
Land East of West Bowling Green Street, Leith, Edinburgh:

Archaeological Monitored Topsoil Strip & Excavation

Data Structure Report

On Behalf of	HB Villages Developments Ltd Market Court 20-24 Church Street Altrincham WA14 4DW
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NT 26403 76182
AOC Project No:	23895
OASIS Entry No:	aocarcha1-342738
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

AOC Archaeology completed an archaeological monitored topsoil strip and excavation on behalf of HB Villages Developments Ltd on an area designated as Land East of West Bowling Green Street.

The works follow on from an archaeological evaluation carried out by AOC in 2017 where two separate areas of cobbles were discovered likely forming part of a yard.

The topsoil strip comprised of an area measuring 12.11m x 8.80m and revealed a continuation of the cobbled surface extending beyond the limits of the excavation. This surface was cut by four concrete foundation bases and was bounded by a sandstone wall at the eastern extent.

The structural features are likely to be the remains of the former 19th century fertiliser works.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological topsoil strip and excavation was required by HB Villages Development Ltd prior to a development at the site designated Land East of West Bowling Green Street. These works follow on from an archaeological evaluation also completed by AOC in 2017. The development area lies within the administrative area of Edinburgh City Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by John Lawson, City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service, CECAS. The excavation will be undertaken in keeping with best practice requirements outlined in current planning guidelines Scottish Planning Policy (2014) & Planning and Archaeology 2/2011 (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The site is located 43m to the east of 20 West Bowling Green Street, Leith, Edinburgh (centered on NGR: NT26403 76182). The site is bounded to the north and east by the Water of Leith and to the west by a public cycle/footpath.

1.3 Archaeological Background

- 1.3.1 The development site lies on the southern limits of the navigable stretch of Water of Leith, and the remains of the 18/19th century version of the weir that marked this boundary are known to survive immediately to the north and possibly under the site's northern boundary. This position on the Water of Leith makes the site a prime location for a water mill with the main site for the medieval mills associated with the town of Leith lying directly opposite the development area on the southern side of the Water of Leith. It is possible that the development area may also contain remains associated with the 1540's sieges of Leith and it is possible that it may also possess important evidence for these nationally significant sieges (e.g. siege ditches/works and/or artefacts).
- 1.3.2 An archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology (Paton & Cook 2016) on land to the north and south of West Bowling Green Street revealed three ditches relating to field systems of Old Bonnington House estate as well as a group of features that most likely relate to the 1560 siege of Leith, alongside a small assemblage of medieval ceramics. The evaluation also recorded the foundation pillars and arched foundations of the 19th Century fertiliser works as well as the remains of 19th Century warehouse foundations cutting through several earlier 18th and 19th century buildings and features, one of which contained a couple of fragments of disarticulated human remains.
- 1.3.3 There are no other known sites of archaeological, historical or architectural significance within the development area. However, similar re-development sites elsewhere in Leith have revealed sub-surface survival of highly significant archaeological features and small finds relating to the medieval and early post-medieval expansion of Leith.
- 1.3.4 The evaluation from 2017 revealed cobbled flooring in two trenches and substantial demolition deposits across the development area



Figure 3: Roy Lowlands 1752-55



Figure 4: OS, Six Inch, 1843-1882

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- i)* to determine the extent, condition, significance, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- ii)* to record and sample excavate the archaeological features discovered during the 2017 evaluation.
- iii)* to assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.

- iv) to determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
- v) to make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The monitored topsoil strip was focused on the cobbled surface discovered within trench 5 as part of the 2017 archaeological evaluation. The monitored topsoil comprised an area measuring 12.11m x 8.8m. Due to the restrictions of the area the site was excavated in two phases. The excavation area was limited by the presence of newly built flats to the east and a live power cable to the west.
- 3.2 The archaeological works were carried out using a 13-tonne tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. Excavations ceased upon discovery of the first archaeological context. Upon the completion of the works the site was backfilled and compacted to the original ground level

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The monitored topsoil strip revealed approximately 1.4m of made ground in the form of demolition material created during the destruction of the previous structures. This deposit directly overlay a cobbled surface which extended across the majority of the site. The cobbles were sub rounded measuring on average 0.29m long by 0.07m wide and were aligned east to west (Plate 1). These were found to be set into a dark grey sandy clay which measured 0.22m in depth and directly over a heavily compacted mid brown clay identified as the natural sub stratum of the site. During the works two fragments of animal bone and a 'butter' knife fragment were recovered while cleaning the cobbles. A single fragment of a 'flower pot' was recovered from the dark grey material directly under the cobbled surface.



Plate 1: Post excavation shot of northern half of site

- 4.2 The cobbled surface was bounded by a sandstone wall along the eastern extent which comprised of angular sandstone blocks and was bonded by lime mortar. This wall measured

0.5m wide by 0.7m deep and was orientated north to south (Plate 2) continuing outwith the limit of excavation.



Plate 2: Post excavation shot of sandstone wall

- 4.3 Four concrete bases were also discovered during the topsoil strip. These all measured c.1m by 1m and were revealed to cut both the cobbled surface and sandstone wall (Plate 3). Similar features were identified during the 2016 evaluation (Cook & Paton) which were considered to be the foundations of 19th/20th century warehouses associated with the fertiliser works.



Plate 3: Post excavation shot of concrete base [006]

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The archaeological topsoil strip revealed a cobbled surface and sandstone wall. As there are no other structural foundations within the study area it is more than likely this surface served as a yard possibly associated with the 18th century structures that once occupied the area. The cobbles and sandstone wall had been truncated by four concrete foundation bases which are considered to be part of the later 19th century warehouses associated with the fertiliser works.
- 5.2 No further works are considered necessary within the development area however this will require confirmation from Mr. John Lawson of CECAS

6 REFERENCES

6.1 Bibliographic References

AOC Archaeology Group 2017 *Land East of 20 West Bowling Green Street, Leith, Edinburgh: Written Scheme of Investigation* Unpublished Client Report

AOC Archaeology Group 2017 *Land East of 20 West Bowling Green Street, Leith, Edinburgh: Archaeological Evaluation Data Structure Report*

Lawson, J, 2011, '*Site at West Bowling Green Street & Anderson Place, Leith*' CECAS

Paton, K & Cook, M 2016 The 1560 fortifications and siege of Leith: archaeological evidence for a new transcription of the cartographic evidence. *Post-Medieval Archaeology* Vol 50, Part 2, 2016.

Scottish Government 2014 *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014)

Scottish Government 2011 PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology

Cartographic References

Roy Lowlands 1752-55

OS Six Inch 1843-1882

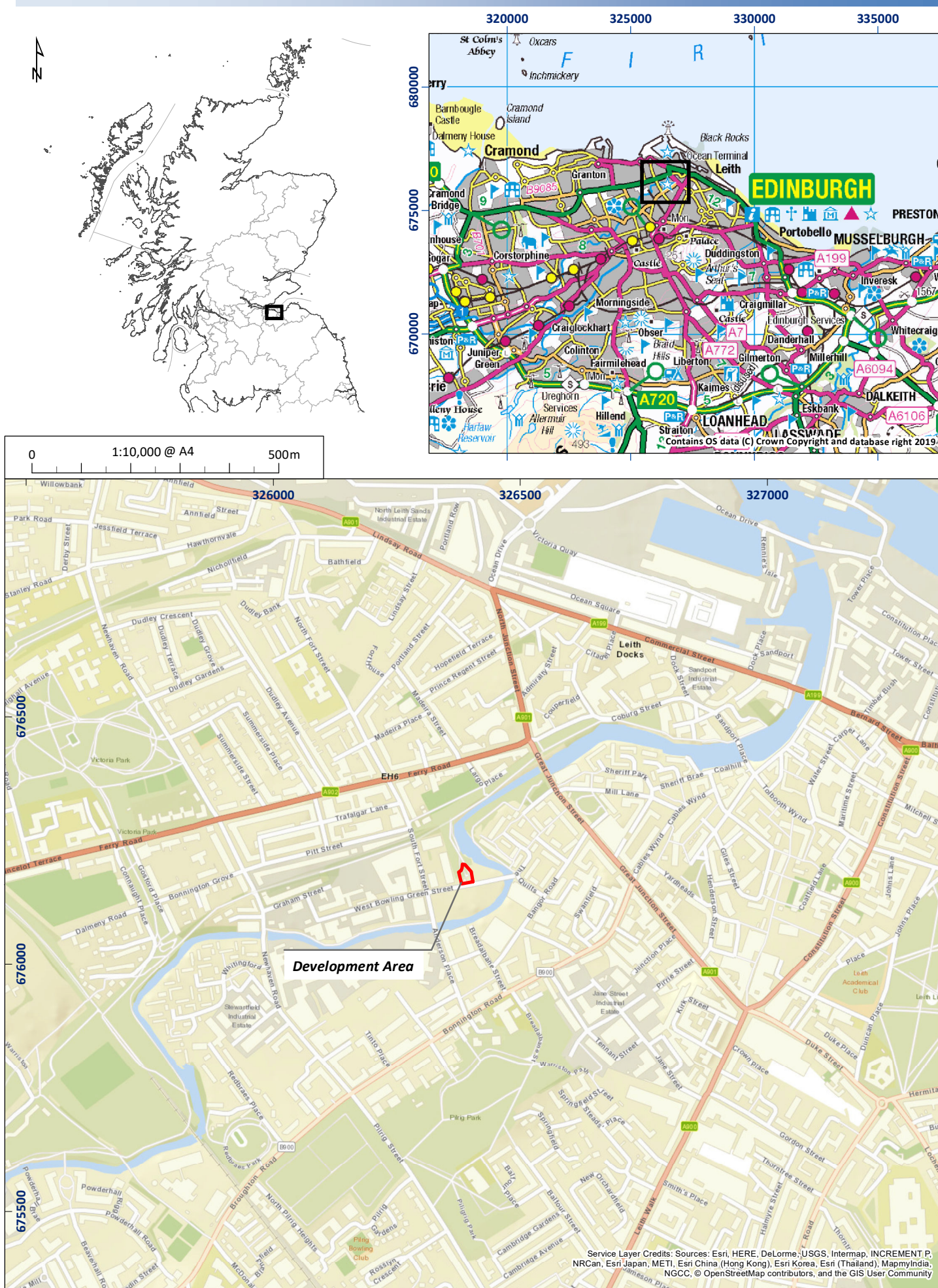


Figure 1: Site location plan



Figure 2: Plan of site

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**Land East of West Bowling Green Street,
Leith, Edinburgh:
Archaeological Monitored Topsoil Strip and
Excavation Data Structure Report**

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Photograph register

Image No.	Feature No.	Description	Taken From
1-4	-	Pre-excavation shots of site	Var
5-6	002	Working shots showing depth of infilling	N & E
7-8	003	Exposed wall [003]	N & S
9-10	005	Cobble sets [005]	S
11-16	-	Working shots of northern half of site	Var
17	-	PX shot of northern half of site	E
18	-	PX shot of northern half of site	NE
19	-	PX shot of northern half of site	N
20	-	PX shot of northern half of site	NW
21-22	-	PX shot of northern half of site	W
23	-	PX shot of northern half of site	SW
24-25	004	Close up of red brick drain with pipe	E
26	006	Concrete base [006]	E
27	005	Close up of cobbled surface [005]	E
28	-	South facing section of trench showing [001] & [002]	S
29	003	PX shot sandstone wall [003]	S
30	003	PX shot sandstone wall [003]	N
31	003	PX shot sandstone wall [003]	W
32	003	PX shot sandstone wall [003]	W
33	007	Concrete base [007]	E
34-35	-	Working shots of southern half of site	Var
36-37	-	PX shots of southern extent of site	E
38	-	PX shots of southern extent of site	E
39	009	Concrete base [009]	W
40	003	Continuation of wall [003]	W
41	003	Continuation of wall [003]	W
42	003	Wall [003] cut by concrete base [009]	N
43-48	-	PX shots of site after backfilling	Var

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context	Description
001	Paving slabs and tarmac forming surface of investigation area measuring 0.2m Tarmac/Paving slabs
002	In-fill and made ground across site comprising of type 1, red blaze and crushed yellow sandstone. Present across entirety of investigation area measuring between 1.4m to 1.6m in depth. Made ground
003	Sandstone wall comprised of angular sandstone block fragments bonded with lime mortar. Measures 0.5m wide by 0.7m deep and orientated N-S. Wall
004	'Frogged' red bricks, no makers stamp. Measure one course high and 4 courses wide orientated E-W. Likely acting as cover or access for adjacent metal pipe. Drain
005	Cobbled surface across majority of trench. Bounded by wall [003]. Cobbles are sub rounded for most part and measure on average 0.29m x 0.07m and are orientated E-W. Surface
006	Concrete foundation base. Cuts cobbled surface [005]. Measures c. 1m x 1m x 0.42m high. Concrete foundation
007	Concrete foundation base. Cuts cobbled surface [005] & [003]. Measures c. 1m x 1m x 0.38m high. Concrete foundation
008	Concrete foundation base. Cuts cobbled surface [005] & [003]. Measures c. 1m x 1m x 0.34m high. Concrete foundation
009	Concrete foundation base. Cuts cobbled surface [005] & [003]. Measures c. 1m x 1m x 0.39m high. Concrete foundation
010	Dark grey firm sandy clay of firm compaction, no inclusions. Directly under [005]. Measures 0.22m in depth across site. Setting for cobbles Deposit
011	Mid brown clay of firm compaction, no inclusions Natural

APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Description	Scale
1	Plan of site	1:20

APPENDIX 4: Finds Register

No.	Context	Description	Material Code
1	005	2 x animal bone fragments	Bo
2	010	1 x ceramic pottery (modern)	Ce
3	005	1 x knife	Me

APPENDIX 5: *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Land East of West Bowling Green Street, Leith, Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	23895
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Stuart Wilson
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Monitored Topsoil Strip and Excavation
NMRS NO(S)	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	19 th /20 th Century cobbled surface & associated sandstone wall
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 26403 76182
START DATE (this season)	11 th February 2019
END DATE (this season)	13 th February 2019
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	Archaeological Evaluation 2016 (Paton & Cook) Archaeological Evaluation 2017 (Marot & Paton)
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>AOC Archaeology completed an archaeological monitored topsoil strip and excavation on behalf of HB Villages Developments Ltd on an area designated as Land East of West Bowling Green Street.</p> <p>The works follow on from an archaeological evaluation carried out by AOC in 2017 where two separate areas of cobbles were discovered likely forming part of a yard.</p> <p>The topsoil strip comprised of an area measuring 12.11m x 8.80m and revealed a continuation of the cobbled surface extending beyond the limits of the excavation. This surface was cut by four concrete foundation bases and was bounded by a sandstone wall at the eastern extent.</p> <p>The cobbled surface and associated sandstone wall likely relate to a 18th century structure serving as a possible yard with the concrete foundations relating to the 19th century fertiliser works.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	To be confirmed
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	HB Villages Developments Ltd
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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