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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract Linlithgow Palace and Peel (PIC155)

Drainage Installation
Trial Trenching Evaluation, March 2018
Report No. HES-PIC155-2018-01

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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

A programme of evaluation was undertaken in March 2018 at Linlithgow Palace, West Lothian (NGR: NT 0019 7732), a Property in Care (PIC155) in the ownership of Historic Environment Scotland, ahead of proposed works to insert new drainage at the Sailing Club landing area (known as Bow Butts), at the edge of the loch to the N of the Palace. Waterlogging of this area is becoming more commonplace.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the work, dated 2nd February 2018, was produced by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) and approved by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in advance of the works.

1.2 Background

Linlithgow Palace was one of the major royal residences of the Stewart dynasty, used chiefly as a 'pleasure palace' midway between the royal castles of Edinburgh and Stirling. In its present form it was begun by James I (1424-37), following a fire that had damaged the previous residence in 1424. It was added to and remodelled by James III (1460-88), James IV (1488-1513) and James V (1513-42). Both James V and his daughter, Mary Queen of Scots (1542-67), were born there. The last building works were carried out for James VI following his 'hamecoming' in 1617, but Charles I's stay in 1633, during his coronation visit, was to be the last by a reigning sovereign. It was finally abandoned in 1746, after the Duke of Cumberland's government army, leaving in pursuit of Prince Charles Edward Stuart's Jacobite force, accidentally started a fire.

The enclosed quadrangular palace is noted particularly for its innovative architecture and elaborate sculpture. Of particular interest are: the east entrance of James I; the lofty SW tower of James III, the first of four built; the chapel, oriel windows and barbican of James IV; the outer gateway and fountain of James V; and the courtyard façade of James VI's north range.

The palace is prominently set upon a grassy hill at the centre of the peel, or royal park, that was formerly the preserve of the royal court but which continues today as a public park for the people of Linlithgow. The peel is an invaluable archaeological resource, hiding beneath its green sward a possible Roman fort, ancillary buildings from the earlier royal residence, the timber pele built for Edward I of England in 1302, traces of royal gardens and other buildings (e.g., the 'catchpule' or tennis court), and structures associated with Oliver Cromwell's occupying force in the 1650s. To the north of the palace lies Linlithgow Loch, then as today an invaluable resource and containing at least two crannogs (artificial islands).

A number of archaeological interventions have taken place at the palace and peel, commencing with clearance excavations in the early 19th century, for which no records survive. Samian ware was recovered during excavations in the early 20th century, suggesting that site has been occupied from at least the Roman era / Iron Age. Features interpreted as a defensive ditch from the time of Edward I were revealed in the 1960s during investigations to the south of the outer courtyard, while early illustrations have

also revealed elaborate terraced gardens to the south-west of the palace, in the area now occupied by the manse.

There have been several archaeological investigations, both within the Palace and in the Peel area in recent times. The immediate, low-lying area of The Bow Butts, where this new drainage is proposed, has not been investigated, due to its relative inaccessibility (both due to waterlogging and to the steep slope along its SW edge, which prevented access during the otherwise very thorough geophysical survey in 2013). Evidence from investigation and survey work to the S, W and E offers some pointers to what may survive in this area (see below).

1.3 Archaeological Sensitivity and Potential Impact

Some of the most helpful evidence, in assessing the likelihood of archaeological features in the Bow Butts area, comes from the area upslope to its S and W, where a trench excavated in 2001/2 revealed a pattern of post-holes and other elements interpreted as a possible palisade. The full extent of this feature is not known, but it is possible that it extends further towards the loch shoreline.

Two smaller trenches were also excavated in 2001/2 and were positioned to investigate the upstanding earthwork known as the Bow Butts. In the eastern trench, topsoil sealed up to 0.5m of dark loam associated with the embankment around the small harbour to the East. This overlay 0.5m of silty sand and gravel deposits, interpreted as re-deposited subsoil. In the western trench, topsoil sealed up to 1.1m of silty sand and gravel, also interpreted as re-deposited subsoil. The banks forming the Bow Butts were found to be archaeologically sterile, but found to be stratigraphically earlier than the harbour embankment. Note that these results refer to the raised banks and not to the proposed development area, on the lower ground surrounded by the banks. No investigation has been carried out on this lower ground.

Relevant here is the dating of the harbour. From an earlier assessment of map and pictorial evidence undertaken by CRT, the harbour would seem to have been constructed at some point between the mid-1820s and 1854.

The Bow Butts appears to be earlier, and the name ‘Bow Butts’ extends back until at least the mid 19th century. It is traditionally thought to have been an area associated with archery. For example, the Ordnance Survey name book of 1855-59 (West Lothian, Volume 38/9) states ‘On the edge of the loch in a long narrow strip of sward, with two slight elevations at the E and W ends; this is called the “Bon Butts” and here they used to practice archery in ancient times’. The Bow Butts are clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1856 (Linlithgowshire Sheet 5).

The longstanding nature of this name and its traditional association with archery suggest that there is the potential here for the survival of features related to archery during the medieval period. These may or may not include buried archaeology.

The results of a geophysical survey in 2013, although limited to the S and W of this area, pointed to the likely survival of midden deposits on the slope N of the Palace. Structural evidence was also revealed, possibly representing walls, foundations, paving or rubble-filled ditches in a series of high-resistance anomalies. Although limited GPR

work formed part of the 2013 survey, this area was not included, so the depths of these potential features are not known.

It may be that at least part of the development area itself, given its low-lying nature at the loch edge, is formed of reclaimed / made-up ground and that this zone was formerly partly submerged in the past. However, the map evidence from 1856 shows this specific area largely as it is today. Given the current, and possibly longstanding, waterlogged nature of this low-lying area, any midden deposits occurring here may well survive particularly well, even if they are sealed by later made-up deposits.

In summary, the archaeological sensitivity of the precise development area is untested, but there is the potential for midden and other deposits to survive here at an unknown depth, and the potential for features to survive here related to (possibly medieval) archery.

1.4 Objectives

The objective of this programme of archaeological work was:

- To conduct an archaeological trial trenching evaluation in order to assess the archaeological sensitivity of the proposed development area in advance of new drainage installation.
- To produce a report.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

All work complied with the requirements of Historic Environment Scotland and was undertaken under the terms of the Minor Archaeological Services Call-off Contract. CFA followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidelines as appropriate.

Turf was carefully removed and stored prior to reinstatement in order to minimise the visual impact of the works. Two trenches (2 & 3) became waterlogged and were soft when backfilled; these were fenced off with Netlon to protect the public and to allow the ground to settle and firm up.

2.2 Evaluation

Four evaluation trenches were excavated by hand.

Trench positions were surveyed using industry standard electronic surveying equipment and all trenches were backfilled.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

Numbers in bold refer to contexts, a full list of which is contained in Appendix 2. Trench positions are shown on Fig. 1.

3.1 Evaluation Trenches

The work required the hand excavation of four trial trenches. Trench locations were provided by HES.

Trench 1

The dimensions of Trench 1 were 2.5m by 1.5m, orientated on an east-west axis. It was located close to a paved slipway at the eastern end of the proposed development area to evaluate deposits in this area.

The turf and topsoil layer (**101**) was 0.2-0.3m in depth, with a thin lens of modern sand (**102**) directly beneath. Below this was a homogenous dark grey silt layer (**103**), likely to be a recent deposit of buried topsoil. This lay above a mid grey sandy silt deposit (**104**), around 0.35m thick, well sorted with occasional pebble inclusions and likely to have been deposited by water. This layer had clear horizons between the overlying buried topsoil (**103**) and the sandy gravel natural (**000**) below it.

Excavation stopped at natural, with the trench 0.6m deep (Fig. 3).

In the eastern end of the trench a modern plastic drain pipe, with a pebble gravel fill, was uncovered (Fig. 2, 4). This was not excavated as the drain was still in use. Trench 1 contained no archaeological features.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was 2.5m x 1.5m, orientated on a NW-SE axis and located at the base of the bank which formed a shallow hollow, likely by the collection of water runoff from the bank.

The upper 0.2m of turf and topsoil (**201**) was removed revealing a clear horizon with the dark grey silt layer (**202**) below. This homogenous well sorted deposit was 0.4m thick with a diffuse horizon with (**203**) below. (**203**) was identical in character to (**202**) save for a marked increase in the frequency of small coal fragments. This deposit was 0.4m thick and overlaid the natural sandy clay (**000**).

Excavation stopped at natural sandy gravel (**000**), with the trench 1m deep at maximum.

Due to the trench being located in a slight hollow it became waterlogged very quickly. There were no archaeological deposits recorded in this trench.

Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 3.5m x 1.5m and was orientated on a NE-SW axis and located perpendicular to the bank to examine the relationship between the level ground and the bank to the SW.

The removal of 0.2-0.3m of topsoil and turf (**301**) revealed a dark grey silt deposit (**302**). This was 0.7m thick and overlay (**303**) which was indistinguishable aside from the presence of coal and pebble inclusions. This lower deposit was 0.2m thick and overlaid the natural sand (**000**) (Fig. 5-7).

Natural was encountered at a depth of 1.1m and excavation extended into the natural by 0.5m to test the nature of the deposit, with the trench overall being 1.6m deep at maximum.

There were no archaeological features recorded in the trench, and the deposits are likely to be water lain and/or slopewash. Waterlogging occurred during excavation of the trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was 2.5m x 1.5m and orientated NW-SE. As with Trench 3 a thin layer of topsoil (**401**) covered two grey silt deposits (**402** and **403**), with the latter being characterised by frequent inclusions of coal; **402** was 0.75m thick, **403** was 0.2m thick.

Natural was orange sand (**000**) which contained a few flat water rounded pebbles (Fig. 8). Excavation stopped at natural, with the trench 1.3m deep at maximum.

There were no archaeological deposits recorded in this trench.

3.2 Finds by Christina Hills

The finds recovered on site are a mix of post-medieval and modern in date, they are summarised below and detailed in Appendix 4.

	Number	Weight (g)
Burnt bone	2	3
Ceramic Building Material	4	83
Ceramic	2	11
Clay pipe	3	3
Coconut shell	1	10
Iron	3	31
Lead	1	12
Pottery	18	270
Slag	1	127

Table 1. Summary of finds by material

Pottery

Modern white earthenware pottery was found unstratified in Trench 1 and in silty deposit **202**. Post-medieval reduced ware pottery was found unstratified in Trench 1, in the spoil of Trench 3, topsoil **301** and in silty deposits **202**, **303** and **403**.

Other Ceramics

Four pieces of modern ceramic building material tile were found unstratified in trench 1. Three post medieval clay pipe stems were from silty deposit **104**. A modern ceramic bottle stop was found in the spoil of trench 3. One unidentified ceramic object was unstratified in trench 1.

Metal

Modern iron nails were found in the topsoil of Trench 3 and a modern iron washer was found in the spoil of Trench 3. An unidentified modern lead object was found in silty deposit **202**. One piece of slag was recovered from silty deposit **303**.

Other

Two pieces of burnt bone, probably animal, were found in silty deposit **202** and one piece of coconut shell was recovered from silty deposit **104**.

4. CONCLUSION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Linlithgow palace and Peel in advance of the installation of a network of drains to counter waterlogging at the base of the north-east bank of the Peel. The trenches were placed in order to identify any archaeological features likely to be disturbed by the pipe trench.

No archaeological features were encountered; some medieval ceramic sherds were recovered, likely brought down slope due to erosion. The soil profile revealed in Trenches 2-4 along the base of the bank were uniform, indicating the gradual downward creep of slopewashed deposits.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Record for the Historic Environment (NRHE) and copies of reports will be lodged with West Lothian Council Sites and Monuments Record.

A summary statement will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 5) and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.

APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

Photo No.	Summary description of subject	Facing
1	Tr1 - Location pre-ex	E
2	Tr1 - Location pre-ex	N
3	Tr1 - Location pre-ex	NW
4	Tr1 - Showing modern pipe	W
5	Tr1 - Post-ex	E
6	Tr1 - Post-ex	N
7	Tr1 - Post-ex	N
8	Tr1 - S facing section	N
9	Tr1 - W facing section	E
10	Tr1 - N facing section	S
11	Tr1 - E facing section	W
12	Tr2 - Post-ex (flooded)	SE
13	Tr2 - NW facing section	SE
14	Tr2 - SW facing section	NE
15	Tr2 - SE facing section	NW
16	Tr2 - NE facing section into bank	SW
17	Tr2 - Working shot	S
18	Tr3 - Pre-ex	N
19	Tr3 - SE facing section	NW
20	Tr3 - SE facing section	NW
21	Tr3 - NE facing section	SW
22	Tr3 - SE facing section, SW end	NW
23	Tr3 - SE facing section, SW end	NW
24	Tr3 - SE facing section, SW end	NW
25	Tr3 - Collapse of NW facing section	SE
26	Tr3 - Collapse of SE facing section	NW
27	Tr4 - SE facing section	NW
28	Tr4 - SE facing section	NW
29	Tr4 - NE facing section into bank	SW
30	Tr4 - NE facing section into bank	SW
31	Tr1 - Post-ex view of location with re-turfing	E
32	Tr2 - Post-ex view of location with re-turfing and fencing	S
33	Tr3 - Post-ex view of location with re-turfing and fencing	W
34	Tr4 - Post-ex view of location with re-turfing	W
35	Tr2 - Post-ex view of location with existing ground disturbance	SE
36	Tr2 - Post-ex view of location with existing ground disturbance	NW

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context no.	Fill of	Trench	Description
000		All	Natural
101		Tr1	Turf and topsoil
102		Tr1	Lens of sand (modern)
103		Tr1	Dark silt (buried topsoil)
104		Tr1	Fine grey silt
201		Tr2	Turf and topsoil
202		Tr2	Mid-grey silt
203		Tr2	Grey sandy silt
301		Tr3	Turf and topsoil
302		Tr3	Dark grey silt
303		Tr3	Dark grey silt with coal and pebbles
401		Tr4	Turf and topsoil
402		Tr4	Dark grey silt
403		Tr4	Dark grey silt with coal and pebbles

APPENDIX 3: Field drawings register

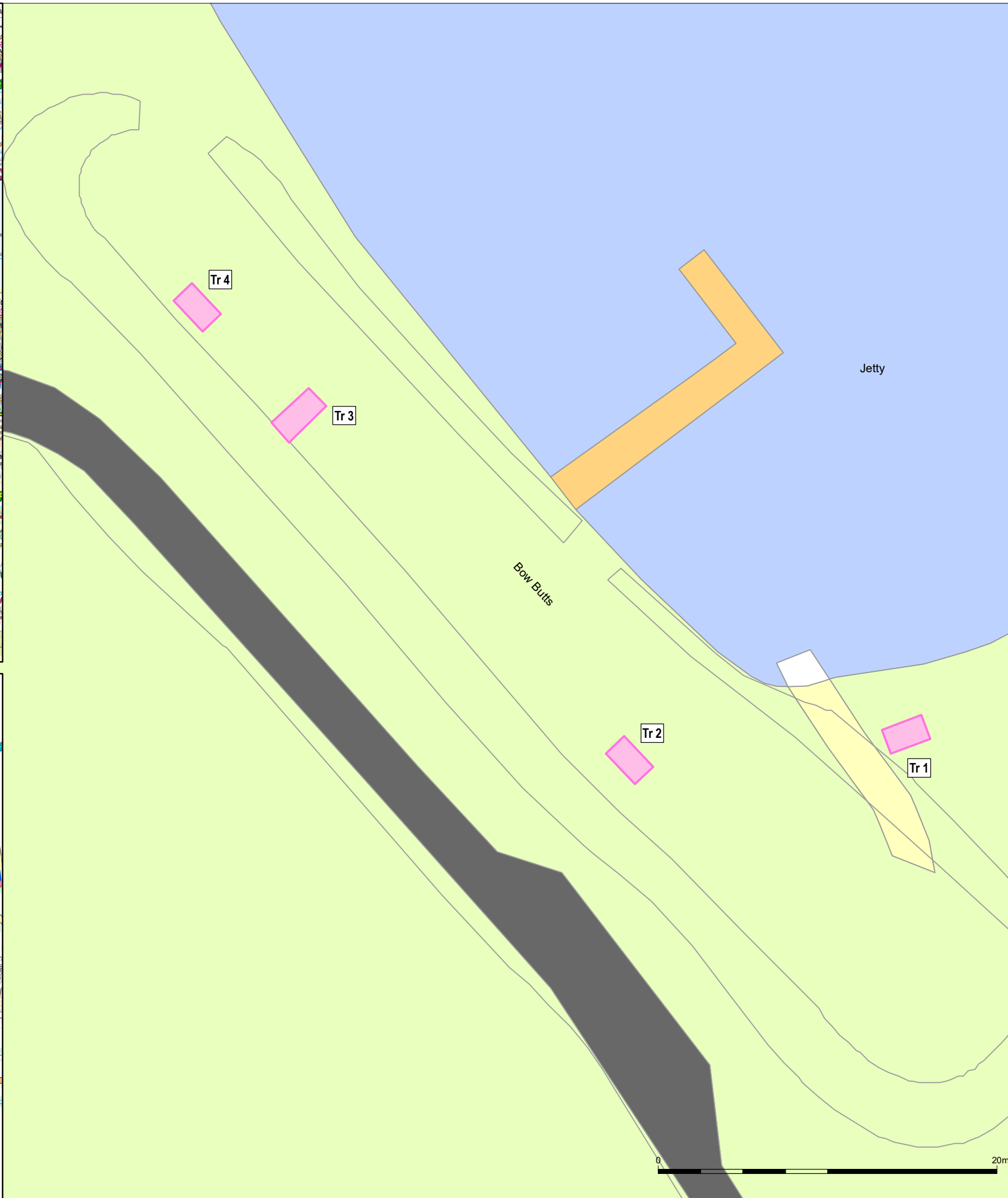
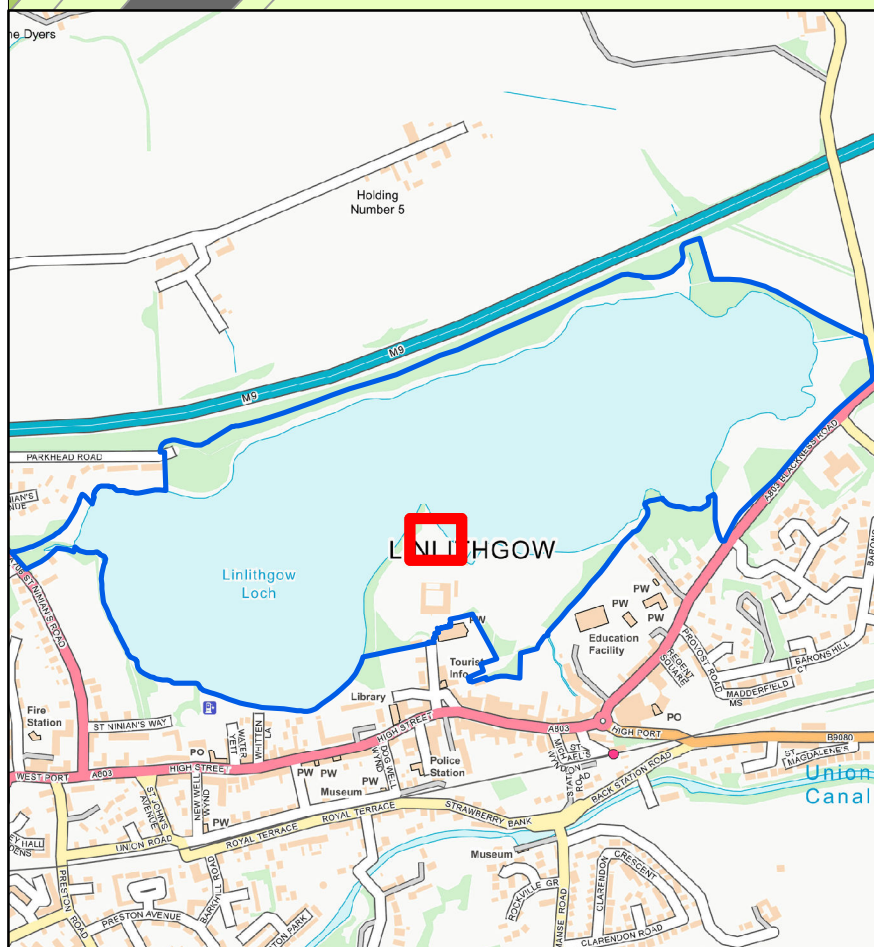
Dwg No.	Sheet No.	Scale	Plan / Section	Description/contexts
1	1	1:50	Plan	Tr1 - Post-ex plan
2	1	1:20	Section	Tr1 - S facing section
3	1	1:20	Section	Tr1 - E facing section
4	1	1:20	Section	Tr1 - N facing section
5	1	1:20	Section	Tr2 - NW facing section
6	1	1:20	Section	Tr2 - NE facing section
7	1	1:20	Section	Tr2 - SE facing section
8	1	1:20	Section	Tr2 - SW facing section
9	1	1:50	Plan	Tr2 - Post-ex plan
10	2	1:20	Section	Tr3 - Post-ex plan
11	2	1:20	Section	Tr3 - NE facing section
12	2	1:20	Section	Tr3 - SE facing section
13	2	1:50	Plan	Tr4 - Post-ex plan
14	2	1:20	Section	Tr4 - SW facing section
15	2	1:20	Section	Tr4 - SE facing section
16	2	1:20	Section	Tr4 - NE facing section

APPENDIX 4: Finds register

Context	Find type	No.	Wt (g)	Notes	Spotdate
104	Clay pipe	3	3	Stem	Post medieval
104	Coconut shell	1	10		
202	Pottery	2	33	Reduced ware. Some glaze. One rim	Post medieval
202	Pottery	2	24	White earthenware. One handle	Modern
202	Lead	1	12	Unknown object	Modern
202	Burnt bone	2	3	Animal	
301	Pottery	2	22	Reduced ware. Some glaze.	Post medieval
301	Iron	2	13	Nails	Modern
303	Pottery	6	75	Reduced ware. Some glaze.	Post medieval
303	Slag	1	127		
403	Pottery	3	80	Reduced ware. Some glaze	Post medieval
Spoil Tr.3	Pottery	1	11	Reduced ware. Some glaze.	Post medieval
Spoil Tr.3	Iron	1	18	Washer	Modern
Spoil Tr.3	Ceramic	1	6	Bottle stop	Modern
U/S Tr1	CBM	4	83	Tile?	Modern
U/S Tr1	Pottery	1	6	White earthenware.	Modern
U/S Tr1	Pottery	1	19	Reduced ware. Some glaze.	Post medieval
U/S Tr1	Ceramic	1	5	Unknown object	Modern

APPENDIX 5: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	West Lothian
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract:
PROJECT CODE:	MINA44
PARISH:	Linlithgow
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	John Musgrove, Ed Rayner
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	NO51NW 2.05
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Palace and Peel
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 0019 7732
START DATE (this season)	March 2018
END DATE (this season)	March 2018
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological hand evaluation was carried out at St Linlithgow Palace Bow Butts in advance of works to install drainage. The trenches were placed to in order to identify any archaeological deposits or features and to better understand the soil profile and formation of the bank along the Bow Butts. No archaeological features or deposits were identified. The bank appears to be formed of well-sorted slopewashed deposits.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
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 Fife Council SMR.



Key:

- PIC Boundary
- Trench Location

Contains Historic Environment Scotland data
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Title:
Location of trenches

Project:
Linlithgow Palace

Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Scale at A3:
1:250

Drawn by: MP	Checked: MJ	Date: 24/07/2018
Report No: 3655	Fig. No: 1	



Fig. 2 - Trench 1 showing modern pipe



Fig. 3 - Trench 1 east facing section

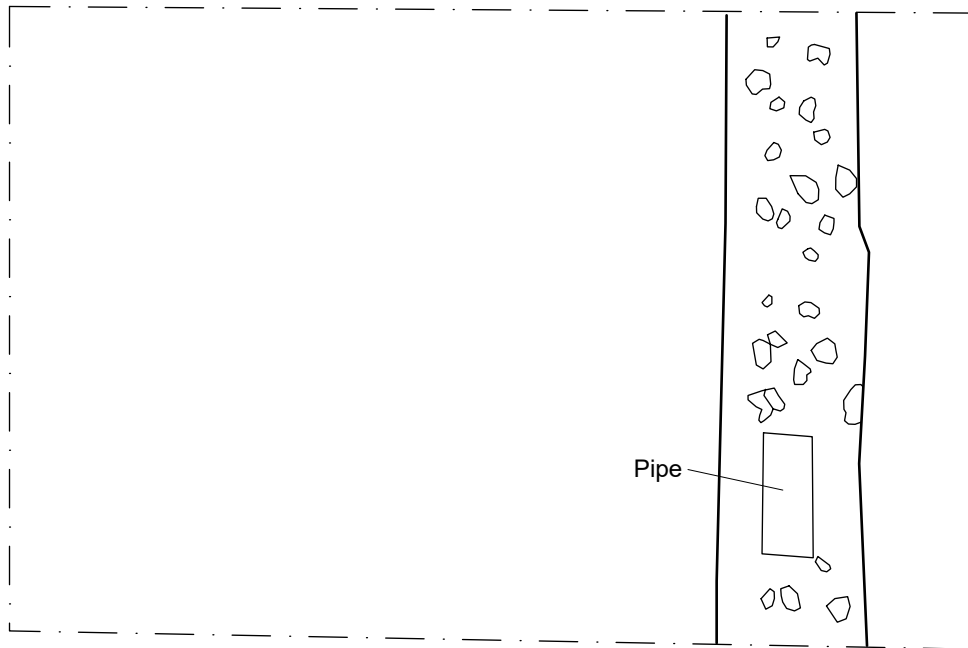
Project:
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Report No: 3655		Fig. No: 2-3



Title:
Trench 1, plan showing location of modern pipe

Client:
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Scale at A4:
1:20

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MJ

Date:
03/07/2018

Report.No:
3655

Fig. No:
4



Fig. 5 - Trench 3, South east facing section showing bank material and flooding

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Report No: 3655		Fig. No: 5

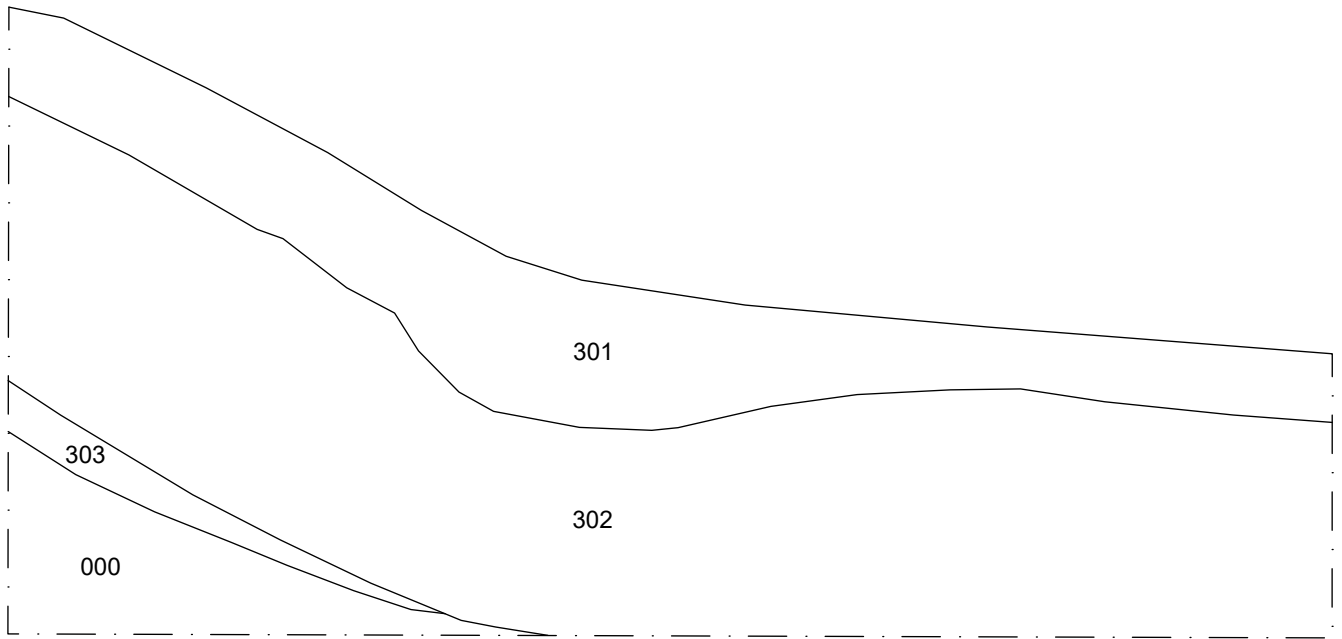


Fig. 6 - Trench 3 North-east-facing section

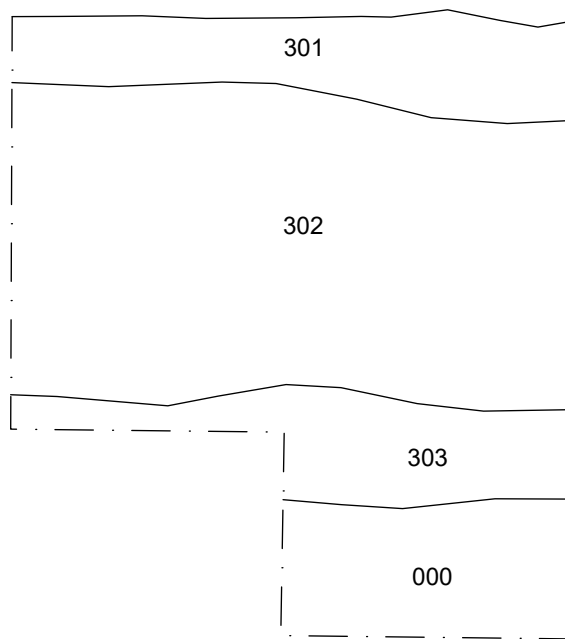


Fig. 7 - Trench 3 South-east-facing section



Title: Trench 1, plan showing location of modern pipe	Client: Historic Environment Scotland
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Fig. 8 - Trench 4 South east facing section



Fig. 9 - Trench 1 turf replaced

Project:
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Fig. 10 - Trench 3, post excavation and netlon fencing



Fig.11 - Trench 4, post excavation and re turfing

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