

WPLE/01



WELLINGTON PLACE, LEITH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

commissioned by Crummock (Scotland) Ltd

April 2016

WELLINGTON PLACE, LEITH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

commissioned by Crummock (Scotland) Ltd

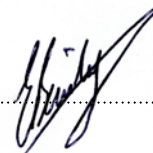
April 2016

project info

HA JOB NO. WPLE/01
NGR NT 2717 7597
PARISH Edinburgh
LOCAL AUTHORITY City of Edinburgh Council
OASIS REF. headland1-221008

project team

PROJECT MANAGER Edward Bailey
AUTHOR Magnar Dalland
FIELDWORK Magnar Dalland, Rafael Maya-Torcely
GRAPHICS Beata Wiczorek-Oleksy, Mano Kapazoglou
APPROVED BY Edward Bailey – Project Manager



 **HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY**

© 2016 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd



SCOTLAND

Headland Archaeology
13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705

scotland@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com

PROJECT SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the excavation of cable trenches associated with the installation of new street lights along the paths across the west end of Leith Links. This followed the discovery of a human bone during initial works. Several bones were retrieved during the trenching. None of these bones were articulated burials, most of them appeared to come from charnel pits, representing the re-burial of bones from graves disturbed during construction work in this area.

A substantial stone wall, 1.3m wide, was uncovered in the trench some 12m to the east of Wellington Place. There are no records of any structure at this location on any maps and may therefore pre-date the 19th century.

CONTENTS

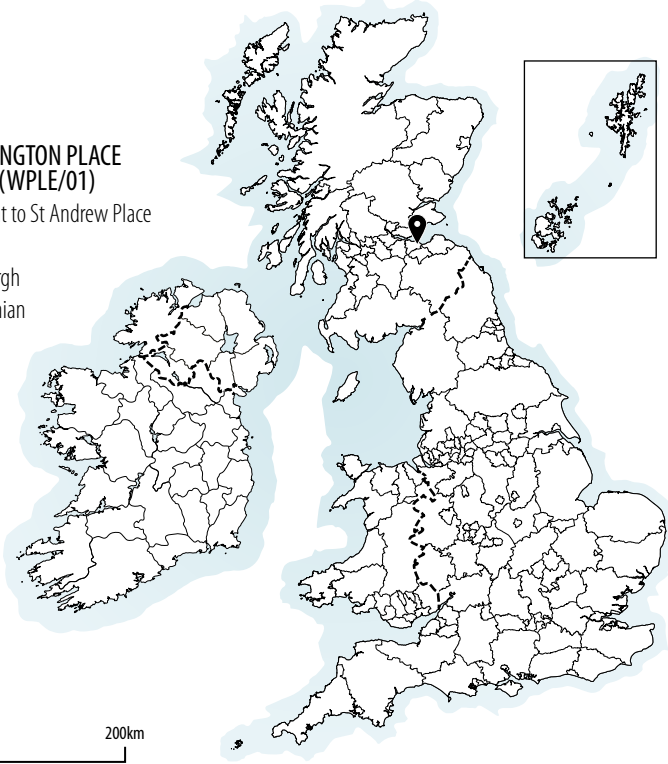
1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION	1
3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1
4	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	1
5	METHODOLOGY	1
	5.1 MONITORING	1
	5.2 RECORDING	2
6	RESULTS	2
7	DISCUSSION	3
8	REFERENCES	3
	8.1 BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES	3
9	APPENDICES	4
	APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS	4
	APPENDIX 2 DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY	6

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

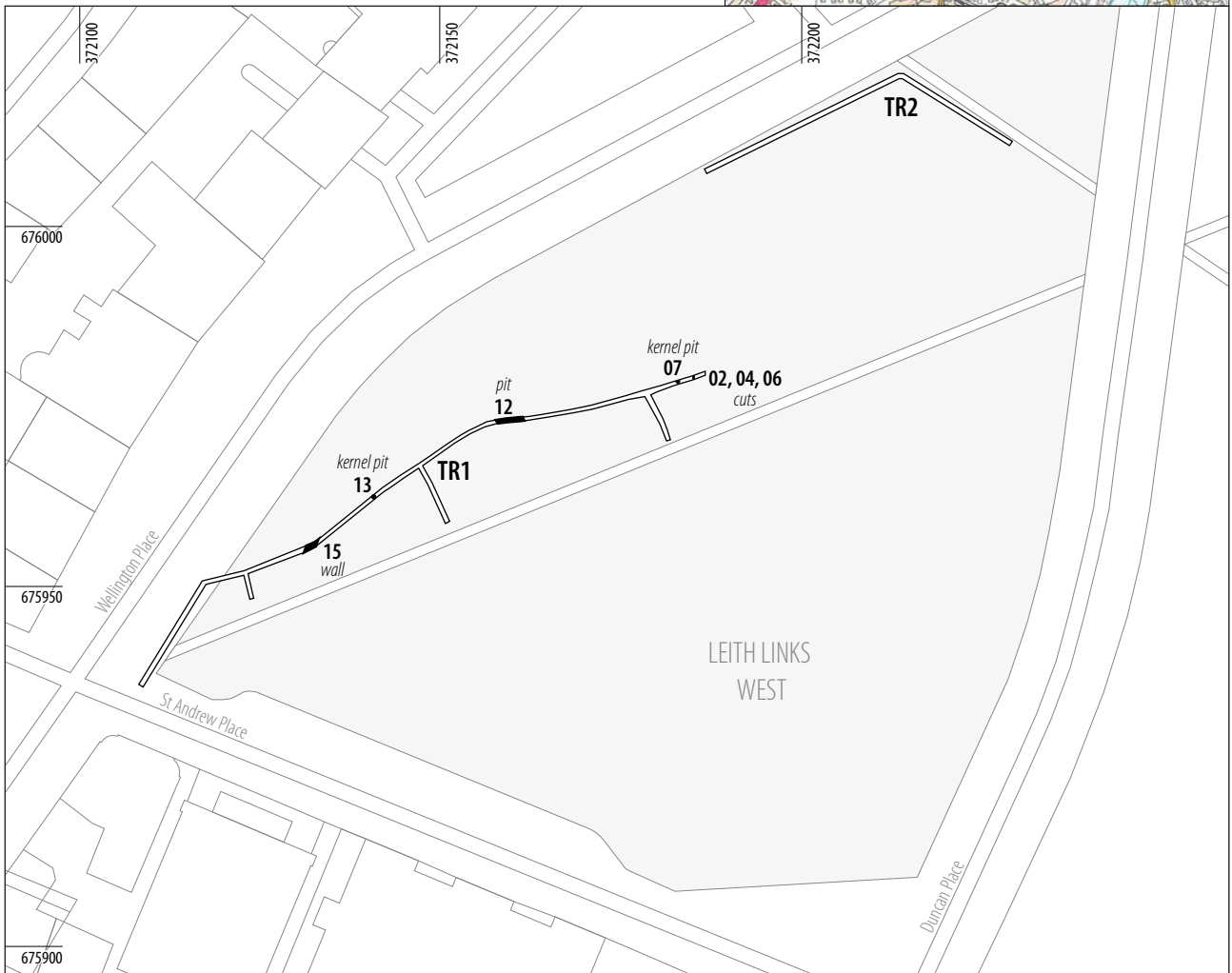
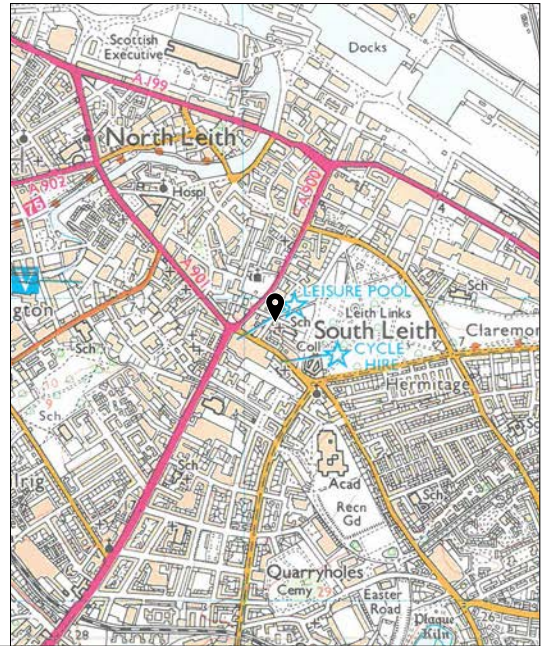
ILLUS 1 SITE LOCATION	VIII
ILLUS 2 BONES IN (07) PROTRUDING FROM N SIDE OF TRENCH 1. FACING N	2
ILLUS 3 DISARTICULATED HUMAN BONES TOWARDS E END OF TRENCH 1. FACING W	2
ILLUS 4 DETAIL SHOWING TIP LINES IN THE FILL AT W SIDE OF CUT [12]. FACING N	2
ILLUS 5 DETAIL OF PIT [13] WITH BONE IN SITU. FACING W	3
ILLUS 6 WALL [15] AFTER REMOVAL OF RUBBLE (17). FACING NNE	3

**WELLINGTON PLACE
LEITH (WPLE/01)**

adjacent to St Andrew Place
Leith
Edinburgh
Midlothian



0 200km



KEY
 □ trench location
 ■ features

0 50m
 scale 1:1,000 @ A4

**HEADLAND
 ARCHAEOLOGY**

SCOTLAND

13 Jane Street
 Edinburgh EH6 5HE
 0131 467 7705
 www.headlandarchaeology.com

Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2001. All rights reserved. Licence no. AL 100013329

ILLUS 1 Site location

WELLINGTON PLACE, LEITH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 INTRODUCTION

During the excavation of cable trenches for new lights along the paths across the west end of Leith Links, human bones were found within a trench. The workmen following the procedures for such finds notified the police and John Lawson, the council archaeologist. Given the possibility that more bones may be disturbed during the work, Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned to carry out a watching brief during the excavation of the remaining cable trenches in the area.

The monitoring took place during six days of excavation carried out between the 1st and 29th of June 2015.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located at sub-triangular area of parkland to the west of Leith Links delimited by St Andrew Place to the south, Wellington Place and John's Place to the north-west and Duncan Place to the East. A tarmacked foot/cycle path cuts diagonally across the area from north-east to south-west and a second shorter path cuts across the triangle to the northeast from Duncan Place through to the north end of Wellington Place. The ground comprises flat parkland with mature trees predominately located along the paths and the edges of the area.

The excavation of two trenches were monitored. Trench 1 ran along the north side path cutting across the area up to Wellington Place and the along the edge of the pavement to the junction with St Andrew place where it linked up with ducts laid down previously. Trench 2 ran along the south side of the path cutting across from Duncan Place and continued some 30m towards the south-west along the edge of the pavement of Wellington Place (ILLUS 1).

The site lies between 7 and 8m OD and is underlain by Raised Marine deposits made up of sand and gravel formed during the Quaternary period. These overlie sedimentary rock cycles of the Strathclyde group formed approximately 335 to 352 million years ago in the Carboniferous period. (British Geological Survey website; <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is known that plague victims have been buried in Leith Links (Turner Simpson et al 1981, 79 and Canmore record for NMRS site no NT27NE 77), with large numbers of bodies possibly relating to a 1645 epidemic found during the construction of Wellington Place, immediately to the west of the site (Canmore record for NMRS site no NT27NE 44).

In 2013 human bones were found during installation of new street lighting ducts at the corner of St Andrew Place and Academy Street at the south-west corner of the area. The discovery led to a small excavation exposing a pit containing disarticulated human bones. The bones represented at least two adults and three juveniles which were dated to between the early 15th and early 17th centuries AD (van Wessel 2013).

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The work included monitoring of the excavation of cable trenches to record in order any sub-surface remains of archaeological interest that was exposed during the work.

The resulting archive will be organised and deposited in the NMRS; to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 MONITORING

The trenches were excavated using a 0.6m wide flat blade bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Archaeological deposits and features exposed during the monitoring were recoded having been cleaned and excavated by hand.



ILLUS 2 Bones in (07) protruding from N side of Trench 1. Facing N **ILLUS 3** Disarticulated human bones towards E end of Trench 1. Facing W **ILLUS 4** Detail showing tip lines in the fill at W side of cut [12]. Facing N

5.2 RECORDING

All recording followed ClFA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological excavations.

All contexts were given unique numbers. A full list of these can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this report. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. Digital photography was used. All record shots were taken with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. A full photographic record can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

A site plan including all identified features, areas of excavation and other pertinent information were recorded digitally. The site plan has been accurately linked to the National Grid and heights to OD. Digital recording was undertaken using a differential GPS. Only the part of the trenches that were monitored were surveyed.

6 RESULTS

The monitoring started near the middle of the parkland near the point where the initial human bone had been discovered. At the time of discovery, a 5m long stretch of the trench that had not been backfilled was left open for further investigation. What appears to be two intercutting pits were recorded at the east end of this segment. Two disarticulated bones were retrieved from these pits. Although not fully excavated there was little evidence to indicate that there were significant quantities of bone within the pits, and that the pits may have been for charnel.

However some 2m further west two arm bones were found protruding from the side of the trench (07) (ILLUS 2). Next to these were a group of smaller bones including fragments of ribs. The bones were not articulated, but the two bones looked to have been placed in a pit although there was no clear evidence of a cut (ILLUS 3). This could possibly be caused by later disturbance. The point these bones were found is near where the initial long bone was found and it is likely that it came from the same charnel pit.

From the initial find spot the trench was excavated and backfilled in stages towards the west. A large cut 3m wide by over 0.9 m deep [12] was located some 28m from the east end of Trench 1. It was filled with (11) light grey sand with darker bands and pockets of darker brown sand. Clear tip lines visible against the edge of the cut indicated that this material had been dumped into the pit (ILLUS 4).

A second charnel pit [13] was located some 20m to the south-west. Unfortunately it was badly disturbed by the machine but part of the cut was still preserved in the side of the trench indicating that the pit was sub-circular and some 0.6m in diameter (ILLUS 5). It was 0.8m deep and was cut through the sub-soil from about 0.3m below the current ground surface. This pit contained a large number of bones including skull fragments.

A 1.3 m wide stone wall was exposed in the western half of Trench 1 some 12m to the east of Wellington Place. It was aligned NNE to SSW and was over 0.5m deep (ILLUS 6). The wall had straight vertical faces on both sides. There was no bonding between the stones

ILLUS 5 Detail of Pit [13] with bone in situ. Facing W
ILLUS 6 Wall [15] after removal of rubble (17). Facing NNE



although some loose lumps of mortar were found amongst the upper stones.

Monitoring of the remaining parts of Trench 1 and the entire Trench 2 to the north did not expose any further archaeological features.

7 DISCUSSION

It is known that plague victims have been buried in Leith, with large numbers of bodies found during the construction of Wellington Place, immediately to the west of the site. It is therefore not surprising that human bones were encountered during the groundworks in this area. None of these bones were articulated burials, most of them appears to come from charnel pits, representing re-burial of bones from graves disturbed during construction work in this area.

The large cut exposed in the east half of Trench 1 appears to be fairly recent. Unfortunately no finds were retrieved from the fill to help indicate the date but it was cut from a horizon only 0.25m below current ground level which would suggest a recent date.

The wall exposed some 12m to the east of Wellington Place is quite substantial being 1.3 m wide. There are no records of any structure at this location on the more detailed maps produced from the beginning of the 19th century. This may indicate that it pre-dates these maps. The structure is not bonded and may represent the foundation of a building. However, both sides of the structure were built forming a flush outer face which may suggest that it is the lower part of the wall exposed above ground.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- Brown, DH 2007 *Archaeological Archives Forum Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*
- Turner Simpson, A, Holmes, N & Stevenson, S 1981 *Historic Leith – The Archaeological Implications of Development* Glasgow
- van Wessel, J 2013 *St Andrew Place, Leith, Edinburgh; Archaeological Excavation and Monitoring Recording* Headland Archaeology unpublished client report

9 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

Appendix 1.1 Context register

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
01	Fill of [02]. Dark grey sand with some disarticulated human bones.
02	Possible cut at E end of Trench 1. Only small part of W side of cut visible in contrast to geological subsoil (10). Extends beyond trench to E, N and S. Cut overlaps [04], not possible to see any stratigraphical relationship.
03	Fill of [04]. Dark grey sand with some disarticulated human bones.
04	Possible cut at E end of Trench 1. Only small part of cut visible in contrast to geological subsoil (10) to the SW. Extends beyond trench to the N. Cut overlaps [04] and [06], not possible to see any stratigraphical relationships.
05	Fill of [06]. Dark brown sand with some disarticulated human bones.
06	Possible cut towards E end of Trench 1. Defined edge towards subsoil to the E, less clear to the W. Might represent the irregular base of a heavily truncated pit.
07	Mixed orange and grey sand containing disarticulated human bones. The deposit was not associated with any well defined cut.
08	Turf and topsoil. Loose grey sand up to 0.25m deep.
09	Subsoil. Dark grey slightly compacted humic sand, up to 0.35m deep.
10	Orange brown sand. Geological subsoil - raised marine deposit.
11	Fill of cut [12]. Light grey sand with bands and pockets light brown more humic sand. Infill of pit. Clear tip lines visible against the edge of the cut.
12	Wide cut exposed in E half of Trench 1. It measured 3m wide and was over 0.9m deep.
13	Sub-circular pit largely removed by machine, but N side of cut still preserved in the edge of the trench. Did not extend across to the opposite side of the trench. The N side is curving, indicating a diameter of some 0.6m. Steep sides, flat base and 0.8m deep. Cut through subsoil (09).
14	Fill of pit [13]. Grey sand containing numerous disarticulated human bones.
15	Stone wall 1.3m wide and over 0.5 m high and aligned NNE to SSW. Built from angular and sub-rounded stone slabs and blocks. The wall has straight vertical faces on both sides.
16	Dark grey sand containing animal bones located up against the S side of the trench. The deposit was not associated with any well defined cut.
17	Stone rubble comprising sub-angular stones up to 0.3m across. Overlies W side of wall [15]

Appendix 1.2 Photographic register

PIC	FILE NAME	FACING	DESCRIPTION
01	WPLE15-01-01.JPG	W	Human bone as first discovered at E end of Trench 1
02	WPLE15-01-02.JPG	W	Human bone as first discovered at E end of Trench 1
03	WPLE15-01-03.JPG	W	View towards find spot for human bone in Trench 1

PIC	FILE NAME	FACING	DESCRIPTION
04	WPLE15-01-04.JPG	W	E segment of Trench 1.
05	WPLE15-01-05.JPG	W	Human bones exposed in E segment of Trench 1
06	WPLE15-01-06.JPG	N	Human pelvis in E segment of Trench 1, detail
07	WPLE15-01-07.JPG	N	Overlapping cuts [02] and [04] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
08	WPLE15-01-08.JPG	N	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
09	WPLE15-01-09.JPG	N	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
10	WPLE15-01-10.JPG	W	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
11	WPLE15-01-11.JPG	E	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
12	WPLE15-01-12.JPG	E	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
13	WPLE15-01-13.JPG	E	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
14	WPLE15-01-14.JPG	E	Overlapping cuts [02], [04] and [06] containing human bones at base of E end of Trench 1
15	WPLE15-01-15.JPG	N	Bones in (07) protruding from N side towards E end of Trench 1
16	WPLE15-01-16.JPG	N	Protruding bones removed. Smaller bones still in situ immediately to the E.
17	WPLE15-01-17.JPG	N	Details of small bones in situ within (07)
18	WPLE15-01-18.JPG	N	Cleaned trench section showing general stratigraphy; turf and topsoil (08), over dark grey sand (09) over orange brown sand (10) geological subsoil.
19	WPLE15-01-19.JPG	N	Cleaned trench section showing general stratigraphy; turf and topsoil (08), over dark grey sand (09) over orange brown sand (10) geological subsoil.
20	WPLE15-01-20.JPG	N	Detail showing E side of cut [12].
21	WPLE15-01-21.JPG	N	Detail showing W side of cut [12].
22	WPLE15-01-22.JPG	S	Detail showing E side of cut [12] on S side of trench
23	WPLE15-01-23.JPG	S	W side of cut [12] on S side of trench
24	WPLE15-01-24.JPG	S	Detail showing W side of cut [12] on S side of trench
25	WPLE15-01-25.JPG	W	Pit [13] with bone in situ
26	WPLE15-01-26.JPG	W	Pit [13] with bone in situ. Detail
27	WPLE15-01-27.JPG	NE	Wall [15] with rubble (17) covering W wall face
28	WPLE15-01-28.JPG	SE	Wall [15] with rubble (17) covering W wall face to the left
29	WPLE15-01-29.JPG	SSE	East spur leading up to lamp post
30	WPLE15-01-30.JPG	ENE	View along trench. Middle spur in the background.
31	WPLE15-01-31.JPG	WSW	View along trench. West spur to the left.
32	WPLE15-01-32.JPG	WSW	View along trench. Wall [15] in the foreground.

PIC	FILE NAME	FACING	DESCRIPTION
33	WPLE15-01-33.JPG	ENE	Wall [15], west face under rubble (17)
34	WPLE15-01-34.JPG	ENE	Wall [15], west face
35	WPLE15-01-35.JPG	ENE	Wall [15] after removal of rubble (17)
36	WPLE15-01-36.JPG	NNW	Wall [15] after removal of rubble (17)
37	WPLE15-01-37.JPG	NE	SE section of Trench 1. Pre-excavation
38	WPLE15-01-38.JPG	SW	SE section of Trench 1
39	WPLE15-01-39.JPG	SW	SE section of Trench 1
40	WPLE15-01-40.JPG	S	SE section of Trench 1
41	WPLE15-01-41.JPG	SW	Working shot. SE end of Trench 1
42	WPLE15-01-42.JPG	SW	Working shot. SE end of Trench 1
43	WPLE15-01-43.JPG	SE	View towards the SE end of Trench 2. Pre-excavation
44	WPLE15-01-44.JPG	SE	View towards the SE end of Trench 2
45	WPLE15-01-45.JPG	SE	View towards the SE end of Trench 2
46	WPLE15-01-46.JPG	W	Middle section of Trench 2
47	WPLE15-01-47.JPG	SW	Middle section of Trench 2
48	WPLE15-01-48.JPG	NE	Middle section of Trench 2
49	WPLE15-01-49.JPG	SW	View towards the SW end of Trench 2
50	WPLE15-01-50.JPG	SW	View towards the SW end of Trench 2
51	WPLE15-01-51.JPG	SW	Working shot. View towards the SW end of Trench 2

APPENDIX 2 DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Wellington Place, LEITH
PROJECT CODE:	WPLE15/01
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Magnar Dalland
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Monitoring
NMRS NO(S):	None
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 LETTERS, 8 OR 10 FIGURES)	NT 2717 7597
START DATE (THIS SEASON)	1st June 2015
END DATE (THIS SEASON)	29th June 2015
PREVIOUS WORK (INCL. DES REF.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (MAY INCLUDE INFORMATION FROM OTHER FIELDS)	<p>Archaeological watching brief was carried out for the excavation of cable trenches for new street lights along the paths across the west end of Leith Links following the discovery of a human bone. Several bones were retrieved during the trenching. None of these bones were articulated burials, most of them appears to come from kernel pits, representing re-burial of bones from graves disturbed during construction work in this area.</p> <p>A substantial stone wall, 1.3m wide, was uncovered in the trench some 12m to the east of Wellington Place. There are no records of any structure at this location on any maps and the structure may therefore pre-date the 19th century.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Crummock (Scotland) Ltd
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Headland Archaeology, 13 Jane Street, Leith , Edinburgh EH6 5HE
EMAIL ADDRESS:	magnar.dalland@headlandarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (INTENDED/ DEPOSITED)	RCAHMS



© 2016 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

SOUTH & EAST

Headland Archaeology
Building 68C, Wrest Park, Silsoe
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS

01525 861 578

southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

MIDLANDS & WEST

Headland Archaeology
Unit 1, Clearview Court, Twyford Road
Hereford HR2 6JR

01432 364 901

midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

NORTH

Headland Archaeology
Unit 16, Hillside, Beeston Road
Leeds LS11 8ND

0113 387 6430

north@headlandarchaeology.com

SCOTLAND

Headland Archaeology
13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705

scotland@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com