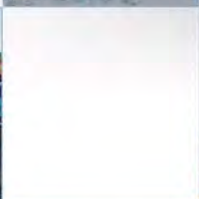
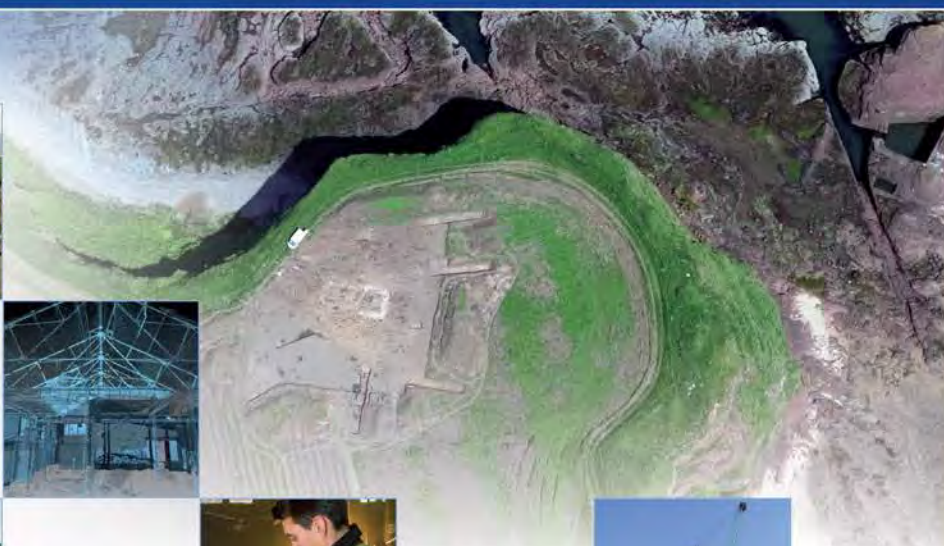


‘Souterrain’, Phase 1A, Tornagrain, Croy, Inverness-shire: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

16th June 2016
AOC22827



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

‘Souterrain’ Phase 1A, Tornagrain, Croy, Inverness-shire Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: **The Moray Estates Development Company Ltd.,**
Estates Office,
Berryley,
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IV36 2ST

National Grid Reference (NGR): **NH 7806 5012**

AOC Project No: **22827**

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Date of Fieldwork: **9th May 2016**

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Turnberry Planning on behalf of their client Moray Estates ahead of service track excavation that passes within a buffer zone around a 'souterrain' identified by earlier archaeological works.

AOC watched all excavations within the buffer zone and a single large pit feature was identified and fully recorded during the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Highland Council have granted 'Permission in Principle' for up to 4960 units and associated retail, commercial and community development (reference 09/00038/OUTIN). The Phase 1A works comprise up to 344 residential units with associated infrastructure including SUDs ponds and services. Previous archaeological works on site have identified a possible souterrain which development proposals were able to preserve *in situ*. The watching brief is required due to the need to excavate a service track through the souterrain buffer zone.
- 1.1.2 The programme of archaeological works was specified by Highland Council as advised by Historic Environment team, HET, is in keeping with the policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The development area occupies mostly agricultural land located to the immediate southeast of the A96 opposite Inverness Airport. The overall the development is focused around the farms at Mid Coul, Hillhead and Culair as well as includes part of Tornagrain Wood. The Phase 1A development area works are centred at NGR: c. NH 7809 5022, and comprises a total area of approximately 28.3 ha.

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (taken from Cultural Heritage Chapter of EIA, 2009)

- 1.3.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas or Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes present within the proposed development area.
- 1.3.2 The NMRS and The Highland Council SMR contain records for six archaeological sites and monuments within the proposed development area. These are Mid Coul cottages (1), Mid Coul Farmhouse (2), a cairn and cist (3), the site of a possible burnt mound (4), an area of rig and furrow cultivation (5) and a plantation bank (18).
- 1.3.3 Examination of cartographic sources led to the identification of thirty-nine additional archaeological sites and monuments. These are two roads (24, 38), three tracks (6, 17, 37), a farmstead (23), a settlement (31), buildings and enclosures (7, 8, 9, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36, 40 and 43.), three quarries (10, 12, 21), a mill complex at Hillhead (11), a well (13), three field boundaries (14, 15, 35, 46), gravel pits (19, 39, 42), a sand pit (41) King's Road (24) and three plantations (20, 29, 30). Two woods (44, 45) have also been recorded as they appear on 19th century maps and contain associated features such as tracks.

- 1.3.4 Examination of aerial photographs did not identify any further sites or features within the development area.
- 1.3.5 Examination of aerial photographs did not identify any further sites or features within the development area.
- 1.3.6 An evaluation was conducted in February 2015 during which a total of 61 evaluation trenches totalling an area of 9,486 m² were excavated within the development area. Of the c.24 ha site there were a variety of areas unavailable to trench because of the presence of live services, existing infrastructure such as roads and an old quarry. Live services included overhead electrical cables, a live water main and an oil pipeline. In total c. 10.5 ha was unavailable for trenching. Of the land available for evaluation the trenching totalled just over 7 %.
- 1.3.7 The evaluation revealed a stratigraphic sequence of sandy topsoil overlying natural deposits of sand and gravel. Numerous archaeological cut features were identified of which variously sized pits were most prominent alongside a possible souterrain structure and a curvilinear feature of unknown function. These features, where investigated, revealed finds such as slag indicative of Iron Age smelting and smithing with two pits suggesting earlier occupation in the form of possible Late Neolithic pottery and Early Bronze beaker sherds.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works are:
 - i) to monitor ground-breaking works associated with the new water main as it passes through the souterrain and therefore to prevent the destruction of potentially significant associated archaeological features prior to their recording;
 - iii) given the discovery of significant archaeological material in quantity that that will suffer an adverse impact from the groundworks associated with the redevelopment (ie where preservation *in situ* is impractical), the recording of all archaeological features by means of a mitigation strategy to be formulated with HCHET.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The watching brief involved the monitoring of all ground breaking works associated with the excavation of a new water main service track through the archaeologically sensitive buffer zone surrounding the souterrain. These works were undertaken in order to safeguard any archaeological features disturbed by the new service track.

- 3.2 All ground reduction was under constant archaeological monitoring. Machine excavation was conducted using a toothless ditching bucket wherever possible and consisted of the removal of topsoil or overburden in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. Spoil was scanned for artefacts. Monitoring in any one area ceased once an archaeological sterile natural subsoil surface was observed or the contractors had reached the formation level.



Plate 1: Southwest facing section of pit [001]

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The watching brief was undertaken under ideal archaeological conditions on 9th May 2016. The track extended for c. 75 m and was on average 5 m wide. The topsoil encountered was around 0.3 m thick along much of the northwest to southeast aligned service track though towards the base of the slope this increased up to 0.9 m.
- 4.2 A single pit feature, [001] was encountered partially exposed on the flat terrace to the west of the souterrain lying approximately 30 m away. This pit feature was well defined and measured 2.3 m northwest to southeast by 1.4 m, though as it extended beyond the trench edge it may have been a little bit wider. The sides of the pit were sloped and to the southeast there was a step to the profile. The pit was up to 0.65 m deep and contained two discrete fills, [002] and [003]. No artefacts were present within this context.
- 4.3 Fill [002] contained heat shattered stones along with charcoal within a sandy soil matrix. The lower fill contained similar inclusions of heat shattered stones and charcoal but this time within a clay rich setting with grey and orange boulder clay present. No artefacts were

recovered from this lower fill though organic impressions of 'straw' were noted within the clay.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The watching brief at during the Phase 1A works at Tornagrain identified a single feature lying close to and potentially associated with the earlier identified souterrain. The lack of modern finds from the feature and its position on the gravel terrace alongside the souterrain suggest there is a strong possibility that these two features relate to the same phase of activity. The presence of charcoal within the pit fill including the more secure lower fill means this feature could be radiocarbon dated during the subsequent post-excavation phase of the project.

6 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The sample retrieved can be added to the material recovered during the earlier Phase 1A evaluation and excavation works. A post-excavation programme for the Phase 1A works meeting the requirements and to the specification of HET will be required.

7 REFERENCES

2009 Cultural Heritage Chapter of EIA, 2009 Unpublished client report

Dunbar, L 2015a *Phase 1A, Tornagrain, Croy, Invernesshire Evaluation* Unpublished AOC Data Structure Report

Dunbar, L 2015b *Phase 1A, Tornagrain, Croy, Invernesshire Excavation* Unpublished AOC Data Structure Report

Scottish Government 2014 *Scottish Planning Policy*, April 2014.

Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*.

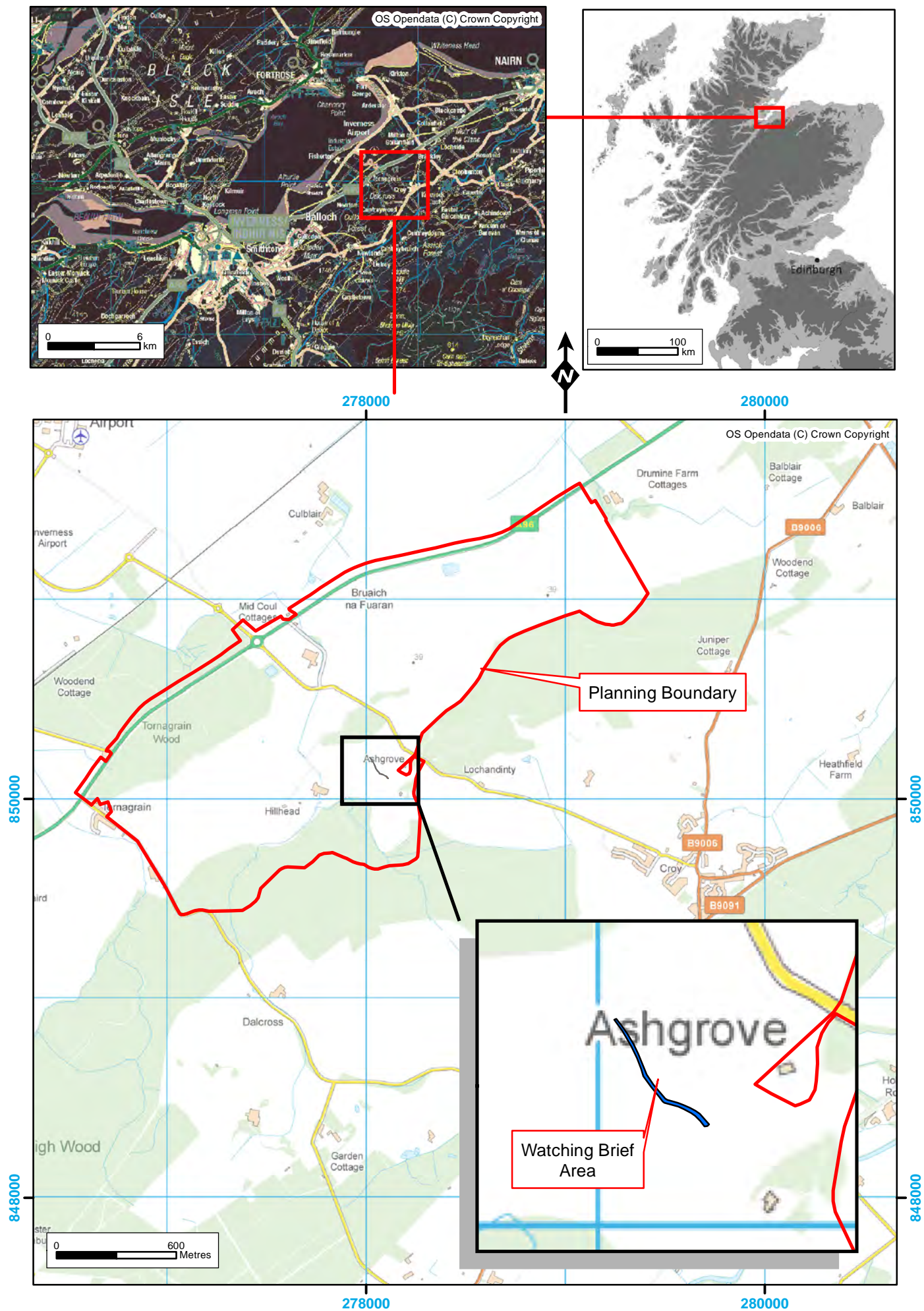


Figure 1: General site location showing extent of watching brief area

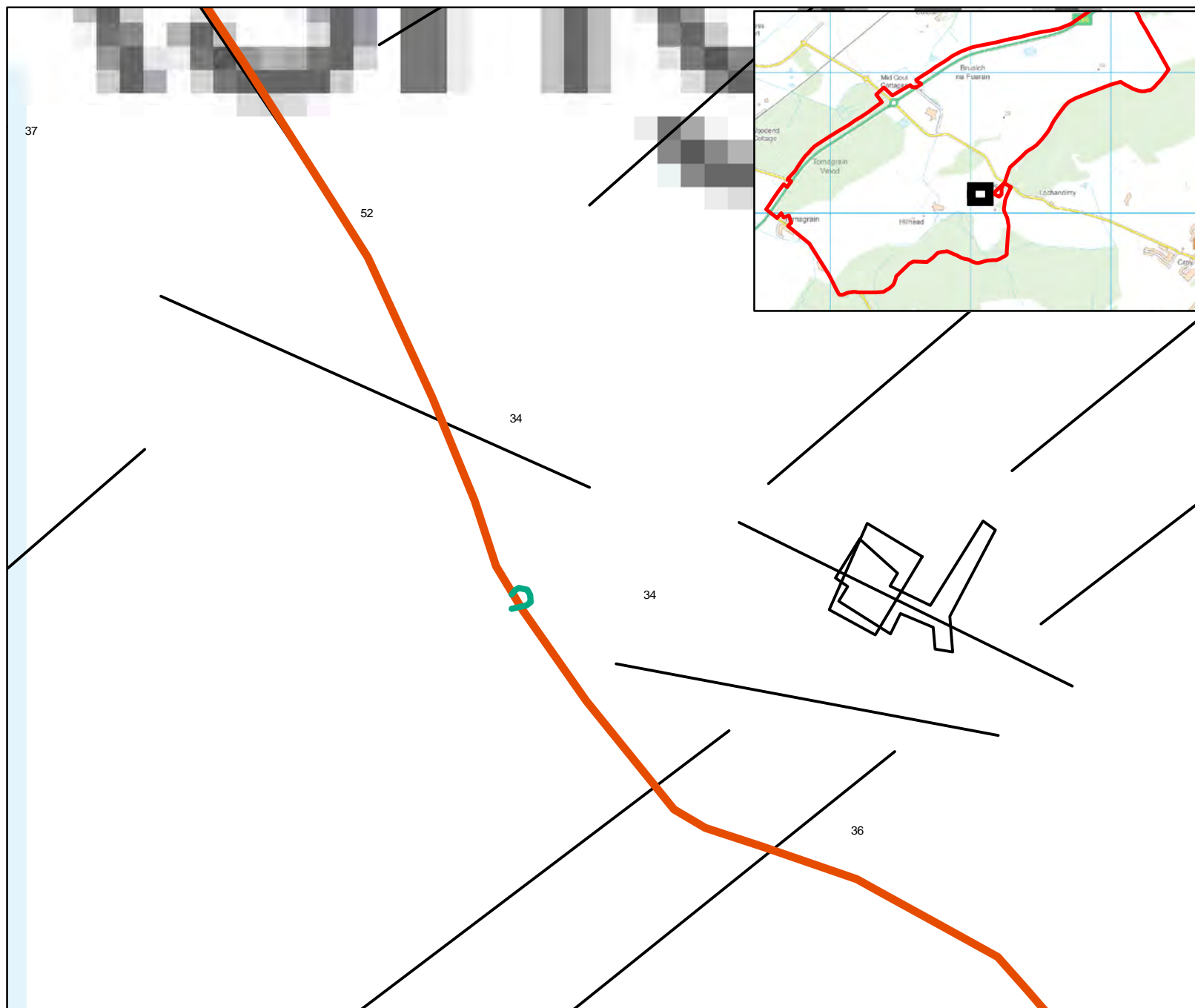


Figure 2: Detail of watching brief area showing evaluation trenches/southern and pit [001]

Legend

- Location of Pit [001]
- Watching Brief Area
- Evaluation trench
- Outline planning boundary



0 20 metres

Cartographic data derived from OS OpenData, Crown Copyright



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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

| Context | Description |
|---------|--|
| [001] | Cut of pit. pit feature was well defined and measured 2.3 m northwest to southeast by 1.4 m, though as it extended beyond the trench edge it may have been a little bit wider. The sides of the pit were sloped and to the southeast there was a step to the profile. The pit was up to 0.65 m deep and contained two discrete fills, [002] and [003]. |
| [002] | Upper fill of pit [001]. Fill [002] contained heat shattered stones along with charcoal within a sandy soil matrix. No artefacts were recovered from this fill. |
| [003] | Lower fill of pit [001]. The lower fill contained inclusions of heat shattered stones and charcoal but this time within a clay rich setting with grey and orange boulder clay present. No artefacts were recovered from this fill. |
| [004] | Natural subsoil comprising a dark orange sand and gravel |

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE REGISTER

| Context | Description |
|---------|----------------------------|
| [003] | 20 litres bulk soil sample |

APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Digital 1

| Frame | Description | From |
|-------|--|------|
| 1 | View of pit [001] half sectioned | WNW |
| 2 | View of pit [001] half sectioned | SW |
| 3 | View of pit [001] half sectioned | W |
| 4 | View of pit [001] half sectioned | NW |
| 5 | View of pit [001] half sectioned | SSE |
| 6 | View of pit [001] half sectioned showing general setting | NW |

APPENDIX 4: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' (DES) REPORT

| | |
|---|---|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | Highland Council |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | Phase 1A, Tornagrain Excavation |
| PROJECT CODE: | 22827 |
| PARISH: | Petty |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR: | Lindsay Dunbar |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | AOC Archaeology Group |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Phase 1A Watching Brief |
| NMRS NO(S): | N/A |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Pits, postholes & possible souterrain |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | Large pit, possibly prehistoric |
| NGR (2 letters, 6 figures) | NH 7809 5022 |
| START DATE (this season) | 9 th May 2016 |
| END DATE (this season) | 9 th May 2016 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES) | None |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | Post-Excavation works |
| CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS: | N/A |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Moray Estates Development Company Ltd. |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: | AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | admin@aocarchaeology.com |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION | Archive to be deposited in NMRS |



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