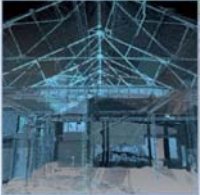
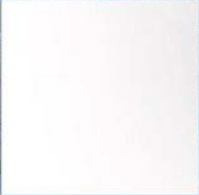


# National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

*AOC Project 23481*

*15<sup>th</sup> June 2016*



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

## National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>On Behalf of:</b>                  | <b>Sportscotland</b><br>Doges<br>Templeton on the Green<br>62 Templeton Street<br>Glasgow<br>G40 1DA |
| <b>National Grid Reference (NGR):</b> | <b>NS 21343 60166</b>  |
| <b>AOC Project No:</b>                | <b>23481</b>   |
| <b>Planning Application Ref:</b>      | <b>16/00328/PP</b>   |
| <b>OASIS Entry No:</b>                | <b>254486</b>  |
| <b>Prepared by:</b>                   | <b>Kevin Paton</b>   |
| <b>Date of Fieldwork:</b>             | <b>8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b>   |
| <b>Date of Report:</b>                | <b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b>   |

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Author: Kevin Paton</b>             | <b>Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b> |
| <b>Approved by: Martin Cook</b>        | <b>Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b> |
| <b>Draft/Final Report Stage: Final</b> | <b>Date: 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b> |

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## Summary

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An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology prior to the re-landscaping of a driving range and golf course at the National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire. An 8% evaluation was required of the available 1.8 ha site.

A total of 19 evaluation trenches were excavated, covering 720 linear metres. Only one archaeological feature was revealed which relates to a post-medieval field system. No other significant archaeological features were revealed and no further works are recommended.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology on behalf of Sportscotland as part of a programme of archaeological works related to the re-landscaping of the driving range and golf course at the National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire. The site lies within the administrative area of North Ayrshire Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS). The archaeological works were conducted according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2016) and are in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014) and *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011* (2011).

### 1.2 Location

1.2.1 The development area is located within the grounds of the Sportscotland National Sports Centre and is centred on National Grid Reference NS 21343 60166 (Figure 1). The sports complex lies to the north-east of Largs town centre and the proposed development site is currently used as part of a golf school and driving range. The site is bounded by the Largs Campus development site to the west, agricultural land to the south, with the sports centre facilities to the north and east.

### 1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) identify no known archaeological sites within the immediate development area. However, to the east of the site there are two farmsteads, Hangingheugh Farm (NMRS No. NS26SW 18) and Cauld Rocks (NMRS No. NS26SW 30). Both are described as being abandoned farmsteads with Cauld Rocks marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Also listed in the NMRS is a hut circle at Wooy Hill (NMRS No. NS26SW 11), although later investigations of the site suggest there are no features in this location.
- 1.3.2 To the immediate west of the development area a series of pits and post holes that may be prehistoric in date were found during an evaluation and subsequent excavation conducted by AOC Archaeology in 2015 (Paton 2015). These features, situated on the edge of a ridge line are thought to be the remains of a vantage point for an as yet unknown population.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- i. to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any sub-surface archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
  - ii. should significant archaeological deposits be discovered, to liaise with the client and WoSAS in preparing an appropriate form of mitigation compliant with *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014) and *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011* (2011).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The evaluation was undertaken by a 13-tonne excavator with a 2m wide bladed ditching bucket. All excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. 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). The trenches were backfilled at the end of each day.

## 4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The weather during the evaluation was good allowing for good archaeological visibility. In total, the evaluation involved the excavation of 19 trenches, totalling 720 linear metres (Figure 2).
- 4.2 The soil make-up throughout the development area consisted of approximately 0.4 m of dark brown clay loam topsoil overlying predominantly red and orange boulder clays with seams of orange gravels and greyish brown sandy clay and stone (Plate 1). A number of rubble drains, as well as modern plastic ducts, were revealed throughout the trenches.
- 4.3 A single archaeological feature in the form of a field boundary ditch [1901] was revealed in Trench 19 that was aligned WSW to ENE between two clusters of trees that may have originally defined the boundary. The ditch was 0.9 m wide by 0.13 m deep, filled with a dark brown silty clay with frequent coal fleck inclusions and containing fragments of post-medieval white ceramic.



Plate 1 - General view of Trench 6

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The archaeological works conducted only encountered agricultural features in the form of a single boundary ditch and several rubble drains. 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 North Ayrshire Council.

## 6 REFERENCES

AOC Archaeology Group 2016 *National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire: Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation*, Unpublished Client Report

Paton, K. 2015 *Largs Campus, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Excavation Report* unpublished client report

Scottish Government 2014 *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014)

Scottish Government 2011 PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology



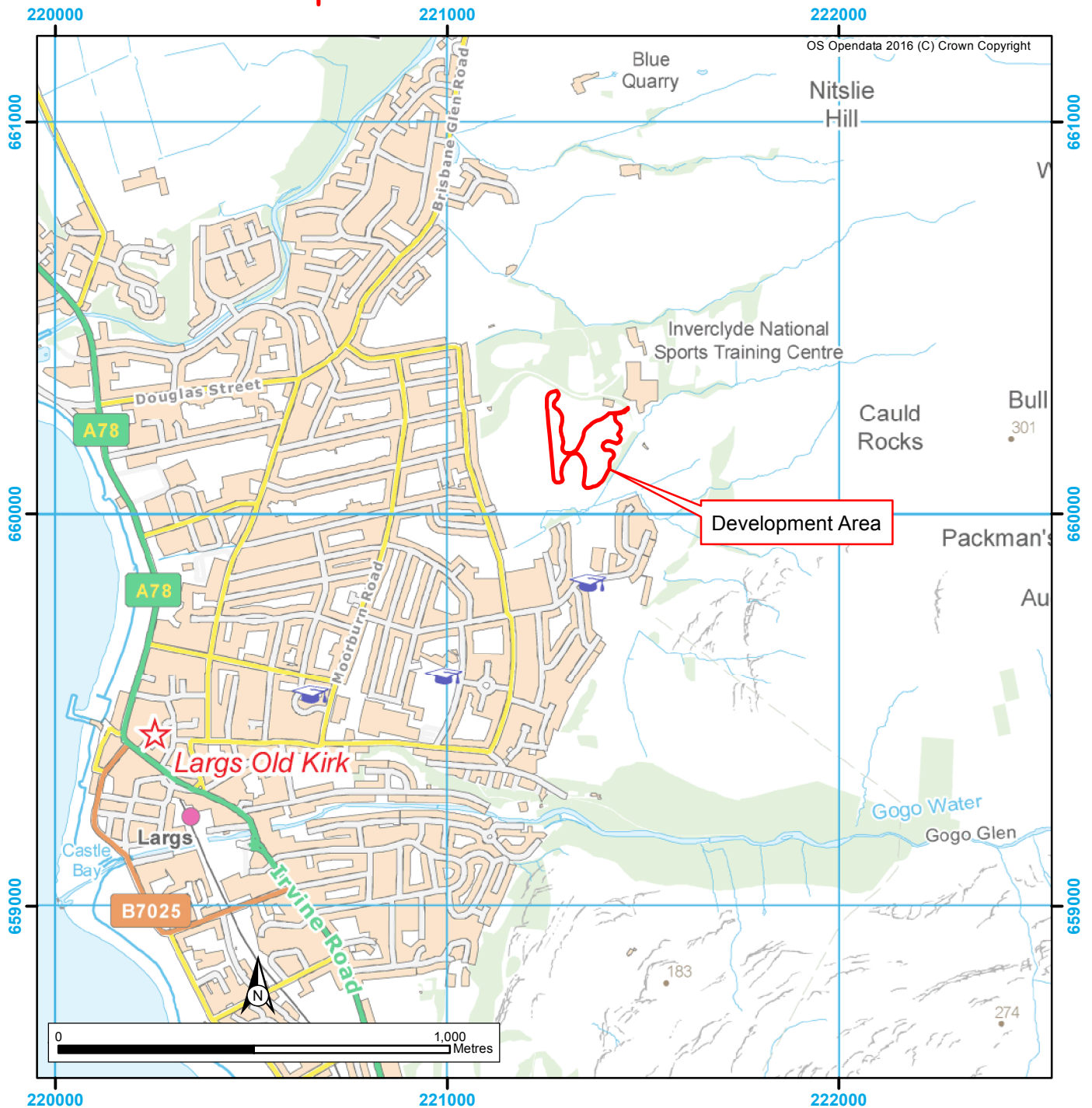
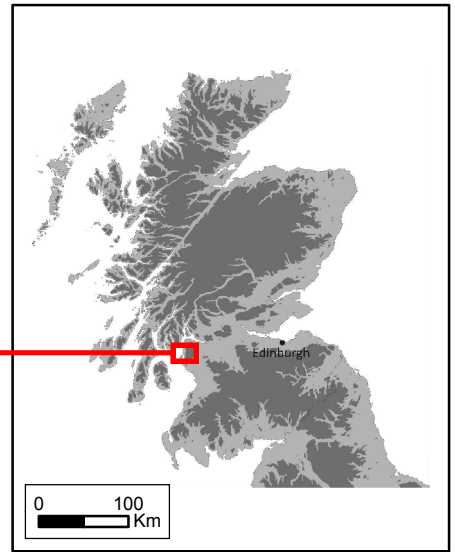
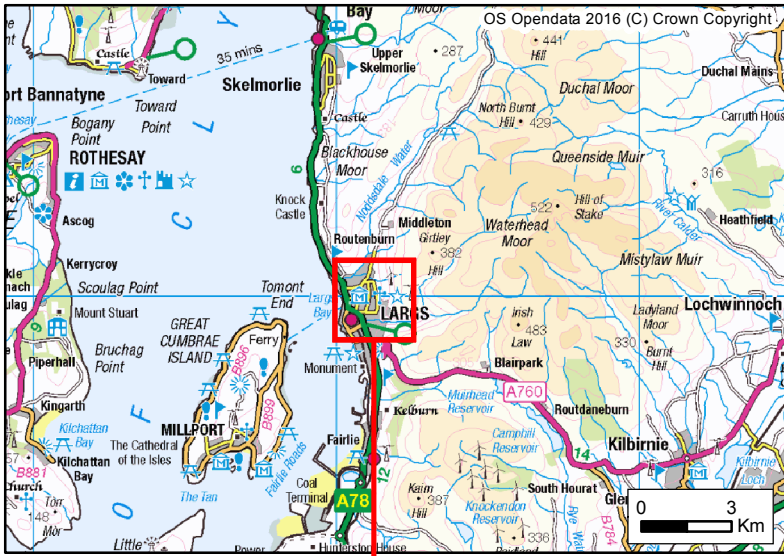


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

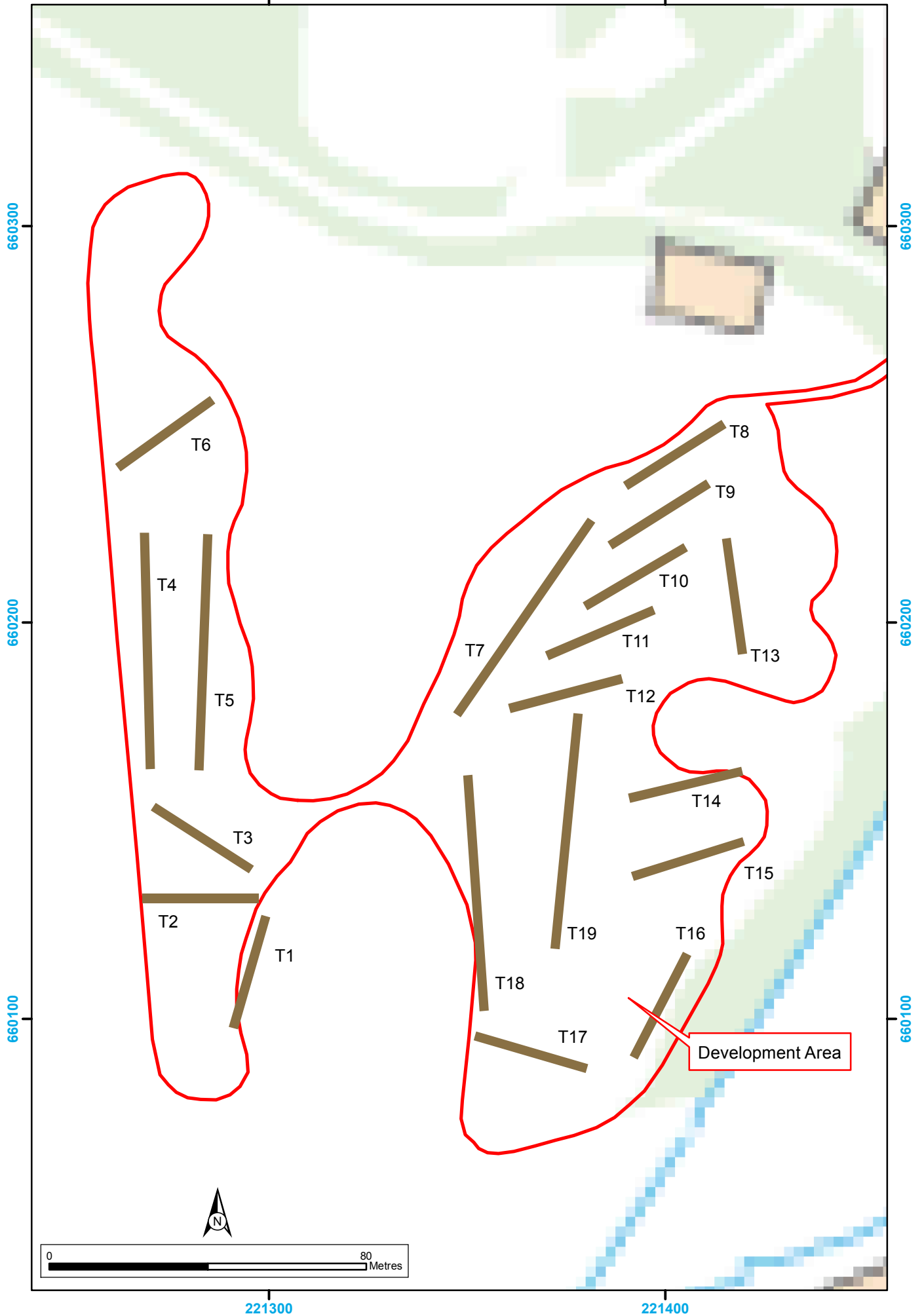


Figure 2: Trench location plan

**National Sports Centre, Largs,  
North Ayrshire:  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Data Structure Report  
Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

### Trench 1

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m                                   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>                             |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE                                      |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.38 m |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | None  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange sandy clay and large stone inclusions  |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

### Trench 2

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | W to E  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.4 m  |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Modern plastic duct drain at 0 m to 3.2 m aligned WNW to ESE; Rubble drain at 9 m to 11.5 m aligned NE-SW                               |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Mixed reddish brown clay and orange gravels until 11 m then greyish brown clay until 20 m then mixed orange gravels and grey sandy clay |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

### Trench 3

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m  |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SE to NW   |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.4 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 9 m to 10.4 m aligned NE-SW; Small electric cable at 4 m to 10 m aligned E-W |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Greyish brown silty clay until 15 m then orange sandy gravel                                 |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None   |

### Trench 4

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 60 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 120 m <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | S to N  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.48 m               |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | None  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Mixed orange and grey sandy clay and large stone inclusions |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

### Trench 5

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 60 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 120 m <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | S to N  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.56 m                       |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | None  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Pink and red sandy clay until 5 m then orange sandy clay and gravle |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

### Trench 6

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Dimensions</i> | 30 m by 2 m       |
| <i>Total Area</i> | 60 m <sup>2</sup> |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE                                     |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.5 m |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | None   |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange sandy clay and gravel                 |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None   |

#### **Trench 7**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 60 m by 2 m  |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 120 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE   |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.44 m  |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drains at 16 m to 18.4 m, 39.2 m to 42 m, and 45 m to 47.2 m aligned NNW-SSE  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Bright orange and yellow clay within a reddish brown degraded stone until 25 m then greyish brown clay with small stone inclusions |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None   |

#### **Trench 8**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m                                    |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>                              |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE                                       |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.45 m  |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 2.9 m to 5.4 m aligned NNE-SSW |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Greyish brown sandy clay and gravel            |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None   |

#### **Trench 9**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.4 m                          |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 2.5 m, and 6 m aligned NW-SE                          |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Greyish brown clay until 9 m then greyish brown sandy clay and gravel |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

#### **Trench 10**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.44 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drains at 1.7 m, 9.1 m, and 12.8 m aligned NW-SE; Modern drains at 3.5 m, 10.5 m and 15.8 m aligned NW-SE; Furrow at 16.7 m to 19 m aligned NNE-SSW measuring 1.8 m wide by 0.05 m |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Grey and orange clay until 24 m greyish brown sandy clay and gravel   |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

#### **Trench 11**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m  |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE   |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.45 m  |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 2 m, 5.6 m and 23.1 m aligned NW-SE; Modern drain at 6 m to 7.3 m, and 14 m to 15 m aligned WNW-ESE; Modern drainage junction at 21.8 m aligned N-S and WNW-ESE. |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Greyish brown clay until 2.8 m then orange sandy clay  |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 12</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | WSW to ENE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.42 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 11.8 m, 22.2 m and 26.5 m aligned NW-SE; Modern drain at 4 m to 5.8 m, 11.8 m to 13.8 m, 20 m to 21.8 m, and 25.5 m aligned WNW-ESE |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Mixed grey and orange sandy clay  |
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 13</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | NW to SE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.48 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | None  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange and greyish brown sandy clay and gravel until 19 m then large orange gravels   |
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 14</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | W to E  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.41 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 5.5 m aligned N to S  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Soft grey clay until 8 m then orange and grey clay until 19 m then orange sandy clay  |
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 15</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.43 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Modern drain at 8.3 m aligned N to S  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange sandy clay   |
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 16</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SW to NE  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.38 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Ceramic tile drain at 13.7 m to 15.2 m aligned N-S  |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Pale grey clay until 3.6 m then orange sandy clay until 10 m then greyish brown sandy clay and stone  |
| Finds                        | None  |
| <b>Trench 17</b>             |   |
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 30 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 60 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | W to E  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.31 m   |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Significant Features</i> | None   |
| <i>Other Features</i>       | Modern drain at 16.9 m, and 17.9 m aligned N to S; Rubble drain at 19.1 m to 21.4 m aligned NE to SW |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>      | Orange sandy clay and gravel until 13 m then orange clay until 20 m then greyish brown sandy clay    |
| <i>Finds</i>                | None   |

#### **Trench 18**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 60 m by 2 m   |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 120 m <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | SSE to NNW  |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.33 m   |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | None  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Rubble drain at 34.1 m aligned WSW to ENE   |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange and red sandy clay and stone until 51.5 m then orange greyish brown sandy clay |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None  |

#### **Trench 19**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Dimensions</i>            | 60 m by 2 m  |
| <i>Total Area</i>            | 120 m <sup>2</sup>   |
| <i>Excavated Orientation</i> | S to N   |
| <i>Soil Make-up</i>          | Topsoil – Dark brown sandy clay loam – 0.36 m  |
| <i>Significant Features</i>  | Ditch [1901]; Ditch fill [1902]  |
| <i>Other Features</i>        | Modern drain at 18.1 m, 24.3 m, 31.15 m, 41.2 m aligned E to W; Modern drain at 46 m to 47.8 m, and 54.5 m to 55.8 m aligned NW-SE; Rubble drain at 56.8 m to 60 m aligned N to S. |
| <i>Natural Subsoil</i>       | Orange and red sandy clay and rock until 40 m then orange and greyish brown sandy clay   |
| <i>Finds</i>                 | None   |

## APPENDIX 2: Context Register

| Context No. | Area | Description and Interpretation  |
|-------------|------|---|
| 1901        | T19  | Linear cut with moderate to steep sides onto a flat base. Aligned WSW-ENE and measures 0.9 m by 0.13 m. Situated between two copse of trees that may be part of former boundary.<br><b>Post medieval field boundary ditch</b> |
| 1902        | T19  | Dark brown sandy clay with frequent coal fleck inclusions measuring 0.9 m by 0.13 m.<br><b>Fill of ditch [1901]</b>   |

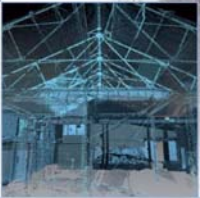
## APPENDIX 3: Photographic Register

| Frame | Description                        | From | Date   |
|-------|------------------------------------|------|--------|
| 1-10  | Panoramic views of W edge          | Var  | 8/6/16 |
| 11    | T1 Post-ex                         | NE   | 8/6/16 |
| 12    | T2 Post-ex                         | E    | 8/6/16 |
| 13    | T3 Post-ex                         | SE   | 8/6/16 |
| 14    | T4 Post-ex                         | N    | 8/6/16 |
| 15    | T5 Post-ex                         | N    | 8/6/16 |
| 16    | T6 Post-ex                         | NE   | 8/6/16 |
| 17    | T7 Post-ex                         | N    | 8/6/16 |
| 18    | T8 Post-ex                         | NE   | 8/6/16 |
| 19    | T9 Post-ex                         | NE   | 8/6/16 |
| 20    | T10 Post-ex                        | NE   | 8/6/16 |
| 21-22 | Spoil bund area backfilled         | Var  | 8/6/16 |
| 23    | T6 backfilled                      | E    | 8/6/16 |
| 24    | T7-T10 backfilled                  | W    | 8/6/16 |
| 25-27 | Views of main area                 | Var  | 8/6/16 |
| 28    | T13 Post-ex                        | SE   | 9/6/16 |
| 29    | T14 Post-ex                        | NE   | 9/6/16 |
| 30    | T15 Post-ex                        | NE   | 9/6/16 |
| 31    | T16 Post-ex                        | NE   | 9/6/16 |
| 32    | T17 Post-ex                        | NW   | 9/6/16 |
| 33    | T18 Post-ex                        | NNW  | 9/6/16 |
| 34    | T19 Post-ex                        | N    | 9/6/16 |
| 35    | ENE-facing section of ditch [1901] | ENE  | 9/6/16 |
| 36    | Line of ditch to trees (WSW)       | ENE  | 9/6/16 |
| 37    | Line of ditch to trees (ENE)       | WSW  | 9/6/16 |
| 38-48 | Panoramic views of site – post-ex  | Var  | 9/6/16 |



**APPENDIX 4: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>   | North Ayrshire Council   |
| <b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME</b>  | National Sports Centre, Largs  |
| <b>PROJECT CODE:</b>  | 23481  |
| <b>PARISH:</b>  | Largs  |
| <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>   | N/A  |
| <b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>   | N/A  |
| <b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>   | None   |
| <b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>   | NS 21343 60166   |
| <b>START DATE (this season)</b>   | 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016  |
| <b>END DATE (this season)</b>   | 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2016  |
| <b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>   | None   |
| <b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b><br>(May include information from other fields) | <p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology prior to the re-landscaping of a driving range and golf course at the National Sports Centre, Largs, North Ayrshire. An 8% evaluation was required of the available 1.8 ha site.</p> <p>A total of 19 evaluation trenches were excavated, covering 720 linear metres. Only one archaeological feature was revealed which relates to a post-medieval field system. No other significant archaeological features were revealed and no further works are recommended.</p> |
| <b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>  | None   |
| <b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>   | None   |
| <b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>   | Sportscotland  |
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| <b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>   | admin@aocarchaeology.com   |
| <b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>  | Archive to be deposited in NMRS  |



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