

# Shrubhill House, 7 Shrub Place Edinburgh Archaeological Evaluation

## Data Structure Report

AOC 22606  
16<sup>th</sup> June 2014



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

# Shrubhill House, 7 Shrub Place, Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report

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**On Behalf of:** Ziggurat (Shrubhill) LLP  
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**National Grid Reference (NGR):** NT 264707505

**AOC Project No:** 22606

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**Date of Fieldwork:** 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Date of Report:** 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014

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

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<b>Draft Report Stage:</b> Final	<b>Date:</b>

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## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
List of Figures .....	3
List of Appendices.....	3
Summary .....	4
1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
<b>1.1 Project Background .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.2 Site Location .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.3 Archaeological background.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2 OBJECTIVES .....	6
3 METHODOLOGY .....	7
4 RESULTS .....	7
5 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS.....	9
6 REFERENCES .....	10
<b>6.1 Bibliographical and Cartographic references .....</b>	<b>10</b>
APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES .....	12
APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER .....	13
APPENDIX 3: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT .....	14

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### List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location map

Figure 2: Extract from Edinburgh Town Plan by Ordnance Survey, 1852

Figure 3: Extract from Edinburgh Town Plan by Ordnance Survey, 1894

Figure 4: Trench location

Figure 5: Plan of Iron rails [001] and cobbles [002]

### List of Plates

Plate 1: North facing section of Trench 1

Plate 2: View of relict cobbled road and rails

Plate 3: Rails [001] and cobbles [002] post cleaning

Plate 4: Rails [001] and cobbles [002] post cleaning

### List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Trench Summaries

Appendix 2: Photographic Register

Appendix 3: Context Register

Appendix 4: *'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland'* Entry

## Summary

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*AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Axiom Project Services on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a proposed development on the former City of Edinburgh Council Buildings at Shrubhill, Edinburgh. The development area consists of brownfield land situated on the western edge of the Leith Walk. .*

*Four trenches equalling 122 linear metres were excavated; these revealed that the proposed development area had undergone significant truncation to a depth of three metres. Natural deposits of clay and sand were revealed in all trenches.*

*No archaeological remains were discovered within the evaluation trenches however a surviving segment of cobbled [002] and railed [001] road probably relating to the Victorian era Middlefield Coach Works was observed within the north-west of the area incorporated into the existing ground surface. A subsequent site visit on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June was undertaken to clean and record these rails.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Axiom Project Services on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a proposed development at Shrubhill, Leith Walk, Edinburgh. The proposed development lies within the administrative area of the City of Edinburgh Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the City of Edinburgh Archaeology Service (CECAS). A programme of archaeological works had been specified by CECAS in keeping with the policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains present within the development area.

### 1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The development area is located to the West of the Wisp, opposite the junction with Millerhill Road. The site is bounded to the west and south by a concurrent development being undertaken by a separate contractor. The centre of the development area is centred on NGR: NT 3039 7089 (Figure 1).

### 1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 The site is located on the western side of Leith Walk. The site is shown as undeveloped on Kirkwood's map of 1817 but by the time of the publication of the first Ordnance Survey Town Plan an number of tenements fronted Leith Walk, with Middlefield Place and a corner garden shown along Middlefield. Middlefield Coach Manufactory was located to the north and occupied much of the northeast corner of the site. This mapping indicates that the gardens associated with Shrub House occupied the western corner of the site.



Figure 2: Extract from Edinburgh Town Plan by Ordnance Survey, 1852



- 1.3.2 By 1894 the coach works had expanded westward and the gardens associated with Shrub House had been completely developed. Two public houses fronted Leith Walk and gardens along Middlefield remained.



Figure 3: Extract from Edinburgh Town Plan by Ordnance Survey, 1894

- 1.3.3 With the exception of the development of the western garden along Middlefield, the 1908 Ordnance Survey map (not shown) shows little change to the development area. The derelict office block which currently occupies the site was constructed some time in the 1960s.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 The objective of the archaeological works were as follows,
- i) The evaluation was to determine and assess the character, extent, condition, quality, date and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the proposed development area through evaluation trenching;
  - ii) To advise and implement an appropriate form of mitigation, such as excavation, post-excavation analyses and publication, given the infeasibility of preserving the archaeological material *in situ*, should significant archaeological remains be encountered;

### 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2013) was agreed with CECAS which proposed the excavation of trenches equating to a 10% sample of the development area. The site covered approximately 2,894m<sup>2</sup> resulting in evaluation trenching with a total basal area of 289 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.2 All trenches were excavated with a 13 tonne tracked excavator using a 2m wide ditching bucket and toothed bucket where necessary. The trench details are summarised in Appendix 1. Machine excavation was conducted in shallow units/spits through overburden to the upper surface of the underlying geological deposits. The evaluation trial trenching was undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures as detailed in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2013).



Plate 1 North facing section of Trench 1

### 4 RESULTS

#### 4.1.1 EVALUATION

- 4.1.1 The works were conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The weather conditions during the evaluation were clear and dry. Overall archaeological visibility was good. In total four trenches were opened, totalling 244m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 4). This was less than the required total of 289 m<sup>2</sup> due to the proximity of upstanding buildings and the presence of former petrol tanks and an unmarked gas pipe located within the north eastern corner of the site.
- 4.1.2 No *in-situ* topsoil was encountered, the site being covered with a mix of made-ground/demolition material and tarmac. Trench one revealed demolition material to a depth of 1.75 m. This immediately overlay natural sands. The trenches three and four also revealed demolition material; this reached a depth of 2.50 m and 2.75 m respectively. The demolition deposit is obviously related to the former Victorian buildings occupying



the site and contains a mix of red brick and broken sandstone. A modern garage also occupied the area between trenches three and four.

- 4.1.3 A segment of cobbled road [002] measuring around four metres in width and nine metres in length was observed at the western end of Trench 1 aligned North West to South East and incorporated within the existing ground surface. The feature had iron sleeper rails [001] set within it and is most probably a remnant of road associated with the late Victorian Middlefield Coach Works shown in Figure 3.



Plate 2: View of relict cobbled road [002] and rails [001]

- 4.1.4 Trench two was excavated through tarmac and underlying bedding deposits of gravel and cinder. This was 0.80 m in depth and overlay natural sands.
- 4.1.5 No archaeology was observed within any of the trenches.

#### 4.2.1 RECORDING SURVEY

- 4.2.1 On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2014 AOC returned to the site to clean and record the iron rails [001] and associated cobbles [002]. Weather conditions were excellent, and archaeological visibility throughout was good. The railway was thoroughly cleaned, drawn, photographed and recorded (see Figure 5 and Plates 3 and 4).



PLATE 3: Rails [001] and cobbles [002] post cleaning



PLATE 4: Rails [001] and cobbles [002] post cleaning

## 5 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The site has undergone significant truncation, which with the exception of the segment of former Victorian cobbled road has removed all trace of the former activity on site. No archaeology was discovered within the evaluation trenches, and as such, no more archaeological investigations are recommended within the development area. This will require confirmation by John Lawson of CECAS.

## 6 REFERENCES

### 6.1 Bibliographical and Cartographic references

AOC Archaeology 2013 Shrubhill, *Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation*. Client Method statement.

*Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. Archaeology and Planning*. Scottish Government Nov.2008.

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011*

Ordnance Survey 1852 Edinburgh Town Plan Sheets 21 & 25

Ordnance Survey 1894 Edinburgh Town Plan Sheet III.4.17



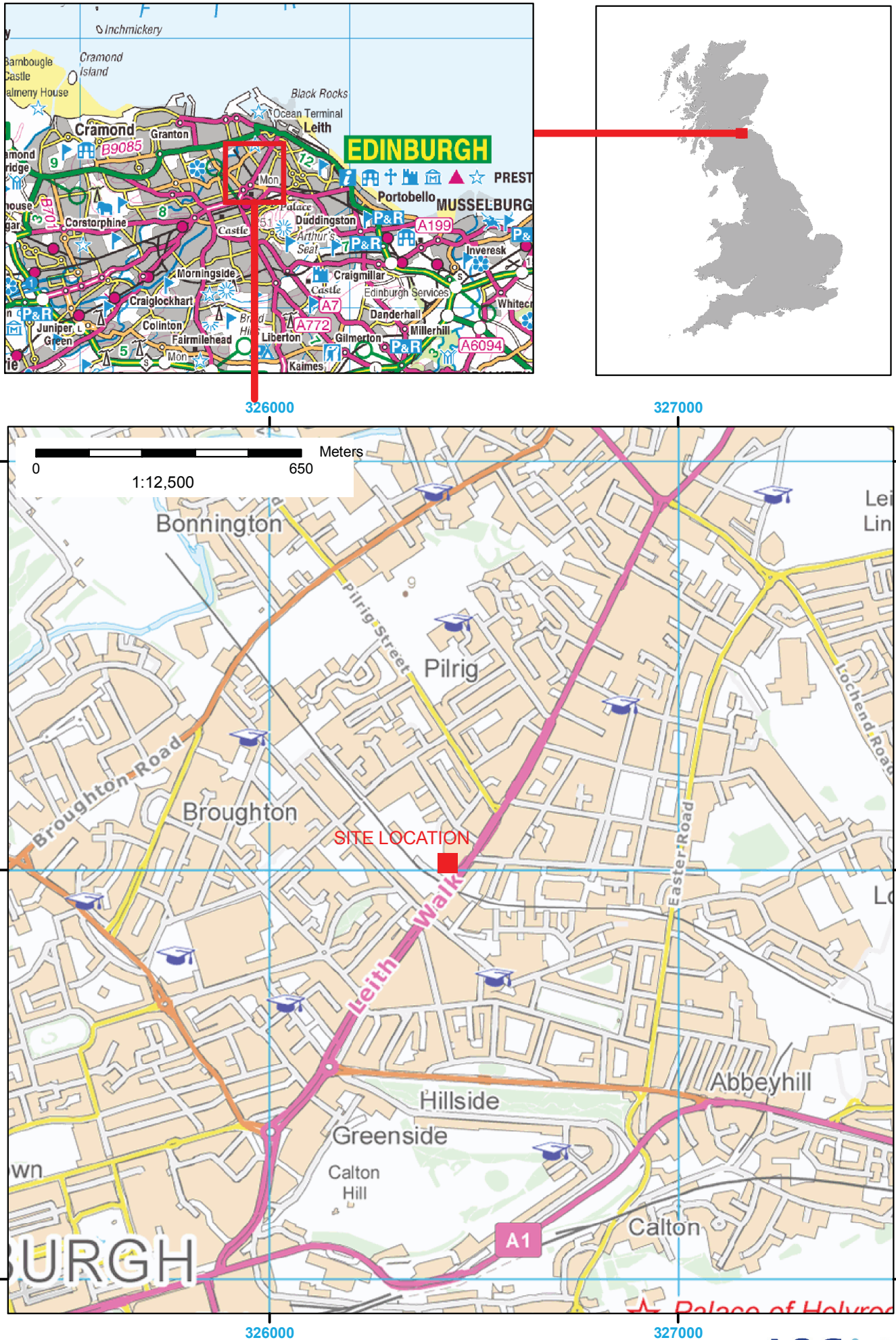
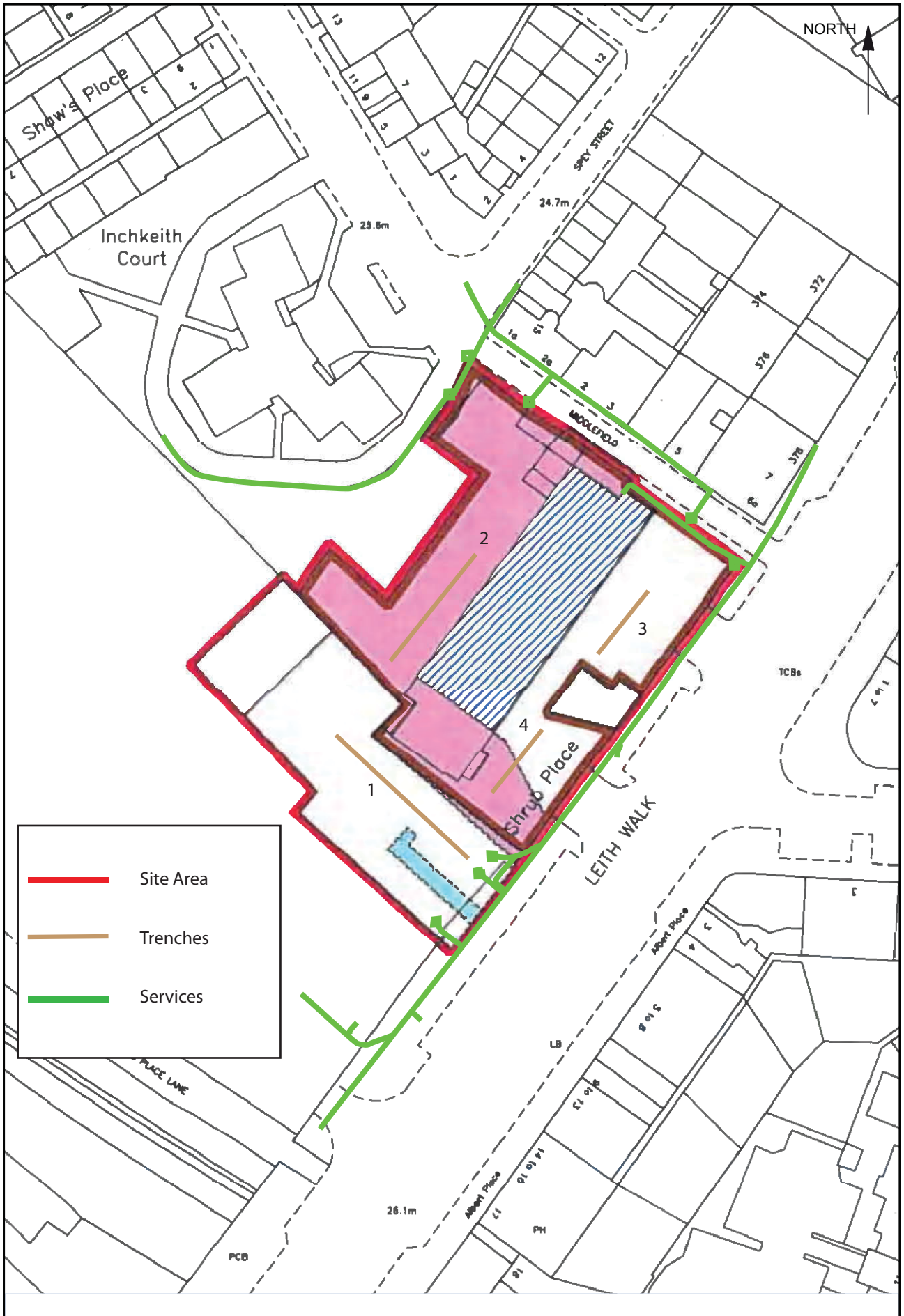


Figure 1: Site location



Based on a drawing provided by the client

Figure 4 - Trench location plan



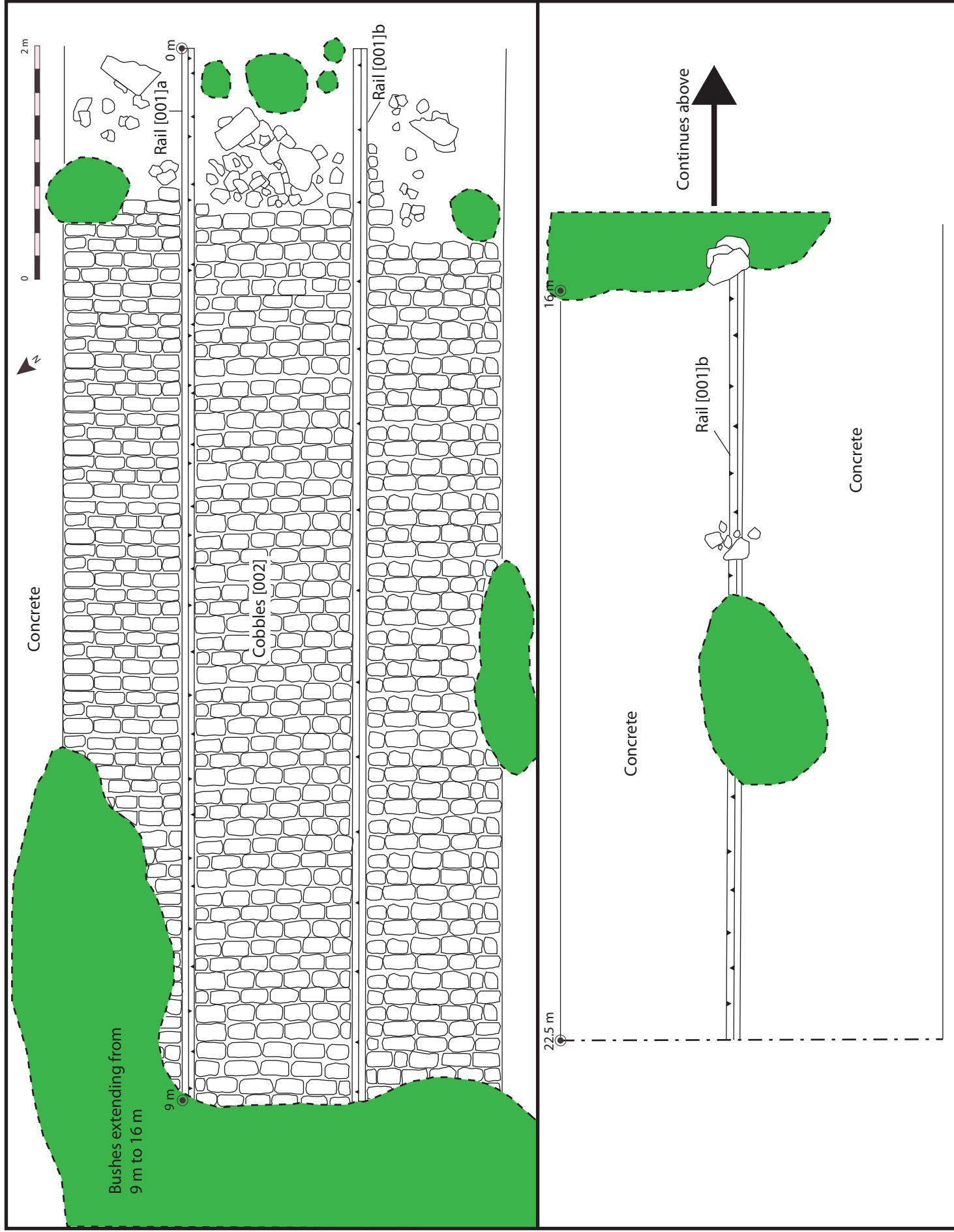


Figure 5 - Plan of iron rails [001] and cobbles [002]

**Shrubhill, 7 Shrubhill Place,  
Edinburgh  
Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report**

**Appendices**

## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

### Trench 1

<b>Dimensions</b>	25 m x 4.0 m	
<b>Orientation</b>	E/W	
<b>Topsoil</b>	-	-
<b>Alluvium</b>	-	-
<b>Made Ground</b>	1.75m	Demolition material including brick, cement, wire and broken sandstone
<b>Subsoil</b>	1.75 m	Yellow brown sand
<b>Features</b>	-	-
<b>Finds</b>	-	-

### Trench 2

<b>Dimensions</b>	20m x 4.0 m	
<b>Orientation</b>	N/S	
<b>Topsoil</b>	-	-
<b>Alluvium</b>	-	-
<b>Made Ground</b>	0.0 m – 0.80 m	Tarmac, type 2 hardcore, cinder.
<b>Subsoil</b>	0.80 m	Yellow brown sand
<b>Features</b>	-	-
<b>Finds</b>	-	-

### Trench 3

<b>Dimensions</b>	12m x 4.0 m	
<b>Orientation</b>	N/S	
<b>Topsoil</b>	-	-
<b>Alluvium</b>	-	-
<b>Made Ground</b>	3.0 m	Demolition material including brick, cement, wire and broken sandstone
<b>Subsoil</b>	3.0 m	Yellow brown sand
<b>Features</b>	-	-
<b>Finds</b>	-	-

### Trench 4

<b>Dimensions</b>	4.0 m x 4.0 m	
<b>Orientation</b>	N/S	
<b>Topsoil</b>	-	-
<b>Alluvium</b>	-	-
<b>Made Ground</b>	2.50 m	Demolition material including brick, cement, wire and broken sandstone
<b>Subsoil</b>	2.50 m	Yellow brown sand
<b>Features</b>	-	-
<b>Finds</b>	-	-

## APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

### Digital

Frame	Trench	Description	From
1	-	Registration	-
2	1	North facing section	N
3	1	Working shot of trench	NW
4	2	Post excavation shot of Trench	S
5	2	South facing section Trench 2	N
6	3	Post excavation shot of Trench	W
7-8	3	West facing section Trench 3	W
9-10	-	Remnant road surface	W/E
11	4	West facing section	W
12-22	-	Railway tracks [001] and cobbled surface [002]	Various
23-24	-	North west of railway tracks [001] where they were particularly overgrown	E

## APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT REGISTER

### Digital

Context	Description
001	Iron rail tracks, orientation NW-SE. Two cast iron railroad tracks running parallel to each other. Each measures 0.1m wide with a 0.03m wide groove on their inside edge. Distance between the tracks was 1.35m. The tracks survive to maximum length of 22.5m on one side, and around 9m on the other side. The tracks are set into cobbled surface [002].
002	Surface of stone cobbled setts. The cobbles vary in size between around 0.1m to 0.15m wide and between 0.1 to 0.3m long. They are bonded with grey mortar. The cobbles form a surface into which railroad tracks [001] are set. The surface measures 1m to the north of the tracks, 1.35m between the tracks and 1.1m to the south side of the tracks. Maximum surviving length is around 8m.

## APPENDIX 4: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND REPORT

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	City of Edinburgh Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Shrubhill, Edinburgh
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	AOC 22606
<b>PARISH:</b>	Edinburgh
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Rob Engl
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	AOC Archaeology Group
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Evaluation
<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
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)</b>	<p>AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Axiom Project Services on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a proposed development on the former City of Edinburgh Council Buildings at Shrubhill, Edinburgh. The development area consists of brownfield land situated on the western edge of the Leith Walk. .</p> <p>Four trenches equalling 122 linear metres were excavated; these revealed that the proposed development area had undergone significant truncation to a depth of three metres. Natural deposits of clay and sand were revealed in all trenches.</p> <p>No archaeological remains were discovered within the evaluation trenches however a surviving segment of cobbled and railed road probably relating to the Victorian era Middlefield Coach Works was observed within the north-west of the area incorporated into the existing ground surface. <i>A subsequent site visit on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June was undertaken to clean and record these rails.</i></p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	n/a
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Ziggurat (Shrubhill) LLP
<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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