

Plots 1 to 3 & 'Stepping Stones' Extension, Seton Mains, Longniddry: Evaluation Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21786
14th January 2011



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

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Plots 1 to 3 & 'Stepping Stones' Extension, Seton Mains, Longniddry Evaluation: Data Structure Report

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National Grid Reference (NGR):	NT 4245 7535
AOC Project No:	21786
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

This report represents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the site of three housing plots and a house extension at 'Stepping Stones', Seton Mains, Longniddry, East Lothian.

The archaeological evaluation comprised in excess of a 10% trenching sample.

The site was found to be archaeologically sterile, with only modern features such as services and made ground encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Mr. Paul Calvesbert to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a proposed residential development at 'Stepping Stones', Seton Mains, Longniddry, East Lothian (centred NGR: NT 4245 7535). The proposed development consists of three house plots within a greenfield setting (Planning References, Plot 1 07/00972/FUL, Plot 2 08/00742/FUL and Plot 3 08/00103/FUL) along with an extension to the existing 'Stepping Stones' property (Planning Reference 07/01072/FUL).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development lies within the administrative area of East Lothian Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS). ELCAS recommended a programme of archaeological works in accordance with *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government February 2010) and *Planning Advice Note 42* (SOEnd 1994) in determining the nature, extent, condition, date and significance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 1.1.3 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2011) was agreed with ELCAS in advance of the evaluation being undertaken. The evaluation was designed around a 10% trenching sample, of each development plot with Plot 1 measuring c.700 m², Plot 2 measuring c.500 m², Plot 3 measuring c.350 m² whilst the extension to 'Stepping Stones' measured c.300 m². A minimum of a 10% trenching sample was undertaken at each plot with care taken to position the trenches within the main footprint of the new build where possible and to avoid the areas of 'tree root protection' as noted within a recent tree survey undertaken as part of the planning application. Additionally areas of known disturbance associated with existing services (mains water, electric, sewers and septic tanks), were also excluded by the evaluation trenching. This led to the evaluation trenching, as a percentage of the actual available land, being in excess of 20% within each Plot. Unfortunately the plot for the extension to 'Stepping Stones' was still mostly covered by an extant building with the remaining area between the to be demolished garage and existing 'Stepping Stones' building crossed by live services.
- 1.1.4 The evaluation identified neither significant archaeological features nor artefacts.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The development area at Seton Mains lies within a small cluster of houses lying between Longniddry and Port Seton, just north of the A198 in East Lothian. The development covers c.0.2 ha, centred at approximately NGR: NT 4245 7535. The land is presently gardens and access roads, though previously would have been arable farmland, which continues to form the main northern and western boundaries of the site.

1.3 Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland archives do not list any known sites existing within the development boundary. However the development area borders the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No.6191) described as a prehistoric enclosure, (as a fort in its NMRS entry No. NT47SW 19), measuring some 205 m NNE by 150 m SSW. Prior to NMRS NT47SW 19 being scheduled in 1995, the site was subject to a

topographical survey during the course of which eight lithics were recovered from the northern part of the enclosure.

- 1.3.2 Before the construction of a house in a plot adjacent to Plot 1 (Seton Mains Cottages), outwith the Scheduled Area though within the possible SE corner of the cropmark enclosure, two trenches were excavated (NMRS NT47SW 19). These revealed a ditch 1.3 m to 2.0 m wide by 0.25 m to 0.50 m deep and a few other features. The considerable truncation of the western end of the ditch suggests that the degree of preservation of other features within the assessment area may have been substantially reduced. A watching brief was conducted when the majority of the assessment area was stripped of topsoil but no further archaeological features were recorded.
- 1.3.3 To the east there is cropmark evidence of rig and furrow agriculture (NMRS NT47NW 61) whilst to the north-east lies a scheduled prehistoric enclosure and ring-ditch roundhouse (SAM No.6297). In the area of the SAM the *Sites and Monuments Record* notes a palisaded enclosure (MEL521), ring-ditch settlement (MEL522) and pit alignment (MEL2678).
- 1.3.4 Whilst no archaeological remains are known within the development area the fact that the majority of the site has no history of significant development means that subsurface remains may have existed prior to the evaluation. The nearby presence of a large enclosure and associated lithics, as well as numerous other prehistoric sites within the immediate locale, indicates a local presence from Prehistoric times.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:
- i) to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area;
 - ii) to advise and implement an appropriate form of mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication, given the infeasibility of preserving the archaeological material *in situ*, should significant archaeological remains be encountered.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The trenching was designed to establish the extent, condition, character, quality, significance and date of any archaeological features present within the site area. The trenching comprised the excavation of a total of five trenches of varying size and orientation, across the entire site, encompassing all three of the House Plots. Unfortunately the presence of a building across much of the House Extension plot meant that two evaluation trenches shown in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Dunbar 2011) could not be opened. The WSI (Dunbar 2011) required 135 m² of evaluation trenching be excavated across Plots 1 to 3.
- 3.2 The evaluation was undertaken by means of a JCB 3CX excavator equipped with a 2.0 m wide toothless ditching bucket. Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the

first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist.

- 3.3 All trial trenching was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures. The trenches were backfilled on completion of the evaluation.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 11th - 12th January 2011. Overall weather conditions were good, comprising overcast but dry conditions yielding good archaeological visibility. The following should be read in conjunction with the data presented in Appendices 1-3 and Figure 1.

- 4.1.2 The excavation of the trenches revealed topsoil composed of a dark brown sandy matrix. Very few modern finds were identified within the topsoil. Underlying the topsoil, natural subsoil varied between areas of clays, gravels and *in situ* weathered sandstone bedrock.



Plate 1: South-facing section of Trench 1 showing build up of dumped material as the trench slopes towards the burn

- 4.1.3 The WSI proposed two small trenches be excavated across the plot for the extension but the plot was still mostly covered by an extant building with the remaining area between the to be demolished garage and existing 'Stepping Stones' building crossed by live services. Of the remaining trenches the WSI stated that the 10% sample would require 135 m² of trenching and in the end nearly 150 m² was opened across the three house plots. When ground disturbed by the various utility services and root protection areas are included the percentage of the available land investigated by the evaluation would rise above 20%.

- 4.1.4 The present route of the burn that crosses the development area lies within a deep cutting, some 5 m to 6 m below that of the house plots with a very steep slope. Within the house plots themselves there is variation in levels, for example Plot 1 varies from more than 31.0 m OD in the west to 27.5 m OD in the east. Whilst Plot 3, on the east side of the burn, varies from 27.0 m OD in the West to 31.0 m OD in the east. The gardens around the existing 'Stepping Stones' house have been terraced with revetment walls with steep gradients and terraces created.
- 4.1.5 As Figure 2 shows the sites were crossed by numerous live services and therefore even prior to the evaluation it was obvious that substantial portions of each plot had been subjected to extensive disturbance. In addition to known services, the evaluation trenches in Plot 1 unearthed more large services tracks, one of which, an old sewer bisecting Plot 1, lay within a 0.80 m wide trench.
- 4.1.6 In all of the trenches, with the exception of Trench 2, it was clear that a significant amount of landscaping had occurred with extensive deposits of redeposited topsoil and modern building debris present, in depths reaching more than 1.0 m. It seems clear that such activities had been undertaken to create usable ground in levelling off the slope down to the burn. In each case from either side of the burn (Plots 1 and Plots 3) the natural geology slopes down towards the burn in what appears to have been a rather gradual slope. In contrast the current ground levels consist of mostly level terraces and sections of steep slope culminating with a steep descent to the burn. Plot 1 showed dumped deposits of 2.0 m with Plot 3 covered by nearly 1.0 m of mixed topsoil and building debris.
- 4.1.7 No significant archaeological features or artefacts were identified during the evaluation. The only artefacts (ceramics and glass sherds) noted during the evaluation were modern in date, the majority dating from the latter part of the 20th century.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 No significant archaeological remains or artefacts were identified during the evaluation. The significant balance of probability is that the site is free of archaeological material.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 No further archaeological works are considered necessary. This recommendation will require confirmation by ELCAS on behalf of East Lothian Council.

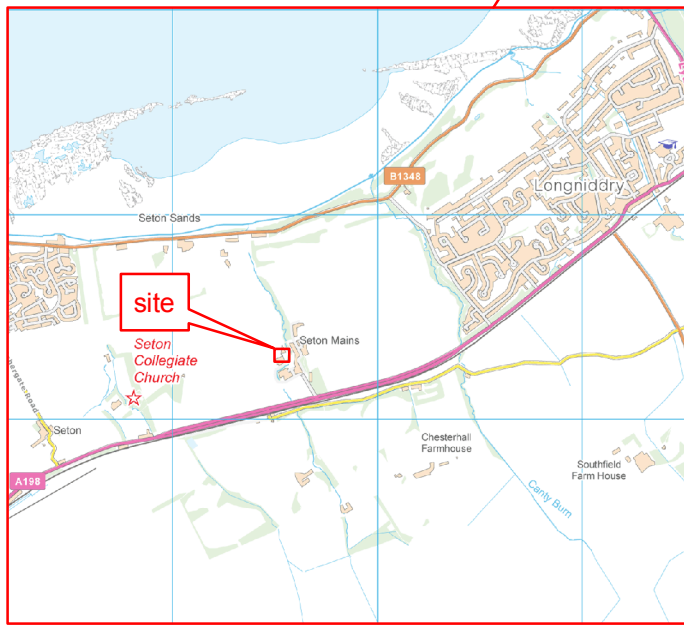
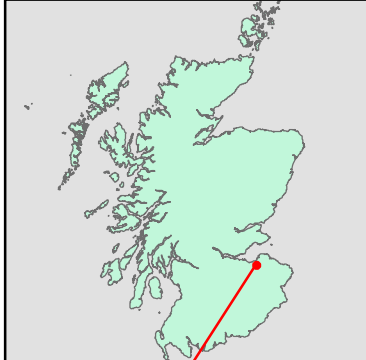
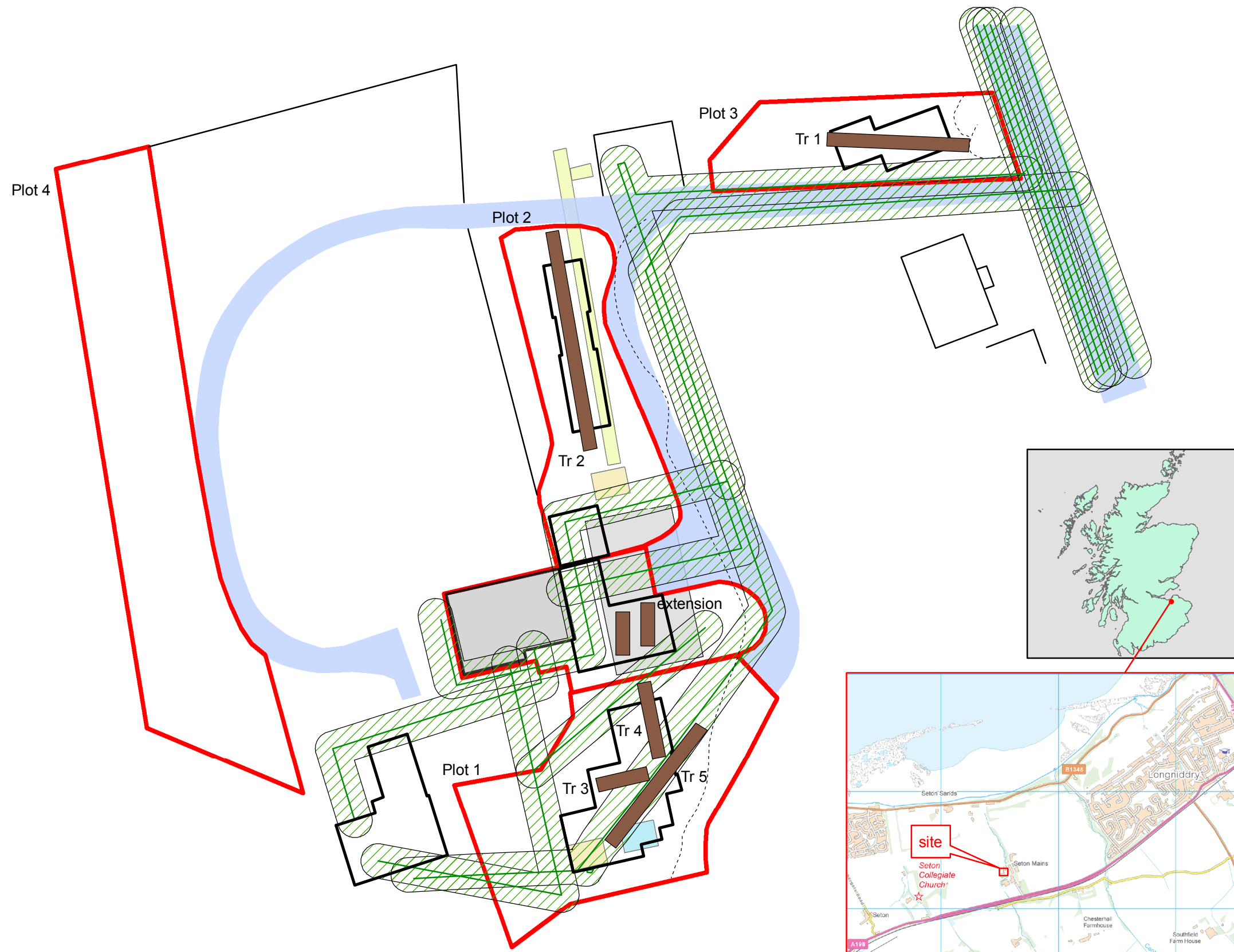
7 BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Dunbar, L. 2011 Plots 1 to 3 & 'Stepping Stones' Extension, Seton Mains, Longniddry, East Lothian: *Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpubl AOC Archaeology Archive Document.

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy* (February 2010)

SOEnd 1994 *Planning Advice Note 42. Archaeology – The Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monument Procedures*. The Scottish Office Environment Department.

Trench Location Plan



Legend













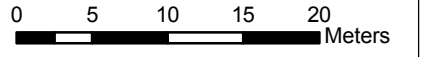
-  Evaluation Trench
-  Proposed Building
-  Route Protection Area
-  Services
-  2m Services Buffer Zone
-  existing building
-  Plot
-  1 Dog Kennel
-  Road
-  French Drain Soakaway
-  Old Garage
-  Septic Tank

Illustration derived from clients original



Cartographic data derived from OS OpenData, Crown Copyright

Project No.:	21786
Date:	17.01.2011
Scale at A3:	1:500



(c) AOC Archaeology 2010

Plots 1 to 3 and 'Stepping Stones' Extension, Seton Mains, Longniddry: Evaluation Data Structure Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	16.5 m by 2.0 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.15 - 0.24 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.20 - 1.05 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	The natural ground surface fell away sharply from east to west, sloping down steeply towards the burn, however a large deposit of redeposited topsoil mixed with building debris including reinforced concrete, bricks, cement, paving slabs and metal lay under the topsoil creating a flat terrace. This was up to 0.85 m thick at western end of trench.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Gravel and clay
<i>Finds</i>	Modern ceramic, glass and brick noted within both topsoil and redeposited made ground.

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	25.0 m by 2.0 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.05 - 0.24 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.15 - 0.30 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	At northern end of trench encountered large wide cut of modern drainage service.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Mostly weathered bedrock with discrete areas of clay
<i>Finds</i>	Modern ceramic and glass noted within topsoil.

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	7.5 m by 2.0 m
<i>Orientation</i>	E-W
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.85 - 1.14 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.95 - 1.20 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Natural ground surface fell away sharply from west to east, sloping down steeply towards the burn. The western end of the trench contained two service cuts, one for an unmarked drain and the other for an electrical feed to the garage. The eastern end of the trench was crossed at an angle by the large cut for a live sewer. The stratigraphy of the trench was topsoil (c.0.20 m) over a redeposited mixed topsoil (up to 1.0 m thick increasing in depth from West to East) over subsoil.
<i>Subsoil</i>	Mostly weathered bedrock with discrete areas of clay.
<i>Finds</i>	Modern ceramic and glass noted within topsoil and mixed topsoil.

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	10.0 m by 2.0 m
<i>Orientation</i>	N-S
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.85 - 1.14 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.95 - 1.20 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Natural ground surface fell away sharply from west to east, sloping down steeply towards the burn. The stratigraphy of the trench was topsoil (c.0.30 m) over a band of orange gravel (0.05 m deep) over redeposited mixed topsoil (up to 0.90 m thick increasing in depth from west to east) over a possible buried topsoil (c.0.20 m thick) over subsoil.

Subsoil Mostly weathered bedrock with discrete areas of clay.
Finds Modern ceramic and glass noted within topsoil and mixed topsoil.

Trench 5

Dimensions 17.0 m by 2.0 m

Orientation NE-SW

Depth of Topsoil 0.95 - 2.05 m

Depth of Excavation 1.35 - 2.35 m

Significant Features None

Other Features Natural ground surface fell away sharply from west to east, sloping down steeply towards the burn. The stratigraphy of the trench was topsoil (c.0.30) m over a band of orange gravel (0.05 m deep) over redeposited mixed topsoil (up to 2.00 m thick increasing in depth from south-west to north-east) over a possible buried topsoil (c.0.20 m thick) over subsoil. A large old disused sewer ran diagonally across the trench. It lay above the natural subsoil on a bed of broken bricks within a wide cut up to 0.80 m truncating the redeposited topsoil.

Subsoil Mostly weathered bedrock with discrete areas of clay

Finds Modern ceramic and glass noted within topsoil and mixed topsoil.

APPENDIX 2: Photographic Record

Black & White Print/ /Digital Film 1

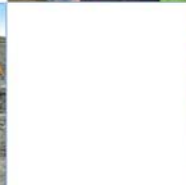
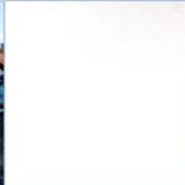
Frame	Trench/Plot	Description	From
1-2	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Plot 3	SE
3-4	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Tr.1 from East	E
5	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Tr.1 from West	W
6	Tr.1/Plot 3	S-Facing section of Tr.1	SW
7-8	-	Registration shot	-
9-10	Tr.2/Plot 2	General view of Tr.2 from South	S
11-12	Plot 3	General view of Western end of Plot 3 – raised garden showing services	W
13	Tr.3/Plot 3	General view of Tr.3 from West	W
14-15	Tr.3/Plot 3	General view of Tr.3 from East	E
16-17	Tr.4/Plot 3	General view of Tr.4 from South	S
18-19	Tr.5/Plot 3	General view of Tr.5 from South-west	SW
20-21	Tr.5/Plot 3	General view of Tr.5 from North-east	NE
22-23	Plot 3	General views of Plot 3 from raised garden to West	W

Digital Film

Frame	Trench/Plot	Description	From
1	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Plot 3	SE
2	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Tr.1 from East	E
3	Tr.1/Plot 3	General view of Tr.1 from West	W
4	Tr.1/Plot 3	S-Facing section of Tr.1	SW
5-6	Tr.2/Plot 2	General view of Tr.2 from South	S
7	Tr.2/Plot 2	General view of Tr.3 from West	W
8	Plot 3	General view of Western end of Plot 3 – raised garden showing services	W
9	Tr.3/Plot 3	General view of Tr.3 from West	W
10	Tr.4/Plot 3	General view of Tr.4 from South	S
11	Tr.5/Plot 3	General view of Tr.5 from South-west	SW
12	Tr.5/Plot 3	General view of Tr.5 from North-east	NE
13-14	Plot 3	General views of Plot 3 from raised garden to West	W

APPENDIX 3: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	East Lothian Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	'Stepping Stones', Seton Mains, Longniddry
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21786
PARISH:	Tranent
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Lindsay Dunbar
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S)	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 4245 7535
START DATE (this season)	11 th January 2011
END DATE (this season)	12 th January 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	N/A
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken prior to a housing development comprising three house plots and a house extension at 'Stepping Stones', Seton Mains, Longniddry, East Lothian. The archaeological evaluation comprised in excess of a 10% trenching sample.</p> <p>The site was found to be archaeologically sterile, with only modern features such as utility services and madeground encountered.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	---
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr. Pauls Calvesbert
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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