

**Report of Archaeological  
Desktop & Walkover Survey  
Kishorn, Wester Ross, Highland  
NG 808 / 395 (Centred)**

*Client: Dagleish Associates Ltd on behalf of Leiths (Scotland) Ltd*

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Stuart Farrell was commissioned by Dalgleish Associates Ltd on behalf of Leiths (Scotland) Ltd in April 2004 to undertake an archaeological desktop and walkover survey at Kishorn, Wester Ross, Highland (centred at NG 808/395) as part of an environmental impact assessment for a proposed quarry.*

*Highland Council Archaeology Unit produced a specification for this work.*

*Work revealed no archaeological sites in the proposed development area; the site lies close to an area used formerly as an oilrig fabrication yard.*

*No recommendations have currently been made for the proposed development area.*

## **1. Introduction**

This report is for an archaeological desktop and walkover survey conducted for Dalgleish Associates Ltd on behalf of Leiths (Scotland) Ltd by the author for a proposed quarry at Kishorn, Wester Ross. This work is to form part of the environmental statement for a future planning application.

The site is located to the southwest of Kishorn near Loch Carron on the coast.

The fieldwork was conducted on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004.

## **2. Acknowledgements**

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

- Mr. E McLellan, of Dalgleish Associates Ltd;
- Mr. M Wildgoose of Scotland's First Settlers Project, for information on Kishorn shelter sites;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit;
- Staff of the RCAHMS;
- Staff of the NMRS;
- Staff of Highland Council Archives.

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**Figure 1 - General Location 1:50,000 – site circled.**  
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### 3. Historical Background

Currently there are no archaeological sites recorded to the proposed development area recorded in either the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record or to the National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE database, though four sites are located close by (see figure 2). Details are as follows:

**1 – Kishorn 3**

NMRS – NG83NW 16

HSMR – N/a

Grid Ref: NG 8062/3935

Type – Rock shelter

No information in HSMR or the NMRS. Noted by M Wildggose (pers comm.) of 'sea cliff site, covered in bracken, 2m high by 4m deep and 8m wide, 20m from sea'.

**2 – Russel or Kishorn 1**

NMRS – NG84SW 31

HSMR – N/a

Grid Ref: NG 8170/4002

Type – Rock shelter

No information in HSMR or the NMRS. Noted by M Wildggose (pers comm.) of 'small cliff site, covered in bog myrtle, 1m high by 3.5m deep and 2m wide, 30m from rock and shingle beach'.

Both sites noted as part of the Scotland's First Settler's Project, though to date no other details are available.

**3 – Kishorn**

NMRS – N/a

HSMR – NG84SW 34

Grid Ref: NG 8179/4002

Type – Enclosure

Noted as 'Marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map as sheep pen. Two enclosures making use of the rockface and boulders to form part of the walls:

- a- A well preserved section of walling 3m long and 1.2m high connects a large boulder to the rockface. Parallel to this and 2m to the S, the low remains of another section of walling connect this boulder to a tumble of boulders which form the western boundary of the enclosure.
- b- 10m W along the rockface, a second enclosure measuring 12m x 4m. The southern front section of wall is very tumbled but the side sections curving into key into the rockface are well preserved and stand 1m high.'

**4 – Kishorn**

NMRS – N/a

HSMR – NG83NW 22

Grid Ref: NG 81665/39937

Type – Dyke

Noted as 'section of drystone dyke. Aligned NW-SE and running down the scree slope from the rockface to the perimeter fence, the tumbled remains of a stone dyke'.

Both sites noted as part of a survey by C Dagg (1999) on the redevelopment of the oil construction yard, where it was noted in the summary of 'that within the perimeter fence defining the area of the construction yard, all evidence for previous human activity has been obliterated except along the short strip connecting the two main areas'.

The proposed development site lies to the south of the Township of Russel at NG 820/404. (NMRS NG84SW 10) Noted by the RCAHMS (2003, 31) that proposed site lies adjacent to the site of the Howard Davis Yard and noting 'originally built as oil-platform construction yard, the site is now partially used for industrial purposes, while the remainder lies derelict'.

Both the aerial photography and the map coverage were limited to the area of interest.

A study of aerial photographs held in the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh revealed some areas of grassland and lazy beds visible on photographs of 1947 and 1959 (5) though all traces of these have been removed by 1975 when area is dominated by area of an oilrig fabrication yard.

Map coverage was also limited. A study of maps of the proposed development area revealed no features of interest. Early maps of the area from Blaue's map of 1654 to Thomson's map of Inverness-shire of 1830 do not show enough detail for the development area. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey of 1880 shows only moorland with the next edition of 1905 showing no change. On the earlier maps the nearby township is noted (Dorret 1750 – Rissell; Thomson 1830 – Rishal; Ainslie 1789 – Risgill; Thomson 1826 – Rishal; Blaue 1654 – Rossol though marked on E side of Loch Kishorn).

### Conclusions

The development area possibly formed part of grazings and land used by the nearby township of Russel, which probably dates from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, though these have mostly been lost by the construction of an oil-platform yard in the 1970's. Two previous archaeological surveys conducted in the vicinity of the development area have not recorded any sites to this area.

### **4. Objectives**

To conduct a walkover survey of the proposed development to record those features revealed by the survey. A copy of the specification provided by Highland Council Archaeology Unit is enclosed. This work is to include the following:

- Desk based survey
- Walkover survey
- Report on results

### **5. Methodology**

A walkover was made of the proposed extraction area and the area to be used for storage of overburden and spoil.

Weather on the day of the walkover (May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004) was sunny with occasional heavy showers.

## **6. Walkover Results**

The walkover survey was carried out in accordance with accepted professional archaeological standards as published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999).

### Site Location

The site lies on a predominantly south facing slope of rough grass and heather (see figure 3).

### Results

A walkover of the proposed extraction and soil storage areas revealed no archaeological features. The only features revealed were two modern concrete navigation pillars at NG 80804/39363 and NG 80884/39424. Similar other pillars are situated behind the dry dock to the east. Overall the area is very wet and open to the elements.

View of pillar no.1.

Top: View of proposed extraction area facing S.  
Bottom: View of proposed storage area facing SE.

## **7. Conclusions**

Though the proposed development site lies close to two rock shelters that may or may not have evidence of occupation, the overall site lies on a south facing slope open to the west and would therefore be unlikely to be suitable for settlement. The area has possibly been formally used as grazing, hence the nearby enclosures and lazy beds, by the nearby township from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries before the advent of the oil-platform construction yard in the 1970's.

## **8. Recommendations**

No recommendations with regard any further archaeological work for this project is to be proposed due to no features being revealed, and it is likely that no other features would be revealed with further work.

It is recommended that it may be advisable for an assessment by trial trenching to be conducted on all 4 archaeological sites located nearby if the quarry expands in the future.

## **9. Archive**

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

- Copy of this report

## **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*.

## 11. References

Dagg, C (1999) Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Redevelopment of the former Oil Construction Yard at Kishorn in Wester Ross. Unpublished report – copy held in Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record. (Report no.5)

Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record database.

IFA (1999) By-laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Reading.

National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE database.

RCAHMS (2003) The Historic Land-use Assessment of Wester Ross. RCAHMS and Historic Scotland. Edinburgh.

### Maps Consulted

Ainslie's map of Ross-shire 1789.

Blaues map of 1654. 'Moravia'.

Dorret's map of 1750. 'A general map of Scotland'.

Huddart's map of 1794. 'A new chart of the West coast of Scotland'.

Thomson's map of 1826. 'Ross and Cromarty Shires'.

Thomson's map of 1830. 'Inverness-shire'.

Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition 6inch-mile sheet 110 Ross-shire of 1880 surveyed 1875.

Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 6inch-mile sheet 110 Ross-shire of 1905 revised 1902.

Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 NG83NW of 1971.

### Aerial Photographs Consulted

RAF CPE/Scot/UK 248	4219-4216	1-8-1947	1:10,000
RAF 58/RAF/2711	F21 3-5	11-2-1959	1:10,000
Fairey 7343/35	171-169	21-5-1975	1:10,000