

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

Updated on 15/06/2007

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Falkirk
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Blackness Castle
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90036-2012-01
PARISH:	Bo'ness and Carriden
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	David Murray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT08SE 6
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Castle
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 0550 8019
START DATE (this season)	6 December 2011
END DATE (this season)	6 December 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was carried out during a small excavation at Blackness Castle. The trench was intended to take a display board, and was located adjacent to the Barrack Block of 1870-74, to the south of the main Castle complex. This trench demonstrated that the ground to the immediate west of the Barracks Block has been disturbed in the recent past. It remains unclear, due to the small size of the trench, whether or not this is localised disturbance, caused by the laying of a nearby drain, or is more widespread, perhaps representing make-up material introduced to create the car park.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	4 Western Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5QF
EMAIL ADDRESS:	g_ewart@hotmail.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2012

Blackness Castle: Watching Brief, December 2011.

HS PIC Index Number: 90036

SITE: Blackness Castle

N.G.R.: NT 0550 8019

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief associated with the installation of
new signage.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90036-2012-01

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4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF.

JANUARY 2012

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its Properties-In-Care (PIC) call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was requested to undertake an archaeological watching brief on a small excavation at Blackness Castle (Fig. 1). The trench was intended to take a display board, and was located adjacent to the Barrack Block of 1870-74, to the S of the main Castle complex. The Barrack Block is assumed to be orientated E/W in this account, and the trench was at its W end, orientated NW/SE and situated 1.2 m from the Barracks at its closest point.

All excavation was carried out by hand, by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision.

The work was carried out on 6th December 2011.

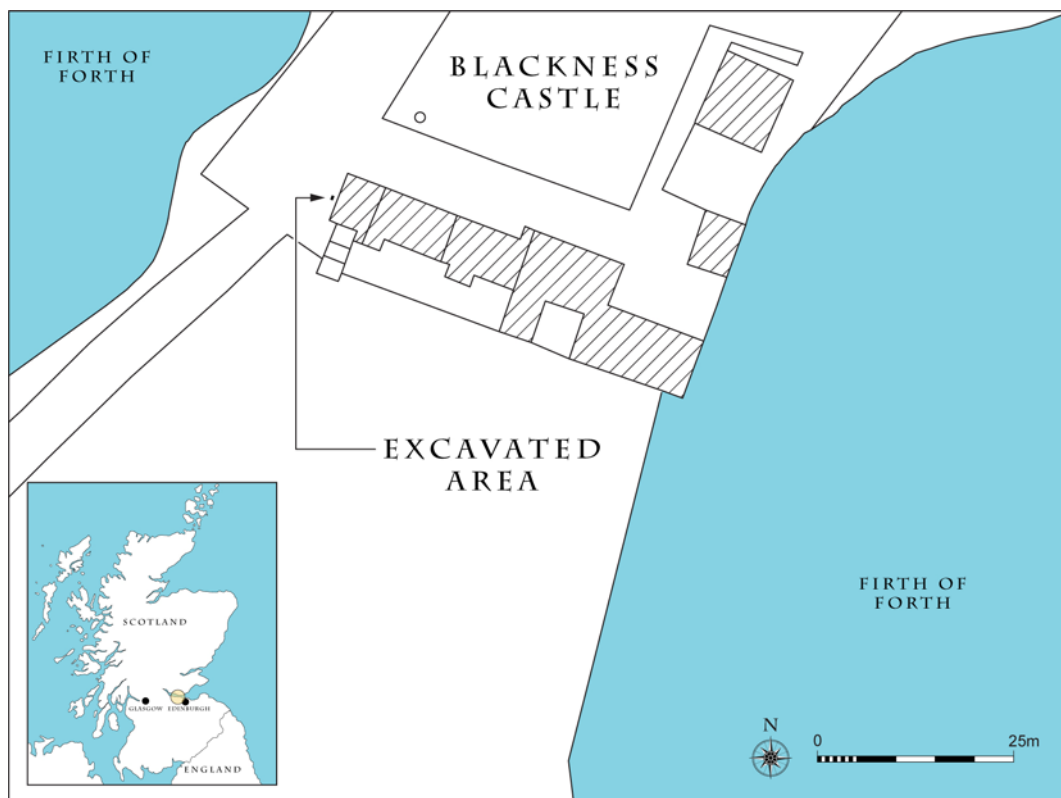


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of Blackness Castle, and the site of the present works.

DESCRIPTION

The trench measured 1.2m by 0.6m in plan, and was 0.45m deep. The uppermost deposit of gravel **001** proved to be a 100mm thickness of small rounded stone, overlying 70- 80mm of pale brown sandy silt and gravel **002**. The rest of the excavation proceeded through **003**, a dark grey sandy silt very rich in rubble (mostly dolerite chunks), but including some sandstone and brick throughout. One hand-made brick and one modern engineering brick fragment were noted within this material.

CONCLUSIONS

This trench demonstrated that the ground to the immediate W of the Barracks Block has been disturbed in the recent past, as evidenced by the presence of the engineering brick. It remains unclear, due to the small size of the trench, whether or not this is localised disturbance caused by the laying of a nearby drain, or is more widespread - perhaps representing make-up material introduced to create the car park.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No.	Description
001	Current gravel surface
002	Pale brown sandy silt and gravel below 001
003	Dark grey sandy silt and rubble below 002

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
01	General area of the trench, pre-excavation	SW	06/12/2011
02	General area of the trench, pre-excavation	N	06/12/2011
03	Excavation in progress	SW	06/12/2011
04	Trench as finished	SW	06/12/2011
05	Trench as finished, detail of SW facing section	SW	06/12/2011