

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2011**

St Andrews Castle: Excavation, October 2011.

HS PIC Index Number: 90259

SITE: St Andrews Castle, St Andrews, Fife.

N.G.R.: NO 5125 1695

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

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90259-2011-02

CONTENTS:	Introduction.....	1
	Description.....	2
	Conclusions.....	3
	List of Contexts.....	4
	List of Digital Photographs.....	4
	List of Finds.....	4



4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF.

OCTOBER 2011

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its Properties In Care (PIC) call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to monitor the excavation of a small trench to receive a new interpretation board located in the outer courtyard of St Andrews Castle, immediately S of the entrance to the Sea Tower (Fig. 1). This replaced an earlier interpretation board in the same location.

The work was carried out on 12th October 2011.

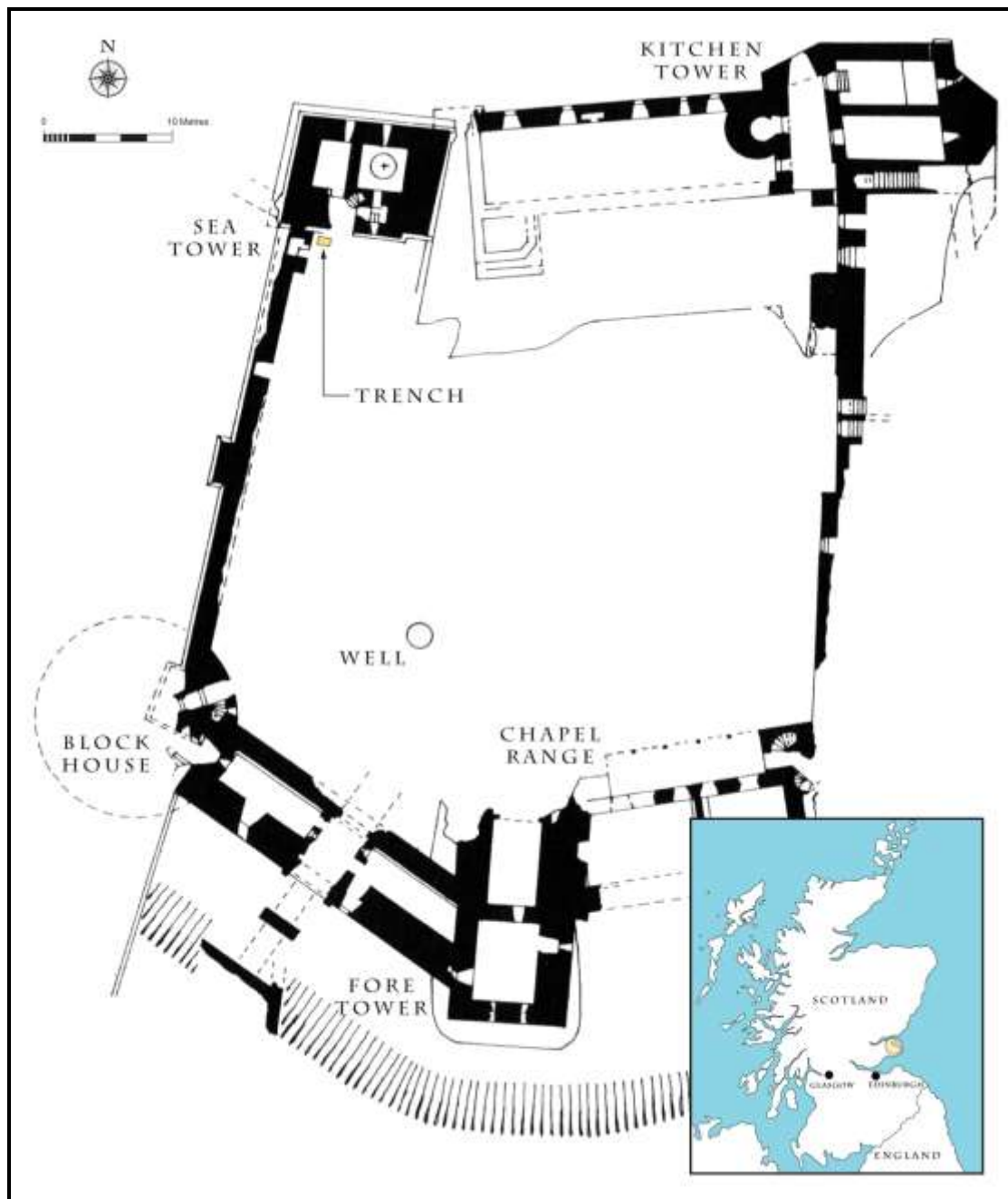


Figure 1: Location map of the works.

DESCRIPTION

Once the existing sign was removed, an area measuring 0.6m N/S x 1m E/W was excavated. The turf and topsoil **001** extended to a depth of 0.1m. Immediately below this context **002** was revealed as a spread of light demolition debris. This deposit contained some moderately large sandstone fragments, along with fragments of mortar and other smashed sandstone debris, to a depth of 0.1m. A further spread of mortar rich debris was then removed (**006**) to a depth of 0.15m. This was characterised by more mortar fragments, particularly towards the E end of the trench. Whilst the desired depth was now achieved, three further deposits were noted, none of which was excavated. To the S of the trench was a narrow strip of dark orange sand **003**. Immediately to the N was **004**, a clay and stone mix, apparently cut against **003** to the S, running E/W across the trench. Within this deposit sherds of early medieval pottery (SF001 and SF002, Fig. 3) were retrieved. Context **004** was a fairly regular straight edged feature towards the centre of the trench, with an average width of 0.25m. The rest of the trench (immediately to the N of **004**) was characterised by **005**, a mixed deposit of mortar and sandstone fragments with small stones.

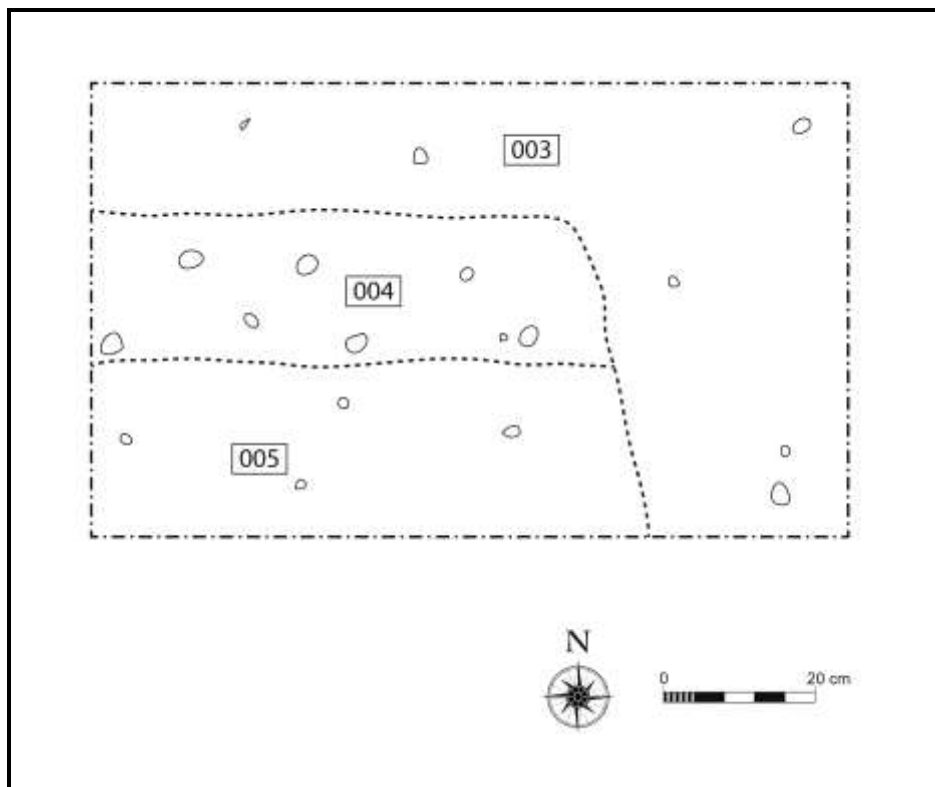


Figure 2: Post-excavation plan of the trench.

CONCLUSIONS

Context **004** is most likely a linear cut, apparently post-dating the sand deposit **003**, which may be natural. Context **004** may also be cut against **005**, which in turn resembles **006**. It was decided not to excavate **004** at this stage because it contained early medieval pottery in its fill, and was not evident in the section at the E or W ends of the trench. On this basis the cut may represent a timber slot, with the clay part of its primary packing rather than back fill. Alternatively, this may be some form of slot with re-deposited material in its fill. It was not evident as a modern feature cut against levelling deposits **002** and **006**. At this stage **002** and **006** appeared to be post-demolition levelling deposits over, or close to, the natural. There was no obvious sign of modern activity and there was no sign of feature **004** until the deposits above were removed. On this basis, **004** and the general horizon revealed at a depth of 0.3m - 0.35m should be regarded as archaeologically sensitive, and may relate to features associated with buildings immediately adjacent to the West Curtain Wall.

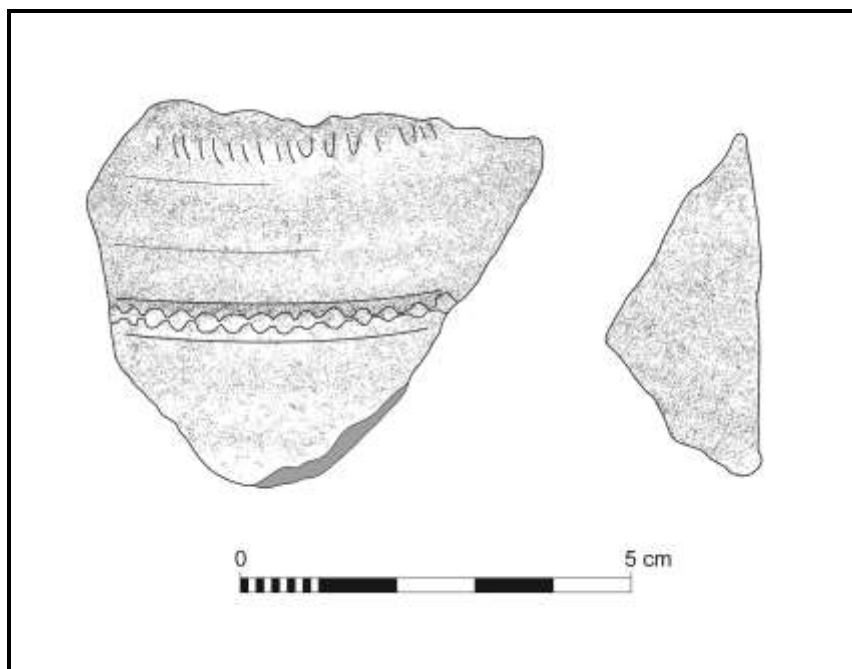


Figure 3: The pottery sherds SF001 (left) and SF002 from context 004.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No.	Description
001	Turf and topsoil
002	Spread of light demolition debris.
003	Narrow strip of dark orange sand
004	Clay and stone mix apparently cut against 003, containing sherds of medieval pottery
005	Mixed deposit of mortar and sandstone fragments with small stones
006	Spread of mortar rich debris

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
01	Work in progress	S	12/10/2011
02	Work in progress	SE	12/10/2011
03	Work in progress	S	12/10/2011
04	Trench fully excavated	E	12/10/2011
05	Trench fully excavated	N	12/10/2011
06	Trench fully excavated	W	12/10/2011
07	Detail of E section (no cut visible)	W	12/10/2011
08	Detail of N section	S	12/10/2011
09	Trench (as viewed from the Sea Tower)	NE	12/10/2011
10	Trench (as viewed from the Sea Tower)	N	12/10/2011

LIST OF FINDS

No.	Context	Type	Description
001	F004	Pottery	1 of 2 conjoining sherds of early medieval (12th-13th century) jug. Fabric is fine white gritty with external pale green glaze with raised external banded decoration.
002	F004	Pottery	1 of 2 conjoining sherds of early medieval (12th-13th century) jug. Fabric is fine white gritty with external pale green glaze with raised external banded decoration.