

# Historic boundary wall unearthed at Edinburgh Castle

✘ Excavations for the new Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo stands on the castle esplanade have unearthed remains of the historic boundary which once separated the town from the Castle.

The old boundary wall was revealed by the team from CFA Archaeology who will now look at the surrounding areas to get a clearer understanding of what it may have been a part of.

Fiona Hyslop MSP, Minister for Culture and External Affairs, said: "It is very exciting that this work to accommodate the new Tattoo stands is revealing previously unknown aspects of one of Scotland's most iconic sites.

"The history of Edinburgh Castle captivates millions of visitors and it is incredible to think that we are still able to discover new information that will improve our understanding of it."

Last year the team found the foundations of the artillery bastion known as the Spur that formed part of the outer defences dating to the 1540s paid for by our French allies.

The excavations are being carried out in close cooperation with the Historic Scotland team that manage the castle, to ensure that the works do not impact on visitors' experience. The works are part of a Scheduled Monument Consent granted by Scottish Ministers for the new Tattoo stands.

A trench dug for one of more than one hundred concrete pad foundations for the new stands revealed the remains of a wall around one metre wide, which is thought to be part of a boundary wall between the city and the castle. This probably dates back to the 17th century.

Peter Yeoman, Historic Scotland Head of Cultural Resources, said; "The approach to the castle pre-1700s is very different to the one we all recognise today. It was far steeper and narrower with the castle dominating the skyline. The Spur we found last year stretched about two thirds of the way down the esplanade and this wall is beyond that.

"There are early plans which we think show the newly discovered boundary wall beside the old approach to the castle. Thanks to these excavations our knowledge of the construction of the Esplanade is much better informed, really bringing home just how steep an incline it would have been and how majestic the castle would have appeared rising up from the rock face."

The esplanade was formed in 1753 to create a parade ground for the military. As part of this process large amounts of leveling was deposited on the area immediately in front of the castle, covering up earlier buildings.

CFA Archaeology will continue to work with the Tattoo Company and their contractor Sir Robert MacAlpine to record the remains as a small part of the wall will be dismantled to enable the foundation works to go ahead.

