

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	West Lothian
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Linlithgow Palace
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90201-2015-01 & HSCO-90201-2015-02
PARISH:	Linlithgow
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Paul Fox
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT07NW 9.00
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Palace
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 0015 7729
START DATE (this season)	19 January 2015
END DATE (this season)	30 March 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of an evaluation trench ahead of the installation of a new statue depicting Mary, Queen of Scots. The excavation revealed what appeared to be levelling deposits and disturbed ground, amongst which were finds dating from medieval to modern periods.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Environment 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 with Historic Environment Scotland

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2014/2015**

Linlithgow Palace • Watching Brief • January 2015

HS PIC Index Number: 90201

SITE: Linlithgow Palace, Linlithgow.

N.G.R.: NT 0015 7729

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief during the excavation of an evaluation trench ahead of the installation of a new statue depicting Mary, Queen of Scots.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90201-2015-01

CONTENTS:

Introduction.....	1
Description.....	2
Conclusions.....	3
List of Contexts.....	5
List of Drawings.....	5
List of Digital Photographs.....	5



4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 5

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of an evaluation trench on Linlithgow Peel in the grassy area adjacent to, and south-west of, Linlithgow Palace (Fig. 1). The evaluation was designed to determine if the preferred location for a proposed statue was archaeologically sensitive, as the foundation of the statue base required an excavated depth of 0.6m. A previous archaeological assessment carried out in 2001 – 2002 identified a series of features in the general vicinity including ditches, a potential quarry pit and linear features indicating that the area is archaeologically sensitive. In addition to the features identified, it seems clear from an examination of the area that it has been subject to levelling episodes which have created the distinctive large double terraces between the west side of the palace and the loch below.

The trench was excavated by hand, by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision, and was carried out on 19th January, 2015.

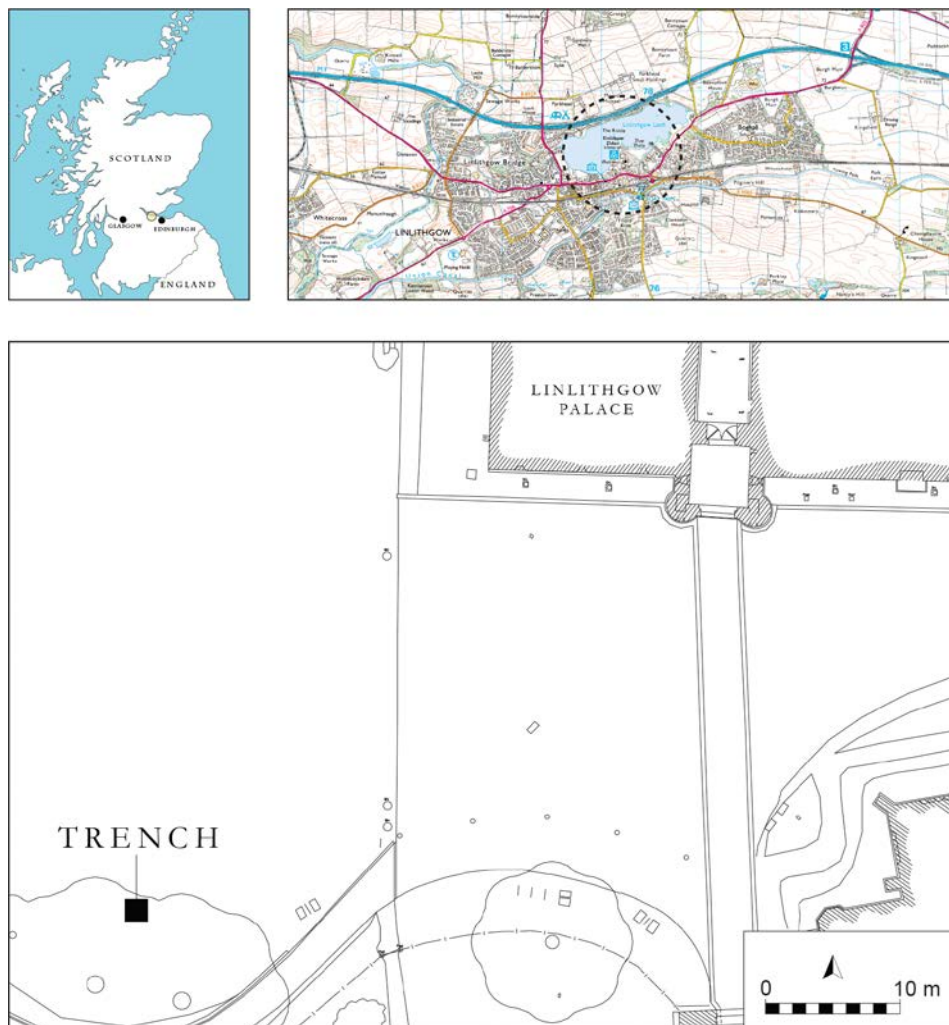


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of the evaluation trench.

Inset No. 2 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2015. Licence number 100036933.

DESCRIPTION

The evaluation trench footprint measured 1.7m E/W x 1.7m N/S. It was de-turfed and boards were used to store the turf and spoil. The turf/topsoil **101** was 9 – 10cm thick and was bedded on a layer of silty gravel **102**, some 10cm thick, containing numerous small sub-rounded water-rolled pebbles. Layer **103** below (12 – 26cm thick) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silt, flecked with charcoal, containing a selection of small finds including animal bone, possible medieval/post-medieval pot sherds, iron and possible iron slag and, tellingly, a piece of corroded barbed wire (Plate 1). Barbed wire was first patented in the 1860s, so this would tend to suggest that this was a probably 19th century (or later) levelling layer, where contemporary objects were being mixed with material derived from kitchen midden deposits, possibly from the flattening of nearby earthworks.



Plate 1: Small finds including barbed wire (bottom, left) from context 103.

An undulating layer of silty gravel **104** (4 – 15cm thick) lay below **103**, which was flecked with charcoal. Upon its removal, a deposit of compact mid-greyish brown silt **105** was revealed, heavily flecked with charcoal and containing numerous pieces of animal bone, as well as green glaze pottery (Plate 2).



Plate 2: The small finds from layer 105.

Layer **105** varied in depth from 4 – 20cm, but was generally not bottomed as the required trench depth of 60cm had been met. In the north-east corner of the trench, layer **105** gave way to a layer of mid-orangey brown sandy gravel **106**, although this was barely exposed. The compaction, high charcoal and bone content and colour of layer **105**, allied to the lack of modern finds, suggests that it was an *in-situ* historic levelling layer comprising a large amount of kitchen midden material.

CONCLUSIONS

There has clearly been a large amount of disturbance and make-up in the vicinity of the statue trench, including levelling activity in the medieval/post-medieval period through to relatively recent times. The next phase of this work will require the cutting of a 1m wide strip (20cm deep) around the evaluation trench. As the area is of high archaeological potential, it is recommended that such ground-breaking activities be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief.

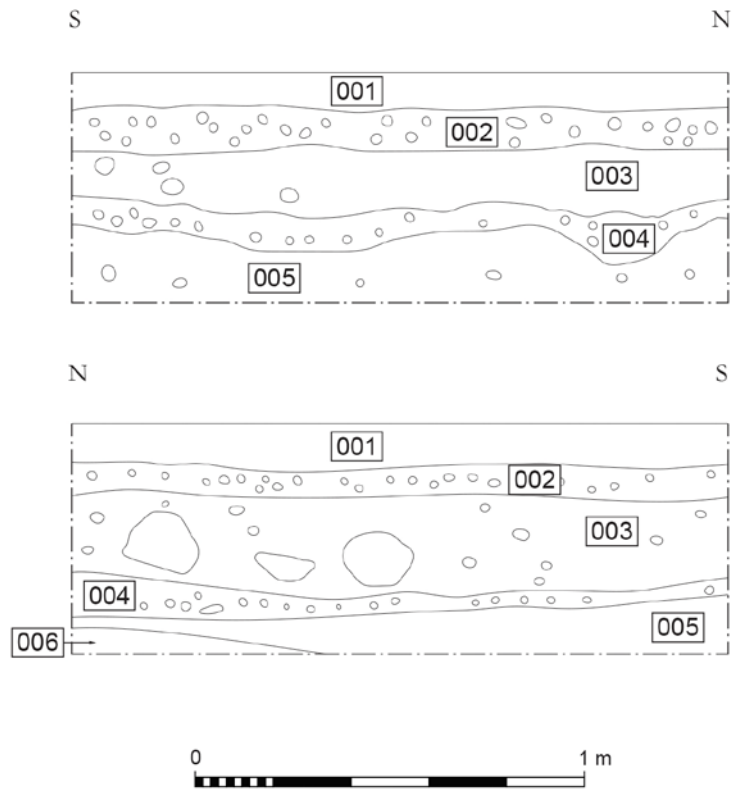


Figure 2: E-facing section (top) and W-facing section.



Plate 3: Post-excavation shot of the trench from the SW.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No	Description
101	Turf and topsoil.
102	Silty gravel bedding for 101.
103	Mid-greyish brown silt flecked with charcoal with a mixture of modern and historic artefacts (modern levelling).
104	Undulating layer of gravel flecked with charcoal.
105	Compact mid-greyish brown silt heavily flecked with charcoal and bone (kitchen midden used as levelling).
106	Mid-orangey brown sandy gravel (partially excavated).

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Section	E-facing.	1:20
1	Section	W-facing.	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Pre-excavation shot of grassy area.	SW	19/01/2015
2	De-turfing in progress.	W	19/01/2015
3	De-turfing in progress.	SW	19/01/2015
4	De-turfing in progress.	SW	19/01/2015
5	Trench with <i>sondage</i> .	W	19/01/2015
6	Trench with <i>sondage</i> .	W	19/01/2015
7	Trench with <i>sondage</i> .	W	19/01/2015
8	Trench with <i>sondage</i> .	N	19/01/2015
9	E-facing section of trench.	E	19/01/2015
10	N-facing section of trench.	N	19/01/2015
11	W-facing section of trench.	W	19/01/2015
12	S-facing section of trench.	S	19/01/2015
13	Post-excavation shot of the trench.	E	19/01/2015
14	Post-excavation shot of the trench.	N	19/01/2015
15	Post-excavation shot of the trench.	SW	19/01/2015
16	Post-excavation shot of the trench.	SW	19/01/2015

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2014/2015**

Linlithgow Palace • Watching Brief • March 2015

HS PIC Index Number: 90201

SITE: Linlithgow Palace, Linlithgow.

N.G.R.: NT 0015 7729

DESCRIPTION: Archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a shallow trench to hold a gravel border surrounding the plinth and base of a new statue depicting Mary, Queen of Scots.

PROJECT CODE: HSCO-90201-2015-02

CONTENTS:

Introduction.....	1
Description.....	3
Conclusions.....	4
List of Contexts.....	4
List of Drawings.....	4
List of Digital Photographs.....	4



4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF

A P R I L 2 0 1 5

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a trench around a recently instated statue base on Linlithgow Peel, in the grassy area adjacent to, and south-west of, Linlithgow Palace (Fig. 1). The trench was being excavated in order to house a gravel path. This followed on from an initial phase of excavation on 19th January, 2015¹ when the evaluation trench for the statue base was excavated which revealed (along with an examination of historic lithographic prints) that there had been a large amount of disturbance and make-up in the vicinity of the statue trench, including levelling activity in the medieval/post-medieval period through to relatively recent times.

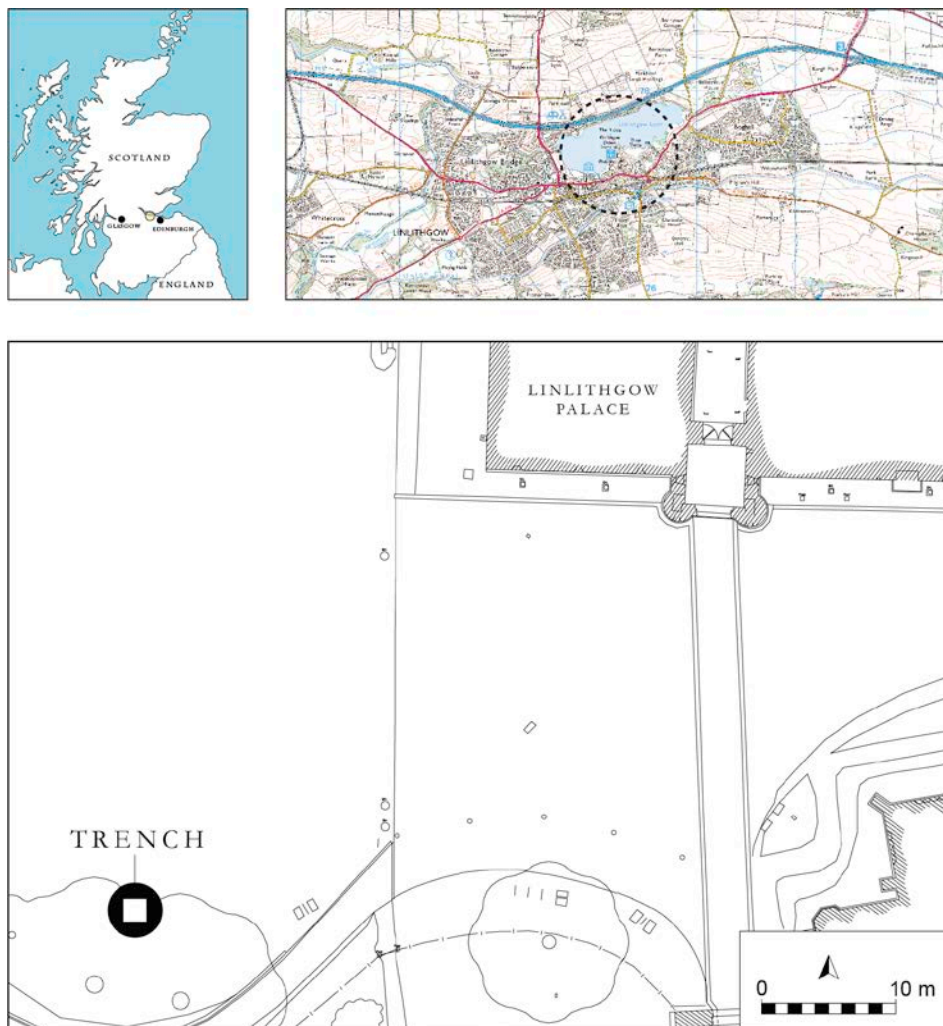


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of the trench.

Inset No. 2 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 2015. Licence number 100036933.

Prior to commencement of the work, a tent was erected over the area so that the statue could be emplaced under cover. The poured concrete base was set within the previous evaluation trench and an

¹ See Report HSCO-90201-2015-01.

octagonal ashlar plinth was erected over it. The gravel border required an excavation depth of $\approx 15\text{cm}$ (measured from the top of the statue base). A further $\approx 5\text{cm}$ depth of gravel was then spread over the base, which was itself lower than the surrounding turf by up to $\approx 10\text{cm}$.

The trench was excavated by hand, by Historic Scotland staff under archaeological supervision, and the work was carried out on 30th March, 2015.



Plate 1: The protective tent over the trench (top) and a view of the trench, as excavated.

DESCRIPTION

The trench for the gravel border was de-turfed and boards were used to store the turf; the spoil was removed in wheelbarrows. The edges of the trench were located 1.2m away from the ashlar faces of the statue plinth. The turf/topsoil **101** was \approx 9-10cm thick and was bedded on a layer of silty gravel **102**, some \approx 10cm thick. It contained numerous small sub-rounded water-rolled pebbles. Layer **103** lay immediately below, and consisted of a mid-greyish brown silt flecked with charcoal. This was partially excavated to a depth of \approx 10cm. This was the layer which, during the initial evaluation in January, had yielded a selection of small finds including animal bone, possible medieval/post-medieval post sherds, iron and possible iron slag and, tellingly, a piece of corroded barbed wire. Barbed wire was first patented in the 1860s which would tend to suggest that this was probably a 19th century levelling layer, where contemporary objects were being mixed with material derived from historic kitchen midden deposits, possibly as a result of flattening the surrounding earthworks. In contrast, there were no artefacts recovered during this period of work, although the trench was a lot shallower.

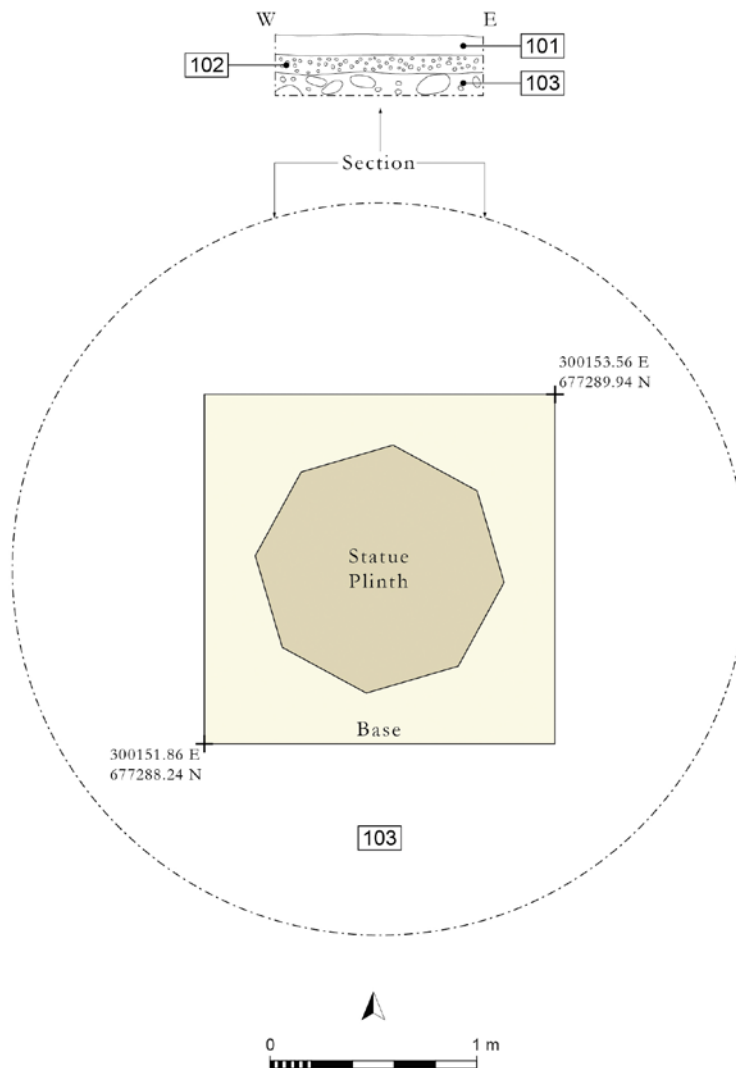


Figure 2: S-facing section (top) and post-excavation trench plan.

CONCLUSIONS

Although nothing of archaeological interest was recovered during this secondary stage of works, the initial evaluation indicated that the area should be considered to be of high archaeological potential. It is therefore recommended that any further ground-breaking activities be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief.

LIST OF CONTEXTS

No	Description
101	Turf/topsoil.
102	Silty gravel bedding for 101.
103	Mid-greyish brown silt flecked with charcoal.

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Post-excavation.	1:20
1	Section	S-facing,	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Pre-excavation shot showing statue plinth and base <i>in-situ</i> .	NE	30/03/2015
2	Pre-excavation shot showing statue plinth and base <i>in-situ</i> .	N	30/03/2015
3	Excavation in progress.	N	30/03/2015
4	Excavation in progress.	NE	30/03/2015
5	Location shot showing protective tent over works.	NE	30/03/2015
6	Location shot showing protective tent over works.	N	30/03/2015
7	Post-excavation shot of trench around statue base.	N	30/03/2015
8	Post-excavation shot of trench around statue base.	NW	30/03/2015
9	Post-excavation shot of trench around statue base.	NE	30/03/2015