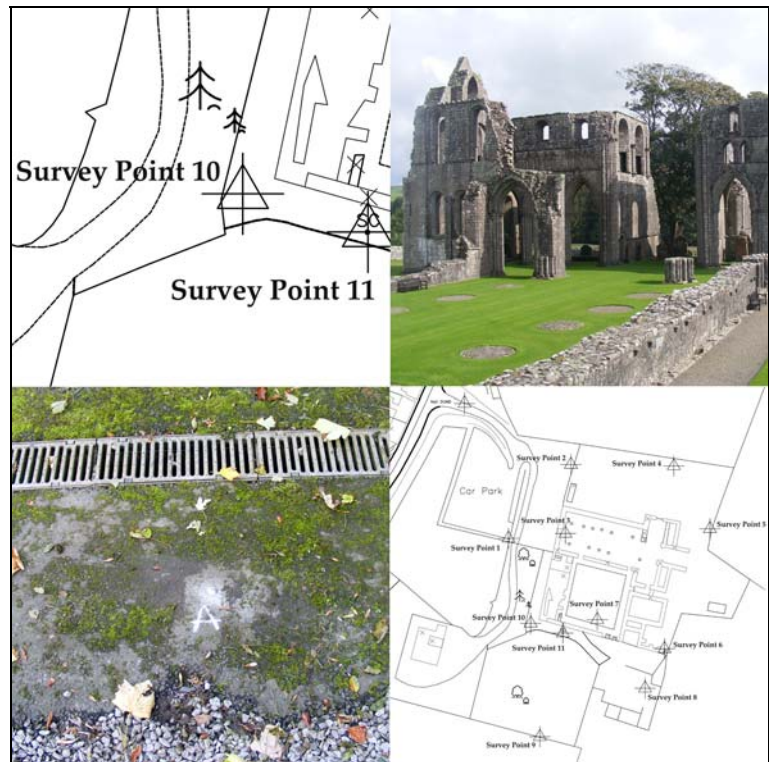


Historic Scotland  
Properties in Care  
Minor Archaeological Works 2008

# Dundrennan Abbey: Minor Excavations, September 2008

HS PIC Index number: 90114  
Project code: HSCO-90114-2008-02



15 December 2008  
Kirkdale Archaeology

<b><u>Site</u></b>	Dundrennan Abbey
<b><u>N.G.R</u></b>	Centred on NX 749 474
<b><u>Project Description</u></b>	Minor excavations
<b><u>Project code</u></b>	HSCO-90114-2008-02

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*SUMMARY: September 2008: A series of eight small holes were hand excavated around the grounds of Dundrennan Abbey. These were needed to install permanent survey points. The holes were 170 mm square in plan and none exceeded a depth of 130 mm. Gravel rich deposits often seen below the topsoil suggested turf had been introduced and carefully laid over levelling.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked by Historic Scotland to excavate a series of eight small holes to take permanent survey points around Dundrennan Abbey. A total of eleven new points were required but only eight required excavation. All eight excavated points were hand dug.

The work was undertaken on 18 September 2008.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

The following is a description of each of the survey points. This includes details of the excavation if relevant.

- **Survey Point 1:** This point was fixed by hammering a pin into the car park (101) to the W of the monument, nothing of archaeological interest was noted.
- **Survey Point 2:** Located in the grass outside and to the NW of the Abbey complex. 170 mm square by 130 mm deep, 80 mm of mid brown silty clay (201) over compact mix of small pieces of rounded gravel and reddish brown silty clay (202).
- **Survey Point 3:** Drilled into the (modern) threshold (301) at the W end of the church.
- **Survey Point 4:** Excavated due N of the transepts of the Abbey church, under a mature Sycamore tree. 170 mm square and 130 mm deep, all through dark brown silty clay, badly root affected (401).

- **Survey Point 5:** Located to the NE of the church, measured 170 mm square by 130 mm deep. Top 100 mm was moderately compact dark grey silty clay (501), above a compact mix of silty clay and gravel (502).
- **Survey Point 6:** This hole was dug to the SE of the main Abbey complex, just to the N of the recently excavated S range. 170 mm square and 130 mm deep, through 60 mm of dark grey silty clay (601), above compacted mix of gravel and silty clay (602).
- **Survey Point 7:** Located in the SE corner of the Cloister this hole measured 170 mm square by 130 mm deep. 80 mm of moderately compact dark brown silty clay (701) overlay dark brown silty clay full of gravel, blaze and some mortar flecks (702).
- **Survey Point 8:** Excavated to the SE of the Abbey, 170 mm square by 130 mm deep. 80 mm of dark grey silty clay (801) was over a similar deposit rich in mortar flecks (802).
- **Survey Point 9:** This point was dug to the S of the Abbey buildings, and measured 170 mm square by 130 mm deep. The only deposit seen was dark brown silty clay, with some angular gravel throughout (901).
- **Survey Point 10:** This was excavated close to the SW corner of the Abbey, through a gravel path. 200 mm square by 100 mm deep, top 40 mm comprised a mix of small rounded gravel (70 %) and dark brown silt (1001), above dark brown silt (60%) mixed with fragments of angular sandstone and concrete chunks (1002).
- **Survey Point 11:** Due S of the W range, this point comprised a stamped mark on a water toby cover (1101).

### 3.0 INTERPRETATION AND OBSERVATIONS

Little significant archaeological information was retrieved from this series of shallow holes. The depth of topsoil was recorded from a number of survey points, and it could be suggested that the gravel rich deposits often seen below the topsoil indicate that turf had been introduced and carefully laid.

**A1.0 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS**

#	Description
101	Surface of car park to the W of the monument
201	Mid brown silty clay
202	Compact mix of small pieces of rounded gravel and reddish brown silty clay
301	Modern threshold at the W end of the church.
401	Dark brown silty clay, badly root affected
501	Moderately compact dark grey silty clay
502	Compact mix of silty clay and gravel
601	Dark grey silty clay
602	Compacted mix of gravel and silty clay
701	Moderately compact dark brown silty clay
702	Dark brown silty clay full of gravel, blaze and some mortar flecks
801	Dark grey silty clay
802	Dark grey silty clay rich in mortar flecks
901	Dark brown silty clay, with some angular gravel throughout
1001	Mix of small rounded gravel (70 %) and dark brown silt
1002	Dark brown silt (60%) mixed with fragments of angular sandstone and concrete chunks
1101	Water toby cover

**A2.0 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DRAWINGS**

#	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	HS Location plan, amended	NTS

**A3.0 APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

#	Description	From	Date
1	Survey point 1 hammered in	W	18/9/08
2	Survey point 2, hole dug	S	18/9/08
3	Survey point 3 drilled in	E	18/9/08

#	Description	From	Date
4	Survey point 7, hole dug	S	18/9/08
5	Survey point 10, hole dug	N	18/9/08
6	Survey point 9, hole dug	S	18/9/08
7	Survey point 8, hole dug	S	18/9/08
8	Survey point 6, hole dug	E	18/9/08
9	Survey point 5, hole dug	S	18/9/08
10	Survey point 4, hole dug	S	18/9/08
11	General view	-	18/9/08
12	General view	-	18/9/08
13	General view	-	18/9/08

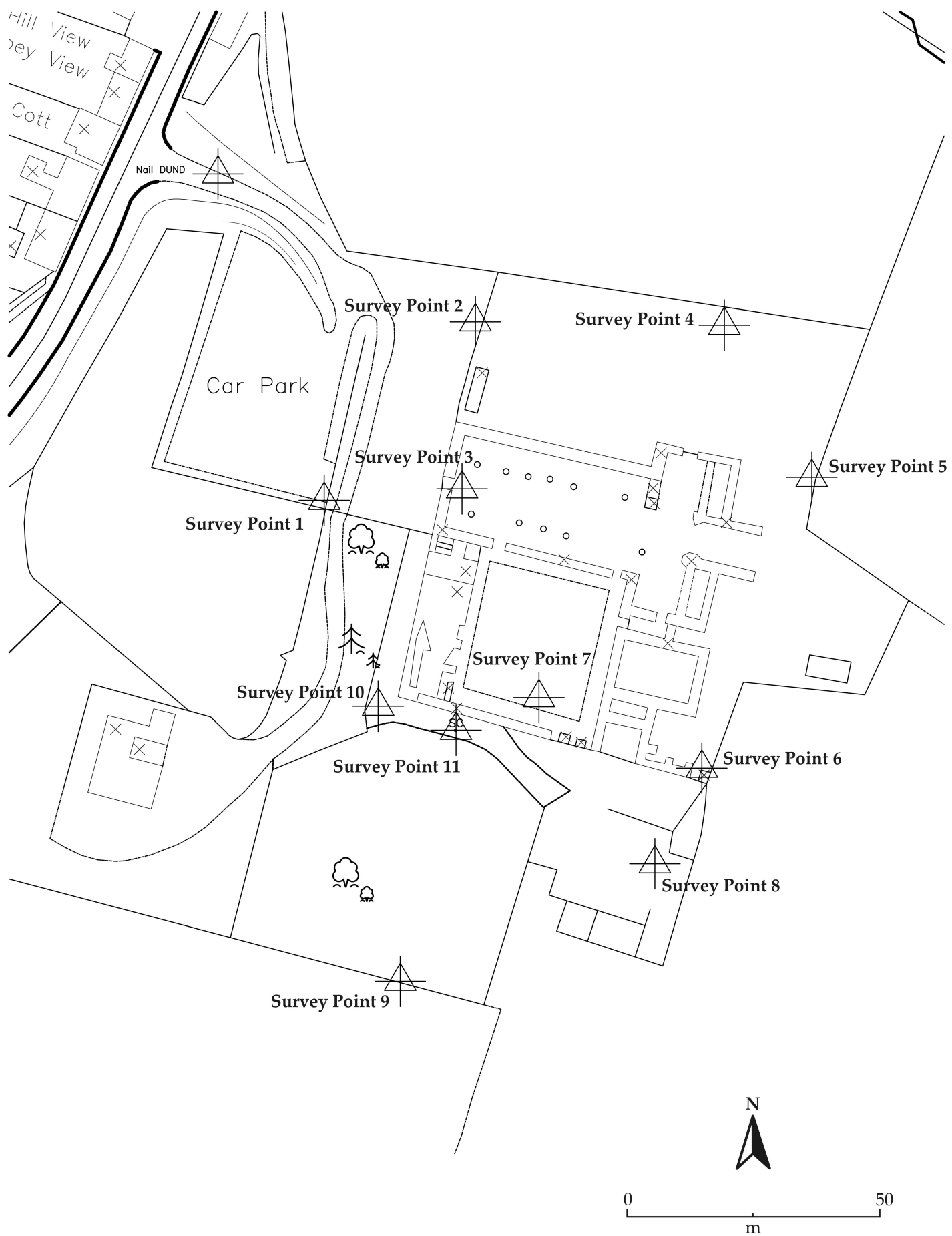


Fig. 1 : Plan (1:1000) showing location of survey points