

Our Ref:
Ask For: Stephanie Leith
Your Ref:
Date: 07/04/2016

George Findlater
Historic Environment Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH



Archaeology Service
John Muir House
Haddington
EH41 3HA
www.eastlothian.gov.uk/archaeology

Dear George,

We are writing with regard to the archaeological project proposed for the area of Kilspindie Castle in the Glebe Field, Aberlady as part of the Aberlady Angles project. East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS) supports the project, and especially its wider aims of community involvement and education. The Aberlady Conservation and History Society has over the years undertaken a number of projects to conserve, understand and promote the heritage of Aberlady. The Aberlady Angles project will continue this, creating opportunities for local people and school children to take an active part in the discovery of their heritage.

The archaeological remains in the Glebe Field are of exceptional importance, in particular with regard to the collection of Anglo-Saxon metalwork which is unique in Scotland. The site has the potential to answer many research questions with regard to the Anglian period in East Lothian. The Aberlady Angles project design outlines how this site fits into the wider context of the early medieval period in south east Scotland and Northumberland, and poses a number of questions that this project may address. It fits into the wider research aims of the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework, and has the potential to shed light on this little understood period in the history of East Lothian.

Although ELCAS supports the wider aims of the project, we have concerns about some aspects of the project methodology as outlined in the project design. The archaeological remains are of exceptional importance, and the site is also likely to be extremely complex, with the geophysical surveys and finds recovered previously from the site suggesting multiple phases of activity, from prehistoric and Roman through to medieval periods. ELCAS would therefore recommend that the areas excavated are limited in size, in order to reduce the impact on the buried remains, and that the areas stripped of topsoil are fully excavated. This would ensure that the maximum information possible is extracted from the excavated areas, while minimising the overall impact on the site.

ELCAS would like to make the following recommendations:

- Trenches are hand excavated rather than using a machine to strip the topsoil.
- Trenches are stripped in spits, of 10-20cm depth, to allow for metal detecting of the trench base after each spit.
- The total area proposed to strip should be reduced, to an excavation area that can be excavated more fully in the time given.

Kind regards,

Stephanie Leith and Andy Robertson

Heritage Officers

Direct line: - 01620 827254

Email: sleith@eastlothian.gov.uk