

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

Updated on 15/06/2007

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Stirling Castle Esplanade
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90291-2014-01
PARISH:	Stirling
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	John Godbert
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Monitoring
NMRS NO(S):	NS79SE 6.01
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Castle
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 7914 9394
START DATE (this season)	11 February 2014
END DATE (this season)	14 February 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of two trenches on the esplanade of Stirling Castle, one for the footings of a new ticket office and the other for a new bicycle rack, both located towards the east side of the esplanade immediately to the northeast of the east boundary wall. The deposits revealed suggested that the 'natural' approach to the castle lay towards the northeast side of both trenches. The sloping profile of the natural bedrock and till appeared to define the southwest side of the route, the profile now largely 'fossilised' in the present cobbled road up the to the site.
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 2014/2015**

Stirling Castle • Monitoring • February 2014

HS PIC Index Number: 90291

SITE: Stirling Castle, Stirling

N.G.R.: NS 788 941 - NS 792 938

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological monitoring of the construction trenches for a new ticket office and bike rack

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90291-2014-01

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MARCH 2014

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to monitor the excavation of two trenches on the esplanade of Stirling Castle – one for the footings of a new ticket office (Trench 1), which measured 4m x 4m in plan, and the other for a new bike rack (Trench 2) which measured 4.75m E/W x 1.2m N/S in plan. The trenches were located towards the E side of the esplanade immediately N of the E boundary wall (Fig.1).

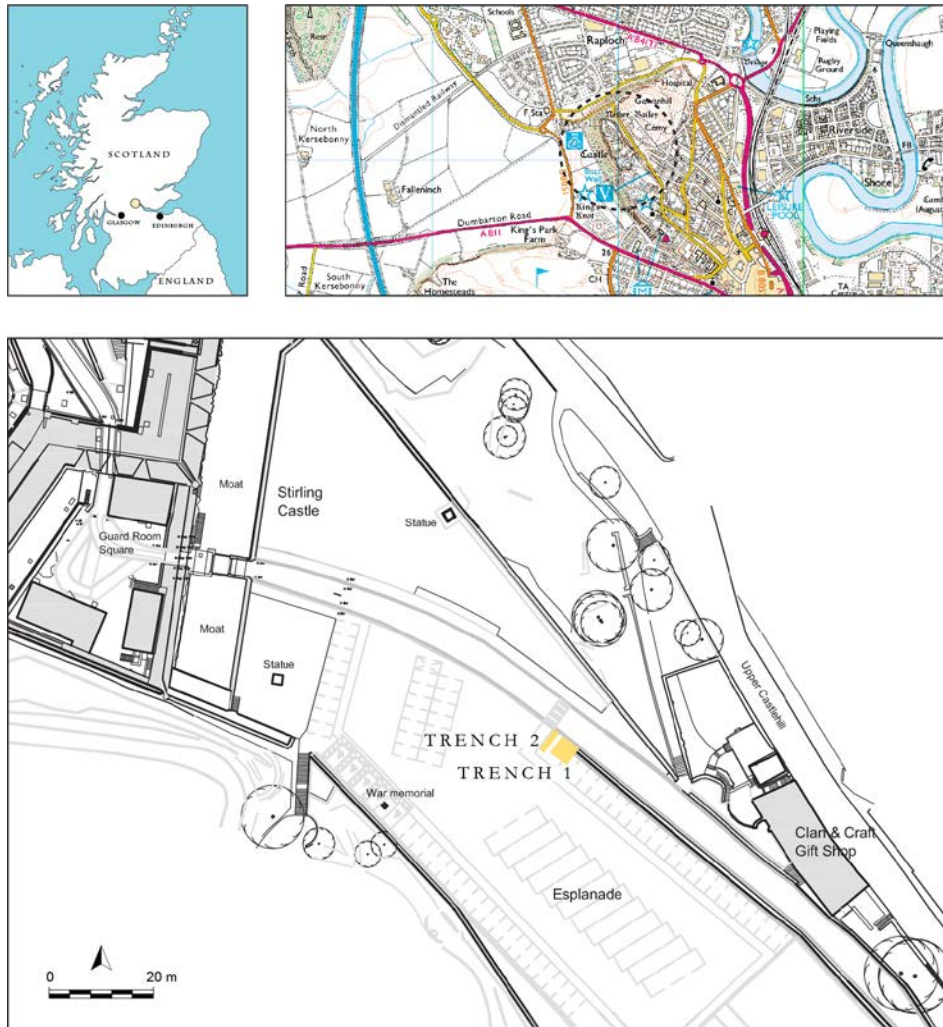


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of Trenches 1 and 2
Inset No. 2 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2014. Licence number 100036933.

The work was carried out by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision, and took place between 11th - 13th February, 2014.

DESCRIPTION

Trench 1 was excavated initially – tarmac (001) and modern hardcore (002) were removed to a general depth of 0.3m. A further spread of chippings in grey silt (003) was revealed and removed to a depth of ≈ 0.15 m. At this point natural deposits were uncovered across the trench; a light orange brown till (004) lay over eroded bedrock. These natural deposits sloped down towards the NE side of the trench and a dark grey shallow silty deposit (005) sealed both to a maximum depth of 0.1m at the very SW corner of the trench.

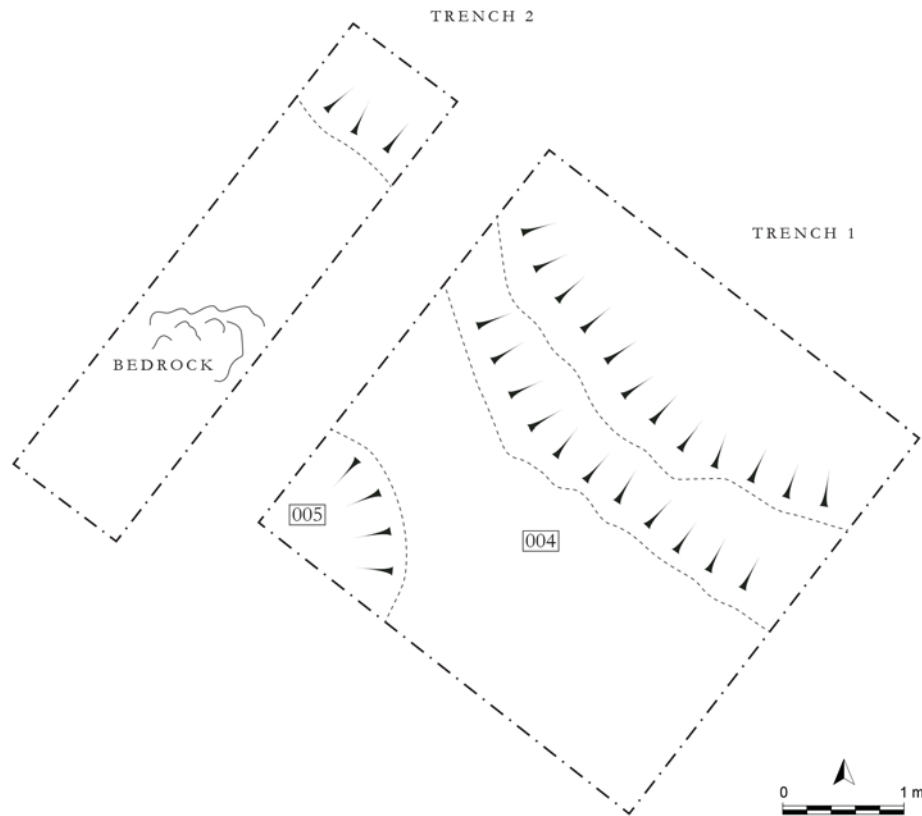


Figure 2: Post-excavation plans of trenches 1 and 2

Trench 2 revealed the same sequence of deposits over the natural, and showed the same sloping profile.

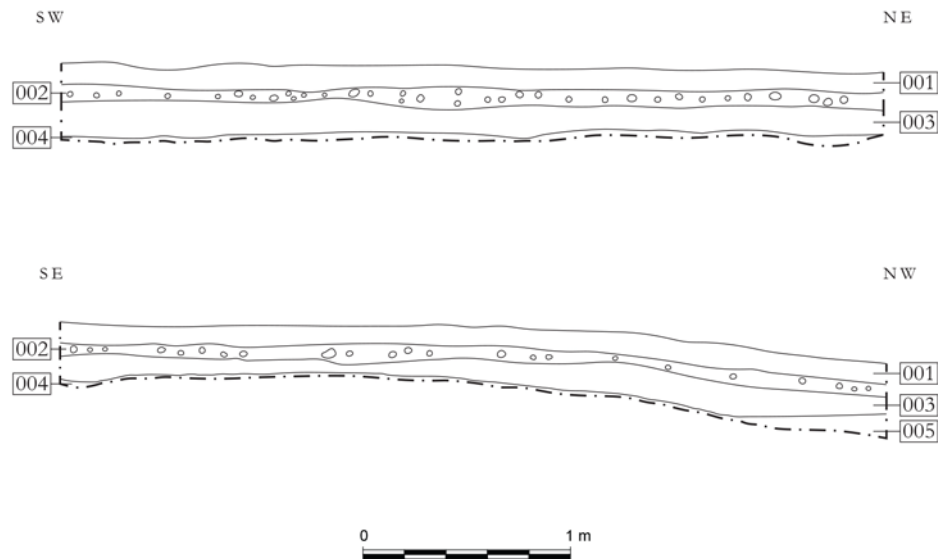


Figure 3: Trench 1, SE-facing section (top) and NE-facing section



Plate 1: Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 (foreground) and Trench 2

CONCLUSIONS

The evidence suggests that the 'natural' approach to the castle lay towards the NE side of both trenches. The sloping profile of the natural bedrock and till appears to define the SW side of the route, now largely fossilised in the present cobbled road up the to the site.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

Number	Description
001	Tarmac, 0.1m deep
002	Hardcore footings for 001 – c.0.1m deep
003	Levelling deposit – grey silt and chippings – 0.12m deep
004	Orange till 0.03m deep (natural, directly over the bedrock)
005	Shallow silty fill, pressed against the sloping profile of the natural: maximum depth 0.1m.

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Post-excavation, trenches 1 and 2	1:20
2	Section	Trench 1, SE-facing	1:20
3	Section	Trench 1, NE-facing	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Trench 1	S	11/02/2014
2	Trench 2	SE	13/02/2014
3	Trench 1 (waterlogged) with Trench 2	S	13/02/2014
4	Trench 2 completed	SW	13/02/2014
5	Trench 2	W	13/02/2014