

**WRITTEN STATEMENT
OF INVESTIGATION**

In respect of

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING & RECORDING

At

**HOLYROOD PARK
PATH REPAIRS: DRY DAM**

For

Historic Environment Scotland

By

Kirkdale Archaeology



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INTRODUCTION

OS Grid Reference: NT 265 732 – NT 285 721

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A programme of archaeological works conducted by Kirkdale Archaeology is required in order to monitor the proposed works at the top of the Dry Dam in Holyrood Park, (Fig. 1) to repair path erosion on the main path to the summit of Arthur's Seat. The work involves using pitched stone to build up edges to the paths, to reinstate the gravel path and to repair a section of rough stone steps using the bedrock and added pitched stone.

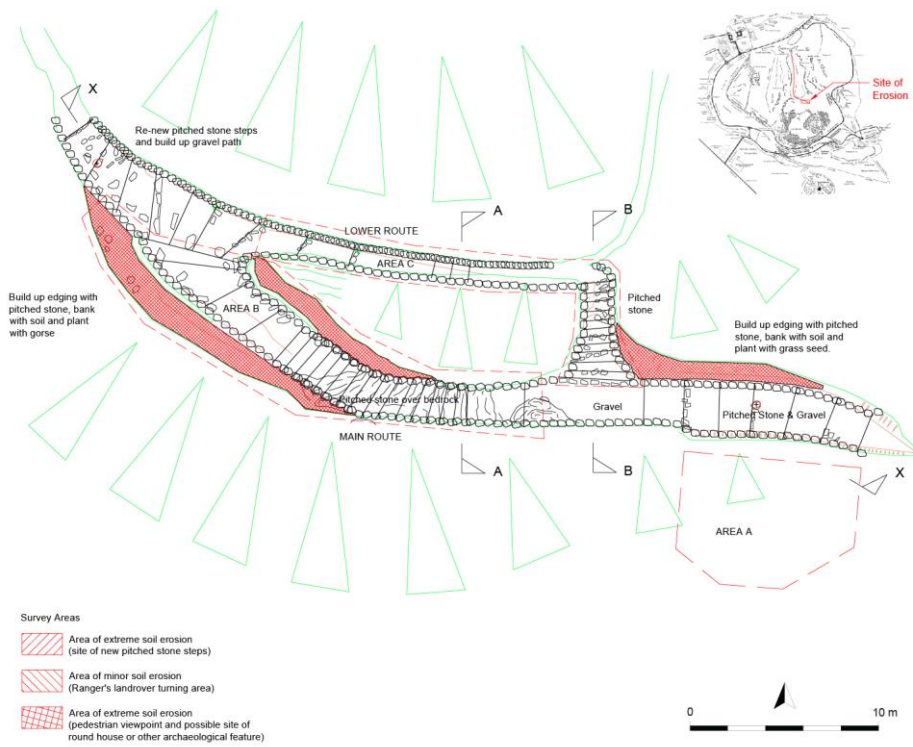


Figure 1: Location plan of the repair works.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Holyrood Park is a rich archaeological resource, with a long and varied past. It has a long history of occupation, with the remains of at least four prehistoric settlements within the park, as well as enclosures and cultivation terraces of uncertain date. The medieval period has left behind little upstanding evidence, other than St Anthony's Chapel and Well, though various finds of medieval date have been recovered from the park.

The park was enclosed with a stone wall by King James V in 1541, as an adjunct to the Palace of Holyroodhouse and its history has close associations with the Palace. This effectively preserved the present Holyrood, or Queens Park, as an area of open ground, with no significant settlement from that time onwards.

With the exception of intermittent stone quarrying activities up to the 19th century, the present topography is mainly the result of mid-19th century landscaping, drainage and road construction. This massive programme transformed and rationalised both the higher ground (primarily Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat) and its perimeter/base on all sides. The natural landfall was retained and managed to create a romantic wilderness, now better drained and accessible, overlooking the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL / SENSITIVITY

A survey of the cultural heritage in Holyrood Park was undertaken in 1996 by the Centre for Field Archaeology (CFA) which recorded all known archaeological sites and find spots within the park boundary.

There have been numerous small scale archaeological interventions within the park in recent years. This has largely taken the form of archaeological monitoring alongside erosion and path repair works, and drainage works. Archaeological monitoring during path repairs downslope from this location in 2011 recorded nothing of archaeological significance, though a number of stray finds were recovered.

The area of the proposed works is in close proximity to a prehistoric fort on the summit of Arthur's Seat and Crow Hill, and an enclosure of unknown date. This route to the summit is likely to have been used since prehistoric times. Given the minimal nature of the ground breaking works, and the results of previous archaeological monitoring work which has demonstrated a considerable amount of hillwash in the area, it is unlikely that any *in-situ* archaeological deposits will be encountered. However, a small number of finds have been found close to the area of the

proposed works including Neolithic stone tools and it is possible that stray finds may be recovered during this work.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

The works involve minimal ground disturbance, though the extent to which they penetrate the ground is variable; in places the ground will need to be levelled and turf and topsoil may need to be removed to build up the edges of the path. While there is unlikely to be any disturbance to archaeological deposits, there is the potential for recovery of stray finds. It is therefore recommended that the works are carried under archaeological supervision. An archaeological watching brief should ensure that any finds encountered during the works are accurately identified and recorded.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESPONSE

FIELD WORK

The archaeological work will be carried out under the terms of the HES archaeology call-off contract. If significant archaeological deposits are encountered, excavation will stop and the findings will be recorded. The HES Cultural Resources Advisor will be contacted, who will discuss the implications of this with the District Architect, Interpretation Manager and Heritage Management.

MONITORING

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
11th September, 2016