

**Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire:  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Data Structure Report

by Katie Sludden

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**Rathmell**

Archaeology Ltd

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Signed ..... Date .....

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Checked ..... Date .....

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## 1 Overview

- 1.1 This Data Structure Report has been prepared for Bryce Boyd Planning Solutions on behalf of Mr. W Ritchie in respect of a proposed dwelling house (App. Ref: P/PPA/350/314) to be erected at Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire centred NGR: NS 4576 6601.
- 1.2 The archaeological investigative works, carried out on the 17th January, 2008, were designed to inform any necessary mitigation of impact on the archaeological remains within the development area. The investigative works covered a currently open grassed field extending to roughly 0.11ha where two evaluation trenches were opened.
- 1.3 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 Renfrewshire Council and the West of Scotland Archaeology Service through an addendum to the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation should the development proceed.
- 1.4 Rathmell Archaeology Ltd was appointed by Bryce Boyd Planning Solutions on behalf of Mr. W Ritchie to undertake the development and implementation of archaeological mitigation works during the development at Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire. The West of Scotland Archaeology Service who advise Renfrewshire Council on archaeological matters has provided guidance on the structure of archaeological investigations required on this site during development works.

## 2 Project Works

- 2.1 The programme of works, agreed with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, commenced with an archaeological evaluation through machine cut trenches extending to an axial trench through the available portions of the footprint of the house and a short perpendicular trench running towards the access road to the east. These works were undertaken in keeping with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation with the on-site works taking place on the 17th January, 2008.
- 2.2 The site is comprised of an area between a current dwelling, Braeview and to the North a commercial farming unit, Meadowview (Figure 2). The plot also lies between two access roads running south-north from Middleton Road to Blackstoun Farm. The area was evaluated with 48m<sup>2</sup> of linear trenching following the centre-line of the proposed structure.
- 2.3 Some alterations to the first trench were made in order to explore a possible wall feature when some hand-cut bricks were found in the plough soil (see Figure 2). Trench 2 was connected to Trench 1 six metres from its' southern end, so that the section between the trenches did not collapse.
- 2.4 The majority of exposed features within the trenches were investigated and evaluated to determine their archaeological significance, as stated in the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation. 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.

## 3 Findings: Desktop study

- 3.1 Blackstoun is located at the meeting of Black Cart Water and a small tributary running south towards the A737 road, about 1 mile Northwest of Paisley town centre. The modern ascription of "Blackstoun" refers to an area comprising the agricultural buildings and residence belonging to the current farmstead. Blackstoun was founded as a medieval grange – a farm complex created by ecclesiastical institutions (eg abbeys) in the management of their extensive estates. However, the size of the modern buildings would make any pin point

location of the old Grange problematic, since the historic map sources do not depict the buildings with any great accuracy.

- 3.2 The Grange is first mentioned in 1460 as belonging to the Abbots of Paisley Abbey. The Grange would have been a summer residence for the Abbots, built by George Shaw in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (Moisley et al, 1962). After the reformation, James, Earl of Abercorn, made improvements and alterations to the Grange but it subsequently burnt to the ground in the 1730s. Thereafter a Mansion (NMRS No.: NS46NE33) was built but has since been demolished (Mitchell, 1906). These buildings can be located within the grounds of the present farmstead but due to its size they cannot be placed accurately. It is likely that the original Grange lies beneath the present residential buildings while the Mansion-house may survive further south near the current bridge over the river.
- 3.3 The first depiction of the Grange occurs on Roy's map (1747-1777, Figure 1a) where several structures are depicted along with an extended land boundary indicating a farmstead there (NMRS No.: NS46NE20). Examining cartographic sources we can see that the development area and the surrounding fields have remained virtually undeveloped since the 1850s. The present Farm first appears on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1855 showing the house with a garden to the north and another structure to the immediate southwest (This may be the Mansion house). The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (1855) shows the existing house and garden with what appears to be the same land boundaries as the present day. The only addition to the house is the extension of the buildings from 1855 onwards (Figure 1f).
- 3.4 It is likely that the present house sits upon the medieval precursor of The Grange. The archaeological remains present may relate to the presence of outworks, middens, ancillary structures and other comparable material related to the farmstead over the four hundred years of the farm's usage there.



Figure 1a: Roy's Map, 1747-1755



Figure 1b: Ordnance Survey, 1<sup>st</sup> edition



Figure 1c: Ordnance Survey, 2nd edition

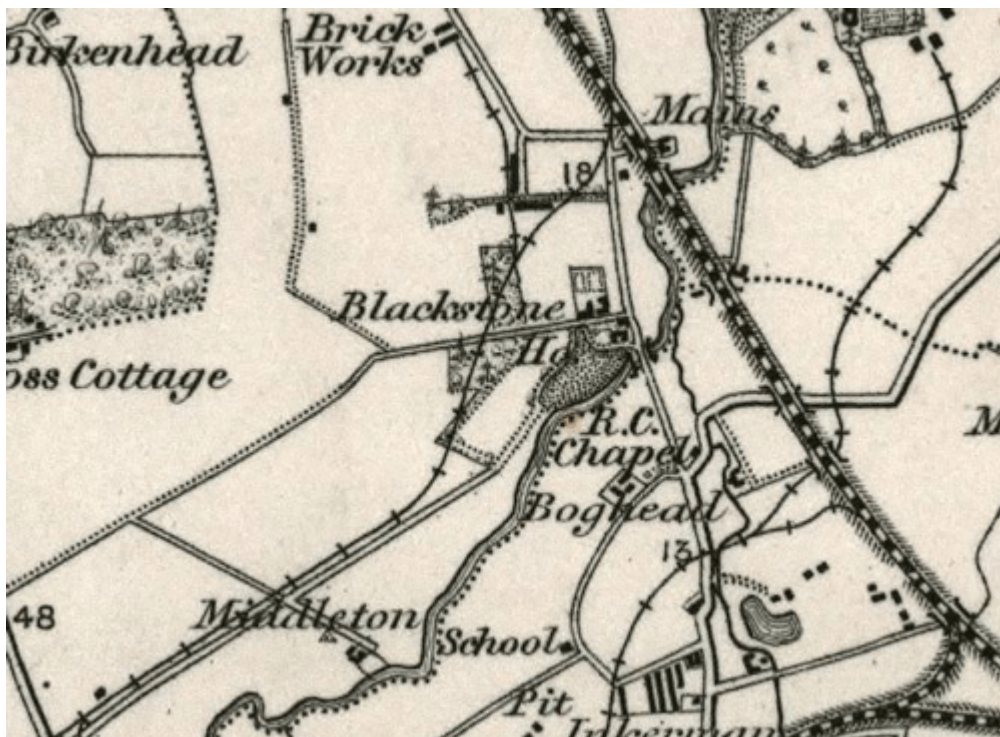


Figure 1d: Ordnance Survey, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

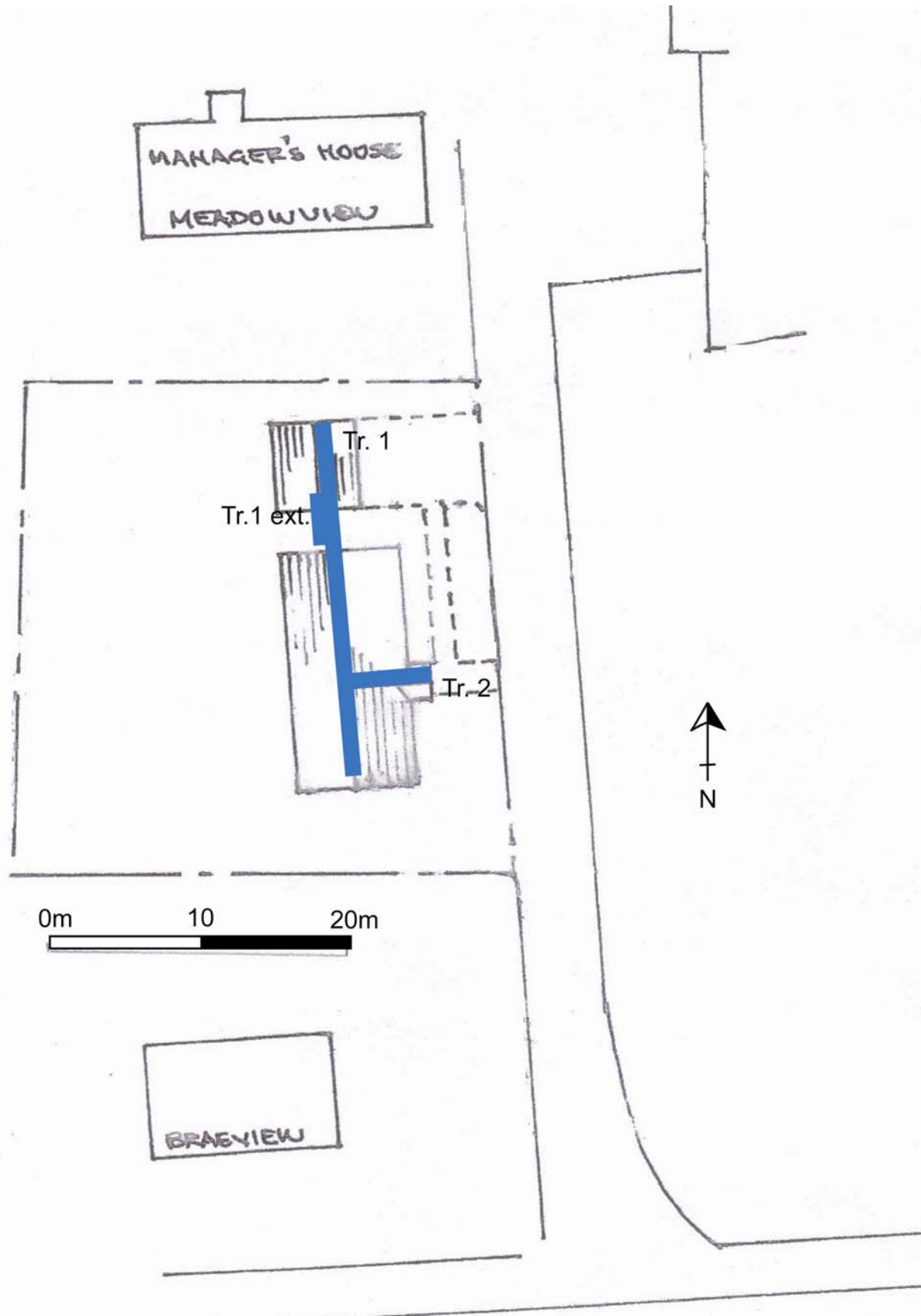


Figure 2: Location of Evaluation Trenches within the existing development area.



## 4 Findings: Evaluation trenches

- 4.1 Two trenches were cut over the plot totalling a basal area of 48m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2). The trenches exhibited a common stratigraphic sequence with moderately compact humic dark grey silty topsoil (001), up to 550mm deep, overlying moderately compact mid- brown silty clay (002) up to 610mm deep. This deposit is most likely to be the remnants of plough-soil or is an area of leeching between the topsoil and natural interface. The natural subsoil (003) consisted of compact light grey and brown clay with yellow clay lenses and was consistent across both trenches.
- 4.2 There was one field drain (004) crossing both trenches NW-SE. The drain was an early Victorian red ceramic drain, known as a 'Mug' drain which used a modified form of 'Mug'-tile (Cox, 2004, 181). This would seem to be representative of the long-term agricultural usage of the site.
- 4.3 Two areas containing hand cast red-brick were discovered, one seemingly rubble debris within the plough soil but the other seems to be an early drain in-filled, possibly later, with hand cut brick, drain (005). The base of this feature was fairly shallow and waterlogged which would support this idea.
- 4.4 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation.



Fig. 3a: General Shot Pre-Ex of Site



Fig.3b: Post-Ex Trench 1



Fig.3c: Post ex of extension to Trench 1



Fig.3d: Post-Ex Trench 2



Fig. 3e: S Facing Section from Trench 2



Fig. 3f Close up of drain (005)



Fig. 3g: Backfilled trenches

## 5 Discussion

- 5.1 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation at Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire. In addition the trenching failed to locate or recover any artefacts that suggested the presence of any pre-19<sup>th</sup> century activity within the proposed development area.
- 5.2 The field drains indicate a clear attempt to improve drainage. This would support the assertion that the ground has been mainly used as agricultural land since the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Presented below are our provisional recommendations for archaeological mitigation in the event of the development proceeding. These recommendations are framed with reference to the issued planning guidance. The appropriateness and acceptability of our recommendations rest with Renfrewshire Council and the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, their advisors. Confirmation that the below recommendations are acceptable should be confirmed with these bodies prior to the implementation of any development works whose appropriateness may rely on these recommendations.
- 6.2 The investigative works have failed to identify any significant archaeology and the character of the ground was such as to suggest that these findings are a reasonable representation of the ground to be impacted upon by the development. Consequently we recommend that the development will not have an identifiable adverse impact on archaeology and hence no further archaeological works are appropriate in the course of the agreed development.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of a proposed dwelling house (App. Ref: P/PPA/350/314) to be erected at Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire centred NGR: NS 4576 6601. An evaluation was carried out on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2008. The evaluation comprised two trenches comprising an axial trench through the house footprint and a perpendicular extension, i.e. the ground to be impacted upon by the development.
- 7.2 A representative sample, as agreed with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, of all of the uncovered features with archaeological potential was investigated. The trenches exhibited a common stratigraphic sequence with topsoil up to 550mm in depth overlying light grey and brown clay with yellow clay lenses. Two field drains were encountered indicating an attempt at drainage were apparent throughout the field.
- 7.3 No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation. In addition no artefacts were recovered that suggested site activity prior to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 8 References

### *Documentary*

Cox, Adrian	2004	<i>Agricultural Drainage exposed: observations recorded during a watching brief on the construction of a water pipeline in Angus, Tayside and Fife Archaeological Journal, Vol. 10, p177-82.</i>
Mitchell, A & Clark, J T,	1906	<i>Geographical collections relating to Scotland, Edinburgh, Vol.2, 206</i>
Moisley et al	1962	<i>The Counties of Refrew and Bute: The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Collins.</i>
SODev	1994	<i>National Planning Policy Guideline 5, Archaeology and planning, Scottish Office Development Department.</i>
SOEnv	1994	<i>Planning Advice Note 42, Archaeology, Scottish Office Environmental Department.</i>
<i>Cartographic</i>		
Ordnance Survey	1856-1891	One-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, 1 <sup>st</sup> Edition
Ordnance Survey	1885-1900	One-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition
Ordnance Survey	1903-1912	One-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition
Roy, William	1747-1755	Roy's Military Survey of Scotland.

## 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 8 for trench locations.

### *Trench 1*

Orientation:	North to South
Size:	1.6m by 25m (40m <sup>2</sup> )
Topsoil depth:	370mm to 550mm
Subsoil character	Directly below the topsoil (001) across the whole of the trench lies subsoil (002), a moderately compacted brown silty clay, for a depth of 450-550mm. Below this lies subsoil (003), lies a very compact light grey and brown natural clay with some yellow clay lenses. This is present for the rest of the trench for a depth of 450-610mm.
Modern features:	Red tile drain (004) runs NNW-SSE across the trench at 13.9m until 18m when it crosses into Trench 2 until 19.5m. Measures 200mm wide at a depth of 600mm. Hand cast bricks were found in the topsoil at 4.5m from the north end of the trench which was subsequently extended by 1.6m for 3m (4.8m <sup>2</sup> ), but no features were encountered. Hand cut bricks were again found within a drain (005) at 11.2m from the north end of Trench 1.
Significant features:	None
Artefacts:	None

### *Trench 2*

Orientation:	East to West
Size:	1.6m by 5m (8m <sup>2</sup> ).
Topsoil depth:	4500mm to 600mm
Subsoil character:	Directly below the topsoil (001) across the whole of the trench lies subsoil (002), a moderately compacted brown silty clay, for a depth of 450-550mm. Below this lies subsoil (003), lies a very compact light grey and brown natural clay with some yellow clay lenses. This is present for the rest of the trench for a depth of 450-610mm.
Modern features:	Red tile drain (004) runs NNW-SSE across the trench at 0m-1m from Trench 1. Measures 200mm wide, at a depth of 600mm.
Significant features:	None
Artefacts:	None

## Appendix 2: Registers

*Context Register*

No.	Trench	Interpretation	Description
001	All	Topsoil	Moderately compact humic dark grey crumbly sandy silt. Contains modern ceramic, glass and plastic but infrequently.
002	All	Subsoil- plough-soil	Brown silty clay, crumbly plough soil.
003	All	Subsoil- Natural	Very compact greasy light grey and brown clays with yellow clay lenses. Contains infrequent yellow sandstone.
004	All	Field Drain	Red Ceramic field drain, horse-shoe shaped in section on a flat tile base, known as a 'Mug' Drain. 7.5m long by 20cm wide by 25cm deep. Was broken but reinstated before backfilling.
005	Trench 1	Field Drain	Rubble drain in-filled with hand-cut bricks, possibly a repair to an older field drain. Only exists partially in trench 1- terminal excavated. 30cm long by 25cm wide running east into E section of trench 1. Waterlogged at its' base.

*Photographic Register*

Image	Description	From	Date
1	General pre ex site shot	NE	17/01/08
2	General pre ex site shot	NW	17/01/08
3	General pre ex site shot	NW	17/01/08
4	General pre ex site shot	SW	17/01/08
5	General pre ex site shot	SW	17/01/08
6	Post Ex Trench 1	N	17/01/08
7	Post Ex of Extension to Trench 1	N	17/01/08
8	Post Ex of Extension to Trench 1	N	17/01/08
9	Post Ex Trench 2	W	17/01/08
10	Post Ex Trench 1	S	17/01/08
11	General shot Trench 1 and 2	SW	17/01/08
12	W Facing Sample Section of Trench 1	W	17/01/08
13	S Facing Sample Section of Trench 2	W	17/01/08
14	Gen Shot Post Ex	SW	17/01/08

15	Gen Shot Post Ex	NW	17/01/08
16	Hand cast Bricks in Poss. Drain	W	17/01/08
17	Hand cast Bricks in Poss. Drain	W	17/01/08
18	Hand cast Bricks in Poss. Drain after some removed	W	17/01/08
19	Hand cast Bricks in Poss. Drain after some removed	W	17/01/08
20	Rubble and bricks in topsoil	N	17/01/08
21	General shots of fields to the North of farmstead (panning e-w)	SE	17/01/08
22	General shots of fields to the North of farmstead (panning e	N	17/01/08
23	General shots of fields to the North of farmstead (panning e	WNW	17/01/08
24	General shots of fields to the North of farmstead (panning e	SSW	17/01/08
25	General shots of fields to the North of farmstead (panning e	NW	17/01/08
26	Backfilled- reinstated trenches	S	17/01/08
27	Backfilled- reinstated trenches	SE	17/01/08

*Drawing Register*

Sheet	No.	Trench	Title	Scale	Date	Author
1	1	1	Plan of trench 1	1:50	17/01/08	KS
1	2	1	Sample Section of trench 1	1:10	17/01/08	KS

## Appendix 3: Discovery &amp; Excavation in Scotland

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Renfrewshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Blackstoun Farm
<b>PARISH:</b>	Kilbarchan
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Katie Sludden
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Rathmell Archaeology Limited
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NS46NE20, NS46NE33
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	None
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NS 457 660
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2008
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2008
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	None
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (may include information from other fields)	<p>A programme of archaeological investigative works was undertaken in respect of a proposed housing development within land at Blackstoun Farm, Renfrewshire. The evaluation comprised two trenches covering approximately 13% of the total area to be impacted upon by the development.</p> <p>The trenches exhibited a common stratigraphic sequence with topsoil up to 550mm in depth overlying mixed clays up to 610mm deep. No significant archaeological features were identified during the course of the archaeological evaluation.</p>
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	RA07090
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Mr. W Richie
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	10 Ashgrove Workshops, Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 6PU
<b>E MAIL:</b>	contact@rathmell-arch.co.uk
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	Report to West of Scotland Archaeology Service and archive to National Monuments Record of Scotland.



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