

Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness

Evaluation: Data Structure Report

(in respect to Planning App 08/00565/FUL)

10th May 2010



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Contents

	Page
List of illustrations	2
List of appendices	2
Abstract	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Development Background	4
1.2 Site Location	4
1.3 Archaeological Background.....	4
2 OBJECTIVES	5
3 METHOD	5
4 RESULTS	6
4.1 Introduction	6
4.2 Evaluation Trenching	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3 Modern Disturbance	7
5 DISCUSSION	7
6 RECOMMENDATIONS	7
7 REFERENCES	8
APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions	11
APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register	16
APPENDIX 3: ‘Discovery and Excavation in Scotland’ Report	17

List of illustrations

Figure 1: Site Location and trench layout

List of plates

Plate 1: View of evaluation Trench 7

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Trench Descriptions

Appendix 2: Photographic Register

Appendix 3: *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* Report

Abstract

This report represents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground at Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness. The evaluation was commissioned by Tesco Stores Ltd. The works, undertaken prior to a retail development, consisted of a 5% sample intrusive evaluation (2250 m²) on a 4.5 ha land parcel. The land parcel was situated on rough pasture centred on NGR: NH 6509 4243.

Neither significant archaeological features nor unstratified artefacts were uncovered by the evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Development Background

1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works was required by Tesco Stores Ltd in respect to a proposed development (retail, doctors surgery, community building, public square & petrol-filling station) at Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness (centred NGR: NH 6509 4243). The development area consists of a greenfield site covering approximately 4.5 ha. The proposed development lies within the administrative area of Highland Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by Highland Council Archaeology Unit (HCAU). A programme of archaeological works has been specified by HCAU (ref: IN-08-565, 19th June 2009) and is required in keeping with the policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government, February 2010) and *PAN 42* in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The site lies a few hundred metres south-east of the River Ness, and less than 3 km from Inverness city centre. The B862 forms the south-east boundary to the site with residential housing on the other side of the road. The remainder of the site is bounded by greenfields. A single track cuts approximately east to west across the site providing a vehicular access route to Ness Side House.

1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 A desk-based study formed part of the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2010) prior to the start of the evaluation. No prehistoric or Roman sites were known in the immediate area surrounding the development site. Roughly 400 m to the south-east lies Holme Mains motte is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The remains of this defensive site have been eroded by cultivation, but earthworks are still visible, especially on its eastern and southern sides.

1.3.2 Early cartographic records tend to be schematic and lack detail. Pont's map of the late 16th century, shows Inverness, but no details relevant to the present site. Both Blaeu's map of 1654 and Hermann Moll's map of 1745 show settlement at 'Holms' to the south of the development area. In the mid-18th century the military road to Fort George is depicted both by Rutherford (1745) and by Roy (Figure 1). Both the National Monuments Record for Scotland (NMRS) and the Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HER) note the presence of General Wade's Military Road of 1732 and its re-aligned route to the immediate east of the proposed development area.

1.1.3 Roy also marks 'Holm' and the presence of buildings near the present location of Ness-side. Taylor and Skinner's plan (1776) show 'Holme' next to 'McIntosh Esq.' Thomson's plan of 1820 shows a building at Ness-side and the route of the road to the east. The First Edition 1:10,560

Ordnance Survey map of 1874 shows the proposed development area as open ground, though Holm House and buildings at Ness-side, Ness-side House and the North Lodge and grounds of Ness Castle are shown in the vicinity. A track linking Ness-side to the main road crosses the south-west corner of the development area.

1.1.4 The NMRS records the location of Holm House, Holm House Outhouse and Holm House, Summer House roughly 250 m to the south-east of the proposed development area. Holm House, Lodge lies 100 m to the south. Holm and the North Lodge are shown on the First Edition map and, as noted above, variants of the place-name 'Holm' are shown on several 17th and 18th century maps.

1.1.5 Aerial Photographs from the 1940s onwards depict the proposed development area as an open area. Images from the 1950s show a linear feature, probably a power line, crossing to the north of the proposed development from east to west (Sortie 58/2703; Frames F22: 0086-0088).

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the evaluation were:

- i) to assess the character, condition, extent, quality, date and significance of any as yet undiscovered archaeological remains within the proposed evaluation areas;
- ii) should significant archaeological features/deposits be discovered to prepare and implement an appropriate mitigation strategy compliant with *Scottish Planning Policy* and *PAN 42*.

3 METHOD

3.1 The evaluation was achieved through the excavation of linear and box trenches using a tracked 360° excavator equipped with a 2 m wide ditching bucket. The trenches covered a 5% sample of the development area, shown in Figure 1. The development area covers 4.5 ha with the evaluation therefore requiring trenches totalling 2,250 m².

3.2 The trenches were of varying lengths and set on varying orientations. The precise location of the trenches was determined on receipt of utility service information and following consultation with HCAU.

3.3 Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural drift geology was reached. Trial trenches were extended around specific archaeological features to determine their lateral extent (while remaining within the development area). All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist.

- 3.4 All potentially significant archaeological features were cleaned and defined prior to sample excavation to determine their significance.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The evaluation was conducted between 3rd and 7th May 2010. The weather conditions during the evaluation were mostly overcast with showers; overall archaeological visibility was good. Eighteen trenches with a combined basal area of 2272 m² were excavated. The following should be read in conjunction with the data presented in Appendices 1-3, Figure 1 and Plates 1 & 2.

- 4.1.2 The various data gathered from the excavation are presented as a series of appendices: Appendix 1 contains the trench summary descriptions; Appendix 2 contains the photographic register and Appendix 3 reproduces the '*Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*' entry.

4.2 Evaluation Trenching

- 4.2.1 The trial trenching incorporated both linear and box trenches. The development area was very flat and a quick walkover survey did not encounter any landscape features that warranted investigation with a trench. The development area was crossed by a farm access track, alongside of which grew a number of mature trees. As some of these trees are to be retained within the future development it meant that some trenches had to be moved (from the locations indicated within the WSI) so as not to encroach upon the root systems of these trees.



Plate 1: View of evaluation Trench 7

4.2.2 The evaluation trenching uncovered only two features, and on closer inspection, neither proved to be archaeologically significant. The feature in Trench 11 was a geotechnical test pit whilst the feature in Trench 13 was extremely shallow and was found to contain a sherd of 19th/20th century pottery. No significant unstratified artefactual material was observed during the course of the evaluation.

4.3 Modern Disturbance

4.3.1 The north-west aligned exit from the roundabout to the immediate south-west of the site extended into the development area to much greater extent than that shown on the WSI drawing. It was flanked by a deep wide drainage ditch and together the ditch and the road reduced the area available for trenching. Trenches 17 and 18 as well as the north-east end of Trench 16 all showed evidence for modern truncation. Trenches 17 and 18 revealed a very hard, compacted gravel surface (with tarmac and concrete inclusions) immediately below a shallow topsoil. In Trench 16 the machine was able to penetrate this upper layer revealing further gravel and redeposited natural layers overlying a terram geotextile. This entire layer was up to 0.6 m thick and the geotextile was located directly over natural subsoil.

4.3.2 It is believed that this area may have housed a site compound during construction of the roundabout and distributor road.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 The evaluation has revealed that the ground directly impacted upon by the development is apparently free from any significant archaeological material. Neither archaeologically significant features nor artefacts were uncovered by the trenching. The significant balance of probability is that the development area is effectively archaeologically sterile.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The results of the evaluation would suggest that the development area has no or very limited archaeological potential, given that no significant archaeological features or any unstratified significant artefacts were uncovered by the evaluation. As such the balance of probability is that the development area is archaeologically sterile.

6.2 No further archaeological works are considered necessary. This recommendation will require confirmation by Highland Council as advised by HCAU.

7 REFERENCES

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Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness: Evaluation Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	77.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	144 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	WNW-ESE
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.31 m to 0.33 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.38 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown fine sand with c.10% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	11.0 m x 10.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m to 0.32 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.36 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown fine sand with c.20% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	81.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	162 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m to 0.32 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown fine sand with c.10% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	11.0 m x 10.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.29 m to 0.30 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.36 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown fine sand with c.20% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	68.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	136 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.31 m to 0.32 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.38 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None

Subsoil Orange/mid-brown sand with c.10% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 40% gravel sized inclusions
Finds Very occasional 19th/20th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 6

Dimensions 78.0 m x 2.0 m
Total Area 156 m²
Orientation N-S
Depth of Topsoil 0.32 m to 0.36 m
Depth of Excavation 0.35 m to 0.42 m
Significant Features None
Subsoil Orange/mid-brown sandy gravel with c.30% small <0.1m gravel sized inclusions becoming increasingly gritty
Finds Very occasional 19th/20th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 7

Dimensions 11.5 m x 10.5 m
Total Area 121 m²
Orientation N-S
Depth of Topsoil 0.30 m to 0.31 m
Depth of Excavation 0.37 m to 0.40 m
Significant Features None
Subsoil Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions
Finds Very occasional 19th/20th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 8

Dimensions 80.0 m x 2.0 m
Total Area 160 m²
Orientation N-S
Depth of Topsoil 0.30 m to 0.32 m
Depth of Excavation 0.36 m to 0.40 m
Significant Features None
Subsoil Orange/mid-brown sand with c.10% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 40% gravel sized inclusions
Finds Very occasional 19th/20th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 9

Dimensions 78.0 m x 2.0 m
Total Area 156 m²
Orientation ENE-WSW
Depth of Topsoil 0.30 m to 0.31 m
Depth of Excavation 0.35 m to 0.38 m
Significant Features None
Subsoil Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 40% gravel sized inclusions
Finds Very occasional 19th/20th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 10

<i>Dimensions</i>	10.5 m x 10.5 m
<i>Total Area</i>	110 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.27 m to 0.32 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.34 m to 0.37 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.30% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 11

<i>Dimensions</i>	101.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	202 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m to 0.36 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.43 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	A few metres from NW end of trench was a geotechnical testpit. Linear with, bowed sides, well defined sharp edges. Upper fill contained a sherd 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.15% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 40% gravel sized inclusions and patches of stone free coarse sand.
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 12

<i>Dimensions</i>	76.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	152 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.31 m to 0.40 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.46 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.1 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with some large stones up to 0.2 m
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 13

<i>Dimensions</i>	11.0 m x 10.5 m plus c.5.0 m ² extension
<i>Total Area</i>	120 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.30 m to 0.31 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.37 m to 0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	A single linear feature, c.4.0 m long by 0.90 m wide. Ill defined edges. Rounded end to west and faded out to east. Section showed a single fill. Uneven sloping sides onto a uneven base only 0.05 m deep. Fill contained sherd of 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 14

<i>Dimensions</i>	81.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	162 m ²

<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.32 m to 0.34 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.40 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 30% gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 15

<i>Dimensions</i>	11.0 m x 10.5 m
<i>Total Area</i>	115 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.32 m to 0.32 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.37 m to 0.38 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Very occasional 19 th /20 th century glazed ceramic & bottle glass sherds

Trench 16

<i>Dimensions</i>	70.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	140 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	NW-SE
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.20 m to 0.28 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.35 m to 0.70 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	A very hard, compacted gravel surface immediately below a shallow topsoil. Within this deposit were also tarmac and concrete. Below this solid compacted deposit were further gravel and redeposited natural layers lying over a terram geotextile layer. This entire layer was up to 0.6 m thick and the geotextile layer was directly over natural subsoil.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Orange/mid-brown sand with c.20% small <0.05 m gravel sized inclusions and patches with up to 30% gravel sized inclusions
<i>Finds</i>	Modern debris such as plastic, glass and concrete

Trench 17

<i>Dimensions</i>	4.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	8 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.2 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.2 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	A very hard, compacted gravel surface immediately below a shallow topsoil. Within this deposit were also tarmac and concrete.
<i>Subsoil</i>	N/a
<i>Finds</i>	Modern debris such as plastic, glass and concrete

Trench 18

<i>Dimensions</i>	4.0 m x 2.0 m
<i>Total Area</i>	8 m ²
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.2 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.2 m

<i>Significant Features</i>	A very hard, compacted gravel surface immediately below a shallow topsoil. Within this deposit were also tarmac and concrete.
<i>Subsoil</i>	N/a
<i>Finds</i>	Modern debris such as plastic, glass and concrete

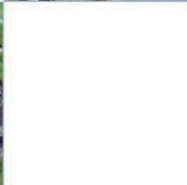
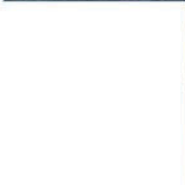
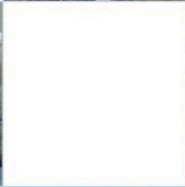
APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register

Colour Print and Digital Film 1

Frame	Trench	Description	From
1-3	-	General views of the development area prior to starting evaluation	Various
4-5	Tr.1	Trench 1 – Post-excavation	NW
6-7	Tr.2	Trench 2 – Under excavation	W
8	Tr.2	Trench 2 - Post-excavation	E
9	Tr.3	Trench 3 - Under excavation	E
10	Tr.3	Trench 3 - Post-excavation	W
11	Tr.4	Trench 4 - Post-excavation	NE
12	Tr.5	Trench 5 - Post-excavation	SE
13	Tr.6	Trench 6 - Under excavation	S
14	Tr.6	Trench 6 - Post-excavation	N
15	Tr.7	Trench 7 - Under excavation	SE
16	Tr.7	Trench 7 - Post-excavation	E
17	Tr.8	Trench 8 - Under excavation	NE
18	Tr.8	Trench 8 - Post-excavation	SW
19	Tr.9	Trench 9 - Under excavation	WSW
20	Tr.9	Trench 9 - Post-excavation	ENE
21	Tr.10	Trench 10 - Post-excavation	E
22	Tr.11	Trench 11 - Post-excavation	NE
23	Tr.12	Trench 12 - Under excavation	N
24	Tr.13	Trench 13 - Post-excavation	S
25	Tr.14	Trench 14 - Under excavation	E
26	Tr.14	Trench 14 - Post-excavation	W
27	Tr.15	Trench 15 - Post-excavation	SE
28	-	General view of southwest field	E
29	Tr.16	Trench 16 - Under excavation	SE
30	Tr.17	Trench 17 - Post-excavation	S
31	Tr.18	Trench 18 - Post-excavation	S
32	Tr.16	Trench 16 – N-Facing section showing made ground & geotextile layer	N
33	Tr.16	Trench 16 - Post-excavation	SE
34	Tr.1	Trench 1 - Backfilled	SE
35	Tr.5	Trench 5 - Backfilled	SE

APPENDIX 3: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Highland Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21597
PARISH:	Inverness and Bona
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Lindsay Dunbar
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR:	NH 6509 4243
START DATE (this season)	3 rd May 2010
END DATE (this season)	7 th May 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken prior to a retail development on a greenfield site at Ness Side, Dores Road, Inverness. The works consisted of a 5% sample evaluation (2250 m²) on a 4.5 ha land parcel comprising rough pasture, a few hundred metres south-east of the River Ness.</p> <p>Neither significant archaeological features nor unstratified artefacts were uncovered by the evaluation.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Tesco Stores Ltd.
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