

PROJECT OUTLINE

Project name: Kinbeachie
Local Authority: Highland
NGR: NH6262

HS project code: N7-7127-52936-2251
HS manager: Ms Deirdre Cameron

Competition method

The contract will be let on the basis of the quality of the strategy put forward to achieve the aims set out below, within the cost limits set below.

Description

The area to be examined is located on the north facing shore of the Black Isle, centred on OS grid square NH6262. Agricultural activity in this area over the past five years has uncovered charcoal spreads, flints, and pottery, indicating human activity from the early Neolithic period onwards. The site is of particular interest as the Neolithic remains may represent domestic rather than ritual activity.

Kinbeachie is predominantly an arable farm, and the archaeological remains lie in fields that are regularly ploughed and planted with cereal crops. The area has been field walked by local volunteers, and students from Aberdeen University's Certificate in Field Archaeology course. Several small-scale excavations have also been carried out. A summary of the known information for this site is attached (Wordsworth, 1997).

If no intervention takes place, the site may suffer gradual attrition from plough damage, and the archaeological evidence will be lost.

Objectives

To make a preliminary assessment of the condition, extent and nature of the site, or sites.

Strategy & Methods

The fieldwork should concentrate on two main centres of archaeological interest (the approximate position of these areas is shown in red on the attached map extract). As these areas of interest are not easily defined, we wish to leave the precise areas to be investigated to the discretion of the tenderer. A combination of geophysical survey and excavation should be used to ascertain the extent and nature of any archaeological remains in these areas.

Tenders should state what type of geophysical survey will be carried out and the minimum area it will cover. An outline strategy for the investigation of soil science and palaeoenvironmental matters should also be included along with an indication of access to specialist advice.

Product of the work

1. an **interim report** for Discovery and Excavation in Scotland;

2. a **Data Structure Report**;
3. a **Costed Assessment** of further work needed to complete all desirable consequent archaeological work;

Ownership and Copyright

As set out in detail in Historic Scotland's standard terms and conditions for a contract, the immediate products of field and laboratory work will be the property of Historic Scotland. Copyright of all products of work executed in accordance with any commission based on this Project Outline shall be the property of and vest in the Crown. However, such products may be used for non-commercial purposes such as academic articles and lectures without further permission or fee.

Distribution and Confidentiality

In addition to the submission for Discovery and Excavation Scotland, copies of major products of the project (e.g. Data Structure Reports and Interim Reports) must be deposited in the local SMR.

Cost

The upper cost limit of the work and products listed above will be £7500 (exclusive of VAT) and the tender must not exceed this sum.

Tenders

A schedule of fee rates used in the calculation of the tender must be included. In addition a detailed list of the fee rates which would be used in calculating the costs of any post-excavation work must be included.

Compensation and Insurance

The successful contractor must carry, and be prepared to display on request, an insurance policy indemnifying the Secretary of State against all third party claims arising from the execution of the contract. The policy should not cover unavoidable losses inherent in the work, such as loss of crops or delays to the contractor caused by unforeseen circumstances.

Liaison, Access and Time Scale

The tenderer should liaise over dates and access with Mr A S Fraser (1 Kinbeachie, Culbokie, Dingwall, IV7 8JS: 'phone 01349 877236) to ensure that those the tenderer prefers are feasible, and should thereafter specify dates in the tender. Work should preferably start on the site by early November.

The successful contractor must ensure that the local authority archaeologist and the Historic Scotland project manager are informed of the dates and scope of the work and have an opportunity to visit the site.

The Data Structure Report and the costed assessment of further work should be submitted to Historic Scotland by 2 February 1998. The interim report for Discovery and Excavation in Scotland should also be submitted at this time.

Completion of Fieldwork

The site should be backfilled at the end of fieldwork and left in a state acceptable to Mr Fraser, the landowner, and Historic Scotland.

Other matters

Mr Fraser believes he may be able to obtain access to a neighbour's mechanical digger (JCB) for a cheap rate.

Attached

Extracts from "Kinbeachie Farm, Culbokie, Black Isle: An Assessment of current archaeological discoveries and a Project Design for future work", Jonathan Wordsworth, March 1997

Map showing approximate position of areas to be investigated.

Letter from Beta Analytic Radiocarbon Dating Services, dated 27 June 1997, giving the most recently obtained radiocarbon date for material from Kinbeachie.

Cromarty Firth

SW2
Castle Eran
(remains of
15)

Mean Low Water Springs
Mean High Water Springs

Easter Toberchurn

Tober a' Chairn
(Spring)

Approximate positions of
areas to be investigated

Wester Toberchurn

Easter Shoretown

Wester Shoretown

Balcoil Belt

Shoretown Croft

Blairtuis

March of Kipbeachie

Blairtuis

Blairtuis Wood

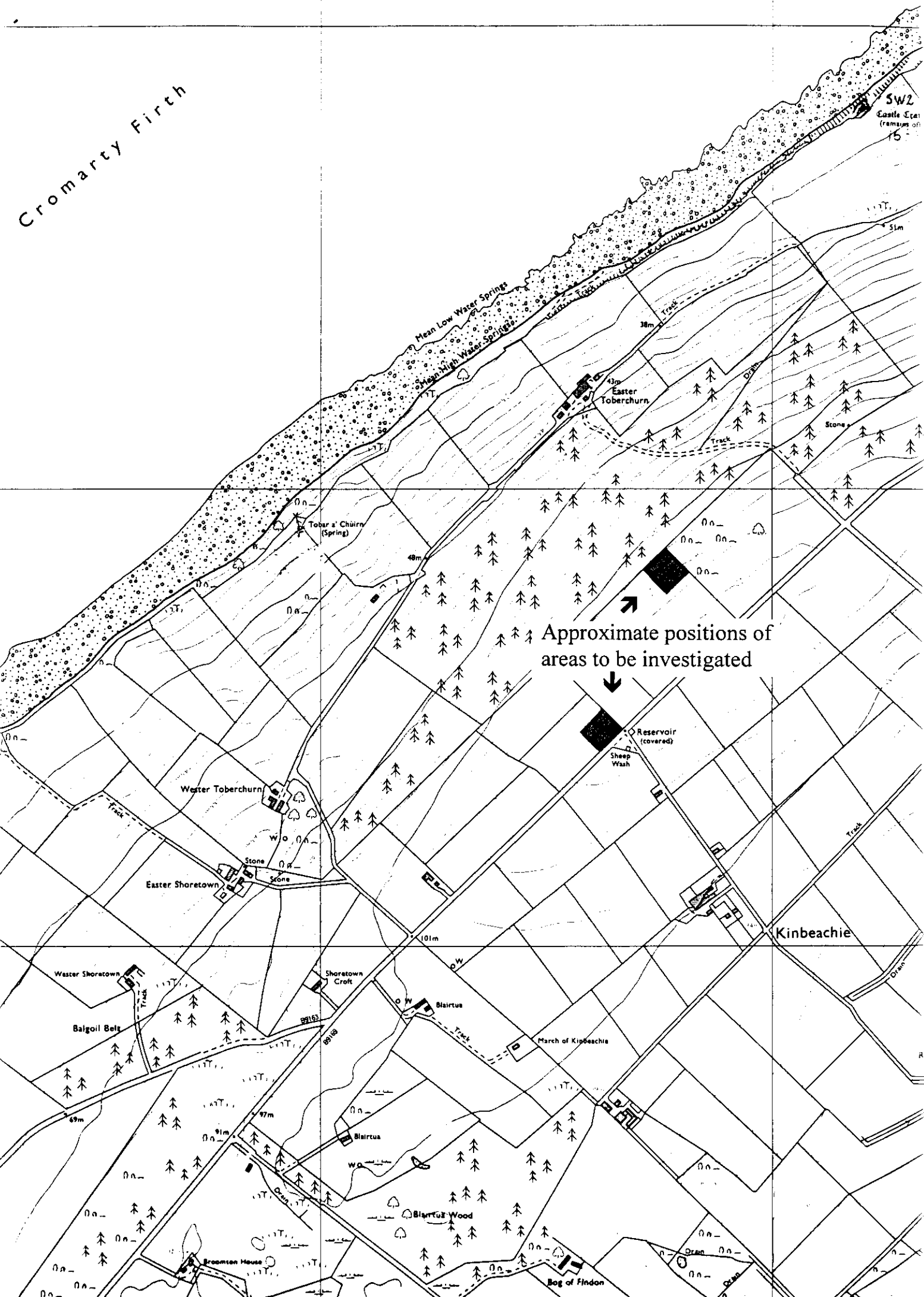
Brampton House

Bog of Findon

Kinbeachie

Reservoir
(covered)

Sheep Wash



Research Design for Proposed Excavation at 1 Kinbeachie Farm, Culbokie

HIGHLAND SMR	
COMPUTER	
INDEX	
MAP	

Background

The farm is situated on a low ridge overlooking the Cromarty Firth. The farm was one of a number of crofts established in this area in the mid 19th century. Prehistoric settlement in the area is attested by the major complex of neolithic cairns to the south at Brae and Woodhead. One, possibly two, roundhouses survive with some scattered clearance cairns in a forestry plantation to the north. Though a historic well, Tobar a'Chuirn, survives to the north at NH 6190 6295 and there was a late medieval castle sited at Kinbeachie at NH 66, it is possible the land now currently farmed was not brought into cultivation until the 19th century when the crofters were established here. The 1st edition OS map of 1865 shows 3 crofts on the present farm and 2 of these have since disappeared.

A hoard of large flint points was found on the NW side of the farm in the late 1940s at cNH 6225 6225. Of the some 12 points only one can now be located. Apart from a stone trough (?saddle quern or later trough) found at cNH 6245 6230 no features of archaeological interest were noted until the present farmer, Mr A Fraser, started to use a larger plough some 8 years ago. Since this was plough was introduced a number of flints and prehistoric pot sherds have been recovered. In 1993 a new water pipeline was cut parallel to the existing road along the south edge of the farm. This led to the discovery of a stone cut trough or cist at NH 6273 6253 capped by a deliberate placing of stones. Dating of this feature was not possible and the fill was largely featureless clay/sand, though one sherd of prehistoric pottery was found under the stone capping and above the fill material.

Another cairn was partly disturbed during ploughing at NH 6233 6217. It had previously been masked by a bank that was removed during road widening. A large flint scraper and a sherd of early neolithic pottery [identified by T. Cowie NMS] were found beneath this cairn. Further sherds of pottery were found to the north of the cairn in a fragmentary condition.

A third cairn has been identified by Mr Fraser but not disturbed to the NE at NH 6294 6275. This is at the top of the hill.

Mr Fraser has also recognised discrete areas of charcoal within his fields and these are probably the result of archaeological deposits being disturbed by the plough. He has also recovered pieces of pottery and flint from his fields. As a result of this fieldwalking was carried out and this identified a concentration of flint and pottery at cNH 6265 6247.

Proposal

1. Limited excavation is proposed at the remains of the cairn at NH 6233 6217 to recover samples for dating and information on the cairn structure. The opportunity will be taken to examine the environs of the cairn to establish the extent of other surviving remains. A trench 3m by 2m is proposed initially.
2. If time permits an additional area will be opened at NH 6265 6247. The purpose of this trench will be to examine the extent and survival of archaeological features below the modern ploughsoil. It is not intended to excavate all features revealed, rather to plot their extent and by selective sampling establish the nature of these features. This area will be examined in 2m squares randomly selected.

3. As the material is currently being recovered from the topsoil, the topsoil will be sieved to evaluate the extent of current and past plough damage.

4. The proposed timetable is to start work on 12th September. Robin Hanley has offered assistance from the 13th September and assistance may also be given by local volunteers with some archaeological experience.

Add site to map
cards
index
computer

file this in Ass Docs