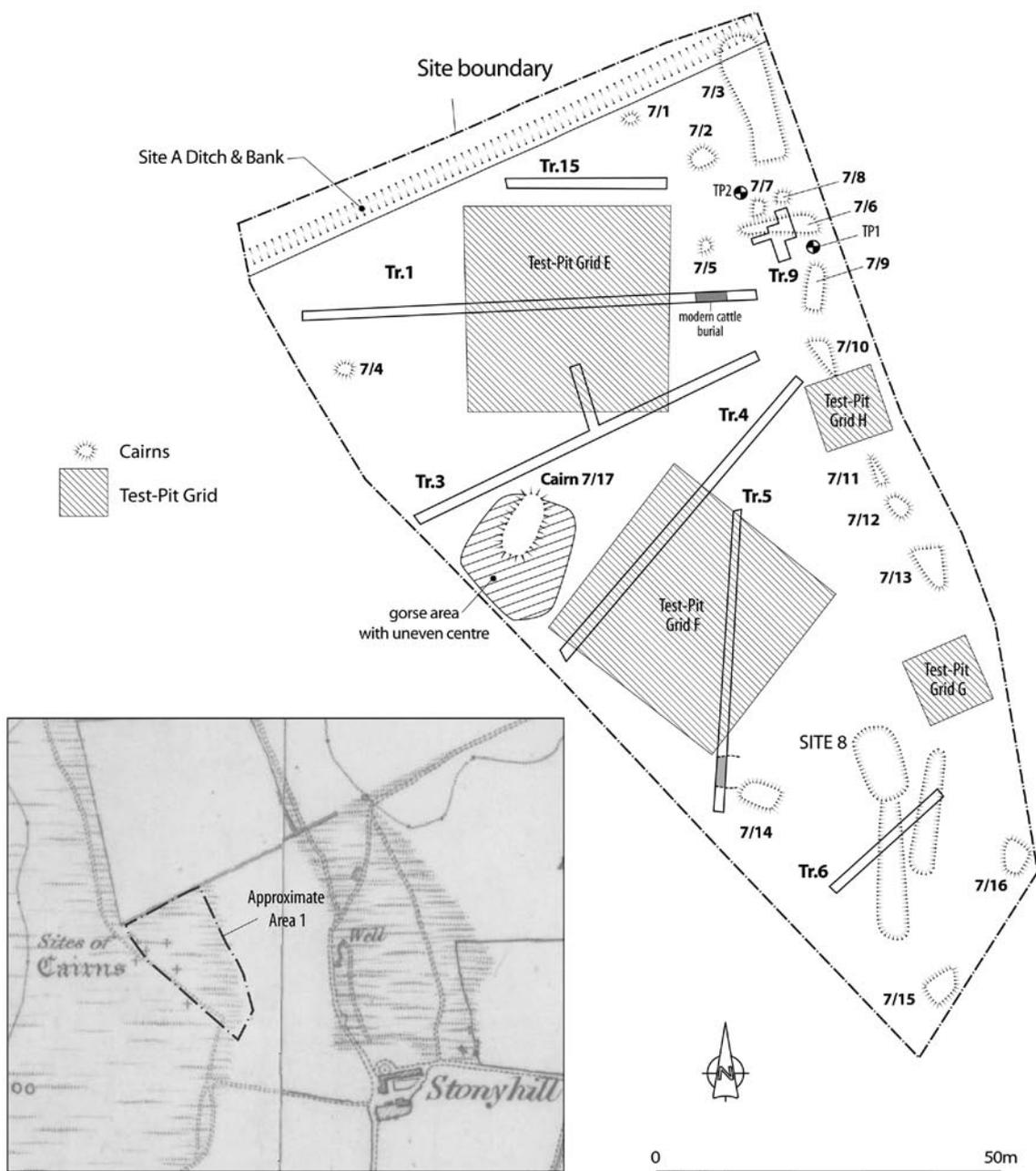


### 3 METHODS

The aims of the project were to record those archaeological sites that would be destroyed in the course of the development, through a programme of surveying, evaluation, excavation, watching brief and publication.

Within Area 1, all upstanding cairns and quarry features were surveyed by total station equipment. These data were used to inform the subsequent evaluation strategy.

Evaluation took place within both Areas 1 and 2, with methodological variation being employed to take account of the differing character of the recorded sites and the apparently blank areas between them. Hand-excavated trenches were positioned over clearance cairns forming Sites 4, 7 and 12 and over a quarry scoop (Site 8). Hand-excavation was also planned for Site 14, but the possible kiln was destroyed by gravel extraction on the



Illus 2 Area 1 plan with an inset showing the Ordnance Survey First Edition (*Aberdeenshire Sheet XXXI 1872*)

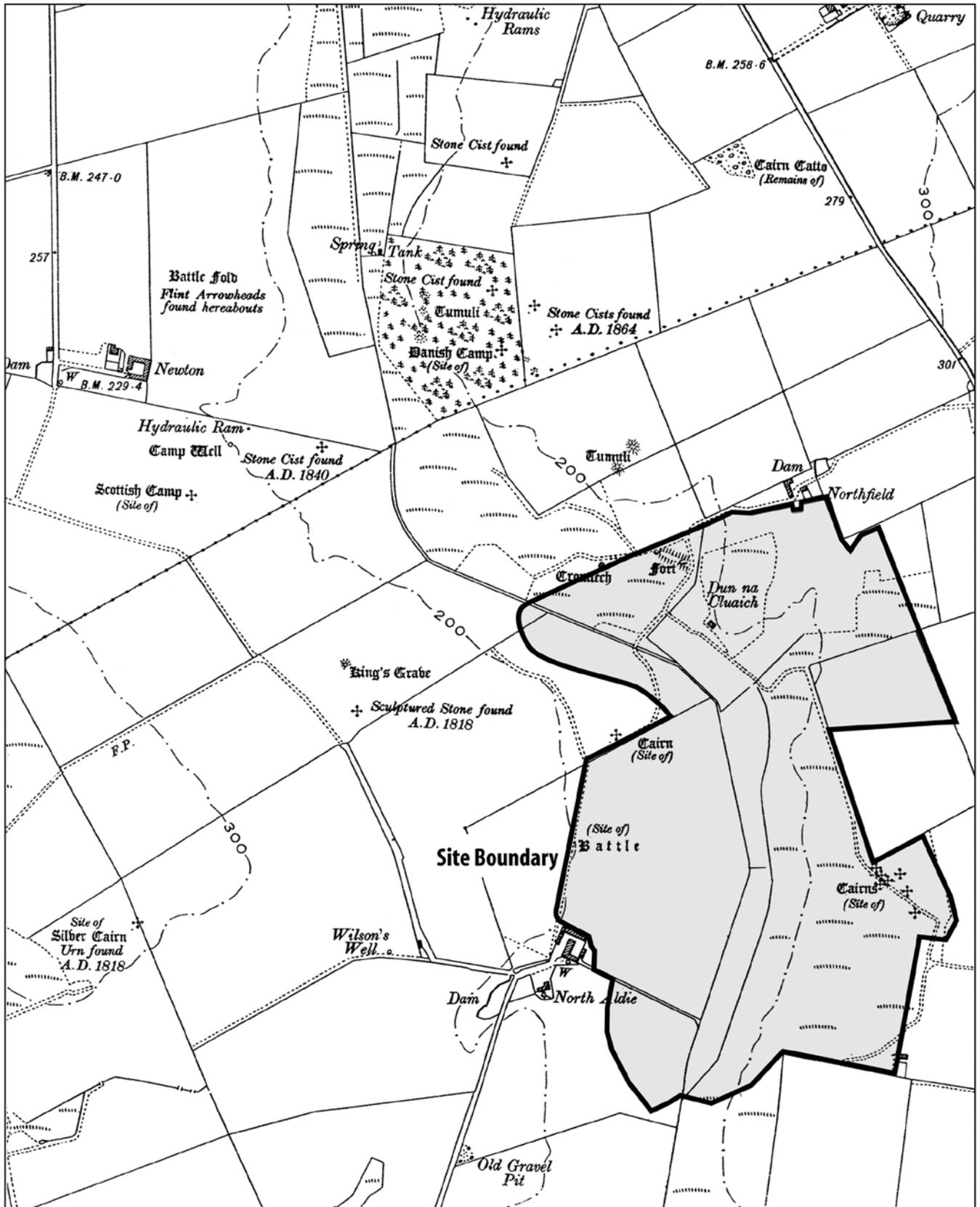
summit of Dun na Cluaich before this was possible. Machine-trenching was used to evaluate Sites 15, 17 and apparently featureless zones within Areas 1 and 2. In Area 1, around 5% (seven trenches, 383m<sup>2</sup>) of the area was investigated (*illus 2*) and in Area 2, 58 trenches (6407m<sup>2</sup>, 3.2%) were excavated in locations accessible by machine (*illus 1*). Within the alleged AD 1012–14 battle site, the excavated spoil was scanned by metal detector with the aim of recovering artefacts.

Hand-dug gridded test-pits with dimensions of 0.5m<sup>2</sup> were excavated during the evaluation in blank areas of Area 1 (*illus 2*) and around ES Sites 12, 14 and 43 in Area 2 (*illus 1*). A grid (Grid K, *illus 1*) was placed on the summit of a prominent knoll close to North Aldie Farm. The identification of numerous lithic artefacts on a second, slighter knoll led to

test-pitting at that location (Grid J, *illus 1*) prior to topsoil removal during the excavation phase.

Following the evaluation, excavation of selected features took place. In Area 1, a lithic scatter (Trench 9) and cairn (Site 7/17) were recorded. At the lithic scatter, an overlying modern stone dump (Cairn 7/6) was removed by machine with the peaty topsoil below being removed by hand. At the cairn, gorse bushes were removed by machine prior to hand excavation. In Area 2, all topsoil was removed by machine prior to the hand-excavation of the post-arc.

A watching brief took place following the completion of excavations in both Areas 1 and 2. In Area 1, the whole of the area was monitored, with negative results, and in Area 2, monitoring in the field containing the battle site produced only a few pits.



Illus 3 Second Edition OS map (*Aberdeenshire Sheet XXXI NE, 1901*)