

Yew Tree Walk, Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh

Watching Brief Report

AOC 21427

30th June 2010



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Yew Tree Walk, Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh: Watching Brief Report

On Behalf of: City of Edinburgh Council

National Grid Reference (NGR): NT 2833 7054

AOC Project No: 21427

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Date of Fieldwork: 25th May 2010

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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 watching brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground in Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh within the Scheduled Area of Craigmillar Castle and Gardens. The work was undertaken to monitor the potential impact on the archaeological resource by the creation of a ramped access from Old Dalkeith Road into the parkland.

No archaeological deposits or features were recorded during the monitoring of groundworks. An entrance in the parkland boundary wall was recorded prior to the removal of blocking rubble and brick infill.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 City of Edinburgh Council commissioned AOC Archaeology Group to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the creation of a ramped access route for Yew Tree Walk leading from Old Dalkeith Road into scheduled ground at Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh. The ramp was located within a Scheduled area surrounding Craigmillar Castle, castle and gardens. The works consisted of archaeological monitoring of all ground breaking works involved in the creation of the ramped access.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The ramp access was located immediately adjacent to a park boundary wall dividing the castle parkland from the pavement of Old Dalkeith Road. The ramp route ran roughly south-west to north-east from the boundary wall adjacent Old Dalkeith Road into the scheduled parkland (NGR: NT 2833 7054). The location of the ground breaking works are shown in Figure 1.

1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The proposed access ramp lies 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 in 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 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 safeguard the archaeological resource, specifically the Scheduled parkland, from any adverse impacts created by the creation of the new access ramp;
 - ii) to report on the results of the watching brief.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The area of ground disturbance associated with the ramp entrance amounted to approximately 15 m in length (south-west/north-east) by generally 1.5 m in width. In order to create the ramp, rising gradually from the level of the Old Dalkeith Road pavement on the external side of the castle park wall, excavation depth was greater at the south-west end of the excavated area than at the north-east end. At the south-west end of the ramp area, adjacent to the parkland boundary wall, the depth of excavation was a maximum of 0.6 m from the existing ground surface and its width was 1.65 m. The ramp area and track were excavated by a mini-digger equipped with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket with a width of c. 1.0 m (Plate 1). Ground-breaking works associated with the new ramped access route (Figure 1) were monitored by an experienced field archaeologist for a distance of approximately 25 m from the wall, until the depth of excavation was a maximum of 0.2 m. All recording was carried out according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard practices.
- 3.2 A black and white print and colour slide photographic record of the archaeological works was taken (Appendix 1).

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The ramp area ground breaking works were undertaken on Tuesday 25th May 2010 in sunny and dry weather conditions. Archaeological visibility was good throughout.
- 4.2 Topsoil was removed by mini-digger to a maximum depth of 0.6 m, adjacent to the park wall, tapering to a depth of 0.2 m at a distance of 25 m north-east of the wall. The topsoil was a loose dark greyish brown slightly sandy silt forest soil. It contained large quantities of irregular rubble and modern (20 or 21st century) debris for approximately 7.5 m from the park wall (plastic, glass, wood, etc). The rubble material may have derived from the removal of a 1 m-wide section of the park wall to provide an entrance into the park, which had subsequently been infilled (probably in the 20th century) with machine-made brick and rubble (Plate 2). The blocking infill of the entrance was removed following the ramp works. A compact light yellowish brown clayey silt with gravel was visible at the base of excavations in small patches immediately adjacent to the wall, to a distance of up to 0.8 m north-east of its face. Given its compact nature, it is likely that this material was the surface of a subsoil deposit, though it could also be a fill associated with the construction of the park boundary wall. Elsewhere, the excavation of the ramp area did not reach the base of the topsoil.



Plate 1: View of excavation of path from south-west



Plate 2: Blocked opening from north-east

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The watching brief identified a rubble-rich topsoil deposit in close proximity to the parkland boundary wall. This rubble may have derived from the opening of an entrance in the wall, which had subsequently been blocked. The infill of the entrance in the wall in this area was photographed prior to its removal.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

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

Cruden, S H 1981 *The Scottish Castle*, Edinburgh.

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

Yew Tree Walk, Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh: Watching Brief Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Photographic Record

Black & White Print and Colour Slide 1

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration shots	
2-3	View of excavation work commencing	NE
4-5	Blocked opening in park wall	NE
6-7	Excavation of path	SW
8-9	Post-excavation view of excavated path route	NE
10-11	Post-excavation view of excavated path route	SW

APPENDIX 2: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Yew Tree Walk, Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21427
PARISH:	Liberton
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Mike Roy
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S)	NT27SE 107
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Castle & Gardens (Scheduled)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 2833 7054
START DATE (this season)	25 th May 2010
END DATE (this season)	25 th May 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on groundworks associated with the construction of a ramped access from Old Dalkeith Road into the parkland of Craigmillar Park, Edinburgh within the Scheduled Area of Craigmillar Castle & Gardens.</p> <p>No archaeological deposits or features were recorded during the monitoring of groundworks. An entrance through the parkland boundary wall was recorded prior to the removal of blocking infill.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	--
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	City of Edinburgh Council
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

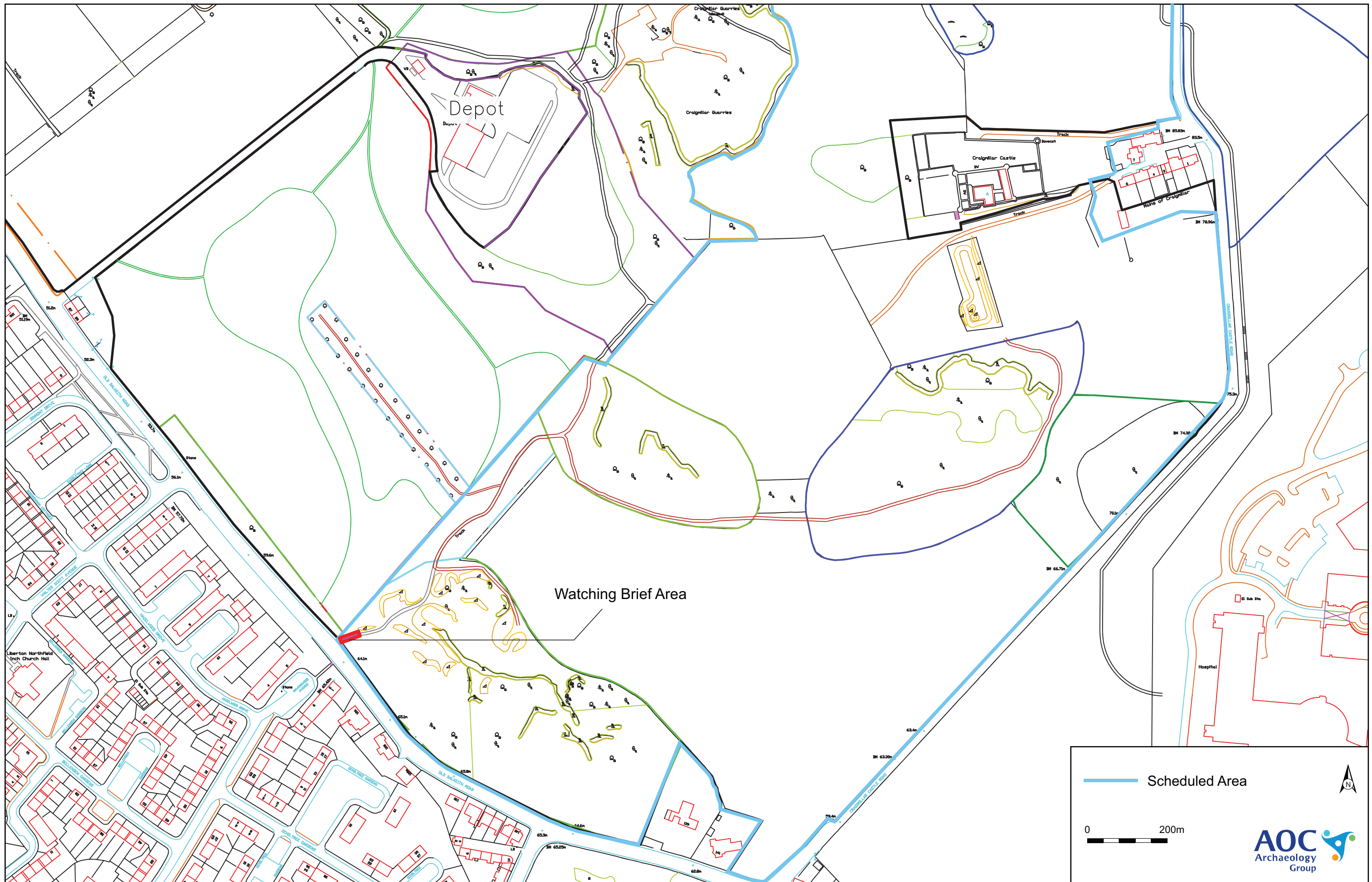
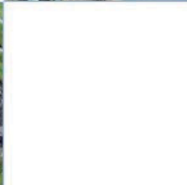
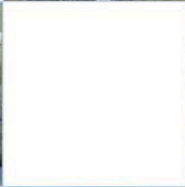


Figure 1: Watching Brief Area



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