

# **Croft 22/23 Borge**

Portree, Isle of Skye

## **Archaeological Watching Brief**

December 2000

Covering ground-works in advance of erection of new house

by

Martin Wildgoose

for

**Mr Neil Campbell**

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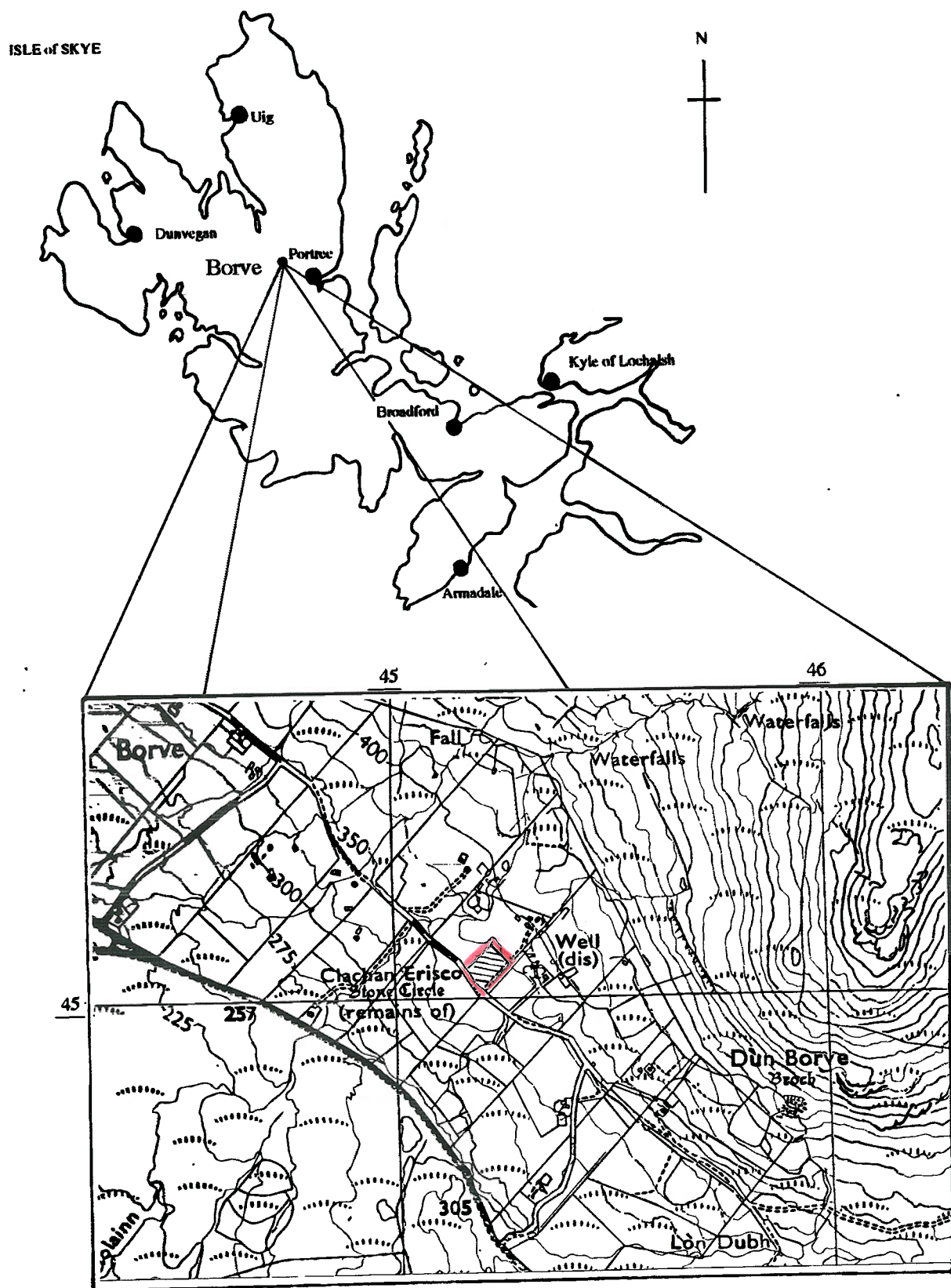


Fig. 1 : Location - Borve and position of house plot

**Planning Application No 00/00298/FULSL**

**A watching brief carried out during the clearing of a platform for a new house, it's access and septic tank.**

**SUMMARY**

The site of the proposed works lies on Croft 22/23 Borge, on the north-east side of the township road at a height of 110.0m OD. The remains of a possible stone circle, (Clachan Erisco NG 44NE 1), lie 80.0m to the south-west, across the township road. The site works did not in any way encroach upon the remains of the stone circle.

The proximity of the development site to the possible stone circle triggered the inclusion of a watching brief as an integral part of the approval of the planning application.

The site works and watching brief were carried out on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2000 during a short spell of very cold but dry weather. The excavations were carried out by a JCB type excavator with a toothless bucket. No archaeological levels or remains were encountered.

**WATCHING BRIEF**

The platform for the house was excavated first, followed by the access and finally the septic tank (see Fig 2).

**House Platform**

The house platform measures 20.0m by 16.0m and lies on a north-west to south-east axis, 80.0m to the north-east of Clachan Erisco. The field within which the house site lies has been intensively cultivated over many years – the last cultivation being with a deep digger plough in 1993 (pers com Neil Campbell).

Approximately 250mm of top-soil/plough-soil was removed in two spits, revealing a clean orange/grey post glacial clay containing small isolated lenses of washed gravel.

**No archaeological features whatsoever were visible in the revealed surface.**

### **Access**

The access area lies immediately to the south-east of the house plot and butts up to the current croft access road. The removal of the top-soil/plough-soil revealed the same orange/grey clay, again with isolated lenses of gravel.

**No archaeological features were visible in the revealed surface.**

### **Septic Tank**

The site for the septic tank lay 16.0m to the south-west of the house site. Again, the top-soil was stripped from an area measuring 2.5m by 3.0m to reveal the same orange/grey clay.

**No archaeological features were visible in the revealed surface.**

## **CONCLUSIONS** (See Fig 2)

The proposed house site and it's associated works, although sited relatively close to a possible stone circle, do not lie over or impinge upon any archaeological remains whatsoever. The visible arc of the three surviving stones would seem to indicate a circle some 30.0-35.0m in diameter. If this arc were extended then the entire circle would fall within the corner of the field to the south of the house site, an area untouched by site works.

Alternatively, it is possible that these stones have been moved from their original positions and now only represent a lost site in the close vicinity.

## **LOCATION OF RECORDS**

All records and site drawings are held in the archive of M Wildgoose  
Tigh an Dun  
Dunan  
Broadford  
Isle of Skye  
IV49 9AJ

Retained records include: -

Site drawing on drafting film at a scale of 1:250

Architect's drawings of the site proposals

Written notes relating to the site visits and watching brief.

END

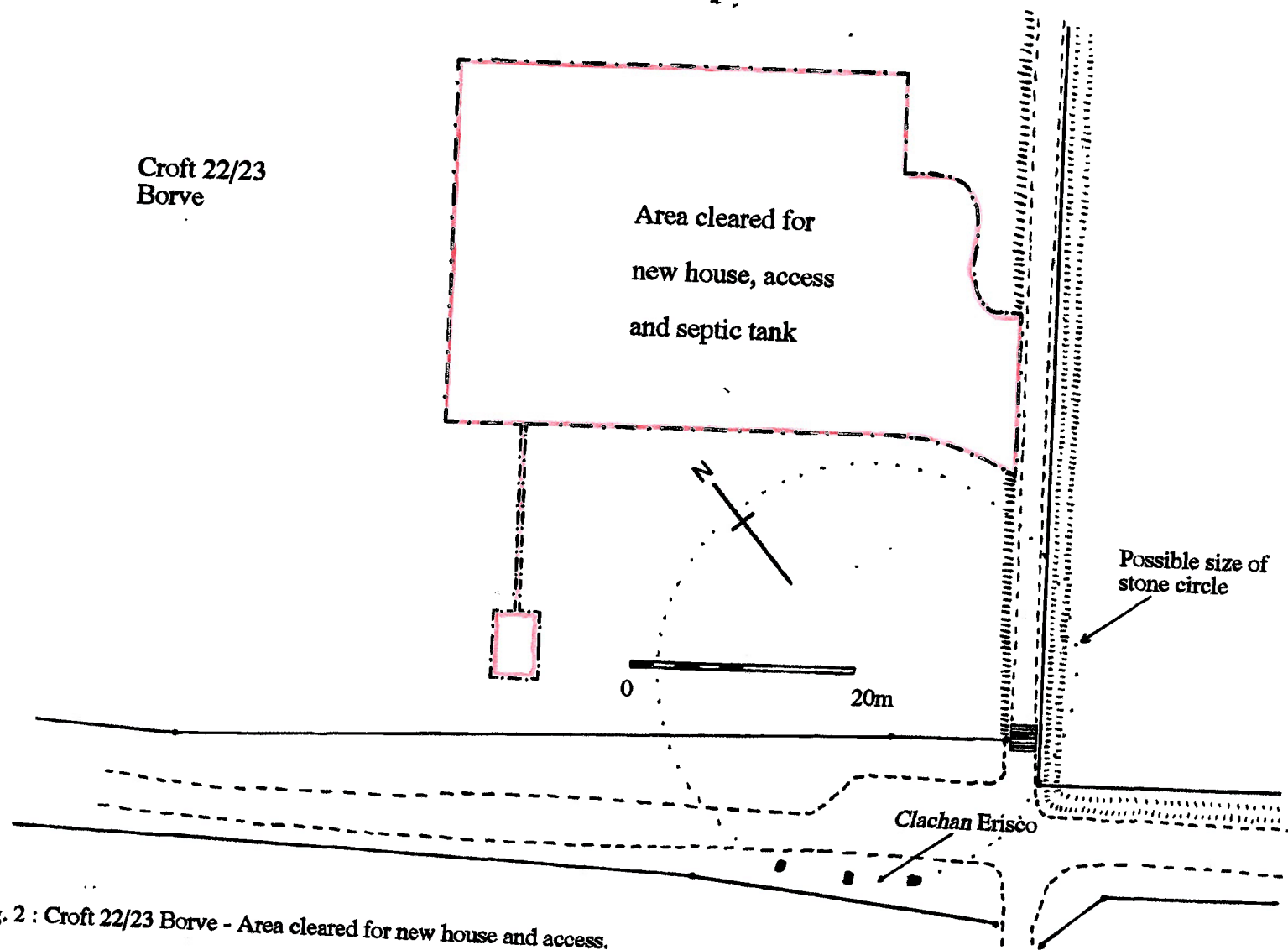


Fig. 2 : Croft 22/23 Borge - Area cleared for new house and access.

## **APPENDIX A**

**Specification for the archaeological watching brief  
(Hard copy only)**

**Brief for archaeological work at:  
22/23 BORVE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICE**

**Archaeology Unit**

## **1. Background**

This specification has been produced in response to the need for an archaeological watching brief to be carried on site ground works. It is for a minimum standard of work; a higher standard may be offered and accepted. A watching brief is required due to the location of the site close to a prehistoric stone circle and the accompanying potential for sub-surface remains of archaeological interest.

## **2. Terms of Reference**

This specification is for archaeological recording work occasioned by planning application no. 00/00298/FULSL. It is based on these documents. If these details are changed a new specification will be needed. It is valid until July 31<sup>st</sup> 2001 after which if no work has been carried out a revised specification will be needed.

The specification has been produced for the applicant, who will be responsible for the work, including all tendering and contractual arrangements. Estimates should be obtained from archaeological contractors on the basis of this specification

Any reference to 'archaeologist' in this specification is to be taken to mean a qualified and experienced practitioner acceptable to the Senior Archaeologist. This is to ensure that work is carried out to professional standards. The project should be carried out by, or under the immediate direction of, a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists or an archaeologist of equivalent standing.

**Before site works commence, the proposed arrangements, including a timetable for the work must be agreed with the Area Planning Manager, and the Senior Archaeologist in writing.**

If this is for a road or water or sewerage proposal the area to be covered is the entire wayleave except where otherwise indicated.

## **3. Tendering**

Tenders must be accompanied by a project design, statement and evidence of competence, including the CV of the Project Director, and other staff where possible.

## **4. Objectives**

1. To record, to professional standards, any features and objects of archaeological importance that will be damaged or destroyed by this development. This is often achieved by clearing the topsoil to a clean surface in which archaeological features can be identified by the archaeologist.

## **5. Method**

- A watching brief will be conducted by an archaeologist on site groundworks, including service trenches so that any finds or features of importance can be recorded to professional standards.
- Those carrying out site works will need to work closely with the archaeologist and provide all necessary access and other arrangements. Where machinery is to be used for topsoil stripping, a straight-edged bucket must be used on a back acting machine. Care will need to be taken to avoid over excavation, and the advice of the archaeologist on-site should be adhered to regarding this.
- The archaeologist must be given every aid by contractors to enable the archaeological work to be carried out. Contractors may need to use differing work practices on site than usual to enable the archaeologist to complete the work. This must be catered for and adhered to.
- **Should archaeological remains be encountered during the work, the archaeologist must be allowed up to one hour to record each feature. If longer than this is required, refer to paragraph 6.IV.**
- Where this is a watching brief for road, water, or sewerage proposals the specification includes drainage and other ancillary works as well as the carriageway itself.

## **6. Monitoring**

- The Senior Archaeologist will normally monitor projects to ensure that specifications are met.
- Monitoring will normally be by unannounced site visit. Alternative or additional monitoring arrangements may be made in individual cases.
- Prior notice of fieldwork starting dates, with contact names and local addresses, telephone numbers and directions and other arrangements for access must be given to the Senior Archaeologist by the archaeologist contracted to carry out the work.
- Any unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries, or any other unexpected occurrences or conditions which might affect the agreed project work or its timetable or cost must be notified immediately to the client and the Senior Archaeologist so that revised arrangements can be made.
- Where archaeological work fails to meet this specification the applicant will be in breach of the planning condition until matters are rectified.

## **7. Reporting**

### **Project report**

At least five copies of the project report must be produced.

- I. One paper copy for the applicant.
- II. One paper copy for the Area Planning and Building Control Manager,
- III. One paper copy for the Archaeology Unit, Planning and Development Service, Council Offices, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX where it will be available for immediate consultation by the public.
- IV. One copy for the Highland SMR as above, on a computer disk in a format compatible with Microsoft Office 97 for Windows.
- V. One paper copy to be deposited with Norman Newton, Libraries Support Unit, 31a Harbour Road, Inverness.

**The report must be submitted to the all of the above within 2 weeks of the completion of the field work.**

The report must include, as a minimum,

1. Location plan showing the project area and archaeological sites and features affected. Grid references must be included.
2. Circumstances and objectives of this work, including a copy of this specification
3. Weather and other conditions affecting fieldwork
4. Scale plans, and photographs of all archaeological features noted
5. A full index to any records or other material generated by the project including its location
6. A brief analysis of the project results drawing in comparative data as appropriate, and a statement of the significance of the results for future research. Note that a negative result may itself be significant.
7. General comments and proposals for future archaeological projects arising from the carrying out of this project
8. A set of colour slides illustrating the project progress from start to completion.

The completed report will be available for immediate public consultation for research purposes at the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record. In addition, the Archaeology Unit reserves the right to make the report available for reference and research purposes, either on paper, or electronically. Subject to this, copyright will remain with the author unless specifically transferred in writing, and the Archaeology Unit will assume author's copyright unless advised otherwise. Copyright will be acknowledged in all cases by the Archaeology Unit.

This specification includes arranging a presentation of the project results to the local community within a year of the completion of the fieldwork. Arrangements must be agreed with the Senior Archaeologist.

## **8. Treasure Trove**

The Archaeological Contractor must liaise with the Assistant Curator (Archaeology) at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery prior to the start of fieldwork, regarding possible emergency conservation needs and future storage arrangements. The Assistant Curator will in turn notify the local museum of the fact that there is archaeological work ongoing in the area. Should museum staff wish to visit the site whilst the archaeological work is in progress, they must first gain permission from the site owner/agent. **The site owner/agent must be aware that no one, other than the Council's Planning Officer, in consultation with the Archaeology Unit, has the authority to vary the terms of this specification.**

Provision must also be made for a cataloguing system for artefactual material, which will be compatible with the needs of the institution receiving these finds. Any report to the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer must be copied to the Senior Archaeologist, and the Assistant Curator (Archaeology) at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery. Any finds, where appropriate, should also be reported to the Receiver of Wreck.

## **9. Discovery and Excavation in Scotland**

A brief summary of the results must be sent to the Council For Scottish Archaeology for inclusion in Discovery and Excavation in Scotland. The cost of this must be included in any tender document.

## **10. General**

1. The archaeologist appointed must be of a professional standing acceptable to the Senior Archaeologist and must carry out the work according to the Code of Conduct, standards and guidelines of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
2. The main contractor has responsibility for the Health and Safety of any archaeological staff on site.
3. The archaeologist is responsible for taking all necessary measures to conform with the Health and Safety at Work Acts and be covered by all necessary insurance.
4. Any Health and Safety incidents on site involving the archaeologist must be immediately notified to the Health and Safety Executive.
5. The archaeologist must agree a timetable for the work with the client and the Senior Archaeologist
6. The archaeologist appointed will not comment to the press or other media without prior approval from the Senior Archaeologist
7. Proper provision must be made for prevailing weather conditions in northern Scotland
8. The archaeologist agrees by undertaking this work to the terms of this specification.

Dorothy Low  
Archaeologist  
Friday, 27 October 2000

## **APPENDIX B**

**SMR card for Clachan Erisco  
(Hard copy only)**

Antiquity No.	County	Parish	Ne	
NG 44 NE 1	SKYE (Inverness)	SNIZORT		
CLACHAN ERISCO - STONE CIRCLE (REMAINS OF)			NG 4519 4801	
(NG 45194801) Clachan Erisco (OE)			1. O.S. 6" 1904	
Stone Circle (Remains), Clachan Erisco. There are three erect stones forming a very flat curve, the axis of the extreme stones running NW-SE. The stone to the E, an irregular six-sided prism, is 6 ft high and 6½ ft in girth at the ground; the central stone, 13¾ ft distant, is 5½ ft in height, 3 ft 2 ins in breadth and 13 ins thick; while the third stone, 13½ ft further on to the NW, measures 3¼ ft in height, 2 ft 8 ins in width and 15 ins in thickness; the two latter are set up radially. In the line of the curve formed by these three stones, at a distance of 21 ft 10 ins to the NW, is a fourth stone 1½ ft high, 2 ft 4 ins broad and 11 ins thick, which may have been one of the component parts of the ring of stones.			2. R.C.A.H.M., 1928 p 204 No. 636	
O.S.495	Contd/		D 37442/1/S.289/5 24m 4/65 T	

Antiquity No.	County	Parish	Page	2
NG 44 NE 1	SKYE (Inverness)	Snizort		
Contd/				
In the immediate neighbourhood are three prostrate monoliths, which possibly had formed part of the circle, as no other stones of their magnitude or appearance are to be found in the adjoining drystone dykes. One of these is built into a dyke about 20 ft to the W of the standing stones and measures 6 ft long, 2 ft broad and 12 ins thick; another lying within two yards of it is 4½ ft long, 1½ ft broad; and the third, on the opposite side of the road 50 yds to the E, is 5ft 2 ins long, about 2 ft in breadth and 8 ins thick.			A.C. 12.12.60	
Clachan Erisco, three standing stones as described by R.C.A.H.M. (See GP: AO/61/83/3 from East.)			3. A.S. Phillips F.I. 28.4.61	
.S.495			D 37442/1/S.289/5 24m 4/65 TCL	

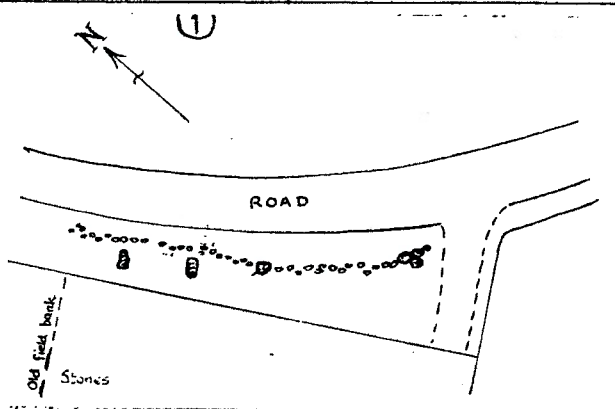
Antiquity No.

County

Parish

Illustration

NG 44 NE 1



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D.S. 495

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Clachan Erisco.



NG 44 NE 1

ARCH. WATCHING BRIEF  
CROFT 22/23 BORVE

(WORD 97)

360 FH  
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