

**Archaeological Desktop and Walkover for a Proposed
Development at Land 280m of New House, Belivat,
Achagour, Ardclach, Highland.**

Client: Inverness Field Archery Club

Date: December 2011

Director: Stuart Farrell FSA (Scot)

Written by: Stuart Farrell

Planning Ref. 11/03610/FUL

Grid Ref: NH 9384/4669 (Centred)

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Non-Technical Summary

The author was commissioned by Inverness Field Archery Club in November 2011 to undertake an archaeological desktop and walkover survey for a proposed development at Land 280m of New House, Belivat, Achagour, Ardclach, (NH 9384/4669) and to assess an area to the SW (centred NH 9367/4661) which the club hope to use at a later date. Highland Council Historic Environment Team produced a specification for this work.

The walkover survey was conducted on 3 December 2011 and revealed no archaeological features to the area of ground under the current application, though there is recorded archaeology closeby in the form of a hut-circle, the area has and is in use currently by the Farm of Achagour but most of the ground is a birch woodland with little or no open ground or evidence for archaeological activity.

No recommendations for further work have been proposed.

Figure 1 – General Site Location 1:25000.

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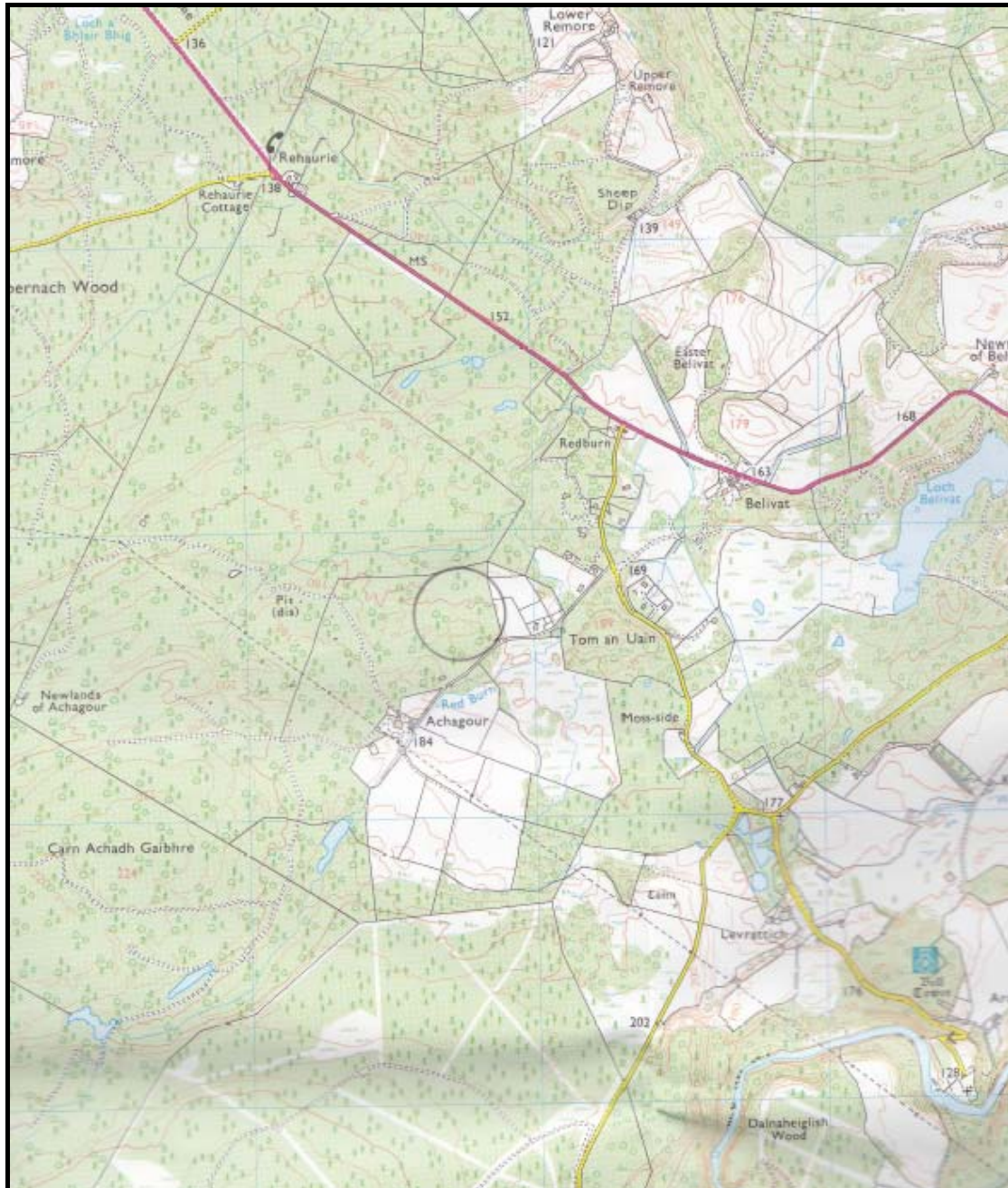


Figure 2 – Site Plans

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Area Red – Existing Application.

Hatched – Area for Future use.

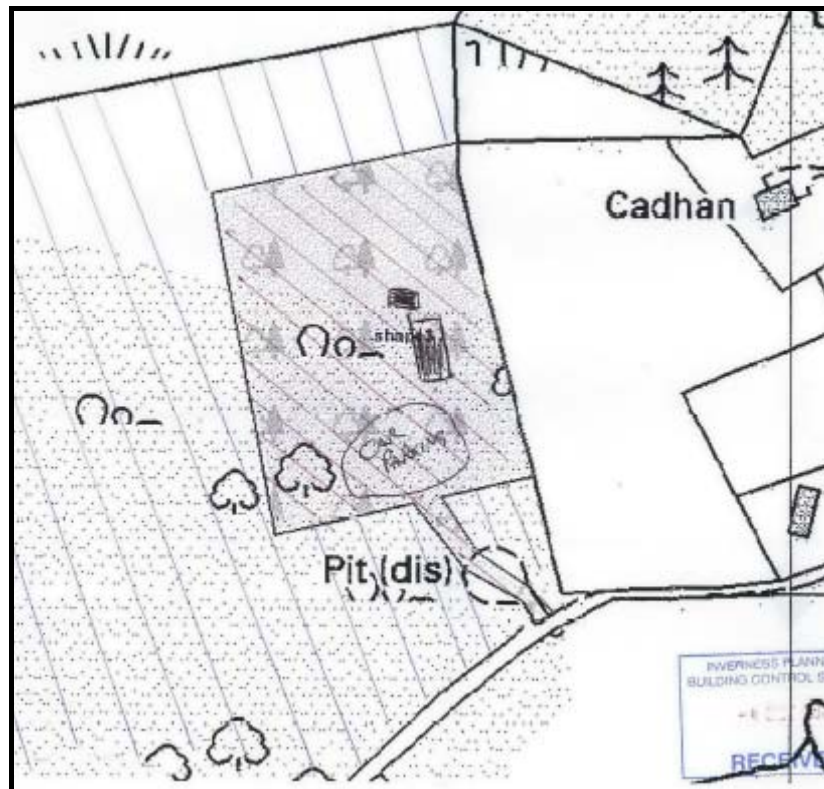
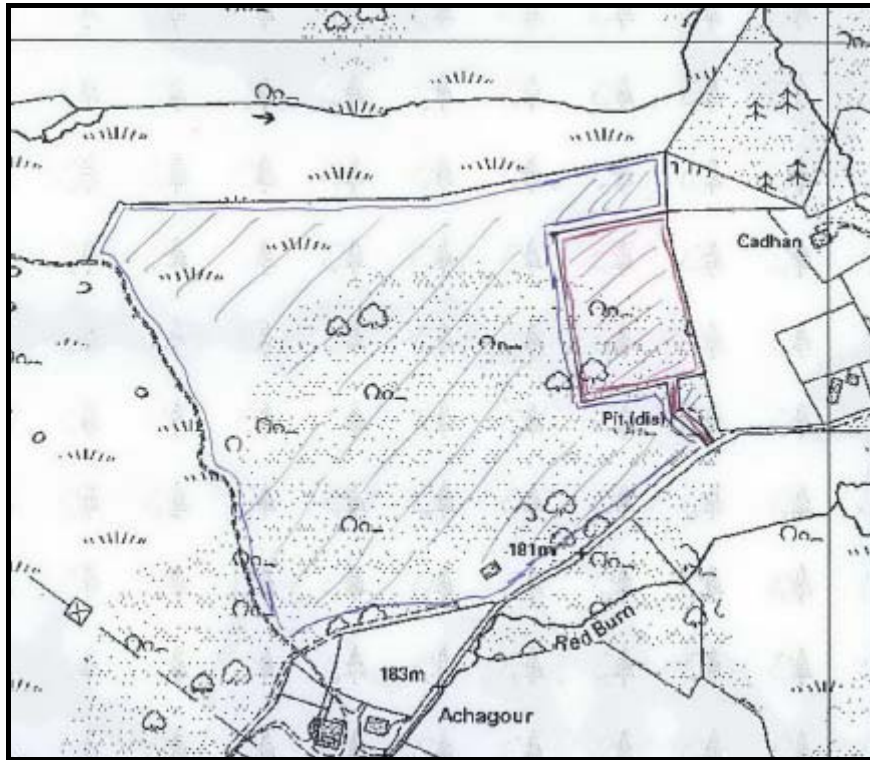
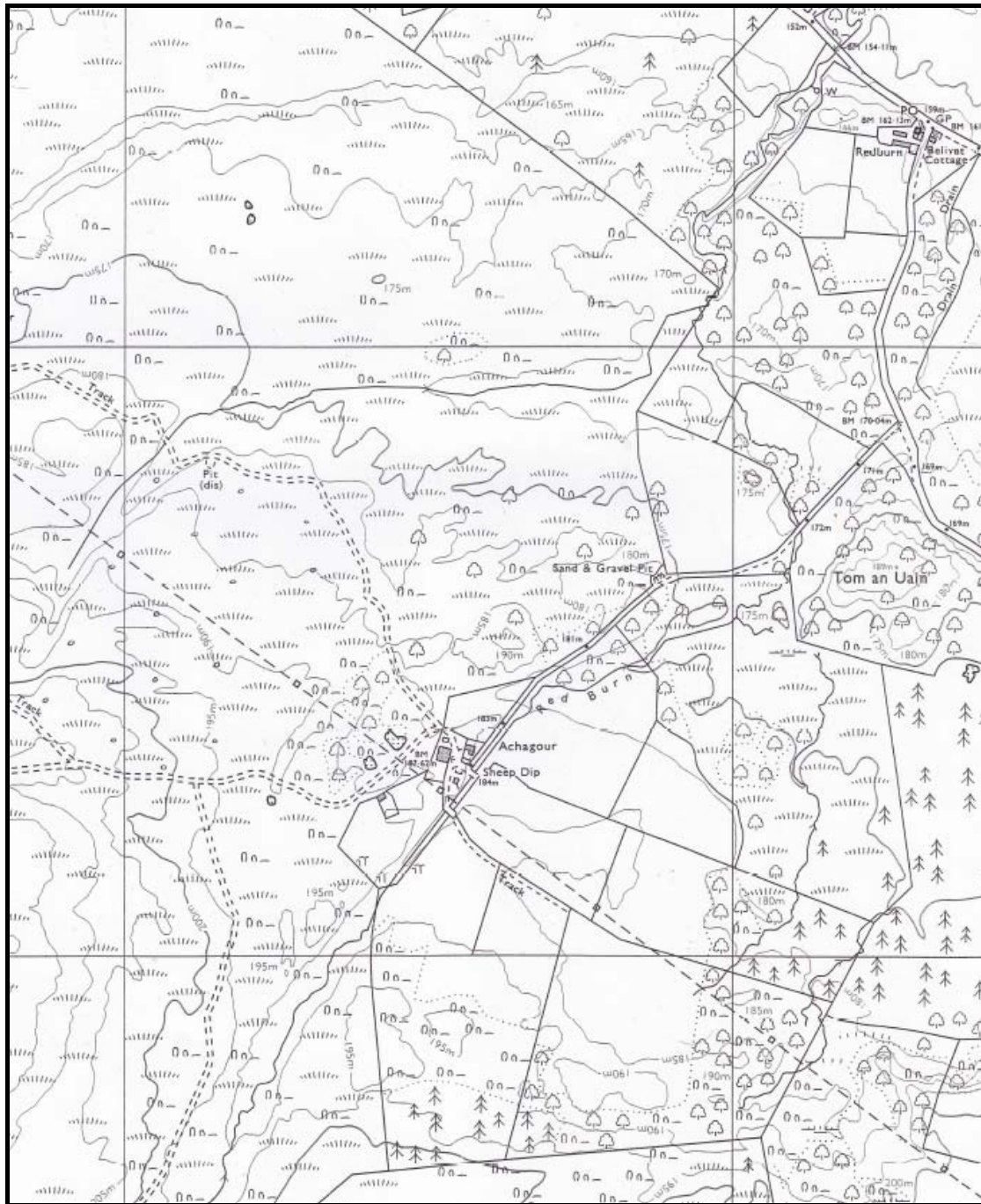


Figure 3 – Ordnance Survey Map of 1977. 1:10,000
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1. INTRODUCTION

An archaeological desktop and walkover survey was carried out by the author on behalf of Inverness Field Archery Club in regard of a condition of planning as required as part of a planning application for an archery course, clubhouse and storage shed. The development site is a 'greenfield' site located to the NE of Achagour Farm, Ardclach, Highland. The work was conducted as part of planning ref. 11/003610/FUL of Highland Council Planning Department.

The work was required as part of planning condition no.5 by Highland Council Planning Department (ref. 11/03610/FUL), which stated the following:

No development shall commence on site prior to, a programme of archaeological work for the evaluation, preservation and recording of any archaeological and historic features affected by the proposed development, including a timetable for investigation, all in accordance with the attached specification, being submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The agreed proposals shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed timetable for investigation.

Reason: In order to preserve the archaeological and historical interest of the site.

A specification for the work was supplied to the client by the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (see Appendix 1).

2. BACKGROUND

The site is located northwest of a private road to Achagour Farm which lies to the SW of the public road from Redburn to Ardclach. Access to the site is gained from an existing access point to the existing gravel pit to the SE corner of the development area. The development site is a 'greenfield' site within an area of ground comprised mostly of birch woodland, some gorse and some rough grazing.

No archaeological work has been conducted previously to the development site or in the immediate area except work by Ordnance Survey.

A survey of maps held in the National Library of Scotland, indicates that the development site is indicated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 as an area of open moorland with an unroofed building to the N of Achagour Farm. Not shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1906, though an old gravel pit is marked (modern house now on site of). Later OS map from 1977 (see figure 3) shows rough ground and trees with sand & gravel pit to SE corner. Early historical maps do not provide enough detail for the development area.

3. METHODOLOGY

The archaeological walkover survey was conducted on areas where the club-house was to be located, location of storage shed, targets and access road. Work was also conducted to the wider area (see figure 2) as this may be used for a future application.

Walkover was conducted on the 3rd of December 2011 in fair weather.

4. RESULTS

The following archaeological sites are located to the vicinity of the development site:

1 – Achagour

HER: MHG 24798

NMRS: N/a

NGR: NH 938/468

Site type: Hut Circle

Recorded in HER of: 'No information'. Possibly visible to the N of G/R on aerial photograph of 1946 (5032) though not very clear.

Walkover reveals only a natural mound with bank to E side at this location covered in birch trees (see plate 5), very unlikely as hut-circle; a walkover to the N reveals boggy wet ground and peat with no indication of hut-circle.

No recommendations to be made.

2 – Aghagour

HER: MHG 33803 & 26533

NMRS: NH94NW 12

NGR: NH 93489/46426

Site type: Building, Farmstead

Recorded in HER of: '1st ed OS shows unroofed linear building to N of the farm (most northerly of 2) at junction of footpaths. Now gone - HAW 9/2004'.

Recorded in HER and NMRS of: 'NH 9353/4632. A farmstead comprising two unroofed buildings, one of which is a long building, four roofed buildings, two of which are arranged around a courtyard and three enclosures is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Nairnshire 1871-3-4, sheet viii). Three unroofed, four roofed buildings and an enclosure are shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1977). Information from RCAHMS 6 August 1996'.

Not shown on 2nd edition OS or visible on aerial photographs of 1946. Walkover reveals no trace of building only birch woods.

No recommendations to be made.

The walkover survey revealed that the gravel pit is still in use, as a borrow pit by Achagour Farm, and that access to the site of the club-house (which is actually to be a wooden garage) and storage shed is already existing (though site of shed looks to have been excavated recently) as area was used recently for feeding pheasants and that area of woods was formerly used for quad-bikes. The woodland is comprised of varying aged birch trees (though mostly mature) on ground of varying rising and falling esker ridges probably of sand and gravel with areas of gorse and some recently planted oak trees. Clearways consist of rough grass and some bracken. Open ground to N (see plate 6) of wet boggy ground with ground cover of heather and moss with occasional slight ridges with birch trees, no evidence of any archaeology.

The former use of the woods for quad-bikes has also seen the creation of a number of clearance ways through the woods, which the Archery Club will use as target runs (Due to the Archery Club's lease agreements no mature trees are allowed to be felled and no new pathways are allowed to be created – *Pers Comm G Parks*) targets are free standing and no fixed construction is to be made. Also for Health & Safety the Archery targets are to be situated 200m from any boundary.

5. DISCUSSION

The archaeological survey conducted on this site revealed an area of ground of birch woodland on a series of esker ridges with no indication of archaeological activity, with the one recorded site looking like a natural knoll, with only the gravel pit (which is still in use) which may be less than 50-100 years old.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

No recommendations for this development are to be made, as the access is existing and the club-house and storage shed are of wooden construction and will not require foundations and are to have no services. No further work is recommended if any future application is made to the land to W as targets and access will not require excavation works.

7. REFERENCES

Highland Council HER entries MHG 24798, 26533 & 33803.
National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE entries NH94NW.

Maps Consulted

1st Edition Ordnance Survey map 1:10,560 Nairnshire sheet 8 published 1874 surveyed 1868-1871.

2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map 1:10,560 Nairnshire sheet 8 published 1906 revised 1903.
Ordnance Survey sheet NH94NW 1:10,000 of 1977 (revised 1971-75).

Aerial Photographs Consulted

RAF 106G/Scot/UK169 26 Aug 1946 5031-33.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author would like to thank the following for their help during the work:

- Mr. Gerry Parks of Inverness Field Archery Club;
- Staff of Highland Council Historic Environment Team;
- Staff of Highland Council Archives.

9. ARCHIVE

The following is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh:

- Notebook of results
- Copy of this report

A set of digital images showing the progress of the work has been deposited with Highland Council Historic Environment Record. Digital images used in this report have been deposited with Highland Council HER on disc as well as a copy of this report as a PDF file.

10. DISCOVERY & EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND

A short summary of the results of this project will be submitted to the Council for Scottish Archaeology's publication *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*. OASIS report no. 115255.

Plate 1 – View of car parking area facing W.



Plate 2 – View of site of clubhouse and storage shed facing NW.



Plate 3 – View of typical clearance way through woods.



Plate 4 – View of woods from NW facing SE.



Plate 5 – View of Supposed Hut Circle facing W – Scale 2m.



Plate 6 – View of open ground to N facing W.



Appendix 1 – HCHET Specification



HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TEAM, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICE SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY

Establish archery course, erect club house, store shed and practice targets at Land 280m NE of New House, Belivat (11/03610/FUL)

1) Summary

This brief details the work required to fulfil the archaeological condition of this planning consent. It represents the minimum standard of work necessary to meet the needs of this condition and should be supplied to tendering archaeological contractors. A list of archaeological contractors is available on our webpage at www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/conservation/archaeology.

This project may impact on valuable features of historic and archaeological importance. In view of the archaeological potential/sensitivity of the site, HET advised that archaeological mitigation is required. The implementation of this brief will meet the concerns raised.

This brief is for a walkover survey. If significant features are identified, recommendations for further measures necessary to mitigate the impact of the development must be made.

This brief has been produced for the applicant who will be responsible for the work and costs, including any tendering and contractual arrangements. This brief must be read with reference to the HET Development Guidance that sets out in detail who is responsible for what, as well as the terms of reference, objectives, method, monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The Development Guidance is available on our webpage available at <http://her.highland.gov.uk/SingleResult.aspx?uid='THG3'>.

2) Archaeological/Historical Background

Evidence of prehistoric settlement has been identified to the north of the development area and there is possibility of further upstanding archaeological remains surviving in the woodland to the south. As such, a walkover survey of the area is required to identify any archaeological features and to inform any specific predicted impacts on the historic environment. The survey will also assess the potential for buried remains in all areas that will be directly impacted by the development. Mitigation will be proposed as appropriate but in this case will attempt to ensure, wherever feasible, that all archaeological remains are preserved in situ and that all features associated with the development are located away from archaeologically sensitive areas.

3) Objectives

The approach to the archaeological study should aim to:

- Identify the cultural heritage baseline within the proposal area.
- Assess the proposed development site in terms of its archaeological and historic environment potential.

- Consider the potential impacts of construction of the proposed development on the cultural heritage resource.
- Propose measures (where appropriate) to mitigate any predicted adverse impacts.

4) Methodology

All fieldwork must be informed by a desk-based assessment undertaken in advance of the start of works.

Walkover Survey

The information gathered through desk assessment should be further assessed and augmented by a rapid and non-invasive field reconnaissance survey of the total application area. This will be conducted in a systematic manner in order to assess the presence or absence, character, extent and condition of sites, monuments and landscape features identified by the desk-based assessment. The survey will also identify any further features of archaeological and historical interest not detected from the desk assessment and assess the area's potential for the discovery of further, as yet unrecorded archaeological sites.

All individual features will be recorded, photographed and sketched. All features will be marked on a plan, at a relevant scale and tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. Digital shapefiles (or equivalent) will be produced showing the full extent of all individual features identified during the course of this work.

Any additional features identified during the field survey may be subject to further mitigation measures such as marking and fencing off, or preservation by archaeological record, should it be not possible to micro-site development features away from upstanding archaeology.

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

The Archaeological Contractor must refer to the minimum standard requirements as laid out in HET Development Guidance. This brief itself is not comprehensive or definitive - tendering Archaeological Contractors will need to determine for themselves the methodology that will deliver the required product. This should be laid down in a Written Scheme of Investigation and agreed with HET in advance of the start of site works. The start of archaeological work will be subject to the submission and approval of this document.

5) Schedule & Monitoring

The Archaeological Contractor is responsible for agreeing arrangements for monitoring with HET staff. We will monitor projects as necessary to ensure that minimum standards are met. Prior notice of fieldwork starting dates, with contact names, telephone numbers and arrangements for access must be given to HET by the Archaeological Contractor.

The Archaeological Contractor must make a short progress report (by telephone) to HET for every week of fieldwork undertaken. Any unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries, or other unexpected occurrences which might significantly affect the archaeological work and/or the development must be notified by the Archaeological Contractor immediately to the applicant and HET. The finds or features must be left in situ until arrangements have been agreed for

safeguarding or recording them. In the meantime work may continue on other areas of the site.

6) Products

Following completion of the fieldwork, an archive and report will be produced and disseminated according to the standards set out in the HET Development Guidance. The report should describe the nature of the field work undertaken; the conditions and limitations within which the work was carried-out; the results that were obtained and recommendations for mitigation and/or further work, as appropriate. Further work may include additional fieldwork, post-excavation analysis, specialist studies and publication.

All work will be undertaken according to the Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists.

The brief has been produced specifically for this scheme based on documents supplied at the time it was issued. It is valid for one year from the date of issue. Where work is not carried out in full within that time, a revised specification may be issued.

This brief has been produced by the Historic Environment Team, to whom any enquiries should be addressed. No one else has authority to vary its terms.

Highland Council Historic Environment Team

Monday, 7 November 2011

www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/conservation/archaeology

Appendix 2 – Photograph Register

- 1 – View of car parking area facing W.
 - 2 – View of site of club-house (garage) facing NW.
 - 3 – View of woods showing typical age of birch trees.
 - 4 – View of typical clearway in woods.
 - 5 – View of typical clearway in woods.
 - 6 – View of typical clearway in woods.
 - 7 – View of typical clearway in woods.
 - 8 – View of woods from NW facing SE.
 - 9 – View of supposed hut-circle facing W – scale 2m.
 - 10 – View of open ground to N facing W.
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LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Highland
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Achagour, Ardclach
PROJECT CODE:	
PARISH:	Ardclach
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Stuart Farrell
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Survey
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NH 9367/4661 (centred)
START DATE (this season)	December 2011
END DATE (this season)	December 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	n/a
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A walkover survey was conducted on 3 December 2011 for a proposed club-house and storage shed at Achagour, Ardclach. Work revealed no archaeological features to the proposed development area and an area of ground for possible future use. Full Report submitted to HCHER and NMRS.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Inverness Field Archery Club
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	39a Park Street, Nairn, Highland IV12 4PP
EMAIL ADDRESS:	stuart714@btinternet.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	To be deposited with NMRS