

Archaeological Watching Brief

Holding F

Orbost

Isle of Skye

PLANNING REF. 01/00208/FULSL/SIFR/SCED

by

Martin Wildgoose

25th June 2002

for

Rosie Cameron and Raymond Morrison

HOLDING F, ORBOST.

Duirinish Parish, Isle of Skye. NG 2568 4265

Planning Application No. 01/00208/FULSL/SIFR/SCED

A watching brief carried out during the excavation of a test trench on the site of a new house at the above OS grid ref. The excavation of the test trench was triggered by the sites close proximity to both a deserted settlement (Biggeary) and to a newly discovered Mesolithic activity site (See Map 2).

1. SUMMARY

The new house site lies on a sheltered, south-west facing, terrace approximately 30 metres to the north-east of the eastern limit of the now deserted settlement of Biggeary and 90 metres to the north of a recorded Mesolithic lithic scatter. (See Maps 1 and 2)

A minor terraced track leads up to the site from the public road at the rear of Bharcasaig Bay. (See Map 2)

The proximity of the development to the above archaeological sites triggered the inclusion of a test trench and watching brief as an integral part of the planning application.

The site works and watching brief were carried out on the 24th of June 2002 during a spell of unseasonably wet and windy weather. The excavation of the trial trench was carried out by a JCB excavator, using a straight edged ditching bucket as required by the Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

2. THE SITE WORKS

2.1 Objectives

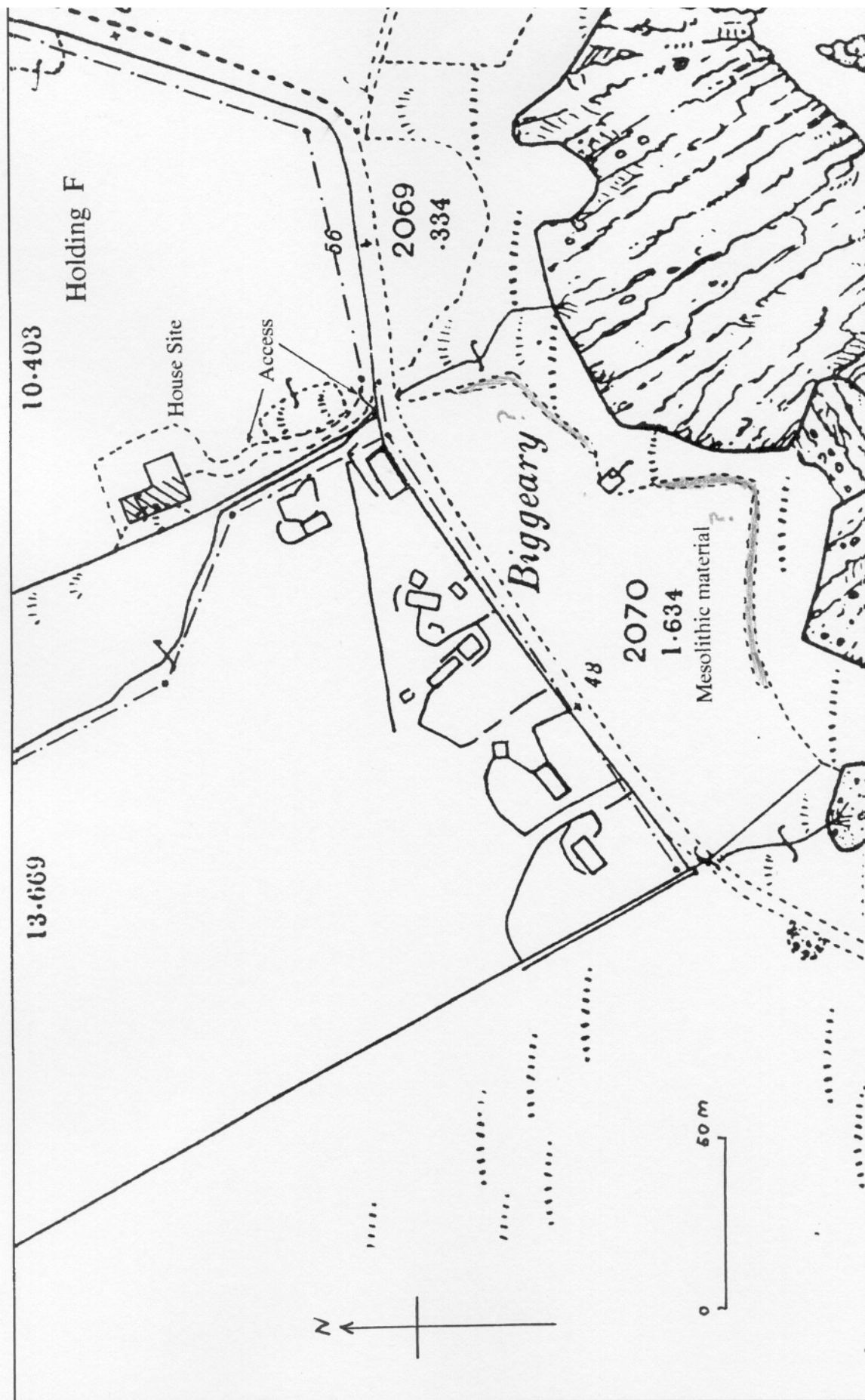
To carry out an archaeological evaluation of the site of a new house prior to the total excavation of the building platform.

Site works consisted of a trial trench (6 metres by 12 metres) which examined the western, level, half of the house platform. The eastern half of the house platform lies on a 45-degree slope, activity on this area would have shown as slope wash in the excavated area.

2.2 Results

There were no visible signs of buried archaeology on the surface of the site.

Excavation of the trial trench revealed no archaeological features and produced only 3 small body sherds of late 19th century pottery (later discarded). There were no lithics present or any other signs of Mesolithic activity.



Map 2 : Holding F, showing location of house site and area of test trench (hatched area) Mesolithic site shaded red.

The presence of a terraced track and pottery fragments may indicate that the platform has seen some agricultural activity within the last 150 years.

The excavated material consisted of from 150mm to 200mm of clean brown loam resting on from 20mm to 150mm of a fine orange sub-soil which lay directly on the uneven surface of the local, somewhat rotten, Basalt rock.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The excavation of the trial trench produced no evidence for human activity, other than cultivation in the late 19th early 20th century.

There are no recommendations regarding this site.

4. LOCATION OF RECORDS.

All records and site drawings are held in the archive of: -

Martin Wildgoose
Tigh an Dun
Dunan
Broadford
Isle of Skye, IV49 9AJ

A full set of colour slides is deposited with the Highland Council Archaeology Unit.

REFERENCES

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| BIGGEARY - | Dualchas SMR record card No. NG 24 SE 19 |
| | Wildgoose, M. An Archaeological Survey of the Orbest Estate. 1998, Site 86. |
| Bharcasaig Bay Mesolithic Site | For details of this site see the unpublished records of survey and excavation held by Mr G. Kozikowski, Orbest House. |

END.