

# Birkwood House, Lesmahagow: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

AOC Project 22981  
23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

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# Birkwood House, Lesmahagow: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

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<b>National Grid Reference (NGR):</b>	<b>NS 8115 3928</b>
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## Abstract

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This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in relation to a planning application due to be lodged for change of use and Listed Building Consent at Birkwood House, Lesmahagow, South Lanarkshire. The development proposes that a new car park will be constructed to the S of the house.

The evaluation required a 10% trenching sample of the development area totalling 500 m<sup>2</sup>. Due to the presence of mature trees and bushes, as well as live electric cables either side of the current driveway, and a high voltage cable along the eastern edge of the site, the total amount evaluated equated to 120 m<sup>2</sup>.

A total of five trenches of varying lengths and alignments were excavated throughout the site, encountering up to 2 m of made ground and landscaping between the driveway and the house. To the S of the driveway the trenches showed abundant root disturbance around the trees and bushes, and no significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed on the sloping ground at the far S of the development area.

No further works are considered necessary within this part of the development area.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by G. Taylor Design to undertake an archaeological evaluation prior to a planning application for a proposed development at Birkwood House, Lesmahagow, South Lanarkshire. The evaluation was undertaken in order to satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority, South Lanarkshire Council who are advised on archaeological matters by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS). The works were conducted according to the terms of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2015) approved on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council by WoSAS and in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011).

## 1.2 Location

1.2.1 The site of the proposed car park (centred on NGR NS 8115 3928) is to the immediate S of Birkwood House, encompassing the current driveway, landscaped areas and the edge of a field to the S. The site is bounded by Birkwood House to the N, by landscaped grounds to the E and W, and fields to the S (Figure 1).

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 A desk based assessment undertaken as part of a pre-planning consultation details the archaeological background of the Birkwood Hospital grounds, which include the car park area (Lovekin & Olesky 2015). A summary of the assessment is provided here.

1.3.2 An archaeological evaluation took place within the Phase 5 development area and the land to its east in February 2007. The single feature of interest was a sub-square shallow gully feature with a topsoil-like fill, dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> /20<sup>th</sup> century by ceramic evidence. This lay directly on the site of a small square structure visible on Ordnance Survey maps of the 1850s and 1890s and represents the robbed-out foundation for this structure (Roy 2007).

1.3.3 There are no known sites within the Birkwood estate that date prior to the post medieval period. However, a number of artefacts have been found in and around the estate that indicate the potential for archaeological sites in the area. A number of prehistoric artefacts have been found in the vicinity of Birkwood, including socketed bronze axes, a bronze spear and a cauldron. Some of these are said to have been recovered from a cairn which stood at East Balgray though the exact location of the cairn is unknown, as are the current whereabouts of the finds associated with it.

1.3.4 A Roman vase was also reportedly recovered from the vicinity as was an Armorican silver coin perhaps dating from the 1st century BC (NSA 1845; RCAHMS 1978). A silver coin hoard containing 100 coins of Edward I and a battle-axe was also recovered from somewhere in the vicinity, during the laying of a drain in the mid 19th century (Lewis 1846). A pale glass bead recovered from the area surrounding Lesmahagow was purchased for the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1900 (PSAS 1900), while a Roman bronze bell, 4.4cm high, was reportedly found on the Birkwood estate during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

1.3.5 Finally, a bronze figurine of a horse was reportedly found slightly to the south of the proposed development '*near the farm of Monkstables*' during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Comparable figurines are known from Hallstatt in Austria where they date to the 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century AD.

1.3.6 In the post-medieval period, Birkwood is noted on Forrest's map of 1816 and Ainslie's map of 1821, with the house undergoing extension in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further additions were undertaken in

the 1890s by James Thomson of Glasgow. A walled garden also exists to the east of the house; the garden was originally a quadrangular area enclosed by rubble-built ashlar-coped walls with a gateway in the west wall. All of these elements are Category B Listed Buildings; the Driveway Bridge is Listed Category C. The first edition Ordnance Survey indicates several other landscape features in a heavily wooded setting including a sundial, a flagstaff and several wells.

- 1.3.7 Birkwood was used as a hospital from at least 1963 when it is labelled '*Birkwood Institute*' on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map. This map also indicates that several large buildings associated with the hospital had been built within the grounds.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:
- i) to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area;
  - ii) to advise and implement an appropriate form of mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication given the infeasibility of preserving the archaeological material *in situ*, should significant archaeological remains be encountered.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The evaluation was to comprise machine trenching of a 10% sample of the 0.5 hectare development area, totaling 500 m<sup>2</sup>. However, due to the presence of a high voltage electric cable running through the eastern edge of the site; street lighting cables either side of the current driveway; and mature trees and bushes to the S of the current driveway, the available evaluation area was significantly reduced. In total, 120 m<sup>2</sup> of linear trench was excavated using an 8-tonne tracked excavator with a 1.8 m wide ditching bucket.
- 3.3 Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist and according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures, and as per the methodology within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2015).

## 4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Weather conditions were mostly fair allowing for good archaeological visibility throughout the evaluation. In total, 62 m of linear trench and a 3 m<sup>2</sup> trench was opened, positioned throughout the development area (Figure 2).
- 4.2 Trenches 1 and 4 to the N of the driveway indicated that the natural slope in front of and surrounding Birkwood House had been landscaped and levelled with up to 2 m of made ground present to the E edge of the development area (Trench 4; Plate 1) and 0.6 m of made ground and topsoil towards the W (Trench 1). Further W, an embankment to the S of the driveway indicates that this area has been previously truncated during the house and driveway construction. Furthermore, from the excavation of Trench 4 it appears that the E edge of the development area has also been truncated prior to being made up.

- 4.3 The other three trenches were situated to the S of the landscaped areas and driveway. Trench 2 was placed along the S edge within a bounded field; Trench 3 was placed between two very large mature bushes (Plate 2) and Trench 5 was placed to the SE edge of the mature trees. Trenches 3 and 5 indicated that the line of trees and bushes had disturbed the top 0.1 to 0.2 m of the underlying geological deposits through root action. Trench 2 revealed no signs of plough truncation or landscaping disturbance indicating that the field system had not been previously disturbed (Plate 3).
- 4.4 The underlying geology throughout the majority of the site was an orange and grey sandy clay with frequent small stone inclusions, interpreted as glacial till. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed.

## **5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The trenching out with the landscaped and levelled areas of the development area encountered a simple stratigraphic sequence of topsoil derived from glacial till. Between the driveway and house this sequence had been disturbed by landscaping, with dumped deposits of soil and sandstone rubble overlying the former topsoil in areas where there is no hard standing. Under the stoned areas and most likely the tarmac areas, the original topsoil had been removed and the area built up with stone, rubble and clayey soils.
- 5.2 No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed throughout the evaluation and no further archaeological works are deemed necessary within the development area. These recommendations will have to be approved by WoSAS on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council.



## 6 REFERENCES

AOC 2015 *Birkwood House, Lesmahagow: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation* unpublished client report

Lewis, S. 1846 *Topographical Dictionary of Scotland*, Two Volumes, Vol.2, 172

Lovekin, T.B. & Olesky, V. 2015 *Land at Birkwood House, Lesmahagow, South Lanarkshire: Desk Based Assessment* AOC client report

NSA 1845 *The new statistical account of Scotland by the ministers of the respective parishes under the superintendence of a committee of the society for the benefit of the sons and daughters of the clergy*, 15v, Edinburgh, Vol.6, (Lanark), 1845

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Scottish Government 2011 *Planning And Archaeology 2/2011*

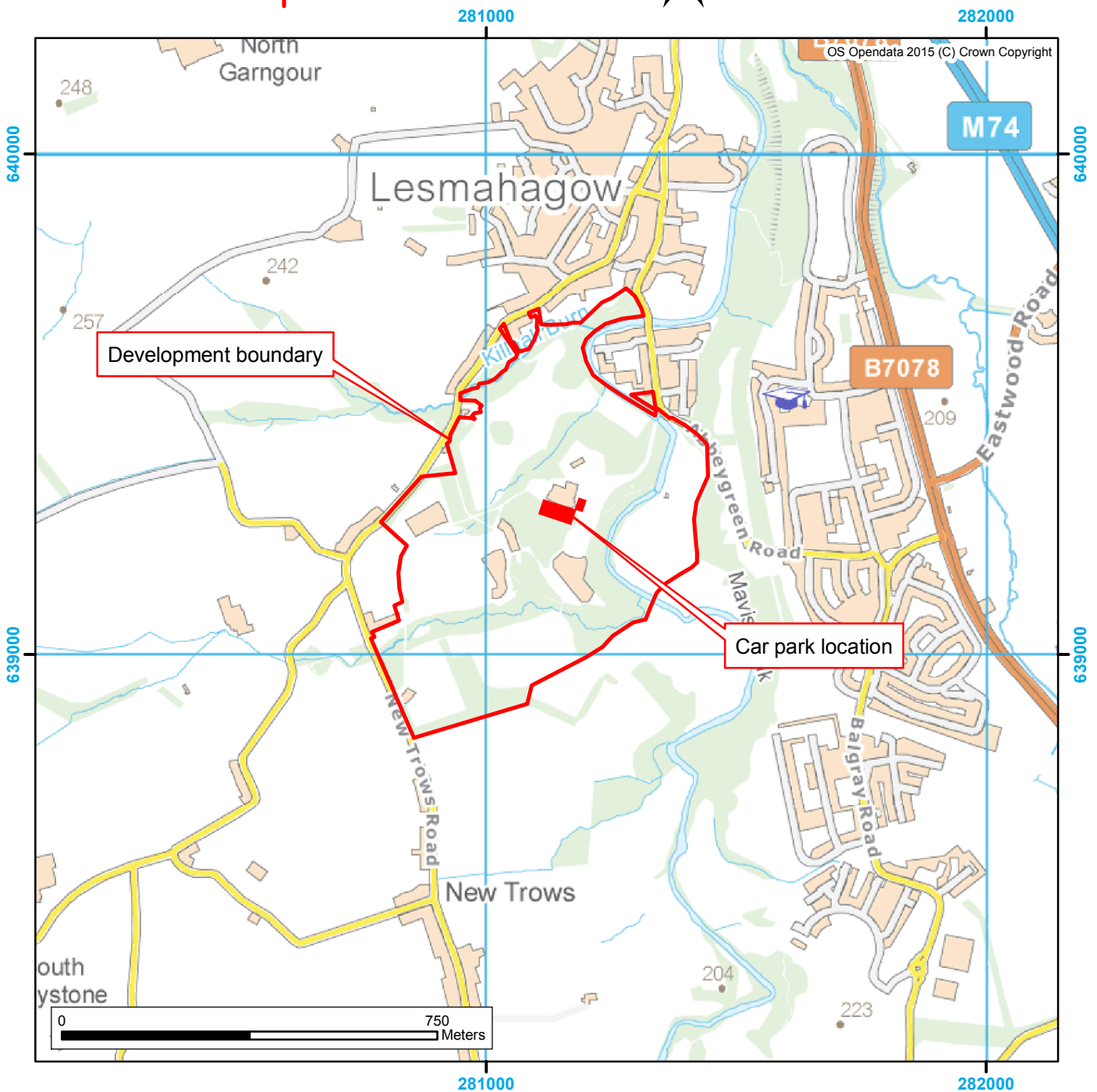
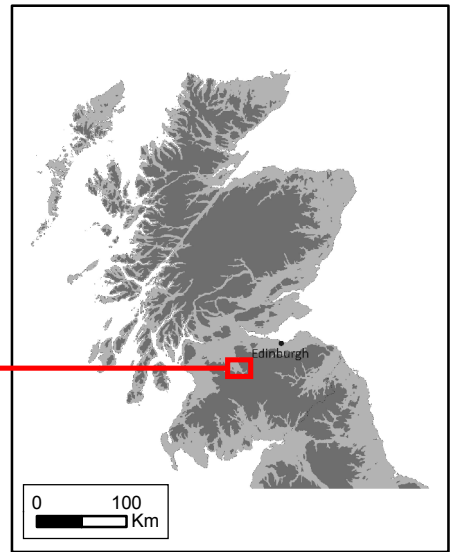
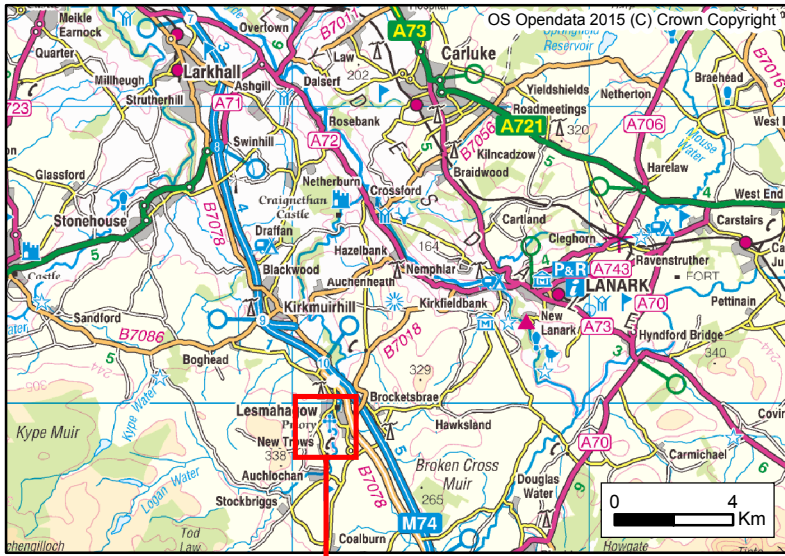


Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figure 2 - Evaluation trench location plan



Plate 1 - Made ground within Trench 4



Plate 2 - Location of Trench 3 within bushes



Plate 3 - Post excavation view of Trench 2

# **Birkwood House, Lesmahagow: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

### Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	20 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	36 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	E to W
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown clay loam – max depth 0.25 m; Made ground – mixture of mid brown clay, crushed sandstone rubble (0.1 m), and ash with coal inclusions – max depth 0.55 m; B-horizon – dark greyish brown clay loam – max depth 0.4 m.
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	1.1 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Rubble drain at 7.4 m aligned N-S (0.2 m wide)
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange and grey sandy clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

### Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	28 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	50.4 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	NW to SE
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Topsoil – dark greyish brown clay loam – max depth 0.5 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.5 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ce storm drain at 5.1 m aligned NE-SW; Ce tile drain 14.7 m to 18.3 m aligned E-W
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orangey brown sandy clay with occasional stone inclusions until 4 m then orange clayey sand to 6 m then orangey grey clay.
<i>Finds</i>	None

### Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	6 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	10.8 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SW to NE
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Topsoil – dark greyish brown clay loam – max depth 0.4 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.4 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ce storm drain from 0 m to 3 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Rooted orangey brown and grey clayey sand
<i>Finds</i>	None

### Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 3 m
<i>Total Area</i>	9 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	N/A
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Hard standing – Red chip stone – max. depth 0.15 m; Made ground – mixture of crushed sandstone rubble, grey clay and mid brown clayey soil, and compact stone – max depth 1.85 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	2 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand and large boulders
<i>Finds</i>	None

### Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	8 m by 1.8 m
<i>Total Area</i>	14.4 m <sup>2</sup>

<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	NW to SE
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Topsoil – dark greyish brown clay loam – max depth 0.5 m
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.5 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Rooted orangey brown and grey clayey sand
<i> Finds</i>	None

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Record

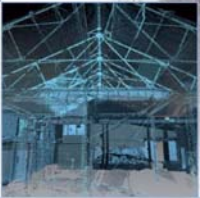
### Digital Photographs

Frame	Description	From	Date
1-5	View of proposed car park area	E	20/2/15
6-7	Trees and bushes and road within evaluation area	W	20/2/15
8	Compound area to front of house	W	20/2/15
9	N-facing section of T1	N	20/2/15
10	Post ex of T1	W	20/2/15
11	Post ex of T2	SE	20/2/15
12	Post ex of T3 with pipe	SW	20/2/15
13	Location shot of T3	SW	20/2/15
14	W-facing section of T4	W	20/2/15
15	Post ex of T4	N	20/2/15
16	Post ex of T5	NW	20/2/15
17	NW end of T5 with SE end of T2	N	20/2/15
18	View of T3 with T2 in background	N	20/2/15
19	Location of T4	SE	20/2/15



**APPENDIX 3: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report**

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	South Lanarkshire Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME</b>	Birkwood House
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	AOC 22981
<b>PARISH:</b>	Lesmahagow
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Kevin Paton
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	AOC Archaeology Group
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S)</b>	None
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	N/A
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NS 8115 3928
<b>START DATE</b> (this season)	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2015
<b>END DATE</b> (this season)	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2015
<b>PREVIOUS WORK</b> (incl. DES ref.)	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in relation to a planning application due to be lodged for change of use and listed building consent at Birkwood House, Lesmahagow, South Lanarkshire.</p> <p>The evaluation required a 10% trenching sample of the development area totalling 500 m<sup>2</sup>. Due to the presence of mature trees and bushes, as well as live electric cables either side of the current driveway, and a high voltage cable along the eastern edge of the site, the total amount evaluated equated to 120 m<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>No further works are considered necessary within the development area.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	---
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	G. Taylor Design
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<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b> (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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