

Archaeological Watching Brief
Greendykes Road, Niddrie, City of Edinburgh
Council



location of temporary access road looking South



23rd November 2012

Introduction (Illus 1)

This archaeological watching brief on the reinstatement of an access track at Greendykes Road, Niddrie below ground excavation was carried out for Edinburgh City Council to satisfy the archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development, as noted by City of Edinburgh Council Archaeological Service in the Decision Notice to Planning Application 12/02756/FUL, dated 25th October 2012. It was undertaken by the author on Monday 19th November 2012 (Site Code NID01); weather conditions were windy with occasional rain showers.

Archaeological Background (Illus 2)

The site at Greendykes Road, Niddrie lies within the former policies of Niddrie House which dated to at least the early 17th century and stood to the North East of the site until its demolition in 1971. There is a suggestion on General William Roy's map of 1747-55 that the house had a designed landscape and the site at Greendykes Road lies within part of that mapped landscape.

Watching Brief (Illus 3-6)

The course of the temporary access road was re-excavated by a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. Dumps of road planings and type 1 hardcore (1) were machined off to expose the surface that had been exposed in the original stripping of the road line. For most of the track length a deposit of broken stone pavings slabs and bricks (2) was exposed at a depth of 0.33m, at its Southern end the trench was excavated to a depth of 0.55m exposing a deposit of brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks (3). It was noticeable that the crushed bricks were more prevalent at its Northern end (Illus 6). No datable artefacts were discovered.

Discussion and Conclusions

The deposit of paving slabs and bricks appeared to have been deliberately laid and probably represents the path line that is visible on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1854. Traces of an Eastern extent to this deposit were recorded close to the limit of excavation and a defined edge was visible at the northern end of the track c 4m from the modern road line (Illus 3 and 6).

This limited watching brief would seem to confirm that elements of the former designed landscape associated with Niddrie House do still survive in areas that have not yet been developed and confirms the benefits of monitoring any new building works in this area.

Cartographic Sources (<http://www.nls.uk/maps>)

1st Edition Ordnance Survey map Edinburghshire Sheet 7, 1854

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the onsite contractors for their help and interest during the watching brief.

Illustration List

Illustration 1 Site location (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2012. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illustration 2 Site as shown on 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1854, red arrow indicates path line (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 3 Location of course of access track and indication of possible path line Scale 1:500

Illustration 4 Stripping of road planings and Type 1 hard core revealing broken paving slabs and crushed brick looking North West

Illustration 5 Detail view of broken paving slabs and bricks looking South East

Illustration 6 Apparent edge to crushed brick and slab surface at Northern end of stripped area

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Greendykes Road, Niddrie
PROJECT CODE:	NID01
PARISH:	Niddrie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 299 711
START DATE	19th November 2012
END DATE	19th November 2012
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A watching brief was carried out on the reinstatement of an access track to a new energy centre within the former policies of Niddrie House. The course of a path that is marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map was located, its surface being made up of broken paving slabs and crushed bricks. No dating evidence was recovered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	City of Edinburgh Council
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk

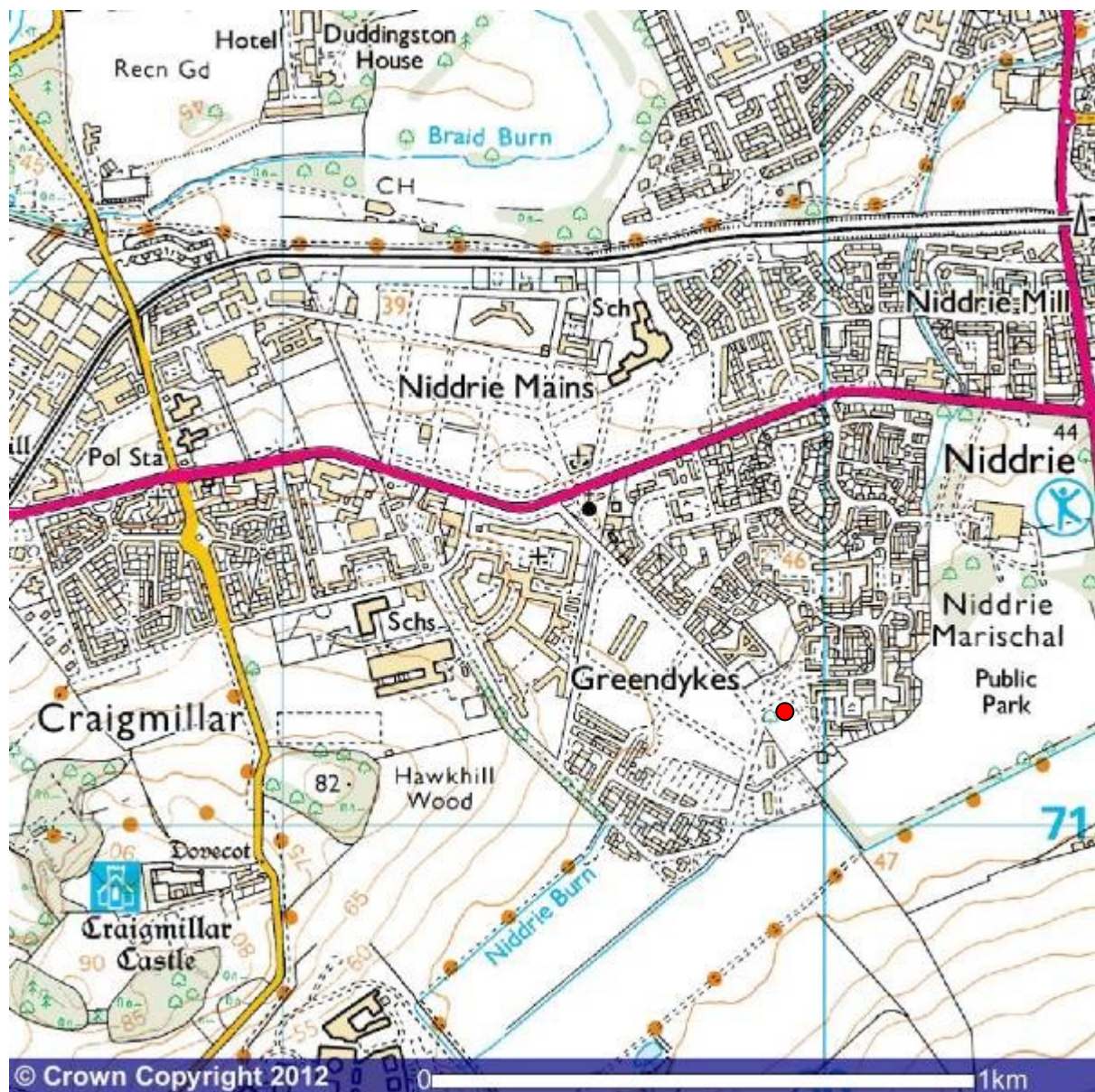


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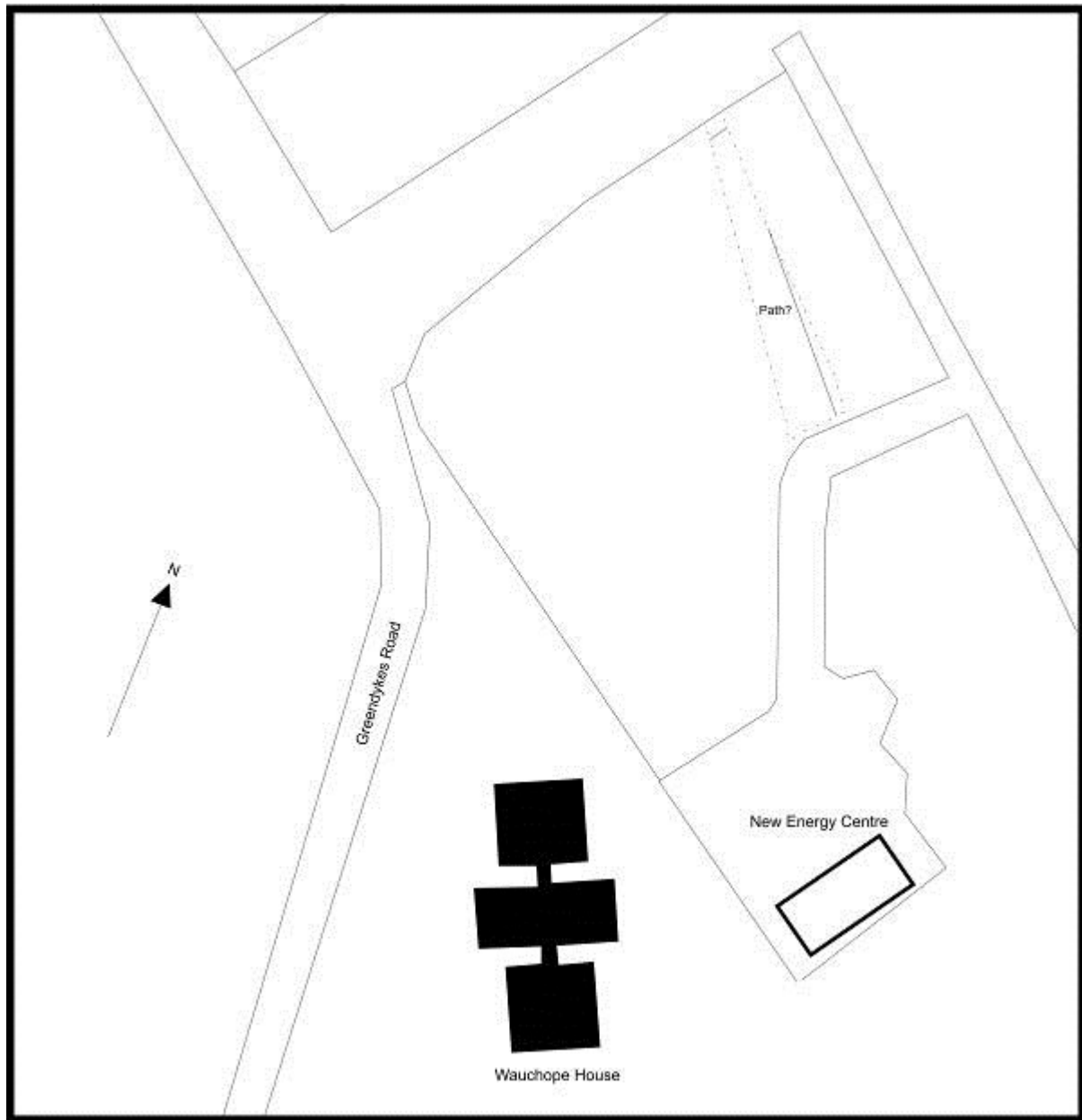


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Illustration 6 Apparent edge to crushed brick and slab surface at Northern end of stripped area