

GGRE10



396–410 GORGIE ROAD, EDINBURGH

Archaeological Evaluation

for Chamic Developments Ltd

11/02827/FUL

December 2011

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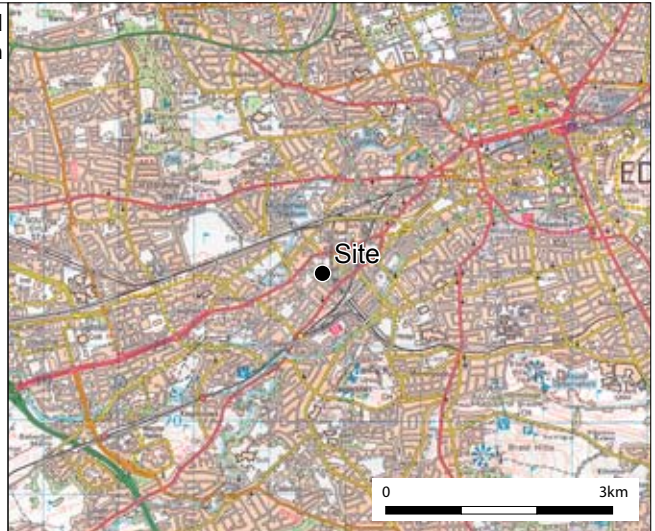
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Gorgie Road
Edinburgh



0 100km

0 3km



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Scale 1:1000 @ A4



0 50m

Illus 1
Site location

396–410 GORGIE ROAD, EDINBURGH

Archaeological Evaluation

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 396 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh in order to support an application for planning consent in advance of development for student accommodation. A total of five trenches were excavated, two of which were placed on the supposed site of Gorgie House. This was dated to the 17th century by the RCHAMS during a site visit prior to its demolition in 1937. These trenches contained the remains of a square building present on the 1855 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map that is likely to be associated with the 19th century industrial buildings to the south and west. No trace of a medieval or early post-medieval structure was located and it is possible that Gorgie House was sited to the north-east, outwith the proposed development area.

The remaining trenches uncovered the remains of a recently demolished early 19th Century building and an associated wooden structure.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Chamic Developments Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation at 396 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh on the site of a proposed student accommodation building including office and retail space. A Desk Based Assessment relating to the development had been undertaken in connection with a previous planning application for the site (Headland Archaeology Ltd Archive Report 2007 396–410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh: an archaeological appraisal).

The work was carried in order to support an application for planning consent and adhered to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Headland Archaeology and agreed by CECAS (City of Edinburgh Council Archaeological Service).

2. SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION (ILLUS 1)

The site was located on the north side of Gorgie Road (NGR NT 2248 7214; Illus 1). It was occupied by a number of commercial operations using standing buildings, car parks and yards. These included some stone-built structures, some brick buildings and modern industrial units. Most of the open areas were surfaced with tarmac and used for vehicle access and parking. Some areas were covered in hard standing and were accessible for trenching.

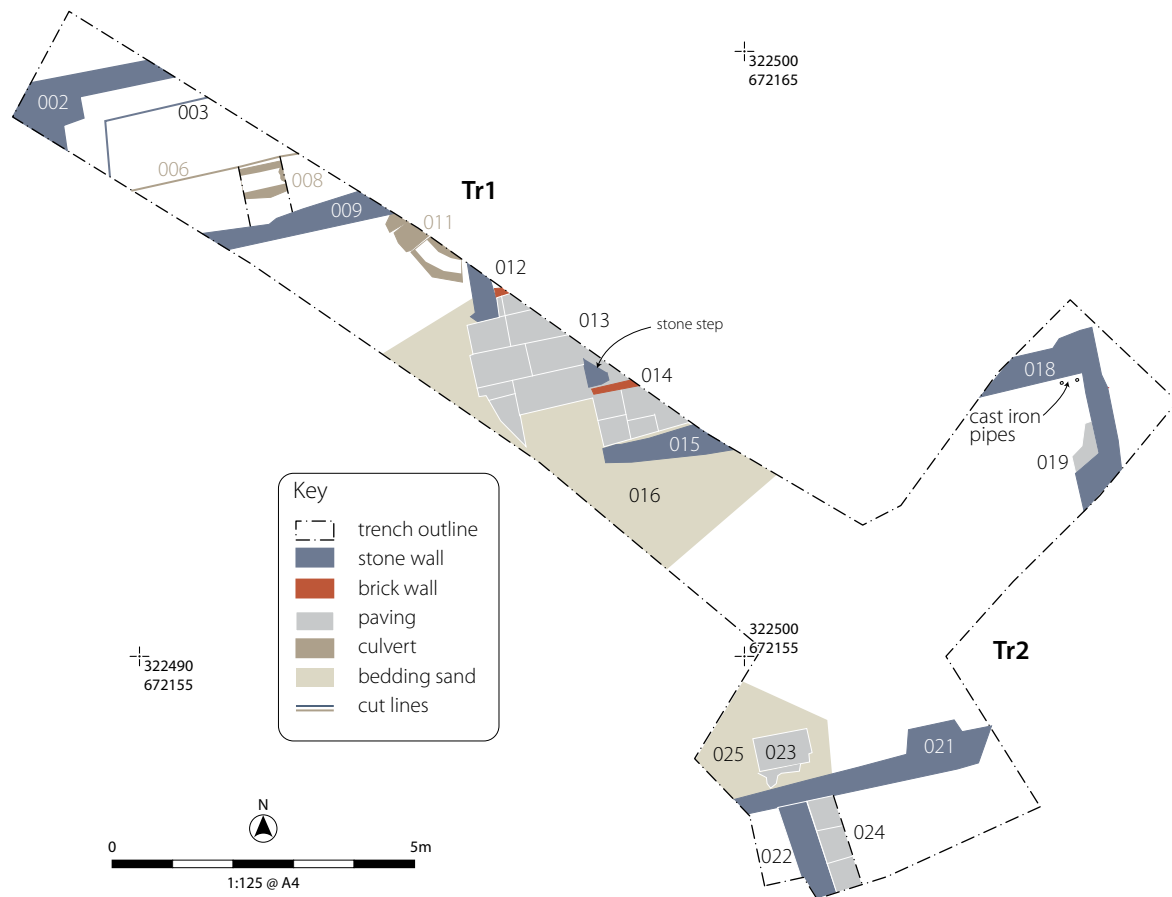
The site lies around 46m OD and is underlain by clay, sand and gravel, which are either alluvial or lacustrine in origin (British Geological Survey website; <http://www.bgs.ac.uk> & Ian Farmer Associates Borehole Records October 2007). The geological deposits were overlain by 'made ground' containing a variety of material, some of it likely to be modern in origin (brick, 'colliery' spoil); the depth of this varies from 1m in the southwest of site ('area of shallow overburden' on attached figure) to over 2m in the northwest.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

As noted above a Desk Based Assessment relating to the site had been undertaken prior to the archaeological evaluation. (Headland Archaeology Ltd Archive Report 2007 396–410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh: an archaeological appraisal). This determined that the proposed development area had a high potential of containing remains relating to the medieval, post-medieval and modern period.

Given the history of the site, and the long tradition of a mill in this location, there was potential for archaeological remains relating to the medieval period to exist on site, perhaps related to medieval milling activity and habitation.

As recorded by the Ordnance Survey and NMRS (NT27SW 8) Gorgie House was located within the proposed development area. Trenches 1 and 2 were located



Illus 2

Plan of Trenches 1 and 2

2

directly over this area. The location appears not to have been built upon since the structure was demolished in c.1937. It was not known if demolition included removing the foundations relating to this structure and these may have survived below ground. This structure was dated to the 17th century when visited by the RCHAMS prior to demolition. There is documentary evidence to suggest that a habitation may have existed on the site by the late 16th century.

The site contained some standing buildings and a former mill lade (still a functioning culvert) mapped on the first edition OS. There were also likely to be other remains related to the 19th century mill and glue works within the development area.

4. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the archaeological significance and potential of the proposed development site.

More specific aims of the evaluation include:

- Establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may have

been present within the accessible areas targeted for trenching.

- Establishing the integrity and state of preservation of archaeological features or deposits that may have been present within the accessible areas.

The results of the evaluation will be used to inform a strategy for further archaeological mitigation if appropriate.

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited in the National Monuments Record of Scotland to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

5. METHODOLOGY

Five trenches and a test pit were opened with a mechanical excavator, equipped with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. All trenches were excavated under direct archaeological supervision to remove topsoil and deposits of modern make-up and were excavated in controlled spits. Machine excavation terminated at the top of the natural geology or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first.

Excavation of archaeological deposits and features required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation continued by hand. On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that require examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools where required. The stratigraphic sequence were recorded in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits had been identified. A sufficient quantity (to adequately evaluate the site) of identified features were investigated and recorded.

Due to the presence of significant quantities of loose demolition rubble combined with deep unsupported excavation it was not possible to enter two trenches and deposits were inspected from the surface only.

All recording followed I/A Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological evaluations. All contexts, small finds and environmental samples were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. 35mm colour transparencies and prints were taken; a graduated metric scale will be clearly visible. Digital images were taken for to supplement this.

A site plan including all identified features, areas of excavation and other pertinent information was recorded digitally and accurately linked to the National Grid and heights to OD. Digital recording was undertaken using an EDM linked to a hand-held computer in order to allow data checking while in the field.

Finds were recorded by context and recorded 3-dimensionally where appropriate (*ie* where their position within a context can provide further significant information or the find is of particular significance). Any artefacts retrieved during the evaluation were cleaned using appropriate techniques and packaged and stored in accordance with First Aid for Finds (Watkinson & Neal 1998).

Deposits identified as archaeologically significant were sampled for environmental material and other finds (*eg* bone, pottery *etc*). Bulk samples were taken from selected deposits for wet sieving and floatation in order to recover any environmental material. A bulk sample was typically 40 litres.

6. RESULTS

6.1 Trenches 1 and 2 (Illus 2)

These trenches were located in the north-east part of the site on the suspected former location of Gorgie House.

Trench 1 contained a series of walls and floor surfaces as well as two small, stone-capped culverts (Illus 3). The northernmost wall [002] was oriented east to west, was



Illus 3
View of Trench 1



Illus 4
View of wall [002]



Illus 5

View of wall [009] and floor [013]

4

0.35m wide and survived to a height of 0.8m (Illus 4). It was constructed of roughly coursed, undressed sandstone bonded with lime mortar. The southern face was coated with a 20mm thick lime render with a thin, pale orange plaster skim. The wall returned to the south at the western edge of the trench. A shallow foundation cut [003] was present to the south of the wall. This was 0.8m wide and 0.15m deep.

A second, less substantial wall [009], running parallel to wall [002], was found 3.5m to the south (Illus 6). This consisted of a single course of lime-mortared undressed sandstone up to 0.4m wide. On the north side of wall [009], on the same orientation, was a stone-capped culvert [008] constructed of two parallel lines of lime mortared sandstone 0.5m wide and 0.35m high (Illus 6). Several flat stones had been placed over these to cap the culvert. The culvert had silted up and contained two fills [026 and 027]. The lower fill [027] was 0.2m of dark grey sandy clay containing lime mortar fragments, animal bone and bottle glass. A similar culvert [011] was also present to the south of wall [009] except this was oriented north-west to south-east.

To the south of wall [009] and the two culverts was a partially surviving flagstone floor [013] consisting of very regular rectangular limestone slabs that measured up to 0.9m by 0.5m with a thickness of 0.15m. A 0.9m wide

recess, formed by a narrow factory made, brick built wall [014], was present on the southern part of the floor; the floor in this area appeared to be covered in soot. The narrow brick wall also supported a 0.37m deep stone step (Illus 5).

Another east to west oriented wall [015], similar to wall [002], abutted the flagstone floor. This tapered to the west to a width of 0.25m, where there was a possible entrance. The wall widened to 0.5m to the east and stood to a height of 0.4m. It was constructed of large squared sandstone and limestone blocks bonded with lime mortar. The south face was rendered with the same 20mm thick lime render with a thin, pale orange plaster skim as wall [002].

This wall was also encountered at the east end of Trench 2 where it stood to a height of 0.8m [018]. The wall returned at the end of Trench 2 where it formed the corner of a building. A large sandstone block in the return of the wall formed a possible lintel for an opening. The remnants of a single flagstone represented the remains of a floor similar to the one in Trench 1 [013]. Two cast iron pipes were located in the corner of the building and appeared to contemporary (Illus 7).

At the west end of Trench 2 was another east to west oriented wall [021] belonging to the same building

Illus 6 ▶
Culvert [008] and [009]



◀ **Illus 7**
View of wall [018] and floor [019]

5



Illus 8 ▶
Wall [021] and [022]



6

Illus 9

Wall [021], [022] and floor [024]

represented by wall [018] (Illus 8). This was more crudely constructed with lime mortared roughly dressed sub-rounded sandstone and was 0.35m wide for most of its length. A single buttress was present and was 0.85m wide. This was roughly coursed to a height of 0.65m. The northern face of this wall, like wall [002] and [018], was rendered with a 20mm thick lime render with a thin, pale orange plaster skim. The southern face was rendered with cement harling. Abutting wall [021] was the remains of a floor represented by a single rectangular flagstone, measuring 0.9m by 0.55m by 0.1m, and a line of cobbles where the wall met the floor. This floor lay over a bedding of brown sand and crushed mortar [025] (Illus 9).

Another wall was present to the south of wall [021] and appeared to abut it. It was slightly thicker with a width of 0.5m. It was constructed of lime mortared roughly dressed sandstone. This wall was also rendered with cement harling where it formed a slightly acute corner with wall [021]. A very regular flagstone floor, similar to [013] was present on the east side of the wall.

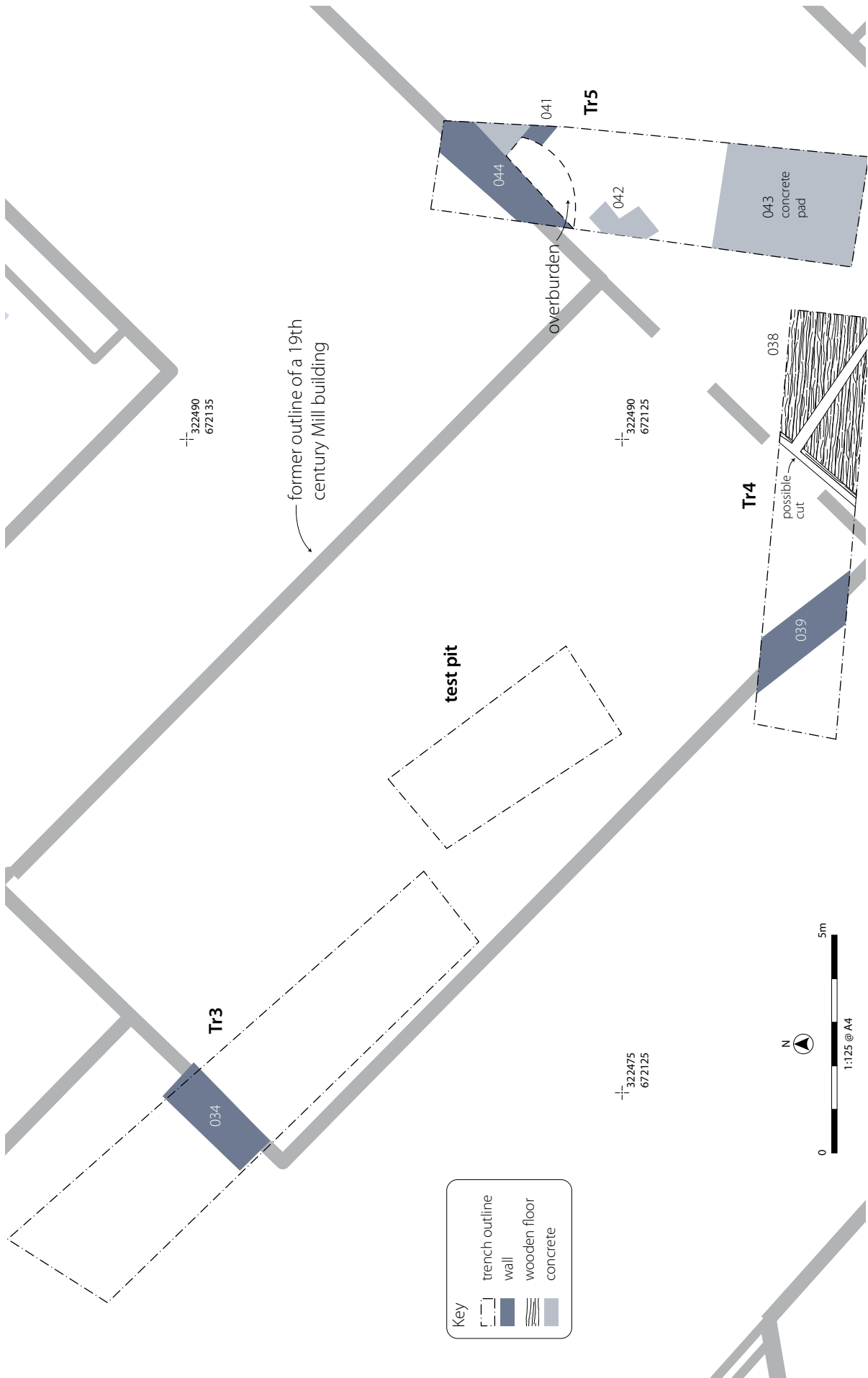
All the structures in Trenches 1 and 2 were sealed with a layer containing demolition rubble, bricks, wood and

large quantities of lime-mortar [017]. This was up to 0.6m deep. Beneath this, where no structures were present, was a very thin layer, up to 0.15m deep, of dark brown sandy clay loam likely to be truncated topsoil. This overlay the natural coarse orange gravel till.

6.2 Trenches 3, 4, 5 and Test pit (Illus 10)

These trenches were located to the south of Trenches 1 and 2 on the site of a recently demolished building. Trenches 3 and 4 were deemed too deep to enter safely and were only inspected from the present ground level.

Trench 3 contained a concrete wall at the northern end. This was 1m wide and 2m deep and oriented north-east to south-west. The trench was excavated to a depth of 2.8m. The upper deposit was 1.3m deep and consisted of demolition rubble and mortar [030]. Beneath this was a mixed sandy clay and stone deposit up to a metre deep [031]. Beneath this at a depth of c. 2.6m below the present ground surface was gravel and rounded stone deposit [032] which sealed sandy blue-grey clay [033] with large clasts of several decimetres in size that were observed to be sub-rounded to angular. It was initially thought that this



Illus 10
Plan of Trenches 3, 4, 5 and Test Pit



Illus 11

Wooden planks at base of Trench 4

deposit might be fill within a former mill lade and it was examined by a palaeo-environmental archaeologist (Scott Timpany); the results of this analysis is given below.

8 A sample of the clay was taken for assessment from a test pit and was found to contain a sparse quantity of waterlogged plant remains together with frequent gravels (many sub-angular to angular) and some fossil material. The plant remains recovered were *Juncus* sp. (rush sp.) fruits, a possible cotton grass (*Eriophorum* sp.) spindle, moss indet. leaf and a vernal sandwort (*Minutia verna*) seed. This plant assemblage indicates wet stony ground was present and together with the gravels, which indicate frost-shatter rather than water erosion, would suggest this deposit is more likely to be of Late Glacial/Early Holocene date rather than relating to a mill lade deposit.

Trench 4 and the test pit mentioned above contained the same sequence of rubble and made ground as Trench 3. A north-west to south-east oriented concrete wall of identical construction to the wall in Trench 3 was present at the west end of Trench 4. At the base of Trench 4, 2.3m below present ground surface were two rectangular areas of wooden planking with a narrow division between them (Illus 11). These had been set into the sandy blue-grey clay encountered at the base of Trenches 3 and the test pit. The planks were 0.15m wide and 0.05m thick. They were held in place by square section iron nails. It was not possible to investigate these features further for safety reasons. The structure formed by these planks respected the line of the wall present at the north end of Trench 5 [044] and it is likely that they are contemporary.

Trench 5 contained a south-west to north-east oriented concrete wall similar to those in Trench 3 and 4. A

narrow sandstone wall [041] that ran perpendicular to the concrete wall was present at a lower level (c 1.3m below the present ground surface). A cement slab floor was associated with this wall. The presence of a large concrete pad in the southern half of Trench 5 impeded excavation and glacial deposits were not reached.

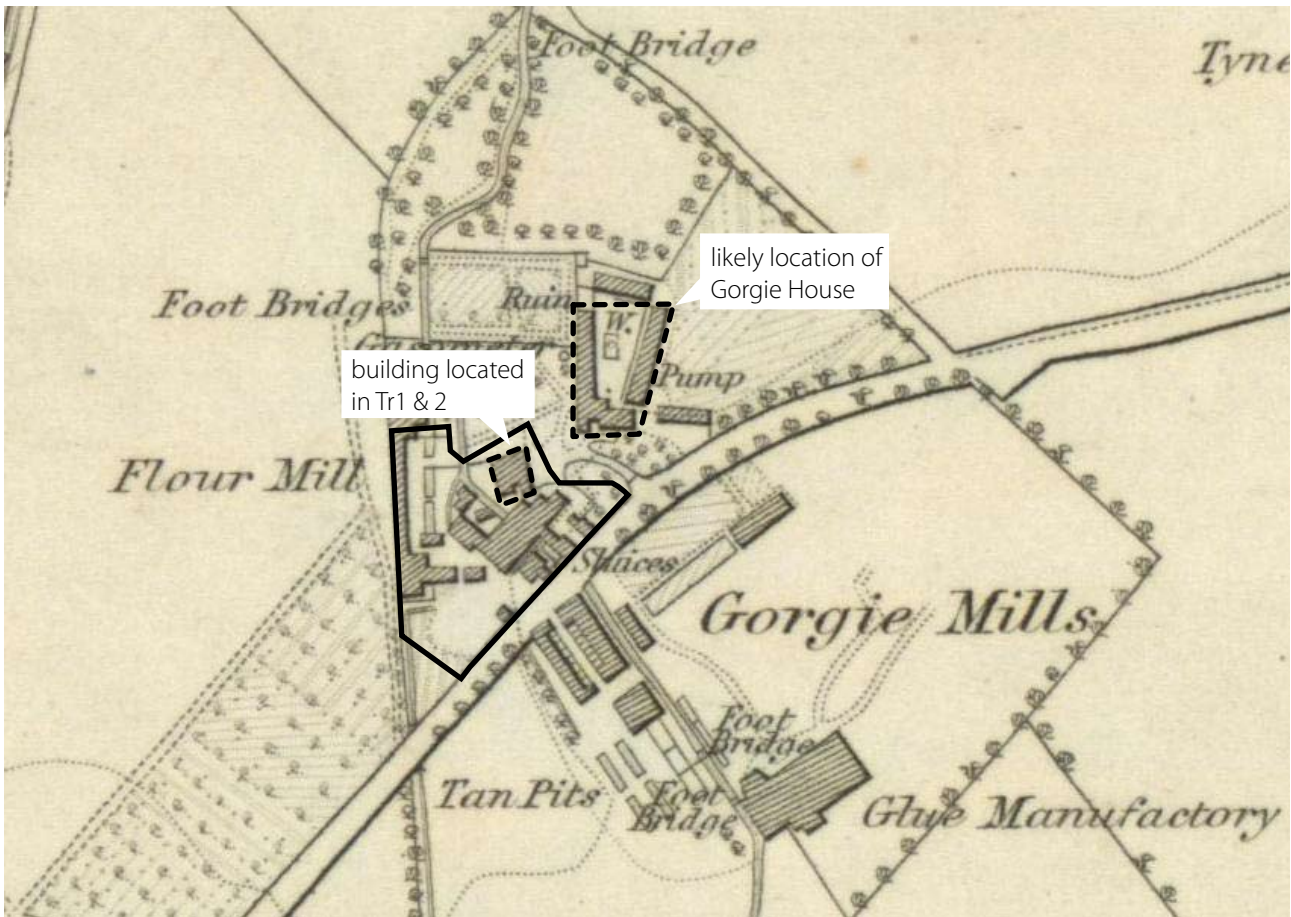
6.3 Finds

The finds amounted to a small assemblage of pottery, glass and structural remains. They were all modern, probably of 19th and 20th century date, though some individual sherds may be a little earlier. Glass finds included a number of cylindrical hand finished wine bottles, of late 18th or early 19th century date. The pottery included various types of table and storage wares, including a piece of decorated Chinese porcelain and transfer printed wares. The finds from rubble deposit [017] included a piece of stained glass window, probably from a decorative window light and pieces of decorative hearth tile. Both are common types of fitting in late 19th and early 20th century Edinburgh tenements. The nail from deposit [038] was found in a block of water logged wood. It is not closely datable, but appears to be hand-wrought rather than machine made and thus is likely to predate the 20th century. The finds assemblage, while containing domestic items, is not a secure indicator of the building's function as this type of material is commonplace in made ground in areas close to settlement. It is possible that it represents refuse from the workers in an industrial building.

7. DISCUSSION

The series of walls and floors encountered in Trenches 1 and 2 represent the remains of a building present on the 1855 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map within a complex of buildings known as 'Gorgie Mills' (Illus 12). The artefactual assemblage contains nothing inconsistent with a 19th century date for this structure.

This cartographic evidence suggests an industrial rather than domestic function for this building, but it could conceivably have been a residence in the complex. The building lies on the former location of Gorgie House as marked on the Ordnance Survey maps from 1905. There was no artefactual evidence to suggest a medieval or indeed early post-medieval origin for the building, despite the survival of contemporary floor surfaces. There was also no evidence for any such activity through the presence of residual artefacts in former topsoil that survived beneath the building.



Illus 12

1855 OS 1st Edition showing building in Trenches 1 and 2

It is possible that some discrepancy has occurred marking the location of Gorgie House as the record made by the RCHAMS (NMRS NT27 SW 8) would put it in the area covered by Trenches 1 and 2. The few descriptions that survive of Gorgie House suggest it was an ‘L’ shaped building, which was added to in the 18th century; creating an oblong structure, with a new eastern frontage added in the 19th century (Smith 1928: 279). This description seems a better fit with the ground plan of buildings present on the 1855 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map to the north-east of the development area (Illus 12) and this is perhaps an equally likely location for Gorgie House.

The walls encountered in Trenches 3, 4 and 5 belonged to the recently demolished 19th century mill. The wooden structure, formed by a series of planks, respects the line of these walls and is likely to be contemporary with this building. The handmade nature of the nails suggest an early 19th century date for the structure indicating they may be associated with the building’s first use. The evaluation uncovered no evidence of an earlier phase of mill.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

Smith, J 1928 ‘Notes on the Lands and Manor House of Gorgie, Edinburgh’, *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 62, 1927–8, 277–80.

8.2 Cartographic sources

1855 Ordnance Survey *Edinburghshire*, 6” to 1 mile, sheet 6, 1855.

1905 Ordnance Survey *Edinburghshire*, 1:2500 scale map, sheet III.10, 1905

8.3 National Monuments Record of Scotland

NT27SW 8 *Gorgie House*



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site registers

Context register

Context no.	Area	Description
001	TR1	Black, coal and mortar-rich levelling deposit to the north of wall 002
002	TR1	E-W oriented wall. Stone and lime-mortar with lime mortar render
003	TR1	Foundation cut for wall 002
004	TR1	Fill of foundation cut 003
005	TR1	Compact silty clay-possible garden soil
006	TR1	Construction cut for culvert 008
007	TR1	Fill of construction cut 006
008	TR1	Stone and lime-mortared stone-capped culvert
009	TR1	E-W oriented wall. Stone and lime-mortared
010	TR1	Compact silty clay containing demolition rubble and mortar
011	TR1	Stone and lime-mortared stone-capped culvert
012	TR1	Brick-built wall
013	TR1	Flagstone floor
014	TR1	Possible step. Stone built over brick
015	TR1	E-W oriented wall. Stone and lime-mortared widens to the east.
016	TR1	Bedding sand for flagstone floor 013
017	TR1	Rubble and mortar levelling deposit
018	TR2	Wall, stone-built and lime mortared. Forms corner of building.
019	TR2	Remains of a flagstone floor associated with wall 018
020	TR2	Bedding sand for flagstone floor 019
021	TR2	NW-SE oriented lime-mortared stone wall
022	TR2	SW-NE oriented lime-mortared stone wall
023	TR2	Flagstone floor associated with wall 021
024	TR2	Flagstone floor associated with wall 022
025	TR2	Bedding sand for flagstone floor 023
026	TR1	Grey-brown sandy silt lower fill of culvert 008
027	TR1	Dark grey sandy silt upper fill of culvert 008
028	TR1	Grey-brown sandy silt fill of culvert 011
029	TR3	Modern rubble levelling deposit
030	TR3	Rubble and mortar levelling deposit

Context no.	Area	Description
031	TR3	Made ground- mixed sandy clay and rubble levelling
032	TR3	Gravel and rounded stone deposit
033	TR3	Grey sandy clay
034	TR3	E-W oriented concrete wall
035	TR4	Modern rubble levelling deposit
036	TR4	Made ground- mixed sandy clay and rubble levelling
037	TR4	Grey-blue sandy clay
038	TR4	Wooden plank structure at the base of Trench 4
039	TR4	E-W oriented concrete wall
040	TR5	Modern rubble levelling deposit
041	TR5	N-S oriented stone wall
042	TR5	Cement flags associated with wall 041
043	TR5	Concrete pad/floor

Photographic register

Photo no.	Facing	Description
001	–	ID shot
002	SE	Trench 3- view of the north end of trench showing made ground
003	SW	Trench 3- view of the north end of trench showing made ground and concrete wall
004	N	Trench 3- view of the north end of trench showing made ground
005	E	Trench 3-section
006	SE	Trench 4 showing concrete wall
007	S	Trench 4- wooden planks at the base of the trench
008	NE	Trench 5- concrete pad (foreground) and wall
009	S	Trench 5 showing made ground
010	SW	Trench 5- concrete wall and floor (foreground)
011	N	Trench 5- section
012	NE	Trench 2- view of wall 018
013	E	Trench 2- view of wall 018
014	S	Trench 2- view of wall 018 and floor 019
015	SE	Trench 2- view of wall 018 and floor 019
016	NW	Trench 2- view of wall 021 and 022
017	NW	Trench 2- view of wall 022 and floor 024
018	SE	Trench 2- view of wall 021 and 022

Photo no.	Facing	Description
019	S	Trench 2- view of floor 023 and wall 021 and 022
020	SW	Trench 2- detail of floor 023
021	S	Trench 2- general view of walls 021, 022 and floor 023
022	SE	Trench 1- view of culvert 008 and cut 006
023	NW	Trench 1- view of culvert 008
024	SE	Trench 1- view of wall 002
025	NW	Trench 1- view of wall 002 showing lime render and return
026	N	Trench 1- south facing section of wall 009
027	E	Trench 1- view of culvert 011
028	E	Trench 1- view of brick and stone corner structure 012
029	SE	Trench 1- view of flagstone floor 013
030	E	Trench 1- view of step 014
031	N	Trench 1- view of wall 015 and bedding sand 016
032	E	Trench 1- section showing demolition rubble 017
033	W	Trench 1- view of wall continuing from 013
034	W	Trench 1- section through culvert 008 showing fills 026 and 027
035	NE	Trench 1- post excavation view of culvert 011
036	N	Trench 1- general view
037	NW	Trench 2- general view of walls 021, 022 and floor 023
038	SE	Trench 2- general view of wall 018
039	S	Trench 1- general view
040	SE	Trench 1- general view
041	SE	Trench 1- general view of floor 013 and brick and stone structure 015
042	SE	General view of area containing Trenches 1 and 2



Appendix 2 – Finds catalogue

Context no.	Material	Qty	Object	Description	Spot Date	Period
10	Glass	4	Bottle	green sherds, including case bottle body sherd	18th/19th?	Mod
17	CBM	3	Wall Tiles	wall and/or hearth tiles, transfer printed blue design, moulded yellow, plain dark red	m.19th-e.20th	Mod
17	Glass	13	Bottle	various base and neck sherds from cylindrical bottles, also natural sherd with embossed lettering	e-L.19th	Mod
17	Lead & Glass	1	Window	fragment of stained glass window, appears to be rectangular border design, some red and pale yellow fields remaining		Mod
17	Pottery (Mod)	8	Various	stoneware, ironstone, porcelain, black trans printed, one hand coloured	m.19th-m.20th	Mod
27	Glass	3	Bottle	green sherds, cylindrical bottles, one hand finished base sherd	L.18th/e.19th	Mod
27	Pottery (Mod)	1	Whiteware	blue glazed	L.18th-20th	Mod
28	Glass	2	Bottle	green sherds	18th-20th	Mod
28	Pottery (Mod)	1	Various	?Chinese porcelain saucer, hand painted in blue	18th?	Mod
36	CBM	1	Brick	frogged brick, with stamped mark, partially obscured by mortar	L.19th/20th	Mod
38	Iron	1	Nail	nail found in situ in block of waterlogged wood, square sectioned shaft, small ?square head		

Appendix 3 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	396–410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	GGRE10
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Ross Murray
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	NT27SW 8
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	19th century industrial/residential buildings
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR	NT 2248 7214
START DATE (this season)	1st November 2011
END DATE (this season)	4th November 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	–
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 396 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh in order to support an application for planning consent in advance of development for student accommodation. A total of five trenches were excavated, two of which were placed on the supposed site of Gorgie House. This was dated to the 17th century by the RCHAMS during a site visit prior to its demolition in 1937. These trenches contained the remains of a square building present on the 1855 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map that is likely to be associated with the 19th century industrial buildings to the south and west. No trace of a medieval or early post-medieval structure was located and it is possible that Gorgie House was sited to the north-east, outwith the proposed development area.</p> <p>The remaining trenches uncovered the remains of a recently demolished early 19th Century building and an associated wooden structure.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Yes
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	<p>Archive to be deposited at RCAHMS.</p> <p>Reports to be deposited at RCAHMS and CECAS.</p>
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Chamic Developments Ltd
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