

**Part II : Discussion of the Aerial photograph evidence relating to Iron Age settlement**

**Kinchyle and Strath Dores in the Iron Age**

Kinchyle Farm lies in the immediate vicinity of six known archaeological sites including cropmarks (Gaz 1 - Gazetteer Appendix IV) interpreted as the buried remains of at least two large round houses. When assessing the significance of this site particular attention was given to related or similar cropmark sites, several of which were discovered in the Inverness, Nairn and Easter Ross areas especially during summer flying in 1995 and 1996. It was also noted that there were several aspects similar to the ground plans of recently excavated buildings at Culduthel Farm (Gaz 11) described as Roundhouses and at Culduthel Mains (Gaz 13) described as Palisaded Enclosure, Pit and Ring Ditch House

There are six related cropmark sites in the nearby area:

- The cropmarks at Kinchyle (Gaz 1 - Photograph 13, Appendix I) are described as an Enclosure, Pit circle and Roundhouse. The circular enclosure is c 16-18 m diameter with a pit circle inside. Another pit circle is visible to the SE. They are interpreted as possibly a number of timber round houses.
- At Darris (Gaz 2) the most distinct feature among cropmarks is a half circular feature c. 10-15 m diameter. There are also a number of pits and linear features.
- At Scaniport Wood (Gaz 3) are cropmarks of a circular Enclosure and Pit Circle - the enclosure is c.14 m diameter, within it is a pit circle c.6 m diameter - also interpreted as a palisaded enclosure and round house.
- At Scaniport (Gaz 4) are cropmarks of a Roundhouse and pit-alignments - the roundhouse is c.12 m diameter, with pits and at least three pit-alignments. Among other indeterminate cropmarks is a roughly crescentic mark which may represent a roundhouse.
- At Scaniport Wood (Gaz 5) cropmarks of a palisaded enclosure and round house
- At Balmore (Gaz 6) a range of cropmarks include linear and possible circular features.

In order to better understand and evaluate the Kinchyle cropmarks, the search was widened to locate and compare cropmark roundhouse sites in the Highland area. At this stage of the investigation it became clear that not only was this an important and under-researched class of monument, but that its numbers and distribution may have been confused over the years by a lack of standardised interpretation and terminology. For example, the local cropmark sites above have been variously described as Enclosure, Pit Circle, Roundhouse (Round house) and Palisaded Enclosure.

## **Iron Age Roundhouses in Scotland**

### **The Atlantic Scottish Iron Age Roundhouse**

Until fairly recently most of the settlement research into the Scottish Iron Age was directed towards the impressive stone built remains of the Atlantic Scottish Iron Age, the popular symbol of which is the broch tower, but the group also includes the contemporary (less monumental and elaborate but structurally similar) roundhouses and wheelhouses which have often been regarded as the fortified homes of chiefs and thus unrepresentative of the Iron Age in Britain as a whole. However, recent research has revised many assumptions about Atlantic roundhouses and their role in settlement to consider them as a local adaptations in a society operating within the mainstream of Scottish Iron Age culture.

Large, round buildings were typical of Iron Age domestic architecture throughout Scotland and the timber roundhouses (or Post-ring structures or Ring-ditch buildings) of eastern and southern Scotland would probably have been no less monumental, if less durable, than their stone built Atlantic roundhouse equivalents. In the 1980s and 90s there was increased survey and excavation on plough truncated sites, most of which appeared as cropmarks, to provide the lowlands with a complimentary settlement picture to that in the uplands.

### **The Northeast Scottish Iron Age Roundhouse**

Large wooden roundhouses in the east were first identified and excavated in East Lothian and Fife, then recognised in Aberdeenshire and are now shown to extend north along the rich coastal lowlands of Moray, Nairn, Inverness, Easter Ross and the Dornoch Firth (Alexander 1999). Over such a large area there is inevitably a diversity in structural form represented by circular patterns of post-holes, post-rings and/or ring-grooves. While these variations in style may prove to be significant, generally these is a pattern of substantial roofed Iron Age roundhouses with conical thatched roofs, supported on rings of posts and with a stone or turf outer wall. Inside there would have been a hearth, and the space may have been divided up radially into areas for cooking, sleeping, crafts and sometimes animals. It is possible that some of the larger roundhouses may have had an upper storey for the human occupants, with animals kept on the ground floor.

Different types of roundhouse might be chronologically distinct, but dating, until recently, relied on often scarce artefacts and on attempts at structural typology. More recent excavated examples include: Bannockburn (Rideout 1996) and the double post-ring structure c.18 m diameter at Ironshill East, Angus (McGill 2003), both located centrally within palisaded 'homestead' enclosures; Candle Hill (Cameron 1999), Romancamp Gate (Barclay 1993) and Wardend of Durris (Russell-White 1995).

## **Roundhouses in the Highlands**

A search for Highland Roundhouse/Round House sites in the HCSMR and NMRS was found to be disappointing. The revised RCAHMS thesaurus of site types defines Roundhouse and its related terms as follows:

- Roundhouse - A circular or sub-circular dwelling, largely timber-built, although it may have a stone or earth wall base.
- Ring Ditch House - A roundhouse with an internal ditch, which may be visible on the ground surface.
- Ring Grove House - A roundhouse, the upright posts of which stood in a penannular bedding trench which may be visible on the ground as a shallow groove. The use of ring-groove wall foundations is a construction device and cannot be used to define a particular building style or function. The technique is not chronologically sensitive and can be traced back to unenclosed settlements of the middle second millennium BC.
- Hut Circle - A low, circular or oval bank of turf, earth or stone, which represents the remains of a roundhouse of later prehistoric date.
- Pit Circle - A circular or sub-circular arrangement of pits thought to have held timber posts.

A search for these terms (excluding hut circle) describing sites in the Highlands in the HCSMR and NMRS resulted in a variety of sites with similarities to Kinchyle, and for good measure also used the terms Homestead, Palisaded Enclosure and Unenclosed Settlement :

- The closest and most important (and widely publicised) is at Culduthel Farm (Gaz 11) where part of a well preserved iron age settlement containing 17 round houses has been recently excavated. The houses had bases of circular turf walls built round an internal post-ring, and most had an entrance porch facing NE. The outer wall of two, the larger 20 m across, stood in a ring-groove with a stone-faced turf wall laced with timbers. Many pits were well over 1.5 m deep, with massive stones for packing posts that may have had two storeys. Several houses contained burnt timbers and the remains of plank-floors, but none appeared to have domestic hearths. The scarcity of domestic refuse and evidence for working glass and metals suggest an industrial zone within a regional seat of power.
- At Old Town Of Leys, Culduthel (Gaz 12) are cropmarks of a Palisaded Enclosure .
- At Culduthel Mains (Gaz 13 - Photograph 14, Appendix I) are a Palisaded Enclosure, Pit and Ring Ditch House. 128 archaeological features recorded, most were fire-pits or cooking pits containing heated stones, charcoal and occasionally structural stonework forming a windbreak. A partial and truncated ring-ditch was found, and a stretch of palisade trench containing both pottery and flint (otherwise artefacts were few).
- At Stoneyfield House, Seafield West (Gaz 14 - Photograph 20, Appendix I) are a Ring Ditch, Ring Groove House and Settlement. An evaluation on a cropmark identified an Iron Age settlement with several ring-groove structures with occupation deposits, post

## **Archaeological Evaluation at Kinchyle Farm, Scaniport, Inverness - Highland Heritage**

pits and hearths. Another trench exposed the almost complete circuit of a ring-groove structure c 22 m diameter with least one inner ring of post-holes concentrically c 4.5 m from this ring-groove. A second ring-ditch was found to the NE of the trench and the outlines of at least three complete timber roundhouses were defined by post-holes. A later iron-smelting hearth overlay part of one structure. Immediately to the W of the ring-groove, an AP showed evidence of a second circular feature with two concentric but incomplete rings. Excavation revealed this to be a spread of habitation deposit.

- At Lonnie farmhouse (Gaz 15 - Photograph 17, Appendix I) Ring-ditch and Pit-circle of a possible unenclosed settlement, comprising a ring-ditch c.13 m diameter containing a ring of pits; an arc of a possible second ring-ditch; and a pit-circle. Also two pit-circles, each surrounded by a ring-ditch. Additional cropmarks suggest an unenclosed settlement with at least three round houses each comprising of a ring-ditch enclosing a pit-circle, with an internal diameter of c.15 m. One has a broad outer ditch, while the other two have narrow arcs of ditch surrounding the pit-circle. A number of pits are scattered around. The remains of a chambered cairn and the cropmarks of two enclosures have been recorded in the surrounding area.
- At Gollanfield (Gaz 16 - Photograph 18, Appendix I) are cropmarks of a circular homestead c. 20 m diameter; possibly containing a timber house. Outside is a pit-circle c.12 m diameter, possibly the remains of a timber house. An arc of ditch and a number of pits are also visible, possibly another pit-circles. Also interpreted as an unenclosed settlement with round houses, pit-circles and pits or a palisaded enclosure.
- At Pityoulish (Gaz 17 - Photograph 19, Appendix I) the cropmarks of a Roundhouse (c.15-18 m diameter) may have a circular pit-defined structure within the interior. A crescentic feature at its NW side, some 30m long, may be a part of the round house or represent a possible souterrain. A roughly circular line of at least seven large pits, each about 2-3m in diameter, surround the round house, and a further cluster of at least five pits is visible c.30 m to the SW. There are other indeterminate cropmarks in the field.
- At Gilchrist (Gaz 18 - Photograph 15, Appendix I) a cropmark of what is probably a circular Enclosure, Pit, Rig and Furrow and Roundhouse. The enclosure is c. 20 m diameter within a narrow ditch and there appears to be a large pit to the NW of it. Also a circular ditched enclosure c 25m in diameter, with smaller ring of post-holes adjoining to the W; and a circular cropmark (internal diameter c.12-15 m) about 30 m SE of the enclosure.
- At Ballindoun (Gaz 19 - Photograph 16, Appendix I) cropmarks of: at least two palisaded enclosures and a round house. The larger enclosure is roughly circular with an internal diameter of c.50-55 m and the smaller a diameter of c.30 m. In the area enclosed by these enclosures is a round house (internal diameter c.12-15 m) defined by a pit-circle.
- At Tom Na Moine (Gaz 20) Cairnfield, Hut Circle, Ring Ditch House. A group of three hut-circles and a possible ring-ditch house which measures c.11 m diameter over a shallow ditch up to 2.7 m wide. A low external bank is on the E and an entrance on the N.

## **The Kinchyle Roundhouse**

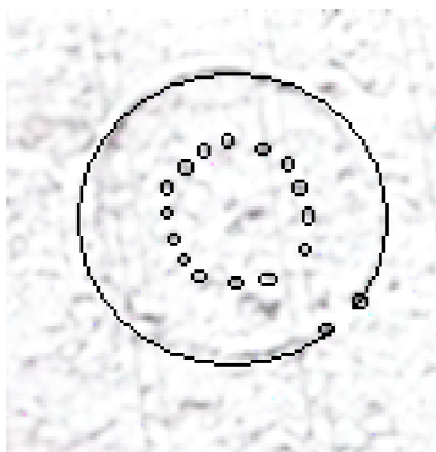
At Kinchyle a series of oblique APs are centred on the cropmarks of a circular enclosure c. 16-18 m in diameter with a pit circle inside. Another pit circle is visible to the SE. These are interpreted as possibly circular timber roundhouses typical of those found in the Northeastern zone of the Scottish Iron Age.



**Figure 6** : enlargement of circular cropmark viewed from the E, shown on RCAHMS oblique AP no. C72 925 (copy in Appendix II)



**Figure 7**: a simple rectification of the digital oblique image to illustrate the ground plan

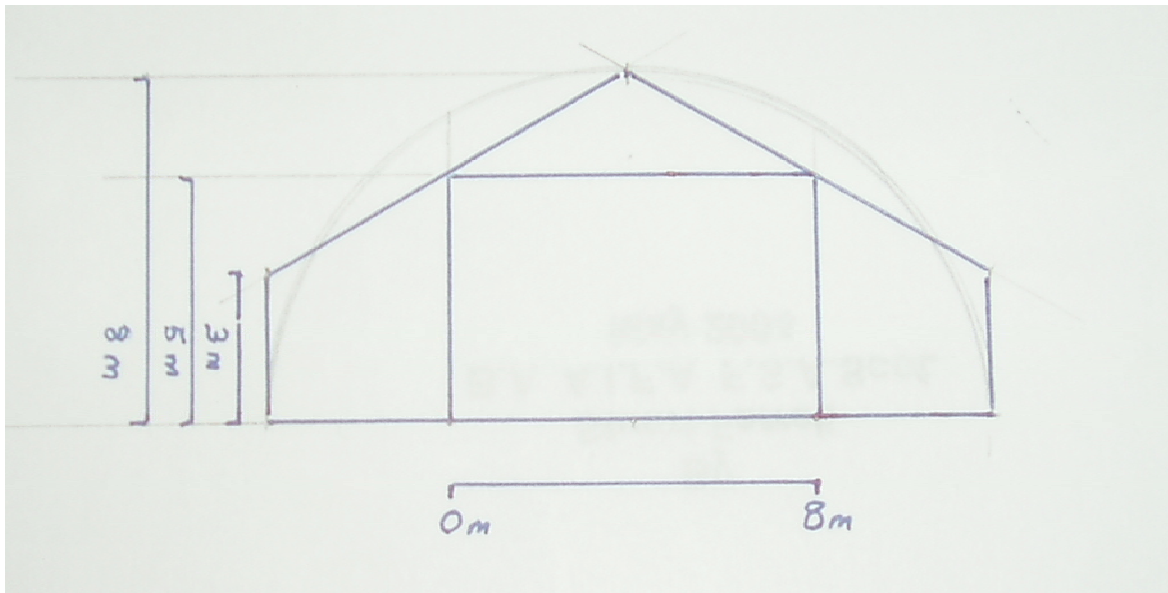


**Figure 8**: interpretative plan of the cropmark - identifying an inner (approximate) circle of 15 pits within a well defined circular groove ditch with a single gap to the east defined by two pits. There are 3 less well defined possible pits close to the centre of the circle. The diameter of the inner circle of pits appears to be half that of the outer groove ditch. The interval between the two pits radially opposite the gap in the outer ditch appears to be larger than the others (i.e. no symmetrical 16th pit).

## Archaeological Evaluation at Kinchyle Farm, Scaniport, Inverness - Highland Heritage

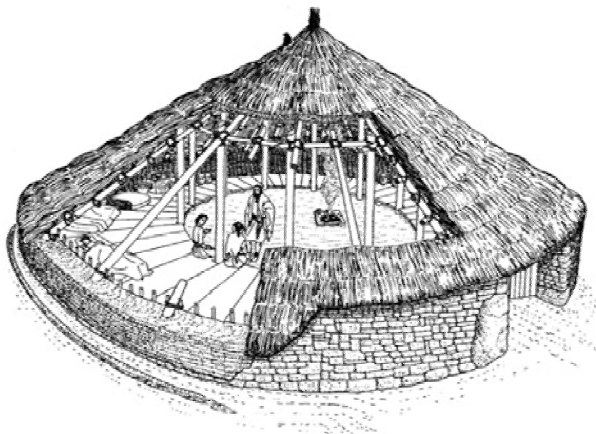
The structure of a roundhouse with this ground plan remains conjectural. The outer ring-ditch may be the foundation of roof beams set at 45 degrees and supported by the inner circle of posts as at Candle Hill, Aberdeenshire (Cameron 1999) where it was estimated that if the outer wall was 1 m high set within the ring-groove with a roof angle of 45 degrees, the apex of the roof would have been about 8.5 m high and possibly support a second floor. As at Kinchyle the internal space would have been constrained by the number of posts.

My personal view is that at the Kinchyle roundhouse the main weight of the roof beams was taken and balanced at their centre by the inner circle of posts and were secured at the centre of the circle - this explains why the pit-circle is set at half the radius. The resulting impressive structure (figure 9) would have a stable interlocking framework of 8 'A-frames' set at 30 degrees given lateral strength by cross-ties and an outer wooden curtain wall.



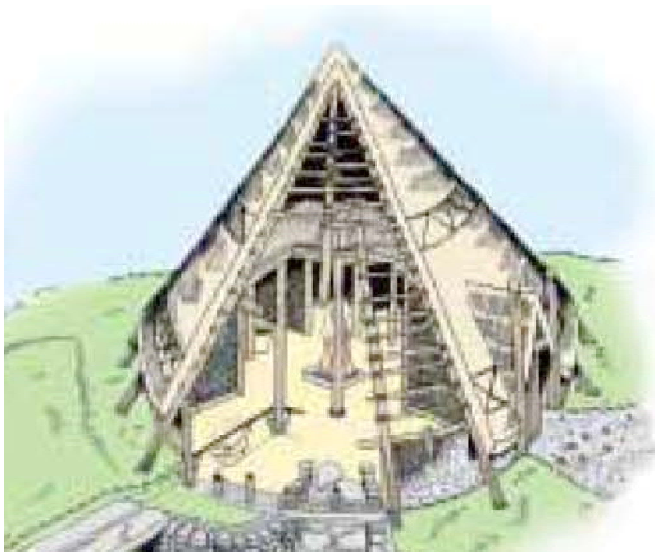
**Figure 9** : a possible roundhouse structure as suggested by ground plan figure 8. This sketch shows a maximum apex of 8 m equal to the plan radius, resulting in an outer wall height of 3 m. A lower apex of 6 m would require an outer wall height of 1 m. The total area is c.200 sq m and the central area is 50 sq m. This structural suggests there was ample scope for an upper floor where there would be 1-3 m headroom in the central 4 m diameter (12.5 sq m) floor space.

**The entrance of Kinchyle Roundhouse**



The single entrance is marked by two pits which appear similar to those of the interior pit-circle, and so presumably contained similar sized posts

**Figure 10** : while the roundhouse depicted here (by Historic Scotland) may be about the same size and structurally similar to Kinchyle, the single entrance (marked by large stones) would not require substantial posts.



**Figure 11** : the roundhouse depicted here may be about the same size as Kinchyle, but is not structurally similar (it would require an external pit-circle) however the single impressive entrance of substantial posts suggests an example for Kinchyle.



**Figure 12** : this roundhouse's (reconstructed at Glastonbury) spectacular roof and entrance would show the same floor plan as at Kinchyle. Such workmanship would be well within the capabilities of the Iron Age occupants, complementing the equally impressive stonework of the Atlantic west.

The construction of ostentatious roundhouse entrances could indicate that the occupants were of enhanced status within a local context, but these features could equally have been symbolic boundaries or elements of display

### **Wealth and status of roundhouse settlements**

It is now believed that there were many roundhouse type buildings evenly spread both in the west and east of Scotland especially in the period from 200 BC to 200 AD. In the west they mostly occupied naturally-defined areas of cultivable land - some of which barely support three families during the pre-clearance late 18th century. It is likely that, instead of the homes of chiefs, Atlantic roundhouses were the standard dwellings during the Iron Age, and that each land holding family occupied one. Together with their uniformity this suggests little differentiation in status between Atlantic area households in the later Iron Age. Brochs and roundhouses can thus be regarded as variants of a recognisable Iron Age pattern, manifestations of a trend towards elaborate roundhouses that developed in more complex structural ways (in Orkney nucleated villages were beginning to be built around broch towers by the 1st century BC)(Armit 1998) while other areas, such as the northeast, developed hillforts and proto-towns.

As with the Atlantic Roundhouses, the impressive size of timber roundhouses, especially if they appear to be widely spaced single examples, tends to suggest that are exceptional structures expressing the status of a local social-political-tribal elite. For example : at Bennachie (near Inverurie, Aberdeenshire) a 20 m wide roundhouse was described as 'Royal' inhabited by society's elite; and that Culduthel Farm was a very large and high-status site (Buchanan 2005). Yet there is no evidence in the limited artefact assemblage in either of these sites or else where to indicate that the occupants were of high status. It is more likely that their inhabitants were farmers growing a mixture of crops and raising animals, but any meaningful assessment of the wealth and status of a particular site can be only be investigated reliably within a more fully researched regional context.

The large roundhouses of the east (from a personal view) reflect a stable, well ordered and reasonably wealthy community that farmed the lowlands of eastern Scotland. The settlements are not defended - there are palisaded enclosures but these appear to be for farm management - so it also appears to have been peaceful and secure. This may be reflected in the development and distribution of hillforts in the east which, together with specialised settlements such as Culduthel, suggest a secure environment in which wealth can be accrued, traded and displayed.



Photograph 1 - view of site



Photograph 2 - Trench T1 from west



Photograph 3 - Trench 2



Photograph 4 - joining T1 and T2 as T2a



Photograph 5 - dark soil in area X-Y trench T1



Photograph 6 - general view of Trench T3 from south

Photograph 7 - sandy area T3a in trench T3



Photograph 8 - areas T3a and T3b



Photograph 9 - area T3b2



Photograph 10 - area T3b2



Photograph 11 - areas T3 - T3b - and feature T3c



Photograph 12 - feature T3c in trench T3



13 Kinchyle Farm C72925



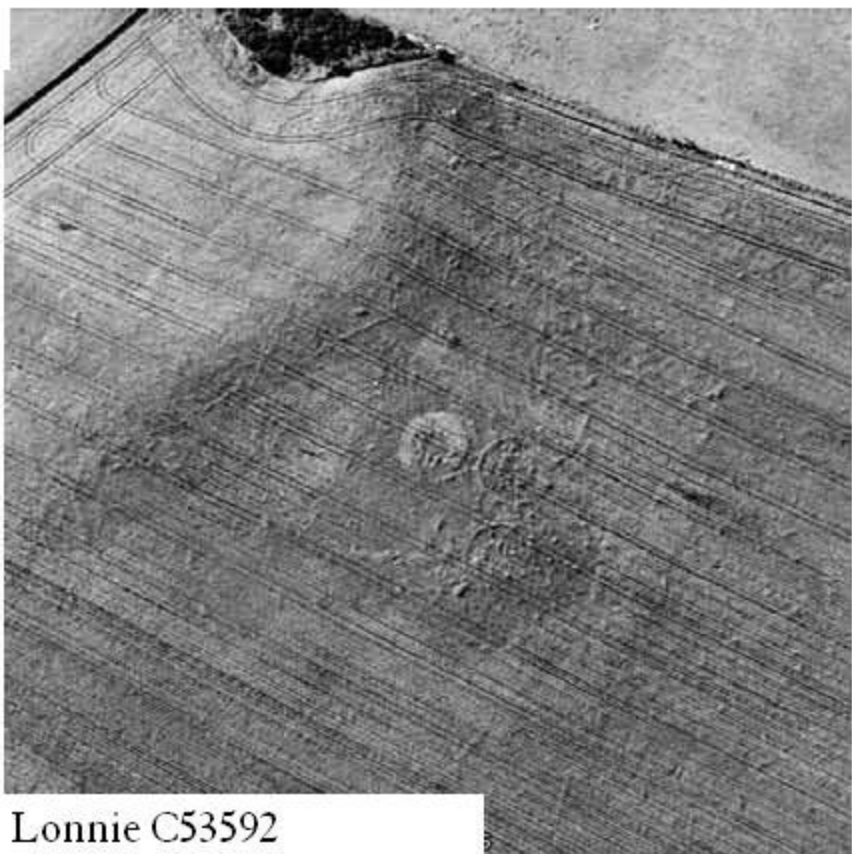
14 - Culduthel - Headland



15 - Gilchrist C52852



16 - Ballindoun C52958



17 Lonnie C53592



18 - Gollanfield C53624



19 - Pityoulish C52789



20 - Stonyfield House C52904

## Photograph Register of jpg digital images on HCSMR CD

jpg file no.	Subject	Report photo. no.	jpg file no.	Subject	Report photo. no.
kinchyle 001	trench T1		kinchyle 038	trench T3 deturfing complete	
kinchyle 002	trench T1	2	kinchyle 039	trench T3 deturfing complete	
kinchyle 003	trench T1		kinchyle 040	feature T3c	
kinchyle 004	trench T1		kinchyle 041	feature T3c	
kinchyle 005	trench T1		kinchyle 042	feature T3c	
kinchyle 006	trench T1		kinchyle 043	feature T3c	
kinchyle 007	trench T1		kinchyle 044	feature T3c	
kinchyle 008	surface of plot	1	kinchyle 045	dark stain in area T3b2	10
kinchyle 009	surface of plot		kinchyle 046	feature T3c	
kinchyle 010	trench T2		kinchyle 047	feature T3c	
kinchyle 011	trench T2	3	kinchyle 048	feature T3c	
kinchyle 012	trench T2		kinchyle 049	feature T3c	12
kinchyle 013	trench T2		kinchyle 050	feature T3c	
kinchyle 014	trench T2		kinchyle 051	feature T3c	
kinchyle 015	trench T2		kinchyle 052	feature T3c	
kinchyle 016	trenchs T1 & T2 join	4	kinchyle 053	area T3a	7
kinchyle 017	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 054	area T3a	
kinchyle 018	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 055	area T3a	
kinchyle 019	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 056	area T3a	
kinchyle 020	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 057	area T3a	11
kinchyle 021	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 058	area T3a	8
kinchyle 022	trench T3 deturfing		kinchyle 059	roundhouse location - E of telegraph pole	
kinchyle 023	dark area trenches T1 & T2	5	kinchyle 060	roundhouse location - E of telegraph pole	
kinchyle 024	dark area trenches T1 & T2		kinchyle 061	area T3	
kinchyle 025	dark area trenches T1 & T2		kinchyle 062	area T3b2	
kinchyle 026	dark area trenches T1 & T2		kinchyle 063	area T3b2	
kinchyle 027	dark area trenches T1 & T2		kinchyle 064	area T3a	6
kinchyle 028	trench T3 deturfing complete		kinchyle 065	area T3b2 cleaned	
kinchyle 029	trench T3 deturfing complete		kinchyle 066	area T3b2 cleaned	
kinchyle 030	trench T3 deturfing complete		kinchyle 067	area T3b2 cleaned	9
kinchyle 031	trench T3 deturfing complete		kinchyle 068	area T3b2 cleaned	
kinchyle 032	trench T3 deturfing complete				
kinchyle 033	trench T3 deturfing complete				
kinchyle 034	trench T3 deturfing complete				
kinchyle 035	trench T3 deturfing complete				
kinchyle 036	trench T3 deturfing complete				
kinchyle 037	trench T3 deturfing complete				

NH63NW 51		Hi	county	Inverness-Shire
16-07-1996		In	district	Dores
no.	name			
C72 925	Kinchyle			
	Timber Round Houses			
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960716 194054 \*RA\***RCAHMS**\*C72 925

**1 - Kinchyle - Cropmarks - Enclosure; Pit circle; Roundhouse** (Photograph 13, Appendix I)

HCSMR no. NH63NW0052 - NMRS no NH63NW 51 - NGR NH 61900 37880

A series of oblique APs (16.07.1996) centred on the cropmark of circular enclosure c 16-18 m in diameter with pit circle inside. Another pit circle visible to the SE. (Harden & Bone 1996). Interpreted as possibly a number of timber round houses.

C 72925 - from the E                      C 72926 - from the E  
C 72927 - from the NE.                  C 72928 - from the NW

**2 - Darris - Cropmarks**

HCSMR no. NH63NW095 - NMRS no. NH63NW 63 - NGR NH 6145 3686

Oblique aerial photographs (RCAHMSAP 26.7.1995) revealed an area of cropmarks 300 m NE of Darris farmstead. The most distinct cropmark is a half circular feature with a diameter of about 10-15m. There are also a number of pits, linear features and other indeterminate cropmarks in the surrounding area. There is no obvious connection between these cropmarks and the supposed site of a chapel here (Gazetteer 5). (RCAHMS 1999).

C 52807 - from the SE                  C 52808 - from the NE.  
C 52809 - from the NNE

**3 - Scaniport Wood - Enclosure and Pit Circle**

HCSMR no. NH63NW035 - NMRS no. NH63NW 32 - NGR NH 633 399.

Air photography has revealed a variety of cropmarks in the field immediately SE of Scaniport Wood. A fine circular enclosure c14 m in diameter lies c.250 m E of Scaniport. Within it is a pit circle c6 m in diameter. Information from J Harden 1989 (Harden and Bone 1990).

6 APs - nos. 8903.06-10 and 8904.08 held in Inverness Museum

4 APs - centred on the cropmarks of a palisaded enclosure and round house. 16.07.1996 :  
C 72918 - from S, C 72919 - from SE, C 72920 - from NE, C 72921 - from NW

**4 - Scaniport - Roundhouse and pit-alignments**

HCSMR no. NH63NW??? - NMRS no. NH63NW 59 - NGR NH 6260 3920

Centred on NH 69(sic)60 3920 - The cropmarks of a round house, pits and at least three pit-alignments have been revealed by oblique aerial photographs (RCAHMSAP 1995), 250m S of Balmore farmstead.

The round house (NH c.6256 3918 ) measures about 12m in diameter.

A pit-alignment (NH c.6254 3921) containing three pits and aligned NW-SE, is situated approximately 30m to the NW.

Some 35m to the E is a second one (NH c.6259 3920), aligned WNW-ESE, containing at least six pits.

A third pit-alignment (NH c.6249 3923), situated approximately 60m NW of the round house, contains at least four pits with some more pits visible immediately to the SE and SW of it. There are a number of other pits in this area and these may form additional pit-alignments. There are also some indeterminate cropmarks, the most distinctive being a roughly crescentic mark (NH 6255 3923) which may represent a round house. (RCAHMS 1999).

3 APs - centred on the cropmarks of a round house, pit-alignments and pits. 26.7.1995

C 52797 - from SW, C 52798 - from SE, C 52799 - from ESE,

9 APs - Oblique aerial views centred on and cropmarks 25.08.2000

D 76204 - from WNW - D 76205 - from W. - D 76206 - from SW. - D 76207 - from S

D 76208 - from SE. - D 76209 - from E. - D 76210 - from NE. - D 76211 - from NNE.

D 76212 - from NW.

**5 - Scanport Wood - Palisaded Enclosure**

NMRS no. NH63NW 66 - NGR NH 6342 3994

RCAHMS 2000, oblique aerial view APs centred on the cropmarks of a palisaded enclosure and round house 16.07.1996:

C 72918 taken from the S, C 72919 taken from the SE,  
C 72920 taken from the NE, C 72921 taken from the NW,

**6 - Balmore - Cropmark**

NMRS no. NH63NW 33 - NGR NH 627 398

Air photography has revealed a range of cropmarks in this field centred c.250 m N of Balmore. They may or may not be archaeological and include linear and possible circular features.

AP nos. 8903.11-13 held in Inverness Museum ( J Harden 1990).

**7 - Kinchyle - Military Road Re-Alignment**

HCSMR no.NH63NW0097 - NMRS no. NH63NW 31.01 - NGR NH 6144 3800

The B862 from NGR NH 6000 3503 to 6313 3999: is on the line of the 1732 Wade road. The military road re-alignment continues N towards Inverness (M Logie Highland Council 1997; NMRS MS 1007/3). A watching brief in advance of a new water main alongside the B862 was maintained during the excavation of trial pits in case remains of the military road were disturbed. Trial pits near other buildings were also monitored, but no significant deposits were encountered. (Conolly & Masser 2001, 53).

**8 - Strath Dores - Building**

HCSMR no. NH63NW114 - NMRS Number: NH63NW 70 - NGR NH 6157 3692

A desk-based assessment identified three buildings on the 1st edition OS map but not noted in the NMRS (NH 6157 3692, NH 6352 3604 and NH 6095 3723). (Conolly & Masser 2001, 53). A roofed building is depicted at this location in 1875 (OS 1875), but not in 1975 (OS 1975) (RCAHMS 2002).

**9 - Darris - Chapel**

HCSMR no. NH63NW006 - NMRS no. NH63NW 6 - NGR NH 6148 3688.

Site of Chapel (OS 1906). Nothing is known about this chapel other than portions of the foundations, and flat stones resembling gravestones, having been ploughed up some years previously. (Name Book 1871, 13). No evidence of a chapel exists at the site. Visited by OS 1962.

**10 - Antfield, Cairn, Axe**

HCSMR no. NH63NW007 - NMRS Number: NH63NW 7 - NGR NH 6163 3755

Stone Battle Axe found A.D. 1870 (OS 1906). A fine basalt axe-head, found in a cairn at Antfield, is in Mr. Stewart's collection of fossils and specimens (ISSFC 1888, 379). This axe was discovered by ploughing about 18 chains north of Antfield steading, and is in the possession of Mr. Stewart, Free Church, Schoolmaster, Dores. (Name Book 1871, 14). No trace of a cairn is to be seen at this spot. At NH 6152 3761, however, lying in a hollow at the foot of a SE-facing slope, is a low, spread mound of small stones, partly grass-covered, and measuring c.25.0 m in diameter and 1.0 m high; but from its situation and character, is more probably a field clearance heap than a burial cairn. The site of the axe find is located at the top of rising ground (Visited by OS 1962 & 1972)

**11 - Culduthel Farm - Roundhouses**

HCSMR no. NH63NW??? - NMRS no. NH64SE 378 - NGR NH 664 415

A watching brief was undertaken between July and September 2005 during the topsoil strip of a large field near Culduthel Farm, close to a known palisaded enclosure (Gazetteer 10).

The archaeological deposits, principally mid- and Late Iron Age, were found to be complex and well-preserved, including large roundhouses, cobbled surfaces, areas of metalworking and associated finds; evidence for a very large and high-status site (Buchanan 2005).

Excavation 2005-2006 uncovered part of a well preserved iron age settlement. The bases of circular turf walls survived around plank-floored houses that may have had two storeys. The scarcity of domestic refuse and evidence for working glass and metals suggest an industrial zone within a seat of power.

The remains of 17 round houses were uncovered built round an internal post-ring, and most had an entrance porch facing northeast. The outer wall of two, the larger 20m across, stood in a ring-groove with a stone-faced turf wall laced with timbers. Charred wood is thought to indicate floor planks. Many pits were well over 1.5m deep, with massive stones for packing posts; several contained burnt timbers. No houses appeared to have domestic hearths.

Eight metal-working furnaces were found within the buildings, with much iron slag, iron bloom and clay furnace lining in adjacent deposits. Copper working was also indicated, by slag, many crucible fragments and ceramic ring-moulds. A rotary quern stone had two ingot moulds carved into one side and a unique fish-tailed mould into the other. Blanks and waste from making glass beads were also found (a pink bead may be unique in iron age Scotland), with small pieces of enamel waste. Further metal-working debris was found in a cobbled area 100m east of the settlement.

Iron objects were common and very well preserved, including chisels and awls, bolts for joining wood and smaller decorative objects. An iron sword stood point down in a posthole; a small knife and a spearhead had been similarly "sacrificed". An enamelled Romano-British bow and fantail brooch, horse harness and decorated sword-hilt guard, date from the late first/early second century AD. A few small Roman coins are interpreted as signs of trade.

**12 - Old Town Of Leys, Culduthel - Palisaded Enclosure**

NMRS no. NH64SE 241 - NGR NH 664 414

4 APs - oblique aerial view centred on the cropmarks of a palisaded enclosure. 16.07.1996

C 72914 taken from the SE, C 72915 taken from the SE,

C 72916 taken from the NE, C 72917 taken from the N,

**13 - Culduthel Mains - Palisaded Enclosure, Pit, Ring Ditch House (Photograph 14)**

HCSMR no. NH63NW0423 - NMRS Number: NH64SE 261 - NGR NH 657 419

Slackbuie to Stratherrick Southern Distributor Road NH 672 424 to NH 657 419.

A watching brief in April and May 2001 within agricultural land on the SE outskirts of Inverness during the topsoil removal phase of the construction of the Southern Distributor Road led to the recording of a total of 128 archaeological features. The majority were fire-pits or cooking pits containing heated stones, charcoal and occasionally, in situ structural stonework forming a windbreak. Artefacts were few but variations in the morphology, stratigraphy and location (in terms of subsoil) of these pits would suggest that they could be assigned to both recent and prehistoric times. In addition, a partial and truncated ring-ditch was recorded, as was a stretch of palisade trench containing both pottery and flint. Modern features including borrow-pits and agricultural burials were also found. Topsoil depth varied considerably over the route, with some features being severely truncated and others well



preserved. The majority of the features were found on the 50m OD terrace; the lower ground at close to 40m OD contained few archaeological remains (Suddaby 2001)

#### **14 - Stoneyfield House, Seafield West - Ring Ditch, Ring Groove House, Settlement**

(Photograph 20, Appendix I)

HCSMR no. NH63NW?0718 - NMRS Number: NH64NE 155 - NGR NH 6917 4535

Cropmark of a series of four ring-ditches c 15m in diameter, 20m N of railway. One has narrow outer ditch. Suggestion of internal pits - possible round barrows (Bone 1996b).

NH 6920 4540 Iron Age settlement. An evaluation, consisting of a programme of geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trial trenching, was carried out in 1996 on a cropmark area located c 500m S of the Bronze Age cemetery. The results from magnetometry identified several ring-groove structures and possible hearths. Trial work confirmed the presence of intercutting features associated with occupation deposits, post-pits and hearths.

A single substantial trench was opened in 1997 and centred on those features located in 1996. The almost complete circuit of a ring-groove structure, with a diameter of c 22m, was located in the southern central area of the trench. At least one inner ring of post-holes was located concentrically c 4.5 m from this ring-groove. A near-complete bronze brooch, dating to the 2nd century AD, was recovered from this feature. A second ring-ditch extended into the NE area of the trench.

The outlines of at least three complete timber roundhouses were defined by post-holes to the N of the ring-groove. A later iron-smelting hearth overlay part of one structure. Immediately to the W of the ring-groove, an aerial photograph showed evidence of a second circular feature with two concentric but incomplete rings. Excavation revealed this to be a sub-circular spread of habitation deposit. Further pits and post-holes were recorded across the site. Finds consisted of carbonised wood and a few sherds of pottery (Cressey, Finlayson & Hamilton 1998).

#### **15 - Lonnie farmhouse - Ring-ditch and Pit-circle** (Photograph 17, Appendix I)

HCSMR no. NH63NW0031- NMRS no. NH74NW 26 - NGR NH 734 487.

Air photography has revealed what may be an unenclosed settlement 450m SW of Lonnie farmhouse. It comprises a ring-ditch about 13m in diameter which contains a ring of pits; an arc of a possible second ring-ditch; and a pit-circle (RCAHMS 1979a, No. 125).

Visible on RCAHMS air photographs IN 3092-4: flown 1977.

Tolan notes two pit-circles, each surrounded by a ring-ditch. (Tolan 1988, Nos. 10-11).

Recent aerial photography (RCAHMSAP 1996) has revealed additional cropmarks suggesting that this is an unenclosed settlement with at least three round houses each comprising of a ring-ditch enclosing a pit-circle, with an internal diameter of about 15m. The most westerly has a broad outer ditch, while the other two have narrow arcs of ditch surrounding the pit-circle. A number of pits are scattered around the immediate area of the round houses. These cropmarks were previously interpreted as enclosures and pit-circles, then as an unenclosed settlement and pit-circle. The remains of a chambered cairn and the cropmarks of two enclosures have been recorded in the surrounding area (NH74NW 14, 48 and 87). (RCAHMS 2000; Harding and Lee 1987, 377 No. 277).

#### **16 - Gollanfield - Homestead and Pit-circle** (Photograph 18, Appendix I)

HCSMR no. NH63NW009 - NMRS no. NH85SW 10 - NMR NH 8073 5330

Air photography has revealed the crop-marks of a homestead and a pit-circle about 200m WSW of Mains of Gollanfield farmhouse. The homestead is circular on plan and measures about 20m in diameter; it contains slight indications of what may have been a timber house.

Outside the homestead on the SE there is a pit-circle, possibly the remains of a timber house, which measures about 12m in diameter. An arc of ditch and a number of pits are visible about 45m to the NW. Tolan notes two pit-circles at NH 806 533. (Tolan 1988, No. 8; RCAHMS 1979a No. 107).

APs - Visible on RCAHMS air photographs IN 2656 and IN 3074-8: flown 1976 and 1977.  
 IN 3640 CN J. Dewar 7256/CN/C8-11 1976  
 IN 3641 CN J. Dewar 7256/CN/C8-11 1976  
 IN 3642 CN J. Dewar 7256/CN/C8-11 1976  
 IN 3643 CN J. Dewar 7256/CN/C8-11 1976  
 IN 4449 IN 4450 IN 4451

5 APs - centred on the cropmarks of an unenclosed settlement with round houses, pit-circles and pits 10.8.1995

C 53626 - from NW,. A structure is visible in the centre top half of the photograph.

C 53627 - from NNE,. A structure is visible in the top right-hand corner of the photograph.

C 53624 - from SE, A palisaded enclosure is visible in the top right-hand corner of the photograph.

C 53625 - from ESE,. A palisaded enclosure is visible in the centre right-hand side of the photograph and a structure is shown in the top left-hand corner.

C 53625 S - from ESE,. A palisaded enclosure is visible in the centre right-hand side of the photograph and a structure is shown in the top left-hand corner.

4 APS - centred on the cropmarks of an unenclosed settlement. 16.07.1996

C 72844 - from N, C 72845 - from NW, C 72846 - from W, C 72847 - from SW,

### **17 - Pityoulish - Roundhouse, pits and a possible souterrain** (Photograph 19, Appendix I)

HCSMR no. NH63NW??? - NMRS no, NH91SW 43 - NGR NH 9275 1445

The cropmarks of a round house, pits and a possible souterrain have been revealed by oblique aerial photographs (RCAHMSAP 1995), in a field 500m NE of Pityoulish. The round house measures about 15-18m in diameter and may have a circular pit-defined structure within the interior. A crescentic feature at its NW side, some 30m long, may be a part of the round house or represent a possible souterrain. A roughly circular line of at least seven large pits, each about 2-3m in diameter, surround the round house, and a further cluster of at least five pits is visible approximately 30m to the SW. There are other indeterminate cropmarks scattered across the field. (RCAHMS 1999).

5 APs - centred on the cropmarks of a round house, pits and a possible souterrain. 26.7.1995

C 52789 - from ESE, C 52790 - from NE, C 52791 - from NNW,

C 52791 S - from NNW, C 52792 - from NW

### **18 - Gilchrist - Enclosure, Pit, Rig and Furrow, Roundhouse** (Photograph 15, Appendix I)

NMRS no. NH54NW 26 - NGR NH 5422 4901

Air photography has revealed the cropmark of what is probably a circular enclosure 350 m SE of Gilchrist farmhouse; it measures about 20 m in diameter within a narrow ditch.

(RCAHMS 1979b, 17 no 98). Visible on RCAHMS APs RC 1857-60, flown 1978. Further APs were taken of this enclosure. There appears to be a large pit to the NW of it (see Archive for details.) Information from J Harden 1989.

Cropmark of circular ditched enclosure c 25m in diameter, with smaller ring of post-holes adjoining to the W; 200m NW of Bellevue Cottages (Bone 1996a).

Recent aerial photographs (RCAHMSAP 1995) suggest that this is a possible enclosure of uncertain function. It has an internal diameter of about 30m and a broad gap on the E side.

About 10m NW of the enclosure the cropmark of a probable round house with an internal

diameter of about 6m is visible. This was previously interpreted as a pit. An area of rig-and-furrow cultivation, about 120m wide, is visible running SW-NE for at least 250m immediately to the SE of the enclosure and at the SE side of the field. A circular cropmark (NH c.5428 4896) with an internal diameter of about 12-15m is situated about 30m SE of the enclosure. A number of other sites have been recorded in the surrounding area, including a barrow cemetery 600m to the SSE. (RCAHMS 1999)..

**19 - Ballindoun - : Palisaded Enclosure, Roundhouse** (Photograph 16, Appendix I)

NMRS no. NH54SW 15 - NGR NH 5283 4306

The crop-marks of what may be two overlapping enclosures are visible on air photographs 120 m SW of Ballindoun farmsteading. Visible on RCAHMS air photographs IN 3214-6: flown 1977 (RCAHMS 1979, 21, No. 149).

Recent aerial photographs (RCAHMSAP 1995) suggest that these are the cropmarks of at least two palisaded enclosures and a round house. The larger enclosure is roughly circular in shape with an internal diameter of about 50-55m. A smaller circular enclosure, with an internal diameter of about 30m, intersects it on the SW side. In the area enclosed by both these enclosures a round house is visible. It is defined by a pit-circle and has an internal diameter of about 12-15m. Other indeterminate cropmarks and pits are also visible within the interior of the enclosures (RCAHMS 1999).

**20 - Tom Na Moine - Cairnfield, Hut Circle, Ring Ditch House**

NMRS no. NJ01NE 42 - NGR NJ 0755 1708

A group of three hut-circles and a possible ring-ditch house are situated on a broad terrace in moorland 270m NW of Dorback Lodge. The hut-circles lie at the SW end of a large area of clearance cairns, measuring up to 5m in diameter, which extends upslope to the NE, and is bounded by boggy ground to the NW and woodland to the SE. The terrace is heather-grown with occasional patches of grass, and the entire area is littered with tree-throws.

The northernmost (NJ 07553 17089) measures about 7m in diameter within a stony bank up to 2.7m in thickness and 0.5m in height, with an entrance on the SW. A small clearance cairn overlies the W side of the hut-circle. The second hut-circle (NJ 07573 17050) lies 30m SE of the first and measures up to 6.5m in diameter within a stony bank up to 2.1m in thickness and 0.3m in height, with an entrance on the NW. The third hut-circle (NJ 07548 17035) lies 16m SW of the last and measures at least 9.2m in diameter within a wall reduced to a bank that measures up to 3.1m in thickness and 0.4m in height. However, on the NE the inner edge is poorly defined as is the outer edge on the NW. The entrance is on the SW.

The possible ring-ditch house (NJ 07673 17065), which lies 90m E of the hut-circles, is situated on a gentle N-facing slope and measures about 11m in diameter over a shallow ditch up to 2.7m in breadth. A low external bank is visible on the E and there is an entrance on the N (RCAHMS 2006).

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*Brief for archaeological work at:*

**New House at Land 290m to SW of Kinchyle Farm,  
Scanport, Inverness**  
(IN-07-196)

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
by STRIP AND RECORD**

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

Archaeology Unit

## 1) Background

The application lies in the vicinity of a recorded prehistoric site - identified as a cropmark showing a circular enclosure and two pit circles probably representing at least two large round houses. The archaeological features may extend into the application area and the potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains is considered to be High. This project could therefore impact on valuable features of archaeological importance. Arrangements must be made to avoid such features wherever possible. Where this is not practicable, they should be recorded before they are damaged or destroyed. This will need to be done by a professional archaeological contractor.

In this case the nature and extent of the potential archaeological features need to be established. An archaeological evaluation aims to identify any such features at the earliest possible stage to minimise the risk of finds or features of interest being discovered and damaged during site works. This approach is intended to ensure that any archaeology on site is identified and recorded with minimum delay or disruption to the development.

Following fieldwork, the Archaeological Contractor will present a report containing the conclusions of the work and proposing mitigation and recording arrangements to be followed in the development. These proposals will require to be agreed with the Planning Authority. Such arrangements might include preservation *in situ*, redesign to avoid key areas and/or excavation and recording of features.

## 2) Terms of Reference

This brief specifies what is considered to be the minimum acceptable standard of work; proposals that present a higher standard may be offered and accepted. It is assumed that this will form the basis of an agreed approach unless changes are agreed with Highland Council Archaeology Unit in writing before the start of any site works.

This brief has been produced for Mr & Mrs H Fraser, who will be responsible for the work, including any tendering and contractual arrangements. The area to be covered by this assessment should be entire area that will be impacted by the proposed development. This should include any proposed services, access roads, works compounds, borrow pits or other ancillary works.

The work should be carried out by, or under the immediate direction of, a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists - or archaeologist of equivalent experience - to ensure that work is carried out to professional standards. The Archaeology Unit may refuse to accept work from, or otherwise take action against, archaeologists who fail to carry out work to these standards. Before site works start, the proposed arrangements, including a timetable for the work should be agreed with the Highland Council Archaeology Unit in writing.

The brief has been produced specifically for this scheme based on documents supplied at the time it was issued. It is valid for one year from the date of issue.

## 3) Objectives

- To identify the location, nature and extent of any features or objects of archaeological importance that would be damaged or destroyed by this development.
- To propose arrangements for the safeguarding where possible, and recording where necessary of any archaeological features or finds identified. These will need to be agreed with the Highland Council Archaeology Unit.
- To make sure that the needs for archaeological conservation and recording are met without causing any unnecessary delay or disturbance to the development project.

#### 4) Method

##### *a. Desk-based Assessment*

A check of all relevant archaeological / historical records, maps and aerial photographs should be undertaken. The following sources are recommended as a minimum:

- *The Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)*. Please note - the online SMR 'Am Baille' is not designed for use in development control, for assembling information for forestry or agri-environment schemes, or for constructing management policy of sites. In order to source the full SMR information required for such studies all consultants should approach the Highland Council Archaeology Unit directly.
- *The National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS)*
- *Historic Scotland's databases of listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and monuments proposed for scheduling.*
- *Vertical stereo aerial photographic coverage held by RCAHMS and the Highland Council Archaeology Unit.*
- *Ordnance Survey map coverage from 1850 onwards, and any other readily available early cartographic sources held at the National Library of Scotland Map Library.*
- *Bibliographic references and early parish accounts.*

##### *b. Trial Trenching*

A series of large block trenches will be excavated by (or under the direction of) the Archaeological Contractor. The trenches will expose the footprint of the proposed building in addition to covering the access and services, to provide a sample of at least 25% of the total application area. The location of these trenches will also be informed by the results of the desk-based work and an assessment of the local topography and must be accurately plotted on a site plan.

Trenches should cover the development area spatially and target potential archaeological features and apparently "blank" areas. They should be a mixture of linear and large block trenches and should be extended as necessary in order to expose and evaluate archaeological features.

Trenches will be backfilled on completion of excavation, unless agreed otherwise with the developer.

All archaeological features identified will be manually cleaned and recorded and a sufficient sample excavated by hand to establish the date, nature, extent and state of preservation of deposits. A representative sample of every archaeological feature will be excavated in the first instance to a degree sufficient to establish their nature, extent, preservation, probable function and date. HCAU minimum requirements are for hand-excavation of 50% of all pits and 10% of all linear features: all significant relationships with other features should be defined and investigated. The depth of surviving deposits must be established. Further excavation will be determined following the results of this work and agreed with HCAU.

#### 5) Report

A report must be produced which sets out the results of the work and makes recommendations for any required further work.

The Council will assume author's copyright unless advised otherwise. However, HCAU reserves the right to make the report available for reference and research purposes, either on paper, or electronically. The completed report will be made available for immediate

public consultation for research purposes at the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record, and through the public library service. The Archaeology Unit will acknowledge copyright in all cases.

**a) Content**

The report must include as a minimum:

- Location plan (bound into the report) showing the project area; area of excavation; and relevant historic sites and features in the vicinity. The location plan must also show the position of features identified during the work.
- A detailed site background, including reference to previous work conducted in the wider area on similar developments and the results of such work.
- The circumstances and objectives of this work.
- An analysis of the project results drawing in comparative data; a statement regarding the potential for, and survival of, buried prehistoric sites in this area; and a statement of the significance of the results (as per the Burra Charter).
- A detailed site plan and scale plans, sections and photographs of all significant features noted.
- A full index to any records or other material generated by the project including the archive location.
- A list of finds, as appropriate, set out in the required format for Treasure Trove reporting.
- Details of the sampling and finds retention policies and their justification.
- Weather and other conditions affecting fieldwork.
- Proposals for presenting the results of the work to the local community where appropriate.

**b) Dissemination & Publication**

The archaeologist appointed is responsible for making sure copies of the report have been received by the recipients listed below. The archaeologist appointed should allow for all costs when estimating for the work. We require archaeologists to submit satisfactory reports within the agreed deadline.

Apart from any copies required by the client, at least **four** copies of the project report must be produced by the archaeologist. These must be submitted to all of the following **within 4 weeks** of the completion of the field work.

- One paper copy for the Council's Area Planning and Building Standards Manager, 1-3 Church Street, Inverness, IV1 1OY.
- One paper copy to be deposited with the Council's Senior Librarian Information Co-ordinator, Libraries Support Unit, 31a Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1OY. This will be available for public consultation through the public library service.
- One paper copy to be deposited with the Council's Assistant Curator (Archaeology), Museum & Art Gallery, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EB (*This copy will only be required if there are finds*).
- One digital copy for the Archaeology Unit, Planning and Development Service, Council Offices, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX : The report should be in Adobe PDF format (preferred) or Microsoft Word format and rendered uneditable. If the report or associated documents are of an appropriate size for delivery by e-mail (i.e. under 2MB) they may be sent directly to [archaeology@highland.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@highland.gov.uk) with an appropriate project identifier in the subject line. If the report is deposited with the HER on a CD or DVD, the disc must be clearly marked using a CD marker pen with the project identifier, project name and name of the archaeological contractor. Please do not use stickers to label the disk.



In addition to depositing the report of completed works with the HER, all reports (including bound paper copies) should be deposited in the National Monuments Record for Scotland, along with the project archive. The project archive should contain all relevant details in connection with the planning and execution of the project, including any terms of reference received by the archaeological contractor.

A brief summary of the results of the archaeological work must be prepared and submitted for publication in the Council for Scottish Archaeology's annual journal 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' at the appropriate time.

#### **6) Monitoring**

The archaeologist appointed is responsible for agreeing arrangements for monitoring with Archaeology Unit staff. We will monitor projects as necessary to ensure that minimum standards are met.

Prior notice of fieldwork starting dates - with contact names, telephone numbers and arrangements for access - must be given to the HC Archaeology Unit by the archaeological contractor.

Any unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries, or other unexpected occurrences which might significantly affect the archaeological work and/or the development must be notified by the archaeologist immediately to the applicant and the Senior Archaeologist. The finds or features must be left *in situ* until arrangements have been agreed for safeguarding or recording them. In the meantime work may continue on other areas of the site.

#### **7) Finds**

Chance finds can be made during any archaeological fieldwork. Archaeologists should note that advice and facilities for emergency conservation and temporary storage can be offered by Inverness Museum. All finds should be notified for Treasure Trove.

#### **8) General**

The archaeologist agrees by undertaking this work to the terms of this brief, including the following:

The archaeologist appointed must:

- carry out the work according to the Code of Conduct, standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- agree a timetable for the work with the client and the HC Archaeology Unit.
- not comment to the press or other media without prior approval from the applicant and HC Archaeology Unit.

This brief has been produced by the Highland Council Archaeology Unit, to whom any enquiries should be addressed. No one else has authority to vary its terms.

*Highland Council Archaeology Unit*

*Friday, 23 March 2007*