

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland – OASIS-type Form (2006)

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	MIDLOTHIAN
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Castle Law / Castlelaw Fort
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90046-2008-01
PARISH:	GLENCORSE
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	David Murray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT26SW 2.00
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Fort
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 229 638
START DATE (this season)	18 October 2008
END DATE (this season)	18 October 2008
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<i>A watching brief was maintained at Castlelaw Fort, on Castle Knowe, near Glencorse, Midlothian, during the removal of vegetation in and around the site. Dense areas of gorse had become established, particularly to the southeast of the fort, and were threatening the monument. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.</i>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Scotland
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

**Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2008**

**Castlelaw Fort
Archaeological monitoring,
October 2008**

**HS PIC Index number: 90046
Project code: HSCO-90046-2008-01**



**26 February 2009
Kirkdale Archaeology**

<u>Site</u>	Castlelaw Fort
<u>N.G.R</u>	NT 229 638
<u>Project Description</u>	Archaeological monitoring
<u>Project code</u>	HSCO-90046-2008-01

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1.0 SUMMARY

A watching brief was maintained at Castlelaw Fort, on Castle Knowe, near Glencorse, Midlothian, during the removal of vegetation in an around the site. Dense areas of gorse had become established, particularly to the southeast of the fort, and were threatening the monument.

There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to monitor the removal of vegetation from Castlelaw hill fort, on the east facing slopes of the Pentlands. The site is a property in care open to the public, and dense gorse vegetation has been encroaching on the east side of the monument. The perimeter fence on this side of the monument has been engulfed by this vegetation, and it has obscured the view of the ramparts from the car park located to the east of, and down slope from the site. Small patches of gorse have also started to grow within the monument itself, appearing amongst its ramparts on both its north and southeast sides.

The work was carried out on 21 October 2008.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

The major area to be cleared was on the southeast side of the site, and comprised an area perhaps 150 m SW-NE by 50 m N- S, just down slope from the ramparts. The ground drops fairly steeply to the east, and very steeply to the south, and it was in these areas that dense gorse has grown up. The gentler approaches to the site to north and west were relatively free of vegetation. Smaller discrete patches of gorse were also cleared from the ramparts of the hill fort itself.

The work was undertaken using a tractor which “threshed” the gorse, smashing it above ground level rather than penetrating the ground. Hand clearance was also employed, where the ground fell away too steeply for the tractor, as well as in more sensitive locations, such as the ramparts themselves. Conditions were dry

underfoot, an important factor when seeking to minimise the potential for disturbance to the site.

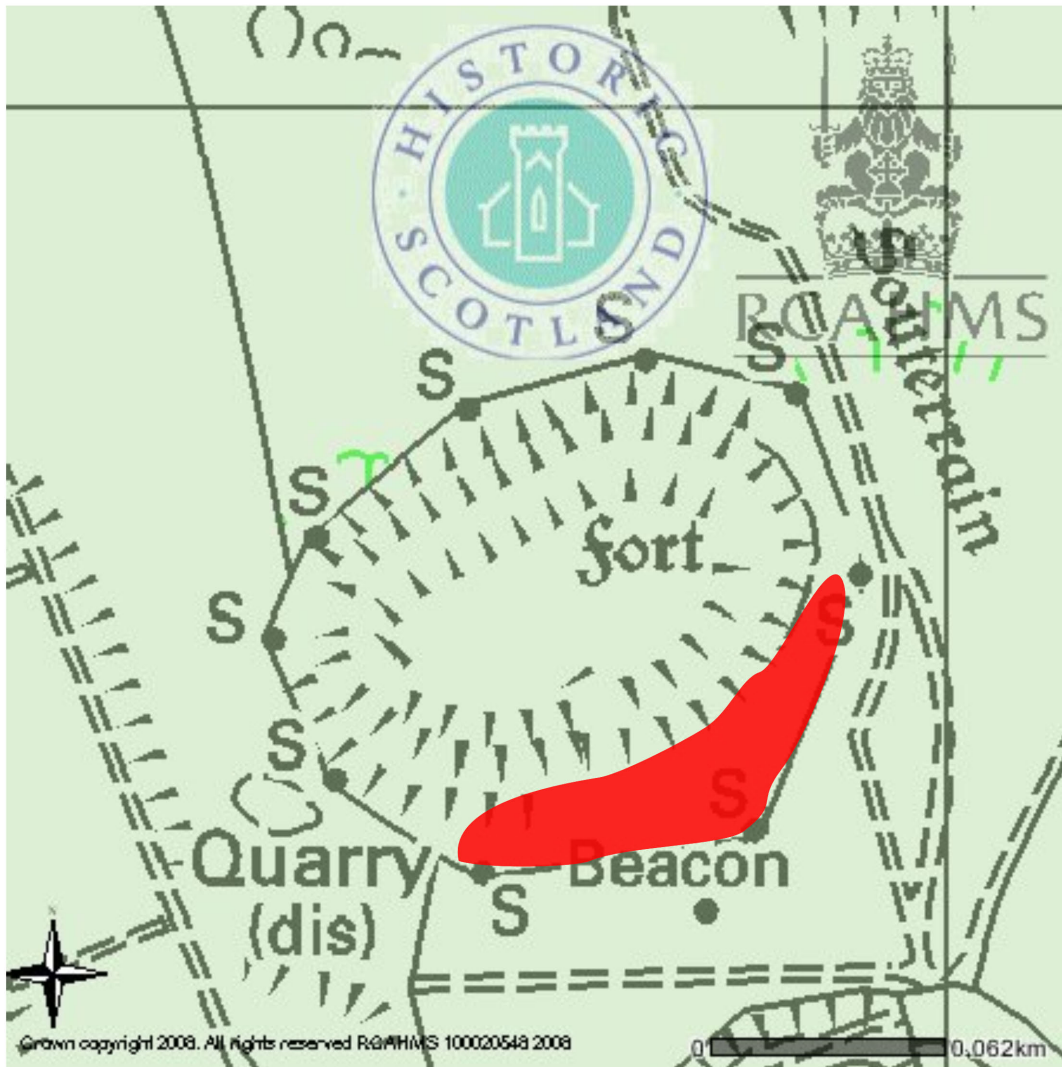
The work was successfully completed with a minimum of disturbance, with no discoveries of archaeological significance.

4.0 INTERPRETATION AND OBSERVATIONS

No observations of archaeological interest were made. This is work that should be periodically undertaken to prevent root systems of gorse from damaging the monument. Dense gorse such as this also provides shelter for rabbits, and encourages their burrowing.

A1.0**APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

#	Description	From	Date
1- 2	Gorse being cleared around S end of monument	SW	21/10/08
3	Gorse being cleared around S end of monument	W	21/10/08
4	Area to SE of monument cleared	NW	21/10/08
5- 6	Area to SE of monument cleared	E	21/10/08
7	Area to SE of monument cleared	SE	21/10/08
8	Area to S being cleared	SW	21/10/08
9	Detail of tractor	W	21/10/08
10	Area to SE of monument cleared	S	21/10/08
11	Path up to monument cleared	S	21/10/08
12- 13	Area to SE of monument cleared	NW	21/10/08



*area of densest
vegetation removed*

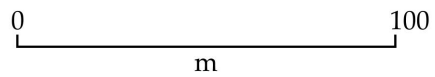


Fig. 1 : Plan showing location of works