

Archaeological Watching Brief
Swimming Pool
Scone Palace
PERTH & KINROSS

PE66



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
SCONE PALACE
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Illustration 1: Site location plan

Illustration 2: Location of swimming pool and associated features

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ABSTRACT

A watching brief was conducted on the demolition and removal of a swimming pool, prior to backfilling, within the grounds of Scone Palace (located at NGR NO 11298 26577). The pool was constructed in the 1980s and had been disused for approximately six years. Associated paving and a screen of Leylandii trees were also removed. No finds or features of archaeological interest resulted. The work (site code PE66) was carried out on 3rd and 4th February, 2020.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

Savills PLC commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the demolition and removal, prior to backfilling, of a disused swimming pool at Scone Palace. The pool was centred on NGR NO 11298 26577. The work (site code PE66) was undertaken on 3rd and 4th February, 2020 in misty weather conditions. The requirement was to monitor the removal of the pool, as well as associated paving and a screen of Leylandii trees.

The work was designed to satisfy the archaeological condition on development application reference 19/01421/FLL.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this investigation was to establish the presence/absence, date, character and quality of any archaeological remains surviving within the development area.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this watching brief. Copies will be sent to the client, The National Record of the Historic Environment at Historic Environment Scotland, and Perth & Kinross Historic Environment Record.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

This watching brief constitutes archaeological work designed to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Ryan Timpson and Adam Johnston of Savills and Brian Cunningham of Scone Palace for their assistance and guidance throughout this project. Savills PLC funded this watching brief.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1)

Scone Palace lies to the W of the village of Scone and SW of Old Scone, set within its own grounds on a natural terrace on the E bank of the River Tay. Perth Racecourse lies to the NW and Perth itself more distantly to the SW on the far bank of the river. The swimming pool lay within an artificial hollow at the base of an embankment to the SW of Scone Palace, NW of a landscaped garden area and SE of a former tennis court, now used to host an array of solar panels. The staff entrance and reception office lay to the NE, at the NW end of the Palace building, which is itself aligned NW-SE. The stand of Leylandii trees which screened the pool from the garden stood behind a drystone revetment wall to the SE of the pool.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

The present Scone Palace was constructed between 1803-1812 as the residence of the Earls of Mansfield. It is a neo-Gothic asymmetrical country house which, together with the interiors and gardens, represents early 19th C avant garde and was designed by William Atkinson. It is presumed to stand on the site of an earlier palace built by Sir David Murray in c.1605, elements of which are possibly incorporated into the present building and which in turn possibly incorporated part of the house of William, Lord Ruthven, who began construction in c.1581. This sequence of houses replaced the medieval Bishop's Palace (also the Abbot's House), which was destroyed along with Scone Abbey in 1559, during the Reformation. The abbey grounds contained a moot hill, still in existence, which was once the coronation site of the Kings of Scots (and possibly Pictish kings before them); other remains include a chapel, mausoleum and burial ground, a Roman temporary camp and a First World War training trench system. There was thus a high probability of subterranean archaeological deposits in the vicinity of the works. The pool itself was constructed in the 1980s and was not of archaeological interest.

2.3 Archaeological Method

The screen of Leylandii trees were first felled without archaeological monitoring, before the stumps were grubbed out by a mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The pool was drained and then the aluminium sides, concrete base and side paving removed by the excavator, again under archaeological supervision. Upon discovery that the NW end of the pool was cracked and that groundwater was ingressing, it was decided not to remove the base of the deep-end but to simply backfill on top of it. Monitoring was terminated at this point.

2.4 Results of Investigations

The deep-end of the pool was a maximum 2.50m deep, cut into the embankment. No finds or features of archaeological interest were exposed during the demolition.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Alder Archaeology consider the watching brief to have been conducted correctly and do not recommend further work in association with the present development. However, the final decision ultimately rests with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust.

Appendix 1 Photographic Register

<i>Image No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
001-3	Location shots, pool and Palace	E, SE
004	Location shot, solar array	NW
005	Location shot, solar array, pool and Palace	SE
006-7	Concrete pad by retaining wall	SE
008-10	Working shots, removing concrete pad	SE
011-12	Working shots, removing Leylandii stumps	SE
013-17	Tree boles in garden soil, post-removal of stumps	SE, S
018-20	Working shots, removing plastic lining and aluminium sides of pool	NW
021	Section, builders sand behind aluminium in SE end of pool (oblique)	N
022	Natural clay subsoil below concrete base of pool	NW
023	Section, builders sand behind aluminium in SE end of pool	SW
024	Natural clay subsoil below concrete base of pool	NW
025-26	Section, builders sand behind aluminium in SE end of pool	NE
027-31	Working shots, draining deep end of pool	NW
032-33	NW end of pool, post-removal of aluminium	NW
034	Working shot, removing aluminium on SW side of pool	SW
035-39	General shots, pool with aluminium removed	NW, W, SW
040	NE end of retaining wall and NE stumps	SE
041-44	Working shots, removal of wall and stumps	SE
045-47	Tree boles in garden soil	NE, SE
048	Location shot, pool from demolished retaining wall	W

Appendix 2 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth & Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Scone Palace swimming pool
PROJECT CODE:	PE66
PARISH:	Old Scone
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	C Fyles
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	WB
NMRS NO(S):	NO12NW 9, 9.13, 9.02
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Country House (19 th C), Palace (medieval), architectural fragments, church, mausoleum (period unassigned), Moot Hill (period unassigned)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NO 11298 26577
START DATE (this season)	03/02/2020
END DATE (this season)	03/02/2020
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	Excavations, 2008, 2009, on Moothill and site of Abbey; geophysics surveys 2005-7 (MASS project)
MAIN DESCRIPTION (NARRATIVE) (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was conducted on the demolition and removal of a swimming pool, prior to backfilling, within the grounds of Scone Palace. The pool was constructed in the 1980s and had been disused for approximately six years. Associated paving and a screen of Leylandii trees were also removed. No finds or features of archaeological interest resulted.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Savills PLC
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX
EMAIL ADDRESS:	director@alderarchaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	HES (intended)

Appendix 3 Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork

3.1 Recording Methodology

Alder Archaeology employs a Single Context Recording System that allows full cross-referencing of stratigraphy, finds and environmental samples, as well as site-wide phasing. All features will be planned at scale 1:20, and sections drawn at scale 1:10. Sections and profiles will be drawn and all features will be photographed with metric scale included. Environmental samples will be taken from archaeologically significant contexts, if the analysis of these samples would aid significantly in the interpretation of any features identified.

3.2 Human Remains

If human remains are encountered they will be left in situ and the local police will be informed. If removal is required this will take place in compliance with Historic Scotland's Policy Paper *The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*.

3.3 Products and Reporting

A Data Structure Report will normally be prepared within a period agreed within the Written Scheme of Investigation/ Project Design, after the completion of the fieldwork. This forms the basic level of reporting. Further reporting may be required on the basis of discoveries made during excavations.

A copy of the report and the project archive will be deposited in the NMRS. Further copies will be sent to the client, LAAO and others, as appropriate.

3.4 Artefacts

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*. We will report such finds, if recovered, with supporting documentation to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel for disposal to the appropriate museum.

3.5 Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

A brief summary of the results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*.

3.6 General Conditions and Health and Safety

We adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.

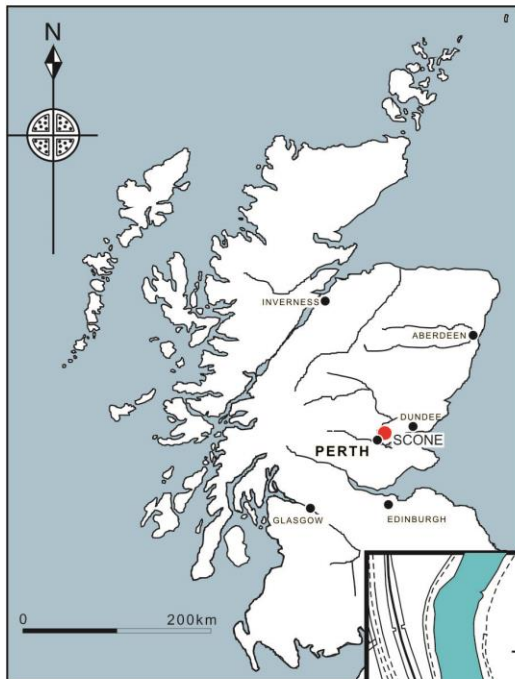
Alder Archaeology Ltd has public liability insurance of £2,000,000. Details of this can be provided on request.

We operate a strict health and safety policy that conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act. We undertake Risk Assessments on all fieldwork carried out.

Alder Archaeology representatives will at all times wear protective footwear, high visibility clothing and other appropriate clothing. Hard hats will be worn if there is active plant on site or at all times if the site is deemed a hard hat area.

If lightly contaminated deposits are uncovered disposable boiler suits and gloves will be worn. A source of clean water will be made available for staff to clean hands with. If the health risk posed by site contamination is felt to be too high all further archaeological work will stop in that area.

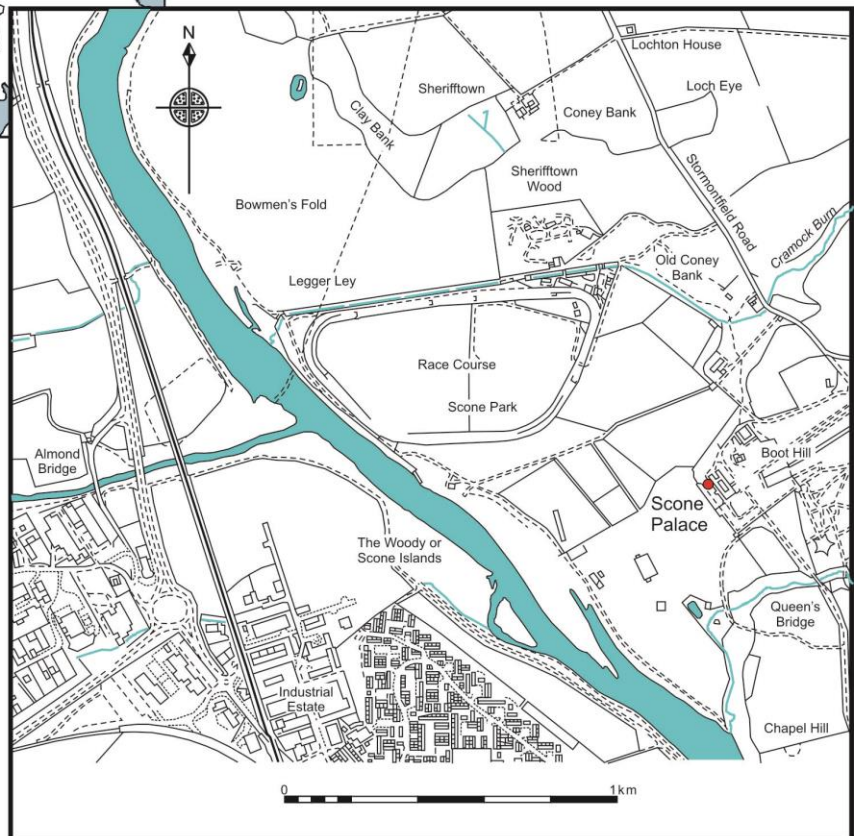
Illus 1



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Scone Palace Swimming Pool

Site Location

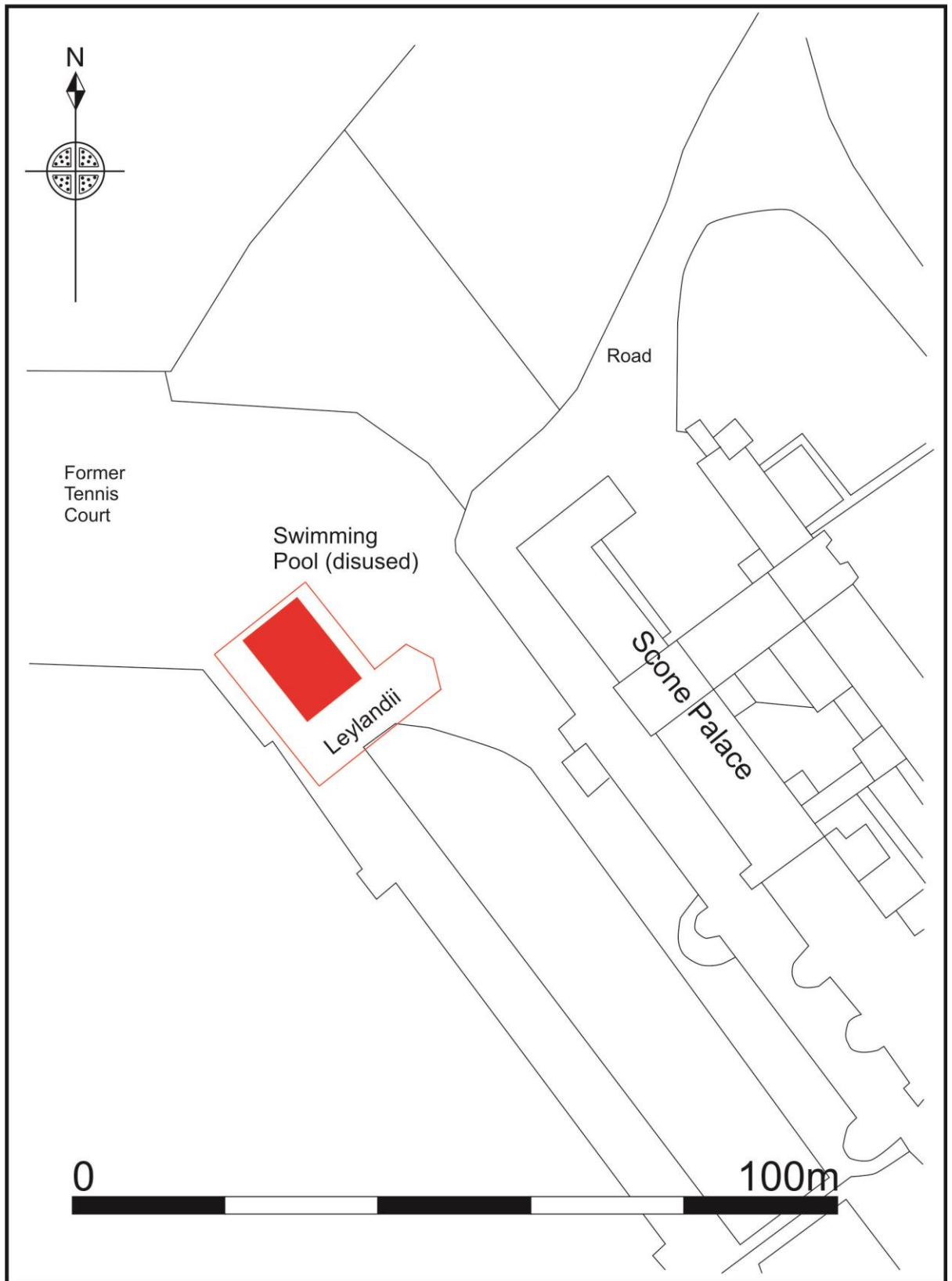


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Illus 2

Location of swimming pool and associated features



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