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**Report on an Archaeological
Watching Brief of construction for the
Golspie Waste Water Treatment Works**

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*Client: Fairhurst Consulting Structural and Civil Engineers
on behalf of North of Scotland Water Authority
Contract reference: 40203*

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken in advance of pipe laying and the construction of a wastewater treatment works on raised beach deposits, which lie south and north east of Golspie on the north side of The Dornoch Firth. This was undertaken in accordance with a specification prepared by the Archaeology Unit of Highland Council Planning and Development Service on behalf of W A Fairhurst and Partners. Features of archaeological interest were identified at the east-end of the study area. These comprised the remains of a probable nineteenth century building.

INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching-brief of pipe-line works and the construction of a waste water treatment works, forming part of the Golspie sewerage scheme, was undertaken in accordance with a specification prepared by the Archaeology Unit of Highland Council Planning and Development Service. The specification identified the potential for archaeological features, due to the number of recorded sites in the area. Two areas were monitored by the watching brief.

Area 1: The pipe-line works skirting round the east end of the town (see figure 1).

Area 2: The site of the treatment works on Golspie Links (see figure 1).

METHOD

All excavation of sediments, by machine using a flat bladed ditching bucket, was monitored within the archaeologically sensitive areas. The watching brief was relatively unobtrusive, with the object of recording unexpected discoveries, whilst causing minimal interruption to the main programme of works.

RESULTS

A summary overview of the archaeological features and deposits which have been identified within the area of the watching brief, is presented here. Details of the structures and deposits are listed in Appendix 1. Registers for drawings and photographs are listed in Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

Area 1

The start point of the watching brief was located at the east end of the houses on the south side of Main Street, National Grid reference: NC 8367 0009 (see fig 1). It stopped at the north end of the access road leading from the western entrance to the Dunrobin Dairy Park to the south-west corner of the Dairy Park, National Grid reference: NC 8400 0015 (see fig. 1). At the start point topsoil up to 0.2 m in depth was removed. This was found overlying barrier stone, revetting raised beach gravels, and raised beach gravels between the foreshore and the inbye land to the north. The

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

| <i>Context</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|----------------|---|
| 01 | Building: Three heavily truncated walls forming one end of a building. Walls built from large beach cobbles and occasional angular sandstone rubble with spreads of degraded mortar. Measures 7.5 m long, 0.75 m wide and survives to two courses in height (0.25 m). Wall returns at north and south ends surround cobbling 004 and continue under the edge of the trench to the west. Modern ceramic, iron objects and pan-tile fragments were recorded within the fabric of the walls. |
| 02 | Wall: Aligned east west, turns to the north at its eastern extremity. Constructed from beach cobbles and angular sandstone with occasional degraded lumps of mortar visible within the wall fabric. Measures 4.0 m long, 0.75 m wide and 0.20 m in height. Modern ceramic and pan-tile fragments also observed scattered over and around the wall. |
| 03 | Stony deposit: An irregular deposit of beach cobbles and angular sandstone with pan-tile and modern ceramics measures circa 1.6 m sq. |
| 04 | Surface: A rough cobbled surface comprising small rounded and angular stones bedded onto compact dark brown silty sand forming a discontinuous surface within building 001. |
| 05 | Deposit: A dark brown, firm, silty sand with frequent inclusions of small coal fragments, ashy spreads, pan tile fragments, ceramic fragments and occasional shell fragments. This was found enveloping the above features and appeared to be a mixture of in-situ midden material with demolition debris compacted into it. Depth |

APPENDIX 2: DRAWING REGISTER

| <i>Drawing no.</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Scale</i> |
|--------------------|---|--------------|
| 01 | Plan of stone founded structures 001, 002, 003, 004, and deposit 005. | 1:20 |

same sequence was evident throughout the length of the pipe trench as far as the south-west corner of the Dunrobin Dairy Park where 0.3 m of topsoil was found overlying 0.2 m of a greyish brown sandy subsoil in turn overlying a coarse yellow sand. Here, minor elements of a building and associated structures were identified (see fig. 2). These comprised the eastern end of a building (001) with a roughly cobbled floor (004), a wall (002), a stone deposit (003) and a mixed midden/demolition deposit (005) containing modern ceramic, glass, pan tile and slate fragments (see fig 2).

Area 2

The second area monitored was the site of the new treatment works on Golspie Links at the south-west end of the scheme, National Grid reference NH 8193 9806 (see fig 1). The area, some 0.41 ha., was cleared of scrub (gorse), 0.10 – 0.15 m of topsoil was removed and was found to overlie undulating banks of sand and gravel; no archaeological features were seen. As a precaution longitudinal and transverse sections were excavated through the gravel to the Treatment Works formation level at a maximum depth of 1.5 m. Again, no archaeological deposits or structures were observed.

DISCUSSION

The large quantity of recent detritus (china, iron, glass, slate, pan tile) contained within deposit 005, structure (001) and its associated features (002-005), indicates that this building was of nineteenth century date. The position and alignment of the walls suggest that they could represent the remains of subsidiary structures associated with a building which appears on the 1873 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, but had been demolished by the time the revised 2nd edition was published in 1906. This interpretation indicates an early to mid-nineteenth century date for the features which is consistent with the artefact evidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the nature and date of the features recorded during the watching brief, no further work is recommended. The project archive will be deposited at the National Monuments Record of Scotland. A summary report will be published in Discovery and Excavation Scotland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The works were funded by North of Scotland Water. The watching brief was monitored by the Archaeology Unit of Highland Council Planning and Development Service.

APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

| <i>Shot no.</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Facing</i> |
|-----------------|---|---------------|
| 01 | General working shot area 1 | E |
| 02-03 | Stripped area west of Golspie Burn | W + E |
| 04 | Golspie from Golspie Burn looking across the Glebe | W |
| 05-06 | Working shot east of Golspie Burn | E |
| 07-08 | Building 001 pre-ex | S |
| 09-10 | Stone founded structures 001, 002, 003, 004, and deposit 005 | S |
| 11-12 | Building 001 | S |
| 13-14 | Wall 002 | S |
| 15-16 | Stone deposit 003 | S |
| 17-18 | General working shot area 2 | S |
| 19 | Excavating section thro' gravel area 2 | W |
| 20 | N-S section through gravel area 2 | S |

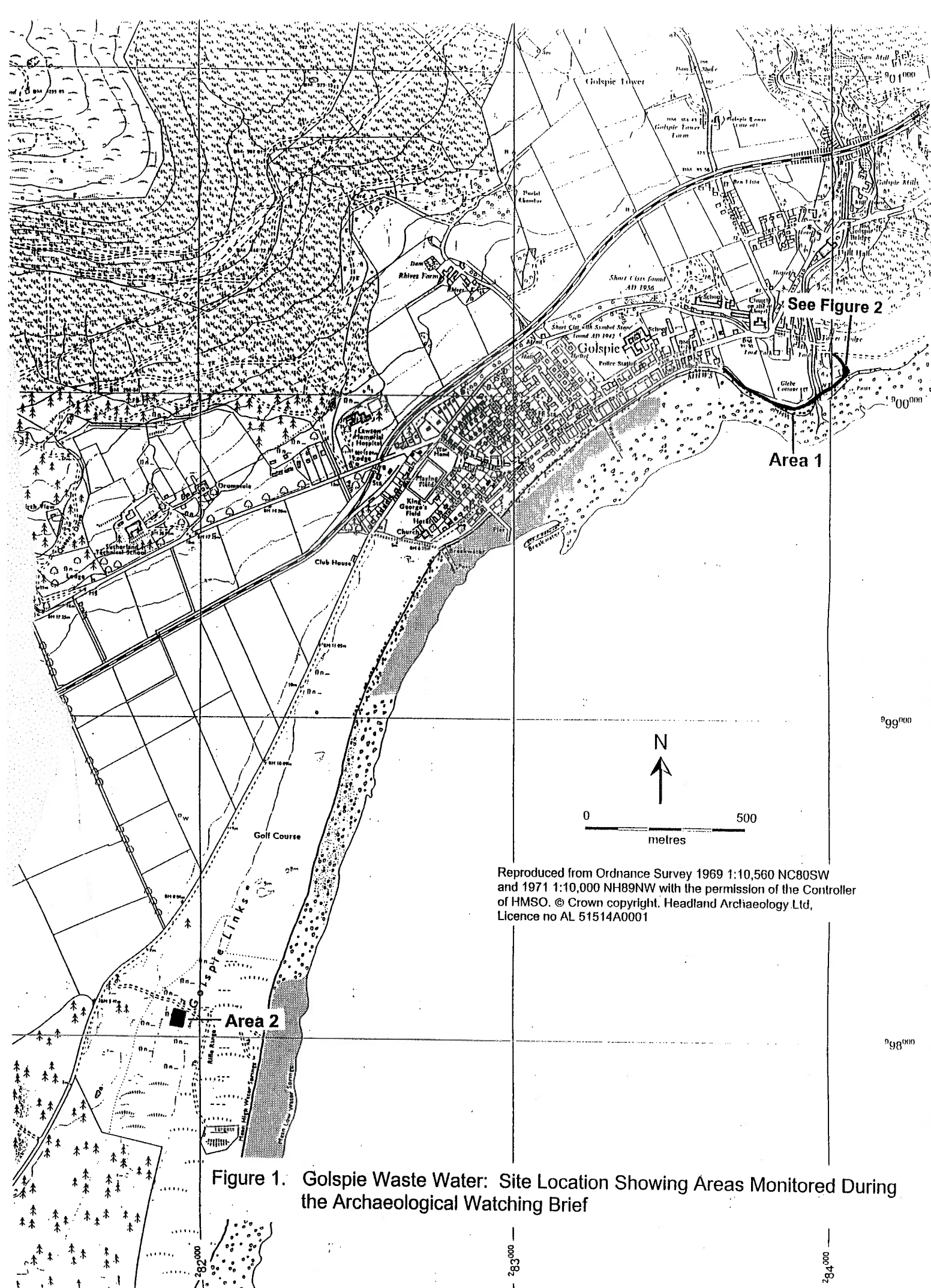


Figure 1. Golspie Waste Water: Site Location Showing Areas Monitored During the Archaeological Watching Brief

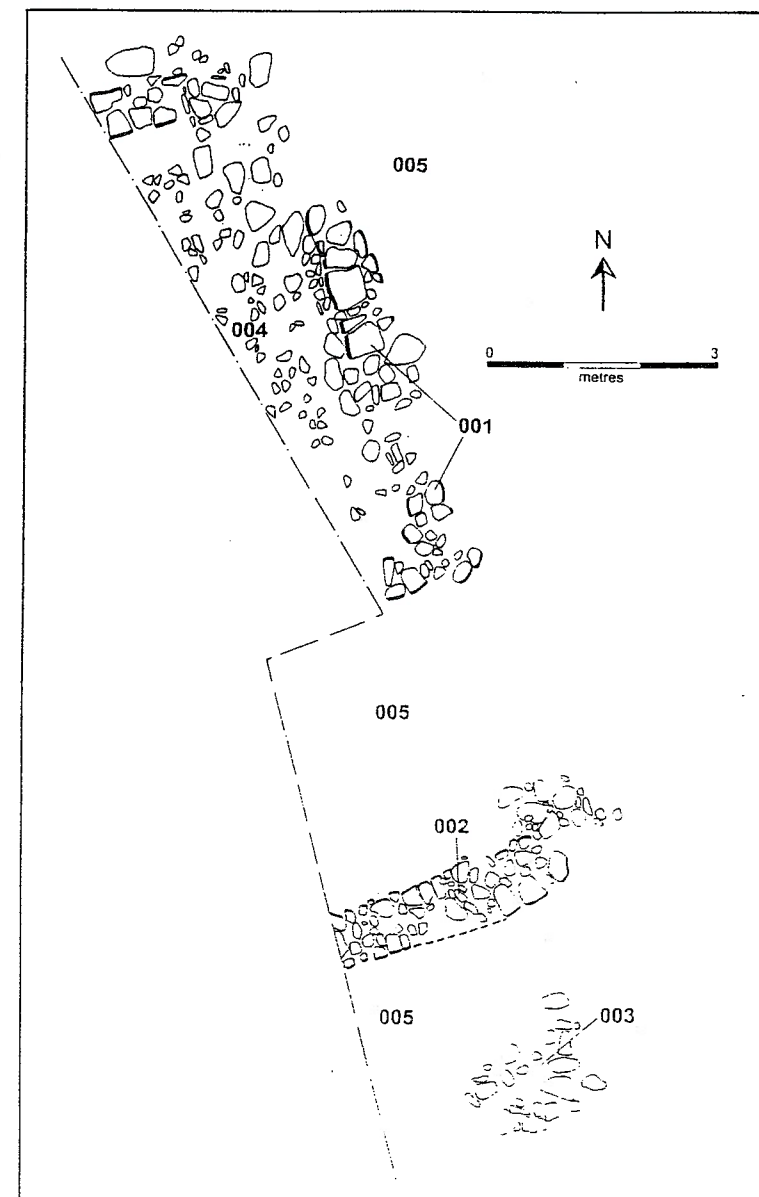
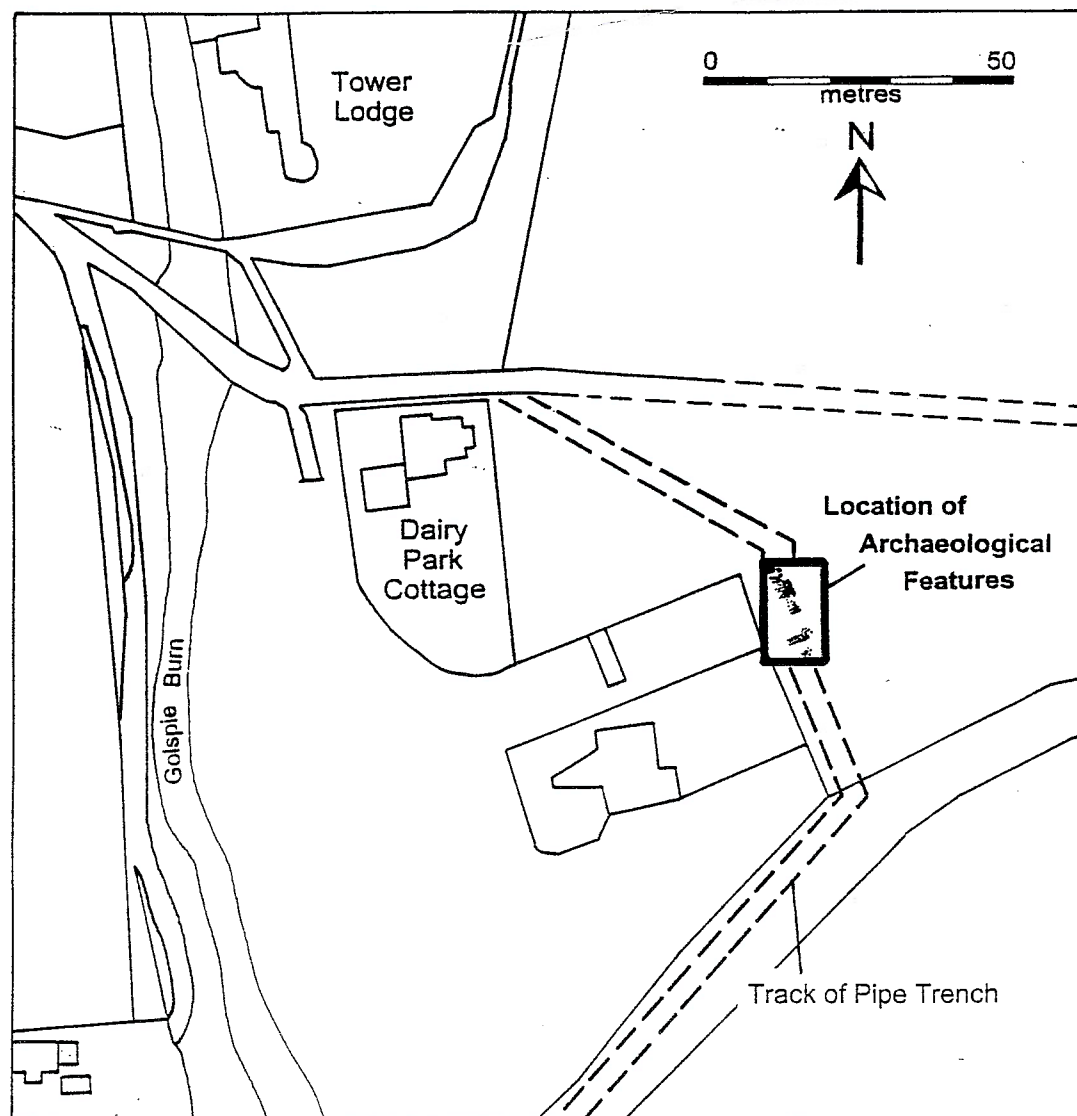


Figure 2. Golspie Waste Water: Location and Plan of Features 001 - 005