

## 7. CONCLUSION

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The results of the Calanais Fields Project are of particular significance in two principal areas. Firstly, it is the most extensively investigated fragment of sub-peat prehistoric field system in the Hebrides, which has produced evidence of a variety of stone-built features including field walls, clearance cairns and heaps, cobbled surfaces and structures. The detailed examination of the local environmental context at Calanais has incorporated pollen analysis, phosphate analysis, soil micromorphology and archaeobotanical remains to provide a detailed picture of the use and changing nature of these features and of the agricultural system in the first millennium BC.

Secondly, the sequence of occupation at Calanais Fields is potentially of great importance to the

study of marginality in prehistoric settlement and agriculture. The site offers an insight into responses of human societies to climatic and environmental changes. The field system at Calanais may be seen as a local development arising from specific social/cultural conditions, echoing a wider phenomenon of increased land enclosure and boundary formation which was an inherent part of life in the Atlantic fringes of Britain and north-west Europe during the Late Bronze Age.

This excavation is also one of very few excavations demonstrating prehistoric cultivation in the Hebrides on the blacklands instead of the machair, in addition to showing evidence for an agricultural landscape in close proximity to the major ritual monument of the Calanais Standing Stones.