

GUARD ARCHAEOLOGY



Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn Data Structure Report Project 4018

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Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn

Data Structure Report

On behalf of: Fairbright Construction

NGR: NS 42378 87146


Project Number: 4018

Report by: Kevin Mooney

Illustrations: Fiona Jackson

Project Manager: Warren Bailie

Approved by:



Date:

02/02/2015

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

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Contents

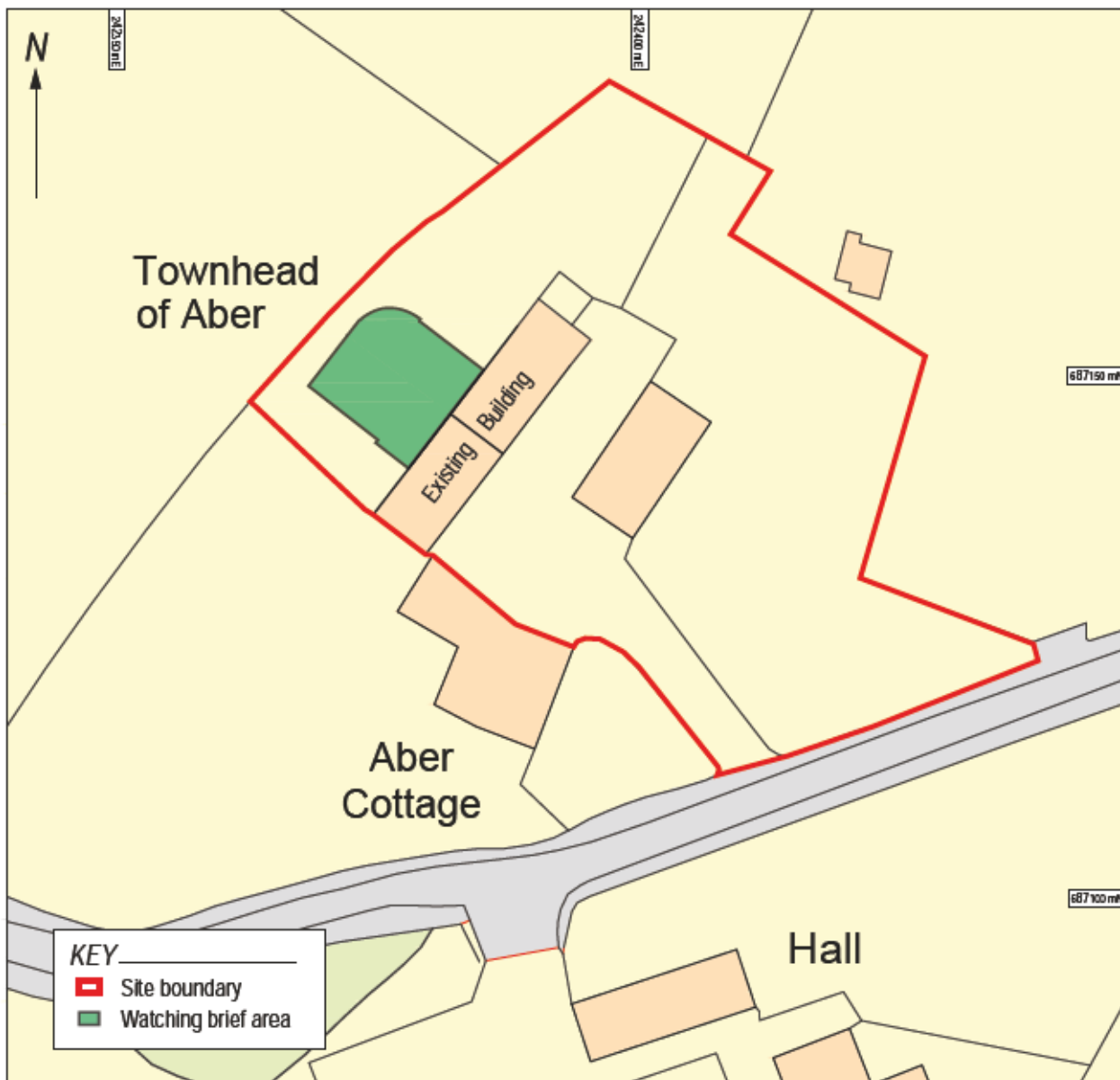
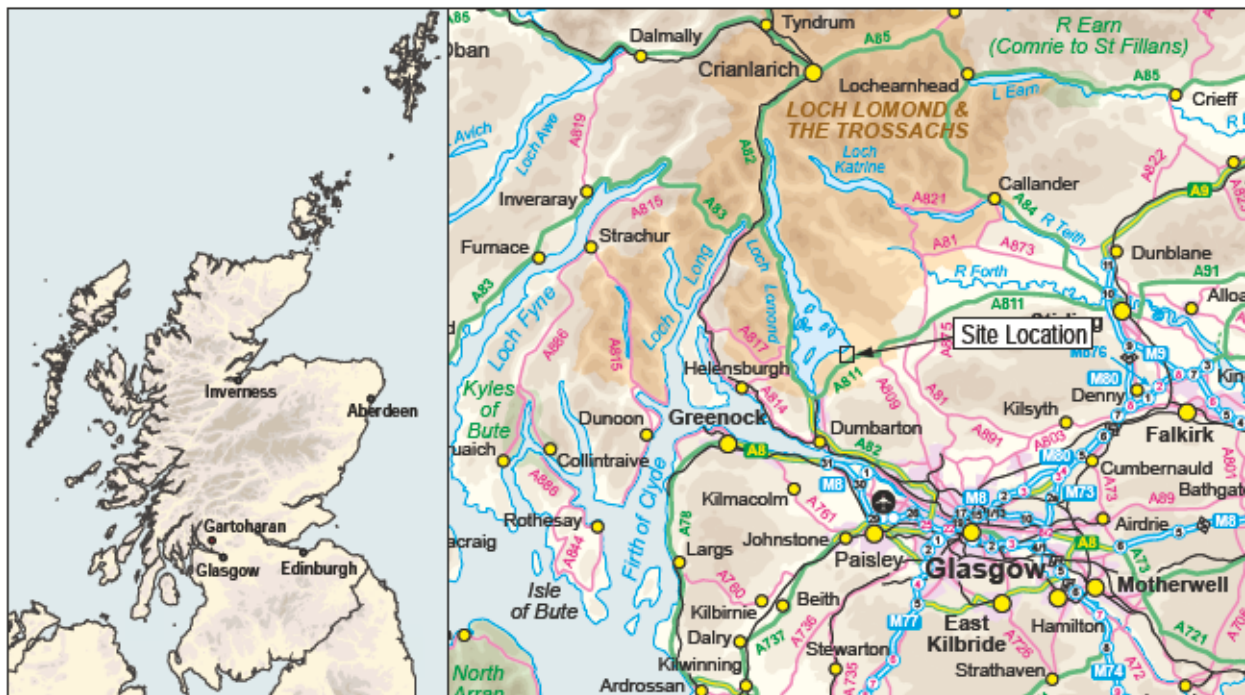
Executive Summary	5
Introduction	5
Site Location, Topography and Geology	5
Archaeological Background	5
Aims and Objectives	5
Methodology	6
Results	6
Discussion	7
Recommendations	7
Acknowledgements	7
Appendices	9
Appendix A: List of Photographs	9
Appendix B: DES	10
Appendix C: Method Statement	11

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location	4
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List of Plates

Plate 1: Shot of patio area during topsoil stripping	6
Plate 2: General shot of yew tree west of site	6



KEY
■ Site boundary
■ Watching brief area

Figure 1:
Site location.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 GUARD Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Fairbright Construction to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundations and other ground preparation works for the construction of rear extensions to a house at Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire (Planning Reference: 2014/0190/HAE). This work was undertaken between 19th January 2015 and 20th January 2015 and revealed no evidence of any in-situ archaeological remains within the development area.

Introduction

- 2.1 This report sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by GUARD Archaeology, on behalf of Fairbright Construction on a site proposed for the construction of rear extensions to a house at Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn. During the course of the watching brief no evidence of in-situ archaeological remains was noted. GUARD Archaeology undertook this programme of work between 19th January 2015 and 20th January 2015.

Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 3.1 The watching brief location is to the rear of Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Gartocharn is a village in West Dunbartonshire in Scotland. It is the only village in the parish of Kilmarnock. The parish has a population of 1,051. It lies on the A811, the main road from Balloch to Stirling.
- 3.2 The site was bounded by pasture fields to the north, north-west and north-east and abutted on either side by neighbouring properties, Aber Cottage to the south and San Makessan to the north and currently consists of a small private garden at the rear of the property Townhead of Aber. The site sloped gradually from north-west to south-east.
- 3.3 The underlying drift geology consists of Devensian Till with large sub angular rock outcrops and inclusions.

Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The proposed development was situated to the rear of Townhead of Aber on Ross and Aber Road, Gartocharn. Aber is known to be the site of a pre-reformation chapel dedicated to St Kessog and thought to be marked by a yew tree (at NS 4237 8714) within the garden of Townhead of Aber (SMR 7962; Canmore ref 43439). Remains of the chapel is thought to have been removed in the 18th century. No other archaeological evidence is currently known for the development area, however the presence of the chapel may also denote burials in the vicinity.

Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to identify:
- the presence or absence of previously unknown archaeological deposits, built remains or artefacts relating to the early occupation of Townhead of Aber;
 - the extent and nature of previously unknown archaeological features within the development area;
 - to ensure that any surviving archaeological remains, encountered during the ground-works are recorded in accordance with ClfA Standards.
- 5.2 The objectives were to:
- Conduct a watching brief on any and all ground-breaking or ground level reduction work associated with the proposed development to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains, and their character, date and extent if surviving;

- Submit a report to data structure level for approval to WoSAS, on completion of the archaeological fieldwork, which includes an outline of the scope of any further excavation works should any significant archaeology be encountered.

Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all foundation trenches, service trenches and any other ground preparation works to include the removal of any existing foundations.
- 6.2 The topsoil and/or overburden for each foundation and service trench location was removed in spits to the first archaeological horizon or, where none was found, to the sterile, undisturbed, natural subsoil. No archaeological features were encountered by the on-site Archaeologist during the watching brief.
- 6.3 All areas were accurately surveyed using a sub-metre GPS and located within the National Grid.
- 6.4 A representative section was recorded denoting depth of topsoil/overburden, any stratigraphy present and the nature of the soil. This information was logged in the day book together with a sketch drawn to scale and a photographic record of deposits.
- 6.5 No human remains were revealed by the excavation.

Results

- 7.1 The watching brief took place over two days, 19th and 20th January 2015. On 19th January the area for the main extension was monitored and on the 20th January an area for an adjoining patio structure was monitored. No archaeological deposits were encountered during the watching brief.
- 7.2 A total area of 98.5 square metres of topsoil was stripped to accommodate the footing of the building and patio area (Figure 1). Across the site topsoil deposits ranged in thickness from 0.20 m at the south-east of the development area and up to 0.42 m thick at the western periphery of the development. The topsoil appeared quite disturbed with visible root activity from some of the larger trees along the western boundary of the property. A quantity of nineteenth/twentieth century ceramic sherds were noted within the topsoil but not retained. A quantity of loose stone was also present in topsoil levels towards the north extent of the stripped area. A grey clay subsoil existed across the site and appeared sterile in nature with large natural inclusions of rock.



Plate 1: Shot of patio area during topsoil stripping.



Plate 2: General shot of yew tree west of site.

Discussion

- 8.1 The existence of a large yew tree located in the western extremity of the property boundary originally suggested the possibility that the St. Kessog chapel existed nearby. However, no human remains, no structural remains or material that could be associated with the chapel remains were uncovered during the watching brief on the proposed extension and associated patio foundations.
- 8.2 The absence of any in-situ archaeological remains may be accounted for by the known development on the property since the late eighteenth century. Clearance work for the construction of the original buildings on site may have robbed out all traces of archaeology. The loose stone encountered in topsoil levels towards the north may be evidence of this. The barn present on site dates from the 1790's with a larger extensive refurbishment of the full property occurring in the 1960's. Some larger fragments of undressed stone were noted in a number of neighbouring property boundary walls, these may or may not relate to evidence of earlier structures in this vicinity. The presence of yew trees elsewhere in the vicinity, in particular in the neighbouring property to the south-west and also in the south-east area of the current property may also suggest possible location of the chapel remains.

Recommendations

- 9.1 The watching brief work has shown that no archaeologically sensitive deposits or features exist within the area stripped of topsoil for the development (Figure 1). In consequence, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required for this development. Due to the unknown location of the chapel, further ground-breaking work out-with this most recent development area has the potential to impact on sub-surface archaeological remains relating to the chapel. Further development within the vicinity of this development and neighbouring properties is likely to require an archaeological watching brief.
- 9.2 GUARD Archaeology would stress that these recommendations are intended for guidance only. While the recommended mitigation strategy was developed following consultation with West of Scotland Archaeological Service (WoSAS), final decisions on the nature and extent of any future archaeological work rest with the planning authority.

Acknowledgements

- 10.1 GUARD Archaeology would like to thank Fairbright Construction for their assistance. Technical support was from Aileen Maule and John Kiely. The illustrations were produced by Fiona Jackson. The report was desk top published by Jen Cochrane. The project was managed for GUARD Archaeology Limited by Warren Bailie.

**Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn
Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices



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Appendices

Appendix A: List of Photographs

File 1

Frame	Area	Context No.	Subject	Taken from
1	-	-	ID SHOT	-
2	Building	-	General shot of site prior to stripping	SE
3	Building	-	General shot of site prior to stripping	S
4	Building	-	Initial topsoil removal prior to revealing subsoil interface	SE
5	Building	-	Initial topsoil removal prior to revealing subsoil interface	SE
6	Building	-	Shot of foundation area of building – stripped to entirety	W
7	Building	-	shot of foundation area of building – stripped to entirety	NW
8	Building	-	shot of foundation area of building – stripped to entirety	NW
9	Building	-	shot of foundation area of building – stripped to entirety	NW
10	Building	-	Detail of natural rock outcrops at NE corner of development area	E
11	Building	-	Detail of natural rock outcrops at NE corner of development area	S
12	Building	-	Detail of BT cable running across site	NE
13	Building	-	Further stripping at SE of site towards original dwelling	NE
14	Building	-	Further stripping at SE of site towards original dwelling	NE
15	Building	-	Further stripping at SE of site towards original dwelling	NE
16	Building	-	Further stripping at SE of site towards original dwelling	SW

File 2

Frame	Area	Context No.	Subject	Taken from
1	Patio	-	ID SHOT	-
2	Patio	-	Post ex of building foot – fully excavated	NW
3	Patio	-	Post ex of building foot – fully excavated	NW
4	Patio	-	Post ex of building foot – fully excavated	SE
5	Patio	-	General shot of Yew tree at East boundary of the site	E
6	Patio	-	General shot of rock outcrops at NE corner of extension	E
7	Patio	-	General shot of rock outcrops at NE corner of extension	SW
8	Patio	-	Pre ex of patio area still to be stripped	NW
9	Patio	-	Mid ex of patio area – topsoil part removed	E
10	Patio	-	Mid ex of patio area – topsoil part removed	SE
11	Patio	-	General shot of topsoil depth – deepening towards the NE of site	W
12	Patio	-	General shot of patio area stripped to subsoil/rock outcrops	W
13	Patio	-	General shot of patio area stripped to subsoil/rock outcrops	W
14	Patio	-	General shot of patio area stripped to subsoil/rock outcrops	E
15	Patio	-	General shot of patio area stripped to subsoil/rock outcrops	N
16	Patio	-	General shot of patio area stripped to subsoil/rock outcrops	N

Appendix B: DES

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	West Dunbartonshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Townhead of Aber - Gartocharn
PROJECT CODE:	4018
PARISH:	Kilmarnock
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Kevin Mooney
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	GUARD Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	--
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	NA
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 42378 87146
START DATE (this season)	19 th January 2015
END DATE (this season)	20 th January 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	GUARD Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Fairbright Construction to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundations and other ground preparation works for the construction of rear extensions to a house at Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dumbartonshire (Planning Reference: 2014/0190/HAE). This work was undertaken between 19th January 2015 and 20th January 2015 and revealed no evidence of any in-situ archaeological remains within the development area.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Unknown
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Fairbright Construction
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	--
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	GUARD Archaeology Ltd, 52 Elderpark Workspace, 100 Elderpark Street, Glasgow, G51 3TR
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Kevin.mooney@guard-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	NMRS

Appendix C: Method Statement

TOWNHEAD OF ABER, GARTOCHARN

WATCHING BRIEF METHOD STATEMENT

PROJECT 4018

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This archaeological watching brief method statement is applicable to the proposed excavation of foundations and other ground preparation works for the construction of rear extensions to a house at Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire (Planning Reference: 2014/0190/HAE). This method statement was prepared in consultation with WoSAS.

Introduction

- 2.1 This Method Statement sets out the methodology for the archaeological watching brief required for the ground-works associated with the development of the rear extension on a house at Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire. The watching brief will be undertaken to establish the presence, extent and nature of any significant archaeological remains, particularly those related to the early occupation of this area. Should significant remains be identified and it is not possible to preserve them *in situ* a further requirement for archaeological works to ensure their preservation through record is likely to be required in consultation with WoSAS.
- 2.2 This method statement outlines the programme of archaeological works that may be needed to mitigate the effects of the development. It details the methodology to be employed in implementing the Stage 1 archaeological works. The mitigation methodology to be employed during Stage 2 excavation and Stage 3 post excavation analysis and publication, will be specified in *addenda* to this document. These *addenda*, if required, will be submitted for the approval of WoSAS, prior to the commencement of any archaeological work.

Site Location

- 3.1 The watching brief location is to the rear of Townhead of Aber, Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Gartocharn is a village in West Dunbartonshire in Scotland. It is the only village in the parish of Kilmarnock. The parish has a population of 1,051. It lies on the A811, the main road from Balloch to Stirling.

Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The proposed development is situated to the rear of Townhead of Aber on Ross and Aber Road, Gartocharn. Aber is known to be the site of a pre-reformation chapel dedicated to St Kessog and thought to be marked by a yew tree (at NS 4237 8714) within the garden of Townhead of Aber (SMR 7962; Canmore ref 43439). The chapel is thought to have been removed in the 18th century. No other archaeological evidence is currently known for the development area, however the presence of the chapel may also denote burials in the vicinity.

Aims, Objectives and Scope

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief is to identify:
 - the presence or absence of previously unknown archaeological deposits, built remains or artefacts relating to the early occupation of Townhead of Aber;
 - the extent and nature of previously unknown archaeological features within the development area;
 - to ensure that any surviving archaeological remains, encountered during the ground-works are recorded in accordance with CIfA Standards.
- 5.2 The objectives are therefore to:
 - Conduct a watching brief on any and all ground-breaking or ground level reduction work associated with the proposed development to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains, and their character, date and extent if surviving;

- Submit a report to data structure level for approval to WoSAS, on completion of the archaeological fieldwork, which includes an outline of the scope of any further excavation works should any significant archaeology be encountered.

Watching Brief Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief will comprise the monitoring of all foundation trenches, service trenches and any other ground preparation works to include the removal of any existing foundations.
- 6.2 The topsoil and/or overburden for each foundation and service trench location will be removed in spits to the first archaeological horizon or, where none was found, to the sterile, undisturbed, natural subsoil. Any archaeological features encountered will be cleaned by hand by the on-site Archaeologist to determine their character and extent.
- 6.3 Any significant archaeological features encountered will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Should negative-cut features be encountered, a representative sample will be 25-50% excavated in order to determine their significance, date and function. A full record of excavated features will be made using a single context recording system using pro forma sheets, drawings and photographs. All archaeological features will be photographed and recorded at an appropriate scale. Sections will be drawn at 1:10, and plans at 1:20. All trenches will be accurately surveyed using a sub-metre GPS and located within the National Grid.
- 6.4 All archaeological finds will be dealt with by the on-site Archaeologist. Finds and animal bone will be collected as bulk samples by context. Significant small finds will be three dimensionally located prior to collection. All finds will be processed to MAP2 type standards and subject to appropriate specialist assessment. If necessary, conservation of finds will be appraised to allow for specialist study.
- 6.5 All excavated feature fills and horizons will be sampled as appropriate, using bulk soil samples, for palaeo-environmental evidence.
- 6.6 A representative section will be recorded denoting depth of topsoil/overburden, any stratigraphy present and the nature of the soil. This information will be logged in the day book together with a sketch drawn to scale and a photographic record of deposits.
- 6.7 Should human remains be revealed by the excavation, the local police, the client and WoSAS will be informed immediately. Any human remains will be accurately recorded, but left *in situ*, pending the agreement of the police, the client and WoSAS on an appropriate mitigation strategy. As there are unlikely to be any modern burials on this site, any human remains affected will be treated as whole entities and would require full excavation if the remains are demonstrably *in situ*.
- 6.8 Should significant archaeological remains be encountered during the watching brief, requiring more than limited excavation and recording, the remains will be largely left *in situ* pending the agreement of the client and WoSAS on a site specific methodology with an appropriate scope of excavation (Stage 2) and Post-excavation design including scope of finds analysis, conservation & publication (Stage 3).
- 6.9 WoSAS will be the final judge of significance regarding any findings and may well insist on full excavation for any features to be destroyed by the proposals.

Report Preparation and Contents

- 7.1 A report detailing the results of the archaeological fieldwork will be submitted to the client within two weeks of completion of all fieldwork and, subject to client approval, then submitted to WoSAS. The report will take the form of a Data Structure Report and will contain an analysis of the results of the watching brief. The report will include a full descriptive text that will characterise the date and extent of any archaeological deposits. It will also include plans at an appropriate scale showing the area subjected to ground-breaking works, archaeological features and archiving lists of all finds, samples, field drawings and photographs.

- 7.2 If appropriate, the report will also include any additional methodologies issued for further archaeological fieldwork, should significant archaeology have been encountered.
- 7.3 The report will include the following:
- executive summary;
 - a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with at least an 8 figure central grid reference;
 - OASIS reference number; unique site code;
 - contractor's details including date work carried out;
 - nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details;
 - description of the site history, location and geology;
 - a site plan to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated;
 - discussion of the results of field work;
 - context & feature descriptions;
 - features, number and class of artefacts, spot dating & scientific dating of significant finds presented in tabular format;
 - plans and section drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale;
 - initial assessment of relevant finds/samples if appropriate;
 - recommendations regarding the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work such as excavation (Stage 2) and Post-excavation finds analysis, conservation & publication (Stage 3);
 - bibliography.
- 7.4 A hard copy of the report will be prepared for the client and a further one including a digital PDF copy sent to WoSAS.
- 7.5 WoSAS state that any DSR is to be submitted within 4 weeks of fieldwork completion, any PERD within 3 months of agreement to the DSR and any final publication within a year of agreement to the PERD.
- 7.6 The report will be presented in an ordered state and contained within a protective cover/sleeve or bound in some fashion. The report will be page numbered and supplemented with section numbering for ease of reference.

Copyright

- 8.1 Unless otherwise agreed copyright for any report resulting from the archaeological work undertaken as part of the project will be deemed the intellectual property of GUARD Archaeology Ltd.

Publication

- 9.1 A summary of the project results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*. In the event of minor archaeological remains being encountered during the archaeological fieldwork, it is proposed that a comprehensive report submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, will form the final publication of the site. A copy of this will be included in the Data Structure Report. Should more significant material be found, publication of the findings in a journal or as a monograph may be required.

Archive

- 10.1 The archive for the project, including a copy of the report, will be submitted to the National Monuments Records for Scotland within three months of completion of all relevant work.

- 10.2 The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be completed within 3 months of completion of the work. Once the Data Structure Report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, WoSAS will validate the OASIS form(s) thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.
- 10.3 A copy of the archive contents will be included in the Data Structure Report which will be provided to WoSAS for inclusion in the planning file and HER archive in order that any relevant conditions can be discharged.

Finds Disposal

- 11.1 The arrangement for the final disposal of any finds made in connection with the archaeological work, will be deposited in keeping with Scottish legal requirements as set out in the Treasure Trove Code of Practice published by the Scottish Government in December 2008. The laws relating to Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia* in Scotland apply to all finds where the original owner cannot be identified. This includes all material recovered during archaeological fieldwork. Accordingly, all assemblages recovered from archaeological fieldwork are claimed automatically by the Crown and must be reported to the Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel through its secretariat, the Treasure Trove Unit. In the event of the discovery of small finds, a filled-out copy of the form "Declaration of an Archaeological Assemblage from Fieldwork" and two copies of the pertinent Data Structure Report will be submitted to the Panel at the conclusion of the fieldwork. The Panel will then be responsible for recommending to the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer which museum should be allocated the finds. All artefacts will be temporarily stored by GUARD until a decision has been made by the panel.

Personnel and Liaison

- 12.1 The GUARD team will comprise the following qualified and experienced GUARD archaeologists:
- Project Manager: Warren Bailie
 - Project Director (on-site Archaeologist): Kevin Mooney
 - Finds and Environmental Support and Conservation: Ms Aileen Maule
 - Illustrator: Ms Gillian McSwan
 - Quality Assurance: Dr John Atkinson
- 12.2 The GUARD Project Manager, Warren Bailie, will be the point of contact for the archaeological works. A full CV for individuals concerned can be made available on request.

Monitoring

- 13.1 The proposed start date for the archaeological works will be Monday 12 January 2015. WoSAS will be informed of the site mobile phone number prior to the start date so that monitoring visits can be arranged. It is envisaged that the archaeological watching brief will take 1-2 days to complete.

Health & Safety and Insurance

- 14.1 GUARD Archaeology Ltd adheres to the guidelines and standards prescribed for archaeological fieldwork set down in the Institute for Archaeologists approved Health and Safety in Field Archaeology document, prepared under the aegis of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM). It is standard GUARD policy, prior to any fieldwork project commencing, to conduct a risk assessment and to prepare a project safety plan, the prescriptions of which will be strictly followed for the duration of all archaeological fieldwork. Copies of the resultant project safety plan and of GUARD's Fieldwork Safety Policy Statement may be viewed upon request.
- 14.2 GUARD Archaeology Ltd also possesses all necessary insurance cover, proofs of which may be supplied upon request.

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