test Pits 205 and 209 both lying in disturbed ground were not inspected.

In test pits 203, 206-8 at a depth of 1.1m a peat like deposit was revealed consistent with indicating an open wet area (included wood fragments, roots, leaves and layers of sand) also above this deposit the stratigraphy showed lenses of similar deposits giving an indication that the overall area has in the past been flooded regularly due to it being low lying.

Using an overlay of the cropmark transcription against a contour survey (scale 1:1250) (see over) shows that the crop marks lie out with the proposed scheme and should be unaffected by the project. It is likely that the proposed field boundary running NW-SE on the overlay is a field boundary as it aligns with an existing fence line to the SE.

## **Recommendations**

No recommendations with regards to this project are to be proposed.

**Archive**

Notebook of results to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh. A set of colour slides showing the progress of the work has been deposited with Aberdeen-shire Council Sites and Monuments Record.

**References**

Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service Record for NJ25NE 25.

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

Stuart Farrell  
39a Park Street  
Fishertown  
Nairn  
IV12 4PP

## **Appendix 1 – Details of Slides**

- 1 – View of field facing north.
- 2 – View of field facing south-east.
- 3 – View of site facing north.
- 4 – View of field facing east.
- 5 – View of start of test-pit 208.
- 6 – View of field facing north.
- 7 – View of test-pit 208 upon excavation.
- 8 – View of test-pit 206 upon excavation.
- 9 – View of test-pit 207 during excavation.
- 10 – View of test-pit 205 upon excavation.
- 11 – *ibid.*