

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

Updated on 15/06/2007

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Glasgow, City Of
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Crookston Castle
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90085-2017-01
PARISH:	Paisley (City Of Glasgow)
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Paul Fox
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Monitoring
NMRS NO(S):	NS56SW 4
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Ringwork, Tower House (Medieval)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Centred c. NS 5252 6274
START DATE (this season)	29 March 2017
END DATE (this season)	29 March 2017
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A watching brief was maintained during the removal of an existing sign and the excavation of two new trenches to house new information panels. An existing stone plinth sign situated on the north side of the entrance path at the head of the inner ditch scarp was to be removed and repositioned a short distance to the west on the outer ditch scarp head. A new sign position required excavation on the grassy platform to the north-west of the tower.</p> <p>Removal of up to 180mm of topsoil in Trench 1 (NS 5254 6273) exposed a surface of compacted stone and mortar. Though the preferred depth of the trenches for the new signage was 450mm, it was decided to use the excavated depth to emplace the sign rather than risk disturbing <i>in situ</i> archaeological deposits.</p> <p>Trench 2 (NS 5249 6274) was excavated no further than a depth of 180mm after a surface of re-deposited clay flecked with charcoal, thought to represent original fabric of the outer ditch and probably of 12th-century date.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Environment Scotland
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited with Historic Environment Scotland

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND
PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2016/2017

Crookston Castle • Watching Brief • March 2017

HS PIC Index Number: 90085 (PIC119)

SITE: Crookston Castle near Pollock, Glasgow (SW).

N.G.R.: NS 525 627

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two trenches to house new signage. Additional monitoring of the removal of an existing plinth sign.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90085-2017-01

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MARCH 2017

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Environment Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the removal of an existing sign and the excavation of two new trenches to house new information panels. An existing stone plinth sign CRK01 situated on the north side of the entrance path at the head of the inner ditch scarp was to be removed and repositioned a short distance to the west on the outer ditch scarp head. A new sign CRK02 required excavation on the grassy platform to the north-west of the stone tower (Fig. 1).

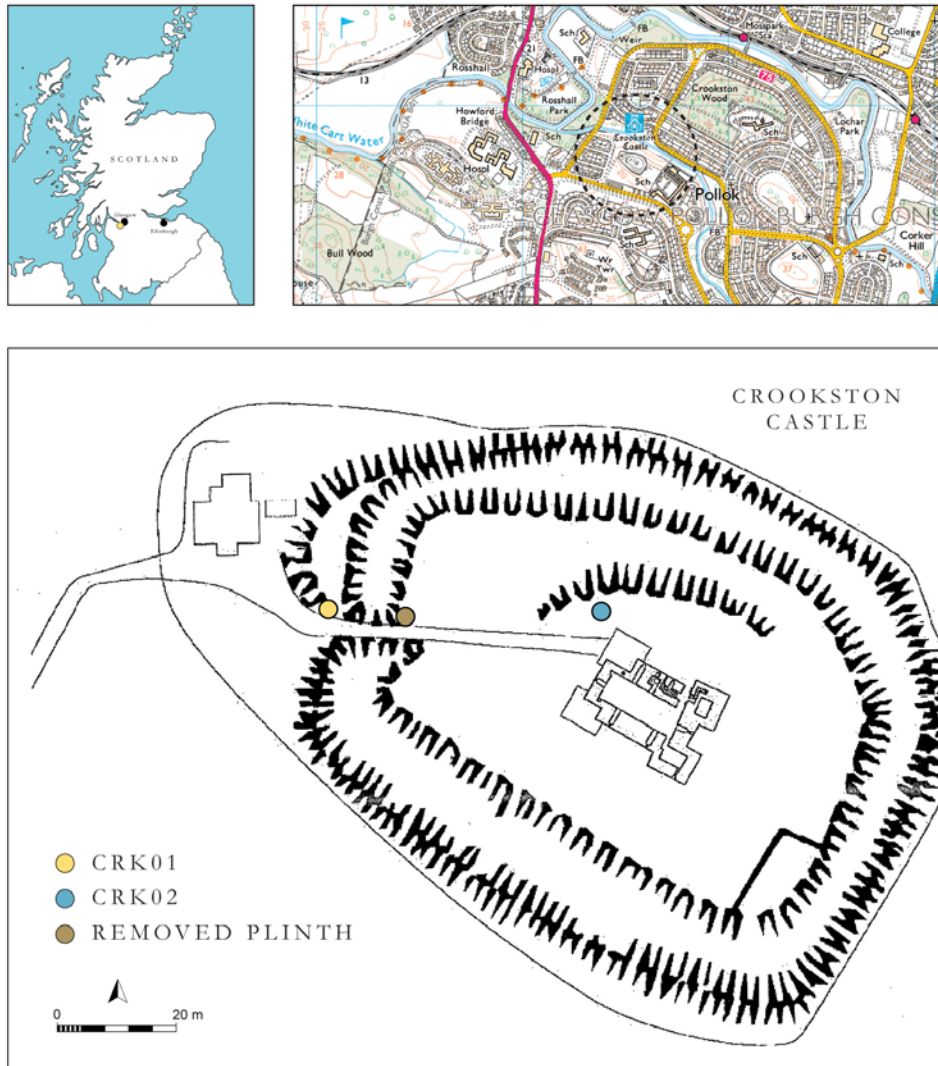


Figure 1: Plan showing the position of the existing sign and the trenches to be excavated.
Mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2017. Licence number 100036933.

Excavation was undertaken by hand, by HES staff under archaeological supervision, and took place on 29th March, 2017.

DESCRIPTION

Trench 1

Trench 1 (to house sign CRK02) was excavated on a relatively flat area to the north-west of the stone tower. The area then falls away via a steep sloping bank to the north-west, north and north-east. The trench measured 1m NE/SW x 0.7m NW/SE. The turf and mid-brown silty topsoil **101** containing numerous sub-rounded and sub-angular stones and some modern artefacts was removed to a depth of 100 – 180mm across the trench. This exposed a surface of compacted stone and mortar **102** which had to be considered an archaeological horizon and therefore a stopping point. Though the preferred depth of the trenches for the new signage was 450mm, comprising a 300mm concrete foundation plus 150mm for bedding material, following consultation with the HES Cultural Resources team, it was decided to use the excavated depth to emplace the sign rather than risk disturbing in situ archaeological deposits.



Plate 1: Trench 1 showing mortar and stone surface 102 below the turf and topsoil.

Trench 2

Trench 2 (to house sign CRK01) was excavated on the head of the outer ditch scarp on the north side of the entrance path. The trench measured 0.60m NE/SW x 0.70m NW/SE. The turf and mid-brown silty topsoil **201** containing a moderate amount of sub-rounded and sub-angular stones and some modern artefacts was removed to a depth of 100 – 180mm across the trench (the section to the north-east was highest at 180mm, with the south-west section being down slope and measuring only 100mm). This exposed a surface of re-deposited clay flecked with charcoal **202** which represented the original fabric of the outer ditch and probably of 12th century date. In consultation with the HES Cultural Resources team,

it was decided to use this excavated depth to emplace the sign rather than risk disturbing in situ archaeological deposits.



Plate 2: Trench 2 showing re-deposited clay bank 202 below the turf and topsoil.

The Existing Sign

The existing stone plinth sign was located on the opposite ditch bank to the east (Plate 3). This was removed under an archaeological watching brief although the subsequent hole created was not formalised in to a trench.



Plate 3: Showing the existing position of sign CRK01.

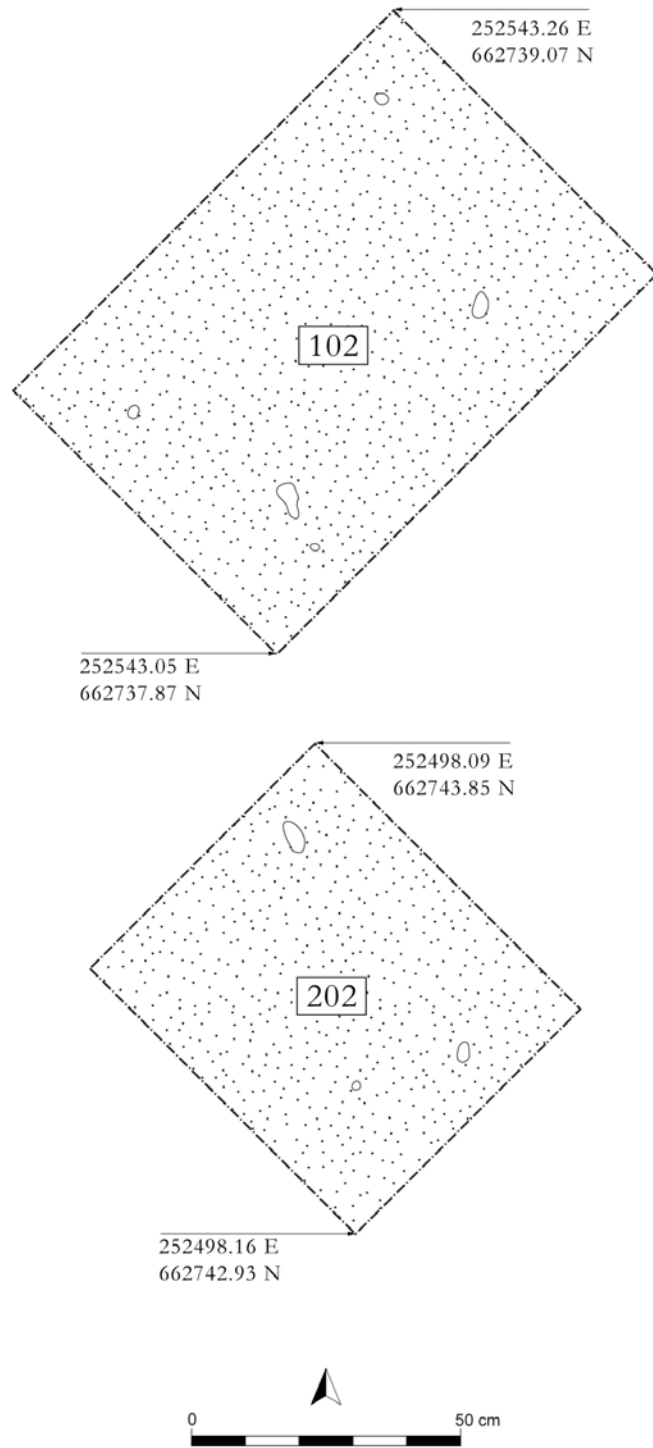


Figure 2: Post-excitation plans of Trench 1 (top) and Trench 2.

The sign was removed and was shown to have a thick concrete base. This was removed and the hole created was to be backfilled with topsoil and turf from Trenches 1 and 2. The hole measured 0.60m x 0.60m x (up to) 0.20m deep. It was noted that the foundation for this sign had partially truncated part of the upraised fabric of the inner ditch scarp, which like **202** (encountered in Trench 2) was made of re-deposited clay flecked with charcoal (Plate 4).



Plate 4: Showing the re-deposited clay forming the inner ditch scarp (truncated by CRK01).

CONCLUSIONS

The works have demonstrated the high archaeological potential of this multi-period site, though it is difficult to be more specific about the nature of the deposit encountered in Trench 1 without excavation. It was also unsurprising to find shallow in situ deposits either side of the outer ditch as it is this internal fabric which gives shape to the earthwork. It is recommended that any further ground-breaking works should be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

Context	Description
101	Turf and stony topsoil.
102	Compacted layer of stone and mortar.
201	Turf and stony topsoil.
202	Compacted layer of re-deposited clay.

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Post-excavation, Trench 1.	1:20
2	Plan	Post-excavation, Trench 2.	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Existing position of CRK01.	E	29/3/2017
2	Existing position of CRK01 with ditch.	SE	29/3/2017
3	Laying out position of Trench 1 for CRK02.	NW	29/3/2017
4	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 103.	SE	29/3/2017
5	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 102.	NE	29/3/2017
6	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 102.	NW	29/3/2017
7	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 102.	SE	29/3/2017
8	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 102 with earthwork.	SW	29/3/2017
9	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1 showing stone and mortar surface 102 with earthwork.	SW	29/3/2017
10	Post-excavation shot of Trench 2 showing re-deposited clay surface 202.	SW	29/3/2017
11	Post-excavation shot of Trench 2 showing re-deposited clay surface 202.	SW	29/3/2017
12	Post-excavation shot of Trench 2 showing re-deposited clay surface 202.	SW	29/3/2017
13	SE-facing section of Trench 2.	SE	29/3/2017
14	Post-excavation shot of Trench 2.	SE	29/3/2017
15	Sign CRK01 removed from existing position.	S	29/3/2017
16	Re-deposited clay surface within the hole left by the removal of CRK01.	S	29/3/2017