

**DRAIN BELOW WALKWAY
DUNNOTAR CASTLE
STONEHAVEN
ABERDEENSHIRE**

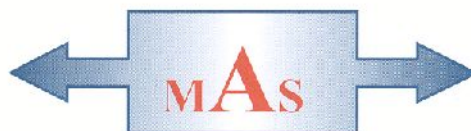


Watching brief

Carried out 31st October 2018

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2018-15

by

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- Watching Brief-

1. Background

- 1.1 An application to insert drainage for the walkway to the E of the Pends at Dunnottar Castle required Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Environment Scotland (Index No. SM986; Case ID 300023932). The Consent was granted subject to one condition. The Condition stipulated that no work should take place within the scheduled area until the applicant had secured the initiation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to be approved in writing by Historic Environment Scotland.
- 1.2 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd were commissioned by Dunecht Estates to provide the Written Scheme of Investigation which was approved by HES.
- 1.3 The WSI stipulated that the excavation of all drainage trenches should be carried out under archaeological supervision and recorded, in accordance with the plans submitted and approved. In the event of archaeological features or finds being discovered they were to be recorded in accordance with best archaeological practice.

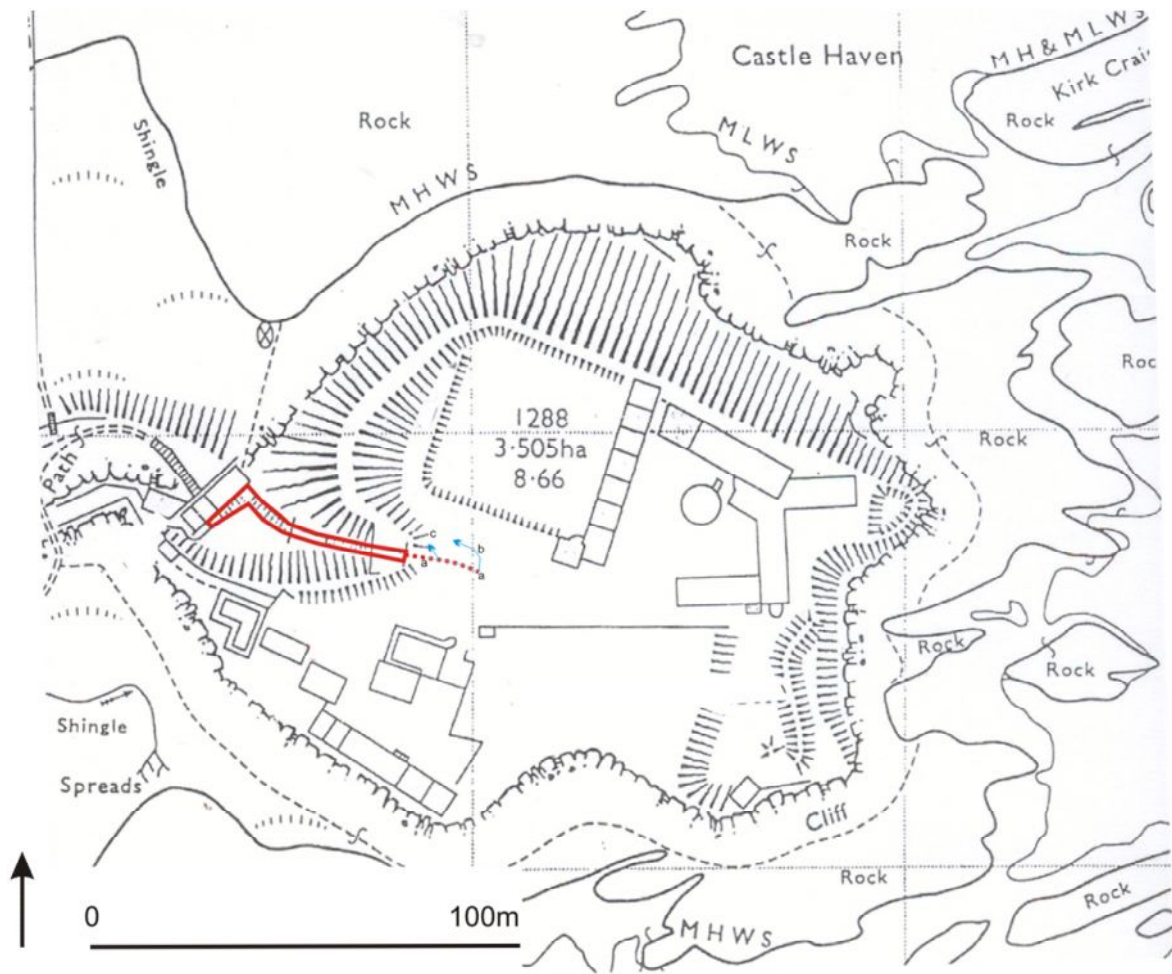
1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Dunecht Estates. The site element of the survey was completed on the 31st October 2018.

2 Methodology

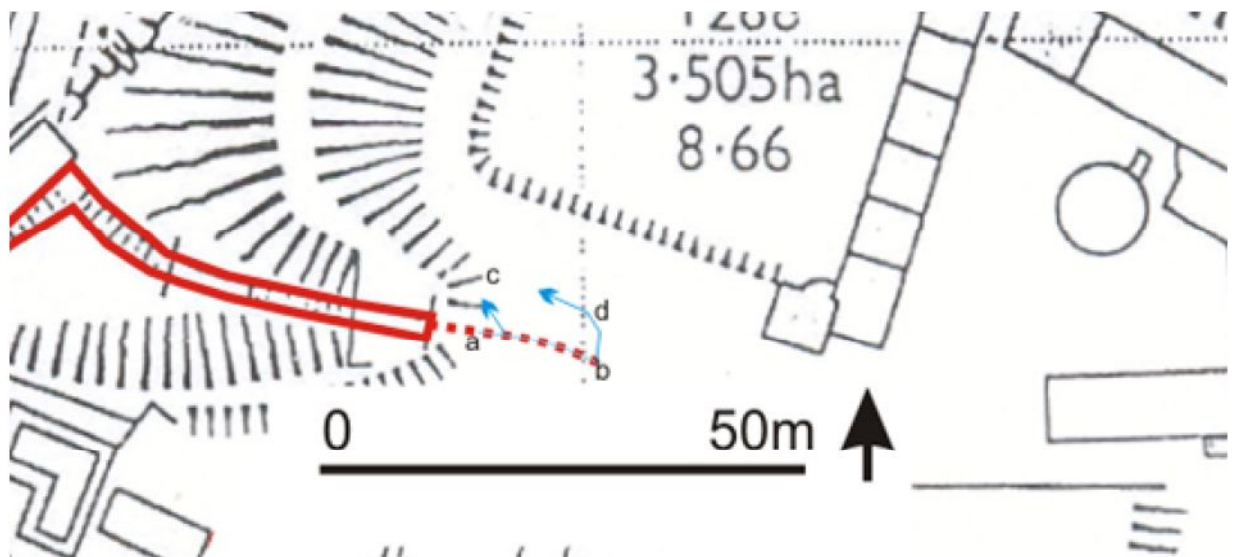
2.1 Prior to any work being undertaken, the existing boardwalk of the walkway was removed and a strip of the underlying geotextile cut away to facilitate excavation for the drain. The work was observed by MAS Ltd and the base and sides of the excavated trench cleaned by trowel and recorded.



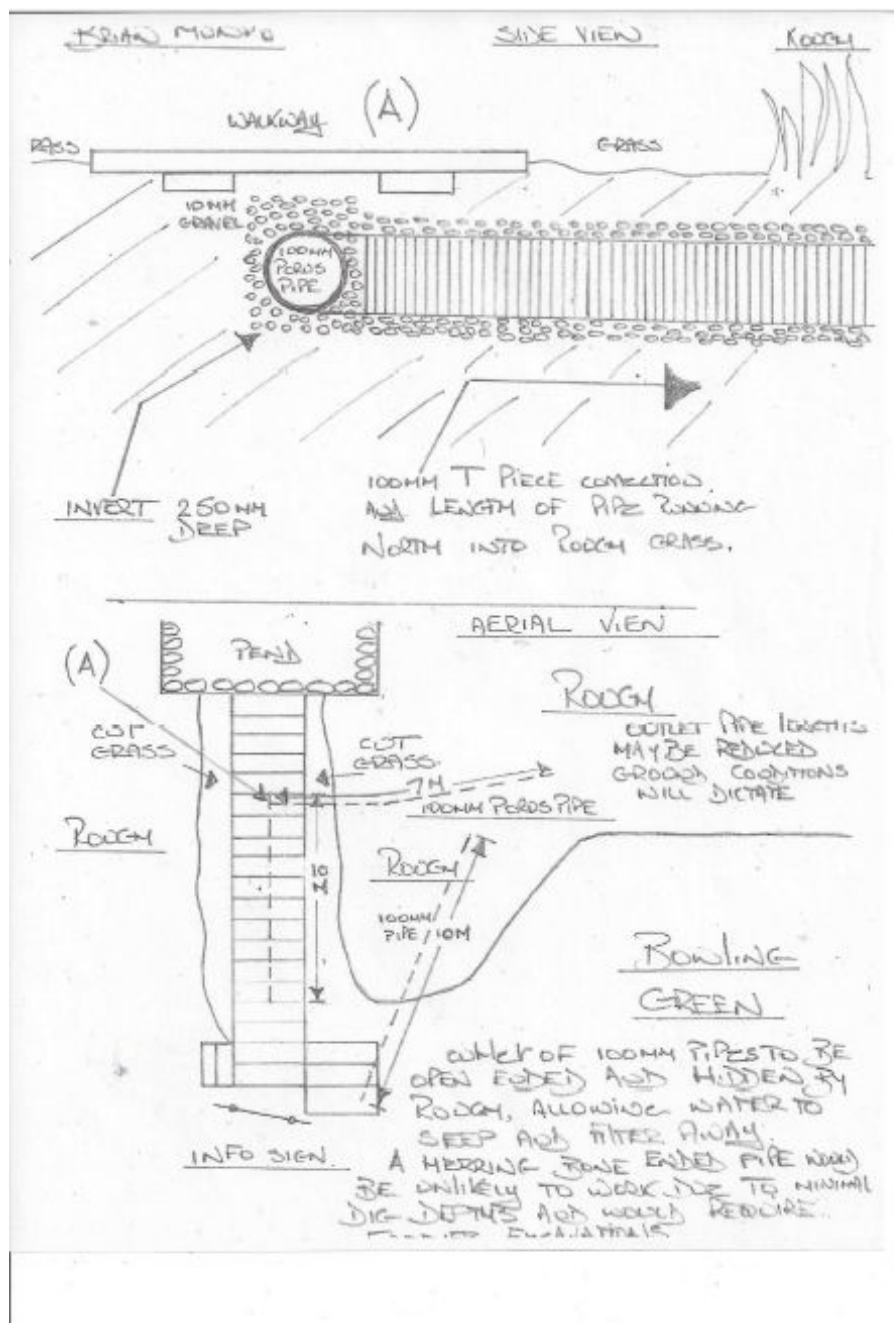
Illus 1 Location of the walkway



Illus 2 Location of drain (red dotted line)



Illus 3 Detail of plan indicating new drain (a-b) and side drains (c, d)



Illus 4 Details of the proposed drain courtesy of Dunecht Estates.

3. The Site

3.1 Dunnottar Castle occupies a coastal promontory c.3km S of Stonehaven, protected on all sides by steep cliffs [NGR: NO88128 83842; NMRS No: NO88SE 11; Parish: Dunnottar]. Although the castle probably occupies the site of a prehistoric fort, in its present form the remains date to various periods from the 14th to the 17th centuries.

In 1716 the castle was forfeited to the government and sold to the York Mining Company and all fittings of value, including floors and doors were removed, and sold.

In 1919 it was bought by the Pearson family and restoration began soon after. It has continued under the management of Dunecht Estates since then.

Parish: Dunnottar

NGR: NO88128 83842

Aberdeenshire SMR: NO88SE0007

NMRS No: NO88SE 11

NRHE Numlink 36992

HES Index No. SM986

4 Results



Illus 5 The walkway after removal of board walk, looking W to Pend entrance

The trench below the board walk was excavated to the agreed width of 250mm and depth of 250mm. For most of the length of the trench there was 150-200mm of topsoil lying on yellow stoney natural clay.



Illus 6 The walkway looking E after excavation.

Approximately 1.1m from the end of the Pend (Illus 3: a and Illus 7), there were a few water worn pebbles on the top of natural; these appeared to have been an unstructured deposition of a few pebbles in an earlier attempt to fill in a worn area at the edge of the pend. As these were at the base of the trench, the drain was laid over the top of them and they were not disturbed.

The two small side drains (Illus 3: c, d and Illus 8), which into the rough grass at the edge of the Bowling Green, had some 240 - 250mm of topsoil over natural, with the natural sloping down towards the sea.

There were no finds apart from two fragments of decayed animal bone and a single fragment of roof slate in the topsoil.

8 Archive

A full set of photographs will be supplied to the Aberdeenshire SMR and to the HES archive.



Illus 7 Detail of unstructured scatter of cobbles at W end of drain



Illus 8 Looking W to pend showing side drains

Photo number	Content
1-2	Walkway after removal of boardwalk facing W to pend
3-6	Walkway after removal of boardwalk facing E
7	Walkway facing E after drain cut
8	Detail of loose pebbles on natural at W end of drain
9-10	Drain trench facing E
11-12	Drain trench facing W