

# St. Ninian's Primary School, Stirling: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

AOC Project 23048  
9<sup>th</sup> April 2015



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## St. Ninian's Primary School, Stirling:

# Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

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**National Grid Reference (NGR):** NS 7919 9185 (Centred)

**AOC Project No:** 23048

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015

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## Abstract

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This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in relation to a proposed development of a new school on the current site of St Ninian's Primary School, Stirling, to the immediate north of Torbrex Road and to the south of Stirling High School.

The evaluation required the excavation of two 20 m long trenches to identify the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, with the particular aim of establishing the presence or absence of a Roman Road.

No significant archaeological features or artefacts were located within the evaluation trenches.

The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that the Roman Road in the vicinity of the development area does not pass through the evaluation area.

No further works are considered necessary within the development area. This recommendation requires the approval of the Stirling Council Planning Officer (Archaeology).

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group have been commissioned by Stirling Council to undertake an archaeological evaluation at St Ninians Primary School prior to the erection of a new primary school within the existing school grounds. The extent of the required archaeological works has been determined by the Stirling Council.

## 1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development site lies within an urban setting to the immediate north of Torbrex Road and to the south of Stirling High School. To the east there are residential properties that face onto Berkeley Road. The development area is centred on NGR: NS 7919 9185.

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

2.1 The main archaeological site that is liable to be affected by this development is a possible Roman Road (HER id 1085.04). This Roman Road is aligned north to south and may pass through the eastern side of the development landtake.

2.2 The Stirling HER and the RCAHMS do not list any other known sites as lying within the development area however there are four historical findspots from the general locality of the development area that suggest the potential for the survival of hitherto unknown subsurface prehistoric remains. Firstly, there are prehistoric coarse stone tools in the form of a granite battle axe (NMRS No. NS79SE 37) and a ground stone axe (NMRS No. NS79SE 77). This is accompanied by a spearhead (NMRS No. NS79SE 36) and then lastly sherds from cinerary Urn (NMRS No. NS79SE 76) both of which probably date to the Late Bronze Age.

# 2 OBJECTIVE

2.1 The objective of the archaeological evaluation was to identify the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, with the particular aim of establishing the presence or absence of a Roman Road.

# 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The evaluation was initially proposed to excavate two 20 m long trenches in the development area. The footprint of the trenches were first cut through the tarmac with a floor cutter to limit the damage to the existing tarmac surface. The tarmac was deposited in a skip as per the clients' request.

3.2 All excavation was undertaken by a JCB 3CX excavator with 1.6 m wide ditching bucket. Excavation was undertaken in shallow units/spits until the first significant archaeological horizon. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist and according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures, and as per the methodology within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2015). The trenches were backfilled on completion of the evaluation.

## 4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 8th April 2015. Weather conditions were good, allowing for good archaeological visibility throughout the evaluation. In total, 32 m of linear trench was opened aligned as per layout in Figure 1. Trench 2 was shortened to allow access to geotechnical surveyors currently working on the site and to avoid an unmarked electrical service (shown in Figure 1).
- 4.2 Trench 1 was oriented NE-SW and measured 20.0 m x 1.6 m wide x up to 0.64 m deep. It consisted of tarmac up to 0.1 m thick, overlying 'type 1' hardcore up to 0.2 m thick. The B-horizon consisted of compact dark brown/grey sandy silt with inclusions of modern ceramics and glass. A buried cable was encountered in Trench 1, 4.9 m from the SW end of the trench. This cable did not register on the Cable Avoidance Tool scan prior to excavation and is believed to be associated with the old transportable school buildings that used to be located in this area and as such, is disused.
- 4.3 Trench 2 was oriented NE-SW approximately 7.0 m SE of Trench 1 and measured 12.0 m x 1.6 m x up to 0.72 m deep. The B-horizon consisted of compact dark brown/black sandy silt with inclusions of modern ceramics, glass and rubbish including marbles, food wrappers and plastic bottles. A c.19<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pit was encountered 0.52 m from the SE end of Trench 2 and contained a possible bullet casing and a glass bottle. This pit measured 0.35 m in diameter x 0.33 m deep. Two walls were also encountered, Wall 1 (Plate 1) was located 3.0 m from the SE end and Wall 2 was located 2.6 m from the NW end. These walls were only one course thick and constructed of slabs measuring 0.32 m wide and roughly 0.5 m long and 0.1 m deep. It is likely they represent the foundations for the transportable buildings previously existing in this area.
- 4.4 No significant archaeological features or artefacts were located within the evaluation trenches. Close examination of the sections within the open trenches did not reveal any evidence for any type of road surface or remains of a Roman road.

## 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that the Roman Road in the vicinity of the development area does not pass through the evaluation area. The walls encountered in Trench 2 are likely to represent the foundations for the transportable buildings previously existing in this area. This is further demonstrated by the school rubbish located around these walls (Plate 2).
- 5.2 No further archaeological works are deemed necessary within this part of the development area. This recommendation will require the approval of the Planning Officer (Archaeology) for Stirling Council.

## 6 REFERENCES

AOC Archaeology 2015, *St. Ninian's Primary School, Stirling: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation* Unpublished AOC project design

Scottish Government 2014 *Scottish Planning Policy*.

Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*.





**Plate 1 – Wall 1, Trench 2**



**Plate 2 – Modern rubbish surrounding Wall 1, Trench 2**



**Plate 3 - General view of Trench 1**



**Plate 4 - General view of Trench 2**

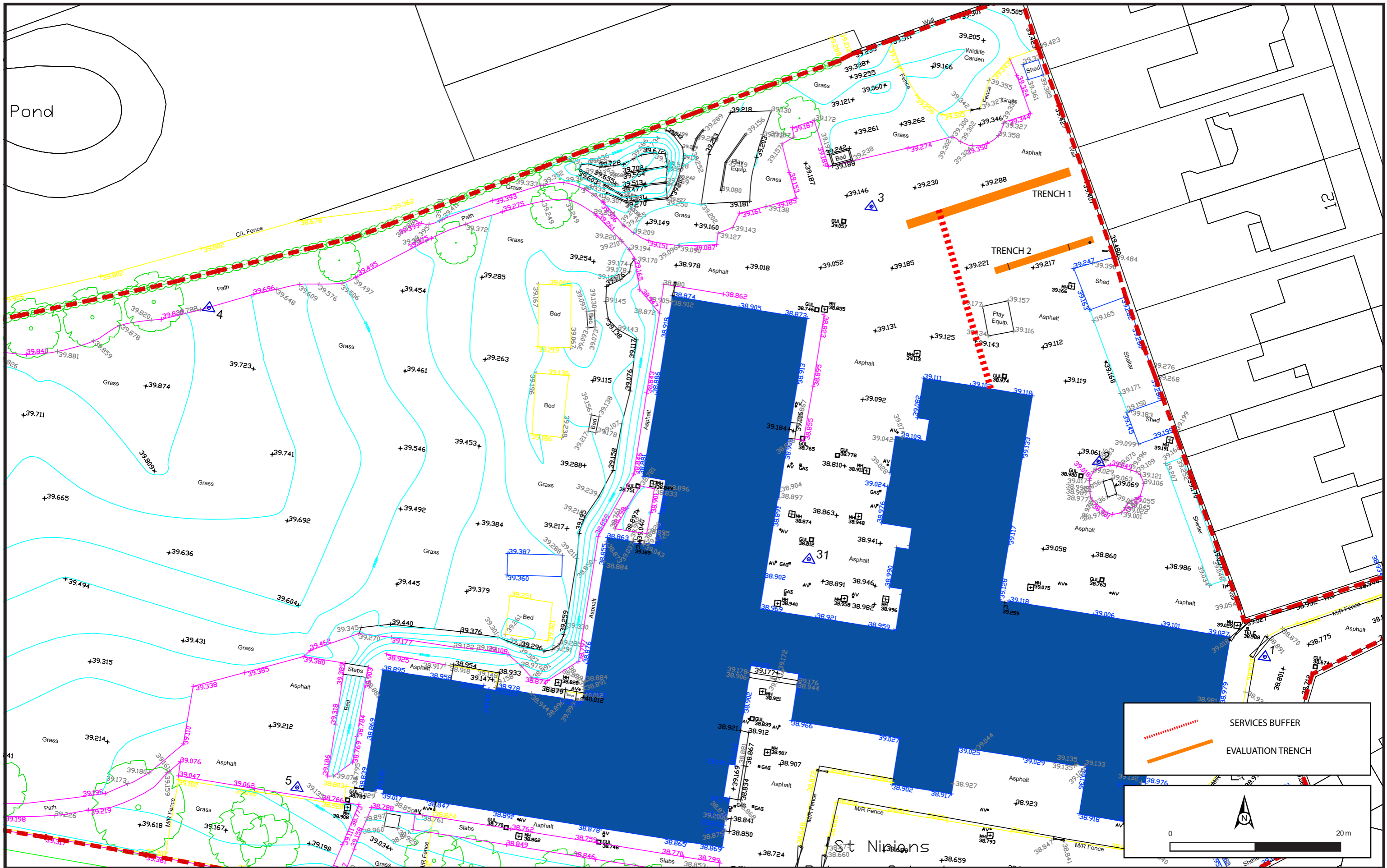


Figure 1: Site plan showing proposed position of evaluation trenches

# **St. Ninian's Primary School, Stirling: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: Trench Descriptions

### Trench 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	20 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	32 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	NE to SW
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Topsoil – Tarmac 0.1m thick Made ground – Type 1 0.2m thick B-horizon – Dark brown/grey sandy silt, compact with inclusions of modern ceramics and glass 0.1-0.2m thick Topsoil
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.63 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	BT Cable, disused, 4.9m from SW end of trench
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Mid brown/red sandy gravel with frequent inclusions of small to medium sub rounded stones
<i>Finds</i>	20th Century ceramics and glass within B-horizon (not retained)

### Trench 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	12 m by 1.6 m
<i>Total Area</i>	19.2 m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Excavated Orientation</i>	NE to SW
<i>Soil Make-up</i>	Topsoil – Tarmac 0.07m thick Made ground – Type 1 0.1m thick B-horizon – Dark brown/grey sandy silt, compact with inclusions of modern ceramics and glass 0.2-0.35m thick
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.53m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Other Features</i>	Victorian rubbish pit – 0.52m from NE end of trench, 0.35m diameter x 0.33m deep Wall 1 – Orientated NW-SE, 3m from NE end of trench, 0.32m wide x width of trench Wall 2 – Orientated NW-SE, 2.6m from SW end of trench 0.32m wide x width of trench
<i>Natural Subsoil</i>	Reddish brown sand and gravel.
<i>Finds</i>	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ceramics, glass and rubbish within B-horizon (not retained) Possible bullet casing and 20th Century glass within Victorian pit (not retained)

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Record

### Digital Photographs

Frame	Description	From	Date
1-7	Contractor arrival onsite and general shots	Various	8/4/15
8-12	CAT scanning area	Various	8/4/15
13-16	Setting out trench	Various	8/4/15
17-20	Setting up floor saw	Various	8/4/15
21-37	Cutting out Trench 1	Various	8/4/15
38	Close up of floor saw blade	-	8/4/15
39-40	Marking out Trench 2	Various	8/4/15
41-42	Removing tarmac from Trench 1	E	8/4/15
43	Cutting Trench 2	N	8/4/15
44	Tarmac removed, spoil heap	S	8/4/15
45-53	Digging Trench 1 working shots	Various	8/4/15
54-55	Working shots Trench 1 and 2	Various	8/4/15
56	Possible post hole	-	8/4/15
57-58	Cut cable in Trench 1	E	8/4/15
59	Trench 1 working shot	NE	8/4/15
60-61	Cutting Trench 2	-	8/4/15
62-63	SE facing section of Trench 1	SE	8/4/15
64	Possible post hole	SE	8/4/15
65	Possible post hole	SE	8/4/15
66	Voided feature	SE	8/4/15
67	End trench 1	NE	8/4/15
68-69	Tarmac dumping	Various	8/4/15
70-72	Vehicle movement	Various	8/4/15
73-74	Tarmac removal from area	Various	8/4/15
75-76	Digging Trench 2	Various	8/4/15
77	Possible Wall	E	8/4/15
78-79	Digging Trench 2	Various	8/4/15
80	Possible feature	S	8/4/15
81	Working shot cleaning Trench 2	S	8/4/15
82	Wall 1	NE	8/4/15
83	Wall 1	SE	8/4/15
84	Working shot Trench 2	NE	8/4/15
85	Wall 2	NE	8/4/15
86	Trench end	SW	8/4/15
87	Backfilling Trench 1	E	8/4/15
88-89	End of day	E	8/4/15

**APPENDIX 3: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report**

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Stirling Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME</b>	St. Ninian's Primary School, Stirling
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	AOC 23048
<b>PARISH:</b>	St. Ninians
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Jessica Lumb
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	AOC Archaeology Group
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S)</b>	NS88NW 4; NS88NW 10
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	N/A
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	N/A
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NS 83560 89271
<b>START DATE</b> (this season)	7 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
<b>END DATE</b> (this season)	7 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
<b>PREVIOUS WORK</b> (incl. DES ref.)	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>AOC undertook an archaeological evaluation in relation to a proposed development of a new school on the current site of St Ninian's Primary School, Stirling, to the immediate north of Torbrex Road and to the south of Stirling High School.</p> <p>The evaluation required the excavation of two 20 m long trenches to identify the nature and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, with the particular aim of establishing the presence or absence of a Roman Road.</p> <p>No significant archaeological features or artefacts were located within the evaluation trenches.</p> <p>The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that the Roman Road in the vicinity of the development area does not pass through the evaluation area.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	---
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