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Report of Archaeological Recording September 3rd – November 24th 2003 West Torbreck, Inverness

NH 6433 / 4034 (centred)

Client: Mr. N Sutherland

Planning Application No: 03/00540/FULIN

By
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B.A A.I.F.A F.S.A.Scot.
December 2003

Contents

Non-Technical Summary

Stuart Farrell was commissioned by Mr. N Sutherland in August 2003 to undertake an archaeological evaluation and watching brief at West Torbreck (NH 6433/4034) as part of a house development. Highland Council Archaeology Unit produced a specification for this work.

Work was sited close to the stone circle of Torbreck. Trial trenching revealed four small pits, of which one contained flint including a scrapper and sherds of late Neolithic pottery. One other pit which contained flint was partly damaged by ploughing whilst the two others contained stones. No other features of interest were revealed when larger areas were opened up for house plots, etc or when watching briefs were conducted.

No recommendations are to be made for further work.

1. Introduction

This report is for an archaeological evaluation and watching brief conducted on behalf of Mr. N Sutherland by the author for a house plot, associated access and features relating to a small farmstead at West Torbreck, Inverness. This work is for planning application 03/00540/FULIN.

The fieldwork was conducted between September 3rd and November 24th 2003.

2. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their help during the work:
- Mr. N Sutherland;
- Mr. J Hepburn-Wright of Adrem Cartographic Services Ltd for site survey work;
- Mr, J Welsh for onsite help;
- Staff of Angus Fraser Contractors for onsite work;
- Staff of Highland Council Archaeology Unit;
- Staff of the RCAHMS;
- Staff of the NMRS;
- Staff of Highland Council Archives
- Dr. T B Ballin for post-excavation analysis of the flint;
- Dr. A MacSween for post-excavation analysis of the pottery;
- Mrs S Stevenson for illustration of finds.

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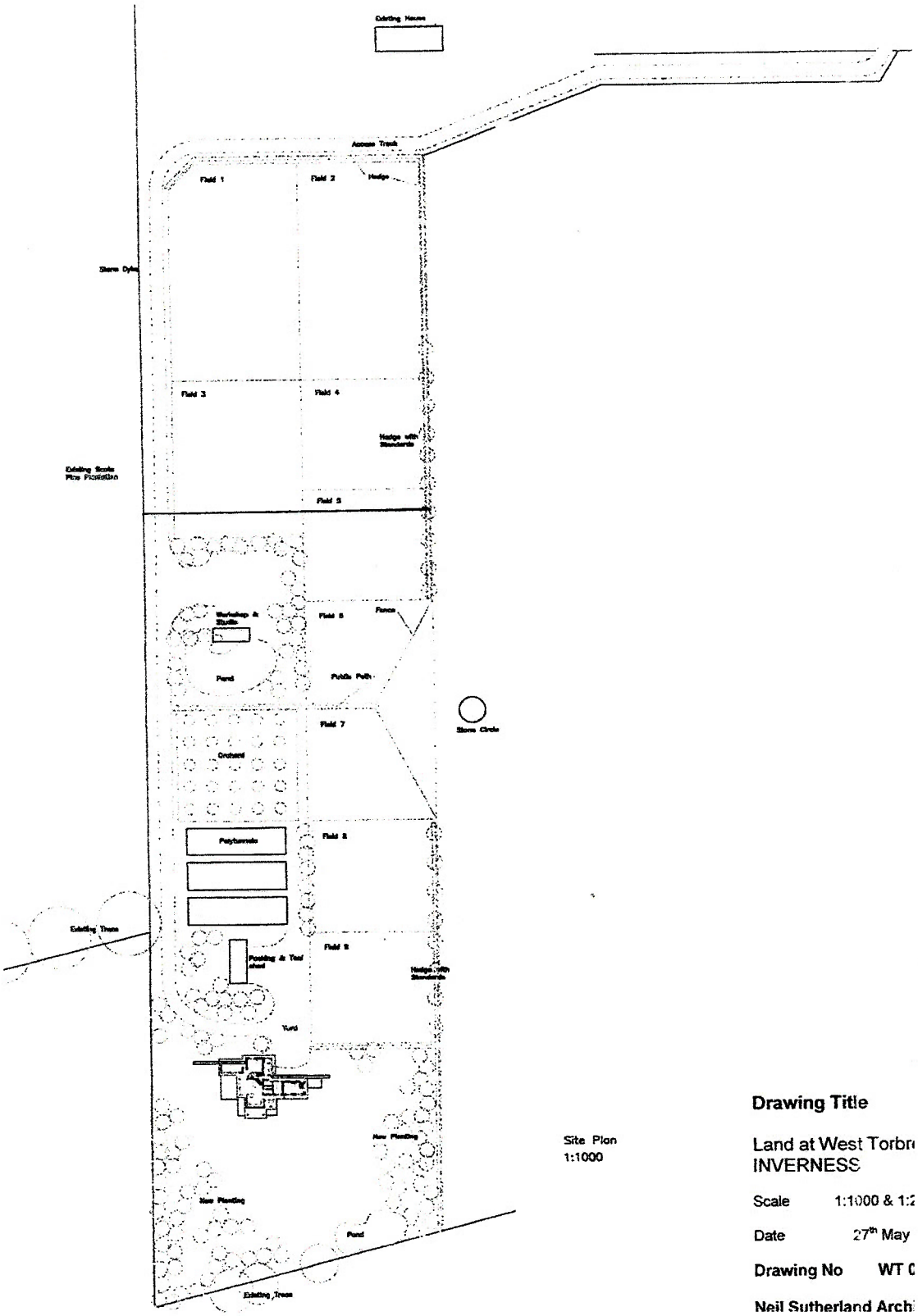
Figure 1 – General Location 1: 50,000

Figure 2 – Development Plan 1: 2000



Site Plan
1:1000

Drawing Title

Land at West Torbr
INVERNESS

Scale 1:1000 & 1:2

Date 27th May

Drawing No WT 0

Neil Sutherland Archi

Figure 3 – 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1871 1: 2500
Development Area outlined in Red

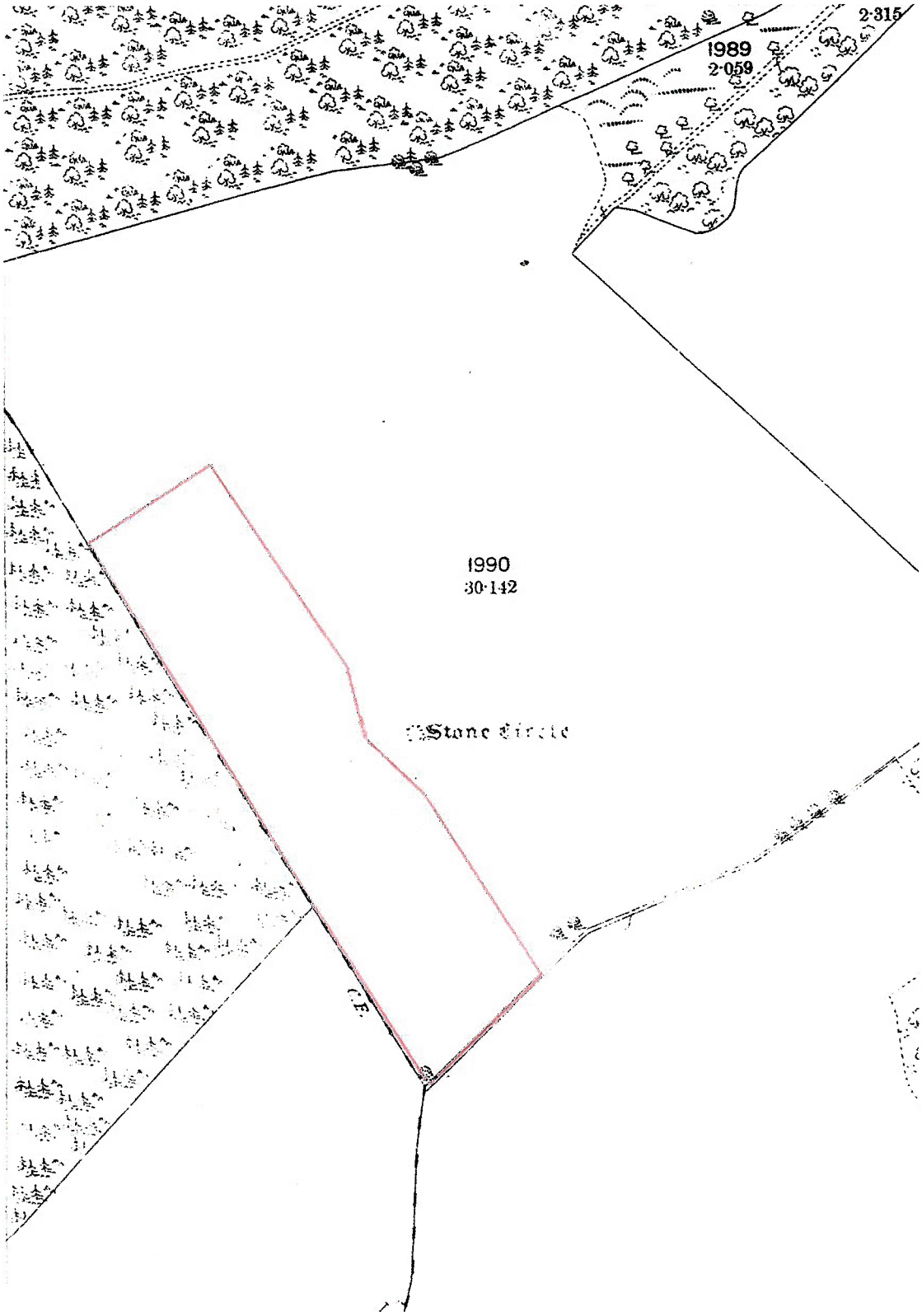


Figure 4 – 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1904 1: 2500
Development Area outlined in Red

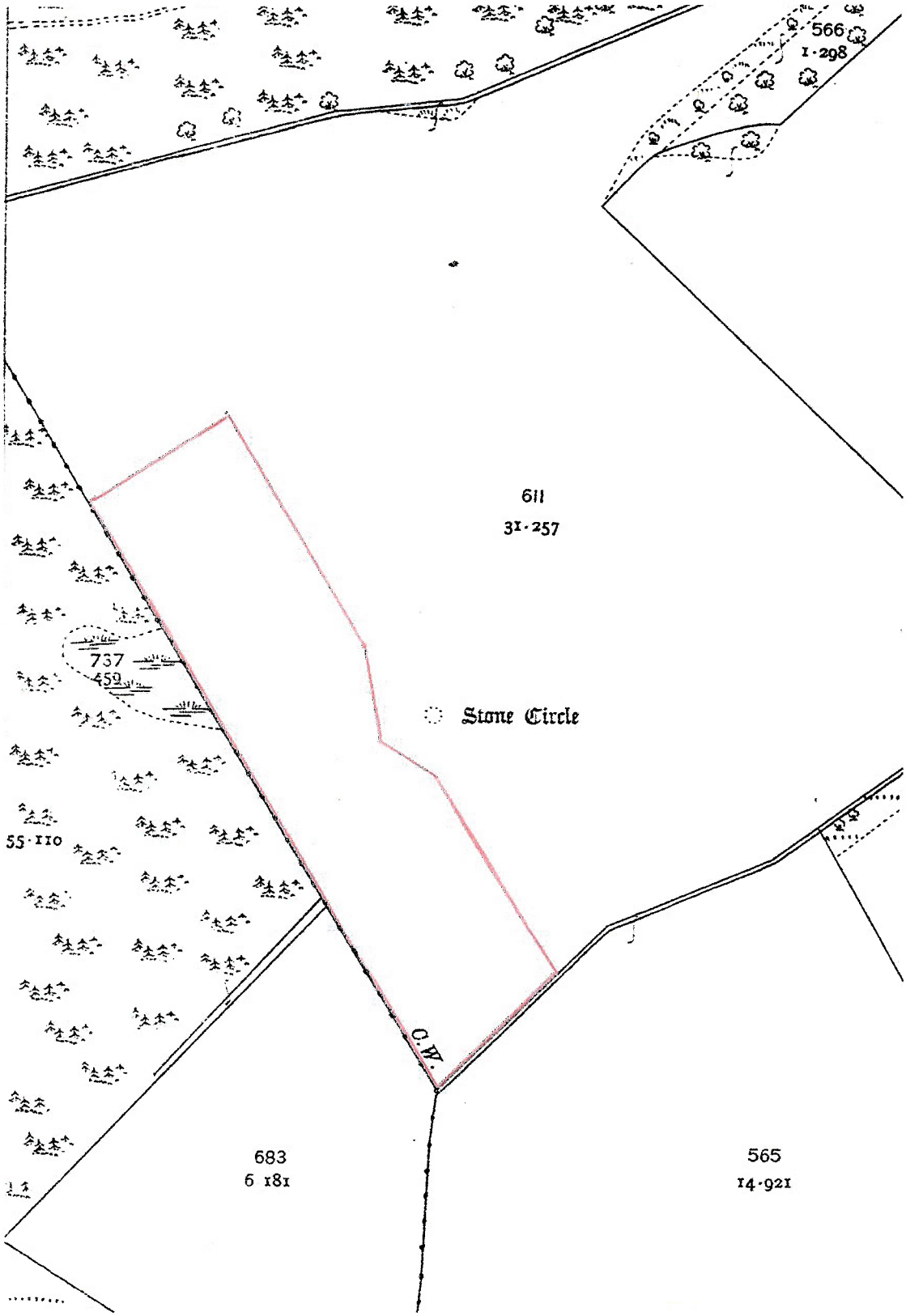
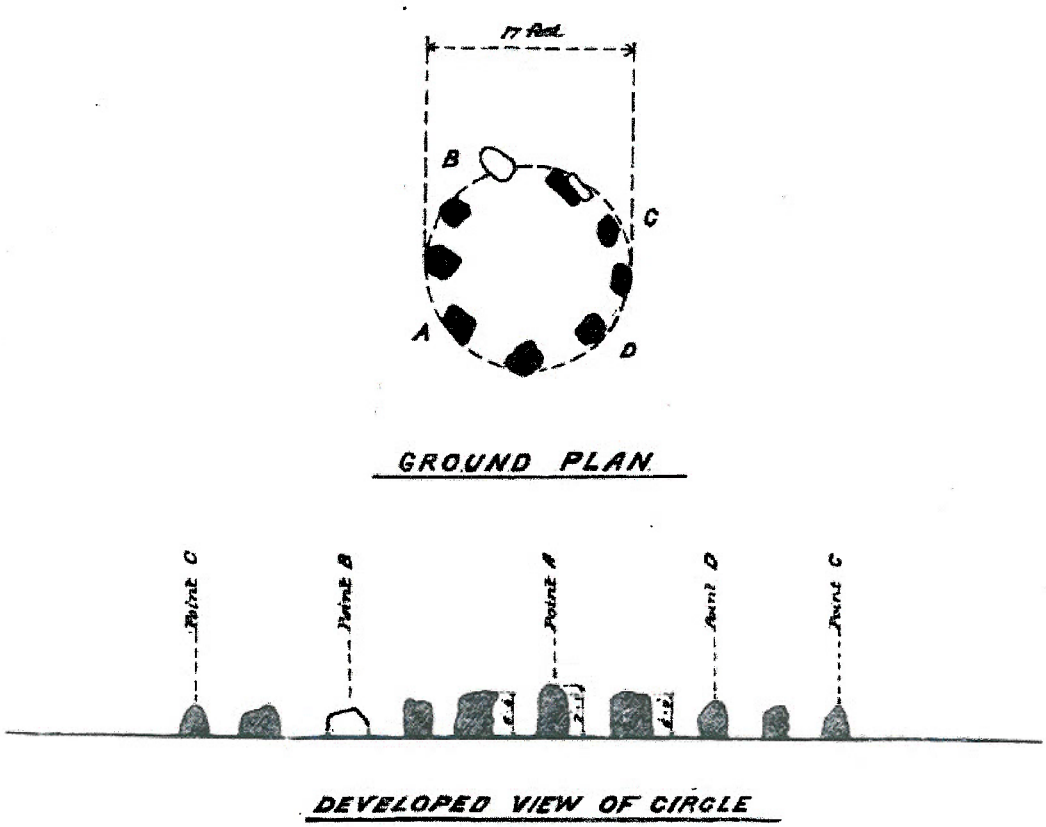


Figure 5 – Plan of Torbreck Stone Circle by J Hunter



West Torbreck Trial Trenching

Figure 6

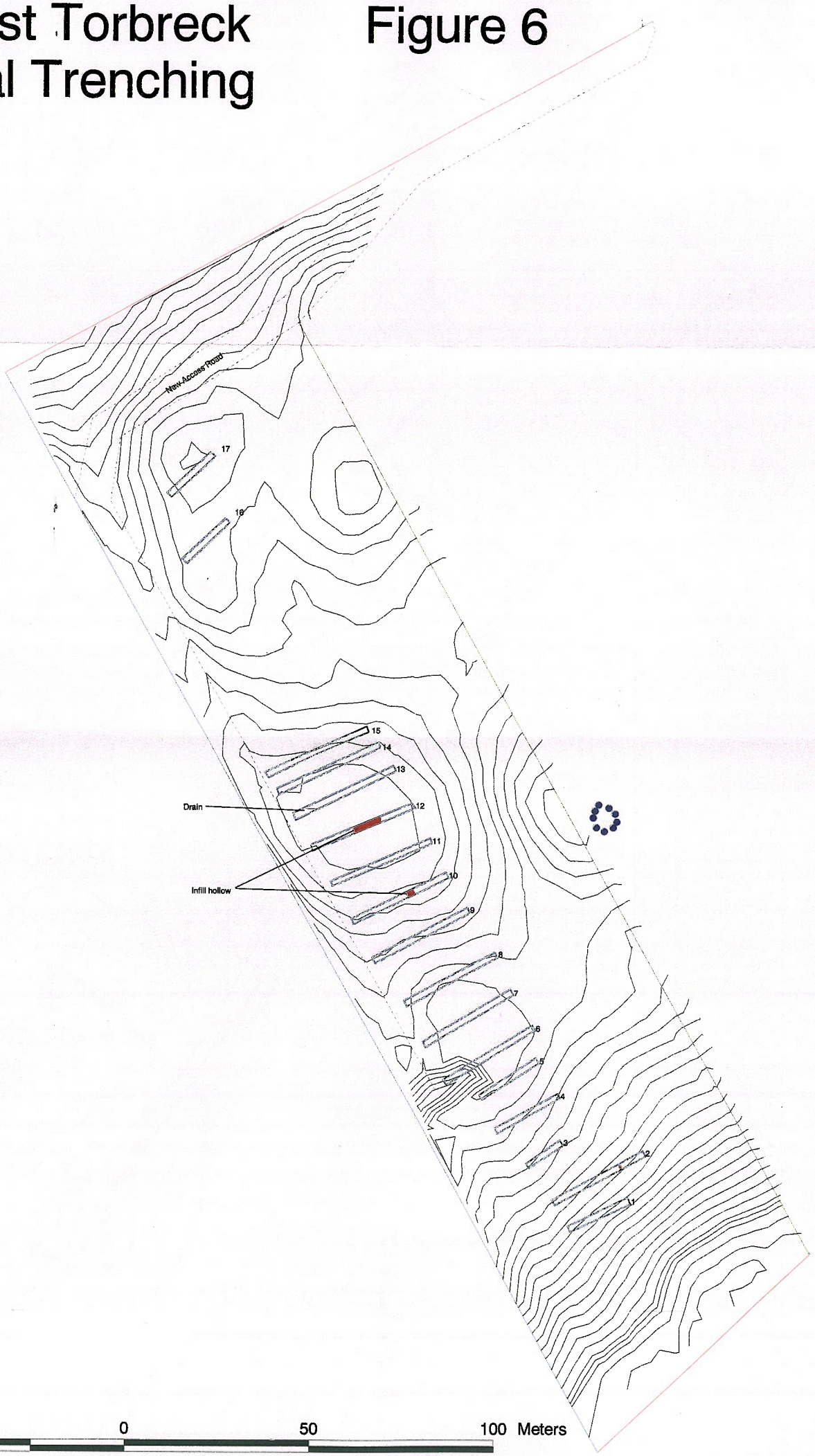


Figure 7 – Areas of Watching brief – (Marked in Yellow) 1: 2000

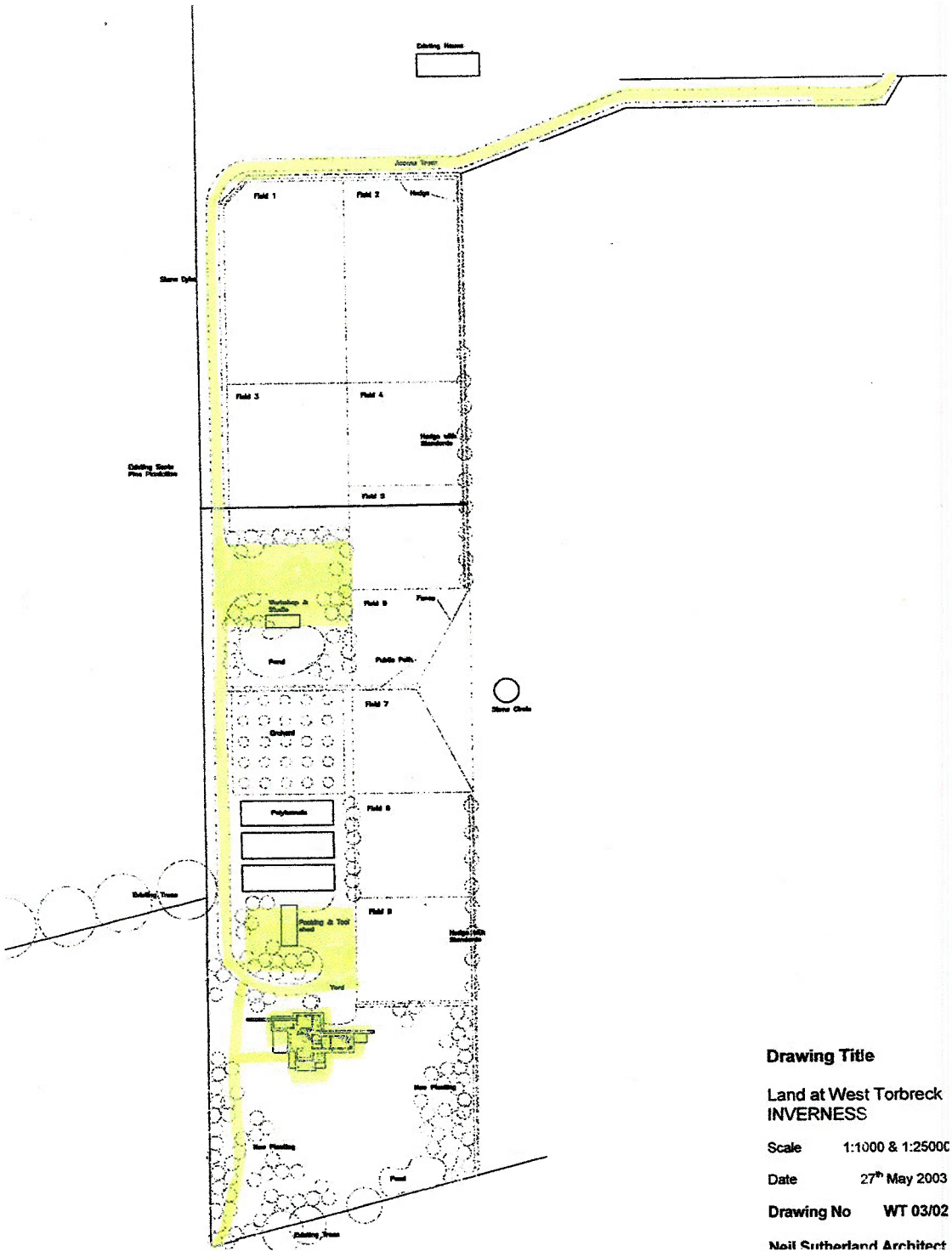
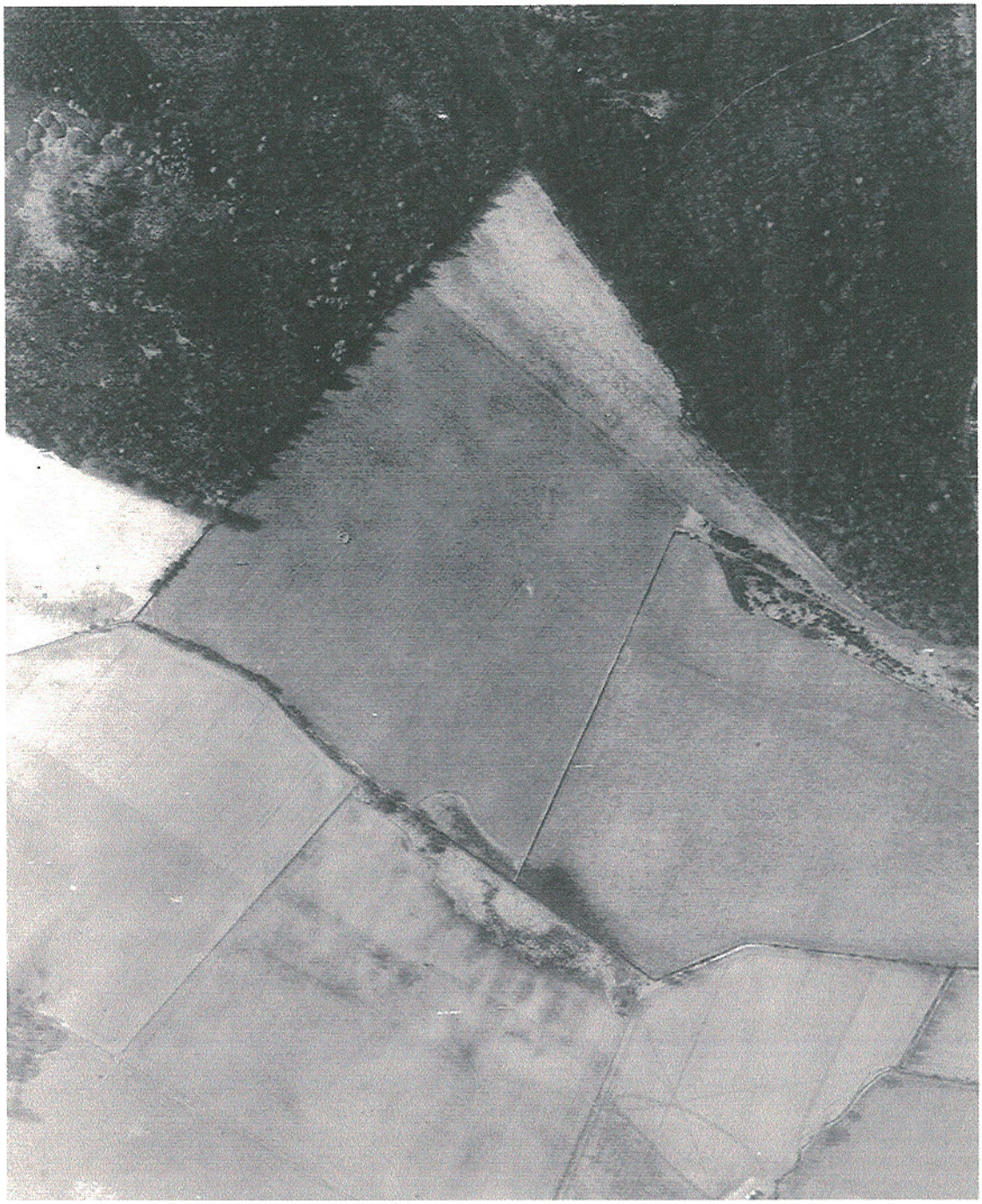


Figure 8 – RAF Aerial Photograph of 1946 1:5000



3. Historical Background

The proposed house plot and associated buildings lies close to the following archaeological site:

Torbreck
HSMR – NH64SW 1
NMRS – NH64SW 1
Grid Ref – NH 6437/4037
Type – Stone Circle
Noted in Highland Sites and Monuments Record and the National Monuments Record of Scotland CANMORE database of:
'A complete circle consisting of nine stones, at a short distance from which are two other stones, supposed to be the remains of an outer Circle'. (Ordnance Survey Name Book 1868) Noted by James Fraser (1884) that 'The circle at Torbreck seems to have been interfered with in improving the field in which it stands. At one time three concentric circles, with a passage connecting the outer and inner rings were visible.' Noted by Henshall (1963, 385) in 1957 that ' Fraser's plan shows a circular setting of nine evenly spaced upright stones with an external diameter of 17ft. It does not appear to be part of a chambered cairn; Fraser suggested the stones had been moved but it seems more likely that it is a stone circle.
Site visited by Ordnance Survey again in 1962 and recorded as 'A stone circle of 9 almost evenly spaced monoliths (maximum height 1.2m) with an overall diameter of 7.8m. A quantity of small stones lies upon the site, but these appear to be the result of field clearance. The site lies within a cultivated field. There are no traces of an outer circle'.

James Fraser (1883) believed that a number of stones had been removed from the circle with 'the large stones in it appear to belong to an outer ring obliterated'. His plan of the circle (see figure 5) includes 2 stones that may have been moved (stones not shaded). Possibly these are the two stones noted by the Ordnance Survey in 1868.

Site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument protected since 1971. Visit by Historic Scotland's Monument Warden in 1991 noted that there was 2 small heaps of field clearance to the edge of the stones. Site is not noted by Burl (2000) other than to appear in his gazetteer of sites.

Past archaeological work has been limited to the area around the stone circle. A watching brief was conducted by the author to the north edge of the development area (NH 64301/40577) that revealed no archaeological features or deposits though the site was on a north-facing slope. (Farrell, 2002a) Further to the east at Torbreck there has been the find of Neolithic pits including cremated animal bone of a Neolithic date (Farrell, 2002b).

Nothing is marked to the development location except the stone circle on the 1st or 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Maps of 1874 and 1906 respectively (see figures 3 and 4). Field was recorded as being planted with arable by the Ordnance Survey in 1870. (OS, 1870) The field is recorded as Clachandreggie (Stoneyfield) in farm documents of Torbreck Farm dating to 1831 (HC Archives) (This name is still known locally at Torbreck Farm – information from Mr. N Sutherland).

A study of aerial photographs held in the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh revealed only one visible feature of a possible field boundary running NW-SE to the north of the stone circle with the rest of the field having evidence of being heavily ploughed (see figure 8). This boundary was partly visible on photographs to 1953. Aerial photograph coverage

was limited to Royal Air Force photographs from the period 1946 to 1953 with the latest coverage of 1988 being at too large a scale for any details to be identified.

4. Objectives
To conduct an evaluation to 10% of the development area and to follow that with a watching brief on the excavation of the development to record those features revealed by excavation work. A copy of the specification provided by Highland Council Archaeology Unit is enclosed.

5. Methodology
Trenches were located in relation to proposed buildings, roads and parking, poly-tunnels and proposed ponds and services. A monitoring was made of the removal of topsoil and subsoil's to an average depth of 350mm for the development area for 17 trenches to an area of 654m^2. A back-acting machine with a straight edged bucket cleared the site with possible archaeological features being cleaned by hand.
Weather on the days of work (September 3rd – November 24th 2003) was generally clear and sunny.

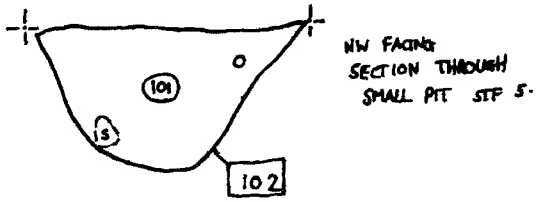
6. Results of Evaluation and Watching Brief
The evaluation and watching brief was carried out in accordance with accepted professional archaeological standards as published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999). Over the construction period a suitably qualified archaeologist was on site to carry out observations and assessment of the area affected by the excavation works.

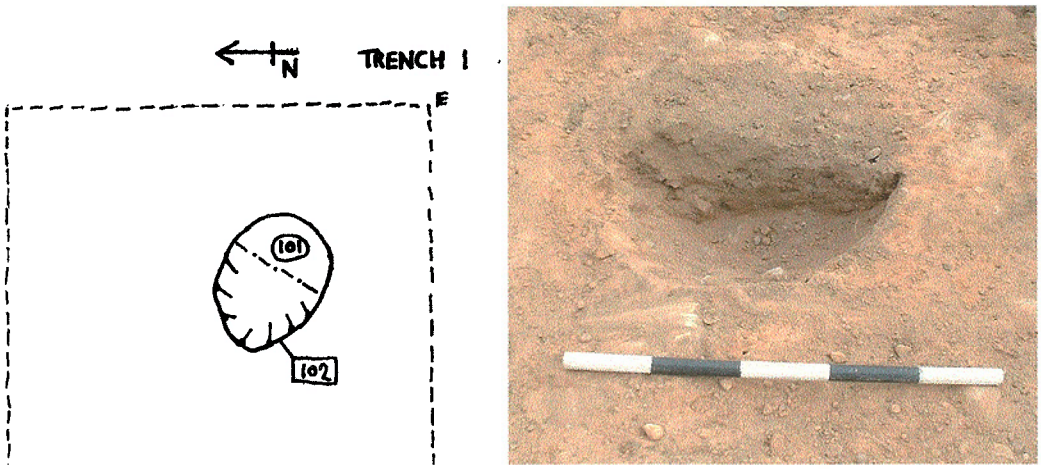
Site Location
The site lies to the west of Torbreck stone circle in an area of current grass pasture. The field is partly on a partial south-facing slope with an underlying natural of gravels and sand.

Evaluation Results
Trenches were placed at random, as no potential archaeological features were revealed in the desktop survey, being placed in relation to the proposed house, road, workshop, poly tunnels, orchard, pond and studio. Excavation of the 17 trenches made, all 1.6m wide (see figure 6) revealed the following:

1 – 17.8m E-W in area of house plot. One small shallow round pit was revealed to the E end of the trench containing pottery (identified as late Neolithic) and flint including half of a small scrapper. (See specialist reports below). Fill deemed not suitable for sampling by excavator.

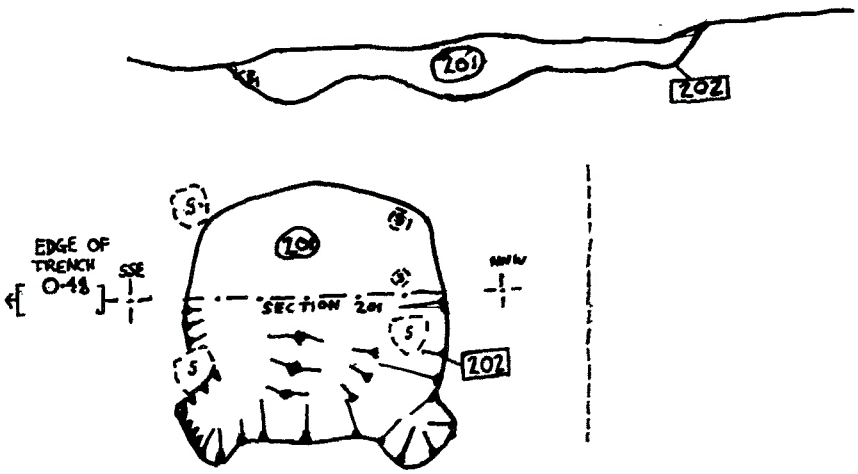
Top: Section 1:10.
Below left: Plan of pit 1:20.
Below right: View of pit facing E – scale 0.5m.

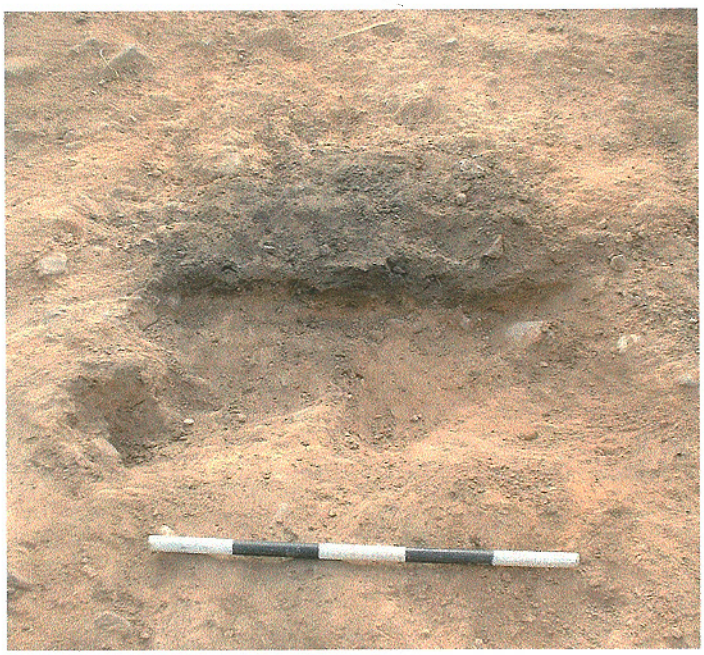




2 – 27.8m EW in area of house plot. One small shallow truncated round pit was revealed to the centre of the trench containing flint (See specialist report below). Fill deemed not suitable for sampling by excavator due to extensive damage by ploughing. Plough scaring also visible running N-S in trench.

Top: Section 1:10, plan 1:20.
Over: View of pit facing W – scale 0.5m.





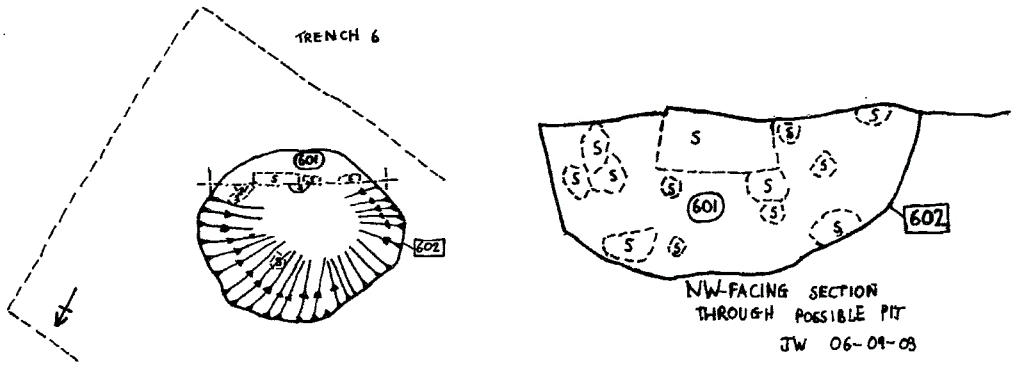
3 – 10.6m EW in area of road. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

4 – 19.2m EW in area of workshop. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

5 – 18m EW in area of workshop. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

6 – 27.7m EW in area of poly tunnels. One medium sized but shallow pit was revealed to the E end of the trench. Heavily filled with round medium to large stones (making for a very difficult section) and little fill. No finds were made or dateable material. Possible stone hole (?). Fill deemed not suitable for sampling by excavator due to stones.

Top right: Plan 1:20.
Top left: section 1:10.
Over: View facing SE – scales 1m.



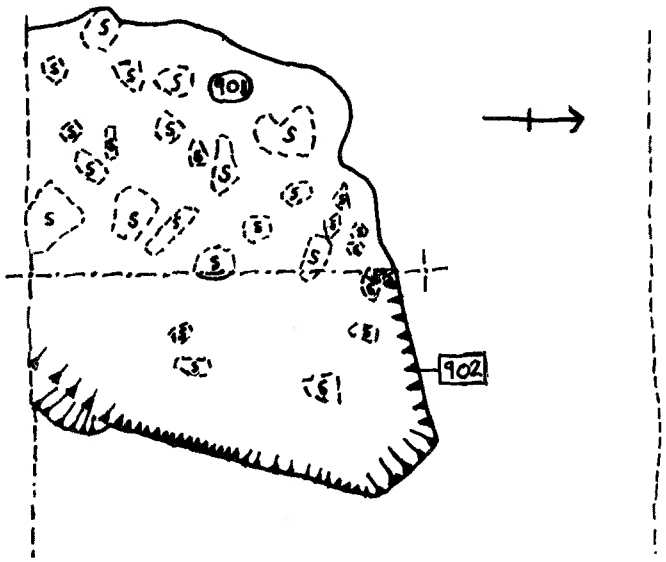
7 – 27m EW in area of poly tunnels. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. One possible feature to the centre of the trench was revealed but deemed upon ½ sectioning to be a tree bole due it being very irregular in plan and cut.

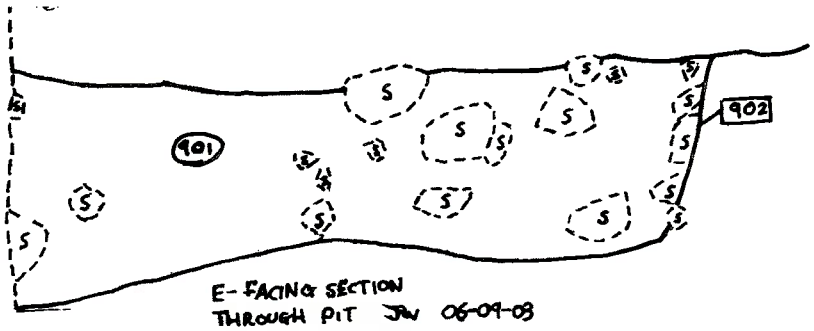
Below: View of tree bole facing E – scales 1m.

8 – 27.6m EW in area of poly tunnels. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

9 – 28m EW in area of poly tunnels. One irregular shaped pit was revealed to the centre of the trench. Heavily filled with medium to large round stones with some fill. No finds were made, though 2 fragments of burnt hazelnut shell were recovered and will be submitted for C14 dating. Fill deemed not suitable for sampling by excavator due to large amount of stones.

Top: Plan 1:20.
Middle: Section 1:10.
Below: View of cut facing SW – scales 1m.





10 – 28.2m EW in area of poly tunnels. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. One small infilled hollow of medium to large rounded stones relating to agricultural improvement was revealed to centre of trench.

11 – 29m EW in area of pond and studio. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

12 – 29.7m EW in area of pond and studio. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. Large infilled hollow 5.5m wide to centre of trench of medium to large rounded stones, excavation (by machine) revealed depth of 0.8m in an area of wet silts.

13 – 29.3m EW in area of pond and studio. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. A modern drainage ditch was revealed at the W end of the trench running NW-SE for 3.2m and 0.3m wide and 0.25m deep infilled with small rounded stones.

14 – 29.6m EW in area of pond and studio. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. 1 possible feature was revealed upon excavation to a natural depression.

15 – 29.9m EW in area of pond and studio. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

16 – 15.5 NE-SW. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. Evidence of plough scaring running N-S in natural.

17 – 13.8 NE-SW. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed. Evidence of plough scaring running N-S in natural.

The Flint by Dr. Torben B Ballin

During recent excavations at West Torbreck (Torbreck Farm), *c.* 3 km SW of Inverness, 15 lithic artefacts were recovered. All artefacts were found in connection with two pits, contexts 101 and 201. Pit 101 contained pottery sherds of a Late Neolithic date. The present site is situated near a stone circle (NGR: NH 6437 4037), and along the Torbreck Burn many, particularly late prehistoric, monuments have been found (eg, burnt mounds, hut circles and enclosures). The aim of the present report is to characterize, catalogue and – if possible – date the lithic finds.

Assemblage

From the excavation at the West Torbreck site the following artefacts were retrieved:

Table I. General artefact list.

	Numbers
Chips	1
Platform flakes	8
Bipolar flakes	4
Scraper-edge fragments	1
Flakes with retouch notch(es)	1
TOTAL	**15**

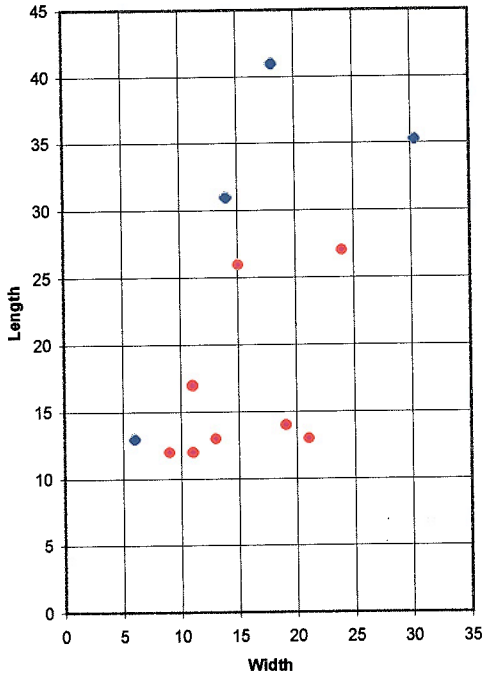
The definitions of the main lithic categories are as follows:

Chips: All flakes and indeterminate pieces the greatest dimension (GD) of which is ≤ 10 mm.
Flakes: All lithic artefacts with one identifiable ventral (positive or convex) surface, GD > 10 mm and L < 2W (L = length; W = width).
Indeterminate pieces: Lithic artefacts which cannot be unequivocally identified as either flakes or cores. Generally the problem of identification is due to irregular breaks, frost-shattering or fire-crazing. *Chunks* are larger indeterminate pieces, and in, for example, the case of quartz, the problem of identification usually originates from a piece flaking along natural planes of weakness rather than flaking in the usual conchoidal way.
Blades and microblades: Flakes where L ≥ 2B. In the case of blades W > 8 mm, in the case of microblades W ≤ 8 mm.
Cores: Artefacts with only dorsal (negative or concave) surfaces – if three or more flakes have been detached, the piece is a core, if fewer than three flakes have been detached, the piece is a split or flaked pebble.
Tools: Artefacts with secondary retouch (modification).

Raw materials
The small assemblage consists entirely of good quality flint. Most of the flints have a honey-brown colour, but one piece is marbled dark/light grey [CAT 1], whereas two pieces are light olive-green [CAT 3, 4]. The presence of differently coloured flints suggests the reduction of at least three nodules at the site. Six of the artefacts are corticated, and the fact that this cortex is heavily abraded indicates the collection of raw material at a pebble source. Most likely, flint was acquired from beach deposits along the shores of the Moray Firth (cf. Fig 1 – off-shore Cretaceous flint deposits – Saville 1994, 58). None of the artefacts has been affected by fire.

Debitage
The majority of the artefacts (13 pieces or 87%) are debitage, with one piece being a chip and 12 being flakes; no blades were found. Eight blanks are platform flakes (average dimensions: 17 x 15 x 4 mm), and seven of these were unequivocally identified as hard-hammer flakes; it was not possible to determine the type of percussion applied to detach platform flake CAT 11. Four of the blanks are bipolar ('hammer-and-anvil') flakes (av. dim: 30 x 17 x 8 mm). No primary flakes were recovered, with five being secondary and seven tertiary. Five of the platform flakes, or approximately two-thirds, have trimmed platform-edges. Flakes CAT 3 and 6 have macroscopic lateral use-wear indicating use as unmodified knives.

Illus 1. Dimensions of all flakes: red dots = platform flakes; blue dots = bipolar flakes.



Tools

Only two tools were retrieved during the excavation, namely a scraper-edge-fragment [CAT 1] and a notched piece [CAT 7]. CAT 1 is the broken-off corner of a relatively large (30 x 12 x 5 mm), probably approximately oval, end-scraper on a platform flake. The retouch is regular, convex and steep, and after fragmentation the piece was blunted along the sharp dorsal edge of the break to allow continued use, now in the form of an elongated side-scraper. CAT 7 is a small platform flake (26 x 17 x 9 mm) with a shallow distal notch (chord = *c.* 5 mm). In magnification it is possible to identify fine retouch to the right of this notch, and it is likely that this piece is either a damaged end-scraper or a re-functioned end-scraper. Neither of the two lateral sides is regular or acute enough to make the implement an effective knife.

Technology

The industry responsible for the West Torbreck assemblage obviously represents a mixed platform/bipolar technology. Due to the size of the assemblage, it is not possible to say how the two approaches were combined, that is, whether platform technique and bipolar technique represent a sequence (for example, with bipolar technique applied to totally exhaust abandoned platform cores), or two parallel approaches (for example, with bipolar technique applied to reduce smaller nodules, and platform technique to reduce larger nodules), or both.

As mentioned above, the raw material is pebble flint, most likely collected along the beaches of nearby Moray Firth. The fact that no primary flakes, or cores, are present suggests that decortication and blank production may have taken place elsewhere. No core preparation flakes were found, but the widespread use of delicate trimming defines the technology as relatively sophisticated. The dorsal face of CAT 7 is characterized by the remains of an old platform-edge. This indicates that the blank was detached from either a core with two platforms at an angle or an irregular (multi-platform) core.

The platform flakes were generally manufactured by the application of hard direct percussion (pronounced bulbs), and three flakes [CAT 4, 8, 13] have multiple

bulbs due to the use of insufficient force. Other attributes indicative of hard percussion are circular impact scars [CAT 9], cracked platform remnants [CAT 4, 10], and large bulbar scars [CAT 6, 7]. Several flakes [CAT 4, 6, 9, 12] are characterized by distal hinge factures, suggesting the use of insufficient force. Three of the eight platform flakes [CAT 7, 9, 12] have a faceted platform remnant, which is either indicative of the detachment of partial core tablets, or the re-orientation of the core during blank production. In the latter case, the faceting represents the flake scars of a prior flaking front and suggests re-orientation of the core, an option supported by the dorsal crest of CAT 7 (an old platform-edge). In summary, the flint artefacts from West Torbreck are the products of a flake industry, including the application of bipolar technique and hard percussion. Some elements, such as the consistent use of trimming, define the industry as relatively sophisticated, whereas other elements, such as multiple bulbs and hinge factures, suggest lack of control.

Dating

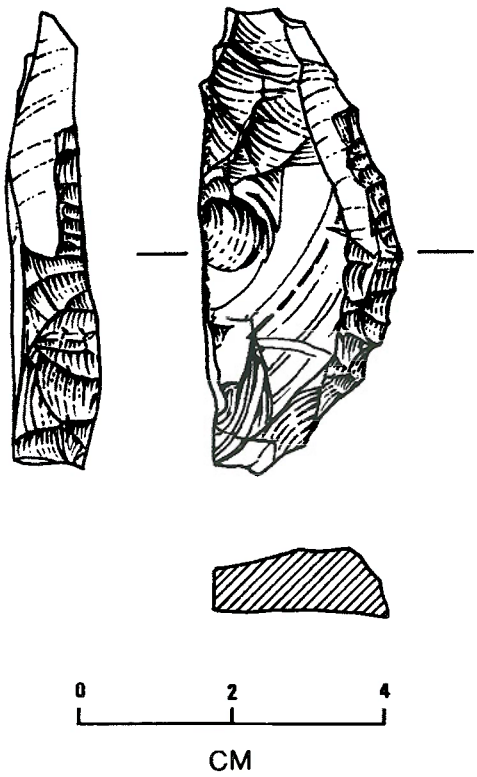
The assemblage includes no diagnostic types, but the association of the flints with diagnostic pottery suggests a Late Neolithic date. A late prehistoric date is supported by several technological attributes, such as the absence of blades and the relative crudeness of the industry (pronounced and multiple bulbs, circular impact scars, hinge fractures, etc.). The consistent use of trimming as a form of core preparation speaks against a *post* Neolithic date (Ballin 2003; forthcoming). The proximity of pits 101 and 201 to the above-mentioned stone circle also supports a Late Neolithic date though, admittedly, the pits have not been proven to form part of this monument.

Discussion

Despite the fact that the association of pits 101 and 201 with the nearby stone circle has not been proven, it is quite likely that the probably Late Neolithic pits formed part of the almost certainly Late Neolithic monument. The fact that the small assemblage includes no primary material or cores suggests that the flints were produced and carefully selected at some presently unknown location for deposition in the pits. Several of the blanks have worn lateral edges, demonstrating that the artefacts were not manufactured for the occasion – unless the tasks producing this macroscopic use-wear were ritual activities associated with the deposition in pits at the periphery of the stone circle.

Though in some cases, worked lithics from late prehistoric ritual sites are found sparsely scattered throughout the site (eg, Beckton farm; Pollard 1997, 99), the deposition of lithics in late prehistoric pits is known (eg, Raigmore; Simpson 1996, 74). The Raigmore site is located not far from West Torbreck, on the east side of Inverness, and though this material may be roughly contemporary with the assemblage from West Torbreck, it seems to represent general settlement debris (charcoal, pottery and flints; *ibid*, 61), in contrast to the carefully selected material from pits 101 and 201.

Below: Scrapper from pit in trench 1. Scale 2:1.



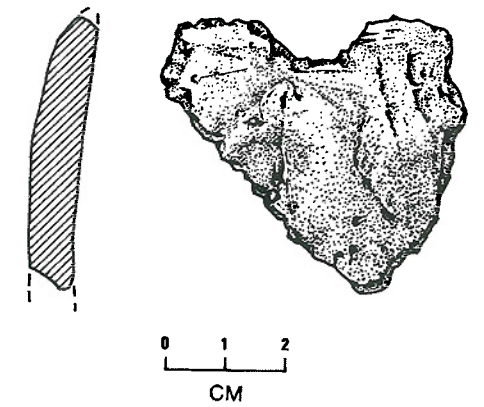
The Prehistoric Pottery by Dr Ann MacSween

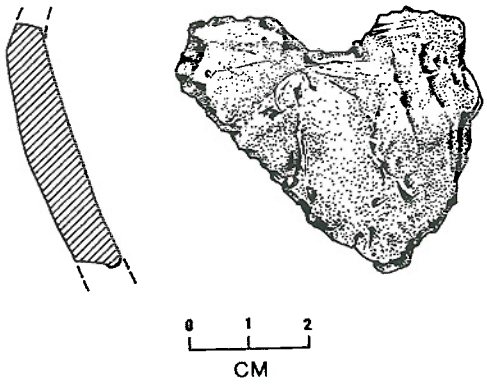
The pottery recovered forms part of 2 vessels. One represented by a carinated rim sherd and a body sherd broken into 2. The surface has been finished by a wet hand to a smooth finish. Fabric is fine clay with about 50% rock fragments (black & white) that is fired hard and red/brown in colour.

The second vessel is represented by 1 sherd and 1 abraded fragment. The fabric is fine clay with about 70% mixed rock inclusions that has fired hard and is red in colour.

Both are possibly late Neolithic in date.

Below: Pottery from pit in trench 1 – scale 1:1. Both possible variations to form are given.





Watching Brief Results

A watching brief was maintained on the excavation for the road (the width of 5m to encompass a drainage ditch and the water supply trench), excavation of the areas for the house, workshop and studio and areas of parking (of 3 area's totalling 600m²) and the electricity supply trench from the SW corner of the site north and branching E to the house and to the road (1.2m wide for a total length of 87m; this last section of watching brief was conducted on the 24th November).

The watching brief on these areas did not reveal any additional archaeological features or deposits. One possible feature was revealed during the excavation of the electricity supply trench but upon investigation was revealed to be a tree-bole.

7. Conclusions

The two pits found to the SW of the stone circle were the only two pits out of the four revealed that produced any finds. As both of these features were cut into yellow sand rather that the orange-brown stony gravel to the north it is possible that other features lie to the edge of the existing burn to the south and south-east area of the development area. Unfortunately none of the fills of the pits revealed were substantial or contained organic material for sampling. Part of the pottery and the hazelnut shells will be submitted for C14 dating.

The finds of the Neolithic pottery and flint is further evidence of a wider Neolithic settlement in this valley especially in relation to the finds made at Torbreck to the east, though further study in the wider area will be required to try and understand the overall settlement pattern.

The field overall has seen signs of agricultural improvement with infilled hollows, a drainage ditch and tree-boles (possible forming part of smaller fields), also evident was modern plough scarring over parts of the site. This later ploughing had damaged the feature found in trench 2 (context 202) and may have caused damage or loss to other archaeological features in the field.

8. Recommendations

No recommendations with regard any further fieldwork for this project is to be proposed due to no further fieldwork being required, though any further development to this site should have an archaeological investigation.

Part of the pottery and hazelnut shells recovered will be submitted for C14 dating and a report on their results be made at a later date.

9. Archive

The following is to be deposited in the National Monuments Record in Edinburgh:

- Notebook of results
- Black and white photographs
- Plan and section drawings
- Context sheets
- Photographic record sheets
- Colour chart
- Copy of this report

A set of black & white photographs of the features excavated and colour slides showing the progress of the work has been deposited with Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record. Digital images used in this report have been deposited with HSMR on disc as well as a copy of this report as a PDF file.

10. Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

A short summary of the results of this project will be submitted to the Council for Scottish Archaeology's publication *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland.*

11. References

Ballin, T.B (2003) Later Bronze Age Flint Technology: A presentation and discussion of post-barrow debitage from monuments in the Raunds area, Northamptonshire. *Lithics* 23, 2002, 3-28.

Ballin, T.B. forthcoming: The Lithic Assemblage. *In* A. Cameron: Excavations at the Green, Aberdeen: a medieval Carmelite House revealed. *Internet Archaeology*.

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OS 61188	55-54	14-5-1988	1:24,000

Appendix 1 – Details of Black & White Photographs and Colour Slides

Film 1

1 – View of stone circle facing SE.
2 – View of site of house plot before excavation facing E.
3 – View of site of access road facing W.
4 – View of site facing N.
5 – View of site facing S.
6 – View of clearance cairn to SW corner of field.
7 – Detail of pit in trench 2 before excavation facing W – scale 1m.
8 – Detail of pit in trench 2 upon ½ section facing W – scale 1m.
9 – Detail of pit in trench 2 upon ½ section facing W – scale 0.5m.
10 – View of N section of access road after stripping of topsoil facing W.
11 – Ibid to NW corner facing W.
12 – View of trench 1 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
13 – View of trench 1 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
14 – Detail of pit in trench 1 upon ½ section facing E – scale 0.5m.
15 – View of trench 2 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
16 – View of trench 2 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
17 – View of trench 3 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
18 – View of trench 4 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
19 – View of trench 5 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
20 – View of trench 15 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
21 – View of trench 15 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
22 – View of trench 14 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
23 – View of trench 14 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
24 – View of trenches 1-15 facing S.
25 – Ibid.
26 – View of excavation for house plot facing E.
27 – Detail of modern drainage ditch in trench 13 facing SE – scale 1m.
28 – View of trench 13 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
29 – View of trench 13 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
30 – View of trench 12 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
31 – View of trench 12 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
32 – Detail of infilled hollow with stones in trench 12 facing NE – scales 1m.
33 – View of excavation of hollow facing W.
34 – View of trench 11 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
35 – View of trench 11 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
36 – View of trench 10 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.

Film 2
1 –View of trench 10 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
2 – Detail of small infilled hollow in trench 10 facing N – scales 1m.
3 – View of excavation for house plot facing S.
4 – View of excavation for workshop facing E scales 1m.
5 – View of excavation for workshop facing SE – scales 1m.
6 – View of excavation for house plot facing S – scales 1m.
7 – View of excavation for house plot facing N – scales 1m.
8 – View of excavation for rear of house plot facing E – scales 1m.
9 – View of excavation for front of house plot facing W – scales 1m.
10 – View of trench 9 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
11 – View of trench 9 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
12 – Detail of ½ section of pit in trench 9 facing W – scales 1m.
13 – Ibid.
14 – View of trench 8 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
15 – View of trench 8 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
16 – View of trench 7 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
17 – View of trench 7 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
18 – View of trench 6 upon excavation facing W – scales 1m.
19 – View of trench 6 upon excavation facing E – scales 1m.
20 – Detail of ½ section of tree bole in trench 7 facing E – scales 1m.
21 – Ibid.
22 – Detail of section through pit in trench 6 facing SE – scales 1m.
23 – View of trench 16 upon excavation facing NE – scales 1m.
24 – View of trench 16 upon excavation facing SW – scales 1m.
25 – View of trench 17 upon excavation facing NE – scales 1m.
26 – View of trench 17 upon excavation facing SW – scales 1m.

Slides only – WB
27 – View of access road facing S upon excavation.
28 – View of access road facing N upon excavation.
29 – View of area excavation for studio facing W upon excavation.
30 – View of site of electricity trench facing S.
31 – View of SE corner.
32 – View of trench upon excavation facing S.
33 – View of trench upon excavation facing N – scales 1m.
34 – Detail of tree-bole upon excavation facing N – scale 1m.
35 – View of trench upon excavation facing N – scales 1m.
36 – View of electricity trench for house upon excavation facing W.

Appendix 2 – Context Register

100 – Light brown sandy topsoil
101 – Grey-green brown fill of pit
102 – Cut of small pit
200 - Light brown sandy topsoil
201 – light yellow brown fill of cut
202 – irregular shaped cut
600 - Light brown sandy topsoil
601 – Stone filled round pit with light brown fill
602 – Cut of possible pit
900 - Light brown sandy topsoil
901 – Stone filled pit
902 – cut of pit

Appendix 3 – Flint Catalogue

Context 101 (pit)
CAT 1) Uncorticated scraper-edge fragment, marbled light/dark grey flint. The piece has fine dorsal retouch along the break suggesting use after fragmentation. 30 x 12 x 5 mm.

CAT 2) Tertiary bipolar flake, honey-brown flint. 31 x 14 x 8 mm.

Context 201 (pit)
CAT 3) Secondary bipolar flake with bilateral use-wear, light olive-green flint. 35 x 30 x 11 mm.

CAT 4) Trimmed, tertiary hard-hammer flake, light olive-green flint. 14 x 19 x 3 mm.

CAT 5) Tertiary bipolar flake, honey-brown flint. 41 x 18 x 13 mm.

CAT 6) Trimmed, tertiary hard-hammer flake with use-wear on right lateral side, honey-brown flint. 27 x 24 x 8 mm.

CAT 7) Untrimmed, tertiary hard-hammer flake with distal notch, honey-brown flint. 26 x 17 x 9 mm.

CAT 8) Untrimmed, secondary hard-hammer flake, honey-brown flint. 26 x 15 x 6 mm.

CAT 9) Trimmed, tertiary hard-hammer flake, honey-brown flint. Left lateral side broken off. 13 x 21 x 5 mm.

CAT 10) Untrimmed, secondary hard-hammer flake, honey-brown flint. Distal end broken off. 17 x 11 x 3 mm.

CAT 11) Trimmed, secondary indeterminate platform flake, honey-brown flint. 12 x 11 x 5 mm.

CAT 12) Untrimmed, tertiary hard-hammer flake, honey-brown flint. 13 x 13 x 3 mm.

CAT 13) Trimmed, secondary hard-hammer flake, honey-brown flint. 12 x 9 x 2 mm.

CAT 14) Tertiary bipolar flake, honey-brown flint. 13 x 6 x 1 mm.

CAT 15) Corticated chip, detached by the application of platform technique, honey-brown flint. Greatest dimension $\leq$ 10 mm.

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd
SERVING The Highland Community

Brief for archaeological work at:

West Torbreck, nr. Inverness

(IN-03-540)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION & WATCHING BRIEF

HIGHLAND COUNCIL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Archaeology Unit

1) Background

The application site lies adjacent to the stone circle at Torbreck (protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument – SMR ref: *NH64SW0001*) and lies close to prehistoric sites and monuments within an area of land with high potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains. This project could therefore impact on valuable features of historical and / or archaeological importance. Arrangements should be made to avoid such features wherever possible. Where this is not practicable, they should be recorded before they are damaged or destroyed. This will need to be done by a qualified and experienced archaeologist.

In this case the nature, extent and condition of any potential archaeological features need to be established. An archaeological **evaluation** aims to identify any such features at the earliest possible stage to minimise the risk of finds or features of interest being discovered and damaged during site works. This approach is intended to ensure that any archaeology on site is identified and recorded with minimum delay or disruption to the development. An archaeological **watching brief** is required at this site because there is a potential for finds or features of interest to be discovered during site works. A watching brief enables any such discoveries to be recorded quickly and efficiently as they appear with minimum delay or disruption to the development.

The archaeologist carrying out the evaluation will present a brief report containing the conclusions of this work and propose mitigation and recording arrangements to be followed in this scheme. Such arrangements might include redesign where practicable to avoid key areas, excavation and recording of features, and / or an archaeological watching brief on specific areas of site clearance for construction purposes.

The brief sets out in detail who is responsible for what, as well as the terms of reference, objectives, method, monitoring and reporting arrangements.

2) Terms of Reference

This brief has been produced for the applicant, who will be responsible for the work, including all tendering and contractual arrangements.

It may be used to obtain estimates from archaeologists, and specifies what we consider to be the **minimum** acceptable standard of work; proposals that present a higher standard may be offered and accepted. *We will assume that this will form the basis of an agreed approach unless changes are agreed with us in writing before the start of any site works.*

It sets out in detail who is responsible for what, as well as the terms of reference, objectives, method, monitoring and reporting arrangements. The approach set out below aims to establish as far as possible the nature and extent of any features of archaeological interest likely to be affected at the earliest possible stage so that they can be preserved, or if necessary recorded before destruction.

The Archaeology Unit will be pleased to comment on tenders submitted in confidence. Any tenders should be accompanied by a project design, statement and evidence of competence, including the CV of the Project Director, and other staff where possible.

The work should be carried out by, or under the immediate direction of, a member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists to ensure that work is carried out to professional standards. Where archaeological work fails to meet the standards set out here, the applicant will be in breach of any archaeological planning condition until matters are rectified. The Archaeology Unit may also refuse to accept work from, or otherwise take action against, archaeologists who fail to carry out work to these standards.

The area to be covered includes any proposed ancillary works such as landscaping, drains, telecommunication, power and water supplies unless otherwise indicated.

The brief is based on details supplied at the time it was issued. However briefs have to be updated from time to time, so if any of these details do not apply when site works start, or fieldwork commences more than a year from the date below, please contact us to request the latest version. It may differ from previous briefs supplied by us for other projects.

Before site works start, the proposed arrangements, including a timetable for the work should be agreed with the Highland Council Archaeology Unit in writing.

3) Objectives

To identify the location, nature and extent of any features or objects of archaeological importance that would be damaged or destroyed by this development.

To propose arrangements for the safeguarding where possible, and recording where necessary of any archaeological features or finds identified. These will need to be agreed with the Archaeology Unit.

To make sure that the needs for archaeological conservation and recording are met without causing any unnecessary delay or disturbance to the development project.

4) Method

The following represents a two-stage approach - all trial trenching (and any recommended further work) should be conducted in advance of the start of development works; the watching brief will run concurrently with development works.

a) Desk-based Assessment

An initial check of all relevant archaeological records and aerial photographs held in Inverness and Edinburgh will be needed. At least the following sources should be checked:

- *The Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)*
- *The National Monuments Record (NMRS)*
- *The Map Library of the National Library of Scotland*
- *any aerial photographic coverage*

b) Preliminary survey and photographic record

A walk over survey of the project area will be needed to enable identification of any upstanding remains. All individual features should be photographed and the features themselves should be marked on a relevant scale plan, keyed by means of Grid References to the Ordnance Survey mapping. In addition, photographs should be taken during the watching brief phase to indicate the progress of the work and any features affected.

c) Trial Trenching

A selection of linear and box trenches will be excavated by (or under the direction of) the archaeologist appointed, to provide a sample of at least 10% of the total application site. Trenches should be positioned after initial examination of the application area and extended as necessary to establish the full extent of surviving features. Trenches should be positioned to cover the full land-take of the application, and specifically to target areas of potential archaeological sensitivity, areas that will be more significantly impacted by the proposed development, and to investigate apparently 'blank' areas. The location of these trenches must be accurately surveyed and depicted on a relevant scale plan. Further excavation may be required should significant surviving archaeology be identified

d) Watching Brief

A watching brief will be conducted by the archaeologist on all site ground-works, so that any finds or features of importance can be recorded to professional standards. The archaeologist will endeavour wherever possible to work with the contractor to ensure that any recording required is done with minimum delay to the site works.

However it is essential for architects, builders and site contractors to note that working practices may need to be varied to accommodate the needs of the archaeologist : -

Those carrying out site clearance and excavation works will need to work closely with the archaeologist and provide all necessary access and other arrangements. They may need to use differing work practices on site than usual to enable the archaeologist to complete the work. For example,

- Where excavating machinery is used, 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 on this.

- Archaeologists may need to get quickly into recently cleared areas and this may mean that drivers of excavators may sometimes need to wait briefly, or switch to working other areas.

- Each excavating machine needs to be watched by at least one archaeologist at all times (1:1 ratio). Work should not begin on site until this cover has been set up.

- Because the archaeologist must be able to record any archaeological remains encountered during the work to professional standards, site clearance works may take slightly longer than normal. This should be allowed for in the development project timetable. Occasionally, more extensive excavation may be needed since there will be limited opportunities to preserve features *in situ*.

- Human remains must be immediately reported to the local police and to the Senior Archaeologist and should not be excavated as part of this work. If discoveries are made that would cause significant delays, see paragraph 5 below.

Once areas have been cleared, and any archaeology recorded, there should be no need for further archaeological work in these areas.

e) Report

A report must be produced which sets out the results of the work and proposes appropriate arrangements for the safeguarding where possible (or recording where necessary) of any objects or features identified. These arrangements must be agreed by the Council's Senior Archaeologist before the start of site clearance works. Once these arrangements have been completed no further *on-site* archaeological work will be needed.

5) Monitoring

The archaeologist appointed is responsible for agreeing arrangements for monitoring with Archaeology Unit staff. We will monitor projects as necessary to ensure that minimum standards are met. This is usually by unannounced site visit - alternative or additional monitoring arrangements may be made in individual cases.

Prior notice of fieldwork starting dates, with contact names, telephone numbers and 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 other unexpected occurrences which might significantly affect the archaeological work and /or the development must be notified by the archaeologist immediately to the applicant and the Senior Archaeologist. The finds or features must be left *in situ* until arrangements have been agreed for safeguarding or recording them. In the meantime work may continue on other areas of the site.

6) Reporting

a) Project report

The archaeologist appointed is responsible for producing a report on the work, *and for making sure copies have been received by the recipients listed below.* The archaeologist appointed should allow for all costs when estimating for the work. We require archaeologists to submit satisfactory reports within the agreed deadline.

Apart from any copies required by the client, at least **five** copies of the project report must be produced by the archaeologist. These must be submitted to all of the following **within 4 weeks** of the completion of the field work.

- One paper copy for the Council's Inverness Area Planning and Building Control Manager, 1-3 Church street, Inverness, IV1 1OY.
- One paper copy to be deposited with the Council's Senior Librarian Information Co-ordinator, Libraries Support Unit, 31a Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1UA. This will be available for public consultation through the public library service.
- One paper copy to be deposited with the Council's Assistant Curator (Archaeology), Museum & Art Gallery, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EB.
- Two copies for the Archaeology Unit, Planning and Development Service, Council Offices, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX :
  - One paper copy
  - One copy of the complete report in Adobe Acrobat format (i.e. a *pdf* file). This can be supplied by email or on a computer disc. Please ensure that all drawings and photographs are included.

The report must include, as a minimum,

- Location plan showing the project area and archaeological sites and features affected. Grid references must be included.
- Circumstances and objectives of this work, including a copy of this specification.
- Weather and other conditions affecting fieldwork.
- Scale plans, and photographs of all significant archaeological features noted.
- A full index to any records or other material generated by the project including the archive location.
- 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.

- General comments and proposals for future archaeological projects arising from the carrying out of this project.
- A set of colour slides illustrating the project progress from start to completion.
- A list of finds, set out in the required format for Treasure Trove reporting. Copies of the necessary forms are obtainable if required from the Council's Assistant Curator (Archaeology), Museum & Art Gallery, Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EB

b) Presentation

Where significant archaeology has been found, the archaeologist must arrange 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.

c) DES

A brief summary of the results must be sent to the Council for Scottish Archaeology for inclusion in Discovery and Excavation in Scotland.

d) Copyright

The Council will assume author's copyright unless advised otherwise. However, the Archaeology Unit reserves the right to make the report available for reference and research purposes, either on paper, or electronically. The completed report will be made available for immediate public consultation for research purposes at the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record, and through the public library service. The Archaeology Unit will acknowledge copyright in all cases.

7) Finds

Chance finds can be made during any archaeological fieldwork. Archaeologists should note that advice and facilities for emergency conservation and temporary storage can be offered by Inverness Museum on consultation with the Conservation Officer and Assistant Curator (Archaeology). A list of services and table of costs are available from the museum.

Archaeologists undertaking fieldwork should notify the Council's Assistant Curator (Archaeology) at Inverness Museum, who will in turn notify local museums of the fact that there is archaeological work ongoing in the area. All finds should be notified for Treasure Trove before the report is submitted.

8) Insurance

The archaeologist appointed must take all necessary measures to conform with the Health and Safety at Work Acts and be covered by all necessary insurance. Section 24 of the Highland Council's revised Contracts Standing Orders states:

"All specifications issued by and contracts entered into with the Council in connection with the carrying out of work or the provision of services shall provide that the contractor holds a valid insurance policy, approved by the Council, for:-

(1) Employers liability - minimum limit - £10m (statutory limit)
(2) Public liability - minimum limit £5m."

9) General

The archaeologist agrees by undertaking this work to the terms of this brief, including the following:

The archaeologist appointed must:

- carry out the work according to the Code of Conduct, standards and guidelines of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- agree a timetable for the work with the client and the Senior Archaeologist.
- not comment to the press or other media without prior approval from the Senior Archaeologist.
- fully allow for prevailing weather conditions in northern Scotland.

Any Health and Safety incidents on site involving the archaeologist must be immediately notified to the Health and Safety Executive.

This brief has been produced for the Council's Senior Archaeologist, to whom any enquiries should be addressed. No one else has authority to vary its terms.

John Wood *Senior Archaeologist* *Wednesday, 30 July 2003*