



Harmony Hall, Melrose, Rear Courtyard

November 2008

Carried out on behalf of the National Trust for Scotland



connolly • heritage • consultancy

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Photographs

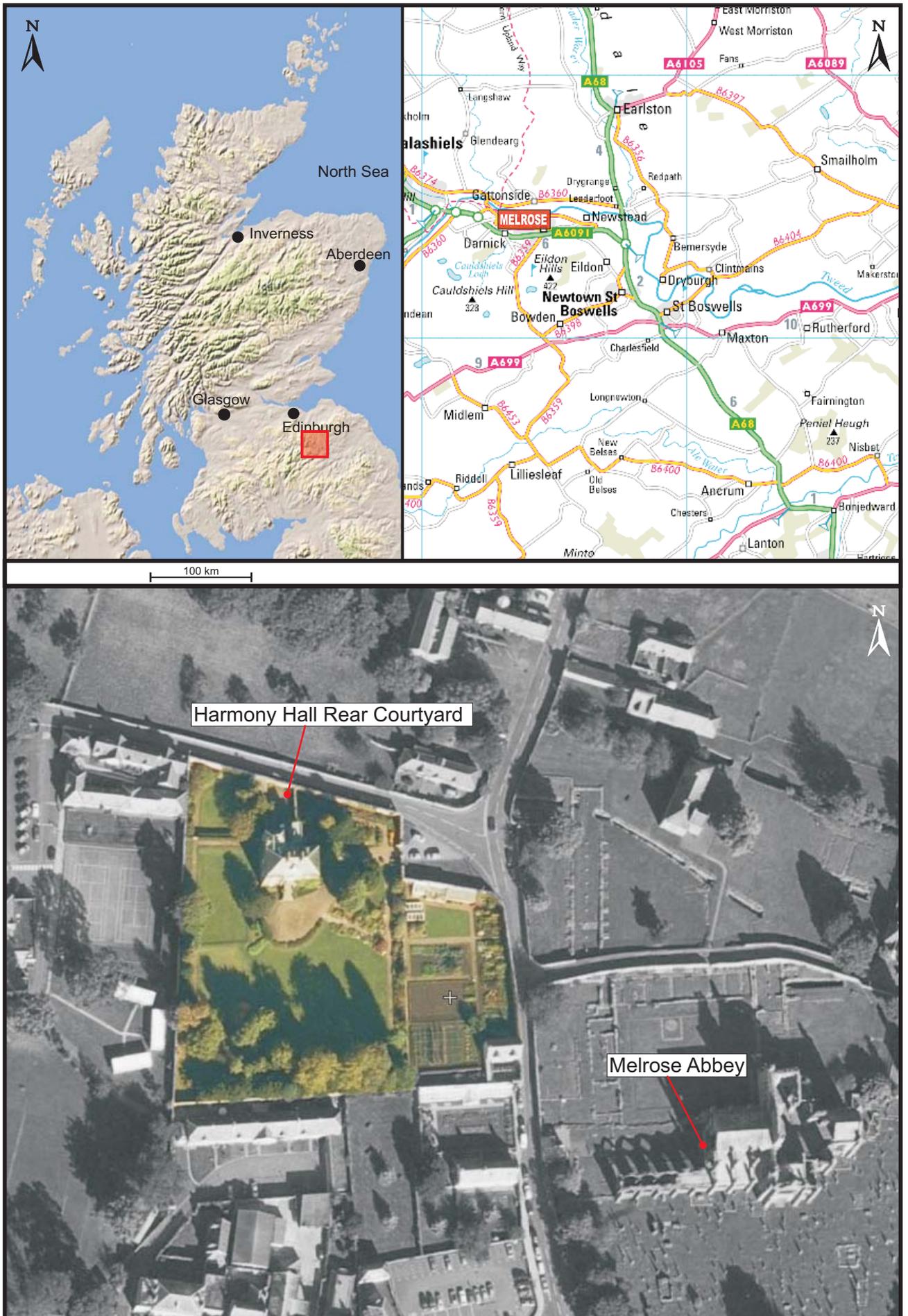


Figure 1: Location Plan

1.0 SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was required due to the requirement for relaying slabs within the rear courtyard of the property. The site lies within a Scheduled area, restrictions for which begin at 400mm beneath the ground surface. To ensure that no damage occurred to archaeology that may lie within this <400mm zone, a watching brief as conducted, to investigate the makeup and nature of this layers removed, and ensure no significant archaeology was disturbed during the procedure.. These works were commissioned by Robin Turner of the National Trust for Scotland. The work was undertaken in November 2008, and was restricted to the unscheduled layer of 400mm beneath ground surface.

- 1.1 The work will enable the resurfacing of the rear courtyard in the previously slabbed area and associated ground disturbance can continue in this area without concerns about damaging archaeological deposits.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Site location

The rear courtyard is located to the north of Harmony Hall, Melrose at NT 354707 634289 (Fig. 1).

2.2 Site History

The house and grounds were built in 1807 as the home for Robert Waugh, a local joiner who made a fortune from a Jamaican plantation. On his return, he had this house built and named it after his plantation.

His Jamaican house had a flight of stairs up to the entrance in order to keep wildlife at bay and local tradition has it that he wanted his house in Melrose to have a similar type of stairway.

He surrounded the house and gardens with the high wall and rarely emerged except for the Abbotsford Hunt and he became known locally as "Melancholy Jacques". Waugh supplied the cedar timber for the library and drawing room when Sir Walter Scott built Abbotsford House. The National Trust for Scotland now owns Harmony and the gardens are open to the public (for a voluntary contribution) between April and September.

The house and grounds are thought to lie within the western cloister of the 12th century Melrose Abbey and archaeological investigations (Headland Archaeology, Report HHM97, 1998) in the north of the grounds showed evidence of two culverts of probable medieval date that may be linked with the main monastic drain.

Roy's military map of *c.* 1755 (Fig. 4) shows the area of investigation as an enclosed plot without any structures present, the 1863 OS first edition however shows the site exactly as it is today. (Fig. 5)

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To observe the removal of existing slabbed area and material used for setting the surface; to assess the potential for disturbance of subsurface archaeological deposits and structures; to record any archaeologically significant evidence.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The area investigated was to a depth of 270mm, which was above the level of 400mm stipulated by Historic Scotland as the maximum depth of intrusion for ground disturbance without SMC. This was the minimum depth to allow the relaying of new slabs, and bedding material.
- 4.2 The removal of the slabs was carried out by hand and the resultant material removed by small mechanical digger. All further investigation was carried out by hand.
- 4.3 The area examined was 2.75 m wide and 6.25 m long.
- 4.4 All features were recorded prior to removal, and a depth of archaeology documented at *c.* 270mm beneath ground surface and not exceeded.

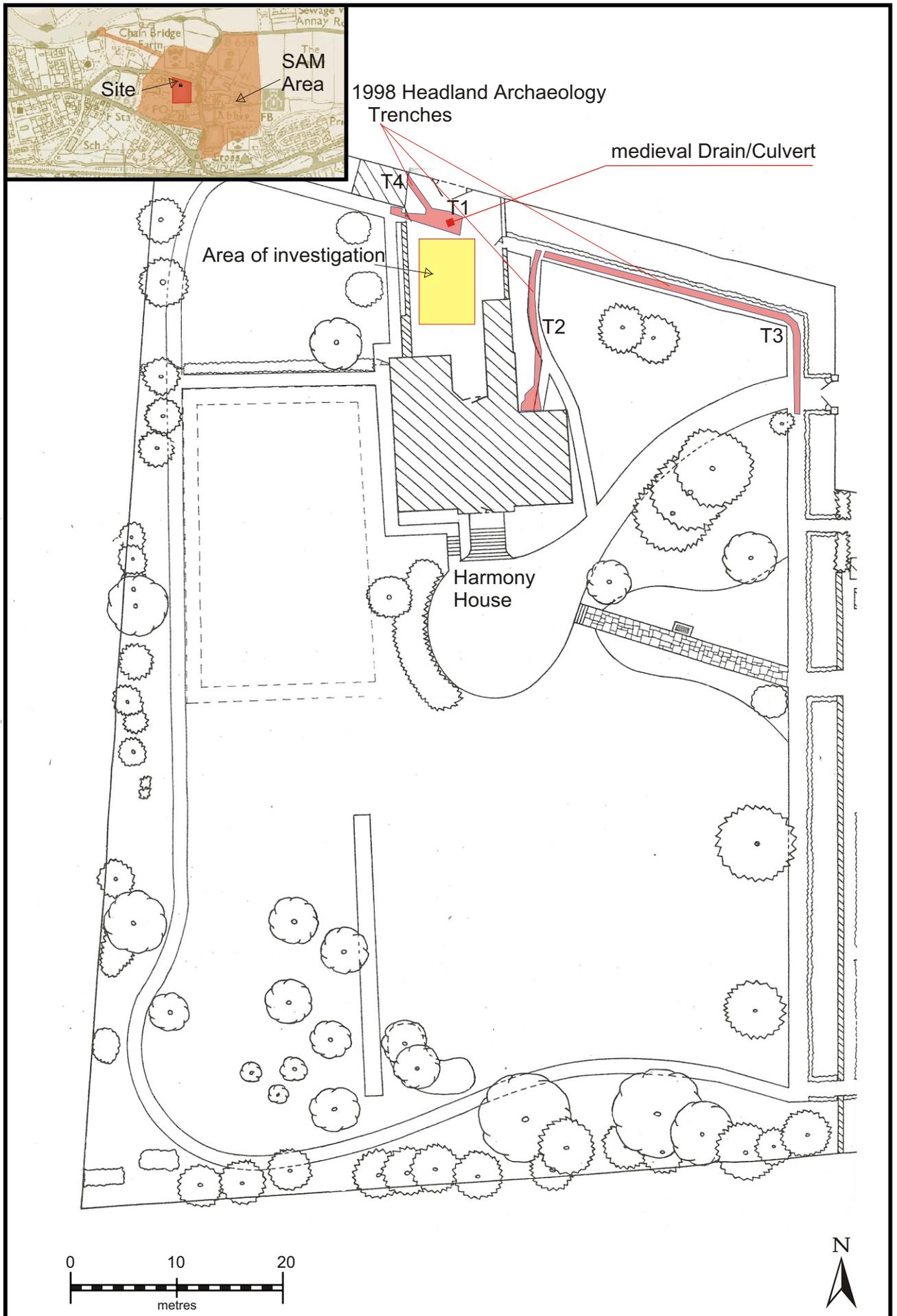


Figure 2: Location of previous evaluation trenches in area and current area of investigation (inset top) Area of Scheduling

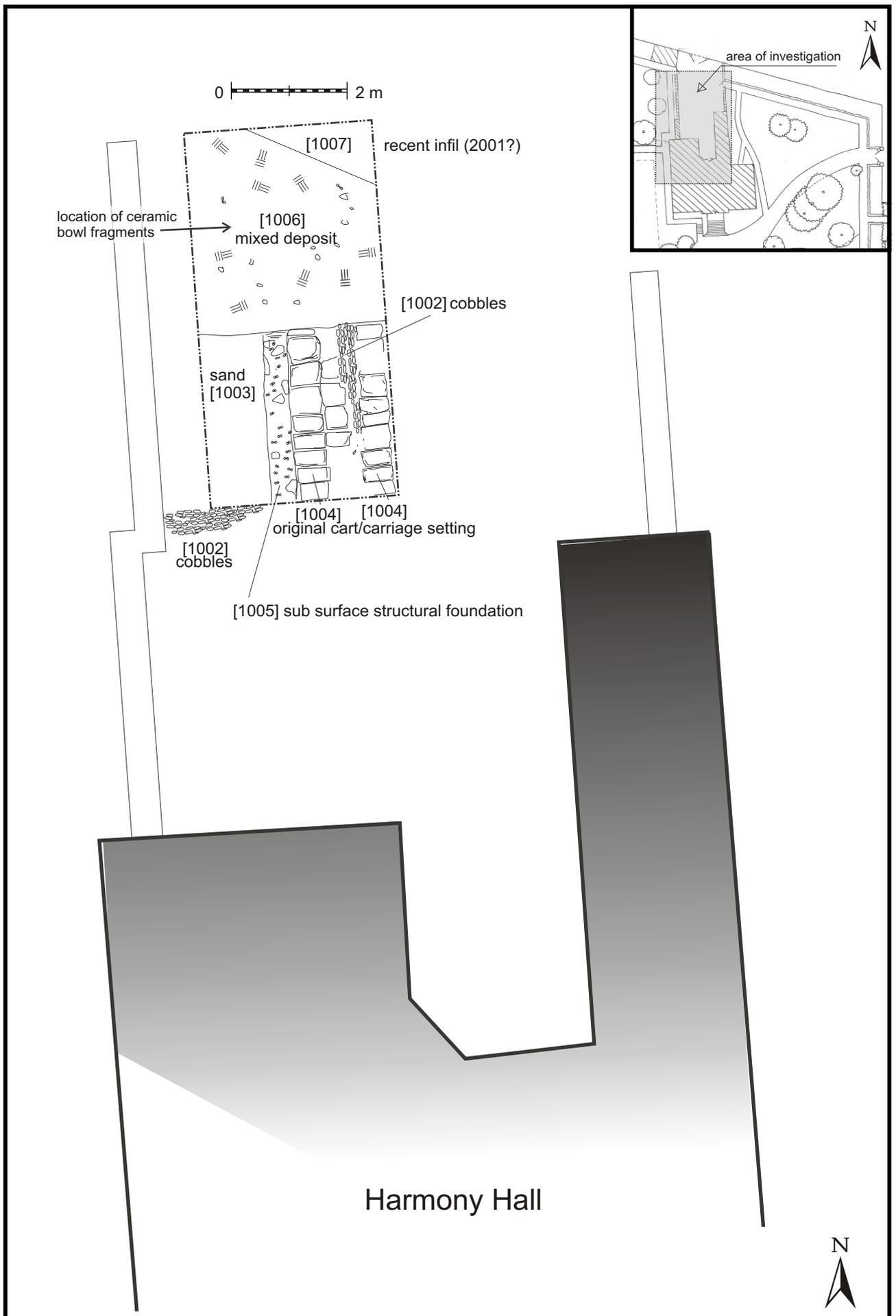


Figure 3: Location of current area of investigation and recorded features at *c.* 270mm beneath ground surface

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Fieldwork

The work was undertaken over one day during 10th November 2008. The day was wet, with light rain. This highlighted the need for the works, as the area of slabbing to be removed, was submerged in a deep puddle. The water was removed by hand, slabs then lifted, all were in a poor state, and after removal, the area was cleaned, examined and recorded prior to completion of the fieldwork.

The various datasets from the evaluation are presented in the appendix section; Photographic list (Appendix 1), Finds register (Appendix 2), Trench/Context description (Appendix 3) DES entry (Appendix 4)

5.2 The Trenches (Fig. 2 & 3)

A single trench/area of investigation was opened, measuring 3.75 m (east-west) x 6.25 m (north-south), by the removal of the existing sandstone slabs [1001], which varied in size, but were mainly rectangular circa 600mm x 400mm and 30mm thick. These had been re-laid in this area in the 1980's when the kitchen floor of the house had been lifted and moved to this location. The slabs were bedded into a yellow sand [1002] and in many cases, had been chocked up with water worn cobbles laid flat, which had previously formed the cobbled surface of the original courtyard [1003]. The water worn pebbles from the nearby river measure on average, 100mm in length and 20mm thick. The disturbed ground was removed by hand to a depth of 150mm where a well mortared and stonebuilt footing was located [1005], which ran north-south parallel to a stone setting which was markedly different in character from the recently laid slabs. The rectangular blocks were *c.* 250mm wide by 500mm long, with a depth of up to 300mm [1004] and also of fine grained grey sandstone. The depth indicated they were intended for taking a weight/wear and with the subsurface wall [1005] running parallel to the western line of blocks, it was clear the two structures were linked. The two lines of "block" slabs were set *c.* 1200mm apart, and had previously been surrounded by the cobbles, parts of which were retained where the recent slab laying had not disrupted the pattern. Both the 'wall' and block slabs terminated at the same line to the north, and from here, archaeological deposits were only encountered at a depth of 210mm. This surface [1006] was a mixed clay layer with frequent inclusions of mortar and brick fragments. This homogenous level forms a base layer through which the 'footing' and cobbles sit over, and with the attached artefact, must form a constructional level for the site. The extreme northeast corner of the investigation area contained a rough sandy fill [1007] of a previous intrusive excavation, dating to 1998 (previously recorded by Headland Archaeology) which recorded a medieval drain some 1m further to the north. The level required for relaying a slabbed area was reached, and no damage to subsurface archaeology was expected.

5.3 Artefacts

The assemblage consisted of a series of conjoining sherd, located on the interface between the original cobbled surfaces sand setting [1002] and the mixed constructional levelling deposit [1006]. The sherd fitted together to form the complete profile of a typical glazed redware bowl with manganese and copper decoration, dating to circa. 1760-1790, this would fit with the construction of the house and grounds.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The programme of evaluation has shown that in the areas of investigation there are no archaeological constraints within the area of resurfacing. The construction level of Harmony Hall was located, and evidence for the original 'standing' for a cart/carriage [1004] was examined, though now badly damaged. No further work would be required.

David Connolly, November 2008

Appendix 1 Photo Register

Photo Record List – Harmony Hall - Melrose				
Photo ID	Digital	Description	Direction to	Date
1	HHM08_001	Record shot of Trench 1 – during lifting of slabs [1001]	SW	10/11/2008
2	HHM08_002	Record shot of Trench 1 – during lifting of slabs [1001]	S	10/11/2008
3	HHM08_003	Record shot of standing area, with parallel ‘carriage tracks, [1004] and west ‘retaining wall’ [1005] beneath	Vert	10/11/2008
4	HHM08_004	Record shot of standing area, with parallel ‘carriage tracks, [1004] and west ‘retaining wall’ [1005] beneath	Vert	10/11/2008
5	HHM08_005	View over northern end of investigation area, with the mixed layer [1006] to the left and the ‘standing area’ to the right showing the interface between the two. Note earlier 1998 intervention in top left [1007]	Vert	10/11/2008
6	HHM08_006	View over southern end of investigation area, with the mixed layer [1006] to the left and the ‘standing area’ to the right	SE	10/11/2008
7	HHM08_006	View over northern end of investigation area, with the mixed layer [1006] to the left	E	10/11/2008

Appendix 2 Artefact List

Artefact Record List – Harmony Hall - Melrose		
Trench	Context	Description
1	1006	6 conjoining sherds manganese decorated Scottish redware (complete profile)

Appendix 3 Trench/Context List

Trench/Context List – Harmony Hall - Melrose	
Trench	Description
1	North - South Orientation (3.75m x 6.5m) Final depth: 0.27m
1001	Recently laid slabs of fine grained sandstone. Various sizes, approx 40mm thick
1002	Sand bedding for slabs. C. 50mm thick
1003	Flat edge laid waterworn cobbles used as cobbles for courtyard - original
1004	Short stretch of original cart/carriage standing of rectangular stone blocks, c. 250mm wide by 500mm long, with a depth of up to 300mm north south orientation.
1005	Cream coloured mortar bonded ‘wall’ running parallel to [1004] rough stone foundation, acting as retaining feature for cart standing.
1006	Mixed clay deposit, representing original constructional phase of area, a dark brown clay rich soil with frequent mortar and brick fragment inclusions.
1007	Backfilled utilities trench, recognised as the 1998 intervention.

Appendix 4

Discovery and Excavation Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Scottish Borders
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Harmony Hall, Rear Courtyard
PROJECT CODE:	HH0808
PARISH:	Melrose
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	David Connolly
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	(Connolly Heritage Consultancy)
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT53SW 40.00
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	18 th century – 20 th century courtyard
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	none
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 54690 34240
START DATE (this season)	10 th Nov 2008
END DATE (this season)	11 th Nov 2008
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief on the removal of late 20 th century stone slab repair of courtyard, for re-instatement of new slabs. The original water pebble cobbles had previously been removed to form a base for this 1980's repair, however, the original slabs forming the 'parking area for a cart remained in a small section. These were recorded but not retained. Beneath the cobble footing sand was a mixed clay layer with a 1760's glazed Scottish Manganese bowl fragment was found, directly on the interface. This would be in agreement with the late 18 th / early 19 th century dates for the house construction and redevelopment.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	none
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	The National Trust for Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Connolly Heritage Consultancy Traprain House Luggate Burn Whittingehame East Lothian EH41 4QA
EMAIL ADDRESS:	info@bajr.org
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	RCAHMS

References

Ordnance Survey Map 1863 Roxburghshire 1:2500 scale map (Sheet VIII.1) surveyed 1859

Wood J 1826 Sketch of Melrose and Gattonside 1826

General Roy Military Map, surveyed 1750-55

Holden, T.G. and Hawker, J. 1998. *'An archaeological watching brief in the grounds of Harmony Hall, Melrose: Data Structure Report'* HHM 97

Hastie M., 2001. *'An archaeological watching brief in the grounds of Harmony Hall, Melrose: Data Structure Report'* HHM 01

Connolly D., 2007. *'Investigations within the lawn area of Harmony Hall, Melrose: Data Structure Report'* HHM 07



HHM08_001.JPG



HHM08_002.JPG



HHM08_003.JPG



HHM08_004.JPG



HHM08_005.JPG



HHM08_006.JPG



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