

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Falkirk
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Kinneil House
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90189-2017-01
PARISH:	Bo'ness and Carriden
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Paul Fox
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological monitoring
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SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Tower House
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NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NS 9824 8060
START DATE (this season)	14 March 2017
END DATE (this season)	14 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 excavation of a large trench to remove the foundation of the leaning south orchard wall as part of stabilisation works to repair and reinstate the wall. This followed an initial stage of test trenching in April 2016 of the wall which was leaning considerably to the north, rendering it potentially dangerous and the subject of a programme of repair. The April 2016 work identified the below ground position of the wall foundation. This was followed by a considerable period of down-taking of the wall masonry until it lay flush with the ground level of the orchard.</p> <p>As suggested by the April 2016 works, it would seem that an area of undulating land (on the orchard side of the wall) was scarped back in places and that material in the form of re-deposited clay was brought in as both levelling material to bed the orchard wall, and as material brought in to level up the ground of the orchard formed as a result. The south orchard wall formed a boundary and revetment between the higher, made-up entrance terrace to the south and the lower level of the orchard to the north. The lack of artefacts was again surprising during the latest programme of works, however the area should still be considered to be of high archaeological potential.</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

Kinneil House • Watching Brief • March 2017

HS PIC Index Number: 90189 (PIC152)

SITE: Kinneil House, near Bo'ness, West Lothian.

N.G.R.: NS 9824 8060

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a large trench to remove the foundation of the leaning south orchard wall as part of stabilisation works to repair and reinstate the wall.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90189-2017-01

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MARCH 2017

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Kinneil House near Bo'ness in West Lothian (Fig. 1). This followed an initial stage of test trenching in April 2016¹ of the south orchard wall which was leaning considerably to the north, rendering it potentially dangerous and the subject of a programme of repair. The April 2016 work identified the below ground position of the wall foundation. This was followed by a considerable period of down-taking of the wall masonry until it lay flush with the ground level of the orchard.



Figure 1: Plan showing the general location of the south orchard wall under investigation.
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¹ See HSCO-90189-2016-01.

The current works would see the excavation of the foundation of the wall and the widening of its footprint from 0.65m N/S to 1.25m N/S x 0.60m deep so that an appropriate foundation could be inserted. This required ground preparation to the south of the wall.

The trench was mechanically excavated by the MCU under archaeological supervision, and the work took place on 14th March, 2017.

DESCRIPTION

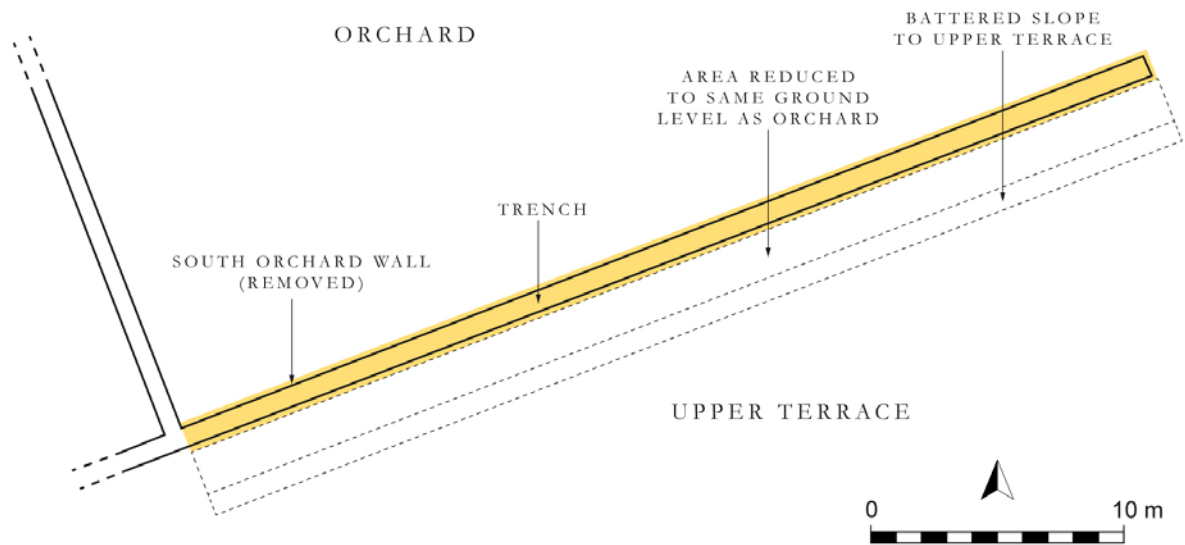


Figure 2: Plan showing the position of the trench and associated ground works.

In order to remove the wall foundation and excavate the widened trench for the new stepped foundation, there was a degree of ground preparation which had to be carried out first. The level of the wall had been reduced down to the level of the orchard ground surface, but in order to be able to dig on the south side of the wall, the ground had to be dropped by *c.*1m (Plate 1).



Plate 1: The pre-excavation sequence of banked deposits and reduced wall line.

In order to achieve this, the mechanical digger had to reduce an area 1.75m wide N/S x 1m deep. A further 1m wide (N/S) strip was then battered up to the existing level of the upper terrace (Plate 2). In this way enough operating room was created to allow the excavation of the new foundation trench.



Plate 2: The working platform being excavated by the digger.

At the western end of the newly created working platform, the E-facing section showed a basic sequence of imported garden soil **101**, c.0.50m thick overlying a layer of imported charcoal-flecked brown clay **102** containing angular rubble pieces (Plate 3).



Plate 3: E-facing section on the south side of the wall.

Having prepared the ground, the removal of the existing wall foundation proceeded. Soil to a depth of 0.30m was to be added to each side (north and south) of the existing wall (0.65m wide) to form a trench 1.25m wide E/W x 0.60m deep. This was again removed using a mechanical digger. The wall foundation was laid to the north so that the stone could be cleaned and reclaimed while the soft deposits were stored in a bund to the south.



Plate 4: Post-excitation shot showing the new foundation trench.



Plate 5: Post-excavation shot showing the S-facing deposits forming the ground of the orchard.

The deposits of the orchard again showed a basic sequence of imported garden soil **101**, c.0.50m thick overlying a layer of imported charcoal-flecked brown clay **102**. As **102** appeared to form the same deposit to north and south of the wall, this suggests that they were emplaced at the same time *i.e.* in the late-17th century.

CONCLUSIONS

As suggested in the previous report – it would seem that an area of undulating land (on the orchard side of the wall) was scarped back in places and that material in the form of re-deposited clay was brought in as (i) levelling material to bed the orchard wall, and (ii) as material brought in to level up the ground of the orchard formed as a result. The south orchard wall formed a boundary and revetment between the higher made-up entrance terrace to the south and the lower level of the orchard to the north. The lack of artefacts was again surprising during the current programme of works, however the area should be considered to be of high archaeological potential.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

Context	Description
101	Imported greyish/brown garden soil.
102	Re-deposited mid-brown clay flecked with charcoal and containing some sub-angular stones.

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Location of the works.	1:100

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	N-facing section of upper terrace and reduced wall.	SE	14/3/2017
2	N-facing section of upper terrace and reduced wall.	N	14/3/2017
3	Pre-excavation shot showing foundation of reduced wall.	NW	14/3/2017
4	Pre-excavation shot showing foundation of reduced wall.	SE	14/3/2017
5	Reducing ground level to south of wall.	NW	14/3/2017
6	Reducing ground level to south of wall.	SE	14/3/2017
7	Reduced orchard wall.	E	14/3/2017
8	Reduced orchard wall.	E	14/3/2017
9	E-facing section of reduced area of upper terrace.	SE	14/3/2017
10	E-facing section of reduced area of upper terrace.	E	14/3/2017
11	Post-excavation shot of reduced area of upper terrace.	E	14/3/2017
12	Wall foundation removal and trench excavation in progress.	W	14/3/2017
13	Wall foundation removal and trench excavation in progress showing masonry retention.	W	14/3/2017
14	Post-excavation shot of foundation trench.	SE	14/3/2017
15	Post-excavation shot of foundation trench.	W	14/3/2017
16	Typical S-facing section of orchard deposits.	S	14/3/2017
17	Post-excavation shot of foundation trench.	SE	14/3/2017
18	Post-excavation shot of foundation trench.	NW	14/3/2017