



Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services

**Glen Tarras Remediation Works,
Langholm, Dumfries & Galloway:
Archaeological Monitoring Works**



**by Rebecca Shaw
4th April 2019**

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1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of a programme of archaeological undertaken in respect of proposed remediation works at Glen Tarras, near Langholm, Dumfries & Galloway (NGR: NY 38204 81352) (Figure 1). The detailed works comprise the undertaking of highway repairs to the B6318 public road on the north side of Glen Tarras.

Although the proposed main construction works were not near any of the previously noted areas of identified archaeological interest, a piped outfall for the surface water drainage will be required running from the road down the side of the glen to the Tarras Water (Figure 2). The route of this pipe will pass through the demolished remains of the former Glen Tarras Distillery (HER reference MDG7977; Canmore ID 67678).

As the proposals involved ground reduction works where there is the possibility of uncovering archaeological finds or features, Dumfries & Galloway Council asked for a programme of archaeological monitoring works to be undertaken as a requirement of the issued planning consent. Dumfries & Galloway Council Archaeology Service, who advise Dumfries & Galloway Council on archaeological matters provided guidance on the nature of archaeological works required.

The archaeological works comprised monitoring of the pipeline excavations within the location of the Glen Tarras Distillery. No significant archaeological deposits or finds were noted during the course of the monitoring works.

Rebecca Shaw Archaeological Services was appointed to act with regard to the archaeological condition by Fred Chalmers on behalf of R H Irving Construction Limited.

2 Background

Glen Tarras was built in 1839 by Mr. J. Kennedy and ceased production in 1905. It formally closed in 1914 and the remaining stock was sold off. Annual production of what appears to have been a fine single malt, was in the region of 75,000 gallons per annum.

The buildings, which were subsequently used during the 1st World War to house munitions, were finally demolished in 1930. The distillery managers house and a row of workers cottages are still upstanding and occupied.

3 Project Works

The archaeological monitoring works were undertaken at Glen Tarras, Langholm from the 12th to 14th February 2019. The works were mainly undertaken as agreed with Dumfries & Galloway Council Archaeology Service through a written scheme of investigation (Shaw, February 2019). However, the SE end (from the river to the site of the distillery) was excavated and piped prior to the attendance of the on-site archaeologist and the NNW half did not involve ground reduction as the new pipe was to be laid within an existing gully on the slope.

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

4 Findings

The monitored section of the outfall trench measured 37m in length (approx) (Figures 4 and 5a-c). At the immediate SE end the topsoil comprised a greyish brown gritty silt [101] above a fairly coarse brown sand with frequent stones [102] - the stones / rocks became larger as the depth progressed (Figures 6a-c). As the ground progressed upslope (where the distillery building(s) were located) a layer of demolition debris / infill [103] was noted above deposit [102] (Figure 7a).

The remains of a section of an in-situ wall (I) [107], aligned SSW / NNE, was observed (Figures 7b-c). The walling, which was located at a depth of 200mm (approx), comprised large blocks of blonde sandstone and measured 0.70m in width (Figure 8a and front cover). To the NW of the wall there was an infill [104] comprising a mixed deposit with re-deposited subsoil which averaged 1.4m in depth. Below [104] was a grey clinker-type deposit 150mm in depth, which was above natural orange sands & gravels [105] (Figure 9a-c).

Towards the NNW end of the trench the ground mostly comprised deposit [105] with a grey sandy clay [106] at the very NW end. Within this section a disused cast iron water pipe (200mm in depth) and two clay pipes (water & foul) (600mm / 700mm in depth) were noted. Ephemeral bits of walling (II) [108] (Figures 4 & 8b) and (III) (Figures 4 & 8c) were also observed within this section. Walling (II) [108] measured 0.50m in height and 0.60m in width and walling (III) [109] was located 300mm (approx) below the current ground level.

At the end of the monitored area, the topsoil averaged 250mm in depth and was above subsoil [105] which measured between 300mm to 400mm in depth, then natural [106] (Figure 9d).

5 Discussion

Historical archives record that Glen Tarras Distillery was built in 1839 and stopped production in 1905 before finally closing in 1914. Early sound cartographic sources indicate that in the mid nineteenth century (1859) the distillery comprised a small collection of buildings located towards the NNE end of the site (Figure 3a). By the end of the nineteenth century (1899) the distillery had become vast in size (Figure 3b) and it was presumably after the substantial extension that 75,000 gallons per annum of malt whisky were produced.

The buildings, which were used in WWI to house munitions, were demolished in 1930 and although a few remains are still apparent above ground (mainly walls around the periphery), in comparison to the array of buildings that the distillery encompassed very little is still visible.

The monitored excavations indicated that although some of the foundations of the larger load bearing walls - such as wall (I) (Figures 7b-8a) may still exist below ground, in general it appears that the floors and internal walls have been extensively cleared. Wall (I) (front cover) in fact appears to be in the location of an external elevation wall depicted on late nineteenth century mapping (Figure 3b). The other two section of walling: (II) (Figure 8b) and (III) (Figure 8c) are more than likely related to the distillery but they appear to be fairly ephemeral and do not relate to walls depicted on early mapping (Figure 3a-b).

Although there was some demolition debris / infill [103], it was not as dense as expected, which suggest that a lot of material may have been removed from site. No finds were recovered during the monitoring works.

6 Conclusion

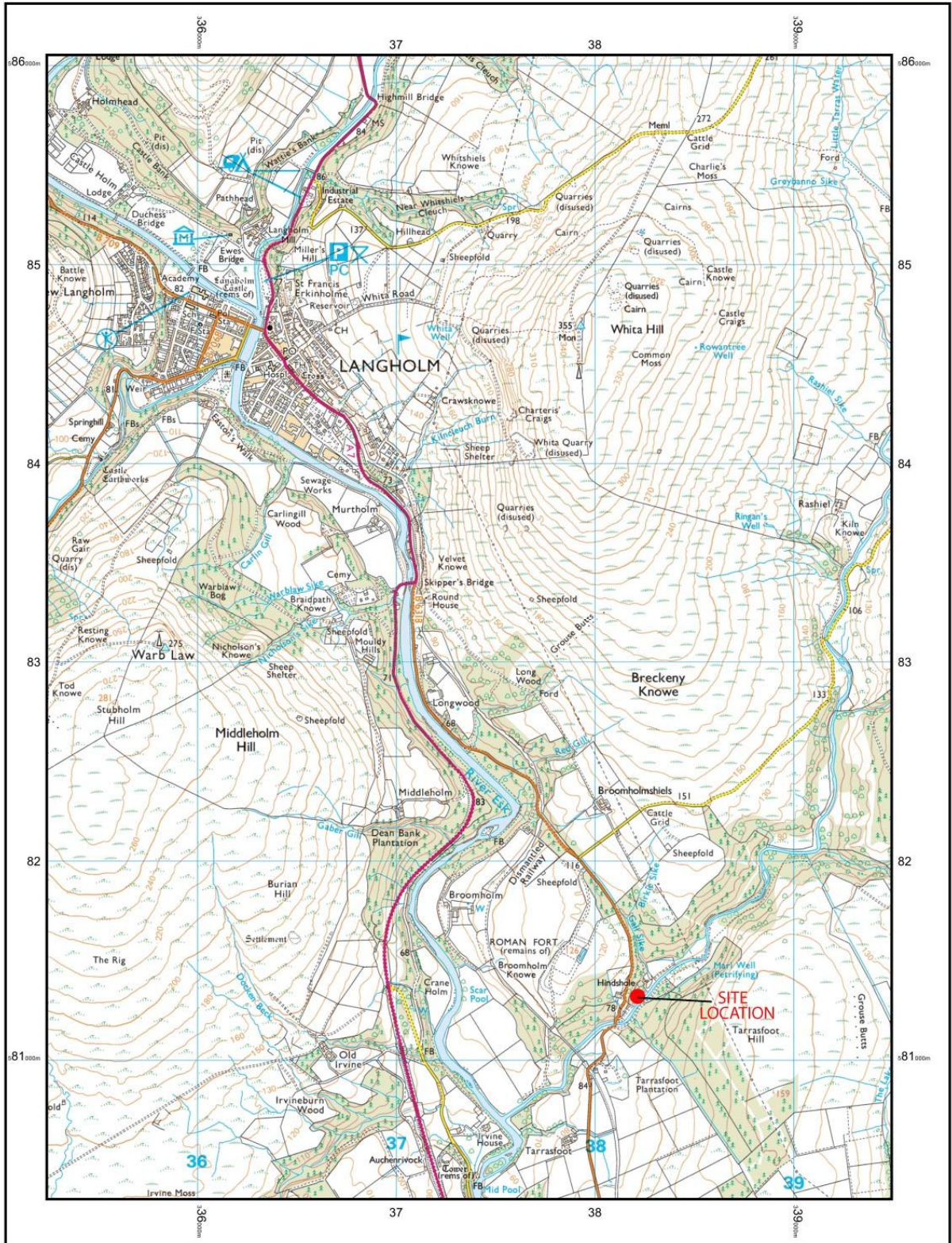
A programme of archaeological works was undertaken between the 12th and 14th February 2019 in respect of proposed remediation works at Glen Tarras, near Langholm, Dumfries & Galloway. The works comprised monitoring of excavations of a trench for an outfall pipe, located on the site of demolished former Glen Tarras Distillery.

The monitored excavations revealed the foundation of one large wall which is in alignment with an elevation depicted on late nineteenth century mapping. In general however, very little structural remains or demolition debris / infill was observed and no finds were recovered.

Data Structure Report - Glen Tarras, Langholm



Glen Tarras

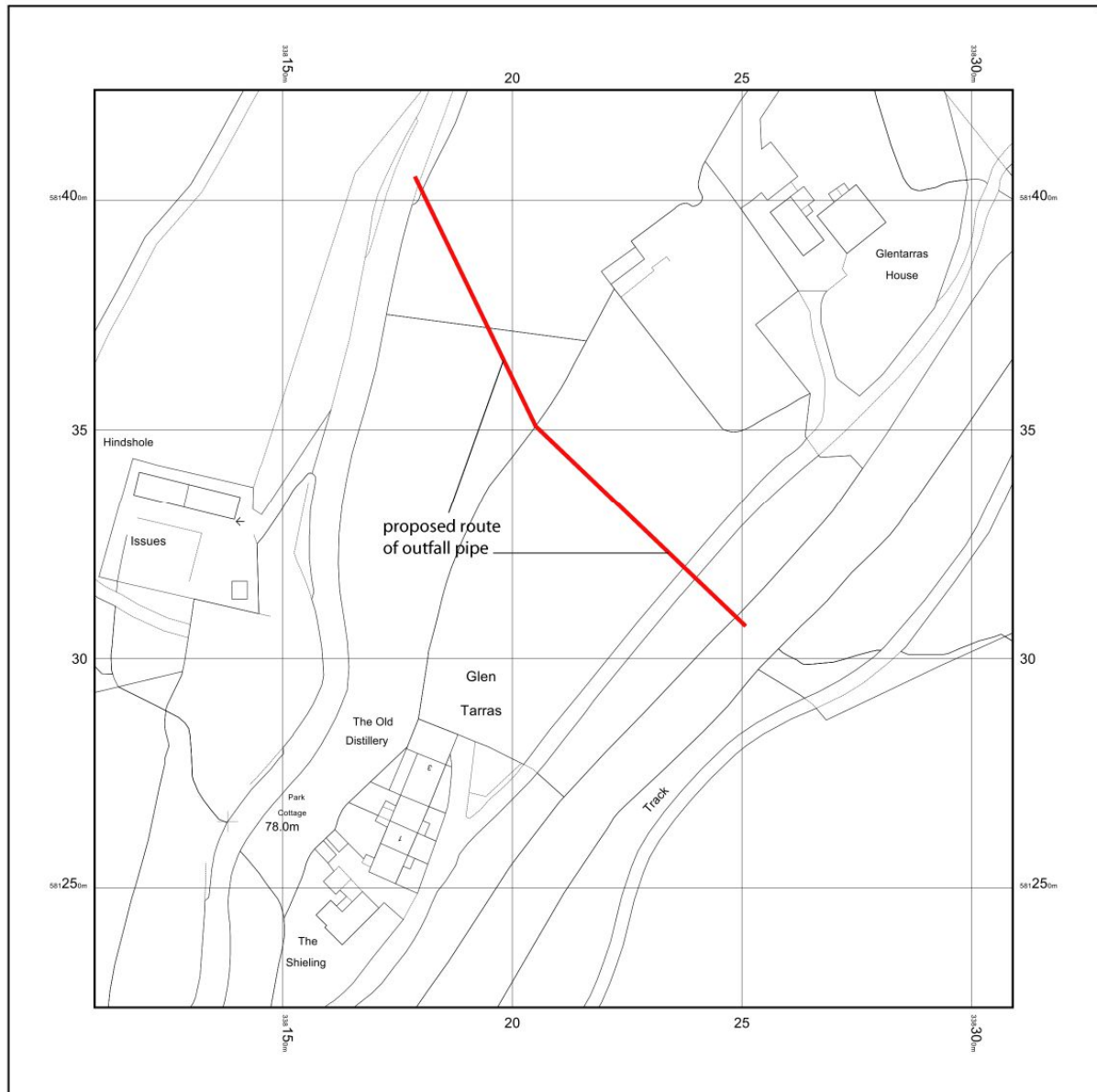


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Figure 1 - location map



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Figure 2 - map showing proposed route of outfall pipe

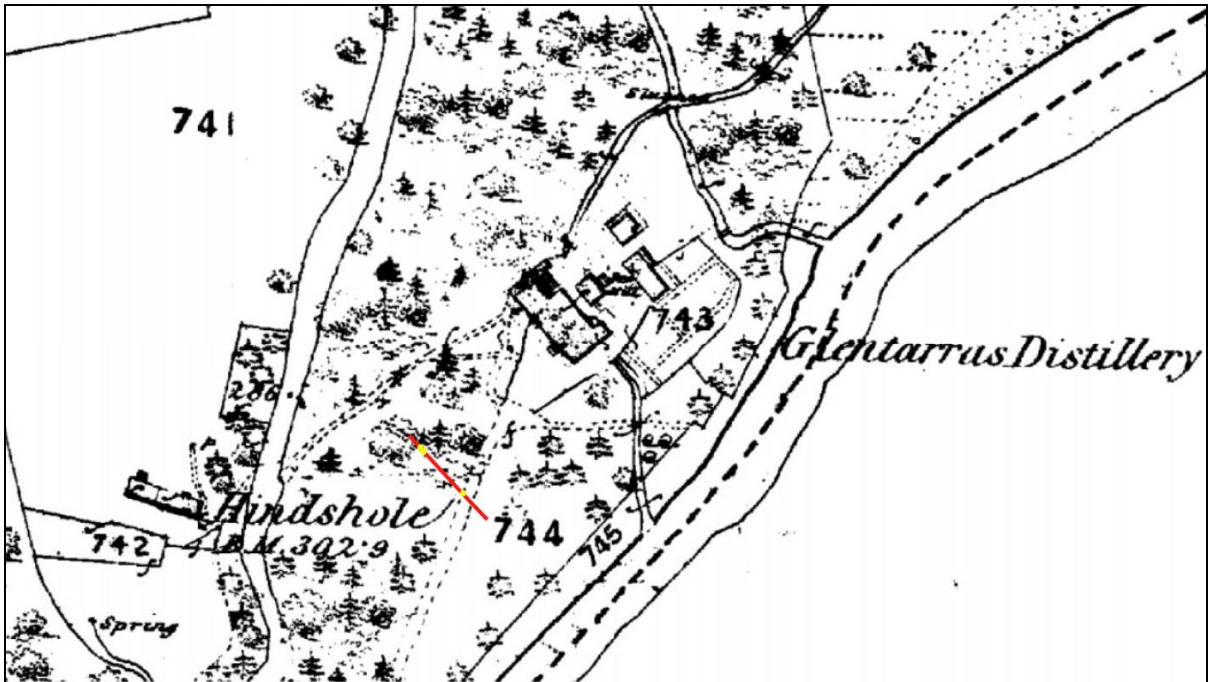
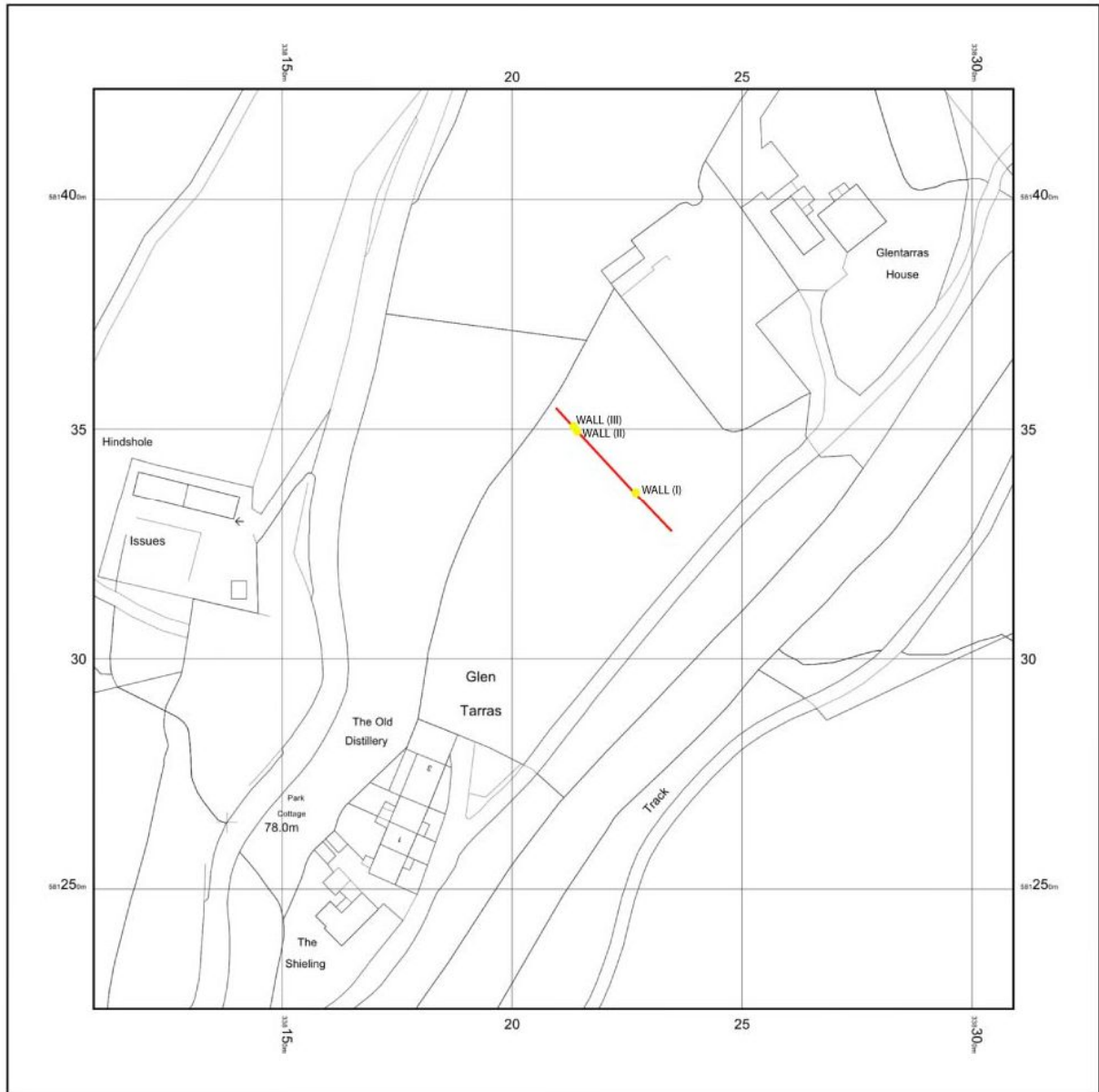


Figure 3b – 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500 (1859) © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group – not to be reproduced without permission (428237352)



Figure 3b – 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500 (1899) © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group – not to be reproduced without permission (428237352)



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Figure 4 - map showing monitored section of outfall pipe and locations of large section of walling (wall I) and ephemeral walling (walls II & III)



Figure 5a - general pre-ex image - NNW end (from SSE)



Figure 5b - general pre-ex image - middle section (from NNW)



Figure 5c - general pre-ex image - SE end (from NNW)



Figure 6a - SE end of monitored section (from S)



Figure 6b – manhole 1 at SE end (s-facing section) (from S)



Figure 6c - general of manhole 1 (from SSW)



Figure 7a - top of slope after removal of topsoil (from NNW)



Figure 7b - remains of wall (I) in-situ (from SSW)



Figure 7c - remains of wall (I) in-situ (from NNE)



Figure 8a - remains of wall (I) in-situ (from NNE)



Figure 8b - remains of ephemeral walling (II) in-situ (from NE)



Figure 1 - remains of ephemeral walling (III) in-situ (from NE)



Figure 9a - general of central section of outfall pipe (I) (from SE)



Figure 9b - general of central section of outfall pipe (II) (from SE)



Figure 9c - general of central section of outfall pipe (I) (from SE)



Figure 9d - NNW end of outfall pipe and manhole 2 (from SE)

References

Documentary

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

Cartographic

Ordnance Survey	1859	1st Ed OS Map, Dumfriesshire (1:2500)
Ordnance Survey	1899	2nd Ed OS Map, Dumfriesshire (1:2500)
Ordnance Survey	2019	Ordnance Survey (1:1250)

Appendix 1: Record Summaries

Context Summaries

No.	Interpretation	Description
101	Topsoil	Greyish brown gritty silt
102	Subsoil	Coarse brown sand with frequent stones - the stones / rocks became larger as the depth progressed
103	Demolition debris / infill	Layer of demolition debris / infill
104	Infill	Mixed deposit with re-deposited subsoil which averaged 1.4m in depth.
105	Natural	Orange sands & gravels
106	Subsoil	Grey sandy clay
107	Wall (I)	Remains of a wall aligned SSW / NNE, 200mm below topsoil [101]. Comprised of large blonde sandstone blocks and measured 0.70m in width.
108	Wall (II)	Ephemeral remains of walling located immediately below topsoil. Measured 0.50 high and 0.60m in width.
109	Wall (III)?	Ephemeral remains of possible wall, 300mm below existing ground surface.

Photographic Record

No	Disc No.	Print No	Description	From	Date
1	1	1	General pre-ex (NNW end)	SSE	12.02.19
2	1	2	General pre-ex (middle section)	NNW	14.02.19
3	1	3	General pre-ex (SE end)	NNW	14.02.19
4	1	4	SE end of monitored section (at base of slope)	S	14.02.19
5	1	5	Manhole 1 (s-facing section)	S	14.02.19
6	1	6	Manhole 1 - general	SSW	14.02.19
7	1	7	Top of slope after removal of topsoil	NNW	13.02.19
8	1	8	Remains of wall (I) in-situ	SSW	13.02.19
9	1	9	Remains of wall (I) in-situ	NNE	
10	1	10	Remains of wall (I) in-situ	NNE	13.02.19
11	1	11	Remains of wall (I) (in-section)	SSW	13.02.19

12	1	12	Middle section of monitored trench (I)	SE	13.02.19
13	1	13	Middle section of monitored trench (II)	SE	13.02.19
14	1	14	Middle section of monitored trench (III)	SE	14.02.19
15	1	15	Wall (II) and drainage	NE	14.02.19
16	1	16	Wall (III)?	NE	14.02.19
17	1	17	NNW end of outfall pipe and Manhole 2	SW	14.02.19

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries & Galloway Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Glen Tarras Remediation Works, Langholm
PARISH:	Langholm
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 (2 letters, 10 figures)	NY 38204 81352
START DATE (this season)	12 th February 2019
END DATE (this season)	14 th February 2019
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
DESCRIPTION:	<p>A programme of archaeological works was undertaken in respect of proposed remediation works at Glen Tarras, near Langholm, Dumfries & Galloway. The works comprised monitoring of excavations of a trench for an outfall pipe, located on the site of demolished former Glen Tarras Distillery.</p> <p>The monitored excavations revealed the foundation of one large wall which is in alignment with an elevation depicted on late nineteenth century mapping. In general however, very little structural remains or demolition debris / infill was observed and no finds were recovered.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	019002
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	R H Irving Construction Limited.
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	Report to Dumfries & Galloway Council Sites and Monuments Record and archive to Historic Environment Scotland Archives.

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