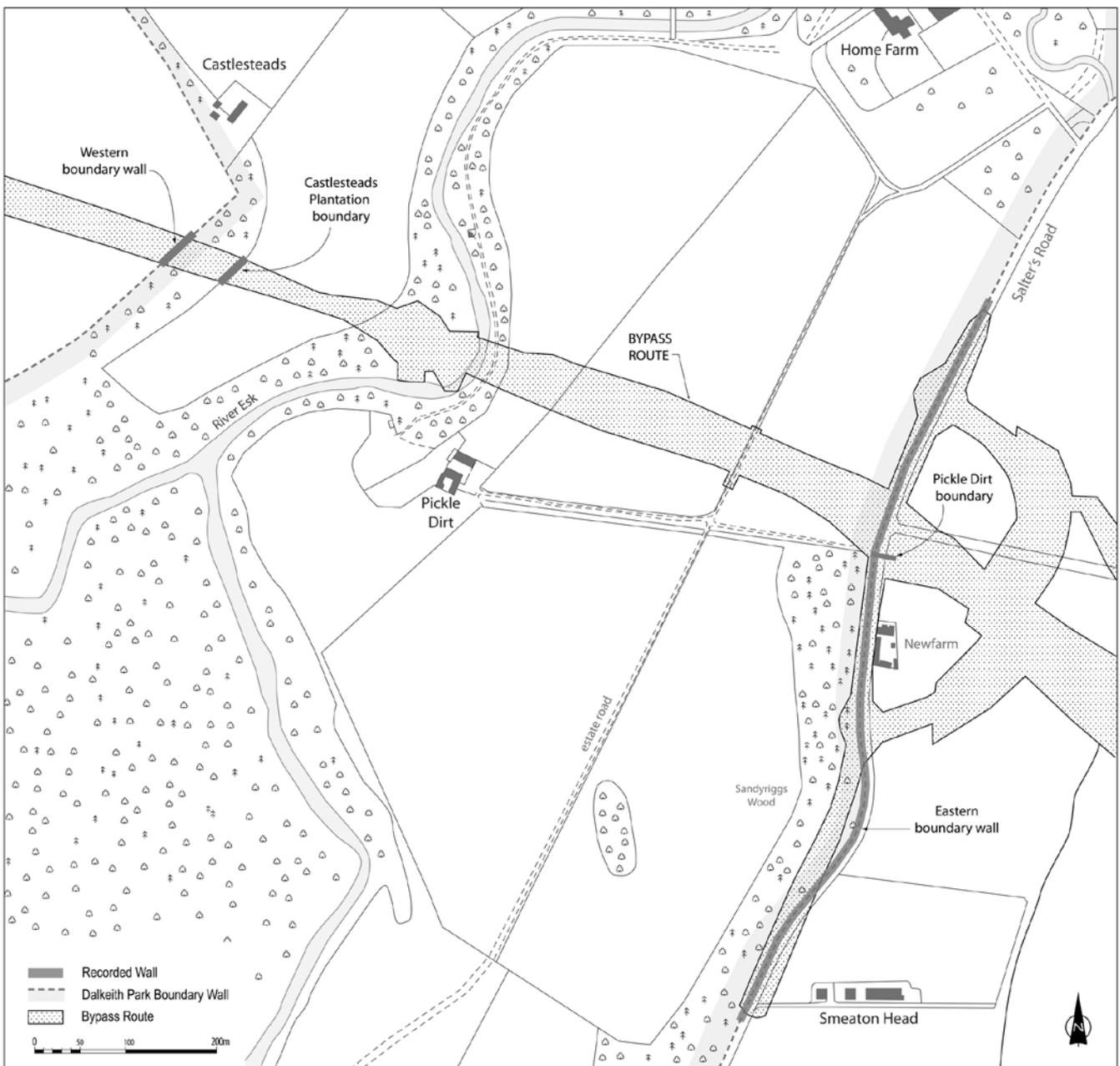


9 AN 18TH-CENTURY DESIGNED LANDSCAPE: PERIMETER BOUNDARY WALL SURVEYS AND BOUNDARY EVALUATIONS, *by M Cressey, I Suddaby and S Mitchell*

9.1 Introduction

Dalkeith Park, formerly the formal gardens and grounds of the 18th-century Dalkeith House, is bounded by a stone wall approximately 10km long.

Within this area, the chief characteristics of the landscape are predominantly wooded zones between two tributaries, the rivers North and South Esk. The eastern boundary wall follows Salters Road, the A6094 from Dalkeith to Musselburgh. The western



Illus 9.1 Location map with park wall sections highlighted



Illus 9.2 Disused entrance in the eastern perimeter wall (recording point 1)

boundary skirts agricultural land and faces the Edinburgh City Bypass. The park wall is a Grade B-listed structure and of historical interest as it is part of the 18th-century layout of the park's designed landscape (Peter McGowan Associates 2005).

During June 2006, prior to the construction of the bypass through Dalkeith Country Park, a programme of building survey and archaeological evaluation was carried out to examine the architectural history of surrounding perimeter walls and other boundaries, and to make a basic record of them prior to demolition. The surveys were restricted to producing a Level 1 (English Heritage 2006) comprehensive photographic record of the wall sections that would be affected by the works. The photographic record was supported by a written description of the character of the building fabric. Subsequent visits during demolition of the wall were made to photograph the exposed sections of the walls. The two sections of wall that were examined are located at the following:

- south-east alongside the A6094 road between Dalkeith and Whitecraigs, NGR points NGR NT 34572 68581 and NGR NT34773 69285
- north-west along the boundary wall between NT 33898 69366 and NT 33890 69355

Two other boundaries were recorded prior to their

destruction where they were cut by the road corridor, namely the county boundary at Pickle Dirt and Castlesteads Plantation boundary ditch and the findings from this fieldwork are also summarised. The areas examined are shown in *illus 9.1*.

9.2 Survey results

9.2.1 Method

A recording system based on regular intervals for both sides of the wall was adopted. Thirty-one recording points were established at 50m intervals. Photographs of the elevations were taken using a Nikon D100 SLR digital and 35mm camera. Six-figure National Grid Reference points were obtained using a hand-held GPS with an accuracy of $\pm 3\text{m}$. A summary description of the wall fabric found on the roadside and within the park is available in the site archive.

9.2.2 Dalkeith to Whitecraig, south-east boundary wall

The roadside wall was uniform in its construction, comprising both randomly coursed and formally coursed cream-coloured sandstone bonded by lime



Illus 9.3 Disused doorway in the eastern perimeter wall (recording point 13)

mortar. The coping stones were hewn semi-circular blocks 0.4m wide. The ground on the park side of the wall is lower, giving rise to higher elevations (mean 3m) on this side of the wall in comparison with the roadside, against which the wall is more uniform, with an average height of 2.3m. A gateway and two door openings were the only features of architectural interest (*illus 9.2–9.3*), and these were designed to provide easier access to Salter's Road, the nearest formal access being Smeaton Gate, some 200m to the north towards the village of Whitecraig. The doors are 20th-century in date but the moulded surrounds are original 18th-century features with chamfered ashlar mouldings and droved margins on the quoins.

Patchwork repairs to the wall have been extensive throughout much of its length over the years as part of estate maintenance and in those areas where damage has occurred through structural failure (as a result of road salt at the base of the wall) and occasional car accidents. A break in the height of the wall was also seen. Some of the rectangular blocks found with stugging (a form of rustication made by mason's chisel) represent the re-use of material salvaged from other buildings for use in the construction the wall. Re-used material was recorded at NT 34669 68730 along the roadside section and comprised two sets of reused voussoirs originating from a segmented arch. These are not carried

through onto the park side of the wall, dismissing their use as a drain or culvert.

Examination of the wall during take-down operations confirmed that it was constructed using a double-skin technique with dressed stones laid in random order on the outer elevations and a core of rubble laid within the interior cavity. This was identified throughout the breaches examined during the wall take-down. The wall thickness was constant throughout its length at 0.45m.

9.2.3 Western perimeter boundary wall

Ivy and other masking vegetation was cleaned away by hand to reveal three sections of walling forming panels about 5m wide (sample areas 1–3). Included within the group was a recessed area that is suggested to have been an ornamental seating area (*illus 9.4*). It is highly probable that this position afforded panoramic views over the River Esk towards Carberry Hill and the landscape beyond during the late 18th or early 19th century. A 20th-century plantation restricts this view today.

The wall is uniform in construction and is constructed of random rubble sandstone with square coping stones. The wall stands to a height of c 1.8m. There was no evidence of re-used stone within the sections of wall selected for survey. Observa-



Illus 9.4 (above) Curving feature in the western perimeter wall



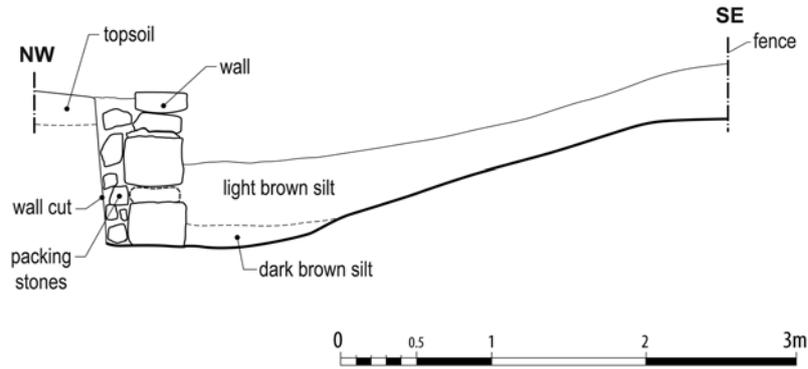
tions made following the demolition of the western boundary wall confirmed a double-skin construction with rubble-filled cavity (*illus 9.5*). Measurements obtained from the wall stubs confirmed that the wall was slightly wider at the base (0.55m), in comparison with the wall heads that were uniformly 0.4m. cursory examination of the foundations exposed when the wall was demolished confirmed that the foundation depth was 0.5m deep with rubble resting directly on top of subsoil.

9.3 The county boundary at Pickle Dirt

A substantial boundary feature runs from Pickle Dirt eastwards towards Salters Road. Its alignment intersects the development corridor just west of Salters Road, although it is not visible as a surface feature in that area (*illus 9.1*). To the west it appears as a broad ditch with a south-facing wall retaining its north side.

The predicted intersection, based on its alignment, of the feature with the current park wall alongside Salter's Road was identified as a potentially significant location in assessing the historical development

Illus 9.5 (left) Section through the western perimeter boundary wall showing double skin with rubble core



Illus 9.6 Section drawing of the Castlesteads boundary

of Dalkeith Park, as the boundary could represent part of the original medieval park boundary (T Addyman, pers comm). The boundary is shown on a plan of 1718 (Peter McGowan Associates 2005, 11), although there is nothing on it to distinguish it from other land boundaries in the area. It is also shown by Roy (c 1750) on his military map of the area, and is depicted in bolder print than nearby field boundaries (Peter McGowan Associates 2005, 12), suggesting a more substantial, or at least different, land division. Roy's map clearly shows this boundary continuing up to Salter's Road, as does the OS first edition map of a century later (1854) although neither depicts the particular form of the boundary.

Currently, the visible remains of the boundary end some 30m short of the eastern park wall alongside Salter's Road. The line of the boundary was not visible within the road corridor, possibly due to prior infilling. This putative infilling roughly coincided with the start of Sandyriggs Wood, which borders Salter's Road as far south as Smeaton Head. Several recent service trenches have been excavated in the infilled area and the current work aimed to establish both the former existence of the boundary, and the extent of any surviving structure.

Two trenches were opened by machine (illus 9.1). One (Trench 1) was within the bypass carriageway corridor, with the other (Trench 2) being within the realigned corridor for Salter's Road. Only Trench 1 revealed archaeological features. A spread of stones in the southern part of the trench appears to form a linear feature on the same alignment as the boundary as depicted on Roy's map (c 1750), whereas a linear V-shaped cut was more recent and is likely to be the remains of a slightly curving field boundary shown on the first edition OS map of 1854.

9.4 Castlesteads plantation boundary

This boundary feature (illus 9.1) consists of a ditch with a well-built wall face revetting its west

edge. It is depicted on maps published by Thomson (1821) and on the Ordnance Survey First Edition (1854), the latter showing what may be a path or track immediately to the north-west. It forms the boundary between the woodland on the edge of the park and the fields to the south-east. Although sharing structural traits with a ha-ha (a sunken wall with its top at ground level, bounded with a ditch on the outer side, designed to keep livestock from entering formal gardens), in this case a sunken boundary was installed to protect the woodland plantations established between this boundary and the park wall. Vistas over the open parkland were still maintained and upstanding walls here would obstruct the views from the putative seating area by the boundary wall (Section 9.2.3).

The plantation was felled in the road corridor prior to fieldwork commencing. Vegetation and arboreal debris from the felling and removal of the woodland to the north-west, was removed from the ditch by earth-moving machinery using a flat-bladed bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Trenches were then excavated in order to evaluate the ditch and the wall. Once completed, the fill of the ditch over the width of the road corridor was removed, and the wall face was cleaned, photographed and representative portions were drawn and described. Much of the remainder of this boundary is obscured by vegetation or fallen stones so the opportunity to clear and record a section is a useful addition to the Designed Landscape Recording.

The wall and ditch attained a width of 4m and a height of 1m (illus 9.6). The upper stones protruded slightly above the level of the topsoil to the north-west. The sandstone forming the wall was similar to that used in the perimeter wall but the size of the blocks was larger and they were more regular in their shape (illus 9.7). The wall width was 0.4m and the vertical face was built in front of a packing deposit of smaller stones which filled the sloping cut and assisted drainage. The ditch contained two silty fills from which no finds were recovered.



Illus 9.7 General view of the Castlesteads boundary

9.5 Discussion

Within the sections of wall examined it was clear that there was uniformity in its design. A double-skin construction with rubble inner core was used throughout its length and was found to be unchanging at a standard 0.45m. Variability in height was also minimal. Re-used stone was prevalent but non-architectural (ie not moulded or modified), comprising uniform blocks of dressed sandstone, some of them studded with chisel marks. The results also confirm that the Salter's Road boundary has been the subject to periodic repairs as a result of salt-spray that had effectively weakened the lower courses. During the programme of take-down works it was confirmed that the Salter's Road and Castlesteads walls rest directly on top of subsoil, and the ground levels on each side of the walls vary according to the nature of the surrounding landscape. Cartographic evidence shows that the ditch and wall boundaries were created by the mid 18th century and probably relate to earlier land parcels on the edge of the original medieval park. During the 18th

and 19th centuries the ditches and revetment wall would have been maintained, effectively containing livestock yet allowing unrestricted views across the open parkland.

It is recognised that by the 1750s there was a greater emphasis on agricultural improvement than on the maintenance of massive formal gardens, many of which were swept away with the Landscape Movement (Buxbaum 2003). The ideal became the villa in subtle parkland with animals kept at a distance by means of ha-has, and the scene changed as one moved around. Formal emparkment also included the erection of boundary walls not only to enclose livestock and restrict the movement of game but, importantly, to differentiate between ground held in private estate and the surrounding common land.

The programme of wall-recording achieved its objective in recording the two Grade B-listed park walls prior to their take-down. The excavation work confirmed that the boundaries examined were also part of the 18th-century layout of the park's designed landscape.