

Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

AOC 23613
10th November 2016



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: South Ayrshire Council
County buildings
Wellington Square
Ayr
KA7 1DR

National Grid Reference (NGR): NS 35275 21025

AOC Project No: 23613

OASIS No: 268255

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

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Contents

	Page
List of Illustrations	2
List of Plates	2
List of Appendices	2
ABSTRACT	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Background	4
1.2 Site Location	4
1.3 Historical Background	4
2 OBJECTIVES	4
3 METHODOLOGY	4
4 RESULTS	5
5 DISCUSSION	7
6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS	7
7 REFERENCES	7
APPENDIX 1: EVALUATION TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS	9
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTERS	11
APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTERS	12
APPENDIX 4: DRAWING REGISTER	12
APPENDIX 5: FINDS REGISTER	12
APPENDIX 6: SAMPLES REGISTER	13
APPENDIX 7: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT	14

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Trench location plan showing feature locations

Figure 3: Plans and sections of features

List of Plates

Plate 1: General view of pit [101]

Plate 2: General view of ditch [207]

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Evaluation Trench Descriptions

Appendix 2: Context Register

Appendix 3: Photographic Register

Appendix 4: Drawing Register

Appendix 5: Finds Register

Appendix 6: Samples Register

Appendix 7: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report

ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on land due to be used for the extension of Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire.

The evaluation revealed several small pits and large ditches in the SE corner of the development area that most likely relate to prehistoric settlement activity. All of the pit features contained abundant charcoal inclusions and a single worked flint flake was found within one. No formal structures were revealed within the trenches but the large ditch features may indicate at least one enclosure containing the features.

It is recommended that further archaeological work be conducted around the features found. The exact details of this work will be subject to the approval of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, who advise South Ayrshire Council on archaeological matters.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was required by South Ayrshire Council on land due to be used for the extension of Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire. The scope of the works was determined by South Ayrshire Council as 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 *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning And Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011).

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The cemetery extension site is located to the immediate east of the current cemetery and comprises a rectangular grass field (NGR: NS 35275 21025; Figure 1). The site is bounded by the back gardens of houses to the east and south, with Holmston Road to the north.

1.3 Historical Background

1.3.1 There are no recorded archaeological sites within the development area or in the immediate vicinity other than post medieval or modern structures. Archaeological work carried out on the opposite bank of the river Ayr to the north of the site uncovered four groups of prehistoric archaeological features (Arabaolaza 2015). These groups consisted of pits and/or post holes, with two groups being possible structures due to the oval arrangements of the features. Pottery fragments and lithics were recovered from the majority of the features. Dating evidence from the groups suggest the area could have been used from the early Neolithic (4300 to 4800 BC) to the Bronze Age (2200 to 800 BC).

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 through evaluation trenching;
- 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 consisted of 10 trenches of varying length and alignment, equating to 1010 m² of linear trench (Figure 2). The work was conducted utilising a 13 tonne tracked excavator equipped with a bladed ditching bucket, and operating under the constant supervision of an experienced field archaeologist. Each trench was recorded using AOC *pro forma* trench record sheets and any potential features investigated further to assess their character and date.

4 RESULTS

4.1 All archaeological works were conducted on the 3rd and 4th November 2016. Weather conditions were generally fair throughout the course of the work conducted meaning that archaeological visibility was good. The various data gathered from the evaluation are presented as a series of appendices:

- Appendix 1: Evaluation trench descriptions
- Appendix 2: Context Register;
- Appendix 3: Photographic Register;
- Appendix 4: Drawing Register
- Appendix 5: Samples Register
- Appendix 6: '*Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*' entry

4.2 The topsoil throughout the development area consisted of a dark greyish brown sand and clay loam which overlay a predominantly orange sand and gravel subsoil in the southern half of the area and a yellow clay in the northern half. Along the southern edge of the site a modern made ground of compact grey clay mixed with occasional modern rubbish, brick, stone and gravel was present. Furthermore, in an area covering southern edge and up to 40 m from it, a former plough soil survived underneath the topsoil, measuring up to 0.2 m thick in places.

4.3 Where this former soil horizon survived a number of probable prehistoric features were encountered, confined to Trench 1-3 in the south-eastern corner of the site (Figure 2 & 3). Trench 1 revealed two small pits [101] and [103] that both contained abundant amounts of charcoal. Excavation of the kidney shaped pit [101] also revealed a worked flint flake and contained a mixed deposit including a heat affected sand (Plate 1).

4.4 Trench 2 revealed the terminal end of a thin linear [201] measuring 0.4 m wide by 0.09 m deep containing abundant charcoal deposits within the fill [202]. The terminal of a much wider ditch [203], as well as two further ditches [205] and [207] of similar width, were also revealed further north. All three ditches measured around 0.9 to 1 m wide, filled with a similar pale brown silty sand with occasional charcoal deposits. Ditch [207] was 0.39 m deep, and had wide 'V' shaped sides and base (Plate 2). No artefacts were found within any of the features in this trench.

4.5 Trench 3 revealed the remains of four pits [301], [303], [305], and [307] that were between 0.25 m diameter and 0.5 m diameter. They all contained similar deposits of a mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent charcoal inclusions. The excavated pit [301] had very steep sides and a relatively flat base, indicating that it may have been a post hole. The other pits may have had a similar function but their shape in plan within the trench does not indicate they formed a single structure.

4.6 Elsewhere throughout the evaluation area there were a number of E-W furrows and N-S aligned ceramic tile drains. These post medieval agricultural features were mainly present in the southern half of the development area, most likely due to the clay subsoil in this area.



Plate 1 - General view of pit [101]



Plate 2 - General view of ditch [207]

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The features found by the evaluation are most likely representative of prehistoric settlement features. The pits found containing hearth waste and discarded flint are typical of features found during the Neolithic and Bronze Age in Scotland. Other sites containing pit features like this have been found at Maybole in South Ayrshire (Becket and MacGregor 2010), Greenan in Ayr (Engl 2015) and at the Ayr Academy site (Arabaolaza 2015).
- 5.2 The ditches found may represent more than one phase of use, with ditch [205] and [207] possibly intercutting out with the trench to the east.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation has been successful in determining the presence of significant archaeology within the development area. As such further archaeological works will be required that would initially take the form of a monitored topsoil strip around the features found and the excavation of any features revealed within the stripped area. Post excavation analysis of any finds and samples taken from the excavations would then be required along with the creation of a publication to detail the findings.
- 6.2 This recommendation will require the approval of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service who advise South Ayrshire Council on archaeological matters.

7 REFERENCES

AOC 2016 *Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished client report

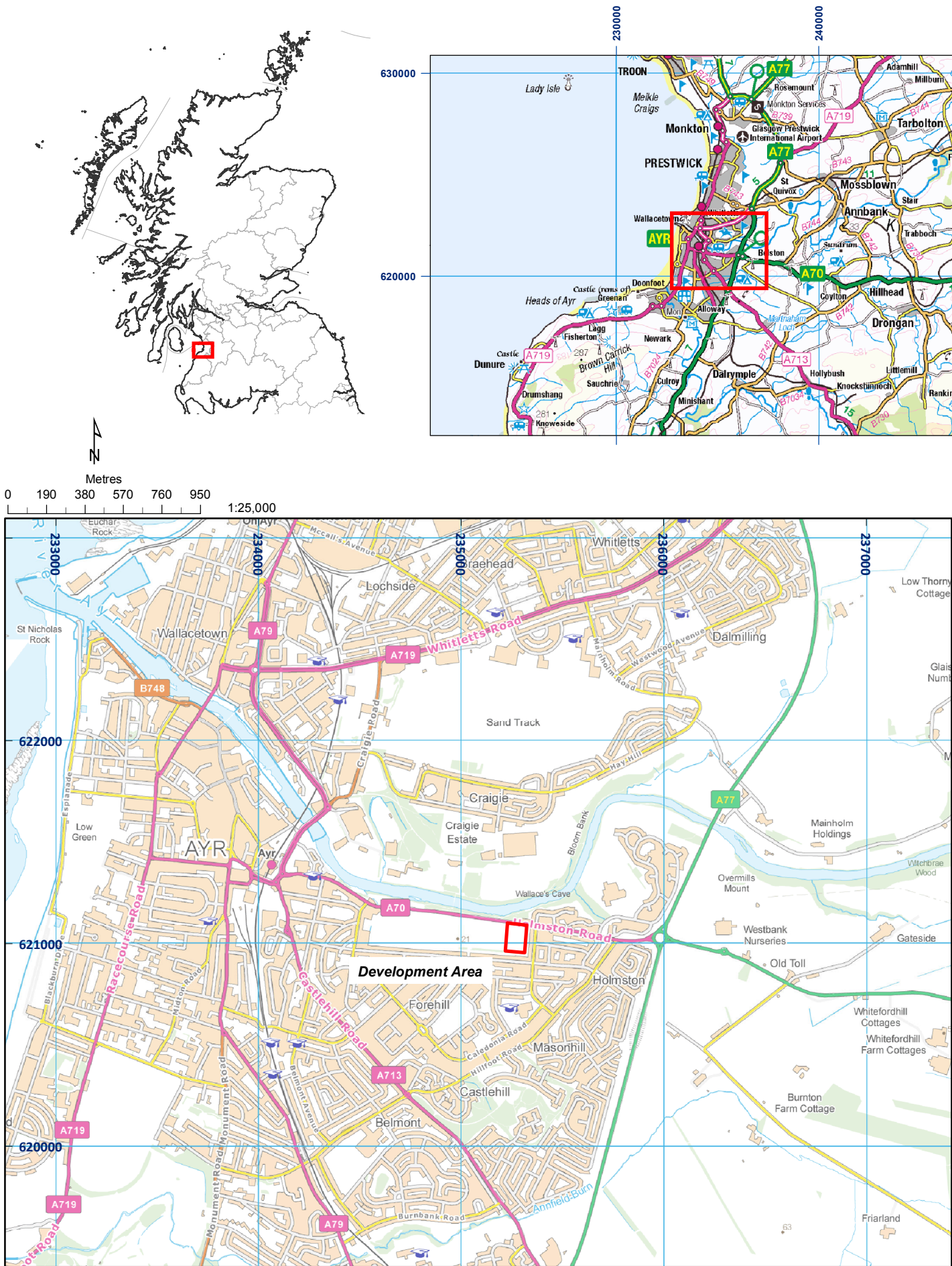
Arabaolaza, I 2015 ***Title unknown*** GUARD Archaeology report

Becket, A & MacGregor, G 2012 Pit practices in Western Scotland in the 4th millennium BC. In A. Anderson-Whymark & J. Thomas (eds) *Regional Perspectives on Neolithic Pit Deposition: Beyond the Mundane* Oxford: Oxbow Books 51-62

Engl, R 2015 *Input title* AOC Client report

Scottish Government 2014 Scottish Planning Policy.

Scottish Government 2010 PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology.



01/23613/DSR/01/01

Figure 1: Site location plan



Figure 2: Trench location plan showing features

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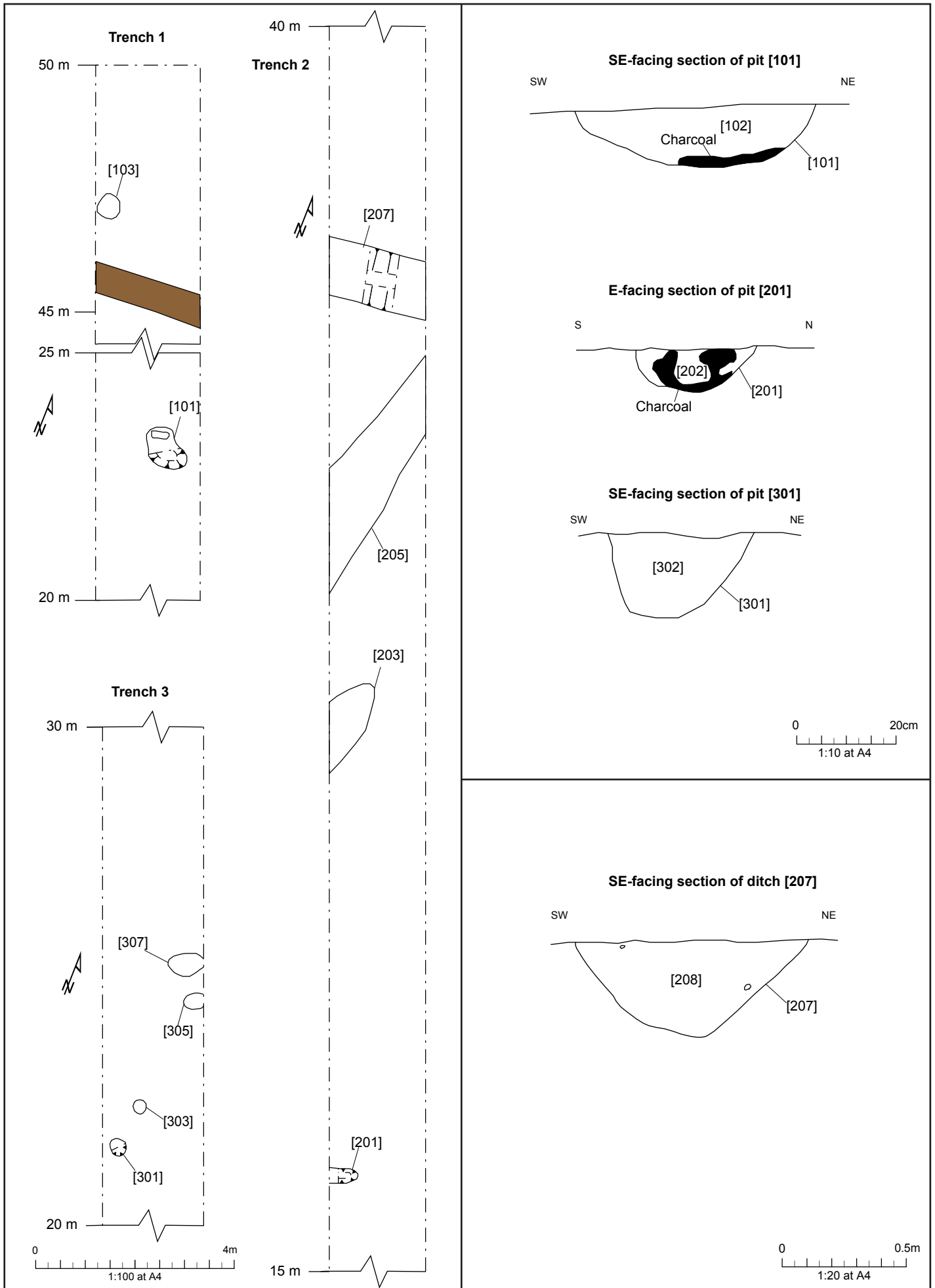


Figure 3 - Plans and sections of features

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**Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire:
Archaeological Evaluation
Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: EVALUATION TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSE to NNW
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.41 m Plough soil – Mid brown sandy loam – 0.21 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand and gravel until 42 m then orange gravel
<i>Significant Features</i>	Pit [101]/[102] at 23 m Pit [103]/[104] at 47.1 m
<i>Other Features</i>	Furrow at 40.4 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSE to NNW
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.41 m Plough soil – Mid brown sandy loam – 0.4 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand and gravel
<i>Significant Features</i>	Linear cut [201]/[202] at 17 m Ditch terminal [203]/[204] at 26 m Ditch [205]/[206] at 30 m Ditch [207]/[208] at 35 m
<i>Other Features</i>	Furrow at 41 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSE to NNW
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Made ground (from 0 m to 20 m) – dark grey clay with brick, modern rubbish and gravel inclusions – 0.25 m Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.3 m Plough soil – Mid brown sandy loam – 0.2 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange and grey clayey sand until 11 m then orange gravel and sand
<i>Significant Features</i>	Pit [301]/[302] at 21.5 m Pit [303]/[304] at 22.3 m Pit [305]/[306] at 24.5 m Pit [307]/[308] at 25.3 m
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic field drain at 4.5 m aligned N-S Furrows at 35.4 m and 41.2 m aligned NE-SW
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 4

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSE to NNW
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Made ground (from 0 m to 20 m) - dark grey clay with brick, modern rubbish and gravel inclusions – 0.4 m Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.3 m Plough soil – Mid brown sandy loam – 0.2 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sandy clay until 10 m then orange sand and gravel
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drain at 2 m and 6 m aligned E-W; Ceramic tile drain at 6 m to 19 m aligned N-S Furrows at 38 m and 43 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire

Trench 5

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSW to NNE
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.43 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange clayey sand until 7 m then orange and yellow sandy clay until 21 m the yellow clay
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drains at 3 m to 8 m; 12 m to 16.5 m; 22 m to 25 m; 33 m to 37.5 m and 42 m to 46.5 m, all aligned N-S
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 6

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSW to NNE
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.4 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange clayey sand and gravel until 13 m then yellow clay
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drains at 0 m to 3.5 m; 7.5 m to 11.5 m; 19.5 m to 24 m; 29 m to 34 m and 39.5 m to 43.5 m all aligned N-S. Furrows at 17.2 m to 20 m; 30 m to 33 m and 39.5 m to 42 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 7

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSW to NNE
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.39 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand until 6 m then yellow clay
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drains at 9 m to 13.7 m; 22 m to 26 m; 27 m to 30.7 m; 31.7 m to 36.5 m and 40 m to 44 m, all aligned N-S Furrows at 18 m to 22 m and 34 m to 36 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 8

<i>Dimensions</i>	50 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	100 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	SSW to NNE
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.42 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand until 10.5 m then yellowish grey clay until 14.9 m then yellow clay
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drains at 4 m to 5.4 m; 3.5 m to 7.3 m; 21.5 m to 26 m; 29 m to 32.5 m; 39.5 m to 43 m and 42 m to 45.5 m, all aligned N-S Furrows at 18.2 m to 21.7 m; 35 m to 37 m and 44 m to 47.2 m aligned E-W
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 9

<i>Dimensions</i>	75 m by 2 m
<i>Excavated Area</i>	150 m ²
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	E to W
<i>Soil make-up</i>	Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.36 m
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Orange sand until 42 m then brown and orange gravel
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Ceramic tile drains at 8 m, 16.2 m, 23 m, 30 m, 38.1 m, 43 m, 53.2 m, and 60 m aligned N-S
<i>Finds</i>	None

Trench 10

<i>Dimensions</i>	30 m by 2 m
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Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire

<p>Excavated Area</p> <p>Excavated Orientation</p> <p>Soil make-up</p> <p>Natural Subsoil</p> <p>Significant Features</p> <p>Other Features</p> <p>Finds</p>	<p>60 m²</p> <p>SSE to NNW</p> <p>Made ground (from 0 m to 12 m) - dark grey clay with brick, modern rubbish and gravel inclusions – 0.25 m</p> <p>Topsoil – Grey sandy loam – 0.46 m</p> <p>Orange clayey sand</p> <p>None</p> <p>Ceramic tile drain at 1.2 m aligned E-W</p> <p>Furrow at 26.4 m aligned E-W</p> <p>None</p>
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APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTERS

Context No.	Area	Description and Interpretation
101	T1	Kidney shaped pit with steep NE side and moderate SW side onto a concave base measuring 0.7 m by 0.47 m by 0.2 m. Prehistoric pit
102	T1	Mixture of red/orange heat affected sand with dark brown silty sand and abundant charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [101]
103	T1	Circular cut measuring 0.4 m in diameter. Probable prehistoric pit
104	T1	Dark brown silty sand with abundant charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [103]
201	T2	Terminal end of linear cut with steep sides onto a concave base. Aligned E-W and measures 0.7 m by 0.4 m by 0.09 m. Probable prehistoric ring groove
202	T2	Dark brown silty sand with abundant charcoal inclusions. Fill of linear [201]
203	T2	Terminal end of linear aligned NE-SW, with terminal to NE end. Measures 0.9 m wide. Probable prehistoric ditch
204	T2	Mid brown silty sand with rare charcoal inclusions. Fill of ditch [203]
205	T2	Linear cut aligned NE-SW measuring 0.9 m wide and possibly intercutting ditch [207]. Probable prehistoric ditch
206	T2	Mid brown silty sand with rare charcoal inclusions. Fill of ditch [205]
207	T2	Linear cut with steep sides onto a concave base (wide 'V' shape). Aligned E-W and measures 0.94 m by 0.39 m. Probable prehistoric ditch
208	T2	Mid brown silty sand with rare charcoal inclusions. Fill of ditch [207]
301	T3	Circular cut with steep sides onto a flat base measuring 0.29 m diameter and 0.17 m deep. Probable prehistoric pit/post hole
302	T3	Mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [301]
303	T3	Circular cut measuring 0.25 m diameter. Probable prehistoric pit/post hole
304	T3	Mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [303]
305	T3	Sub-circular cut measuring 0.3 m diameter. Probable prehistoric pit/post hole
306	T3	Mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [305]
307	T3	Oval shaped cut aligned ENE-WSW measuring 0.6 m by 0.4 m. Probable prehistoric pit/post hole
308	T3	Mid greyish brown silty sand with occasional charcoal inclusions. Fill of pit [307]

APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTERS

Frame	Description	From	Date
1-5	Views of evaluation area (pre-ex)	Var	3/11/16
6	Post-ex of T1	NNW	3/11/16
7	Post-ex of T2	NNW	3/11/16
8	ENE-facing section at start of T3	SE	3/11/16
9	Post-ex of T3	NNW	3/11/16
10	Post-ex of T4	NNW	3/11/16
11	Post-ex of T5	NNE	3/11/16
12	SE-facing section of pit [101]	SE	3/11/16
13-14	General views of pit [101]	Var	3/11/16
15	Post-ex of T6	SSW	3/11/16
16	Post-ex of T7	SSW	3/11/16
17	Furrow in T1	E	3/11/16
18-19	Pit [103] in T1	E/N	3/11/16
20	E-facing section of linear [201]	E	3/11/16
21-22	General view of linear [201]	Var	3/11/16
23	Post-ex of T8	NNE	3/11/16
24-25	General views of ditch terminus [203]	Var	3/11/16
26	General view of ditch [205]	SW	3/11/16
27	General view of ditch [207]	E	3/11/16
28	E-facing section of ditch [207]	E	3/11/16
29	SE-facing section of pit [301]	SE	3/11/16
30	General view of [301] and [303]	S	3/11/16
31	General view of [305] and [307]	NW	3/11/16
32	Post-ex of T9	W	4/11/16
33	Post-ex of T10	SSW	4/11/16
34-38	General views of site with trenches backfilled	Var	4/11/16

APPENDIX 4: DRAWING REGISTER

Drawing No.	Details	Scale
1	Plan of Trench 1	1:100
2	Plan of Trench 2	1:100
3	Plan of Trench 3	1:100
4	Plan of Trench 4	1:100
5	SE-facing section of pit [101]	1:10
6	E-facing section of linear [201]	1:10
7	E-facing section of ditch [207]	1:10
8	SE-facing section of pit [301]	1:10

APPENDIX 5: FINDS REGISTER

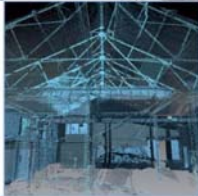
Finds No.	Context No.	Description
1	102	Worked flint flake

APPENDIX 6: SAMPLES REGISTER

Context No.	Quantity (litres)
102	10
302	10

APPENDIX 7: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	South Ayrshire Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Ayr Cemetery
PROJECT CODE:	23613
PARISH:	Ayr
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Kevin Paton
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NS 35275 21025
START DATE (this season)	3 rd November 2016
END DATE (this season)	4 th November 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on land due to be used for the extension of Ayr Cemetery, South Ayrshire.</p> <p>The evaluation revealed several small pits and large ditches in the SE corner of the development area that most likely relate to prehistoric settlement activity. All of the pit features contained abundant charcoal inclusions and a single worked flint flake was found within one. No formal structures were revealed within the trenches but the large ditches may indicate at least one enclosure containing the features.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Yes
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	South Ayrshire Council
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group Edgefield Road Industrial Estate Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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