

# An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Camping and Caravanning Club, Culzean Castle, Ayrshire



Culzean Castle as seen from the south east

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Services Ltd

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ARS Ltd Report 2015/175



February 2016

**Archaeological Research Services Ltd**

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### **Executive Summary**

*Project Name: An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Camping and Caravanning Club, Culzean Castle, Ayrshire.*

*Site Code: CUL16*

*Planning Authority: South Ayrshire Council*

*Geology: Diamicton Till*

*NGR: NS 24515 10194*

*Date of Fieldwork: November 2015 - February 2016*

*Date of Report: February 2016*

*In November 2015 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by the Camping and Caravanning Club to undertake an archaeological watching brief at their Culzean Castle site, Ayrshire. The work involved monitoring the excavation of trenches for the installation of electricity, gas and water services as part of a utility upgrade and renewal programme. The excavations took place within the camp site across grassed areas and roads.*

*Culzean Castle originally belonged to the Kennedys who were an ancient Scottish family descended from Robert the Bruce. A stone tower house was built on the site in the 16th century. Although many alterations were made to the castle over the years, it wasn't until the 1770s that it started to become the grand building that can be seen today. David Kennedy who was the 10th Earl of Cassillis commissioned the famous Scottish architect Robert Adam to design and build a castle to reflect the family's status and wealth. A new phase of works started in 1877 under the 3rd Marquess. In 1945, when the castle was passed to the National Trust for Scotland, the top floor was converted into a flat for use by General Eisenhower, as a gesture for America's support during the Second World War.*

*The close proximity of the site to the castle and its grounds gave rise to the need for a watching brief to monitor groundworks to identify and record any archaeological features or finds that may have survived as buried deposits.*

*The Camping and Caravanning Club site at Culzean Castle sits within the railway cutting that was created for the Maidens and Dunure railway, the remnants of which can be seen in localised dumps of waste material associated with the original construction of the railway and its embankment. The lack of archaeological finds and features on the site can almost certainly be attributed to the large amount of landscaping that would have taken place in order to establish this railway line. In addition, the landscaping that has been carried out in recent years in order to create roads, paths, grassed areas and level hard-standings for caravans and tents would have disturbed the ground, and any archaeology surviving within it.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. In November 2015 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by the Camping and Caravanning Club to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Camping and Caravanning Club site at Culzean Castle, Ayrshire. The work involved monitoring the excavation of trenches for the installation of electricity, gas and water services as part of a utility upgrade and renewal programme. The excavations took place within the camp site across grassed areas and roads.

1.2. The site has the potential to contain archaeological remains relating in particular to the original 16<sup>th</sup> century castle and the later additions and alterations.

## **2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY**

2.1. The castle and its grounds sit on the south-west coast of Scotland near to the A77 road. The site is centred at NS 24515 10194 (Figure 1). The solid geology of the area consists of Swanshaw sandstone formation overlain by superficial deposits of diamicton till (BGS 2016).

## **3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

3.1. Culzean Castle originally belonged to the Kennedys who were an ancient Scottish family descended from Robert the Bruce. A stone tower house was built on the site in the 16th century. Although many alterations were made to the castle over the years, it wasn't until the 1770s that it started to become the grand building that can be seen today. David Kennedy who was the 10th Earl of Cassillis commissioned the famous Scottish architect Robert Adam to design and build an 'L' plan castle to reflect the family's status and wealth. A new phase of works started in 1877 under the 3rd Marquess.

3.2. In 1945, when the castle was passed to the National Trust for Scotland, the top floor was converted into a flat for use by General Eisenhower, as stipulated by the Kennedy family. This was done as a gesture for America's support during the Second World War.

3.3. The castle was reopened in April 2011 after refurbishment which was funded by a gift in the will of American millionaire William Lindsay to the National Trust for Scotland.

3.4. The Maidens and Dunure Railway by Glasgow and South Western Railway was opened in 1906 and ran through what is now the Camping and Caravanning Club site at Culzean Castle. The line was closed to passengers in 1942 but was reopened again in 1947. The railway was finally closed for good in 1968.

#### **4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

4.1. The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to record any archaeological features and deposits identified within the excavation areas and to ensure that all groundworks were kept to a necessary minimum.

#### **5. METHODOLOGY**

5.1. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a number of trenches for the installation of electricity, gas and water services as part of a utility upgrade and renewal programme (Figure 2). The excavations took place within the campsite across grassed areas and roads.

5.2. All relevant groundworks were undertaken with a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and, where necessary, hand dug by the onsite contractors until impact depth was reached or sensitive archaeological material was identified. The exposed horizon was then carefully examined and any potential archaeological features or deposits were cleaned by hand and investigated. All excavation was carried out under careful archaeological supervision.

5.3. The deposits were recorded according to the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation. Each context was recorded on pro-forma records which included the following: character and contextual relationships; detailed description (dimensions and shape; soil components, colour, texture and consistency); interpretation and phasing as well as cross-references to the drawn, photographic and finds registers.

5.4. All necessary plans were recorded at a scale of 1:20 and all sections were recorded at 1:10. All deposits were leveled and all heights expressed in metres above Ordnance Datum.

5.5. A photographic record of all identified archaeological features was maintained during the course of works and all images were taken in digital format.

#### **6. RESULTS**

6.1. The service trenches were excavated and recorded in two phases in order to reduce disruption to the caravan site and its users. Consequently, these two phases have been categorised as Phase A and Phase B.

##### **Phase A**

6.2. A number of 0.3m-wide trenches were excavated across roads and grassed areas of the site prior to the installation of replacement electricity cables (Figure 2). Where the trenches crossed roads, they were excavated through a layer of asphalt (001) that measured 0.05m in depth. A layer of grey hardcore (002) sat beneath the asphalt (001) to a depth of 0.1m. Where the trenches were excavated across grassed areas, they were dug through turf and topsoil (003) which had an average depth of

0.1m. A layer of pale brown subsoil (004) was located beneath the topsoil (003) with a depth of 0.15m (Figure 3).

6.3. Natural clay (005) was encountered across the site to an average depth of 0.4m. The clay, where seen, varied in colour from brown to orange and in places graded into soft sandstone bedrock. A number of additional deposits were recorded during the watching brief although none were of archaeological significance. These deposits included layers of crushed modern brick (006) and grey chippings within sand (007) (Figure 4). No archaeological features or finds were encountered during this phase of the watching brief.

#### **Phase B**

6.4. Two trenches were excavated, Trench 1 for water drainage and Trench 2 for gas and water service pipes. A further two rectangular areas were excavated for the installation of septic tanks 1 and 2 (Figure 2).

##### **Trench 1**

6.5. Trench 1 (Figure 5 and 6) was excavated across grass and woodland areas of the site with an average width of 0.3m. Where the trench crossed the grassed areas it was dug through turf and topsoil (104) which had an average depth of 0.26m. Where the trench was excavated across woodland, it was dug through a layer of undergrowth and decaying woodland material (101) which had an average depth of 0.16m. Woodland floor (101) and topsoil (104) overlay a light brown silty loam subsoil deposit (105) with an average depth of 0.15m. Natural clay (103) was encountered across the trench at an average depth of 0.48m below the surface.

##### **Trench 2**

6.6. Trench 2 was excavated across a grass turfed area of the site with an average width of 0.3m. This revealed turf and topsoil deposit (104) which had an average depth of 0.19m. Towards the western extent of the trench topsoil (104) overlay a 0.5m thick asphalt surface (106) which sat upon a 0.34m thick stone sub-base deposit (107) (Figure 7). Towards the eastern extent of the trench topsoil (104) overlay a grey stone crush (108) which had a depth of 0.18m and was interpreted as the remnants of a former railway embankment. Below (108) was a 0.33m thick stone bedding deposit (109) (Figure 8). Bedding deposit (109) and sub-base deposit (107) overlay the clay natural substrate (103), seen at an average depth of 0.56m from the surface.

##### **Septic tanks 1 and 2**

6.7. Two rectangular areas, both approximately 10m x 5m in area were stripped prior to the installation of new septic tanks. The excavation revealed a woodland floor deposit (101) with a depth of 0.15m and overlay a 0.12m thick sub-soil deposit (105) (Figure 9). Within the septic tank 1 area, sub-soil (105) sealed a redeposited natural clay (102) with a depth of 0.29m and this was interpreted as deliberate deposition of material associated with the construction of the railway embankment. Redeposited material (102) overlay clay natural (103) at a depth of 0.46m from the surface. Within the septic tank 2 area, sub-soil (105) overlay natural clay (103) which was exposed at a depth of 0.27m from the surface.

6.8. There were no archaeological finds or features discovered during this phase of the watching brief.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

7.1. The Camping and Caravanning Club site at Culzean Castle sits within the railway cutting that was created for the Maidens and Dunure railway, the remnants of which can be seen in localised dumps of waste material associated with the original construction of the railway and its embankment. The lack of archaeological finds and features on the site can almost certainly be attributed to the large amount of landscaping that would have taken place in order to establish this railway line. In addition, the landscaping that has been carried out in recent years in order to create roads, paths, grassed areas and level hard-standings for caravans and tents would have disturbed the ground, and any archaeology surviving within it.

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9.1. All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

## **10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

10.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved with this work, in particular Jo Choudhury of The Camping and Caravanning Club.



**11. REFERENCES**

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Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). 2014. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

## **Appendix I**

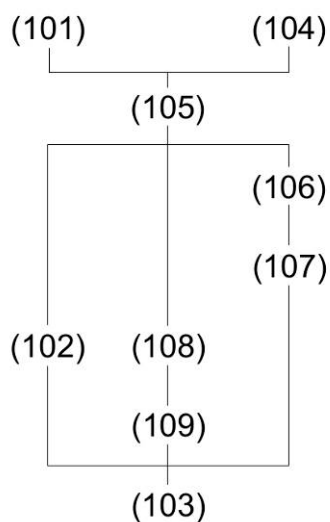
### **Context Register and Site Matrix**

Phase A

Context	Description
001	Tarmac – same as 106
002	Grey stone hardcore – same as 107
003	Topsoil and turf mat – same as 104
004	Mid brown silty clay Subsoil – same as 105
005	Clay natural – same as 103
006	Crushed brick deposit
007	Grey chippings within sand

Phase B

Context	Description
101	Topsoil-woodland floor
102	Re-deposited clay natural
103	Clay natural
104	Topsoil and turf mat
105	Mid brown silty clay Subsoil
106	Tarmac
107	Brown/grey stone sub-base
108	Orange/yellow Stone crush
109	Orange/yellow Stone bedding



Site Matrix

## **Appendix II**

### **Photograph Register**

<b>Shot</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Excavation of electricity cable trench. Phase A
2	Excavation of a trench across tarmac.
3	General working Photograph
4	General working Photograph
5	General working Photograph
6	General working Photograph
7	General working Photograph
8	General working Photograph
9	General working Photograph
10	General working Photograph
11	General working Photograph
12	General working Photograph
13	SE-facing view of Trench 1 through (104). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m)
14	NE-facing view of Trench 1 through (101). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m)
15	SE-facing view of Trench 2 through (106). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m)
16	NE-facing view of Trench 2 through (108). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m)
17	SE-facing view of Septic tank trench. Phase B (scale 1 x 1m)
18	General working Photograph
19	General working Photograph
20	General working Photograph
21	General working Photograph
22	General working Photograph
23	General working Photograph
24	General working Photograph
25	General working Photograph
26	General working Photograph
27	General working Photograph
28	General working Photograph
29	General working Photograph

## **Appendix III**

### **Figures**



Figure 1. Site location Ordnance Survey data copyright OS, reproduced by permission, Licence no. 100045420

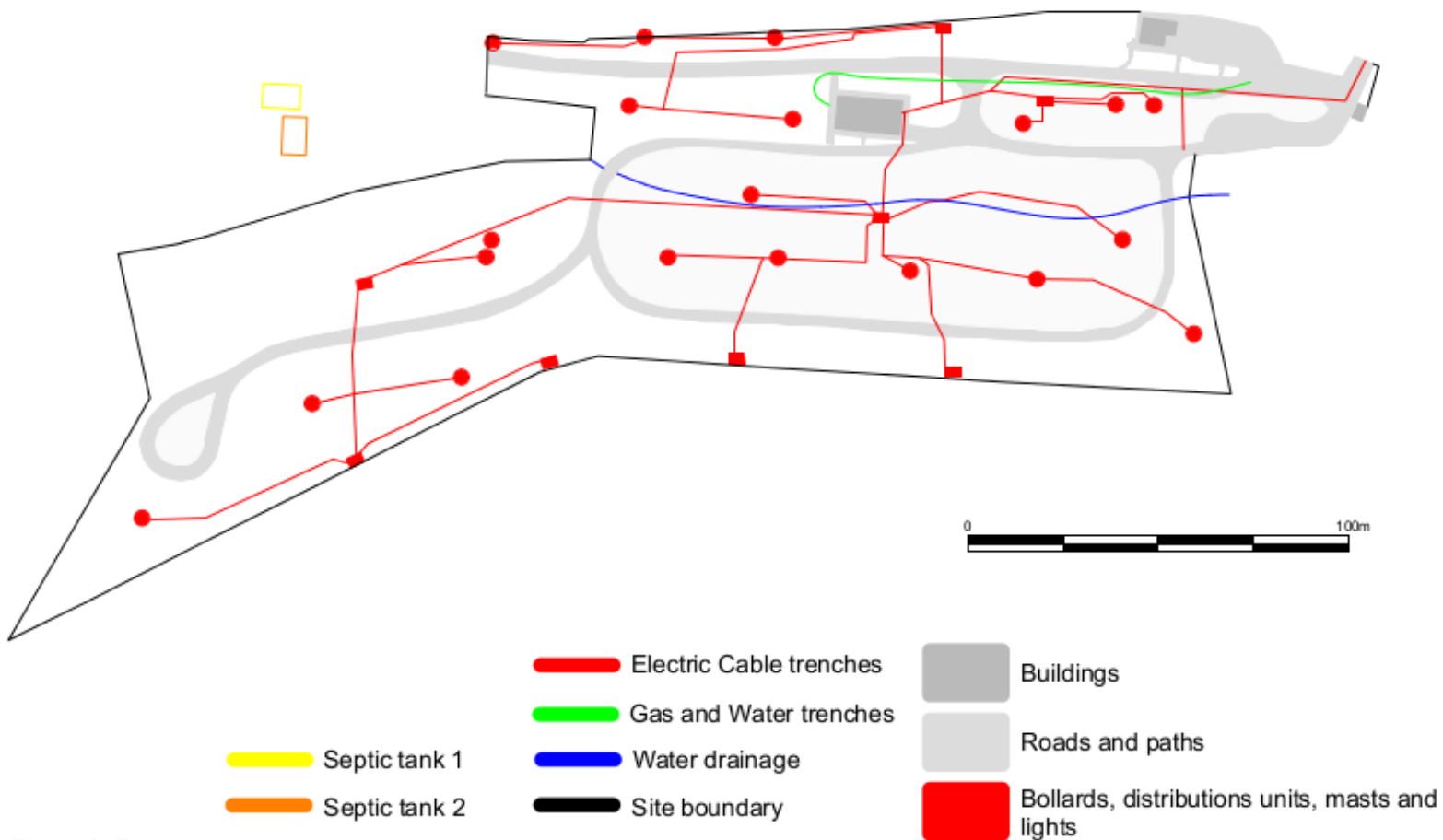


Figure 1: Trench loactions





Figure 3. Excavation of electricity cable trenches. Phase A.



Figure 4. Excavation of a trench across a road showing tarmac with grey chippings (007) beneath. Orange/brown natural clay can be seen in the base of the trench. Phase A.





Figure 5. View looking south east showing a representative section of Trench 1 through topsoil (104). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m).



Figure 6. View looking north east showing a representative section of Trench 1 through woodland floor (101). Phase B (scale 1 x 1m).





Figure 7. View looking south east showing a representative section of Trench 2 through Tarmac (106) Phase 2 (scale= 1 x 1m).



Figure 8. View looking north west showing a representative section of Trench 2 through (108). Phase B (scale= 1 x 1m).





Figure 9. View facing south-east of septic tank area 1. Phase B (scale= 1 x 2m).

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### Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Camping and Caravanning Club, Culzean Castle, Ayrshire
Short description of the project	In November 2015 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by the Camping and Caravanning Club to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the Culzean Castle site, Ayrshire. The work involved monitoring the excavation of electricity cable trenches that were being dug as part of an electricity system renewal program. The excavations took place within the camp site across grassed areas and roads. The groundworks did not encounter any archaeological finds or features.
Project dates	Start: 02-11-2015 End: 26-11-2015
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	The National Trust for Scotland

### Project location

Country	Scotland
Site location	SOUTH AYRSHIRE KIRKOSWALD The Camping and Caravanning Club site, Culzean Castle
Study area	2.6 Hectares
Site coordinates	NS 24515 10194 55.354259102948 -4.768396167477 55 21 15 N 004 46 06 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
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Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	none
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