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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT SCOTSBURN HOUSE FORT,  
ROSS AND CROMARTY:  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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*SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT REF:-*

*AMH/3757 - 201401285*



## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT SCOTSBURN HOUSE FORT**

### PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (SDE 14)

SITE	<b>Scotsburn House, fort 580 m W of</b>
National Grid Reference	NH 7148 7616
SAM Index No.	<b>3757</b>
Project Manager	Dr Gordon Noble
Directors	Candy Hatherley & Aoife Gould
Environmental Assessment	Susan Ramsay
Artefact Assessment	Ewan Campbell
Illustrations	Candy Hatherley & Alice Watterson

### **Schedule**

Fieldwork – July 2014

Report – October 2015

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## 1 Introduction

Scotsburn House Dun (named *Scotsburn House Fort* in Historic Scotland's scheduling document) is situated on the valley floor at the east end of Strath Rory, immediately to the east of the Balnagown River and at the foot of hills to the north (Figure 1) (NGR NH 7148 7616). The site occupies a spur of land on the southern edge of a natural terrace which is formed into an elevated promontory (c. 120 m O.D.) by the steep slope of the terrace to the south and the river ravine to the west, currently unimproved grassland bordered by pasture and arable fields. This is marginal land which, although it has been ploughed and settled in the past (see below), has never been intensively farmed. The views out from the site are spectacular, especially to the south where it overlooks Nigg Bay and the entrance to the Cromarty Firth through the North and South Sutors and the north coast of the Black Isle. Views inland are currently restricted by tree cover but, if removed, there would be view up the Strath to the summit of Cnoc An Duin hillfort. The site is within an area of well-preserved prehistoric sites including hut-circles, field systems and chambered cairns, a situation partly due to its upland location, but nevertheless still a notable concentration in the region. Cnoc An Duin, one of the largest and highest hillforts in northern Scotland, is located 2 km north-west along the floor of the valley. Approximately 100 m to the east is Scotsburn House Chambered cairn (NH 7153 7618) which occupies a similar spur of land further along the same terrace.

Prior to excavation the upstanding remains of a large thick-walled dry-stone roundhouse enclosed by a series of outworks could be identified on the summit of the knoll (Figure 2). Encircling the house is a stone enclosure wall and three concentric earthen banks and ditches. The banks and ditches form a D-shaped enclosure enclosing the roundhouse and terminating to the north and south at the edge of the ravine. The banks and ditches are well-preserved within fenced woodland at the ravine's edge but are heavily truncated elsewhere. The stone wall is clearly a later feature built partially overlying the inner-most earthen bank. A break in the outworks at the south-east indicates the likely position of an entrance-way. The entrance to roundhouse is not evident.



Figure 1  
Location of excavated sites

The two outer banks and ditches have been severely reduced or removed across the majority of the site by ploughing, stone robbing and trampling by livestock. On the east and south of the knoll a post-medieval dry-stone field wall cuts across them and borders an area of deep ploughing to the east, the ground beyond it reduced by at least 0.40 m. The footings of a two-roomed rectangular turf building survive on the southern flank of the knoll and a possibly associated sub-rectangular stone enclosure or building is located to the west. These buildings and the field suggest that the knoll was a small farm in the late or post-medieval period.

Quarry scoops and stone robbing is evident across the site and both the facing stones of the stone enclosure wall and revetting of the earthen banks has been removed in places. The walls of the roundhouse have also been heavily robbed and the summit of the knoll is a mass of small stones, presumably the hearting of the walls left after the larger stones had been removed. Within the centre of the roundhouse is a large quarry c. 1 m in depth and associated spoil heap. Access via a cart to the centre of the house appears to have been gained by the cutting of a narrow track through the outer works to the north, across the roundhouse wall to the edge of the quarry. It continues south from here, cutting across the roundhouse wall again and down the slope towards a trackway running parallel to the fenceline along the ravine edge which cuts through both sides of the D-shaped enclosure.

Previously referred to as both a broch and a dun (Mortimer 1969; 1970; RCAHMS 1979a, 23), this impressive site had never been planned (although Mortimer states he planned it in 1969) and appears to have been rarely visited by cartographers, antiquarians or archaeologists. The first published description is from a visit by the Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club in 1899 (ISSFC 1902, 361-2). The roundhouse wall was clearly heavily robbed by this time as the writer describes a 'well-like' quarry hole in the centre of the house and the concentration of small 'hearting' stones across the roundhouse walls. The site does not appear on the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ordnance Survey maps and is not referenced until a visit by the Ordnance Survey in 1970. It was scheduled by Historic Scotland in 1975 and included within the RCAHMS Easter Ross list of 1979 (RCAHMS 1979a).



# SCOTSBURN HOUSE

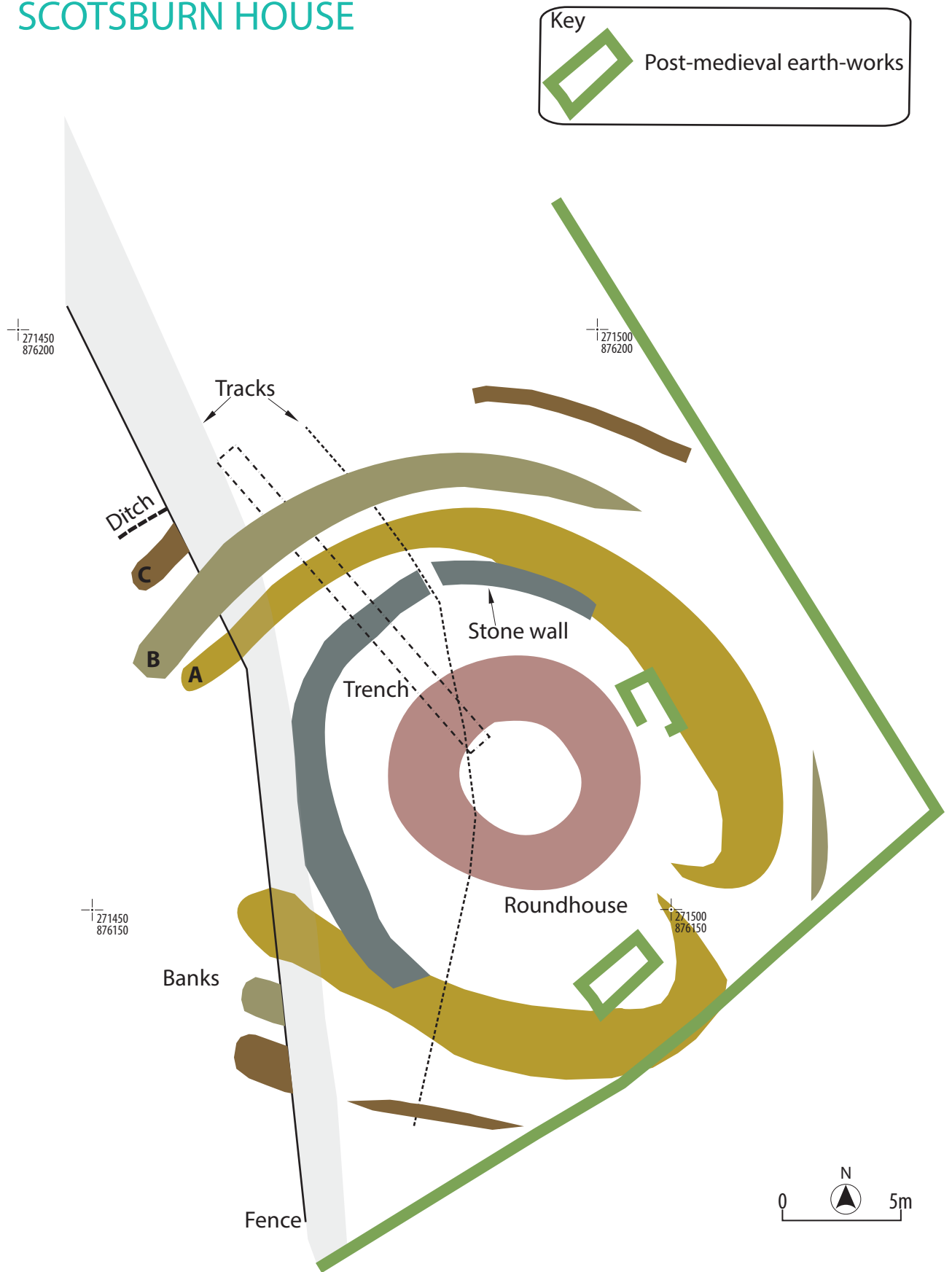


Figure 2  
Archaeological features and location of trench

## 1.1 Site description

### *The roundhouse*

The roundhouse survives as a sub-circular concave rubble bank c. 0.80 m in height which varies in thickness of 4-6 m. Due to extensive robbing the outer edge of the wall is widely spread and only a couple of outer facing stones are visible. On the south-west an outcrop of bedrock appears to be located immediately out-with the line of the roundhouse wall. The internal diameter of the house is approximately c. 12 m and the interior is full of dense rubble. An area of walling of reduced height on the south-east may be a possible entrance.

### *Enclosures*

Two clear phases of enclosure can be identified as earthworks. The primary scheme is a D-shaped enclosure made up of three concentric earthen banks and ditches which enclose the knoll, terminating at each end at the edge of the ravine to the west. These banks are evenly spaced c. 2 m apart and appear to be a single planned scheme. A 2 to 3 m wide break in the south-east forms an entrance-way through the ramparts to the roundhouse. A very large rectangular boulder located on the west side of the entrance passage may be revetting along the edge of the passage.

The inner-most bank (Bank **A**) is the best preserved of the three, surviving up to 1 m in height and 2.5 m in width at its northern terminal. Running from this terminal the bank is revetted with large stones on both sides and the rounded end of the terminal is capped with stone. The north and south line of Bank **A** are both truncated by the trackway but can be traced running east from the terminals as a concave bank. The bank's circuit around the house is obscured by the stone enclosure wall which overlies it, covering its inner edge completely. The steep outer edge of the bank remains clear and is revetted along the north and east with large stones.

The middle bank (Bank **B**) is best preserved at the northern terminal where it is c. 2 m wide and 1 m high. It is visible running from this terminal as a denuded earthwork which can be traced along the north-west and north edge of the knoll but disappears along the east and south. Elements of stone revetting are visible on both sides of the bank and the rounded terminals and, where upstanding, large boulders cap its apex. Bank **C** can only really be seen at its terminals and as a slight earthwork along the north-west side.

The ditches between Banks **A** and **B** and Banks **B** and **C** are only visible on the ground between the terminals and along the well-preserved stretch of Bank **A** and **B** on the north-west. The ditch beyond Bank **C** is only visible cutting into the natural slope within the fenced woodland running parallel with the outer edge of the bank's terminal.

The second phase of enclosure is a stone wall which encircles the knoll. The wall is only visible as a free-standing feature along the north-west and western arc where it is c.2.50 m wide and 1 m in height. Its inner and outer faces have been heavily robbed along this length, leaving the rubble core exposed. Where the wall overlays Bank **A** on the north, east and south sides of the knoll, the stone structure is not easily defined and the bank and wall appear to form a single slope running down from the roundhouse to the revetted outer edge of Bank **A**.

### **1.2 Topographic surveys**

Scotsburn House Dun was heavily overgrown with thick mature vegetation which was slowly cleared over a number of weeks through 2014 and 2015 by a determined team from the North of Scotland Archaeology Society. Due to the dense vegetation, especially around the roundhouse walls and its interior, a complete survey was not possible until April 2015 when a RCAHMS archaeological survey team member Mr George Geddes, along with the author and three students from the University of Aberdeen, undertook a plane table survey at 1:500 (not included here as presently un-inked) complemented by a digital survey with a dGPS (Figure 2).

### **1.3 Objectives and strategy of the fieldwork**

An application for Scheduled Monument Consent was submitted to Historic Scotland to open up a 20 m long and 2 m wide trench across the visible enclosures outside of the roundhouse to characterise and date the enclosures and any archaeological features surviving between these outworks. Permission was also sought to expose and record a 2 m wide section of the roundhouse wall to try to identify if it was solid-based, ground-galleried or composite built. These two trenches were run as one and the final trench was 29 m x 2 m.

The trench was hand excavated down to the latest occupation horizon, cleaned, planned and recorded. The archaeological deposits located between the roundhouse and the stone enclosure wall and between the stone enclosure wall and Bank **A** were cleaned and recorded

and a number of sondages were excavated to sample material for environmental and dating assessment. The ditches and parts of Banks A and B were excavated and sampled.

## 2 Excavation results





The north-west/south-east orientated trench was located to the north-west side of the roundhouse, placed in an area where the stone enclosure wall and Banks A & B were each well-defined separate and upstanding features (Figures 3 & 4). The final excavated trench ran from the inner face of the roundhouse wall to the edge of Bank C. The roundhouse wall was de-turfed and a layer of collapsed loose rubble removed from its surface to reveal the wall beneath. The wall was recorded in detail at this stage (Figure 4a) and no further excavation was undertaken. Archaeological investigations outside of the roundhouse exposed multi-phase extra-mural activity located between the house and the stone enclosure wall. This occupation was well-preserved beneath c. 1.10 m deep layers of rubble and earth. Initial analysis suggests that this area may have been associated with the drying, storing and processing of grain. A well-used and frequently repaired metalled surface was located between the stone enclosure wall and Bank A and two partially rock-cut ditches were identified between Banks A & B and B & C.









Figure 3 Aerial shot of Scotsburn during the excavation. Source: Oskar Sveinbjarnarson.

# SCOTSBURN

**Key**

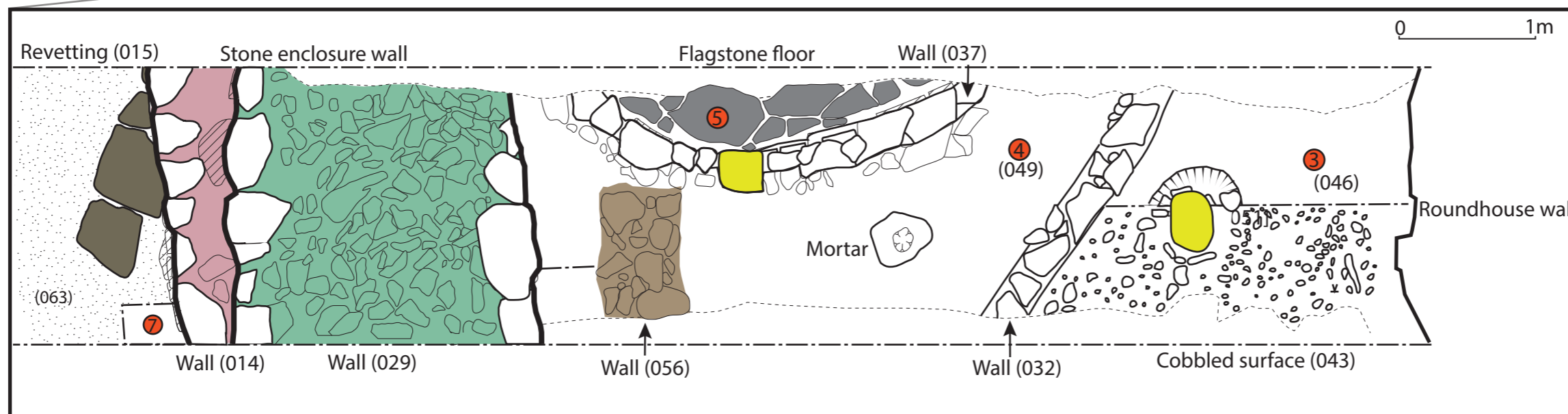
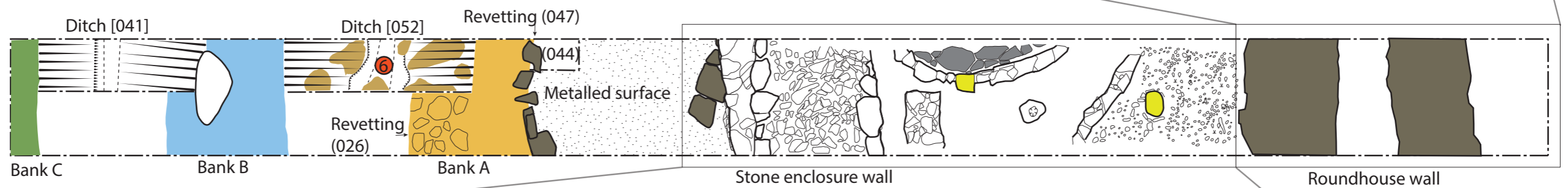
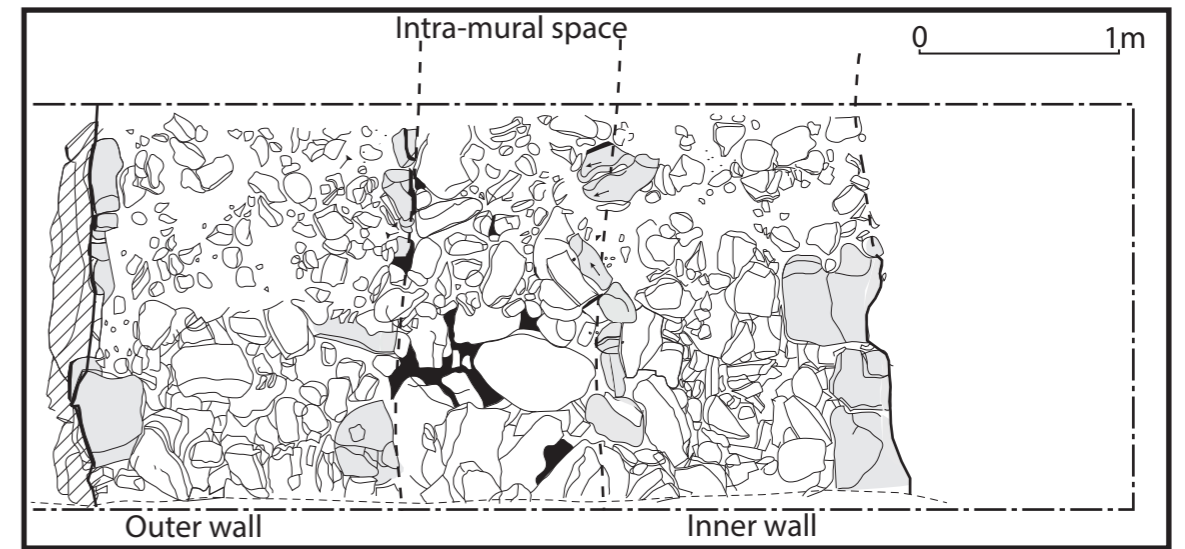
-  Bedrock
-  Columnar boulder
-  Facing stone - roundhouse wall
-  Voids

**RADIOCARBON DATED SAMPLES**

-  3 731-399 cal BC
-  4 353 - 57 cal BC
-  5 355 - 58 cal BC
-  6 357 - 95 cal BC
-  7 728 - 395 cal BC
-  8 537 - 387 cal BC



**Figure 4a** Detail of roundhouse wall



**Figure 4b**  
Detail of area between roundhouse wall and stone enclosure wall

Figure 4  
Plan of trench

### **2.1.1 The roundhouse wall**

Aside from its outer façade the roundhouse wall was only exposed in plan (Figure 4a). Extensive robbing, disturbance by tree roots and collapse meant it was tricky to understand its construction and it is clear that further excavation is required to clarify and expand the following observations. The 4 m wide dry-stone wall appeared in plan to comprise an inner and outer wall separated by a central intra-mural space. The inner wall was c. 1.20 m wide and survived as the fragmented remains of two wall faces with a stone core of neatly stacked horizontally placed stones. The outer wall was c. 1.70 m wide and was of similar construction with two walls bounding a well-ordered stone core.

The intra-mural space located between the inner and outer wall was c. 1 m wide. Both wall faces which defined the space were barely recognisable in plan, with only a few in-situ facing stones remaining in each wall. The disordered mass of vertical and horizontal rubble with large void spaces which filled the central void was, however, highly distinct from the neat stone cores of the inner and outer walls. Further excavation would be required to determine if this space was a continuous gallery or an intra-mural cell within the wall.

The outer wall face was fully exposed within the trench and survived up to a height of c. 1.20 m and had a pronounced batter of 0.20 m over a 1 m length. It was well-built with very large boulders and coursed angular rubble and was levelled throughout with pinning stones (Figure 5). The wall was built onto a flag raft which extending out from the wall face by 0.15 m, likely a levelling and stabilising plinth.

### **2.1.2 Stone enclosure wall**

The stone enclosure wall was a composite built structure, 2.5 m wide and 0.55 m high and orientated NNE/SSW. It had three separate phases of construction and remodelling. Only the north-west face and part of the rubble and earth core (014) of the primary phase of the wall survived but it is presumed that this is the remnant of a composite built wall which has partially been removed, probably due to collapse. The outer wall survived up to 4 courses and was well-built with regular courses of small angular and flat stones (Figure 6).

In the second phase of the enclosure wall a 2.1 m wide composite built dry stone wall with two stone wall faces and an earth and rubble core (029) was built against the rubble and earth core of the primary wall (014). This additional wall was built on a slightly different

orientation than wall (014) and was of rougher construction with the south-east wall poorly built of irregularly coursed large slabs.

Further remodelling of the primary wall (014) occurred against its north-west face. A line of boulders (015) were constructed directly against and beneath the wall face of (014), seemingly placed as revetting and supporting stones against its foundations. These stones were aligned east/west and clearly did not form the base of a coursed wall as they were each of different heights and were not laid flush. They may have been constructed in response to slumping or partial collapse of a section of the wall.

### **2.1.3 Banks and ditches**

Banks A and B and the two ditches located along their north-east edges were fully exposed within the trench and the much denuded edge of Bank C was just exposed at the end of the trench. Total excavation of these ditches and the partial excavation of Banks A & B (to reveal the full extents of the original ditch cuts) was undertaken within a 1 m wide sondage on the east side of trench.

Prior to excavation the de-turfed Bank A was flat topped with straight sided slab revetting (047) against its vertically cut south-east face. The north-west face was steep sloping with rough revetting in the form of boulders and stones embedded into its surface (026). Bank B was a concave earthen bank with a very large boulder set into its flattened apex.

Between Banks A and B was a partially rock-cut ditch [052]. On excavation the ditch was 4.30 m in width and 0.80 m in depth and was steep sloping on the south and shallow sloping on the north with a narrow steep U-shaped base. The sides were cut into natural sands and gravels and, where it had been encountered, the underlying sandstone bedrock. The ditch had initially filled with slumped re-deposited natural, presumably collapse from the banks. A sequence of three basal deposits showed that this happened fairly rapidly after the ditch was cut as there appeared to be no natural silting prior to the initial fill. The basal fill of the ditch (058) was sampled and a fragment of charred hazelnut was dated to between 357 and 95 cal BC (Table 1 Sample 6 - Poz-68735). The ditch had been subsequently re-cut into a gentler sloping shallow ditch which had left at least the bottom two of the basal fills intact. The basal fill of the re-cut ditch was a thick layer of turf, potentially slumped from a repair of the bank. Finally rough stone revetting (026) was placed against the north-west edge of Bank A. The upper fills of the ditch represented natural silting.



From top:- Figure 5 Outer face of roundhouse wall. Looking south-east; Figure 6 The stone enclosure wall. Looking north-east; Bottom left: - Figure 7 The rock cut ditch between Banks B & C. Bank B in the foreground with Bank A beyond. Looking south-east; Figure 8 The extra-mural activity between the roundhouse and the stone enclosure wall. Looking north-west from the top of the roundhouse wall. Sources: Author.



Between Banks B and C was another partially rock-cut ditch [041] (Figure 7). On excavation the ditch was 3.30 m wide and 0.70 m deep with a steep sloping north and a gentle slope on the south slope with a narrow U-shaped base. The ditch had been cut into bedrock on the north and natural sands, gravels and bedrock on the south. It was filled initially by a dump of re-deposited natural presumed to be slumped bank material. After this initial fill the ditch had slowly silted up and was either re-cut and/or cleaned out at least once. The upper fill of the ditch was a thick deposit of turf and re-deposited natural which was stony, possibly remnant bank material and revetting from the north-west face of Bank B or the south-east face of Bank C.

#### **2.1.4 Area between the roundhouse and the stone enclosure wall**

A 14 m<sup>2</sup> area exposed between the outer wall face of the roundhouse and the south-west face of the stone enclosure wall revealed well-preserved evidence of extra-mural activity taking place outside of the roundhouse (Figure 8). All the structures exposed were left *in-situ* and only a number of the occupation deposits encountered were investigated through sondages. Detailed interpretation of this activity within a narrow trench is difficult as none of the structures were fully exposed in plan and very little excavation was undertaken and what follows can only be regarded as an initial observation of what is clearly complex and multi-phase activity.

A series of thick rubble and earth layers were removed beneath the topsoil and turf and during excavation it was clear that this rubble could be broadly separated into the collapse of the roundhouse wall and that of the stone enclosure wall. At the base of this sequence of collapse overlying the occupation horizons adjacent to the stone enclosure wall was a thick layer of turf, possible collapsed turf capping of the stone enclosure wall. Beneath this turfy deposit the foundations of two narrow walls were identified, wall (032) and wall (037).

Wall (032) was a roughly constructed east/west orientated wall with the two surviving courses of flat stones of sandstone which ran across the entire width of the trench. The area between this wall and the outer face of the roundhouse had a compacted cobbled surface (043). This cobbled surface had been laid around an erect columnar boulder (Figure 9). Excavation within this area between the roundhouse wall and wall (032) below the cobbled surface was undertaken within a 1 m wide sondage on the east side of trench to create a section through the deposits between the roundhouse wall and wall (032).

Within this sondage underlying the cobbled surface was a layer of very fine charcoal rich silt (049) which continued beneath the foundations of wall (032). A sample of Context 049 showed that it contained carbonised alder, birch, hazel, oak and willow alongside a high percentage of burnt barley and wheat/emmer wheat (Appendix A, Ramsey). The cereal grains were poorly preserved and many could not be identified, suggesting either that they had been burned at high temperatures or had gone through repeated episodes of burning. The mixed charcoal assemblage alongside these grains looks to be general hearth waste from fuel gathered from local woodland (both carr and hillslopes) within the vicinity of the site. A charred barley grain gave a radiocarbon date of between 353 and 57 cal BC (Table 1, Sample 4; Poz-687334).

Underlying layer (049) was a layer of fine yellow silty sand (046) which continued beneath the flag foundation raft at the base of the roundhouse wall. A sample of Context 046 taken from below the flag foundation of the roundhouse wall was found to contain alder, birch, hazel, oak and willow charcoal and a charred hazel nutshell, a group which is likely to represent general hearth waste. A small roundwood fragment of charred willow gave a radiocarbon date of between 731 and 399 cal BC (Table 1, Sample 3; Poz-68733). Cutting into layer (046) was a vertically cut c. 0.30 m deep circular hole [051], the cut for the columnar boulder to be set into. The boulder was a fine water-rolled elongated oval shaped boulder 0.36 m wide and upstanding to 0.50 m in height above the surface. It was very heavily packed into place with stones set into the hole, presumably to keep it in rigid.

In the area between the east/west wall (032) and the stone enclosure wall was a section of curved wall (037) (Figure 10). It was located on the east side of the trench and, as both ends continued beyond the section edge, was likely to be the west end of a structure. The wall was a narrow thin dry-stone wall of single stone thickness constructed from coursed flat sandstone slabs and up to three courses in height. Incorporated into its fabric was a columnar boulder, similar in size and shape to the one located close to the roundhouse

The wall was built with a pronounced outward tilt on its inner edge and was supported by a concentration of stones set against its outer face and a rough rubble wall (056) which abutted its outer face. The interior of the structure contained three distinct charcoal rich occupation deposits which lapped against its inner face. The earliest occupation deposit within this sequence (045) was a heavily compacted turf layer which overlay a neatly laid flagstone floor created from thin slabs of sandstone. A sample taken of this turf layer

(Context 045) contained a mixed charcoal assemblage indicative of hearth waste including alder, birch, hazel, oak and cherry. Similar to Context 049 it also contained a high percentage of barley and wheat/emmer wheat which was again heavily burnt (Appendix A, Ramsey). A charred barley grain from Context 045 gave a radiocarbon date of between 355 and 58 cal BC (Table 1, Sample 5; Poz-687332). Excavation within the interior of the structure stopped at the flagstone floor.

In the area between the east/west wall (032), the stone enclosure wall and the curved structure (037) was a build-up of occupation deposits. Beneath the turf collapse was compact dark brown silt which overlay a patch of cobbling (033) lapping up against the outer face of walls (032) and (037). This cobbled surface had been truncated but was similar and potentially contemporary with the cobbled surface (043) seen between the roundhouse wall and wall (032). Beneath the cobbles was dark brown charcoal rich silt occupation deposit (035) which was excavated and sampled due to the visible concentration of carbonised grains throughout the layer. A very mixed charcoal assemblage of seven different timber types suggests that Context 035 was hearth waste and it contained the highest percentage of badly burnt carbonised barley and wheat/emmer wheat grains identified at Scotsburn. Beneath Context 035 was the black fine charcoal layer (049) which had already been identified beside the roundhouse wall and was dated to between 353 and 57 cal BC. In this area the layer contained more frequent fragments of daub and had a large red sandstone mortar or pivot stone set into its surface (Figure 11) (see Appendix A for description).

The fine charcoal rich occupation deposit (049) therefore could be seen across the entire area exposed between the roundhouse wall and the rough rubble wall (056) which abutted the curved structure. Context 049 lapped up against the outer face of the curved wall (037) and its supporting stones and continued beneath the foundations of the east-west wall (032).

A sondage against the south-east face of the stone enclosure wall and the rough rubble wall (056) identified a sequence of thin occupation deposits lapping up against the face of the stone enclosure wall. At the base of this sequence a layer of redeposited natural which ran beneath the stone enclosure wall was sampled. The layer was pretty sterile but a fragment of charred willow was dated to between 537 and 387 cal BC (Table 1, Sample 8; Poz 68738). No further excavation was undertaken within this area.



From top:- Figure 9 The cobbled surface (043), the columnar boulder and wall (032). Looking south-east; Figure 10 The curved wall (037) with paved surface. Looking west; Figure 11 Finding the mortar stone!; Figure 12 The cobbled surface between the stone enclosure wall and Bank A. Looking north. Sources: Author except 11 - Gordon Noble.

### 2.1.5 Area between stone enclosure wall and Bank A

A 6.60 m<sup>2</sup> area was exposed between the stone enclosure wall and Bank A. Beneath a thick sequence of turf layers below the topsoil was a heavily iron-panned metalled surface (019) (Figure 12). The metalled surface comprised compacted pebbles and cobbles set into mottled orange and brown silt. Its surface was rutted and patched and had been repaired with areas of new cobbles in places and had clearly been in use for a considerable time.

This metalled surface was left largely *in-situ*. Two small sondages were dug, one against the north-west face of the stone enclosure wall and one against the stone revetting (047) of Bank A, to try to establish the relationship between the stone enclosure wall, the bank and the metalled surface. The slot against the revetting of Bank A showed that an earlier metalled surface (044) lay beneath the metalled surface (019). This earlier surface also lapped up against the stone revetting of Bank A. Natural sand lay beneath the revetting and the metalled surface (044).

The slot into the metalled surface (019) below the north-west face of the stone enclosure wall showed that the earlier metalled surface (044) was also present lapping up against the face of the stone enclosure wall. Beneath the metalled surface (044) and the wall was a layer of re-deposited natural (063) which overlay natural sand. A sample of layer (063) contained carbonised birch, alder and hazel and a fragment of small roundwood birch was radiocarbon dated to between 728 and 395 cal BC (Table 1, Sample 7 - Poz-68736).

Table 1 Scotsburn radiocarbon dates

Lab No	Material	Context/Sample	Radiocarbon Age (BP)	Calibrated range BC (95% confidence)	δ13C-‰
Poz-68733	Salix sp	Deposit underlying roundhouse wall. <b>046/S3</b>	2400 ± 30	731 – 399 cal BC	-27.2
Poz-68734	hordeum vulgare x10	Occupation layer between roundhouse and enclosure wall overlying (046). <b>049/S4</b>	2140 ± 30	353 – 57 cal BC	-27.7
Poz-68732	hordeum vulgare x10	Occupation deposit within curvilinear structure overlying flagged floor. <b>045/S5</b>	2145 ± 30	355 – 58 cal BC	-27.0

Lab No	Material	Context/Sample	Radiocarbon Age (BP)	Calibrated range BC (95% confidence)	δ13C-‰
Poz-68735	Corylys cf avellana 0.10g	Basal deposit within ditch [052]. <b>058/S6</b>	2155 ± 30	357 – 95 cal BC	-29.1
Poz-68736	Betula species 0.18g	Deposit beneath primary phase of stone enclosure wall (014). <b>063/S7</b>	2385 ± 30	728 – 395 cal BC	-27.0
Poz-68738	Salix sp 0.05g	Deposit beneath the second phase of stone enclosure wall (029). <b>065/S8</b>	2365 ± 30	537 – 387 cal BC	-29.1

### 2.1.6 Finds assemblage

The excavation at Scotsburn House recovered very few finds and these all came from the area between the roundhouse wall and the stone enclosure wall. One fragment of unidentified mammal animal bone was recovered from the cobbled surface (043) (Appendix A, Gillis) and pieces of burnt clay or daub from Context 049 perhaps suggest that wattle and daub fences were in the vicinity. Aside from these the only artefact recovered from the excavation was the stone basin or mortar which was set into the fine charcoal rich occupation deposit (049). This has been assessed by Dr Ewan Campbell (full report in Appendix A) who states that it may have been for food processing. Further considerations of its use are outlined below.

## 3 Phasing and interpretation

The small-scale archaeological excavation at Scotsburn House Dun allows for only preliminary interpretations to be made of what is evidently a highly complex multi-phase site. The results of the radiocarbon dating programme for Scotsburn are unsurprisingly frustrating in terms of constructing a chronological framework for the site and it is clear that further excavation and dating is required to begin this task in earnest. The sequence of radiocarbon dates does however show that there was activity on the site by the early to mid-first millennium BC and the extra-mural occupation was underway by the later first millennium BC.

The earliest radiocarbon dates all sit within the plateau in the calibration curve of 800 – 400 cal BC. These come from three samples of re-deposited natural sandy gravel, one located immediately below the roundhouse's flag foundations (731 – 399 cal BC Poz-68733), one beneath the primary phase of the stone enclosure wall (728 – 395 cal BC Poz-68736) and one below the secondary phase (537 – 387 cal BC Poz-68738). Whilst these do seem to indicate an early to mid-first millennium BC establishment for roundhouse and enclosure wall at Scotsburn caution is required. It is not clear where this re-deposited material derived from (it is certainly secondary but may even be a tertiary deposition of material) or the relationship between these layers and the walls (are these levelling layer placed immediately prior to the construction of these walls or the remains of an earlier occupation of the site?). As the stone enclosure wall is a secondary enclosure of the roundhouse, the samples taken from beneath the wall (728 – 395 cal BC Poz-68736; 537 – 387 cal BC Poz-68738) were of ground formally located between the roundhouse and Bank A which may have been previously occupied.

The earliest dates for Scotsburn can therefore only give a very broad *terminus post quem* for the construction of the stone enclosure wall and the roundhouse but do suggest that the site was occupied in the early to mid-first millennium BC. A *terminus ante quem* date for the construction of the roundhouse in the later first millennium BC comes from the primary occupation layer which lapped up against the roundhouse wall (353 – 57 cal BC Poz-68732), giving a very broad range for the date of its construction between 731 and 57 BC.

The primary enclosure of the roundhouse by the three concentric earthen banks and partially rock-cut ditches has not been comprehensively dated as part of this fieldwork. The later first millennium BC date retrieved from the basal deposit of ditch (357 – 95 cal BC Poz-68735) is very similar to the dates for the extra-mural activity between the roundhouse and the stone enclosure wall and, whilst it suggests that the main phase of external occupation fits into this period, it does not firmly date the construction of the ditch. The extra-mural activity located between the roundhouse and the stone enclosure wall can however clearly be dated to between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Unlike the problems encountered for the samples discussed above, the two dates derived for this settlement (353 – 57 cal BC Poz-68734; 355 – 58 cal BC Poz-68732) can be considered secure as they both came from carbonised short-lived barley grains within undisturbed deposits. The dating of the primary *in-situ* occupation deposit (045) within the curved wall structure (037) (355 – 58 cal BC Poz-

68732) indicates that this structure was in use at this time, whilst the layer (049) spread across the majority of the area and lapped up against the wall of the roundhouse, the columnar boulder, the curved structure (037) and its buttress (056) (353 – 57 cal BC Poz-68734) gives a broad *terminus ante quem* for the construction of these structures. The mortar stone and the east/west wall (032) and the cobbled surfaces (033 & 043) were all built onto layer (049), perhaps suggesting that it was a deliberately laid surface to level out the ground prior to the construction of this new phase.

The high percentage of carbonised grains within mixed hearth material was seen within these two deposits and, even more plentifully in the undated layer (035) overlying (049), suggesting that a similar activity was on-going for a considerable period in this area. Due to the absence of chaff and weed seeds within all of these charred plant assemblages it is likely that the grain within these deposits was fully processed and the cleaned charred grains may have been burnt during the drying process, accidentally during storage or during cooking. This small assemblage from Scotsburn appears to fit the emerging picture of agriculture in Iron Age Scotland. The majority of the grain was six-row barley, the dominant cereal crop seen across Scotland during this period (Boardman 1998, 160). Wheat/emmer wheat are lesser represented at Scotsburn and was a marginal crop in later prehistoric Scotland. As it is unlikely to have been grown this far north it was probably imported from the south and indicates that Scotsburn was a wealthy and well-connected settlement at this time.

It may be that the area immediately outside of the roundhouse was a yard for the drying and storage of grain. The curved wall with a flagged floor could be the narrow foundations for turf or wattle walled structure or enclosed yard associated with this activity. The large mortar set into the yard outside of the roundhouse may also illuminate the activities taking place in this area. Large hollowed stones are common within an Iron Age context and have been found in numbers on Atlantic roundhouses e.g. Howe, Bu and Gurness in Orkney; Jarlshof and Clickhimin in Shetland. Stones with flat bases or worn basins located by doorways are regarded as pivot stones whilst others with cut marks or double hollows have been interpreted as anvil stones (e.g. at Dun Mor Vaul - Mackie 1974, 135; at Gurness - Hedges 1987b, 78, 79, 130-137). The mortar at Scotsburn was however deliberately set into the surface of a probable yard suggesting that it may have had a different function. Large mortar stones have frequently been found set into the floors of rectangular Iron Age houses in western Denmark within food preparation areas (Webley 2008, 93). Similar to the



Scotsburn mortar these large stones have small round cavity's pecked into their upper surface. Webley (2008) states that they "seem ill-suited to grinding corn, and they may well instead have been employed to crush other foodstuffs, perhaps including salt" (ibid, 75). Is the mortar stone then evidence, alongside the burnt grain that this area was for food preparation and cooking?

#### **4 Discussion**

The massive 4.20 m thick-walled roundhouse is a complex Atlantic roundhouse with an intramural space within the wall. The date of its construction is unknown but, given the suite of radiocarbon dates obtained, is likely to be occupied by the mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. The architectural complexity of the roundhouse and its high quality construction, evident from the neat horizontally stacked stone core and the large coursed boulder outer wall with an even batter, differs significantly from the walls of the other roundhouses investigated as part of this research and may indicate that specialist stone masons were involved in its design and construction. Unlike the other composite-walled structures seen on the peninsula there seems to be no reason from the quality of its build why Scotsburn was not a multi-storey building. The thick-walls would also have ensured stability on the soft sandy gravel terrace (Shepherd 1994, 273) and the flagstone raft identified at the base of the wall may have been a constructional device for this purpose. Flagstone rafts have been identified below the foundation courses at other Atlantic roundhouses e.g. Old Scatness (Dockrill *et al* 2006, 102), Howe (Ballin-Smith 1994, 37) and St Boniface (Lowe 1998, 43), all of which were constructed onto soft underlying deposits such as sand and gravels. Evidence that these rafts continuing beyond the face of the wall, and maybe across the entire wall width, has been seen at the eroding wall section of Steiro in Orkney (Romankiewicz 2011, 92).

The roundhouse at Scotsburn is the focal feature within an elaborate and large-scale enclosure scheme which was enhanced over time with the construction of a massive stone enclosure wall and an external cluster of buildings and yards. The primary enclosure of a series of earthen banks and ditches was a monumental construction which would have taken considerable labour resources. Whether these features had a defensive purpose or were purely symbolic enclosures is unclear but they are certainly highly conspicuous. As the house itself is not located within a naturally defensive position, at the end of a valley and the

base of the surrounding hills, one could argue that they are symbolic barriers, boundaries which separate the house from the outside world and have to be passed through to enter into the community (Sharples 1998, 209). They are also evidently the outward display of the community's status and ownership over the land.

It is unclear whether the construction of the roundhouse and the tri-vallate enclosure scheme were separate or contemporary events but the location of the house at the very centre of the D-shaped enclosure looks to be a single planned enterprise. These banks and ditches appear to have been maintained over time, re-cut and shored up with stone slabs. The primary *in-situ* silting of the inner ditch with collapsed bank material dated to between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, suggests that the scheme was being well maintained into the later first millennium BC. The date of the construction or subsequent remodelling of the large and impressive stone wall built partially overlaying the inner-most bank is unknown. This new wall did not render the original enclosing works redundant and, if anything, enhanced its monumental statement by creating a higher inner rampart around the house. The wall may have been primarily built to create a new enclosed outdoor space but less prosaic explanations for its construction, such as a period of insecurity or a change in ownership, should also be considered (Dockrill *et al* 2005).

The new wall cut off the only opening into the site across the edge of the ravine and created a walled enclosure completely encircling the house. The area between the roundhouse and the new wall now functioned as a yard, with outbuildings and cobbled surfaces. Environmental evidence suggests that grain may have been dried or stored here. The scale of this processing, so key for understanding Scotsburn's economic role within the wider community, is not clear from this small excavation. Was Scotsburn a central storehouse for surplus goods such as grain and dairy gathered from surrounding dependent communities such as is seen at Old Scatness in Shetland (Dockrill and Bates 2005) or are we seeing smaller-scale production and cooking by the occupiers of the household?

The partially exposed curved wall with an internal flagged floor may be an outbuilding, the edge of a yard or even a domestic building. Thin-walled structures have been excavated beside a number of Atlantic roundhouses and the circular, oval and polygonal structures surrounding Howe Phase 7 and Midhowe in Orkney seem fairly similar to the curved wall at Scotsburn (Ballin-Smith 1994, 47 – 67). Another feature of many extra-mural settlements around Atlantic roundhouses is a narrow path around the foot of the roundhouse. This path

is often defined by a wall along its outer edge, with access to the yards and structures beyond gained through openings in the wall (e.g. on Orkney at Phase 7 at Howe - Ballin-Smith 1994, Illus 31-33; Gurness, Midhowe and Lingro -Hedges 1987c, Fig 2.6 and 2.7). The east/west wall which defines the outer edge of the cobbled surface adjacent to the roundhouse at Scotsburn looks very much like a section of similar walled pathway. Set into this cobbled surface was a columnar boulder, a feature frequently seen incorporated into the architecture of later prehistoric roundhouses, wheelhouses, souterrains and oblong galleried structures termed *wags* (e.g. the outbuildings at Yarrow and the wags at Langwell and Wag of Forse – Heald and Barber 2015, Figs 9.1 – 9.3; the wheelhouse at Udal – Crawford 2002, colour plate 14) These orthostats have usually been identified as structural supports for a roof and the location of the one at Scotsburn may suggest that the cobbled area contained lean-to structures against the wall of the roundhouse.

Concentric banks and ditches and thick stone walls are commonly seen enclosing Atlantic roundhouses and associated external complexes throughout the north Atlantic region, from Shetland to Sutherland. The use of large rock-cut ditches and earthen dumps or stone-faced banks is especially characteristic of enclosures in Shetland (Sharples 1998, 31) and a number of sites on the islands are morphologically very similar to Scotsburn e.g. Hoga Ness and Underhoull are both located within D-shaped concentric banks and ditches enclosures set against steep ravines (Figure 13) (Mackie 2007, 121, Fig 4.1). Large-scale or multiple enclosures and external activity around Atlantic roundhouses have traditionally been seen to peter out to the south of Caithness but as so little work has been undertaken in areas further south it is difficult to know if this is a true reflection of distribution. Visits by the author to un-surveyed Atlantic roundhouses on the Black Isle (e.g. Carn Mor, Dun Mor and Drummondreoch) identified elaborate enclosure schemes encircling each house (see Chapter 3). These sites appear to be smaller in scale than their northern counterparts, perhaps reflecting the smaller size of communities in the area due to the availability of fertile land (Sharples 1998, 209).

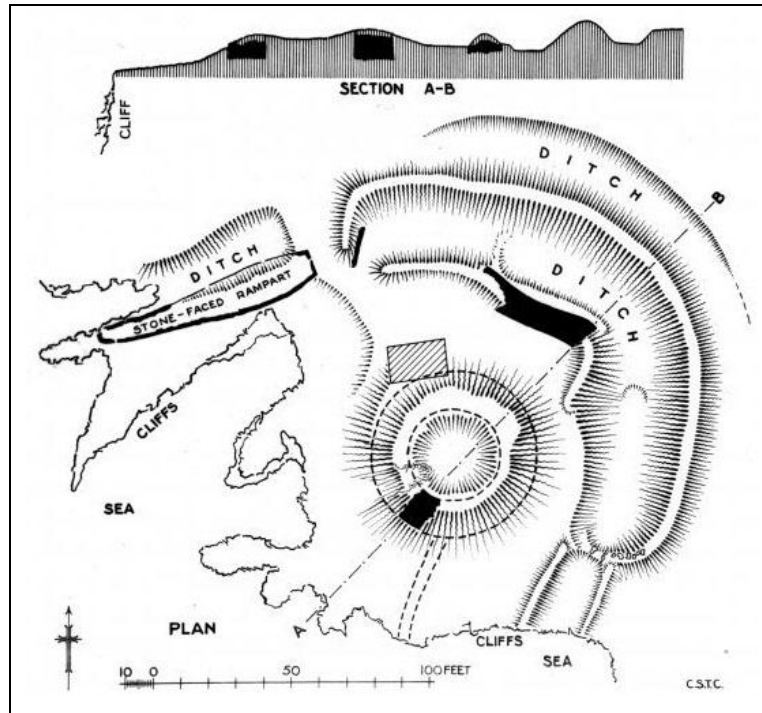


Figure 13 The complex Atlantic roundhouse at Hoga Ness, Unst, Shetland.  
Source: RCAHMS 1946c.

Excavation on Orkney have shown that these enclosures surround large village settlements, such as the massive wall and three ramparts and ditches at Gurness (Hedges 1987b) and the large rampart at Howe (Ballin-Smith 1994). Plans and photographs of excavations undertaken by the antiquarian Tress Barry demonstrate that a number of Caithness sites were equally impressive e.g. Keiss Road, Keiss harbour (Heald and Jackson 2001, Illus 2), Kilmster (Mackie 2007, 568) and Nybster (Ibid, 602), and recent work by the Caithness Archaeological Project has shown that both domestic dwellings and auxiliary buildings were present at Whitegate and Nybster (Heald and Jackson 2002).

Previous researchers have suggested that the development of Orcadian broch towers and ancillary settlements occurred during a single phase (Hedges 1987; 1990; Foster 1989; Barret and Foster 1991; Ballin-Smith 1994, 38-39) whilst others now consider that there is evidence for the later development of external settlements (e.g. Howe - Gilmour 2000 and Gurness and Midhowe - Mackie 1987; 1994). The external features surrounding the roundhouse at Scotsburn were certainly secondary to the construction of the house and the tri-vallate enclosure scheme as they were built after the stone enclosure wall had been erected. How long the roundhouse was extant for prior to this development is unknown but the construction of the stone wall appears to have signalled a new progressive phase for the

community at Scotsburn and from the site plan it seems that a substantial external complex was developed.

The site's location adjacent to a large chambered cairn should also be noted. Many later prehistoric settlement sites, especially Atlantic roundhouses, have strong associations with earlier funerary or settlement sites. It has been suggested that the close proximity or incorporation of earlier remains into a newly established site may have been undertaken to legitimise or enhance both the ownership of the land and the prestige or status of the builders (Hingley 1992, 16, 41-2). The development of Atlantic roundhouses overlying or adjacent to Neolithic chambered cairns can be seen in early structures on Orkney at Howe (Ballin Smith 1994), Pierowall (Sharples 1984), Quanterness (Renfrew 1979) and St Boniface (Lowe 1998). Whilst Scotsburn does not incorporate the chambered cairn to the east, it echoes its elevated prominent position on a terrace overlooking the land to the south and gives the impression of appropriating the land from the previously dominate funerary monument.

The monumental roundhouse at Scotsburn, enclosed by elaborate outworks and located in a strategic elevated position on fertile land at the very edge of the Strath, must have been a wealthy and dominate settlement in the region, likely a local centre for a powerful group for a considerable period of time. Its proximity at the foot of Cnoc An Duin, the largest hillfort in the region which overlooks the Strath and whole of the Tarbat peninsula, may indicate that these settlements were in some way linked, either as contemporary sites or by the builders of Scotsburn choosing to associated with the hill's former status by placing their settlement close by.

## **5 APPENDIX A**

### **5.1.1 Material culture**

**Stone basin** - Ewan Campbell, University of Glasgow

#### *Description*

Large water-worn boulder of Old Red Sandstone with roughly pecked basin in upper surface.

Boulder plano-convex, flat base. Basin oval 210 x 160 mm, 45mm deep. Inner surface irregular, no signs of wear. Surface of the boulder around the basin also pock-marked.

Overall size 430 x 370 x 135mm. Context 049. Figure 14.

### *Discussion*

It is not clear what the function of this basin was as it appears not to have been used, and is perhaps unfinished. It may have been intended for some kind of food processing, but this is speculative. Alternatively it could have been the first stage in the creation of a socket stone for a door post, as this requires a stable block to support the door post, but the oval shape mitigates against this explanation.

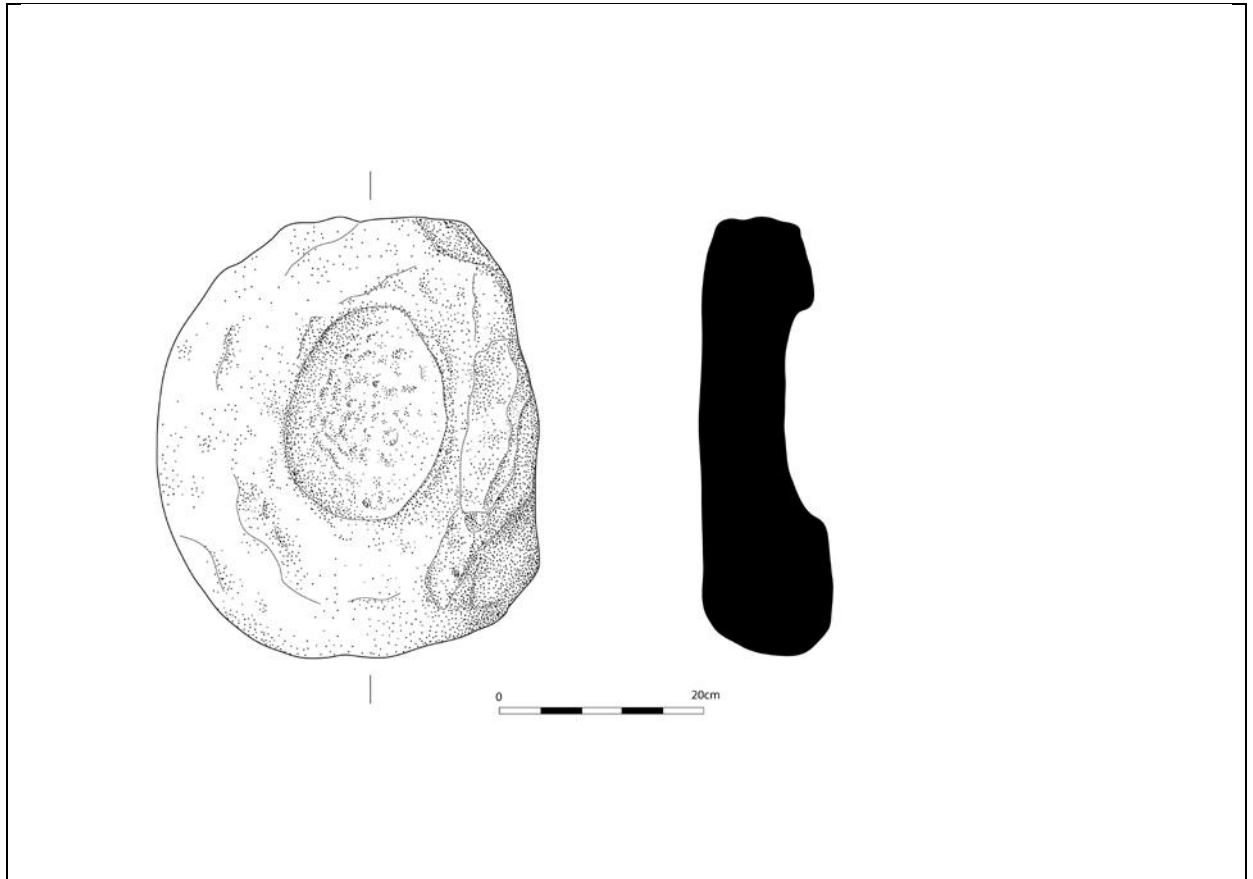


Figure 14 Stone basin/mortar stone

### **5.1.2 Carbonised plant macrofossils and charcoal**

**Susan Ramsay**

The complete botanical results are shown in the table below.

## SCOTSBURN

	Context	035	045	046	049	049	058	063	064	065
	Sample	002	005	003	004	010	006	007	009	008
	Description	charcoal rich occupation layer	floor of curvilinear structure	under outer wall of roundhouse	occupation layer beneath (035)	occupation layer beneath (035)	basal fill of ditch	deposit beneath repair of enclosure wall	occupation layer against enclosure wall	redeposited natural against enclosure wall
Volume of charcoal 1-4 mm		600ml	25ml	10ml	50ml	2.5ml	2.5ml	10ml	20ml	2.5ml
Volume of charcoal >4 mm		30ml	5ml	5ml	30ml	5ml	5ml	10ml	10ml	2.5ml
% cereal grain identified		10%	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Charcoal</b>	<b>Common name</b>									
<i>Alnus</i> cf <i>glutinosa</i>	alder	26 (2.76g)	6 (0.19g)	3 (0.06g)	32 (2.49g)	-	8 (0.22g)	4 (0.07g)	26 (1.10g)	-
<i>Betula</i> spp	birch	8 (0.78g)	3 (0.18g)	6 (0.19g)	19 (1.57g)	2 (0.08g)	-	4 (0.35g)	4 (0.25g)	2 (0.02g)
<i>Corylus</i> cf <i>avellana</i>	hazel	13 (1.13g)	1 (0.02g)	4 (0.26g)	7 (0.36g)	9 (1.25g)	8 (0.34g)	15 (0.59g)	18 (0.59g)	-
Ericales	heather type	9 (0.47g)	6 (0.47g)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> type	Scots pine type	1 (0.08g)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prunoideae	cherry type	-	5 (0.28g)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Quercus</i> spp	oak	20 (1.27g)	5 (0.28g)	1 (0.16g)	30 (3.63g)	-	-	-	5 (0.51g)	-
<i>Salix</i> spp	willow	14 (1.71g)	-	1 (0.15g)	2 (0.05g)	1 (0.02g)	1 (0.02g)	-	-	3 (0.10g)
<b>Carbonised seeds</b>										
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> var <i>vulgare</i>	hulled six row barley	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> sl	barley	74	36	-	25	4	-	-	-	-
cf <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> sl	cf barley	63	38	-	22	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Triticum</i> cf <i>dicoccum</i>	cf emmer wheat	23	17	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
cf <i>Triticum</i> spp	cf wheat	42	26	-	15	1	-	-	-	-
Cereal indet	indeterminate cereal	719	405	1	243	20	-	-	-	-
<b>Carbonised seeds</b>										
<i>Corylus avellana</i> nutshell frag	hazel nutshell frag	-	-	6 (0.09g)	3 (0.05g)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Misc</b>										
Bone	bone	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2 Scotsburn carbonised plant macrofossils and charcoal

### **Fragments selected for AMS dating**

Context	Sample	Description	AMS potential
035	002	charcoal rich occupation layer	Salix sp (<20 rings 0.20g) Hordeum vulgare (x10 grains-0.10g)
045	005	floor of curvilinear structure	Prunoideae (<20 rings 0.07g) Hordeum vulgare (x10 grains-0.10g)
046	003	under outer wall of roundhouse	Salix sp (<20 rings 0.15g) Corylus avellana nutshell (0.02g)
049	004	occupation layer beneath (035)	Alnus cf glutinosa (<20 rings 0.28g) Hordeum vulgare (x10 grains-0.10g)
049	010	occupation layer beneath (035)	Corylus cf avellana (<20 rings 0.55g) Salix sp (<20 rings 0.02g)
058	006	basal fill of ditch	Corylus cf avellana (<20 rings 0.10g) Salix sp (<20 rings 0.02g)
063	007	deposit beneath repair of enclosure wall	Corylus cf avellana (<20 rings 0.12g) Betula sp (<20 rings 0.18g)
064	009	occupation layer against enclosure wall	Alnus cf glutinosa (<20 rings 0.07g) Betula sp (<20 rings 0.07g)
065	008	redeposited natural against enclosure wall	Salix sp (<20 rings 0.05g) Salix sp (<20 rings 0.04g)

### **Discussion**

Cereal grains were present in several of the contexts, but context (035) contained large numbers of cereal grains and so only 10% of the total volume of cereal grains was analysed. The majority of the cereal grains are too poorly preserved to be further identifiable, which suggests either burning at high temperatures or repeated episodes of burning. Both barley and wheat (probably emmer wheat) were identified, but the large percentage of indeterminate grains makes it difficult to determine which of these cereal types was most common or whether (as it appears from the identifiable grains) they appear in roughly equal quantities. The large numbers of cereal grains recorded from contexts (035), (045) and (049) tend to suggest either burning of stored grain or accidental burning during the final stages of processing. There was no evidence for carbonised weeds or chaff, which suggests the grain was at the fully cleaned stage when it was burned.

The charcoal assemblages were generally very mixed with alder, birch, hazel, heather type, Scots pine type, cherry type, oak and willow all represented. There is no evidence for selection of charcoal types for particular purposes and the assemblages look like general hearth waste from fuel collected in the local area.



### 5.1.3 Faunal remains

Rosalind Gillis, Muséum national d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris

Scotsburn							
43		med mammal	tibia		1		

Table 3 Faunal remains from Scotsburn

## 6 APPENDIX B - REGISTERS

### CONTEXT REGISTER SDE14

Context No	Descriptive interpretation	Relates to cut/structure
001	Turf and topsoil	
002	Rubble wall collapse	
003	VOID	
004	VOID	
005	Rubble wall collapse	
006	Rubble – wall collapse	
007	Wall and bank collapse	
008	Rubble collapse	
009	Brown silty sand with rubble – collapse/abandonment	
010	Rubble wall collapse	
011	Turf layer – levelling	
012	Rubble collapse on roundhouse wall	055
013	Primary abandonment – brown sand and rubble	
014	Wall – repair/rebuild of enclosure wall (029)	029
015	Wall – repair/revetting for wall (014)	029
016	Rubble collapse	
017	Roundhouse wall core	055
018	Burnt organic layer against enclosure (029)	
019	Metalled surface – road with repairs	
020	Layer overlying road surface (019) – compact and iron panned	
021	VOID	
022	Rubble on wall (029) – slumping/displaced core of wall	029
023	Turfy layer beneath rubble collapse	
024	Bank – redeposited natural from ditch [052]	052
025	Bank – redeposited natural from ditches [052] and [041]	041
026	Inner ditch fill – collapse of revetting (034)	052
027	VOID	
028	Occupation layer between walls (032) and (037)	
029	Primary phase of enclosure wall around roundhouse	029
030	Occupation within building (037)	037
031	Core of roundhouse wall = more voided version of (017)	055
032	Linear wall base parallel to roundhouse wall	
033	Occupation between (032) and (037)	
034	Inner ditch – revetting of bank after recut of ditch	052

<b>Context No</b>	<b>Descriptive interpretation</b>	<b>Relates to cut/structure</b>
035	Levelling/occupation between (032) and (037)	
036	Revetting for bank (025)	
037	Curvilinear wall	
038	Outer ditch – upper fill	041
039	Outer ditch – fill	041
040	Outer ditch – basal fill	041
041	Outer ditch - cut	041
042	Occupation within the interior of 037	037
043	Cobbled surface between roundhouse wall and (032)	
044	Primary phase of road	
045	Turfy occupation within (037)	037
046	Redeposited natural/levelling for built of roundhouse	
047	Revetting for bank (024)	
048	Bank built against (047)	
049	Occupation layer contemporary with (037)	
050	= 049	
051	Cut for monolith	
052	Cut of enclosure ditch – Inner ditch	052
053	Layer against face of (029)	
054	Flags within (037)	037
055	Outer wall of roundhouse	055
056	Rough rubble wall parallel with (029)	
057	Re-cut of 052	052
058	Basal fill of ditch 052	052
059	Fill of ditch 052	052
060	Upper fill of ditch 052 – fill of re-cut 057	052
061	Slumping of bank 025 – fill of ditch 052	052
062	Monolith stone	051
063	Occupation beneath wall (014)	
064	Occupation beneath wall (056), against wall (029)	
065	Redeposited natural	
066	Packing stones for monolith	051
067	Fill for monolith setting	051
068	Leveliing for the construction of (014)	
069	Turf capping on top of recut 057	052
070	Upper fill/slumping from bank	052
071	Layer built up on top of wall (056)	
072	Layer which (056) is built on	
073	Slumping from bank 024/fill Of 052	052
074	VOID	
075	Collaspe of 029 enclosure wall	

**PHOTO REGISTER SDE14**

<b>Photo No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facing</b>
1	Deturfing	
2	Deturfing	
3	Deturfing	
4	Pre-ex (002)	SE
5	Pre-ex (002)	NW
6	Pre-ex (002)	NW
7	Pre-ex Ditch (051) and banks (024/25)	SW
8	Pre-ex Ditch (051) and banks (024/25)	E
9	Pre-ex Ditch (051) and banks (024/25)	NE
10	Working shots	
11	Mid-ex Ditch (052)	SE
12	Mid-ex Ditch (052)	NW
13	Pre-ex (005)	NW
14	Pre-ex (006)	SE
15	Pre-ex (006)	NW
16	Working shots	
17	Pre-ex (008)	NW
18	Pre-ex (008)	SE
19	Pre-ex (008)	NE
20	Rubble (009)	SE
21	Working shots	
22	Rubble overlying roundhouse wall (012)	NW
23	Rubble overlying roundhouse wall (012)	SW
24	Rubble overlying roundhouse wall (012)	SE
25	Mid-ex (008)	NNW
26	Mid-ex (008)	NNW
27	Mid-ex (008)	NNW
28	Mid-ex (008)	SSE
29	Mid-ex (008)	SSE
30	Mid-ex (008)	SSE
31	Mid-ex (008)	SW
32	Mid-ex (008)	SW
33	Mid-ex (008)	SW
34	Mid-ex (012)	NW
35	Mid-ex (012)	NE
36	Mid-ex (012)	SW
37	Wall (014)	SSE
38	Wall (014)	SSE
39	Wall (014)	SSE
40	Pre-ex (011)	SSE
41	Pre-ex (011)	SSE
42	Pre-ex (011)	SSE
43	Pre-ex (011)	ESE
44	Pre-ex (011)	NNW
45	Pre-ex (018)	NW

Photo No.	Description	Facing
46	Pre-ex (010)	NW
47	Working shots	
48	Possible Hearth feature? – not a hearth feature	SE
49	Possible Hearth feature? – not a hearth feature	E
50	Possible Hearth feature? – not a hearth feature	NW
51	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	SSE
52	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	WNW
53	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	NNW
54	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	NNW
55	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	ESE
56	Pre-ex (019) and (020)	ESE
57	Core of roundhouse wall (017)	SW
58	Core of roundhouse wall (017)	NW
59	Pre-ex (021)	SSE
60	Pre-ex (022)	SW
61	Pre-ex (022) wall rubble	NE
62	Pre-ex (022) wall rubble	NW
63	Pre-ex (022) wall rubble	NW
64	Pre-ex (023)	NW
65	Pre-ex (023)	SE
66	Aerial shots	
67	Working shots	
68	Road (019)	SSW
69	Road (019)	ENE
70	Road (019)	SE
71	Road (019)	NW
72	Working shots	
73	Banks (024/5) and ditch (052) Pre-ex	W
74	Pre-ex (026) & (027)	SE
75	Bank, revetting and collapse (024/027/026)	SE
76	Bank (025)	NW
77	Bank (025)	SE
78	Bank (025)	W
79	Bank (024)	W
80	Pre-ex of banks (024/25)	NW
81	Pre-ex (028)	NW
82	Pre-ex (028)	SE
83	Mid-ex (025)	NW
84	Mid-ex (025)	NW
85	Mid-ex (025)	NW
86	Mid-ex (025)	NE
87	Aerials	
88	Pre-ex (033)	SE
89	Pre-ex of revetting (034)	SE
90	Section of roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017)	NW
91	Section of roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and	SW

Photo No.	Description	Facing
	(017)	
92	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SW
93	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SW
94	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SW
95	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SW
96	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SSW
97	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SE
98	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	SE
99	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	WNW
100	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	Various
101	Roundhouse wall after cleaning (031) and (017) and (055)	ESE
102	Pre-ex (034)	SW
103	Pre-ex (035)	SE
104	Pre-ex (035)	NW
105-114	VOID	NW
115	Mid-ex (036)	ENE
116	Pre-ex (029) with (014/15)	WSW
117	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	WSW
118	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	WSW
119	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	W
120	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	WSW
121	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	WSW
122	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	ENE
123	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	ENE
124	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	ENE
125	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	SSE
126	Roundhouse wall (031/017)	NW
127	Pre-ex (025)	SE
128	Working shots	
129	Ditch (041) Section	NE
130	Ditch (041) Section	NE
131	Pre-ex (042)	NE
132	Pre-ex (042)	SW
133	Pre-ex (042)	NW
134	Pre-ex (043) - cobbles	SE
135	Pre-ex (043) - cobbles	NW
136	Pre-ex road (044)	NE

Photo No.	Description	Facing
137	Pre-ex road (044)	SE
138	Pre-ex road (044)	
139	Enclosure wall (029) – showing internal hearting	SE
140	Enclosure wall (029)	SE
141	Cobbled surface (043) during sectioning	ENE
142	Cobbled surface (043) during sectioning	SE
143	Cobbled surface (043) during sectioning	WSW
144	Pre-ex (045)	NE
145	Pre-ex (045)	NW
146	Section through cobbles (043), showing (046) and monolith (051)	SE
147	Section through cobbles (043), showing (046) and monolith (051)	ENE
148	Elevation of revetting (047)	NW
149	Elevation of revetting (047)	NW
150	Slot through (044) showing (047)	NW
151	Slot through (044) showing (047)	Vertical
152	Slot through (044) showing (047)	NE
153	SW facing section of ditch (052)	NE
154	SW facing section of ditch (052)	SW
155	SW facing section of ditch (052)	SW
156	Flagged surface (054) within wall (037)	NW
157	Flagged surface (054) within wall (037)	NW
158	Flagged surface (054) within wall (037)	ENE
159	Flagged surface (054) within wall (037)	SE
160	Flagged surface (054) within wall (037)	WSW
161	Pre-ex (053)	NW
162	Pre-ex (053)	SE
163	Stone wall base (056)	NW
164	Stone wall base (056)	ENE
165	Stone wall base (056)	SE
166	Stone wall base (056)	WSW
167	VOID	
168	VOID	
169	VOID	
170	Trench from roundhouse wall	NW
171	Trench from roundhouse wall	NW
172	Trench from roundhouse wall	NW
173	Trench from ditch (041)	SE
174	Trench from ditch (052)	SE
175	Trench from revetting (047)	SE
176	Trench from roundhouse wall (055)	NW
177	Trench from roundhouse wall (055)	NW
178	General shots of roundhouse as earthwork	
179	Aerials	
180	Mid-ex (056)	SE
181	Ditch (052) and re-cut (057)	NE

Photo No.	Description	Facing
182	Ditch (052) and re-cut (057)	SE
183	Ditch (052) and re-cut (057)	SE
184	Ditch (052) and re-cut (057)	SE
185	Ditch (052) and re-cut (057)	SE
186	NW facing elevation of roundhouse wall (055)	SE
187	SW facing section of trench	NE
188	SW facing section of trench	NE
189	SE facing section of trench	NW
190	SE facing section of trench	NW
191	NE facing section of trench	SW
192	Pre-ex (063)	NE
193	Post-ex of trench	N
194	Post-ex of ditch (052)	NE
195	Elevation of (029), (014) and (015)	SE
196	Post-ex of sondage and (056)	SW
197	Post-ex of sondage and (056)	NW
198	Pre-ex of (068)	NE
199	Pre-ex of (068)	S
200	Pre-ex of (068)	S
201	Section through (063) under (014)	S
202	Post-ex of (037) and (054)	
203	Photos for stitching	
204	Panoramas	Various
205	Elevation of roundhouse wall (055)	SW
206	Elevation of roundhouse wall (055)	SW
207	Elevation of roundhouse wall (055)	SW
208	Section of trench between roundhouse and enclosure	E
209	Section of trench between roundhouse and enclosure	ENE
210	Section of trench between roundhouse and enclosure	NE
211	Backfilled trench	NW
212	Backfilled trench	SE
213	Backfilled trench	SW
214	Pre-ex (013)	SW

#### DRAWING REGISTER SDE14

Drawing No.	Description	Type	Scale
001	Pre-ex of trench deturfed – north	P	
002	Pre-ex of trench deturfed – south	P	
003	Pre-ex (008)	P	
004	Pre-ex (012)	P	
005	Pre-ex (008)	P	
006	Pre-ex rubble (009) and (013)	P	
007	Pre-ex (011)	P	
008	Pre-ex (016)	P	

<b>Drawing No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Scale</b>
009	Pre-ex (010)	P	
010	Pre-ex (018)	P	
011	VOID		
012	Pre-ex (017) roundhouse wall core	P	
013	Layer over road pre-ex (020)	P	
014	Pre-ex (013) rubble	P	
015	VOID		
016	Pre-ex rubble (022)	P	
017	Pre-ex (023)	P	
018	Pre-ex road surface (019)	P	
019	Pre-ex bank (025) and revetting (026)	P	
020	VOID		
021	Pre-ex (028)	P	
022	Pre-ex of enclosure wall (029), (014) and (015)	P	
023	Pre-ex (033)	P	
024	Pre-ex (034)	P	
025	Roundhouse wall with (017) and (031) and sondage	P	
026	Pre-ex (035)	P	
027	Overlay of Plan 022 showing phasing of enclosure wall	P	
028	SW facing section of ditch (041)	S	
029	Cobbled surface (043)	P	
030	Pre-ex (042)	P	
031	SE facing elevation of (047) revetting	S	
032	Pre-ex of road (044)	P	
033	Composite plan of trench – from roundhouse wall to enclosure wall	P	
034	SW facing section of trench	S	
035	Pre-ex (045)	P	
036	Elevation of roundhouse wall (055)	S	
037	Pre-ex (056)	P	
038	SW facing section ditch (052)	S	
039	NW facing elevation of wall (014)	S	
040	NW facing elevation of wall (029)	S	
041	Post-ex plan of trench	P	
042	NE facing section of sondage against SE face of (029)	S	
043	SE facing elevation of wall (029)	S	
044	SW facing section of trench	S	
045	NE facing elevation of (037)	S	
046	SW facing section of trench	S	
047	SW facing section of trench	S	
048	SE facing elevation of (029)	S	



#### SAMPLE REGISTER SDE14

Sample No.	Context No.	Description
1	028	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts - occupation/daub/charcoal
2	035	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts - charcoal
3	046	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts - under roundhouse wall
4	049	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts - occupation
5	045	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts – on top of flags
6	058	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts – basal fill of ditch (052)
7	063	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts – dating of wall (014)
8	065	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts – dating of wall (029)
9	064	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts – dating of wall (029)
10	049	Dating/artefacts/ecofacts - daub

#### FINDS REGISTER SDE14

Context No.	Material	Description
049	ceramic	Daub
043	Animal bone	one
049	sandstone	Mortar/Knocking Stone

## 7 PUBLICATION PROPOSAL

### Academic publication

It is proposed that the results of the excavation be incorporated with the other on-going excavations of prehistoric settlement sites on the Tarbat Peninsula. This work may then be published as a stand-alone article on the settlement archaeology of the Tarbat Peninsula or will be incorporated into the wider Archaeology of Fortriu publication as a monograph or a journal article.

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