

ISOA18



# HOUSE ON ISLE OF SEIL, OBAN

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING

PLANNING REF. 18/00365/PP

commissioned by Envirocentre  
on behalf of George Fleming

February 2019



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PROJECT INFO:

HA Project Code **ISOA18** / NGR **NM 7711 1809** / Parish **Kilbrandon And Kilchattan** / Local Authority **Argyll And Bute** / OASIS Ref. **headland1-335990**

PROJECT TEAM:

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

Trial trenching was carried out on a house plot at Clachan, Seil, Argyle and Bute. Three trenches were excavated but no archaeological features were exposed. The remains of a nineteenth century stone dyke were recorded. The dyke is depicted on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map surveyed in 1871.

# CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	SITE LOCATION	1
3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	1
4	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	1
5	METHOD	1
6	RESULTS	2
7	DISCUSSION	2
8	REFERENCES	3
9	APPENDICES	4
	APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER	4

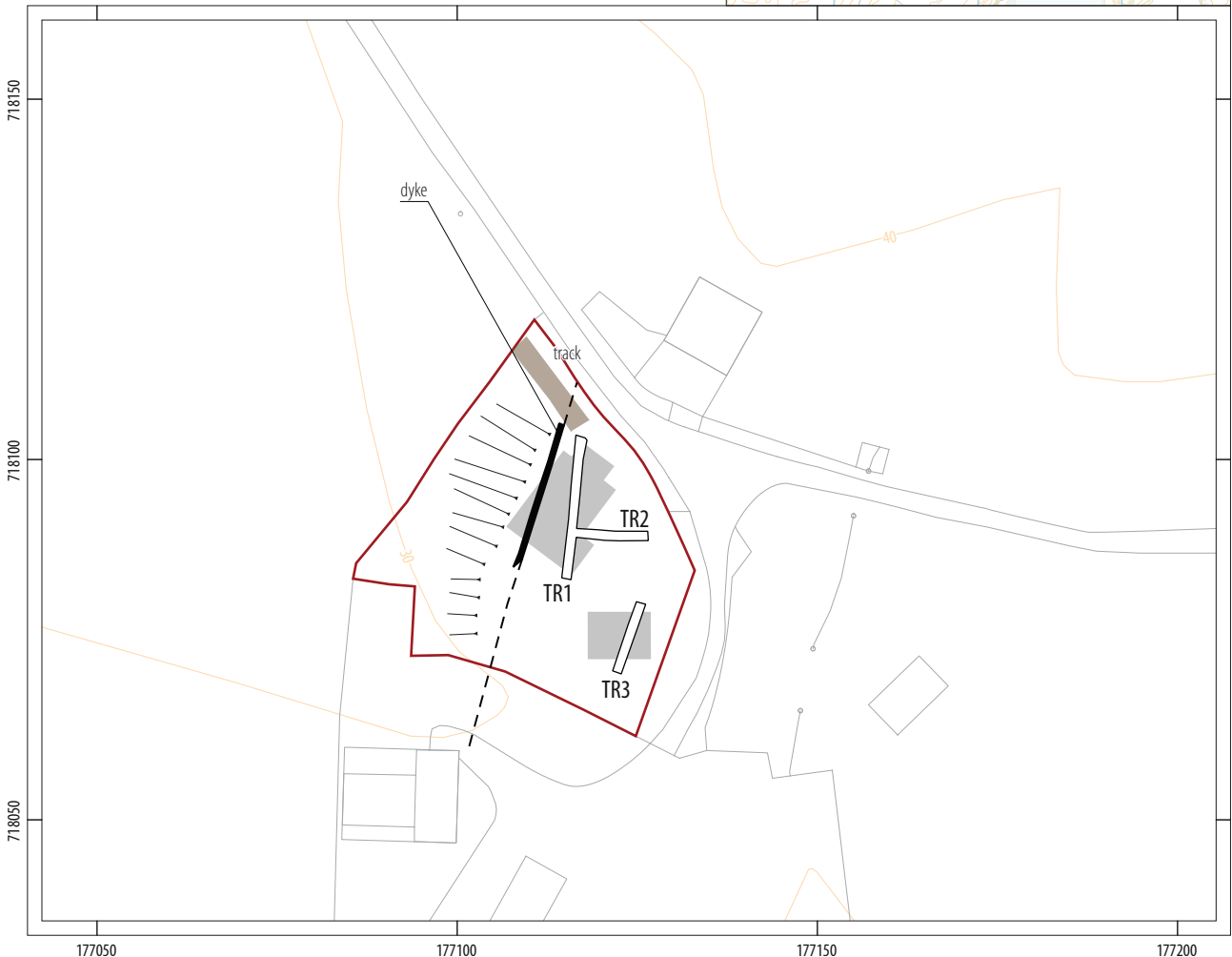
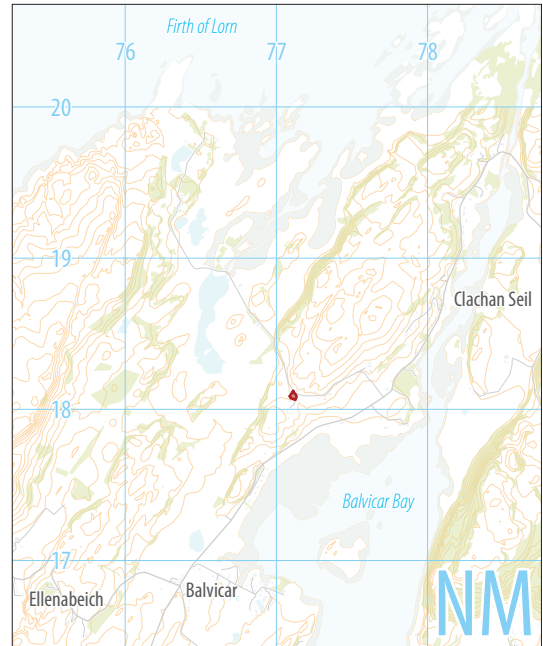
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<b>ILLUS 1</b> SITE LOCATION	VIII
<b>ILLUS 2</b> EXTRACT FROM OS 1ST EDITION MAP SURVEYED IN 1871	2
<b>ILLUS 3</b> SOUTH FACING VIEW OF TRENCH 1	3

Isle of Seil  
Oban  
Argyll



0 200km  
1:12,500,000 @ A4



0 20m  
1:1,000 @ A4

- development boundary
- trench location
- proposed building footprint
- line of dyke from OS 1st edn

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ILLUS 1 Site location



# HOUSE ON ISLE OF SEIL, OBAN

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Envirocentre (the consultant) acting on behalf of George Fleming to undertake archaeological trial trenching of a plot for a proposed house and garage on land at Clachan on the Isle of Seil in Argyll and Bute (Illus 1).

The trial trenching took place on the 3rd December 2018 and was carried out in accordance with a Method Statement prepared by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd and agreed with WoSAS (West of Scotland Archaeology Service).

### 2 SITE LOCATION

The development site lies to the north of Mull View, Clachan, Seil, Argyll and Bute (NM 7711 1809). The area proposed for development measures some 1460m<sup>2</sup> and is currently used for arable farming. It is bounded by agricultural land to the north, east and west and residential property to the south.

The centre of the site lies at 34.5m AOD on relatively flat land with steep slopes to west 3 to 5m high. The site is predominately used for grazing with some mature conifers growing along the plot boundary to the south and east.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has identified the bedrock in this area as Easdale Slate (NERC 2018).

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

There are no known sites of archaeological significance on the proposed development site. The site is situated to the north of the former township of Oban Seil as seen on Roy's map of 1752 (Roy

1752) and Ordnance Survey 1st edition maps (OS 1875) (Illus 2). This former township has been highlighted by WoSAS as an area of archaeological sensitivity, with the township having some potential for longevity.

### 4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

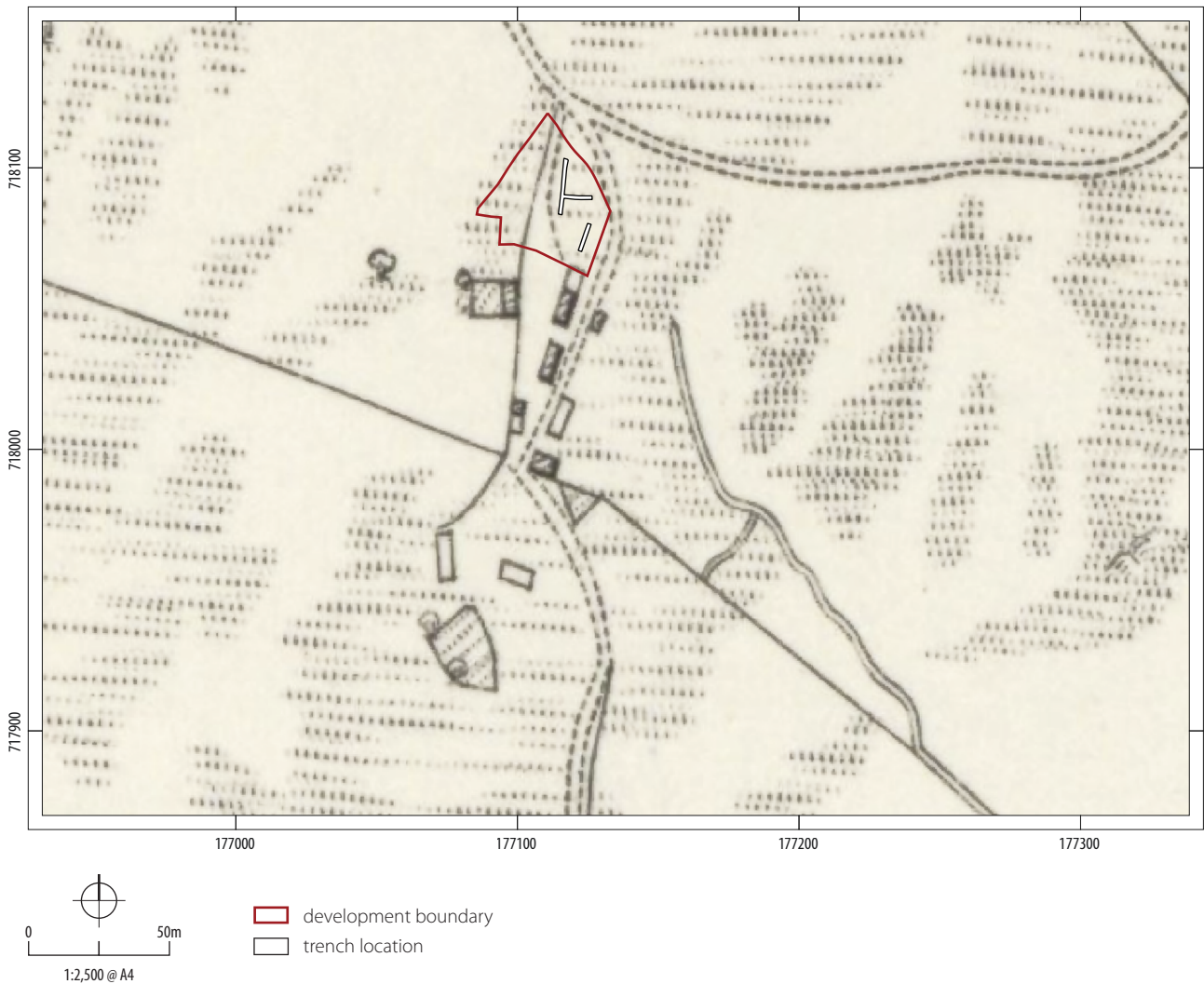
The purpose of evaluation was to provide enough evidence for confident prediction of the archaeological significance and potential of the proposed development site. More specific aims of the evaluation include:

- › establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the accessible areas targeted for trenching;
- › establishing the integrity and state of preservation of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within accessible areas of the site.

### 5 METHOD

A total of 40 linear meters of trenches were excavated using an excavator equipped with a 1.3m wide flat bladed ditching bucket. One 20m trench was aligned north to south across the proposed house. A 10m trench was located to the south-east of the proposed house cutting across the proposed footprint of the garage. A second 10m trench was excavated at right angle to the east side of the 20m trench across allow ridge (Illus 1).

The excavated trenches were photographed, and their location recorded using a dGPS.



ILLUS 2 Extract from OS 1st edition map surveyed in 1871

## 6 RESULTS

No archaeological features were uncovered in the evaluation trenches. The trenches varied in depth from 0.1 to 0.5m. The turf was up to 0.1m thick overlying topsoil comprising small slate fragments in a matrix of grey brown humic sand up to 0.4m deep (Illus 3).

Prior to excavation of the trenches, there appeared to be several archaeological features in the area in the form of banks and small enclosures. Excavation of the trenches revealed that these were all natural ridges and hollows in the bedrock.

The low base of a stone dyke was running along the top of the steep slope to the west. It was largely covered in grass with a few stones visible through the turf. The east side along the edge was up to 0.25m high and could be traced over a distance of 23m. The west side was less distinct and was only visible at the north end. The dyke appeared to have been truncated by a farm track that runs down the slope to the lower ground along the north side of the site.

## 7 DISCUSSION

The evaluation did not identify any previously unrecorded archaeological remains within the development area. The township of Oban Seil is mapped in detail on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition maps (OS 1875) surveyed in 1871 (Illus 2). It depicts six roofed and three un-roofed buildings situated along the road leading from the main road up to Ardencale House some 1.5km to the northwest.

The site is located just to the north of the mapped township. One of the houses immediately to the south, Ardmaddy View, is still standing, now fully restored. The Ordnance Survey depicts a field boundary running south across the western part of the site from a road junction to the north, up to the north-east corner of Ardmaddy View and continuing south to an unroofed building some 70m further south. This boundary coincides with the dyke remains recorded during the fieldwork (Illus 1–2). There was no evidence to suggest there was any evidence of an earlier township being present within the site, or the dyke representing anything other than a field boundary contemporary with the standing buildings to the south.





ILLUS 3 South facing view of Trench 1

## 8 REFERENCES

General Roy 1747–52 *Military Survey of Scotland, Highland Sheet*

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd 2018 *House on Isle of Seil, Oban, Argyll & Bute: Archaeological Works. Method Statement for Archaeological Trial Trenching*. [Unpublished Client Document]

National Environment Research Council (NERC) 2018 *British Geological Survey* <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/> accessed 6 December 2018

Ordnance Survey (OS) 1875 'Argyllshire Sheet CXXI' (1:10,560, surveyed 1871, includes Kilbrandon and Kilchattan)

Ordnance Survey (OS) 1900 'Argyll and Bute Sheet CXXI.NE' (1:10,560, revised 1897, includes Kilbrandon and Kilchattan)

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## 9 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

PICTURE	DIGITAL FILE NAME	FACING	DESCRIPTION
01	ISOA18-01.JPG	N	Trench 1 from the south
02	ISOA18-02.JPG	S	Trench 1 from the north
03	ISOA18-03.JPG	E	Trench 2 from the west
04	ISOA18-04.JPG	W	Trench 2 from the east
05	ISOA18-05.JPG	NNE	Trench 3 from the south
06	ISOA18-06.JPG	SSW	Trench 3 from the north





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