| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | Edinburgh, City Of |
| :---: | :---: |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | Palace of Holyroodhouse (South Gateway, Palace Yard) |
| PROJECT CODE: | HSCO-90132-2016-01 |
| PARISH: | Edinburgh, City Of |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR: | Gordon Ewart |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | Kirkdale Archaeology |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Watching Brief and Excavation |
| NMRS NO(S): | NT27SE 35.00; NT27SE 35.15 |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Palace; Gateway |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | None |
| NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures) | NT 26867384 |
| START DATE (this season) | 21 September 2016 |
| END DATE (this season) | 7 April 2017 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.) |  |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: <br> (May include information from other fields) | A watching brief was maintained during excavations to locate a burst water pipe, initially estimated to lie somewhere towards the south end of the forecourt. <br> During the excavations, at least two multi-phase, narrow, stone-walled structures, each with a series of floors, including a cobbled surface at the base. Cartographic evidence suggests that these are two possible stables which were built against the boundary wall between the South Garden and Palace Forecourt during the early $18^{\text {th }}$ century. The south boundary wall and cobbles are, in turn, residual elements of the late $16^{\text {th }}$-century palace and garden layout. It is likely that the cobbled surface is a continuation of the present Holyrood Road, itself an extension of the Cowgate. <br> These buildings were partially in-filled, to raise the floor levels, most likely in line with a newly raised palace forecourt level, defined by a combination of dumped material, sealed by clay and mortar-rich surfaces. <br> The sequence culminated with reduction of the upstanding walls and the infill of the areas immediately adjacent. These were carefully levelled over with bedding material for the mid-19th century courtyard surface. These deposits then saw the introduction of a major water pipe (c.1890) with at least three further service pipes running roughly N-S. <br> The sequence can be summarised in terms of the following four phases: <br> Phase 1: Late-16th century - early-17th century. <br> The south boundary wall of the palace/abbey, separating the south garden from Holyrood Road, ran along the south side of the forecourt. <br> Phase 2: Late-17th century - 18th century. <br> The area was subdivided with new cross walls, creating at least two buildings. <br> Phase 3: Early-18th century. <br> New floors added at a higher level, when the courtyard level was generally raised. <br> Phase 4: Mid-19th century. <br> These structures reduced and cleared away. |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: |  |

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

| CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS: |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Historic Environment Scotland |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN <br> CONTRIBUTOR: | 4 Western Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5QF |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | g_ewart@hotmail.com |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION <br> (intended/deposited) | Archive to be deposited with Historic Environment Scotland |

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

Holyrood Palace •Watching Brief • October 2016

HS PIC Index Number: 90132
SITE: Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh.
N.G.R.: NT 269739
DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief during the digging of two trenches to locate a burst water pipe.
PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90132-2016-01
CONTENTS: Introduction ..... 1
Description .....  2
Conclusions ..... 5
List of Contexts ..... 9
List of Drawings ..... 9
List of Digital Photographs ..... 10

KIRKDALE

ARCHAEOLOGY

```
4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF
    O С TO В E R 2016
```


## INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Environment Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two trenches to locate a burst water pipe, estimated to lie somewhere towards the south end of the forecourt (Fig. 1).


Figure 1: Plan showing the general locations of the two trenches.
Mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2016. Licence number 100036933.

Excavation was undertaken by machine, by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision, and took place on 21 ${ }^{\text {st }}$ September, and 3rd October, 2016.

## DESCRIPTION

## Trench 1

The excavation was completed by a small mechanical excavator, initially opening a trench $c .1 \mathrm{~m}$ wide aligned roughly E/W but which changed alignment to a NW/SE orientation, in an attempt to trace the buried pipe. The resulting trench measured a maximum 2.25 m long $\times 1.5 \mathrm{~m}$ wide. The sections were recorded, and exposed a series of road surfaces, a possible broken stone drainage channel, evidence of gardens/cultivation and an iron water pipe.


Figure 2: Trench 1 (top) and Trench 2, post-excavation plans.

Immediately below the present surface (1012) of the Palace Forecourt, was a spread of tarmac (1011). Running roughly NE/ SW were a series of tipped fills (1009, 1010, 1008, 1007) within a straight-sided, almost vertical cut (1025). These comprised loose dumps of stones in a dark silt, backfilling the cut to a total depth of 1.5 m , and sealing an iron water pipe at it base (1001). This pipe trench (1025) was found to
have cut across two successive dumps of compacted angular stones (1013 and 1014), apparently road/courtyard foundation/levelling deposits, up 0.60 m deep. These in turn sealed a spread of rubble and smaller, broken stone fragments $\mathbf{- 1 0 1 5}, \mathbf{1 0 2 3}, \mathbf{1 0 1 7}$, and $\mathbf{1 0 2 2}$, cumulatively $0.25-0.65 \mathrm{~m}$ deep. To the northern side of the trench the rubble overlay a deposit of grey/brown, stone free, silty clay (1016), c. 0.55 m deep, which in turn was cut against a series of narrow bands of varying composition. These deposits appear to be laid surfaces. To the north, they comprised a band of charcoal (1005) 0.10m deep, a spread of white mortar (1004), 0.03 m deep, a layer of orange/brown sandy silt (1003), 0.10 m deep, with a clean light brown silt at the base (1002). On the southern side of the trench, there was a similar series charcoal (1018), 0.30 m deep, a clay pad (1019), 0.10 m deep sealing 1020 (similar to 1003 , and excavated to a depth of 0.25 m ).


Figure 3: Clockwise from top/left: Trench 1: SW-facing section, NW-facing section, and E / NE facing (adjoining) sections.


Plate 1: Trench 1, post-excavation.

## Trench 2

Trench 2 was excavated by small mechanical excavator in an area slightly to the south-east of Trench 1. It covered an area of $1.6 \mathrm{~m} \times 1.00 \mathrm{~m}$, was oriented $\mathrm{NW} / \mathrm{SE}$, and was intended to reveal more of the pipe noted in Trench 1.


Figure 4: Trench 2, SE-facing section.

Once the concrete (2001) was cut away, two deposits of stone chippings/road make up were noted (2002 and 2003) - similar to 1013 and 1014 - sealing a spread of rubble (2004), similar to 1015/1023. This was found to seal a pipe (2007) running roughly NW/SE, set in a deep cut (2010). The pipe trench was cut against a deep rubble deposit (2005) which in turn sealed dark, humic earth (2009) at a depth of $c .1 .25 \mathrm{~m}$ below the present forecourt surface.


Plate 2: Trench 2, post-excavation.

## CONCLUSIONS

## Trench 1

This trench can be described in terms of 7 phases.

## Phase 1

The natural subsoil was revealed at a depth of $c .2 \mathrm{~m}$ below the present forecourt surface, and shows no sign of a preserved old ground surface. This suggests it has been levelled or truncated in some way.

## Phase 2

A series of relatively shallow layers were introduced, these may represent floors and domestic occupation within any of the structures known to have been in this area from later- $17^{\text {th }}-l a t e r-18^{\text {th }}$ century. However, the character of these surfaces suggests they may be fragments of a mineral parterre associated with the $16^{\text {th }}$ and early- $17^{\text {th }}$ palace gardens.

## Phase 3

The cut visible against Phase 2 deposits may reflect a robbed structure - a wall or drain.

## Phase 4

Levelling over cleared Phase 3 structures in the late- $17^{\text {th }}$ century using rubble to raise the forecourt level by $c .0 .60 \mathrm{~m}$. It is also possible that this deposit is a surviving element from a (redundant) parterre layout, simply buried by the new forecourt

## Phase 5

Levelling for a further forecourt surface associated with new gates etc. - probably in the mid-19 ${ }^{\text {th }}$ century.

## Phase 6

New water pipe laid in a deep narrow trench (early-20 th century).

## Phase 7

Present forecourt surface laid.

## Trench 2

This trench can be described in terms of 6 phases

## Phase 1

Cultivation, defined by a deep garden soil deposit.

## Phase 2

A deep rubble spread, suggesting demolished structures recycled as underpinning for a raised courtyard surface. It is also possible that this deposit is a linear feature or surface within a mineral parterre, simply buried by later courtyard.

## Phase 3

A trench cut (and backfilled) for an iron water pipe.

## Phase 4

Rubble and small stones laid down as underpinning for a further raised ground level.

## Phase 5

An electricity cable was emplaced in a metal sleeve, dug against raised surfaces and backfilled.

## Phase 6

Present forecourt surface laid.

## Summary

The two trenches show evidence of:

- Garden activity, both cultivation and parterres: $16^{\text {th }}-$ mid- $17^{\text {th }}$ century;
- Stone buildings cleared and rubble potentially used within the $16^{\text {th }}-17^{\text {th }}$ century parterre designs. These ultimately provided footings for the raised forecourt, replacing the parterres (late-17 th century);
- Rubble and angular aggregate used as underpinning for a further raising of the forecourt to almost the present level (later-19th century); and,
- Modern services and laying of the present forecourt surface ( $20^{\text {th }}$ century).

The evidence as a whole suggests that there may be extensive survival of a sequence of late medieval parterres, simply buried and sealed beneath the first forecourt surface, and associated with the Palace of Charles II. These historically important deposits lie just $c .1 \mathrm{~m}$ below the present surface.

## Finds

A single ashlar block - moulded pale yellow/cream coloured sandstone, probably part of a window margin was retrieved from context 2005.


Plate 3: The ashlar block from Trench 2, context 2005.

The discovery of such a large fragment suggests that at least one significant medieval building was destroyed and used within the fabric of a parterre and, later, as rubble footings for the new courtyard/forecourt laid alongside the developed palace of Charles II (during the 1660s).


Plate 4: Another view of the ashlar block from Trench 2, context 2005

## LISTOF CONTEXTS

| Context | Trench | Description |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1001 | 1 | Cast iron water pipe 10 inches in diameter. |
| 1002 | 1 | Light brown clean silt, natural subsoil. |
| 1003 | 1 | Orange /brown sandy silt, 100mm deep. |
| 1004 | 1 | Narrow band/layer of white mortar 30mm deep. |
| 1005 | 1 | Charcoal spread/layer 100mm deep. |
| 1006 | 1 | Dark silt, up to 200 mm deep. |
| 1007 | 1 | Dark sandy silt and stone fragments, up to 800 mm deep. |
| 1008 | 1 | As above but fewer stones, 300 mm deep. |
| 1009 | 1 | Dark grey silty soil, 200 mm deep. |
| 1010 | 1 | Light grey silty soil, 100 mm deep. |
| 1011 | 1 | Tarmac, up to 200 mm deep. |
| 1012 | 1 | Concrete and tarmac surface, 100 mm deep. |
| 1013 | 1 | Angular stone fragments, up to 200 mm deep. |
| 1014 | 1 | Angular stone fragments, up to 200 mm deep. |
| 1015 | 1 | Layer/spread of rubble and mortar, 1 'course' thick, 200 mm deep. |
| 1016 | 1 | Grey brown silt, stone free, $600-650 \mathrm{~mm}$ deep. |
| 1017 | 1 | Same as 1023. |
| 1018 | 1 | Band/deposit of charcoal rich silt, up to 300mm deep. |
| 1019 | 1 | Orange/brown clay pad/spread, 100mm deep. |
| 1020 | 1 | Silty clay and small stones, unexcavated. |
| 1021 | 1 | Dark grey silt up to 500 mm deep. |
| 1022 | 1 | Rubble spread, up to 400 mm deep. |
| 1023 | 1 | Layer of crushed small stones, 200 mm deep. |
| 1024 | 1 | Small stones and clay-rich soil, up to 600 mm deep, not fully excavated. |
| 1025 | 1 | Cut for pipe trench, 1.5 m deep x 1.2 m wide (max), not fully excavated. |
| 2001 | 2 | Present surface of forecourt, same as 1012. |
| 2002 | 2 | Same as 1013. |
| 2003 | 2 | Same as 1014. |
| 2004 | 2 | Same as 1023. |
| 2005 | 2 | Same as 1022. |
| 2006 | 2 | Same as 1007. |
| 2007 | 2 | Same as 1001. |
| 2008 | 2 | Iron pipe containing power cable, 4 inches in diameter. |
| 2009 | 2 | Dark grey brown garden soil, not fully excavated, sealed by 2005. |
| 2010 | 2 | Cut for pipe trench, up to 600 mm deep, 2007 is at the base. |

LISTOF DRAWINGS

| No. | Type | Description | Scale |
| :---: | :---: | :--- | :---: |
| 1 | Plan | Trench locations. | $1: 50$ |
| 2 | Section | Trench 1, all sections | $1: 10$ |
| 3 | Section | Trench 2, SE-facing | $1: 10$ |
| 4 | Plan | Trench 1, post-excavation | $1: 20$ |
| 5 | Plan | Trench 2, post-excavation | $1: 20$ |

LISTOF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

| No. | Description | From | Date |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | Trench 1, post-excavation. | S | $21 / 09 / 2016$ |
| 2 | Trench 1, post-excavation. | NW | $29 / 09 / 2016$ |
| 3 | Trench 1, post-excavation. | SE | $29 / 09 / 2016$ |
| 4 | Trench 2, post-excavation. | S | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 5 | Trench 2, post-excavation. | SE | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 6 | Trench 2, post-excavation. | SW | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 7 | Trench 2, post-excavation. | SE | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 8 | Trench 2, general view of location. | N | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 9 | Ashlar block from Trench 2. | $\mathrm{N} / \mathrm{A}$ | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |
| 10 | Ashlar block from Trench 2. | $\mathrm{N} / \mathrm{A}$ | $03 / 10 / 2016$ |

