



Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services

**Arkland Farm, Thornhill
Dumfries & Galloway:
Archaeological Monitoring Works**



**by Rebecca Shaw
27th June 2017**

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Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of archaeological monitoring works required by Buccleuch Rural Solutions on behalf of their client, in respect of proposed development works at Arkland farm, Thornhill, Dumfries & Galloway (NGR: NX 8031 9790) (Figure 1). The proposed works comprise: erection of agricultural shed (planning ref. no. 16/1240/ DPA) (Figure 2).

Archaeological works are required as the development lies within an area of archaeological interest relating to an earthwork to the south of the steading and a hollow way that possibly follows the line of a former ditch (MDG5693). The 19th century Ordnance Survey maps suggest that the earthwork is a prehistoric fort (Figures 3a-b) - though in the 1970s they revised their view and considered that the features may be natural. However, archaeologists from the Royal Commission also considered it to be an archaeological feature.

To ascertain the nature of the feature Dumfries & Galloway Council have required a programme of archaeological works to be undertaken as a requirement of the issued planning consent. Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service, who advises Dumfries & Galloway Council on archaeological matters provided guidance on the nature of archaeological works required. The archaeological works required are: monitoring during down-cutting within the development area to appropriately record and recover any features or finds

Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services was appointed to act with regard to the archaeological condition by Buccleuch Rural Solutions on behalf of their client.

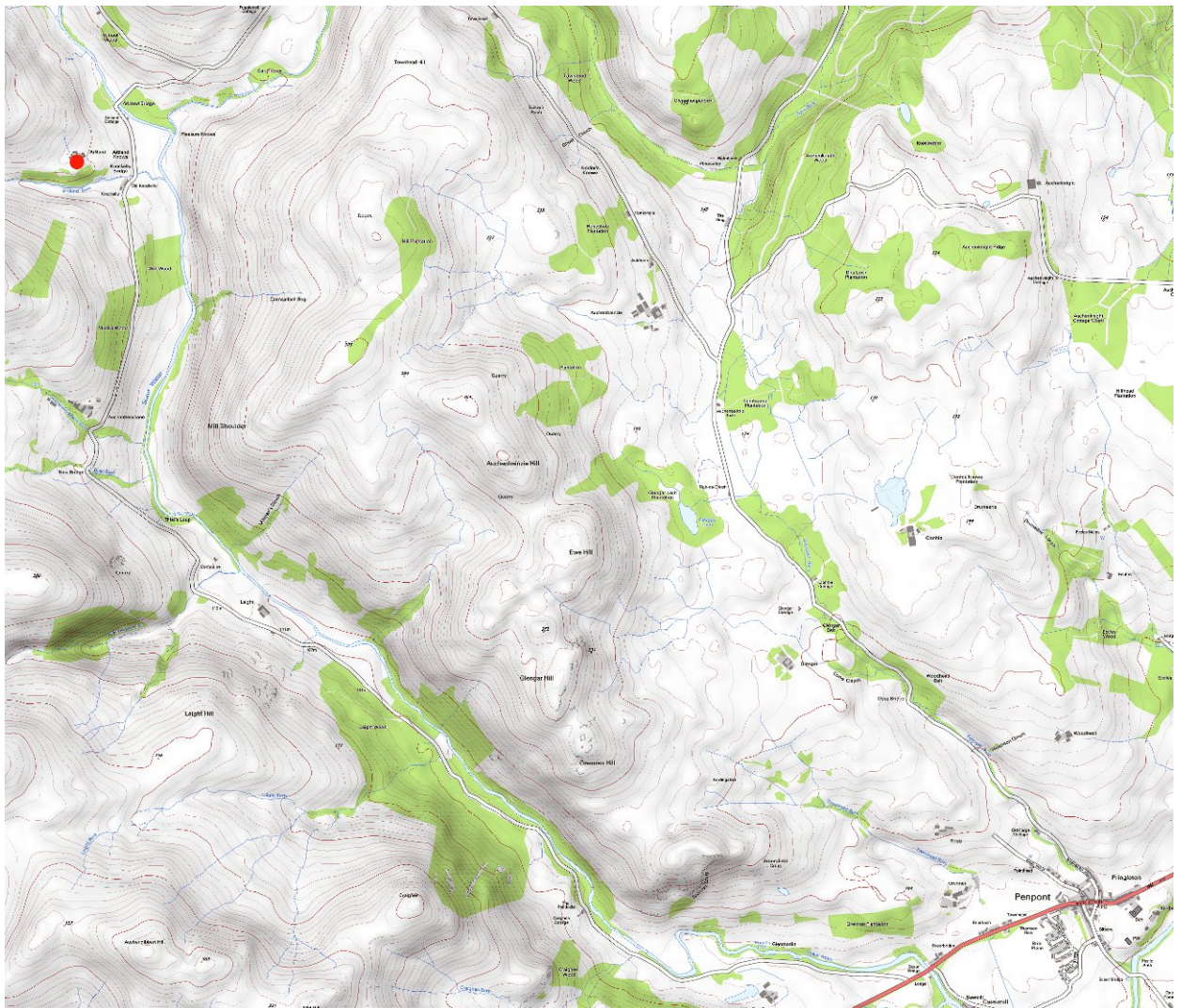


Figure 1 – location map

2 Project Works

The archaeological monitoring works were undertaken on the 30th May 2017. The works were undertaken as agreed with Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service through the written scheme of investigation (WSI) (Shaw, March 2017).

All works complied with the Chartered Institute for Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct, and Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statements.

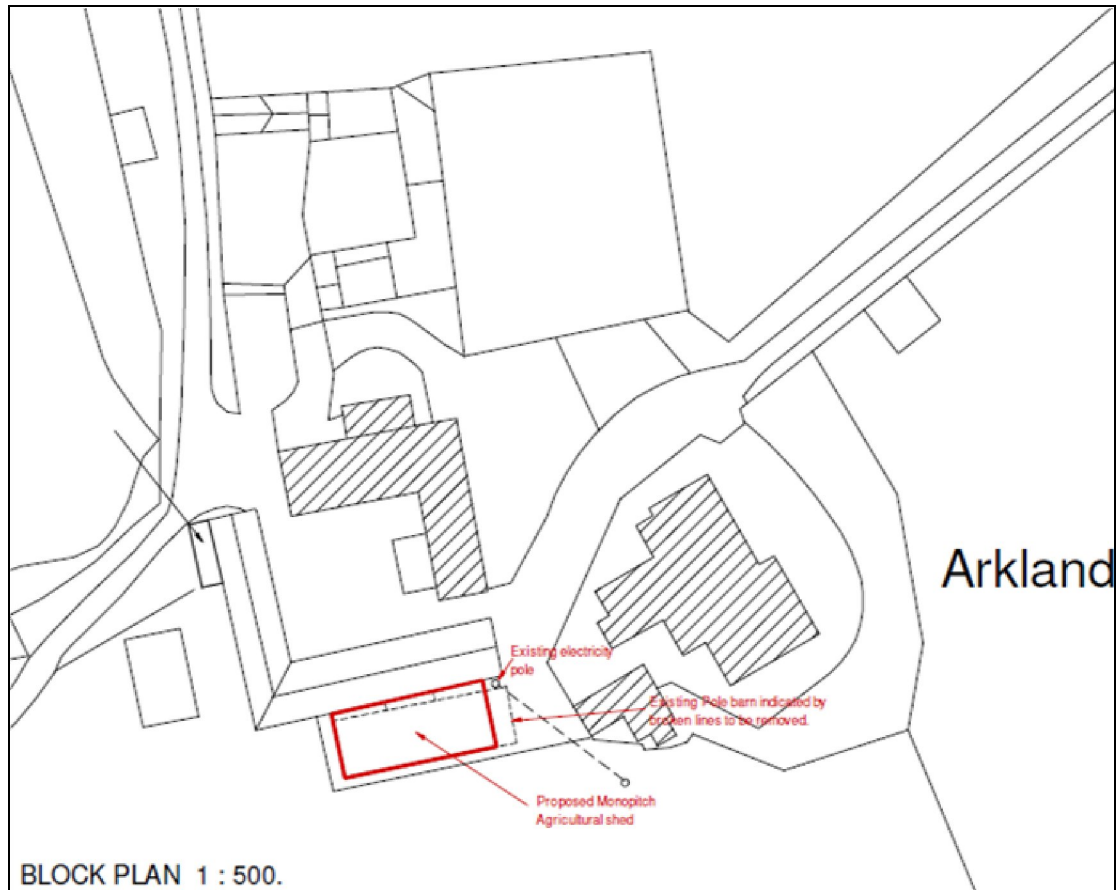


Figure 2 – plan showing proposed location of new agricultural shed (kindly provided by Buccleuch Rural Solutions)

3 Findings

The existing structure was cleared down to ground level (Figure 4a) prior to the attendance of the archaeologist.

Pits

A total of 13 pits (Figure 8) which were excavated to provide concrete bases for upright pillars, averaged 1.3m by 1.2m and between 600mm to 1.1m in depth.

Pit 1 – measured 1.4m by 1.4m and excavated to a depth of 1.1m (Figure 4b). Upper deposit comprised dirty brown silt containing wood debris; slates and stones [101] 300mm in depth, above an infill consisting of pale yellowy brown sands & gravels with frequent stones (some large) [102] 700mm. At base (small) gravels & sand with small to medium sized frequent sub-rounded and sub-angular stones [103].

Pit 2 – measured 1.3m by 1.1m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 4c). Upper deposit comprised dirty brown silt containing wood debris; slates and stones [101] 350mm in depth, above an infill consisting of pale yellowy brown sands & gravels with frequent stones (some large) [102].

Pit 3 – measured 1.2m by 1.3m and excavated to a depth of 800mm (front cover). Upper deposit comprised a dirty brown silty deposit containing wood debris; slates and stones [101] 270mm in depth, above an infill consisting pale yellowy brown sands & gravels with frequent stones (some large) [102].

Pit 4 – measured 1.4m by 1.4m and excavated to a depth of 800mm (Figure 5a). Fill comprised a dirty brown silty deposit containing wood debris; slates and stones [101] 90mm to 400mm in depth above an infill consisting of pale yellowy brown sands & gravels with frequent stones (some large) [102]. Sands & gravels at base with frequent small sub-rounded & rounded stones [104].

Pit 5 – measured 1.6m by 1.4m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 5b). Fill comprised a dirty brown silty deposit containing wood debris; slates and stones [101] 200mm in depth, above yellow brown coarse sands & gravels [105].

Pit 6 – measured 1.5m by 1.3m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 5c). Founds of existing building to N. Upper fill comprised a greyish brown gritty silt [106] with frequent roots (from nearby trees) 300mm in depth. Below [106] was infill comprising large rocks mixed with orange sands & gravels (very small) [107] – clay drain within this deposit.

Pit 7 – measured 1.2m by 1m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 6a). Founds of existing building to N. Upper fill comprised a greyish brown gritty silt [106] with frequent roots (from nearby trees) 400mm in depth. Below [106] was infill comprising large rocks mixed with orange sands & gravels (very small) [107].

Pit 8 – measured 1.3m by 0.9m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 6b). cobbles with bedding sand [108] 200mm in depth, above bright orangey red stony deposit mixed with a slightly clayey silt [109] – red tile drain a N edge.

Pit 9 – measured 1.3m by 1.2m and excavated to a depth of 900mm (Figure 6c). Large rock founds of existing building to N. Fill comprised a very dirty brown silt mixed with stones [110] red ceramic pipe fragments; white china & earthenware within deposit.

Pit 10 – measured 1.5m by 1.2m and excavated to a depth of 800mm (Figure 7a). Large rock founds of existing building to N. Fill comprised a very dirty brown silt mixed with stones [110] 700mm in depth – metal debris within deposit. Bright orangey red stony deposit mixed with a slightly clayey silt [109] at base.

Pit 11 – measured 1.2m by 0.9m and excavated to a depth of 700mm (Figure 7b). Upper fill comprised a mid brown compost-like deposit [111] 100mm in depth (E half) and a dark brown (rooted) dirty silt [112] (W half), below which was infill comprising orangey brown sandy gravels with frequent stones [113] 400mm in depth. Pale yellowy brown fairly fine sand at base [114].

Pit 12 – measured 1.4m by 1m and excavated to a depth of 800mm. Mid brown stony silt mixed with straw and compost-like deposit [111] 200mm-300mm in depth, above yellow brown coarse sands & gravels [105] – sand at base.

Pit 13 – measured 1.3m by 1m and excavated to a depth of 600mm (Figure 7c). Compost-like deposit [111] 50mm in depth, above bright orangey red stony deposit mixed with a slightly clayey silt [109] – yellowy sand & stones at base.

4 Discussion

In general the pit excavations revealed an upper deposit comprising either demolition debris (200mm to 400mm in depth) for the pits along the S edge (Pits: 1; 2; 3; 4 & 5) or a dirty silted

deposit (300mm to 900mm in depth) for the pits along the N edge adjacent to the existing stone outbuilding (Pits: 6; 7; 9 & 10). Pit 8, which was located at a doorway into the existing stone outbuilding, had an upper surface comprising cobbles & bedding sand [108] – as there were no remains of cobbles elsewhere, presumably only the doorway giving access between the two buildings was cobbled (although it maybe that the cobbles were cleared previously). The pits that within the central section of the previous structure (Pits: 11; 12 & 13) all had an upper fill which comprised a compost-like deposit [111] – which is often found in earthen floored structures which have had long term animal use but then abandoned.

The lower fill of all pits comprised a depth of stone (some very large) and / or gravelly / sandy deposit, which although appeared fairly natural, it was fairly loose and contained occasional bits of metal or wood, indicating it was infill. The relative sterile nature of the deposit, however, does suggest that it may have been quarried (possibly from nearby) and bought in to provide a stable base. The presumption is that when a structure was built in this location at the end of the 19th C (Figure 3b) the ground was maybe fairly boggy (possibly due to its location at the base of the slope where the fort or natural feature is located) and was therefore cleared down to natural sands & gravels before a quarried stone / sand / infill deposit was laid down.

Although there was potential to uncover remains which would help clarify the exact nature of the possible fort or natural feature to the immediate S of the proposed development area (Figures 3a-b), no finds or deposits that pre-dated the 20th century were noted. A general walkover of the feature however, had banks and escarpments which appeared manmade,

5 Conclusion

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken on the 30th May 2017 in respect of proposed development works at Arkland farm, Thornhill, Dumfries & Galloway (NGR: NX 8031 9790). The works comprised archaeological monitoring for the excavation of thirteen pits to support uprights for a new agricultural shed.

In general the archaeological monitoring works indicated a fairly shallow depth of either demolition debris or a dirty silt above a depth of relatively clean stony / gravelly infill. No significant archaeological deposits or remains were identified during the course of the monitoring works.



Figure 3a – 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1857) (1:2500) © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group – not to be reproduced without permission - 914384242

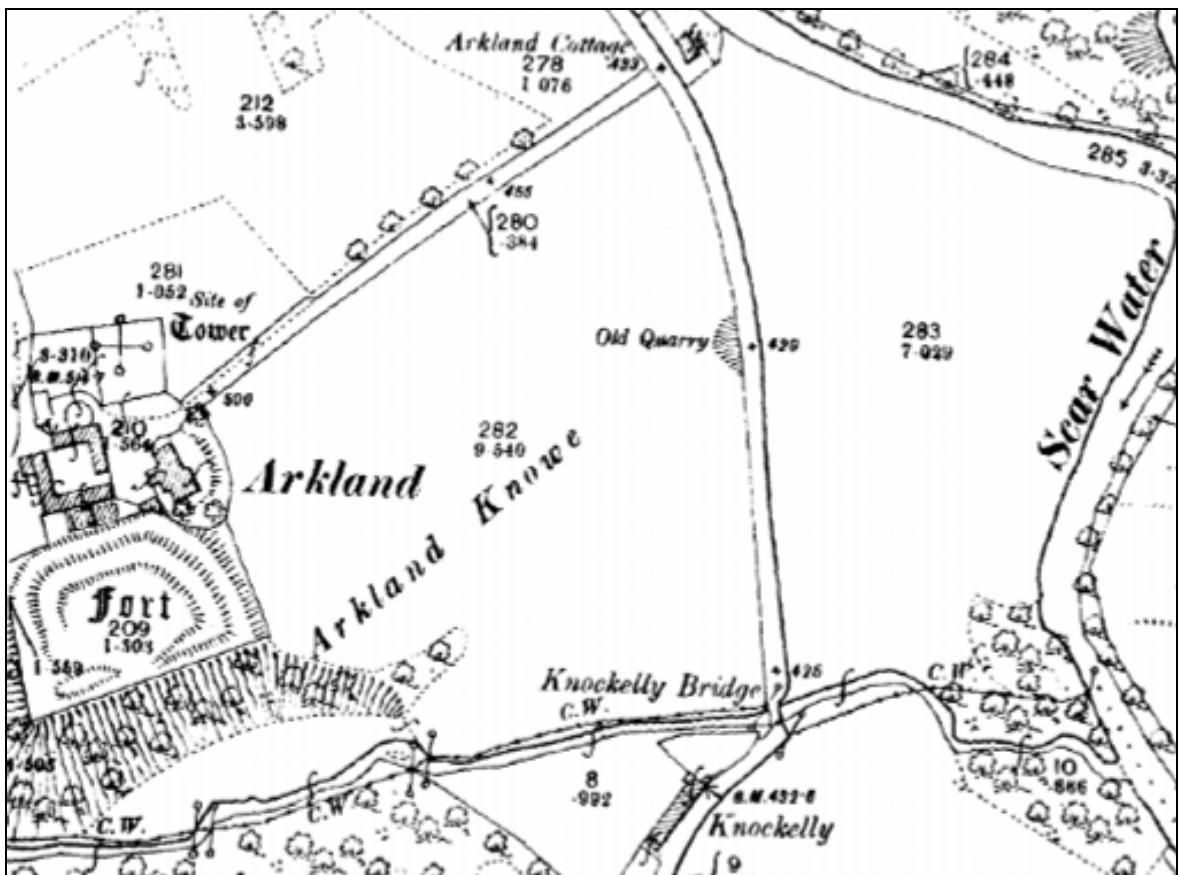


Figure 3b – 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1899) (1:2500) © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group – not to be reproduced without permission - 914384242



Figure 4a – general pre-ex of site (from NE)



Figure 4b - post-ex image of Pit 1



Figure 4c - post-ex image of Pit 2



Figure 5a - post-ex image of Pit 4



Figure 5b - post-ex image of Pit 5



Figure 5c - post-ex image of Pit 6



Figure 6a - post-ex image of Pit 7



Figure 6b - post-ex image of Pit 8



Figure 6c - post-ex image of Pit 9



Figure 7a - post-ex image of Pit 10



Figure 7b - post-ex image of Pit 12



Figure 7c - post-ex image of Pit 13

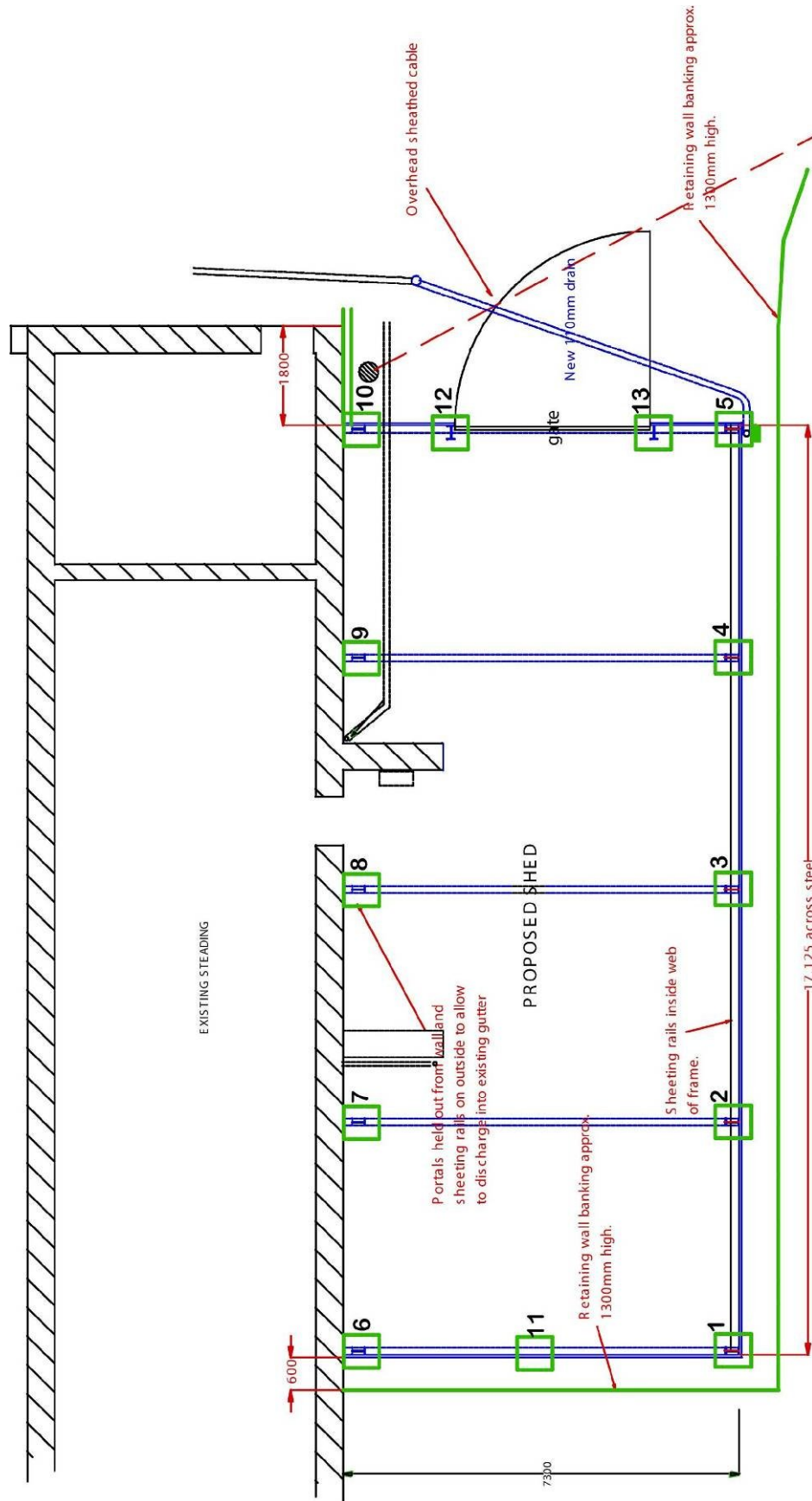


Figure 8 – site plan showing pit locations (kindly provided by Buccleuch Rural Solutions)

References

<i>Documentary</i> SOEn	2010	Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). <i>Archaeology</i> , Scottish Office Environmental Department.
SOEn	2011	<i>PAN 2/2011</i> , Planning & Archaeology Scottish Office Environmental Department.
HES	2016	Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016
Shaw R	2017	Arkland Farm, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire <i>Unpublished Written Scheme of Investigation</i>
<i>Cartographic</i> Roy	1747-55	Military Survey of Scotland
Ordnance Survey	1857	1 st Edition Ordnance Survey Map Dumfriesshire (1:2500)

Appendix 1: Record Summaries

Context Summaries

No.	Interpretation	Description
101	Deposit	Dirty brown silt containing wood debris; slates and stones
102	Infill	Pale yellowy brown sands & gravels with frequent stones (some large)
103	Natural	Gravels (small) & sand with small to medium sized frequent sub-rounded and sub-angular stones
104	Natural	Sands & gravels at base with frequent small sub-rounded & rounded stones.
105	Infill	Yellow brown coarse sands & gravels.
106	Deposit	Greyish brown gritty silt with frequent roots (from nearby trees) 300-400mm in depth.
107	Infill	Large rocks mixed with orange sands & gravels (very small) – clay drain within Pit 6
108	Surface & bedding sand	Cobbles with bedding sand 200mm in depth.
109	Infill	Bright orangey red stony deposit mixed with a slightly clayey silt – red tile drain a N edge of pit 8
110	Infill	Very dirty brown silt mixed with stones - red ceramic pipe fragments; white china & earthenware within deposit.
111	Deposit	Mid brown compost-like deposit, 50mm - 300mm in depth
112	Deposit	Dark brown (rooted) dirty silt
113	Infill	Orangey brown sandy gravels with frequent stones - 400mm in depth.
114	Natural?	Pale yellowy brown fairly fine sand at base

Photographic Record

No.	Disc No.	Colour No.	B & W No.	Description	From	Date
1	1	1	1	General pre-ex image of site	W	30/06/17
2	1	2	1	General pre-ex image of site	E	30/06/17
3	1	3	1	Post-ex image of pit 5	E	30/06/17
4	1	4	1	Post-ex image of pit 4	E	30/06/17
5	1	5	1	Post-ex image of pit 3	E	30/06/17
6	1	6	1	Post-ex image of pit 2	E	30/06/17

Data Structure Report - Arkland Farm, Thornhill

7	1	7	1	Post-ex image of pit 1	E	30/06/17
8	1	8	1	Post-ex image of pit 6	S	30/06/17
9	1	9	1	Post-ex image of pit 7	W	30/06/17
10	1	10	1	Post-ex image of pit 8	W	30/06/17
11	1	11	1	Post-ex image of pit 9	S	30/06/17
12	1	12	1	Post-ex image of pit 10	S	30/06/17
13	1	13	1	Post-ex image of pit 11	E	30/06/17
14	1	14	1	Post-ex image of pit 12	E	30/06/17
15	1	15	1	Post-ex image of pit 13	E	30/06/17

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries & Galloway Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Arkland Farm, Thornhill
PARISH:	Penpont
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Rebecca Shaw
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological monitoring works
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR:	NX 8031 9790
START DATE (this season)	30 th May 2017
END DATE (this season)	30 th May 2017
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
DESCRIPTION:	<p>A programme of archaeological works was undertaken on the 30th May 2017 in respect of proposed development works at Arkland farm, Thornhill, Dumfries & Galloway (NGR: NX 8031 9790). The works comprised archaeological monitoring for the excavation of thirteen pits to support uprights for a new agricultural shed.</p> <p>In general the archaeological monitoring works indicated a fairly shallow depth of either demolition debris or a dirty silt above a depth of relatively clean stony / gravelly infill. No significant archaeological deposits or remains were identified during the course of the monitoring works.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	016043
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Buccleuch Estates Ltd

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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	Report to Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service Historic Environment Record and archive to Historic Environment Scotland Archives.

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