

GUARD ARCHAEOLOGY



Paisley Town Hall Refurbishment: Archaeological Watching Brief Data Structure Report Project 3658

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Paisley Town Hall Refurbishment: Archaeological Watching Brief

Data Structure Report

On behalf of: Renfrewshire Council

NGR: NS 48456 63977

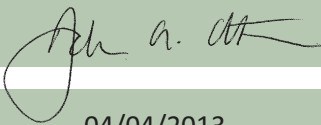
Project Number: 3658

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04/04/2013

Date:

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

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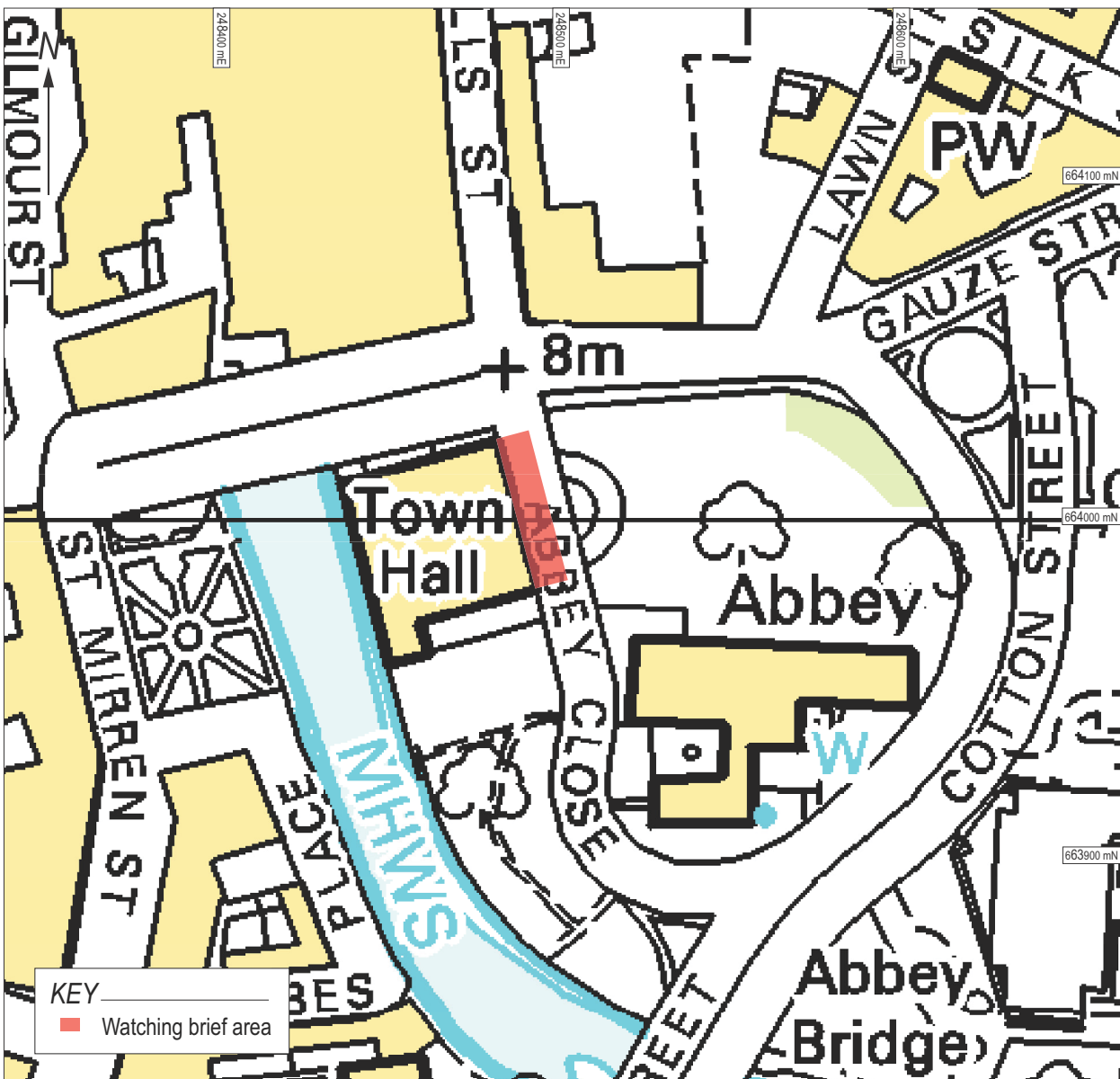
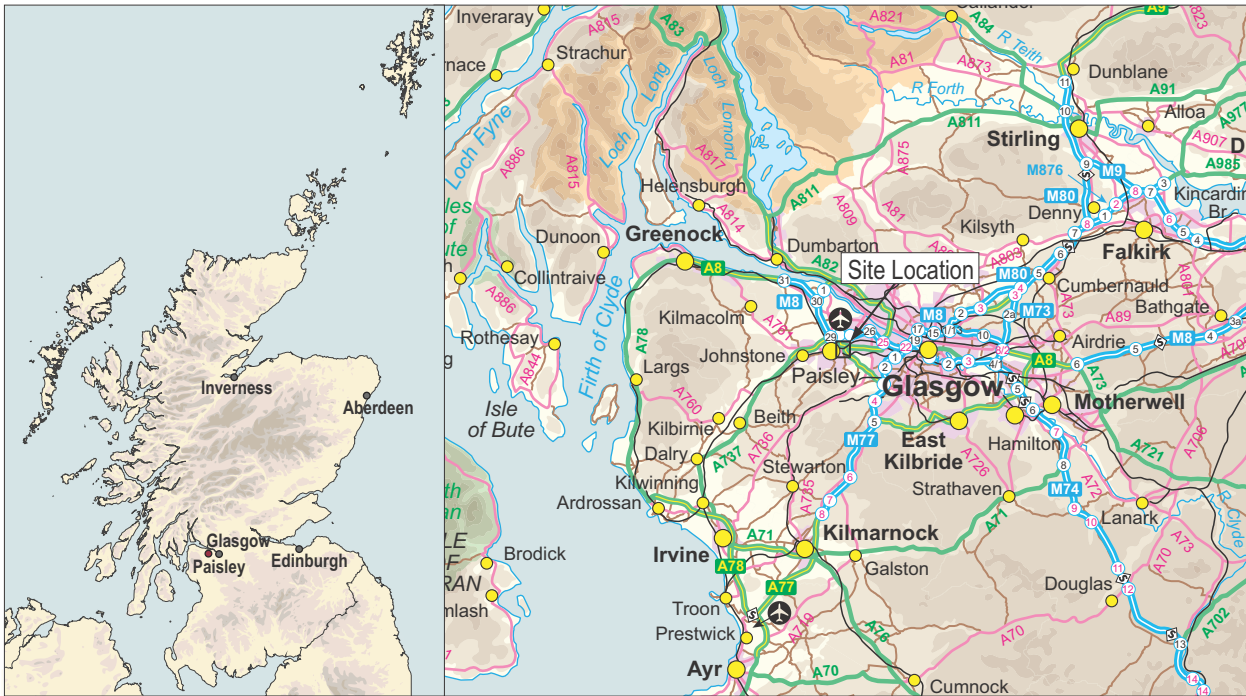
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Executive Summary

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by GUARD Archaeology Ltd during ground works associated with the refurbishment of Paisley Town Hall. The watching brief monitored a series of service trenches and foundations but no archaeological features or deposits were uncovered. The area had been severely disturbed previously when modern services had been installed

Introduction

- 2.1 This report sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by GUARD Archaeology Ltd, on behalf of Renfrewshire Council, during the refurbishment of Paisley Town Hall (Council Reference: DM/LMG 211306.03a). The work was undertaken during February/ March 2013

Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 3.1 The town hall is located at NGR: NS 48456 63977 on the corner of Abbey Close and Gauze street in the centre of Paisley, Renfrewshire. The town hall lies on the east bank of the White Cart River within the precinct of Paisley Abbey (Figure 1).
- 3.2 The underlying superficial geology consists of sand and gravel overlying glacial till of boulder clay (www.bgs.co.uk).

Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The Town Hall is an imposing A listed neo-classical building that was completed in 1882 to a design by Belfast architects WH Lynn. The building lies across the road from Paisley Abbey with graveyard on the north side of the Abbey. To the south is the graveyard of the United Free Church which was demolished in the late 19th century with the graveyard remaining. Paisley Abbey dates to 1169 and would have formed part of a larger monastery with buildings and ranges mainly to the south of the Abbey although there are references to a possible guardhouse and gates to the north-west towards the present Town Hall. As well as the monastic buildings there are references to extensive gardens and orchards to the north of the abbey. The abbey would have formed the core of the medieval town of Paisley that grew up round the abbey.

Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to identify:
- as yet unknown archaeological features and deposits that may be disturbed by the development work;
 - to ensure that any surviving archaeological remains that may be disturbed by the development work are recorded to an appropriate level.
- 5.2 The objectives were therefore to:
- Conduct an archaeological watching brief during ground breaking works associated with the refurbishment work and to identify and record any archaeological remains that may be disturbed by the ground works;
 - Submit a report to data structure level on completion of the archaeological watching brief, which includes an outline of the scope of any further archaeological works should any significant archaeology be encountered.

Methodology

- 6.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Writing Scheme of Investigation prepared by Renfrewshire Council (Appendix F).
- 6.2 Any archaeological features encountered were cleaned by hand by the on-site archaeologist to determine their character and extent. All on-site recording, written, drawn and photographic, was to the standards normally pertaining in archaeological fieldwork and to IfA standards. A full record of excavated features was made using a single context recording system using pro forma sheets, drawings and photographs. All archaeological features were photographed and recorded at an appropriate scale. Sections were drawn at 1:10, and plans at 1:20, all plans were located within the National Grid.

Results

- 7.1 The main element of the archaeological watching brief consisted of the diversion of services away from the front of the Town Hall. A major gas main was located along the east façade of the Town Hall this was diverted to approximately 10m further to the east. The new pipe trench was 1.6m wide and 1.1m deep. The base of the trench was cut into grey/brown coloured compacted clay sub-soil (006). Over this was a layer of building debris (005) up to 0.25m thick containing bricks, this layer had been disturbed by the later insertion of service trenches that had been backfilled with grey gravel. Above this was an extensive layer of plastic sheeting with a levelling layer of small gravel (004) that was up to 0.15m deep. Over this was another levelling layer comprising gravel and asphalt (003) up to 0.25m thick. Above this was a concrete foundation layer (002) 0.1m thick with concrete paving slabs forming the surface (001). When the old gas pipe trench was exposed a similar sequence of layers were observed in the section of the trench. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed in any of the trenches.

Discussion

- 8.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the excavation of a new service trench and the re-excitation of an old pipe trench. In both trenches the same sequence of layers was observed. Although several layers were observed during excavation and in the section of the old trench, these layers were comparatively recent. A layer of plastic mesh was observed in the trench section at a depth of approximately 0.75m from the present ground surface suggesting that this area had been recently excavated possibly when Abbey Close was renovated. In addition several service trenches crossed the main trench confirming the high level of disturbance in the area.

Conclusions

- 9.1 The watching brief did not uncover deposits of significance during the ground works associated with the refurbishment of Paisley Town Hall it is advised that it is unlikely that further archaeological work is required. However, final decisions on the requirement and scope of any future archaeological work rest with the planning authority.
- 9.2 A summary of the results of the evaluation will be submitted to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland. A copy of the summary is included in Appendix E. The archive for the project, including a copy of the report, will be submitted to the National Monuments Record for Scotland within six months.
- 9.3 The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be completed within three months. Once the Data Structure Report has become a public document by submission or incorporation into the local Sites and Monuments Record, the Renfrewshire Council archaeological advisors will validate the OASIS form thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.

Acknowledgements

- 10.1 GUARD Archaeology would like to thank Renfrewshire Council 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 Gillian McSwan. The project was managed for GUARD Archaeology by John Atkinson.

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Section 2: Appendices



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Appendices

Appendix A: Bibliography

www.bgs.ac.uk

Appendix B: List of Contexts

Context No.	Area	Description	Interpretation
001	-	concrete paving slabs	-
002	-	concrete levelling layer	-
003	-	asphalt levelling layer or old road surface	-
004	-	grey gravel layer with plastic mesh	-
005	-	building rubble layer	-
006	-	grey clay - natural?	-

Appendix C: List of Drawings

Drawing No.	Area	Sheet No.	Subject	Scale
1	-	-	W facing section (in daybook)	1:10
2	-	-	E facing section (in daybook)	1:10

Appendix D: List of Photographs

Frame	Area	Context No.	Subject	Taken from
1	-	-	W facing section of service trench	W
2	-	-	exposed gas pipe - site N	S
3	-	-	N site with services	SW
4	-	-	view along service diversion trench	N
5	-	-	general view if site	N
6	-	-	E facing section of trench	E
7	-	-	view from burial ground opposite W door of abbey	SWW
8	-	-	working shot exposed services in extension trench	N
9	-	-	general view if site	S
10	-	-	E facing section around exposed gas pipe	E
11	-	-	services exposed at S end of trench	SE
12	-	-	general view if site	S
13	-	-	machine removing loose from old pipe trench	S
14	-	-	SE facing section of extension trench	SE
15	-	-	general view of town hall/site	NE
16	-	-	view from burial ground opposite W door of abbey	SWW
17	-	-	film id photo	-
18	-	-	location of services trench	E
19	-	-	working shot rubble for backfilling trench	-
20	-	-	working shot -excavated trench	N
21	-	-	E facing section	E
22	-	-	W facing section of service trench	W
23	-	-	working shot - trench being backfilled	NNE

Appendix E: Discovery and Excavation Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Renfrewshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Paisley Town hall
PROJECT CODE:	3658
PARISH:	Paisley
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Bob Will
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	GUARD Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NS46SE 166
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	A Listed town hall
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	none
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 48456 63977
START DATE (this season)	13/2/13
END DATE (this season)	27/2/13
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	--
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was carried out during ground works associated with the refurbishment of Paisley Town Hall. The watching brief monitored a series of service trenches and foundations but no archaeological features or deposits were uncovered. The area had been severely disturbed previously when modern services had been installed.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Renfrewshire Council
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	52 Elderpark Workspace, 100 Elderpark Street, Glasgow, G51 3TR
EMAIL ADDRESS:	bob.will@guard-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

Appendix F: Writing Scheme of Investigation

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1.0 Introduction

Project Background

- 1.1 A watching brief has been requested as a specific condition (number 17) as part of the planning consent for the refurbishment project at Paisley Town Hall.

The site sits within the medieval site of the Abbey precinct and as a result there is a high likelihood of important below ground archaeology being present during any ground disturbance close to the Abbey area.

- 1.2 Renfrewshire Council has recommended that a Watching Brief be undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new entrance ramp at the front of the Town Hall.
- 1.3 This work is to be carried out with full regard to the WoSAS Standard Conditions for archaeological fieldwork.

2.0 Archaeological Background

- 2.1 The development site is situated at the historic core of Paisley and given the importance of the early monastic settlement at this location there exists the possibility that any ground breaking works may unearth medieval or post medieval remains.
- 2.2 The Town Hall is category A listed and is an extensive and imposing 19th century neo-classical municipal building. It was completed in 1882 to a design of the Belfast Architect practice of WH Lynn. The main east and south facades adjoin Abbey close and the graveyard of the Abbey.

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological watching brief will be to identify and record any elements of the archaeological resource that may be disturbed by the proposed development works primarily during the excavation for foundations and during any new ground breaking works such as foundations and service tracks.
- 3.2 To liaise with WoSAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and/or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *insitu*, if at all feasible or by archaeological recording.

4.0 Archaeological Watching Brief

- 4.1 The Watching Brief will adhere to this Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 4.2 The watching brief will be undertaken on:
- The groundworks involved in the creation of new foundations;

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- The groundworks involved in the creation of service diversions.
- 3.3 Sufficient notice of the commencement of the archaeological watching brief must be given to WoSAS.
 - 3.4 All excavation will be supervised by an experienced field archaeologist. The watching brief will also include the excavation of any archaeological features encountered (should preservation *insitu* prove infeasible) in order to establish the extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological features impacted upon by these works.
 - 3.5 Where small discoveries (those requiring less than one hour to deal with) are encountered, these will be excavated and recorded in accordance with the national standards set out by the Institute for Archaeologists in Standard and Guidance.
 - 3.6 Where larger discoveries are made (those requiring more than two hours to deal with) the field archaeologist will immediately inform the client and WoSAS to describe the features and propose a mitigation strategy if appropriate for their excavation and any consequent post excavation works. The final arbiter of whether further work is required on site will be Renfrewshire Council as Planning Authority, as advised by WoSAS. WoSAS has indicated that it will be the judge of significance on behalf of the Planning Authority, and will determine the need for, and scope of, any further programme of archaeological works. Following discussion with WoSAS, a supplementary *Written Scheme of Investigation* will be prepared, and the arrangements confirmed by email or fax.
 - 3.7 Should human remains be uncovered these will be treated in accordance with Scots Law, IFA standard practice and in keeping with Historic Scotland's *The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*. Any human remains which are encountered will initially be left *insitu*. Their removal will be a matter of discussion with the client and WoSAS (who must be notified within 12 hours of their discovery). The Police will also be informed prior to the removal of any bone material.
 - 3.8 All excavation must be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appear to be worthy of preservation *insitu*. While preservation *insitu* is the preferred option, this may not be achievable within the confines of the site, and should this situation arise, the only alternative will be to preserve the material through a process of managed excavation and recording. In the event that preservation *insitu* is not adopted, any additional phases of fieldwork would also be funded by the client. In the event of the preservation *insitu* being feasible, any resultant Data Structure Report, artefact or ecofact analysis (Post-Excavation) and publication (if appropriate) will also be fully funded by the client in accordance with a mitigation strategy approved by WoSAS on behalf of the planning authority. Archaeological remains to be preserved *insitu* will be covered by terram and these areas backfilled.
 - 3.9 Within one month of the completion of all fieldwork the results of the archaeological works will be presented in the form of a written report. This report will synthesise the results of the fieldwork and determine the significance and extent of any archaeological features identified.

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- 3.10 The report will take the form of a Data Structure Report, prepared in accordance with current standard Historic Scotland procedural requirements. Specifically the Data Structure Report will contain the following:-
- i. a full descriptive text detailing the features identified and an interpretation of their date and purpose;
 - ii. plans and elevations at an appropriate scale showing watching brief areas and features located;
 - iii. appropriate lists and diagrams summarising the contexts and artefacts recovered and the records made of them;
 - iv. analysis of the results of the works, including appropriate post excavation appraisals.
- 3.11 In addition a Summary Report on the works and its findings will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*, and *OASIS*.
- 3.12 Four copies of the report (and a CD containing a pdf copy) will be supplied to the client for distribution to the relevant bodies once the report has been approved by WoSAS.
- 3.13 The catalogued archive from these works will be prepared for deposition in the National Monuments Record of Scotland within 6 months of the completion of all fieldwork. Digital copies of a selection of photographs and plans will be deposited separately for inclusion in the WoSAS SMR.
- 3.14 Finds of objects will be subject to Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and Bona Vacantia and reported by the archaeological contractor to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel for disposal to an appropriate museum.

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