

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION

In respect of

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RECORDING

at

EDINBURGH CASTLE

LOWER ESPLANADE
KIOSK REPLACEMENT

for

Historic Environment Scotland

by

Kirkdale Archaeology



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INTRODUCTION

OS Grid Reference: NT 249 734 - NT 254 736

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A programme of archaeological works conducted by Kirkdale Archaeology is required in order to monitor the work associated with the proposed installation of a replacement kiosk on the same frontage line and on the same level as the existing kiosk (or bottom box) at the lower, east end of the Esplanade (Fig.1).

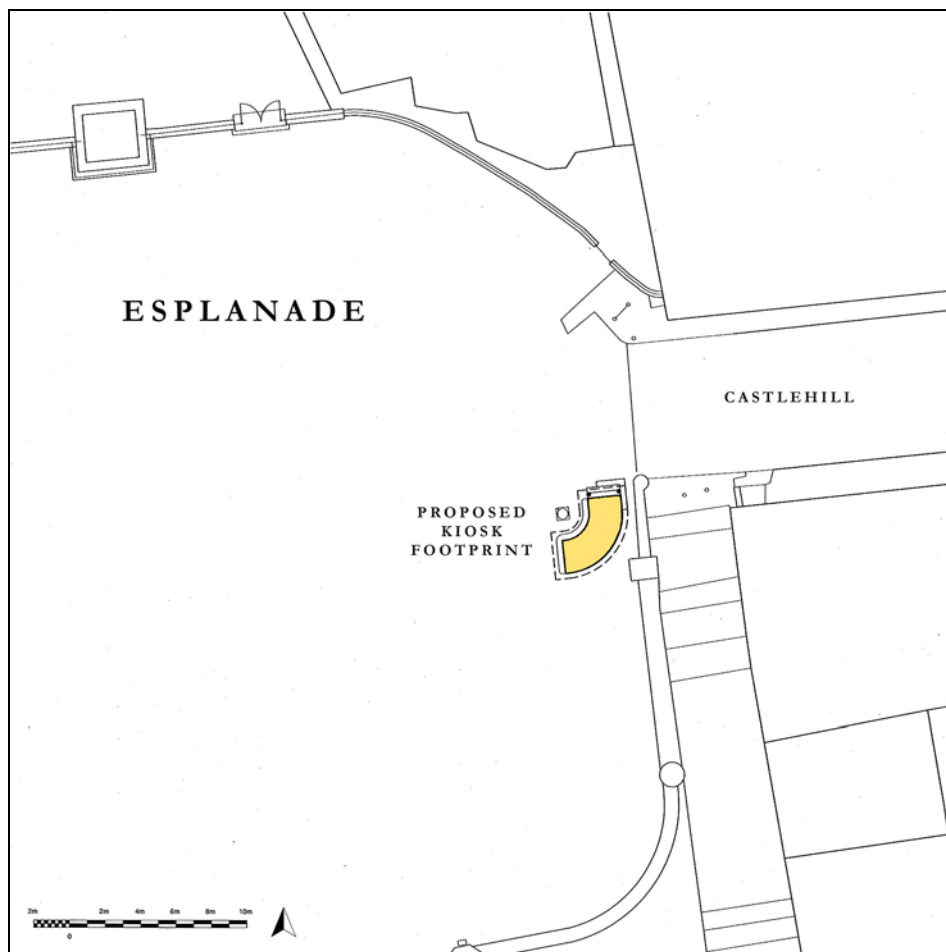


Figure 1: Plan showing the location of the proposed kiosk.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Esplanade was created in its present form in 1816-20, to celebrate the British Army's victory over Napoleonic France at the battle of Waterloo. For around 3000 years, this area has been one of, if not the main access routes to the summit of Castle Rock. It also has a long history as the site of numerous defences to protect this access route and the castle itself. Archaeological investigations in 1989¹ revealed evidence for large ditches below the western end of the Esplanade, running roughly along the natural fault line between volcanic and sedimentary rock. The ditches date back to the Iron Age, but were modified and re-used up until the 15th century. Earlier defences may have extended further to the east.

In the 1540s an elaborate defensive spur was designed and built by the Italian military engineer Ubaldini; this is shown in Gordon of Rothiemay's bird's-eye view of Edinburgh (Fig. 2). The spur was rebuilt and modified at least once, following damage in the Lang Siege in 1573. By 1650 it was removed, under Cromwell's orders, and replaced with a new defensive work – the hornwork – which was completed in the later 17th century during the reign of Charles II. Features of these new defences including the Dry Ditch, a deep stone-lined ditch with a gatehouse immediately to the west and gun flankers.

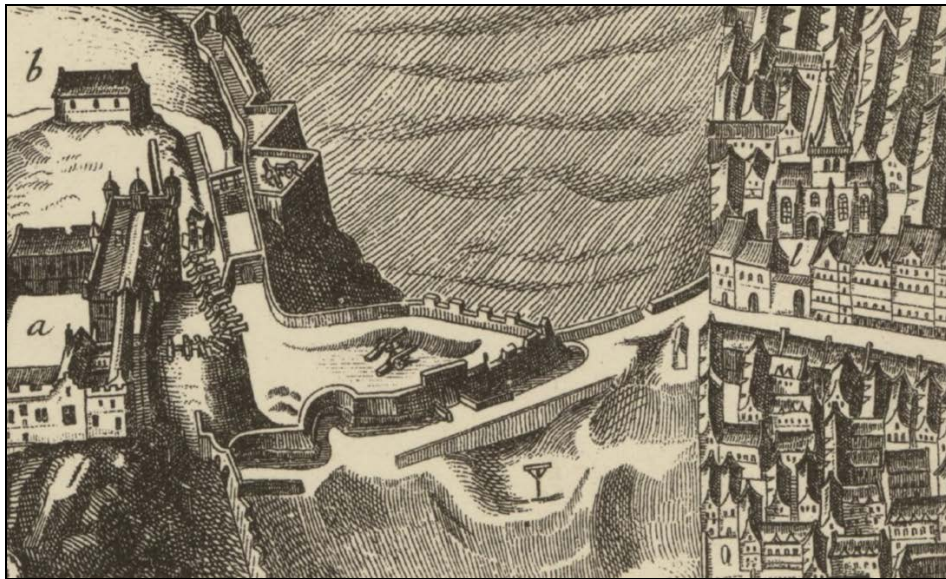


Figure 2: Gordon of Rothiemay's bird's eye view of Edinburgh, 1647 (detail).

Jacobite Risings in the late-17th and early-18th century spurred plans to improve the defences of Edinburgh Castle, as part of this designs were made for a new defensive outwork to the east of the castle in the area of the present Esplanade. There are plans of the so-called 'Grand Secret' but work was abandoned at an early stage. In 1753 the entire area was extensively landscaped and

¹ Driscoll, S T & Yeoman, P A 1997 Excavations within Edinburgh Castle in 1988-91, Soc. Antiq. Scot. Monograph Ser. No. 12.

levelled to create a parade ground for the castle garrison, with the castle forming an imposing backdrop to the west. The area was landscaped using imported earth excavated during the construction of the City Chambers and the ground was built up to the north and south to extend the platform either side. The area underwent further developments in the 1810's, when it was again widened, laid with granite setts and enclosed by low stone walls with decorative railings on the north side and dummy sentry posts on the south side. Recent excavations by CFA Archaeology² on the Esplanade suggest that there was further significant landscaping in the early-20th century.

The first ceremonial occasion was held on the Esplanade in 1822 for George IV's visit to Scotland. Since then it has increasingly been used as a place for ceremonial events and military displays – the first performance of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo was held on the Esplanade in 1950 and has been held every year since. It has also become a stage for commemoration and memorial, housing a number of military monuments.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL / ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

The area of the Esplanade has high archaeological potential, given that it is the main access route up to Castle Rock, which has been occupied for over 3000 years. Furthermore, landscaping in the 18th and early-19th century is likely to have sealed medieval and earlier deposits and structures. It is likely that the Esplanade can reveal a great range of evidence for its long history in the form of defensive structures, occupation deposits, evidence for siege activity and works, and associated finds.

There have been a number of investigations in recent years (between 2008-2012), alongside works to improve the Military Tattoo Grandstand. Boreholes taken in 2008³ revealed, albeit limited, evidence for the stratigraphy and depth of deposits across the Esplanade. Borehole no. 10 situated slightly to the southwest of the area of proposed works indicated that the upper deposits (upper 1 – 1.5m) comprised tarmac and made ground consisting of broken stone, sandstone, gravelly to fine sand and pockets of clay, with further made-up ground below.

Excavations between 2009-11 by CFA Archaeology⁴ uncovered evidence for the remains of the 16th century defensive spur, and further to the east on the Esplanade they revealed evidence for an L-shaped wall line. The wall seems to be that of the westernmost building in a row of houses

² Anderson, S 2011, CFA Edinburgh Military Tattoo Grandstand Works, Castle Esplanade Post-Excavation Archive Report, Report No. 1984.

³ Ove Arup & Partners Scotland Ltd 2008, Proposed New Grandstands for Edinburgh Military Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle Esplanade, Factual Report on Ground Investigation, Contract No. 3114.

⁴ Suddaby, I 2011, Edinburgh Military Tattoo Grandstand Works, Edinburgh Castle Esplanade, Archaeological Watching Brief & Excavations Data Structure Report No. 1732.

which once ran along the north side of Castlehill. The investigations carried out by CFA Archaeology have provided valuable evidence on the nature of the made-up ground that forms the Esplanade. Sections recorded through utility trenches running the length and width of the Esplanade indicate that the upper 0.5m of deposits comprise 20th century landscaping, and that any archaeologically significant structural remains are likely to lie at least 1.2m below the tarmac.

There remains high potential for further structures and evidence of occupation and defensive structures across the area of the Esplanade. However, as recent investigations have demonstrated, the extensive landscaping between the 18th and 20th centuries means that any significant archaeological deposits are likely to be well-buried. Further to this, the south-eastern corner of the Esplanade has suffered disturbance in the recent past associated with the construction of the public toilets on Castle Wynd, and it is likely there has been other disturbance in the vicinity as a result of modern services. The upper levels in the area of the proposed works are therefore unlikely to be archaeologically sensitive.

P R O P O S E D M I T I G A T I O N

While the works are unlikely to impact upon significant archaeological deposits, given the high cultural significance of the monument and the high archaeological potential of the Esplanade, the works will be undertaken under an archaeological watching brief. This will be undertaken during the ground breaking works and reduction of levels down to the depth required for the concrete foundations. The sensitivity and significance of any underlying deposits will be reviewed as work progresses. HES Cultural and Natural Resources will be consulted if any significant archaeological deposits or finds are uncovered, and excavation will stop and the archaeological remains cleaned and recorded. If nothing of significance is noted then excavation will proceed to the required depth. Once this depth is reached the area will be cleaned and recorded in plan and section.

F I E L D W O R K

The height of the new kiosk is largely the same as the one it replaces, but the footprint is approximately twice the size of the existing kiosk. The new kiosk will be a lightweight structure, with minimal foundations required. The existing concrete slab which forms the base of the present kiosk will be extended to encompass the footprint of the new structure. This is irregular in plan, but will be contained within an area measuring \approx 5m N/S x 4.2m E/W. It is expected that a depth of no greater than 0.45m will be required across the footprint area, though this may vary depending upon the nature of the underlying ground.

As noted above, while the Esplanade area has high archaeological potential, the nature and location of the works mean that the new development is unlikely to impact upon any archaeological remains. Ground disturbance is unlikely to extend to a depth of greater than 0.45m, and given what we know about the nature of the made-up ground and underlying deposits on the Esplanade, it is likely that only modern deposits will be disturbed.

M O N I T O R I N G

This will entail:

- The presence on site of at least one site archaeologist during all ground breaking works.
- The archaeologist should be able to direct rate, location and method of excavation employed by contractor.
- The archaeologist should suspend excavation if necessary, in order to examine / clean / retrieve any archaeological features, surfaces, structures or artefacts that may be exposed during excavation.
- All spoil will be suitably stored for examination before backfill/reinstatement.

A R C H A E O L O G I C A L R E C O R D I N G & E X C A V A T I O N

This will entail:

Drawing

- Confirmation of site plan as supplied by the Client.
- Location plan of all interventions at a suitable scale, 1:50/1:100.
- Detailed, individual area plans of all interventions – at significant stages of excavation if appropriate and on completion of excavation, drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- All sections, or a representative selection, will be drawn in detail at a scale of 1:10.
- All drawing will be annotated with site feature numbers, site code, scale, date and name(s) of staff.

Photography

- Still photographs will be colour digital and will record general location of works, plus detailed coverage during, and on completion of, excavation.
- All photographs will have a suitable scale visible.
- All photographs will be listed in a full photo register (describing content, orientation and date).

- 'Documentary' photographs will also be taken in order to represent site conditions, constraints and resources.
- If appropriate, digital moving coverage will be taken for further illustration of site conditions, constraints and resources.

Site Recording: Buried Archaeology

- Description of all excavated material will be expressed in terms of archaeological features, each of which will be assigned a unique three-digit number. The numbering will also reference the site code and any individual trench number.
- Each discrete feature will be described on site *pro forma*, which will cover stratigraphic relationships, finds, physical description, location, drawing references and interpretation.
- Each feature will also be listed in a feature register – comprising a brief description, date, and feature number.

Sampling

When required, three levels of sampling are proposed for above and below ground investigations:

- **General:** Bulk sample per context removed.
- **Special:** Specific sample identified for later specialist study (charcoal, industrial waste, environmental, infestations, organics).
- **Specialist:** Monitoring of any independent sampling strategy from external specialists (dendrochronological, mortar, paint, *etc.*)

GENERAL ISSUES

In the event of the discovery of significant remains and/or artefacts, which may be impacted by the proposed works, excavation should be suspended until further instruction is received from relevant agencies. At this point the Historic Environment Scotland CNRT should also be informed and consulted.

All artefacts, faunal remains and samples will be processed off-site. Disposal and/or examination/conservation of this material will be assessed in the light of results of fieldwork. Any programme of specialist post-excavation work on finds, faunal remains and analysis of samples will be assessed on completion of the fieldwork

Any human remains revealed during the excavation will remain *in situ*. All discoveries of human remains will be reported to the local police and Historic Environment Scotland CNRT.

If human remains are to be excavated during any subsequent work, this will be completed in line with Historic Environment Scotland policy on the treatment of human remains.

REPORTING

The results of the Fieldwork and DBA will be presented in an illustrated Data Structures Report (DSR) with accompanying digital documentation as specified by the Historic Environment Scotland CNRT.

Copies of the report and digital files will be produced as specified. Typically this comprises:

- Four bound paper copies.
- Two digital versions on CD including all photographs (the latter in tiff or jpeg format).

This will include an assessment of all assemblages and recommendations for any further specialist work. A costed programme for the full sample analysis towards publication of the findings will be included if appropriate, and a short note will be submitted to 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' and OASIS. The position of all trenches, excavation areas *etc.*, will be supplied on CD disk, as a georeferenced .dxf file, and reports will be submitted within 20 working days of completion of the fieldwork.

ARCHIVE

If there is no further requirement for reporting beyond the DSR and D&E entry, the report and site records will be compiled in a suitable archive comprising primary data and digital documentation as appropriate, suitable for submission to local and national archives.

The archive will follow current guidelines for archival standards set by the Archaeology Data Service and Historic Environment Scotland.

The project archive will be deposited with the NMRS within six months of completion of fieldwork and relevant post-excavation analyses. Finds will be subject to the Scots laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*, and will be reported to the Crown Agent for disposal. Appropriate conservation of finds will be conducted before disposal.

Gordon Ewart
5^h November, 2015