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Client: Persimmon Homes West Scotland



Edinburgh Road, Holytown Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

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BSc Hons AIFA

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Client</i>	PERSIMMON HOMES WEST SCOTLAND
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	NS 77133 60873
<i>Address</i>	EDINBURGH ROAD, HOLYTOWN, NORTH LANARKSHIRE
<i>Parish</i>	HOLYTOWN
<i>Council</i>	NORTH LANARKSHIRE
<i>Planning Application No</i>	S/05/01567/OUT
<i>NMRS No</i>	N/A
<i>SMR No</i>	N/A
<i>HB/SAM No</i>	N/A
<i>Listing Category</i>	N/A
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<i>Specialists</i>	N/A
<i>Schedule</i>	
<i>Fieldwork</i>	01/11/2008
<i>Report</i>	01/01/2009

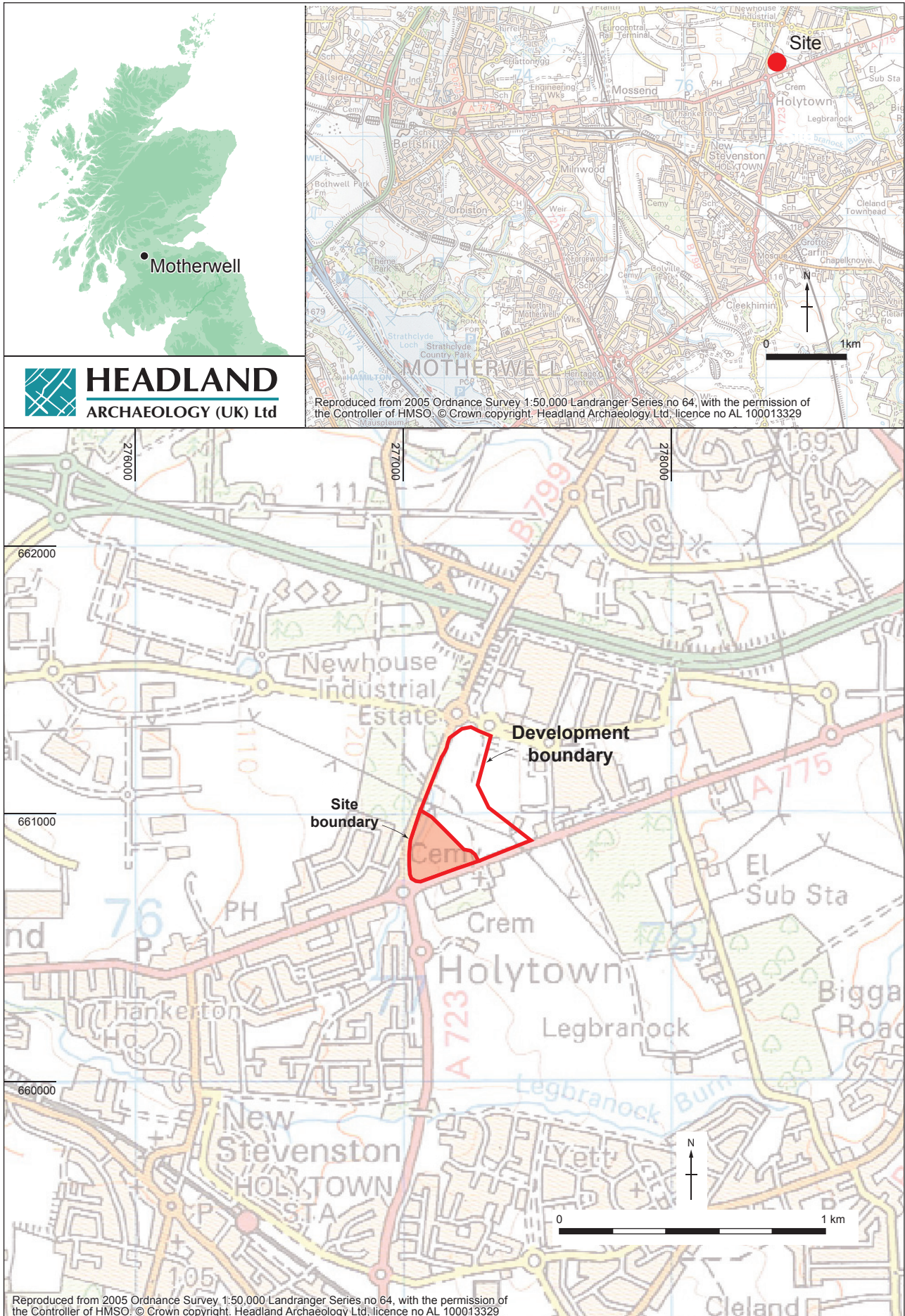
Signed off by:.....

Mark Roberts BA (Hons), Project Manager

Date:.....

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Illus 1
Site location

Edinburgh Road, Holytown

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

by Kate Bain

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Persimmon Homes West Scotland to undertake a program of archaeological evaluation of land off Edinburgh Road Holytown, North Lanarkshire, ahead of the construction of a proposed new residential development.

A rapid desk-based study was carried out for the site, revealing that the site was located at a potentially important road junction, depicted on the earliest maps of the area. This, coupled with an apparent total lack of subsequent development meant that site was deemed to have archaeological potential. A site visit identified upstanding elements of possible post-medieval cultivation practices, preserved within its boundaries in the form of areas of rig and furrow. A total of 22 trenches were excavated across the site, only 5 of which contained any features or deposits of an archaeological nature, all of which comprised the remains of rig and furrow, preserved at the southerly extremes of the site. No further archaeological features or deposits of an archaeological nature were identified during the course of works which was thought to represent a genuine absence of below ground features within the monitored areas, rather than their destruction by outside influences.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation, by rapid desk-based study and trial trenching, carried out as part of a planning condition (S/05/01567/OUT) for a residential development of land off Edinburgh Road, Holytown, North Lanarkshire. The evaluation sought to identify by trial trenching any archaeological remains on the site. This was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Headland, 2008) submitted and previously agreed with West of Scotland Archaeology Service in their role as archaeological advisors to North Lanarkshire Council.

BACKGROUND

The site was located on land at the junction of Edinburgh Road and Bo'ness Road, just to the east of Holytown, North Lanarkshire. It was characterised by gently undulating scrub grassland, bounded to the east and south by the two previously mentioned roads and to the east by a partial hedge. A burn, with a steep sided bank flanked the north western edge of the site before passing under the road to the west. The remainder of the site was bounded by areas of ongoing demolition and groundworks.

AIMS

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to ascertain whether there are any archaeological constraints that may affect the proposed development; in particular, to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the area and to ascertain their quality, nature, extent and character.

The results of a rapid desk-based study, carried out in advance of fieldwork are presented below.

RAPID DESK-BASED STUDY

The study was intended to provide an assessment of all relevant archaeological and historic records for a study area roughly 1 km around the site in order to determine the likely presence of archaeological deposits and their likelihood to survive within the site. It was designed to provide a summary assessment of the implications for the development site, not as an exhaustive historical discussion.

Methodology

The following sources were consulted:

- National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS); Pastmap
- Historic Scotland Schedule of Ancient Monuments and List of Listed Buildings;
- maps held by National Library of Scotland;
- plans held by National Archives of Scotland; and
- Other readily accessible published sources.

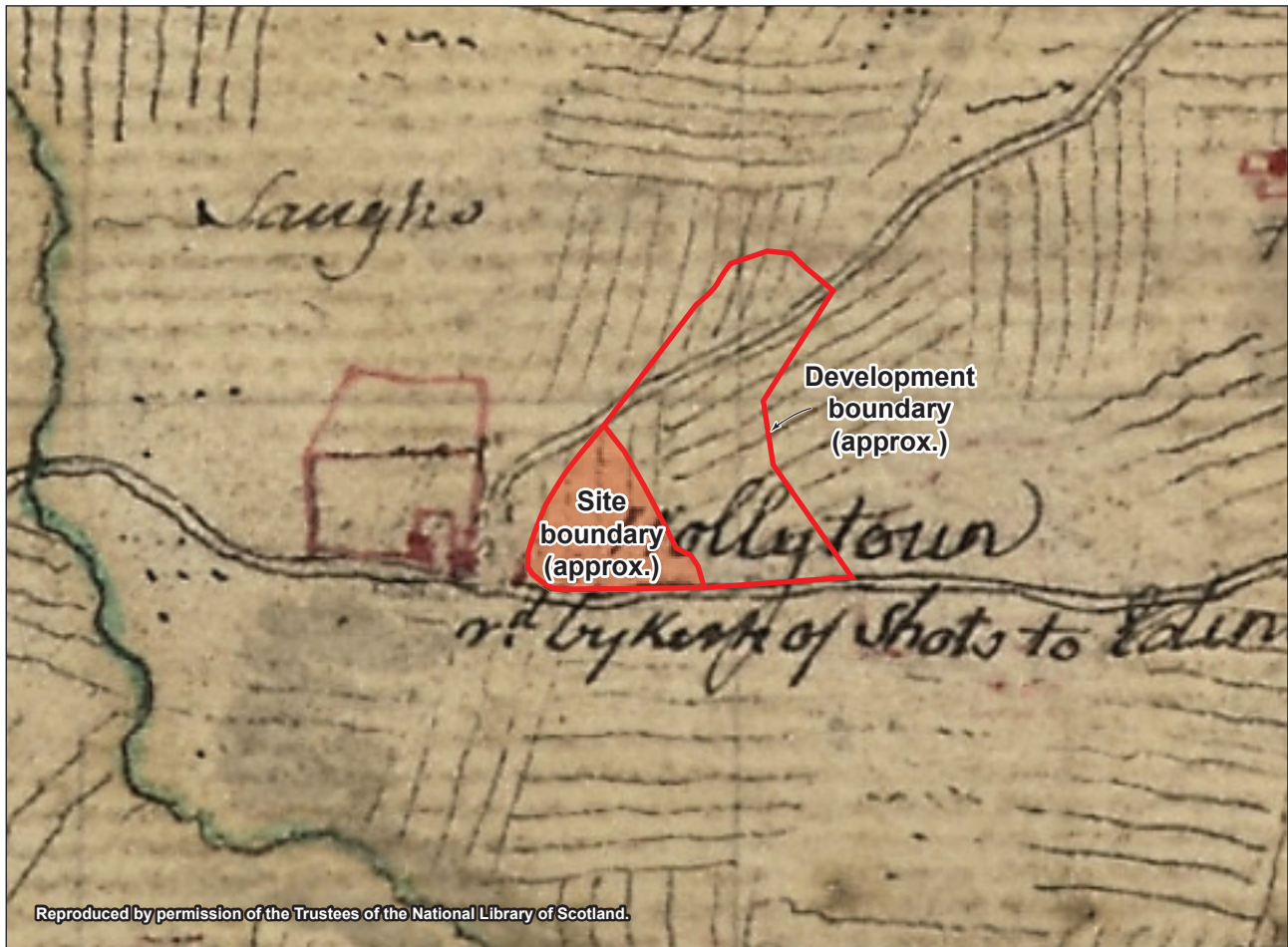
Results

Previously recorded sites

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings or any other recorded cultural heritage sites within the proposed development area.

Cartographic Evidence

Roy's Military Survey Map (Lowland) of 1755 (Illus 2) illustrates an existing settlement called Holytown but shows very little detail other than its approximate size and its position on the line of the Edinburgh Road.



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Illus 2

Detail from Roys Military Survey of Scotland (lowland) 1747-55

By the time the 1st edition Ordnance Survey of the area (Illus 3) was published in 1864 the village has assumed a defined plan, concentrated on either side of Edinburgh Road. The village had apparently good communication links in the form of the main road and a branch of the Cleland and Midcalder Railway. The surrounding landscape is scattered with evidence of mining in the form of collieries and disused coal pits all exploiting the mineral resource of the Lanarkshire coalfield.

There was, however, no evidence in the historic map resource to suggest that the site itself was ever anything other than an open field.

Historical and Archaeological Background

Prehistoric and Roman

There was no conclusive evidence for prehistoric land use in the immediate landscape of the site. Several spot finds of prehistoric artefacts have however been recorded in the locale.

Whilst two of these findspots were recorded by antiquarian sources, possible prehistoric material was also recovered from topsoil deposits during recent archaeological monitoring to the south of the site (Kennedy and Somerville 2003) There was no evidence for Roman activity in the immediate area of the site.

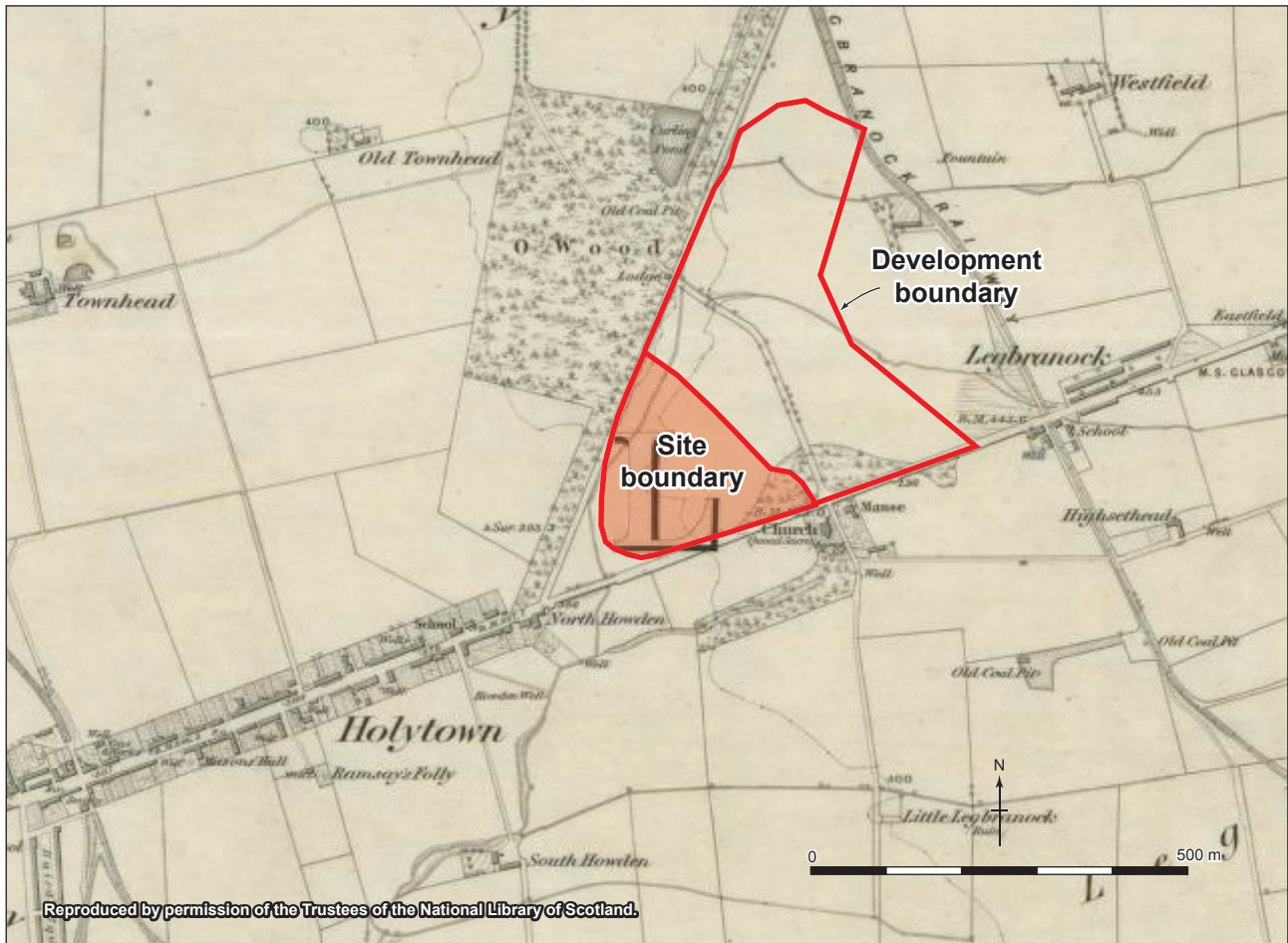
Medieval and Post-medieval

There are no sites dating to the medieval period on or around the site, however, the depiction of Holytown as an established settlement on Roy's map may suggest that the settlement has its origins in the medieval or early post-medieval period.

The post-medieval period saw the activity around the site increase dramatically with numerous collieries and other industrial sites throughout the local landscape. Previous archaeological work, located to the south of the site, identified the remains of rig and furrow cultivation, but by far the most predominant activity identified was associated with quarrying and mining. The only artefacts identified during the archaeological work dated to the 19th and 20th centuries.

Conclusions

Whilst no known cultural heritage sites were identified on the site, it was considered that the site had some potential for undiscovered archaeological remains. There is some evidence of both prehistoric and medieval activity in the area in the form of artefactual and agricultural remains respectively. Located at the junction of two roads, both of which appear on the earliest maps of the area, the site may have been of strategic importance to the settlement. The site



Illus 3

Detail from 1st edition Ordnance Survey, 1864

appeared to have remained undeveloped throughout the post-medieval period, thus increasing the potential for the survival of earlier sites. However, there was also high potential for unmapped mining activity across the site, possibly dating to the intervening period of over 100 years between the publications of the earliest historic maps, which may have accounted for its apparent lack of use.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING

Methodology

A total of 22 trenches were excavated, deployed to prospect for archaeological remains, representing approximately 5% of 4 ha of the site (Illus 4). The remaining 4ha of the site was subject to 'grouting works' rendering it unsuitable for archaeological prospection. Several further areas within the site were disturbed by localised soil stripping and mounds of displaced topsoil, presumed to be as a result of activity associated with earlier site access issues.

Trenches were excavated using a 13 tonne, 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. A Digicat Cable Detector was used before

trenching to offset the possibility of disturbing any unmarked services. All trenches were backfilled after being recorded.

The location of all of trenches was plotted to Ordnance Survey National Grid coordinates. Individual trenches, features and deposits were recorded on pro-forma record sheets and, where appropriate trench sections illustrated at a scale of 1:50. A full photographic record was kept using colour slide and monochrome print film.

Results

With the exception of Trenches 3, 18, 19 & 22 all of the trenches measured 50m long by 2m wide.

Trenches 20 & 21 were excavated in order to investigate a series of regular, linear undulations, identified within a small, semi-circular, plantation of trees in the south-eastern corner of the site. These features were identified as the upstanding remains of rig-and-furrow cultivation (Illus 5). A single, broad linear feature on a northeast-southwest alignment was also identified in Trench 20, it directly corresponded with the limit of the tree plantation and was infilled with extremely wet, humic material of relatively recent date.

Further evidence of rig and furrow was identified



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Illus 4
Trench locations

in Trenches 1&2 and to a lesser extent, Trench 3, and although no surface evidence remained in these cases, the remaining furrows maintained the same northwest-southeast alignment as those observed in trenches 20 & 21.

The majority of the trenches produced evidence of modern ploughing (Illus 6) in the form of very regular linear plough marks, on investigation these were found to contain fragments of modern glass and ceramics, dating them to the latter half of the 20th century.

No further features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified during the evaluation.

Conclusion

No significant below ground archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation. The preservation of above ground features, as part of a relict field system in the area planted with trees and at the margins of the site, indicates that very little ground disturbance has taken place on the site in terms of development in their immediate vicinity. Mining in the area of the site, according to the grouting survey appears to have been in the form of subterranean galleries, at depths unlikely to have affected any archaeological features which may have existed. Modern cultiva-



Illus 5
Trench 21 through area of upstanding Rig and Furrow



Illus 6
Trench 13 showing modern plough marks

tion and agricultural drainage appear to have had a minimal effect on the natural geology and it seems, therefore, reasonable to assume that the absence of below ground archaeological features is as the result of a genuine paucity of activity, as indicated by the desk-based study, rather than for reasons of later intrusions.

REFERENCES

Bain, K. (2008) *Written scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation at land off Edinburgh Road, Holytown, Glasgow*. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd.

Kennedy, O. & Somerville, J. (2008) *Bathgate to Newarthill Pipeline Data Structure Report*. GUARD.

Cartographic Sources

The following maps and plans held by the National Library of Scotland and RCAHMS were examined (listed in chronological order):

Ordnance Survey. (1864) One-inch to 1 mile *1st edition map Sheet XII, Lanarkshire*.

Ordnance Survey. (1897) One-inch to 1 mile 2nd edition map; Sheet 31 Airdrie.

Ordnance Survey. (1903-1912) One-inch 3rd edition map; Sheet 31 Airdrie.

Roy, William. (1747-55) *Military Survey of Scotland*.

APPENDIX 1: DIGITAL ARCHIVE METADATA

Digital Data Monitoring Record

Project: Edinburgh Road, Holytown, Glasgow

Project Code: ERHG08

Project Manager: Mark Roberts

Project Officer: Kate Bain

Digital Data: Primary Archive

File Name	Description	Folder	Linked Files	Software	Version	3 rd party data
ERHG08-Surveyed-trenches	Site survey	ERHG08-Plans\ERHG08-Surveyed-trenches.dwg	ERHG08-Plans\HT-C1-01.dwg	Autocad		Y

Digital Data: Report Archive

File Name	Description	Folder	Linked Files	Software	Version	3 rd party data
	This file	ERHG08\ ERHG08_Digital-archive-metadata.xls	-	Microsoft Exel	2003	N
Edinburgh Road Holytown:results of archaeological evaluation	Final Report	ERHG08-Report\ERHG08-Report.doc	-	Microsoft Word	2003	N
Edinburgh Road Holytown:results of archaeological evaluation	Typeset Report	ERHG08-Report\ERHG08_Report_ts_v01.indd	-	Adobe Acrobat	8 Pro	Y
Report	Text Report	ERHG08-Report\ERHG08-Report.doc		Microsoft Word	2003	N
Abstract	Text Abstract	ERHG08-Report\ERHG08-Abstract.doc	-	Microsoft Word	2003	N
Illus 1	3 in 1 site location	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08-Illus01-3in1-v01-jvw.ai	-	Adobe Illustrator	2003	Y
Illus 2	Roys map	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08-Illus02-v01-ts.ai	-	Adobe Illustrator	2003	Y
Illus3	1st Edition Os	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08-Illus03-v01-ts.ai	-	Adobe Illustrator	2003	Y
Illus4	Trench location plan	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08-Illus04-trench-plan-v01-jvw.ai	-	Adobe Illustrator	2003	Y
Illus5	Trench 21 plate	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08_Illus5.jpg	-	jpeg	2003	N
Illus6	Trench 13 plate	ERHG08-Illustrations\ERHG08_Illus6.jpg	-	jpeg	2003	N