

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION

In respect of

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING & RECORDING

At

HOLYROOD PALACE

For

Historic Environment Scotland

By

Kirkdale Archaeology



4 Western Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh EH12 5QF

www.kirkdale.net

30th September 2016

INTRODUCTION

OS Grid Reference: NT 269 739

HS Index Number: 90132

A programme of archaeological works conducted by Kirkdale Archaeology is required in order to monitor the proposed extension to the existing services in the south garden of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, in order to provide additional services for the large outdoor events held in the gardens each year. The work will involve the excavation of a new trench running a length of around 15m and measuring approximately 300mm x 300mm, and a new access chamber measuring 300mm wide by 400mm deep in the south west quadrant of the south garden, close to the modern path (Fig. 1). The route chosen is the shortest possible to provide the services required with minimal ground disturbance.

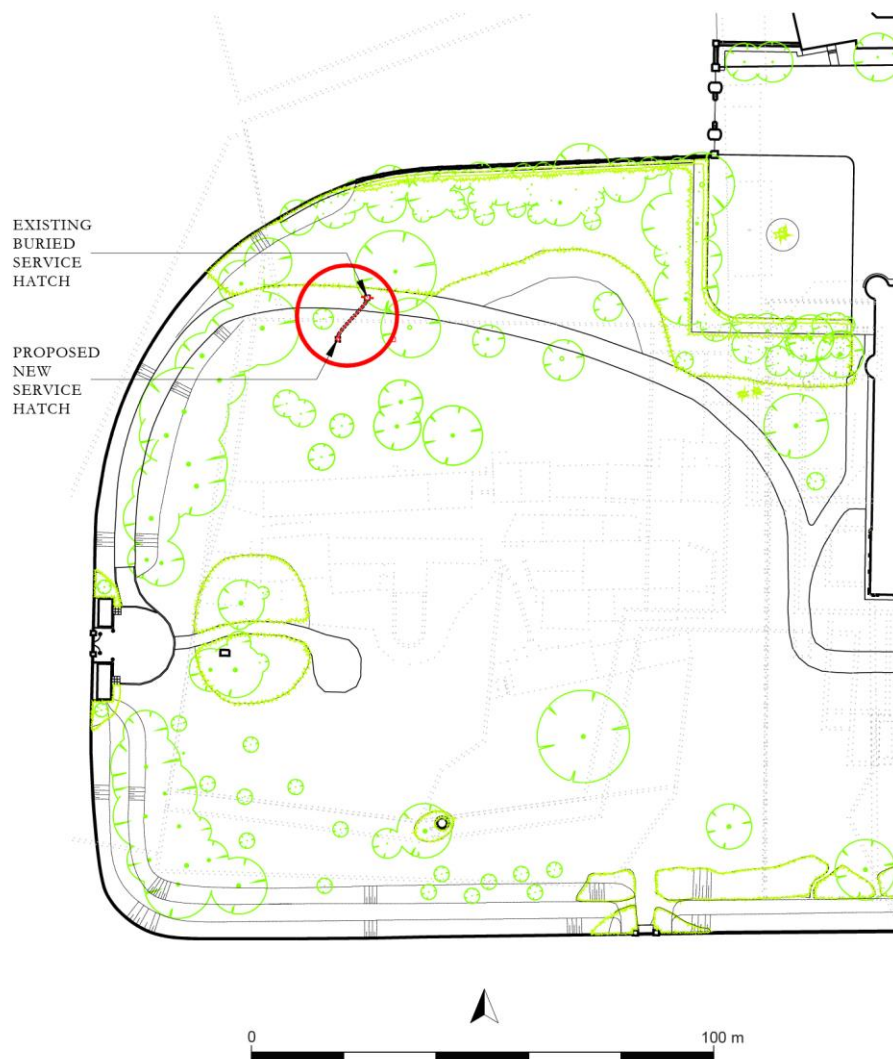


Figure 1: Location plan of the proposed works.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Palace of Holyroodhouse is the official residence of the monarch in Scotland. It developed out of the Augustinian Abbey of Holyrood, founded by David I in 1128. Over time the guesthouse at the abbey grew into a royal palace, with major building works being undertaken during the reigns of James IV, James V and Charles II. The Palace consists of a quadrangular building adjacent to the remains of the nave of the medieval abbey church. There are gardens to the north, east and south of the palace.

The area to the south of the palace has a complex development history which has seen successive changes associated with the abbey, the development and expansion of the royal palace and associated lodgings, and, in the 17th and 18th centuries, the emergence of a small suburb known as St Anne's Yards. The gardens too have seen many phases of development and alteration alongside the palace developments, with significant changes under James IV, James V and Charles II.

The earliest evidence we have for the royal gardens at Holyrood comes from references in the early 16th century; prior to this the area to the south would have formed part of the outer precinct of the abbey. Accounts of the Master of Works record planning and preparation work, including the draining and landscaping of ground to the south of the palace to allow for the creation of gardens. Rothiemay's map of Edinburgh from 1647 (Fig. 3) shows a number of enclosed gardens, with tree-lined walkways and symmetrically arranged planting, as well as possible vegetable or herb gardens further east, which may once have been part of the abbey. Subsequent maps (Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 7) show the evolution of various different layouts over the next two centuries, with its present form taking shape in the 19th century. Preparations ahead of George IV's visit saw the removal of outbuildings to the south of the palace and the creation of more open space. The gradual acquisition of further land to the south led to the extension of the gardens in the 1850s and 1860s, and the creation of lawns and gravel paths. They were finally laid out in their present form under Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, with the reorganisation of access to the palace, a further extension to the south gardens and removal of the remaining buildings in the area known as St Anne's Yards. The ground was lowered and levelled, with new lawns and gravel paths laid; the ha-ha was also created around this time, with the ground banked up to obscure the enclosing boundary wall of the gardens. Since the late 19th century there have only been small scale changes to the planting within the garden.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

There have been a number of small scale interventions in the area to the south of the palace. In the 1990s and 2000s a programme of minor excavation and archaeological monitoring was undertaken as part of a major fire and security upgrade of the palace, the results of which have been published in *Monastery and Palace: Archaeological Investigations at Holyroodhouse 1996 – 2009*, Archaeology Report No. 6, by Gordon Ewart and Dennis Gallagher (2013).

Minor excavations associated with the installation of new services through the south gardens in 2001 revealed evidence for a wall running N/S on the west side of the gardens. The wall was of sandstone and brick construction and is thought to be the remains of a 19th century (or possibly earlier) boundary wall defining the earlier western extent of the south gardens. A number of excavations close to the south range of the palace have demonstrated high archaeological potential. In 2006 geophysical survey and subsequent excavations revealed evidence for part of the earlier 16th century palace, as well as evidence for the remains of various other buildings, wall-lines and surfaces associated with other palace structures including the chancellor's lodgings. In 2010, excavation to allow for the removal of pampas grass to the south of the palace, close to the modern path, revealed significant archaeological deposits including medieval and later pottery, a clay pipe stem and traces of a wall line running E/W that may be the remains of 17th century palace buildings.

The 2006 geophysical survey did not extend across the whole of the south garden and does not cover the area of the proposed works. The results from small scale interventions elsewhere in the garden have produced varied results. Excavations in 2006 associated with the installation and repair of services, to depths of between 0.5m and 1.5m, revealed evidence for landscape features and building debris associated with 18th and 19th century buildings which once formed part of St Anne's Yard and subsequent landscaping, though there were no finds of particular archaeological significance. In 2009/10 there were a series of small excavations for the planting of new trees; on average excavation did not exceed 500mm in depth and most trenches revealed little or no trace of archaeological deposits, though in some cases there was evidence for landscaping deposits or building debris, evidenced by flecks of mortar in the soil.

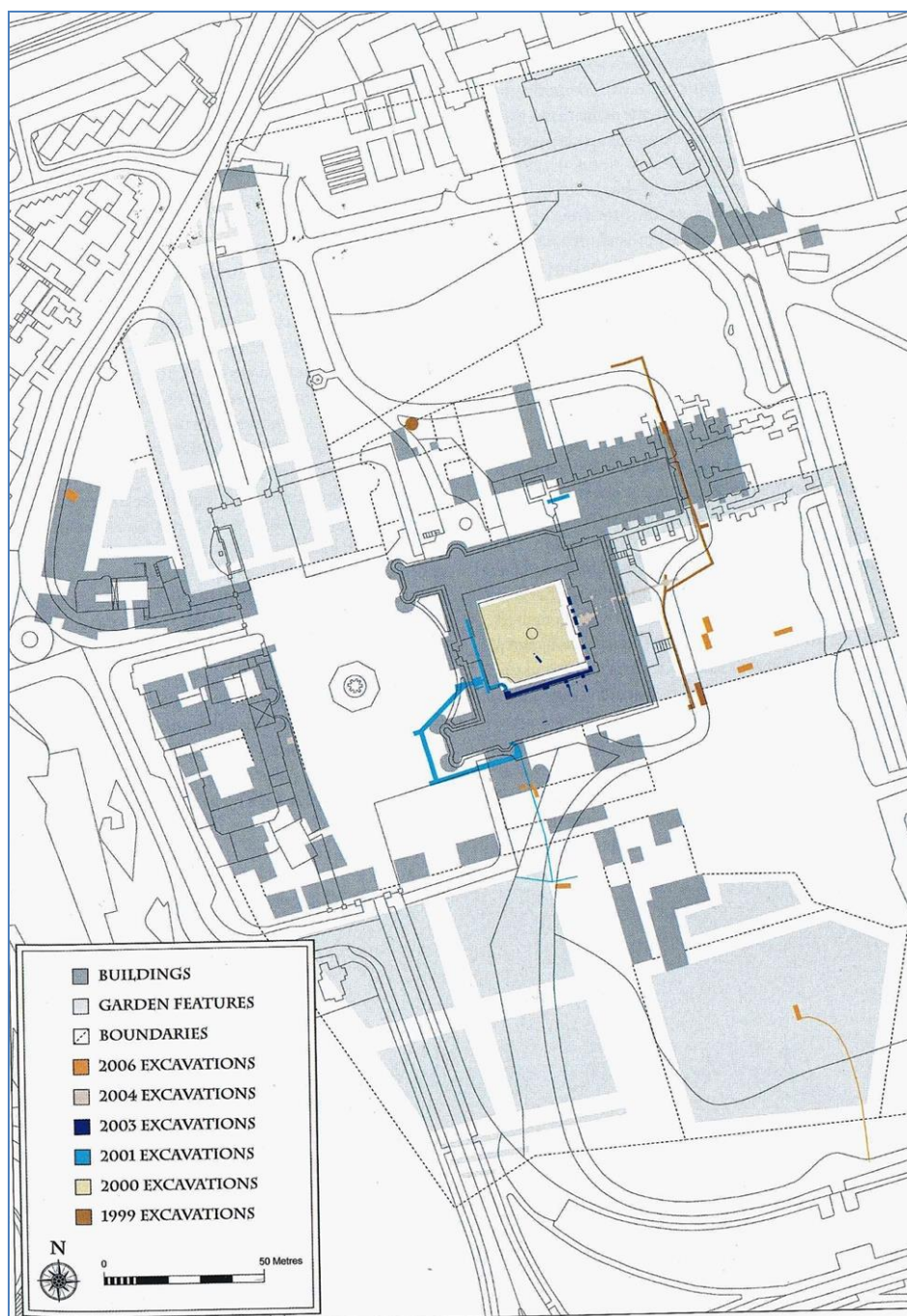


Figure 2: Plan showing location of excavations between 1996 – 2009 over 18th century map of the palace and grounds.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

The south garden has good archaeological potential, as evidenced by the small scale investigations and geophysical survey that has previously been undertaken. In the area immediately to the south of the palace there is very good potential for the survival of footings of earlier palace buildings, and to the south east, those that once formed St Anne's Yard. The location for the proposed works is unlikely to impact upon these remains. However, it is in an area where there is good potential for archaeological deposits relating to the various phases of use, and the development of the palace gardens over several centuries. The location of the service trench is also likely to intersect the footings of a boundary wall revealed during previous interventions.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

While the level of intervention is relatively minimal, with the depth of excavations not exceeding 500mm, there is good archaeological potential in this area. There is also the possibility that these works are in the area of a previously identified boundary wall and excavations may extend down to the upper surface of these remains. The work will therefore be carried out under an archaeological watching brief, with the excavation carried out by hand by the MCU.

DETAILS FROM HISTORIC MAPS SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH PALACE GARDENS



Figure 3: Detail of Gordon of Rothiemay's map of Edinburgh, 1647.

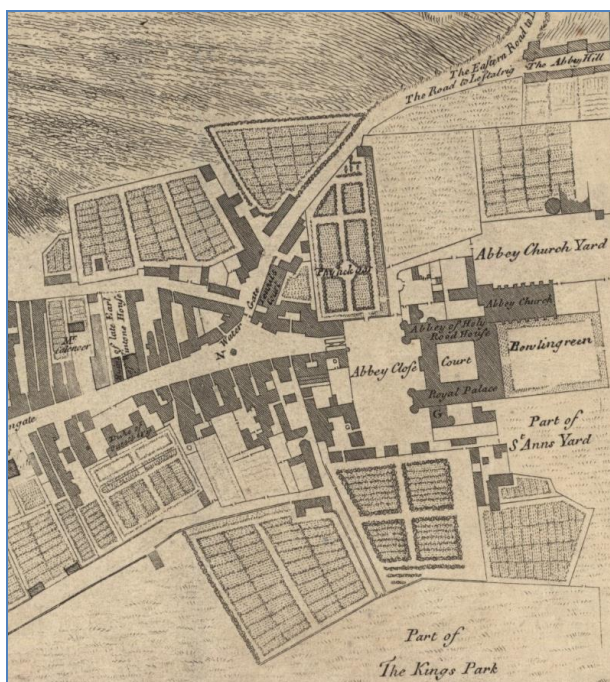


Figure 4: Detail from Williams' 1765 plan of City and castle of Edinburgh.



Figure 5: Detail from Kirkwood's 1821 Plan of the city of Edinburgh and surrounds.

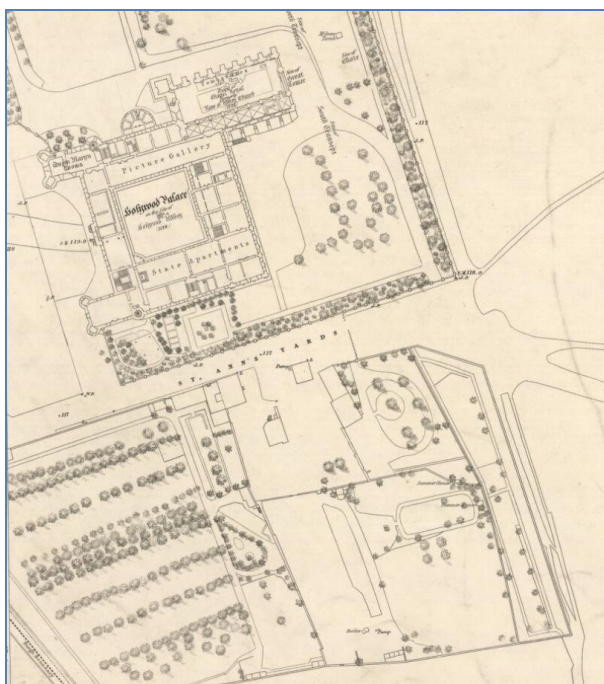


Figure 6: Detail from Ordnance Survey map of Edinburgh c.1853.



Figure 7: Detail from 1870s Ordnance Survey map of Edinburgh, showing the plan of the palace and gardens much as it is today.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESPONSE

F I E L D W O R K

The archaeological work will be carried out under the terms of the HES archaeology call-off contract. If significant archaeological deposits are encountered, the HES Cultural Resources Advisor will be contacted, excavation will be adjourned and the findings (to date) recorded.

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.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

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 CRT 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 CRT.

If human remains are to be excavated during any subsequent work, this will be completed in line with Historic 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 CRT.

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.

A short note will be submitted to 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland'.

The position of all trenches, excavation areas *etc.*, will be supplied on CD disk, as a georeferenced .dxf file.

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 RCAHMS.

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
30th September, 2016