

**Pearmont House, Dumfries
Dumfries and Galloway:
Archaeological Evaluation**

Data Structure Report

by Claire Shaw

issued 23rd February 2007



Rathmell

Archaeology Ltd

Quality Assurance

This report covers works which have been undertaken in keeping with the issued brief as modified by the agreed programme of works. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance of Rathmell Archaeology Limited on the preparation of reports. All works reported on within this document have been undertaken in keeping with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

Signed Date

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Checked Date

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Contents

1 Overview	3
2 Project Works	3
3 Findings: Desktop Study	5
4 Findings: Evaluation Trenches	7
5 Discussion	10
6 Recommendations	10
7 Conclusion	10
8 References	10
Appendix 1 - Trench Details	12
Appendix 2 - Record Summaries	13
Appendix 3 - Discovery & Excavation in Scotland	16
Contact Details	17

Figures

Fig. 1	Trench location plan	4
Fig. 2a-c	Historical maps	6
Fig. 3a-b	Aerial photograph of Curriestanes Cursus	8
Figs. 3c	Trench section	8
Fig. 4	Trench location plan	9

1 Overview

- 1.1 This Data Structure Report presents the findings of archaeological investigative works required by Mr. Ian Watson in respect of proposed residential development at Dalbeattie Road, Dumfries, Dumfries & Galloway (centred on NGR ref: NX 9580 7517, Planning ref: 06/P/3/0081). The archaeological works, carried out on the 16th of February 2007, were designed to inform any necessary mitigation of impact on the archaeological remains within the development area. The land was previously covered heavily with vegetation but has recently been cleared in preparation of the evaluation works and covers an area of 0.2 ha.
- 1.2 The findings presented below inform on the character of any archaeologically significant features within the proposed development area. These investigative works were sufficient to inform on archaeological hazard and allow the development of any necessary subsequent mitigation. The character of such further stages of work will need to be agreed with Dumfries & Galloway Council and the Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service.
- 1.3 Rathmell Archaeology Ltd was appointed by required by Mr. Ian Watson to act with regard to the archaeological condition. Ms Jane Brann of the Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service, who advises Dumfries & Galloway Council on archaeological matters, provided guidance on the character of archaeological investigations required on this site.

2 Project Works

- 2.1 The programme of works agreed with Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service, commenced with an archaeological evaluation through machine cut trenches extending to 5% of the development area. These works were undertaken in keeping with the submitted Written Scheme of Investigation with the on-site works taking place on the 16th of February 2007.
- 2.2 On arrival to site it could be seen that the initial set layout of the trenches (Figure 1) had to be greatly altered due to the topography and various obstruction which littered the site. On the south eastern boundary, the site is enclosed by a wall and immediately behind this wall there is a bank which is some 6m wide and drops significantly down to the base of the depression. It is without doubt that this embankment was predominantly created to form a level ground surface to form the base of Dalbeattie Road on which the property runs along. Therefore trenches were not cut into this embankment as it is more than likely to be composed of made-up ground as well the potential of undermining the boundary wall.
- 2.3 Although the trees on the site had been felled, they had been stockpiled into two groups (soft woods and hard woods), awaiting uplift. This resulted in two significant areas of the site being inaccessible to trenching, though trenches were placed as close to the tree trunks as possible for maximum coverage. In total 124.8m² of trenches were opened across the site, this fell short by 7.2m² of the stipulated investigative works.
- 2.4 The majority of exposed features were investigated and evaluated to determine archaeological significance. All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct and Historic Scotland Policy Statements.

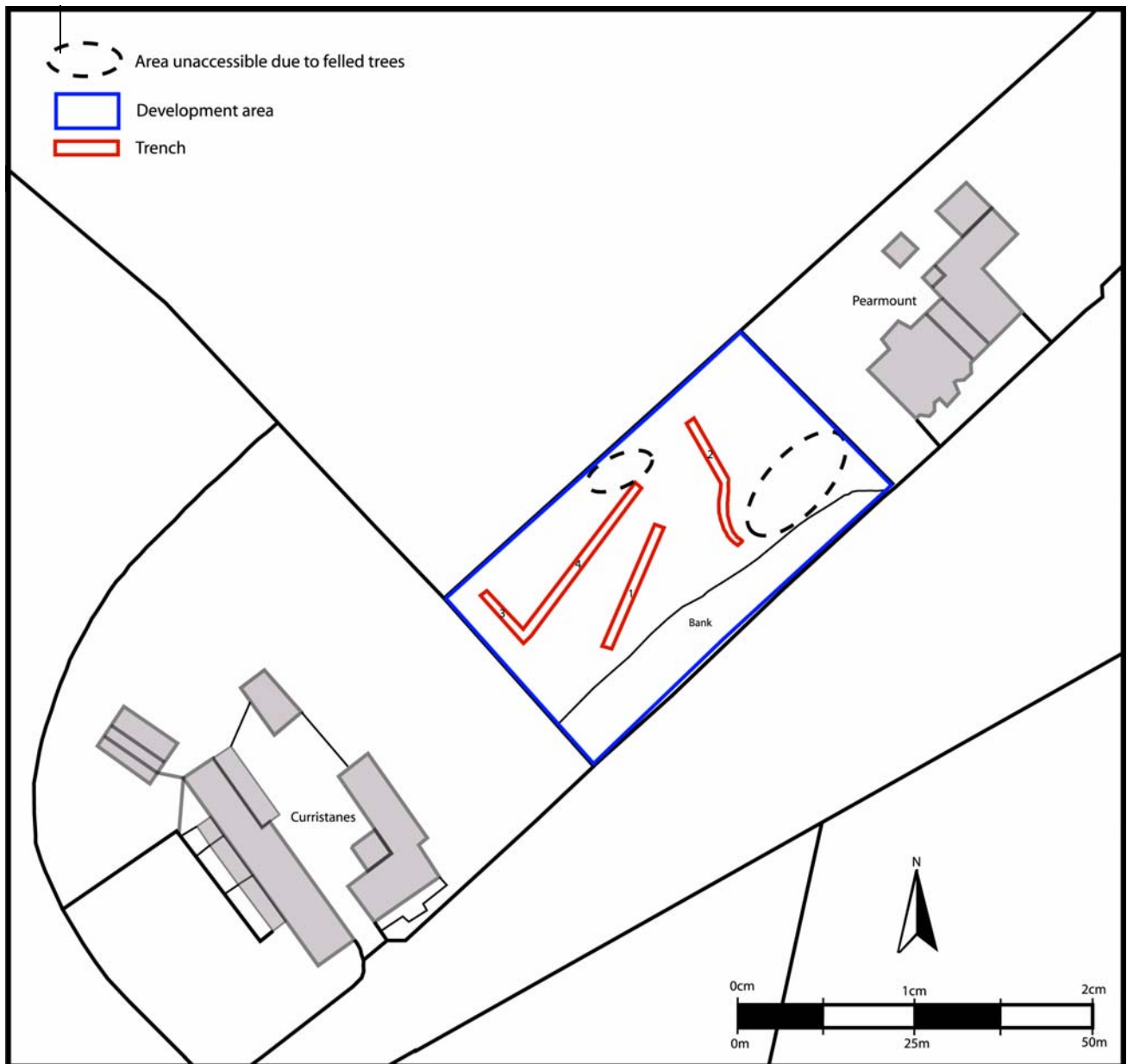


Figure 1: Trench location plan

3 Findings: Desktop study

3.1 *Statutory protected sites*

- 3.1.1 The desktop study did not identify the presence, within the study area of any sites protected for their archaeological or historical merit under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 or buildings protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1997 (Historic Scotland 1998). The development site however, does lie near the proximity of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (AMH 5738, DG6082, NMRS NX 97NE 85) see below for archaeological significance of this monument.
- 3.1.2 Nor were any sites identified that have the potential to contain the burial of human skeletal material, and hence raise the difficulties of the crime of violation of sepulchre (the common law crime of unlawful interference with human remains).

3.2 *Cartographic evidence*

- 3.2.1 The earliest source of sound cartographical evidence that illustrates a basic level of detail of the area concerned dates to the eighteenth century with the pre-Ordnance Survey map by Roy (1747-1755) (Figure 2a). This is followed by the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey maps (1854 and 1900 respectively, Figure 2b and 2c) that provide accurate detail of the area concerned.
- 3.2.2 Roy's map of the area (Figure 2a) shows the distinct lack of settlements in the immediate area, though it does show the somewhat complex enclosed field system to the south and rig and furrow system (associated with Starryheugh) to the north. It can be seen that the area concerned is depicted as uncultivated.
- 3.2.3 The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1854) (Figure 2b) illustrates that there has been significant development in the area, predominantly along Dalbeatie Road in the form of Pearmont. Although not particularly clear it appears as two large buildings with gardens to the south west forming a narrow property adjacent to Curriestanes. The development area falls within this garden of Pearmont. The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey (1900) appears to show a broadly comparable position with Pearmont still denoted as two buildings (though they appear to be situated within the road) (Figure 2c).

3.3 *Documentary and Archival Sources*

- 3.3.1 Both the Old Statistical Accounts 1791-99 (OSA) and New Statistical Accounts 1834-45 (NSA) were consulted for Dumfries and it was noted that no specific reference was made in relation to Pearmont.

3.4 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 3.4.1 The proposed development area is situated within the immediate proximity of a Neolithic cursus monument (DG6082; NMRS NX 97NE 85) which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (AMH 5738) protected under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Although the site is not visible on the ground it was identified in 1989 through cropmarks visible on aerial photographs (Figure 3).



Figure 2a: Roy's Military Map



Figure 2b - 1st edition Ordnance Survey 1854



Figure 2c: 2nd edition Ordnance Survey 1900

- 3.4.2 So far only the eastern end of the monument has been photographed, where it is defined by an irregular ditch, which varies in size from 2m to 5m, suggesting it may have been constructed in phases rather than as one single event (a common feature of Scottish cursus sites). Both the northern and southern edges of the cursus are clearly visible (though the former is intersected by the modern road) measuring roughly 300m from east to west by 95m (at most), narrowing to 70m at the eastern terminal. The terminal appears rounded and has a gap at its central point indicative of an entrance way.
- 3.4.3 In 2002 works were undertaken along the southern edge of Park Road in advance of pipe-laying operations (Brann, 2003). Topsoil monitoring revealed both the northern (2.5m to 3m in width by 0.65m in depth) and southern ditches (5m in width by 0.6m in depth) – though both had been truncated by the modern road. Although the ditches contained no finds or other datable material, a small pit located within the interior of the cursus, contained numerous fragments of pottery and burnt bone. Radiocarbon dating of oak charcoal found within the fill of the pit produced a date of 1925 +/- 45 years BC with cumulative evidence therefore suggesting a date of late Neolithic / early Bronze Age.
- 3.4.4 In 2005 further works (Shaw 2005) were undertaken in respect of proposed development on two parcels of land adjacent to Dalbeattie Road, Dumfries (NGR refs: NX 9590 7519 and NX 9606 7530). One significant archaeological feature was identified during these works, a pit containing prehistoric pottery and charcoal. A number of other archaeological features were also revealed (pits and possible postholes) most of these though, were quite truncated and contained no finds or other datable material.
- 3.4.5 In addition in 2005 (Shaw 2005) an evaluation was carried out in respect of a proposed development on land at Starryheugh Farm (NGR ref: NX 9569 7521 - Area A and NX 9541 7520 - Area B). The evaluation comprised of sixteen trenches covering two separate areas and no significant archaeological features were identified during the course of this programme of works.
- 3.4.6 In specific reference to the development area, it can be seen from the aerial photograph (Figure 3a) that the line of the cursus has been truncated to the west by the insertion of Dalbeattie Road and Park Road as well as Curriestanes and Pearmont house. At this end of the cursus we can not clearly define its terminal point. It is conclusive to say that it is probable that the cursus would have either fallen short of or included the depression in which the development site sits. A consideration to the possibility of its inclusion is the unusual semi-circular boundary to Curriestanes farm house evident in the first edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2b). It is speculative to say that this circular boundary may be reflective of the terminus of the cursus which may have been evident at the time of construction of Curriestanes farm.

4 Findings: Evaluation trenches

- 4.1 All four trenches exhibited a fairly common stratigraphic sequence with a mid to light brown fine silty/sand topsoil up to 300mm deep, overlying a distinct orange/brown silty/sand with frequent sub angular stones throughout, extending in depth beyond 1.2m.
- 4.2 With the exception of Trenches 1 and 2 (Figure 4a & b), which were adjacent to each other, both contained field drains and what was presumably the same sewage pipe [103] [203]. The remaining two trenches were entirely blank of any features.
- 4.3 The predominant features located within the trenches were a field/rubble drain [105], a red ceramic drain [205] and two Victorian rubbish dumps [107] and [403].



Figure 3a: Curriestanes Cursus; star denotes development area, line denotes cursus (solid confident, broken inferred)



Figure 3b: Section of trench 4 showing homogenous composition of underlying subsoil [402].



Figure 4a – Trench 1



Figure 4b – Trench 2



Figure 4c – Trench 3



Figure 4d – Trench 4

5 Discussion

- 5.1 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation undertaken on land at Pearmont House, Dumfries. The evaluation trenching covered some 5% of the proposed development but uncovered no evidence of any features that were not relatively modern in character. This general lack of archaeological features is not unexpected when consideration the terrain and cartographic evidence shows the site as a garden associated with Pearmont dating to the mid nineteenth century.
- 5.2 The character of the observed cursus monument (DG6082; NMRS NX 97NE 85) noted in the aerial photographs (Figure 2) is such that it is reasonable to infer that the western terminal may have terminated at Curriestanes Farm. In doing this feature would have encapsulated the depression in which the current development is situated in however we can not dismiss the possibility that the cursus may have fallen short of the depression.
- 5.3 Conversations with the residents revealed a somewhat varied history in regards to the depression. It was indicated that the origin of this depression was created by a quarry as reflected in the name of the adjacent property of Curriestanes. It was also inferred that in the past the depression was subject to water logging (as a means of counteracting this problem a sequence of trees were planted across the site).
- 5.4 During the evaluation the opportunity to explore the potential of the quarry as well as the seasonal body of water was taken and a deeper section was cut at the end of trench 4. At a depth of 1.5 - 2m it was evident that the underlying subsoil [402] was homogenous in composition (Figure 3b) and showed no sign of a source of extraction material in the form of bedrock, sand and gravel or bands of silt indicative of the settling of seasonal bodies of water. It can therefore be stated that the likelihood of this being a natural feature resulting from glacial action is relatively high.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The archaeological works failed to identify any significant archaeological features or artefacts within the study area. Consequently, we recommend that no further archaeological works are appropriate.
- 6.2 The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Dumfries and Galloway Archaeology Service, their advisors. Confirmation that the above recommendations are acceptable should be confirmed with these bodies.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed development on land at Pearmont House, Dumfries, Dumfries & Galloway Galloway (centred on NGR ref: NX 9580 7517, Planning ref: 06/P/3/0081). An evaluation was carried out on the 16th of February 2007. The evaluation comprised four trenches covering approximately 5% of the development area.
- 7.2 A representative sample, as agreed with the Dumfries & Galloway Archaeology Service, of all of the uncovered features with archaeological potential was investigated. All four trenches exhibited a fairly common stratigraphic sequence with a mid to light brown fine silty/sand topsoil up to 300mm deep, overlying a distinct homogenous orange/brown silty/sand with frequent sub angular stones throughout, extending in depth beyond 1.2m.
- 7.3 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation.

8 References

8.1 Documentary

- | | | |
|------------|------|---|
| Brann, M L | 2003 | 'Curriestanes Cursus (Troqueer parish), Watching Brief'. Discovery and Excavation, Scotland, 4, 2003, 51 |
| Shaw, R | 2005 | Dalbeattie Road, Curriestanes, Dumfries. <i>Unpublished Data Structure Report</i> . |
| Shaw, R | 2005 | Starryheugh Farm, Curriestanes, Dumfries. <i>Unpublished Commercial Written Scheme of Investigation</i> . |
| SODev | 1994 | <i>National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning</i> , Scottish Office Development Department. |
| SOEnv | 1994 | <i>Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology</i> , Scottish Office Environmental Department. |

8.2 Cartographic

- | | | |
|---------|------------------|---|
| 1854 | Ordnance Survey | Kirkcudbrightshire, 1 st edition map 1:10560 |
| 1900 | Ordnance Survey | 2 nd edition map 1:10560 |
| 1745-55 | Roy Military map | Military Map of Dumfries Sheet 05/1b |

Appendix 1: Trench Details

Within this appendix a standardised set of data pertaining to the evaluation trenches is presented.

All measurement distances quoted along the trench measure based on the quoted orientation of the trench. See Figure 15 for trench locations.

Trench 1

Orientation:	North to South
Size:	22m by 1.6m (35.2m ²).
Topsoil depth:	220mm to 300mm.
Subsoil character	Distinct orange/brown fairly compacted fine silty/sand containing frequent sub-rounded and angular stones with numerous roots throughout [102]
Modern features:	Salt glazed sewage pipe running in a east-west direction [103]
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None.

Trench 2

Orientation:	South to northwest
Size:	20m by 1.6m (32m ²).
Topsoil depth:	200mm to 300mm.
Subsoil character	Distinct orange/brown fairly compacted fine silty/sand containing frequent sub-rounded and angular stones with numerous roots throughout [202]
Modern features:	Salt glazed sewage pipe running in a east-west direction [203] and a red ceramic drain [206]
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None.

Trench 3

Orientation:	Northwest to southeast
Size:	9m by 1.6m (14.4m ²).
Topsoil depth:	190mm to 240mm.
Subsoil character	Distinct orange/brown fairly compacted fine silty/sand containing frequent sub-rounded and angular stones with numerous roots throughout [302].
Modern features:	None.
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None.

Trench 4

Orientation:	North to South
Size:	27m by 1.6m (43.2m ²).
Topsoil depth:	220mm to 300mm.
Subsoil character	Distinct orange/brown fairly compacted fine silty/sand containing frequent sub-rounded and angular stones with numerous roots throughout [402].
Modern features:	None.
Significant features:	None.
Artefacts:	None

Appendix 2: Record Summaries

Context Summaries

No.	Trench	Interpretation	Description
101	1	Topsoil	Mid-light brown fine silty/sand with abundant plant and tree roots with occasional small stones throughout. Between 220mm and 300mm in depth.
102	1	Subsoil	Distinct orange/brown fine silty/sand with frequent sub-rounded and angular stones throughout. Also has abundant tree and plant root inclusions.
103	1	Cut	Cut for sewage pipe running in a east-west direction
104	1	Fill	Fill of cut [103]. A salt glazed ceramic pipe in a mid brown silty/sand matrix. Pipe is dead
105	1	Cut	Cut for stone rubble drain running in a north west-south east direction.
106	1	Fill	Composed of smallish sub-rounded stones on average 350mm wide.
107	1	Cut	Cut into the northern side of the trench is a Victorian rubbish dump. Cut extends into the subsoil [102] and measures 360mm wide.
108	1	Fill	Victorian rubbish dump, containing shoes, bottles, metalwork, plant pots etc.
201	2	Topsoil	Mid-light brown fine silty/sand with abundant plant and tree roots with occasional small stones throughout. Between 200mm and 300mm in depth.

202	2	Subsoil	Distinct orange/brown fine silty/sand with frequent sub-rounded and angular stones throughout. Also has abundant tree and plant root inclusions.
203	2	Cut	Cut for sewage pipe running in a northeast-southwest direction, believed to be the same as the sewage pipe [104].
204	2	Fill	Fill of cut [203]. A salt glazed ceramic pipe in a mid brown silty/sand matrix. Pipe is dead.
205	2	Cut	Cut of red ceramic drain, running in a northeast-southwest direction.
206	2	Fill	Red ceramic drain.
301	3	Topsoil	Mid-light brown fine silty/sand with abundant plant and tree roots with occasional small stones throughout. Between 190mm and 240mm in depth.
302	3	Subsoil	Distinct orange/brown fine silty/sand with frequent sub-rounded and angular stones throughout. Also has abundant tree and plant root inclusions.
401	4	Topsoil	Mid-light brown fine silty/sand with abundant plant and tree roots with occasional small stones throughout. Between 220mm and 300mm in depth.
402	4	Subsoil	Distinct orange/brown fine silty/sand with frequent sub-rounded and angular stones throughout. Also has abundant tree and plant root inclusions.
403	4	Cut	Cut into the southern side of the trench is a Victorian rubbish dump. Cut extends into the subsoil [402] and measures 360mm wide.
404	4	Fill	Victorian rubbish dump, containing mainly a selection of wine bottles.

Drawing Register

Sheet	No.	Title	Scale	Date	Author
1	001	Post-ex plan of trench 1	1:100		CS
1	002	Post-ex plan of trench 2	1:100		CS
1	003	Post-ex plan of trench 3	1:100		CS
1	004	Post-ex plan of trench 4	1:100		CS

Photographic Register- Film 1

Image	Description	From	Date
1	General of Trench 1	N	16/02/07
2	General of Trench 1	S	16/02/07
3	General of Trench 2	SE	16/02/07
4	General of Trench 2	N	16/02/07
5	General of Trench 3	NW	16/02/07
6	General of Trench 4	S	16/02/07
7	General of Trench 7	N	16/02/07
8	General shot of a section in Trench 4	NW	16/02/07
9	Victorian rubbish dump in trench 1		16/02/07
10	Remains of the external toilet	SW	16/02/07
11	General site overview	S	16/02/07
12	General site overview	S	16/02/07
13	General site overview	S	4/10/05

Appendix 3: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries & Galloway
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Pearmont House
PARISH:	Dumfries
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Claire Shaw
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NX 97NE85
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Cursus
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NX 958 751
START DATE (this season)	16 th February 2007
END DATE (this season)	16 th February 2007
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of the proposed development on land at Pearmont House, Dumfries, Dumfries & Galloway Galloway (centred on NGR ref: NX 9580 7517, Planning ref: 06/P/3/0081). An evaluation was carried out on the 16th of February 2007. The evaluation comprised four trenches covering approximately 5% of the development area.</p> <p>The works were required as the site lies close to or within the site of a cursus monument (DG6082; NX 97NE85) noted on aerial photographs of the area. No sign of the cursus was found within the evaluation area. All four trenches exhibited a fairly common stratigraphic sequence with a mid to light brown fine silty/sand topsoil up to 300mm deep, overlying a distinct homogenous orange/brown silty/sand with frequent sub angular stones throughout, extending in depth beyond 1.2m.</p> <p>No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation.</p>
PROJECT CODE:	06074
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Ian Watson
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to Dumfries and Galloway Archaeology Service and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.

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