

FORTH VALLEY COLLEGE, ALLOA ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

PROJECT 2957

carried out
on behalf of
Halcrow Group Ltd

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FORTH VALLEY COLLEGE, ALLOA
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
DATA STRUCTURE REPORT

PROJECT 2957

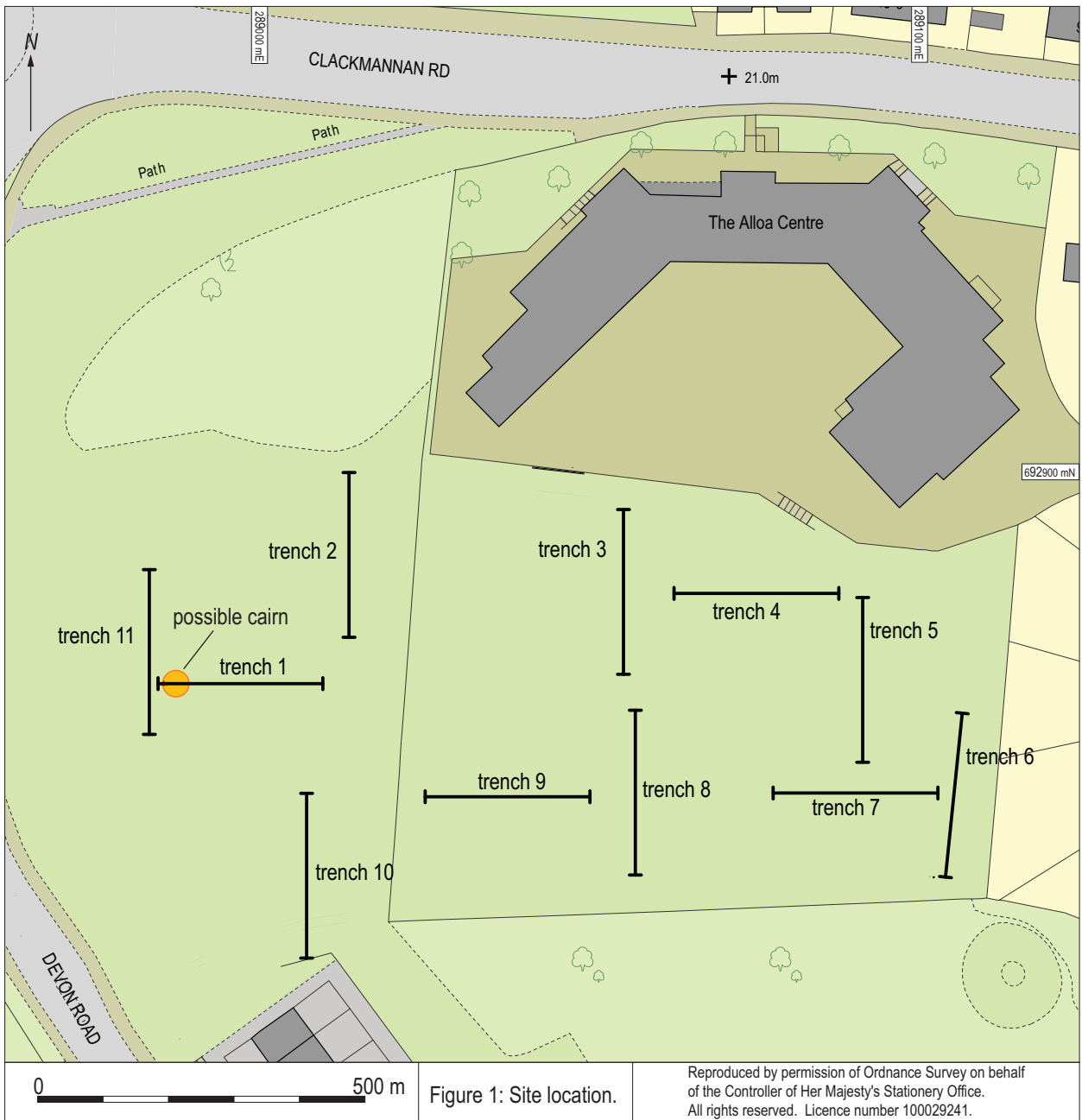
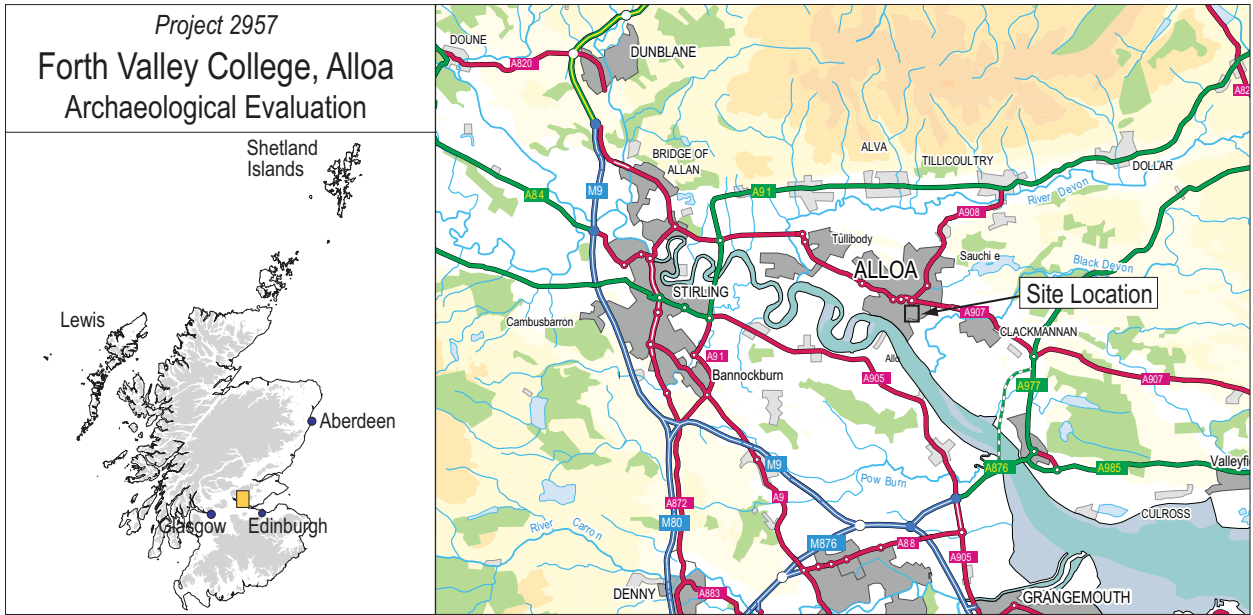
by

Iraia Arabaolaza

This document has been prepared in accordance with GUARD standard operating procedures.

Approved by: Date: 24 September 2009
Dr Iain Banks





1.0 Executive Summary

Between 7 and 9 September 2009, an archaeological evaluation of the proposed Forth Valley College site in Alloa was undertaken by Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) on behalf of Halcrow Group Ltd. The evaluation examined a 5% sample of the proposed development area and encountered no significant archaeological remains. It is therefore advised that no further archaeological work will be required by Clackmannanshire Council.

2.0 Introduction

Halcrow Group Ltd, acting on behalf of Forth Valley College, commissioned GUARD to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the proposed Forth Valley College site in Alloa, in order to support a planning application involving the redevelopment of the site and the creation of a new college facility.

3.0 Site Location, Topography and Geology

The site forms the summit of a small hill, Hawk Hill, located immediately to the south of the Alloa Centre, Clackmannanshire (centred on NGR NS 8906 9289). It is bounded on the east by Devon Road and on the south and west by housing. The area is currently rough grassland and is crossed by public footpaths.

The underlying drift geology consists of Till, Devensian, while the solid geology consists of Scottish Lower Coal (<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/bgsmapper/map.action?scale=bgs25k>).

4.0 Archaeological Background

Just beyond the eastern boundary of the proposed development area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, known as Hawk Hill Cairn A (SAM No 6914; NMRS NS89SE.10; SMR 1155.01). The monument consists of a semicircular prehistoric burial cairn measuring 16.3 metres in diameter and 1.4 metres high. A cist built of five flagstones on one of which a cross had been cut was found circa 1810 when the cairn was opened (SMR 1155.02). On the west side of the proposed development area, a possible cairn, Hawk Hill Cairn B, measuring circa 10 metres in diameter is located (NMRS NS89SE.10; SMR 1155.03). This putative cairn appears recorded on the 2nd and 3rd edition Ordnance Survey maps but it does not appear on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

5.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- Establish the presence, extent, date and level of survival of the putative cairn (SMR 1155.03) and any associated features;
- Establish the presence or absence of as yet unknown archaeological deposits within the application boundary;
- Determine the extent, level of survival and significance of archaeological deposits, should they exist;
- Test for the presence of archaeological features associated with prehistoric funerary monuments;
- Add to any knowledge about mining activity on the site;
- Add to the knowledge concerning human activity and settlement in Alloa;
- Inform the necessary level of archaeological mitigation that might have to be addressed by condition of planning consent;
- Allow Forth Valley College to be appraised of the archaeological issues that would have to be addressed if planning consent was granted.

6.0 Methodology

A total of eleven trenches, measuring c. 25 m by 1.6 m, representing a 5 % sample of the proposed development area were excavated by a tracked machine excavator, fitted with a flat-bladed ditching

bucket, under close archaeological supervision (Figure 1; Plate 1). The topsoil was removed until the surface of the subsoil or the first archaeological horizon was reached, whichever was encountered first. Digital photographs were taken of the excavated trenches and trench sections. All contexts encountered were recorded by writing description and the presence of modern artefacts was noted. Some finds were also catalogued and retrieved. The bank encountered in Trench 1 was recorded as well by a measured section drawing. The trench locations were surveyed prior to the evaluation.



Plate 1:
Working shot of TR11.

7.0 Results

Tr No	L (m)	W (m)	Topsoil/Ovrburden	Topsoil	Intermediate	Subsoil	Details
1	25	1.6	(1001) Loose, mid grey clayish loam with occasional cobbles and modern ceramic/glass. 0.25m thick.	(1003) Loose mid brown clayish loam with fine roots. 0.25m thick.	(1004) Hard orangey grey clay 0.25m thick redeposited natural.	(1002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles.	A bank orientated N-S and built of redeposited natural subsoil is located here.
2	25.5	1.6	(2001) Loose, mid grey clayish loam with moderate roots. 0.25m thick.	-	(2003) Loose light grey concrete debris.	(2002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles.	Field drains were found in this trench. No other archaeological remains.
3	25.5	1.6	(3001) Loose, mid grey clayish loam with occasional cobbles and modern glass. 0.35m thick.	-	-	(3002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles.	No archaeological remains. Find No 2 found in here.

<i>Tr No</i>	<i>L (m)</i>	<i>W (m)</i>	<i>Topsoil/Ovrburden</i>	<i>Topsoil</i>	<i>Intermediate</i>	<i>Subsoil</i>	<i>Details</i>
4	25.5	1.6	(4001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with occasional cobbles and modern ceramic. 0.3m thick	-	-	(4002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles/ boulders.	No archaeological remains. Find No 1 found in here.
5	25	1.6	(5001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with occasional pebbles and modern china. 0.25m thick	-	-	(5002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles.	Field drain was found. No other archaeological remains were found in this trench.
6	25	1.6	(6001) Dry loose mid brown silty sand with occasional pebbles and roots. 0.30m thick	(6003) Loose, mid grey clayish loam with occasional cobbles and metal debris. 0.3m thick	-	(6002) Hard orangey brown silty clay with occasional cobbles.	No archaeological remains.
7	25.5	1.6	(7001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with occasional pebbles and modern glass. 0.25m thick	-	-	(7002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional pebbles.	No archaeological remains.
8	25	1.6	(8001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with moderate fine roots. 0.20-0.25m thick	-	-	(8002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles/ boulders.	Plough marks were found. No other archaeological remains.
9	25.6	1.6	(9001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with occasional pebbles, fine roots and modern ceramic. 0.15m thick	-	-	(9002) Hard orangey grey clay with moderate cobbles.	No archaeological remains.
10	25	1.6	(10001) Loose mid grey clayish loam. 0.25m thick	-	-	(10002) Hard orangey grey clay with moderate cobbles/boulders.	Possible modern trial pit. No other archaeological remains.
11	30	1.6	(11001) Loose mid grey clayish loam with fine roots and modern glass. 0.30m thick	-	-	(11002) Hard orangey grey clay with occasional cobbles.	Possible modern trial pit and plough marks. No other archaeological remains.

8.0 Discussion

The excavation of evaluation trench 1 revealed a bank orientated N/S and built of re-deposited natural subsoil (1004) above the old topsoil surface (1001) and covered by a new layer of topsoil (1003) (Plate 2). A modern cable was observed running across this bank. The location of this bank was the same location as the putative cairn (SSMR 1155.03). While, due to the lack of finds and other features, the bank could not be dated, its absence on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map suggests a modern date. Other than field drains, plough marks and modern trial pits, the rest of the trenches were archaeologically sterile.



Plate2:

TR1 south facing section of the bank.

9.0 Recommendations

No further archaeological intervention is recommended for the proposed development area, as no significant archaeological remains were found during this evaluation. The final decision on the need for further work, however, resides solely with the Planning Authority and they should be consulted before any further development takes place.

10.0 Acknowledgements

GUARD thanks James Goad of Halcrow Group Limited, Lorna Main, archaeological adviser to Clackmannanshire Council, and Susan Mills from Alloa Museum who visited the site during the evaluation. Many thanks to Mark McDonald and Graham the machine driver for their hard work, Fiona Jackson for her technical advice and Brian Hay at Clackmannanshire Council who allowed the field team to use the parking facilities at Alloa Centre. Ronan Toolis managed the project for GUARD, John Kiely and Aileen Maule gave technical support and the report was desk-top published by Jen Cochrane.

11.0 Bibliography

National Monuments Record for Scotland, www.rcahms.gov.uk

<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/bgsmapper/map.action?scale=bgs25k>

12.0 Appendices

12.1 *List of Contexts*

<i>Area</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Interpretation/Relationships</i>
TR1	1001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR1	1002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR1	1003	Mid brown clayish loam	Topsoil of bank
TR1	1004	Orangey grey clay	Re deposited natural
TR2	2001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR2	2002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR2	2003	Light grey concrete	Concrete debris
TR3	3001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR3	3002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR4	4001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR4	4002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR5	5001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR5	5002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR6	6001	Mid brown silty sand	Topsoil
TR6	6002	Orangey brown silty clay	Subsoil
TR6	6003	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR7	7001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR7	7002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR8	8001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR8	8002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR9	9001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR9	9002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR10	10001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR10	10002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil
TR11	11001	Mid grey clayish loam	Topsoil
TR11	11002	Orangey grey clay	Subsoil

12.2 *List of Finds*

<i>Area</i>	<i>Find No</i>	<i>Context No</i>	<i>No of Pieces</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Description</i>
TR4	001	4001	1	Ceramic	Green glaze pottery sherd
TR3	002	3001	1	Coin	1944 three pence coin

12.3 *List of Photographs*

Digital

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Taken From</i>
1	ID photo of TR1	-
2	TR1 S facing section	S
3	TR1 post-ex	E
4	ID photo of TR2	-
5	TR2 W facing section	W
6	TR2 post-ex	N
7	ID photo of TR3	-
8	TR3 E facing section	E
9	TR3 post-ex	N
10	ID photo of TR4	-
11	TR4 N facing section	N
12	TR4 post-ex	E
13	ID photo of TR5	-
14	TR5 E facing section	E
15	TR5 post-ex	N
16	ID photo of TR6	-

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Taken From</i>
17	TR6 W facing section	W
18	TR6 post-ex	S
19	ID photo of TR7	-
20	TR7 N facing section	N
21	TR7 post-ex	E
22	ID photo of TR8	-
23	TR8 E facing section	E
24	TR8 post-ex	S
25	TR8 post-ex	S
26	ID photo of TR9	-
27	TR9 S facing section	S
28	TR9 post-ex	E
29	ID photo of TR10	-
30	TR10 feature (possible trial pit)	E
31	TR10 W facing section	W
32	TR10 post-ex	N
33	ID photo of TR11	-
34	TR11 E facing section	E
35	TR11 post-ex	N
36	TR11 post-ex	S
37	TR11 working shot	S
38	Post-ex shot of trenches in front of college	SW
39	Post-ex shot of trenches in front of college	SW
40	General view of site	S
41	General view of trenches next to bank	W
42	Alloa's tower from site	N
43	Alloa's tower from site	NNE
44	Concrete platform in front of college	W
45	General working shot	W
46	Water in trench	S

12.4 DES

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Clackmannanshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Hawk Hill, Alloa
PROJECT CODE:	GUARD 2957
PARISH:	Alloa
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Iraia Arabaolaza
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	GUARD
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NS89SE 10
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Cairn
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 8900 9287
START DATE (this season)	7 September 2009
END DATE (this season)	9 September 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by GUARD prior to the proposed Forth Valley College development in Alloa, due to the location of a putative cairn (Hawk Hill Cairn B) within the development area and the proximity of another cairn (Hawk Hill Cairn A) itself a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Trial trenching amounting to a 5% sample of the development area was excavated. An earth bank of probably modern date was encountered on the location of the putative cairn (Hawk Hill Cairn B). No other archaeological remains of any significance were encountered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS.
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Forth Valley College
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	GUARD, Gregory Building, Lilybank Gardens, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8QQ
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