

Midway between the forts of Kirkintilloch and Cadder, just east of the bridge that takes the Kirkintilloch to Glasgow Road (A803) over the Forth and Clyde Canal, and just south of the road, is the site of a Roman fortlet. The fortlet is sometimes visible in aerial photographs, but no traces are visible on the ground today.

HISTORY OF DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION:

The fortlet at Glasgow Bridge was first identified in aerial photographs in the early 1950s. Later photographs taken from the air throughout the 1950s and then again in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 2000s continued to show traces of the fortlet. The site has never been excavated, but a watching brief and limited trenching about 1km west of

the fortlet took place in 1992 in advance of a water pipeline installation. Samples of the ditch fills from the 1992 excavation were taken for environmental analysis. Most recently, geophysical survey including both magnetometry and resistivity was undertaken in 2008 in the area of the fortlet.

DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION:

Examination of aerial photographs reveals that the fortlet had an internal area of about 20m square, and that it was defended by a single rampart (probably of turf) and a single ditch. The fortlet faced the north-west, where its defences consisted of the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch. Gaps have been identified in both the north-west and south-east sides, indicating the fortlet's entrances, which probably featured gateways. The Antonine Wall Ditch appears to run continuously across the front of the fortlet, with no recognisable causeway giving access across the Ditch toward the north. It is thought that there was probably a bridge here, which allowed access across the frontier. The recent geophysical surveys have been unable to detect the fortlet's ramparts or internal structures, but have shown its ditches. Environmental analysis of Antonine

Wall Ditch fills at a location about 1km west of the fortlet have provided a localised sequence of pollen representing a period of about 500-600 years, between around AD 57-550. There was probably some arable agriculture and cereal cultivation during the Roman occupation of the Wall, followed by much less activity following the Wall's abandonment. By around AD 350-400, though, there is clear environmental evidence for renewed activity—probably of non-cereal agriculture or pastoralism.

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