

**George St, Whithorn, Wigtonshire:
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Data Structure Report

by Claire Shaw

issued 17th April 2007



Rathmell

Archaeology Ltd

Quality Assurance

This report covers works which have been undertaken in keeping with the issued brief as modified by the agreed programme of works. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance of Rathmell Archaeology Limited on the preparation of reports. All works reported on within this document have been undertaken in keeping with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

Signed Date

In keeping with the procedure of Rathmell Archaeology Limited this document and its findings have been reviewed and agreed by an appropriate colleague:

Checked Date

Copyright Rathmell Archaeology Limited. All rights reserved.

No part of this report may be copied or reproduced by any means without prior written permission from Rathmell Archaeology Limited. If you have received this report in error, please destroy all copies in your possession or control and notify Rathmell Archaeology Limited.

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the commissioning party and unless otherwise agreed in writing by Rathmell Archaeology Limited, no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of the report. No liability is accepted by Rathmell Archaeology Limited for any use of this report, other than the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided.

Opinions and information provided in the report are on the basis of Rathmell Archaeology Limited using due skill, care and diligence in preparation of the same and no explicit warranty is provided as to their accuracy. It should be noted and it is expressly stated that no independent verification of any of the documents or information supplied to Rathmell Archaeology Limited has been made.

Contents

1 Overview	3
2 Project Works	5
3 Findings: Desk Based Assessment	5
4 Findings: Monitoring	7
5 Discussion	6
6 Conclusion	6
7 References	9
Appendix 1 - Record Summaries	10
Appendix 2 - Discovery & Excavation in Scotland	11
Contact Details	12

Figures

Fig. 1 Plot location	4
Fig. 2 Historical maps	6
Fig. 3 Site Photographs	8

1 Overview

- 1.1 This Data Structure Report presents the findings of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on behalf of Mr. D. Coe in respect of groundworks in support of the development to the rear of 6 George Street, Whithorn, Wigtownshire. The archaeological works have been designed to mitigate the impact on the archaeological remains within the development area.
- 1.2 The site is located to the rear of number 6 George Street, part of an Outstanding Conservation Area. The land under development was formally the garden of number 6 George Street which once formed the burgage plots synonymous with the medieval layout of the burgh. Archaeological monitoring was restricted to one house plot (Planning ref. 06/P/5/0166) (Figure 1).
- 1.3 There are no known specific archaeological sites within the development site, although the site lies within the medieval and post-medieval burgh of Whithorn. Dumfries and Galloway Council has required a programme of archaeological monitoring in relation to any ground breaking works to address any potential archaeological deposits.
- 1.4 Rathmell Archaeology Ltd (Rathmell) was appointed by Mr. D. Coe to act with regard to the archaeological issues. The program of archaeological monitoring was designed to mitigate any adverse impact on any archaeology revealed during ground breaking works.

2 Project Works

- 2.1 The programme of works agreed with Dumfries and Galloway Council, comprised of monitoring works of all foundation trenching and ground reduction relating to the housing plot. These works were undertaken on the 11th of April 2007. In compliance with the Method Statement (Rees 2007) all groundbreaking works within the development were observed on this date.
- 2.2 On arrival to site the area had already been cleared of previously existing buildings, namely a coal shed within the south western corner. Works were commenced with the excavating of the foundation trenches of the proposed residential development covering an area 105m².
- 2.3 All works were carried out using a 3cx JCB machine with 0.6m wide toothed bucket, extending to an average depth of 800mm. Any potential archaeological features were investigated. However, no significant archaeological features were observed during the on-site works and no archaeological material was recovered. All features impacted by the ground reduction were of relatively modern or natural origin.
- 2.4 All works were conducted in accordance with the Method Statement, the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Scotland Policy Statements.

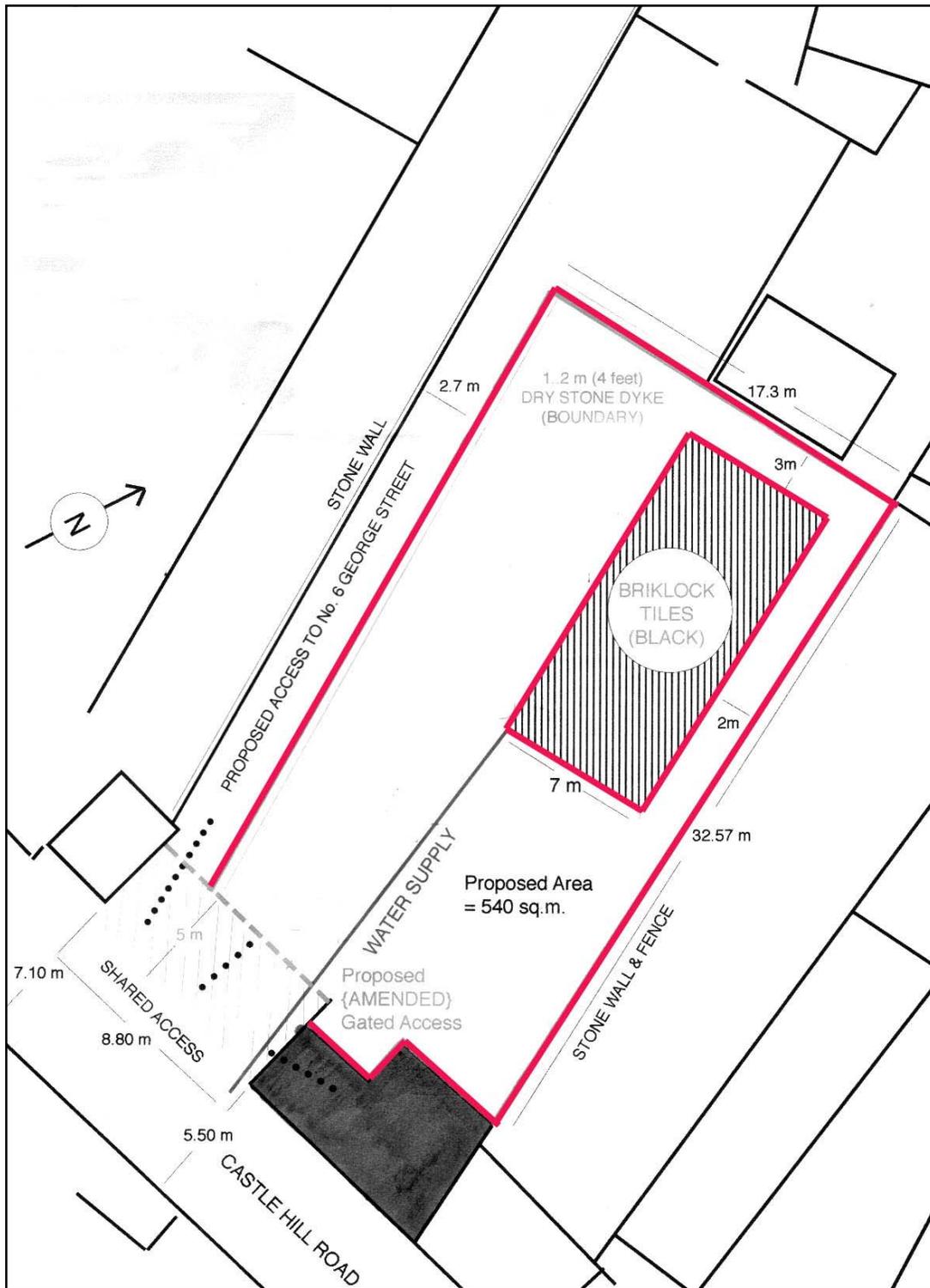


Figure 1: Development area illustrating footing of dwelling

3 Findings: Desk-based assessment

3.1 *Cartographic evidence*

- 3.1.1 As stated the development site is situated to the immediate rear of number 6 George Street on land that formally formed the garden to the afore mentioned house. The earliest source of sound cartographical evidence that illustrates a basic level of detail of the area dates to the mid eighteenth century with the pre-Ordnance Survey map by Roy (1747-1755) (Figure 2a). Thereafter it is the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (1850) that provides accurate detail of the area concerned.
- 3.1.2 Roy's map of Whithorn (Figures 2a) shows the somewhat concentrated settlement of Whithorn, set out in a traditional medieval layout, along a main road with the remains of the burgage plot layout to the rear of each dwelling. It can be seen that with the concerned area, for the most part the ground appears to be open, though there is a narrow structure along the south-eastern boundary.
- 3.1.3 On the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1850) it can be seen that not only has the infrastructure of the village developed considerably but so has the overall size of the village. It is noteworthy that although the village has significantly extended along the main thoroughfare, the established long narrow gardens (burgage plots) to the rear of the houses have continued in practice. This may be more due to the style of property constructed, narrow terrace housing, fronting straight onto the road. In regards to the development it can be seen that along Castle Hill Road, a long narrow structure has been constructed and appears to house two public inns. These inns were probably associated with the brewery located at the corner of Castle Hill Road. This narrow structure has been demolished and does not appear within the garden of the associated house.

3.2 *Documentary and Archival Sources*

- 3.2.1 The desk-based assessment did not identify the presence of any sites protected for their archaeological or historical merit under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 or buildings protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1997 (Historic Scotland 1998) within the study area. The National Monuments Record of Scotland identified one archaeological site within the vicinity of the development, that of the dilapidated brewery at the corner of Castle Hill Road.
- 3.2.2 Both the Old Statistical Accounts 1791-99 (OSA) and New Statistical Accounts 1834-45 (NSA) were consulted for Whithorn and it was noted that very little reference was made in relation to activity in the area.

4 Findings: Monitoring Works

- 4.1 The housing plot is located within the latter half of the former garden of number 6 George Street, Whithorn. Work commenced with the excavation of the lateral foundation trenches.
- 4.2 Across the extent of the plot, the soil profile exhibited a uniform stratigraphy. The topsoil (101) was dark brown, fine silty sand with occasional small stones and root inclusions throughout with an average depth of 700mm.
- 4.3 Discussion with the developer revealed that this soil is made-up ground, resulting from the depositing of soil used as ballast in ships coming from Ireland to transport coal. Below the topsoil, the subsoil (102) has an orange/brown hue, silty/sand and is quite malleable. This layer was deemed sufficient as a base for construction. Towards the north-western end of the foundations, the subsoil (102) came off the reveal the underlying bedrock (103), a fragmentary rock used in the area to construct dry stone boundary walls.



Figure 2a: Roy 1747-55 (sheet 03/7e)



Figure 2b: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1850

5 Discussion

- 5.1 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of archaeological monitoring works within the foundation trenches. This general lack of archaeological features indicates that the ground in question has probably been used for small scale agricultural purposes (relating to its history as a burgage plot) before becoming a garden. In relation to the narrow structure which is depicted in the 1st Edition Ordinance map housing two Inns, the majority of this structure has been demolished. The location of the new development sits 19m from Castle Hill Road and would therefore miss the footing for this structure.
- 5.2 As all ground disturbance work has been carried out, there is no need of further archaeological monitoring and we recommend that no further archaeological works are necessary on this plot.
- 5.2 The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with the planning authority. Confirmation that the above recommendations are acceptable should be confirmed with these bodies prior to the implementation of any development works whose appropriateness may rely on these recommendations.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 A programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out on the 11th of April 2007 for Mr. D. Coe in respect of the forthcoming housing development to the rear of 6 George Street, Whithorn.
- 6.2 During the monitoring works of the foundation trenches and ground reduction, no features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed.



Figure 3a: NW-SE foundation trench



Figure 3b: SW-NE foundation trench



Figure 3c: NW-SE foundation trench



Figure 3d: SW-NE foundation trench

7 References

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Davidson, I | 1791-99 | <i>Old Statistical Account of Scotland, 1791-99. Whithorn, County of Wigtown, Vol.16.</i> University of Glasgow and Edinburgh, 275285. |
| Nicholson, Rev. C | 1834-45 | <i>New Statistical Account of Scotland, 1834-45. Whithorn, County of Wigtown, Vol.4.</i> University of Glasgow and Edinburgh, 52-60 |
| Rees, T | 2006 | 6 George Street, Whithorn, Wigtownshire: Archaeological Watching Brief (WSI) <i>unpublished commercial document.</i> |
| SODev | 1994 | <i>National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning,</i> Scottish Office Development Department. |
| SOEnd | 1994 | <i>Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology,</i> Scottish Office Environmental Department. |
| <i>Cartographic</i> | | |
| 1747-55 | Roy | Military map of Wigtownshire – sheet 03/7e |
| 1855 | Ordnance Survey | 1 st edition map 1:10560 |

Appendix 1: Record summaries

Context Summaries

Context No	Interpretation	Description
100	Overburden	Gravel overburden extending over the entire yard area to a depth of 70mm.
101	Topsoil	Dark brown, fine loamy, silty sand with occasional small stones and root inclusions. Comment from land owner stated that this soil is made- up ground, resulting from the depositing of soil used as ballast in ships coming from Ireland to transport coal. The extent of this layer was homogenous with very few inclusions and an average depth of 700mm.
102	Subsoil	Orange/brown silty sand, clay like. Occurred at extent of excavation.
103	Natural	Bedrock, fragmented surface, traditionally used in the area to form dry stone boundary dykes

Photographic Record

Image

No.	Print Film No.	Neg. No.	Slide Film No.	Neg. No.	Description	From	Date
1	1	1	1	5	General photo of foundation trench	SE	11/04/07
2	1	2	1	6	General photo of foundation trench	NE	11/04/07
3	1	3	1	7	General photo of foundation trench	NW	11/04/07
4	1	4	1	8	General photo of foundation trench	SW	11/04/07

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries and Galloway Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	6 George Street, Whithorn
PARISH:	Withorn
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Claire Shaw
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Monitoring
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NX 4470 4034
START DATE (this season)	11/04/07
END DATE (this season)	11/04/07
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>Programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out on the 11th of April 2007 for Mr. D. Coe in respect of the forthcoming housing development at the rear of the property number 6 George Street, Whithorn.</p> <p>During the monitoring works of the foundation trenches, no features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	06072
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr. D. Coe
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	10 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
E MAIL:	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.

Contact Details

Rathmell Archaeology can be contacted at its Registered Office or through the web:

Rathmell Archaeology Ltd

10 Ashgrove Workshops
Kilwinning
Ayrshire
KA13 6PU

www.rathmell-arch.co.uk

t.: 01294 542848
m.: 07817 334907

f.: 01294 542849
e.: contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk

The Dumfries and Galloway Council Archaeology Service can be contacted through the details noted below:

Dumfries and Galloway Council Archaeologist

Planning & Environment
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Newall Terrace
Dumfries
DG1 1LW

t.: 01387 260154

f.: 01387 260149
e.: jane.brann@dumgal.gov.uk

End of Document