

**Eastlands Road, Rothesay, Isle of Bute:
Archaeological Evaluation**

Data Structure Report

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Rathmell

Archaeology Ltd

Quality Assurance

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Signed Date

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Checked Date

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1 Overview

- 1.1 This Data Structure Report presents the findings of archaeological investigative works that were required by Bute Homes in respect of the proposed construction of 42 residential dwellings on land southwest of Rose Creek and Inishm, Eastlands, Rothesay, Isle of Bute. The archaeological works were designed to inform the planning decision and develop mitigation of any identified adverse impact on the archaeological remains within their proposed development area.
- 1.2 The area concerned is currently a green field site extending to 2.5ha (NGR: NS 104 647) and located to the immediate south of Eastlands Road. There are no known archaeological sites within the dwelling area; however there are several sites within the immediate landscape, including a possible short cist (NMRS NS16SW.17), a post-medieval farm (NMRS NS16SW.15) and the Ardencraig Garden (NMRS NS16SW.33.1).
- 1.3 The findings presented below inform on the character of any archaeologically significant features within the proposed extraction area. These investigative works were sufficient to inform on archaeological hazard and allow the determination of planning consent.
- 1.4 Rathmell Archaeology Ltd was appointed to act with regard to the investigative archaeological works by Bute Homes. The West of Scotland Archaeology Service, who advise Argyll and Bute Council on archaeological matters, provided guidance on the character of archaeological investigation required on this site.

2 Project Works

- 2.1 The programme of works agreed with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS), commenced with an archaeological evaluation through machine cut trenches extending to 5% of the development area, some 2.5ha. However upon arrival at the site it became evident that approximately the northern two thirds of the site had been topsoil stripped and landscaped by previous developers. The exposed surfaces had then been left to re-vegetate and a considerable scrub growth covered most surfaces. The landscaped ground was walked to confirm the consistent character of this disturbance and test scrapes were also conducted to further verify the modern truncation.
- 2.2 This situation was communicated to WoSAS who then agreed to sign off the majority of the site, leaving the southern third left for evaluation. This provided some 0.93ha of land to evaluate, in total 341m² of linear trenching was excavated, comfortably acceding the 5% for the remaining area.
- 2.3 The majority of exposed features within the trenches were investigated and evaluated to determine archaeological significance, as stated in the agreed Method Statement. All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Scotland Policy Statements.

3 Findings: Desktop study

3.1 *Statutory protected sites*

- 3.1.1 The desktop study did not identify the presence within the study area 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).
- 3.1.2 Nor were any sites identified that have the confident potential to contain the burial of human skeletal material, and hence raise the difficulties of the crime of violation of sepulchre (the common law crime of unlawful interference with human remains).



Figure 1a: Roy 1745

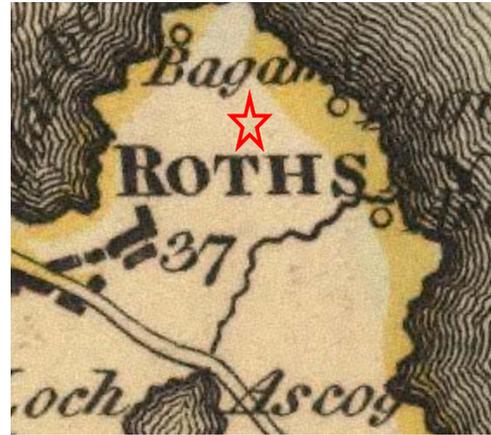


Figure 1b: Ainslie

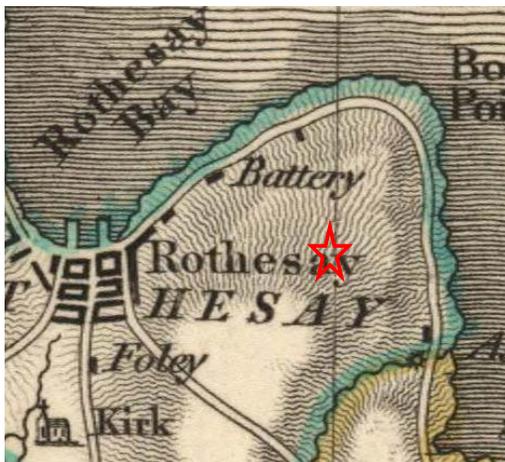


Figure 1c: Thompson 1832



Figure 1d: 1st ed. Ordnance Survey 1869



Figure 1e: 2nd ed. Ordnance Survey 1900

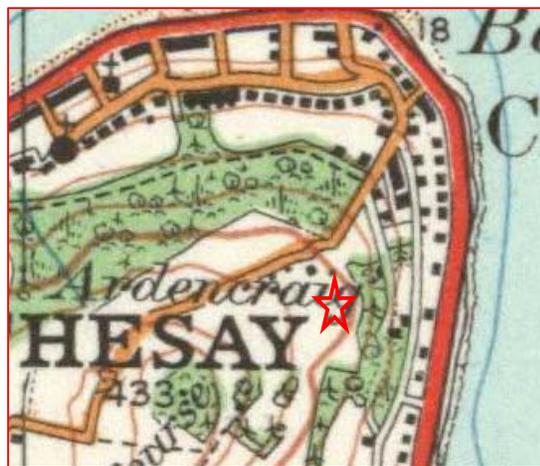


Figure 1f: Ordnance Survey 1926

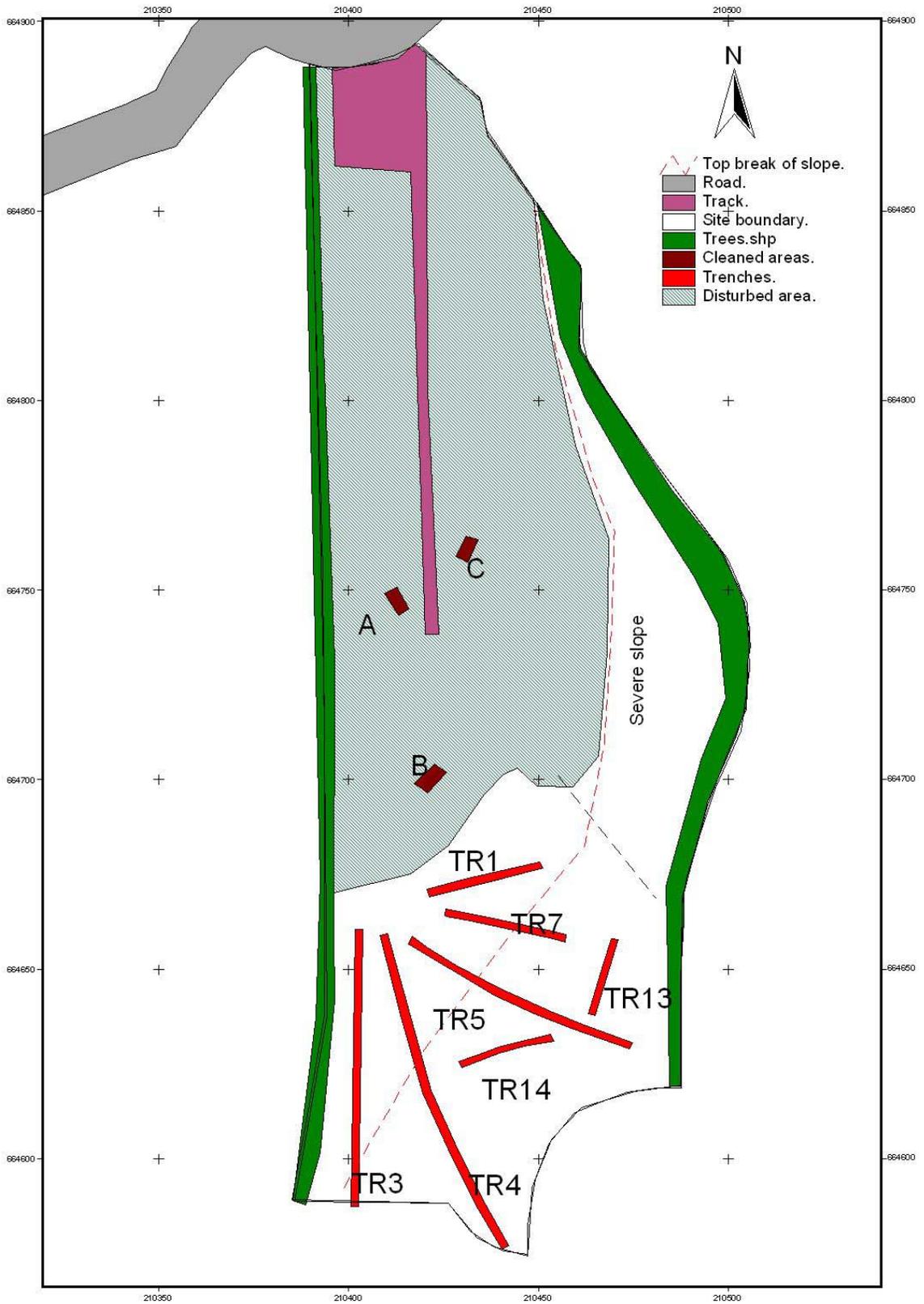


Figure 2: Trench plan



Figure 3a: Trench 4



Figure 3b Trench 7



Figure 3c: Trench 13



Figure 3d: Trench 14

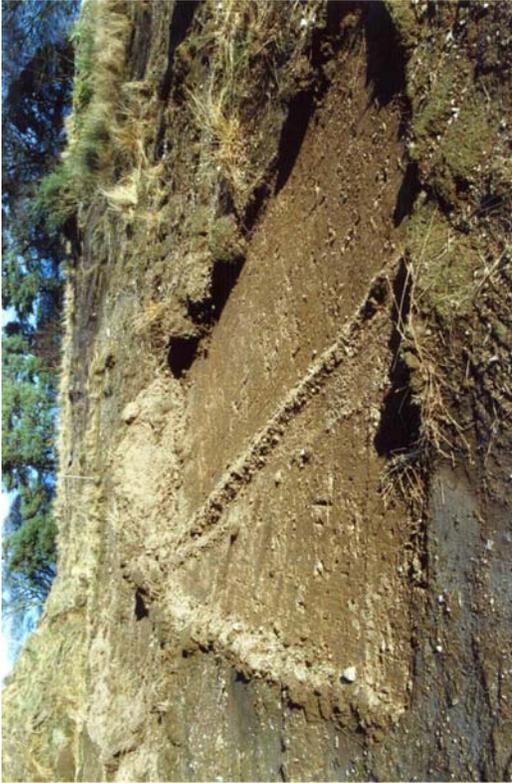


Figure 4a: Area B



Figure 4b: General Shot Stripped Area



Figure 4c: Area C



Figure 4d: General Shot Stripped Area

3.2 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 3.2.1 The National Monuments Record of Scotland identified no known archaeological sites within the development area; however there are several sites within the immediate landscape, including a possible short cist (NMRS NS16SW.17), a post-medieval farm (NMRS NS16SW.15) and the Ardencraig Garden (NMRS NS16SW.33.1) to the immediate east and south.
- 3.2.2 The available pre-Ordnance Survey mapping (1745 to 1826) evidence suggests that ground has remained as open hillside with no indication agricultural activity except to the north. (Figures 1a, b & c).
- 3.2.3 The first edition Ordnance Survey of 1869 (Figure 1d) shows open fields bounded on the east by a wood and divided by a band of trees, which are depicted on subsequent Ordnance Survey mapping up until recent maps.

4 Findings: Evaluation

4.1 *Disturbed Area or inaccessible ground*

- 4.1.1 The majority of the northern two thirds of the site showed evidence of having had the topsoil and some subsoil removed. It was confirmed by Mr Ian Woollcott (*pers comm*), that previous developers had stripped the area and undertaken major landscaping works.
- 4.1.2 Three areas A, B and C (Figure 2) approximately 5m by 4m were cleared of plant re-growth to establish the level of stripping, each area showed the orange red gravel [004]. The more westerly area (A) evidenced a little topsoil, which appeared to have been redeposited. The conclusion reached from these test scrapes on-site and from a general walkover was that there were no areas of topsoil surviving *in-situ* and extensive evidence of the upper surface of the subsoil having been significantly truncated.
- 4.1.3 A graded track had been cut through the middle of the area (see Figure 2), up to a depth of approximately 1.8m at its southernmost limit. A section of the track cutting was observed and showed that the surviving depth of a compact red orange sandy gravel [004] was between 100mm to 300mm thick and sat upon bed rock.
- 4.1.4 The ground to the east of the disturbed area, along the whole eastern flank, was inaccessible due to a steep slope and trees that run along the eastern boundary of the site (Figure 2). The slope become less severe in the southern portion of the site

4.2 *Undisturbed Area*

- 4.2.1 All seven trenches (Figure 2) exhibited a fairly common stratigraphy, with thin dark brown clay silt topsoil, which was in general 50mm or less in depth, overlaying varying subsoil. Hillwash, consisting of brown grey sandy clay silt to a depth of up to 220mm, was evident in Trenches 1, 5, 7 and 13, especially those portions of trench on the eastern downslope of the site.
- 4.2.2 There were eight subsoils, the predominate two were [002] and [003], these were orange brown sandy clay or silty clay, respectively. The rest were variants of this, in colour and inclusions. The exceptions were [004], [006] and [008] which were red orange gravels.
- 4.2.3 Bioturbation was evident in the three of the more northerly of the trenches (1, 5 and 7) penetrating the underlying subsoil; it consisted purely of tree root action.
- 4.2.4 No significant archaeology features were uncovered during the evaluation, although some modern ceramic detritus was observed throughout the topsoil [001] within the trenches.

5 Discussion

- 5.1 The northern two-thirds of the development area has clearly suffered severe disruption from previous reductions associated with previous aborted developments. The evaluation tested the scale of this truncation through a walkover and test scrapes in the areas with the best

potential. However, all indications are that should any archaeology have been present it will have been wholly destroyed.

- 5.2 Given the thin nature of the topsoil, it may be reasonable to suggest that most, if not all, the southern third of the site has at some point in the past had the topsoil and some of the underlying subsoil removed, then had a reintroduction of some topsoil. Given the level of vegetation present it may have been some time ago, possibly prior to the stripping of the northern two thirds.
- 5.3 The level of tree root action present in Trenches 1, 5 and 7, would correspond with the position of the band of trees which divided the fields now subject to development (Figure 1a-f). The absence of drainage features appears unusual given the general clay subsoil, although this may be an indication of the late enclosure of this ground and its general poor character.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation failed to identify any significant archaeological features or artefacts within the development area. In addition, a significant portion of the site has suffered from a high level of disturbance through previous development. Consequently, we recommend that no further archaeological works are appropriate.
- 6.2 The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with Argyll and Bute Council, and their advisors, the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed development at Eastlands Road, Rothesay, Isle of Bute, (NGR: NS 104 647). An evaluation was carried out from the 6th to 7th February 2007. The evaluation comprised seven trenches covering 7% of the available, undisturbed area. In addition areas which had previously suffered severe truncation were tested to ensure that this truncation would reasonably have removed any archaeology that may originally have been present.
- 7.2 Most trenches exhibited common stratigraphy, with a thin dark brown clay silt topsoil, which was in general 50mm or less in depth, overlaying varying subsoil. Hillwash was evident in Trenches 1, 5, 7 and 13, especially those portions of trench on the eastern downslope of the site. There were eight various subsoils, the predominate two were [002] and [003], these were orange brown sandy clay or silty clay, respectively. The rest were variants of this, in colour and inclusions. The exceptions were [004], [006] and [008] which were red orange gravels
- 7.3 No significant archaeology was uncovered during the evaluation, though modern ceramic detritus was observed.

Appendix 1: Trench Details

Within this appendix a standardised set of data pertaining to the evaluation trenches is presented.

All measurement distances quoted along the trench measure based on the quoted orientation of the trench. See Figure 2 for trench locations.

Trench 1

Orientation:	North to South
Size:	73m by 2m (146m ²).
Topsoil depth:	70mm to 100mm.
Subsoil character:	Subsoil [002], orange brown silty clay with frequent small and medium size stone inclusion.
Modern features:	None.
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None.

Trench 2

Orientation:	North northwest to South southeast
Size:	88.5m by 2m (177m ²).
Topsoil depth:	120mm to 200mm.
Subsoil character:	Subsoil [003], Mid-brown with orange flecks sandy clay with frequent small stone and quartz inclusions, which changes to [004] a compact red orange sandy gravel, at +51.5m for 4.5m before reverting to [003].
Modern features:	None.
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None.

Trench 3

Orientation:	West to east
Size:	26.4m by 2m (52.8m ²).
Topsoil depth:	100mm to 140mm.
Subsoil character:	Subsoil [003], Mid-brown with orange flecks sandy clay with frequent small stone and quartz inclusions, changing to [002], orange brown silty clay with frequent small and medium size stone inclusion, at +8.5m.
Modern features:	None.
Significant features:	None.

Artefacts: None.

Trench 4

Orientation: South southwest to North northeast
Size: 21.5m by 2m (43m²).
Topsoil depth: 150mm to 210mm.
Hillwash depth 100mm to 230mm
Subsoil character: Subsoil [006], compact red orange sandy gravel with frequent small stone inclusions becoming more stony after +13.2m
Modern features: None.
Significant features: None.
Artefacts: None.

Trench 5

Orientation: Southeast to Northwest
Size: 66.6m by 2m (133.2m²).
Topsoil depth: 100mm
Hilwash depth 100mm to 220mm
Subsoil character: Subsoil [003], Mid-brown with orange flecks sandy clay with frequent small stone and quartz inclusions, with a patch of [007] light brown grey clay with frequent small stone inclusions, between +26.2m and 29.5m, at +50.9m [003] changes to [008], red orange silty gravel with occasional medium sized stone inclusions.,
Modern features: None.
Significant features: None.
Artefacts: None.

Trench 6

Orientation: West to East
Size: 33.1m by 2m (66.2m²).
Topsoil depth: 130mm to 140mm.
Hillwash depth 100mm to 110mm
Subsoil character: Subsoil [006], compact red orange sandy gravel with frequent small stone inclusions, changing to [003], mid-brown with orange flecks sandy clay with frequent small stone and quartz inclusions at +5.6m, which changes to [009], mottled orange grey sandy clay with occasional stone inclusions and frequent tree roots at +13m, which changes to [007], compact light brown grey clay, with patches of orange sand, at +17.6m which then becomes [006],

compact red orange sandy gravel with frequent small stone inclusions, at +25.58m.

Modern features: None.

Significant features: None.

Artefacts: None.

Trench 7

Orientation: East northeast to West southwest

Size: 32m by 2m (64m²).

Topsoil depth: 50mm to 70mm.

Hillwash depth 60mm to 100mm

Subsoil character: Subsoil [010], red orange silty clay with occasional small stone inclusions and tree roots.

Modern features: None.

Significant features: None.

Artefacts: None.

Appendix 2: Registers

Context Summaries

No.	Interpretation	Description
001	Topsoil	Dark brown clay silt, with frequent rootlets and roots, generally very shallow, depths ranging from 50mm to 210mm
002	Subsoil	Orange brown silty clay with frequent small and medium size stone inclusion
003	Subsoil	Mid-brown with orange flecks sandy clay with frequent small stone and quartz inclusions.
004	Subsoil	A compact red orange sandy gravel
005	Hillwash	Brown grey sandy clay silt.
006	Subsoil	A compact red orange sandy gravel with frequent small stone inclusions
007	Subsoil	Light brown grey clay with frequent small stone inclusions
008	Subsoil	Red orange silty gravel with occasional medium sized stone inclusions
009	Subsoil	Mottled orange grey sandy clay with occasional stone inclusions and frequent tree roots

010	Subsoil	Red orange silty clay with occasional small stone inclusions and tree roots
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Drawing Register

Sheet	No.	Title	Scale	Date	Author
1	01	Trench 3	1:100	06/02/07	AG
1	02	Trench 4	1:100	06/02/07	AG
1	03	Trench 14	1:100	06/02/07	DG
1	04	Trench 13	1:100	06/02/07	DG
1	05	Trench 5	1:100	06/02/07	AG
1	06	Trench 7	1:100	06/02/07	DG
1	07	Trench 1	1:100	06/02/07	AG

Photographic Register

Image	Description	From	Date
1	Trench 3	S	06/02/07
2	Trench 4	SSE	06/02/07
3	Trench 14	E	06/02/07
4	Trench 13	SSW	06/02/07
5	Trench 5	NW	06/02/07
6	Trench 7	W	06/02/07
7	Trench 1	WSW	06/02/07
8	General Site Shot	N	06/02/07
9	General Site Shot	NW	06/02/07
10	General Site Shot	SW	06/02/07
11	General Site Shot	SSE	06/02/07
12	Area A	WSW	06/02/07
13	General Site Shot	S	06/02/07
14	General Site Shot	WSW	06/02/07
15	Area B	S	06/02/07
16	General Site Shot	S	06/02/07
17	Area C	S	06/02/07

Appendix 3: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Argyll and Bute
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Eastlands Road, Rothesay
PARISH:	Rothesay
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Douglas Gordon
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 104 647
START DATE (this season)	6 th February 2007
END DATE (this season)	7 th February 2007
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed development at Eastlands Road, Rothesay, Isle of Bute, (NGR: NS 104 647). An evaluation was carried out from the 6th to 7th February 2007. The evaluation comprised seven trenches covering 7% of the available, undisturbed area. In addition areas which had previously suffered severe truncation were tested to ensure that this truncation would reasonably have removed any archaeology that may originally have been present.</p> <p>Most trenches exhibited common stratigraphy, with a thin dark brown clay silt topsoil, which was in general 50mm or less in depth, overlaying varying subsoil. Hillwash was evident in Trenches 1, 5, 7 and 13, especially those portions of trench on the eastern downslope of the site. There were eight various subsoils, the predominate two were [002] and [003], these were orange brown sandy clay or silty clay, respectively. The rest were variants of this, in colour and inclusions. The exceptions were [004], [006] and [008] which were red orange gravels</p> <p>No significant archaeology was uncovered during the evaluation, though modern ceramic detritus was observed.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	07001
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Bute Homes
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	10 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, KA13 6PU
E MAIL:	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to West of Scotland Archaeology Service and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.

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