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Tarbet Isle

Loch Lomond

Argyll & Bute



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Tarbet Isle, Tarbet, Loch Lomond, Argyll, Scotland

NGR: NN 3288 0540

Data Structure Report

on behalf of

Peter McFarlin and Preston McFarland

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Abstract

An excavation, **consisting of five small trenches**, was undertaken on Tarbet Isle in October 2014 on behalf of the public through members of the Clan MacFarlane. Timothy Pont had depicted a castle on the island on his map of the late 16th century and a survey of the island had identified the footings of a rectilinear structure. The excavations revealed the remains of a two-roomed, trapezoidal-shaped, drystone structure. The north room contained a burnt layer of coal and wood ash, suggesting the presence of a hearth. Several pottery sherds and a coin dating to the 17th century were found, and it is thought that the structure was occupied in **the 17th & 18th** centuries. The island may have been used for storage, or as a lookout for the Clan Macfarlane so that they could control movement up the loch, or watching other activities on the lochside perhaps assisting them in the extraction of a levy. Pont's map depicting a castle on the island is therefore **through** to be a result of confusion with Inveruglas Castle further north.

A single pottery sherd belonging to a large, flat-rimmed bucket urn was also found within rubble debris. This may have been used to bury cremated human bone on the island in about **1500 to 1000 BC**. A cairn of stones over the urn may have been disturbed for the construction of the 17th century building.

Additional work included the creation of a **digital photographic record** of four books containing documents and comment held in the W H Hill Collection (The Royal Faculty of Procurator's Library, Glasgow). These books related to Clan Macfarlane history and were undertaken by the clan chief and antiquarian Walter Macfarlane (c.1699-1767).

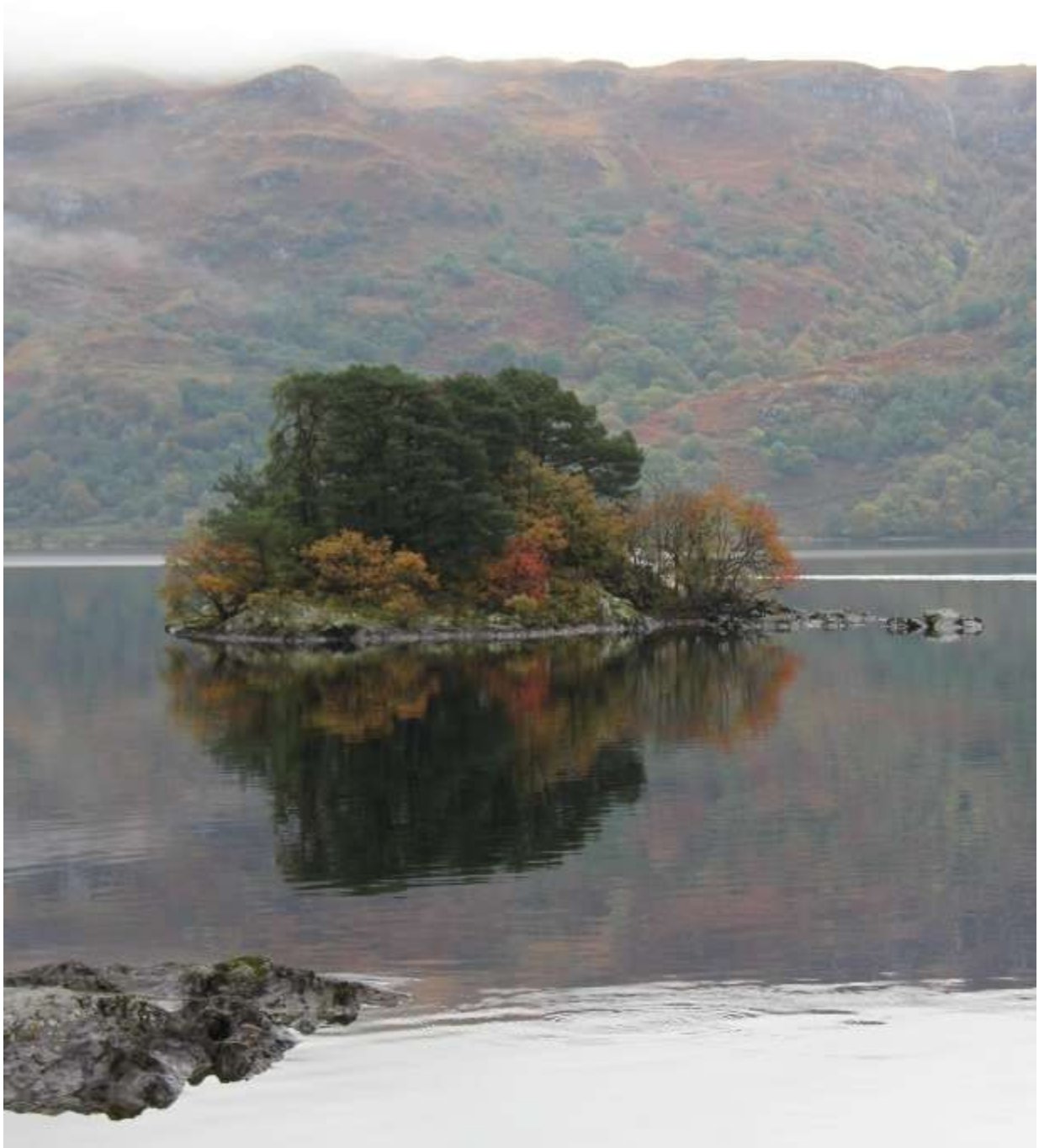


Plate 1: Tarbet Isle from the shore.

1. Introduction

1.1

Tarbet Isle is one of the 23 named islands in Loch Lomond and lies within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Four trenches were excavated across a small structure located on Tarbet Isle and the work was funded by Peter McFarlin and Preston McFarland from the U.S.A. The excavation involved members of the local archaeological community and took place over nine days between October 14th and 24th 2014.

Project background

1.2

Peter McFarlin commissioned Northlight Heritage to undertake an exploratory excavation on a small island off Tarbet, where the low stone foundations of a structure were just visible on the surface (NMRS NN30NW 22). The island was part of the former Clan Macfarlane estate until the 18th century and the aim of the project was to explore the Macfarlane heritage. The site was first identified by Fiona Baker during a survey of the islands in Loch Lomond (Firat 1997). The visible remains on the island consisted of a two-roomed trapezoidal-shaped structure which survived as low, grass covered banks. It was thought that this structure was likely to be a late-medieval stronghold or island dwelling, which documentary sources have linked to the Clan Macfarlane. The island is not Scheduled by Historic Scotland.

In 1996 there were mature trees and sedge on the island, some of which were growing within the building and over the walls. Subsequent visits to the island in 2013 and 2014 have ascertained there is now a single oak tree growing within the structure, while elsewhere on the island there are about 20 oak, Scots pine and holly trees (Firat 1997, 146-9).

Permission to excavate was granted by the landowner, the Luss Estates. The island lies within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and so the Park Authority requested that the nesting birds not be disturbed, that the number of people on the island be restricted to six and that the site be restored to its previous appearance following the excavations. Permission was also granted to remove a tree which was growing in the middle of the structure. Hugh McBrien from the West of Scotland Archaeology Service advised on the size and location of the trenches. The excavations were undertaken in October 2014 so that the nesting birds would not be disturbed and the midges would have died away.

2. Location, Geology and Topography

2.1

Tarbet Isle is located in the northern part of Loch Lomond where the loch narrows (NGR: NN 3288 0540; see Figure 1). The loch here is deep and shelves steeply away from the island although the loch bottom is less than 10m deep between the island and the nearby western shore. The local geology is Beinn Bheula Schist Formation (Psammite and Pelite) (British Geological Survey - <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The superficial deposits are not recorded.

The island is a rock outcrop and the highest point is in the east, where the schist bedrock rises to a few metres above the level of the loch. The structure is located on a slight platform and the ground drops away to the west towards a fairly flat area. The level of the water in the loch is higher than it has been in the past and there is evidence of erosion at the edges of the island, where tree roots have been exposed.

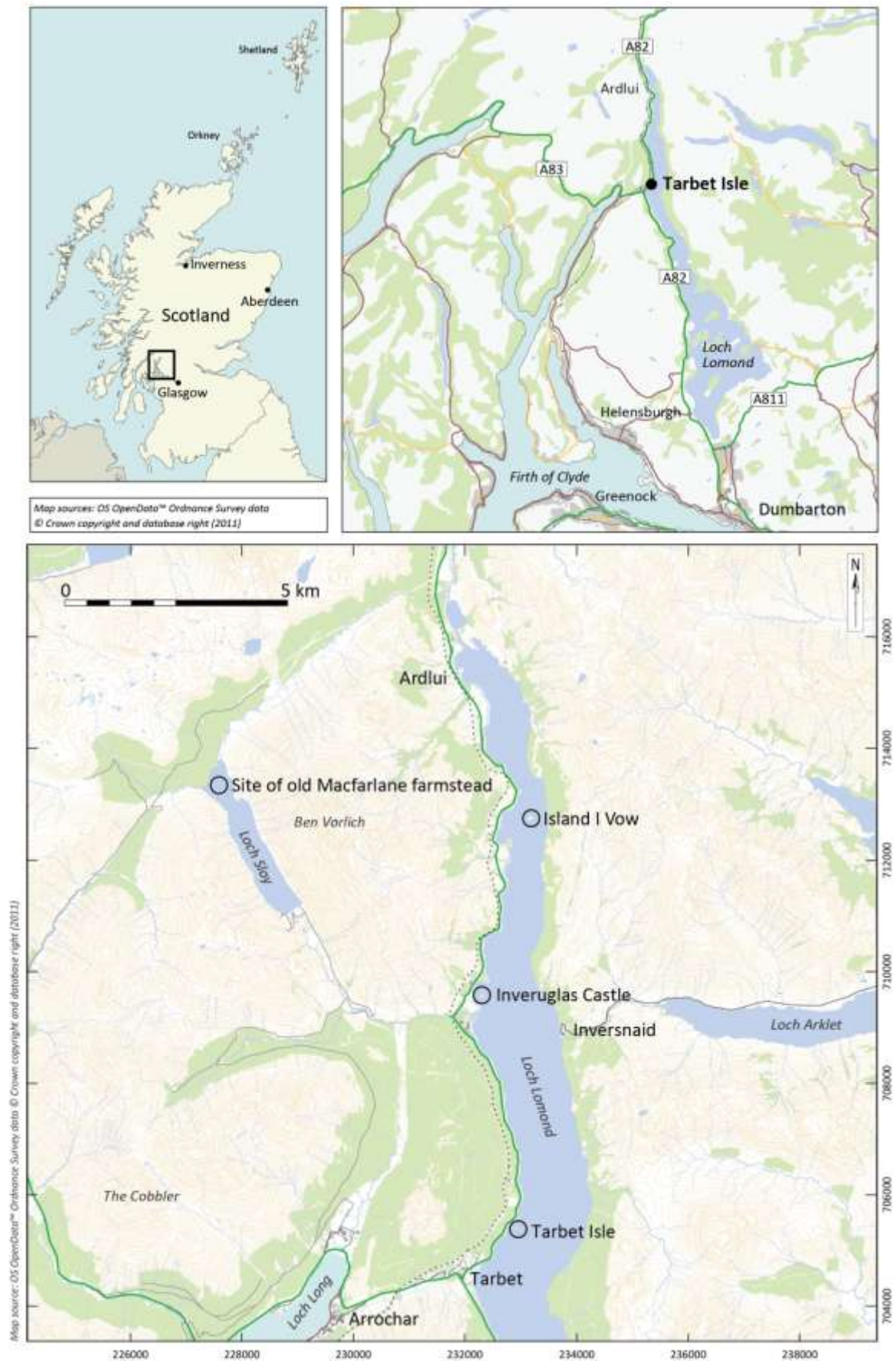


Figure 1: Location of Tarbet Isle, Argyll.

3. Archaeological and Historical Context

3.1 Historical background

The area around Loch Lomond formed the territory of the medieval Earldom of Lennox, and the Clan Macfarlane occupied the north-western shore of the loch from at least the early 13th century. An early charter records that Gilchrist, a younger son of the Earl of Lennox, was granted the lands and barony of Arrochar between 1225 and 1239 and henceforward the lands became known as 'Arrochar MacGilchrist'. Included with these lands were the islands of 'Elanvow, Elanvanow, Elanrouglas and Elaig' (MacFarlane 1922, 27). It has been suggested that in the 1300s Tarbet Isle was called 'Elaig' (Firat 1997, 146). The Clan Macfarlane name is derived from the name of Gilchrist's grandson, Parlane. In 1263, King Hakon of Norway sent 60 ships up Loch Long to harass the Scots. The party of Vikings and Hebrideans dragged their boats across the isthmus between Arrochar and Tarbet and then led a surprise attack on the inhabitants of Loch Lomond (Fraser 1869, 87-88).

By the 16th century, the MacFarlanes had their main residence on the island of Inveruglas (Fraser 1869, 69). This residence was a substantial, mortar-bonded, sandstone castle with a Z-plan characteristic of the 16th century. The antiquarian William Macfarlane gave a date of 1592 for the castle on Inveruglas (Hill Collection), although this may have referred to the construction of the towers as the main part of this castle may have been considerably older (pers comm Fiona Baker). A more domestic residence with outbuildings was built on Island I Vow (Ellan Vhow) by Andrew Macfarlane, the laird of Arrochar, in 1577 (Fraser 1869, 78). Clan feuds, cattle raiding and 'banditry' were fairly commonplace during the 16th century and the Macfarlanes apparently 'took a more passive role of supplying and receiving stolen goods from some of the MacGregor groups who had settled in that area' (Johnson-Smith 2002). The MacFarlanes, in particular, feuded with the neighbouring Colquhouns of Luss and in 1592 were accused (perhaps unfairly) of being involved in the murder of Humphrey Colquhoun, (Johnson-Smith 2002).

Between October 1653 and May 1654, Cromwell's troops were active in the vicinity because of the support the Macfarlane chief gave to the crown and Inveruglas Castle (and the Macfarlane house at Clattochmore) were destroyed. The Macfarlanes re-occupied Island I Vow and then in 1697 constructed a new house at Inverloch or New Tarbet in Arrochar. Other significant structures at this time included a grain mill at Porchaible, near Inveruglas, and an almshouse at Creag a'Phuirt near Island I Vow (Johnson-Smith 2002). The rallying place of the MacFarlanes was in the hills to the west, on the shores of Loch Sloy, where there was a settlement that was flooded by the construction of the Loch Sloy dam in 1950 (see Figure 1).

The continuation of political unrest after the restoration of the crown meant that there was a need to maintain soldiers in the area. In 1689 the MacFarlane chief supported a regiment, at his own expense, to guard and secure the pass between Arrochar and Tarbet (Whyte 1988, 9). The clan also utilised their military control of the area to levy fees from those bringing cattle along the increasingly important drove road through their lands (Johnson-Smith 2002).

Although they supported the Jacobite cause, there is no evidence that the MacFarlanes took part in either of the uprisings in 1715 or 1745. The later 18th century saw the Clan Macfarlane chiefs attempt to introduce commercial practices to the estate, with the introduction of large sheep farms and the reduction of joint tenancy farmsteads. However, like many other Highland chiefs, the MacFarlanes over-extended themselves financially and were declared bankrupt, with the estate being sold in 1784.

3.2 Historic Maps

Timothy Pont's manuscript maps of the late 16th century provide a contemporary depiction of the significant

castles and houses of the period, as well as the names of some of the islands in Loch Lomond. Pont's map (No 17, Loch Lomond) depicts 'yle Terbert' occupied by a two storied structure with a high, gabled roof and a low annex to one side (see Figure 2). Pont's accompanying text to No 17 describes Tarbet very briefly as 'a pair of lenth with wood' (see Figure 3). This refers to the term 'bowshot of length', which is a measure of distance. The text mentions a wood but, surprisingly, no structure (see National Library of Scotland transcripts). On the mainland nearby, Pont depicts a structure called 'Castel Tarbart', which is thought to refer to a house belonging to the Macfarlanes at Clattochmore (NN30SW 1; see also James 2014). On another of Pont's maps (No 16 Gare Loch, Loch Long and Holy Loch) a single structure called 'Cast: Terbart' is depicted very close to the western shore, if not actually on the shore.



Figure 2: Loch Lomond by Pont (17) depicting a structure on 'yle Terbert' (NLS).

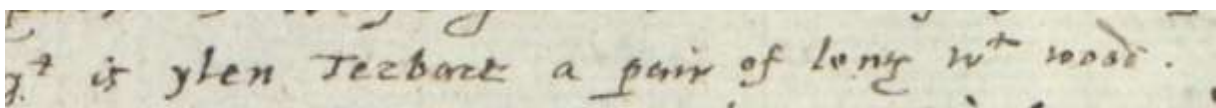


Figure 3: Pont's description of 'Terbert' from 'Loch Lomond and the yles therein'.
(See <http://maps.nls.uk/pont/texts/transcripts/ponttext150v-151r.html>.)

No structures are depicted on the 'Island of Tarbat' in Roy's Military Survey dated to the mid-18th century, nor on the 1st edition 6-inch OS map of Argyllshire (surveyed 1860).

3.3 Archaeological Survey

A survey of all the islands in Loch Lomond was undertaken in 1996 and the remains of a structure were recorded on Tarbet Isle. The structure was described as a two-roomed drystone building measuring 14m north to south by 5.5m east to west. The walls were grass-covered banks standing to a maximum height of 0.5m and 0.8m thick, possibly on an artificially created platform. The long walls were not quite parallel and so formed a structure which was trapezoidal in shape with an entrance on the east side, north of the dividing wall. A semi-circular feature was noted on Firat's survey to the south-east of the structure (Firat 1997, 146-9).

Subsequent visits to the island in 2013 by Peter McFarlin and in 2014 by Heather James ascertained there was a single oak tree growing within the structure, while elsewhere on the island there were about 20 trees (oak and Scots pine), some of which had died.



Plate 2: The structure on Tarbet Isle looking south in 2014.

4. Summary Objectives

The primary research questions guiding the work were:

- What has been the effect of the tree roots on the archaeological remains?
- What is the maximum depth of the archaeological deposits on the island?
- What are the character and date of deposits on the island?

Secondary research questions included:

- What function was served by the two rooms or areas in the structure? Is there evidence for a hearth and are there artefacts? What do the surviving deposits tell us about the function of the structure?
- Can the semi-circular feature be identified? What function did it serve?
- Is there any evidence for other structures on the island? Is there a surrounding wall? Are there other timber buildings?
- Is there any evidence for earlier use of the island? Is there evidence for prehistoric features?

5. Methodology

All excavation was done by hand and trenches were backfilled to the pre-excavation level at the end of the excavation. All archaeological features were planned, photographed and recorded using *pro-forma* record sheets and digital photography. Plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20 as appropriate. Bulk

samples were taken of archaeological deposits that had potential for artefacts or macroplant remains. A hand-drawn offset plan of the site was undertaken in order to locate the trenches.

In order to prevent damage to the trees, roots were only cut if they were less than 2.5cm in diameter or could be traced back to a dead tree. Permission was granted by the LLTNP and the Luss Estates to remove the single oak tree growing within the structure, but this was not managed within the time available.



Plate 3: General view of the excavation from the west.

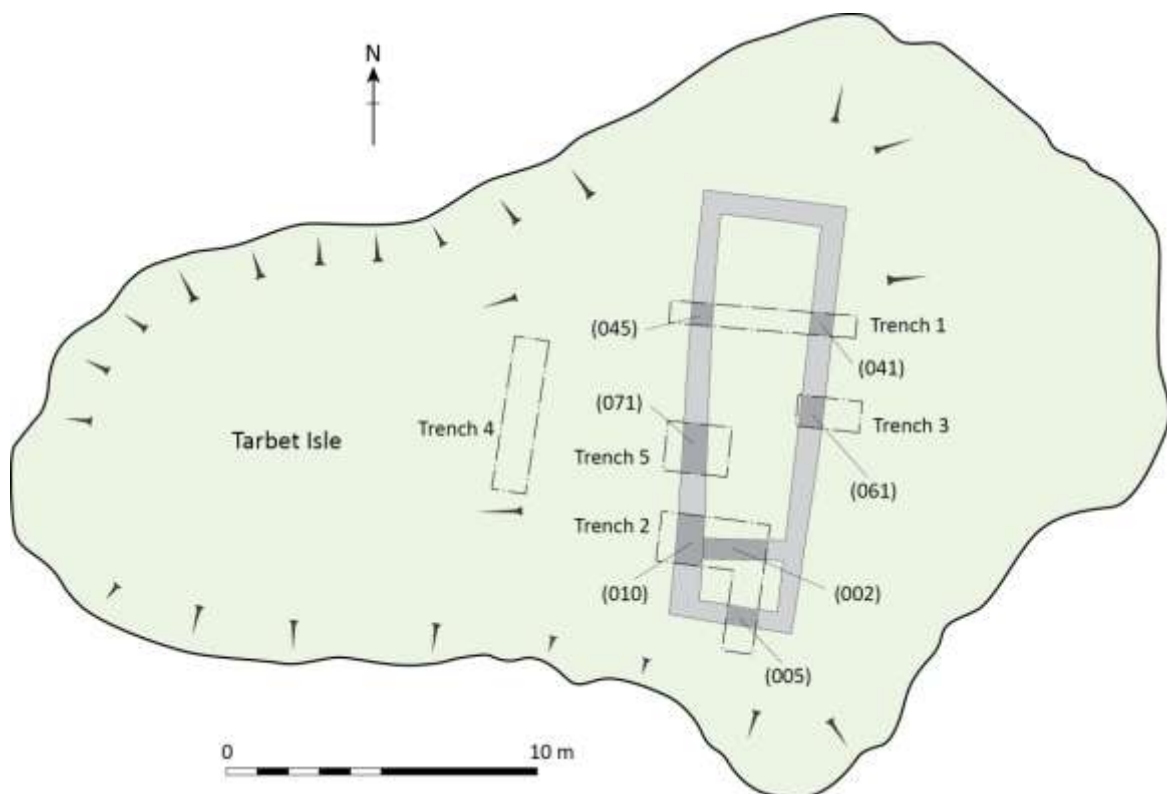


Figure 4: Location of the trenches (outline of the island based on the plan by Firat 1997).

6. Results

6.1 Trench 1 (see Figures 4 & 5)

Trench 1 measured 6m long, 1.5m wide and was aligned east/west across the northern room of the structure. Wall (045) in the west consisted of up to two rough courses of rounded and angular boulders and stones and measured 0.3m high and 0.6m wide (see Plate 4). Wall (041) in the east was of a similar construction and also a single course, 0.25m high and 0.75 m wide (see Plate 5). The drystone walls (045) and (041) were 3.5m apart at this point.



Plate 4: Trench 1 looking east, wall (045) in the foreground.



Plate 5: Trench 1: wall (041) and tumble (049).

Bedrock was seen at a depth of 0.3m below the surface within a small sondage in the centre of the structure (see Plate 6). There was a thin layer of light grey gritty clay (048) lying immediately above the bedrock which was between 0.01m and 0.04m deep. Layer (048) was sealed by a layer of mid-brown/grey peaty silt with some gravel (043), which was about 0.15m deep. Layer (043) abutted the inner face of wall (045) in the west, but its extent was not fully excavated in the east. Layer (043) formed a fairly level surface which rose slightly towards the walls. It contained charcoal from mixed woodland and a single very worn nut shell (see Appendix 4). Both walls were abutted on either side by angular and rounded stones (046, 047, 049 and 051) (see Figure 5). No foundation cuts for the construction of the walls were observed.

There was a thin layer of coal and charcoal (044) within the interior of the structure to a depth of 0.4m. This dark layer sealed the peaty layer (043) and the stones (047) and (051). The dark layer (044) did not extend beyond the walls. The charcoal was derived from both deciduous and coniferous woodland and consisted of fairly large pieces of young, unabraded round-wood twigs (see Appendix 4). A thin layer of dark grey greasy silt (042) (similar in texture, but slightly lighter in colour to layer (044)) sealed the stones (047) on the west side and this also was confined to the area enclosed by the wall (045). These layers were all sealed by a layer of mid brown turf and roots (040) which was 0.05m to 0.10m deep.

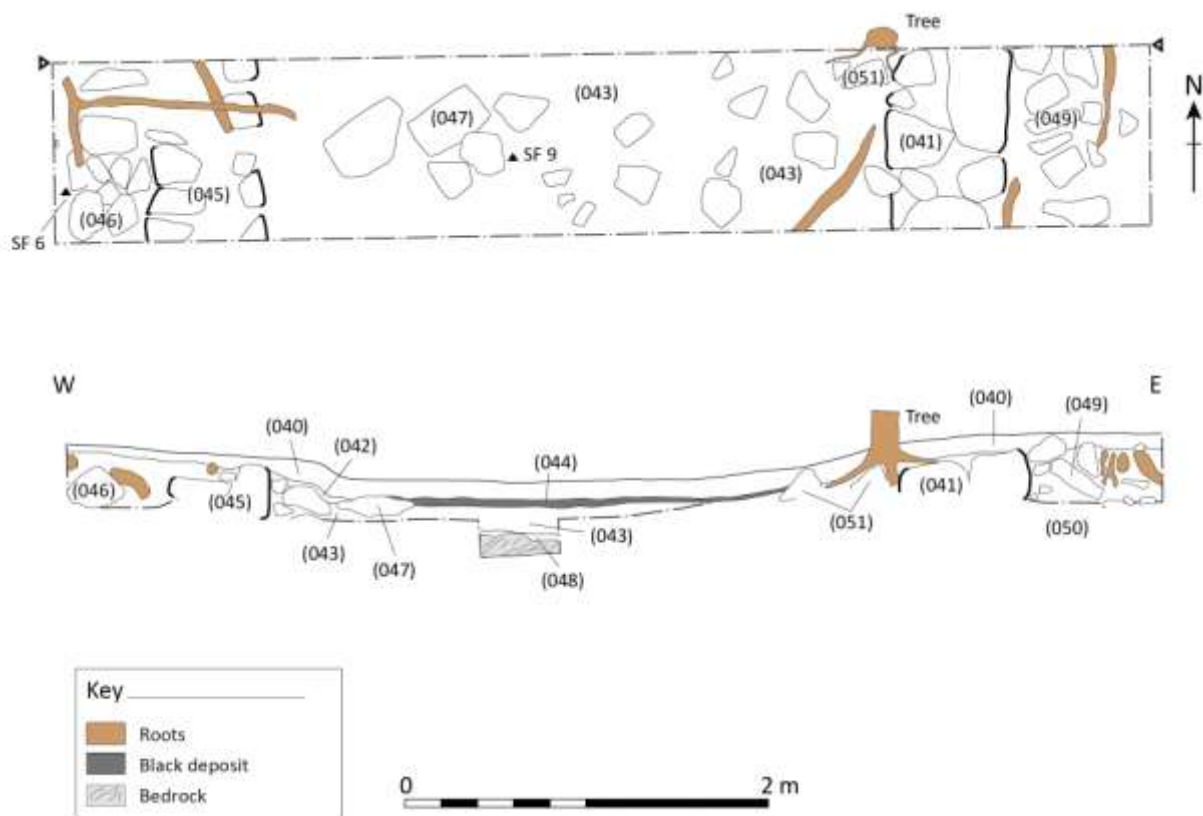


Figure 5: Trench 1: plan and section.

Finds

A flat spade- or shovel-like iron object (SF9) was found on the surface of layer (043) (see Plate 7). Layer (043) also produced two pieces of flint (SF10 was a probable gun flint and one unnumbered, undiagnostic piece), a clay pipe stem fragment and a tiny fragment of medieval pottery (possibly from a jug with a lead glaze) from the sample. Two sherds of 17th-century pottery (SF6) were found within the tumble outside the west wall (046). The uppermost layer (040) contained a sherd of green bottle glass and a quartz flake.



Plate 6: Trench 1: layers (040) and (044) removed onto layer (043) and sondage onto bedrock.



Plate 7: Iron object, possible spade or shovel, SF9.

Root disturbance

A rowan tree sapling grew on top of wall (041) and its roots had penetrated the tumble (051), but not the wall (041). The tumble (049), outside the structure to the east, was also penetrated by tree roots. At the west end of the trench a large tree root penetrated the tumble (046). The middle of the trench was largely free of tree roots.

Interpretation

Trench 1 extended across the northern room, which revealed that the structure measured 3.5m wide internally. The deposits within the northern room lay 0.3m deep above bedrock and the thin basal deposit (048) consisted of weathered bedrock. Although the bases of the walls (041) and (045) were not reached within the trench, it is likely that they were built on top of the weathered bedrock so there was no evidence for a prepared platform in

this trench. The walls (041) and (045) were of very similar build and there was nothing to suggest they were not contemporary. The surface of layer (043) probably represented the old floor surface associated with the use of the structure, upon which the broken spade or shovel and gun flint were deposited. There were no other structural features, such as a hearth, dividing walls or paved floor surfaces within the structure.

It is thought likely that the building was constructed over weathered bedrock and the internal layer (043) built up as a result of laying turf or earth within the structure to level up the floor. This practice has been observed on medieval sites in Scotland and in Scandinavia. The numerous stones in the vicinity of the walls are probably debris from the walls as they collapsed and became embedded in the floor deposits.

Layer (044) was a thin, but distinct, residue of burning which contained coal as well as mixed charcoal. The fresh unabraded nature of the charcoal and its large size has suggested that it is of a fairly modern date, although this condition could also be a result of the site being fairly undisturbed. Fir trees were generally not introduced until the 19th century, apart from the silver fir which was introduced in the 17th century. Unfortunately, the charcoal of silver fir cannot be differentiated from other fir. The presence of coal also indicates that it includes rake-out from a hearth rather than being the remains of a burnt thatched roof and turf walls. The fact that the deposit (044) was confined within the walls would also support this interpretation, as the ash from a burnt building would have spread beyond the confines of the walls.

The full extent of tumbled stones in the vicinity of the walls was not ascertained because of the limited extent of the trenches, but the relatively small amount of stones would suggest that the walls were originally only a few courses high. This would have formed a solid base for a timber superstructure and turf walls, as suggested by Fiona Baker (Firat 1997). The lack of mortar and sandstone clearly argue against the structure having been a medieval castle or other significant building.

After the abandonment of the structure, a moderately thick turf and vegetation layer built up over the walls and burnt floor deposit. There was significant disturbance of the tumble by tree roots, as they found the easiest route was between the loose stones rather than through the *in situ* walls. However, the proximity of the roots to the walls poses a threat to the integrity of the walls should the trees blow down and the tree-bowls be uprooted.

6.2 Trench 2 (see Figures 4 & 6)

Trench 2 measured 4.2m long and 1m wide and was aligned north/south across the southern room (see Plate 8). A subsequent shallow extension to the west measured 2.5m long and 1.5m wide (see Figure 6). The outer drystone wall of the structure (005) was 0.65m wide and 0.45m high and consisted of up to three rough courses of large angular and rounded stones, including one large quartz boulder. The inner drystone wall (002) was 0.75m wide, 0.5m high and consisted of three or four rough courses of similar sized stones. The two walls were not parallel so that the southern room was irregular in shape, measuring 2.5m wide and between 1.5m and 1.6m long.

Bedrock was revealed at a depth of 0.6m below the surface within a small sondage dug against the southern face of wall (002) (see Plate 9). Within the sondage the bedrock sloped steeply away towards the south.

A series of deposits filled the southern room. The layer immediately above bedrock was dark brown gritty silt (011) which was 0.15m deep. This layer continued beneath wall (002) and therefore pre-dated the structure. Layer (011) contained small amounts of mixed deciduous wood charcoal and a carbonised bramble seed (see Appendix 4). Layer (011) was sealed by a 0.15m-deep layer of mid-brown gritty silt (013/009). Layer (013/009) was sealed by a distinctive layer of orange brown silty sand and stones (012) which was 0.10m deep. Both layers (013/009) and (012) abutted wall (002) (see Figure 6). These layers were sealed by a deposit of angular and

rounded stones (003) which extended for a distance of 0.5m from the wall (002) and merged with a layer of grey-brown silt (006) which contained a few large angular stones. Layer 006 abutted the outer wall (005).



Plate 8: Trench 2: wall (002) in the foreground, looking south-west.

To the south of wall (005), the ground sloped away steeply towards the water's edge and the deposit exposed here consisted of mid-brown silt and stones (007) (see Plate 10). To the north of wall (002), within the northern room, the deposits were excavated to a depth of 0.4m and consisted of orange brown silt and stones (008), which was 0.25m deep, and grey brown silt (004) which was 0.08m deep. All these deposits were sealed by turf (001) which was up to 0.10m deep.

An extension to the trench was dug to a depth of a few centimetres, enough to reveal the junction of the inner wall (002) and the western wall (010). Wall (010) was 1.0m wide, but its height was not investigated (see Plate 11). It was clear that the inner wall (002) abutted the outer wall (010) and therefore wall (002) would have been a secondary insertion.

The ground sloped steeply away towards the shore to the south and also to the west, where it formed a lower terrace.

Finds

No finds were retrieved from deposits (011, 013/009, 008, 004, 007 and 012). Layer (003) contained a sherd of clear vessel glass. Layer (006) contained a sherd of thick clear glass (possibly window glass), a sherd of green bottle glass, a lump of coal and a thin metal lid. All these finds are 19th- or 20th-century in date.

The uppermost layer (001) contained sherds of a medieval pottery handle (SF12, see Plate 12), a 19th-century clay pipe bowl (SF1, see Plate 13), two sherds of modern white ceramic, three sherds of clear vessel glass, a sherd of green bottle glass (which joined with the glass sherd from layer (006) and a fragment of a butchered rib bone. Apart from the pottery handle, all these finds are 19th-21st century in date. The handle formed rim neck and strap handle from a small thinly potted jug in a buff coloured sandy fabric. A 13th or 14th-century date

has been suggested for the handle although it is very worn and could perhaps be later (pers comm. G Haggarty).

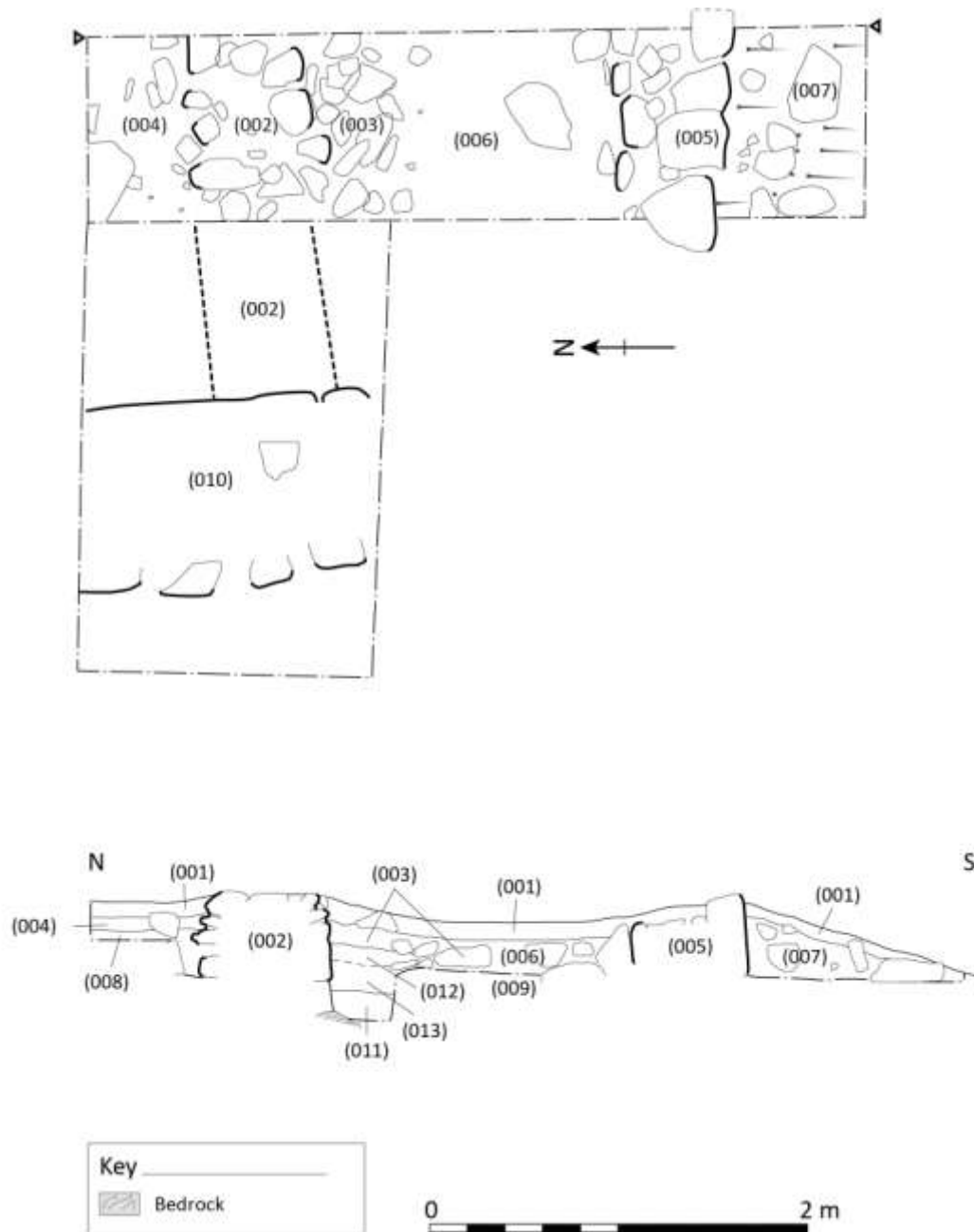




Plate 9: Trench 2: dividing wall (002) on left and deeper sondage in centre.



Plate 10: Trench 2: the outer wall (005) from the west.



Plate 11: Trenches 2 and 5: wall (010) in line with wall (071).



Plate 12: Trench 2: a 13th - or 14th-century pottery handle (SF12 from context (001)).



Plate 13: Trench 2: a 19th-century clay pipe made in Glasgow (SF1).

Interpretation

Bedrock was observed at a depth of 0.6m in Trench 2 (compared to 0.3m deep in Trench 1). This indicates that, beneath the structure, the bedrock slopes away towards the water and supports the suggestion that a platform had been created in this area upon which the structure was built. The short southern wall (005) was similar in build to the two long walls of the structure (045 and 041) seen in Trench 1 and are presumably contemporary. Wall (002) had been inserted into the structure to act as a dividing wall. Very little of the interior deposits were excavated and so it is not clear what length of time elapsed between the original building's construction and the insertion of the dividing wall. A small amount of tumble was seen in the vicinity of walls (002) and (005), which is consistent with the walls originally having been only a few courses high. It is presumed unlikely that stones would have been removed from the island for building elsewhere, although this is possible.

Layer (011) clearly pre-dated the internal dividing wall but, unfortunately, this layer did not contain any datable artefacts and there was not time to examine its relationship to the outer walls. However, it is likely to have consisted of redeposited material brought in to create a level building platform.

Again it was difficult to be certain about the relationships between the internal deposits and the walls. The layers (008), (013) and (012) all appeared to abut the wall (002), which would suggest that they had accumulated after the wall was built. However, the similar character of the deposits (008) and (012) to either side of the wall (002) might suggest that the wall (002) had been constructed after these layers were deposited, although no foundation cut was seen.

It is probable that the surface (012/009) formed the floor of the southern room, probably created out of beaten earth. There were no finds from this surface which would suggest its function.

Layer (008) may have formed a floor in the northern room. There were no deposits within Trench 2 similar to the burnt layer (044) in Trench 1, which indicates that the area of rake out did not extend across the whole of the northern room, but was probably restricted to the vicinity of a hearth.

The uppermost layers (004, 003, 006, 007 and 001) were interpreted as post-abandonment tumble and turf deposits dating to the 19th to 21st centuries. The finds do suggest, however, that some probably informal seasonal occupation of the site (such as camping) was taking place throughout the modern period. The presence of the 13th/14th-century pottery handle within the topsoil may be a result of some disturbance of earlier deposits. It should be noted here that a mid-17th century pottery sherd was found near the water's edge by a visitor prior to these excavations taking place. Erosion of the island's deposits at the water's edge is likely to leave artefacts on a surface which may become exposed when the loch level is low.

6.3 Trench 3 (see Figures 4 and 7)

Trench 3 was 2.2m long and 1.0m wide and was located across the east wall of the structure and also across a slight outer bank, which was initially thought to be an abutting wall. The drystone wall (061) measured 0.75m wide and consisted of three courses of stones 0.50m high. Bedrock was seen at a depth of only 0.18m below the surface, dropping away steeply towards the west (beneath the structure) to at least 0.45m deep. The basal layer above bedrock was light grey gritty gravel (063) at a depth of 0.40m below the surface. Layer (063) contained mixed woodland charcoal similar to that from the other samples with the addition of holly and one carbonised dock seed which is admittedly very slight evidence for scrub clearance (see Appendix 4). A single small fragment of unidentifiable calcined bone was also found in the sample from layer (063). Wall (061) was constructed on top of layer (063). Sealing layer (063) and abutting the wall (061) was a significant deposit of loose angular and rounded stones (062) of similar size to the stones in the wall (061) (see Plate 14). These stones extended across the whole trench to a depth of between 0.10m to 0.30m. All these layers were sealed by a layer of turf and roots (060) which was about 0.10m deep.



Plate 14: Trench 3 from the south: wall (061) to the left and tumble (062) to the right.

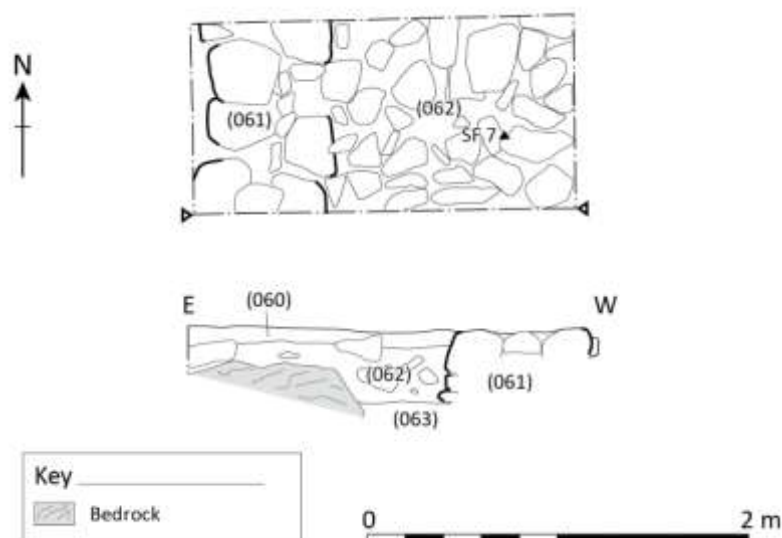


Figure 7: Trench 3: plan and section.

Finds

The only finds from this trench were a very corroded coin (SF7) and a sherd of coarse, handmade pottery (SF8) from the stones (062). The coin is a Scottish turner (2d) of the 1640s or 1660s issues, corroded as a result of the acidic soil (pers comm Donal Bateson). The pottery was identified as a sherd of a large, flat-rimmed bucket urn, possibly used to bury a cremation and dating to about 1500 to 1000 BC (pers. comm. Alison Sheridan).

Interpretation

Wall (061) continued the line of wall (041) in Trench 1, and together they formed part of the long, straight east wall of the structure. The stones (062) were interpreted in the field as tumble from the wall, equivalent to the tumble (049) in Trench 1. This would suggest that there was considerably more tumble in this vicinity than elsewhere around the structure.

The single sherd of prehistoric pottery is a unique find from the island. It is unlikely that it was brought to the island as a single sherd and so it may be evidence for burial on the island in the 2nd or 3rd millennium BC and the discovery of a single piece of calcined bone fund would be consistent with a disturbed cremation burial within an urn.

The coin is likely to have trickled down through the loose stones at any time after the mid-17th century. The coin does not therefore securely date the deposition of the tumble, but does provide further tangible evidence for activity on the island in the 17th century.

6.4 Trench 4 (see Figures 4 & 8)

Trench 4 measured 5.0m long and 1.0m wide and was aligned north/south. The trench was located across a lower terrace to the west of the structure in order to examine the deposits beyond the visible remains. It was dug to a depth of between 0.10m and 0.15m. Outcropping bedrock was observed at a depth of only 0.06m below the surface in the eastern side of the trench and at 0.45m in a sondage at the northern end.

A fairly homogenous deposit of mid-brown silt (021) across the trench was disturbed by several tree roots, some of which were burnt (see Plate 15). At the southern end of the trench there was a roughly circular patch of very dark brown silt (022) which was 0.05m deep (see Plate 16). Layers (021) and (022) were sealed by turf, which was about 0.10m deep across the entire length of the trench, except at the south end where it had been burnt prior to our arrival on the island.

Finds

Layer (021) produced three sherds of 17th-century pottery (SFs 2 and 3 and one unnumbered), a grey piece of flint (SF 4, probably a broken gun flint see Appendix 2 and 3) and a nail. The circular patch of burning (022) produced two further sherds of 17th-century pottery (SFs 5 and 11). The turf layer (020) produced nine sherds of clear vessel glass, one sherd of green bottle glass, a thin metal lid (modern), a single sherd of modern white ceramic and a lead air rifle pellet.

Interpretation

The deposits within this trench lay between 0.06 and 0.45m deep over bedrock and there were no

archaeologically significant features. Five sherds of 17th-century pottery were found in the layer below the turf, which was otherwise uncontaminated by modern artefacts. These sherds may have been re-deposited downhill from the vicinity of the structure, perhaps as a spread of midden material derived from occupation in the 17th century. A single flint flake has been identified as a probably gun flint and is consistent with a 17th/18th century date for activity on the island.

The turf had been burnt in several places as a result of recent campfires which had gone out of control. This layer also contained modern pottery and other modern material possibly associated with people camping on the island.



Plate 15: Trench 4 and sondage in the north-west corner.

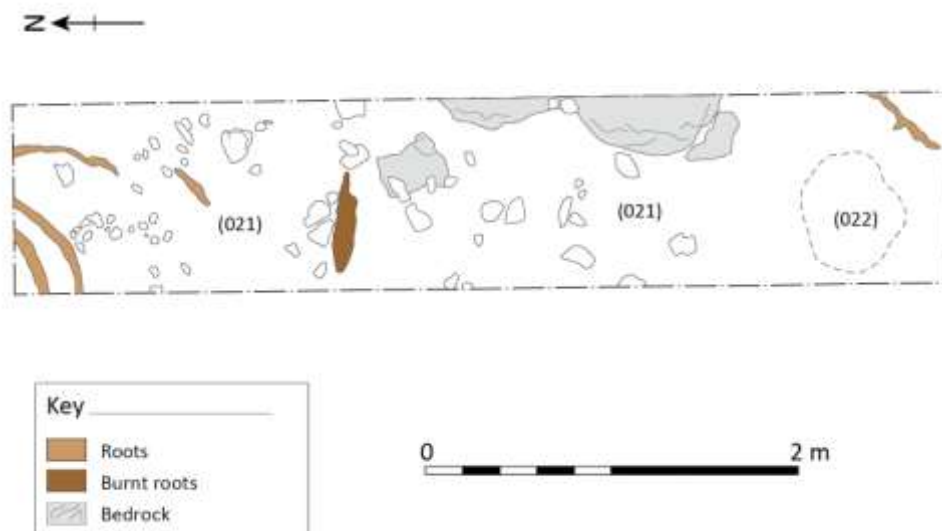


Figure 8: Trench 4 plan.



Plate 16: Trench 4: a circular patch of burning (022) at the southern end.

6.5 Trench 5 (see Figure 4)

Trench 5 measured 1.6m by 2m and was located over the west wall in order to examine the alignment of this wall, as the 1997 survey had suggested that the structure was trapezoidal in shape. The turf (070) was 0.01m – 0.05m deep and was removed in order to reveal the alignment of the wall. The wall (071) consisted of rough angular and rounded stones and measured 1.0m wide and was abutted by the dividing wall (002). Wall (071) appeared to form a continuous, if irregular, line with the walls in Trenches 1 and 2.

Finds

There were no finds from this trench.

Interpretation

This trench revealed that the west wall - consisting of wall (045) in Trench 1, wall (071) in Trench 5 and wall (010) in Trench 2 - together formed a slightly irregular line, which confirmed the trapezoidal shape of the structure. The wall varied in thickness, as it was 1.0m wide in the south (010 and 071) and 0.60m wide in the north (045). The irregularity of the structure in the south-west corner was perhaps because of the significant drop in the ground level, which might have required the extra thickness to the foundations.

7. Discussion

7.1 Prehistoric bucket urn & calcined bone

A large thick pottery sherd recovered from Trench 3 has been identified as a fragment of a large, flat-rimmed bucket urn, possibly used to bury a cremation. It dates to about 1500 to 1000 BC (pers comm Alison Sheridan). The sherd is most likely to have been disturbed from a cremation burial on the island and it is possible that the unusual amount of stone in this area could have once formed a burial cairn, which was robbed for the construction of the building. The disturbance of a cremation burial may also explain the single fragment of calcined bone found beneath the stone tumble (063). The single pottery sherd and bone adds to the very sparse evidence for prehistoric activity around the Loch Lomond area. The known sites include two Neolithic or Bronze Age lithic scatters in Arrochar (see Bjarke Ballin 2005; James 2014) These are likely to be traces of what was probably more extensive activity which took place beside water courses and near cultivable ground. The Loch Lomond area has been attractive for settlement throughout the prehistoric period, as attested by a Mesolithic and Bronze Age site at Midross (pers comms Dene Wright & Ally Becket) and the presence of several crannogs or artificial islands, which generally date to the later prehistoric and medieval periods.



Plate 17 Pottery sherd from a prehistoric bucket urn (SF 008, context (062))

7.2 17th-18th century structure

These excavations revealed the low foundations of a drystone structure which measured about 12.5m long and was between 2.5m and 3.5m wide internally, with walls between 0.6m and 1.0m thick. The stone was locally sourced schist and no mortar was used. The superstructure would probably have consisted of turf walls with a thatched roof of heather or bracken supported on timber couples. The schist bedrock on Taret Isle is very uneven, sometimes outcropping and sometimes buried beneath up to 0.6m of soil. Fiona Baker had suggested that the building may have been constructed on a level terrace and the results of the excavations support this. Vernacular buildings are difficult to date as the construction technique changed little from the medieval period until the 18th century. It is likely that the structure pre-dates the 19th century, as few 19th- to 21st-century artefacts were found either in the turf and topsoil or within the demolition debris of the south room (003 and 006). The charcoal from the burnt layer (044) was said to be fresh and unabraded which the specialist suggested may indicate a fairly modern date, although it might also mean that the site was fairly undisturbed. Only two fragments of clay pipe were found, a 19th-century pipe bowl from the topsoil and a fragment of stem from the surface of layer (043). The stem fragment is very similar in character and bore hole size to the pipe bowl and so may be 19th rather than 17th century in date. However, considering the shallow and loose nature of the deposits and the potential disturbance through root action near the walls, the stem fragment is thought to be intrusive.

Seven sherds of 17th-century pottery were found during these excavations and one large sherd of a vessel base of a similar date was retrieved from the edge of the island during an earlier visit (pers comm Sue Furness). None of these sherds have been found in a context that would securely date the use of the structure, but the discovery of this pottery within midden and tumble (021, 062 and 046) which did not contain any later material, would suggest that these deposits date to the 17th or 18th centuries. A broken, possibly 13th or 14th century jug handle (Tr 2) is the only pre-17th century medieval pottery. Its poor condition, perhaps due to it lying in wet conditions, led the specialist to suggest that it could be more recent. This handle is not evidence for activity on the site in the medieval period as it could have been in use in the 17th/18th centuries and been a very old jug when it broke.

The mid-17th-century coin found within tumble is also good evidence for activity on the island at that time. The specialist suggested that its very corroded state was probably being due to the soil conditions rather than to its having been very worn and old when lost. The gun flint is also consistent with a 17th or 18th century date and does provide some evidence for the presence armed inhabitants. The spade or shovel from the floor surface in the north room is itself very difficult to place chronologically. Medieval spades or shovels tended to use metal only for the tip and so this example is thought to be post-medieval in date (17th-19th century).

Structures which have been occupied in the 19th and 20th centuries often produce a far greater amount of ceramic, glass and clay pipe than has been found here. It is therefore the conclusion of this author that the structure was in use in the 17th or early 18th centuries and was out of use by the mid 18th century.

The identification of fir charcoal is an interesting addition to the consideration of the date of the site as only silver fir was introduced prior to the 19th century. Unfortunately it has not been possible to differentiate between silver fir from other types of fir. However, the documented tree planting activities of Walter MacFarlane on his Arrochar estate in the 18th century (Johnson-Smith 2002) could perhaps explain the early appearance of silver fir in the vicinity.

The function of the structure may have been as a store or lookout for the Macfarlane chiefs. The northern room was occupied by a coal and wood burning hearth (perhaps requiring the shovel) and was therefore used for occupation possibly by a small armed force. The southern room is particularly small and is located to the south of the probable entrance. It is tempting to suggest that the southern room was a watch tower, but there is no evidence that a tower as such existed and it was quite common for structures to be subdivided for different uses. It could also have served as store room. It is highly unlikely that the building would have had a purely agricultural use such as a shieling, farmstead or shepherd's shelter, as the island is so small and there is a lack of grazing or significant cultivatable deposits. Its location within the loch would, however, lend itself for use as a lookout point for watching activities up and down the loch or for storing commodities out of reach of general traffic. **It is known that the Macfarlane chiefs were supporting a military force within the area during the 16th and 17th centuries** (see page 8) and so it is possible that members of the Clan Macfarlane used the island as a lookout point for controlling movement on the loch and up the loch side. The fact that Pont does not mention a building on the island in the late 16th century when he does mention buildings on other islands might indicate that the structure had not been built at that time, but rather belonged to a period in the 17th century. There is no evidence that the structure was destroyed by Cromwell's troops, as the patch of burning was probably derived from the spread of ash and coal from a hearth rather than being from the burning of the walls and roofing material.

Other structures surveyed in the area include two buildings at Port a'Chaipuill, which were of similar drystone construction, but were a little wider and of more recent date. One structure measured 14m by 4m wide and had walls c. 1.0m high and another was about 4.5m by c 3.25m wide (internally) with a stone and brick floor and walls nearly 2m high. The pottery and pantiles found indicated that these dated to the 19th and 20th centuries. They have been interpreted as a mill and horse stable (Starbuck 2011, 71-83), although an alternative interpretation as a ginal house (granary or grain store) has been suggested (Johnson-Smith 2002). A recently excavated structure at Tigh Caol, Cowal measured 19.6m long and 5.2m wide (externally) with earth floors and drystone walls 0.6m – 0.8m thick and 0.5m high. The quantity and wide range of high quality finds reflected its use as an inn, probably in the 18th century (Adamson & Bailie 2014). Three farmsteads within the MacFarlane territory have also been surveyed at Stuc na Cloich (the Black Village), Blairstaing and Ardliesh, and these show a similar degree of irregularity in their building outline to the structure on Tarbet Isle, although they are unlikely to pre-date the 18th century (Johnson-Smith 2002).

The structural remains on Tarbet Isle are not those of a medieval castle and there is no evidence from the excavations that a substantial mortared building ever stood on the island. The depiction by Pont of a castle here is therefore most likely a mistake. Pont's own text does not mention a castle, even though he does mention many other less significant details on other islands. He does, however, mention 'a prettie hous and dwelling pertyning to Mackfarlan' on 'Rowglash' (which is probably a reference to Inveruglas) but does not depict the island at the north end of Loch Lomond. The presence of 'Nether Inveruglas' at Inverbeg further south may have added to some confusion. (Many thanks to Sue Furness for pointing this out). The most likely interpretation is that the castle on the island depicted by Pont is actually Invergulas rather than Tarbet Isle.

There has been a suggestion that an early name for Tarbet Isle was 'Elaig', although the reason for this is not explained (Firat 1997, 146). 'Elaig' is mentioned in the 13th-century charter along with 'Elanvow, Elanvanow and Elanrouglas' (MacFarlane 1922, 27), but matching these with the known islands is difficult. The 1st edition OS map shows four named islands in the north end of Loch Lomond: 'Island I Vow' (Elan Vow), 'Inveruglas Isle', 'Wallace's Isle' and 'Tarbet Isle', plus two very small unnamed islands. Further work on the documentary evidence is required here, especially as there is also an island further south with the similar sounding name to 'Elaig' which is 'Inchlonaig', opposite Luss.

7.3 19th/21st century

A very small number of 19th to 21st century finds attest to sporadic visits to the island probably by picnickers and campers.

The effect of the tree roots

A tree survey was undertaken by the author prior to the excavations taking place and this survey ascertained that there were several trees growing in the vicinity of the structure but only one inside it. This tree has not been cut down. Tree roots were growing around the walls and penetrating the loose stones and soil beside the walls, but did not protrude through the walls themselves. Although the roots might not be damaging the walls directly at present, if the trees were to be uprooted in a storm the walls of the structure would be severely damaged.

8. Recommendations

The tree growing within the structure and the large trees in the vicinity of the walls should be felled before they blow down.

Consideration of further work could include

- more extensive excavation of the structure, which could help to ascertain its function.
- Examination of the deposits to the east of the structure to see if there are the remains of a prehistoric cairn which was partly robbed to provide stone for the construction of the building.

9. List of Sources

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Finally, many thanks to Melanie Tonk for permission to use her pier without which the logistics would have been so much more difficult.

11. Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Tables / Concordances

Table 1: Context Information

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Trench</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Compaction</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Texture</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Description/Interpretation</i>	<i>Stratigraphy and/or phasing info</i>
001	2	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Turf & roots	0.05m – 0.10m	Modern vegetation & thin topsoil	Seals all other contexts in Trench 2
002	2	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall. An internal wall within the structure. 0.75m wide & 0.5m high.	Sealed by 001, abutted by 004, 003, 012, 013. Abuts 010. Seals 011.
003	2	Layer				0.10m	Angular and rounded stones to the S of 002. Tumble from wall 002	Sealed by 001 & 006, abuts 002, 006. Seals 012.
004	2	Layer	Compact	Grey brown	silt	0.08m	Internal floor surface	Sealed by 001, abuts 002, seals 008.
005	2	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall, includes large quartz stones. 0.65m wide & 0.45m high. Outer wall of structure at S end.	Sealed by 001, abutted by 007, 006.
006	2	Layer	Compact	Grey brown	silt	0.20m	Layer between the walls 002 & 005. Internal floor surface. Contains coal and glass.	Sealed by 001. Abuts 005. Seals 003 & 009.
007	2	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Silt and stones	0.30m	Stones abutting the outer face of the wall 005. Tumble from wall 005.	Sealed by 001, abuts 005.
008	2	Layer	Moderate	Orange brown	Silt and stones	0.25m	Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size within the soil matrix. Re-deposited natural ?	Sealed by 004, abuts 002.
009	2	Layer	Moderate	Grey brown	Gritty silt		Layer beneath 006, within the small southern room. Not fully excavated.	Sealed by 006, = 013.
010	2	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall foundation wall 1.0m wide. Height of wall not examined.	Sealed by 001, abutted by 002.
011	2	Layer	Compact	Dark brown	Gritty silt	0.15m	Basal deposit within the small sondage in the southern room. Continued beneath the wall 002. Pre-dates the dividing wall.	Sealed by 013 and 002. Over bedrock.

012	2	Layer	Moderate	Orange brown	Silty sand and stones	0.10m	Mottled orange deposit abutting the wall 002. Similar to 008.	Sealed by 003, abuts 002, seals 013.
013	2	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Gritty silt	0.15m		Sealed by 012, abuts 002, seals 011. = 009.
020	4	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Turf & roots	0.05 – 0.10m	Modern vegetation & thin topsoil	Seals all other contexts in Trench 4
021	4	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Silt	0.05m	Contains several angular and rounded stones and occasional larger stones. Some patches of burning.	Sealed by 020 & 022
022	4	Layer	Loose	Very dark brown/black	Silt	0.04m	Burnt turf. Forming an oval shaped feature at the southern end of the trench. Result of a modern fire.	Sealed by 020, seals 021.
040	1	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Turf & roots	0.05 – 0.10m	Modern vegetation & thin topsoil	Seals all other contexts in Trench 1
041	1	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall in the E of the trench. The East wall of the structure. 0.75m wide & 0.25m high.	Sealed by 040, abutted by 049 & 043. Equal to 061. Possibly seals 050.
042	1	Layer	Moderate	Dark grey	Greasy, silt	0.04m	Seals stones 047 at the west end of the trench.	Sealed by 040, abuts 045, seals 047. Equivalent to 044?
043	1	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown/grey	Peaty silt with some gravel.	0.15m	Extends across the. Sealed by the burning 044 and tumble 047. OGS or floor surface.	Sealed by 044 & 047, Abuts 045. Seals 048 and bedrock.
044	1	Layer	Moderate	Dark grey brown	Greasy, charcoal	0.04m	Layer of burning extending across the interior of the structure between walls 045 and 041 over the layer 043. Contains burnt wood and coal.	Sealed by 040, seals 043.
045	1	Structure				m	Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall in the W of the structure. 0.60m wide and 0.30m high. W wall of structure.	Sealed by 040 & 046. Abutted by 043 & 047.
046	1	Layer			Stones		Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size abutting the wall 045 to the W. Extends for about 0.4m from the wall and forms a fairly straight edge on its W side except for the stone in section. Tumble or a path?	Sealed by 040. Abuts 045.
047	1	Layer			Stones		Large stones in the centre of the trench lying on top of layer 043. Tumble?	Sealed by 044, seals 043. Abuts 045.

048	1	Layer	Moderate	Light grey	Gritty clay	0.03m	Natural subsoil over bedrock	Sealed by 043.
049	1	Layer				0.30m	Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size abutting the E wall of the structure . Tumble?	Sealed by 040, abuts 041, seals 050.
050	1	Layer	Moderate	Grey	Gritty clay		Layer seen beneath the tumble 049. Natural ground surface?	Sealed by 049. Possibly beneath wall 041.
051	1	layer					Rough stones abutting the west side of wall 041 within the structure.	Sealed by 044 and 040, abutting 041.
060	3	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Turf & roots	0.08m	Modern vegetation & thin topsoil	Seals all other contexts in Trench 3
061	3	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming a drystone wall 0.75m wide & 0.50m high. East wall of structure.	Equal to 041.
062	3	Layer			Stones	030m	Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size. Abutting wall 061. Tumble?	Sealed by 060, abutting 061, seals 063.
063	3	Layer	Moderate	Light grey	Gritty gravel & clay.		Natural subsoil below wall 061, tumble and over bedrock.	Sealed by 062 & 061.
070	5	Layer	Moderate	Mid brown	Turf & roots	0.01-0.05m	Modern vegetation & thin topsoil	Seals all other contexts in Trench 5
071	5	Structure					Rough angular and rounded stones of varying size forming W wall of structure 1.0m wide.	Sealed by 070, Equivalent to wall 045 and 010.

Table 2: Finds

<i>Find No.</i>	<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Trench</i>	<i>No. of Pieces</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	001	2	1	Clay pipe	Bowl and stem marked 'GLASG[OW] & "GHILL'. 19 th century
2	021	4	1	Pottery	No glaze. 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
3	021	4	1	Pottery	Green glaze. 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
4	021	4	1	Flint	Grey flake, broken probable gun flint
5	022	4	1	Pottery	No glaze 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
6	046	1	2	Pottery	Slight green glaze, 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
7	062	3	1	Coin	Scottish turner (copper 2d) coin of either the 1640s or 1660s issues (D Bateson pers com)
8	062	3	1	Pottery	No glaze, thick sherd. Prehistoric (A Sheridan pers comm)
9	043	1	6	Iron	Flat spade-like object
10	043	1	1	Flint	Grey flake, probable gun flint
11	022	4	1	Pottery	No glaze. 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
12	001	2	5	Pottery	No glaze. Handle. 14/14 th century (pers. comm. George Haggarty).
13	043	1	1	Flint	Flake (undiagnostic)
	u/s		1	slate	Frag
	001	2	2	Pottery	White ceramic, modern
	001	2	3	Glass	Clear, vessel
	001	2	1	Glass	Green bottle – joins with glass from 006
	001	2	1	Bone	?Rib, butchered
	003	2	1	Glass	Clear, vessel
	006	2	1	Glass	Clear, ?thick window
	006	2	1	Glass	Green bottle – joins with glass from 001
	006	2	1	Coal	lump
	006	2	1	Metal	Thin lid
	020	4	1	Metal	Thin lid
	020	4	1	Pottery	white
	020	4	1	Lead	Air gun pellet
	020	4	1	Glass	Green bottle frag
	020	4	9	Glass	Clear, vessel
	021	4	1	Iron	Nail, square head
	021	4	1	Pottery	Red fabric, no glaze 17 th century (G Haggarty pers comm)
	040	1	1	Glass	Green, bottle
	040	1	1	Quartz	Flake
	043	1	1	Clay pipe	Stem frag.

Table 3: Samples

<i>Sample No.</i>	<i>Context No.</i>	<i>No./Size Bag/Bucket</i>	<i>Reason for sampling</i>				<i>Application/comments</i>
			<i>Pot</i>	<i>Lithic</i>	<i>Bone</i>	<i>Botanics</i>	
001	004	M				X	Charcoal?
002	006	M				X	Charcoal?

003	044	M				X	Coal/charcoal
004	022	S	X			X	Charcoal?
005	063	M					Charcoal?
006	043	S		X		X	Charcoal?
007	011	S				X	Charcoal?

Table 4: Drawings

<i>Drawing No.</i>	<i>Sheet No.</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Scale</i>
001	1	002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007.	Trench 2. Plan after 001 removed.	1:20
002	1	021, 022	Trench 4 Plan after 020 removed.	1:20
003	2	041, 042, 043, 044, 045, 046, 047	Trench 1. Plan after 040 removed.	1:20
004	3	002, 005, 007, 008, 009.	Trench 2 after 004, & 006 removed.	1:20
005	2	061, 062.	Trench 3. Plan after 060 removed.	1:20
006	4	041, 043, 045, 046, 047	Trench 1. Plan after 042 & 044 removed.	1:20
007	4	061, 062	Trench 3. Plan after some of rubble 062 removed	1:20
008	5	061, 062, 063	Trench 3. Plan after half of rubble 062 within the trench removed onto subsoil and bedrock.	1:20
009	6	002, 005, 010, 041, 045, 061.	Plan of Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5.	1:50
010	7	040, 041, 042, 043, 044, 045, 046, 047, 048, 049, 050,	Trench 1. S facing section	1:10
011	8	001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 011, 012, 013.	Trench 2, W facing section	1:10
012	8	060, 061, 062	Trench 3, N facing section	1:10

Table 5: Digital Photographs

<i>Photo No.</i>	<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>From (Compass)</i>
4405161_141014_1	001, 002, 003, 005	Trench 2 deturfing	NW
4405161_141014_2	001, 002, 003	Trench 2 deturfing, Alison	SW
4405161_141014_3	001, 002, 003	Trench 2 deturfing, Alison & Peter	NW
4405161_141014_4	040	Trench 1 pre-excavation	W
4405161_141014_5	021, 022	Trench 4	S
4405161_141014_6	021, 022	Trench 4, Preston & Ian	SW
4405161_141014_7	021, 022	Trench 4, Preston & Ian	SW
4405161_141014_8		General view of site	W
4405161_141014_9		General view of site	W
4405161_141014_10		Clay pipe 'GLASG[OW]'	

4405161_141014_11		Clay pipe 'GLASG[OW]'	
4405161_141014_12	002, 004, 003	Trench 2 N end, turf removed	SE
4405161_141014_13	007, 005, 003, 002,	Trench 2, deturfed	S
4405161_141014_14	007, 005, 003, 002,	Trench 2, deturfed	S
4405161_141014_15	002, 003, 006, 005,	Trench 2, deturfed	W
4405161_141014_16	002, 003, 006, 005,	Trench 2, deturfed	W
4405161_141014_17	002, 003, 006, 005,	Trench 2, deturfed	W
4405161_141014_18	002, 003, 006, 005,	Trench 2, deturfed	W
4405161_141014_19	002, 003	Trench 2, deturfed, detail of the wall	W
4405161_141014_20	021	Trench 4, deturfed	S
4405161_141014_21	021	Trench 4, deturfed	S
4405161_141014_22	021	Trench 4, deturfed	S
4405161_141014_23	021, 22	Trench 4, deturfed, S end	W
4405161_141014_24	021	Trench 4, deturfed, middle	W
4405161_141014_25		Trench 4, deturfed N end	W
4405161_151014_1	021	Trench 4, pottery found	
4405161_151014_2	021	Trench 4, pottery found	
4405161_151014_3	021	Trench 4, pottery found, SF 2	
4405161_151014_4	045, 044	Trench 1, deturfed	W
4405161_151014_5	045, 044	Trench 1, deturfed	W
4405161_151014_6	045, 046	Trench 1, deturfed	S
4405161_151014_7	044	Trench 1, deturfed, middle of trench	S
4405161_151014_8	044	Trench 1, deturfed, middle of trench	S
4405161_151014_9	041, 049	Trench 1, deturfed, E end	S
4405161_151014_10	041, 049	Trench 1, deturfed, E end	S
4405161_151014_11	041, 049	Trench 1, deturfed, E end	S
4405161_151014_12	021, 022	Trench 4, deturfed	N
4405161_151014_13	022	Trench 4 deturfed, middle of trench	N
4405161_151014_14		lan planning	
4405161_151014_15		lan planning	
4405161_151014_16	021, 022	Trench 4 being planned	
4405161_151014_17		lan planning	
4405161_151014_18		Level set up	
4405161_151014_19		lan planning	
4405161_151014_20		Trench 1, Preston digging	W
4405161_151014_21		Trench 2, Peter & Alison	
4405161_151014_22	002, 004	Trench 2, Alison	W
4405161_161014_1	044, 045, 041	Trench 1,	W
4405161_161014_2	021	Trench 4, med pottery sherd discovered SF3	
4405161_161014_3	021	Trench 4, med pottery sherd discovered SF3	
4405161_161014_4		Trench 4, lan finding pottery	
4405161_161014_5		Trench 4, lan finding pottery	
4405161_161014_6		Trench 4, lan finding pottery	
4405161_161014_7	044, 045, 041	Trench 1	W
4405161_161014_8	044, 045, 041	Trench 1	W
4405161_161014_9	060	Trench 3, surface moss removed	W
4405161_161014_10	060	Trench 3, surface moss removed	W
4405161_161014_11	022	Trench 4, 022 half sectioned	S
4405161_161014_12	022	Trench 4, 022 half sectioned	S
4405161_161014_13	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	S
4405161_161014_14	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	S
4405161_161014_15		Group shot in tent	

4405161_161014_16		Group shot in tent	
4405161_161014_17		Preston	
4405161_161014_18	002, 004	Trench 2, 001 removed	W
4405161_161014_19	002, 004	Trench 2, 001 removed	W
4405161_161014_20	003, 006	Trench 2, 001 removed, centre of trench	W
4405161_161014_21	005, 007	Trench 2, 001 removed	W
4405161_161014_22	005, 002, 004, 006,	Trench 2, 001 removed , whole trench	N
4405161_161014_23	005, 007, 002	Trench 2, 001 removed , whole trench	S
4405161_161014_24	044, 045	Trench 1,	W
4405161_161014_25	044, 045	Trench 1,	W
4405161_161014_26	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	SE
4405161_161014_27	002, 005	Trench 2	NE
4405161_161014_28	002, 005	Trench 2	NE
4405161_171014_1		View up the loch	
4405161_171014_2	044	Trench 1	W
4405161_171014_3	041, 049	Trench 1, 040 removed	SW
4405161_171014_4	041, 049	Trench 1, 040 removed	W
4405161_171014_5	046, 045	Trench 1, 040 removed	SW
4405161_171014_6	046, 045	Trench 1, detail of stones 046	S
4405161_171014_7	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	S
4405161_171014_8	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	S
4405161_171014_9	061, 062	Trench 3, 060 removed	W
4405161_171014_10	061, 062	Trench 3, Some of 062 removed	S
4405161_171014_11	002, 005, 006	Trench 2, 004, 003 & 006 removed	NE
4405161_171014_12	002, 001, 004, 008	Trench 2, 001, 004 removed	W
4405161_171014_13	003, 006, 009	Trench 2, central area	W
4405161_171014_14	005, 007	Trench 2, some of 007 removed	W
4405161_171014_15	005, 007	Trench 2, some of 007 removed	E
4405161_171014_16	022	Trench 4, 020 removed	S
4405161_171014_17	022	Trench 4, 020 removed	N
4405161_171014_18	022	Trench 4, burnt roots in layer 022	E
4405161_171014_19		View of island	
4405161_181014_1	044	Preston & DJ in Trench 1	SW
4405161_181014_2	044	Preston & DJ in Trench 1	SW
4405161_181014_3	061, 063,	Tessa in Trench 3	
4405161_181014_4		Peter sieving soil from Trench 2	
4405161_181014_5	063, 061	Trench 3 after 062 half sectioned	S
4405161_181014_6	063, 061	Trench 3 after 062 half sectioned	E
4405161_181014_7	063, 061	Trench 3 after 062 half sectioned	S
4405161_181014_8	063, 061	Trench 3 after 062 half sectioned	E
4405161_181014_9	063, 061	Trench 3 after 062 half sectioned	E
4405161_181014_10	061	Trench 3 detail of wall	S
4405161_181014_11	061	Trench 3 detail of wall	S
4405161_181014_12	044	Preston & DJ in Trench 1	SE
4405161_181014_13	043	Iron object, possible spade or shovel SF 9	
4405161_181014_14	043	Iron object, possible spade or shovel SF 9	
4405161_201014_1		General view of dig, Trench 2	NE
4405161_201014_2		General view of dig, Trench 2	N
4405161_201014_3		General view of dig, Trench 2	N
4405161_201014_4		General view of dig, Trench 2 & 3	E
4405161_201014_5		General view of dig, Trench 2 & 3	E

4405161_201014_6		Group shot	
4405161_201014_7		Group shot	
4405161_201014_8		Iron object SF 9	
4405161_201014_9	045, 043	Trench 1	W
4405161_201014_10	071	Trench 5	N
4405161_201014_11	071	Trench 5	N
4405161_231014_1	022	Trench 4, sondage in NW corner	N
4405161_231014_2	022	Trench 4, sondage in NW corner	E
4405161_231014_3	022	Trench 4 N end of trench	E
4405161_231014_4	022	Trench 4 middle of trench	E
4405161_231014_5	022	Trench 4 S end of trench	E
4405161_231014_6	046, 045, 042	Trench 1, S facing section, W end	S
4405161_231014_7	046, 045, 042	Trench 1, S facing section, detail of roots	S
4405161_231014_8	045, 044, 042	Trench 1, S facing section	S
4405161_231014_9	045, 044, 042	Trench 1, S facing section	S
4405161_231014_10	044, 043, 048	Trench 1, S facing section, sondage in middle	S
4405161_231014_11	044, 043, 048	Trench 1, S facing section, sondage in middle	S
4405161_231014_12	044, 043, 048	Trench 1, S facing section, sondage in middle	S
4405161_231014_13	044, 043, 048	Trench 1, S facing section, sondage in middle	S
4405161_231014_14	041, 049, 044	Trench 1, S facing section, E end	S
4405161_231014_15	041, 049, 044	Trench 1, S facing section, E end, detail	S
4405161_231014_16	041, 049	Trench 1, S facing section, E end	S
4405161_231014_17	041, 049, 050	Trench 1, S facing section, E end	S
4405161_231014_18	041, 049, 043	Trench 1 whole trench	W
4405161_231014_19	041, 049, 043	Trench 1 whole trench	W
4405161_231014_20	041, 049, 043	Trench 1 whole trench	W
4405161_231014_21	041	Trench 1, wall	S
4405161_231014_22	045	Trench 1, wall, W facing elevation	W
4405161_231014_23	045	Trench 1, wall, E facing elevation	E
4405161_231014_24	043, 048	Trench 1, sondage onto bedrock	S
4405161_231014_25	041	Trench 1, wall, W facing elevation	W
4405161_231014_26	041, 049	Trench 1, wall E facing elevation	E
4405161_231014_27	041, 049	Trench 1, wall	S
4405161_231014_28	071, 045	Trench 5 & 1 wall marked with poles	S
4405161_231014_29	071, 045, 002	Trench 5 & 1 wall marked with poles	S
4405161_231014_30	002, 005	Trench 2, SW corner of structure	SW
4405161_231014_31	005, 002	Trench 2, S facing elevation of 005	S
4405161_231014_32	005, 002	Trench 2, S facing elevation of 005	S
4405161_231014_33	002	Trench 2, wall, W facing section	W
4405161_231014_34	001, 003, 012, 013, 011	Trench 2. W facing section (off set)	W
4405161_231014_35	001, 006, 005, 007	Trench 2, W facing section	W
4405161_231014_36	001, 005, 007	Trench 2, W facing section	W
4405161_231014_37	005, 007	Trench 2, wall, S facing elevation	S
4405161_231014_38	005	Trench 2, wall	W
4405161_231014_39	005	Trench 2, wall	W
4405161_231014_40	005, 006	Trench 2, wall N elevation	N
4405161_231014_41	002, 003, 012, 013, 011	Trench 2, S facing elevation	S
4405161_231014_42	010, 002	Trench 2, extension	W
4405161_231014_43	010, 002	Trench 2, extension	W
4405161_231014_44	010, 002, 003	Trench 2, junction of walls	W
4405161_231014_45	010, 002, 003	Trench 2, junction of walls	W
4405161_231014_46	010, 003	Trench 2, wall	N
4405161_231014_47	001, 010, 005	Trench 2 SW corner	N

4405161_231014_48	041	Trench 1, wall	S
4405161_231014_49	071	Trench 5,	S
4405161_231014_50	071, 010	Trench 1 & 5 walls	S
4405161_251014_1		Group shot, Peter, Preston, Libby & Margaret	
4405161_251014_2		Group shot, Peter, Preston, Libby & Heather	
4405161_251014_3		Group shot, Peter, Preston, Libby & Heather	
4405161_251014_4		Trench 4 returfed	
4405161_251014_5		Trench 4 returfed	
4405161_251014_6		Trench 5 returfed	
4405161_251014_7		Trench 2 returfed	
4405161_251014_8		Trench 2 returfed	
4405161_251014_9		Trench 2 returfed	
4405161_251014_10		Trench 1 returfed	

APPENDIX 2: DES

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Argyll and Bute
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Tarbet Isle
PROJECT CODE:	4405161
PARISH:	Arrochar
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Heather James
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Northlight Heritage
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Excavation
NMRS NO(S):	NN39NW 22
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Building
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	15 th to 17 th -century pottery, 17 th -century coin and a sherd from a prehistoric urn
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NN 3288 0540
START DATE (this season)	14/10/14
END DATE (this season)	23/10/14
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	FIRAT (1996a) 'Loch Lomond Islands (Arrochar; Luss parishes), survey', <i>Discovery Excav Scot</i> Page(s): 15
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Ongoing research into the Clan Macfarlane history included the excavation of five small trenches over the low stone foundations of a trapezoidal-shaped building on Tarbet Isle in Loch Lomond. The aims were to ascertain the character and date of the structure, the depth of deposits on the island and the effect of the tree roots on the archaeological remains. Tarbet Isle is depicted on Pont's manuscript map (No 17) occupied by a significant structure with high gable ends and an annexe, but this structure is not shown on any later maps. It seems likely that Pont was actually depicting the island of Inveruglas with its documented medieval castle.</p> <p>The excavations confirmed the presence of drystone foundation walls which would probably have supported a timber and turf structure. The finds included several 17th-century pottery sherds, a possible 13th- or 14th-century pottery handle and a 17th-century coin.</p> <p>The earth floor of the structure was sealed by a layer of burning, which is thought to be rake out from a hearth.</p> <p>A single thick prehistoric sherd derived from a large, flat-rimmed bucket urn was also found, which suggests that the island had been used for cremation burial (c 1500 – 1000 BC).</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Peter McFarlin & Preston McFarland (USA)
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Northlight Heritage, Studio 406, South Block, 64 Osborne St, Glasgow G1 5QH
EMAIL ADDRESS:	hjames@yorkat.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	NMRS (Intended)

APPENDIX 3: Flints

Three flints were collected from the excavations. One is a probable gun flint (SF 10 context 043) and one is a broken probable gun flint (SF 4 context 021) (pers comm Dr Tony Pollard).

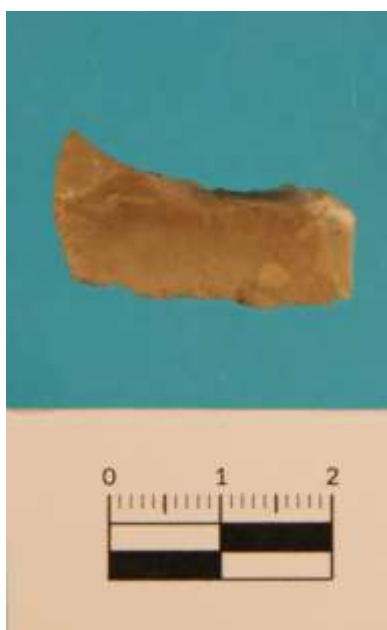
Context 043 contained one undiagnostic, unworked flint flake (pers comm Dr Dene Wright).

SF No	Context	Description	Length	Width	Thickness (max)
10	043	Grey, wedged – shaped gun flint.	20mm	19mm	5mm
4	021	Grey, wedged – shaped gun flint, (broken)	27mm	14mm	7mm
13	043	Grey flake, unworked. Undiagnostic.	19mm	10mm	4mm

Table 6: Flint Catalogue



SF 10 (context 043)



SF 04 (context 021)



SF 13 (context 043)

APPENDIX 4: Botanical Report

1. Summary

A total of seven bulk samples were submitted for flotation processing to recover artefacts and ecofacts. Four samples were selected for further botanical analysis to address specific research questions. Two deposits from Trench 1 from the southern room of the structure contained different charcoal assemblages; both contained mixed deciduous taxa, however context (044) included conifer charcoal and may be more modern than initially expected. The remaining samples contained charcoal from mixed deciduous woodland taxa that are likely to represent utilisation of local woodland resources.

2. Introduction

Four trenches were excavated across a small structure located on Tarbet Isle, Loch Lomond. The excavation was concentrated on a rectangular building with drystone wall foundations thought to be 17th-18th century in date. Samples were submitted for specialist processing and analysis to recover any artefacts and ecofacts in order to determine the function of the two rooms of the building and discover any evidence of a hearths or evidence of industrial processes.

3. Methodology

Standard (Non-Waterlogged) Bulk Sample Processing

Bulk samples were received within 10 litre plastic tubs, sealed to exclude light and air. They were floted for the recovery of environmental evidence and artefacts using standard methods and a bespoke adapted Siraf flotation system including a pumped recycled water system with four settling tanks. Samples were disaggregated by agitating in water over a 500µm diameter mesh supported over a flotation drum. Light, primarily organic materials that floated as wash-over (flots) were retained on 500µm and 1mm calibrated mesh diameter Endicot sieves whilst other materials larger than 500µm that did not float remained on the mesh as the retent.

Wet retents were spread out on plastic trays and examined visually before being tagged and dried. The flot material was wrapped in blue acid-free paper, tagged and recorded before being air dried on trays in a warm drying room. Once dried, the retents were sieved using 4mm and 2mm Endicot sieves and sorted using magnified illuminated lamps for all categories of artefacts and ecofacts. A magnet was employed to locate magnetized stone and metals.

Sorting of flots was undertaken using a Nikon 93756 binocular microscope with associated Schott KL-1500 LCD cold light source. Sorted materials were bagged and labelled for potential submission to specialists and weighed (where relevant) using an Ohaus CS200 digital scale calibrated to 0.01g. Sorted residues were also weighed on a digital scale, bagged and stored pending decision for disposal.

Botanical Material Identification

Carbonised botanical material from each sorted retent was added to the corresponding flot before being passed through a 500µm, 1mm and 4mm mesh diameter sieve. Charcoal identification was undertaken using the reflected light of a Zenith metallurgical microscope at X63 magnification. Depending upon volume present, 100% of the charcoal >4mm fragment size, or a representative sample thereof, was identified as completely as preservation would allow. Charcoal >2mm fragment size was scanned, and if necessary and feasible a selection was identified to ensure the identified material provided an accurate representation of the species composition for each sample analysed. The total volume of charcoal present was recorded. Carbonised cereals, seeds and other macroplant remains within samples were 100% identified as specifically as preservation would allow using a Nikon 93756 binocular microscope at variable magnifications of between X8 - X40 with associated Schott cold light source.

Charcoal identification was undertaken with reference to Schweingruber (1990). Seed identification was confirmed by comparison with images within Beijerinck (1947), Cappers (2006) and the Dickson botanical reference collection. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

4. Results

Results from processing and analysis are presented separately in spreadsheet format as Tables 7 & 8.

Trench 1 Northern Room

Context (043) Sample <06>

Context (043) contained a small volume of charcoal identified as mixed woodland taxa. The assemblage included alder (*Alnus*), birch (*Betula*), oak (*Quercus*), willow (*Salix*), hazel (*Corylus*) and cherry type (*Prunoideae*). One carbonised possible nut shell fragment was recovered, but was highly abraded and could not be identified with confidence. No other notable artefacts or ecofacts were recovered from this sample other than one small shard of pottery.

Context (044) Sample <03>

Deposit (044) contained an abundance of charcoal from coniferous and deciduous woodland taxa, with a volume of coal and cinder. The mixed deciduous woodland taxa included ash (*Fraxinus*), willow, oak, hazel and alder. Fragments of conifer charcoal were identified as pine (*Pinus sp*), fir (*Abies sp*) and fir/spruce (*Abies/Picea*). This was the only sample submitted for identification to contain conifer charcoal and coal. Most of the charcoal fragments were derived from relatively young round-wood twigs and had a fresh unabraded and unaltered appearance and comparatively large size, all of which may suggest a fairly modern date.

Trench 2 Southern Room

Context (011) Sample <07>

Only a very small volume of charcoal was recovered from context (011) which was interpreted as re-deposited material, possibly a levelling deposit. The deposit pre dates the dividing wall of the structure. Only fifteen fragments could be identified and included oak, ash, hazel, cherry type and birch. One carbonised bramble (*Rubus fruticosus s/l*) seed was also recovered and may have derived from scrub clearance. As the deposit is thought to be re deposited material from elsewhere on the island, interpretation based on the presence of only one seed can only be tentative.

Trench 3 Outside Structure

Context (063) Sample <05>

Context (063) was interpreted as the old ground surface beneath the structure and was thought to be similar to (011). It was also anticipated the deposit may contain material from a prehistoric cairn which may have existed in the vicinity. A diverse assemblage of charcoal was identified that derived from mixed woodland taxa similar to the other samples but with the inclusion of one fragment of holly (*Ilex*). One carbonised dock (*Rumex sp*) seed was recovered and may have derived from scrub clearance. Again, little interpretation can be gleaned from only one seed. One very small fragment of calcined bone was noted, but was poorly preserved, abraded and therefore unidentifiable.

5. Discussion

Few artefacts were recovered from the samples during sorting, with the exception one small shard of pottery from (043) and one small fragment of poorly preserved indeterminate calcined bone from (063). Magnetic material was recovered from all samples but was deemed to be natural ironstone, known to be abundant within the local geology. No evidence for industrial activity was recovered from Trench 1 contrary to anticipation. However, coal mixed with charcoal, including oak, could be interpreted as indicative of an industrial hearth. When available, oak is usually the preferred wood for fuel that requires prolonged burning at very high temperatures. As such oak is regularly associated with metalworking and industrial processes and has been the smelting fuel of choice since antiquity (Tylecote 1962, Dickson & Dickson 2000). There did not appear to be any primary reliance on any one taxon for use as fuel, therefore the charcoal assemblages may be reflective of small scale domestic hearths and fires.

Context (044) contained fragments of fir, fir/spruce and pine together with mixed deciduous woodland taxa that would suggest the utilisation of wood from local resources. The majority of the fragments appeared to have derived from roundwood twigs or branches and therefore unlikely have been structural. The presence of both pine and fir may be indicative of local plantations and possibly more modern arboricultural practices with intentional plantation of such types for a variety of practical uses. If the charcoal had been deemed to have derived from silver fir (*Abies alba*), the presence of such could corroborate an 17th-18th century date as it was introduced early in the 17th century. However, it is not known to have been widely planted within the area. All other types of fir were not introduced until the 19th century. Consequently, the combination of charcoal types is more likely to represent fairly recent burning events.

Uncarbonised botanical remains including leaf fragments and mosses within the samples are more than likely

modern and therefore not associated with archaeological material. The abundance of roots in all of the samples would support this assumption.

6. Bibliography

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Context	Sample	Charcoal	Bone	Constituents weights (g)		
				magnetic material	Plant material	pottery
004	01	0.03		0.45		
006	02	0.02		0.11	0.01	
011	07	1.28		0.45		
022	04	1.19		0.73		
043	06	0.94		1.13		0.94
044	03	6.73		1.03		
063	05	1.6	0.01	1.56		

Table 7 Sorted material

Tarbet 4405161	Trench	1	1	2	3
	Context	043	044	011	063
	Sample	06	03	07	05
% sorted		100	10	100	100
Total flot volume (1-5 abundance scale)		80ml	2000ml	30ml	40ml
Charcoal		++	+++++	++	++
Coal		-	+++	-	-
Cinder		-	++	-	-
Seed		-	-	+	+
Dicot. leaf fgmt.		++	-	+	++
Moss		-	-	-	+
Roots		++++	++	++++	++++
Insect/invertebrate remains		++	+	-	+++
Total Charcoal (F+R)					
Charcoal >4mm		10ml	500ml	5ml	10ml
Charcoal <4mm		5ml	1000ml	5ml	5ml
% >4mm sorted		100	10	100	100
Charcoal AMS option Y / N		Y	Y	Y	Y
Charcoal	Common Name				
<i>Abies sp</i>	fir	-	2 (0.06g)	-	-
<i>Abies/Picea</i>	fir/spruce	-	1 (0.24g)	-	-
<i>Alnus</i>	alder	7 (0.12g)	2 (0.46g)	-	5 (0.15g)
<i>Betula</i>	birch	3 (0.15g)	-	2 (0.06g)	2 (0.08g)
<i>cf Betula</i>	cf birch	-	-	-	1 (0.12g)
<i>Corylus</i>	hazel	3 (0.13g)	7 (0.55g)	1 (0.06g)	1 (0.14g)
<i>Fraxinus</i>	ash	-	1 (0.25g)	2 (0.03g)	1 (0.23g)
<i>Ilex</i>	holly	-	-	-	1 (0.06g)
Indeterminate	indeterminate	-	-	-	2 (0.17g)
<i>Pinus sp</i>	pine	-	3 (0.49g)	-	-
Prunoideae	plum/cherry	2 (0.10g)	-	1 (0.02g)	-
<i>Quercus</i>	oak	4 (0.23g)	3 (0.26g)	9 (0.35g)	7 (0.32g)
<i>Salix</i>	willow	1 (0.07g)	1 (0.05g)	-	-
Macros (carbonised)	Common Name				
<i>cf indet. nutshell fgmt.</i>	<i>cf indet. nutshell fgmt.</i>	1	-	-	-
Seeds (carbonised)	Common Name				
<i>Rubus fruticosus sl</i>	bramble	-	-	1	-
<i>Rumex sp</i>	docks	-	-	-	1

Table 8: Charcoal & seed Identification