



Highland Archaeology Services Ltd

Bringing the Past and Future Together

Chapel Street, Inverness



Archaeological Watching Brief



CONTRACTORS HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT SCHEME
Accredited Contractor
www.chas.gov.uk

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

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

Archaeological Watching Brief

Chapel Street, Inverness

Report No.	HAS100202
Site Code	HAS-ICS10
Client	John Fraser & Son
Planning Ref	09/00737/FULIN
Date/ revision	26/02/2010
Author	John Wood

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Chapel St, Inverness, in response to a planning condition. No archaeological features or significant artefacts were recorded.

Contents

Aims and objectives.....	3
Location	3
Introduction.....	5
Archaeology and policy background	5
Programme.....	6
1. Desk Based Assessment.....	6
2. Watching Brief.....	7
Table of Photographs	9

Illustrations

Figure 1 Site location.....	4
Figure 2 Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:500 scale map, surveyed 1867-8	6
Plate 1 (Top) view NE, site cleared; (Bottom) View SE showing foundation trenches	8
Aerial photograph	11

Acknowledgements

Background mapping has been reproduced by permission of the Ordnance Survey under Licence 100043217. The aerial photograph on p.11 is courtesy of getmapping.com. The site plan in Figure 1 was kindly supplied by the client.

Aims and objectives

- To minimise any possible delay or cost to the development by anticipating archaeological requirements as far as possible, timetabling and integrating archaeological recording work with the project, and dealing with any issues arising quickly and efficiently.
- To determine as far as possible the character, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeologically significant remains; and to preserve these where possible and record where necessary in line with national and local policies and standards.
- To ensure that any artefacts or human remains are dealt with in accordance with legal requirements and current Historic Scotland policy guidance.

Location

The site lies between Chapel Street and Friars Street Inverness, at about 7m above sea level at OS grid reference NH 6643 4559.

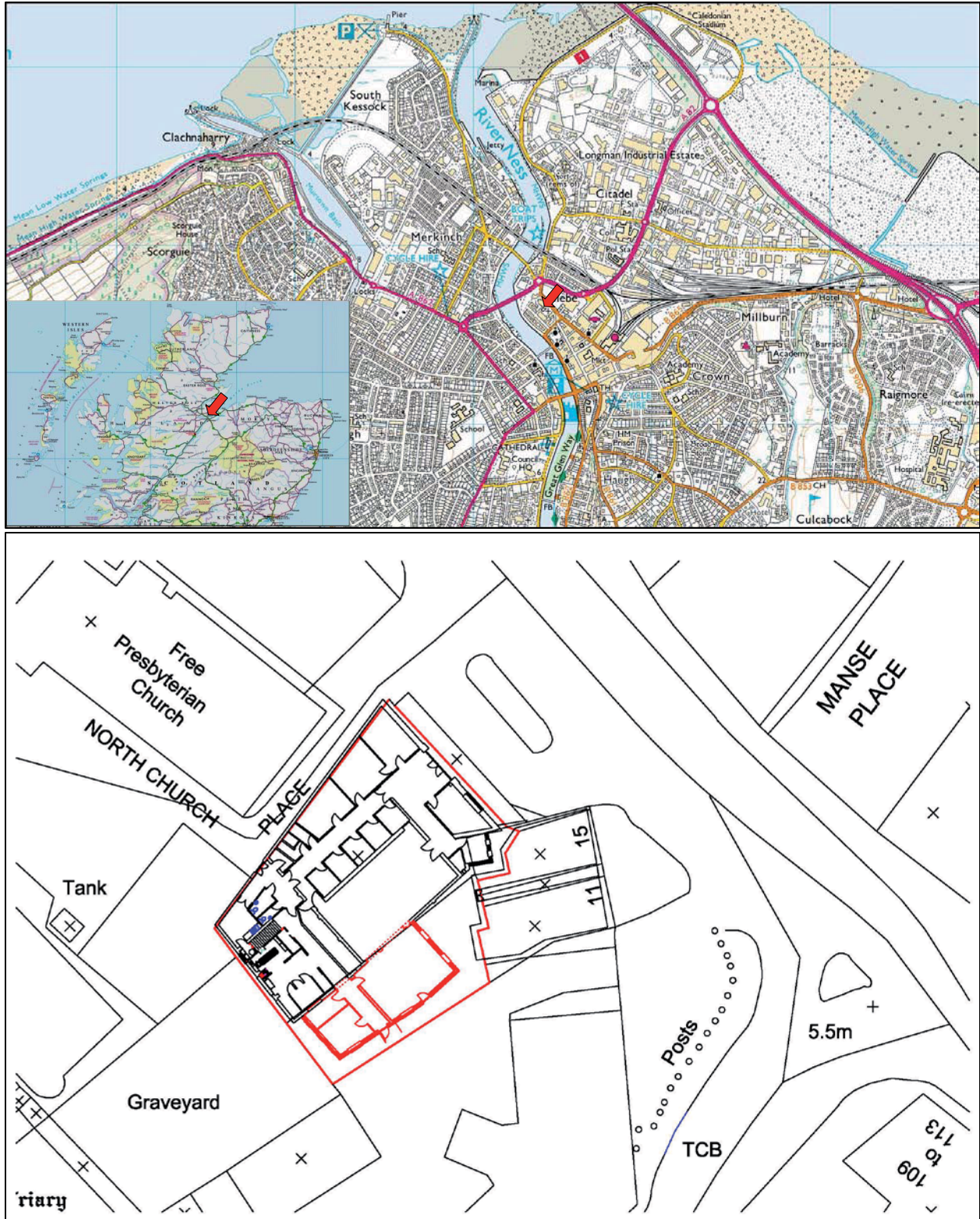


Figure 1 Site location

Introduction

A programme of archaeological work was undertaken by John Wood of Highland Archaeology Services Ltd in response to a planning condition at Chapel St., Inverness. It included archaeological mitigation and recording in line with the Scottish Government's current planning policies and advice. The purpose was to identify and record the nature and extent of any archaeological features revealed or affected by the intended development.

Archaeology and policy background

Archaeological fieldwork was requested in this case because there was considered to be potential for finds or features of interest to be discovered during site works. Although no archaeological finds or features had been recorded within the site itself, the site lies in an area of sensitivity for archaeology.

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 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

1

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

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>



Figure 2 Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:500 scale map, surveyed 1867-8
Courtesy of National Library of Scotland. Arrow shows approximate position of site. Not reproduced to scale.

Programme

1. Desk Based Assessment

Relevant archaeological / historical records, maps and aerial photographs were checked as required.

The graveyard to the SW of the development is a scheduled monument. It was the site of the medieval Blackfriars, believed to have been demolished by Oliver Cromwell in the mid 17th c.⁵

⁵ Historic Environment Record: MHG45288; NMRS: NH64NE12 ; SAM 6402

According to W R Macdonald (1902), ‘Traditionally, the Dominicans or Black Friars, and the Franciscans or Grey Friars had each an establishment here but it was destroyed by Cromwell and the stones carried off for the erection of a citadel at the north of the town. The only remains is the shaft of one of the columns which supported the church which traditionally was connected with the Grey Friars Monastery occupying the space now used as a burial ground.’ However the Old Statistical Account (1793) is clear that ‘in 1233, King Alexander II founded a convent at Inverness not of Franciscans or Grey Friars as erroneously handed down by oral tradition, but of Dominicans or Black Friars’. The Ordnance Survey visited in April 1960 and found that ‘All that remains of the Black Friars' Monastery is an octagonal column of ashlar masonry 0.7 m in diameter with the remains of the springing of an arch 2.4m above ground level. The total height of the column is c. 3.5m. ‘.

The scheduled area has simply been drawn along the modern graveyard boundary and includes the site boundary wall. No archaeological investigation has been carried out there, so the original site limit is not known. Historic Scotland were consulted and care was then taken to keep excavations back from the wall, which was not affected.

In 1824, a mid-14th c. hoard containing upwards of 3000 silver pennies, was found at a depth of about 300mm ‘close by’ Greyfriars (Blackfriars) churchyard, Inverness, although the exact site is not recorded. The hoard included a mixture of English and Scottish coins. According to the records, ‘The earthenware jar containing the hoard was broken at the time of finding and some of the coins lost.’⁶

The NE edge of the site is bordered by No 11 Chapel Street. This is also recorded on the Highland Historic Environment Record but it is not a listed building and there are no details.⁷

The Ordnance Survey 1:500 scale map of 1867-8 shows this site as garden ground, which coincides with the evidence as excavated.

2. Watching Brief

The footprint of the new building was excavated in two spits to the first soil change below the surface material using a flat-bladed ditching bucket on the rear arm of a back-acting mechanical excavator under the supervision of the present writer. The relevant level was inspected by the archaeologist for signs of in situ archaeology.

There was a considerable depth of topsoil over the whole area. This had been disturbed repeatedly and included 19th and 20th c. bottles and disarticulated animal bones (small horse). In the centre of the site, the base of one rectangular feature was noted in the subsoil approximately 50mm deep, apparently cut from a high level. This contained the same topsoil as elsewhere, could not be identified within the topsoil level and no datable artefacts. It was interpreted as a modern pit.

Despite the disturbance it was clear from examining the foundation trenches that the natural subsoil had been reached. There was no evidence that this area had been part of the Friary complex.

No human remains were found. No archaeological excavation was undertaken as part of this work beyond that necessary to achieve the objectives above.

⁶Historic Environment Record: MHG3828; NMRS: NH64NE35

⁷ Historic Environment Record: MHG3724; NMRS: NH64NE59



Plate 1 (Top) view NE, site cleared; (Bottom) View SE showing foundation trenches

Table of Photographs

Photo No	Camera Pt	Direction (facing)	Date	Taken by	Subject / Comments
ICS10 036	1	ENE	18/02/2010	JW	First spit clearance virtually complete
ICS10 037	2	NNE	18/02/2010	JW	First spit clearance virtually complete
ICS10 038	3	W	18/02/2010	JW	First spit clearance virtually complete
ICS10 039	4	SW	18/02/2010	JW	First spit clearance virtually complete
ICS10 040	5	SW	18/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 041	6	W	18/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 042	7	W	18/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth (Zoom)
ICS10 043	7	W	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 044	5	SE	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 045	6	NW	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 046	6	N	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 047	6	W	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 048	8	SW	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 049	9	NE	19/02/2010	JW	Feature 1
ICS10 050	10	SW	19/02/2010	JW	Feature 1
ICS10 051	11	NE	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 052	11	NE	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 053	12	NE	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10 054	13	NE	19/02/2010	JW	Second spit clearance to full depth
ICS10	2	WSW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches

Photo No	Camera Pt	Direction (facing)	Date	Taken by	Subject / Comments
055					
ICS10 056	6	WSW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 057	6	NW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 058	13	NE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 059	13	NW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 060	13	NE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 061	12	NE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 062	12	SSE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 063	14	NE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 064	14	E	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 065	15	E	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 066	15	SE	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 067	15	S	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 068	15	SW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 069	15	W	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 070	2	SW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches
ICS10 071	2	NW	22/02/2010	JW	Foundation trenches

