

**Report of Archaeological Desktop &  
Walkover Survey  
Fortrose Water Mains Renewal Project  
NH 7195/5617 - NH 7334/5725**

Client: Halcrow Group Ltd on behalf of Scottish Water

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September 2003**

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Stuart Farrell was commissioned by Halcrow Group Ltd in September 2003 to undertake an archaeological desktop and walkover survey for the Fortrose Water Mains Renewal Project (NH 7195/5617 to NH 7334/5725).*

*Work revealed one unrecorded archaeological site of a former farm.*

*Recommendations have been made for a watching brief to be conducted when work is undertaken within the town of Fortrose due to it being a medieval burgh and that the proposed works lie close to the Cathedral.*

## **1. Introduction**

This report is for an archaeological desktop and walkover survey conducted for Halcrow Group Ltd on behalf of Scottish Water by the author for the Fortrose Water Mains Renewal Project, Highland.

The walkover survey was conducted on September 17<sup>th</sup> 2003.

## **2. Acknowledgements**

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

- Mr. A Barnett, of Halcrow Group Ltd;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit;
- Staff of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland;
- Staff of the National Monuments Record of Scotland;
- Staff of Highland Council Archives;
- Staff of the National Library of Scotland, Map room.

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**Figure 1: General Survey Location 1: 50,000**



### **3. Objectives**

To conduct a desktop survey to the development area to record those features that would be affected by the new proposed water renewals scheme. This survey to follow those guidelines as proposed by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 1999) and to follow the enclosed specification as provided by Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

### **4. Archaeological Survey**

#### **Desktop & Walkover Results**

A desktop survey was conducted using the following sources:

- Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record;
- National Monuments Record of Scotland, Edinburgh;
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland – aerial photograph collection;
- National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (Maps);
- Highland Council Archives;
- Inverness Library.

Both the aerial photography and the map coverage were limited to the area of interest. Map coverage was also limited as the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of 1871 was almost the same as the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 1905 and little survey work has been carried out in detail in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the next edition being late 1960's.

Aerial photographs, was limited due to scale with cover age being too high to identify any archaeological features, only open fields visible outside the burgh.

The following 7 archaeological sites were to be found on the route or close to the pipeline (proposed new pipelines are marked in red on the accompanying maps with sites numbered).

HSMR – Highland Sites and Monuments Record  
NMRS - National Monuments Record of Scotland  
N/a – not available

Recommendations are given after each site.

#### **Archaeological Background**

Currently little archaeological work has been undertaken in the burgh. The following projects have been undertaken in the vicinity:

- NH 7270/5660 (to the SE) Union Street - work by SUAT in 1993 (SUAT, 1993) 2 trenches revealed subsoil to an average depth of 1.3m onto sand though only 18m<sup>2</sup> was excavated. Only find was of demolition material and some white glazed pottery of no earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- NH 7275/5671 (to the E) 69-71 & 73 High Street – work by SUAT in 2001 (SUAT, 2001) 6 trenches revealed no features earlier than 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century with only 1 sherd of medieval pottery recovered from topsoil.
- NH 7259/5660 (to the W) Tavern Lane – work by Marjorie Kenworthy (Kenworthy, 2001) work around former store (with lintel with date of 1683) revealed 3 features that were excavated and named as pits. Finds included medieval pottery and a silver penny with a possible 14<sup>th</sup> century date.

Archaeological work to date shows that there are some earlier deposits to be found in the burgh though work has been limited.

1 – Ness House, Fortrose  
HSMR – NH75NW 176  
NMRS – NH75NW 211  
Grid Ref: NH 73788/56584  
Type – Poorhouse

Status – Listed B Building

Noted in listed building information of 'Designed by William Lawrie 1859, large H-plan block, addition of circa 1866. Now five flats'.

Walkover reveals building private flats with former lodge house to W also private house's.

*No recommendations to be made, site should be unaffected by proposed works.*

Top: View of former Poorhouse facing NW.

Right: View of former Lodge facing N.



## 2 – Fortrose Cathedral

HSMR – NH75NW 1

NMRS – NH75NW 10

Grid Ref: NH

Type – Cathedral

Status – Scheduled Ancient Monument

Noted in HSMR and NMRS of 'The cathedral of Bishops of Ross, dedicated to SS Peter and Curitan, was transferred from Rosemarkie to Fortrose about 1235. Of building of this period only the undercroft of the Chapter house remains; the upper storey of which was rebuilt in 19th century as a Courthouse. All other remains date apparently from late 14th and early 15th centuries and consist of the vaulted S aisle of nave, and bell-tower. The ground plan was recovered c1870 by an excavation by H.M. Commissioners of Woods & Forests. The cathedral fell into disrepair about the time of the Reformation, but was partially repaired in 1615 and by 1649 was not very ruinous. A tradition says Cromwell subsequently removed most of masonry.

Noted by Ordnance Survey in 1966 of 'The remains of cathedral are as described above. The area of the nave is defined by shale and only a few base stones of buttresses remain. The graveyard to S. is still used occasionally, the extant portion of the Cathedral has recently been re-roofed'.

Kirkdale Archaeology carried out a series of excavations and a watching brief in February and March 1996. The aim of the project was to establish whether the landscaped layout presently in place accurately reflects location of buried elements of the cathedral structure. The extent of surviving remains was patchy, with noticeably superior masonry revealed towards W end of the site, perhaps indicating the assumed two-phased construction programme between the nave and the choir.'

Site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (see area marked in green on drawing).

Churchyard enclosed 1825.

*Area around cathedral to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

Below: View of Cathedral facing S.





**3 – Mercat Cross, Fortrose**

HSMR – NH75NW 9

NMRS – NH75NW 11

Grid Ref: NH 72592/56541

Type – Mercat Cross

Status – Listed B

Noted in HSMR and NMRS of 'This is the market cross at Fortrose. Its head has been lost and the remains are now inserted in a circular stone slab in the pavement. An iron ring is attached near the base. This was possibly formerly used as a means of punishment'. Noted by Ordnance Survey in 1966 of 'A market cross, octagonal in section, surviving to a height of 2.6m is as described, except that the iron ring has been removed'.

Cross by corner of road, possibly moved from original location.

*Area around cross to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

Below: View of Cross facing E.





**4 – Chapter House, Fortrose**  
HSMR – NH75NW 90  
NMRS – NH75NW 10  
Grid Ref: NH 72738/56536  
Type – Chapter House  
Status – Listed A Building  
Noted in HSMR and NMRS as site 2.

*Area around cathedral to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

Below: View of Chapter House facing N.



**5 – Fortrose**  
HSMR – NH75NW 25  
NMRS – NH75NW 75  
Grid Ref: NH 720/560  
Type – Burgh  
The origins of Fortrose relate to the Cathedral of Ross that was removed from nearby Rosemarkie to Fortrose c1240, the church being the chief benefactor of the Earls of Ross. (Alston, 1999) James II united Fortrose with the village of Rosemarkie in 1445. Granted a share in the burgh of Rosemarkie in 1455 becoming a Royal burgh in its own right in 1590 and being annexed to Rosemarkie in 1592 (Gifford, 1992). An Act of Parliament by James VI ratified its right as a Royal burgh in 1661.

*Parts of the burgh to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

**6 – Fortrose**  
HSMR – NH75NW 9  
NMRS – NH75NW 9  
Grid Ref: NH 7256/5651  
Type – Bishop's Palace  
Noted in HSMR and NMRS of 'Built 1497-1507 and alleged to have been removed in circa.1650. Actual location unknown with Ordnance Survey putting location at a field named 'the Precints' where foundations have been found. Local studies in 1912 put the site closer to the Mercat Cross, which are confirmed by aerial photographs of 1952.

Noted by OS in 1966 that 'impeding building operations may confirm this' (but no note of the results).'

Site possibly lies in ground of no.16 High Street close to road. Aerial photograph of 1952 (4172) shows a square mound SW of the mercat cross.

*Area along this stretch of High street to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

**7 – Fortrose**

HSMR – N/a

NMRS – NH75NW 316

Grid Ref: NH 727/564 (centred)

Type – Incised Cross

Noted in NMRS of 'Found (1998) in a garden opposite Fortrose Cathedral. The rock (22x150x68) is roughly carved in high relief on face only with a cross with square angles at the crossing. Only one traverse arm has survived.'

*Area around cathedral to form part of watching brief (see recommendations below).*

**8 – Fortrose**

HSMR – N/a

NMRS – N/a

Grid Ref: NH 7390/5662

Type – Farm

Site located during walkover survey. Former U-shaped farm building now converted into green-keeper's workshop for adjacent golf course. Of rubble sandstone with new corrugated roof. 3 blocked up doorways and entrance to loft.

*No recommendations to be made, site should be unaffected by proposed works.*

*Below: View of farm facing NW.*



## **5. Conclusions**

Overall 6 out of the 8 archaeological sites revealed relate to the medieval burgh of Fortrose. All of which form part of the core of the burgh.

## **6. Recommendations**

It is recommended that a series of archaeological watching briefs be conducted on the following sections of work:

- From the Mercat cross along Academy Street until Dean Road
- Section of pipeline along Rose Street
- Section of pipeline along Union Street
- Section of pipeline along Castle Street
- Section of pipeline along Station Road
- Section of pipeline along Church Street
- Section of pipeline along High Street to Bishop's Road
- Section of pipeline along Deans Road to where it meets Castle Street

*Reason – that this is the area of the medieval burgh and lies within the conservation area of the town, also lying close to the Cathedral area which is Scheduled Ancient Monument.*

## **7. Archive**

A copy of this report is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh and the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record. Images used in this report to be deposited with HSMR on disc as well as a copy of this report as a PDF file.

## **8. Discovery & Excavation in Scotland**

A short summary of the results of this project will be submitted to the Council for Scottish Archaeology's publication *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*.

## 9. References

- Alston, D (1999) Ross and Cromarty: A Historical Guide.
- Gifford, J (1992) Buildings of Scotland: Highlands and Islands. Penguin. Edinburgh.
- HC Archives – Dean of Guild plans and records for Fortrose D229.
- Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record database entries for NH75NW.
- IFA (1999) By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.
- Kenworthy, M (2001) Watching Brief and Rescue Excavation at Tavern Lane, Fortrose. Unpublished report – copy held by Highland SMR.
- National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE database entry for NH75NW.
- Ordnance Survey map of Ross-shire 1:2500 sheets 90.6 & 90.7 1871 (surveyed 1868-9)
- Ordnance Survey map of Ross-shire 1:2500 sheets 90.6 & 90.7 1905 (revised 1904)
- SUAT (1993) Archaeological Assessment Union Street Fortrose. Unpublished report – copy held by Highland SMR.
- SUAT (2001) Site Evaluation 69-71 and 73 High Street, Fortrose. Unpublished report – copy held by Highland SMR.

### Aerial Photographs Consulted

RAF CPE/Scot/UK 223 3113-3115, 4112-4116	27-6-1947	1:10,000
RAF 540/725      4172-4173	16-5-1952	1:10,000
OS OS/66/034 091, 088, 139-140, 142, 144, 147, 155-156	30-4-1966	1:7,500
Fairey 7343/6      604-608	12-8-1973	1:10,000

### **Photographic Register**

- 1 – View of former poorhouse facing NE.
- 2 – View of former lodge facing NE.
- 3 – View of Cathedral facing S.
- 4 – View of Mercat Cross facing E.
- 5 – View of Chapter House facing N.
- 6 – View of Farm facing NW.