

HRCL13/001



M8 ENABLING WORKS, COATBRIDGE

Archaeological Monitoring

for Forkers Ltd

Ref: M8 M73 M74 Motorway Improvements

2013

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Parish:	Old Monklands
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Archive will be deposited with: RCAHMS

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M8 ENABLING WORKS COATBRIDGE

Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology Ltd carried out a watching brief on enabling works undertaken in advance of road improvements along the M8 motorway between Baillieston Interchange and Shawhead Junction close to Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire. The watching brief was undertaken in order to identify and record any archaeological remains that might be exposed by the enabling works at Shawhead Junction. The work was commissioned by Forkers Ltd, the Contractor, and a specification was agreed with Historic Scotland. The road improvements are being funded by Transport Scotland.

The ground works at the A8/A725 Shawhead Junction, Coatbridge comprised topsoil stripping of discrete areas located to the south-east of the junction to provide compound areas and associated access tracks. The ground works exposed the clay geological subsoil in many areas along with evidence of 19th/20th century disturbance associated with the coal mining industry that was prevalent in this area at the time. No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were uncovered during the works.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Forkers Ltd, on behalf of Transport Scotland, to undertake a programme of archaeological works in connection with enabling works associated with major road improvements along the M8 at Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire.

The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd and approved by Historic Scotland on behalf of Transport Scotland.

A Desk Based assessment and archaeological walkover survey of the proposed development corridor had previously been undertaken in 2007 to inform the Cultural Heritage Chapter of the Environmental Statement (Mouchel/Fairhurst 2007).

The Environmental Statement identified no known archaeological sites within the development area. Although twenty known sites were identified within the vicinity of the development, indicating some

potential within the development area for unknown sites to be present.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located to the south-east of the A8/A725 Shawhead Junction, Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire (NGR: NS 72498 62596; [Illus 1](#)). It was occupied by enclosed pasture fields bounded by the A8 to the north and the A725 spur road to the west. To the southeast a hedge formed the field boundary beyond which runs the North Calder Water. A large gas facility and pipeline lie within the development area ([Illus 2](#), [photo 22](#)). The site lies c 100m OD and is underlain by superficial deposits of Devensian Till formed during the Quaternary period, covering sedimentary layers of Scottish middle coal formation dating to the carboniferous period (British Geological Survey).

The desk-based assessment identified that the earliest known site in the environs was a group of four prehistoric cists (NMRS: NS76SW 1) discovered in 1832 and located approximately 1km to the west of the site, although little is known of

these features. Their location is depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1864).

The Statistical Accounts of 1799 described the area around Coatbridge as an 'immense garden', indicating that the area was heavily farmed at the time. By the beginning of the 19th century the area was transformed with the introduction of the iron and coal industries. By 1885 Coatbridge was known as the 'iron Burgh' (www.monkland.co.uk).

The Rosehall Colliery (NMRS NS76SW 149) and the Langloan Iron Works were two of the earlier industries set up in the area, both owned by Messrs Addie and Millar (*ibid*). By 1837 the Rosehall branch railway was constructed joining the private lines of the Rosehall Coalfield and Langloan Iron Works lines. These are depicted on the early Ordnance Survey maps (1864, 1898 National Map Library of Scotland). The partial remains of one of these lines is still visible as a sunken embankment to the east side of the development area (*Illus 3*). The Rosehall Colliery continued to produce coal until its closure in 1945. The second half of the 20th century saw the construction of the motorway and the expansion of Coatbridge itself.

3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In line with the WSI the main objectives of archaeological works were:

- to mitigate any adverse impacts on sub-surface remains of archaeological interest

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Site works

The work was undertaken to the specification of the WSI. The improvement works being monitored comprised ground works within the currently grassed areas surrounding Shawhead Junction. All ground works that had the potential to disturb significant sub-surface archaeological remains were monitored by an archaeologist. The monitoring strategy was put in place to provide information on any previously unrecorded features of archaeological interest in a relatively unobtrusive manner.

The ground works involved the removed of topsoil in advance of upgrading works to the A8 to motorway.

4.2 Recording

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological watching briefs. All recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards. Digital photographs were taken. A full list of the photographic record can be found in Appendix 1.

4.3 Reporting and Archives

The results of the works are presented below. A summary report has been prepared for submission to *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 2) and the OASIS database (headland1-149695).

The complete project archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) within six months of the completion of the project. The records (paper and digital) will be archived according to best practice guidelines set out by the Archaeological Archiving Forum (July 2007).

5 RESULTS

The monitoring works were undertaken intermittently in variable weather conditions between Tuesday 9th April and Friday 3rd May 2013. All topsoil removal was undertaken using a tracked excavator with a flat-bladed ditching bucket. Once the turf layer had been removed the underlying subsoil was removed in shallow spits until the geological subsoil was reached or the maximum depth of excavation had been achieved.

A total of four large areas were stripped of topsoil as part of the enabling works. This included two large compound areas (Compound 1 and 2), a large area of hard standing and a wide track leading to the proposed new gas compound area. In addition to this a series of 4m wide access tracks leading to each of these areas was also monitored.

A short track leading from the main A725 road led to Compound 1 (*Illus 4*) located south of the existing gas facility. This measured approximately 30m². A further length of track continued round the eastern perimeter of the gas facility leading to Compound 2 that measured approximately 40m x 30m (*Illus 5*). A 4m wide track led from the north-west corner of Compound 2 north leading to an area of hard standing 55m x 20m in size located to the north-west corner of the area (*Illus 6*). The final area comprised a 10m wide track 70m long leading to the proposed new gas facility area.

The result of the topsoil strip across all these areas was relatively uniform. This comprised of between 0.3m and 0.4m of dark loam topsoil overlying the

geological subsoil of yellow clay. The topsoil included frequent charcoal flecks and occasional 19th/20th century glazed pottery fragments (not collected) indicating evidence of agricultural use during this period. All the areas displayed patches shale and coal dust embedded into the geological subsoil. In particular, the 10m wide track leading to the proposed new gas facility displayed significant spreads of coal dust along with areas of brick fragments (Illus 7). These spreads of material probably relate to the early rail tracks associated with Rosehall Colliery that crossed this area of land along with evidence of the general coal mining activity in the area. These layers of coal dust were also in evidence in the trench sections where the existing gas pipe was being exposed (Illus 8) showing up to 0.2m of coal unevenly impressed into the clay subsoil.

5.1 Discussion

It was clear from the results that much of this area had been affected by the heavy industrial activity in the area. It was unclear if this activity had reduced the chances of identifying any earlier activity on the site although the geological subsoil was revealed in enough places to suggest that no pre-industrial archaeology existed in this area.

6 REFERENCES

6.1 Bibliographic sources

Archaeological Archives Forum Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (published by the IfA 2007).

IfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs (revised October 2008).

Mouchel/Fairhurst 2007 M8 Baillieston to Newhouse; Stage 3 Report: Part 1 Environmental Statement.

6.2 Cartographic sources

1864 Lanark Sheet VIII.13 (Old Monkland) (Ordnance Survey 1st ed)

1898 Lanarkshire Sheet 007.16 (Ordnance Survey)

1898 Lanarkshire Sheet 008.13 (Ordnance Survey)

6.3 Other sources

Internet

Online databases

British Geological Survey
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 07/05/2013)

<http://www.monklands.co.uk/coatbridge> (accessed 03/05/2013)

National Map Library of Scotland <http://maps.nls.uk/> (accessed 06/05/2013)

SPP: Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/03132605/0>)

Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-99

<http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/link/1791-99/Lanark/Old%20or%20West%20Monkland/>

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Photographic register

Frame no.	Direction	Description
001		Film 1 ID shot
002	E	Working shot of access road strip
003	W	General view of access road
004	NE	Working shot showing re-deposited coal/shale below topsoil
005	NE	S facing section of gas pipe trench showing layers of coal dust
006	SW	View of compound 1 topsoil strip
007	W	View of compound 1 topsoil strip
008	W	View of compound 1 topsoil strip
009	SW	View of compound 1 topsoil strip
010	SW	View of compound 1 topsoil strip
012	NE	View of main track topsoil strip
013	SW	View of topsoil strip at site entrance
015	NE	Main track topsoil strip
016	E	Detail of the railway embankment
018	W	Topsoil strip of the access track
020	E	General view of the railway embankment
021	NE	View of main track area to be stripped
022	SW	view of existing gas compound
023	W	Stripping of compound 2
024	W	Stripping of compound 2

025	SW	Compound 2 after topsoil strip
026	N	View of track to N of compound 2
027	N	View of track to N of compound 2
029	E	View of topsoil stripping in the NW corner of site
030	NW	Location of works to NW corner
031	W	View of area strip in NW corner
032	NW	View of area strip in NW corner
033	N	View of area strip in NW corner
035	N	Initial topsoil strip of main track
036	NE	pre excavation shot of main track
037	SW	View of works to the W side of the junction
038	SW	View of works to the W side of the junction
039	SW	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
041	N	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
042	N	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
043	SW	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
044	W	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
045	S	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground
047	N	Main track topsoil strip showing disturbed ground

7.2 Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland entry

Please delete this section if you are not working in Scotland or if for other reasons not applicable.

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	North Lanarkshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	M8 Enabling Works, Coatbridge
PROJECT CODE:	HRCL13-001
PARISH:	Old Monkton
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Don Wilson
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 72498 62596
START DATE (this season)	09/04/2013
END DATE (this season)	03/05/2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>(NARRATIVE) Headland Archaeology Ltd undertook a watching brief on enabling works ahead of road improvements along the M8 motorway between Baillieston Interchange and Shawhead Junction close to Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in order to identify and record any archaeological remains that might be exposed by the enabling works at Shawhead Junction. The work was commissioned by Forkers Ltd on behalf of Transport Scotland, and a specification was agreed with Historic Scotland.</p> <p>The ground works at the A8/A725 Shawhead Junction, Coatbridge comprised topsoil stripping of discrete areas located to the south-east of the junction to provide compound areas and associated access tracks. The ground works exposed the clay geological subsoil in many areas along with evidence of 19th/20th century disturbance associated with the coal mining industry that was prevalent in this area at the time. No features or artefacts of archaeological significance were uncovered during the works.</p>

PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: None

CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:

SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: Forkers Ltd

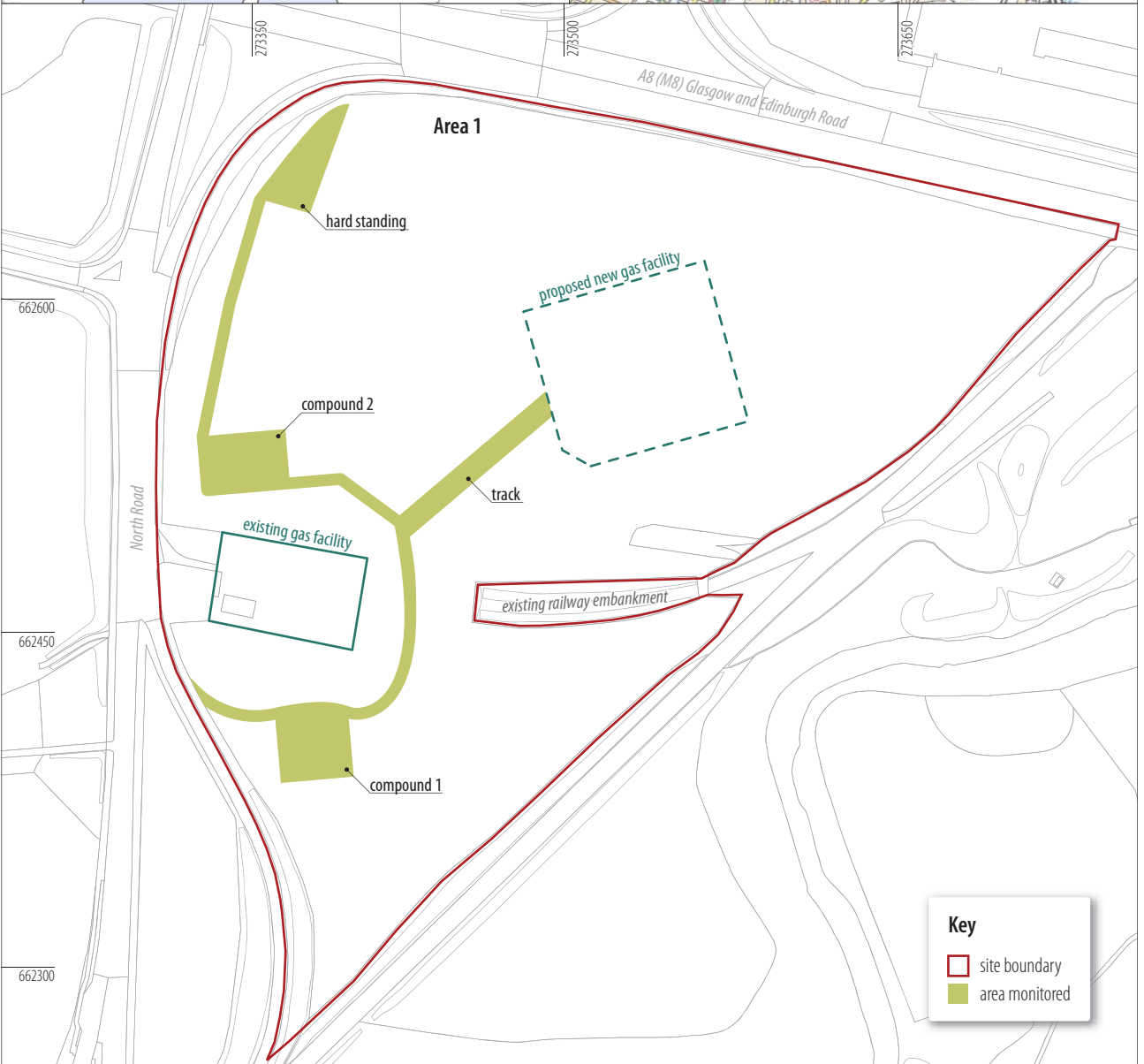
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: Headland Archaeology, 13 Jane Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5HE

EMAIL ADDRESS: enquiries@headlandarchaeology.com

ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited) RCAHMS



Hagmill Rd
Coatbridge
North Lanarkshire



Key

- site boundary
- area monitored

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Illus 1
Site location



Illus 2

View of the existing gas facility



Illus 3

General view of the existing railway embankment, facing E



Illus 4

View of the topsoil stripped compound 1 area, facing E



Illus 5

General view of compound 2 area, facing SW



Illus 6

View of the N end of the area of hard standing, facing N



Illus 7

View of the contaminated clay on the 10m wide track, facing NE



Illus 8

Detail of the trench section showing the layer of coal dust above the clay natural