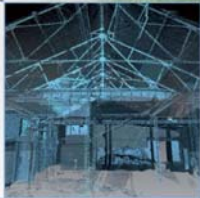


Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh: Archaeological Monitored Top-soil Strip Data Structure Report

AOC 23247
25th March 2017



Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh: Archaeological Monitored Top-soil Strip Data Structure Report

On Behalf of: Cala Homes (East) Ltd
Cairnlea House
Callander Road
Callander Business Park
Falkirk
FK1 1XE

Planning Reference: 15/05100/FUL

National Grid Reference (NGR): NT 1650 6730

AOC Project No: 23247

OASIS No.: aocarcha1-281589

Prepared by: Anne Marot & Rob Engl

Date of Fieldwork: March 2017

Date of Report: 27th March 2017

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

Author: Anne & Rob Engl

Date: 27th March 2017

Approved by: Martin Cook

Date: 27th March 2017

Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft

Date: 27th March 2017

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Edgefield Industrial Estate
Edgefield Road
Loanhead
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593
Fax. 0131 440 3422
e-mail. edinburgh@aacarchaeology.com



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ABSTRACT

Following the completion of an initial archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group in January 2017 further works consisting of a monitored top-soil strip and limited excavation were carried out prior to a residential development on land next to Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh (NT 1650 6730).

The works involved the monitored top-soil stripping of a targeted area measuring 10,200 m² concentrated on the slope in the northern corner of the site where the evaluation had revealed four pits and two ditch features. The top-soil strip revealed a further 14 features including pits and the truncated remains of a later prehistoric ring-groove roundhouse. Two body-sherds of undecorated prehistoric ceramics were recovered from a single pit fill.

Due to the presence of prehistoric activity within the development area it is recommended that a limited post-excavation research design (PERD) will be produced. The PERD will define the scope and scale of post-excavation works necessary to adhere the fieldwork findings, and to produce a final report suitable for publication.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works consisting of a targeted area strip and excavation was required by Cala Homes (East) Ltd. prior to a residential development on land adjacent to Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh. The scope of the works was determined by the City of Edinburgh Council as advised on archaeological matters by the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS). The works were conducted according to the terms of an addendum (AOC 2017) to the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2016), approved on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council by CECAS and in accordance with *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning And Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011).

1.2 Site Location

1.2.1 The proposed development area is an agricultural site with the main area being used for crops and the lower lying SW edge being used for grazing. It lies within Balerno, an existing residential area on the west side of Edinburgh (Centred on NGR NT1650 6730). The site is bounded by the development fronts onto existing residential properties of Station Loan and Dalmahoy Crescent to the SW, Newmills Road to the NE, open agricultural land to the NW and the back of residencies on Lanark Road West to the SE.

1.3 Historical Background

1.3.1 The development area lies within a broadly urban setting of Balerno which has a lot of residential properties surrounded by agricultural land. The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of the 1850's shows the development area comprising entirely of agricultural land (Figure 2). Both Lanark Road West and Old Newmills Road are present and lie upon their current alignment.

1.3.2 The HES national database shows no sites existing within the sites boundaries and the closest known site is Curriehill Castle (NMRS No NT16NE 12) and Curriehill House (NMRS No NT16NE 73) which both lie c 150 m east of the development area. To the south of the development area there are three sites associated with the Balerno Railway line including Station Loan, Balerno Goods Station and an overbridge (NMRS No. NT16NE 88, 92 and 87 respectively). On the Water of Leith 100 m south of the southern edge of the development area there was the site of Newmill Mill (NMRS No. NT16NE136).

1.3.3 An archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology in January 2017 revealed four pit and two ditch features that may represent prehistoric activity on the site. Elsewhere, an area of peat that measures up to 1 m thick was encountered in the lowest lying part of site.

1.3.4 This peat deposit had numerous post medieval drains and dykes running through it that were partly visible on the surface. This network of drains was also prevalent throughout the rest of the development area with a large number of rubble and ceramic tile drains encountered, alongside two probable field boundary ditches from the same period.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological top-soil strip were:

- i. the identification, excavation, soil sampling and recording of all significant archaeological features within the proposed development;
- ii. the retrieval of a representative artefact assemblage;
- iii. upon conclusion of the excavation, the preparation and undertaken of a post-excavation and publication programme;
- iv. the post-excavation analysis of recovered material and publication of results of the excavation to bring the findings into the public and academic domain.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A single area (see Fig 2.) equating to 10200 m² was machine stripped of topsoil under constant archaeological supervision. The works were undertaken between the 06th March 2017 and the 25th March 2017. Mitigation works for dealing with the resulting findings included excavation:
- Post-holes, pits and structural curvilinear features were subject to 100% excavation and recording (contra WSI Appendix 9. Non-structural linear features were subject to 20% sample excavation). Standard bulk samples, soil chemistry and , where appropriate, specialist sampling, will to be undertaken as per normal AOC Archaeology procedure (Appendix 9);
 - Until the character of all these features was fully determined the controlled topsoil strip was maintained on ground-breaking works associated with the extension (Appendix 9);
- 3.2 A series of possible culvert features in the south-east of the site were trenched in order to identify their size, function and date, if possible.
- 3.3 A deposit of peat was probed in an attempt to quantify its size, depth and whether further environmental works are deemed necessary.

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 All archaeological works were conducted between the 06th March 2017 and the 25th March 2017. Weather conditions were fair throughout the course of the work and archaeological visibility remained good. The various data gathered from the top-soil strip and excavation is presented as a series of appendices:

Appendix 1: Context Register;
Appendix 2: Photographic Register;
Appendix 3: Drawing Register;
Appendix 4: Samples Register;
Appendix 5: Finds Register
Appendix 6: *'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland'* entry

- 4.2 The evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology in January 2017 revealed a small number of archaeological features including pits of probable prehistoric date and two shallow linear ditches of post-medieval date. The majority of these features were located at the northern end of the development area along a ridgeline crossing the site from east to west. The archaeological potential

of these features was discussed with CECAS expressing the view that a secondary phase (Phase 2 as described within the WSI) of investigative works was required. These works consisted in the main of the top-soil stripping of a large area initially measuring 100m by 100m.

- 4.3 The topsoil removed from the strip area consisted of a mid to dark grey clay loam overlying a predominantly orangey brown sandy clay subsoil. The subsoil changed to a mixture of grey boulder clay within the lower lying portion of the strip area to the south. The sub-soil was cut by numerous rubble and tile drains aligned north to south and set at five metre intervals.
- 4.4 The linear ditch feature [3601] revealed during the evaluation was found to extend towards the east. The present land-owner informed AOC that this was the remains of a former field boundary consisting of a hedge line which divided the current field into two. This boundary feature is visible on the grubbed up in recent years.
- 4.5 The other linear feature [3401] recorded within the evaluation was revealed to be a drainage ditch that fed into the existing drainage system.
- 4.6 The top-soil strip revealed a further 12 archaeological features consisting of eleven sub-circular and oval pit features and a curvilinear ring-groove. This latter feature was associated with two pit/post-holes and a central hearth feature forming the truncated remains of a late prehistoric roundhouse. Given the position of these features the topsoil strip was extended eastwards to within 5.0 m of the existing field boundary. No further features were observed.



Plate 1 Ring-groove roundhouse [013] under excavation from south



Plate 2 Ring-groove roundhouse [013] post excavation from south



Plate 3 Hearth feature [018] east facing section



Plate 4 Pit/Posthole [016] within ring-groove roundhouse [013] from west



Plate 5 Slot 1 ring-groove [014] of roundhouse [013] from north

4.7 **Ring-groove Roundhouse [013]**

4.7.1 The ring groove roundhouse was made up of the truncated, partially surviving ring-groove [014], two pit/postholes [016 - 020] and the centrally placed hearth feature [018]. The ring-groove was 8.5 m in length, giving the roundhouse a probable diameter of 8-9 m. Three slots were excavated through the ring-groove [014], revealing steeply sloping sides and a narrow rounded base. The ring-groove was aligned from the north to the south-east and ranged from 0.3 to 0.5m in width and between 0.20 m to 0.25 m in depth. A central hearth [018] was located to the east of the ring-groove. This feature consisted of numerous flat stones placed within a shallow circular pit cut measuring 0.70 m in diameter and 0.10 m in depth. The fill of the hearth contained a dark brown, organic fill with charcoal fleck inclusions and fire cracked stone. A circular, flat based pit [016] was excavated directly to the north-west of the hearth with a second smaller circular posthole lying to the north-east.

4.8 **Pit/Posthole Features in proximity to Structure [013]**

4.8.1 A small number of four isolated pit and posthole features were excavated to the south-east and south-west of Structure [013]. Two circular pits [026] and [028] measuring 0.70m in diameter were revealed to the south-west of the roundhouse. These features were relatively shallow with moderately sloping sides and concave bases. Both of the pits were filled with dark brown organic fills of clay silt. To the south-east of the roundhouse lay the small, circular posthole [022] and the elongated sub-circular pit [024]. This latter feature measured 1.75m by 0.80m with a maximum depth of 0.20 m.

4.9 **Dispersed Pit Cluster [003-005-007-009-011]**

4.9.1 A total of five pit features were revealed in the north-east corner of the area strip. The most northerly of these features Pit [003] had dimensions of 1.0 m by 0.75 m with a depth of 0.30 m. The pit contained a dark brown organic fill with numerous inclusions of sub-angular stones. This produced two body-sherds of prehistoric ceramic (SF 01).



Plate 6 Pit [003] east facing section

- 4.9.2 The remaining pits were ranged down-slope along the eastern boundary of the strip area. These features varied widely in size and ranged from 0.30 m to 1.0 m diameter. All of the pits revealed similar shallow, broad concave profiles and fills of medium brown clay silt. An exception was the southernmost pit [011]. This circular feature was cut by a modern drain and contained a dark brown, burnt organic fill.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The monitored top-soil strip undertaken at Newmills Road revealed the truncated remains of a ring-groove roundhouse and scattered pit features. These features add to the record of later prehistoric settlement within the south Edinburgh area. Current evidence for such settlement is relatively sparse. The remains of a palisaded homestead were excavated to the west of the site at Ravelrig Quarries (Maguire 2009) and a hillfort occupies Dalmahoy Hill. To north of the site at Higgs Farm lies the crop-mark remains of a possible later prehistoric enclosure of unknown date. A further such enclosure lies to the south-west of the site at Harlaw.
- 5.2 Given the findings of the topsoil strip a limited post-excavation research design (PERD) will be produced as per the addendum (AOC 2017). The PERD will define the scope and scale of post-excavation works necessary to adhere the fieldwork findings, and to produce a final report suitable for publication. The PERD will be agreed with the planning authority acting on advice from CECAS.

6 REFERENCES

6.1 Bibliographic References

AOC 2016 *Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished client report

AOC 2016 *Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report*. Unpublished client report

Maguire, D. (2009a) *Ravelrig Quarry, Kirknewton, City of Edinburgh (Ratho parish), evaluation and excavation*, *Discovery Excav Scot, New, vol. 10, 2009*. Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England.

Scottish Government 2014 Scottish Planning Policy.

Scottish Government 2010 PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology.

6.2 Cartographic References

1852 Ordnance Survey *Edinburghshire Sheet V*

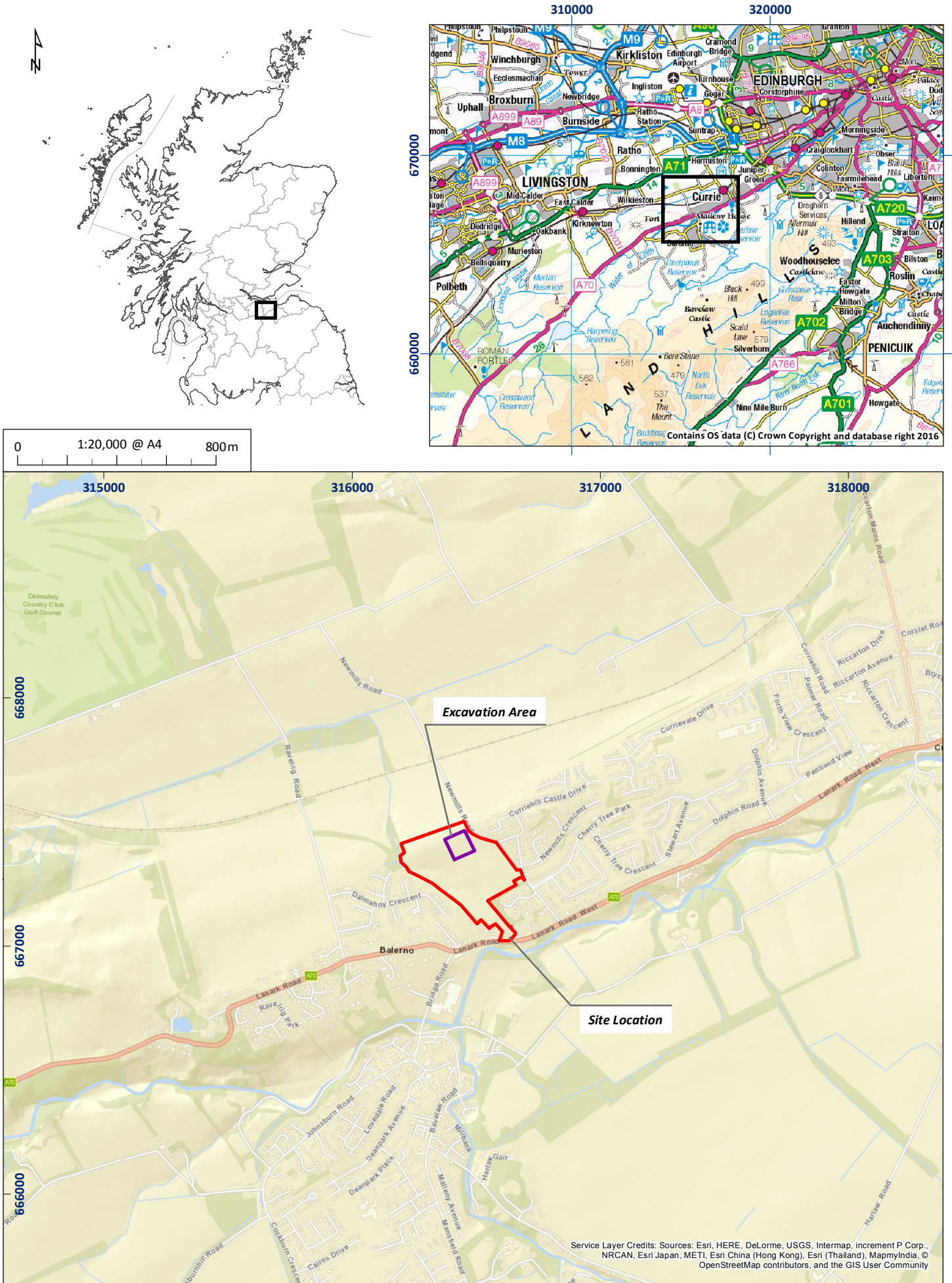


Figure 1: Site location plan

01/23247/EVALREP/01/01

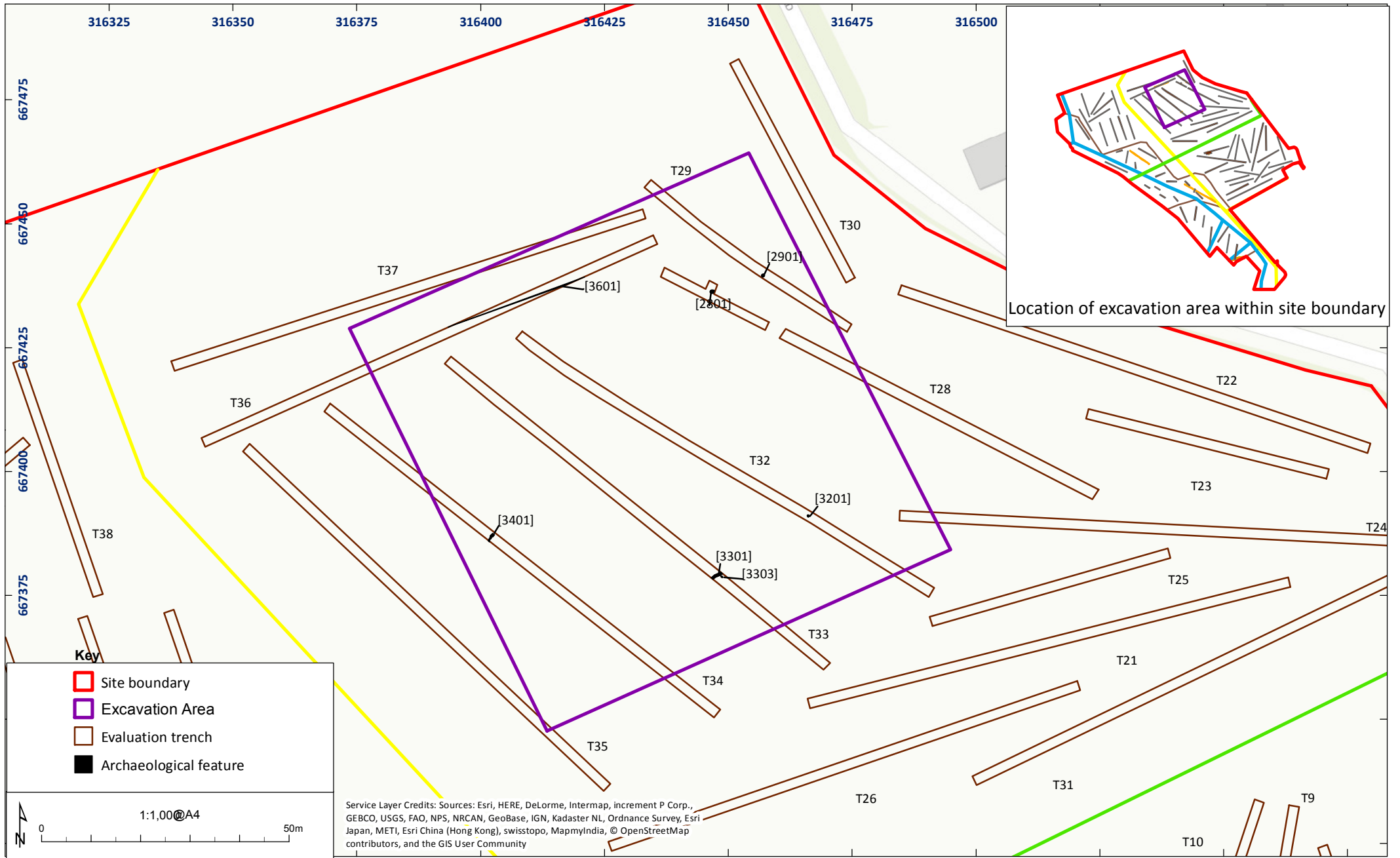
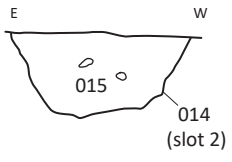
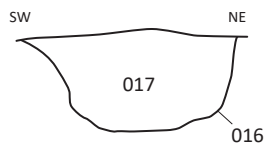


Figure 2: Excavation Area

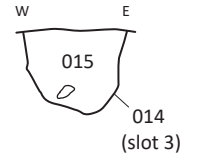
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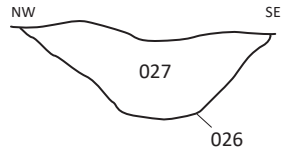
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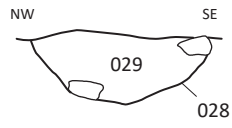
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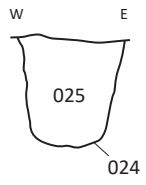
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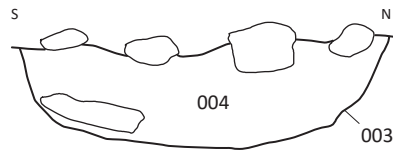
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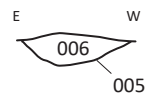
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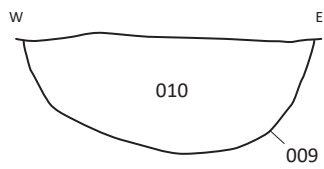
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Section LL



Section NN



Section OO

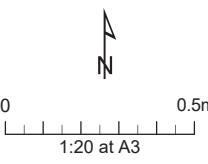
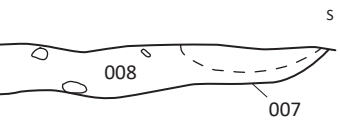
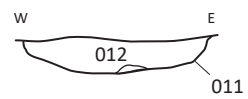


Figure 3: Section drawings

**Newmills Road, Balerno,
Edinburgh:
Archaeological Evaluation
Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTERS

Context No.	Area	Description and Interpretation
001		Topsoil 0.30m - 0.40m in depth mid to dark grey clay loam
002		Subsoil Red brown clay
003		Pit Cut Oval Cut with steep sides, gently round base, 0.25m deep, SF 1 2 x Ceramic bodysherds
004		Fill of [003] Medium grey brown clay silt, very stony
005		Posthole Very truncated post, 0.10m deep, gently rounded base
006		Fill of [005]
007		Pit cut Shallow truncated pit, gently rounded uneven base, 0.13m deep, moderately slopping sides
008		Fill of [007] Pale grey brown clay silt with organic lens in S end containing burnt bone
009		Pit Cut Sub-circular pit with steeply slopping sides and rounded base, 0.30m deep
010		Fill of [009] Single fill of dark organic dark brown clay silt with <5% stone inclusions
011		Pit Cut 0.5 diameter and 0.10 deep
012		Fill of [011]
013		Ring groove Roundhouse The roundhouse consists of a ring-groove [013], internal pit/post [017], pit [020] and hearth [018]. The roundhouse is approximately 8-9m in diameter.
014		Ring groove The ring-groove survives along the west of the roundhouse. The ring-groove is 8.5m in length and appears truncated at both its northern and southern ends. The ring-groove is 0.3-0.5m wide and 0.2m deep, steep sides with narrow rounded base
015		Fill of [015] Moderate compact fill of medium brown clay silt, <10% stone
016		Pit Cut 0.60m diameter and 0.25m deep, circular with steep sides, narrow flat base
017		Fill of [016] Moderate compact fill of medium brown clay silt, <20% stone
018		Hearth Cut Circular, 0.75m diameter and 0.07m deep, gently sloping sides and flat base
019		Fill of Hearth Dark brown burnt organic fill, charcoal flecks and numerous flat stones
020		Pit/Posthole Cut 0.30m diameter and 0.15m deep
021		Fill of [020] Medium brown clay silt
022		Pit Cut 0.30m diameter and 0.30m deep. Narrow concave profile with sharply sloping sides.
023		Fill of [022] Medium brown clay silt, <10% stone
024		Pit Cut Moderate sloping sides and irregular base, 1.75m x 0.80m x 0.25m. The cut
025		Fill of [024] Medium/dark brown clay silt, <20% stone
026		Pit Cut 0.65m diameter and 0.20m deep
027		Fill of pit [026] Medium brown clay silt, <10% stone
028		Cut of pit 0.45m diameter and 0.15m deep
029		Fill of pit [028] Medium brown clay silt, <10% stone

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTERS

Frame	Description	From	Date
1	Registration shot		
2-5	Strip 1 Post-ex shot	E	06/03/17
6-9	Strip 3 Post-ex shot	S	07/03/17
10	Strip 4 Post-ex shot		07/03/17
11	Pre-ex shot – Possible ring groove and pits [013]	E	08/03/17
12	Pre-ex shot – Possible ring groove and pits[013]	E	08/03/17
13-14	E-facing section of pit [003]	E	15/03/17
15	N-facing section of pit/posthole [005]	N	15/03/17
16	W facing section of pit [007]	W	15/03/17
17	S-facing section of pit [009]	S	15/03/17
18	S-facing section of pit [011]	S	15/03/17
19	E-facing section of hearth [018]	E	15/03/17
20	E-facing section of pit [016]	E	15/03/17
21	SW-facing section of pit [016]	SW	15/03/17
22	SW-facing section of pit [026]	SW	15/03/17
24	SW-facing section of pit [028]	SW	15/03/17
25	N-facing section of pit [024]	N	15/03/17
26	N-facing section of slot 1 [014]	N	16/03/17
27	N-facing section of slot 2[014]	N	16/03/17
28	S-facing section of slot 3[014]	S	16/03/17
29-30	Post-excavation shots of roundhouse [013]	S	16/03/17

APPENDIX 3: DRAWING REGISTER

Drawing No.	Details	Scale
001	Plan of [003], [005], [007], [009] and [011]	1:50
002	E-facing section of [003]	1:10
003	N-facing section of [005]	1:10
004	W-facing section of pit [007]	1:10
005	S-facing section of pit [009]	1:10
006	S-facing section of pit [011]	1:10
007	Plan of [013], [016], [018], [020], [022], [026] and [028]	1:50
008	SE-facing section of [016]	1:10
009	E-facing section of [014] slot 1	1:10
010	N-facing section of [014] slot 2	1:10
011	S-facing section of [014] slot 3	1:10
012	NW-facing section of posts [022]	1:10
013	S-facing section of posthole [022]	1:10
014	SW-facing section of pit [028]	1:10
015	E-facing section of hearth [018]	1:10
016	N-Facing section of pit [024]	1:10
017	SW-Facing section of pit [026]	1:10

APPENDIX 4: SAMPLES REGISTER

Context No.	Quantity (litres)
004	1 Bag
008	1
010	2
012	1
015 Slot 3	2
015 Slot 2	2
017	2
019	1
021	1
028	1
028	1

APPENDIX 5: FINDS REGISTER

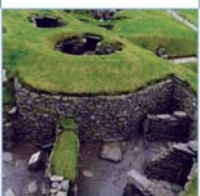
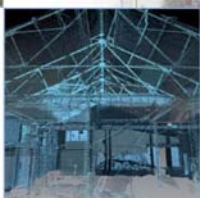
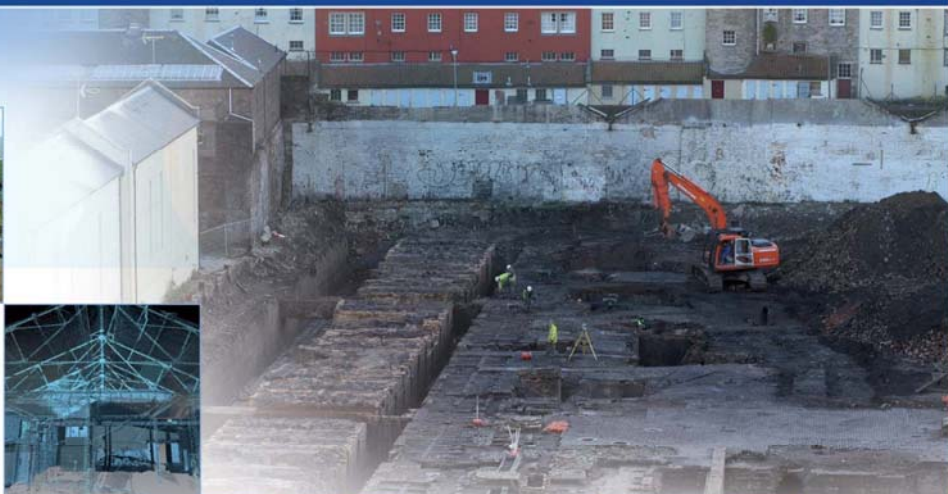
No.	Context	Description	Material Code
001	004	2 bodysherds of prehistoric ceramic	Ce

APPENDIX 6: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	23247
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Anne Marot & Rob Engl
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Monitored top-soil strip and archaeological excavation
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Late prehistoric ring-groove roundhouse and pit features
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Two bodysherds of undecorated prehistoric ceramic
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 1650 6730
START DATE (this season)	March 2017
END DATE (this season)	March 2017
PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES)	AOC 2016 <i>Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report</i> . Unpublished client report
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>Following the completion of an initial archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group in January 2017 further works consisting of a monitored top-soil strip and limited excavation were carried out prior to a residential development on land next to Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh (NT 1650 6730).</p> <p>The works involved the monitored top-soil stripping of a targeted area measuring 10,200 m² concentrated on the slope in the northern corner of the site where the evaluation had revealed four pits and two ditch features. The top-soil strip revealed a further 14 features including pits and the truncated remains of a later prehistoric ring-groove roundhouse. Two body-sherds of undecorated prehistoric ceramics were recovered from a single pit fill.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Yes
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Cala Homes (East) Ltd.
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group Edgefield Road Industrial Estate Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com

Newmills Road, Balerno, Edinburgh; Archaeological Monitored Top-soil Strip

ARCHIVE LOCATION	Archive to be deposited in NMRS
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AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com