

**Hall of Christian Brethren, Stevenston, North
Ayrshire:
Archaeological Monitoring**

Data Structure Report



by Douglas Gordon
issued 19th April 2013

RATHMELL 
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Quality Assurance

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Signed

Date

In keeping with the procedure of Rathmell Archaeology Limited this document and its findings have been reviewed and agreed by an appropriate colleague:

Checked

Date

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Introduction

1. This Data Structure Report has been prepared for Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship in support of the construction of a sunroom extension and ramp at the Hall of Christian Brethren, Stevenston, North Ayrshire (12/00641/PP). These archaeological works are designed to mitigate any adverse impact on the archaeological remains within the development area.
2. North Ayrshire Council required a programme of archaeological works to be undertaken as a requirement of the issued planning consent (12/00641/PP). The West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS) who advise North Ayrshire Council on archaeological matters provided guidance on the structure of archaeological works required on site during the groundbreaking works.
3. Rathmell Archaeology Limited was appointed by Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship to undertake the development and implementation of archaeological mitigation works prior to the development of the site. The project works were outlined in the Method Statement (Klemen 2013) which was agreed with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.

Historical and Archaeological Background

4. The town of Stevenston (Canmore ID: 206808, WoSAS Pin 53128) is mentioned as being chartered in AD1240 in 19th century gazetteer, though the exact nature of the charter is unknown. The town is most likely to be a kirkton, as in a small secular settlement that has grown up around a Church, in this case Stevenston parish church (Canmore ID: 41063, WoSAS Pin 5638) which Roy (1752-55) depicts on his lowland mapping of the *Military Survey of Scotland* (Figure 1a). During the 18th century the town became a coal mining centre with thirty-two mines recorded on the Ardeer Estate when it was sold to the Rev Patrick Warner in 1707 and exporting to Ireland. By the 19th century the pits were mostly exhausted, with the last, Ardeer East, closing in 1926.
5. In the 20th century, the town was a major base for Nobel Industries and later ICI, whose Ardeer site employed many thousands of workers producing explosives and chemicals. To the south of Stevenston, on the border of the Nobel Plant, sits the South African Pavilion. Known locally as Africa House, this building was once part of the Empire Exhibition held in Glasgow in 1938. The pavilion was rebuilt at Ardeer after the end of the exhibition and served as the staff restaurant for many years.
6. With specific reference to 7 Townhead Street and its immediate surrounding environs there are no known archaeological sites in the Historic Environment Records, other than being within the medieval township of Stevenston (Canmore ID: 206808, WoSAS Pin 53128). However, to the north-west and east of the Stevenston Burn is the location of Stevenston Mill (Canmore ID: 317749). John Ainslie's map of *The Southern Part of Scotland* (1821) (not shown) depicts a set of buildings within this location and possibly represents Stevenston Mill.



Figure 1a: Roy's Military Survey Lowlands 1747-55

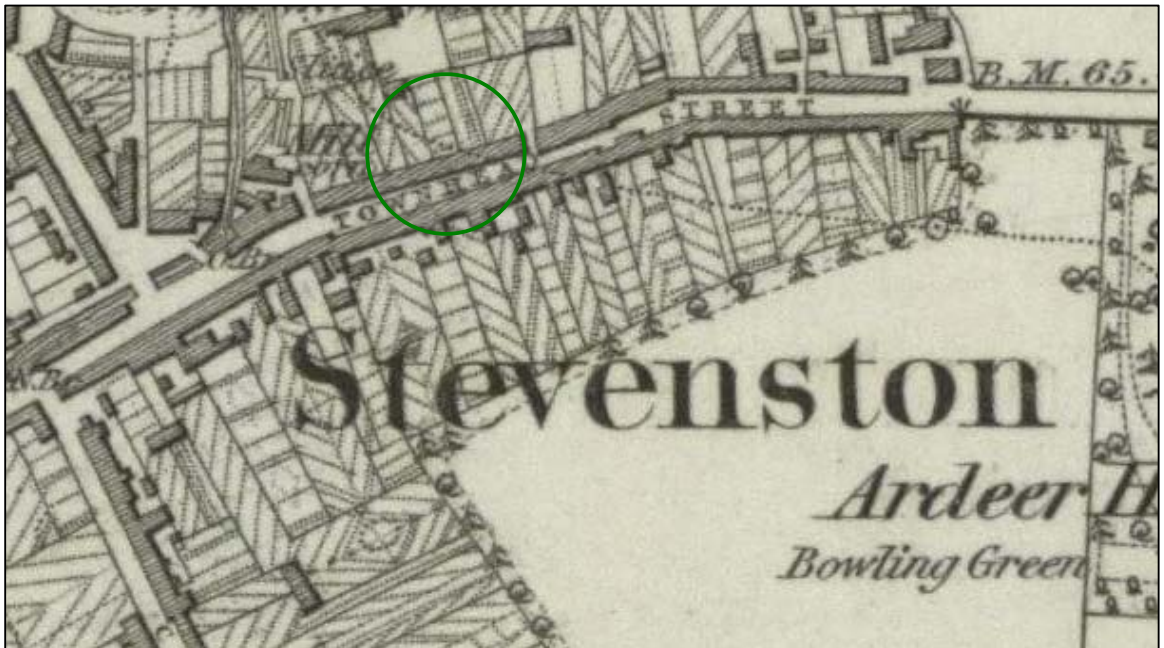


Figure 1b: 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1860). The green circle denotes the development area

Project Works

The programme of mitigation consisted of the archaeological monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches. Works undertaken by Rathmell Archaeology Ltd were consistent with the terms described in the Method Statement (Klemen 2013). Monitoring, recording and excavation were carried out in conjunction with the terms of this document.

7. Archaeological monitoring works were undertaken on the 9th and 12th of April 2013. Excavations were carried out by a 1.5 ton 360° mechanical excavator and by hand. Any potentially significant archaeological features, structures or deposits encountered were recorded by the archaeologist on site, using Rathmell Archaeology Ltd standard method. All contexts, small finds and environmental samples were given unique numbers with bulk finds collected by context.
8. All works complied with West of Scotland Archaeology Service Standard Conditions, the Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Scotland Policy Statement.

Findings

9. The development area is the ground to the immediate north of the Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship, covering an area approximately 55m² in size. The ground itself contained a stair and wheelchair ramp at the entrance to the church that was made of reinforced concrete. The ground surrounding the stair and ramp was covered with concrete slabs (001).
10. The archaeological works consisted of monitoring the digging of foundation trenches (Figure 2). These trenches measured 630 to 670mm in width, and from 520mm down to 750mm in depth (Figure 3a & b). The initial works dug the outer foundation trenches on three sides. These excavations revealed that beneath the concrete (001), a mixed light and dark brown sand (002) measuring 50mm in depth overlay a mixed dark brown silt sand (003) with frequent building/demolition detritus such red and yellow brick fragments, ceramic drainage pipes, glazed tiles and metal. (003) ranged from 170mm down to 360mm in depth, though tended to be primarily 170mm. Underlying (003) was an orange brown sand (004). Cutting through (004) were four linear features (005). Three of the features consisted of a trench measuring 320mm wide with a fill of a mixture of (003) and (004), and contained a large brown ceramic drainage pipe. The fourth example was a 1m wide trench that contained a junction of 3 to 4 drainage pipes. A fifth linear (006) aligned NNW-SSE was a narrow trench 200mm wide with a fill of (003) and a black electrical cable (006).
11. Once the majority of the upstanding reinforced concrete stair and ramp had been removed along with the remaining concrete slabs (001), the contractor decided to leave the solid concrete foundation in place and use that to build off of. This meant that only two 1.5 to 1.8m long foundation trenches measuring 270mm wide and up to 300mm deep, were required down the longitudinal centre line for the sunroom extension. These trenches revealed the same stratigraphy as the outer trenches. A further two trenches of similar dimensions were excavated along the wall of the hall, the eastern one revealed the same stratigraphy as all the other trenches while the west trench which was the ramp had been revealed up to 250mm of Type one hardcore (007) over (004).
12. No archaeologically significant artefacts were observed during the course of the works.

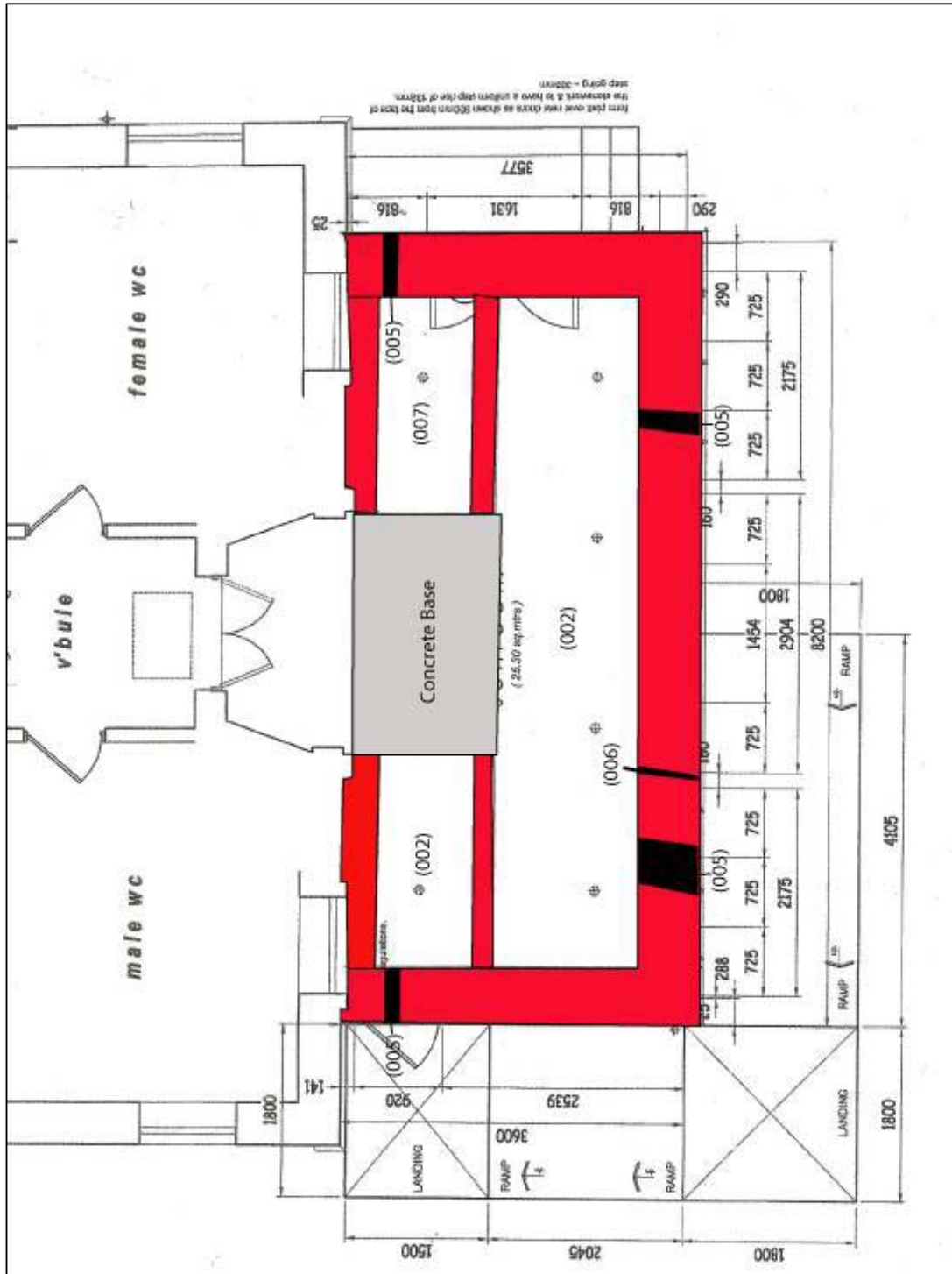


Figure 2: Site Layout



Figure 3a: General Shot with outside foundation trenches excavated from the North West



Figure 3b: Eastern foundation Trench from the North

Discussion

13. No significant archaeological features were uncovered during the course of the monitoring. The features and stratigraphy exposed appeared to be of recent origin. (003) appeared to contain building detritus which may have been from the building of the present hall in the 1950s, it is also equally possible that it may be the remnant of demolition rubble from the buildings that had been previously extant along the southern edge of the road.
14. The drainage pipes (005) present within the foundation trenches were related to the present hall. Although it is also possible that the junction of drains may relate to the previous buildings or the public house to the immediate east of the site.
15. No evidence of the previous buildings was evident within the foundation trenches.

Recommendations

16. The archaeological mitigation works did not reveal any significant archaeological material from within the development area. Those features that were revealed are considered to be of recent origin.
17. As such it is the recommendation of Rathmell Archaeology Ltd that no further works are appropriate. The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with North Ayrshire Council and their advisors, the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.

Conclusion

18. A programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out on the 9th and 12th of April 2013 on behalf of the Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship in support of the construction of a sunroom extension and ramp at the Hall of Christian Brethren, Stevenston, North Ayrshire (12/00641/PP).
19. In the course of the archaeological monitoring no significant archaeology was uncovered, only features relating to the 20th Century.

References

Documentary

Klemen, P 2013, *Hall of Christian Brethren, North Ayrshire: Archaeological Watching Brief, Method Statement* (unpublished commercial report by Rathmell Archaeology Ltd)

Cartographic

1747-55	Roys' Military Survey	Area around Saltcoats
1860	Ordnance Survey	25 Inch Ordnance Survey 1st Edition

Appendix 1: Registers

Context Register

Context No.	Area/ Trench	Type	Description	Interpretation
001		Deposit	Compact grey concrete slabs	Ground Surface
002		Deposit	Mixed light and dark brown sand	Bedding Sand
003		Deposit	Mixed dark brown silt sand with frequent inclusions of red and yellow brick fragment, slate fragments and metal. 170mm to 360mm in depth	Building/demolition rubble
004		Deposit	Orange Brown Sand	Natural
005		Deposit	Linear feature measuring 0.32-1m wide with (003) fill and brown ceramic 6inch pipe	Foul water drainage pipe
006		Deposit	Black cable in 200mm wide trench with (003) fill	Electricity Service
007		Deposit	Angular and sub angular grey stones	Type 1 hardcore

Photographic Register

Image No.	Digital	Description	From	Date
01	1	Eastern Foundation Trench	N	09/04/13
02	2	Eastern Foundation Trench	NE	09/04/13
03	3	Eastern Foundation Trench	E	09/04/13
04	4	Northern Foundation Trench with (005) junction and Electricity Cable (006)	N	09/04/13
05	5	Northern Foundation Trench	W	09/04/13
06	6	Western Foundation Trench	N	09/04/13
07	7	(005) within Western Foundation Trench	W	09/04/13

Image No.	Digital	Description	From	Date
08	8	General Site shot	W	09/04/13
09	9	General Site shot	W	12/04/13
10	10	Eastern centre line trench	W	12/04/13
11	11	Southern Foundation Trench (East portion)	W	12/04/13
12	12	Western Centre Line Trench	W	12/04/13
13	13	Southern Foundation Trench (Western portion)	W	12/04/13

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	North Ayrshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Hall of Christian Brethren
PROJECT CODE:	RA13009
PARISH:	Stevenson
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Douglas Gordon
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NA
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	NA
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 2671 4206
START DATE (this season)	8 th April 2013
END DATE (this season)	19 th April 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out on the 9th and 12th of April 2013 on behalf of the Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship in support of the construction of a sunroom extension and ramp at the Hall of Christian Brethren, Stevenston, North Ayrshire (12/00641/PP).</p> <p>In the course of the archaeological monitoring no significant archaeology was uncovered, only features relating to the 20th Century.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Townhead Hall of Christian Fellowship
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Unit 8 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to West of Scotland Archaeology Service and archive to RCAHMS Collections

Contact Details

20. Rathmell Archaeology can be contacted at our Registered Office or through the web:

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