

LEAC NA BAN near TAYVALLICH, ARGYLL AND BUTE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

METHOD STATEMENT

PROJECT 6703

by

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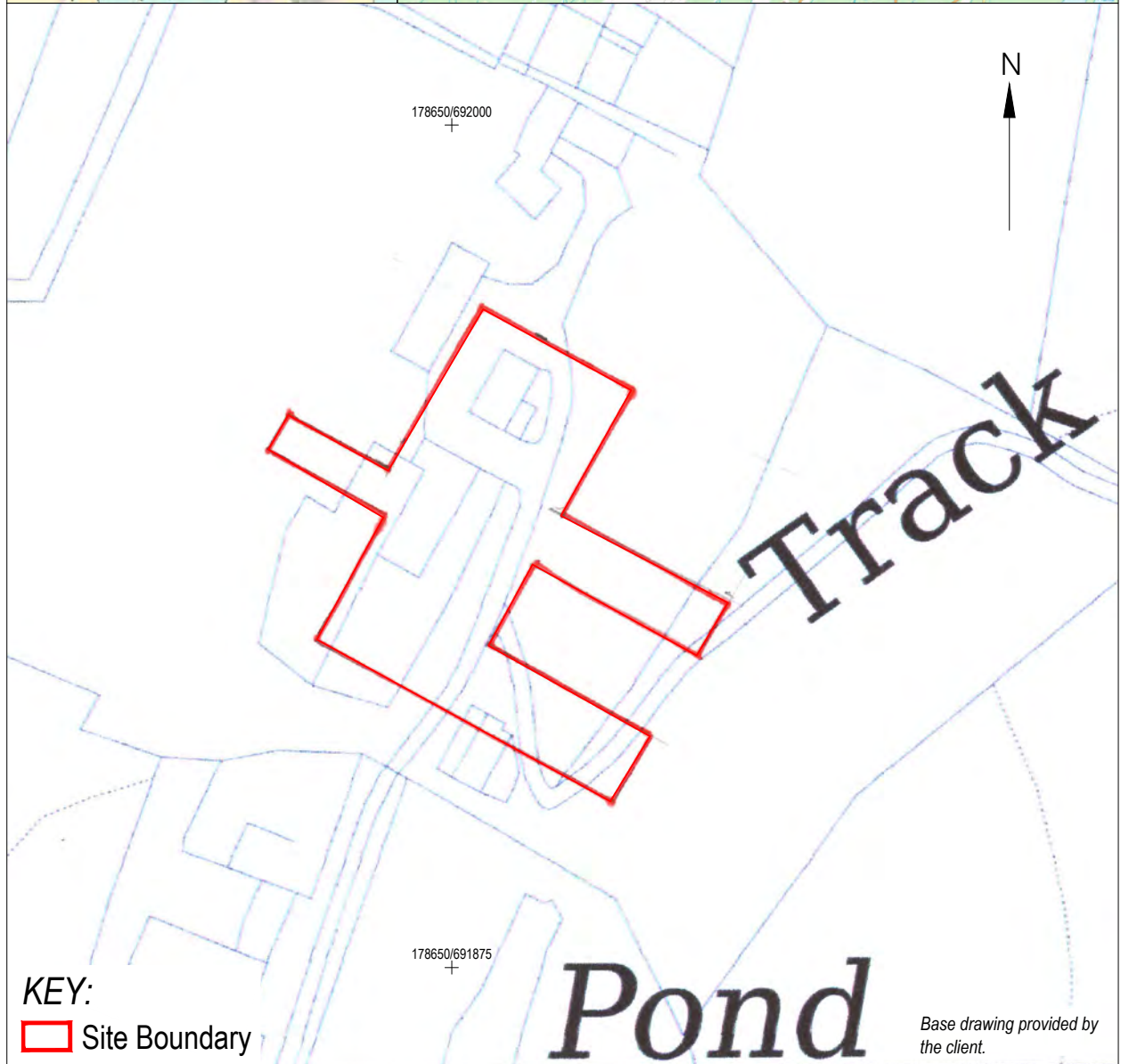


Figure 1
Site Location Plan

0 50 m

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Executive Summary

- 1.1 This document sets out a Method Statement (MS) for the required archaeological watching brief required during the ground breaking works associated with the demolition of an existing building and for ground works for the erection of a dwelling house at Lean na Ban, near Tayvallich, Argyll and Bute. This document will require to be agreed by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS hereafter) archaeological advisors to Argyll and Bute Council, prior to the commencement of archaeological fieldwork.

Introduction

- 2.1 This MS sets out the scope and methodology for an archaeological watching brief, to meet the condition of planning consent for the proposed development at Leac na Ban, near Tayvallich, Argyll and Bute (Planning Ref: 25/00817/PP). In accordance with the recommendation from the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS hereafter), an archaeological watching brief during the ground breaking works associated with the demolition of an existing building and for ground works for the erection of a dwelling house will then be undertaken to establish the presence, extent and nature of any significant archaeological remains. Should significant remains be identified and it is not possible to preserve them *in situ* a further requirement for archaeological works to ensure their preservation through record is likely to be required.
- 2.2 This MS outlines the programme of archaeological works that may be needed to mitigate the effects of the development. It details the methodology to be employed in implementing the Stage 1 archaeological works. The mitigation methodology to be employed during Stage 2 excavation and Stage 3 post excavation analyses, publication and public outreach, if required, will be specified in addenda to this document. These addenda, if required, will be submitted for the approval of WoSAS prior to the commencement of any archaeological work. All phases of work will be funded by the developer as required by the Planning Authority.

Site Location

- 3.1 The development area is located 1.7 km to the south of Crinan in Argyll and Bute (NGR: NR 78663 91979) and is surrounded by agricultural ground in all directions with forestry outwith and surrounding the agricultural ground. The site is located within the very small settlement of Leac na Ban and sits at 115 m OD.
- 3.2 The bedrock underlying the site is Crinan Grit Formation – Quartzite Metamorphic bedrock, while there is no information on the superficial deposits (BGS Geology Viewer).

Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The site is located within an area rich in archaeological remains from the prehistoric through to the post-medieval/modern periods. There are also several scheduled monuments to the north, east and south of the site. These include the Crinan Canal, Crinan to Cairnbaan Scheduled Monument (SM6500) which is also a conservation area and is located approximately 1.25 to the north of the site. The canal was designed by John Rennie, and built c 1794-1809 as a ship canal linking the two sea lochs, Crinan and Gilp. Approximately 0.8 km to the north-east is Barnluasgan Enclosures 1200 NNE of Scheduled Monument (SM3860) which comprises two enclosures of probable prehistoric date with the larger one measuring 11 m in diameter and appearing to have the remains of a homestead, the smaller enclosure measuring 5 m in diameter. A further two enclosures are located to the east and south-east of the site and include Barnluasgan Enclosure 950 NNE of Scheduled Monument (SM7265) which is 15 in diameter and Barnluasgan Enclosure 530 Nne of Scheduled Monument (SM3861) which is 17 m in diameter. Approximately 0.8 km to the south-east of the site is Dun, Enclosure and Cairn, 200m west of Barnluasgan Scheduled Monument, while to the south is a further scheduled monument known as Druim an Duin Dun (SM2420) of probably Iron Age date. The deserted settlement of Arichonan Township Scheduled Monument (SM5797) is located 1.25 km to the south-west of the site.

- 4.2 The site is also surrounded by numerous undesignated sites with the site located within South Leachnaban (WoSAS Pin: 44981) which comprises five roofed buildings, one unroofed building and six enclosures. Barnluasgan Cairn which comprises a linear cairn of heaped stones is recorded (WoSAS Pin: 53973) 0.3 km to the south-west of the site, while 0.3 km to the west is the site of Bar Ban Enclosure (WoSAS Pin: 58624) which measures 10 m in diameter and South Leachnaban Enclosure (WoSAS Pin: 3775). To the north are remnants of rig and furrow cultivation (WoSAS Pin: 53955) and an agricultural terrace (WoSAS Pin: 53928). There are also numerous clearance cairns surrounding the site including Leac Na Ban to the north (WoSAS Pin: 53929, 53930 and 53930), a culvert to the west (WoSAS Pin: 53942) and Lean na Ban drove and wall (WoSAS Pin: 53926) to the south-east.

Aims, Objectives and Scope

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief is to identify and report on:
- the presence or absence of any archaeological remains within the development area, and
 - the character, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits encountered.
- 5.2 The objectives are therefore to:
- conduct an archaeological watching brief during groundworks within the development area to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains, and their character, date and extent if surviving;
 - submit a report to data structure level for agreement of WoSAS on completion of the archaeological fieldwork, which includes an outline of the scope of any further excavation works should any significant archaeology be encountered.

Methodology

- 6.1 All work will be conducted in line with the following standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), of which GUARD Archaeology is a Registered Organisation:
- Code of conduct (2025);
 - Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording (2023);
 - Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording (2023);
 - Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2020);
 - Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (2020);
- 6.2 In terms of the preparation and transfer of archaeological assemblages the following guidance, initially developed by the Scottish Archaeology in Museums Working Group of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy and prepared as part of the 'Before the Museum Project' led by the Association of Local Government Archaeologists Scotland (ALGAO: Scotland) and National Museums Scotland (NMS) will be followed:
- Guidance on the Transfer of Archaeological Assemblages to Museums in Scotland from Commercial/Developer-Funded Projects (2025);
 - Minimum Standards for the Preparation of Archaeological Assemblages in Scotland (2025).
- 6.3 ScARF (Scottish Archaeological Research Framework) and RARFA (Regional Archaeological Framework for Argyll) will be consulted in the preparation of any PERD if significant archaeological remains are encountered during the work programme that could contribute to the research aims of ScARF.

Archaeological Watching Brief

- 6.4 All groundworks (Figure 1) associated with the development will be monitored by an Archaeologist.

- 6.5 The topsoil or overburden will be removed in spits to the first archaeological horizon or, where none is found, to the natural subsoil or construction depth whichever is encountered first. The ground will be excavated using a back-acting machine, equipped with a flat (toothless) bucket, under the constant supervision of a GUARD Archaeologist. Any archaeological features encountered will be cleaned by hand by the on-site Archaeologist to determine their character and extent.
- 6.6 Any significant archaeological features encountered will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Should negative-cut features be encountered, a representative sample will be 25-50% excavated to determine their significance, date and function. A full record of excavated features will be made using a single context recording system using pro forma sheets, drawings and photographs. All archaeological features will be photographed and recorded at an appropriate scale. Sections will be drawn at 1:10 and plans at 1:20.
- 6.7 All archaeological finds will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Finds and animal bone will be collected as bulk samples by context. Significant small finds will be three dimensionally located prior to collection. All finds will be processed to MAP2 type standards and subject to appropriate specialist assessment. If necessary, conservation of finds will be appraised to allow for specialist study.
- 6.8 All excavated feature fills and horizons will be sampled as appropriate, using bulk soil samples, for palaeo-environmental evidence. Sampling will be selective in the interest of saving valuable time and resources, especially when dealing with large quantities of potentially repetitive evidence. Any sampling should be clearly documented, justified and its implications for analysis recognised. General rules regarding sampling are set out in Table 1 below; where a site's scale or complexity warrants it, a separate sampling strategy will accompany this MS. All samples will be retained in storage until a decision has been made regarding the requirement for post-excavation analysis, prior to any superfluous samples then being discarded.

Table 1: Feature General Sampling Strategy

Feature/Deposit Type	Percentage/Quantity to be Sampled
Pits/posts not containing artefacts	Up to 50%
Pits/posts/spreads containing artefacts	Up to 100%
Cremations	100%
Burial cists	100%
Floor deposits/occupation layers	Up to 100% on grid basis & kubienas as agreed
Large pits >1m diameter	Up to 50% bulk, column samples & monolith/kubienas as agreed
Linear feature/ditch	Up to 10% bulk (min 40 Litres), column samples & monoliths/kubienas as agreed
Waterlogged/carbonised wood	100%

- 6.9 A representative section will be recorded denoting depth of topsoil, any stratigraphy present and the nature of the soil. This information will be logged in the day book together with a sketch drawn to scale and a photographic record of deposits.
- 6.10 Should human remains be revealed by the excavation, the local police, the client and WoSAS will be informed immediately. Any human remains will be accurately recorded, but left *in situ*, pending the agreement of the police, the client and WoSAS on an appropriate mitigation strategy.
- 6.11 Should significant archaeological remains be encountered during the watching brief, requiring more than the limited sample excavation outlined above, the remains will be largely left *in situ* pending the agreement of the client and WoSAS on a MS addenda for an appropriate scope of excavation (Stage 2) and Post-Excavation Research Design (PERD) including scope of finds analyses, conservation, publication and public outreach (Stage 3).

- 6.12 Should significant archaeological remains be encountered within any of the monitored areas, the area of investigation may be expanded if micro-siting is not feasible, in consultation with the client and WoSAS, with the aim of defining the full extent of the archaeological features.
- 6.13 WoSAS will be the final judge of significance regarding any findings and may well insist on full excavation for any features to be destroyed by the proposals.

Report Preparation and Contents

- 7.1 A report detailing the results of the archaeological fieldwork will be submitted to the client within two to four weeks of completion of fieldwork and, subject to client approval, then submitted to WoSAS. The report will take the form of a Data Structure Report (DSR) and will contain an analysis of the results of the archaeological watching brief. The report will include a full descriptive text that will characterise the date and extent of any archaeological deposits. It will also include plans at an appropriate scale showing the distribution of any features from the archaeological monitoring and recording, and will include archiving lists of all finds, samples, field drawings and photographs.
- 7.2 If appropriate, the report will also include any addenda to this MS for further archaeological fieldwork, should significant archaeology have been encountered.
- 7.3 The report will include the following:
- executive summary;
 - a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with at least an 8-figure central grid reference;
 - OASIS reference number; unique site code;
 - planning application reference number;
 - contractor's details including date work carried out;
 - nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details;
 - description of the site history, location and geology;
 - methodology (including note of samples taken or otherwise, what was sampled and why)
 - a site plan to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated;
 - discussion of the results of fieldwork;
 - context & feature descriptions;
 - features, number and class of artefacts presented in tabular format;
 - plans and section drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale;
 - initial assessment of relevant finds/samples if appropriate;
 - conclusions regarding the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work such as excavation (Stage 2) and Post-excavation finds analysis, conservation & publication (Stage 3);
 - bibliography.
- 7.4 A digital PDF copy of the report will be prepared for the client and a further digital PDF copy sent to WoSAS.
- 7.5 The DSR is to be submitted to the client within two to four weeks of fieldwork completion, any PERD within three months of agreement to the DSR and any final publication within a year of agreement to the PERD.

Copyright

- 8.1 The copyright for any report resulting from the archaeological work undertaken as part of the project will be deemed the intellectual property of GUARD Archaeology Ltd.

Publication and Outreach

- 9.1 A summary of the project results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. In the event of minor archaeological remains being encountered during the archaeological fieldwork, it is proposed that a comprehensive report submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, will form the Stage 1 publication of the site. A copy of this will be included in the Data Structure Report.
- 9.2 In accordance with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) Scotland Guidance (Mann 2023); in the event of significant archaeological remains or finds encountered, opportunities to deliver public outreach activities will be explored, in order to deliver public benefit and social value from the works. This could include a visit to local schools, a talk delivered to local historical/archaeological societies and/or posters/leaflets detailing the works for local libraries and schools, all of which would be detailed in any resultant PERD.

Archive

- 10.1 The archive for the project, including a copy of the report, will be submitted to the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) for Scotland within three months of completion of all relevant work.
- 10.2 The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be completed within 3 months of completion of the work. Once the Data Structure Report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, WoSAS will validate the OASIS form thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.

Finds Disposal

- 11.1 The arrangement for the final disposal of any finds made in connection with the archaeological work, will be deposited in keeping with Scottish legal requirements as set out in the Treasure Trove Code of Practice published by the Scottish Government in January 2016. The laws relating to Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia* in Scotland apply to all finds where the original owner cannot be identified. This includes all material recovered during archaeological fieldwork. Accordingly, all assemblages recovered from archaeological fieldwork are claimed automatically by the Crown and must be reported to the Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel through its secretariat, the Treasure Trove Unit. In the event of the discovery of small finds, a filled-out copy of the form "Declaration of an Archaeological Assemblage from Fieldwork" and two copies of the pertinent Data Structure Report will be submitted to the Panel at the conclusion of the fieldwork. The Panel will then be responsible for recommending to the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer which museum should be allocated the finds. All artefacts will be temporarily stored by GUARD until a decision has been made by the panel.

Personnel and Liaison

- 12.1 The GUARD team will comprise the following qualified and experienced GUARD archaeologists:
 - Project Manager: Maureen Kilpatrick
 - Site Director: TBC
 - Finds and Environmental Support and Conservation: Aileen Maule
 - Illustrator: Gillian Sneddon
 - Quality Assurance: Dr Ronan Toolis
- 12.2 The GUARD Project Manager will be the point of contact for the archaeological works. A full CV for individuals concerned can be made available on request.

Monitoring

- 13.1 The proposed start for the archaeological fieldwork, is TBC confirmed. The WoSAS will be informed of the commencement of fieldwork and will be informed of the site mobile phone number prior of the attending archaeologist so that monitoring visits can be arranged.

Health & Safety and Insurance

- 14.1 GUARD Archaeology Limited adheres to the guidelines and standards prescribed for archaeological fieldwork set down in the (now Chartered) Institute for Archaeologists approved Health and Safety in Field Archaeology document. It is standard GUARD Archaeology policy, prior to any fieldwork project commencing, to conduct a risk assessment and to prepare a project safety plan, the prescriptions of which will be strictly followed for the duration of all archaeological fieldwork. Copies of the resultant project safety plan and of GUARD Archaeology Limited's Fieldwork Safety Policy Statement may be viewed upon request.
- 14.2 GUARD Archaeology Ltd also possesses all necessary insurance cover, proofs of which may be supplied upon request.

Sources Consulted

ALGAO: Scotland & NMS 2025 Guidance on the Transfer of Archaeological Assemblages to Museums in Scotland from Commercial/Developer-Funded Projects.

ALGAO: Scotland & NMS 2025 Minimum Standards for the Preparation of Archaeological Assemblages in Scotland.

BGS Geology Viewer <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/> [accessed 03/12/25].

Historic Environment Scotland Pastmap <https://pastmap.org.uk/map> [accessed 03/12/25].

Mann, B 2023 ALGAO Scotland 'Delivery of Public Benefit and Social Value Guidance for Archaeology in the Planning Process' report.

National Library of Scotland <https://maps.nls.uk/>.

West of Scotland Archaeology Service Sites and Monuments Record, <https://www.wosas.net/search> [accessed 03/12/25].