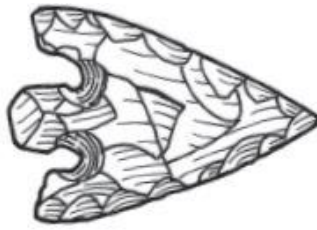


# RoCAS



ROSS & CROMARTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

## Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church of Scotland New Hall Extension, The Parade, Fort William



### Controlled Strip

### Written Scheme of Investigation

HC Planning Reference	<b>10/04998/FUL</b>
National Grid Reference	<b>NN 10459 74053</b>
Site Code	<b>DMC13</b>
RoCAS Report	<b>2013-6/DMC13</b>
Author	<b>Lynn Fraser</b>
Client	<b>Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church</b>
Date	<b>11-02-2013</b>

Ryefield Farm Tore Ross-shire IV6 7SB Scotland  
Email: [rossandcromarch@gmail.com](mailto:rossandcromarch@gmail.com)  
Mob: 07891 578998 Ph: 01463 811310

## CONTENTS

*Cover page: Aerial image of Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church and Manse*

Summary	2
1.0 Project background	2
2.0 Site location	2
3.0 Archaeological and historical background	2
4.0 References and general information	4
5.0 Aims and objectives	4
6.0 Methodology	4
7.0 Strategy for recording / conservation	6
8.0 Post-excavation and reporting	6
9.0 On-site contact	6
10.0 Health and safety	7
11.0 References	8
<b>Figures</b>	
Figure 1 Site location	3

*Imagery and mapping, unless otherwise stated, reproduced under ESRI licensing and provided by Microsoft Bing Maps.*

## ***Summary***

*This report is a proposal for an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church on the site of an extension to the existing church hall at Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church, The Parade, Fort William. The watching brief is a requirement of the Highland Council Planning Department prior to development of the site.*

## **1.0 Project Background**

A controlled strip archaeological watching brief is proposed to take place during the site clearance in advance of development. The watching brief requirement has arisen due to the situation of the development within an area of high archaeological potential<sup>1</sup>. The application area is thought to overlie the former settlement of Maryburgh, as depicted on 18<sup>th</sup> century mapping, and excavation work under The Parade proved that remains of the former town survive beneath the present land surface.

The purpose of the controlled strip is to identify and record the character, extent, condition and date of any archaeological features which may lie buried below ground level prior to their destruction.

## **2.0 Site Location**

The development site is centred at approximately Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference NN 10459 74053 in Fort William and lies between The Parade to the northwest and Fassiefern Road to the southeast (Figure 1). The site is located within the grounds of Duncansburgh Church and Manse.

## **3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The application area is thought to overlie the former settlement of Maryburgh, as depicted on 18<sup>th</sup> century mapping. Excavations carried out in 2007 by Dr Tony Pollard under The Parade proved that remains of the former town survive beneath the present land surface.

There are no sites, features or finds recorded within the development area. Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church is a Grade B listed building.

---

<sup>1</sup> HET 2011

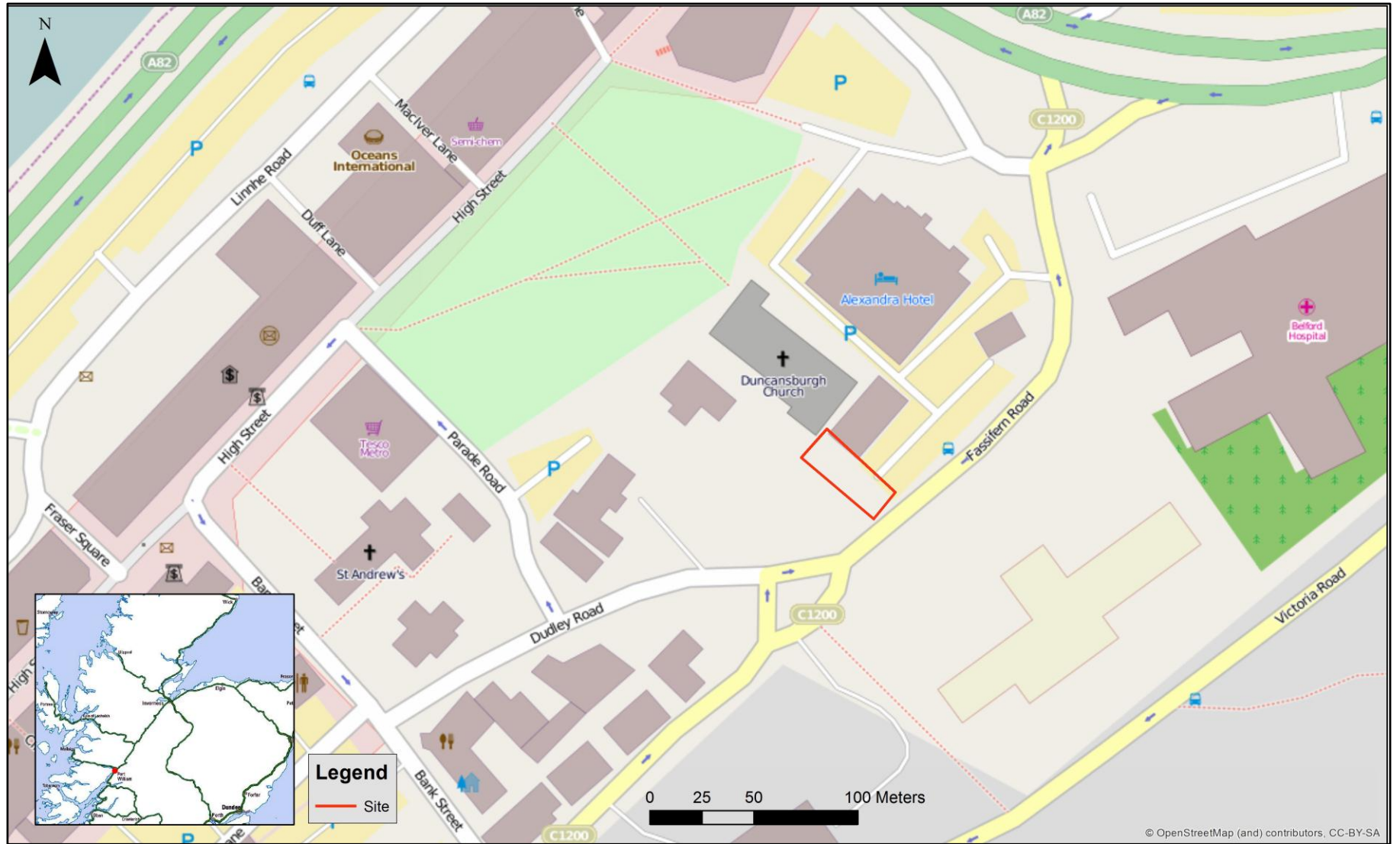


Figure 1: Site location based on plans provided by the client

## 4.0 References and General Information

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is written in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Work* from the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HET)<sup>2</sup>.

The *Scottish Planning Policy 2010* and PAN 2/2011 describe how archaeology should be managed when considering planning decisions and determining conditions for developments that have an impact on the historic environment<sup>3</sup>.

All reporting and fieldwork will be conducted as per the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Code of Conduct*<sup>4</sup>.

## 5.0 Aims and Objectives

The general aim of the archaeological watching brief is to identify and record any features or finds of archaeological importance during the initial site clearance that could be damaged or destroyed by this development, while minimising any delays or disruptions to the development project and to propose appropriate mitigation in the event that significant features of interest are uncovered<sup>5</sup>. The end result of the archaeological watching brief is to make available the records of any archaeological remains found on a site.

The specific objectives are:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area
- To remove by hand any overburden in order to expose the archaeological deposits
- To record and excavate all features and recover any artefacts prior to their destruction
- To sample deposits for post-excavation work, including environmental analysis and dating
- To make recommendations for post-excavation work

## 6.0 Methodology

### 6.1 Desk-based assessment

- 6.1.1 The purpose of the desk-based assessment (DBA) is to gain information about the known archaeology or potential for archaeology within a given area or site (including the presence or absence, character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality of the potential archaeological resource), in order to make an assessment of its merit to assist in the formulation of a strategy for further work<sup>6</sup>. The information will also inform the archaeologist of the potential nature of archaeological features to be uncovered during fieldwork.

---

<sup>2</sup> Highland Council 2012

<sup>3</sup> The Scottish Government 2010, 2011

<sup>4</sup> IfA 2010

<sup>5</sup> Highland Council 2012

<sup>6</sup> IfA 2008 (a)

The DBA will be undertaken prior to the fieldwork commencing, and will involve a full check of all available historical and archaeological records, aerial photographs and historical maps using the Highland Historic Environment Record (HER), the Highland Council archives, the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS), Historic Scotland's databases, the National Library of Scotland and any other available records or online resources about the site.

## 6.2 Controlled strip

The archaeological specification<sup>7</sup> requires an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching a 10% sample of the entire site. The extent of the site under development is 186m<sup>2</sup>. To undertake a 10% sample of such a small area would involve several small trenches would require to be excavated. This presents a problem for the safe operation of a large mechanical excavator within a confined space. It is proposed that the most appropriate evaluation, based on the size of the development area, the safe operation of the mechanical excavator and the safety of the archaeologist on site, would be a controlled strip. The following methodology reflects this recommendation.

All site groundworks must be monitored by an archaeologist. Topsoil stripping (using a smooth-bladed bucket) of the entire application site will be monitored and guided (to include the rate, speed and depth of the strip) by an archaeologist to ensure that machining stops at the first archaeological horizon<sup>8</sup>.

Any features identified that require further cleaning and excavation will be done by hand to establish, as far as possible, the date, nature, extent and state of preservation of the deposits. Further time on site may be required to do this in accordance with professional standards. The clearance area may be extended, if necessary, to investigate significant relationships between features. Both the client and Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HET) will be updated about on-site progress and any discoveries of interest.

In the event of any sensitive discoveries, all finds and features will be left *in situ* and the archaeologist will notify the contractor/developer and the HET immediately to make arrangements for their safeguarding and recording<sup>8</sup>. In particular, any human remains uncovered will be left *in situ* until the local police and the HET have been contacted and excavation will be conducted as per Historic Scotland's Operational Policy Paper 5<sup>9</sup>.

A second phase of archaeological work may be required in the event that significant archaeological features are uncovered. Any such works will be agreed, in advance, with the client and Highland Council HET.

All recovered artefacts and ecofacts must be subject to a programme of post-excavation analysis and the results incorporated into a final report.

## 6.3 On-site recording

The area supervised, including find spots and feature locations, will be plotted using a Trimble

---

<sup>7</sup> HET 2011

<sup>8</sup> IfA 2008b, HET 2012

<sup>9</sup> Historic Scotland 2006

Geo-XR Rover capable of centimetre accuracy.

Areas containing archaeological features and each individual feature will be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and feature section drawings will be drawn at a scale of 1:10. All significant archaeological features will be sampled, in the event that post-excavation analysis is deemed necessary.

#### **6.4 Photography**

The development site will be recorded using high resolution digital photography prior to the start of works and throughout the watching brief in order to record the evaluation as well as any features or finds of interest.

#### **7.0 Strategy for recording/conservation**

All artefacts recovered will be sorted and recorded. Finds will then be turned over to *Treasure Trove*. If help is required with emergency conservation, we will contact *Inverness Museum* or *National Museums Scotland*. The client will be notified immediately if any post-excavation specialist work is anticipated.

#### **8.0 Post-excavation and reporting**

Upon completion of work, *Ross and Cromarty Archaeological Services* will compile and analyse all data from the evaluation. Additional expenses for post-excavation specialist work on material recovered during fieldwork are the responsibility of the client. If any such work is deemed necessary, it will be approved in advance with both the client and the HET.

A digital report will be produced containing the conclusions of the work and any mitigation proposals, proposals for further work and post-excavation specialist work. This report will be disseminated to the contractor/developer (hard/digital copy), the Highland Council Planning and Buildings Standard Department, Highland Council HET and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

The report will be submitted with digital copies of the site photographs, site plans and relevant GIS shapefiles. *Ross and Cromarty Archaeological Services (RoCAS)* will retain copyright of this report.

A summary of the watching brief will be submitted for publication in Archaeology Scotland's annual journal, *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. An OASIS entry will also be completed.

#### **9.0 On-site contact**

The archaeologist on site will be Lynn Fraser who can be contacted on 07891 578998 and on rossandcromarch@gmail.com. RoCAS will keep the HET informed of the schedule of works. Site clearance is expected to commence at the end of the week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> February. In order to avoid any delays, if features are uncovered, an additional archaeologist may be called out to assist with timely excavation and recording.

## **10.0 Health and Safety**

*Ross and Cromarty Archaeological Services* will complete a risk assessment prior to commencement of the fieldwork and will adhere to the contractor's on-site health and safety policies. A copy of our Health and Safety policy is available upon request.

We hold £5 million public liability insurance together with professional indemnity insurance.



## 11.0 References

Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HET) 2011. *Specification for an archaeological evaluation: Extension to church to form new hall and upgrade existing access and Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church, The Parade, Fort William NGR 210459 774053 (10/04998/FUL)*

Highland Council 2012 *Standards for Archaeological Work*, v.1  
[Http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/conservation/archaeology/developmentguidance.htm](http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/conservation/archaeology/developmentguidance.htm)

Historic Scotland. 2006. *Operational Policy Paper 5: The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*.

IfA 2008 (a). *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment*. Reading, IfA.

IfA 2008 (b). *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief*. Reading: IfA.

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) 2010. *By-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists: Code of Conduct*. Reading, IFA.

The Scottish Government 2010. *Scottish Planning Policy*.  
[Http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf)

The Scottish Government 2011. *Planning Advice Note 2/2011 (PAN 2/2011): Planning and Archaeology*. [Http://www.scotland.gov.uk/](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/).