

ANNAN MOTTE AND BAILEY AUDIT

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Solway Heritage
Campbell House
The Crichton
Bankend Road
DUMFRIES
DG1 4ZB

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1 INTRODUCTION

Bruce's Motte and Bailey is one of a linked programme of 21 diverse projects that are being developed in the Sulwath Connection Landscape Project. This document is part of the development stage of the Sulwath Connection Landscape Project that will provide a design and programme of work to be submitted to Historic Scotland and Dumfries and Galloway Council for approval.

1.1. Aim

The broad aim for the Bruce's Motte and Bailey Project is to:

- Protect the Historic Monument from further degradation.
- Improve views into and out of the site.
- Improve access to and around the site.
- Increase a sense of security for users.
- Increase awareness of the historical importance of the site through interpretation.

1.2. Study Area

The Bruce's Motte and Bailey is the remains of a 12th century Castle that is designated as a Scheduled Monument. It is now a public park located above the east bank of the River Annan to the south of Annan town centre. River erosion since the 13th century has greatly reduced the size of the Motte and Bailey and may have forced the Bruces to relocate their seat to their Motte at Lochmaben. A recreation ground, Everholm Park, is situated to the west and north on the flood plain below the Motte. Residential areas of the town are located on rising ground to the east.

For the purpose of this study the site is the area of the Scheduled Monument and defined as the area enclosed by high stone walls to the south and east, the bottom of the embankment to the west and a timber fence / stone wall to the north where it adjoins the gardens of Moat House and Greenbank.

1.3. Approach

The report examines the characteristics of the site and the aspects that are to be considered to enhance the access use and understanding of the remains of the Motte and Bailey.

The document is divided into three parts:

1 Background

This section provides a summary of the recent history of the site noting how the current access provision has developed over the last 180 years.

Access legislation and standards are also considered together with the statutory consents required if the physical work is to be implemented.

2 Assessment

This section is divided into 5 areas:

- **Vehicular and Pedestrian Approaches**
- **Parking**

- **Footpaths**
- **Interpretation**

Each area is considered under the headings of:

Audit

This section describes the area and all its features including the current provision and condition of access.

Comments

This section notes where current provision is not adequate and identifies the constraints to enhancing access to the facility. The access and conservation needs are considered to establish potential benefits to be gained.

Recommendations

Providing a concise list of improvements based on the audit information and the desire to minimise further disturbance to the site.

3 Summary of Recommendations

This section will summarise the recommendations by proposing an action plan for a programme of works over a three year period. The action plan will prioritise the work and identify outline costs. The site will need to be monitored and some flexibility in the plan is required to respond to changing aspirations and external conditions.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1. History

Town maps were inspected to provide an impression of the changing features and layout of footpaths in the Motte and Bailey over the last 180 years.

The Wood map produced in 1826 shows the Motte and Bailey forming the grounds of the dwelling named 'Bruce Moat' located on the North West edge of the site and belonging to a Rev. Graham Esqr. This building appears to have been built in 1807 with the Motte and Bailey forming part of the garden. The boundary of the garden is similar to the layout of present day walls with Toot Hill, (Bruce Street), to the east and the river to the west. On the map trees are illustrated within the garden on the slopes of the Bailey and on the low ground to the west.

The Ordinance Survey map produced in 1859 at a scale of 1:500 provides a detailed and accurate 'snap shot' of the gardens surrounding the renamed 'Moat House'. A wide drive is shown linking the gated access from Toot Hill, (Bruce Street), to the rear of 'Moat House' and down to the out buildings on the northern boundary of the site. Narrow paths in a simple network provide links to a well, to a footbridge across a canalised stream and onto the Bailey. The whole of the grounds are shown with a walled boundary and densely planted with shrubbery and trees. The exception is the flat topped Bailey where there are a series of island beds to the north and a path dividing the southern part and running around the top of the embankment.

The Ordinance Survey map of 1894 provides less detail but shows substantial 'improvements' to the gardens of 'Moat House'. Additional buildings are shown near the outhouses. The network of paths have been extended and linked to provide a circular walk at the base of the embankment and crossing the low ground to the west including a path to the riverside. The stream appears to have been culverted. Steps are shown up the Motte to the north and south with a small building on the summit.

The Ordinance Survey map produced in 1907 shows no changes since 1894 except for the loss of some of the outhouses and the steps on the northern side of the Motte.

A brief search for photographic and contemporary published evidence of the site has provided few useful images. A 'Souvenir Guide to Annan' produced in 1902 describes the Motte and Bailey as having 'steep wooded embankments' and distant photographic views of the site show that the gardens could be better described as a mature woodland for most of the last 100 years. An undated photograph taken from the southern end of the Bailey towards the Motte show the flat area cultivated (probably for fruit and vegetables) with a shed on the western side and a summer house on the summit of the Motte. Mature deciduous trees are shown on the slopes of both the Motte and Bailey.

In the late 1960's Annan Town Council obtained 'Moat House' and gardens. The house was converted into the town museum and the gardens opened to the public. Later, the museum was relocated and 'Moat House' was converted into offices and eventually became surplus to the needs of the Local Authority. At some stage seats and play equipment were installed on the Bailey, however these were removed in the late 1990's. 'Moat House' has recently passed into private ownership; however most of the grounds have been retained by Dumfries and Galloway Council as public open space.

2.2. Access Legislation and Standards

The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (DDA) makes it unlawful for providers of goods, facilities and services to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of his or her disability. It affects all owners of historic landscapes that are open to the public.

The DDA requires reasonable adjustments should be made where the current historic landscape is impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use. Adjustments that require physical works will require Scheduled Monument and Planning Approval.

The DDA does not include standards for access however guidance is provided by 'BT Countryside for All. A Good Practice Guide to Disabled People's Access in the Countryside'. While access for disabled people is often assumed to mean providing for wheelchair users, the needs of other types of disability must also be considered. The guidance recognises that access solutions may vary from site to site and allows for a reasoned approach to access based on the constraints imposed.

3 VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN APPROACHES

3.1. Audit

The Motte and Bailey is, despite its size, largely hidden from view except when approaching Annan from the West. The earthworks can be seen on the opposite bank of the river although it is largely obscured by trees in the summer. The approach to the site from the Town Centre is down Bruce Street or Battery Street although there are no signs to indicate the location of the historic site. A combination of high stone walls and vegetation obscures the nature of the site even when it is very close. The approach roads are narrow and lack footways near the entrance to the car park and at the East (Bruce Street) entrance.



3.2. Comments

Thinning of vegetation will help make the landform more noticeable. Sign posts from the town centre would make people more aware of the site and direct them to the entrances. The absence of footways is a matter of concern; however the narrow street offers no opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment without further restricting vehicular movement.



3.3. Recommendations

- 1 Thin Embankment vegetation to open up views into the historic monument.
- 2 Signpost the Motte and Bailey from town centre to direct visitors to this hidden feature.

4 PARKING

4.1. Audit

Everholm car park is located immediately to the west of the Motte and Bailey with 40 parking bays. There are no spaces dedicated for disabled visitors. The car park is surfaced with black top and the parking spaces are defined with granite setts. The car park has no parking restrictions and it is therefore popular with workers in the nearby Council Offices. A consequence of this is that there are often no spaces for visitors. The opportunity for kerbside parking is limited in the immediate vicinity of the site due to the narrow carriageways. There are no directional signs from the car park to the Motte and Bailey. A slab footpath leads to the sports centre between the play area and the Motte. A rutted track links the car park to the North Entrance. The car park suffers from occasional flooding when the river is in spate.



4.2. Comments

The existing car park is well located for visitors to the Motte and Bailey. It has a reasonable standard in layout and demarcation. The absence of dedicated disabled spaces and general lack of available spaces during office hours may need to be addressed. Well designed directional signs are required and a surfaced route from the car park to the north entrance would improve access for many users.

4.3. Recommendations

- 3 Consider short stay parking restrictions and identifying disabled parking spaces.
- 4 Provide an entrance sign to the car park which includes 'Motte and Bailey'.
- 5 Provide a surfaced path between the car park and the north entrance.

5 ENTRANCES

5.1. Audit

There are three entrances into the site:

East Entrance



A double metal gate set in the 2.0 m high red sandstone boundary wall on Bruce Street. This has been the main access to the Motte and Bailey for over 150 years and remains the most visible entrance to the historic monument.

North Entrance



This is a broad rising path at the northern extremity of the site. Hidden behind the sports hall it is also obscured by privet hedging and trees. There is no surfaced path or directional signs between the car park and this entrance.

South Entrance



Adjacent to the car park entrance there is a narrow path immediately behind the boundary wall. The path entrance is overgrown with shrubs and enclosed by the high wall on one side and the steep embankment of the Bailey on the other.

5.2. Comments

All three of the present entrances are not welcoming and appear to keep people out rather than inviting them in. There is no indication of what lies beyond the entrances and sight lines are obscured by vegetation and landform.

5.3. Recommendations

- 6 Cut back vegetation to improve views into site, repair gates and erect entrance sign at East Entrance.
- 7 Provide directional signs to North Entrance from car park.
- 8 Monitor use of the South Entrance after vegetation has been cut back to opened up views.

6 FOOTPATHS

6.1. Audit

The path network is used mainly by locals to exercise dogs and there is a serious problem with dog fouling. The footpath network generally follows the layout from earlier gardens and can be divided into four sections.

Garden drive



This path starts at the gated East Entrance and follows the base of the eastern slope of the Motte down to the North Entrance. Approximately 2.0m wide it appears to have been a drive linking the out houses to Bruce Street. There is evidence that the drive once had a cobbled surface although most of these appear to be lost. The northern end of the path has a gradient of greater than 1 in 12. Present surface has a layer of soil/leaf litter which will need to be cleared before assessing condition of the harder underlying surface.

West Path



This narrow beaten earth path of less than 1.0m wide has been cut into the western slope of the Motte above the fence line. There have been problems of erosion where some of the slope has slipped and two retaining structures have been constructed to prevent further erosion. A stone wall is located above the path and the other below the path using scaffolding poles and timber sleepers. Erosion appears to be a continuing problem and is partly due to children playing on the retaining structure that is located above the adjacent play area.

Motte Path



A worn beaten earth route follows a ridge up the south side of the Motte to the highest part of the historic monument. White ceramic glazed garden edging has been used to form steps in the past although most are now missing and an alternative desire line avoiding the old steps is also used.

South Path



This narrow path is partly surfaced with blacktop but also has areas of short grass. It follows the boundary wall between the south entrance at the car park to the east entrance at Bruce Street. There is a locked and damaged pedestrian gateway in the wall at the junction of Battery Street and Bruce Street. The section between the car park and gateway has a gentle slope, however it also has a section of path that has a gradient greater than 1 in 12.

Bailey Paths

There is a circular route that provides access onto the Bailey. From the East Entrance seven ramped steps with timber risers and a metal handrail lead up to the Bailey and a path that continues on the eastern side of the Bailey to link with the south side of the Motte. Dog fouling appears to be a problem on the Bailey area where the grass is regularly cut. There are a number of concrete plinths on the Bailey area which appear to be the remnants of seats or play equipment.



6.2. Comments

There are two issues concerning the footpaths on the site:

1 Protection of the Historic Monument

Erosion caused by continued use of beaten earth paths on the site will have the potential effect of further degradation of the historic monument. Three options may be considered to resolve this issue.

Preventative - fencing may be erected to stop further use of the paths.

Design - new paths / steps can be implemented to formalise access onto the Motte.

Education – information can be provided to explain why the paths should not be used. The sensitive areas should then be monitored and where feasible repairs undertaken.

The first two options to resolve this issue will inevitably result in further disturbance to the ground. It is proposed that the guiding principle will be to minimise disturbance to the ground and to monitor erosion of sensitive areas.

2 Poor Access Provision

All the paths present difficulties in providing access for the disabled. The surface materials are unsuitable, the gradients too steep, there is a lack of passing places on narrow paths and no resting places or seats. The topography of the site is the main constraint to finding solutions to the access problem combined with the desire to prevent further disturbance or degradation to the historic monument. The guiding principle will be to find a reasoned solution that improves access.

6.3. Recommendations

9 Re surface existing paths between the East and North entrance and a loop onto the Bailey. The work will include scraping the path to expose the stable ground below and building up with crushed stone, blinded with stone dust and compacted to form a firm surface. Black top surfacing to the track between the car park and north entrance will reduce maintenance implications caused by occasional flooding of this area.

10 Rebuild the seven steps at the Bailey including the handrail.

11 Monitor erosion on the Motte embankments and repair where possible.

7 INTERPRETATION

7.1. Audit



There is no interpretation on site to indicate the presence of the monument although a stone plinth located between the Motte and the Bailey once had a cast metal plaque fixed to the top. The Motte and Bailey does appear in some leaflets including ‘Archaeosights – Follow the Bruces and Balliols’.

7.2. Comments

The stone plinth was built as part of the ‘Archaeosights’ trail and a plaque described the tale of the curse of St Malachy. The plaque was heavily vandalised before being eventually removed. The vandalism was believed to have been partly due to the lack of visibility from passers by who would have provided a certain degree of ‘community policing’. There are opportunities to add interpretation both on the site and at nearby approaches which relate to other Sulwath Connection projects.

The proposed Robert the Bruce Trail includes the Motte and Bailey. There is an opportunity to adopt their proposal. All interpretation will need to be robust and easily maintained.

7.3. Recommendations

12 Remove stone plinth.

13 Install an interpretation panel or feature within the site near the east entrance.

14 Install an interpretation / information panel in the car park.

15 Install an interpretation / information panel or feature within the small public garden south of the car park.

16 Consider installing an interpretation feature on the west side of the river linking the Motte and Bailey with the Annandale Way.

8 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations identified in the assessment process have been collated into a series of actions. The actions are listed in priority with an indicative programme and costings:

1 Control of Vegetation.

The forestry report has recommended clearance work to trees and shrubs to open up views within the area as well as in to and out of the historic monument. The works will entail extensive specialist tree surgery and timber clearance operations. It is considered advantageous to implement this work at an early stage prior to other proposed actions.

Programme: Year One.

Outline cost: £9,000

2 Re surfacing Existing Paths and Tracks

The proposed crushed stone path built onto the existing path line will provide a 2.0m wide route through the site between the east entrance and the north entrance. It is proposed that the track between the car park and the north entrance is surfaced with blacktop to avoid maintenance works required to damage caused to crushed stone surface by the occasional flooding of the lower area. In addition a narrower 1.2m wide loop will provide access on to the Bailey. The intention is to provide a path network with even slopes and a firm stable surface which will provide access for all from the east entrance to the centre of the site. The proposed paths will be a significant improvement on the existing provision, however there will continue to be obstructions, (steps and steep gradients), that prevent disabled access to the whole site.

Programme: Year Two

Outline cost £13,000 (£9,150 if all paths were surfaced with crushed stone)

3 Signs and Gates

Entrance signs are to be erected at the entrance to the car park, east entrance from Bruce Street and a directional sign pointing to the North Entrance from the car park. The production of signs will also provide an opportunity to develop a distinctive graphic style appropriate for a historic site.

The metal gates are to be repaired at both the east entrance and off the south path.

Programme: Year Two

Outline cost £5,500

3 Interpretation

Remove stone plinth. Install a conventional GRP interpretation / information panel at the east entrance, car park and within the small public garden south of the car park.

Programme: Year Two

Outline cost £5,000

4 Potential Additional Work

It is recommended that further consideration should be given to:

- signposting the Motte and Bailey from the town centre,
- imposing short stay parking restrictions,
- identifying disabled parking spaces,
- installing an interpretation feature on the west side of the river linking the Motte and Bailey with the Annandale Way.

5 Evaluation and Monitoring

It is important that the work undertaken is monitored and evaluated as the project develops. This will enable the project to respond to changing factors and help determine its success.

It is essential that the use and condition of sensitive areas is monitored.

Observation of the condition of the desired 0 line path to the top of the Motte is particularly important so that the path can be managed to reduce further erosion.