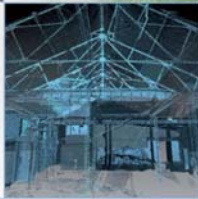
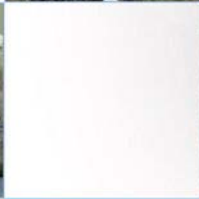


Erection of new house Land west of Tikvah, Beaulieu Archaeological Evaluation

AOC Project Number: 70132

29th June 2016



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Erection of new house, land west of Tikvah, Beaulieu: Archaeological Evaluation

Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	Gordon and Julie Moran
Planning Reference	15/04396/MS
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NH 53306 48378
AOC Project No:	70132
Prepared by:	Sam Williamson
Illustration by:	Sam Williamson, Mary Peteranna
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: S Williamson

Date: 28/06/2016

Approved by: M Peteranna

Date: 29/06/2016

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Ardyne Studio
Bank Street
Cromarty
IV11 8YE

Tel. 01381 600650
Mob. 07972 259255
E-mail inverness@aocarchaeology.com

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Abstract

This report details the findings of the archaeological evaluation carried out in advance of a new house build on land west of Tikvah, Beaulieu, on behalf of Gordon and Julie Moran. The evaluation was required to determine if any archaeological remains survived within the development area. A standing stone, Scheduled Monument 3127, is located less than 50m southwest of the site, whilst other significant archaeology in the vicinity deemed the potential for archaeological remains to be found on the site to be high.

Fieldwork was carried on the 23rd of June 2016. The evaluation covered the entire house site and produced four features of indeterminate age and function, comprising three shallow pits and one linear burning feature. No further works are recommended.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

A programme of archaeological works was required by Gordon and Julie Moran in association with planning application number 15/04396/MS for the erection of a new family home on a green field site located on land west of Tikvah, Beaully, in Inverness-shire. The proposed development will see the plot utilised for the construction of an access road, driveway, house, and associated landscaping and infrastructure. A targeted programme of trial trenching across the site was specified in keeping with policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any surviving archaeological remains. Planning conditions requiring archaeological works were recommended by the Highland Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by the Highland Council Historic Environment Team.

1.2 Site Location and Description

The development site lies at NH 53306 48378, on the southeast side of an unclassified road running in a northeasterly direction from the A862 at Windhill, Beaully (Figure 1). The setting is primarily renewed farmland used as rough grazing and for crops, situated on gently undulating land. The development area measures just over 1000m² and consists of a house site with associated access road.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 The site falls within the boundaries of the old civil parish of Urray. A standing stone, Scheduled Monument 3127 (Plate 1), is located approximately 50m to the southwest of the development area. The landscape surrounding the site is renewed farmland with known significant prehistoric and later archaeological sites in the vicinity.
- 1.3.2 Evidence for the Neolithic and Bronze Age interaction of the landscape is extensive, this in part due to the number of upstanding monuments in the region. In particular, there are a significant number of Neolithic chambered cairns in the region representing the predominant upstanding Neolithic remains. The distribution of chambered cairns around the Firthlands indicates the main areas of settlement during the Neolithic. They were built on highly visible and prominent locations overlooking areas of settlement, as the evidence of the Black Isle fieldwalking project and the fieldwalking initiatives around nearby Tarradale (Eric Grant pers. comm.) suggest. The group of cairns situated at Kilcoy, to the northeast, is one such example overlooking the raised beaches of the Beaully Firth.
- 1.3.3 While previous excavated evidence for Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement is very slight, being primarily the results from excavations at Kinbeachie Farm (Barclay et al, 2001), more recent excavation nearby at Windhill has identified substantial and significant prehistoric remains (Peteranna and Williamson, 2015). The Windhill features include a long rectangular structure defined by post pits, Neolithic pottery, a ring-ditch enclosure containing Bronze Age pottery and a single post alignment.
- 1.3.4 Windhill is shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1875 (Figure 2). This shows the development site to be situated in open fields immediately south of a small road, and northeast of the standing stone. Farm buildings are situated in the west on the far side of the road, which incidentally appears to be on the same alignment as the modern road. A second standing stone is recorded on the west side of the larger road - the modern A862. Additional maps show little change to the outlying landscape other than the addition and later dereliction of farm buildings and enclosures beyond the boundaries of the development.



New House at Windhill, Beaully

Project No: 70132

15th June 2016

Scale at 1:3,454

— Site



Figure 1: Location map of the new Windhill house site



Plate 1: the standing stone, Scheduled Monument 3127

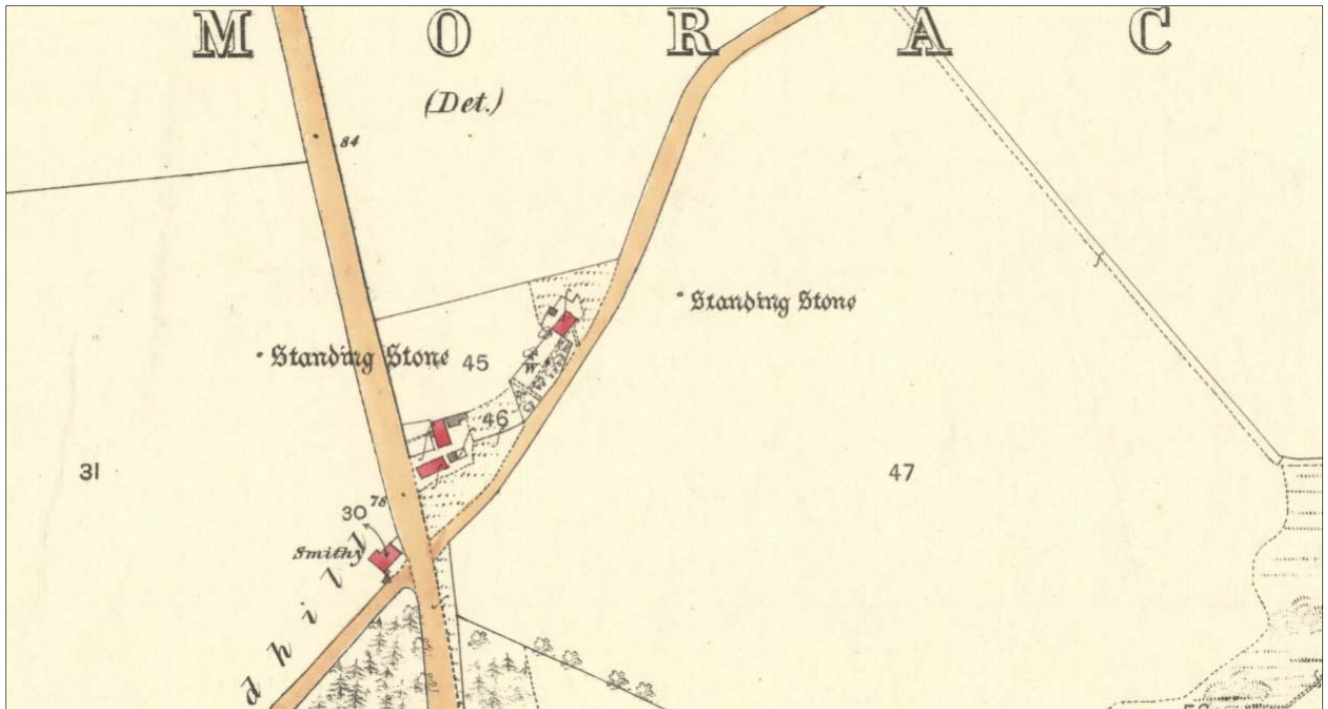


Figure 2: Extract from the 1875 25-inch-to-the-mile 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, Inverness Mainland Sheet II.2 (with inset II.11)

2 Methodology

2.1 Aims and Objectives

The methodology for this project has been based upon a Written Scheme of Investigation which was submitted to and approved by the Highland Council Historic Environment Team (HHET). The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:

- ❖ To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area
- ❖ To remove by hand any overburden in order to expose archaeological deposits
- ❖ To excavate, sample and record any features or to propose arrangements for their safeguarding, where possible
- ❖ To sample deposits for post-excavation work, including environmental analysis and dating
- ❖ To make recommendations for further measures necessary to mitigate the impact of the development
- ❖ To make recommendations for post-excavation work

2.2 Evaluation

- 2.2.1 The evaluation was conducted on the 23rd of June 2016. The footing for the access road and house site were stripped in their entirety under the supervision of the archaeologist on a fine summer's day (Plate 2). The stripped area amounted to around 400m². Stripping was carried out by a 14 tonne digger equipped with a 1.2m wide straight-edge bucket.
- 2.2.2 The trenches were excavated in spits down to the natural subsoil and recorded to AOC's standard operating procedures.



Plate 2: Pre-excavation image of site, standing stone in upper right of image

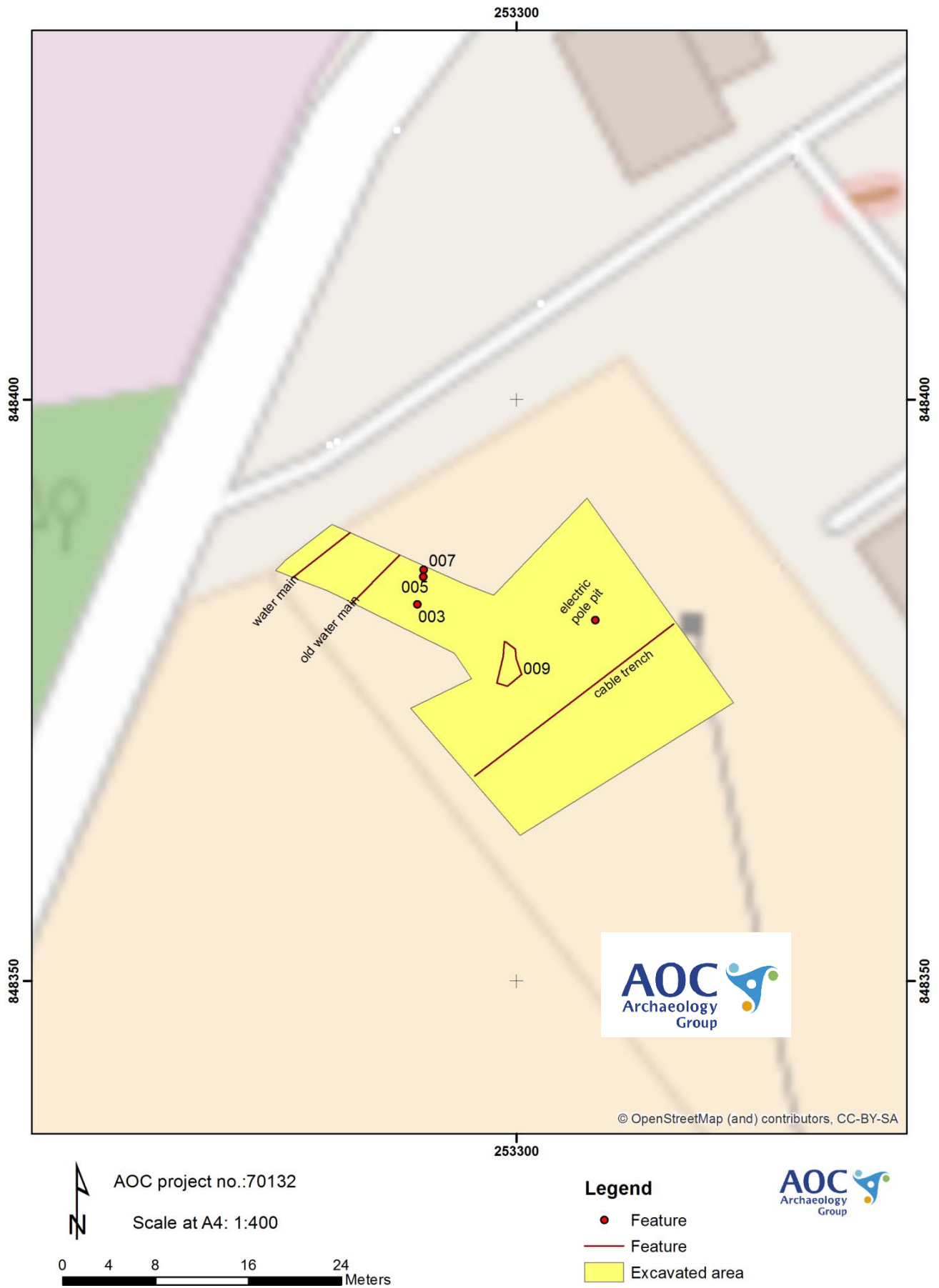


Figure 3: Plan of the evaluation trench and archaeological features

3 Results

3.1 Evaluation

- 3.1.1 The evaluation demonstrated a moderately deep plough horizon, 0.6m in the southwest of the development area rising slightly to 0.4 m in the northeast. The underlying natural comprised mixed orange and brown sands and gravels with rounded cobbles typical of glacial till. Four features of archaeological interest (Figure 3) were recorded – three shallow pits flecked with charcoal [003], [005] and [007] (Plate 3), and a larger linear feature [009] (Plates 4-5) containing substantial chunks of charcoal. All four features showed evidence of bioturbation from burrowing animals. Illustrations of the features can be found in Appendix 4.
- 3.1.2 Existing services and the posthole for an old electric cable pole were also recorded. Two sherds of 19th/20th century white ware pottery were recovered from the topsoil but otherwise the site was devoid of artefacts.

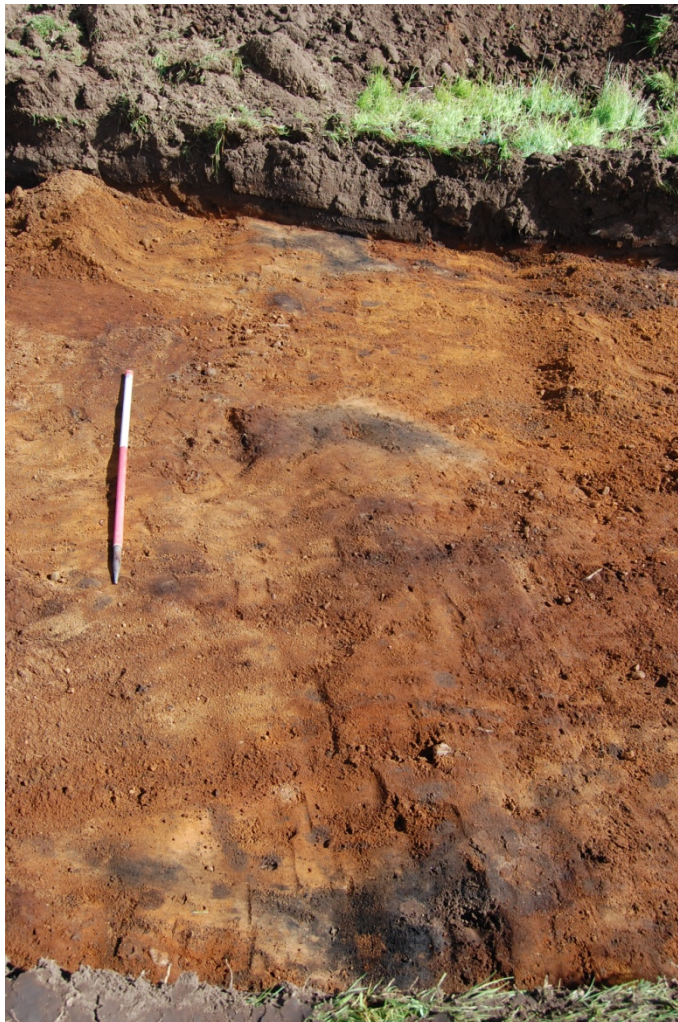


Plate 3: the three pit-like features with [003] in the foreground, [005] in the midground, and [007] in the background



Plate 4: pre-excavation image of [009]



Plate 5: SSE-facing section of slot 1 in [009]

4 Discussion

- 4.1 Features [003], [005] and [007] were shallow scoops up to 0.2m deep, amorphous in plan and bowl shaped in section, with flecks of charcoal within the fill. While these may potentially be the truncated remains of features, excavation did not reveal enough evidence to provide a firm interpretation of their purpose.
- 4.2 The linear feature [009] contained a moderately loose fill of mottled, haloed orange and grey deposits with an indistinct edge between them and the natural. The fill was fairly silty and clean of smaller stones and gravels, with some large fragments of charcoal were preserved throughout. The indistinct edge of the cut suggests that the context relates to vegetation burning and resembled similar amorphous burnt spread on the nearby Windhill development site (AOC 2015).

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 The evaluation provided some evidence for possible archaeological features. The three shallow pit-like features are of indeterminate form and function and the bioturbation that has occurred has likely impacted the integrity of these. The charcoal-rich spread of material suggests that vegetation burning for site clearance took place in prehistory. This interpretation is similar archaeological features identified on the adjacent Windhill site in 2015.
- 5.2 There are no recommendations for further work.

5 References

Barclay, G.J., Carter, S.P., Dalland, M.M., Hastie, M., Holden, T.G., MacSween, A., and Wickham-Jones, C.R., 2001, 'A possible Neolithic settlement at Kinbeachie, Black Isle, Highland', *PSAS* 131, 57-85

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Appendix 1: List of Site Photographs

Photo No.	Feature	Description	Direction Facing	Taken By	Date
1	-	Panorama of site: pre-excavation	NE-SW	SW	23/06/2016
2	-	Standing stone	SE	SW	23/06/2016
3	-	Standing stone	SW	SW	23/06/2016
4	003, 005, 007	Pre-excavation image of features in relation to one another	N	SW	23/06/2016
5	003	Pre-excavation: pit	S	SW	23/06/2016
6	005	Pre-excavation: pit	N	SW	23/06/2016
7	007	Pre-excavation: pit	N	SW	23/06/2016
8	009	Pre-excavation: burnt spread	E	SW	23/06/2016
9	003	Post-section: NNE-facing section	SSE	SW	23/06/2016
10	005	Post-section: pit in plan	SSW	SW	23/06/2016
11	005	Post-section: E-facing section	W	SW	23/06/2016
12	007	Post-section: NNW-facing section	SSE	SW	23/06/2016
13	009	Slot 1: SSE-facing section	NNW	SW	23/06/2016
14	009	Slot 1: burn vegetation in plan	N	SW	23/06/2016
15	009	Slot 2: NW-facing section	SE	SW	23/06/2016
16	009	Slot 2: SE-facing section	NW-NE	SW	23/06/2016
17	-	Panorama of site: post-excavation	NW-NE	SW	23/06/2016

Appendix 2: Context Register

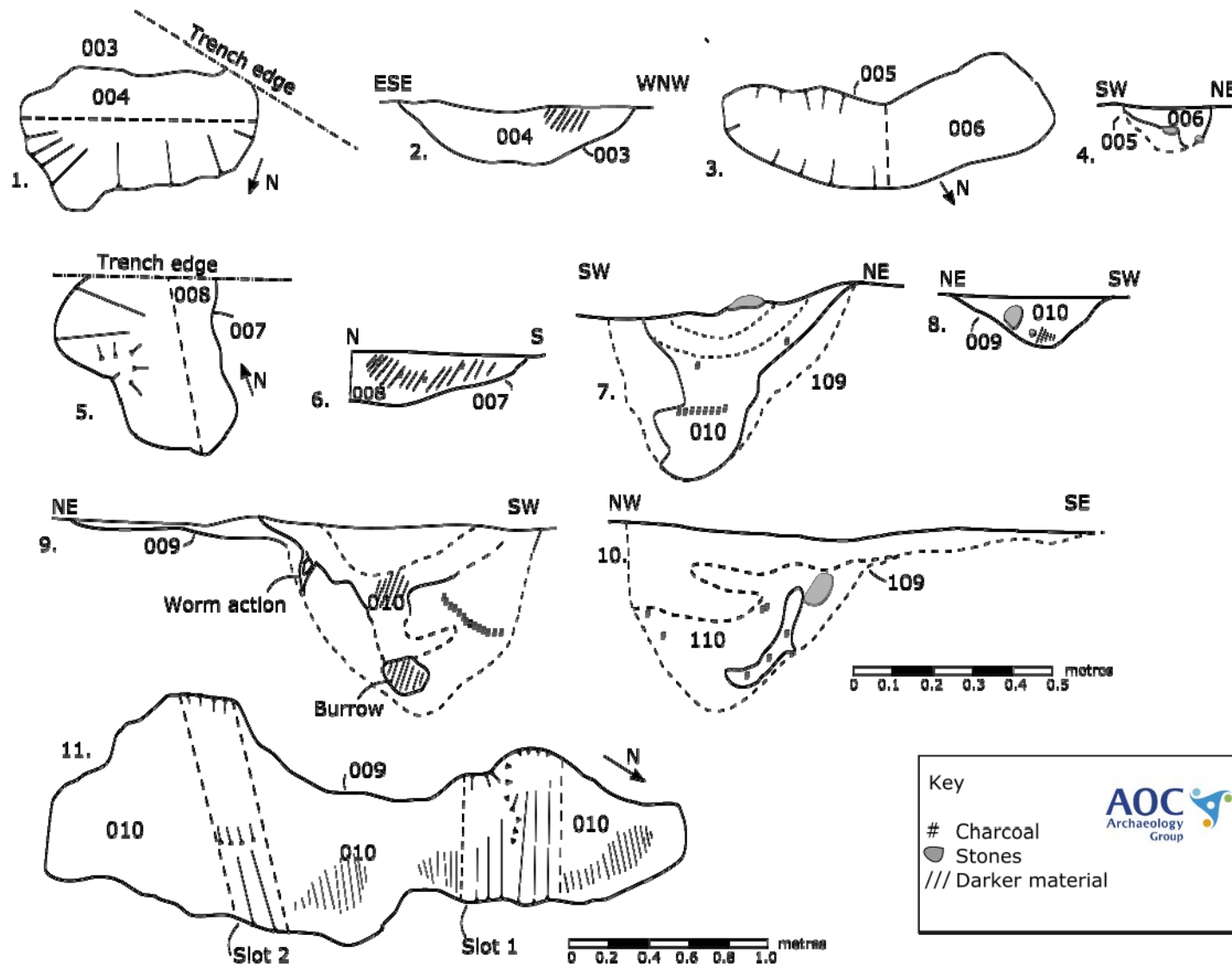
Context No.	Type	Description	Aligned	Interpretation	Fill of	Filled by
001	Deposit	Dark brown silty loam with some small stones. Moderately loose.		Topsoil		
002	Deposit	Mixed brown and orange sands and gravels with some larger rounded cobbles.		Natural		
003	Cut	A cut somewhat elongated but amorphous shaped in plan. 0.6m long, 0.4m wide and 0.15m deep. Gently curving sides to a flattish base. Edges distorted by burrowing.	ENE-WNW	Pit		004
004	Fill	A mid-brown to black sandy silty, somewhat compacted down. Contains flecks of charcoal (2%) but is otherwise fairly clean.		Fill of pit	003	
005	Cut	A slightly curved linear oval pit feature, 0.8m long x 0.25-0.35m wide and 0.12m deep. Slightly v-shaped section. Edges a little indistinct, affected by burrowing.	E-W	Pit		006
006	Fill	Mid-brown black sandy silt with some pebbles (<5%) and charcoal flecks (2%)		Fill of pit	005	
007	Cut	An amorphous shaped pit in plan, partially overlain by the trench edge. Measures 0.5m long and 0.4m wide, 0.12m deep. Gently sloping sides to a flattish base.	N-S	Pit		008
008	Fill	A dark brown-black sandy silt with chunks of charcoal present (2%). Fairly clean of stones.		Fill of pit	007	

Context No.	Type	Description	Aligned	Interpretation	Fill of	Filled by
009	Cut	A cut with an amorphous loosely linear shape in plan, and a faintly v-shaped section in profile. Measures roughly 3.2m long, 1.2m wide at its widest and 0.6m wide at its narrowest. 0.4m deep. Edges are indistinct due to slumping and burrowing.	NNW-SSE	A natural cut formed during the growth of vegetation and the fire and the heat affected vegetation		010
010	Fill	A mottled haloed fill. Somewhat moderately loose sandy silt, ranging in colour from pale yellow-grey, to orange, to black. Lots of thick intact charcoal chunks (2-4%) with some appearing to be part of large roots. There are some subrounded cobbles within the fill up to 0.15m long.		Burnt vegetation and heat affected soil	009	

Appendix 3: Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Plan/Section	Scale	Description	Direction Facing	Contexts	Drawn By	Date
1	Plan	1:10	Post-section plan of pit		003, 004	SW	23/06/2016
2	Section	1:10	NNE-facing section	NNE	003, 004	SW	23/06/2016
3	Plan	1:10	Post-section plan of pit		005, 006	SW	23/06/2016
4	Section	1:10	ESE-facing section	WNW	005, 006	SW	23/06/2016
5	Plan	1:10	Post-section plan of pit		007, 008	SW	23/06/2016
6	Section	1:10	W-facing section	E	007, 008	SW	23/06/2016
7	Section	1:10	Slot 1: SE-facing section	NW	009, 010	SW	23/06/2016
8	Section	1:10	Slot 1: NW-facing section	SE	009, 010	SW	23/06/2016
9	Section	1:10	Slot 2: NW-facing section	SE	009, 010	SW	23/06/2016
10	Section	1:10	Slot 2: SE-facing section	NW	009, 010	SW	23/06/2016
11	Plan	1:20	Post-slot plan of feature		009, 010	SW	23/06/2016

Appendix 4: Site Drawings





AOC Archaeology Group, Ardyne Studio, Bank Street, Cromarty, IV11 8YE
 tel: 01381 600650 | mob: 07972 259 255 | e-mail: inverness@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com