

MS/6193/7103

Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2000

Hilton of Cadboll
Watching Brief

5th June 2000



ARCHAEOLOGY

1.0

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at the chapel site at Hilton of Cadboll while MCU personnel from Fort George cut a trench W of the chapel enclosure designed to take a concrete foundation for the reconstructed Hilton of Cadboll stone.

The site chosen for this work was believed to be far enough from the chapel and its associated structures to hopefully avoid archaeologically sensitive material. The trench however comprised hole more than 4m square in plan and with a depth exceeding 1m. A geophysical survey indicated a possibility of wall lines in this area.

2.0

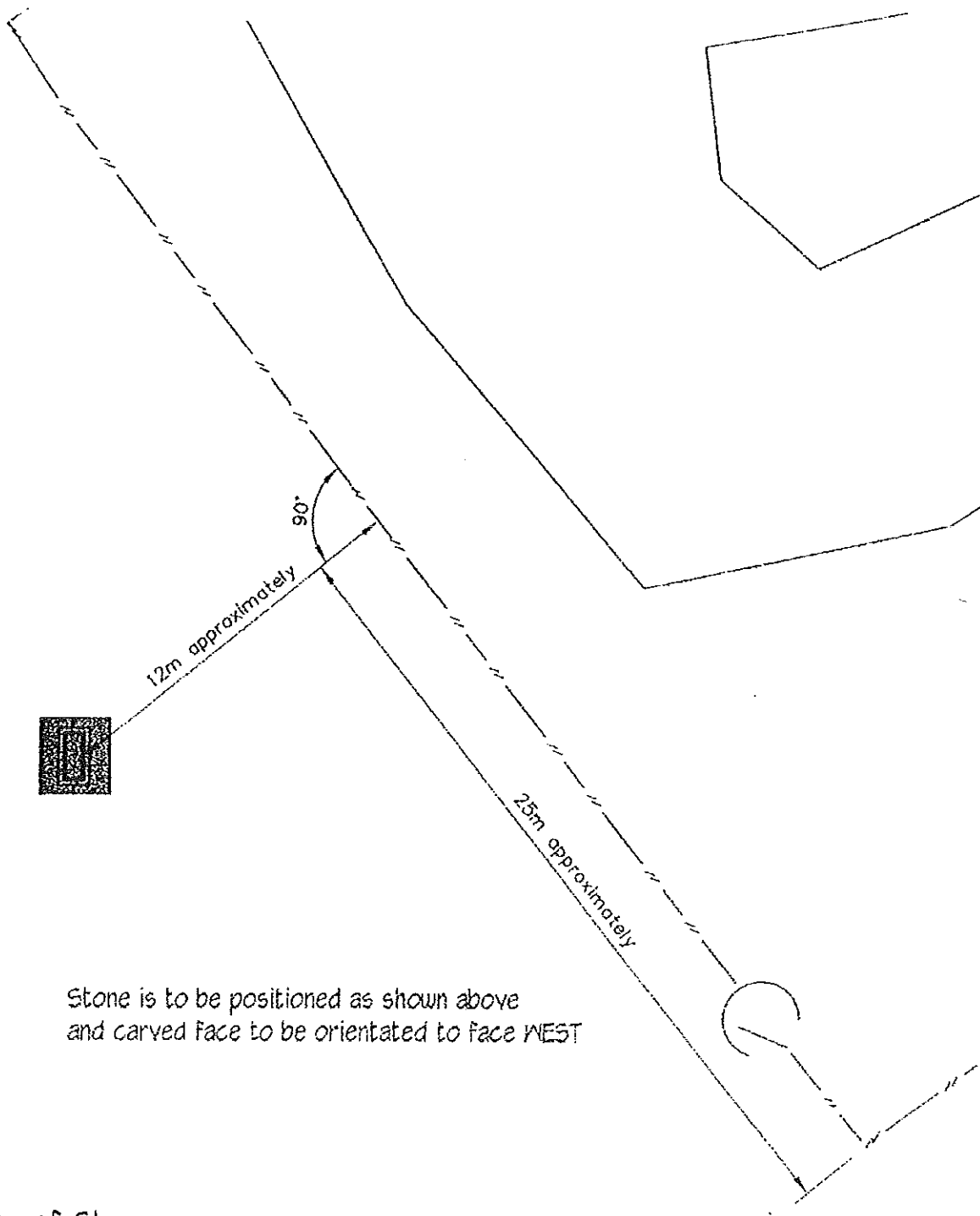
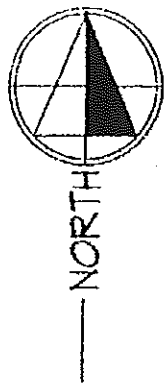
THE EXCAVATION

The site of the excavation was a low bank of grassed-over sand lying against the W side of the chapel enclosure. The exact placement for the trench was a point 12m W of the enclosure fence at a position 25m along the fence measured N from the SW strainer pole. The trench measured 2.40m N-S by 2.20m E-W and was exactly positioned by compass due to the requirement that the standing stone should have its carved side facing due W.

The enterprise was delayed somewhat by dispute between the sculptor of the replacement stone and Stephen Watt from Historic Scotland over the exact position that the stone would occupy. This matter was resolved in favour of the existing plan and the excavation was carried out.

The layers of material exposed during the works consisted of a succession of horizontal stone-free sand layers; some clean, some contaminated. The designated depth for the trench was 1135mm. However the local water table was reached at 900mm at which point the works were temporarily ended.

The sequence of sand layers consisted of springy turf [100], 60mm thick and containing some beach pebbles sealing [101], 200-300mm of soft light grey sand forming the topsoil. Below the turf and topsoil layers the horizons consisted of [102], a medium-grain windblown sand layer 190mm deep made up of clean yellow sand, a third of which has been turned by iron contamination into hard red brown lumps. Below [102] was a layer of contaminant-free soft yellow sand [103], 200mm deep sealing [104], 160mm of soft yellow sand containing 20% of hard iron pan fragments. The basal layer of this sequence was a deep horizon of grey waterlogged sand commencing at 800mm below the turf and having a thickness of at least 300mm.



Stone is to be positioned as shown above
and carved face to be orientated to face WEST

Position of Stone



Key	Depths
	1-100mm
	101-200mm
	201-300mm
	>300mm (< natural)
	dug to natural

Fig. 1 : Location of Trench

There were no structures of masonry, wood or turf located within this trench. There were no finds.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

The low ridge of material into which the replacement Stone of Cadboll is to be inserted appears to be nothing more than a bank of windblown sand that has accumulated against the W side of the chapel enclosure. The apparent absence of obvious human activity may be the result either of placing the trench in a fortuitously blank spot or because sand accumulation W of the Chapel may simply have buried any archaeological material to an unknown depth.

A1.0 APPENDIX 1 : CONTEXT LIST

Context	Description
100	Turf layer. Springy coastal turf. 60mm.
101	Topsoil. Light grey organically contaminated sand. 200-300mm
102	Wind blown sand. Med grain yellow sand with 30% iron staining. 190mm.
103	Wind blown sand. Clean yellow softish sand. 200mm.
104	Wind blown sand. Yellow sand with 20% iron staining. 160mm.
105	Sand. Med grey waterlogged sand. Depth exceeds 300mm

A2.0 APPENDIX 2 : DRAWING LIST

Drawing No.	Description	Scale
1	HS plan of Chapel site. Amended.	1:200
2	Section. W side of trench. E facing.	1:20
3	Plan. Trench plan with levels.	1:100

A3.0 APPENDIX 3 : PHOTO LIST

A3.1 COLOUR SLIDES

No.	Subject	Taken from
1	General views of the site. Pre excavation.	W
2	General views of the site. Pre excavation.	W
3	The Trench. General view.	W
4	Trench Section. S side.	N
5	Trench Section. S side.	N
6	Trench Section. N side	S
7	Trench Section. N side	S
8	Trench Section. W side	E
9-10	not used	

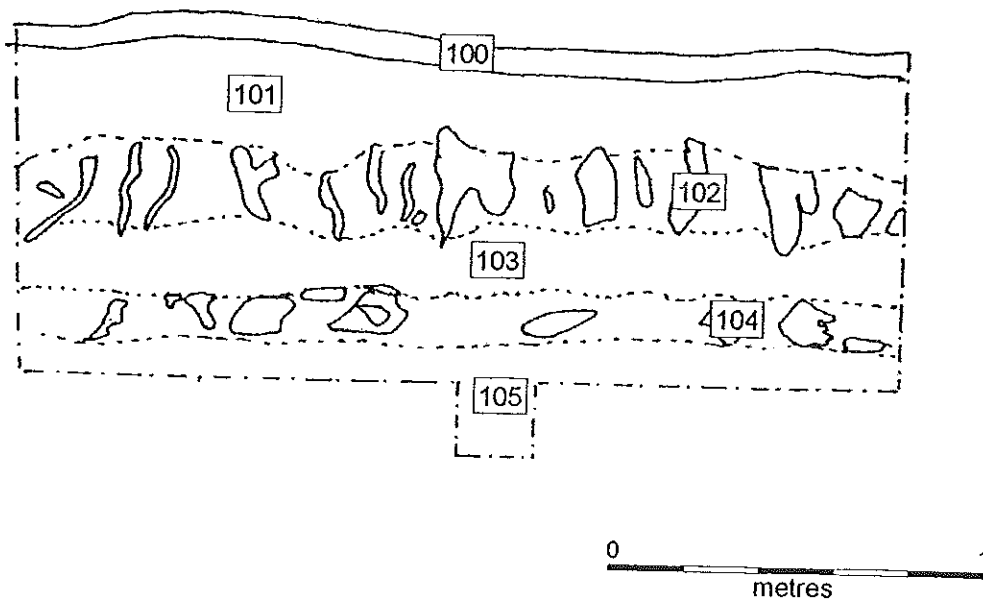


Fig. 2 : Section of Trench

No.	Subject	Taken from
11	Trench Section. W side	E
12	Trench Section. E side	W
13	Trench Section. E side	W

A4.0

APPENDIX 4 : SAMPLES LIST

Sample No.	Context	Description
1	102	Sample of iron stained sand. 1 bag.
2	104	Sample of iron stained sand. 1 bag.