



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY

Professional cultural heritage consultants - branches nationwide
enquiries@cfa-archaeology.co.uk



CAPABILITY
FLEXIBILITY
ASSURANCE

Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract Kildrummy Castle, Aberdeenshire PIC250

Watching Brief: Interpretation Board
Installation, April 2018
Report No. HES-PIC250-2018-01

Authors:
Bethan Gray MA



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

The Old Engine House
Eskmills Business Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian
EH21 7PQ

Tel: 0131 273 4380

Fax: 0131 273 4381

email: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

web: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Authors	Bethan Gray MA
Illustrator	Shelly Werner BA MPhil PhD MCifA
Approver	Melanie Johnson MA PhD FSA Scot MCifA
Commissioned by	Historic Environment Scotland
Date issued	May 2018
Version	1
Grid Ref	NJ 45541 16370
Oasis Reference	cfaarcha1-213282
PIC No.	PIC250
HES Report No.	HES-PIC250-2018-01
CFA Report No.	3665

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract

Kildrummy Castle, Aberdeenshire (PIC250)

Watching Brief: Interpretation Board Installation, April 2018

Report No. HES-PIC250-2018-01

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Working Methods	4
3.	Archaeological Results	5
4.	Conclusion	6

Appendices

1.	Photographic Register	6
2.	Context Register	6
3.	Discovery and Excavation in Scotland	7

Illustrations (bound at rear)

Fig. 1 Plan of interpretation board installation

Fig. 2 KDR11

Fig. 3 KDR13

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

Due to new information signage being installed by Historic Environment Scotland at Kildrummy Castle, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 45485 16390; Fig. 1), an archaeological watching brief was undertaken to monitor the installation of these boards and record any archaeological material uncovered.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the work, dated 22nd of November 2017, was produced by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) and approved by Historic Environment Scotland (HES). The monument is a Property in Care in the guardianship of HES.

The works involved the installation of new interpretation panels to replace outdated and faded signage and address the known gaps in the on-site interpretation. Excavations for the concrete foundations for two panels (KDR11 and KDR13) were dug under archaeological supervision (Fig. 1).

1.2 Background

Kildrummy Castle is one of the few great stone castles of enclosure to have survived in Scotland from the high point of medieval European castle building. Defended to the north by the steep natural den, from which the stone for the castle was quarried, and with a broad ditch dug on the other sides, in plan Kildrummy is shield-shaped (with the flat top to the north).

It appears that the castle as first constructed in the early 13th century for Alexander II was a plain polygonal enclosure; this phase is represented by the coursed rubble of the east, west and south curtains. In the middle of the century the chapel was constructed and, to achieve a true east-west axis, was allowed to breach the curtain (in a manner 'that defies rational and learned explanation'). Subsequently, possibly as a result of the visit of Edward I of England in 1296, the towers, the ashlar plinth of the north curtain and the gatehouse were added, to produce a castle with remarkable similarities to the Edwardian castles of Harlech and Caernarvon in Wales and Bothwell in Strathclyde.

Important early features of the interior include the archers' slits and prison in the Warden's tower (in the north-east), the adjacent postern gate and portcullis, the great hall against the north curtain, and the massive donjon or Snow Tower in the north-west which follows early French models. Later refashioning of the castle included the Elphinstone tower, a 16th century tower-house at the west end of the hall and the bakehouse complex in the south-east.

The castle saw many sieges, notably in 1306 when Sir Nigel Bruce (King Robert's brother) held it against the young Prince Edward of Caernarvon until betrayed by Osborn the smith (who was rewarded, it is said, by having the gold he had been promised poured molten down his throat). A central point in the great Earldom of Mar, it was restored (most evident in west curtain), besieged in 1335 by Balliol forces, burnt in 1530, captured by Cromwell in 1654, and became the headquarters of the Earl of Mar's Jacobite rising of 1715, after which it was dismantled.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were:

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor all ground disturbance works required for the interpretation board installation.
- To mitigate the effects of construction on any archaeological deposits or features identified through their excavation and recording and produce a report on them.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance. Recording of all elements followed established CFA methods.

There were two areas of excavation, for panels KDR11 and KDR13. The excavation areas for each board consisted of two slots each measuring 0.6m x 0.2m x 0.25m.

2.2 Watching Brief

All ground breaking work for the new interpretation boards was monitored by an appropriately qualified archaeologist.

All excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, photography and the completing standard CFA record forms.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 General

Panel KDR11 was located in the central courtyard close to the wall, south of the chapel (leaving at least 1.2m clearance on all sides) and will be a lectern style panel (Fig. 1). The photographic record shows a timber lean-to structure built against this wall. It is not clear how deep its foundations were, if indeed it had any. There is no apparent trace of it on the surface so there has been some clearance work in this area. Even if it had no foundation it seems to have held a large collection of carved stones for some time, so would likely have left some surface trace. An early plan of unknown date, but pre-clearance works, shows the area as ‘heaps of rubbish overgrown with grass and bushes’. A pre-clearance photograph on Canmore shows a less ‘manicured’ inner courtyard than at present. Files indicate that historic surfaces that were discovered during earlier clearance and excavation were left uncovered, while other areas were re-turfed.

Panel KDR13 was located overlooking the landscape on the east side of the castle, and will be a lectern style panel (Fig. 2). The ground breaking works avoided the bank and ditch, which excavation suggests retains almost their original profiles along this side of the castle. The reports record that 30m south of this location “A section across the earthwork E. of the castle revealed that on this side the original profile of the ditch is almost unchanged. The ditch is about 85 ft. across from crest to crest and 16 ft. deep, the outer face steep and the inner almost vertical, the bottom flat and some 20 ft. across. Traces of an upcast bank survive on both scarp and counter-scarp; no timber palisade was identified and no stone wall revealed”. The panel also avoided the line of the purported clay-bonded outer curtain which may have followed the inner bank of the ditch.

3.2 Watching Brief

Panel KDR11 was in the re-turfed area of the courtyard, and the excavated area for its foundations revealed topsoil (001) up to 0.15m deep below which was a loose silt deposit (002), up to 0.15m in depth, containing sandstone inclusions (Fig. 2).

The excavation of foundations for Panel KDR13 revealed topsoil (001) up to 0.15m deep below which was a brown silt (003), up to 0.15m in depth, with heavy rooting activity from nearby vegetation (Fig. 3).

4. CONCLUSION

The archaeological watching brief that was undertaken at Kildrummy Castle for the installation of new information boards revealed no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.

A summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 3) and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER:

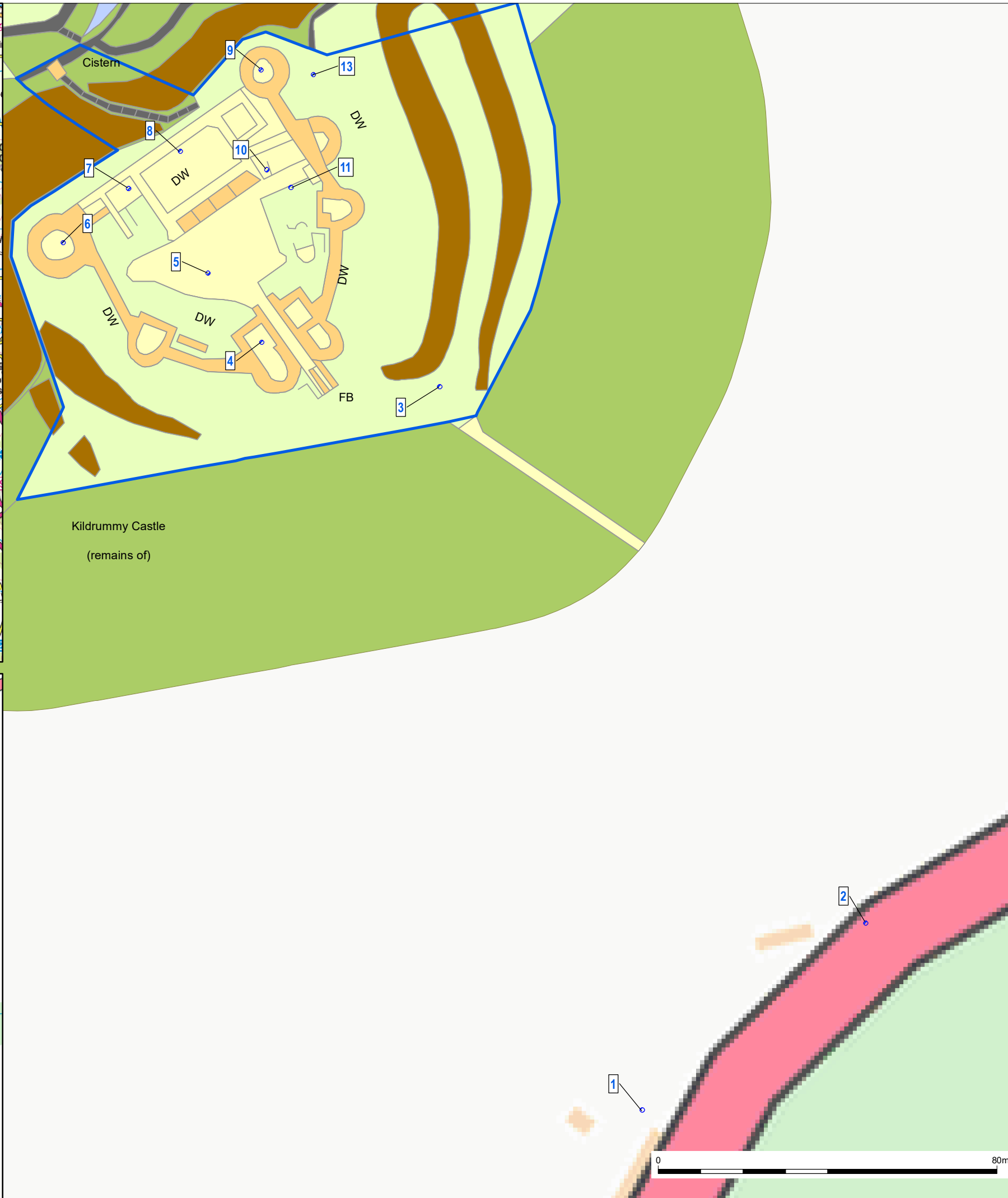
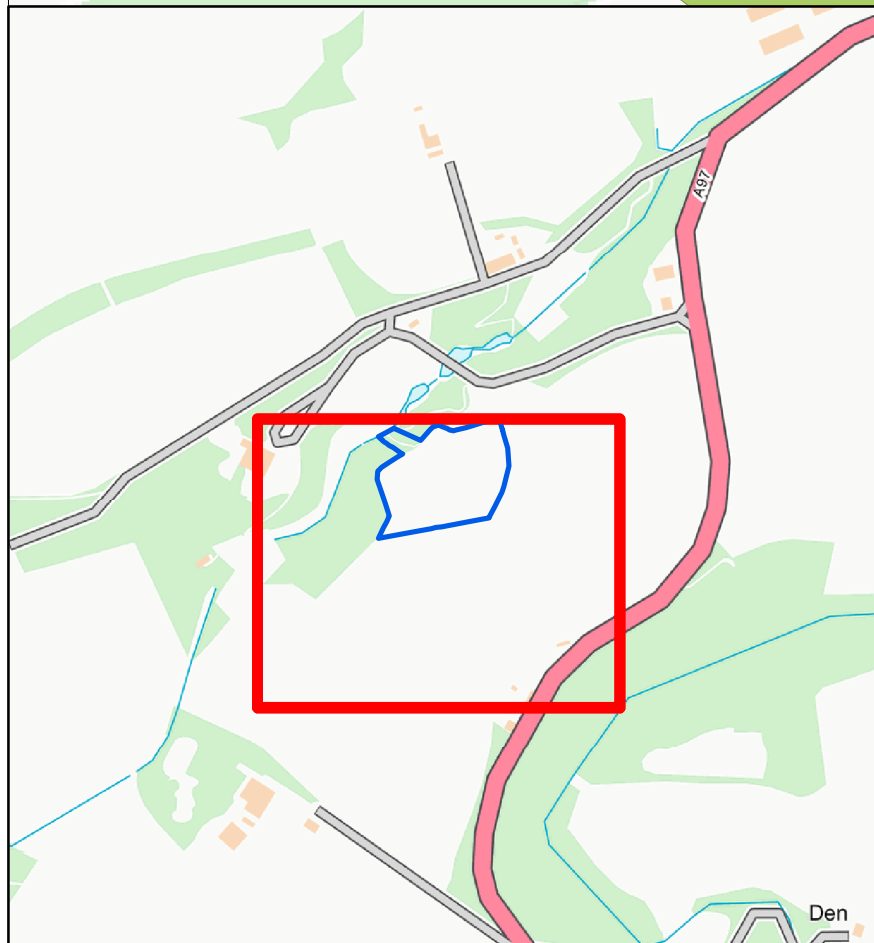
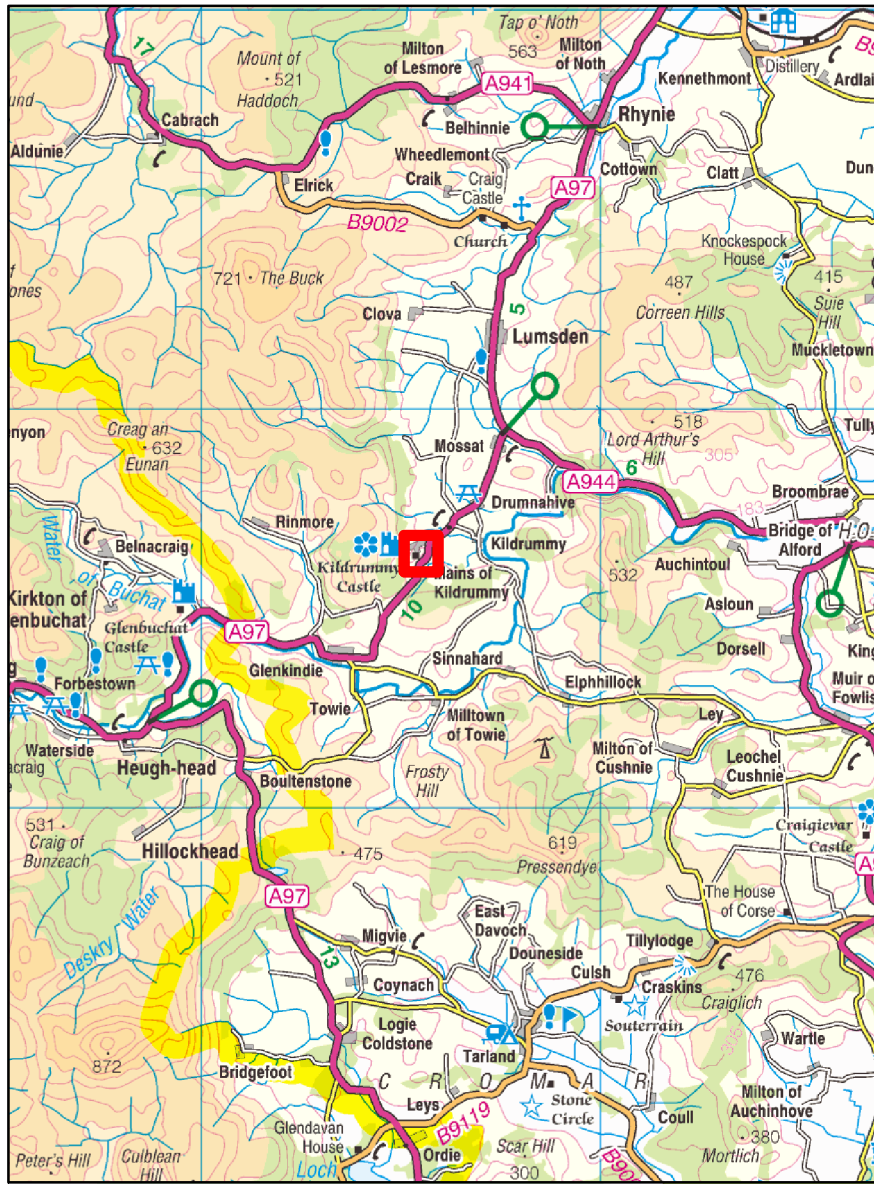
Shot No.	Summary description of subject	Facing
001	KDR11	E
002	KDR 11 Southern Slot	N
003	KDR11 Northern Slot	S
004	KDR13	N
005	KDR13 SW Slot	SW
006	KDR13 NE Slot	SW

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context no.	Fill of	Type	Description
001		Deposit	Topsoil
002		Deposit	Greyish-brown stony silt
003		Deposit	Brown clayey silt with roots

APPENDIX 3: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Aberdeenshire
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Kildrummy Castle
PROJECT CODE:	MINA25
PARISH:	Kildrummy
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Bethan Gray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NO51NW 2.05
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NJ 45541 16370
START DATE (this season)	April 2018
END DATE (this season)	April 2018
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Kildrummy Castle for the installation of new information boards. It revealed no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	-
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Environment Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited with NRHE, reports lodged with Aberdeenshire Council SMR.



Key:

- PIC Boundary
- Signage Location

Contains Historic Environment Scotland data
© Historic Environment Scotland

© Crown copyright and database rights [2017] Ordnance Survey [100057073]. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
The Old Engine House
Eskmills Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
T: 0131 273 4380
F: 0131 273 4381
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:
Plan of Interpretation Board Installation

Project:
**Minor Archaeological Services
Call-Off Contract: Kildrummy Castle
(PIC250) Interpretation Board
Installation Watching Brief**

Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Scale at A3:
1:1,000

Drawn by: MP	Checked: SW	Date: 01/06/2018
Report No: 3665	Fig. No: 1	



Fig. 2 - KDR11



Fig. 3 - KDR13

Project:
 Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract: Kildrummy Castle (PIC250) Interpretation Board Installation Watching Brief



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskmills Park
 Musselburgh
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 T: 0131 273 4380
 F: 0131 273 4381
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Drawn by: AN	Checked: SW	Date: 31/05/2018
Report No: 3665		Fig. No: 2-3



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

HEAD OFFICE - Musselburgh

Old Engine House
Eskmills Park, Musselburgh
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ

t: +44 (0) 131 273 4380
e: enquiries@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Leeds

Offices C1 & C2
Clayton Business Centre, Midland Road
Leeds, LS10 2RJ

t: +44 (0) 113 271 6060
e: yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Manchester

44G9, Europa Business Park
Bird Hall Lane, Cheadle Heath
Manchester, SK3 0XA

t: +44 (0) 161 428 8224
e: manchester@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Milton Keynes

Suite 11, Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall
Milton Keynes, MK6 1NE

t: +44 (0) 1908 226 124
e: miltonkeynes@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Carlisle

Warwick Mill Business Village
Warwick Bridge, Carlisle
Cumbria, CA4 8RR

t: +44 (0) 1228 564 531
e: cumbria@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Sheffield

Office 5, Ecclesfield Business Centre
46 Stocks Hill, Ecclesfield
Sheffield, S35 9YT

t: +44 (0) 114 327 1108
e: sheffield@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Leicester

Business Box
3 Oswin Road, Brailsford Industrial Estate
Leicester, LE3 1HR

t: +44 (0) 116 279 5156
e: leicestershire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Hertfordshire

Amwell House
9 Amwell Street, Hoddesdon
Hertfordshire, EN11 8TS

t: +44 (0) 845 017 9847
e: herts@cfa-archaeology.co.uk