

HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2011

Kelso Abbey: Excavation, June 2011.

HS PIC Index Number: 90177

SITE: Kelso Abbey, Kelso.

N.G.R.: NT 728 338 - NT 730 336

DESCRIPTION: Small-scale excavation ahead of the installation of new signage.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90177-2011-01

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4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF.

JUNE 2011

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, and as part of the preparatory work ahead of the installation of new signage, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to monitor the excavation of a single trench at the West Door of Kelso Abbey - part of the only surviving fragment of the Abbey Church (Fig.1). The work was completed by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision, and took place on 7th June 2011.

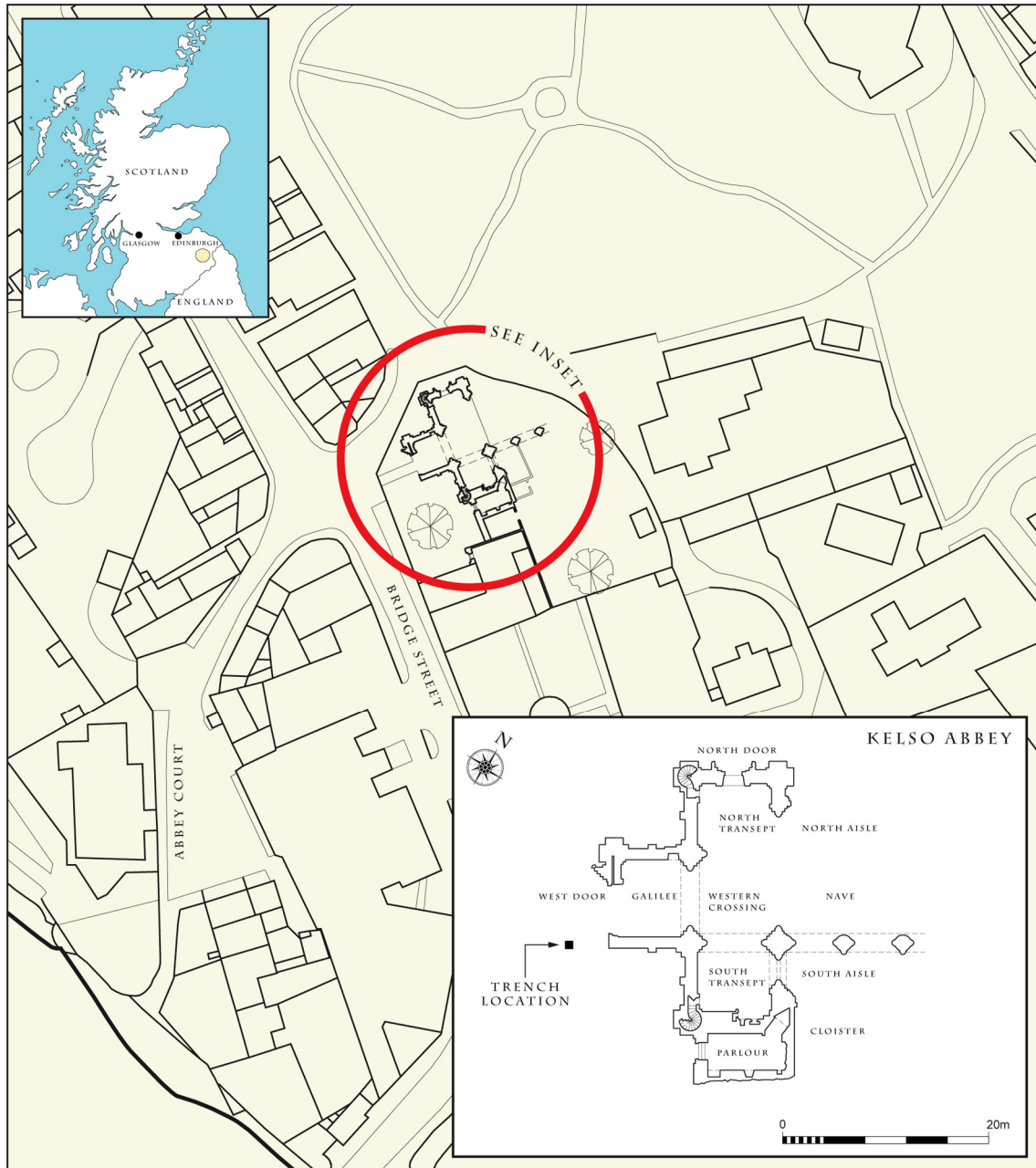


Figure 1: Location map of the works.

DESCRIPTION

The trench was located 3.4m W of the S face of the W door, between two existing interpretation panels. The two existing panels were removed, and a new trench excavated, measuring 0.8m x 0.8m x 0.5m (LxWxD). The contents of the trench comprised **001**, elements of the modern concrete pad associated with the existing signage (0.1m thick), which lay over **002**, a dark silt and gravel layer containing early 20th century bottle glass (0.1m thick), which in turn lay over a compacted rubble deposit (**003**) that extended across the trench (0.15m thick), and which contained two fragments of worked stone (**SF001** and **SF002**). Context **003** sealed **004**, a heavily compacted silt deposit containing lots of mortar fragments. This was excavated to a thickness of 0.15m throughout the trench, before the required depth of the trench was reached (c.0.5m), and excavation ceased.



Figure 2: Post-excavation photograph of the trench (No.4, detail).

CONCLUSIONS

Contexts 003 and 004 appear to represent demolition horizons from the Abbey Church - possibly 16th century destruction and clearance works.



Figure 3: Small finds 001 (top) and 002, retrieved from context 003.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No.	Description
001	Modern concrete pad associated with existing signage.
002	Dark silt and gravel containing early 20th century bottle glass.
003	Compacted rubble deposit.
004	Heavily compacted silt deposit with lots of mortar fragments.

LIST OF SMALL FINDS

No.	Context	Description
001	003	Fragment of moulded stone measuring a maximum of 70mm (long) x 60mm (wide) x 60mm (thick). Small fragment of roll moulding – finely cut with slight evidence of diagonal tooling. A fine grey sandstone. Possible fragment of W doorway decoration.
002	003	Fragment of moulded stone measuring a maximum of 110mm (long) x 38mm (wide) x 40mm (thick). Detached fragment of roll moulding – almost complete circular section of possible mullion type decoration or 'projecting' design. Finely tooled and cut from a fine grey sandstone. Possible fragment of W doorway decoration.

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
01	Preparation and general location of Trench 1.	W	07/06/11
02	Site pre-excitation.	SW	07/06/11
03	General location showing West Door.	W	07/06/11
04	Trench 1 fully excavated.	W	07/06/11
05	Trench 1 fully excavated.	N	07/06/11
06	Trench 1 fully excavated.	S	07/06/11
07	Trench 1 fully excavated.	W	07/06/11
08	Interpretation board in place prior to backfilling.	E	07/06/11