

Craigmillar Park Heritage Plaques: Data Structure Report

AOC 21334

9th June 2009



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Craigmillar Park Heritage Plaques: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service

National Grid Reference (NGR): NT 2867 7079, NT 2849 7069 & NT 2867 7040

AOC Project No: 21334

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Summary

This report represents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on scheduled ground associated with Craigmillar Castle, Edinburgh. The work was undertaken in assessing any adverse impact on the archaeological resource by the insertion of three heritage interpretation plaques. The work was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service.

No significant features were unearthed. Excavation of a test-pit located at NT2867 7040 retrieved an unstratified fragment of a medieval/post-medieval ceramic strap handle.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service commissioned AOC Archaeology Group to undertake a test-pit evaluation prior to the insertion of three interpretation plaques within scheduled ground at Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh. A Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2009) was submitted as the necessary methodological supporting documentation for an application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) in allowing the interpretation plaque proposal to proceed. Historic Scotland subsequently approved the SMC application with Final Consent being granted before works were initiated on site.

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The three test-pits, each located over one of the three foundation footprints for the interpretation plaques, were located on the very edge of the scheduled area. Test-pit 1 was the closest test-pit to the castle lying on the edge of the scheduled area to the north (NGR: NT 2867 7079). Test-pit 2 lay in a lightly wooded area to the south-west of the castle (NGR: NT 2849 7069). Test-pit 3 was located immediately adjacent to the north-western side of Craigmillar Castle Road near its junction with Old Dalkeith Road (NGR: NT 2867 7040).

1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The proposed interpretation plaques lie within scheduled parkland (Index No. 90129) associated with Craigmillar Castle (NMRS NT27SE107.0). Other historically significant elements within the scheduled area include the garden (NMRS NT27SE 107.1) and doocot (NMRS NT27SE 107.2) as well as the P-shaped fishpond earthwork to the south of the Castle. The *P* derives from the Preston family who held the land for nearly 300 years from 1374). Scheduled ground around these sites affords them statutory protection under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (AM & AAA 1979)*.

1.3.2 Architecturally, Craigmillar Castle comprises several distinct phases and is of some considerable importance in the early development of artillery defences in Scotland (Cruden 1981, Tabraham 2000). Its inner keep, L-shaped on plan, was latterly surrounded by a machiolated curtain wall with four round corner towers and subsequently by an outer line of defence, a courtyard with wall and ditch. Originally dated to circa 1374 (Cruden 1981), the keep mostly likely dates to the early 15th century, with the inner machiolated curtain wall constructed a few decades later (Tabraham 2000). The outer courtyard wall and ditch were built in the early 16th century. Burnt by the Earl of Hereford in 1544, the castle was bought by Sir John Gilmour in 1660 and converted into a comfortable country house (Coventry 1995).

1.3.3 The castle is situated within parkland included in Historic Scotland's *Inventory of Designed Landscapes and Gardens in Scotland* in 2001. Its site value is rated as *outstanding* in terms of archaeology, history, as a Work of Art, architecture and landscape setting (see

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/heritage/gardens/gardenssearchsummary>).

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- i) to evaluate the locations of the heritage interpretation plaques' foundations;
 - ii) to report on the results of the evaluation.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Three test-pits, each located over the footprint of an interpretation plaque's foundations were excavated by hand (Figure 1) – the test-pits' were essentially the foundation trenches for the plaques. Each test-pit was excavated until natural subsoil was reached. All spoil was temporarily stored on terram adjacent to each test-pit prior to back-filling.

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The three test-pits were excavated on Monday 30th March 2009 in cold and dry weather conditions. Archaeological visibility was good throughout. The following should be read in conjunction with the data presented in Appendices 1 – 4 and Figures 1).
- 4.2 The general stratigraphy encountered was shallow topsoil overlying an orange/brown firm silty clay yellow sand natural subsoil (Appendix 1). A gradual transition/interface between topsoil and subsoil was evident in Test-pits 1 and 3 with an abrupt transition in Test-pit 2. Test-pit 2 (Plate 2) was heavily bioturbated by trees roots and prior disturbance in the area of Test-pit 1 (Plate 1) was apparent in the form of an access point to a utility service. Modern detritus (white ceramic, glass and plastic) was unearthed in all test-pits.
- 4.3 No significant archaeological features were exposed. Three unstratified pre-recent small finds (Appendix 3) were retrieved from the topsoil in Test-pit 3; the most significant being a fragment of a medieval/post-medieval 'strap handle' from a ceramic vessel identified as deriving from a 14-15th century Scottish White Gritty Ware jug (John Lawson pers com).



Plate 1: Test-pit 1



Plate 2: Test-pit 2



Plate 3: Test-pit 3

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 No significant archaeological features were revealed by the evaluation. The provenance of the strap handle fragment is questionable given its distance from the castle. However it was in all probability incorporated into local farmland during the disposal of organic refuse deriving from either the castle or nearby agricultural settlement. No further works are considered necessary.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AM & AAA 1979 *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*.

Coventry, M 1995 *The Castles of Scotland*. Edinburgh.

Cruden, SH 1981 *The Scottish Castle*. Edinburgh.

Tabraham, C 2000 *Scotland's Castles*. Batsford. Edinburgh.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Test-pit descriptions

Test-Pit 1

<i>Dimensions</i>	1.0 m by 1.1 m
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.26 m
<i>Topsoil description</i>	dark gray/brown silty clay with occasional small stones
<i>Subsoil interface</i>	0.10 m
<i>Subsoil description</i>	mid orange/brown firm sandy silt with occasional small stones
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.46 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Modern Features</i>	A metal and concrete service access point was exposed in the north-east corner of the test-pit – the test-pit was extended 10 cm to the south to accommodate access and allow insertion of the plaque foundation.
<i>Finds</i>	Modern detritus – glass, plastics

Test-Pit 2

<i>Dimensions</i>	1.0 m by 1.0 m
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.50 m
<i>Topsoil description</i>	dark gray/brown silty clay with occasional small stones – heavily bioturbated by tree roots. Larger stone fragments (up to 0.15 m diameter) more frequent towards base of test-pit.
<i>Subsoil description</i>	dark orange/brown firm silty clay with occasional small stones (also heavily penetrated by tree roots)
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.50 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Modern Features</i>	None
<i>Finds</i>	Modern detritus – glass, plastics

Test-pit 3

<i>Dimensions</i>	1.0 m by 1.0 m
<i>Depth of Topsoil</i>	0.44 m
<i>Topsoil description</i>	dark gray/brown silty clay with occasional small stones
<i>Subsoil interface</i>	0.09 m
<i>Subsoil description</i>	mid orange/brown firm silty clay with occasional small stones
<i>Depth of Excavation</i>	0.53 m
<i>Significant Features</i>	None
<i>Modern Features</i>	None
<i>Finds</i>	One small grey stoneware sherd, one small section of clay pipe stem, one fragment of 'strap handle' and modern detritus – glass, plastics.

APPENDIX 2: Small Finds

Context	Description
Test-pit 3 (topsoil)	- 1 x thin-bodied grey stoneware sherd (22 mm by 20 mm by 5 mm); 1 x small section of clay pipe stem (20 mm long by 8 mm diameter); 1 x fragment of 'strap handle', orange/light brown fabric (<i>reduced</i> dark grey core) with slight green glaze adhering to small area (40 mm long by 35 mm wide by 10 mm thick).

APPENDIX 3: Photographic Record

Black & White Print and Digital Film 1

Frame	Test-pit	Description	From
1-2		Registration shots	
3-4	1	East-facing section	east
5-6	1	North-facing section	north
7-8	1	South-facing section	south
9-10	1	West-facing section	west
11-12	2	East-facing section	east
13-14	2	South-facing section	south
15-16	2	West-facing section	west
17-18	2	North-facing section	north
19-20	3	East-facing section	east
21-22	3	North-facing section	north
23-24	3	South-facing section	south
25-26	3	West-facing section	west
27-28	1	East-facing section	east
29-30	1	West-facing section	west

APPENDIX 4: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Craigmillar Park Heritage Plaque Evaluation
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21334
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Victoria Clements, Rob Engl & John Gooder
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation
NMRS NO(S)	NT27SE107.0 & NMRS NT27SE 107.1
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Castle & Garden
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Medieval/post-medieval ceramic strap handle
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 2867 7079, NT 2849 7069 & NT 2867 7040
START DATE (this season)	30 th March 2009
END DATE (this season)	30 th March 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken prior to the insertion of three heritage interpretation plaques with the scheduled area of Craigmillar Castle.</p> <p>No significant features were unearthed. Excavation of a test-pit located at NT2867 7040 retrieved an unstratified fragment of a medieval/post-medieval ceramic strap handle.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	--
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	City of Edinburgh Council Countryside Ranger Service
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocscot.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



Liberaton Northfield
Linch Church Hall

Depot

Test Pit 1

Craignillar Castle

Test Pit 2

Test Pit 3

Hospital

Scheduled Area

0 100m

