

## *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*

Updated on 15/06/2007

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Aberdeenshire
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Kildrummy Castle
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	HSCO-90181-2014-01
<b>PARISH:</b>	Kildrummy
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Paul Fox
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Kirkdale Archaeology
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NJ41NE 4
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Castle
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)</b>	Centred c. NJ 4548 1637
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	30 June 2014
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	1 July 2014
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)</b>	
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the installation of nine survey markers. A mixture of brass stud and 'Feno'-type markers were installed in and around the castle. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Historic Scotland
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<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

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

**Kildrummy Castle • Monitoring • June 2014**

**HS PIC Index Number: 90181**

**SITE:** Kildrummy Castle, Aberdeenshire

**N.G.R.:** NJ 455 163

**DESCRIPTION:** Watching Brief during the installation of survey markers.

**PROJECT CODE:** HSCO-90181-2014-01

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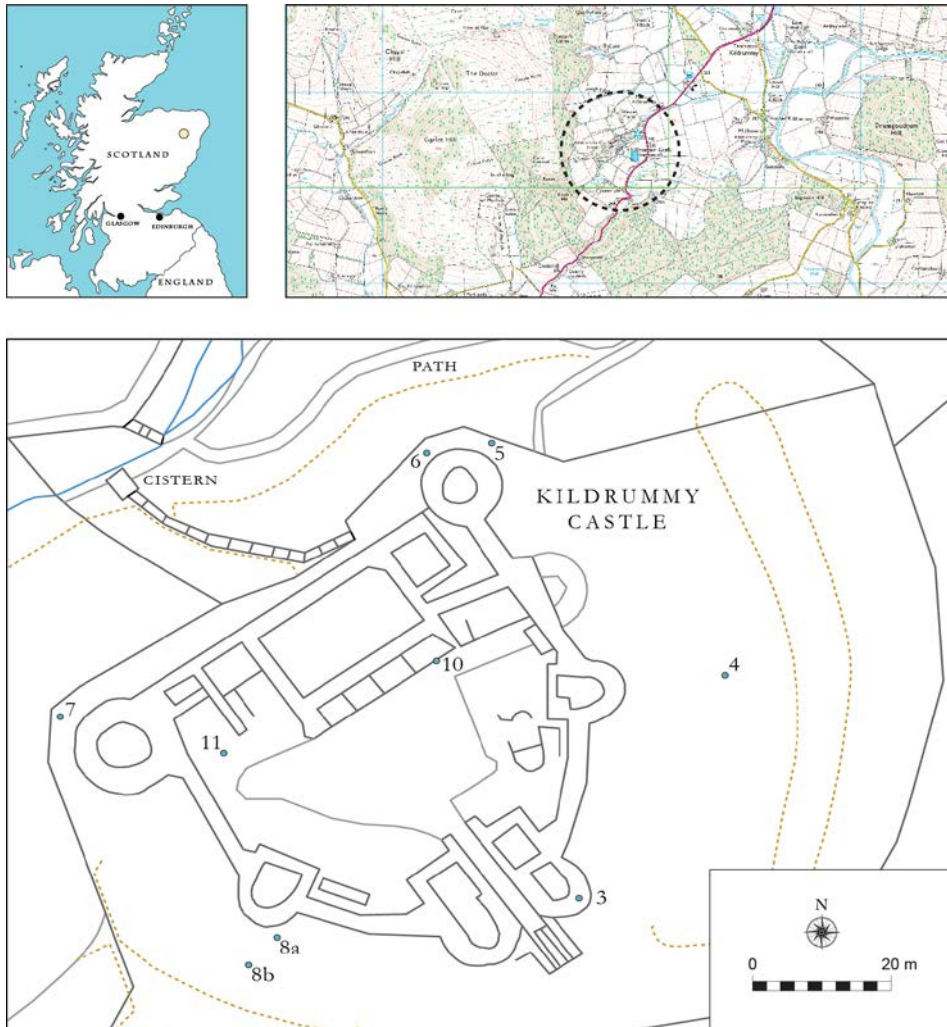


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**S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 4**

## INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the placement of survey markers at Kildrummy Castle, Aberdeenshire (Fig. 1<sup>1</sup>). Concern that the Warden's Tower is tilting meant that the emplacement of survey markers around the castle would allow the inclination of the tower to be measured from multiple locations, informing a conservation strategy should the need arise.



**Figure 1:** Plan showing the location of the survey marker trenches.

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The work was undertaken by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision and in the presence of an Historic Scotland surveyor. It took place on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> The large scale of the site meant that lines-of-site between the intended locations of some of the survey markers were obscured and so the affected markers had to be moved from their intended locations. The final locations will be provided by the Historic Scotland survey team when the markers are surveyed-in and added to the existing site plan.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The placement of the markers is presented in numerical order; their actual order of installation was 10, 3, 6, 5, 4, 8, 7, 9 and 11.

### **PSM 3 (Brass stud<sup>2</sup>)**

Originally marked on the top of the outer bank of the external E ditch, this was moved into the rough-racking of the SE wall of the SE chamber of the gatehouse/barbican.

### **PSM 4 (Feno type marker)**

Placed as originally intended on the top of the inner bank of the external E ditch opposite the Brux Tower. The trench measured 25cm N/S x 20cm E/W x 15cm deep. Turf and mid-brown topsoil (**4001**) lay above a layer of moderately-compact mid-brown silt (**4002**) containing small pieces of sandstone rubble which may have been the backfill of a previously-excavated trench – the layer was not investigated further as the depth had been achieved and the marker was inserted without issue.

### **PSM 5 (Brass stud<sup>2</sup>)**

Originally intended for the top of the inner bank of the external E ditch, this was moved onto the outer wooden edging of the second step from the top on the stair on the N side of the Warden's Tower.

### **PSM 6 (Brass stud<sup>2</sup>)**

Originally intended for the centre of the lower tread of the stair on the N side of the Warden's Tower, this was moved onto the outer wooden edging of the lowest step.

### **PSM 7 (Feno type marker)**

Placed as originally marked next to the fence fronting the ravine to the NW of the Snow Tower. The trench measured 35cm NW/SE x 20cm NE/SW x 15cm deep. Turf and mid-brown topsoil (**7001**) lay over a layer of moderately-compact mid-brown silt (**7002**) containing small pieces of sandstone rubble - the layer was not investigated further as the depth had been achieved and the marker was inserted without issue.

### **PSM8 (Feno type marker)**

Originally marked on the slope of the outer bank of the external W ditch, this was moved onto the top of the inner bank of the external W ditch outside the Maule Tower (location 8a). The initial trench measured 20cm N/S x 25cm E/W x 10cm deep. Turf and mid-brown topsoil (**8001**) was 10cm deep and overlay a layer of sandstone rubble in a matrix of moderately-compact mid-brown silt (**8002**). This layer could not be adequately identified within the constraints of the trench and it was decided to backfill it and move the trench to the SW.

The secondary trench (8b) was placed at the edge of the top of the inner bank of the external W ditch outside the Maule Tower. The trench measured 20cm N/S x 25cm E/W x 15cm deep. Turf and mid-brown topsoil (8003) was 15cm deep and overlay a layer of moderately-compact mid-brown silty clay (8004).



**Plate 1:** Location shot of PSM5.

### **PSM9**

Originally intended for the SW side of a previously-excavated rectangular grassed area to the NW of the SW portion of the gatehouse, this was relocated to a more central portion of the grassed area. The trench was de-turfed, however it was subsequently realised that there was no need for this marker as the re-arrangement of the subsequent markers already provided the required lines of site. The trench was re-turfed.

### **PSM 10 (Brass stud<sup>2</sup>)**

Originally intended for an area of cobbling in the castle courtyard, this was moved into the rough-racking of the SE wall of a chamber to the SE of the Great Hall.

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<sup>2</sup> In discussion with a Historic Scotland cultural resources advisor, it was agreed that areas of reduced masonry which had been subject to extensive rough-racking could be utilised to take survey markers. This would see a proposed 'feno type' ground marker replaced with a 5-6cm long brass stud which could be placed into a hole drilled through the rough-racking and secured with resin. These brass studs are relatively innocuous and were placed in areas of reduced wall core (as opposed to the facings) in areas that had been subject to quite heavy historical pointing.

**PSM11 (Brass stud<sup>2</sup>)**

Originally intended for the previously-excavated grassed area to the SE of the Elphinstone Tower, this was relocated to provide a better sight-line to PSM10. The marker was moved into the rough-racking of the wall core of a right-angled corner / reduced wall line of a building possibly connected with the Elphinstone Tower (although this relationship is unclear).

**C O N C L U S I O N S**

Nothing of archaeological significance was encountered during the work.

**LIST OF CONTEXTS**

Trench	Context	Description
PSM4	4001	Turf and mid-brown topsoil
PSM4	4002	Moderately-compact mid-brown silt containing small pieces of sandstone rubble
PSM8a	8001	Turf and mid-brown topsoil
PSM8a	8002	Sandstone rubble in a matrix of moderately-compact mid-brown silt
PSM8b	8003	Turf and mid-brown topsoil
PSM8b	8004	Moderately-compact mid-brown silty clay
PSM7	7001	Turf and mid-brown topsoil
PSM7	7002	Moderately-compact mid-brown silt containing small pieces of sandstone rubble

**LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Drilling a hole in rough-racking for PSM10	SW	30/6/2014
2	Brass stud PSM10 in place	NW	30/6/2014
3	Location shot of PSM10	SE	30/6/2014
4	Drilling a hole in the rough-racking for PSM3	SW	30/6/2014
5	Brass stud PSM3 in place	SW	30/6/2014
6	Location shot of PSM3	SW	30/6/2014
7	Drilling a hole in the rough-racking for PSM6	SW	30/6/2014
8	Brass stud PSM6 in place	SW	30/6/2014
9	Location shot of PSM5 (with PSM6 below)	SE	30/6/2014
10	Excavating trench for PSM4	E	30/6/2014
11	Post-excavation shot of the trench for PSM4	W	30/6/2014
12	Location shot of PSM4	W	30/6/2014
13	PSM4 in place	E	30/6/2014
14	Excavating the trench for PSM8	W	30/6/2014
15	Excavating the trench for PSM8	S	30/6/2014
16	Sandstone rubble in the trench for PSM8	W	30/6/2014
17	Location shot of the initial trench for PSM8	NW	30/6/2014
18	Sandstone rubble in the trench for PSM8	W	30/6/2014
19	Relocated trench for PSM8	SW	30/6/2014
20	Location shot of the relocated trench for PSM8	SW	30/6/2014
21	PSM8 in place	SW	30/6/2014
22	Excavating the trench for PSM7	NE	30/6/2014
23	View from PSM7 to the Warden's Tower	SW	30/6/2014
24	Post-excavation shot of the trench for PSM7	SE	30/6/2014
25	Post-excavation shot of the trench for PSM7	NE	30/6/2014
26	Location shot of the trench for PSM9	NE	30/6/2014
27	Drilling a hole in the rough-racking for PSM 11	SW	30/6/2014
28	Brass stud PSM11 in place	NE	30/6/2014
29	Brass stud PSM11 in place	SW	30/6/2014