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SUDS POND AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT PARKS FARM, INVERNESS

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

Nuala C. Marshall
MA(Hons) MA

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

Client	TULLOCH HOMES LTD
National Grid Reference	NH 68889 43318
Address	PARKS FARM, INVERNESS
Parish	INVERNESS & BONA
Council	HIGHLAND
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Project Manager	SIMON STRONACH
Text	NUALA C. MARSHALL
Illustrations	THOMAS SMALL
Typesetting	CAROLINE NORRMAN
Fieldwork	KATE BAIN NUALA C. MARSHALL
Specialists	N/A
Schedule	
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Signed off by: .....

Simon Stronach BSc(Hons) MIfA, Project Manager

Date:.....

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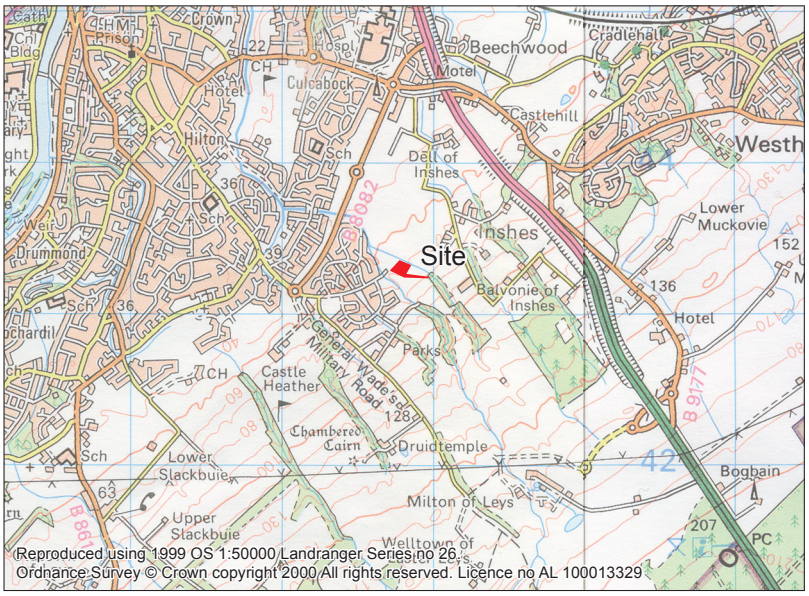
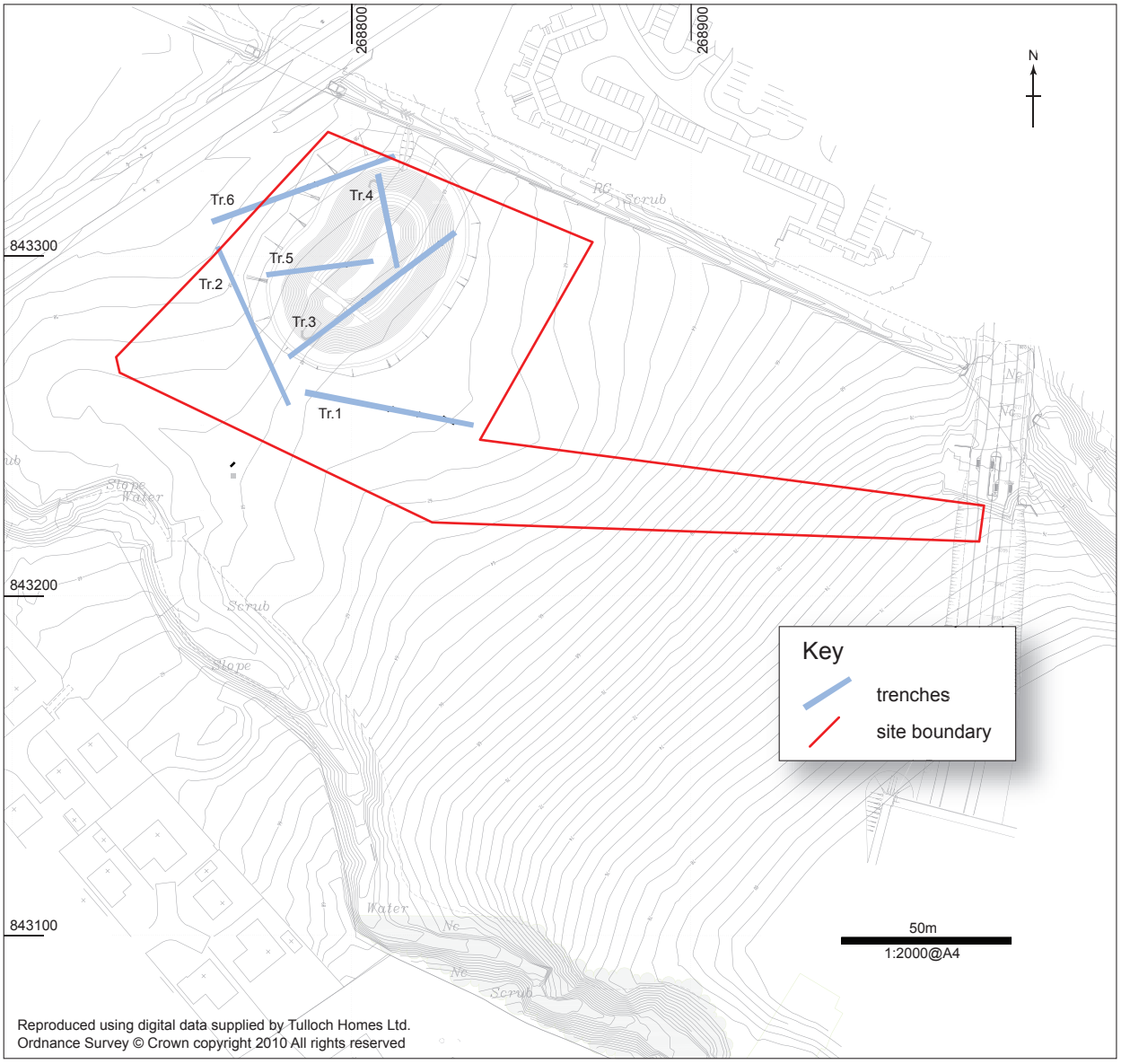
Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd
13 Jane Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5HE
P 0131 467 7705 ≈ **F** 0131 467 7706 ≈ **E** office@headlandarchaeology.com
www.headlandarchaeology.com





Illus 1
Site location showing area of evaluation

SUDS POND AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT PARKS FARM, INVERNESS

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

by Nuala C. Marshall

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook an evaluation in an area proposed for a SUDS Pond and associated works at Parks Farm, Inverness in order to test the archaeological potential of the area that would be impacted on by the development. Prior to the fieldwork, a desk-based assessment was undertaken to understand the background of the site and to highlight any areas of potential interest. The work was commissioned by Tulloch Homes Ltd and a specification for the work was agreed with Highland Council Archaeological Unit.

A total of 6 trenches were excavated across an area of land located west of the distributor road which had been previously investigated for archaeological evidence. No archaeological features, deposits or artifacts of significance were revealed during these investigations.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a program of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching, carried out as part of a planning condition placed by Highland Council (IN-08-702) for a SUDS Pond and associated works at Parks Farm, Inverness. The fieldwork took place on the 18th and 19th February 2010 and was commissioned by Tulloch Homes Ltd.

The evaluation sought to identify any archaeological remains on the site. This was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Headland 2010) submitted and previously agreed with Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

2. BACKGROUND

The area proposed for the SUDS Pond and associated works is situated in the north-west corner of the Parks Farm development which is mainly situated across a north-west facing hillside to the south of Inverness (Illus 1). The development is contained within a field of grass and scrub with indications of earlier ploughing. It is enclosed to the north and south by water courses and to the west by Stevenson Road. The east of the site was bounded by areas of ongoing groundworks.

The site lies in an area where there is potential for archaeological remains. The surrounding environs have produced evidence for prehistoric settlements, burials and ritual monuments. However, previous evaluations on the distributor road and housing elements of the overall development have produced negative results. (Dingwall 2008, Spanou 2009)

3. METHODOLOGY

Objectives

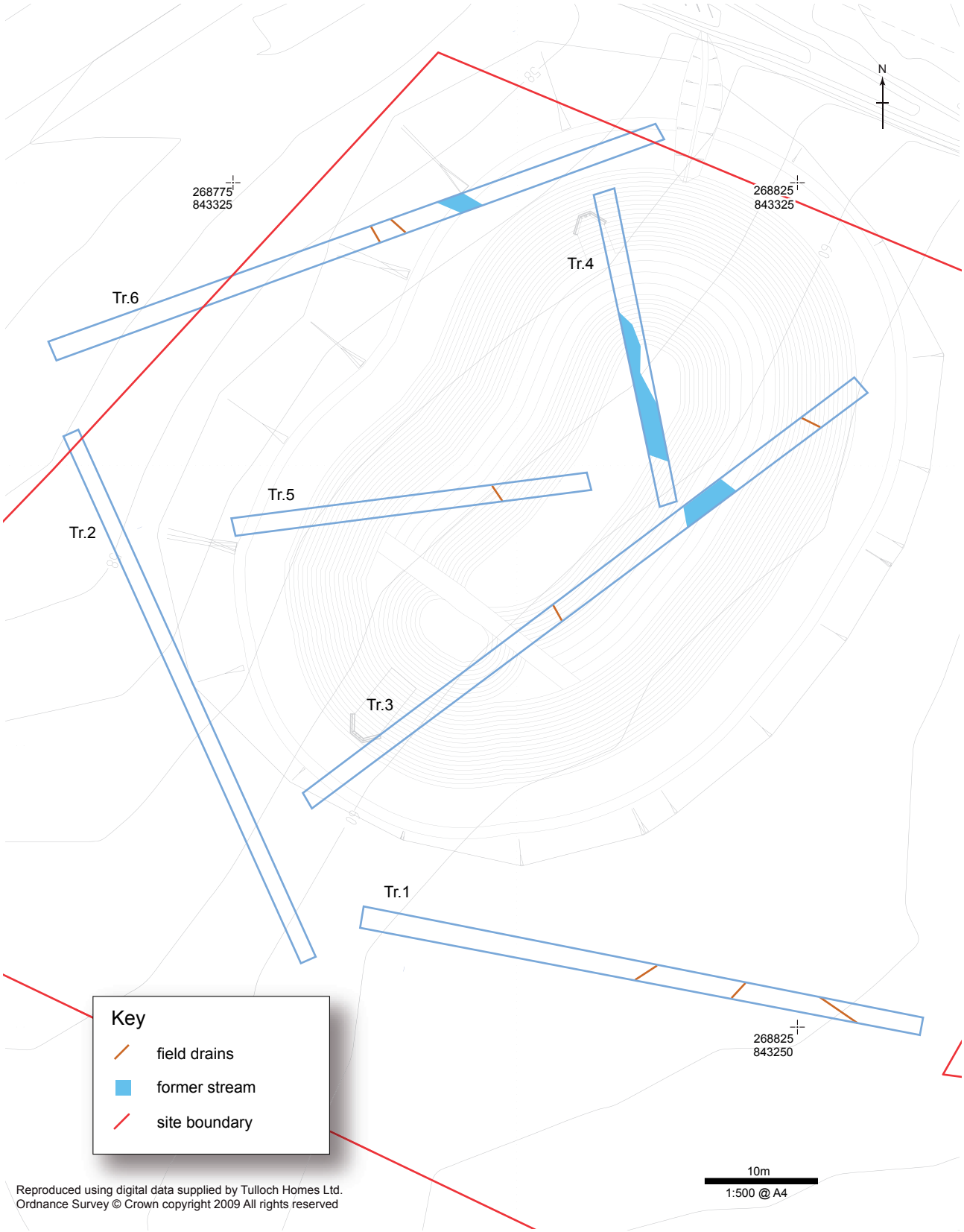
The objectives of the evaluation were:

- To evaluate the archaeological potential of the development site and determine the location, character, extent and quality of any archaeological remains identified within it.
- To propose arrangements for the safeguarding, where possible, and recording where necessary of any archaeological features or finds identified (to be agreed with the Highland Council Archaeology Unit).
- To meet the needs for archaeological conservation and recording without unnecessary delay or disturbance of the development project.

Methodology

Machine Evaluation

The proposed application area comprised approximately 11100m^2, although a much smaller area was planned to be disturbed by the development. A 5% sample of the application area (shown as Site Boundary on Illus 2) was evaluated, equating to 560m^2 or 280 linear metres of trench approximately 2m wide. The locations of the trenches were decided on site, targeted to provide coverage across the application area. They took into consideration topographic features or areas thought to have more archaeological potential and other on-site factors such as the presence of services and water courses.



Illus 2
Evaluation trench plan

Illus 3
Excavating trench 2

All excavation was undertaken by a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.80m flat-bladed ditching bucket, working under the direct guidance of an archaeologist (See Illus 3).

Recording

All recording was in accordance with the codes of practice of the Institute for Archaeologists. All trenches and contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a total station linked to an onsite PC equipped with CAD software.

A full photographic record including colour slide and black and white photographs was taken, supplemented with digital photography. A graduated metric scale was clearly visible in record photographs of contexts.

4. RESULTS

The trenches

Six trenches were excavated, two along the course of the proposed storm drainage and the remaining four, targeted on the area of the SUDS Pond (Illus 4). Full descriptions of each trench can be found in Appendix 1. Results are summarized below.

Trenches 1 and 2 were positioned in an area intended for storm drainage and were both 50m in length. The topsoil in both was an average depth 0.40m and was mid to light brown sand clay. The topsoil was at its deepest in trench 2 at 1.10m, most likely due to hill-wash deposits gathering at the bottom of a slope where the trench was located. Underlying geological deposits were a mixture of yellow and pink sand clay with inclusions of shattered stone and were probably fluvioglacial in origin. Ceramic field drains were encountered running mainly N-S within trench 1. No archaeological features or finds were present in either trench.

Four trenches (3-6), two 60m in length and two 30m, were excavated within the area of the SUDS pond proper. The topsoil, on average, was 0.35m deep and was medium to light brown sand clay. Underlying geological deposits in these trenches mainly consisted of orange yellow sand clay with large stone inclusions.

A deposit of loose medium brown sand with pebble inclusions was seen in trenches 3, 4 and 5 and had a maximum width of 5m. After investigation, this deposit was interpreted as natural in origin and most likely evidence of a former stream bed. (Illus 5). Ceramic field drains were present within these trenches, orientated in various directions. No archaeological features or finds were present.

Illus 4
Area of evaluation

Illus 5
Post excavation shot of trench 4 showing evidence of stream bed

5. CONCLUSION

Despite the archaeological potential of the site suggested by desk-based work, no archaeological features or deposits were identified during the evaluation. In addition to this, no furrows or plough marks were noted, suggesting a genuine paucity of archaeological activity, rather than its destruction or truncation by ploughing or other agricultural practices.

6. REFERENCES

Dingwall, K 2008 *Proposed Distributor Road at Parks Farm: results of a desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. Client Report.

Spanou, S 2009 *Housing Development at Parks Farm, Inverness: Results of an archaeological evaluation*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. Client Report.

Stronach, S 2010 *SUDS Pond and associated works at Parks Farm, Inverness: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. Client Report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site registers

1.1 Trench Register

Trench No.	Orientation	Description	Length (m)	Max Depth (m)
1	NW-SE	Topsoil: Mid-light brown loam sand, 0.40m deep.	50	0.98
2	N-S	Topsoil: Mid brown loose sand clay, 0.35-1.0m deep	50	1.10
3	NE-SW	Topsoil: Mid to light brown friable sandy clay, 0.30-0.50m deep	60	0.56
4	NNW-SSE	Topsoil: Medium brown friable sandy clay, 0.40m deep	30	0.45
5	E-W	Topsoil: Mid brown friable sand clay, 0.25-0.30m deep	30	0.50
6	NNE-SSW	Topsoil: Mid brown friable sandy clay, 0.40m deep	60	0.52

1.2 Context Register

Context No.	Area	Description
001	Trench 1	Mid-light brown loam sand topsoil
002	Trench 1	Light yellow brown sandy loam subsoil, flecks of charcoal, small stones etc.
003	Trench 1	Fine clay sand, friable, occasional medium cobble sized stones
004	Trench 2	Mid brown sandy clay topsoil
005	Trench 2	Pale yellow sand
006	Trench 2	Pink sandy clay
007	Trench 3	Mid brown sandy clay topsoil
008	Trench 3	Mixed yellow orange sandy clay
009	Trench 3	Loose brown sand
010	Trench 4	Mid brown sandy clay topsoil
011	Trench 4	Mid orange sandy clay subsoil
012	Trench 5	Mid brown sand clay topsoil with root inclusions
013	Trench 5	Pale orange yellow sand clay subsoil
014	Trench 6	Mid brown sandy clay topsoil
015	Trench 6	Pale orange sand clay subsoil with stone inclusions.

1.3 Photographic Register

Shot No.	Direction facing	Description
1	SW	Post-ex shot of Trench 1
2	N	Post-ex shot of Trench 2
3	N	Post-ex shot of Trench 2
4	NE	Post-ex shot of Trench 3
5	NNW	Post-ex shot of Trench 4
6	W	Trench 5 Working shot
7	W	Post-ex shot of Trench 5
8	W	Sample shot of field drains found on site (trench 5)
9	SSW	Post-ex shot of Trench 6