

**Report of Archaeological Watching Brief
24th July 2002
Moril Mhor, Tomatin, Highland
NH 80436 / 28378**

**By
Stuart Farrell
B.A A.I.F.A F.S.A.Scot.
August 2002**

Introduction

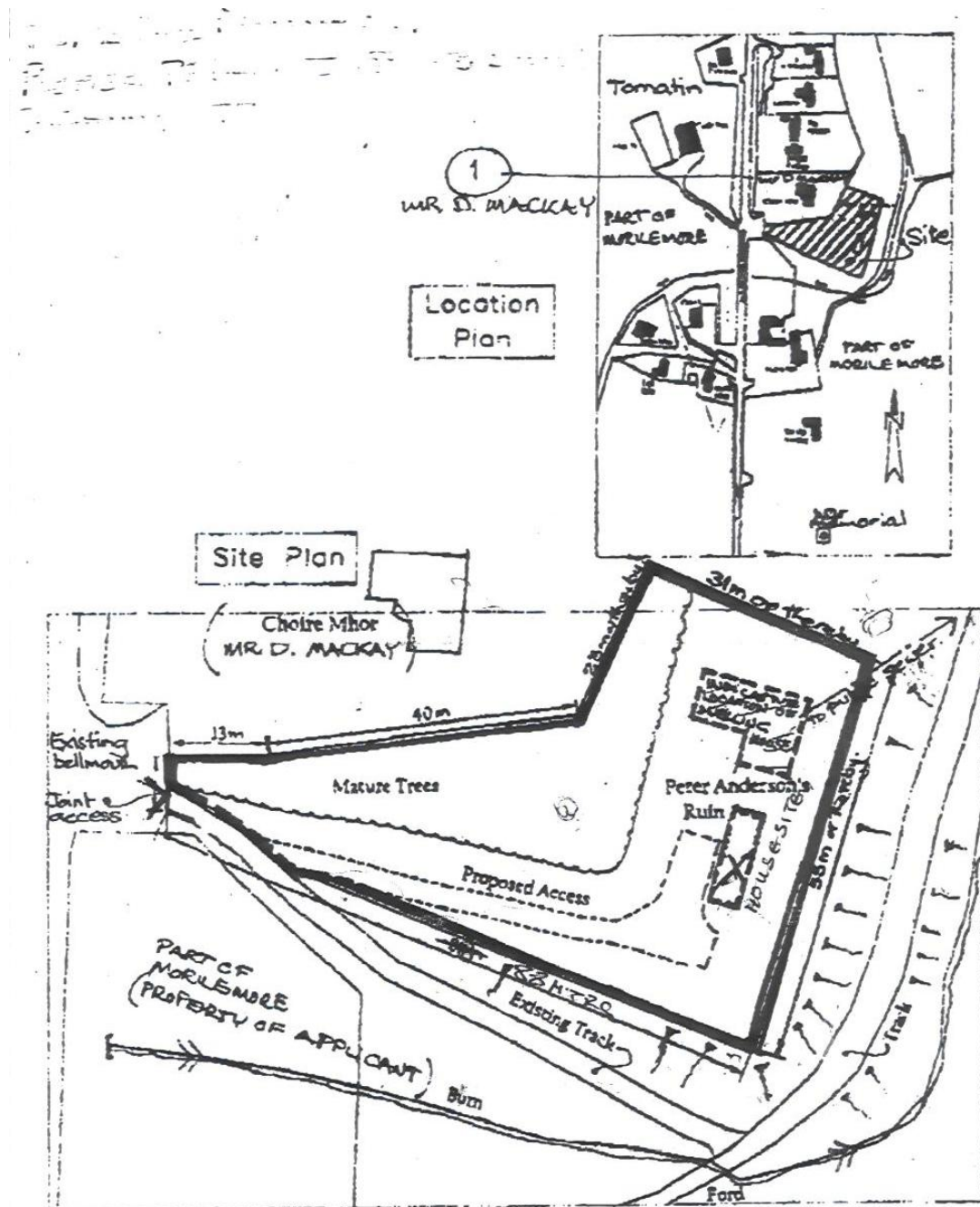
This report is for an archaeological watching brief conducted on behalf of Mr. K Cruickshank by the author for a house plot at Tomatin.

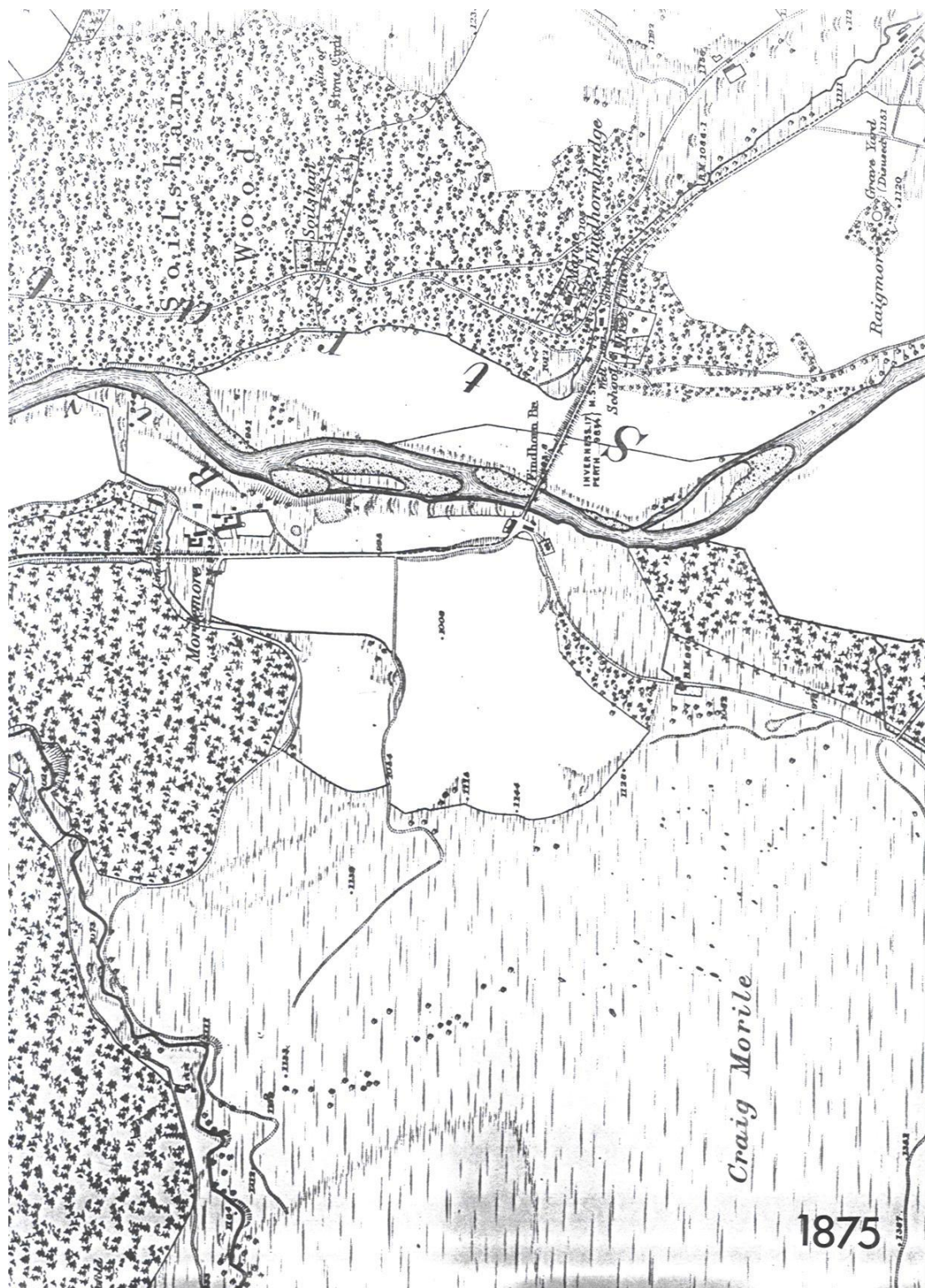
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their help during the work :

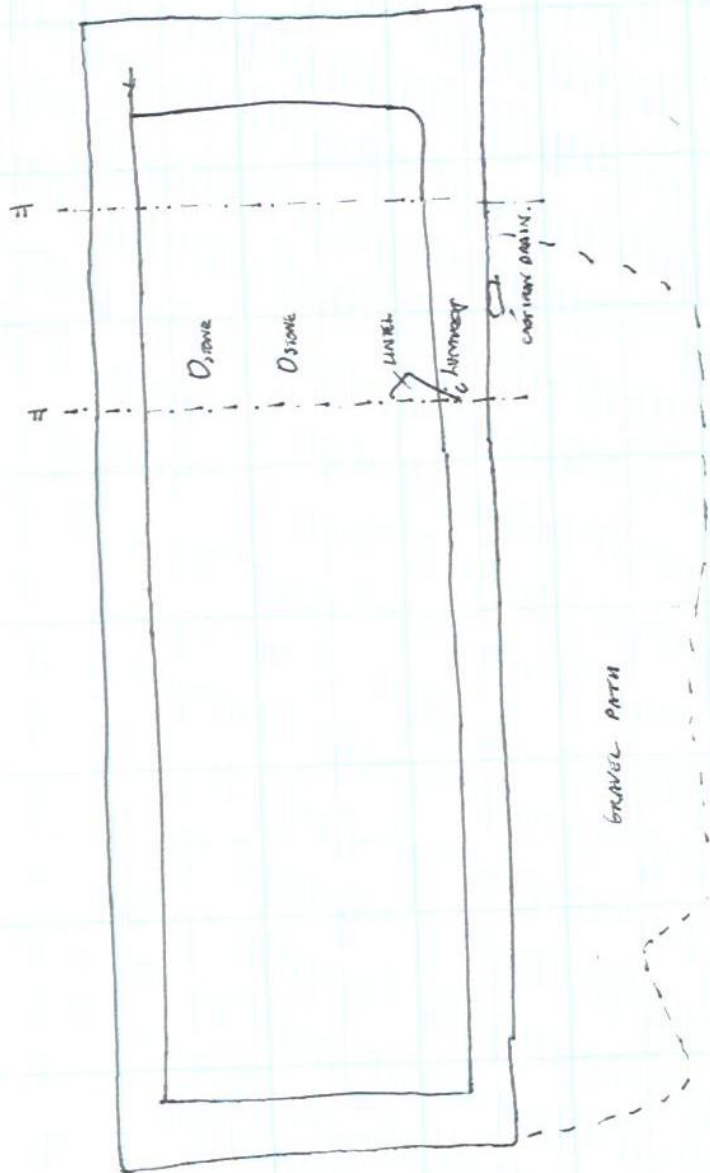
- Mr. K Cruickshank;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

Location





↑ N
(SITE)



Scale : 1:100

Historical Background

The origins of the croft are unknown; it is known that the croft was standing in 1870 (Shown as roofed on 1st edition OS map of 1875 [surveyed 1870] and is also shown as roofed on 2nd edition OS map of 1904 [revised 1900] though not named. (Site highlighted in red on map extracts) Although named Peter Anderson's Croft no information was available locally or in Highland Council Archive's to why this name is attached. No maps of a pre 1875 date of a good scale are available locally. Site lies to the north of Morilemore Farm.

Objectives

To conduct a watching brief on the excavation of the development to record those features revealed by excavation work. A copy of the specification provided by Highland Council Archaeology Unit is enclosed.

Methodology

A monitoring was made of the removal of topsoil and subsoil's to a maximum depth of 300mm for the removal of the croft and part of the surrounding area. A back-acting machine with a straight edged bucket removed soil. Features in and around the croft were cleaned by hand.

Weather on the day of work (24th July 2002) was slightly overcast but bright.

Watching Brief Investigation

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with accepted professional archaeological standards as published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999). Over the construction period a suitably qualified archaeologist was on site to carry out observations and assessment of the area affected by the excavation works.

Results

Although most of the site had been cleared before the author was on site, the croft had been left intact. An inspection of the area of excavation already machined revealed that the croft lay to the east edge of a steep bank on very rough ground with the ground dropping sharply to the river.

The croft was revealed to be rectangular in plan aligned N-S with no sign of any internal division and no sign of access, though machining revealed a gravel path along its E side stopping at the NE, path was up to 1.3m wide and of 8m in length and to a depth of 30mm. House is 14.7m NS by 5.2m EW with walls 0.6m thick and standing to a maximum height of 0.6m (particularly at N gable). Built of rubble, both of rounded and quarried stone. Finds made in topsoil of white glazed pottery and glass of a late 19th century date (not retained). House has no sign of drain to south end and likely had no byre.

Trial trench made through the house E-W (machine cut then hand cleaned) revealed a beaten earth floor with partial remains of hearth to NW corner of the

house. Section through walls revealed that remaining stone was only 1 course high of 0.2m. Find at eastern edge wall of a beaten clay pad (approximately 0.4m x 0.3m) with a large flat stone situated above in position of entrance, likely to be threshold. Running along the outside edge of wall was revealed a section of cast-iron pipe functioning as a drain to keep water off threshold. Find made of occasional medium sized flat stones in beaten earth possibly as flooring.

Removal of croft structure by machine to south again revealed a beaten earth floor but no indication of any internal division or internal fittings for posts or crucks. Again indication of drain along the east side of the building, as noted above, was revealed.

With no indication of a byre being found and that the surrounding area is limited in area and quality it is likely that this building was possibly a farm labourer's cottage associated with Morilemore Farm, that lies to the south.

Recommendations

No recommendations with regards to this project are to be proposed.

Archive

Notebook of results is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh. A set of colour slides showing the progress of the work has been deposited with Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record.

References

IFA (1999) By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.

Ordnance Survey Maps sheet 32 Inverness-shire of 1875 and 1904.

Stuart Farrell
39a Park Street
Fishertown
Nairn
IV12 4PP

Appendix 1 – Details of Slides

- 1 – View of croft facing NE.
- 2 – View of rear of croft facing N.
- 3 – View of croft facing N.
- 4 – View of croft facing S.
- 5 – View of croft facing SE.
- 6 – View of croft facing E.
- 7 – View of croft facing NE.
- 8 – View of gravel path to E side of croft facing N – scales 1m.
- 9 – ibid but facing S.
- 10 – Detail of internal and external wall of croft facing N.
- 11 – Internal view of croft facing N – scales 1m.
- 12 – ibid.
- 13 – View of croft facing SW – scale 1m.
- 14 – Detail of N gable of croft facing SW.
- 15 – Section through croft facing E.
- 16 – ibid – scales 1m.
- 17 – ibid but facing W.
- 18 – ibid.
- 19 – Detail of possible hearth facing W – scale 0.5m.
- 20 – Detail of cast-iron drain by threshold facing N – scale 0.5m.
- 21 – Detail of clay pad and threshold stone facing S – scale 0.5m.
- 22 – ibid.
- 23 – View of removal of croft at S end facing W.
- 24 – View of sections through croft facing NNW.
- 25 – ibid but facing SE.
- 26 – ibid but facing E.
- 27 – View of hearth upon removal of croft facing W.