

GRCH18

# GLASCAIRN ROAD, CULBOKIE, HIGHLAND

*Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation*

*for Tulloch Homes Ltd*

*18/01724/PAN*

*August 2019*

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*August 2019*

HA Job no.: GRCH18 and GCCH19

NGR: NH 60256 58995

Parish: Ross and Cromarty

Council: Highland

OASIS ref.: headland1-318401

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# GLASCAIRN ROAD, CULBOKIE, HIGHLAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

*Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted two phases of trial-trench archaeological evaluation on land at Glascairn Road, Culbokie, Highland in support of a planning application for development of the site by Tulloch Homes. Trial trenching revealed no archaeological remains.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Tulloch Homes (the client) to undertake a programme of archaeological works in connection with a proposed residential development at Glascairn Road, Culbokie, Highland.

A proposal of application notice (18/01724/PAN) has been submitted to Highland Council. As part of the application process, the client has commissioned an archaeological evaluation and the results will form part of the application submission.

The client is currently ensuring that sufficient information is gathered in support of the planning application, in keeping with current policy and guidance (PAN 2/2011, SHEP, SPP). In particular SPP section 112 states:

*When significant elements of the historic environment are likely to be affected by development proposals, developers should take the preservation of this significance into account in their proposals. The amount of information and analysis required should relate in scale to the possible impact on the historic environment.*

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Headland Archaeology (2018) setting out the proposed strategy for archaeological mitigation.

This included for a 7% evaluation of the proposed development area. The WSI was submitted to and agreed with Highland Council Archaeological Service who advise the Local Planning Authority on archaeological matters. This report details the results of the work.

## 2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located here (NH 60256 58995; Illus 1). It is occupied by unkempt grass and an area of gorse shrubs to the south-east. To the north and north-west lies the Cromarty Firth (Illus 2).

It lies between 96m AOD in the north-west and 101m AOD in the south-east and is underlain by Raddery Sandstone Formation - Sandstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 383 to 393 million years ago in the Devonian Period (British Geological Survey website; <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A 8% trial trench evaluation was conducted in 2016 by Highland Archaeology Services Ltd (McKeggie 2017) on the area of ground proposed for community use (marked CCT on Illus 1). No archaeological features were recorded within the six trenches excavated.

The Scheduled monument of Culbokie Dun (SM4579; NRHE NH65NW 1), also known as Carn Mor Dun, is located approximately 500m to the south-east of the site in an area of woodland. The Dun consists of an 8' thick wall surrounded by two ramparts and a medial ditch. Human remains were recorded as being removed in 1859 by the Ordnance Survey Object Name Book but no details exist as to what has happened to them since.

## 4 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In line with the WSI the main objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the archaeological significance and potential of the proposed development site.

More specific aims of the evaluation include:

- Establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the accessible areas targeted for trenching.
- Establishing the integrity and state of preservation of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the accessible areas.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Site works

The work was undertaken as specified in the WSI. In two separate phases. The first phase of trial trenching was carried out between 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and the second phase was carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

18 trenches of 50m length and 2m width were planned across the whole development area. Thirteen trenches were excavated as part of Phase 1. Due to the presence of a substantial amount of mature gorse and vegetation along the south-eastern edge of the site (Illus 3) the remaining five trenches (numbers 06, 07, 11, 17 and 18) were inaccessible during the initial phase of works and were excavated during phase 2 once the vegetation had been removed.

Trenches were excavated in spits under direct archaeological supervision. A tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed ditching bucket was used to remove the topsoil and subsoil down to archaeological horizons or clean geological deposits.

### 5.2 Recording

All recording followed ClfA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological evaluations (ClfA 2014). All trenches, contexts and environmental samples were given unique numbers, and all recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a differential GPS. A full photographic record comprising digital photography was taken and a graduated metric scale was clearly visible in all images.

### 5.3 Reporting and archive

The results of the works are presented below. Full trench descriptions and technical details of individual contexts are presented in Appendix 1. A summary report has been prepared for submission to *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 2) and the OASIS database (headland1-318401).

The complete project archive will be deposited with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) within six months of the completion of the project. The two phases of work were assigned separate projects codes (GRCH18 – Phase 1 and GCCH19 – Phase 2). These will be archived together as a single project. The records (paper and digital) will be archived according to best practice guidelines set out by the Archaeological Archiving Forum (2011).

## 6 RESULTS

Full context descriptions are contained in Appendix 1. Contexts are numbered by trench number: i.e. Trench 001 (101), Trench 002 (201).

### 6.1 Phase 1

No archaeological remains were encountered in any of the 13 excavated trenches. Geological deposits of yellow to orange brown silty sands including gravel, boulders and outcrops of sandstone bedrock were seen in all of the trenches (Illus 4). The superficial geology was overlain by a thin subsoil of mid grey-brown silty sand which was at most 0.1m thick in trenches towards the north-west of the site. Subsoil coverage was inconsistent, and though it was present in all of the trenches in places the geological subsoil was directly overlain by topsoil (Illus 5). Topsoil was a dark grey-brown sandy silt which varied in thickness between 0.25 and 0.45m thick. The topsoil was thickest in Trenches 15 and 16 at the south of the site.

Field drains related to relatively recent agricultural improvements were seen in five trenches (01, 08, 09, 13 and 15). These were all constructed of small cobbles and boulders in straight sided cuts and were mostly orientated NE-SW.

### 6.2 Phase 2

An additional five trenches were excavated during the second phase of works (Trenches 06, 07, 11, 17 and 18). Again geological deposits of yellow to orange brown silty sands including gravel, boulders and outcrops of sandstone bedrock were recorded in all of the trenches. As a result of the presence of gorse across this part of the site heavy root bioturbation was prevalent throughout the trenches (Illus 6).

The topsoil was between 0.2m and 0.4m thick overlying the geological subsoil. Two further field drains were recorded in trenches 11 and 17. No archaeological features were identified.

## 7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this evaluation are consistent with those from the evaluation of the CCT previously evaluated in 2016 by Highland Archaeology Services. The field drains recorded during this evaluation were of a similar shallow depth and likely to relate to pre 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural use of the land.

It is possible that the agricultural activity in the area has truncated any earlier prehistoric activity in the area or the ground conditions were not suitable for

habitation. The need to drain the fields in recent times may suggest the latter. Also, despite the shallow topsoil it is not thought that the geological subsoil has been much truncated by modern ploughing.

## 8 REFERENCES

Archaeological Archives Forum (AAF) 2011  
*Archaeological Archives A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (2nd edn) (ClfA: Reading) [http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf\\_archaeological\\_archives\\_2011.pdf](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf) accessed 16 July 2018

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Headland Archaeology 2018 Glascairn Road, Culbokie, Highland. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Highland Archaeological Services 2016 'Culbokie Centre, Culbokie, Highland. Archaeological Trial Trenching Report. Unpublished Client Report

McKeggie, L. 2017 Culbokie Centre, Evaluation, Discovery Excav Scot, New, vol. 17, 2016. Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England. Page(s): 119

Ordnance Survey Name Book. *Object Name Books of the Ordnance Survey (6 inch and 1/2500 scale)*. Page(s): Book No. 31

## 9 APPENDICES

### 9.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

#### *Photographic register*

Photo	Facing	Description
GRCH18-01	N	General shot looking out over firth
GRCH18-02	SE	Tr01 Record Shot
GRCH18-03	SW	NE facing section Tr01
GRCH18-04	NE	Tr03 Record Shot
GRCH18-05	SE	NW facing section Tr03
GRCH18-06	N	General shot showing Tr03 in foreground
GRCH18-07	NNE	Tr02 Record Shot
GRCH18-08	ENE	WSW facing section Tr02
GRCH18-09	SE	Tr05 Record Shot
GRCH18-10	NE	SW facing section Tr05
GRCH18-11	SSW	Tr04 Record Shot
GRCH18-12	NW	SE facing section Tr04
GRCH18-13	SE	Tr08 Record Shot
GRCH18-14	NE	SW facing section Tr08
GRCH18-15	E	General shot with Tr08 in foreground
GRCH18-16	SE	Tr09 Record Shot
GRCH18-17	NE	SW facing section Tr09
GRCH18-18	SE	Tr10 Record Shot
GRCH18-19	NE	SW facing section Tr10
GRCH18-20	SW	Tr12 Record Shot
GRCH18-21	SE	NW facing section Tr12
GRCH18-22	SE	Tr14 Record Shot
GRCH18-23	NE	SW facing section Tr14
GRCH18-24	E	General shot with Tr12 and Tr14 in foreground
GRCH18-25	NW	Tr13 Record Shot
GRCH18-26	NE	SW facing section Tr13
GRCH18-27	N	Tr15 Record Shot
GRCH18-28	E	W facing section Tr15
GRCH18-29	NW	Tr16 Record Shot
GRCH18-30	NE	SW facing section Tr16
GRCH18-31	W	General shot with Tr16 in foreground
GCCH19-01	SW	View towards S corner of site and Trenches 17 and 18
GCCH19-02	NW	View towards NW end of site and Trench 11
GCCH19-03	N	View towards E corner of site and Trenches 06 and 07
GCCH19-04	NE	Trench 06 from SW end.
GCCH19-05	SW	Trench 06 from NE end.
GCCH19-06	SW	Trench 07 from NE end.

GCCH19-07	NE	Trench 07 from SW end.
GCCH19-08	NW	Trench 11 from SE end.
GCCH19-09	SE	Trench 11 from NW end.
GCCH19-10	NE	Trench 17 from SW end.
GCCH19-11	SW	Trench 17 from NE end.
GCCH19-12	S	Trench 18 from N end.
GCCH19-13	N	Trench 18 from S end.

*Context register*

<b>Context no.</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Description</b>
1001	01	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
1002	01	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
1003	01	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
2001	02	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
2002	02	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
2003	02	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
3001	03	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
3002	03	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
3003	03	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
4001	04	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
4002	04	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
4003	04	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
5001	05	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
5002	05	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
5003	05	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
8001	08	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
8002	08	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
8003	08	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
9001	09	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
9002	09	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
9003	09	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
10001	10	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
10002	10	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil



10003	10	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
12001	12	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
12002	12	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
12003	12	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
13001	13	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
13002	13	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
13003	13	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
14001	14	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
14002	14	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
14003	14	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
15001	15	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
15002	15	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
15003	15	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural
16001	16	Dark grey brown sandy silt - Topsoil
16002	16	Mid grey-brown silty sand – Subsoil
16003	16	Yellow/Orange brown silty sand with gravel, boulders and frequent outcrops of sandstone bedrock – Natural

## 9.2 Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Highland Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Glascairn Road, Culbokie. Highland
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	GRCH18
<b>PARISH:</b>	Ross & Cromarty
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Matt Ginnever
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Headland Archaeology
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	None
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	None
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	NH 60256 58995
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	May 2018
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	May 2018
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<i>Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd conducted a trial-trench archaeological evaluation on land at Glascairn Road, Culbokie, Highland in support of a planning application for development of the site by Tulloch Homes. Trial trenching revealed no archaeological remains.</i>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Tulloch Homes
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	matt.ginnever@headlandarchaeology.com
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	HES

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

**ILLUS 1** SITE LOCATION

**ILLUS 2** GENERAL SITE SHOT WITH TRENCH 3 IN FOREGROUND LOOKING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CROMARTY FIRTH

**ILLUS 3** GENERAL SHOT OF SITE SHOWING GORSE COVERAGE IN BACKGROUND AND TRENCH 8 IN FOREGROUND

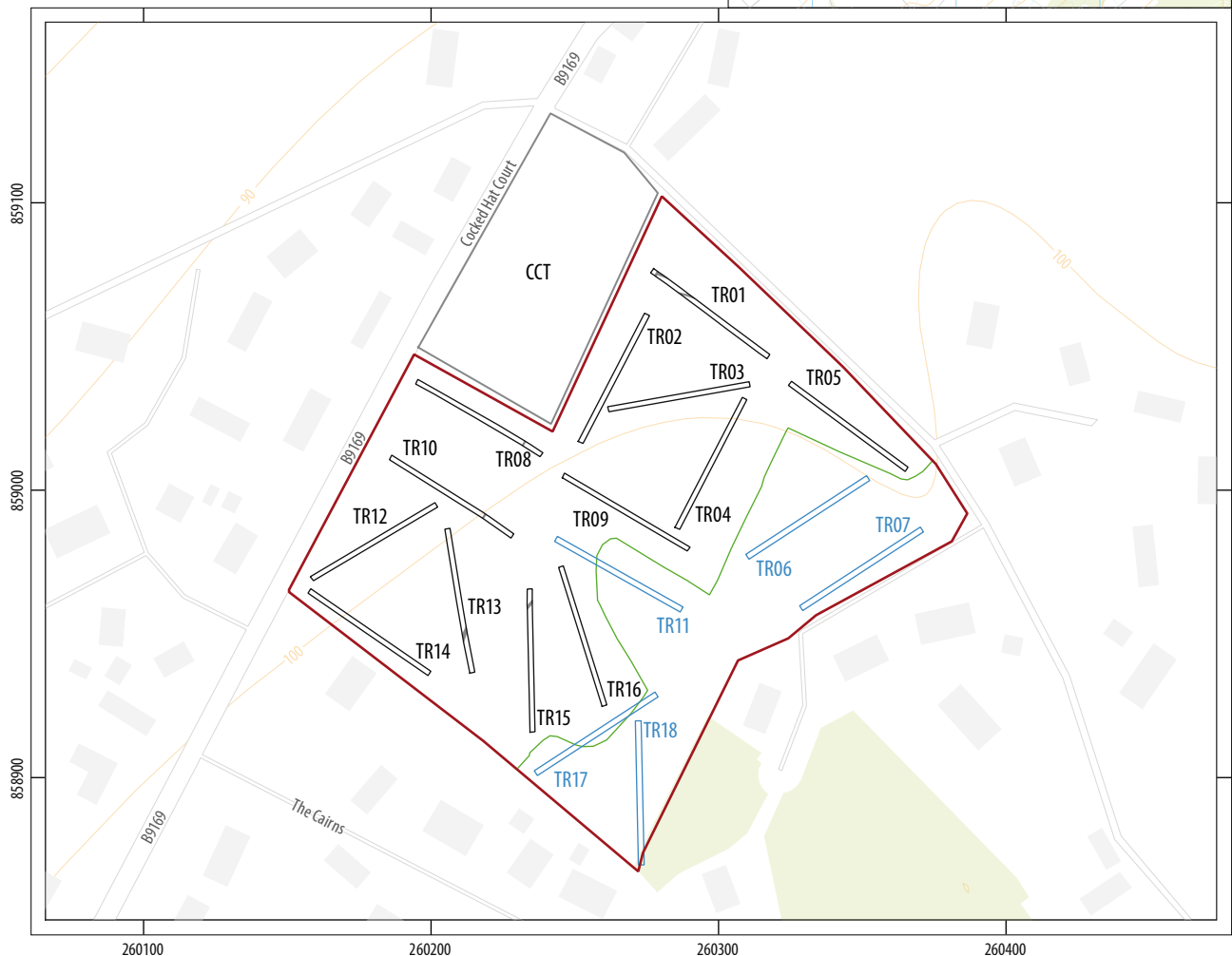
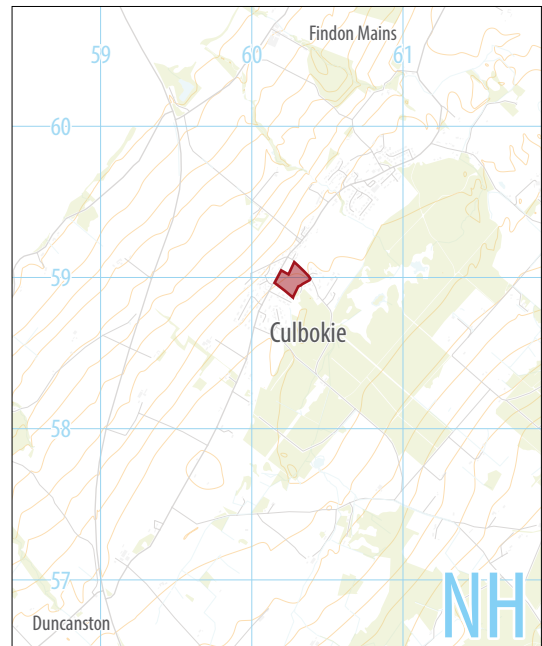
**ILLUS 4** RECORD SHOT OF TRENCH 4 SHOWING TYPICAL GEOLOGICAL SUBSOIL

**ILLUS 5** NW FACING SECTION TRENCH 12 SHOWING TYPICAL TOPSOIL OVER GEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

**ILLUS 6** VIEW OF TRENCH 7 SHOWING THE HEAVY BIOTURBATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL SUBSOIL

Land adjacent to B9169 Road  
Culbokie  
Highland

0 200km  
1:12,500,000 @ A4



0 50m  
1:2,500 @ A4

- development boundary
- phase 1 trench location
- phase 2 trench location
- gorse
- field drain

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ILLUS 1 Site location



2



3



**ILLUS 2** General site shot with Trench 3 in foreground looking in the direction of the Cromarty Firth

**ILLUS 3** General shot of site showing gorse coverage in background and Trench 8 in foreground





**ILLUS 4** Record shot of Trench 4 showing typical geological subsoil      **ILLUS 5** NW facing section Trench 12 showing typical topsoil over geological deposits



**ILLUS 6** view of Trench 7 showing the heavy bioturbation of the geological subsoil