
2 Introduction by *Paul Duffy*

The headquarters of William Grant and Sons Distillers Ltd are located *c* 2.5km north of the town of Girvan, in the Grangetown Industrial Estate to the east of the main A77 (T) road (see [Illus 1](#)). Between 1996 and 1998, a programme of expansion of the existing storage facilities was undertaken, involving the construction of several new bonded warehouse blocks, associated access roads and services. During this time, a series of archaeological investigations, including evaluation, geophysical survey, watching briefs and excavation, were undertaken by GUARD in part fulfilment of archaeological negative suspensive conditions placed upon the development by West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS), acting on behalf of South Ayrshire Council Planning Department.

The construction work and associated archaeological mitigations focused on an area of warehouse development within a small valley to the north-west of the main industrial estate, between 12m and 25m OD (see [Duffy 1997a](#); [Duffy 1997b](#); [Duffy](#)

[1997c](#); [MacGregor & Duffy 1997](#); [Speller & Banks 1997](#); [Duffy 1998](#); [Halliday & Will 1998](#)). This valley runs westward from Ladywell Farm to the coast, traversing a raised beach on its route. Prior to the project commencing, the valley was a focus for arable farming for the entirety of its length. In Area B, three warehouses had already been constructed before the commencement of archaeological involvement. On-site observations of stubble remains, however, suggest this area too was originally utilized for arable farming.

The drift geology for Area A consists of raised beach deposits of post-glacial sand, shingle and marine shells. The drift geology for Area B, by contrast, is mapped as later glacial sand, silt and clays ([Geological Survey of Scotland 1981](#)). The solid geology of both areas is Devonian lower old red sandstone ([Geological Survey of Scotland 1987](#)). All three sites were located within an area termed as undifferentiated alluvial soils ([Macaulay Institute for Soil Research Soil Survey of Scotland 1968](#)).