

Invergarven School, Girvan, South Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: Faithful & Gould
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology in relation to the proposed new Invergarven Primary School development within the grounds of Girvan Academy, Girvan, South Ayrshire.

The evaluation required a 5-10% trenching sample of the development area. A total of six trenches and test-pits of varying lengths and alignments were excavated throughout the available parts of the site. The trenches revealed between 0.7 m to over 2.5 m of landscaped made ground overlying the pale brown and grey clay subsoil. The majority of the area appears to have been previously stripped with gravel deposits dumped onto the subsoil and then overlain by soils generated from the Girvan Academy construction. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed.

As the available area was archaeologically sterile and showed a high level of disturbance, it is recommended that no further archaeological works are considered necessary within the development area.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Faithful & Gould to undertake an archaeological evaluation in order to inform the planning application for the proposed development of a new Invergarven Primary School, on the grounds of Girvan Academy, Girvan, South Ayrshire. The evaluation was undertaken in order to satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority, South Ayrshire 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 2016) approved on behalf of South Ayrshire 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 Girvan Academy is located at the eastern edge of Girvan, South Ayrshire. The development area is to the SE of the Academy buildings, occupying an area of landscaped ground containing a cycle track and undulating lawn (centred on NGR NX 19115 97449). The development area is bounded by Coalpots Road to the SE, the academy to the NW, a private residence to the NE and the Mill Burn to the SW (Figure 1).

1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The site of the proposed new school extension falls within the general location of the reputed site of Ballochtout Castle represented on the 1st edition OS map of 1856, although removed by this date (Figure 2). The castle was described as a five story structure set within corn fields with no associated orchard or garden. It is possible that the castle was the remains of a tower house or a representation of an earlier structure. The castle was recorded as belonging to the Grahams of Knockdoliane in the 16th century (Paterson 1863). The place name appeared on the Roy Military Survey map of 1747-1755. Roy showed the presence of several structures including two rectilinear enclosure walls (Figure 3).



Figure 2 – Extract from 1856 Ordnance Survey



Figure 3 – Extract from Roy's Military Survey of Scotland 1752-55

- 1.3.2 No visible remains of the tower were identified by the Ordnance Survey during a site visit undertaken in 1955 and no local knowledge was recorded. Aerial photographs taken in 1947 did not reveal any indications of a buried structure within the immediate locale.
- 1.3.3 Several other sites of archaeological significance are known in the wider locale. To the SW of the site lies the Scheduled Monument of Mote Hill (SM5602) (NGR; NX 189 972). This monument consists of a crop-mark related to a round barrow of probable Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. In 1961 a Bronze Age Urnfield was excavated to the S of the site on Coalpots Road (NX 19NE13, NGR; NX 1907 9717). A further Collared Urn was found in 1861 lying to the NE of the development area at Knothead (NX19NE 14, NGR; 196 978).

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 5-10% sample of the 0.9 hectare development area. However, due to the presence of electric cables in the centre of the site and close to the edge of Coalpots Road, as well as a cycle track that was to be retained, the available evaluation area had to be reduced.
- 3.2 Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil. 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 *Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2016).

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 26th May 2016. Weather conditions were fair allowing for good archaeological visibility throughout the evaluation. In total, two trenches and four test-pits totalling 51.5 m of linear trench were opened, varying in alignment and length (Figure 4).
- 4.2 Due to the limitations on the available areas for evaluation, only one trench could be located close to the large tree that may indicate the location of Ballochoul Castle. However, Trench 1 encountered a previously unknown water main in this area and no further trenching could be conducted to the W of the service buffers.
- 4.3 Within the other five trenches and test-pits the topsoil was an imported mid brown sandy clay most likely representing re-deposited subsoil, measuring 0.6-0.9 m thick. In Trench 3 & 4, this made ground overlay a pale brown and grey clay subsoil (Plate 1). In test-pits 2, 5 & 6 it overlay a dark grey silty clay containing decomposing grass and occasional modern material that was 0.3 m thick in Test-pit 5, 1.4 m in Test-pit 6 and 1.8 m in Test-pit 2. This in turn overlay a grey and brown gravel deposit (made ground) that was 0.7 m thick in Test-pit 5, but was not fully excavated in Test-pit 2 & 6 due to the depth of the trench.
- 4.4 No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed within any of the trenches or Test-pits.



Plate 1 - General post-ex view of Trench 4



Plate 2 - W-facing section of Trench 6

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The trenching encountered deep deposits of made ground that were most likely dumped in the area during the landscaping of the grounds after the construction of Girvan Academy. The trenches revealed that this made ground was placed directly onto the natural subsoil, except at the S end of Trench 3, indicating that the subsoil has been disturbed by the construction.
- 5.2 As no significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed throughout the evaluation and the development area appears to have been disturbed by previous construction activity, no further archaeological works are deemed necessary within the development area. These recommendations will have to be approved by WoSAS on behalf of South Ayrshire Council.

6 REFERENCES

AOC 2016, *Invergarven School, Girvan, South Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation* unpublished client report

Paterson, J. 1863-6, *History of the counties of Ayr and Wigton*, 3v in 5. Edinburgh. Page(s): 75-81
RCAHMS

Scottish Government 2014 *Scottish Planning Policy 2014*

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning And Archaeology 2/2011*

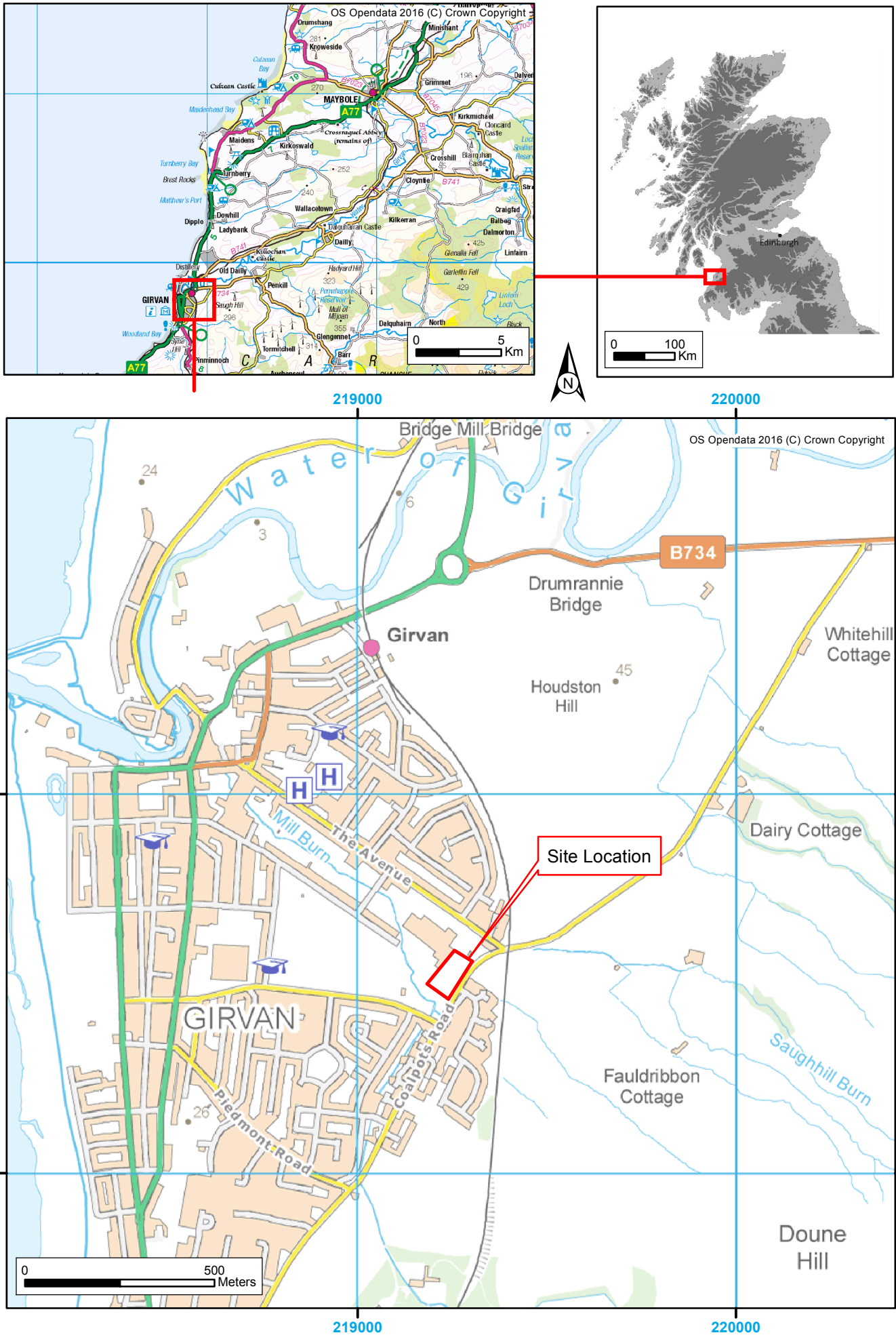


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

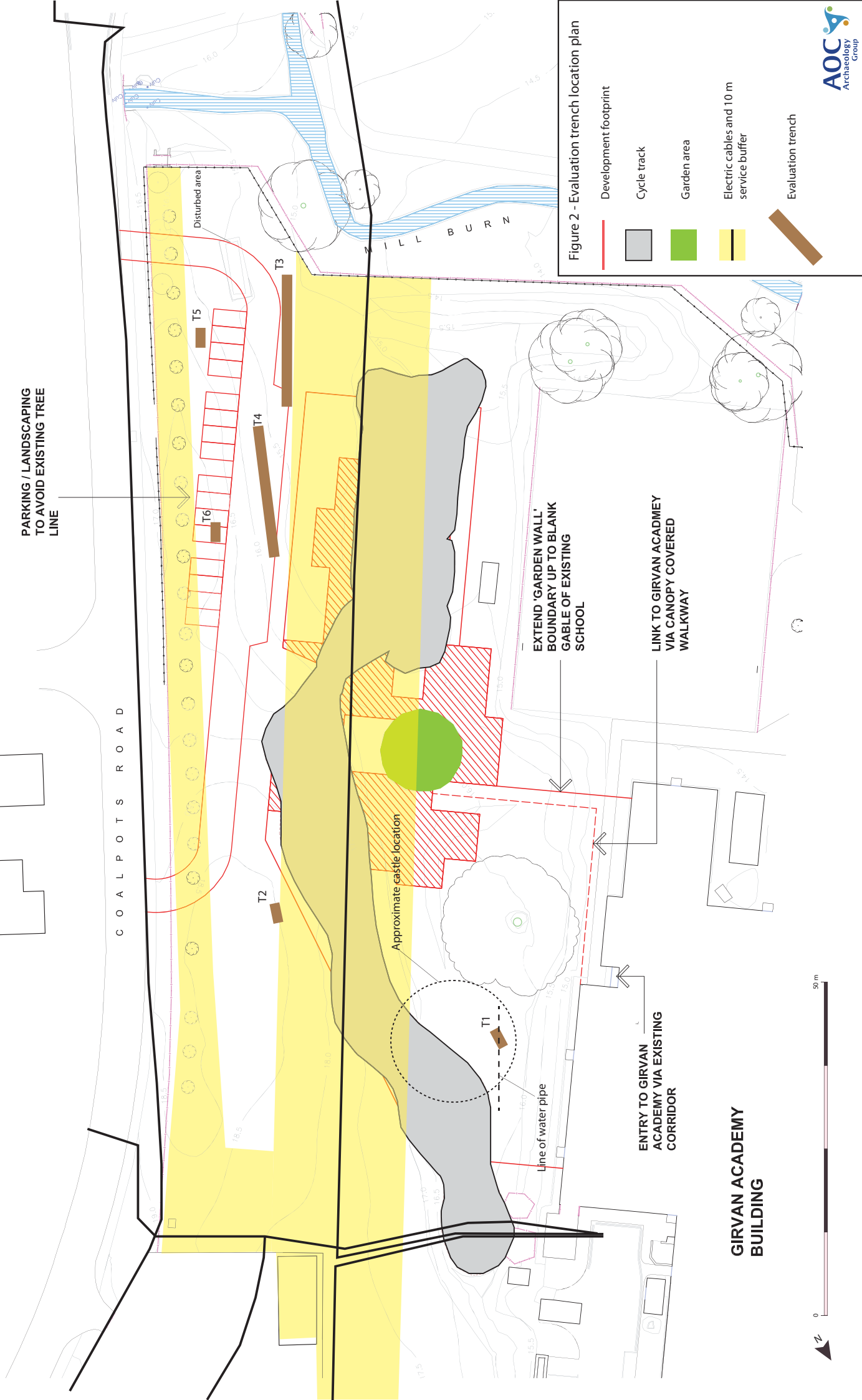


Figure 2 - Evaluation trench location plan

- Development footprint
- Cycle track
- Garden area
- Electric cables and 10 m service buffer
- Evaluation trench

PARKING / LANDSCAPING TO AVOID EXISTING TREE LINE

COALPOTS ROAD

Approximate castle location

EXTEND 'GARDEN WALL' BOUNDARY UP TO BLANK GABLE OF EXISTING SCHOOL

LINK TO GIRVAN ACADEMY VIA CANOPY COVERED WALKWAY

ENTRY TO GIRVAN ACADEMY VIA EXISTING CORRIDOR

GIRVAN ACADEMY BUILDING



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Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	2.5 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	4 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	N to S
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay loam with turf – depth 0.15 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Modern water main service track
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Not reached
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	4.8 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	N to S
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions – depth 0.7 m; Made ground – dark grey silty clay with abundant grass and occasional modern material – depth 1.8 m; Made ground – dark grey and brown gravels – not fully excavated
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Not reached
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	20 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	32 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SW to NE
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions – max. depth 0.8 m; Former topsoil and plough soil – Mid greyish brown clay loam with occasional small stones and coal flecks. Visible from 0 m to 7 m – max. depth 0.35 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Pale brown and grey clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	20 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	32 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	S to N
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions – max. depth 0.9 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Pale brown and grey clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	4.8 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	N to S
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions – depth 0.6 m; Made ground – dark grey silty clay with abundant grass and occasional modern material – depth 0.3 m;

	Made ground – dark grey and brown gravels – depth 0.7 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Pale brown and grey clay
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 6

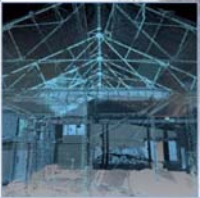
<i>Dimensions</i>	3 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	4.8 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	N to S
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Imported topsoil – mid brown sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions – depth 0.7 m; Made ground – dark grey silty clay with abundant grass and occasional modern material – depth 1.4 m; Made ground – dark grey and brown gravels – not fully excavated
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	None
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Not reached
<i>Finds</i>	None

APPENDIX 2: Photographic Record

Frame	Description	From	Date
1-2	View of development area from SW edge	Var	26/5/16
3-8	Views of cycle track, hard standing and small garden area in NW edge	Var	26/5/16
9-11	Views from NE edge of development area	Var	26/5/16
12	Cables in burn	NE	26/5/16
13	View of cable line (approx.)	SW	26/5/16
14	T1 post-ex	N	26/5/16
15	T2 post-ex	N	26/5/16
16	T2 view showing depth	NE	26/5/16
17	T3 post-ex	NE	26/5/16
18	T4 post-ex	N	26/5/16
19	T5 post-ex	SW	26/5/16
20	W-facing section of T6	W	26/5/16
21-24	Views of backfilled trenches	Var	26/5/16

APPENDIX 3: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	South Ayrshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Invergarven School, Girvan, South Ayrshire
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 23446
PARISH:	Girvan
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Kevin Paton
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S)	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NX 19115 97449
START DATE (this season)	26 th May 2016
END DATE (this season)	26 th May 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology in relation to the proposed new Invergarven Primary School development within the grounds of Girvan Academy, Girvan, South Ayrshire.</p> <p>The evaluation required a 5-10% trenching sample of the development area. A total of six trenches and test-pits of varying lengths and alignments were excavated throughout the available parts of the site. The trenches revealed between 0.7 m to over 2.5 m of landscaped made ground overlying the pale brown and grey clay subsoil. The majority of the area appears to have been previously stripped with gravel deposits dumped onto the subsoil and then overlain by soils generated from the Girvan Academy construction. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	---
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Faithful & Gould
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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