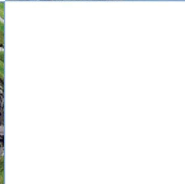
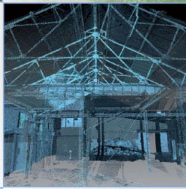
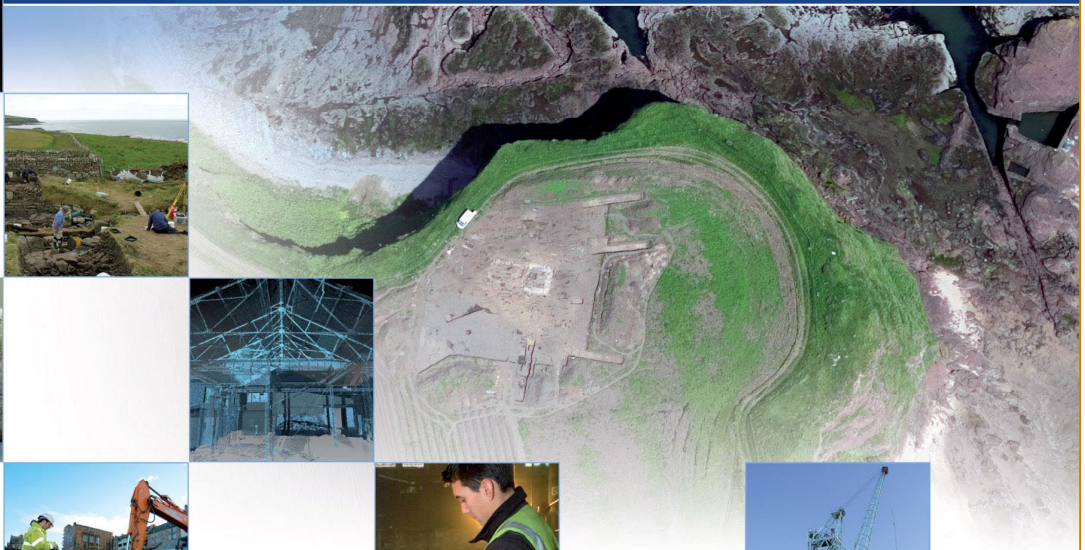
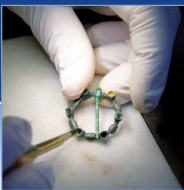


# Blyth Bank Farm Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

AOC 21461  
September 2009



ARCHAEOLOGY

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## Blyth Bank Farm Archaeological Evaluation: Data Structure Report

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**On Behalf of:** Glenrath Farms Ltd.,  
Peebles,  
Peebleshire  
EH45 9JW

**National Grid Reference (NGR):** NT 1413 4735

**AOC Project No:** 21461

**Prepared by:** Lindsay Dunbar

**Illustration by:** Alan Hunter-Blair

**Date of Fieldwork:** Evaluation - September 2009

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

**Author:** Lindsay Dunbar **Date:** 28 September 2009

**Approved by:** John Gooder **Date:** 28 September 2009

**Draft Report Stage:** Evaluation draft **Date:** 28 September 2009

**Enquiries to:** AOC Archaeology Group  
Edgefield Industrial Estate  
Edgefield Road  
Loanhead  
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593  
Fax. 0131 440 3422  
e-mail. [admin@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:admin@aocarchaeology.com)



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## Abstract

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A programme of archaeological works was required by Glenrath Farm Ltd in respect to a proposed commercial development at Blyth Bank Farm, Blyth Bridge, Peebles, Scottish Borders. The proposed development at Blythe Bank Farm will include the construction of a number of poultry sheds with associated access roads and landscaping works within existing arable farmland. A programme of archaeological works was required in keeping with the policies outlined in SPP23 (2008) and PAN42 (1994), in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

The footprint of each large shed was evaluated through the excavation of five trenches totalling, approximately 450 m<sup>2</sup>. In total 25 trenches totalling 2250 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated. The majority of the trenches contained no archaeological features and only a few lithic artefacts were identified from the topsoil in one trench. The features identified included a ruinous structure, presumed as a sheepfold and a relict field boundary. The small unstratified lithic assemblage contained a microlith micro-scraper and a narrow blade. No features or artefacts associated or contemporary with 'Longstruther', an 18<sup>th</sup> century village, were uncovered during the works.

## 0 Non Technical Summary

- 0.1 A programme of archaeological works was required by Glenrath Farm Ltd in respect to a proposed commercial development at Blyth Bank Farm, Blyth Bridge, Peebles, Scottish Borders. The proposed development at Blyth Bank Farm will include the construction of a number of poultry sheds with associated access roads and landscaping works within existing arable farmland. The proposed development lies within the administrative area of Scottish Borders Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by Dr. Bowles. A programme of archaeological works was required in keeping with the policies outlined in SPP23 (2008) and PAN42 (1994), in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 Blyth Bank farm occupies a total of 458 ha of pasture between the villages of Blyth Bridge and Romannobridge. The site of the proposed development within Blyth Bank Farm is located approximately 1 km north west of the A701 road between New Steading and Blyth Bank Steading (NGR: NT 1413 4735). The proposed poultry sheds are to be located either side of an unclassified track that runs through the valley between Blyth Muir and Blyth Bank.

### 1.2 Development proposal

- 1.2.1 The proposed development at Blyth Bank Farm will include the construction of ten poultry sheds with associated access roads and landscaping works. The proposed entrance to poultry sheds resort will involve the construction of a new access road from the New Steading to the A701 at NT 154 474.

### 1.3 Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the development area is set in a report AOC report, *Blyth Bank, Scottish Borders: Archaeological Impact Assessment* (Fouracre 2007). This assessment demonstrated the rich prehistoric heritage of land surrounding the proposed development site. The site of the former settlement of Longstruther is known to have occupied the site from at least 1775 and possibly earlier. A number of sites associated with the extraction and agricultural industry also exist within the proposed development site as well as the former main road from Edinburgh to Moffat.
- 1.3.2 Armstrong's map (1775) depicts a small settlement within the proposed development area comprising of six buildings lining the Longstruther Burn. The settlement is accessed by a

road later known as the Thief's Road, which linked Mountain's Cross and Longstruther to the Edinburgh-Moffat Road. Interestingly Longstruther is omitted from Skinner's map of 1775 which depicts the road from Edinburgh to Moffat suggesting that it was relatively small or insignificant settlement at this time.

- 1.3.3 The development has commenced inadvertently without the full suite of archaeological works being undertaken prior to the start of some construction groundworks; specifically in the area to the south of the aqueduct with transects the development site, groundworks on the footprints of poultry sheds Nos. 2, 3, 9 and 10 have been completed. An archaeological evaluation was completed on Shed 11 with an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken on the remaining shed developments south of the aqueduct; notably any groundworks on access tracks, underground works including drains, services etc and any hard landscaping south of the aqueduct. A particular focus for the watching brief will be placed on groundworks around Sheds 2, 3 and 9 which is believed to be the location of the former Longstruther settlement.

## **1.4 Curatorial control**

- 1.4.1 National planning policies and planning guidance, SPP23 (2008) and PAN42 (SOEnD 1994a), as well as the local plan policies, require a mitigation response that is designed to investigate the potential for archaeological sites within the development area and thence allow the preservation or recording of any significant remains.
- 1.4.2 The site is located within the Local Authority administrative area of Scottish Borders Council. The Council is advised on archaeological matters by Dr. Bowles. A programme of evaluation works that fully met the advice rendered by Dr. Bowles was undertaken.

## **2 Objectives**

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- i) to determine the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the development area by means of an intrusive field evaluation;
  - ii) to advise and implement an appropriate form of mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication, should significant archaeological remains be encountered.

### 3 Method

- 3.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2009) proposed the excavation of 5 trenches within the footprint of each shed and surrounding hardstanding (each shed covering an area of approximately c. 5950 m<sup>2</sup>). Three trenches each measuring 55 m by 2 m orientated along the long axis of the shed and two, each measuring 30 m by 2 m and aligned transversely, were excavated across the footprint of each shed
- 3.2 All trenches were excavated with a 13 tonne tracked excavator using a 2.0 m wide ditching bucket. The trench details are summarised in Appendix 1. Machine excavation was conducted in shallow units/spits through topsoil/overburden to the upper surface of the underlying geological deposits. The evaluation trial trenching was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures as detailed with the Method Statement (AOC 2009).
- 3.3 A watching brief is to be conducted upon the service tracks associated with the Sheds south of the water viaduct that bisects the site. This report will be up-dated following completion of the watching brief.

### 4 Results

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The works were conducted between 14<sup>th</sup> September and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009. The weather conditions during the evaluation were dry and sunny in parts. Overall archaeological visibility was good. In total 25 trenches were opened totalling approximately 2250 m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2).

4.1.2 The various data gathered from the excavation are presented as a series of appendices:

- Appendix 1 contains trench summaries;
- Appendix 2 contains the photographic register;
- Appendix 3 contains the context register;
- Appendix 4 contains the finds register;
- Appendix 5 reproduces the '*Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*' entry.

#### 4.2 Overview

4.2.1 The proposed development was covered in a layer of dark brown silty topsoil, which varied in depth from 0.20 m to 0.31 m, according to the topography of the land. The deeper areas of topsoil tended to occur in the low points of the field, and can be viewed as accumulated hillwash. The topsoil varied across the site between a loose sand and gravel to a more



compact silty clay material. Unusually, there was no evidence of plough scarring on the surface of the natural subsoil, perhaps indicating that the field had not been subject to modern deep ploughing methods. No evidence for drainage in the form of field drains, either modern or historic, were uncovered.

#### **4.3 Linear feature [700] (Figure 3, Plate 2)**

4.3.1 Trench 7d was bisected by a clearly defined linear ditch feature [700], aligned E-W across the trench. The feature measured in plan c.0.80 m wide with a shallow profile, with depths between 0.15 m and 0.22 m. it contained a single fill [701].

#### **4.4 Stone Structure [800] (Figure 4, Plate 3)**

4.4.1 In Trenches 8a and 8b there was the remains of a small sub-square structure [800]. This consisted of poorly sorted stones, from 0.38 m by 0.28 m by 0.15 m down to less than 0.06 m in diameter forming the stone foundation of a small structure. The structure measured c.5.0 m long by 4.5 m wide with walls up to 1.0 wide. There was the suggestion of an entrance to NW.

4.4.2 The stones directly overlay the natural subsoil of sands and gravels with no cut present. The spread of stones was suggestive of a rubble wall and no real great height could be expected. No mortar, wallfacing, dressed stonework or coursing was visible. The cleaning undertaken during the evaluation showed that not only were the stones not resting within an actual foundation cut but also that no internal 'floor' levels were present.

4.4.3 The fact that this feature has survived in the ploughsoil is perhaps suggestive that it is not of a great antiquity, and probably dates to the post medieval period.

#### **4.5 Modern Features**

4.5.1 Adjacent to a boggy marshy area of field (southeast of Trench 5c) there was an area of modern machine disturbance, possibly associated with gravel extraction.

4.5.2 Trench 8c was crossed by a narrow cut which contained a plastic water pipe which was supplying an animal feeding trough.

#### **4.6 Unstratified Finds (R. Engl pers comm.)**

4.6.1 Nine pieces of blue/grey Southern Uplands type chert were recovered from topsoil in Trench 11c (Find No.1). These pieces were all debitage, and included a single narrow blade of probable Mesolithic date. The finds were recovered from a slightly raised area, a natural ridge.

- 4.6.2 A single micro-scraper of Mesolithic date was retrieved from topsoil of Trench 7c (Find No.2). This again was made on blue/grey Southern Uplands type chert.

## 5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The footprints of the proposed poultry sheds have been heavily trenched during the evaluation and very few features or artefacts were uncovered; however the presence of a few Mesolithic lithics within the topsoil along with the linear feature [700] and a possible 'shieling' type structure [800] were unearthened.
- 5.2 The structure [800] was so slight in its survival and the lack of a foundation cut and floor is suggestive of a small unroofed structure. It may have acted a wind break for sheep or a shepherd. The fact that it survives in the ploughsoil suggests that in recent years it was visible as a structure and the area was subsequently not actively ploughed.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation has revealed that the overwhelming majority of the development area directly impacted upon by the development is free from any significant archaeological features. Nevertheless given the the presence of a few Mesolithic lithics, linear feature [700] and possible 'shieling' type structure [800] it may be worthwhile expanding the watching brief remit to include the local area of these discoveries. This recommendation must be viewed as being provisional. Ultimately, the scope and scale of the any further archaeological works would be defined by Dr Bowles of behalf of Borders Council.

## 7 REFERENCES

AOC 2009 *Blyth Bank Farm Archaeological Works: Written Scheme of Investigation* AOC Archaeology Client Report

SPP23 2008 *Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. Archaeology and Planning*. Nov.2008.

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

## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

### Shed 4

#### Trench 4a

Dimensions	56.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m to 0.22 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### Trench 4b

Dimensions	29 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NW-SE
Depth of Topsoil	0.19 m to 0.20 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### Trench 4c

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.21 m to 0.24 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### Trench 4d

Dimensions	30.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NW-SE
Depth of Topsoil	0.23 m to 0.28 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### Trench 4e

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.24 m to 0.32 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

### Shed 5

#### Trench 5a

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.28 m to 0.32 m
Features	None

Subsoil Silty sandy gravel rich subsoil  
 Finds None

**Trench 5b**

Dimensions 32 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NW - SE  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.27 m to 0.32 m  
 Features None  
 Subsoil Silty sandy gravel rich subsoil  
 Finds None

**Trench 5c**

Dimensions 54.0 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NE-SW  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.28 m to 0.30 m  
 Features Adjacent to a boggy marshy area of field (southeast of Tr.5c) there was an area of modern disturbance, possible gravel extraction.  
 Subsoil Silty sandy gravel rich subsoil  
 Finds None

**Trench 5d**

Dimensions 29.0 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NW-SE  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.29 m to 0.32 m  
 Features None  
 Subsoil Silty sandy gravel rich subsoil  
 Finds None

**Trench 5e**

Dimensions 55.0 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NE-SW  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.26 m to 0.31 m  
 Features None  
 Subsoil Silty sandy gravel rich subsoil  
 Finds None

**Shed 7**

**Trench 7a**

Dimensions 55.0 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NE-SW  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.20 m to 0.24 m  
 Features None  
 Subsoil Red/Pink sandy boulder clay  
 Finds None

**Trench 7b**

Dimensions 30.0 m by 2.0 m  
 Orientation NW - SE  
 Depth of Topsoil 0.20 m to 0.24 m  
 Features None

Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Trench 7c**

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m to 0.22 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	Find No.2 Microlith – micro-scraper

**Trench 7d**

Dimensions	30.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NW - SE
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m to 0.21 m
Features	Linear ditch feature [700], aligned E-W across trench. Shallow profile, irregular in plan c.0.80 m wide on average with depths between 0.15 m and 0.22 m. Single fill [701].
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Trench 7e**

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m to 0.24 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Shed 8****Trench 8a**

Dimensions	57.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.24 m to 0.28 m
Features	Stone foundations of a small sub-square structure [800]. Consisted of poorly sorted stones, from 0.38 m by 0.28 m by 0.15 m down to less than 0.06 m in diameter. Directly overlying natural sands and gravels. Measures c.5.0 m long by 4.5 m wide with walls up to 1.0 wide. Possible entrance to NW.
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Trench 8b**

Dimensions	4.5 m by 4.0 m
Orientation	NW - SE
Depth of Topsoil	0.22 m to 0.28 m
Features	As Tr.8a
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Trench 8c**

Dimensions	57.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.23 m to 0.27 m
Features	Narrow linear cut for water pipe to feeding trough
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### **Trench 8d**

Dimensions	31.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NW - SE
Depth of Topsoil	0.23 m to 0.28 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### **Trench 8e**

Dimensions	56.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	NE-SW
Depth of Topsoil	0.24 m to 0.28 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Red/Pink sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

### **Shed 11**

#### **Trench 11a**

Dimensions	56.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.21 m to 0.32 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Orange sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### **Trench 11b**

Dimensions	30 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	N-S
Depth of Topsoil	0.20 m to 0.26 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Orange sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

#### **Trench 11c**

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.23 m to 0.27 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Orange sandy boulder clay
Finds	Small assemblage of chert pieces from topsoil, Find No.1

**Trench 11d**

Dimensions	30.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	N-S
Depth of Topsoil	0.23 m to 0.29 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Orange sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**Trench 11e**

Dimensions	55.0 m by 2.0 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Topsoil	0.24 m to 0.35 m
Features	None
Subsoil	Orange sandy boulder clay
Finds	None

**APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER****Black & White Print Film 1**

Frame	Area	Detail	From
1-2	-	Registration	
3-4	Tr.5c	Disturbed ground southeast of Tr.5c	W
5-6	Tr.8c	Cut for modern service – water pipe for feeding trough	SW
7-8	Tr.8e	General view of Tr.8e	NE
9-10	Tr.4a	General view of Tr.9a, south-west end	NE
11-13	Tr.4a	General view of Tr.9a, north-east end	SW
14-15	Tr.7d	General view of linear cut [700]	SW
16-17	Tr.7d	General view of linear cut [700]	NE
18-19	Tr.8a/b	General view of stone structure [800]	E
20-23	Tr.8a/b	General view of linear cut [700]	W

**Digital Record**

Frame	Area	Detail	From
1	-	Registration	
2-5	Trench 5	General view of Trench 5	Various
6-9	Trench 8	General view of Trench 8	Various
10-13	Trench 4	General view of Trench 4	Various
14-17	Trench 7	General view of Trench 7	Various
18-21	Trench 11	General view of Trench 11	Various

## APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Area	Description
[700]	Tr.7d	Linear ditch feature [700], aligned E-W across trench. Shallow profile, irregular in plan c.0.80 m wide on average with depths between 0.15 m and 0.22 m. Single fill [701].
[701]	Tr.7d	Fill of linear feature [700], with dark brown sandy silt matrix and a few stone inclusions of up to 0.30 m by 0.30 m in size. No charcoal.
[800]	Tr.8a/b	Stone foundations of a small sub-square structure [800]. Consisted of poorly sorted stones measuring from 0.38 m by 0.28 m by 0.15 m down to less than 0.06 m in diameter. Directly overlay natural sands and gravels. Overall measuring c.5.0 m long by 4.5 m wide with walls up to 1.0 wide. Possible entrance to NW. Internal dimensions of 2.6 m by 2.2 m. Small buttress/extension on SE side.

## APPENDIX 4: FINDS REGISTER (Rob Engl)

Find No.	Trench	Context	Description
1	Tr.11c	U/S	A small assemblage of blue/grey Southern Uplands type chert lithics, nine pieces all debitage with one identifiable piece – a narrow blade of probable Mesolithic date.
2	Tr. 7c	U/S	A single microlith of blue/grey Southern Uplands type chert recovered from topsoil. Retouched artefact - Mesolithic micro-scraper.



**APPENDIX 5: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT**

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries and Galloway Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Blyth Bank Farm Archaeological Evaluation
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21461
PARISH:	Linton (Tweeddale)
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Lindsay Dunbar
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 1413 4735
START DATE (this season)	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2009
END DATE (this season)	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological works was required by Glenrath Farm Ltd in respect to a proposed commercial development at Blyth Bank Farm, Blyth Bridge, Peebles, Scottish Borders. The proposed development at Blyth Bank Farm will include the construction of a number of large poultry sheds with associated access roads and landscaping works within existing arable farmland.</p> <p>The footprint of each shed was evaluated through the excavation of five trenches totalling approximately 450 m<sup>2</sup>. Overall 25 trenches totalling approximately 2250 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated. The majority of the trenches contained no archaeological features and only a few lithic artefacts were identified from the topsoil. The features identified included a ruinous presumed sheepfold and a relict field boundary. The small unstratified lithic assemblage contained a microlith micro-scraper and a narrow blade. No features or artefacts associated or contemporary with 'Longstruther', an 18<sup>th</sup> century village which once lay in the local area, were uncovered during the works.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Watching brief to follow
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Glenrath Farms Ltd.
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	C/o AOC Archaeology Group
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Lindsay.Dunbar@aocarchaeology.com

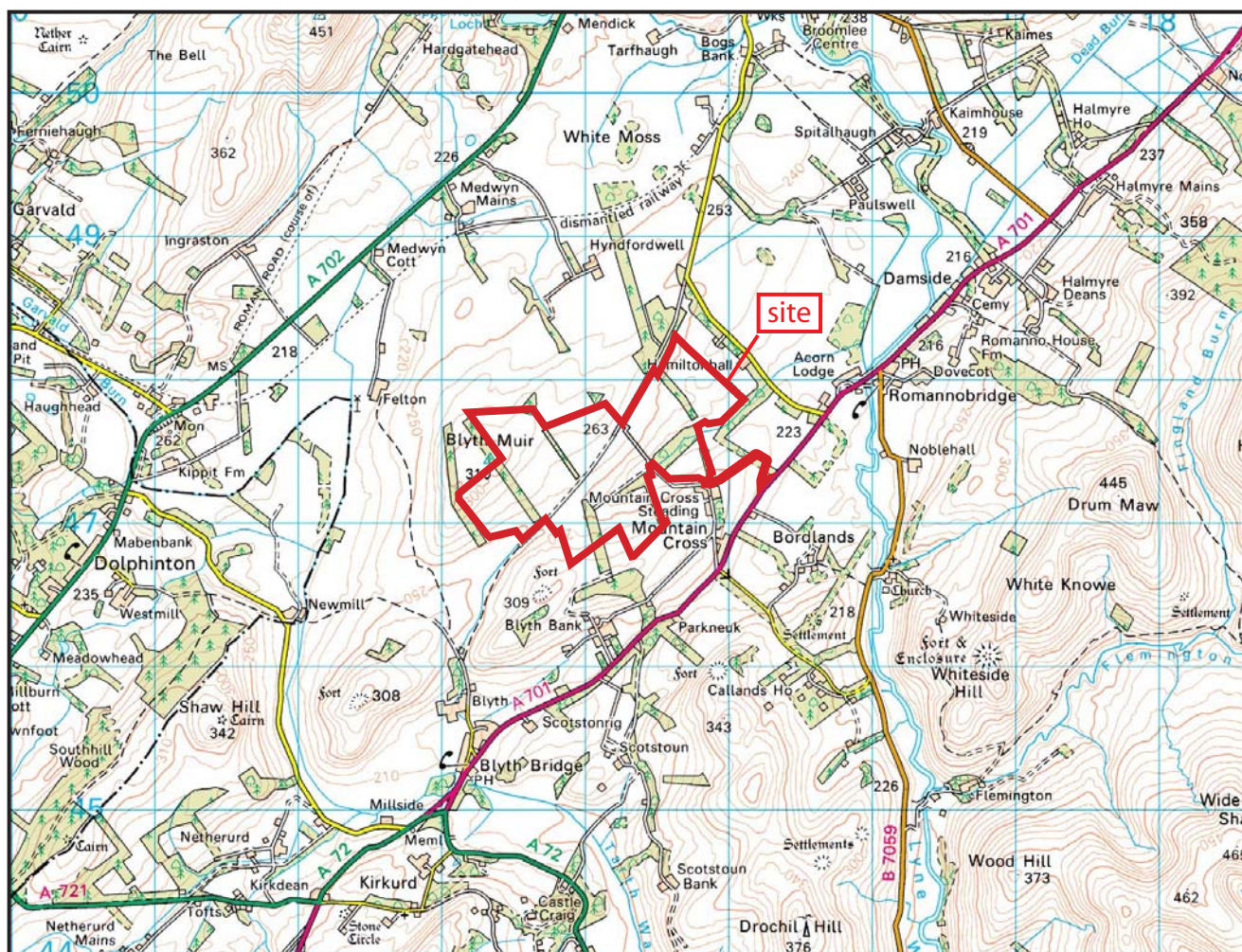
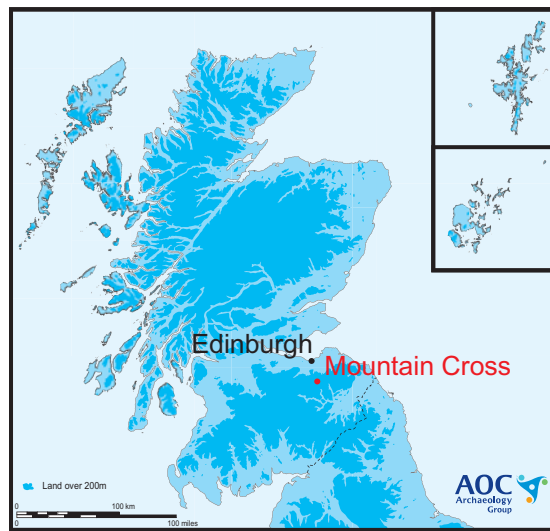


Figure 1: Site location

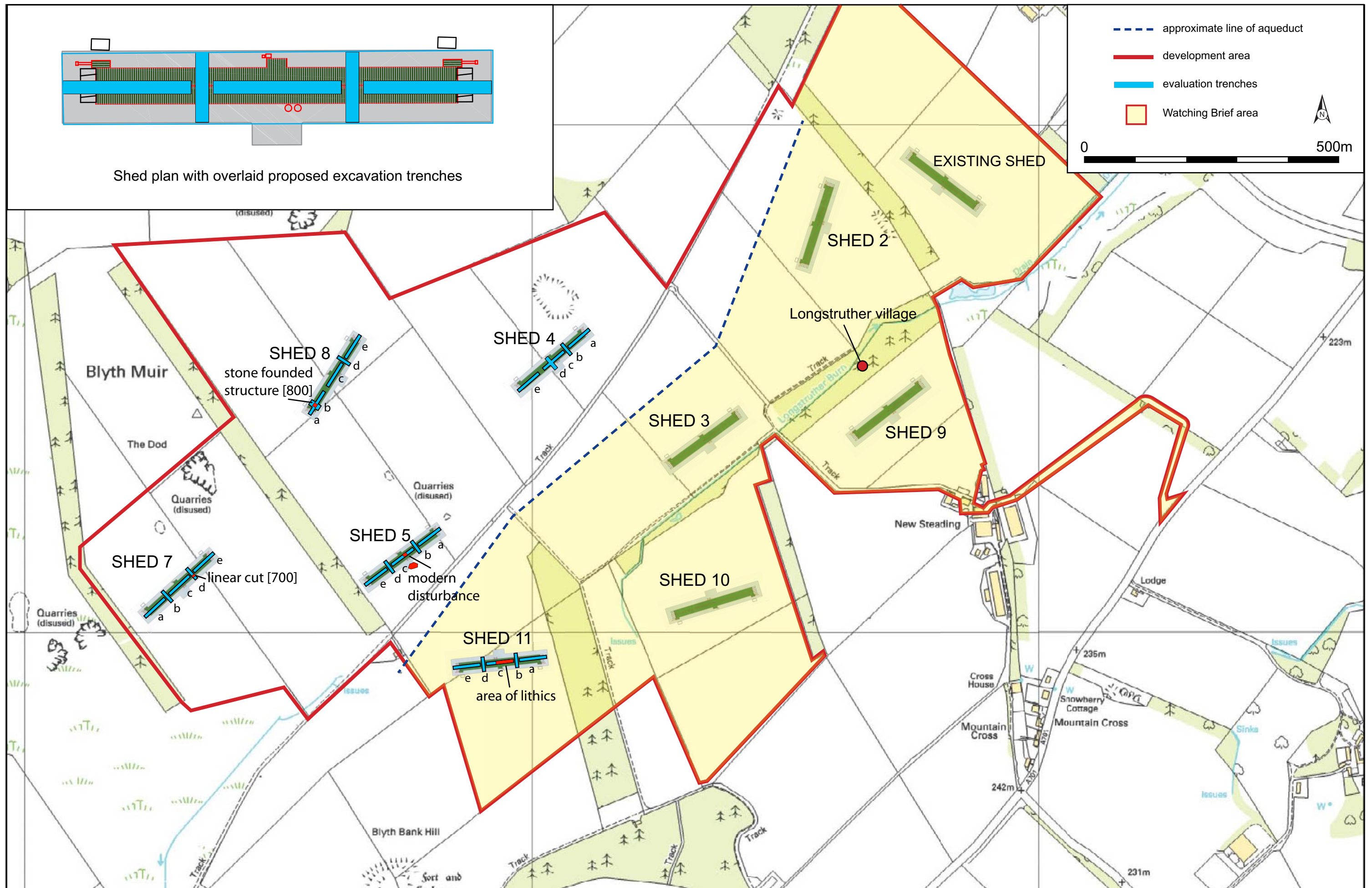


Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

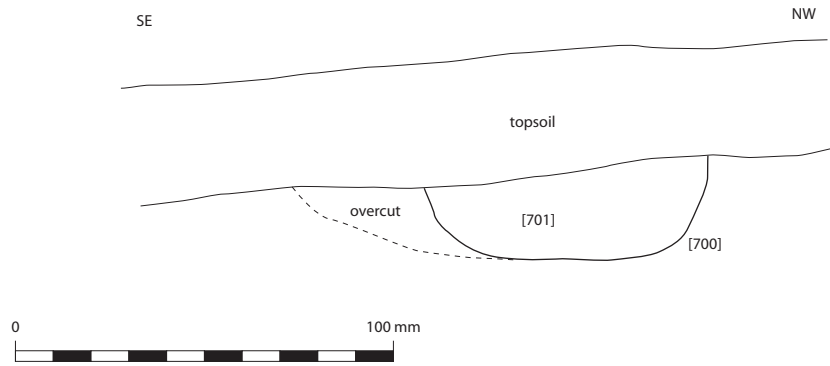


Figure 3: North-east facing section through linear cut [700] in Trench 7d

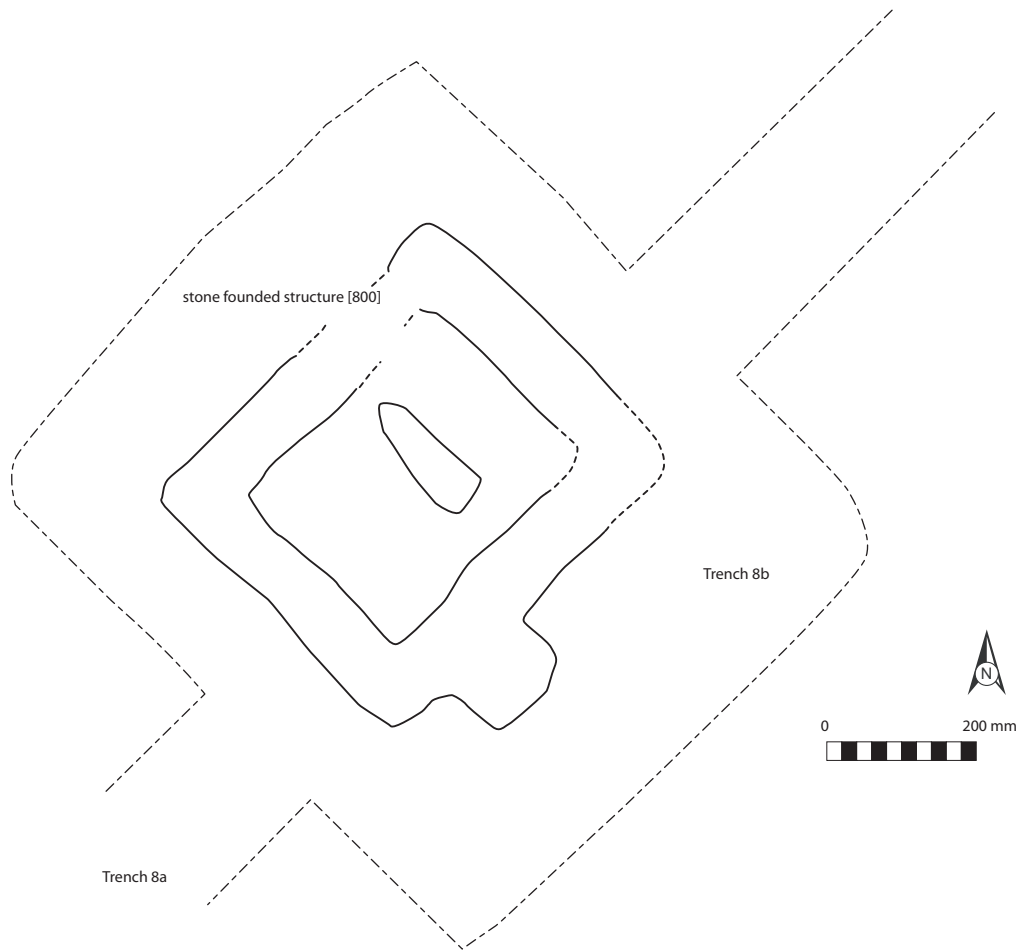


Figure 4: Plan of extent of stone founded structure [800] in Trench 8a and b



Plate 1: Area of modern disturbance adjacent to a boggy area immediately south of Trench 5c



Plate 2: North-east facing section through cut [700] in Trench 7b



Plate 3: General view of stone founded structure [800], in Trench 8a and b, from the east

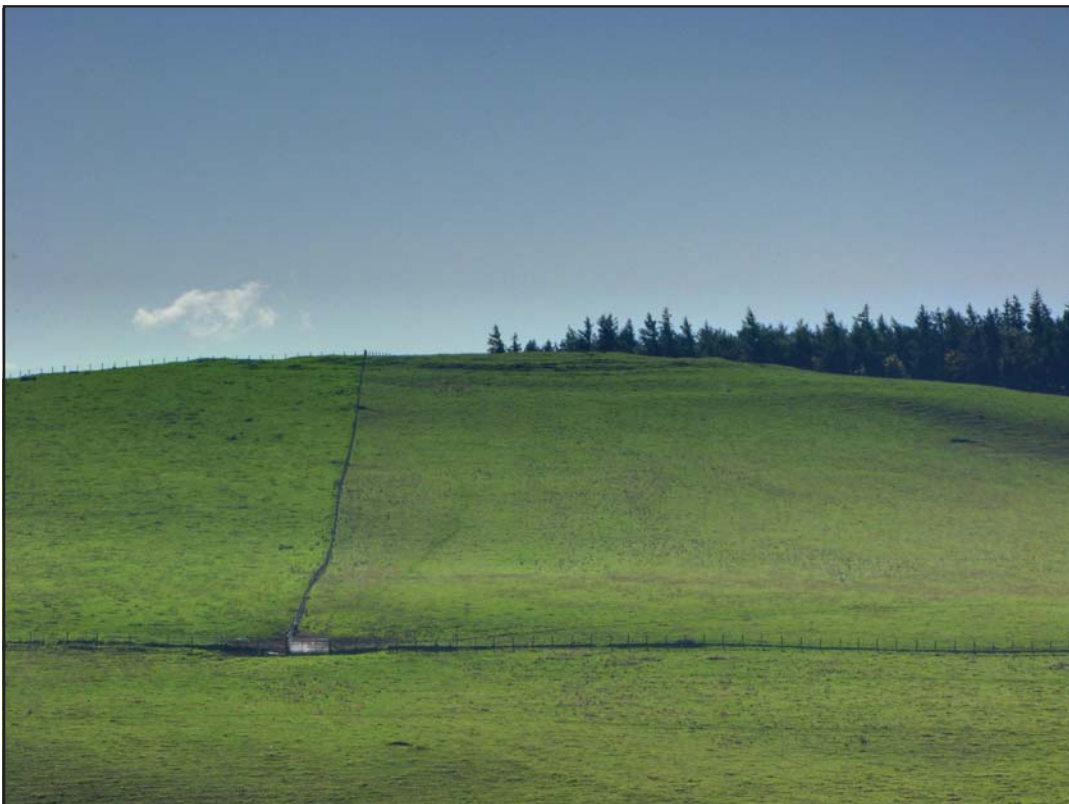
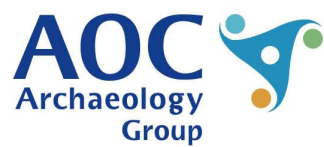
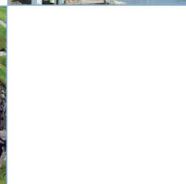
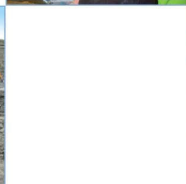
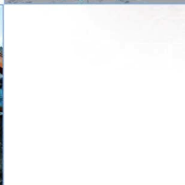
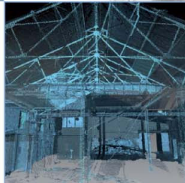


Plate 4: General view of Blyth Bank Hill Fort and Enclosures to the south of site, from the north



Plate 5: General view of Trench 9e from the north-east



**AOC Archaeology Group**, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY  
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: [edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com)

[www.aocarchaeology.com](http://www.aocarchaeology.com)