

OMLE12



OLD MILL LANE EDINBURGH

Archaeological Trial Trenching

for Archicentre on behalf of Mrs Jean Ghaznawi

11/01388/FUL

April 2012



HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd



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HA Job no.: OMLE12

NGR: NT 27333 70780

Parish: Liberton

Council: City of Edinburgh

OASIS ref.: headland1-122776

Archive will be deposited with RCAHMS

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Fieldwork

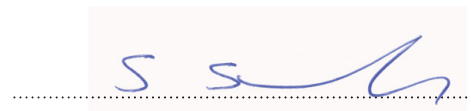
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Illus 1

Site location

OLD MILL LANE EDINBURGH

Archaeological Trial Trenching

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Archicentre on behalf of Mrs Jean Ghaznawi to undertake a programme of trial trenching at 4 Old Mill Lane, Edinburgh. The works were designed in response to a planning condition set by City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service. A 1950s house on the site had formerly burned down and a replacement was under construction at the time of the fieldwork. The site lies immediately NE of the settlement of Nether Liberton, which was recorded as being in existence in the late 14th century.

Four trenches were excavated around the new structure to test for the existence of archaeologically significant features. A single isolated cut was encountered to the south of the building. It is assumed to be a refuse pit, most likely relating to the construction of the 1950s house. No further remains were encountered and geological sand and gravels were found below 0.25–0.7m of compact stony clay/silt topsoil. A section of boundary wall to the SE of the site may date from the early 20th century or possibly earlier and was photographed as part of the works.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Mrs Jean Ghaznawi to undertake a programme of trial trenching at 4 Old Mill Lane, Edinburgh (Illus 1; NT 27333 70780). The works were designed in response to a planning condition set by City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS, planning application reference 11/01388/FUL). A former 1950s house on the site had burned down and a replacement was under construction at the time of the fieldwork.

The site lies within an area considered to be of archaeological and historical importance, and had potential to contain remains relating to the medieval and post-medieval periods. The site lies adjacent to Nether Liberton, a settlement recorded as being in existence from the late 14th century. Mid-19th century map evidence (Ordnance Survey 1855) does not show any structures within the development area except for a boundary wall running along the SE edge of the site. There was potential for earlier structures or remains of agricultural/domestic activity.

The planning condition had specified that a programme of archaeological works be agreed prior to development

work commencing. This condition had been overlooked and construction of the new house was well underway before Headland Archaeology was engaged to agree a programme of works and produce a specification (a Written Scheme of Investigation; WSI). In a meeting held with CECAS and the project architect, it was agreed to excavate four trial trenches around the perimeter of the new building to assess whether any archaeological remains were likely to have been disturbed by the development works. The scope of this work was set out in a WSI submitted and agreed with CECAS.

2. OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the mitigation works was to identify the impact the development may have had on any archaeological features or deposits that may have been present within the footprint of the house. More specific aims of the evaluation include:

- Establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the areas targeted for trenching and the potential survival of any features or deposits that may extend below the footprint of the newly constructed building.



Illus 2
Trench 1, facing S



Illus 3
Trench 2, facing E

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

The results of the works were to inform a strategy for further archaeological mitigation as appropriate. The resulting archive has been organised and will be deposited in the National Monuments Record of Scotland to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

2



Illus 4
Trench 3, facing S

3. METHODOLOGY

The trenches were excavated with a back-acting excavator under direct archaeological supervision down to clean geological deposits.

All recording was undertaken according to IfA standards and guidance. All contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was undertaken on *proforma* record cards. Trenches were planned at 1:50. The site has been related to the National Grid. Black and White slide and digital photographs were taken and recorded in a photographic register. Record shots of archaeological contexts included a metric scale. Site registers can be found in Appendix 1. Additional photographs were taken of the section of boundary wall at the SE edge of the site (see Illus 1).

A summary report has been prepared for submission to Discovery and Excavation in Scotland (DES) a copy of which is found in Appendix 2 and the project has also been recorded on the OASIS database (headland1-122776).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Trenches 1–3 (2x1m, 5x1m and 6x1m respectively, Illus 2–4)

These trenches were located to the W, N and E of the new building. Excavation revealed orange geological sand and gravel [005] at a depth of 0.25–0.7m (deepest to the E of the site), sealed by a compact dark brown stony topsoil [004]. The interface between the two deposits was somewhat diffuse. No archaeologically significant remains were encountered.

4.2 Trench 4 (2x1m)

Trench 4 was located to the S of the new building, adjacent to the existing garage. Geological sand and gravel [005] was encountered at a depth of 0.7m, sealed by stony topsoil [004] as in the other trenches. A shallow cut [003] (up to 0.2m deep) was encountered at the S end (Illus 5); it was filled with a loose mixture of topsoil, ash and lumps of orange clay [001]. Several flat stones [002] were located at the base of the cut and excavation established they were not structural. No dating evidence was retrieved.



Illus 5

Trench 4, facing E, showing stone-filled cut [003]

5. DISCUSSION

The single isolated pit [003] in Trench 4 is likely to relate to disposal of domestic, garden or building waste. No direct dating evidence was recovered, but in the absence of any other evidence it seems most likely that this feature is associated with the development or use of the site in the modern period. Certainly the fill was loose, and this provides some weak evidence that it had not been present for a sufficient amount of time to become compacted. It is concluded that there is no evidence to suggest that the development had disturbed any remains of archaeological significance.

The only feature visible on the site that is likely to pre-date the former 1950s house is the boundary wall on the SE side (Illus 6). This lies on the line of a boundary visible on the 1855 OS 6 inch map, though it may have been modified at the turn of the 20th century to become the northern end of a narrow rectangular structure visible on the 1909 map (Ordnance Survey 1909). Several photographs of the wall were taken and will be included in the site archive.

6. REFERENCES

- Hendy, M 2011 *New Dwelling at 4 Old Mill Lane, Edinburgh – Site Desk Top Study*, Penicuik.
 1855 Ordnance Survey (6 inch 1st Edition) *Edinburghshire*, Sheet 6.
 1909 Ordnance Survey (6 inch 3rd Edition) *Edinburghshire*, Sheet III.SE.



Illus 6

Eastern end of possible 19th century wall, looking S



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site registers

Context register

| Context no. | Area | Description |
|-------------|------|--|
| 001 | Tr 4 | Mixed backfill consisting of topsoil, ashy material, orange clay and medium stones. Fill of cut [003] 1.5x0.8m visible, 0.1m deep. |
| 002 | Tr 4 | Several fairly flat stones lying in base of cut [003]. Measure up to 0.7x0.5x0.15, do not appear structural. |
| 003 | Tr 4 | Shallow cut, 1.5x0.8m visible, up to 0.2m deep. Unclear break of slope, shallow sides, base unseen. Probably waste pit. |
| 004 | all | Dark brown, fairly compact stony sandy silt. Garden Soil/Topsoil. |
| 005 | all | Orange sandy gravel. Geological deposit. |

Photographic register

| Photo no. | Direction | Description |
|-----------|-----------|--|
| 001 | – | ID shot |
| 002 | S | Tr 1 pre-excavation |
| 003 | NE | Tr 2 pre-excavation |
| 004 | S | Tr 1 record shot |
| 005 | E | Tr 2 record shot |
| 006 | N | Tr 2 section |
| 007 | W | Tr 4 stony cut [003] pre-excavation |
| 008 | S | Tr 3 record shot |
| 009 | W | Tr 4 stony cut [003] exposed and excavated |
| 010 | S | SE boundary wall |
| 011 | SE | SE boundary wall |
| 012 | S | SE boundary wall |
| 013 | S | SE boundary wall |
| 014 | NE | Tr 3 backfilled |
| 015 | SE | Tr 1 backfilled |
| 016 | E | Tr 2 backfilled |

Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland entry

| | |
|--|---|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | City of Edinburgh Council |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | 4 Old Mill Lane, Edinburgh |
| PROJECT CODE: | OMLE12-001 |
| PARISH: | Edinburgh |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S): | Jürgen van Wessel |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | Headland Archaeology Ltd |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Trial Trenching |
| NMRS NO(S): | – |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | – |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | None |
| NGR: | NT 27333 70780 |
| START DATE (this season): | 30th March 2012 |
| END DATE (this season): | 30th March 2012 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.): | None |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | <p>Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Archicentre on behalf of Mrs Jean Ghaznawi to undertake a programme of trial trenching at 4 Old Mill Lane, Edinburgh. The works were designed in response to a planning condition set by City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service. A 1950s house on the site had formerly burned down and a replacement was under construction at the time of the fieldwork. The site lies immediately NE of the settlement of Nether Liberton, which was recorded as being in existence in the late 14th century.</p> <p>Four trenches were excavated around the new structure to test for the existence of archaeologically significant features. A single isolated cut was encountered to the south of the building. It is assumed to be a refuse pit, most likely relating to the construction of the 1950s house. No further remains were encountered and geological sand and gravels were found below 0.25-0.7m of compact stony clay/silt topsoil. A section of boundary wall to the SE of the site may date from the early 20th century or possibly earlier and was photographed as part of the works.</p> |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | None |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited) | Archive to be deposited at RCAHMS. Reports to be deposited at RCAHMS and CECAS. |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Archicentre on behalf of Mrs Jean Ghaznawi |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: | Headland Archaeology Ltd, 13 Jane St, Edinburgh. EH6 5HE |
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