

Method Statement: watching brief at Staffa Cottage, Isle of Iona, Argyll

Client: Duncan Wallace and Jacqui McLennan

Produced by Clare Ellis of Argyll Archaeology
Planning Ref. No.: (24/01512/PP)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This *Method Statement (MS)* has been produced with respect to alterations to Staffa Cottage, including the demolition of existing extensions and outbuildings and construction of a new rear extensions and ancillary dwelling house, Isle of Iona, Argyll (24/01512/PP). All major ground disturbance associated with this development will be monitored by an archaeologist. A programme of archaeological works is presented here which has been designed in accordance with the principles inherent in the National Planning Framework 4.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT

- 2.1 Previous archaeological monitoring in the vicinity of the development by Argyll Archaeology resulted in the discovery of a buried soil from which several stone tools, lithics and handmade pottery was recovered. The buried soil was covered by a series of colluvial deposits.
- 2.2 If significant archaeological material is encountered and excavated a public lecture will be held on Iona describing the results of the excavation and any post-excavation works.

3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The archaeological objectives are:
- a. to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features within the confines of the proposed development
 - b. to fully excavate any archaeological features identified (but where significant quantities or very complex archaeological material is present a separate cost for their excavation will be provided to the client prior to any works being undertaken)
 - c. to propose further stages of archaeological work as required

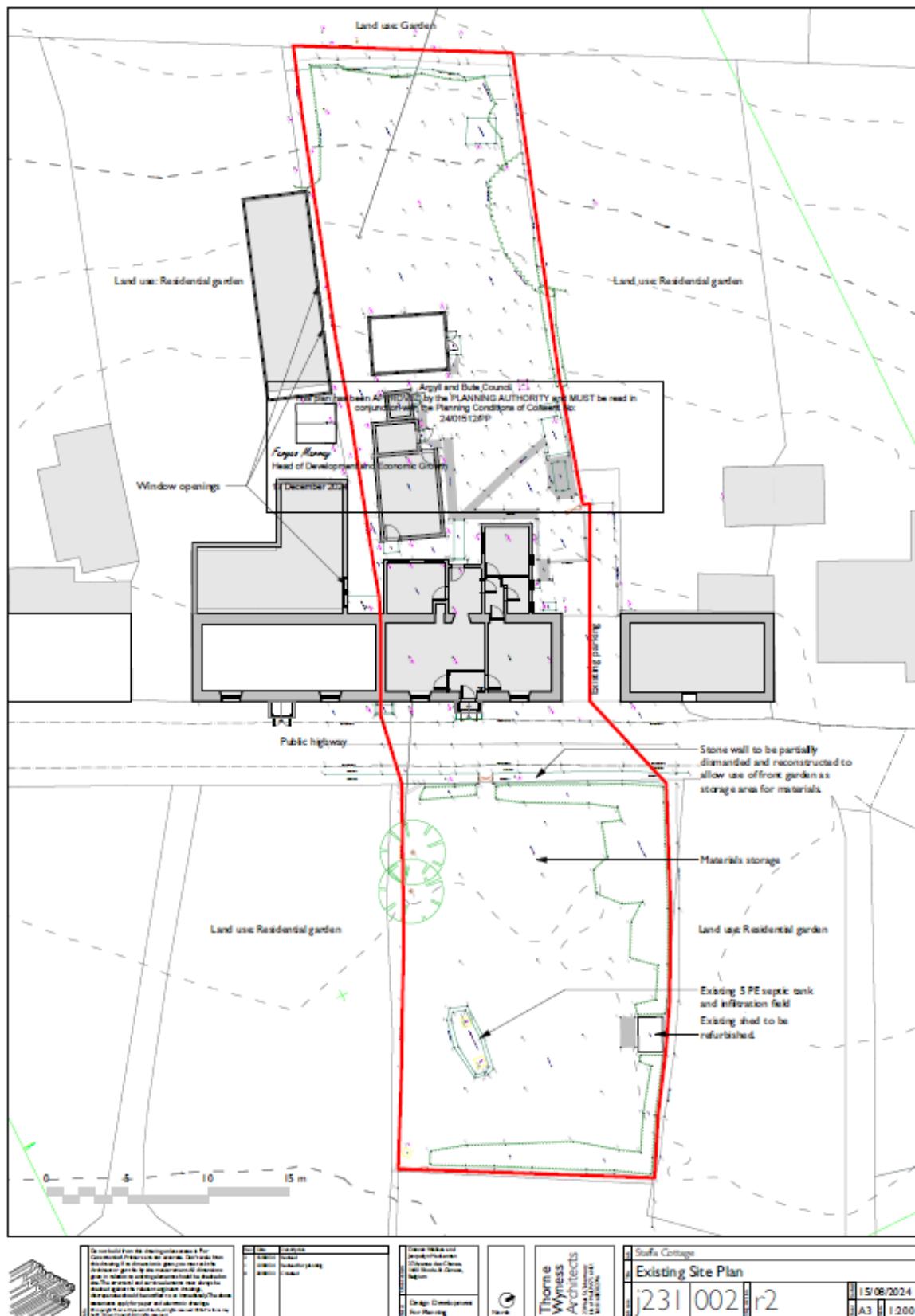


Fig. 1. Existing site plan.

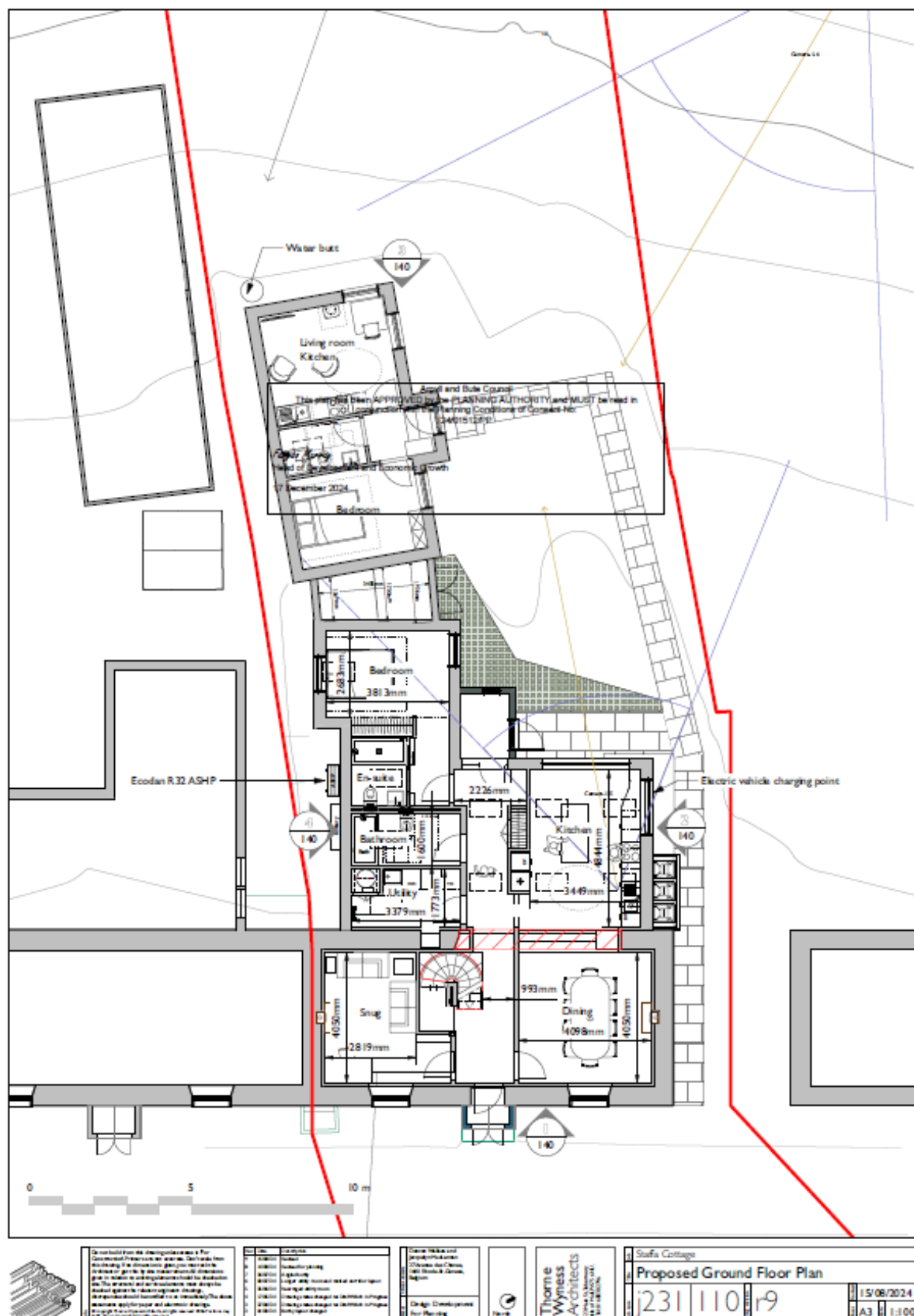


Fig. 2. Proposed site plan

4.0 PROGRAMME OF WORKS

- 4.1 The demolition of the existing extension buildings and outbuildings does not need to be monitored by an archaeologist. However, no concrete floors, or pre-existing foundations should be grubbed out/ removed without an archaeologist being on site to monitor these works. Furthermore, any hand or machine stripping of existing ground surface and underlying soil as well as the excavation of any new foundation trenches and service trenches shall be monitored by an archaeologist.
- 4.2 Where possible all machine stripping/excavation should be undertaken by a tracked 360° excavator equipped with a smooth (toothless) bucket. If other plant and/or buckets are used, stripping and excavation will revert to a toothless bucket whenever feasible. The depth of any topsoil strip and the excavation of foundations will be down to the depth required by the builder. However, work will be halted if significant archaeological deposits and/or features are encountered before the required depth is reached.
- 4.3 If more than a minimum quantity of archaeological deposits and/or features are discovered an assessment will be made of the quantity and quality of the surviving archaeology and an estimate of the cost of any necessary excavation will be produced. The programme of excavation will be agreed with Argyll and Bute Council's archaeological advisers West of Scotland archaeology Service (WoSAS) and the client (Duncan Wallace and Jacqui Mclellan) prior to any excavation work being undertaken. However, if the client decides not to proceed with the development, then the site will be reinstated using the removed material which will be demarcated from the exposed archaeological material by one or more layers of geotextile or another method acceptable to the planning authority.
- 4.4 All archaeological deposits and features discovered will be subject to archaeological excavation. Excavation, recording and sampling will generally be undertaken according to standard operating procedures (Appendix 3). All postholes and pits will be fully excavated. Linear features will be sampled excavated up to 10% of their total area. To clarify, all archaeologically significant features, structures and deposits revealed will be fully excavated unless it can be demonstrated that they can be and will be preserved in situ. Where archaeological material is to be preserved in situ it will be covered with one or more layers of geotextile or another method acceptable to the planning authority before being covered with previously removed material.
- 4.5 Where archaeological features and/or deposits are encountered then sufficient time must be afforded to the archaeologist to excavate and record the archaeological resource as revealed.
- 4.6 Any human remains will be treated according to Scottish Law and the 'right of sepulchre' and any discovery will be notified to the local police and the appropriate archaeological curator and treated and excavated according to Historic Environment Scotland guidelines (HES policy paper No. 5).

5 REPORTING

- 5.1 Within eight weeks of the completion of fieldwork the results of the archaeological works will be presented in the form of a written Data Structure Report.
- 5.2 The report will be prepared in accordance with current standard Historic Environment Scotland procedural requirements and standard procedures (Appendix 4). The Data Structure Report will contain the following:
- i) a location plan
 - ii) a location plan of the archaeological resource
 - iii) a full descriptive statement of the results including illustrative feature plans and sections and data appendices
 - iv) where appropriate the production of a Costed Post-excavation Research Design which details the proposed post-excavation works and publication plan
- 5.3 A summary report on the works and its findings will be submitted to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland to ensure compliance with standard practice. The DSR and other data will also be submitted to OASIS.
- 5.4 A digital copy of the Data Structure Report will be supplied to the client for distribution to the relevant bodies within eight weeks of the completion of fieldwork. However, if more convenient, Argyll Archaeology can forward digital copies to the relevant bodies on behalf of the client.

6 FURTHER WORK

- 6.1 In the event of significant archaeological deposits being discovered and if recommended by the Council, further stages of archaeological work may be necessary. WoSAS will be the final judge of significance in any instance and may well insist on full excavation of any archaeological remains that will be destroyed by the development. A costed Post-Excavation Research Design will be prepared in these circumstances. The scale of such works would be determined in consultation with the planning authority's archaeological advisor WoSAS. Any Post Excavation Research Design required will be produced within 3 months of the submission of the DSR and any final publication will be written within a year of agreement to the Post-Excavation Research Design. However, this is negotiable based on availability of specialists etc.
- 6.2 Where finds are recovered from the site then the procedure set out in the *Minimum Standards for the Preparation of Archaeological Assemblages in Scotland* (2025) and the *Guidance for the Transfer of Archaeological Assemblages to Museums in Scotland* (2025) will be followed. The fee range for the submission of finds to a given museum is between £75 and £1325 depending upon the size of the assemblage recovered.
- 6.3 The funding of all archaeological works, including fieldwork and post-excavation works and which are covered by this MS, will be the sole responsibility of Duncan Wallace and Jacqui McLennan.

- 6.4 Finally, the archaeological planning condition will not be discharged until all archaeological works as agreed by the Council have either been completed or secured by a written contract.

7 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

- 7.1 The archive from these works will be prepared for deposition in the National Monuments Record of Scotland within 6 months of the completion of fieldwork.

8 TIMETABLE

- 8.1 No timetable has been set, but it is anticipated that the build will start in October/November 2025.

9 MONITORING

- 9.1 WoSAS will be informed of the start date once it has been agreed and they will be kept informed of the progression of fieldwork.

10 PROJECT TEAM AND FACILITIES

- 10.1 Dr Clare Ellis, a Member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists will manage and undertake the project.
- 10.2 Any resultant post-excavation analyses or conservation that is beyond the expertise of Dr Clare Ellis will be sub-contracted to appropriate specialists (Appendix 3).

11 CONDITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- 11.1 The client will provide up to date service information, including type and location prior to archaeological works taking place. Argyll Archaeology will not accept responsibility for any services that deviate from the mapped locations nor for unmarked services.
- 11.2 Argyll Archaeology prefers to only undertake ground breaking works on land where services have been cut or neutralised. However, Argyll Archaeology recognises that this is frequently impractical. Where live services are present, every care will be taken in avoiding striking these services. However, unmarked services shall not relieve the client of responsibility for services under this paragraph, to the extent that it is impracticable for Argyll Archaeology to ascertain the presence of services by prior to excavation by reason of overgrowth, the

presence of structures or any other condition which make such investigation impracticable.

- 11.3 Where previous works has identified the presence of contaminated ground, Argyll Archaeology must be notified of the nature and extent of the contamination and be given guidance to the appropriate health and safety precautions required. Where these precautions comprise more than the use of thin over-suits and nitrate gloves the necessary equipment will be provided by Argyll Archaeology for an additional cost to the client.
- 11.4 Argyll Archaeology will not accept liability for damage to any crop while undertaking the programme of works or in gaining access to land.
- 11.5 If stock is not securely excluded from an archaeological site then no liability will be accepted for any injury or loss of livestock.
- 11.6 Where on-site machinery and staff is not provided by Argyll Archaeology no liability will be accepted of any damage caused to or by it.
- 11.7 In severe adverse weather conditions where on-site work would be deemed unsafe or unproductive a daily rate charge, per archaeologist, will be made.
- 11.8 Where a day rate is quoted, this is for any part day and up to 8 hours.

3 Controlled topsoil strip and excavation

- 3.1 Machinery and method of excavation during a controlled topsoil strip will be under the direction of the archaeologist.
- 3.2 Where previously agreed with the client and the local authority's archaeological advisor and where archaeological material can be adequately dealt with within the time-scale, within each significant archaeological horizon all features will be hand excavated. All pits and postholes will normally be fully excavated. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate.. Even in the case where no remains have been located the stratigraphy will be recorded.
- 3.3 All investigation of archaeological horizons will be by hand, with cleaning, inspection and recording both in plan and section.
- 3.4 Any finds of human remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected. In Scotland the local police will be informed. If removal is essential this will only take place with police approval, and in compliance with Historic Environments Scotland's Operational Policy Paper '*The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*'.
- 3.5 All finds of gold and silver will be moved to a safe place. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the artefacts from theft or damage. In Scotland the recovery of such material, along with all other finds, will be reported to the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer.

Recording

- 3.8 The minimal recording will comprise a photographic record and day book entry.
- 3.9 For each area a block of numbers in a continuous sequence will be allocated.
- 3.10 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, will be recorded.
- 3.11 Plans will normally be drawn at a scale of 1:50. Burials will be drawn at 1:10. Other detailed plans will be drawn at an appropriate scale.
- 3.12 Long sections of layers and any cut features will be drawn at 1:50. Sections of features will be drawn at 1:20.
- 3.13 Generally all sections will be accurately related to Ordnance Datum. There may, occasionally, be instances where this is unnecessary or not feasible.
- 3.14 Registers of sections and plans will be kept.
- 3.15 A full digital colour photographic record will be maintained. This will illustrate the principal features and finds both in detail and in a general context. The photographic record will also include working shots to represent more generally the nature of the fieldwork.
- 3.16 A register of all photographs taken will be kept on standardised forms.
- 3.17 All recording will be in accordance with the standards and requirements of the *Archaeological Field Manual* (Museum of London Archaeology Service 3rd edition 1994).

Finds

- 3.18 All identified finds and artefacts will be collected and retained. Certain classes of material, ie post-medieval pottery and building material may on occasion be discarded after recording if a representative sample is kept.
- 3.19 Finds will be scanned to assess the date range of the assemblage with particular reference to pottery. In addition the artefacts will be used to characterise the site, and to establish the potential for all categories of finds should further archaeological work be necessary.
- 3.20 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner and to accepted standards. Finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in Minimum Standards for the Preparation of Archaeological Assemblages in Scotland (2025). A charge will be levied to deposit the finds within a museum, the amount will be between £75 and £1325 + VAT depending upon the quantity of material recovered. All recovered archaeological material in Scotland belongs to the Crown and its disposal is administered by the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer. Finds will be transferred to a museum in Scotland following the 'Guidance on the Transfer of Archaeological Assemblages to Museums in Scotland from Commercial/Developer-Funded Projects'.

4 Report

- 4.1 The style and format of the report will be compliant with Historic Environment Scotland's issued guidance on Data Structure Reports. The report will include as a minimum the following;

- i) A location plan of the excavation area
- ii) A location plan of the archaeological features
- iii) A summary statement of the results.
- iv) If appropriate recommendations for further stages of work

5 Specialist staff

The following specialist staff may be used on this project depending on the type of artefacts and soil samples recovered during the course of the fieldwork.

Clare Ellis	Soils and sediments analysis	Argyll Archaeology
Susan Ramsay	Pollen analysis	Sub-contractor
Susan Ramsay	Macroplant analysis	Sub-contractor
Ruby Ceron-Carasco	Marine shell and fish bone	Sub-contractor
Catherine Smith	Animal bone	Sub-contractor
Will Murray	Artefact conservation	Sub-contractor
Alison Sheridan	Prehistoric pottery	Sub-contractor
Derek Hall	Medieval and post-medieval pottery	Sub-contractor
Anne Crone	Dendrochronology	Sub-contractor
NMS	Metal work, slag, coarse stone, other artefacts etc	Sub-contractor

6 General

- 6.1 The requirements of the Brief will be met in full where reasonably practicable.
- 6.2 Any significant variations to the proposed methodology will be discussed and agreed with the local authority's archaeological representative in advance of implementation.
- 6.3 The scope of fieldwork detailed in the main part of the Project Design/Written Scheme of Investigation is aimed at meeting the aims of the project in a cost-effective manner. However there may on occasions be unusual circumstances which have not been included in the programme and costing. These can include;
- i) unavoidable delays due to extreme weather, vandalism, etc;
 - ii) trenches requiring shoring or stepping, ground contamination, unknown services, poor ground conditions;
 - iii) extensions to specified trenches or feature excavation sample sizes requested by the local authority's archaeological advisor;
 - iv) complex structures or objects, including those in waterlogged conditions, requiring specialist removal.

Health and Safety

- 6.4 All relevant health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice will be respected.

Insurances

- 6.5 Argyll Archaeology holds Employers Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and Hired equipment insurance. Details can be supplied on request.
- 6.6 Argyll Archaeology will not be liable to indemnify the client against any compensation or damages for or with respect to;

- i) damage to crops being in the area or areas of work (save in so far as possession has not been given to the Archaeological Contractor);
 - ii) the use or occupation of land (which has been provided by the Client) by the Project or for the purposes of completing the Project (including consequent loss of crops) or interference whether temporary or permanent right of way, light, air or other easement or quasi easement which are the unavoidable result of the Project in accordance with the Agreement
 - iii) any other damage which is the unavoidable result of the Project in accordance with the Agreement
 - iv) injuries or damage to persons or property resulting from any act or neglect or breach of statutory duty done or committed by the client or his agents servants or their contractors (not being employed by Argyll Archaeology) or for or in respect of any claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs charges and expenses in respect thereof or in relation thereto.
- 6.7 Where excavation has taken place evaluation trenches will be backfilled with excavated material but will otherwise not be reinstated unless other arrangements have previously been agreed. Open area excavations normally will not be backfilled but left in a secure manner unless otherwise agreed.

Copyright and confidentiality

- 6.8 Argyll Archaeology will retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive license to the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Method Statement.
- 6.9 Argyll Archaeology will assign copyright to the client upon written request but retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
- 6.10 Argyll Archaeology will advise the Client of any such materials supplied in the course of projects which are not Argyll Archaeology's copyright.
- 6.11 Argyll Archaeology undertake to respect all requirements for confidentiality about the Client's proposals provided that these are clearly stated. It is expected that Clients respect Argyll Archaeology's and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' general ethical obligations not to suppress significant archaeological data for an unreasonable period.

Standards

- 6.12 Argyll Archaeology conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, the CIfA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, the CIFA Standards and Guidance for Desk Based Assessments and Field Evaluations etc.