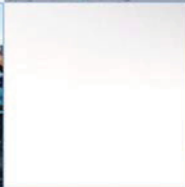
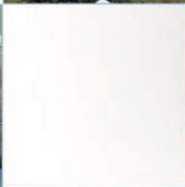


# 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh: Watching Brief Report

AOC 21548  
25<sup>th</sup> February 2010



## 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh: Watching Brief Report

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On Behalf of: East Lothian Council  
Community Housing & Property Management,  
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Macmerry,  
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EH33 1EX

National Grid Reference (NGR): NT 3392 7308

AOC Project No: 21548

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010

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## Abstract

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This report represents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on behalf of East Lothian Council (Community Housing & Property Management) during construction works associated with a residential development at 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh, East Lothian. The scope of the works was determined by East Lothian Council as advised by East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS), in keeping with the policies outlined in SPP (2010) and PAN42 (1994).

Extensive and deep madeground deposits directly overlay natural subsoil over the vast majority of the site. Neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material were unearthed by this work. No further works are recommended.

## 0 NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 0.1 An archaeological Watching Brief was required by East Lothian Council during ground-breaking works associated with the construction of a residential development at 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh, East Lothian. The project involved the construction of a three story block of flats.
- 0.2 Extensive and deep madeground deposits directly overlay natural subsoil over the vast majority of the site. Neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material were unearthed by the watching brief. No further works are recommended.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological Watching Brief was required by East Lothian Council during ground-breaking works associated with the construction of a residential development at 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh, East Lothian (NGR: NT 3392 7308). The need for, and scope of archaeological works, had been determined by the East Lothian Council, who are advised on archaeological matters by East Lothian Council Archaeology Service (ELCAS).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works required were in accord with *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and PAN 42 (SOEnD 1994).
- 1.1.3 The project involved the demolition of an existing two-storey block of flats and construction of a new three-storey block. The footprint of the new building was larger than that of the former building.

### 1.2 Curatorial control

- 1.2.1 This programme of works was designed to fully satisfy the requirements of East Lothian Council, as advised on archaeological matters by ELCAS. While the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2010) outlined the entirety of the archaeological programme of work which may have been needed to mitigate the effects of the proposed development, it detailed principally the methodology to be employed in implementing the Watching Brief.

### 1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The site is located in the general area of the medieval fishing settlement of Fisherrow. Pont's map shows *Fisheraw* (Fisherrow), alongside *Muscle Brug* (Musselburgh) and *Innervysk* (Inveresk), each beginning described as a village by Fynes Moryson in 1598 (Smith 1999, 682). Musselburgh was chartered as an ecclesiastical burgh of Dunfermline Abbey in 1315, although it and Inveresk, if not Fisherrow, were settlements for centuries prior to this. Located on the coast near the mouth of the River Esk, the advantageously situated area of Fisherrow has probably been the scene of human activity since early prehistory. While Roman activity is well attested in the wider area centred on Inveresk fort, an anchorage may well have lain near Fisherrow, even earlier activity is evidence by the find of five short cists, embedded in sand (NGR: 337 725) in 1896. In addition to human bones finds included a food vessel, a stone hammer, a flint arrowhead and another amorously shaped flint (NMRS: NT37SW 42).

## 2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource from any adverse impacts created by groundworks associated with the development;
- ii) to liaise with ELCAS and East Lothian Council in the event of significant archaeological features and/or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.
- iii) to report on the results of the watching brief.

## 3 METHOD

3.1 All excavations were undertaken by an excavator utilising a bladed ditching bucket operating under the constant monitoring of an experienced field archaeologist.

## 4 RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Watching Brief was carried out under fair and clear weather conditions between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010. The weather conditions and use of a ditching bucket rendered good archaeological visibility.

4.1.2 The various data gathered from the excavation are presented as a series of appendices:

Appendix 1 contains the site investigation test pit descriptions;

Appendix 2 contains the photographic register;

Appendix 3 reproduces the '*Discovery & Excavation in Scotland*' entry.

### 4.2 Overview

4.2.1 The watching brief focused on the monitoring of topsoil/overburden stripping, excavation of foundation trenches and general ground level reduction outwith the footprint of the pre-existing block of flats.

4.2.2 The first day on site consisted of monitoring a reduction in ground level (c. 400 - 500 mm) across most of the site. Following this a series of site investigation pits (Nos. 1 - 6; see Appendix 1) were excavated along projected lines of the new building foundations. This work found the majority of the development area to possess deep made ground. Test pits 1 and 2 located on the western boundary of the site found superficial made ground deposits directly overlying natural light brown sands to a depth of approximately 0.6 m. Excavation in Test-pits 3 (3 m deep) and 4 (3 m deep) on the eastern side of the development site and Test pit 5, in the



north, failed in reaching natural subsoil. Monitoring of Test pit 6 found the edge of madeground near the western limit of the test pit; the natural sand either being cut or infilled at a depth 0.8 m below the former ground surface (Plate 2).

- 4.2.3 The madeground comprised mostly dumped dirty soils, frequent ashy dumps, occasional rubble and building detritus (broken stone, mortar dumps, rare brick, tile & wood). A white substance, probably lime, was observed in Test pits 3, 5 and 6; generally mixed with ashy dumps. In Test-pit 1 the lime appeared as two discrete layers of present in upper part of the madeground, each approximately 0.2 - 0.3 m wide and separated by a distance of c.0.2 - 0.3 m (Plate 1).



**Plate 1: 'Lime' layers in Trench 4 (from SW)**



**Plate 2: Edge of natural sand at western limit of Trench 6 (from East)**



## **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 No significant archaeological deposits, features or small finds were encountered during the watching brief.
- 5.2 No further archaeological works are recommended. This recommendation with require ratification by ELCAS on behalf of East Lothian Council.

## **6 REFERENCES**

AOC 2010 *5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh: Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation*, Unpubl AOC Archaeology Client Report

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy* (February 2010).

The Scottish Office Environment Department 1994 *Planning Advice Note 42. Archaeology – the Planning Process and Scheduled Ancient Monument Procedures*. January 1994.

# **5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh, East Lothian: Watching Brief Report**

## **Section 2: Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: SITE INVESTIGATION PIT DESCRIPTIONS

### TEST-PIT 1

Dimensions	3.5 m by 2.5 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of overburden	0.6 m
Depth of excavation	3.0 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits. Rare tile and brick inclusions.
Features	None
Subsoil	Light brown sand
Finds	None

### TEST-PIT 2

Dimensions	3.5 m by 2.5 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Overburden	0.6 m
Depth of excavation	2.75 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits, spreads and dumps of white substance provisional identified as lime. Rare tile and brick inclusions.
Subsoil	Light brown sand
Finds	None

### TEST-PIT 3

Dimensions	8.5 m by 1.25 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Overburden	+3.00 m (including initial ground reduction across the sites)
Depth of excavation	3.0 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits, spreads and dumps of white substance provisional identified as lime. Rare tile and brick inclusions.
Features	Extensive made-ground
Subsoil	Excavation ceased prior to subsoil being reached
Finds	None

### TEST-PIT 4

Dimensions	4.75 m by 1.75 m
Orientation	N-S
Depth of Overburden	+3.00 m
Depth of excavation	3.00 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits, spreads and dumps of white substance provisional identified as lime. Two discrete layers of lime present in upper part of made-ground, each approximately 0.2 - 0.3 m wide and separated by a distance of c. 0.2 - 0.3 m.
Features	Extensive made-ground
Subsoil	Excavation ceased prior to subsoil being reached
Finds	None

### TEST-PIT 5

Dimensions	3.0 m by 1.25 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Overburden	+2.0 m (including initial ground reduction across the sites)
Depth of excavation	2.0 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits, spreads and dumps of white substance provisional identified as lime. Rare tile and brick inclusions.
Features	Extensive made-ground
Subsoil	Excavation ceased prior to subsoil being reached
Finds	None

**TEST-PIT 6**

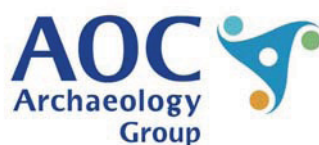
Dimensions	4.0 m by 1.25 m
Orientation	E-W
Depth of Overburden	+2.0 m (including initial ground reduction across the sites)
Depth of excavation	2.0 m
Overburden description	Dirty soils with occasional rubble, ashy deposits, spreads and dumps of white substance provisional identified as lime. Rare tile and brick inclusions.
Features	Cut edge of natural sand (ran N-S across test-pit) identified near western section. Natural sand cut at depth of 0.8 m below surface. Madeground filled test-pit thereafter.
Subsoil	Light brown sand
Finds	None

**APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER**

Frame	Description	From
	<b>Black &amp; White Print</b>	
1-4	SI Pit 1	Various
5-8	SI Pit 2	S & SE
9-10	SI Pit 3	N & NE
11-12	SI Pit 4	S & SE
13-15	General shots of site	NE & NW
	<b>Digital</b>	
1-3	SI Pit 4	SW
4-5	SI Pit 3	W
6-8	SI Pit 5	W
9-11	SI Pit 6	E
12-13	General shots of site	SE

**APPENDIX 3: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT**

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	East Lothian Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh: Watching Brief
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	21548
<b>PARISH:</b>	Musselburgh
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	John Gooder
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	AOC Archaeology Group
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	None
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	None
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NT 3392 7308
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2010
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2010
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief, undertaken during construction works associated with a residential development at 5-9 Links Avenue, Musselburgh, found extensive and deep made ground deposits directly overlying natural subsoil over the vast majority of the development site. Neither significant archaeological features nor artefactual material were observed by this work.
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	East Lothian Council
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	AOC Archaeology Group Edgefield Road Industrial Estate Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	admin@aocarchaeology.com
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b>	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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