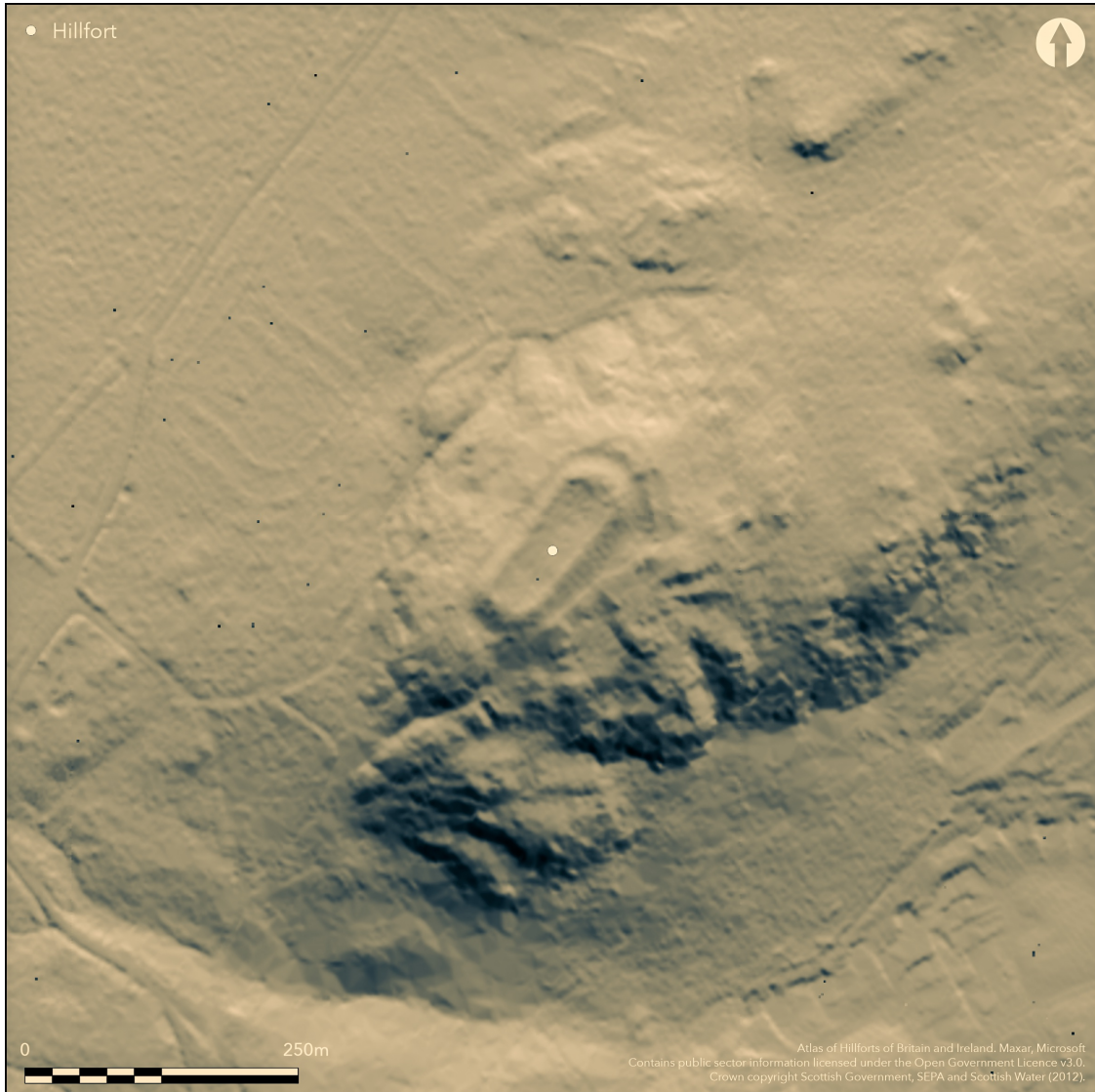


Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland

SC2896 Craig Phadrig, Inverness-shire (Craig Phadraig, Craig Phaidraig, Craig Phaidrick, Craig Phatric, Craig Pharuig, Creck Faterick, Craig Phatrick, Craig Phadra and Creek Fateric)



HER: Highland HER MHG3809 (None)

NMR: NH 64 NW 6 (13486)

SM: 2892

NGR: NH 6400 4527

X: 264000 **Y:** 845270 (OSGB36)

Summary

Craig Phadrig, the steep and wooded hill that rises abruptly on the western outskirts of Inverness is crowned by a spectacular fort. Its defences comprise two walls, the inner of which is a massive vitrified structure reduced to a bank about 12m thick and 1.4m high internally taking in a subrectangular area on the elongated summit of the hill measuring some 72m from NE to SW by 22m transversely (0.18ha). The

outer wall appears to be of slighter proportions around most of the circuit and appears to be accompanied by an internal quarry in some sectors, following a roughly concentric line around the NE, NW and SW, only to diverge along the SE flank to an angle on the E; an external ditch and an outer rampart on the NE follow this same course, the rampart terminating at its S end above what is almost certainly the site of an entrance, though the inner end of the passage is blocked by the collapsed outer wall. In common with other subrectangular forts with heavily vitrified walls, there is no evidence of an entrance into the inner enclosure on the summit; a feature variously described as an entrance (Headland 2011) and a barrow-run (RCAHMS 2014, 8) almost certainly overlies the defences and probably facilitated later access into the interior. Traces of the excavation trenches dug in 1971 can be seen within the interior, where Alan Small identified two main phases of occupation, apparently separated by a long period of abandonment; the later occupation was evidently early medieval, finds from a floor including sherds of E Ware and a fragment of a mould for a hanging bowl escutcheon (Small and Cottam 1972). There are seven radiocarbon dates from various samples of timber from beneath and within the walls, and the interior, but the brackets of their probabilities are so wide as to be of little use in dating the defences. Following the second season of excavation in 1972, Alan Small claimed that the inner wall had been reconstructed following its catastrophic destruction and vitrification (1972), though whether this refortification related to the early medieval occupation is unclear. He also cryptically describes on the NE 'a double rampart, the impression of a third being created by the ditch from which the material for the outer rampart had been upcast' (1972). Apparently he dismissed the outermost rampart that the most recent surveys by Headland Archaeology and RCAHMS have identified in this sector, but there must be some doubt in the light of these surveys and the identification of a blocked entrance on the E whether the ditch was an external accompaniment to the outer of the walls here, which had also been burnt, or was an internal quarry for a robbed rampart on its outer lip. Given the traces of internal quarrying elsewhere around the outer circuit, the latter is perhaps the more likely, in its turn indicating that the outer vitrified wall on this side is a secondary construction that not only blocks the entrance on the E but crosses the internal quarry at this point. As the RCAHMS investigators suggest (RCAHMS 2014), the outer circuit is perhaps the remains of the earliest fortification here, forming a polygonal enclosure measuring about 120m from NE to SW by a maximum of 60m transversely (0.6ha) within a rampart with an internal quarry and an entrance on the E. This rampart was robbed in antiquity to build the rectangular enclosure on the summit, explaining why Small failed to find any trace of it on the NW (1972). The inner enclosure was subsequently burnt and later reconstructed, though the chronology of these events is unknown. The outer vitrified wall on the NE, now appearing as the middle line of defence, appears to be an outwork to the inner enclosure, and given that it does not follow the line of the earlier rampart, we can guess that it was not conceived in the initial construction of the inner enclosure but is a later addition long after the rampart of the earlier fort had been robbed. In 2015, remedial work following the removal of a wind-blown tree, revealed a phase of refurbishment in the medieval period, with a substantial timber palisade set along the crest of the inner ruined wall, which at this point proved to be 6.5m thick (Peteranna and Birch 2015); radiocarbon dates from this work have yet to be published.

Status

Citizen Science: X

Reliability of Data: Confirmed

Reliability of Interpretation: Confirmed

Location

X: -475305 **Y:** 7858306 (EPSG: 3857)

Longitude: -4.2697352594135385 **Latitude:** 57.477297622108004 (EPSG:4326)

Country: Scotland

Current County or Unitary Authority: Highland

Historic County: Inverness-shire

Current Parish/Community/Council/Townland: Inverness And Bona

Monument Condition

None

Condition:

Extant	✓
Cropmark	✗
Likely Destroyed	✗

Land Use

Clearing in coniferous plantation with public access

Current Use:

Woodland	✗
Commercial Forestry Plantation	✓
Parkland	✓
Pasture (Grazing)	✗
Arable	✗
Scrub/Bracken	✗
Bare Outcrop	✗
Heather/Moorland	✗
Heath	✗
Built-up	✗
Coastal Grassland	✗
Other	✗

Landscape

Hillfort Type

None

Type:

Contour Fort	✓
Partial Contour Fort	✗
Promontory Fort	✗
Hillslope Fort	✗
Level Terrain Fort	✗
Marsh Fort	✗
Multiple Enclosure Fort	✗

Topographic Position

Position:

Hilltop	✓
Coastal Promontory	✗
Inland Promontory	✗
Valley Bottom	✗
Knoll/Hillock/Outcrop	✗
Ridge	✗
Cliff/Plateau-edge/Scarp	✗
Hillslope	✗
Lowland	✗
Spur	✗

Dominant Topographic Feature: None

Aspect:

North	✗
Northeast	✗
East	✗
Southeast	✗
South	✗
Southwest	✗
West	✗
Northwest	✗
Level	✓

Altitude: 170.0m

Boundary

N/A

Dating Evidence

The brackets are sufficiently wide on the old radiocarbon dates from samples from within and below the defences to indicate merely that the fort probably dates from the pre-Roman Iron Age; two substantive phases of occupation were identified in the interior, the later dating from the early medieval period. The new dates, while not yet published, show that rubble from the inner wall had collapsed across material dating from circa 400-250 BC, while a phase of refurbishment of the inner perimeter dated to the 11th-12th centuries AD

Reliability: C - Low

Principal Activity:

Pre 1200BC	✗
1200BC - 800BC	✗
800BC - 400BC	✓
400BC - AD50	✓
AD50 - AD400	✗
AD400 - AD 800	✓

Post AD800 ✕
Unknown ✓

Other Activity:

Pre Hillfort: None

Post Hillfort: Early medieval re-occupation, but uncertain whether the defences may have been refurbished

Evidence:

Artefactual: A bronze pin from the earlier occupation phase; sherds of E ware, a mould for the escutcheon of an early medieval hanging bowl from the upper.

C14: Seven 'old dates' with very wide probabilities; new work provides another six dates but these have yet to be published

Investigation History

Highland HER holds an archive of photographs, while the RCAHMS collection not only includes aerial views taken on various occasions, but also the archive from the excavations in 1971-2 (RCAHMS 2014).

Investigations:

1st Identified Written Reference (1777): Description published by John Williams (1777, 31-5)

Earthwork Survey (1777): Sketch-plan by James Watt (Williams 1777; RCAHMS SC1376598)

Excavation (1777): Thomas West digs in the rampart and collects specimens of burnt stones (West 1777, 387)

1st Identified Map Depiction (1789): Annotated 'Vetrified Fort' (Ainslie et al 1789)

Earthwork Survey (1790): Plan and description by Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouse) (1790, fig 5; RCAHMS 2014 fig 5)

Earthwork Survey (1809): Plan by Thomas Telford and Alexander Nimmo (RCAHMS SC1367518)

Excavation (1809): Ten trial pits dug by Thomas Telford and annotated on his plan (RCAHMS 2014, 9, fig 8; SC1367518)

Excavation (1826): Sir George Steuart Mackenzie (Hibbert 1857, 188)

Excavation (1847): Digging (Pryer 1847)

Other (1868): Annotated Vitrified Fort on the 1st edition OS 25-inch map (Inverness-shire 1881, sheet 11.4)

Other (1870): Notes (Gowans 1870)

Earthwork Survey (1880): Plan by Thomas Aitken (1880, 348)

Earthwork Survey (1913): Derived sketch-plan reproducing earlier detail and description (Wallace 1918, 91-3)

Earthwork Survey (1943): Sketch-plan and description by Angus Graham and Gordon Childe for the RCAHMS wartime Emergency Surveys (RCAHMS 2014, 13, fig 11; SC1453995)

Other (1957): Description for RCAHMS Survey of Marginal Lands (Feachem 1963, 126)

Other (1962): Surveyed at 1:2500 by the OS

Other (1969): Scheduled

Other (1969): Visit and description by the OS
 Excavation (1971): Directed by Alan Small (Small 1971; Small and Cottam 1972)
 Earthwork Survey (1972): Depicting the excavation trenches (Small and Cottam 1972, fig 2)
 Excavation (1972): Directed by Alan Small (Small 1972)
 Earthwork Survey (2011): Plan and description by Headland Archaeology Ltd on behalf of the Forestry Commission (Headland 2011, fig 17)
 Earthwork Survey (2013): Plan and description (RCAHMS 2014, 1-2 fig 2, 19-21; RCAHMS GV005343 & SC1386712)
 Excavation (2015): Evaluation following tree throw (Peteranna and Birch 2015)

Interior Features

Featureless on the surface, but evidently containing the remains of buried structures; a well was identified by Williams at the NE end of the interior (1777)

Water Source

None

Source:

None
 Spring
 Stream
 Pool
 Flush
 Well
 Other

Surface

None

Interior Features (Surface):

No Known Features
 Round Stone Structures
 Rectangular Stone Structures
 Curvilinear Platforms
 Other Roundhouse Evidence
 Pits
 Quarry Hollows
 Other

Excavation

Structures of uncertain size and shape

Interior Features (Excavation):

No Known Excavation

Pits	X
Postholes	X
Roundhouses	X
Rectangular Structures	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Quarry Hollows	X
Other	✓
Nothing Found	X

Geophysics

None

Interior Features (Geophysics):

No Known Geophysics	✓
Pits	X
Roundhouses	X
Rectangular Structures	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Quarry Hollows	X
Other	X
Nothing Found	X

Finds

None

Interior (Finds):

No Known Finds	✓
Pottery	X
Metal	X
Metalworking	X
Human Bones	X
Animal Bones	X
Lithics	X
Environmental	X
Other	X

Aerial

NO APPARENT FEATURES

Interior Features (Aerial):

APs Not Checked	✓
None	X
Roundhouses	X
Rectangular Structures	X
Pits	X

Postholes	X
Roads/Tracks	X
Other	X

Entrances

See main summary

Total Number of Breaks Through Ramparts:

2: None

Number of Possible Original Entrances:

2: None

Guard Chambers: X

Chevaux de Frise: X

Entrances:

1. Simple Gap (North east): In inner wall and variously interpreted as an entrance (Headland 2011) or a later excavation feature (RCAHMS 2014, 8)
2. Blocked (East): The RCAHMS and Headland plans both show, but don't appear to comment upon, a probable blocked entrance at the angle in the line of the outer rampart on the E.
2. Simple Gap (East): None

Enclosing Works

Two complete circuits and an outer rampart on the NE

Enclosed Area:

Area 1: 0.18ha.

Area 2: 0.6ha.

Total: 0.6ha.

Total Footprint Area: 0.8ha.

Ramparts

None

Multi-period Enclosure System:

✓ None

Ramparts Form a Continuous Circuit:

✓ None

Number of Ramparts:

NE Quadrant: 3

SE Quadrant: 2

SW Quadrant: 2

NW Quadrant: 2
Total: 3

Morphology

Current Morphology:

Partial Univallate	X
Univallate	X
Partial Bivallate	✓
Bivallate	X
Partial Multivallate	✓
Multivallate	X
Unknown	X

Detailed Morphology:

Partial Univallate	X
Univallate	X
Partial Bivallate	X
Bivallate	X
Partial Multivallate	X
Multivallate	X

Surface Evidence

None

Enclosing Works (Surface):

None	X
Earthen Bank	X
Stone Wall	✓
Rubble	X
Wall-walk	X
Evidence of Timber	X
Vitrification	✓
Other Burning	X
Palisade	X
Counter Scarp Bank	X
Berm	X
Unfinished	X
Other	X

Excavated Evidence

None

Enclosing Works (Excavation):

None	X
Earthen Bank	X
Stone Wall	✓

Murus Duplex	X
Timber-framed	X
Timber-laced	✓
Vitrification	✓
Other Burning	X
Palisade	✓
Counter Scarp Bank	✓
Berm	X
Unfinished	X
No Known Excavation	X
Other	X

Other

Gang Working:

X None

Ditches:

X A ditch is noted at least on the NE, but see main summary text

Number of Ditches: 1

Annex:

X None

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Links

Atlas of Hillforts:

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/40ccda26452f427a9f081506958e1d81/#data_s=id%3Aacf7b6cc651c4bc1a392992140d959ca-1cbc55d5d6c9413a8e28ea115b03f70f%3A2727&widget_23=active_datasource_id:acf7b6cc651c4bc1a392992140d959ca,center:-475305%2C7858306%2C102100,scale:10000,rotation:0

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