

**Cart Street, Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire:  
Archaeological Evaluation**



**Data Structure Report**

**by Rebecca Shaw**

**18<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

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## 1 Introduction

This Data Structure Report presents the findings of archaeological works undertaken for Clydebank Rebuilt URC, in respect to the proposed construction of forty flats. The development area is sited on a small piece of land on Cart Street, Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire (centred on grid ref, NS 498 696)

As the proposed development was on the site of the former Forth & Cart Canal (which opened in 1840 and was abandoned in 1893) West Dunbartonshire Council asked for archaeological works to be undertaken as a requirement of the issued planning consent. The main objective for the works was to be able to record and recover any items of interest that were impacted on by the development works.

Although a watching brief condition was placed on the consent, in order to help establish the full extent of the possible works required, WoSAS agreed to allow Clydebank Rebuilt URC to undertake an initial evaluation trench. This initial trench allowed the make up of the ground to be established and assess if any remains of the canal or associated features survived within the areas that would be impacted on by the development. .

Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services was appointed to act with regard to the archaeological condition by Hugh Moore of Clydebank Rebuilt URC. The terms of the evaluation trench and watching brief were agreed through a Method Statement (Shaw, 2008) with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, who advise West Dunbartonshire Council on such matters.

## 2 Background

The Forth and Cart canal was authorised by an Act in May 1836 and was completed in 1840. It measured 0.5m in length and provided a shortcut between the Forth and Clyde Canal (which opened 1790) at Whitecreek and the River Clyde. It was built to help aid the transport link between Paisley, the Firth of Forth and Port Dundas. It had three locks: a single lock and a pair of staircase locks; which were 20.4m long and 4.5 m wide with a total water rise of 9m. It was taken over by the Forth and Clyde Canal in 1855; and, together with the Forth and Clyde Canal was taken over by the Caledonian Railway in 1867. The Forth and Cart Canal was closed in 1893 as it had become unprofitable.

The closure of the canal provided an opportunity for the Glasgow - Clydebank railway, which brought workers from Glasgow to the adjacent Thompson shipyard, to extend the line to Dalmuir. This line opened in 1897 and destroyed the first section of the canal. A section of the canal is now part of Argyll Road. An environmental assessment that was undertaken on behalf of Redrow Homes (Scotland) Ltd in regard to the proposed construction of a new junction on the M8 motorway, noted that the course of the canal was still clearly visible to the eastern edge of the shipyard site. It was therefore thought that much of the canal probably still existed, however, investigation showed that there were no substantial remains of the canal were left in this section.

The 1<sup>st</sup> edition ordnance survey (1865) shows the Forth and Cart Canal coming from the Forth and Clyde Canal at Whitecreek and joining to the River Clyde (Figure 1a). It was constructed to the west of the farm buildings of 'West Barns of Clyde' which had a long enclosed garden area running from the rear of the property to the canal embankment. By the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1898) just over 30 years later the canal was denoted as 'Old Canal' – at this point the canal had been abandoned 5yrs previously. The garden area of West Barns of Clyde farm now appears to be a smaller field-like area running from the rear of the structure to a railway embankment (Figure 1b).

The Lanarkshire and Dumbartonshire Railway (L & D R) which was opened circa.1896 to serve the west of the city, was built partially over the site of the abandoned canal. The L & D R was absorbed into the Caledonian Railway in 1909 and then in 1923 became part of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS) in 1948 railways were nationalised to form British Rail. By the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 1919 additional rails had been added but these mostly seem to be end of

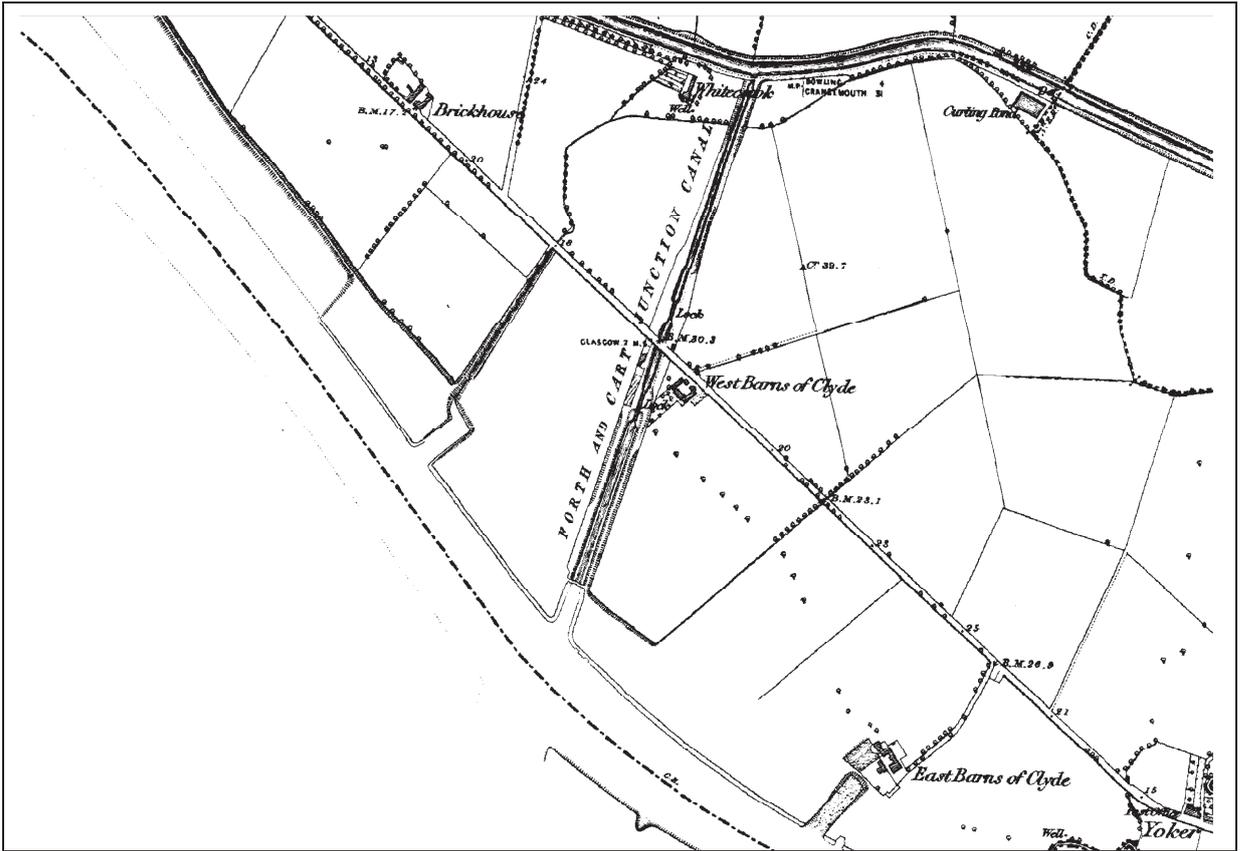


Figure 1a – 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1865)

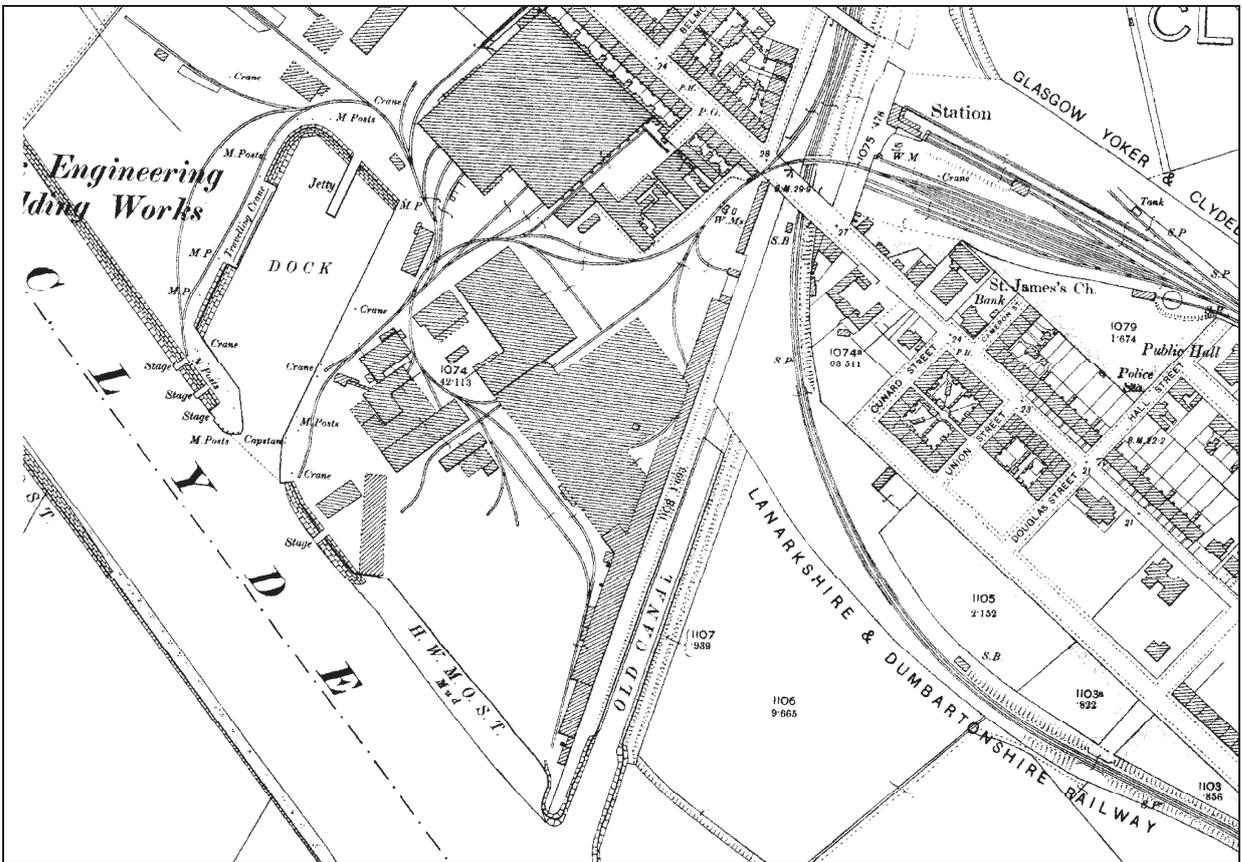


Figure 1b – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey (1898)



Figure 2a – Ordnance Survey (1919)

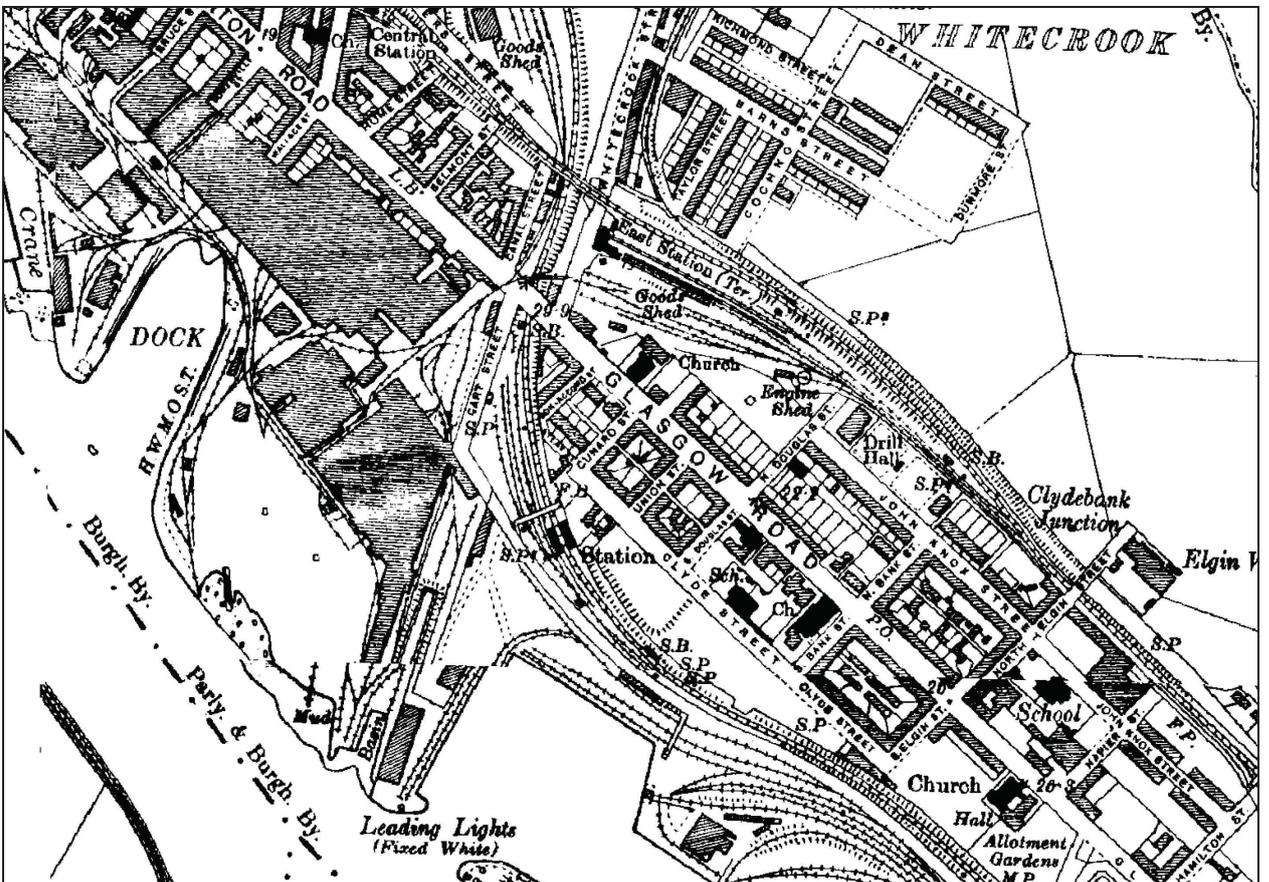


Figure 2b – Ordnance Survey (1939)

line rails (Figure 2a) possibly to unloading of goods etc. By the time of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition (1939) there is little change with the exception of the addition of a long rectangular structure, noted as *Hall* – local knowledge recalls that this was formerly the site of an orange hall (Hugh Moore *pers. comm.*). The initials *SP* that appear on all three maps (1898) (1919) and (1939) sited towards the eastern half of the proposed development area (Figures 1b and 2a-b), the initials mean that there was a signal point located here.

On the 1958 ordnance survey map two halls are marked (as well as numerous other small buildings) with a much larger one having been constructed to the north of the original one, by the 1969 edition although the later hall still exists (as do all the other small buildings) the original one though has disappeared. Through time the railway line became less and less used and gradually stations along the route were closed with the line finally closing altogether in 1964. After 1969 the ordnance survey mapping shows little alteration, apart from the removal of the railway lines (circa.1983) and eventual disappearance of the hall & other buildings, after which the site is shown as more or less as open ground.

### 3 Project Works:

The initial trench works were undertaken as agreed with WoSAS and comprised a machine cut trench excavated under archaeological supervision. The trench measured roughly 30m in length by 2m in width and was aligned east /west and sited towards the northern end of the site (Figure 5).

The works were undertaken on the 10<sup>th</sup> September in accordance with the agreed method statement. No archaeological features were observed during the on-site works and no material was recovered. All works complied with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct, and Historic Scotland Policy Statements

### 4 Findings:

When on-site works started the evaluation trench was moved very slightly to the north (1 to 2m) from its agreed alignment with WoSAS, this was done to avoid what appeared to be live cable at the western end of the trench. The actual location of the evaluation trench is shown in figure 5.

The trench was excavated from west to east to an average depth of 1.25m revealing various deposits of made up ground. At the very start of the western end of the trench there was a tarmac [111] and gravel layer [112] below which was a substantial depth of infill material which comprised a brown sandy slightly stony gravelly clay [113] with a stony silty clay [101] at the bottom. A fairly shallow deposit of a pale grey silty clay [114] lay between deposits [113] and [101] (Figure 3a). Further to the east the upper deposits remained more or less the same but the lowest fill was a brownish black clinker-like material [102].

The middle section of the trench (Figure 4a) comprised upper deposit [113] below which was mostly dumps of sand [105] and [106] both of which contained coke and/or clinker debris as well as compact deposit [102].

At 19.5m and 25.5m there are the remains of what appear to be two timber fences/walls [109] which comprised two very large square posts with wooden planks (Figures 3b & 4c) aligned horizontally on their respective western sides. The fill between the two fences was a dirty pink clay (Figures 3c & 4d) which contained occasional very large stones [108] started at roughly 500mm down from the upper surface. In western half of the section between the two fence below [108] there was an orangey brown dirty sand [107]. To the immediate east of the easternmost of the two wooden fences/walls to the end of the trench there were four in-situ wooden railway sleepers [110] which were aligned east/west (Figure 4b). Between the sleepers was clinker-like deposit [102] and above them for a depth of between 800-900mm was clay deposit [108].



Figure 3a – tip deposits at western end of trench



Figure 3b – timber fence (2) in southern section



Figure 3c – timber fence (2) in northern section



Figure 4a – general post-ex of trench



Figure 4b – railway sleepers at E end



Figure 4c – timber fence (1) [109]



Figure 4d – area between timbers fences [109]

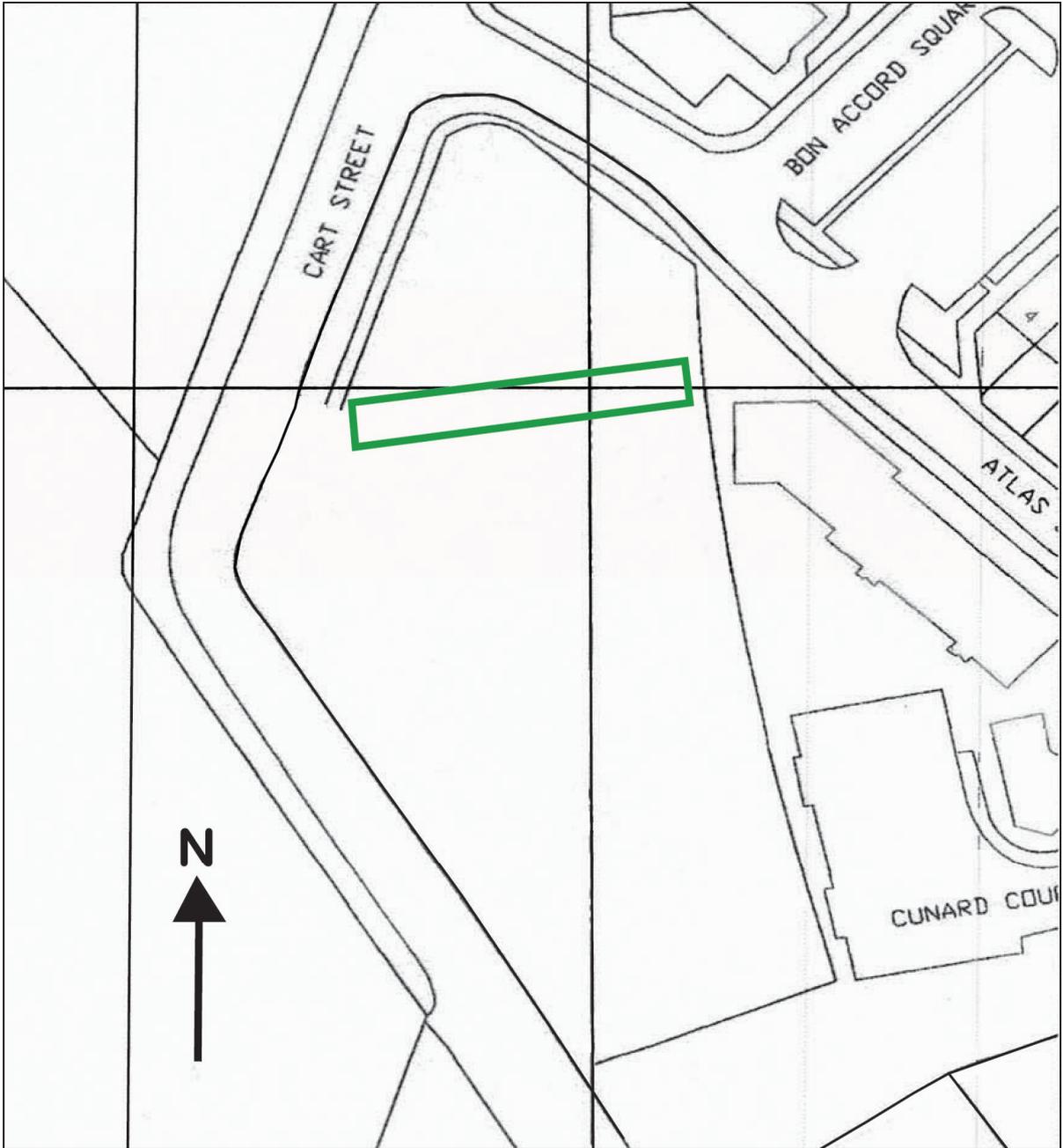


Figure 5 – Site plan showing actual location of trench

## 5 Discussion

The evaluation trench, which was excavated to an average depth of 1.25m, comprised entirely of infill deposits. There was evidence within the entire trench of when the site was in use as a railway, with clinker-like deposits throughout and in-situ wooden railway sleepers at the eastern end. Map evidence indicates that the main line of the Lanarkshire & Dumbartonshire Railway line, which was opened in 1896, was mainly located within the eastern half of the site, although other rails were added later (Figure 2a), these appear to just have been terminal points.

Timber structure [109] located next to the wooden sleepers appears contemporary with when the railway was in use as both areas have been infilled with the same dirty pink clay deposit [108]. Mapping indicated nothing structural running in that alignment but the initials *SP* which stand for signal point and therefore the wooden wall-like structure may have been related to the construction of this.

Most canals are constructed of substantial stone walls and a photograph taken in 1970 and archived in the RCAHMS (ref: SC 733534) which shows the entrance into the Forth & Cart Canal from the River Clyde suggests that Forth & Cart Canal also had stone walls. If this is the case the results from the evaluation trench suggest that either the walls were demolished or that the excavation works were not deep enough to locate the canal walls. The latter would appear more likely as from the location of the railway sleepers at 1.25m in depth, it is apparent that there is substantial infill on the site.

The sequence of the site seems to be that the Forth & Cart Canal was constructed on the site in 1840 and was subsequently abandoned in 1893. Shortly after abandonment the northern half of the canal was mostly built on top by roads and railways, so presumably the canal was either removed or infilled in this section. The southern section of the canal remained open and was still partially visible in 1939. Further railway lines and buildings were then built on the proposed development area over the next 60 years. The railway line was eventually closed in 1964 with the rails finally being removed in 1983.

Debris from the running of the trains (ie clinker-material) seems to have been used to mainly infill the western half of the site and thus this was possibly partially done while the railway line was in use, as suggested by the differing layers. However, after the closure of the railway line further debris material was probably spread across the site, maybe from flattening embankments – the rails though would have been left exposed. After the rails were removed (though not the wooden sleepers) this area and the area between the timber wall/fences was infilled with a dirty clay. Not long after the entire site seems to have been covered with a brown sandy gravelly clay, this was probably done to create an even stable level across the entire site.

## 6 Recommendation

The results of the evaluation trench together with the fact that general site ground reduction is going to be no more than 300mm and the founds for the new flats are to be done using vibro stone columns, means there will be minimal ground disturbance. Vibro stone columns essentially enhance weak soils to improve their load bearing capacity, which is ideal for this site as geotechnical works noted dispersed soft sediment across the proposed build area.

The process involves a vibrating poker or mandrill penetrating to a designed depth with the resulting cavity then being filled with layers of small stone, the vibrator is then put back into the cavity to force stone into the surrounding ground to produce dense columns of support.

As no potential archaeological remains appear to survive in the top 300mm as it is all infill material and vibro stone columns which cause little disturbance are being used for the founds, the recommendation is that no further archaeological works are required.

## 7 Conclusion

An archaeological evaluation trench was carried out on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 on behalf of Clydebank Rebuilt URC. The works were undertaken in respect to the proposed erection of forty flats at a site located on Cart Street, Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire (centred on NGR: NS 498 696).

There was the potential for remains associated with the Forth & Cart Canal to be located running along the western and northern areas of the site. The Forth & Cart Canal, which was constructed to link the Forth & Clyde Canal with the River Clyde was opened in 1840 and closed in 1893. It is not known if the canal, which would have run along the western edge of the site was entirely removed or just infilled but the eastern half was heavily disturbed by the construction of a railway line on the site in 1896 by Lanarkshire & Dumbartonshire Railway.

The evaluation trench revealed a depth of infill material, comprising various deposits, at least 1.25m in depth across the northern end of the site (the limit of excavation undertaken). Although structural remains and deposits relating to the later railway were located, the canal and any other associated remains with its use, if they still survive, must lie below 1.25m.

## References

### *Documentary*

|                 |      |   |
|-----------------|------|---|
| Butt R          | 1995 | The Directory of Railway Stations   |
| Hume J          | 1976 | The Industrial Archaeology of Scotland. 1. The Lowlands and Borders   |
| Lindsay J       | 1968 | The Canals of Scotland  |
| RCAHMS (Hume J) | 1970 | View from W showing site of Forth and Cart Canal (photographic archive no. SC 733534)                           |
| SODev           | 1994 | <i>National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning</i> , Scottish Office Development Department. |
| SOEn            | 1994 | <i>Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology</i> , Scottish Office Environmental Department.                         |

### *Cartographic*

|                 |      |   |
|-----------------|------|---|
| Ordnance Survey | 1865 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire |
| Ordnance Survey | 1898 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire |
| Ordnance Survey | 1919 | Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire                         |
| Ordnance Survey | 1939 | Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire                         |
| Ordnance Survey | 1958 | Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire                         |
| Ordnance Survey | 1969 | Ordnance Survey, Dumbartonshire                         |

## Appendix 1: Record Summaries

*Context Summaries*

| No. | Interpretation       | Description  |
|-----|----------------------|--|
| 101 | Infill               | Dark greyish brown fine silty clay containing a moderate amount of small angular and sub-angular stones  |
| 102 | Infill               | Dark brownish black very loosely compacted very gravelly deposit containing clinker debris, ash, coke, china, glass and animal bones. Also contains some very large stones.        |
| 103 | Infill               | Band of very stony (slightly silty) light brownish clay  |
| 104 | Infill               | Very compact dark (black) gravel and coke deposit  |
| 105 | Infill               | Patches of orange and brown very loosely compacted fairly dirty sand. Contains some clinker material as well as heavily corroded iron objects                                      |
| 106 | Infill               | Dark brown silty sand with charcoal smears and lumps of coke   |
| 107 | Infill               | Orange and brown dirty sand with moderate to frequent small stones.  |
| 108 | Re-deposited subsoil | Dirty pink clay (subsoil)  |
| 109 | Timber wall          | Wall made of very large wooden square posts roughly 2m apart. Wooden planks aligned north / south and fixed horizontally between the two pylons on the western side form the wall. |
| 110 | Railway sleepers     | Large wooden sleepers aligned east/west and located at the eastern end of the trench   |
| 111 | Tarmac               | Tarmac on upper surface in western half  |
| 112 | Gravel               | Base for tarmac  |
| 113 | 'Topsoil'            | Brown sandy slightly stony gravelly clay   |

*Photographic Record*

| No. | Film No. | B&W Negative No. | Disc No. | Digital No. | Description                                 | From | Date     |
|-----|----------|------------------|----------|-------------|---|------|----------|
| 1   | 1        | 1                | 1        | 1           | General pre-ex                              | W    | 10/09/08 |
| 2   | 2        | 36               | 1        | 2           | General post-ex                             | W    | 10/09/08 |
| 3   | 2        | 35               | 1        | 3           | General post-ex                             | E    | 10/09/08 |
| 4   | 2        | 34               | 1        | 4           | N-facing section at western end of trench   | N    | 10/09/08 |
| 5   | 2        | 33               | 1        | 5           | Timber wall (1) in northern section         | SW   | 10/09/08 |
| 6   | 2        | 32               | 1        | 6           | Deposit [108] between the two timbers walls | W    | 10/09/08 |
| 7   | 2        | 31               | 1        | 7           | Timber wall (2) in the southern section     | NW   | 10/09/08 |

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|    |   |    |   |    |  |     |          |
|----|---|----|---|----|--|-----|----------|
| 8  | 2 | 30 | 1 | 8  | Timber wall (2) in the southern section                    | NE  | 10/09/08 |
| 9  | 2 | 29 | 1 | 9  | South facing section showing deposit [108] and walls [109] | SE  | 10/09/08 |
| 10 | - | -  | 1 | 10 | General post-ex  | ESE | 10/09/08 |

*Drawing Record*

| Sheet No. | Drawing No. | Description                       | Scale | Date     |
|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|
| 1         | 001         | Post-ex plan of evaluation trench | 1:50  | 10/09/08 |

## Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>               | West Dunbartonshire Council   |
| <b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>       | Cart Street, Clydebank  |
| <b>PARISH:</b>                        | Old Kilpatrick (Dumbarton)  |
| <b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>           | Rebecca Shaw  |
| <b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>          | Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services  |
| <b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>            | Evaluation trench   |
| <b>NMRS NO(S):</b>                    | None  |
| <b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>         | None  |
| <b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>             | None  |
| <b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>     | NS 498 696  |
| <b>START DATE (this season)</b>       | 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2008   |
| <b>END DATE (this season)</b>         | 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2008   |
| <b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b> | None  |
| <b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>          | None  |
| <b>DESCRIPTION:</b>                   | An archaeological evaluation trench was carried out on the 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2008 on behalf of Clydebank Rebuilt URC. The works were undertaken in respect to the proposed erection of forty flats at a site located on Cart Street, Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire. There was the potential for remains associated with the Forth & Cart Canal to be located running along the western and northern areas of the site. The Forth & Cart Canal, which was constructed to link the Forth & Clyde Canal with the River Clyde was opened in 1840 and closed in 1893. It is not known if the canal, which would have run along the western edge of the site was entirely removed or just infilled but the eastern half was heavily disturbed by the construction of a railway line on the site in 1896 by Lanarkshire & Dumbartonshire Railway. The evaluation trench revealed a depth of infill material, comprising various deposits, at least 1.25m in depth across the northern end of the site (the limit of excavation undertaken). Although structural remains and deposits |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | relating to the later railway were located, the canal and any other associated remains with its use, if they still survive, must lie below 1.25m. |
| <b>PROJECT CODE:</b>                            | 08020   |
| <b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>                 | Clydebank Rebuilt URC   |
| <b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>             | 1780 Great Western Road Anniesland Glasgow G13 2TL  |
| <b>E MAIL:</b>                                  | rebeccashaw@archaeologist.com   |
| <b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b><br>(intended/deposited) | Report to West of Scotland Sites and Monuments Record and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.                                       |

## Contact Details

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