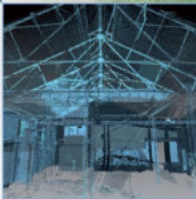


Leith Links, Edinburgh Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detecting Survey: Data Structure Report

AOC 24845
3rd May 2019



Leith Links, Edinburgh: Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detecting Survey Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust Swanston Steading 109/11 Swanston Road Edinburgh EH10 7DS
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NT 27369 75968
AOC Project No:	24845
Oasis No.	1-350509
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Date:	7th May 2019

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

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Summary

AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief and metal detecting survey in advance of the redevelopment of the play area and the erection of an outdoor gym and net unit in Leith Links, Edinburgh.

The metal detecting survey uncovered nothing of archaeological significance.

The watching brief revealed one possible linear with 19th/20th century rubble fill, orientated NE-SW. All archaeological features were preserved in situ.

No further archaeological works are considered necessary within the development area. This will need to be confirmed in writing by CECAS on behalf of the CEC.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 A programme of archaeological works consisting of a metal detecting survey and archaeological watching brief is required by Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust in advance of the redevelopment of the play area and the erection of an outdoor gym and net unit in Leith Links, Edinburgh. The need for, and scope of, the archaeological works has been determined by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) who are advised on archaeological matters by the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS).

1.1.2 The programme of archaeological works is in keeping with the policies outlined in *Scottish Planning Policy* (2014) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (2011) in order to record the extent and significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the development area.

1.2 Site location

1.2.1 The development area lies in the centre of Leith Links (Figure 1) (NT 27369 75968). Most of the work took place on the site of the existing play area. An outdoor gym will be built to the north-east of the play area and a net unit will be erected to the south.

2 Objectives

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- i)* to determine the location, character, condition, quality and date of any archaeologically significant metal artefacts within the proposed development area ;
- ii)* to safeguard the archaeological resource from any adverse impacts created by groundworks associated with the development of the play area, outdoor gym and net unit at Leith Links through the implementation of an archaeological watching brief;
- iii)* to liaise with CECAS and the client 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;
- iv)* to report on the results of the metal detecting survey and archaeological watching brief.

3 Archaeological Background

3.1 The site lies to the east of the medieval port of Leith (Figure 1). Cartographic evidence suggests that area has not been heavily developed from the end of the medieval period until the present day (Figures 2 & 3). However, two mounds within the park, locally known as Giant's Brae and Lady of

Fife's Brae, have been identified as the sites of possible gun emplacements built by the besieging English army during the 1560 siege of Leith (Figures 2 & 3).



Figure 2: Extract from the 1st Edition OS 6 inch map.

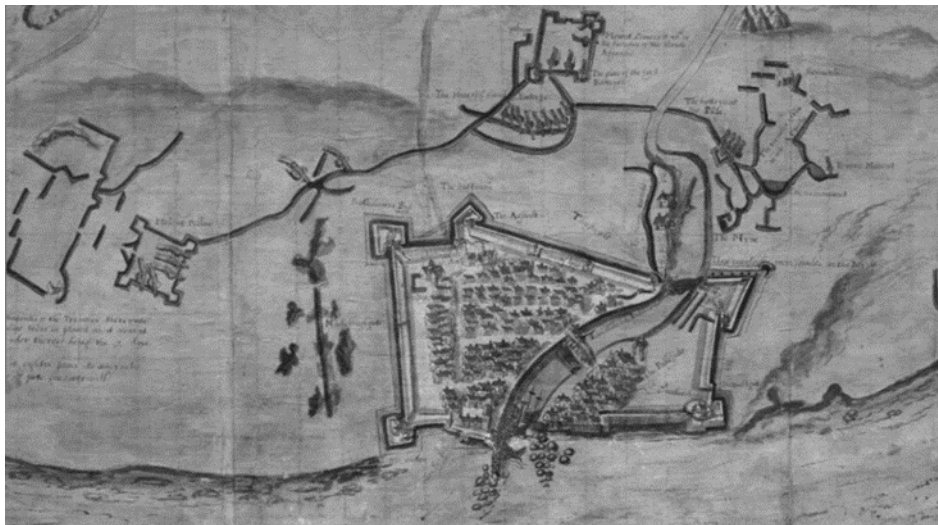


Figure 3: Extract from the Petworth Map showing the siegeworks surrounding Leith in 1560 (taken from Pollard 2008).

- 3.2 A geophysical survey was undertaken on parts of Leith Links in 2006 in order to assess the survival of earthworks associated with the 1560 siege. This showed a number of anomalies. In 2007, five trial trenches were dug across some of these anomalies (Figure 4). Nothing of archaeological interest was recorded in trenches 1-3. In trenches 4 and 5 a linear bank and a shallow ditch were recorded. It has been suggested that this might be the linear siegework depicted in a near contemporary map of the siege of Leith (Figure 5). However, no dateable artefacts were recovered from this feature and it was concluded that a larger excavation would be required to definitively determine its date and nature (Pollard 2008). Trenches 4 and 5 and the possible military earthwork

was of particular significance to this project as it appears that the linear feature will run through the site of the proposed outdoor gym (Figures 1, 4 & 5).



Figure 4: Plan of the geophysical surveys and excavations carried out in 2006-2007. Note the linear feature running WSW to ENE through both trenches 4 and 5 and the area of the proposed outdoor gym (taken from Pollard 2008).

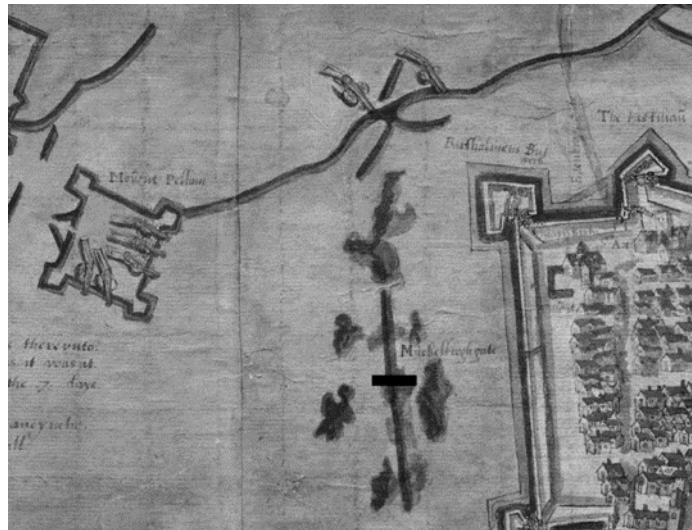


Figure 5: Extract from the Petworth Map showing the approximate location of trench 4 in Leith Links as a thick black line. Note that it transects the linear earthwork apparently related to the siege (taken from Pollard 2008).

- 3.2 In 2015 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Headland Archaeology on the excavation of cable trenches in the west of Leith Links (Dalland 2015). The excavations uncovered a number of disarticulated human bones in charnel pits (Figure 6). A stone wall (Figure 6) was also uncovered. It is known that plague victims were buried in Leith Links and it is believed that the human remains found during the watching brief died during a medieval or early modern plague epidemic (Turner Simpson et al 1981). There is no record of the wall on any ordinance survey map and it is therefore most probably pre-nineteenth century in date.

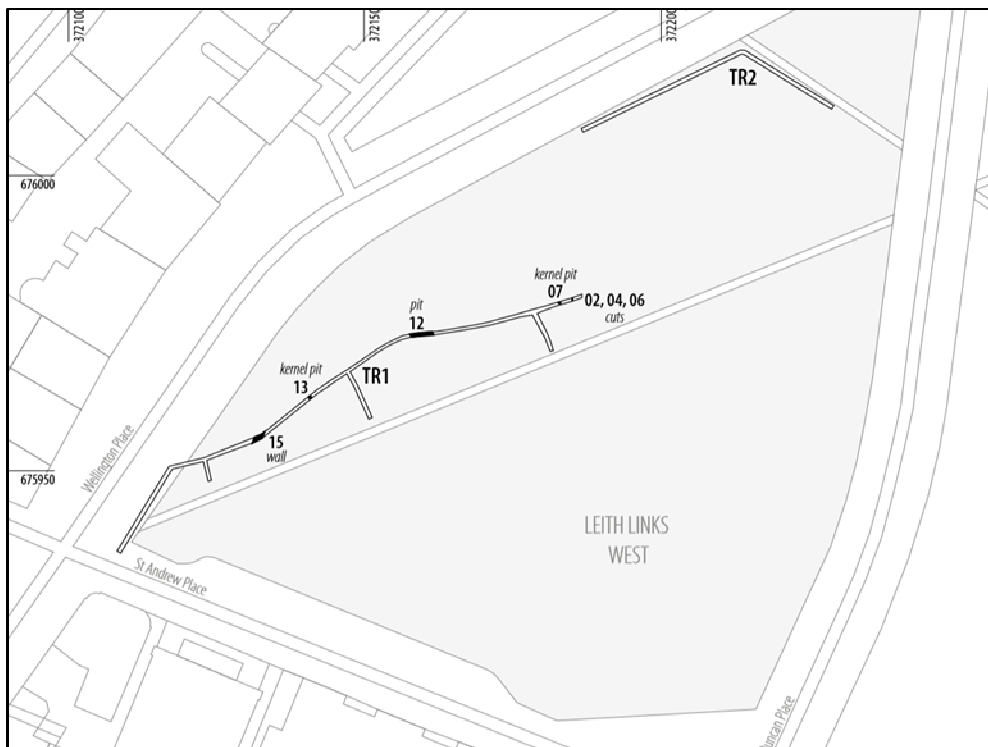


Figure 6: Plan showing results of 2015 watching brief (taken from Dalland 2015).

4 Methodology

4.1 Metal Detecting Survey

4.1.1 The metal detector survey was undertaken using Minelab x terra 705. The metal detecting area was walked in transects no greater than 2m wide. This allowed for a degree of overlap between transects to ensure ground was not missed.

4.1.2 A limited examination of artefacts was undertaken as an element of the report.

4.2 Archaeological Watching Brief

The Watching Brief involved the monitoring of the topsoil strip/test-pitting necessitated by the development and expansion of the playpark. Machine excavation was in shallow units/pits where park apparatus was to be installed and ceased on the first significant archaeological horizon, formation level or natural subsoil, whichever was encountered first. Spoil was scanned and metal detected for artefacts.

5 Results

The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken on the 2nd of May 2019. Weather conditions were fair, allowing for good visibility. The relevant data is collected below in the following appendices.

Appendix 1- Photographic Record

Appendix 2- Context Register

Appendix 3- *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland* entry

5.1 Metal Detecting Survey

- i) A number of metal objects were discovered during the metal detecting survey. All probably 19th century in date and of low archaeological significance
 - a. Robust iron bar, probably cast, broken at both ends.
 - b. A flat square cast iron plate. Function is unclear as there is no obvious signs of fixture or perforation.
 - c. Two robust bolts.
 - d. Narrow flat iron strip with 'spoon'-shaped terminal, probably the tip of a door or window latch.
- ii) On recommendation from Dawn McLaren, finds specialist at AOC Archaeology, no further work was to be undertaken on this material.
- iii) Though their presence was recorded, these finds were not retained, and their find spots were not recorded.

5.2 Archaeological Watching Brief

- 5.2.1 The watching brief consisted of the excavation of 7 test-pits and 1 topsoil area strip. All work was undertaken to the north of the existing playpark area, with the exception of Test-pit 7 which was located to the north-east.
- 5.2.2 Excavation revealed a loamy clay topsoil ranging between 0.27 m and 0.35 m across the area. A dark grey/dark brown silty sand with small stone inclusions appeared immediately beneath the topsoil running to a depth of 0.50 m to 0.60m. A natural subsoil of light brown/yellow sand was reached between 0.55 m and 0.70 m throughout. The area strip undertaken between Test-pits 4 and 5 reached a formation level of 0.25 m.
- 5.2.3 A linear cut feature [004], was observed running NE-SW 1.7 m from the NW end of the area strip to the east of the development area. The feature was 1.07 m wide and appeared immediately beneath the topsoil. The cut was steeply sloping (45 degrees) with an uneven flat base and a depth of 0.28 m. The feature extended beyond the limits of the excavation and was filled by broken brick and crushed stone mixed with sand. No artefacts were found.



Plate 1: General shot of area, pre-excavation



Plate 2: Test-pit 1



Plate 3: Test-pit 2



Plate 4: Test Pit 3



Plate 5: Test-pit 4



Plate 6: Test-pit 5



Plate 7: Test-pit 6



Plate 8: Test-pit 7



Plate 9: Area strip between Test-pits 4 and 5



Plate 10: Rubble filled linear [004], South-West facing section

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The negative linear feature [004] (Plates 9-10) was possibly a ditch later backfilled to level the ground for the park. The material of its fill suggests that it is possibly of 19th-early 20th century date.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 No further archaeological works are considered necessary within the development area. This will need to be confirmed in writing by CECAS on behalf of the CEC.

8 Bibliography

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Pollard, T. 2008 The Archaeology of the Siege of Leith, 1560, *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*,4:1-2, 159-188

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Leith Links, Edinburgh:
Watching Brief Data Structure Report

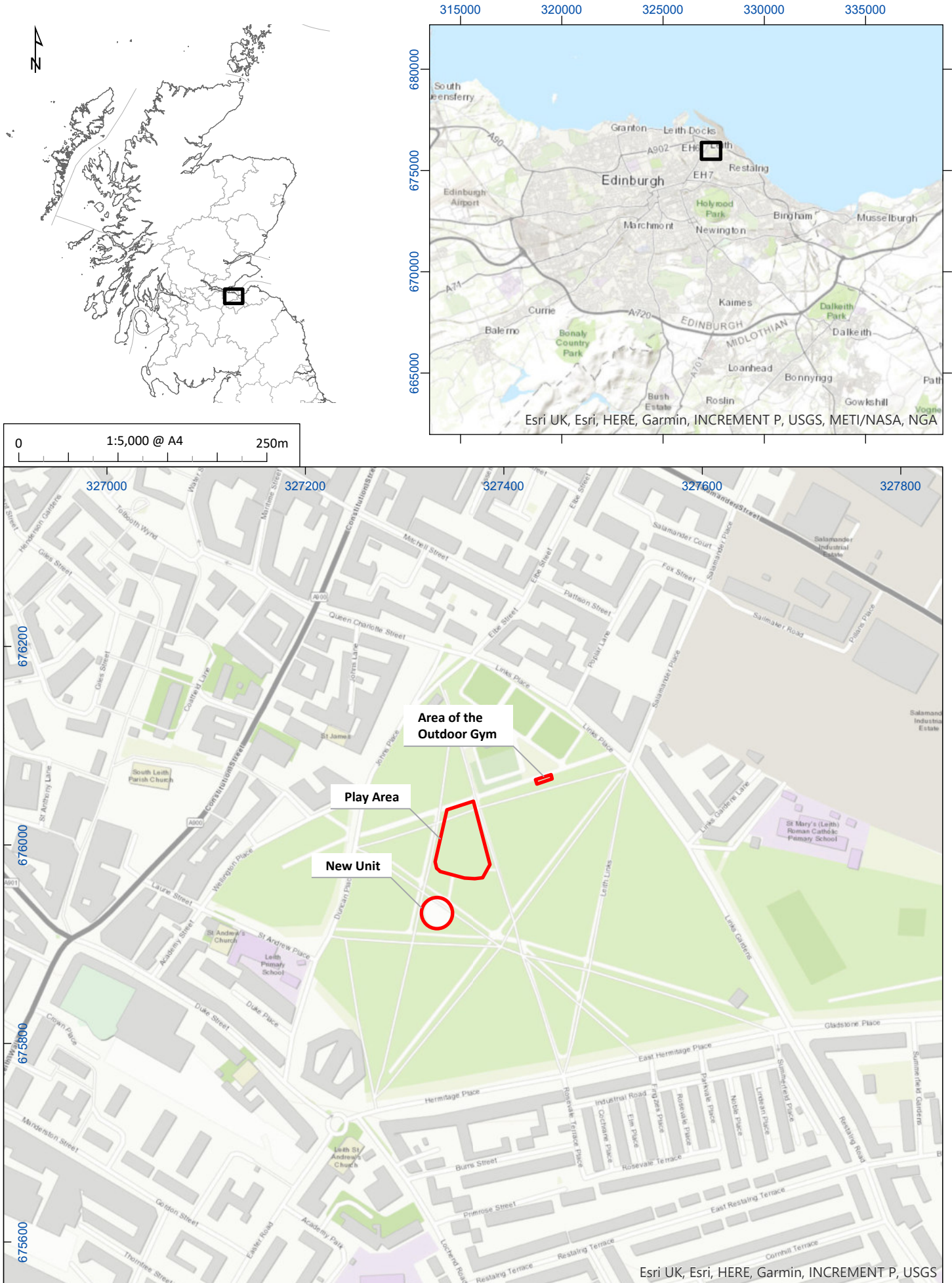


Figure 1: Site location plan

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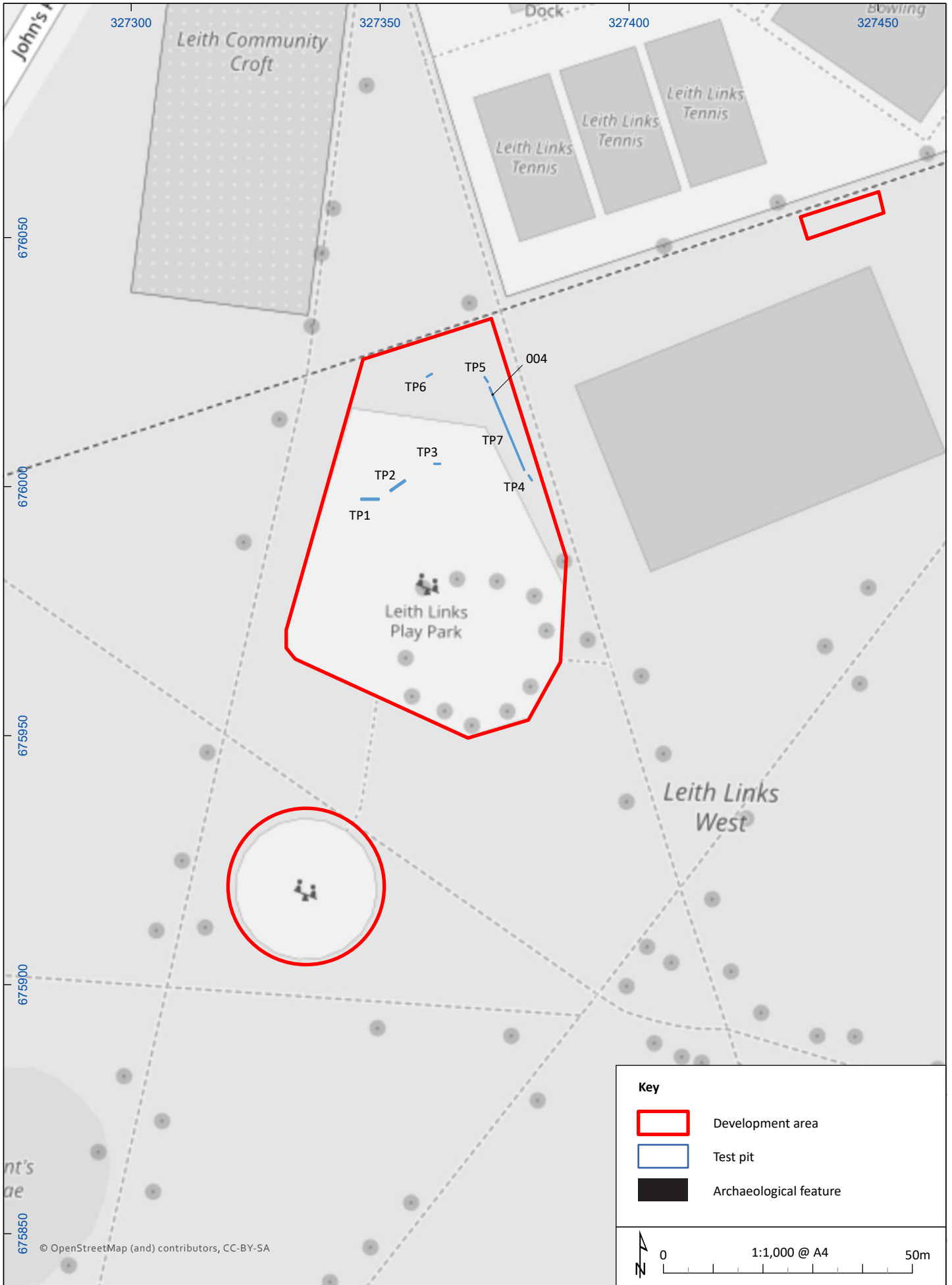


Figure 2: Test pit location plan

01/24845/DSR/01/01

**Leith Links, Edinburgh:
Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detecting Survey
Data Structure Report
Appendices**

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

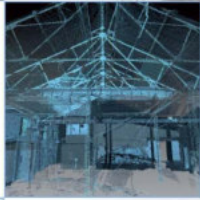
Photo	Description	From	Date
	Camera 1		
01-3	General shots of site	N	02/05/19
04	Shot of Test-pit 1	N	02/05/19
05	Shot of Test-pit 2	NW	02/05/19
06	Shot of Test-pit 3	N	02/05/19
07	Shot of Test-pit 3	S	02/05/19
08	Shot of Test-pit 4	NE	02/05/19
09	Shot of Test-pit 5	NE	02/05/19
10	Shot of Test-pit 5	SW	02/05/19
11	Shot of Test-pit 6	SW	02/05/19
12	Shot of Test-pit 6	NE	02/05/19
13-4	Shot of Test-pit 7	W	02/05/19
15-6	Area strip between Test-pits 4 and 5	NE	02/05/19
17-9	Rubble filled cut [004], South-west facing section	SW	02/05/19

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Description and Interpretation
001	Topsoil covering entirety of site Mid brown, medium to firm loamy soil (somewhat clayey) 0.27m-0.3m deep
002	Subsoil into which [004] is set Dark grey/dark brown silty sand below (001) 0.2-0.3m thick Some stone inclusions (>5%)
003	Fill of [004] 1.07m wide, 0.28m deep Cut into subsoil Running NE-SW Located at the NE entrance of road (logged on Garmin as point 083) Gently curving edges, relatively flat base 1.1m wide, 0.15m deep
004	Fill of [003] Negative linear feature Orientated North-East to South-West Steep side and flat uneven base Cut into subsoil 1.07m wide, 0.28m deep
005	Subsoil covering entire site Light brown sand below (002) No inclusions At least 0.2m thick – continues to extent of excavation

APPENDIX 3: 'DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND' (DES) REPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Leith Links, Edinburgh: Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detecting Survey
PROJECT CODE:	24845
PARISH:	Leith
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Benet Davis
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detecting Survey
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 27369 75968
START DATE (this season)	2 nd May 2019
END DATE (this season)	2 nd May 2019
PREVIOUS WORK (inc DES)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p><i>AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief and metal detecting survey in advance of the redevelopment of the play area and the erection of an outdoor gym and net unit in Leith Links, Edinburgh.</i></p> <p><i>The metal detecting survey uncovered nothing of archaeological significance.</i></p> <p><i>The watching brief revealed one possible linear with rubble 19th/20th century rubble fill, orientated NE-SW. All archaeological features were preserved in situ.</i></p> <p><i>No further archaeological works are considered necessary within the development area. This will need to be confirmed in writing by CECAS on behalf of the CEC.</i></p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	To be confirmed.
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRATIONS:	---
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	AOC Archaeology Group
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ARCHIVE LOCATION	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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