

18-20 Gallowgate, Largs: Archaeological Mitigation

Data Structure Report



by Jack Portwood

issued 11th December 2017

on behalf of Cullis Amusements

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 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

Signed *S Portwood* Date11th December 2017....

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

Checked *LM Clinsty* Date11th December 2017....

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Introduction

1. This Archaeological Data Structure Report has been prepared on behalf of Cullis's Amusements in support of development work (an extension at the rear of the property) on land at 18-20 Gallowgate, Largs. These archaeological works are designed to mitigate any adverse impact on potential archaeological remains within the development area (Figure 2).
2. North Ayrshire Council required that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken in support of the development work (Condition 1 on Planning Ref: 16/01005/PP). The West of Scotland Archaeology Service, who advise North Ayrshire Council on archaeology matters, provided guidance on the structure of archaeological works required to mitigate any adverse impact on archaeological remains within the development area. Rathmell Archaeology Limited was appointed by the applicant to undertake the development and implementation of archaeological mitigation works for the project.
3. The Method Statement (Rees 2017) provided the detail of the works (monitoring, exclusion, excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication) for the mitigation pertaining to ground breaking works and hence the direct physical impact on buried sediments.
4. All works undertaken complied with Rathmell Archaeology Ltd.'s standard working procedures and West of Scotland Archaeology Service's (WoSAS) Standards. This Data Structure Report is designed to meet the requirements of WoSAS.

Archaeological and Historical Background

5. As has been identified by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service:

The area that is proposed for development under this application is located within the defined area of archaeological potential associated with the historic settlement of Largs. Little is known about early Largs, which was licensed as a burgh in 1629, but which may well predate this time as a settlement. For example, the parish church (at the site of Skelmorlie Aisle) is on record in 1263, and it is probable that some form of civil settlement would have existed in the vicinity of this structure. As so little is known about the history of Largs, the date and extent of early settlement is also not known, but an area of archaeological potential has been drawn up on the basis of street pattern and information contained on early maps. The proposed development is within the extent of this area of potential, and as a result, could disturb, damage or destroy archaeological remains of earlier periods which may be present on site. WoSAS response 4/11/16

6. Of note, the historic Ordnance Surveys maps (Figures 1a and b) record a mound or tumulus (WoSAS PIN: 5760, Canmore ID: 441185) behind Gallowgate - the development area may impinge on the mapped southwestern circuit of this feature. Accounts state that human bones were found here during the building of an outhouse; following this the mound was partly excavated in 1873 by Dr J S Phene. He reportedly found burnt clay, oak charcoal, degraded flakes of copper or bronze as well as calcined (burnt) bone. Dr Phene linked these burials to the Battle of Largs (in 1263) though this is not confirmed. A local tradition also purports that the mound, called the Gallowhill, was used for executions in later centuries.
7. This mound has been reported as a sub-oval, flat-topped mound that is grass covered with a tree planted on it. It measures some 10m by 8m across the top and about 24m in diameter overall, its average height is 5m. Construction appears to be of earth and shingle. Monitoring work in 1995 on the extension of 14 Gallowgate failed to locate any significant archaeological material.

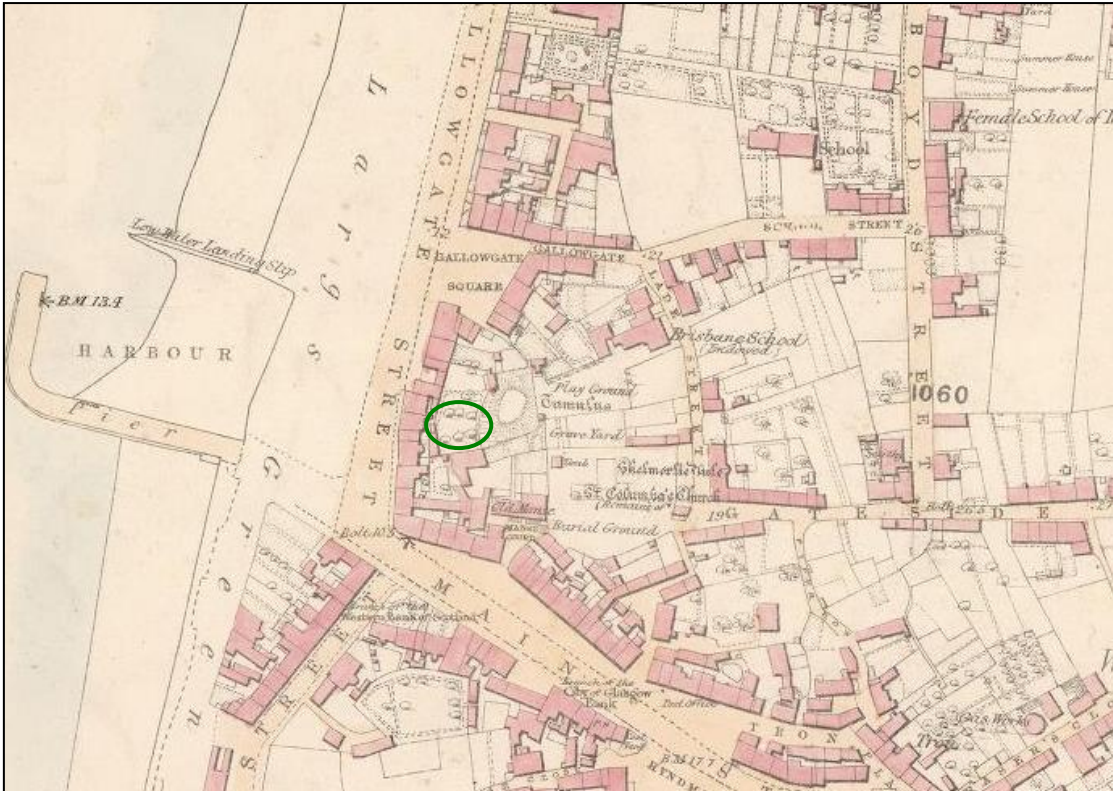


Figure 1a: 6-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1857). The green circle denotes the development area.

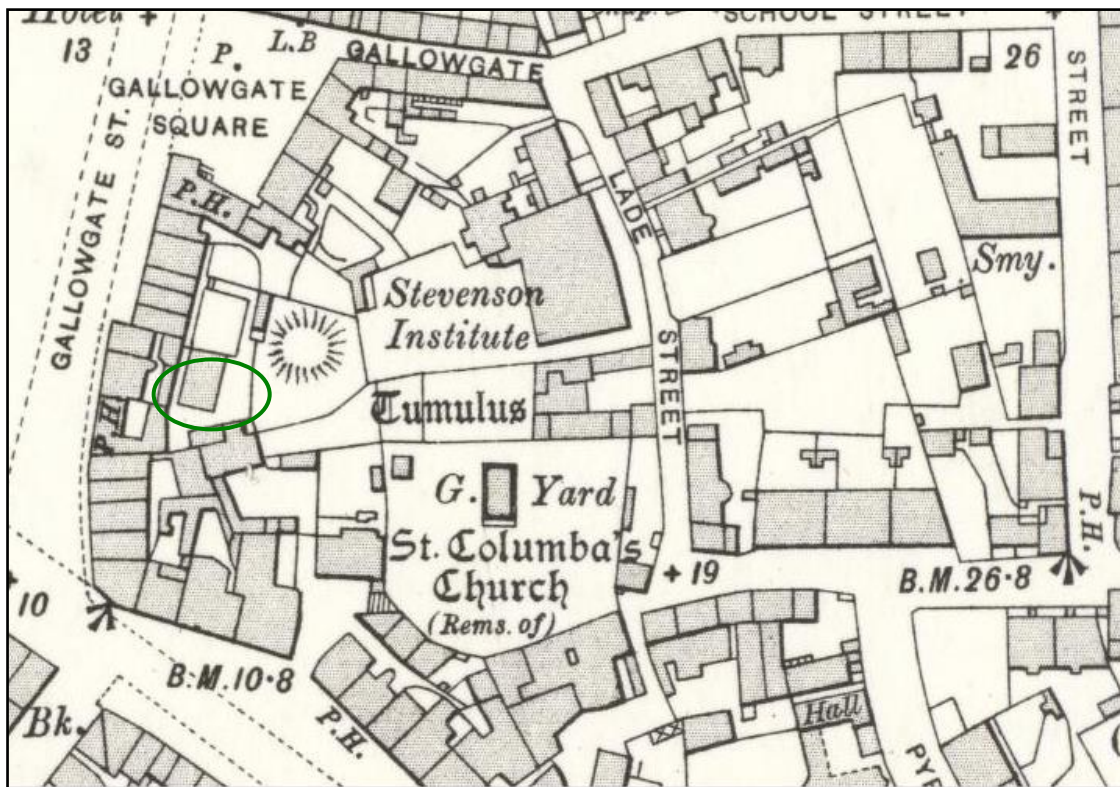


Figure 1b: 1909 revised Ordnance Survey. The green circle denotes the development area.

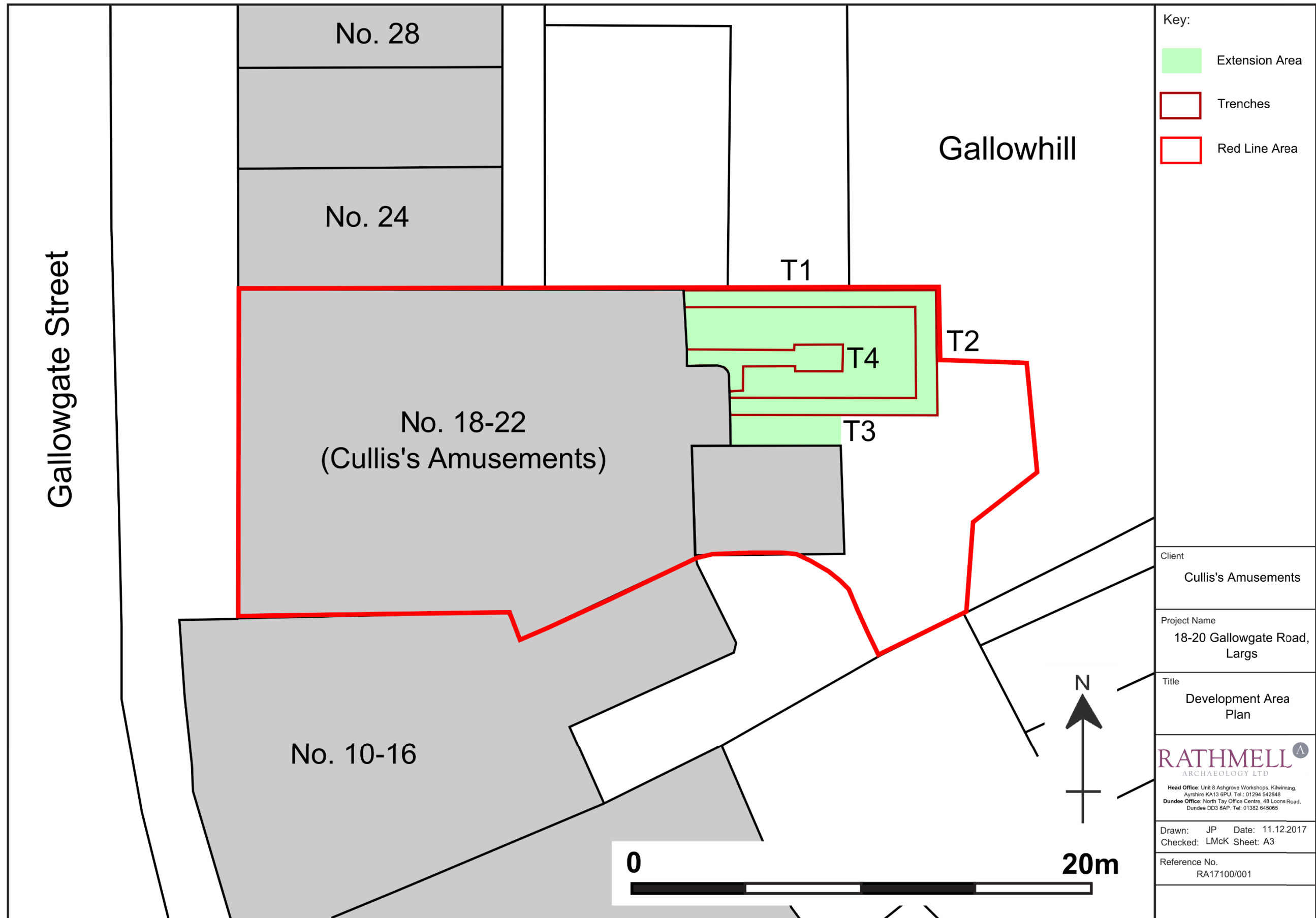


Figure 2: Block plan showing development area as prepared by LMA Architects and approved by North Ayrshire Council

Findings

8. The project works involved the main site contractor stripping the building footprint and locating existing services under archaeological supervision. The excavated area was within a yard to the rear of 18-20 Gallowgate road and was orientated in an east-west direction. The yard area, like the gardens and yards of the adjoining properties off Gallowgate Road, had been cut into the western side of Gallowhill (Figure 2).
9. Four trenches were monitored within the excavated area. Three of these, Trenches 1-3, formed the northern, southern and eastern walls of the building extensions footprint and the final one, Trench 4, was excavated so as to identify existing services and so that they could be incorporated into the new extension build. Trench 1 ran east-west along the northern extent, Trench 2 ran north-south along the eastern extent, Trench 3 running east-west to the south and Trench 4 a service trench running east-west.
10. The excavation works started with the removal of a tarmac layer (001), which had a thickness range of between 0.03m-0.05m. Beneath the tarmac layer lay a (type 2) gravel foundation layer, (002), which had a thickness range of between 0.2m-0.28m. This layer was disturbed in places and contained very occasional fragments of ceramic building material (CBM). This gravel layer was found overlying the natural subsoil in all of the four trenches.
11. Trench 1 (Figures 3a) was orientated in an east-west direction running along the northern extent of the development area. The trench was 11m long, 0.7m wide and had a depth range of between 0.3m-0.5m. The northern edge of Trench 1 was bounded by a modern wall, [003], which was constructed, from yellowish-brown coloured, modern bricks bonded with a fine grained grey mortar. The wall was 1.7m in high and 0.3m wide. The wall, [003], had been constructed onto a thin concrete foundation pad (005), with a thickness range of between 0.08m-0.11m. This pad ran the entire length of the wall and projected outwards to the south underlying gravel layer, (002), and overlying natural subsoil layers, (004 and 006). Subsoil layer (004) was located in the western half of Trench 1 and consisted of a moderately compacted, mid red brown orange, silt sand. Subsoil layer (006) was located in the western half of Trench 1 and consisted of a mid-orange-yellow brown sand/silt and was excavated to a depth of between 0.04-0.19m.
12. Trench 2 (Figures 3b) was orientated in a north-south direction running along the eastern extent of the development area. The trench was 4.5m long, 0.7m wide and had a depth range of between 0.35m-0.4m. The eastern edge of Trench 2 was bounded by modern wall, [003], and the thin concrete foundation pad (005) was noted at the trenches northernmost end underlying the gravel layer (002). Subsoil layer (006) was noted at the trenches northernmost end and subsoil layer (004) was noted within the rest of the trench underlying the gravel (002).
13. Trench 3 (Figures 4a) was orientated in an east-west direction running along the southern extent of the development area. The trench was 9m long, 0.7m wide and had a depth range of between 0.35m-0.4m. Subsoil layer (004) was noted throughout the trench underlying the gravel layer (002).
14. Trench 4 (Figures 4b) was excavated to locate existing services in the yard area and was orientated in an east-west direction ending at an existing manhole and offshoot trench which ran in a north to south direction, branching off the main trench about a third of the way along its length. The main trench was 7m long, 0.7m-1.2 wide and had a depth range of between 0.39m-0.7m. The offshoot trench was 1.6m long, 0.5m-0.7m wide and had a depth range of between 0.4m-0.48m. The trench revealed a large ceramic pipe which ran in an east-west direction, from the existing rear of the building to the manhole. There was a junction a third of the way along where a pipe ran off to the south and another towards where a small access cover lay to the northwest. A large amount of ceramic building material and rubble was seen surrounding the pipes indicating where the pipe trenches had been cut through the natural subsoil (004). No evidence of the service trenches was noted within the gravel layer (002) suggesting the service trenches predated the existing yard.



Figure 3a: View of Trench 1 and wall [003] from the W.



Figure 3b: View of Trench 2 and wall [003] from the W.



Figure 4a: View of Trench 3 from the E.



Figure 4b: View of Trench 4 before the removal of the existing manhole. From the S.

Discussion

15. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were identified within the monitored area. One of the reasons for this could be the fact that the yard at the rear of Cullis's Amusements, like the yards of the neighbouring properties had been cut into the western side of Gallowhill, removing any possible archaeology which may have been located there. Another reason for the absence of archaeology could be due to the urbanised nature of the immediate area which may also have been responsible for the removal of subsurface archaeology.

Recommendations

16. This Data Structure Report covers archaeological works carried out on behalf of Cullis's Amusements in support of development work (an extension at the rear of the property) on land at 18-20 Gallowgate, Largs (Condition 1 on Planning Ref: 16/01005/PP).
17. The archaeological monitoring works uncovered no significant archaeological features or artefacts within the development area and as such it is recommended that no further work should be carried out.
18. The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with the representative of the West of Scotland Archaeological Service.

Conclusion

19. This Data Structure Report covers archaeological works carried out on behalf of Cullis's Amusements in support of development work (an extension at the rear of the property) on land at 18-20 Gallowgate, Largs (Condition 1 on Planning Ref: 16/01005/PP).
20. The monitoring works focused on the excavation of the extensions building footprint and an exploratory trench excavated so as to locate existing services. These excavations uncovered a modern foundation gravel layer which had formed the yard behind Cullis's Amusements building which overlay disturbed natural subsoil layers.
21. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

Acknowledgements

22. The author would like to thank Cullis Amusements for allowing us the chance to carry out these works and also to Paul Robins from the West of Scotland Archaeology Service who gave guidance throughout. The author would also like to thank the team from J.C Morton homes for their assistance with onsite works. Thanks should also go to Liam McKinstry from Rathmell Archaeology Limited who kindly edited this report.

Appendix 1: Registers

Within this appendix are all registers pertaining to works on-site during the watching brief.

Context Register

Context No.	Area/ Trench	Type	Description	Interpretation
001	Trench 2, 3	Deposit	0.03m-0.05m thick tarmac layer.	Existing tarmac surface of road/yard
002	Trench 1-4	Deposit	Loosely compacted grey gravel (type 2)	Foundation for tarmac road/yard
003	Trench 1	Structure	Modern wall, 0.3m wide 1.7m high	Retaining wall/ boundary wall.
004	Trench 1-4	Deposit	Moderately compacted, mid red brown orange silt sand. Excavated to depth of between 0.05-0.22m.	Disturbed Natural subsoil
005	Trench 1	Deposit	Concrete/ ground layer 0.08m-0.11m thick	Foundation for wall (003). Overlies natural.
006	Trench 1, 2	Deposit	Mid orange-yellow brown sand/silt. Excavated to depth of between 0.04-0.19m.	Disturbed natural subsoil.

Photographic Register

Image No.	Digital No.	Description	From	Date
01	8941	General view of site.	W	27/11/17
02	8942	General view of site.	W	27/11/17
03	8943	Mid excavation shot of service trench (near Collis's).	S	27/11/17
04	8944	Mid excavation shot of service trench (near Collis's).	W	27/11/17
05	8945	Mid excavation shot of north foundation trench (west).	W	27/11/17
06	8946	Mid excavation shot of north foundation trench (west).	S	27/11/17
07	8947	Mid excavation shot of north foundation trench (middle).	S	27/11/17
08	8948	Mid excavation shot of north foundation trench.	W	27/11/17
09	8949	General view of site.	E	27/11/17
10	8950	Mid excavation shot of north foundation trench (east).	S	27/11/17
11	8951	Post excavation shot of north foundation trench.	E	27/11/17
12	8952	Mid excavation shot of service trench and manhole.	S	27/11/17
13	8953	Mid excavation shot of service trench and manhole.	S	27/11/17
14	8954	Mid excavation shot of service trench and manhole.	S	27/11/17
15	8955	Mid excavation shot of service trench and manhole.	S	27/11/17
16	8956	Mid excavation shot of service trench and manhole.	S	27/11/17
17	8957	Post excavation shot of service trench with manhole removed.	S	27/11/17
18	8958	General shot of the rear of Collis's where it's cut into	S	27/11/17

Image No.	Digital No.	Description	From	Date
		mound.		
19	8959	Mid excavation shot of south trench.	N	27/11/17
20	8960	Mid excavation shot of south trench.	ENE	27/11/17
21	8961	Post excavation shot of south trench.	WNW	27/11/17
22	8962	Mid excavation shot of east trench.	W	27/11/17
23	8963	Mid excavation shot of east trench.	W	27/11/17
24	8964	Post excavation shot of east side of site.	WNW	27/11/17
25	8965	Post excavation shot of south and east trenches.	W	27/11/17
26	8966	Post excavation shot of south and east trenches.	E	27/11/17
27	8967	Post excavation shot of south and east trenches.	E	27/11/17

Appendix 2: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	North Ayrshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	18-20 Gallowgate, Largs.
PROJECT CODE:	RA17100
PARISH:	Largs
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Jack Portwood
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Rathmell Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	Canmore ID: 441185
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Mound
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 220219, 659467
START DATE (this season)	27 th November 2017
END DATE (this season)	27 th November 2017
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (may include information from other fields)	<p>This Data Structure Report covers archaeological works carried out on behalf of Cullis's Amusements in support of development work (an extension at the rear of the property) on land at 18-20 Gallowgate, Largs (Condition 1 on Planning Ref: 16/01005/PP).</p> <p>The monitoring works focused on the excavation of the extensions building footprint and an exploratory trench excavated so as to locate existing services. These excavations uncovered a modern foundation gravel layer which had formed the yard behind Cullis's Amusements building which overlay disturbed natural subsoil layers.</p> <p>No significant archaeological features or artefacts were identified.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Cullis Amusements
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Unit 8 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
E MAIL:	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Report to West of Scotland Archaeology Service and archive to the National Record of the Historic Environment

Contact Details

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

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