



**Formation of Access Track,
Old Ballikinrain,
Balfron,
Stirling Council
Archaeological Evaluation
Data Structure Report**

June 2016



Document control sheet

Client: M Percy Ltd
 Project: Old Ballikinrain
 Document Title: Archaeological Evaluation WSI

Job No: 233

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Document Status: FINAL				

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Executive Summary

ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd were contracted by Mr Gavin Bruce of The Grand Plan on behalf of M Percy Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site at Old Ballikinrain, near Balfron, Stirling. The evaluation is undertaken in advance of the formation of a new access track across agricultural land.

The archaeological evaluation followed the placement of a planning condition upon the proposed development by Stirling Council. In practice the evaluation involved the mechanical excavation of four evaluation trenches along the footprint of the proposed development. No significant archaeological features or deposits were noted in these trenches.

ARCHAS recommend that no further archaeological mitigation be required on site and that the planning condition can be deemed as having been met.

A record of the evaluation has been deposited with the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) website hosted by the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS ID archascu1-247843) and with Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES), the annual publication of fieldwork by Archaeology Scotland.

1 Introduction

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Mr Gavin Bruce of The Grand Plan on behalf of M Percy Ltd to undertake archaeological mitigation in advance of proposed development at Old Ballikinrain, near Balfron, Stirling (centred NGR: NS 56233 87783). The client proposes to construct new access to Old Ballikinrain House in order to separate access to the residential property from that used by the commercial vehicles of the timber business also present on site. The proposed access track runs across a series of fields to the south east of the house.
- 1.1.2 The site was identified by the Stirling Council Archaeology Officer as being located in an area of archaeological potential. Through Planning Condition 5 of Planning Application 15/00709/FUL, Stirling Council recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation be carried out prior to development. The condition states:
- 'No works shall take place within the development site until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, agreed by the Stirling Council Planning Officer (Archaeology), and approved by the Planning Authority'¹*
- 1.1.3 The consultation response of the Stirling Council Archaeology Officer outlined the need for an archaeological evaluation prior to development.²
- 1.1.4 Prior to work commencing on site ARCHAS prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which investigated the history of the development area, and outlined the standards and methodology to be adhered to during the evaluation.
- 1.1.5 The work was completed on Tuesday 14th June 2016 by Ross. The weather throughout was overcast with periods of sunshine and occasional showers.
- 1.1.6 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd. conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of conduct, and relevant Standards and Guidance documents.

¹ Stirling Council, 15/00709/FUL Decision Notice

² Stirling Council Archaeology Officer, Archaeological Consultation regarding 5/00709/FUL/ML – 03/11/15

1.2 Site Location and Setting



Figure 1: Site location with the area requiring archaeological investigation marked red

General

- 1.2.1 The proposed development is located in Stirling Council area, to the south east of the town of Balfron, between the Endrick Water and the B818 (Figure 1). The proposed development area is centred on NGR: NS 56233 87783 with the area identified for archaeological assessment extending to around 3,200m².

Study Area

- 1.2.2 The site is an irregular series of fields anchored on the B818 to the south east. The western boundary is formed by a belt of mature woodland aligned north west to south east, while the eastern boundary runs towards the north west before curving round to meet the Old Ballikinrain complex (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Old Ballikinrain House to the NW as viewed from the field to the west of the proposed development (Photograph 024)

- 1.2.3 The new access track is curvilinear in nature, running from the Old Ballikinrain complex in a roughly south eastwards manner, crossing a field boundary and eventually reaching the B818.

Geology

- 1.2.4 The drift geology of the proposed development site comprises Till, Devensian - Diamicton. These superficial deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period and are characteristic of a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. There are also pockets of Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits of Gravel, Sand and silt dateable to 3 million years ago present along the route of the new road.
- 1.2.5 The underlying bedrock geology comprises Sandstone, Pebbles and gravel of the Stockiemuir Sandstone Formation. These were formed 359-385 million years ago in the Devonian Period and are characteristic of a local environment previously dominated by rivers.³

³ www.bgs.ac.uk – 08/04/16

2 Brief Archaeological & Historical Background

2.1 General

2.1.1 Readily accessible historical and archaeological records were consulted in order to gain an understanding of the relevant history of the development area. These resources included the National Monuments Record of Scotland, the Map Library as held by the National Library of Scotland and the Statistical Accounts of Scotland. Consultation of these resources for the wider area allows the archaeological team to better appreciate the likelihood of the archaeological deposits likely to exist in the area.

2.2. Results

2.2.1 The area around Old Ballikinrain is remarkable for its lack of any recorded archaeological features and historical events pre-dating the post-medieval period.

2.2.2 Old Ballikinrain House itself has its origins in the 17th century, altered in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is protected as a Category B Listed Building (LB10394) but would initially have sat in a landscape very different from that to which it sites today.

2.2.3 The primary instigation for the placement of the planning condition is the presence of Gateside Farm as depicted upon William Roy's mid-18th century map of Scotland (Figure 2). This map was the first to show what can be considered an accurate depiction of the Scottish landscape and shows a farmstead called 'Gateside' in the vicinity of the proposed development.



Figure 2: Extract from William Roy's c.1750 map with the proposed development area and Gateside Farm marked red. Note Ballikinrain (Old Ballikinrain) to north east. ARCHAS Ltd after © The British Library Board. All Rights Reserved (Roy Military Survey of Scotland)

2.2.4 A pre-improvement farmstead, Gateside Farm was presumably cleared from the Ballikinrain Estate in the second half of the 18th century during improvement works intended to make the land more profitable, removing many small tenant farmers in the process.

2.2.5 Gateside Farm is certainly absent from the record by the production of John Grassom's map 'To the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the County of Stirling' produced in 1817 (Figure 3). This map clearly shows the landscape of the development area as it survives today, with an irregular plot of land bordered by tracks and bands of trees.



Figure 3: Extract from John Grassom's 'To the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Stirling' from 1817 showing the landscape and field systems around the development much as it survives today

2.2.6 This area would have been created during the improvement period as a bordered and defined designed landscape, with views from Old Ballikinrain House the primary consideration. The house itself faces to the south east, with the bordered land of the proposed development area angling from the house to form what would have been a well maintained meadow.

2.2.7 The landscape shown by Grassom is also clearly depicted in the 1st edition 25 inch to 1 mile Stirling Sheet XXI.2 (Killearn). This and subsequent OS maps show no development or features of interest within the proposed development area.

2.3 Conclusions

2.3.1 The proposed development is in the general vicinity of Gateside Farm, a pre-improvement farmstead removed during the 18th century in order to create a simple designed landscape around Old Ballikinrain House.

2.3.2 The age of Gateside Farm are unknown, but this may have origins in the medieval period.

2.3.3 Although the area around Old Ballikinrain has no real recorded archaeological history pre-dating the post-medieval period, the possibility remains that previously unknown archaeological features will survive across the proposed development route, although these may have been compromised by the 18-19th century landscaping work.

3 Methodology

3.1 The Development

3.1.1 The development proposal requires the formation of a new access track to Old Ballikinrain. This will be cut across agricultural land.

3.2 Field Evaluation

3.2.1 The purpose of archaeological field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological potential of a site by investigating a previously agreed percentage of the overall area. The results of these investigations allow the archaeological team to assess the presence, absence, potential and importance of archaeological deposits surviving across the site, while meeting the requirements of the Planning Condition as outlined by Stirling Council. In practice, this requires a number of trenches to be opened in a systematic and organised manner across the site. These will be plotted to ensure good spatial coverage to assess the survival and further potential for any archaeological deposits to survive across the site.

3.2.2 The results of this phase of works and subsequent recommendations by ARCHAS will allow the Stirling Council Archaeology Officer to make an informed decision as to whether the site should be investigated further, or accept the archaeological condition as having been met. ARCHAS will make recommendations relating to any future mitigation, but the decision for any further archaeological intervention ultimately rests with Stirling Council.

3.2.3 An archaeological evaluation investigates only a certain percentage of the development area through a series of carefully placed trenches. For the proposed development, Stirling Council requested that 5% of the site be investigated.

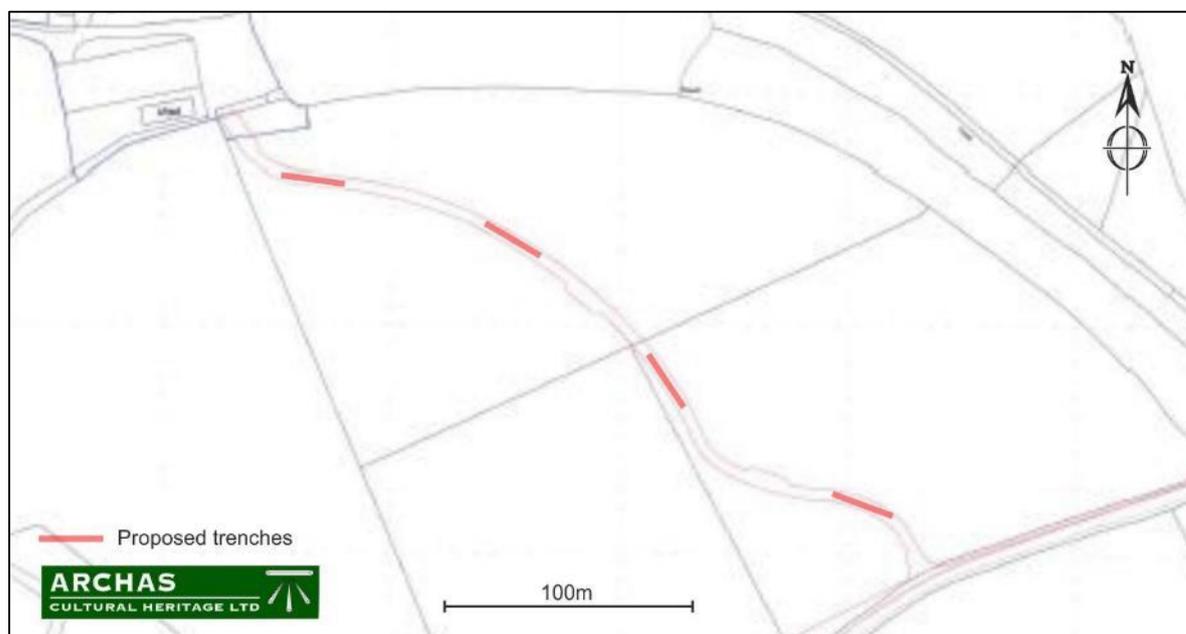


Figure 4: Proposed trench locations. ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd after The Grand Plan

3.2.4 The proposed trench plan (Figure 4) is designed as a guide for the placement of trenches. It suggests the excavation of four 25m long trenches along the route of the new road. The exact locations of these trenches will vary depending upon exact placement and conditions on the ground. However, the trench plan is designed to be flexible and can be altered depending upon ground conditions, while maintaining good spatial coverage.

- 3.2.5 In the event, four trenches were excavated providing comprehensive coverage across the development footprint with a combined length of 102.1m.
- 3.2.6 All trenches were excavated using a 2 tonne 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.20m wide toothless ditching bucket. All trenches were opened under the direct supervision of a qualified archaeologist.
- 3.2.7 In all excavated trenches, natural subsoil was identified. Where any features of archaeological potential were encountered these were investigated by the ARCHAS on site team. Any archaeological deposits or artefacts recovered were recorded to ARCHAS Ltd and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*CIfA*) standards and relevant details noted down on ARCHAS *pro forma* sheets.
- 3.2.8 A digital photographic record was maintained. This illustrates the nature of the soils and stratigraphy encountered and also includes working shots to represent more generally the nature of the fieldwork. A register of all photographs taken was kept on standardised ARCHAS forms.
- 3.2.9 The locations of all trenches were recorded using a hand held GPS.

4 Results

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation at Old Ballikinrain failed to reveal any deposits or artefacts of archaeological or historical significance.
- 4.1.2 The WSI as accepted by the Stirling Council Archaeology Officer agreed that four trenches measuring 25m in length would be plotted along the route of the proposed access track. In the event, a total of four trenches were excavated with a total length of 102.10m, slightly exceeding the agreed total of 100m (Figure 5).

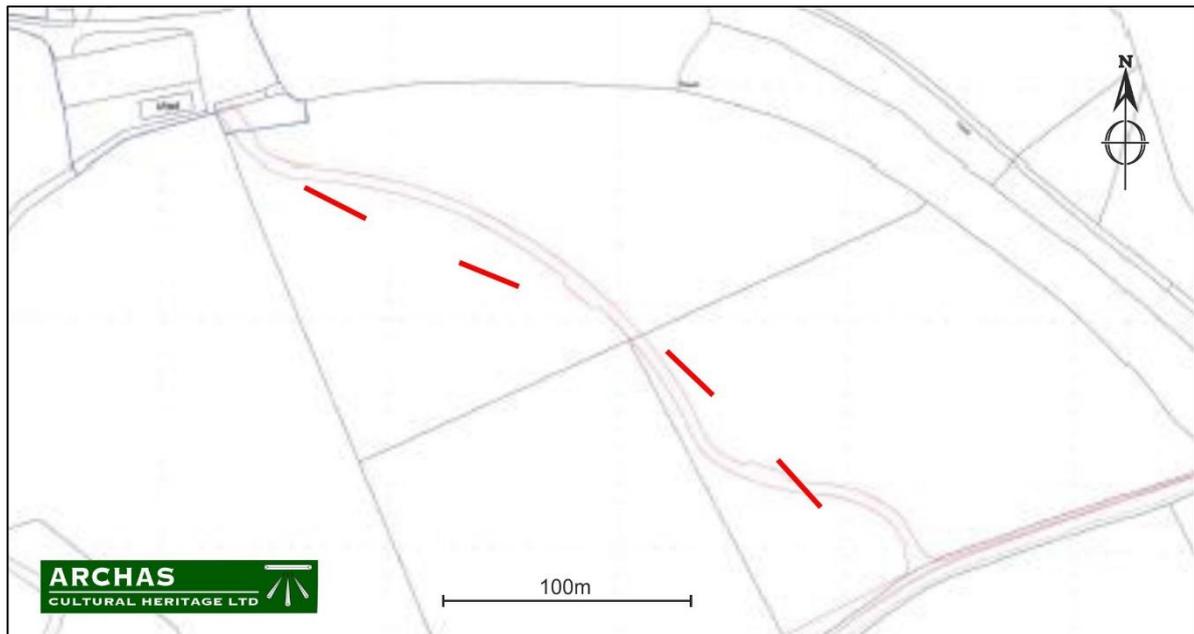


Figure 5: Plan of Trenches as excavated at Old Ballikinrain. Please note the route of the road has deviated since the original plan was produced. ARCHAS Ltd after The Grand Plan

4.2 Trenches Excavated

- 4.2.1 A description of trenches excavated and the key deposits and features identified in each is provided below. Detail of the contexts encountered and the Trenches excavated can be viewed in Appendix A and Appendix B. All context numbers for layers and features are recorded within curved parentheses (*xxx*). In each case the initial letter applied to a context define the trench in which it was located. For example (**101**) would be the first deposit recorded in Trench 1.

Trench 1

- 4.2.2 Aligned WNW-ESE, Trench 1 was located so that it crossed an area of possible landscaped higher ground at the eastern end.
- 4.2.3 The topsoil (**101**) was shown to comprise moderately compact mid brown, very slightly silty sand. This was notable for how clean it was. (**101**) was a very homogenised deposit with virtually no inclusions and none of the 19th and 20th century ceramic sherds, glass fragments of farming detritus often found on agricultural land in close proximity to occupation areas.

- 4.2.4 (101) gave way to reveal (102), a moderately compact slightly mottled orange brown and yellow brown sand (Plate 4). This was the natural subsoil and was much darker at the eastern end of Trench 1.
- 4.2.5 The relationship between (101) and (102) was clear and obvious with no mixing between the two. This suggests a lack of ploughing in this area.
- 4.2.6 A series of three linears were noted at the western end of Trench 1. Aligned north to south, these measured c.0.50-0.60m in width (Plate 2) and were clearly regularly spaced out, with an area of 2m between each. This indicated these were almost certainly part of a drainage system or relating to earlier ploughing of the site. Excavation of the most westerly of the three showed the features to be ploughing related, with an ephemeral depth of 0.03m (Plate 3). As such, the linears were recorded together at (103).



Plate 2: Pre-excitation view of linear (103) (Photograph 030)



Plate 3: Post-excitation view of (103). Note the burrowing activity (Photograph 032)



Plate 4: Post-excavation view of Trench 1. Note the linear (103) just beyond the scale (Photograph 004)



Plate 5: Post-excavation view of Trench 2. Note the linears (203) in the foreground and the difference in the subsoil to Trench 1 (left) (Photograph 010)

Trench 2

- 4.2.7 The topsoil (**201**) in Trench 2 was very similar to (**101**), but contained occasional small stones and had a depth of 0.35m.
- 4.2.8 The subsoil (**202**) was noticeably different, much more firmly compact and comprising mottled pink, red brown and orange brown slightly clay sand with frequent small stone inclusions (Plate 5).
- 4.2.9 Four narrow linears at the western end of Trench 2 were clearly spaced 2.50m apart and aligned on the same north to south orientation. These were shown to be field drain containing red ceramic pipe and as such collectively recorded as (**203**).

Trench 3

- 4.2.10 While the consistency of the topsoil (**301**) in Trench 3 was much the same as elsewhere, it was noticeably deeper across the NW end of the trench where it was 0.70m deep in places.
- 4.2.11 The natural subsoil (**302**) was different again from Trenches 1 and 2, appearing much more mottled, with patches of softer yellow sand intermixed with more gravelly areas and mid brown clay.
- 4.2.12 As with Trenches 1 and 2, a series of linears, or potential linears were noted. The grubbier areas of mid brown clay may be geological, but had the appearance of four roughly even bands – collectively (**303**). Investigation of these showed they are likely to be re-deposited natural subsoil in relict furrows.

4.2.13 Two north to south aligned linears (**304**) (Plate 6) had a width of 0.18m and excavation showed them to be vertically cut channels for red ceramic field drains (Plate 7).



Plate 6: Pre-excitation view of (304) (Photograph 026)



Plate 7: Post-excitation view of (304) (Photograph 028)

Trench 4

4.2.14 In trench 4 the topsoil (**401**) had a depth of 0.30m overlying a natural subsoil of moderate to softly compact orange brown fine grain sand with patches of clay (**402**).

4.2.15 At the NW end of the Trench two ephemeral plough scars (**403**) and (**404**) were noted, aligned north to south. These had a depth of <0.03m and a width of 0.15m and were filled by topsoil (**401**).

4.2.16 One north to south aligned linear (**405**) was shown to be a cut for a red ceramic field drain.



Plate 8: Locations of Trench 3 (left) and Trench 4 (right) (Photograph 025)

5 Summary and Discussion

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The archaeological evaluation at Old Ballikinrain failed to reveal any archaeological artefacts or features of significance.
- 5.1.2 The map regression showed the presence of the pre-Improvement farmstead named 'Gateside' in the vicinity of the proposed development, but no indications of this were noted of this during the evaluation with the possible exception of the relict ploughscars.
- 5.1.3 The map regression shows that extensive landscaping work took place between c.1750 and 1817. The cleanliness of the topsoil and lack of residual 19th and 20th century detritus is indicative of a landscape which has not been extensively farmed while the horizon between the topsoil and the natural subsoil displayed no signs of mixing, despite the topsoil only being 0.30m deep in places. It seems likely this has never, or very rarely been worked.
- 5.1.4 The relict furrows and ploughscars noted in places beneath the topsoil are likely those from the pre-improvement period, before the extensive landscaping took place.
- 5.1.5 It is not possible to say whether 'Gateside' existed along the line of the proposed development, but it is likely any earlier remains in the area would have been compromised by the work done to make the land around Old Ballikinrain House more presentable.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 Archaeological monitoring at Old Ballikinrain failed to reveal any artefacts or archaeological deposits of any significance.
- 6.1.2 ARCHAS Cultural Heritage do not recommend any further archaeological mitigation on site with regards to the current development and believe the archaeological condition can be discharged.
- 6.1.3 Whilst ARCHAS can provide recommendations as to any future work on site, the final decision for any further archaeological mitigation rests with Stirling Council through Stirling Council Archaeology Service.

Acknowledgements

ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd would like to thank Mr Gavin Bruce of The Grand Plan Ltd for commissioning us to undertake the work.

Thanks are also due to the client, Mrs Amelia Percy and her family for their commitment to ensuring the archaeological condition was dealt with appropriately, for working around our timetabling issues and for providing a mechanical excavator to complete the work. The machine driver Gordon Mair has our gratitude for his company and good humour during the excavations.

We must also note the assistance provided by Stirling Council Archaeology Officer Murray Cook in planning and completing the project.

Appendix A Context Register

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Trench</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initial</i>
101	1	Deposit	Moderately compact mid brown, very slightly silty sand.	D: 0.35m	Turf and topsoil. Very clean.	14/06/16	RC
102	1	Deposit	Slightly mottled orange brown and yellow brown sand.	-	Natural Subsoil. Much darker at E end.	14/06/16	RC
103	1	Features	Series of three NW-SE aligned parallel linears. 2m apart.	W: 0.60m, D: 0.03m	Relict furrows?	14/06/16	RC
201	2	Deposit	Moderately compact mid brown slightly silty sand with occasional small stone inclusions	D: 0.30m	Turf and topsoil. As (101)	14/06/16	RC
202	2	Deposit	Firmly compact mottled pink, red brown and orange brown slightly clay sand with frequent small stone inclusions and fragments of Fe stone	-	Natural Subsoil. As (102)	14/06/16	RC
203	2	Features	Series of three N-S aligned linears, 2.50m apart	W: 0.20m	Red ceramic field drains	14/06/16	RC
301	3	Deposit	Moderately compact mid brown slightly silty sand. Very clean, with very few inclusions.	D: 0.70- 0.30m	Turf and topsoil. As (101)	14/06/16	RC
302	3	Deposit	Firmly compact, mottled sand clay, with areas of soft yellow sand, mid brown gravel and mid brown clay.	-	Natural Subsoil. As (102)	14/06/16	RC
303	3	Features	Ephemeral and diffuse linears.	-	Possibly geological, possibly relict furrows.	14/06/16	RC
304	3	Features	Series of at least two, narrow N-S aligned linears filled with re-deposited natural	W: 0.18m, D: >0.25m	Red ceramic field drains	14/06/16	RC
401	4	Deposit	Moderately compact mid brown slightly silty sand. Very clean, with very few inclusions.	D: 0.30m	Turf and topsoil. As (101)	14/06/16	RC
402	4	Deposit	Moderately to softly compact orange brown fine grains and with occasional patches of grey brown clay sand.	-	Natural Subsoil. As (102)	14/06/16	RC
403	4	Features	Ephemeral linear filled by topsoil	L: <1.60m, W: 0.15m, D: <0.03m	Ploughscar.	14/06/16	RC
404	4	Features	Ephemeral linear filled by topsoil	L: <1.60m, W: 0.15m, D: <0.03m	Ploughscar. As (404). 2.5m apart.	14/06/16	RC
405	4	Features	Narrow linear with vertical sides and filled by a mix of re-deposited natural including yellow/pink clay.	D: >0.10m	Field drain.	14/06/16	RC

Appendix B Trench Register

Trench No.	Length (m)	Width (m)	Area (m²)	Depth (m)	Orientation
1	27	1.2	32.4	0.35	WNW-ESE
2	25.1	1.2	30.12	0.30	WNW-ESE
3	25	1.2	30	0.70-0.30	NW-SE
4	25	1.2	30	0.30	MW-SE

Appendix C Photographic Register

Image No.	Direction facing	Trench	Contexts No.	Description	Date	Initials
001	NE	1	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 1	14/06/2016	RC
002	E	1	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 1	14/06/2016	RC
003	SE	1	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 1	14/06/2016	RC
004	E	1	(102)	Post-excavation view of Trench 1	14/06/2016	RC
005	S	1	(101)	N facing section of Trench 1	14/06/2016	RC
006	SE	2	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 2	14/06/2016	RC
007	SW	2	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 2	14/06/2016	RC
008	NE	2	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 2	14/06/2016	RC
009	E	2	(202)	Post-excavation view of Trench 2	14/06/2016	RC
010	S	2	(201)	N facing section of Trench 2	14/06/2016	RC
011	E	3	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
012	SW	3	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
013	N	3	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
014	E	3	(302)	Post-excavation view of Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
015	SW	3	(301)	NE facing section of Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
016	SW	3	(301)	NE facing section of Trench 3	14/06/2016	RC
017	N	4	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 4	14/06/2016	RC
018	N	4	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 4	14/06/2016	RC
019	SW	4	-	Working shot - Opening Trench 4	14/06/2016	RC
020	NW	4	(402)	Post-excavation view of Trench 4	14/06/2016	RC
021	SW	4	(401)	NE facing section of Trench 4	14/06/2016	RC
022	E	1, 2	-	Working shot - Trenches 1 and 2	14/06/2016	RC
023	W	-	-	Working shot - Old Ballikinrain House	14/06/2016	RC
024	W	-	-	Working shot - Old Ballikinrain House	14/06/2016	RC
025	E	3, 4	-	Working shot - Trenches 3 and 4	14/06/2016	RC
026	N	3	(307)	Pre-excavation view of (307)	14/06/2016	RC
027	N	3	(307)	Pre-excavation view of (307)	14/06/2016	RC
028	N	3	(307)	Post-excavation view of (307)	14/06/2016	RC
029	W	3	(307)	Post-excavation view of (307)	14/06/2016	RC
030	N	1	(103)	Pre-excavation view of (103)	14/06/2016	RC
031	E	1	(103)	Pre-excavation view of (103)	14/06/2016	RC
032	E	1	(103)	Post-excavation view of (103)	14/06/2016	RC
033	W	1	(103)	Post-excavation view of (103)	14/06/2016	RC

Appendix D Provisional Discovery and Excavation Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Old Ballikinrain
PROJECT CODE:	233
PARISH:	Killearn
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Ross Cameron
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	n/a
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Greenfield
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 56233 87783
START DATE (this season)	14/06/16
END DATE (this season)	14/06/16
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>ARCHAS Cultural Heritage Ltd were contracted by Mr Gavin Bruce of The Grand Plan on behalf of M Percy Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site at Old Ballikinrain, near Balfron, Stirling. The evaluation is undertaken in advance of the formation of a new access track across agricultural land.</p> <p>The archaeological evaluation followed the placement of a planning condition upon the proposed development by Stirling Council. In practice the evaluation involved the mechanical excavation of four evaluation trenches along the footprint of the proposed development. No significant archaeological features or deposits were noted in these trenches.</p> <p>ARCHAS recommend that no further archaeological mitigation be required on site and that the planning condition can be deemed as having been met.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	n/a
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	M Percy Ltd
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	ARCHAS Cultural Heritage LTD Suite B2 Laws Close 339-343 High Street Kirkcaldy KY1 1JN
EMAIL ADDRESS:	ross.cameron@archas.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION	NMRS and Stirling Council SMR (intended)