Report of Archaeological Desktop & Walkover Survey
Former Royal Naval Air Station HMS Fieldfare, Evanton, Highland.
Centred at NH 6265/6752.

Client: W Munro Construction Ltd.

By
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September 2005
Non-Technical Summary

Stuart Farrell was commissioned by Howard Brindley Consulting on behalf of W Munro Construction Ltd in August 2005 to undertake an archaeological desktop and walkover survey for a new proposed development at Evanton Industrial Estate, the site being the former Royal Naval Air Station HMS Fieldfare, Evanton, Highland.

Work revealed a number of archaeological sites close to the development area to include a Bronze Age cist, farm and part of a designed landscape. The development area includes a former hangar.

Recommendations have been made for a watching brief to be conducted on any groundbreaking works due to the closeness of the cist burial to the proposed development site.
1. Introduction
This report is for an archaeological desktop and walkover survey conducted for Howard Brindley Consulting on behalf of W Munro Construction Ltd by the author for survey for a new proposed development at Evanton Industrial Estate, the site being the former Royal Naval Air Station HMS Fieldfare, Evanton, Highland.

The fieldwork was conducted on August 26th 2005.

2. Acknowledgements
I would like to thank the following for their help during the work:
- Mr. H Brindley of Howard Brindley Consulting;
- Mr. W Munro, of W Munro Construction Ltd;
- Mr. P John, with help with research at the Public Record Office, London;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit;
- Staff of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland;
- Staff of the National Monuments Record of Scotland;
- Staff of the National Archives of Scotland;
- Staff of Inverness Library;
- Staff of the National Library of Scotland, Map room.

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Figure 1: General Survey Location 1:25,000.
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Figure 2: General Development Location.
Copyright Howard Brindley Consulting.
Figure 3: Ordnance Survey Map of 1974 (surveyed 1973).
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3. Objectives
To conduct a desktop and walkover survey to record those features that would be affected by the proposed development. This survey to follow those guidelines as proposed by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 1999).

4. Archaeological Survey

Desktop & Walkover Results
A desktop survey was conducted using the following sources:
- Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record;
- National Monuments Record of Scotland, Edinburgh;
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland – aerial photograph collection;
- National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (Maps);
- National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh;
- Public Record Office, London
- Inverness Library.

Both the aerial photography and the map coverage were limited to the area of interest. Aerial photographs, in particular the latest coverage was limited due to scale. Map coverage was also limited as the 1st edition of 1875 was the same as the 2nd of 1906. Early historical maps of the area do not provide enough detail for the proposed development area. A provisional Ordnance Survey map does exist for 1959 but does not provide enough detail for the development area.

The first detailed survey work carried out is the OS map of 1973 (see figure 3) which shows the former dispersal areas around the runway with a number of small buildings or structures situated to the south of the hangar, though their function is not marked. By 1991 (see enclosed map) most of these buildings have been removed.

Limited archaeological survey work has previously been conducted to the area of the former naval base, by the RCAHMS in 1997 as part of the Defence of Britain Project, in the form of a limited photographic survey and basic written description. (Info from D Easton, RCAHMS)

The development area forms part of the former Royal Naval Air Station HMS Fieldfare, which formed part of the Royal Air Force Base RAF Evanton. The Royal Navy established the base in 1922 as HMS Novar to enable planes to land as the fleet was in the Cromarty Firth. By 1937 the site had been taken over by the Royal Air Force Base and named RAF Evanton as an Armament Training Group, though the Royal Navy kept an attachment here. By 1943 the naval section had been expanded and named HMS Owl II, but by October 1944 the whole base came under naval control and was commissioned HMS Fieldfare. By 1948 the base had reverted to a storage depot but a detachment of the United States Army Air Force was here from 1955 for 11 years testing weather balloons (Hughes 1991, Smith 1983).

No information for the former is noted in any of the main local sources (Alston 1999, Beaton 1992 or Gifford 1992). No records for the base, except a sudden death due to an accident in a cookhouse fire in 1944, are held in the National Archives of Scotland. A search at the Public Record Office, London revealed no surviving records. An enquiry to the RAF museum at Hendon revealed a plan to survive of the main part of the base but not to the Naval Air Station.
The following 4 archaeological sites were to be found in or close to the development area. Sites are as follows:

HSMR – Highland Sites and Monuments Record
NMRS - National Monuments Record of Scotland
N/a – not available

Recommendations are given after each site.

1 – Evanton
HSMR – NH66NW 82
NMRS – NH66NW 34.04
Grid Ref: NH 6263/6755
Type – Airfield
Noted in HSMR and NMRS of ‘Situated on the raised beach above the A9 road to the NE of the airfield is another small industrial estate (Evanton Industrial Estate) in which served elements of a secondary technical survive. Notable are 2 hangars, one a Bellman the other, a pentad transportable, and all-steel end opening RNAS type with canted sides designed for aircraft with wings folded. Many of the Nissens, including Naval workshops are used as industrial units. The Naval Guard Room or picket post lies derelict at NH 6252/6758 though its interior was not examined, the view through the window would suggest it has had a subsequent use since the military occupation ceased. Visited by RCAHMS 1997’.
No information held on file in Highland SMR.

Walkover reveals hangar to be extend, though only building surviving to its south side (as depicted on figure 3) is an office and toilet. To the south side is a modern concrete loading ramp, also partly visible are the remains of the concrete dispersal areas to the SE. Internally a former gallery (?) with office survives on the centre of the N wall, no other original features were noted. The east end of the building has seen the insertion of a modern roller shutter door. Small building to SE corner of the development area is a modern dilapidated wooden hut.

No recommendations to be made.

Below: View of W end of hangar.
Top: View of S side of hangar.
Middle: View of E end of hangar.
Bottom: View of wooden building to SE corner of site.
Top: View of concrete dispersal pad facing W.
Middle: View of office facing NW.
Bottom: View of gallery facing N.
2 – Wester Teaninch
HSMR – NH66NW 18
NMRS – NH66NW 19
Grid Ref: NH 6252/6756
Type – Cist, Food Vessel
Noted in HSMR and NMRS of ‘A short cist was found at NH 6252/6756 in 1963 by contractors Pat Munro of Beauly whilst a drain was being dug. It was orientated NW/SSE and when the corner slab was the remains of an inhumation were revealed. The bones were sent to Glasgow University the cover replaced and the cist reburied (Info from Mr. W Munro, Clashnabuaie, Alness). According to the farmer at Wester Teaninch, it is still in situ. Visited by OS in 1972’.

Walkover reveals no trace of cist, area of grass only.

No recommendations to be made.

3 – Wester Teaninch
HSMR – N/a
NMRS – N/a
Grid Ref: NH 625/675
Type – Farm
Marked as Wester Teaninch on 1st and 2nd edition OS. Marked on J Thomson’s map of 1826 and named as Teaninch.

Walkover reveals farm, possibly still in use. No indication that site may have been reduced and so lie in development area. Existing buildings look to be late 18th century in date.

No recommendations to be made.

Below: View of farm facing SW.

4 – Teaninch
HSMR – NH66NW 94
NMRS – N/a
Grid Ref: NH 627/676
Type – Structure
Noted in HSMR of ‘Earth mound next to garage, south side of hangar. Mature beech trees delineate edges. Shown on 1st and 2nd edition editions as plantations. Both measure 30m x 27m’.
Forms possibly part of the improvements of Colonel Hector Munro of Novar Estate dating from the late 18th century. Marked on 1st and 2nd edition OS and noted in the Ordnance Survey Book of Reference (1875) as arable and wood.

Walkover reveals site not visible from development area.

*No recommendations to be made.*

### 5. Conclusions
Overall most of the site relates to the former naval base though has seen alterations to its use as an industrial unit, in the removal of a number of buildings. Though areas of hard standing concrete survive, these will probably remain as part of the proposed waste reclamation yard. The prehistoric cist situated on a raised beach may be alone and not form part of a larger group overlooking the Cromarty Firth.

It is recommended that a watching brief be conducted during any groundbreaking works in case of any further finds are made of human remains during any groundbreaking works if required.

### 6. Archive
A copy of this report is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh and the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record.

### 7. 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*.

### 8. References


Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record database entries for NH66NW.


National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE entries for NH66NW.

Ordnance Survey (1875) Book of Reference to the Plan of the Parish of Alness in the County of Ross-shire.


Maps Consulted
Ordnance Survey map NH66NE for 1991 1:10,000.
Ordnance Survey map NH6267-6367 for 1973 revised 1972 1:2,500.
Blaue, J 1654 - Map of Scotland.
Moll, H 1745 - The shires of Ross and Cromarty.
Thomson, J 1826 - Ross and Cromarty Shires (North section).

Aerial Photographs Consulted
RAF 106G/DY/25 6054-6055 21-9-1944 1:15,000
OS OS/77/56 32-34 21-6-1977 1:7,500
OS 61589 201-202 20-5-1989 1:24,000