

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Edinburgh, City Of
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Holyrood Park
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90131-2015-01
PARISH:	Edinburgh, City Of
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Alan Radley
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT27SE 197
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Park
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 2737 7244; NT 2778 7408; NT 2809 7302;
START DATE (this season)	28 October 2015
END DATE (this season)	30 October 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of three small trenches to allow the installation of new interpretation panels around Holyrood Park. Trench A was situated close to the Innocent Railway (NT 2737 7244), Trench B was close to Meadowbank Lodge (NT 2778 7408), and Trench C was located at the car park near Dunsappie Loch. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.
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 SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2014/2015**

Holyrood Park • Excavation • October 2014

HS PIC Index Number: 90131

SITE: Holyrood Park, Edinburgh.

N.G.R.: NT 2737 7244; NT 2778 7408; NT 2809 7302

DESCRIPTION: The excavation of three trenches to hold the bases for new interpretation panels.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90131-2015-01

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JANUARY 2015

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake the excavation of three small trenches to hold the bases for new interpretation panels in Holyrood Park, Edinburgh (Fig. 1). Trench A was situated close to the Innocent Railway, Trench B was close to Meadowbank Lodge, and Trench C was located at the car park near Dunsappie Loch.

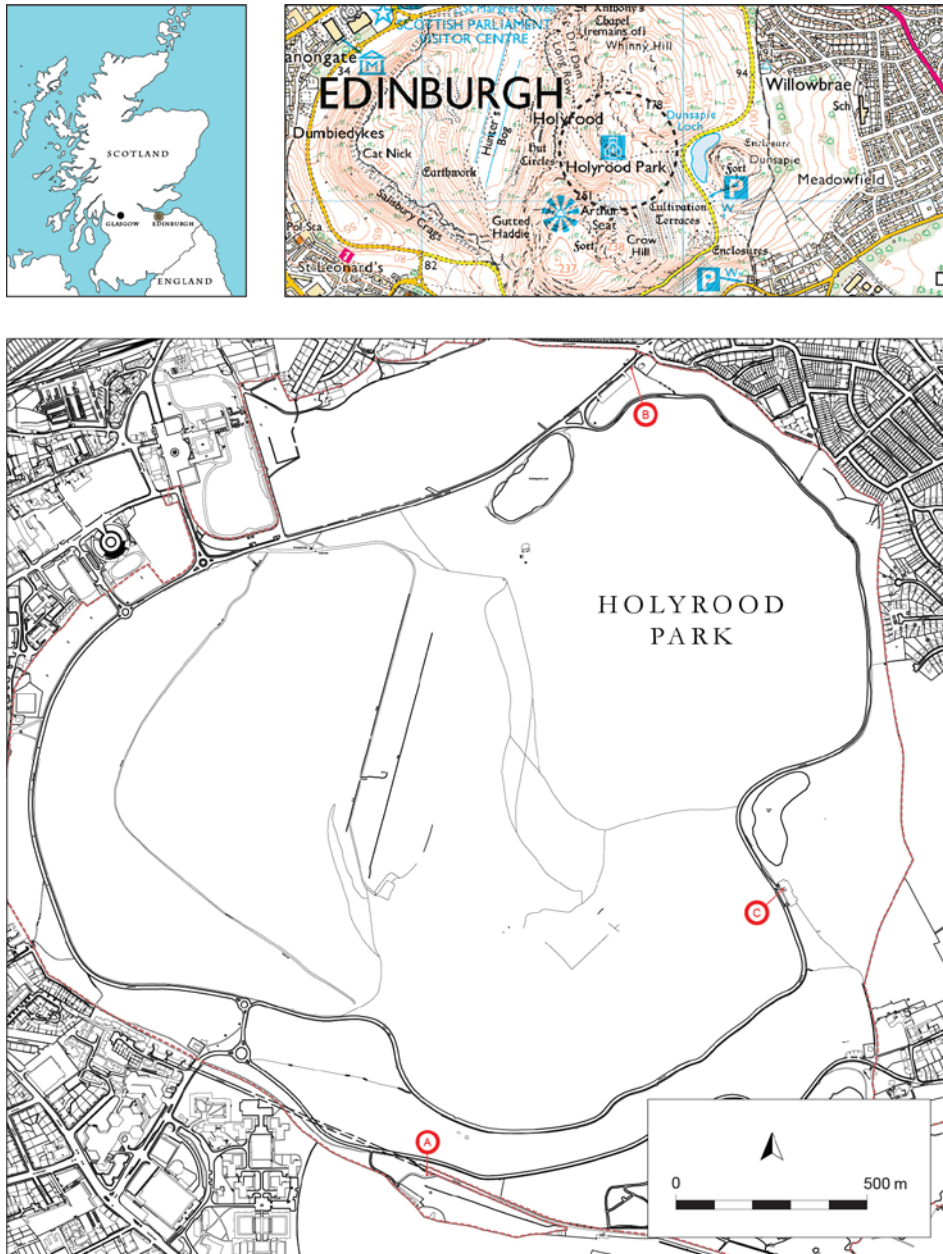


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of the three trenches (A, B and C) in Holyrood Park.

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The trenches were excavated by hand and the work was carried out between the 28th – 30th October, 2014.

DESCRIPTION

Trench A

Trench A measured 1.35m NW/SE, by 0.6m NE/SW and was 0.95m deep at its north-eastern end. The trench was situated on a steep slope, so at the south-west baulk it measured only 0.55m deep.

The upper deposit, **101**, measured \approx 0.2m thick, and comprised a turf and mid-dark brown silty topsoil. Context **101** sealed **102**, a roughly even mix of mid-brown slightly silty clay and stones with occasional mortar flecks throughout. The stones typically measured 80mm x 60mm in size. There were occasional lumps of tarmac seen within **102**.

Directly under **102**, context **103** comprised a mix of angular stone chips, typically measuring 80mm x 60mm, in a light-mid brown clayey silt.

Context **104**, located towards the bottom 0.15m of the excavated trench at its north-eastern end, comprised mostly stone fragments in a light brown clayey silt. The stones typically measured 100mm x 80mm.

Trench B

Trench B measured 1.30m E/W, by 0.6m N/S and was 0.6m deep.

Filling the upper 0.2m of the trench, context **201** was a heavily rooted and quite compact deposit of grey brown clay containing one or two small stones. Below **201**, and sealed by it, was context **202**, a heavily rooted mid-grey silty clay up to 0.1m thick.

Below **202** lay context **203**, a deposit of grey ash, some 60mm thick at the western end of the trench tapering to 20mm thick at the eastern baulk. Deposit **203** lay over **204**, which filled the bottom 0.25m of the trench. Context **204** comprised a deposit of orange/light brown clay; it was not fully bottomed as the required depth of the trench was achieved before the base of the deposit was reached.

Trench C

Trench C measured 1.3m NW/SE, by 0.6m NE/SW and was up to 0.55m in depth.

The upper 0.1m of the material excavated, context **301**, was comprised of turf and a mid-brown clayey loam. Context **301** sealed **302**, a 0.15m thick deposit of mid-brown slightly clayey silt. The primary deposit excavated, **303**, measured 0.3m in thickness and was comprised of an orange-brown clay with stone fragments throughout.

Lumps of tarmac were noted in all three of these heavily rooted deposits.

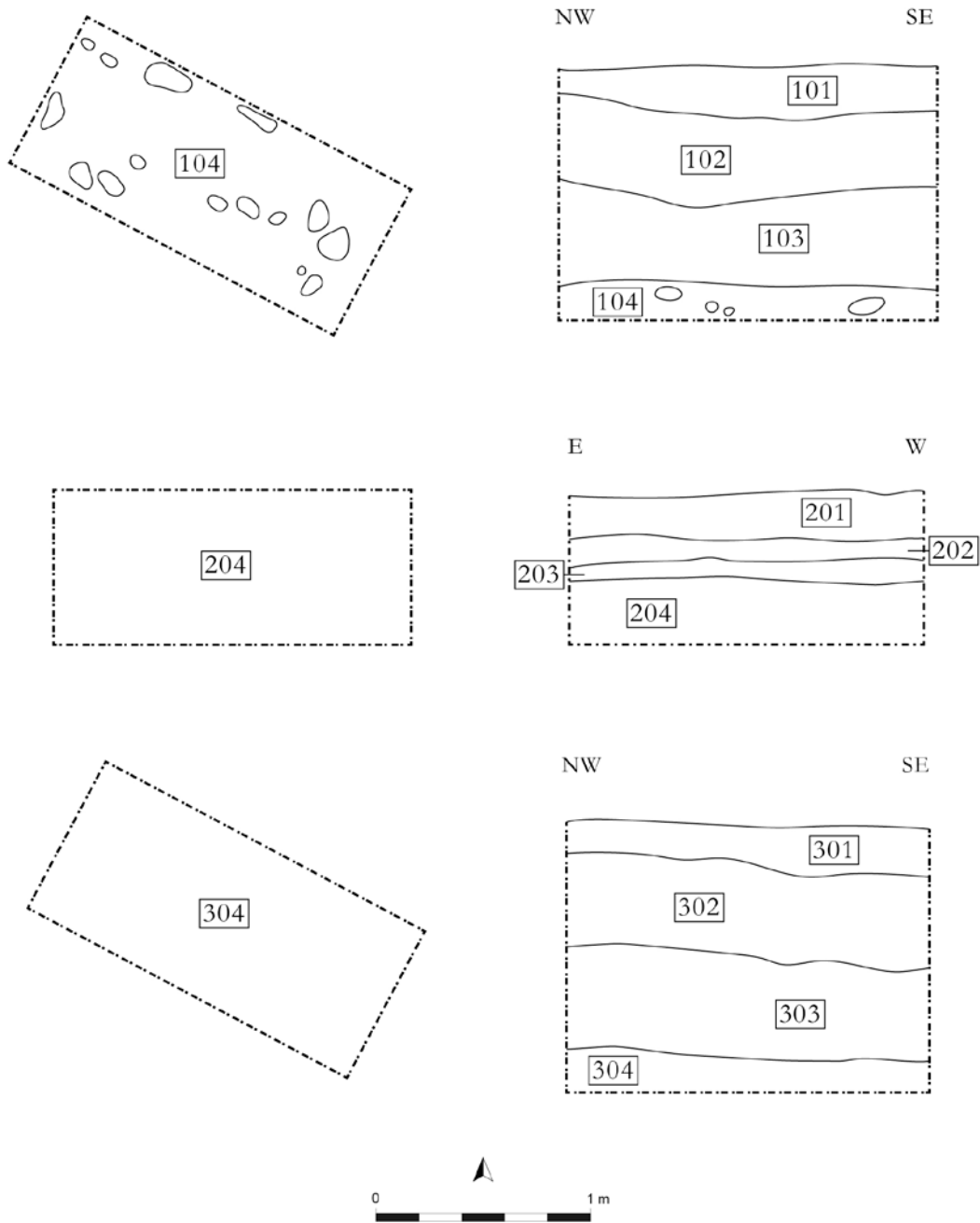


Figure 2: Clockwise from top/left: Post-excavation plan of Trench A; SW-facing section of Trench A; N-facing section of Trench B; SW-facing section of Trench C; Post-excavation plan of Trench C; Post-excavation plan of Trench B.



Plate 1: Trench C, SW-facing section.

CONCLUSIONS

Trench A

This area has been landscaped (probably toward the end of the 20th century) as part of the work done when the paths to the north-east and south were constructed.

It was unsurprising therefore that the main deposits contained much stone, probably construction or demolition debris. This perhaps indicated that a small structure (possibly one of the boundary walls, moved slightly to accommodate the path) was being built or demolished nearby at the same time as the rest of the work was carried out.

Trench B

The ash deposit **203** may indicate an earlier ground surface $\approx 0.25\text{m}$ below the current one. Alternatively it could have been deliberately dumped in order to provide good drainage within a gardening landscape.

Deposit **204** looked to be re-deposited subsoil, perhaps hill-wash or material imported as levelling.

Trench C

It appears as though this whole area has been landscaped when the tarmac surface of the car park was laid, thus any archaeological remains that survive would need to be deeper than the level excavated as part of the current work. Context **303** may have been a re-deposited subsoil, perhaps suggesting that the landscaping also included the removal of material in some areas. This would seem to make the survival of archaeological features, even at deeper levels, unlikely.

Future Work

The areas around trenches A and C have been extensively landscaped in recent times and, at least to the depths seen; there is little chance of *in-situ* archaeology surviving.

In Trench B, the upper c.0.25m of deposits had been disturbed or re-deposited in recent times; below this level there is potential for archaeological evidence surviving intact.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No	Trench	Description
101	A	Turf and mid-dark brown silty topsoil.
102	A	Roughly even mix of mid-brown slightly silty clay and stones with occasional mortar flecks throughout.
103	A	Mix of angular stone chips and light-mid brown clayey silt.
104	A	Stone fragments and light brown clayey silt; stones typically measure 100mm x 80mm.
201	B	Heavily rooted and quite compact deposit of grey/brown clay with one or two small stones.
202	B	Heavily rooted mid-grey silty clay.
203	B	Deposit of grey ash, 60mm thick at the western end of the trench tapering to 20mm at the eastern baulk.
204	B	Orange/light brown clay.
301	C	Turf and mid-brown clayey loam.
302	C	Mid-brown slightly clayey silt.
303	C	Orange brown clay containing stone fragments, typically 60mm x 40 in size.

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Section	Trench A, SW-facing.	1:20
2	Plan	Trench A, Post-excavation.	1:20
3	Section	Trench B, N-facing.	1:20
4	Plan	Trench B, Post-excavation.	1:20
5	Section	Trench C, SW-facing.	1:20
6	Plan	Trench C, Post-excavation.	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Trench A, NW-facing section.	NW	28/10/2014
2	Trench A, location shot.	W	28/10/2014
3	Trench B, post-excavation.	N	29/10/2014
4	Trench B, location shot.	NW	29/10/2014
5	Trench C, SW-facing section.	SW	30/10/2014
6	Trench C, location shot.	S	30/10/2014