



Highland Archaeology Services Ltd

Bringing the Past and Future Together

Torness Inverness-shire



Archaeological Evaluation

7 Duke Street Cromarty Ross-shire IV11 8YH

Tel / Fax: 01381 600491 Mobile: 07834 693378 Email: info@hi-arch.co.uk Web: www.hi-arch.co.uk

Registered in Scotland no. 262144 Registered Office: 10 Knockbreck Street, Tain, Ross-shire IV19 1BJ VAT No. GB 838 7358 80
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Torness Inverness-shire

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No.	HAS110605
Site Code	HAS-TRS11
Client	M Somerville
Planning Ref	10/02654/FUL
OASIS	highland4-104704
O S Grid ref	NH 5792 2720
Date/ revision	05/07/2011
Authors	Emma Malone and John Wood

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken ahead of construction of a house at Torness, Inverness-shire, in response to a planning condition. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were recorded.

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Fieldwork was carried out by Emma Malone ; the report was produced and edited by John Wood . Background mapping has been reproduced by permission of the Ordnance Survey under Licence 100043217. Historic maps have been reproduced courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.

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Location

The site is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference NH 5792 2720 at a height of about 205m above sea level.

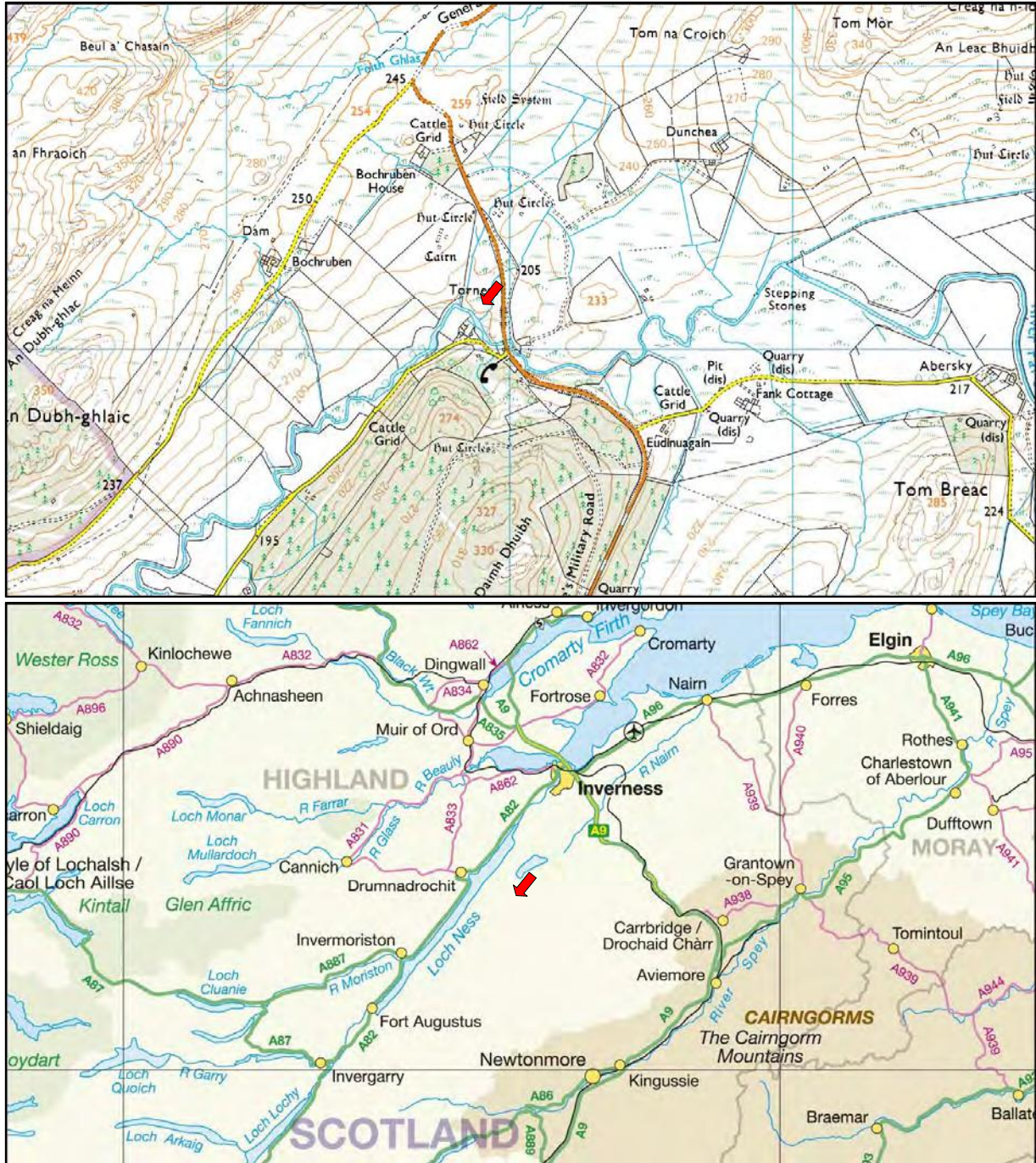


Figure 1 Site location

Introduction

A programme of archaeological work was undertaken by Highland Archaeology Services Ltd in response to a planning requirement at Torness, Inverness-shire. The purpose was to identify and record the nature and extent of archaeological features that might be affected by the development, and to propose mitigation measures where necessary.

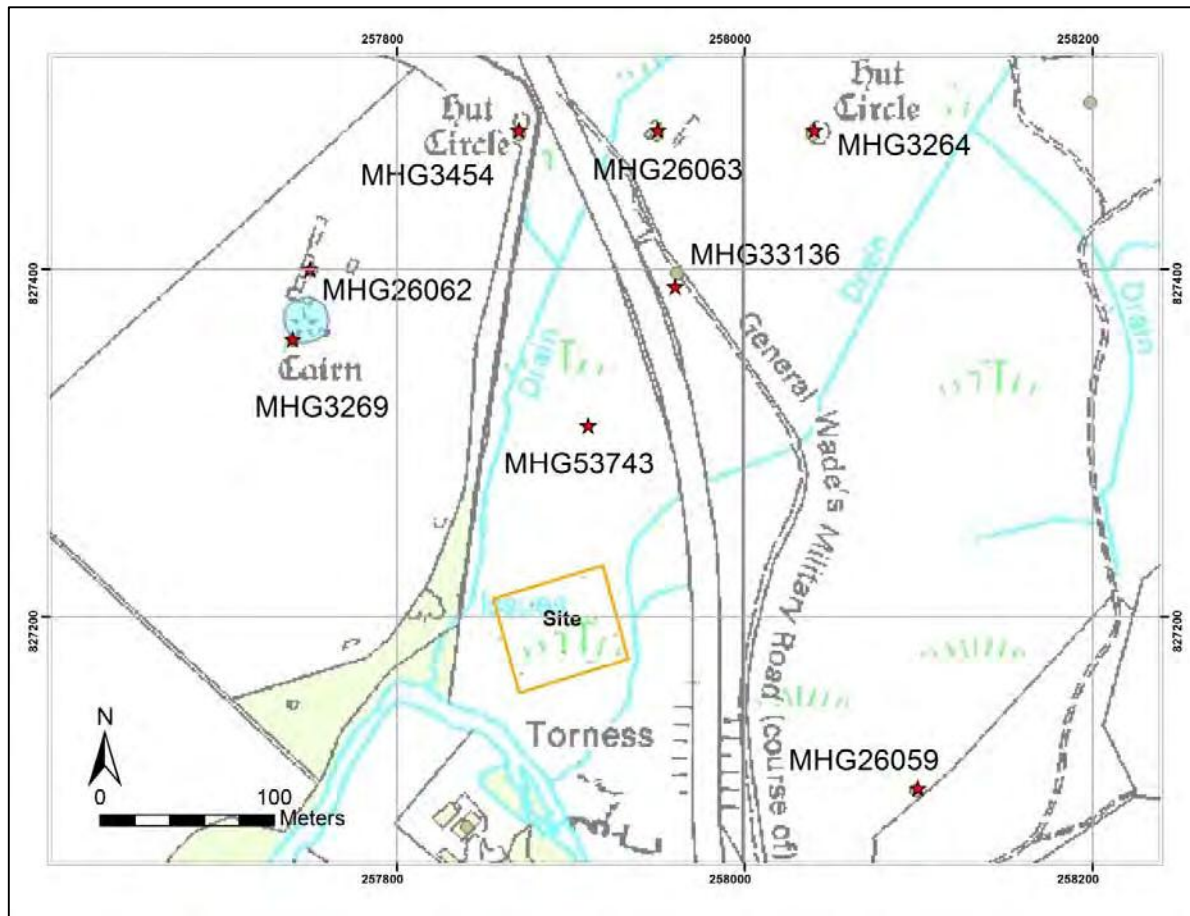


Figure 2 Recorded archaeological sites in the area

Archaeology and policy background

Archaeological mitigation was requested in this case because there was considered to be potential for finds or features of interest to be affected by construction work.

The planning and policy framework includes the Highland Council's *Structure Plan*¹, and the Scottish Government's *Scottish Planning Policy SPP 23: Planning and the Historic Environment* (2008)². The

¹ <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/structureplan/thehighlandstructureplan.htm>

fundamental principles underpinning the above policies are set out in *Passed to the Future: Historic Scotland's Policy for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2002)³ and the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS 1999).⁴

Recorded sites in the immediate area are shown in Figure 2 above. References are to Highland Council Historic Environment Records (HHER). None of these are shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch to 1 mile (1:10560) map surveyed in 1871 (see Figure 3 below)

MHG26059 Enclosure **NH 5810 2710** *Approx. 220m ESE of the site*

There are no details recorded for this feature.

MHG26062 Farm **NH 5775 2740** *Approx. 250m NW of the site*

Remains of a former farmstead, lying within the scheduled area of Cairn MHG 3269 (see below)

MHG26063 Farm **NH 5795 2748** *Approx. 290m N of the site*

Remains of a farmstead, and possible kiln.

MHG3264 Hut circle **NH 5804 2748** *Approx. 318m NNE of the site*

On a recently cultivated rise is a circular, stone-walled hut measuring c. 11.0m in diameter between the centres of a wall spread c. 3.0m all round.

MHG3269 Cairn **NH 5774 2736** *Approx. 220m NW of the site*

Prominently situated on a rise, is a Neolithic or early Bronze Age burial cairn, robbed to provide material for an adjacent ruined farmstead. c.15.0m diameter ; 2.3m maximum height, composed of water worn stones

MHG33136 Section of General Wades Road **NH 5796 2739** *Approx. 110m E of the site at its nearest point.*

A section of General Wade's Military Road that detours from the modern B862. This section is still very visible in the ground.

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/10/28135841/0>

³ www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/pasttofuture.pdf

⁴ <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

MHG3454 Hut circle**NH 5787 2748 Approx. 285m N of the site**

At the edge of modern cultivation, a denuded, stone-walled hut c 9.0m diameter between the centres of a wall spread to c 2.5m all round. There is no trace of a field system.

MHG53743 Possible postholes**NH 5791 2731 Approx. 285m N of the site**

A number of possible postholes were recorded during archaeological evaluation. Fragments of slag were found in some features.



Figure 3 Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6 inch map, surveyed 1871

(Inverness-shire (Mainland) Sheet XXX. Extract, not reproduced to scale. Courtesy of National Library of Scotland)

Programme

The evaluation was carried out on 15 June 2011 according to the Written Scheme of Investigation agreed by all parties in May 2011⁵, although changes to the trench layout proved necessary on site owing to the presence of rock outcrops and wet areas. Nine trenches, each 20m x 1.5m were opened as shown in Figure 4 below.

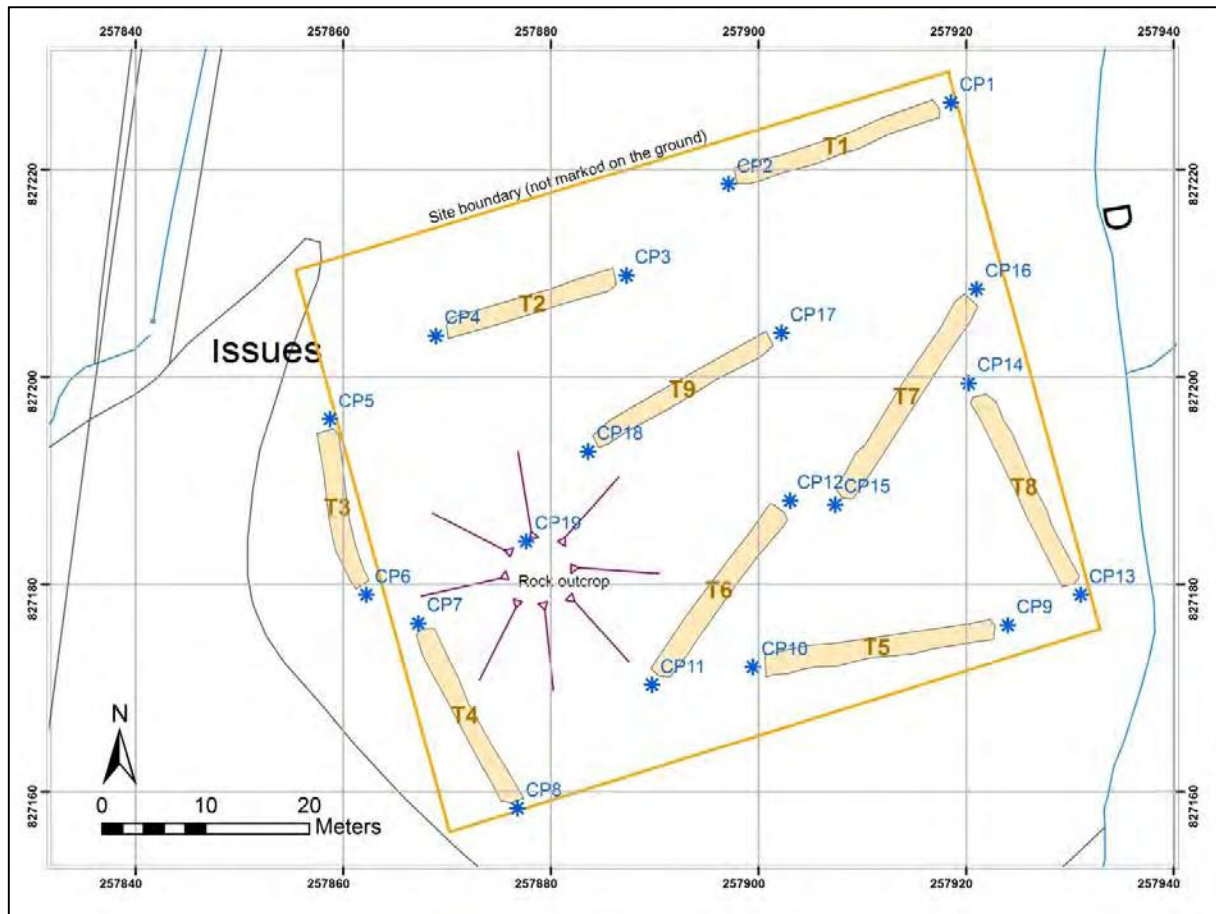


Figure 4 Trench layout and camera points (photo locations)

Results

The weather was sunny and mild (18° c.) The trenches were excavated to the base of the topsoil, which was found to be a rich, mid-brown, silty loam ranging from 0.10m – 0.90m depth.

The subsoil revealed by excavation ranged from a pale grey silty clay with dark grey mottling at the eastern, boggy site extremity, to mid yellow and orange mottled sand with frequent bedrock outcrops and

⁵ Wood J, 2011 *Land to N of Bridge Cottage, Torness: Proposed Archaeological Evaluation: Written Scheme of Investigation* Highland Archaeology Services Report no. HAS110503, Cromarty

decayed sandstone inclusions elsewhere. The subsoil throughout the site bore witness to sporadic patches of scrub burning and vegetation root staining.

No archaeological features were recorded.

Conclusions and Recommendations

No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were found. There are no recommendations for further archaeological work on this site.

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1 Previously recorded features

HHER	Name	Type	NGR	Description	Status
MHG26059	Torness	Enclosure	NH 5810 2710	No details	
MHG26062	Torness	Farm	NH 5775 2740	Farmstead	SAM 11800: Torness, cairn 305m NNW of
MHG26063	Torness	Farm	NH 5795 2748	Farmstead, Kiln (Possible)	
MHG3264	Torness	Hut circle	NH 5804 2748	At NH 5803 2748 on a recently cultivated rise is a circular, stone-walled hut measuring c. 11.0m in diameter between the centres of a wall spread c. 3.0m all round.	
MHG3269	Torness	Cairn	NH 5774 2736	Prominently situated on a rise, is a cairn robbed to provide material for an adjacent ruined farmstead. c.15.0m diameter ; 2.3m maximum height, composed of water worn stones	
MHG33136	Section of General Wades Road Near Torness	Road	NH 5796 2739	Section of General Wade's road that detours from the modern B862. This section is still very visible in the ground and can be travelled through the field it is in.	

HHER	Name	Type	NGR	Description	Status
MHG3454	Torness	Hut circle	NH 5787 2748	At the edge of modern cultivation, a denuded, stone-walled hut c 9.0m diameter between the centres of a wall spread to c 2.5m all round. There is no trace of a field system.	SAM 11800: Torness, cairn 305m NNW of
MHG53743	Scattered prehistoric settlement features, Abersky, Torness	Post-holes	NH 5791 2731	A number of possible postholes were recorded during archaeological evaluation. These were tentatively assigned a prehistoric date. Fragments of slag was found in some features.	

Table 2 Trenches

Trench no.	Length	Width	Depth (max)	Depth (min)	Oriented	Date excavated
1	20m	1.5m	0.70m	0.42m	WSW-ENE	15/06/2011
2	20m	1.5m	0.44m	0.28m	WSW-ENE	15/06/2011
3	20m	1.5m	0.60m	0.35m	NNW-SSE	15/06/2011
4	20m	1.5m	0.30m	0.20m	NNW-SSE	15/06/2011
5	20m	1.5m	0.70m	0.30m	WSW-ENE	15/06/2011
6	20m	1.5m	0.70m	0.25m	NE-SW	15/06/2011
7	20m	1.5m	0.40m	0.15m	NE-SW	15/06/2011
8	20m	1.5m	0.25m	0.15m	NNW-SSE	15/06/2011
9	20m	1.5m	0.30m	0.20m	WSW-ENE	15/06/2011

Table 3 Photographs

Photo no.	Camera Point (see Fig 4)	Trench no.	Direction	Description	Date
001	1	1	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
002	1	1	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
003	2	1	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
004	2	1	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
005	3	2	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
006	3	2	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
007	4	2	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
008	4	2	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011

Photo no.	Camera Point (see Fig 4)	Trench no.	Direction	Description	Date
009	5	3	SE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
010	5	3	SE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
011	5	----	NW	Showing sharp gradient at NW boundary post	15/06/2011
012	6	3	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
013	6	3	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
014	7	4	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
015	7	4	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
016	8	4	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
017	8	4	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
018	9	5	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
019	9	5	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
020	10	5	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
021	10	5	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
022	11	6	N	Open trench view	15/06/2011
023	11	6	N	Open trench view	15/06/2011
024	12	6	S	Open trench view	15/06/2011
025	12	6	S	Open trench view	15/06/2011
026	13	7	NE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
027	13	7	NE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
028	14	7	SW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
029	14	7	SW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
030	15	8	SE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
031	15	8	SE	Open trench view	15/06/2011
032	16	8	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
033	16	8	NW	Open trench view	15/06/2011
034	17	9	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
035	17	9	W	Open trench view	15/06/2011
036	18	9	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
037	18	9	E	Open trench view	15/06/2011
038	19	---	NE	Panoramic view	15/06/2011
039	19	---	SE	Panoramic view	15/06/2011
040	19	---	SW	Panoramic view	15/06/2011
041	19	---	NW	Panoramic view	15/06/2011
042	---	---	S	Overview of site	15/06/2011

Photograph locations are shown on Figure 4 above.



Plate 1 Trench 1 View E



Plate 2 Trench 2 View W



Plate 3 Trench 3 View NW



Plate 4 Trench 4 View E



Plate 5 Trench 5 View E



Plate 6 Trench 6 View N



Plate 7 Trench 7 View SW



Plate 8 Trench 8 View SE



Plate 9 Trench 9 View E