

## CPAT Report No. 1809




# Pathway resurfacing, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

### Archaeological Watching Brief



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CPAT Project No: 2526  
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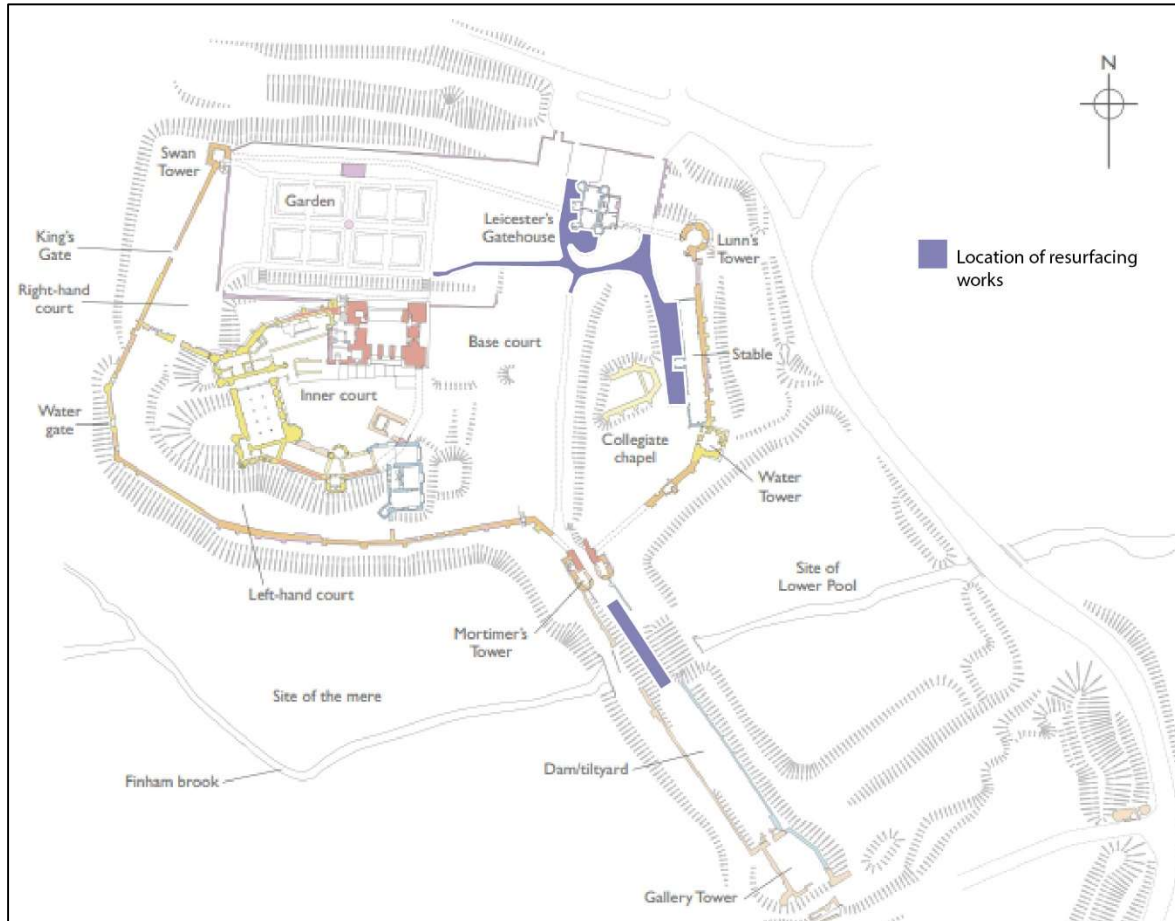
## **Summary**

In March 2021 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) undertook a watching brief on behalf of English Heritage during pathway resurfacing works at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire.

Nothing of archaeological significance was revealed in the course of the watching brief.

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1. In March 2021 the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) were instructed by English Heritage to undertake a watching brief during pathway resurfacing work at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire (SP 27964 72295) to ensure archaeological remains were not harmed.



*Fig. 1 Location of the groundworks (shaded in blue)*

- 1.2. The proposed groundworks were located in two discreet areas (Fig.1), comprising a section of pathway on the dam/tiltyard to the south of the castle and a section of pathway located between the formal gardens to the north of the keep and the stables to the east, with some resurfacing also being carried out around Leicester's Gatehouse to the north-east.
- 1.3. The resurfacing involved removal of the existing path material to an average depth of 0.1m, and excavation up to approximately 0.3m for the installation of timber edging to match existing boards where the path abutted a grass verge.
- 1.4. The existing pathway material itself did not form part of the scheduling for Kenilworth Castle although removal of this material was monitored in order to identify the point at which the upper interface with the scheduled subsurface deposits was attained and to identify potential archaeological features or structures buried beneath the modern surface.

## 2 Historical Background

- 2.1. Kenilworth Castle is located in the town of the same name in Warwickshire. Constructed from Norman through to Tudor times, the castle has been described by architectural historian Anthony Emery as 'the finest surviving example of a semi-royal palace of the later middle ages, significant for its scale, form and quality of workmanship.' Kenilworth has also played an important historical role. The castle was the subject of the six-month-long Siege of Kenilworth in 1266, thought to be the longest siege in medieval English history, and formed a base for Lancastrian operations in the Wars of the Roses. Kenilworth was also the scene of the removal of Edward II from the English throne, the French insult to Henry V in 1414 (said by John Strecche to have encouraged the Agincourt campaign), and the Earl of Leicester's lavish reception of Elizabeth I in 1575.
- 2.2. The castle was built over several centuries. Founded in the 1120s around a powerful Norman great tower, the castle was enlarged significantly by King John at the beginning of the 13th century. Huge water defences were created by damming the local streams, and the resulting fortifications proved able to withstand assaults by land and water in 1266. John of Gaunt spent lavishly in the late 14th century, turning the medieval castle into a palace fortress designed in the latest perpendicular style. The Earl of Leicester then expanded the castle once again, constructing new Tudor buildings and exploiting the medieval heritage of Kenilworth to produce a fashionable Renaissance palace.
- 2.3. Kenilworth was partly destroyed by Parliamentary forces in 1649 to prevent it being used as a military stronghold. Ruined, only two of its buildings remain habitable today. The castle became a tourist destination from the 18th century onwards, becoming famous in the Victorian period following the publishing of Sir Walter Scott's novel Kenilworth in 1821. English Heritage has managed the castle since 1984. The castle is designated as a Grade I listed building (1035327) and as a Scheduled Monument (1014041).
- 2.4. The network of paths within the castle is post medieval in date. Most of the paths are depicted on mapping in 1887, although the pathway to the south bypassed Mortimer's Tower and ran to the south of the tiltyard via a bridge crossing Finham Brook. The tiltyard itself, situated on top of the former dam which retained the waters of the brook to form a large lake to the west of the castle, had been cut through and bisected by the line of the watercourse, presumably a deliberate act to drain the lake. The breach was repaired during the mid-1960s.

## 3 Watching Brief

- 3.1. The watching brief was conducted between the 17th and 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2021 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2020).
- 3.2. The watching brief initially comprised monitoring of the pathway surfacing between the stable, Leicester's Gatehouse and the gardens, located to the north of the castle (Figs. 1 - 3). The modern top dressing (1) comprised a light yellowish brown grit 0.1m thick. Underlying this was a soft mottled orangey brownish black sand deposition >0.1m thick. A blackish fuel waste and stony spread (5) was located adjacent to the north-west corner of Leicester's Gatehouse (Figs. 4 and 5), extending intermittently along the west extent of the building, this was interpreted as earlier path surfacing material.



- 3.3. Monitoring of the groundworks at the northern extent of the tiltyard (Figs. 1 and 6) identified a continuation of the top dressing (1) to a thickness of 0.1m, overlaid by a loosely compacted gritty sand topsoil deposit (3) 0.1m thick. Underlying deposit (1) was a moderately compacted mottled mid-dark reddish brown sand (4) containing fuel waste residue 0.12m thick (Fig. 7).



*Fig. 2 Area to the west of the stable following the removal of the surface material, viewed from the north-west. Photo CPAT 4915-007*



*Fig. 3 Trench excavated for edging boards between Leicester's Gatehouse and the gardens, viewed from the east. Photo CPAT 4915-009*





*Fig. 4 Groundworks to the west of Leicester's Gatehouse viewed from the north Photo CPAT 4915-023*



*Fig. 5 Groundworks to the west of Leicester's Gatehouse viewed from the east Photo CPAT 4915-031*





*Fig. 6 Groundworks on the dam/tiltyard viewed from the north Photo CPAT 4915-017*



*Fig. 7 East facing section of deposits on the dam/tiltyard Photo CPAT 4915-015*

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## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1. Nothing of archaeological significance was disturbed during the course of the path resurfacing works. All deposition identified was modern in date. No artefactual material was discovered.

## 5 Sources

### Published sources

Morris, R. K., 2015, English Heritage Guide Books: Kenilworth Castle, English Heritage

### Online sources

[www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000496](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000496) (accessed July 2021)

<https://www.khas.co.uk/filling-gap-tiltyard-1964-now/> (accessed July 2021)

### Cartographic sources

1887 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1<sup>st</sup> edition Warwickshire Sheet 26.9

## 6 Archive deposition Statement

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance (2014). The archive will be digital only and will be deposited with English Heritage and Warwickshire Historic Environment Record. No artefacts were recovered in the course of this work.

### Archive summary

5 watching brief visit forms

31 digital photographs, CPAT film no 4915

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## Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 2313

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by English Heritage to undertake a watching brief during the groundworks associated with pathway resurfacing at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire (SP 27964 72295).
- 1.2. The proposed groundworks are located in two discreet areas. Area 1 comprises a section of pathway on the dam/tiltyard to the south of the castle. Area 2 is located between the formal gardens to the north of the keep and the stables to the east, with some resurfacing also being carried out around Leicester's Gatehouse to the north-east.
- 1.3. The resurfacing involves removal of the existing path material to an average depth of 50mm, and excavation for the installation of timber edging to match existing boards where the path abuts a grass verge.
- 1.4. Whilst the existing pathway material does not form part of the scheduling for Kenilworth Castle, the ground underneath the paths is scheduled.

### 2 Historic Background

- 2.1. Kenilworth Castle is located in the town of the same name in Warwickshire. Constructed from Norman through to Tudor times, the castle has been described by architectural historian Anthony Emery as 'the finest surviving example of a semi-royal palace of the later middle ages, significant for its scale, form and quality of workmanship.' Kenilworth has also played an important historical role. The castle was the subject of the six-month-long Siege of Kenilworth in 1266, thought to be the longest siege in medieval English history, and formed a base for Lancastrian operations in the Wars of the Roses. Kenilworth was also the scene of the removal of Edward II from the English throne, the French insult to Henry V in 1414 (said by John Strecche to have encouraged the Agincourt campaign), and the Earl of Leicester's lavish reception of Elizabeth I in 1575.
- 2.2. The castle was built over several centuries. Founded in the 1120s around a powerful Norman great tower, the castle was enlarged significantly by King John at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Huge water defences were created by damming the local streams, and the resulting fortifications proved able to withstand assaults by land and water in 1266. John of Gaunt spent lavishly in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, turning the medieval castle into a palace fortress designed in the latest perpendicular style. The Earl of Leicester then expanded the castle once again, constructing new Tudor buildings and exploiting the medieval heritage of Kenilworth to produce a fashionable Renaissance palace.
- 2.3. Kenilworth was partly destroyed by Parliamentary forces in 1649 to prevent it being used as a military stronghold. Ruined, only two of its buildings remain habitable today. The castle became a tourist destination from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, becoming famous in the Victorian period following the publishing of Sir Walter Scott's novel *Kenilworth* in 1821. English Heritage has managed the castle since 1984. The castle is designated as a Grade I listed building (1035327) and as a Scheduled Monument (1014041).

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1. The watching brief will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014, revised 2017). The watching brief will be undertaken to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of the new detached recreational building. The excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:
- The presence or absence of archaeological features encountered during the ground works will be noted.
  - Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the ground works they will be systematically investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to determine their date, character and function, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with CIfA Standard and Guidance.
  - All features will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the development at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
  - Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
  - Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
  - All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 8 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
  - In the event of human burials being discovered the Ministry of Justice will be informed. The remains will initially be left *in situ*, and if removal is required, a MoJ licences will be applied for under the Burial Act 1857.
  - In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.
- 3.2. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:
- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
  - All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
  - arrangements to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples.
  - Any artefacts recovered during the evaluation will be deposited in the English Heritage collection.
- 3.3. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:
- Non-technical summary
  - Introduction
  - Site location
  - Archaeological Background
  - Watching brief
  - Conclusions
  - References



- Appropriate appendices on archives and finds
- 3.4. In addition to copies submitted to the client, a copy of the report will be provided to the regional Historic Environment Record.
- 3.5. The site archive will be ordered, catalogued, labelled and conserved and stored according to the UKIC Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage and the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2014). The project archive will be deposited in the English Heritage collection within 12 months, while any artefacts will be deposited in the English Heritage collection, with the permission of the freeholder, Kenilworth Town Council.

## 4 Resources and Programming

- 4.1. The watching brief will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Nigel Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). CPAT is also a CIfA Registered Organisation (RAO No 6) and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 4.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works.
- 4.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original watching brief and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.
- 4.4. Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.5. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance.

W Logan

22 February 2021