

New Maturation Warehouses Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin

Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

November 2023

AOC Project Number: 70715



New Maturation Warehouses, Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin:

Archaeological Watching Brief

Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	HGA c/o John Grant Stoneyfield Business Park Inverness IV2 7PA
Planning Reference:	22/05279/FUL
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NH 79360 30000
AOC Project No:	70715
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Date:	December 2023

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was required by HGA, on behalf of Tomatin Distillery, during groundworks for the construction of two new maturation warehouses at Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin, near Inverness (National Grid Reference (NGR): NH 79360 30000). The requirement arose as a desk-based assessment (DBA) of the development site and a phase of archaeological evaluation indicating both prehistoric and post-medieval remains in the wider area.

The watching brief was carried out between 13th November and 30th November 2023. No archaeological features and/or deposits were present.

No further archaeological mitigation is recommended with respect to the current development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was required by HGA, on behalf of Tomatin Distillery, during initial groundworks for the construction of two new maturation warehouses at Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin, near Inverness (National Grid Reference (NGR): NH 79360 30000). The requirement arose as a desk-based assessment (DBA) and subsequent archaeological evaluation of the development site (herein 'the Site') indicated that the wider area contains both prehistoric and later post-medieval remains (Stirling 2023; Murray 2023).
- 1.2 The Site lies within the administrative area of the Highland Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by Kirsty Cameron, Archaeologist, Historic Environment Team, Highland Council. The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principles set out in Scottish Planning Policy (2010) and Planning and Archaeology 2/2011 (2011) and adhered to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2022).
- 1.3 The objectives for the fieldwork had previously been set out in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) (Glew & Marshall 2023).

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY, AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 The site was located within a grassy field adjacent to existing distillery warehouses at Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin, near Inverness (NGR: NH 79360 30000) (**Figure 1**). The field was gently undulating and had been used as pasture until construction works began.
- 2.2 The site lies at c.290m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and is underlain by bedrock geology of Findhorn Pluton Phase 2 Granodiorite biotite, igneous bedrock which was formed between 443.8 and 419.2 million years ago during the Silurian period. The superficial deposits at the Site are glaciofluvial sheet deposits of gravel, sand, and silt, formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present (BGS 2023).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The following archaeological background is taken from the DBA produced for the site in January 2023 (Stirling 2023).
- 3.2 The Early Historic maps indicate the Tomatin area comprised a mixture of improved farmland and rough open ground along the main Inverness to Perth routeway, though no specific detail of the Site can be seen. The development area first appears in detail on historic mapping on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map surveyed in 1870. The area is depicted as an open field with a mixture of improved and rough ground adjacent to the main Inverness to Perth Road. It lies opposite Freeburn Inn and there is a well depicted in the field. The 2nd edition map, surveyed in 1900, now shows the Highland Railway line running to the west of the Site. New field boundaries have been added and split the open area into several smaller fields, though the Site itself remains as one cohesive field. A roofed structure is also depicted on the south side of the field.

- 3.3 The Ordnance Survey Name Book (Inverness-shire Mainland Vol. 5), describes Freeburn Inn as a “first class Inn without offices attached situated 15 miles south of Inverness on the highland road, two stories high, slated and in good repair. There are 7 monthly Markets held at the Inn during the year for the sale of sheep and cattle.” (Scotland’s Places 2023). The New Statistical Account (County of Inverness, Vol. XIV, 1845) also describes the holding of seven fairs for the sale of sheep and cattle at the Inn, which was at a central location in the parish. It is possible that the development area, being a large, open field adjacent to the Inn, was used to facilitate these regular markets.
- 3.4 According to the Highland Historic Environment Record (HER) and National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE via Canmore) there are no previously known heritage assets known within the site. Nine previously known assets lie within 500m of the site. These include Freeburn Hotel (Canmore 100469 / MHG24071 / MHG43033), Frithe Bridge (Canmore 14092 / MHG2841), Allt na Frithe Bridge (Canmore 139394 / MHG32441), Tomatin Railway Viaduct (Canmore 279920 / 279898 / MHG49447), Tomatin ROC Observation Post (Canmore 173652 / MHG30320), an 18th century Military Road (Canmore 139374 / MHG32440), the site of Telford Toll House (MHG58060), Free House (Canmore 115723 / MHG262060, and Dubhag Bridge (Canmore 14133 / MHG2872). The known assets are all post-medieval in date, however, further to the southeast, a prehistoric settlement of hut circles and a field system (Canmore 14936 / MHG2838) is known, indicating the potential for both prehistoric and later remains to survive within the area.
- 3.5 Previous archaeological works have taken place in the nearby area in 2022 as part of the A9 Dualling project and associated local road improvement works. A watching brief located in the field to the southeast of the Site revealed six linear features, which were interpreted as possible agricultural drainage ditches, with one being a possibly earlier feature (Murray 2022). In the same field, archaeological investigations for the A9 Dualling recorded a stretch of Wade’s 18th century military road, which survived as an earth and gravel bank but with little formal road surface remaining (Humble 2022).
- 3.6 Further works for the A9 Dualling included a metal-detecting survey, a trial trenching evaluation, and a strip-map-excavation (Engl 2022; MacIver 2022a, 2022b). The metal-detecting survey was carried out near Wade’s military road but recovered limited artefactual evidence. Trial trenching and subsequent excavation identified several pit and linear features in two separate land parcels. Some of the pits contained fire waste material, from which radiocarbon dates suggest an Iron Age and Early Medieval/Pictish origin for the features.
- 3.7 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by AOC in February 2023 as part of the programme of mitigation. This revealed indications of post-medieval farming practices, but no clear evidence of other archaeological activity (Murray 2023).

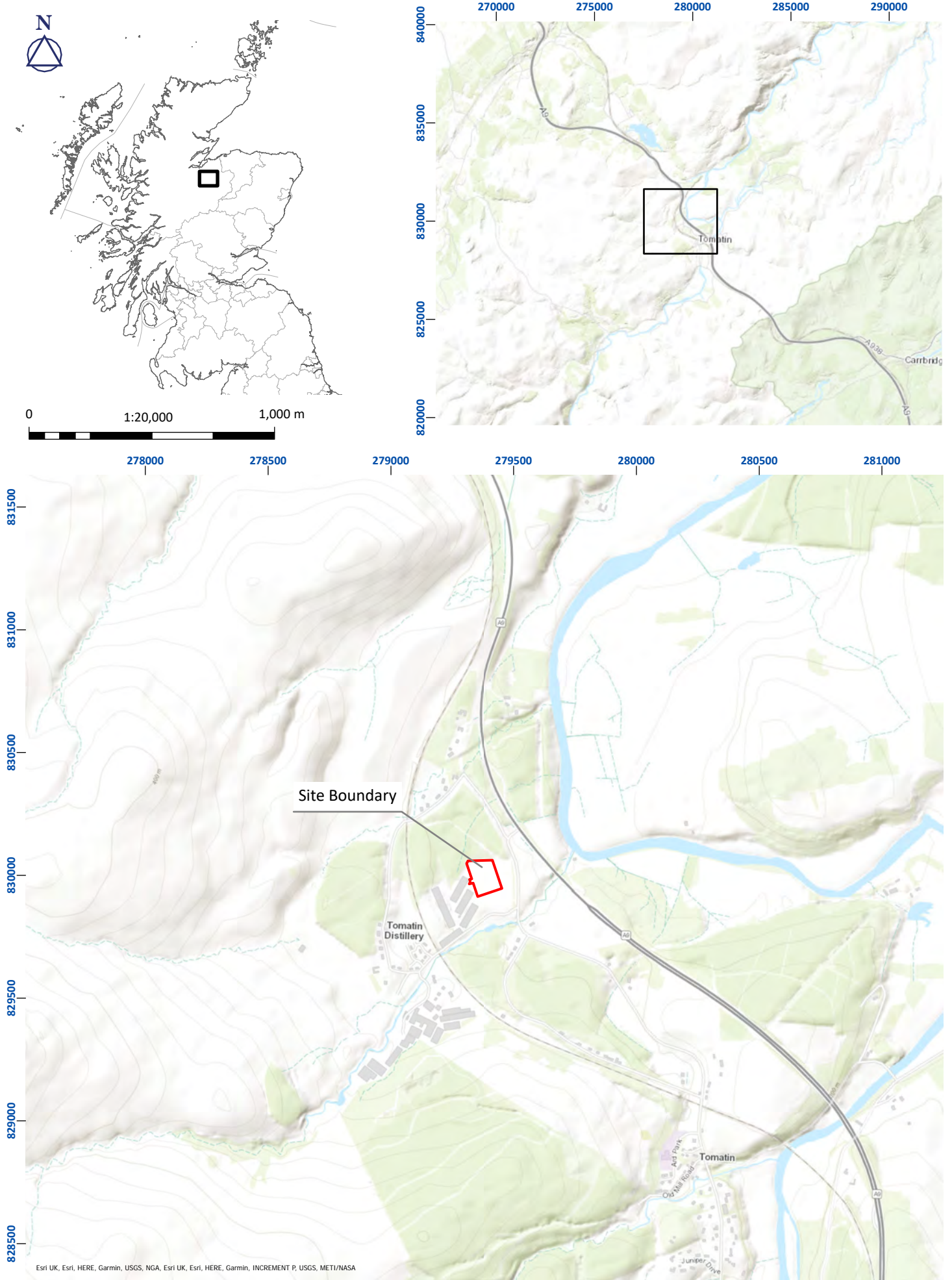


Figure 1 : Site location plan

04/70715/DSR/01/01



Figure 2: Watching brief area

4.0 OBJECTIVES

4.1 The *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists* (CIfA) defines an archaeological watching brief as ‘a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed (CIfA, 2020).’

4.2 The aims of the archaeological works were:

- i) To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area prior to the destruction of any significant material
- ii) To excavate, sample and record any features or to propose arrangements for their safeguarding, where possible
- iii) To sample deposits for post-excavation work, including environmental analysis and dating
- iv) To make recommendations for further measures necessary to mitigate the impact of the development
- v) To make recommendations for post-excavation work that will require completion

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 An archaeological watching brief was kept during all topsoil excavation works in the initial phases of the groundworks. The monitored area was approximately 13,900 m² in total (**Figure 2**). An archaeologist supervised all digging by mechanical excavator which was fitted with a c.2m-wide straight-edged bucket in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site. All work was carried out in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2020) and the Highland Council’s Standards for Archaeological Work (2012).

5.2 The watching brief location was plotted using a Trimble DGPS capable of centimetre accuracy. The archaeological monitoring was recorded using high-resolution digital photography in order to record the process as well as any features or finds of interest.

6.0 RESULTS

6.1 The watching brief was carried out between the 13th and 30th of November 2023. The watching brief area comprised an area of predominantly undisturbed ground between the existing Tomatin Distillery maturation warehouses and the unnamed road to the village of Tomatin. An area of c. 13,900 m² was excavated, encompassing the proposed building footprints, access road, and sewer/attenuation tank areas.

- 6.2 The topsoil (001) primarily comprised a loose mid to dark grey-brown silty peat, with frequent sub-angular and sub-rounded stone, occasional fragments of modern debris and rare roots with a depth of between 0.1m to 0.44m.
- 6.3 The natural subsoil (002) primarily comprised yellowish-brown sand with occasional reddish-brown clay patches, containing frequent sub-angular stone inclusions and rare, larger sub-angular stone boulders.
- 6.4 No archaeological features or finds were identified during the watching brief.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 No archaeological features were present within the watching brief area. Due to the absence of archaeological features, no further archaeological mitigation is recommended.
- 7.2 Final decisions on the requirement for further mitigation rests with the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HET).

8.0 REFERENCES

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Plate 1: Post excavation of first area in the northwestern edge of the site showing field drains, facing south



Plate 2: Post excavation of construction compound, facing north



Plate 3: Post excavation of construction compound, facing west-northwest



Plate 4: Post excavation of haul road under soil storage bund area, facing west



Plate 5: Post excavation across the entrance to the construction area, facing north



Plate 6: Post excavation of the area for southern warehouse, facing north



Plate 7: Post excavation of the main warehouse locations, facing north



Plate 8: Post excavation of the southeastern corner of the main construction area, showing changing ground levels, facing northwest



Plate 9: Post excavation of the northern leg of pipe trench route, facing east



Plate 10: Post excavation of the eastern leg of pipe trench route, facing north

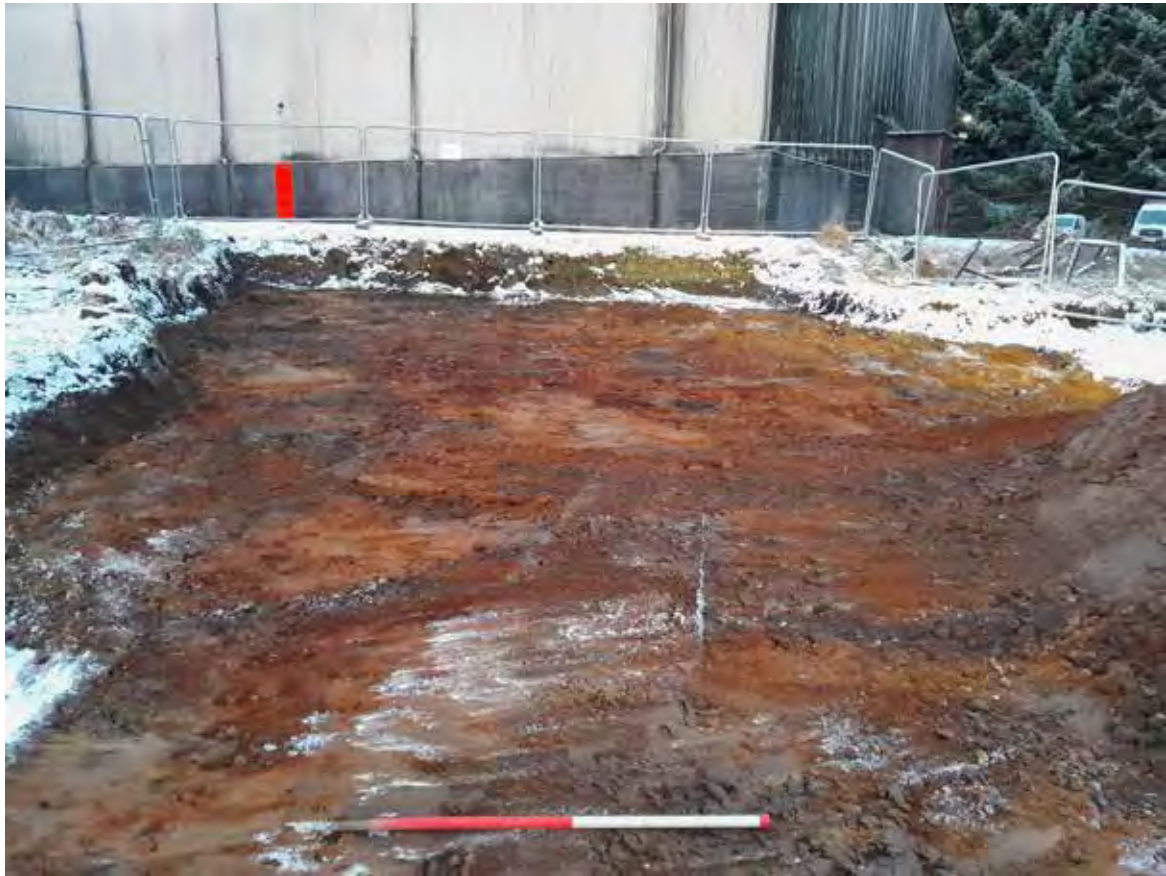


Plate 11: Post excavation of the access road, facing northwest

Appendix 1: Photographic Register

Photo No.	Description	Direction Facing	Date
1	Pre-excavation of the northwest corner of the site	N	13/11/2023
2	Post excavation of the northwest corner of the site	N	13/11/2023
3	Post excavation of the northwest corner of the site with field drains	S	13/11/2023
4	Post excavation of the northwest corner of the site with field drains	S	13/11/2023
5	Record of the first portion of the construction compound area	N	14/11/2023
6	Record of the first portion of the construction compound area (wide angle)	N	14/11/2023
7	Record of the first portion of the construction compound area	S	14/11/2023
8	Record of the first portion of the construction compound area	S	14/11/2023
9	Post excavation of construction compound area	N	14/11/2023
10	Post excavation of construction compound area (wide angle)	N	14/11/2023
11	Post excavation of construction compound area	N	14/11/2023
12	Post excavation of construction compound area (wide angle)	N	14/11/2023
13	Post excavation of construction compound area	W	14/11/2023
14	Post excavation of construction compound area (wide angle)	W	14/11/2023
15	Working shot of machine	NE	15/11/2023
16	Working shot of machines/general shot of the site	ESE	15/11/2023
17	Post-excavation of haul road down the northern edge of the site	WNW	15/11/2023
18	Post-excavation of haul road down the northern edge of the site (wide angle)	WNW	15/11/2023
19	Post-excavation of haul road down the northern edge of the site	ESE	15/11/2023
20	Record shot of haul road down the western edge of the site	SSW	15/11/2023
21	General shot of the site from the northwest corner	SSE	15/11/2023
22	Post-excavation of haul road turning spot under the location of soil bund	N	15/11/2023
23	Post-excavation of haul road under the location of soil bund	WNW	15/11/2023
24	Post-excavation of haul road under the location of soil bund (wide angle)	NW	15/11/2023
25	Post-excavation of haul road turning spot under the location of soil bund (wide angle)	N	15/11/2023
26	Post-excavation of haul road turning spot under the location of soil bund	ESE	15/11/2023
27	Post-excavation of haul road turning spot under the location of soil bund (wide angle)	ESE	15/11/2023
28	Progress shot, dumper access path near the cabin	N	15/11/2023
29	Progress shot, dumper access path near the cabin	N	15/11/2023
30	Progress shot, dumper access path near the cabin	N	15/11/2023
31	Progress shot, dumper access path near the cabin	S	15/11/2023
32	Progress shot, dumper access path near the cabin	S	15/11/2023
33	Progress shot, dumper access along the east side of the soil bund	S	15/11/2023
34	Progress shot, dumper access along the west side of the soil bund	S	15/11/2023
35	Progress shot, dumper access along the west side of soil bund island	S	15/11/2023
36	Progress shot. Beginning of stripping (east-west) at the north end of the field	E	15/11/2023
37	Progress shot. Beginning of stripping (east-west) at the north end of the field.	W	15/11/2023
38	Progress shot, the area around the cabin and site access road	N	16/11/2023
39	Progress shot, the area around the cabin and site access road	N	16/11/2023
40	Progress shot, the area around the cabin and site access road	N	16/11/2023
41	Progress shot, the area around the cabin and site access road	N	16/11/2023
42	Progress shot, the area around the cabin and site access road	S	16/11/2023
43	Progress shot, beginning of the removal of the bund	N	16/11/2023
44	Progress shot, beginning of the removal of the bund	N	16/11/2023
45	Progress for 17/11/23 showing removal of the bund	S	17/11/2023
46	Progress for 17/11/23 showing removal of the bund	S	17/11/2023
47	Progress for 17/11/23 showing removal of the bund	N	17/11/2023

Photo No.	Description	Direction Facing	Date
48	Progress for morning 20/11/23 showing first strip removal	S	20/11/2023
49	Progress for morning 20/11/23 showing first strip removal	N	20/11/2023
50	Progress for the afternoon of 20/11/23 shows the second (incomplete) strip	S	20/11/2023
51	Progress for the afternoon of 20/11/23 showing the second (incomplete) strip	N	20/11/2023
52	Progress for the morning of 21/11/23, showing completion of the strip from the previous day.	S	21/11/2023
53	Progress for the morning of 21/11/23, showing completion of the strip from the previous day.	S	21/11/2023
54	Progress for the morning of 21/11/23, showing completion of the strip from the previous day.	N	21/11/2023
55	Progress for the afternoon of 21/11/23, showing strip one of afternoon operations, stripping West to east.	NE	21/11/2023
56	Progress for the afternoon of 21/11/23, showing strip one of afternoon operations, stripping West to east.	SW	21/11/2023
57	Progress for 22/11/23	S	22/11/2023
58	Progress for 22/11/23	N	22/11/2023
59	Partial progress for morning of 23/11/23	N	23/11/2023
60	Partial progress for morning of 23/11/23	N	23/11/2023
61	Afternoon progress for 23/11/23	E	23/11/2023
62	Afternoon progress for 23/11/23	W	23/11/2023
63	Dumper access route 24/11/23	E	24/11/2023
64	Dumper access route 24/11/23	W	24/11/2023
65	Partial progress morning of 24/11/23	S	24/11/2023
66	Partial progress morning of 24/11/23	N	24/11/2023
67	Progress morning of 24/11/23	N	24/11/2023
68	Progress morning of 24/11/23	S	24/11/2023
69	Progress for morning of 27/11/23	N	27/11/2023
70	Progress for morning of 27/11/23	S	27/11/2023
71	Progress for the afternoon of 27/11/23	N	27/11/2023
72	Progress for the afternoon of 27/11/23	S	27/11/2023
73	Progress for morning of 28/11/23	N	28/11/2023
74	Progress for morning of 28/11/23	S	28/11/2023
75	Access road stripping, 29/11/23	W	29/11/2023
76	Access road stripping, 29/11/23	E	29/11/2023
77	Expansion of sewer access drainage trench, 29/11/23	N	29/11/2023
78	Expansion of sewer access drainage trench, 29/11/23	S	29/11/2023

Appendix 2: OASIS Summary

OASIS Summary for aocarcha1-521455

OASIS ID (UID)	aocarcha1-521455
Project Name	Watching Brief at New Maturation Warehouses, Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin
Sitename	New Maturation Warehouses, Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin
Sitecode	70715
Activity type	Watching Brief
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	AOC Archaeology Group
Project Dates	13-Nov-2023 - 30-Nov-2023
Location	New Maturation Warehouses, Tomatin Distillery, Tomatin NGR: NH 79387 29989 LL: 57.34439574138093, -4.005774071918452 12 Fig: 279387,829989
Administrative Areas	Parish: Moy and Dalarossie Council: Highland Country: Scotland
Project Methodology	An archaeological watching brief was kept during all topsoil excavation works in the initial phases of the groundworks. The monitored area was approximately 13,900 m ² in total. An archaeologist supervised all digging by mechanical excavator which was fitted with a c.2m-wide straight-edged bucket in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site.
Project Results	No archaeological features were present within the watching brief area. Due to the absence of archaeological features, no further archaeological mitigation is recommended.
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation Tomatin Distillery
Person Responsible for work	Karena Wolleson / Peta Glew
Archives	
DES description	
NGR	NH 79387 29989
Previous Work	Yes
Future Work	Yes
Caption(s) for illustrations	

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