

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE  
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2014/2015**

**Elcho Castle • Watching Brief • May 2014**

**HS PIC Index Number: 90140**

**SITE:** Elcho Castle, Perth and Kinross

**N.G.R.:** NO 1641 2103

**DESCRIPTION:** Watching brief during the installation of new signage

**PROJECT CODE:** HSCO-90140-2014-01

**CONTENTS:**

Introduction.....	1
Description.....	2
Conclusions.....	2
List of Contexts.....	3
List of Digital Photographs.....	3

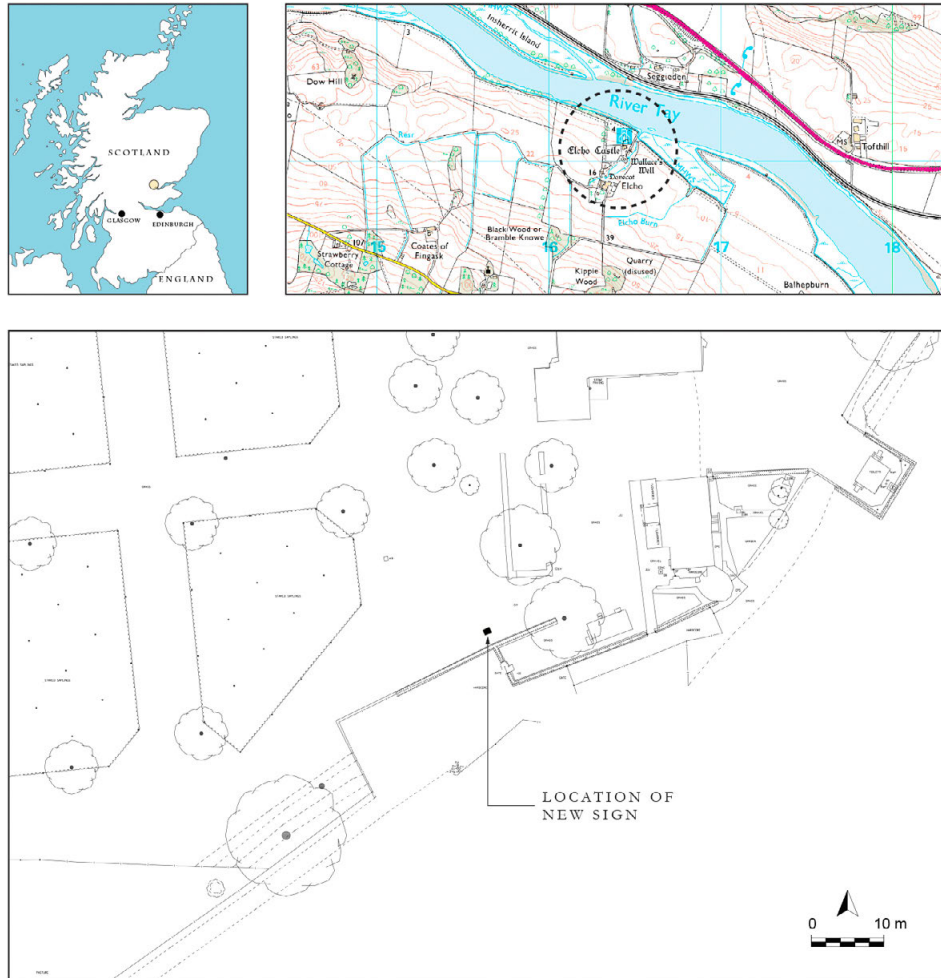


4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF

JUNE 2014

## INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief at Elcho Castle, Perth and Kinross (Fig.1) during the excavation of a trench ahead of the emplacement of a new sign.



**Figure 1:** Plan showing the location of the trench.  
Inset No. 2 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2014. Licence number 100036933.

The work was carried out by hand and took place on 7 May 2014.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The foundation trench (Trench 1) was located N of, and parallel to, the present hedge on the southern side of the present garden area at the E side of the castle enclosure/barmkin. The trench measured 1m SE/NW x 0.8m NE/SW and was dug to a depth of 0.45m. The excavation revealed a worked topsoil deposit (**001**), 0.18m deep, which sealed a narrow band of clean, yellow sand (**002**). The sand was 70mm deep and gave way to **003** – a well mixed, mid-brown ‘garden’ soil.

Only 20<sup>th</sup>-century ceramic sherds were found within **001**, however, context **003** contained a range of ceramic types including:

- A single sherd of potentially prehistoric type;
- A single sherd of late medieval ware;
- A single fragment of unglazed ceramic floor tile (date uncertain); and,
- Two sherds of 20<sup>th</sup>-century tableware.



**Plate 1:** View of Context 003 , visible as the light-brown band running across the section

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The sand deposit and present topsoil horizon appear to date from the recent landscaping / garden creation. Context **003** is a truncated cultivation deposit, and may well reflect historic gardening in this area. The presence of residual material within a well-sorted and relatively stone-free deposit suggests horticultural ‘double digging’.

## **LIST OF CONTEXTS**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
001	Turf and topsoil
002	Thin layer of clean yellow sand
003	Light to mid-brown mixed silty soil containing few stones – excavated to a depth of 0.17m (not bottomed)

## **LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Site of new sign	S	07/05/2014
2	Trench fully excavated	SE	07/05/2014
3	Detail of E section	NW	07/05/2014
4	General view of trench	NW	07/05/2014
5	Ceramic finds from 003	N/A	07/05/2014