

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

Updated on 15/06/2007

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Clackmannan
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Clackmannan Tower
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90073-2013-01
PARISH:	Clackmannan
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Paul Fox
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NS99SW 1
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Castle, Tower House
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Centred c. NS 9080 9191
START DATE (this season)	19 March 2013
END DATE (this season)	21 March 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was maintained during the alteration of three existing gates in order to provide wheelchair access to the property. Recent landscaping and the burial of services were indicated in all three trenches, and nothing archaeological significance was uncovered during the work.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Scotland
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

**HISTORIC SCOTLAND PROPERTIES IN CARE
MINOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS 2013**

Clackmannan Tower • Watching Brief • March 2013

HS PIC Index Number: 90073

SITE:	Clackmannan Tower, Clackmannan
N.G.R.:	NS 906 919
DESCRIPTION:	Watching Brief during the alteration of three existing gates in order to provide wheelchair access to the property
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90073-2013-01
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A P R I L 2 0 1 3

INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Clackmannan Tower during the alteration of three gates in order to provide wheelchair access to the property. Gate 1 was located at the bottom of the access road to the Tower, at the top (W end) of High Street. A short distance to the W, on the NE side of a cattle grid was Gate 2, while Gate 3 lay further to the W, still some distance from the Tower itself (Fig.1). The alteration to Gates 1 and 3 required the removal of an existing gate. All the gates required excavation in order to secure the gateposts. The work was carried out by Historic Scotland staff using a mini-digger under archaeological supervision, and took place between 19th – 21st March 2013.

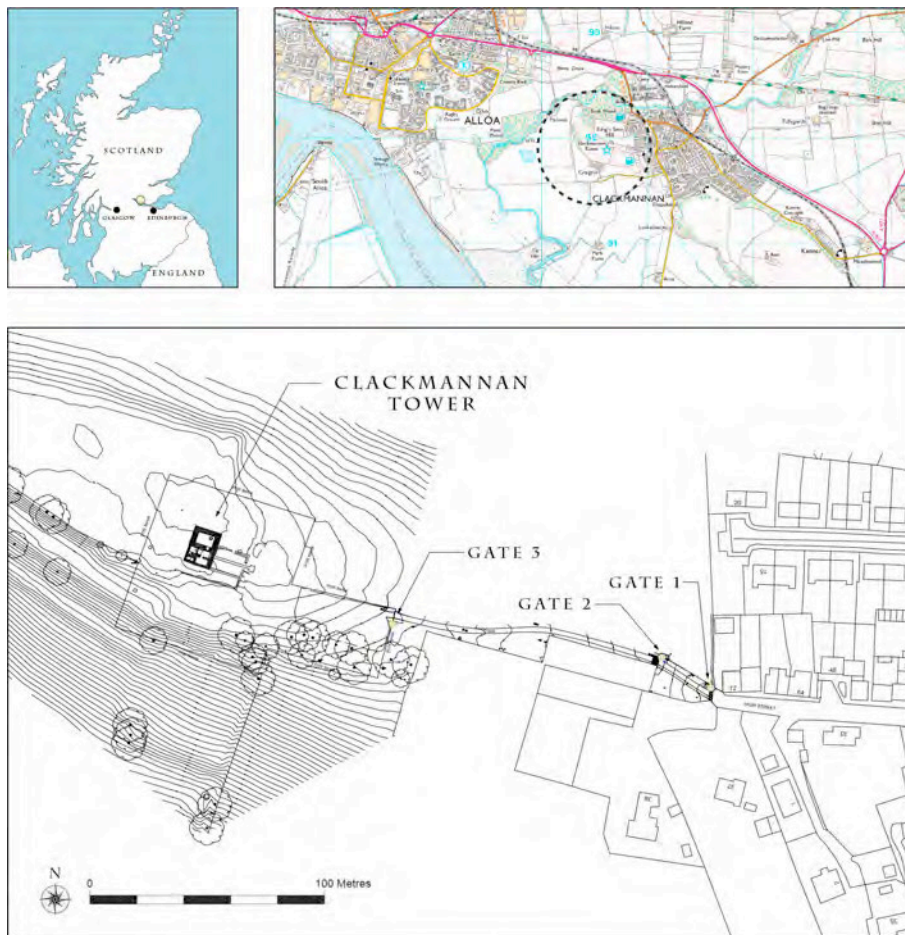


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of Clackmannan Tower and the area of works
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Clackmannan Tower dates to the 14th / 15th Century, with subsequent additions in the 16th / 17th Century. The remains of a barmkin wall still exist to the E of the Tower, which was part of a much larger expanded complex of buildings, walls, gardens and a moat. Old lithographs show a large mansion house on the W side of the Tower with further buildings to the N and NE of the Tower itself – no traces of these are visible.

DESCRIPTION

Trench 1 (Gate 1)

The existing gate was removed and an area 2.15m N/S x (up to) 2.9m E/W was reduced by 0.1m to the E, and graded gently up to the W. Two gatepost trenches were then excavated. The N gatepost trench measured 0.6m N/S x 0.95m E/W x 0.7m deep. The S gatepost trench measured 0.7m N/S x 0.9m E/W x 0.7m deep. The sections consisted of introduced topsoil **101**, 0.25m thick, overlying a compact gravelly surface **102**, 0.15m thick, possibly representing a hard surfacing related to the access road for the Clackmannan Water Works (now demolished). This overlay the mottled orange-brown clay natural **103** containing some small sub-rounded stones. Layers **102** and **103** had been truncated to the E by a sloping cut **104**, at least 0.25m wide, within which was a 0.05m diameter metal water pipe **105**, at a depth of 0.7m. The pipe trench had been backfilled with **106**, a re-deposited mixture of layers **102** and **103**.



Plate 1: Trench 1, post-excavation shot

Trench 2 (Gate 2)

The existing post-and-wire fence was disconnected from the upright of the bow yett and peeled back. One of the metal fence posts then had to be removed. An area 2.2m N/S x 2.7m E/W was then reduced by 0.1m-0.15m. Two gatepost trenches were then excavated by a further 0.65m. The W trench measured 0.64m E/W x 1.3m N/S, while the slightly skewed E trench (due to the working space available for the mini digger) measured 1.25m NE/SW x (up to) 0.9m NW/SE. The sections consisted of modern made-up ground overlying possible buried topsoil. The turf and introduced topsoil **201** was 0.45m thick and overlay a 0.1m thick layer of mid-greyish brown silty clay, **202**. A further mid-brown silty topsoil **203** lay below this and was exposed to a depth of 0.1m.



Plate 2: Trench 2, E-facing section

Trench 3 (Gate 3)

The existing post-and-wire fence was disconnected from its round post and peeled back. The post itself was then removed. The bow yett was held in place by deep concrete foundation, which was removed by the mini digger. The removal of the gate exposed a large slab over a manhole containing an electricity cable. The area around the fence was badly waterlogged and churned up due to livestock. To the E of the post-and-wire fence, the upper 0.4m was a layer **301** of muddy turf over mid-brown silt 0.4m thick. The remaining 0.3m below consisted of a layer **302** of mottled orange-brown clay natural containing some small sub-rounded stones. To the W of the post-and-wire fence, at a depth of 0.1m, a layer of compacted type 1 stone, **303**, lay below the turf - once the hard stand for a car park. Truncating **302** was a 0.35m wide cut **304** for the electricity cable, which had been backfilled with a re-deposited mixture of layers **301** and **302**. To the W of the post-and-wire fence, the ground level was reduced by 0.1m in an area 2.40m N/S x (up to) 0.9m E/W. To the E of the post-and-wire fence, an L-shaped trench 2.40m N/S x 0.6m-1.3m E/W x 0.7m was dug. Nothing of archaeological interest was uncovered.



Plate 3: Trench 3, work in progress

CONCLUSIONS

Whilst landscaping and the burial of services were indicated in all three trenches, nothing of great archaeological interest was uncovered during the work. The site remains one of high archaeological potential and any future ground breaking works should be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief.

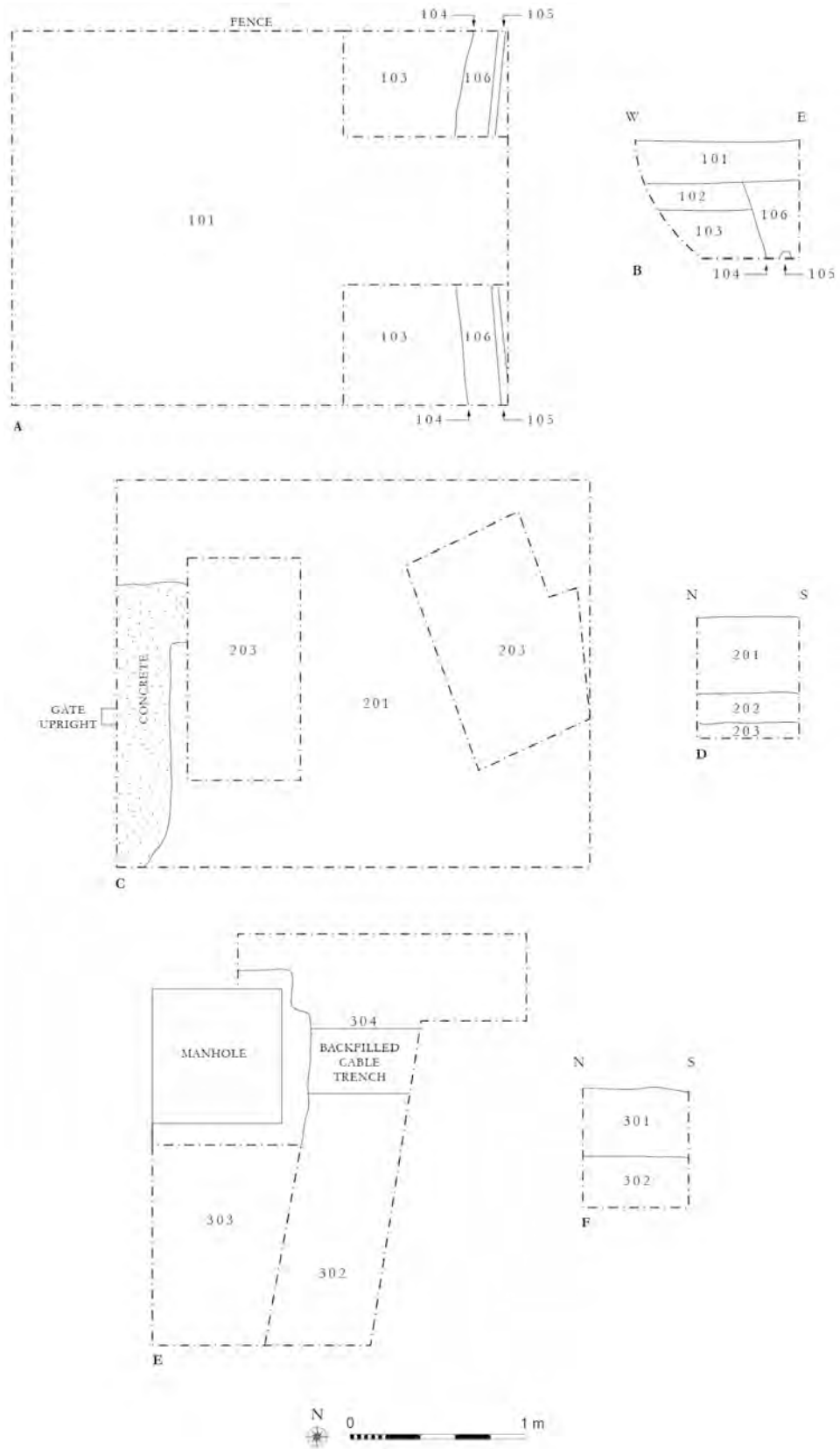


Figure 2: A: Post-excavation plan of Trench 1; B: S-facing section in Trench 1;
 C: Post-excavation plan of Trench 2; D: W-facing section in Trench 2;
 E: Post-excavation plan of Trench 3; F: W-facing section in Trench 3

LIST OF CONTEXTS

Number	Description
101	Introduced turf and topsoil
102	Compact gravelly surface
103	Orange-brown natural clay
104	Sloping cut through 102 and 103 for 105
105	Metal water pipe
106	Re-deposited backfill over 105
201	Introduced turf and topsoil
202	Mid-greyish brown silty clay
203	Mid-brown silty topsoil below 202
301	Turf and topsoil
302	Orange-brown natural clay
303	Compacted hard stand
304	Cut for electricity cable

LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Trench 1, post-excavation	1:20
2	Section	Trench 1, S-facing section	1:20
3	Plan	Trench 2, post-excavation	1:20
4	Section	Trench 2, W-facing section	1:20
5	Plan	Trench 3, post-excavation	1:20
6	Section	Trench 3, W-facing section	1:20

LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Clackmannan Tower, E façade	E	19/3/2013
2	Clackmannan Tower, E façade doorway	E	19/3/2013
3	Clackmannan Tower, W façade	W	19/3/2013
4	Clackmannan Tower, N façade	N	19/3/2013
5	Clackmannan Tower, N façade	N	19/3/2013
6	Clackmannan Tower, S façade	S	19/3/2013
7	Existing Gate 3	W	19/3/2013
8	Existing Gate 3	NW	19/3/2013
9	Approach to Tower from Gate 3	W	19/3/2013
10	Removal of existing bow yett and exposed manhole, Trench 3	W	19/3/2013
11	Work in Progress, Trench 3	W	19/3/2013
12	Work in Progress, Trench 3	N	20/3/2013
13	Work in Progress, Trench 3	E	20/3/2013
14	Work in Progress, Trench 3	N	20/3/2013
15	Work in Progress, Trench 3	SW	20/3/2013
16	Work in Progress, Trench 3	SW	20/3/2013
17	Work in Progress, Trench 3	E	20/3/2013
18	Post-excavation shot, Trench 3	W	20/3/2013
19	Post-excavation shot, Trench 3	W	20/3/2013
20	Post-excavation shot, Trench 3	W	20/3/2013
21	Pre-excavation shot of existing Gate 2	NW	20/3/2013
22	Pre-excavation shot of existing Gate 2	NW	20/3/2013
23	Work in Progress, Trench 2	S	20/3/2013
24	Work in Progress, Trench 2	S	20/3/2013

No.	Description	From	Date
25	Concrete foundation in Trench 2	S	20/3/2013
26	Work in Progress, Trench 2	SW	20/3/2013
27	Trench 2, W gate post, E-facing section	E	20/3/2013
28	Trench 2, W gate post, E-facing section	SE	20/3/2013
29	Trench 2, W gate post trench	S	20/3/2013
30	Trench 2, excavating E gate post trench	SW	20/3/2013
31	Pre-excavation shot of existing Gate 1	E	21/3/2013
32	Work in Progress, Trench 1	E	21/3/2013
33	Water Pipe exposed, Trench 1	S	21/3/2013
34	Water Pipe exposed, Trench 1	S	21/3/2013
35	Water Pipe exposed, Trench 1	S	21/3/2013
36	Post-excavation shot, Trench 1	SW	21/3/2013
37	Post-excavation shot, Trench 1	W	21/3/2013
38	S-facing section, Trench 1	S	21/3/2013
39	Grading ground level, Trench 1	SE	21/3/2013
40	S-facing section, Trench 1	S	21/3/2013