



Millhaugh: Fieldwalking MH14.3

17-19 February 2016



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14 April 2016



1. Introduction

The fieldwalking survey at Millhaugh MH14.3 was scheduled to be undertaken throughout the week ending 19 February 2016. However, arriving on site on 15 February the ground was covered by snow (Figure 1) making it impossible to fieldwalk. One of the vagaries of planning a fieldwalking survey in February. The snow cleared and the fieldwalking commenced on 17 February, and continued until torrential rain drove us from site at midday on 19 February. The time lost meant that the field was not fully surveyed (Figure 6), although it is planned to be completed at some point before March 2017.

The fieldwalking was carried out by a small team of supervised students and a volunteer.



Figure 1: Snow covered Millhaugh. The photograph was taken from the north with the Ochils to the south.

2. Location

The track entrance to the steading at Millhaugh (centre National Grid Reference 'NGR' NO 02670 15864) is approximately 1.5km west of the centre of Dunning village on the B8062 to Auchterarder (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2: Location of MH14.3 and notation of other fields at Millhaugh. Image from Google Earth © 2015 Digital Globe; © 2015 Google.



Figure 3: Location of track entrance to Millhaugh. © Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey.



3. Fieldwalking and surface collections

Collections from systematic fieldwalking may provide insight and give an overview into the distribution of activity areas (Gardiner 1987, 57), assist in the creation of geographic models utilising lithic scatters as representative of sites within the landscape (cf. Allen 1991; Barrowman 2000; Wagstaff 1991), and offer explanations for patterns in land-use (cf. Barrowman 2003, 100; Foley 1981). Bias is inherent in surface collections regardless of the expertise of the fieldwalker in the recognition of chipped stone artefacts; Gardiner (1987, 57) makes explicit the incomplete nature of surface collections often including artefacts from different archaeological periods, i.e. the conflation of four dimensions into two. Despite these limitations they remain a valuable and under-utilised resource to understand and give meaning to prehistoric lifeways, instigate new research agendas and highlight areas for future archaeological investigation (after Schofield 1995a, 5; 1995b, 108-109; cf. Wright 2012).

4. Archaeological background

MH14.1

There is no record of any previous archaeological investigations at MH14.1, save for the fieldwalking undertaken in 2014 (Wright 2014), and the test-pitting, geophysical survey and fieldwalking carried out in 2015 (Wright 2015). The cropmarks were formally scheduled in June 1996 (NO01SW 34/NGR NO 0067813952 and NO01SW 36/NGR NO 0061514044) [Scheduled monument index 'SM' 5774]. They are recorded as a prehistoric settlement comprising a number of circular enclosures and other cropmarks; interpreted as an enclosure/barrow, pit alignment, ring ditch and later rig and furrow.

The footprint of the enclosure/barrow is broadly similar to the kerbed cairn in MH14.3, which was excavated in 2014 (Brophy 2014). However, it appears that the putative ploughed down barrow is enclosed by a ditch. There is the intriguing possibility that the cropmark could be what survives of an Early Neolithic round barrow. There is only one such monument currently known in Scotland, and that is at Pitnacree, Perth & Kinross (cf. Brophy 2010, 2014; Coles *et al.* 1965).

Neolithic and Bronze Age lithic artefacts were collected during fieldwalking at MH14.1 in 2014, and 2015 (cf. Wright 2014, 2015).

Excavations are planned to be undertaken in late Autumn 2016. Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Environment Scotland and permission from the landowner have been received.



MH14.2

Prior to the fieldwalking in 2014 (Wright 2014), there were no references to either any known archaeology, or archaeological investigations at MH14.2.

MH14.3: Millhaugh cairn

Prior to the SERF excavations in 2014 (Brophy 2014), no previous archaeological work had ever taken place at this monument, and indeed there is no tradition of this being a prehistoric burial mound until relatively recently. This prominent, upstanding, tree-topped mound was not even recorded formally as an archaeological site until 1991 when it was recognised by Gordon Barclay (1991), then Inspector of Ancient Monuments, as a possible barrow. The mound quickly became a scheduled ancient monument (SM5775). The site is also known as Parkside, and has NMRS no. NO01SW 41 with NGR NO 010140. Subject to the completion of post-excavation tasks, the excavations have demonstrated that the monument is a kerbed cairn, possibly Bronze Age in date (cf. Brophy 2014).

Other cropmarks were scheduled in 2001. They are located 200m south-east of the cairn and comprise of a putative barrow, sub-rectangular ditched enclosure and other indeterminate cropmarks (NO01SW69; NGR NO 0096613916).

MH14.4: Settlement

The cropmarks at NO 01SW28 (NGR 01128 14149)/NO 01SW43 (NGR NO 01195 14087) are described in the National Monuments Record as a settlement comprising an interrupted ditched enclosure, putative pit enclosure and pit alignment. The cropmarks were scheduled in 1993 (SM5776).

Excavations are planned for the period 18 June -10 July 2016. Geophysical survey immediately to the north of the area to be excavated, and fieldwalking will be undertaken in late Autumn 2016. Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Environment Scotland and permission from the landowner have been received.

5. Geology

The drift geology for MH14.3 is glacial till (Figure 4).

6. Results

Methodology

As previously, the methodology employed has proved to be successful with a significant time-savings in not having to set up 20m² grid squares. The tolerance level of c.2-3m achieved by the GPS is more than adequate for the surface collection of material from scattered locations. A greater resolution would be required where high densities of artefactual material are located.

Non-lithic materials

All glass and sherds of pottery encountered could be typologically dated to the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Lithics: preliminary notes

39 lithics were recovered from MH14.3. The most common raw materials are chert (38.46%) and quartz (30.77%). Other raw materials included flint (12.82%), indurated tuff (10.26%), chalcedony (5.13%), and quartzite [2.56%] (Figure 5). The diversity of raw materials is a common feature in lowland prehistoric assemblages.

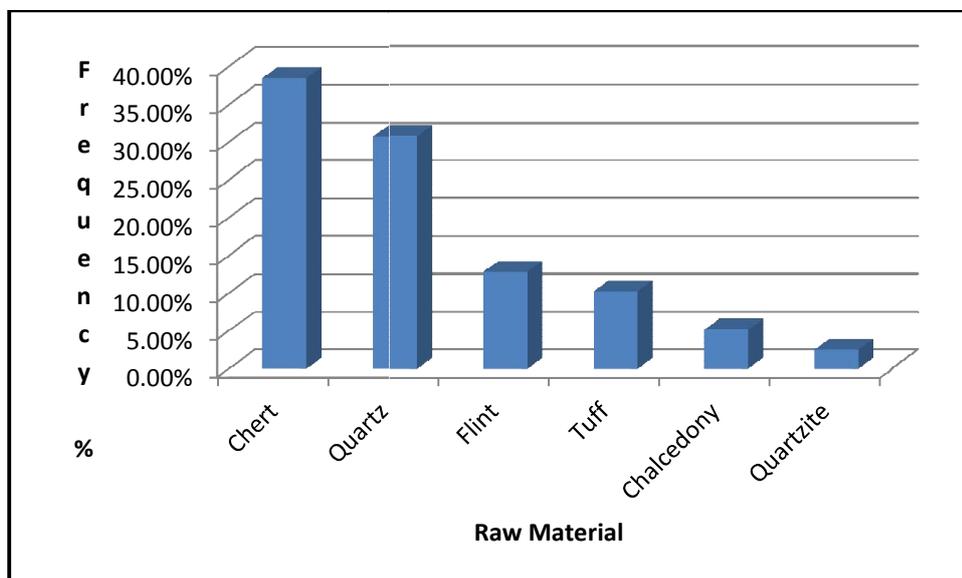


Figure 5: Percentage frequency of lithics by raw materials.

A brief typological analysis of the lithics has been carried out. The character of the assemblage from MH14.3 can be found at Appendix I.

Flakes and blade-like flakes (87.18%) dominate the assemblage. Flakes are common in lithic assemblages and cannot without other corroborating evidence be unequivocally ascribed to any particular period in prehistory. Two of the five cores



are core fragments. The cores and flakes indicate the use of platform and bipolar reduction strategies. There is no attribute evidence to suggest that these strategies were coeval, and bipolar reduction may indicate a separate phase of reduction at MH14.3.

There are four flakes of grey green indurated volcanic tuff; one primary and three tertiary. The primary flake suggests that it was struck from a cobble. Further work needs to be done in establishing the source of this raw material.

Generally quartz has a low percentage frequency in Mesolithic assemblages, although there are exceptions, e.g. Powbrone (cf. Wright 2012). An increase in the use of quartz has been attributed as an Early Neolithic development in Eastern Scotland (cf. Warren 2006).

These artefacts will be considered as part of a full technological analysis of the assemblages which will be undertaken in due course.

Artefact distribution

The recovery locations of lithics by raw material is highlighted in the distribution map at Figure 6. The majority of the lithics were recovered from the north-east corner of the field in the vicinity of the Millhaugh cairn.

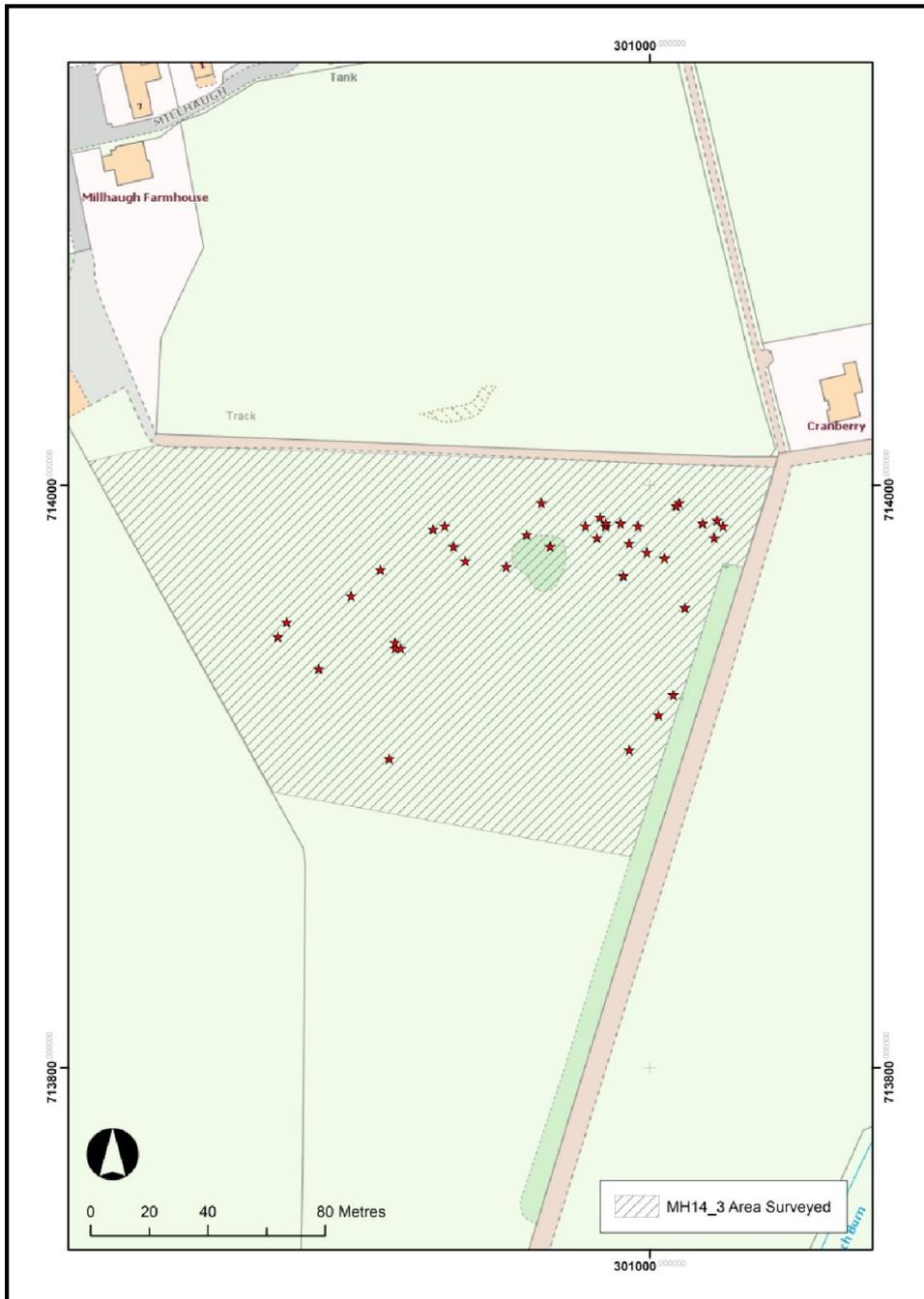


Figure 6: Recovery locations of lithics by raw material. Distribution map prepared by Dr Tessa Poller.

8. Summary

Lithic assemblages associated with ritual sites from the Neolithic, and the same may be said of the Bronze Age (e.g. Watson and Bradley 2000), are generally small in comparison to those from the Mesolithic period . This has been explained by radical changes in depositional practice in the Neolithic (Healy 1987; Warren 2006,



34-35). The work undertaken on the SERF project may be said to attest to these comments.

The fieldwalking programme at Millhaugh has so far produced 256 lithic artefacts. There is evidence for Neolithic and Bronze Age events, although at this point none of the lithics from MH14.3 can be said to be truly diagnostic to an archaeological period.

9. Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Calum Rollo (landowner) and John Neil (farmer) for their gracious permission to allow us to walk MH14.3, and to an excellent fieldwalking team, namely James Cromey, Taryn Gouck, Amy Halliday, Martina Kurin, Jennifer McKay, Rebecca Millar, Joe Morrison, Arizona Mosby, Rory Peace, and Jennifer Rees (Figure 7). Thanks must also go to Dr Tessa Poller for producing the distribution map.

The fieldwork was largely funded by Historic Environment Scotland, and I am grateful for the advice and cooperation of their personnel during the SMC process. The fieldwork was also supported financially, and in other ways by the University of Glasgow.



Figure 7: The fieldwalking team at Millhaugh on 18 February. Left to right: Rory Peace, Martina Kurin, Jennifer McKay, Dene Wright, Jennifer Rees, and Rebecca Millar.



Bibliography

All SERF reports and more information about the project may be found at our web pages.

www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/archaeologyresearch/projects/serf/

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Appendix I: Character of the lithic assemblage from MH14.3

	Total	Chert	Quartz	Flint	Tuff	Chalcedony	Quartzite
Cores	5	3	1	1			
Flakes	34	12	11	4	4	2	1
<i>Primary</i>	5		2	1	1		1
<i>Secondary</i>	5	2	2	1			
<i>Tertiary</i>	24	10	7	2	3	2	
<i>Primary regular</i>							
<i>Primary irregular</i>	5		2	1	1		1
<i>Secondary regular</i>							
<i>Secondary irregular</i>	5	2	2	1			
<i>Tertiary regular</i>							
<i>Tertiary irregular</i>	24	10	7	2	3	2	
Total	39	15	12	5	4	2	1