

CSLE13/001



CONSTITUTION STREET IMPROVEMENTS, LEITH

Watching brief

for The City of Edinburgh Council

July 2013

CONSTITUTION STREET, LEITH, EDINBURGH

Watching brief

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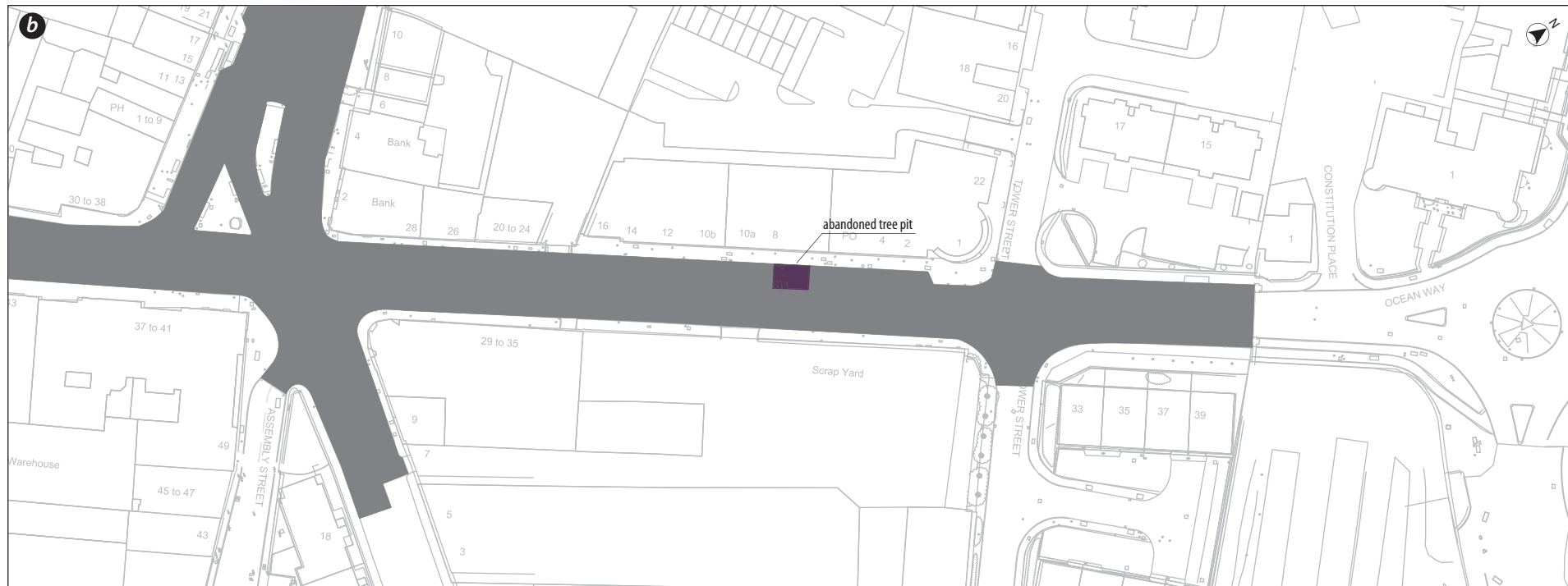
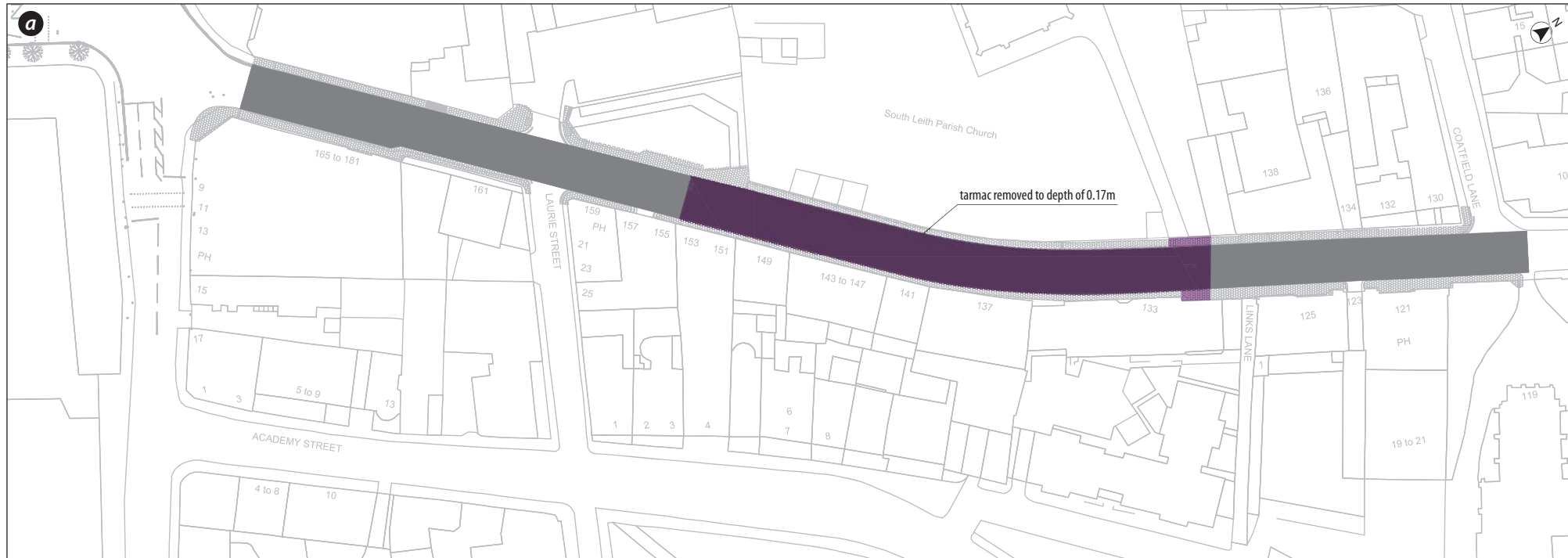
July 2013

HA Job no.:	CSLE13/ 001
HAS no.:	-
NGR:	NT 269 759
Parish:	City of Edinburgh
Council:	City of Edinburgh Council
OASIS ref.:	headland1-151646
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Archive will be deposited with:	RCAHMS

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION	1
3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES	1
4 METHODOLOGY	2
4.1	Site works	2
4.2	Recording.....	2
4.3	Reporting and Archives.....	2
5 RESULTS.....	2
5.1	Conclusion	3
6 REFERENCES.....	3
6.1	Bibliographic sources.....	3
7 APPENDICES	4
7.1	Appendix 1 – Site registers	4
7.2	Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland entry	6



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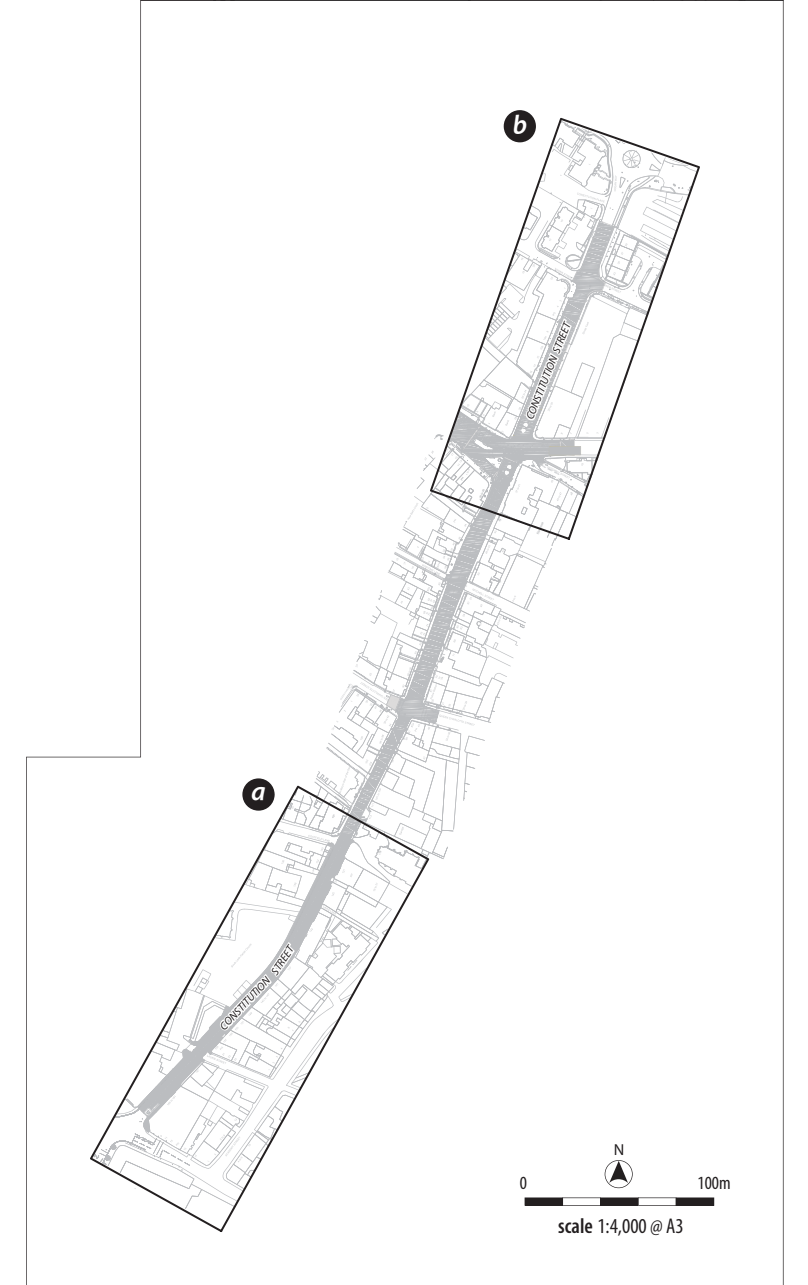
- areas for resurfacing / improvements
- monitored



scale 1:800 @ A3



Constitution Street
Leith
Edinburgh



0 100m
scale 1:4,000 @ A3

Illus 1
Site location

CONSTITUTION STREET IMPROVEMENTS, LEITH, EDINBURGH

Watching brief

Abstract/Summary –Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief on improvement works undertaken on Constitution Street Leith, Edinburgh. The work involved road and footway resurfacing, alterations to kerb lines and gully repairs. The original design included the planting of trees, however, these were abandoned due to the presence of services. Excavation for road resurfacing generally did not exceed 0.17m and therefore no archaeological remains were encountered during the works.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by The City of Edinburgh Council to undertake a programme of archaeological works in connection with street improvement works at Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh. The improvements included relaying footways, alterations to kerb lines, gully repairs, the installation of tree pits and installation of a new bus stop.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was agreed with the City of Edinburgh Archaeological Services (CECAS) and prepared by Headland Archaeology (April 2013) on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council; setting out the proposed strategy for archaeological mitigation.

The WSI was submitted to and agreed with CECAS who advise the Local Planning Authority on archaeological matters. This report details the results of the work.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located between Duke Street and Dock Gates (NGR NT 269 759 and NT 272 764) (Illus 1).

The Constitution improvement consisted of three phases/ sections of works- with sections from Baltic Street to Dock Gates, Duke Street to Coatfield lane and Coatfield Lane to Baltic Street. The site is around 9m aOD and is underlain by windblown sand and raised beach deposits (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

Constitution Street lies within a sensitive archaeological area due to its proximity to the early medieval core of Leith and later defences. During mitigation works associated with the Edinburgh Trams project, articulated burials and a defensive ditch relating to the 16th century fortification of Leith were discovered across Constitution Street to the east of South Leith Parish Church's graveyard. A road surface on an earlier route into Leith consisting of a series of cobbled and earthen surfaces interleaved with midden deposits were discovered at the junction of Queen Charlotte Street and Constitution Street. At the far end of Constitution Street, outside Number 8, the remains of a large stone-built breakwater were discovered (Humble and Murray 2008).

3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In line with the WSI the main objectives of archaeological works were:

- To mitigate any adverse impacts on sub-surface remains of archaeological interest.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Site works

The work was undertaken as specified in the WSI. Where ground works had the potential to disturb significant sub-surface remains they were monitored by an archaeologist. Deeper excavations, those between 0.5m and 2m required the presence of a monitoring archaeologist. Excavation on the road opposite South Leith Parish Church was monitored due to the presence of known human burials in the area.

Excavations of the road surface and pavements generally did not exceed 0.17m. The Archaeological monitoring operated on a daily visit for two weeks and there-after upon a call-out basis, where the contractor (Tarmac) contacted the monitoring archaeologist if excavations extended 0.30m below the existing ground level.

One archaeologist monitored one earth moving plant. The monitoring strategy was designed to provide information on any previously unrecorded features of archaeological interest in a relatively unobtrusive manner. It did not involve major interruption to the work programme. Isolated features or artefacts were recorded according to normal watching brief methodology. This was typically one hour for each feature.

4.2 Recording

All aspects of the work were undertaken in accordance with the current IfA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological watching briefs.

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 was clearly visible. Digital images were taken for illustrative purposes.

A site plan including all identified features, areas of excavation and other pertinent information was recorded digitally. The site plan was accurately linked to the National Grid and heights OD.

4.3 Reporting and Archives

The results of the works are presented below. A summary report has been prepared for submission to *Discovery & Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 2) and the OASIS database (headland1-151646).

The complete project archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) within six months of the completion of the project. The records (paper and digital) will be archived according to best practice guidelines set out by the Archaeological Archiving Forum.

5 RESULTS

Resurfacing

The road improvements involved the removal of the existing road surface to a depth of 0.17m using a cold planer. The tarmac directly overlay an older road surface or in some areas, previously excavated during the tram works, hardcore (Illus 2). Several tram tracks were visible, set into the older road surface (Illus 3). The tracks ran the length of Constitution Street. The exposed tracks were located 2.05m from the kerb on the eastern side of the road. They measured 0.17m wide, 0.13m deep and were spaced 2.20m apart. The tracks were left *in situ*. Hardcore was visible beneath the tracks.

Excavations for kerb replacement were superficial, through made ground and generally did not exceed 0.40m.

Excavation of the pavements along the length of Constitution Street involved the removal of the existing surface, onto the underlying make-up material, generally to a depth of 0.17m (Illus 4).

Tree pits

A tree pit was excavated outside Number 6 Constitution Street to a depth of 0.35m. Stratigraphy consisted of stone sett road surface (001) overlying a 0.10m thick hardcore deposit (002). Excavation stopped at a depth of 0.35m as several service pipes were encountered in the area, dug through redeposited sand (Illus 4). Excavation of tree pits was abandoned following the discovery of services in the area.

5.1 DISCUSSION

The work undertaken was very superficial and generally did not go beneath make-up deposits for the pavement and road. Tram tracks were uncovered during the works, but were left in situ. No archaeology was encountered during the works.

5.1 Conclusion

No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the works.

6 REFERENCES

6.1 Bibliographic sources

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd 2013 *Constitution Street Improvements, Leith* Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief. Client report.

Humble, J. Murray, M 2008 Edinburgh Trams- Results of watching brief on service diversions (Leith and Haymarket) and groundworks at the Gogarburn depot. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd Unpublished Report.

IfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological Watching Briefs (revised October 2008).



Illus 2

Area outside South Leith Parish Church Constitution Street - facing south



Illus 3

Area outside 119 Constitution Street - showing tram tracks - facing south



Illus 4

Excavation of pavement to the north of Tower Street, facing north



Illus 5

Detail of abandoned tree pit outside no 6 Constitution Street - showing services, facing west

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Photographic register

Frame no.	Direction	Description
1	S	Constitution St- Junction with Leith walk- Road re-surfacing
2	S	Constitution St- North end- Pavement resurfacing
3	-	Registration
4	N	Constitution St- section beside S Leith Parish Church
5	N	Constitution St- N end near Tower St
6	S	Constitution St- outside S Leith parish church
7	S	Constitution St- outside S Leith parish church
8	N	Constitution St- outside S Leith parish church- General shot
9	S	Brick casing [002]
10	W	Services in Tree pit outside No 4 Constitution St
11	S	General shot outside 121 Constitution St- showing tram tracks
12	SW	General shot outside 121 Constitution St- showing old road surface
13	S	Tram track detail
14	N	General shot outside 121 Constitution St- looking N
15	N	Pavement resurfacing at N end Constitution St
16	N	General shot of abandoned tree pit

Context register

Context no.	Area	Description
001	6 Constitution St	Stone sett road surface
002	6 Constitution St	Hardcore deposit 0.10m thick.
003	6 Constitution St	Brick structure with protruding lead pipe. Measuring 0.35m x 0.35m and 0.30m thick.

7.2 Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation in Scotland entry

Please delete this section if you are not working in Scotland or if for other reasons not applicable.

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Constitution Street, Leith , Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	CSLE13
PARISH:	City of Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Laura Bailey
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 269 759
START DATE (this season)	July 2013
END DATE (this season)	July 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief on improvement works undertaken on Constitution Street Leith, Edinburgh. The work involved road and footway resurfacing, alterations to kerb lines and gully repairs. The original design included the planting of trees, however, these were abandoned due to the presence of services. Excavation for road resurfacing generally did not exceed 0.17m and therefore no archaeological remains were encountered during the works.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	none
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Edinburgh City Council
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Headland Archaeology, Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Laura.bailey@headlandarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	RCAHMS