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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract Maclellan's Castle, Dumfries & Galloway (PIC204)

Drainage repair works adjacent to the ticket
office, watching brief, October 2019
Report No. HES-PIC204-2019-01

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Minor Archaeological Services Call-Off Contract

**Maclellan's Castle,
Dumfries & Galloway (PIC204)**

**Drainage repair works adjacent to the Ticket Office,
Watching Brief, October 2019**

Report No. HES-PIC204-2019-01

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Fig. 1 Location plan showing watching brief area

Fig. 2 General view showing area of works, from NE

Fig. 3 Excavated trench from E

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

A Watching Brief was undertaken in October 2019 on behalf of Historic Environment Scotland in support of Scheduled Monument Consent for a programme of work at Maclellans's Castle, Kirkcudbright (NGR: NX 68242 51062), a Property in Care (PIC204) in the guardianship of Historic Environment Scotland.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the watching brief, dated 16th September 2019, was produced by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA). The WSI was designed to fulfil the terms of the Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) and was agreed with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in advance of the work taking place.

The works involved the excavation of a small area in order to effect repair work to an existing drain system adjacent to the Ticket Office which is situated to the south of Maclellan's Castle. Although the works were in an area already affected by previous incursions for services, the depth and extent of the works required in order to repair the drain had the potential to uncover undisturbed archaeological layers, deposits or structures.

1.2 Background

MacLellan's Castle survives as a well preserved ruined tower house. It stands at the end of St Cuthbert's Street, close to the harbour in Kirkcudbright.

MacLellan's Castle stands within the older precinct of the convent of Greyfriars. The friary site was ruinous when granted to Sir Thomas MacLellan by Regent Moray in 1566. Sir Thomas sold the church to the burgh for parochial use, while he reserved the remainder of the site and the stones for his new residence. Construction began in 1581 and was probably completed in the following year. The castle was built on a grand scale with an outer barmkin (courtyard) and a 'handsome gate', now lost. It was designed to impress, rather than to be a practical fortress, despite the generous provision of gun loops and shot-holes. There is a magnificent Renaissance-style armorial panel over the entrance with a matching window surround in the adjacent wing. The panel bears Sir Thomas's initials together with those of his second wife, Grizel Maxwell.

The castle comprises an extended L-plan main block, facing NW, together with a large rectangular tower projecting from the SE corner. In addition, there is a double projection in the re-entrant angle for the main entrance. This contains the door and main stair, with additional accommodation above, capped by a belvedere at roof level. The main block comprises three storeys and an attic, while the SE corner tower rises for a further storey, but without turrets.

There is a series of vaulted storage rooms in the basement, connected by passages to a large kitchen in the N wing. There is a secondary entrance directly into the SE wing. There are no corridors on the upper floors, but there are three wheel stairs. The principal chambers are planned so that these could be reached without corridors, or having to traverse other rooms. The great hall is central to the first floor, equipped with

a vast fireplace, behind which is a 'laird's lug', connecting with a private chamber beyond. On the floor above, a room of similar size to the great hall served as the withdrawing room.

The castle has been ruinous since 1752. It was brought into state care in 1912.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works are:

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor all ground disturbance works required for the drainage repair.
- 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

All work complied with the requirements of Historic Environment Scotland and undertaken under the terms of the Minor Archaeological Services Call-off Contract, and was conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 'Code of Conduct' (CIfA 2014), and other relevant CIfA Standards and Guidance.

2.2 Watching Brief

The trench was excavated by hand by the Monument Conservation Unit (MCU) under archaeological supervision.

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

The stratification of the excavated area was recorded whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

The excavation site abutted the side of a stone wall (002) forming the gable of the ticket office and was cut through a 0.07m thick concrete surface (001) forming a border between the ticket office wall and a planted border.

A 1m x 1m trench had been excavated down to the level of a plastic pipe (006) at a depth of 0.6m beneath the concrete surface. Further excavation was required to reach the ceramic pipe (008) which was the subject of the repair work. The ceramic pipe was reached at a depth of 1.2m.

Deposits exposed beneath the concrete surface are described below in order of deposition. All depths are measured from the top of the concrete surface.

Sterile homogenous coarse sand (010) was recorded at the base of the trench. The origin of the sand (010) is unclear. The site is close to the mud banks of the River Dee estuary and could be natural, however its situation within a heavily developed historic environment means that it is more likely that it is imported material.

The cut of the pipe trench (007) was exposed only on one side. It had an irregular sloping profile and was cut into the sand (010). The pipe trench had been backfilled with sand (005), with brick rubble hardcore (004) for the concrete surface (001) laid over the top.

No archaeological features or deposits were identified.

4. CONCLUSION

A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a small area in order to effect repair work to an existing drain system adjacent to the Ticket Office, situated to the south of Maclellan's Castle. Two modern pipes were located, and no archaeological features or deposits were identified.

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 Dumfries and Galloway Sites and Monuments Record.

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

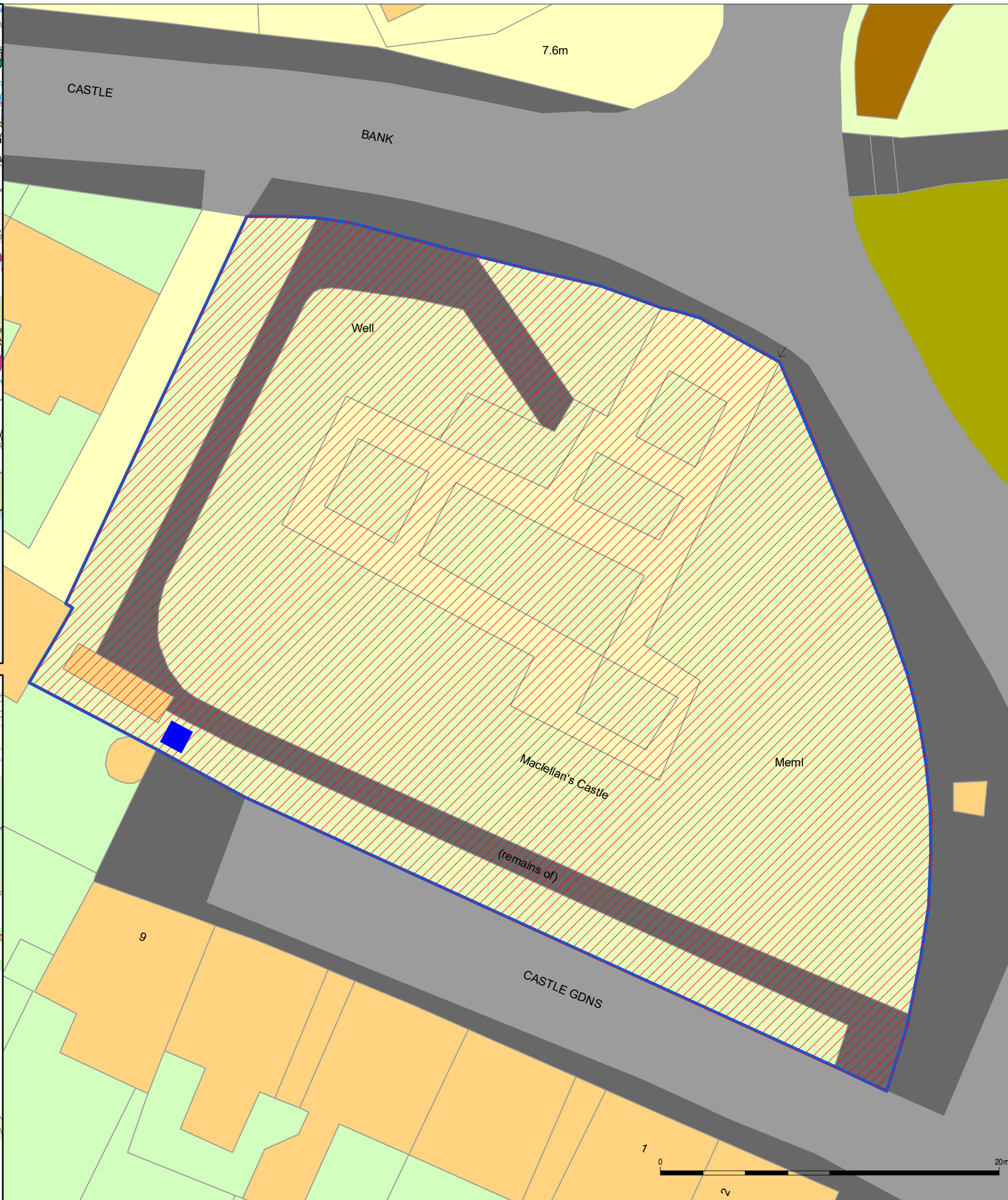
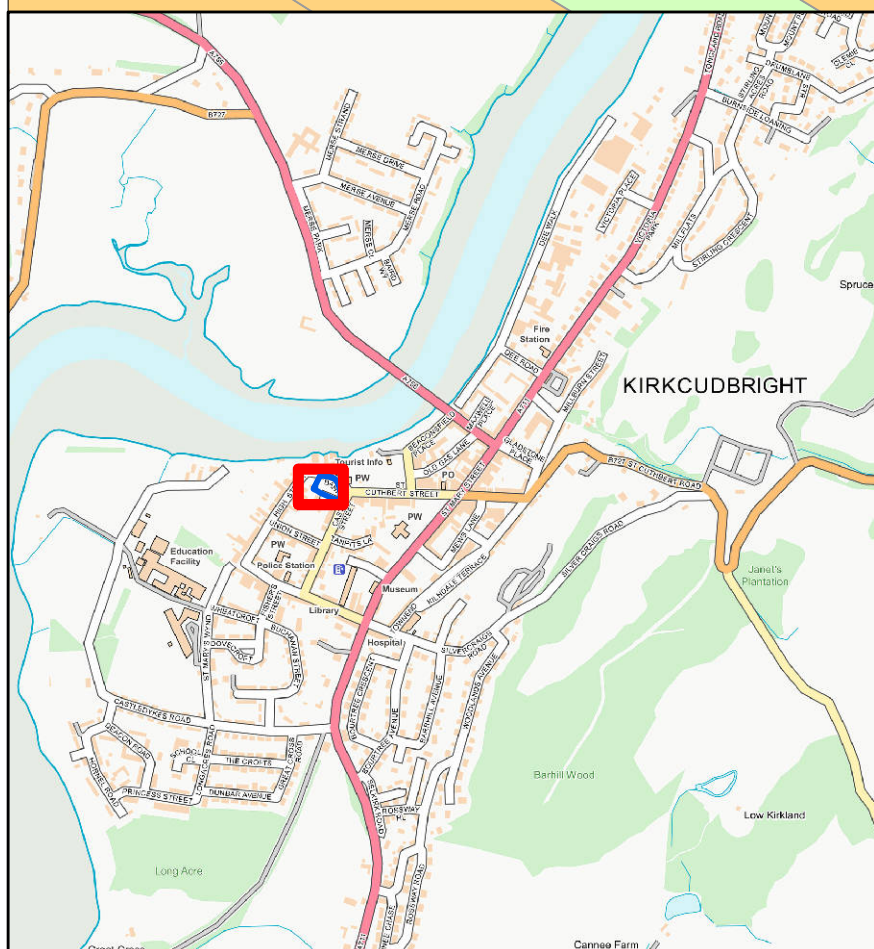
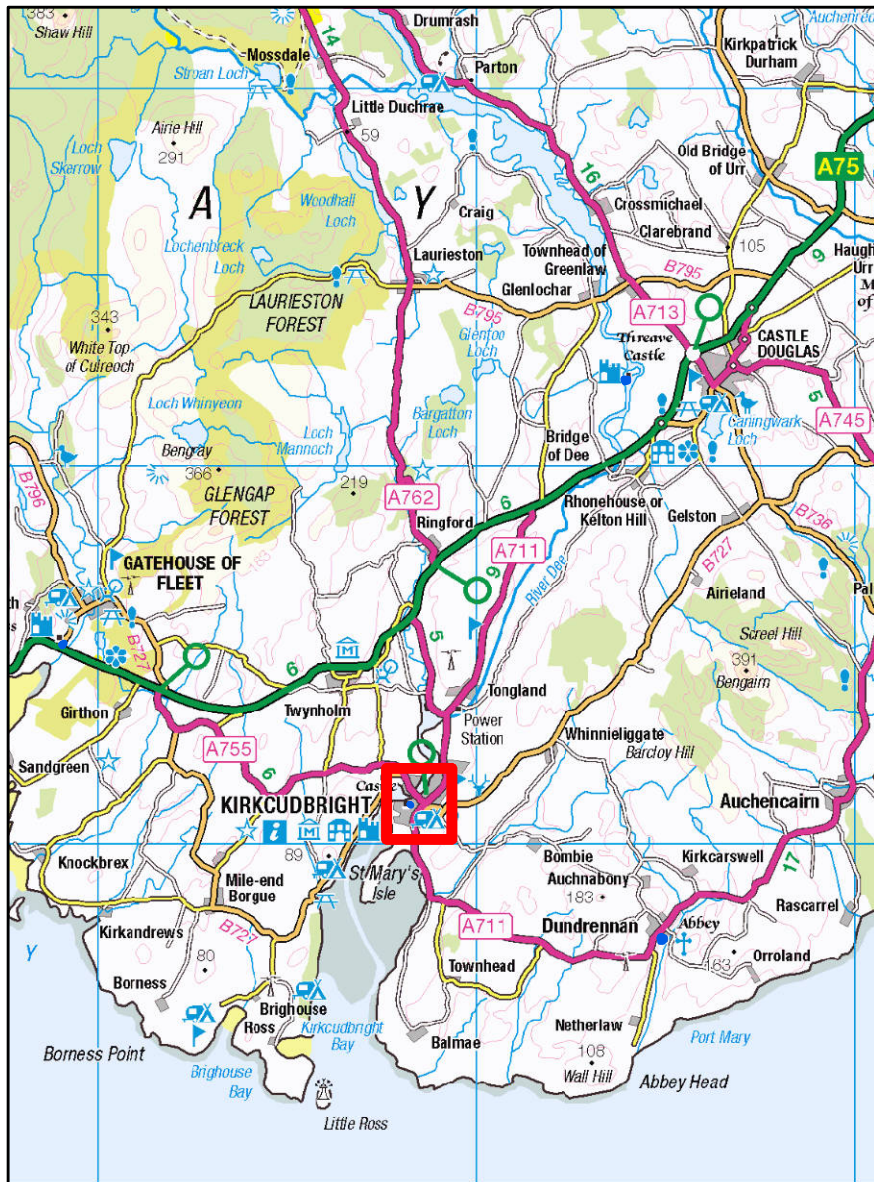
Photo No.	Summary description of subject	Facing
1	View of work site and open pit	SW
2	View of work site and open pit	W
3	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	S
4	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	W
5	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	N
6	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	S
7	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	S
8	Detail of pit as excavated during WB	W

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context	Summary description
001	Concrete surface
002	Stone wall of ticket office
003	Brick foundation of ticket office wall
004	Brick rubble infill over plastic pipe (006)
005	Sand infill over pipe
006	Plastic pipe
007	Cut for pipe trench
008	Clay waste pipe
009	Garden soil
010	Sand, possibly natural

APPENDIX 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Dumfries and Galloway
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	MacLellan's Castle, Kirkcudbright
PROJECT CODE:	MINA104
PARISH:	Kirkcudbright
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Stuart Mitchell
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Tower house
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NGR: NX 68242 51062
START DATE (this season)	October 2019
END DATE (this season)	October 2019
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	(NARRATIVE) A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a small area in order to effect repair work to an existing drain system adjacent to the Ticket Office, situated to the south of Maclellan's Castle. Two modern pipes were located, and no archaeological features or deposits were identified.
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 Dumfries and Galloway Council SMR.



Key:

- PIC 204 Boundary
- Scheduled Monument
- Watching Brief Location

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Title:
Location plan showing watching brief area

Project:
Maclellan's Castle

Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Scale at A3:
1:250

Drawn by: SW	Checked by: MJ	Date: 15/01/2020
Report No: 3911	Fig. No: 1	



Fig. 2: General view showing area of works, from NE



Fig. 3: Excavated trench from E

Project:
Maclellan's Castle



Client:
Historic Environment Scotland

Drawn by: SW	Checked: MJ	Date: 15/01/20
Report No: 3911		Fig. No: 2 - 3



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