

PQBE/01



# 60 PLEASANCE AND QUAKER BUILDING EDINBURGH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

commissioned by University of Edinburgh

15/02153/FUL

15/01915/FUL

April 2017



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project info

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**NGR** NT 26340 73352  
**PARISH** Edinburgh  
**LOCAL AUTHORITY** City of Edinburgh  
**OASIS REF.** headland1-276540

project team

**PROJECT MANAGER** Kirsty Dingwall  
**AUTHOR** Aisling Fitzpatrick, Matt Ginnever  
**FIELDWORK** Aisling Fitzpatrick, Don Wilson, Matt Ginnever, Nuala Woodley, Stephen Cox  
**GRAPHICS** Caroline Norrman, Rafael Maya-Torcelly  
**APPROVED BY** Kirsty Dingwall – Project Manager

*Kirsty Dingwall*

 **HEADLAND  
ARCHAEOLOGY**  
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**SCOTLAND**

Headland Archaeology  
13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705

[scotland@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:scotland@headlandarchaeology.com)

[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)



## PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a watching brief on works associated with internal alterations and extension to 60 Pleasance, the Pleasance Theatre Building and the former Quaker Meeting House in Edinburgh. The work was commissioned by The University of Edinburgh in response to a planning condition from the local planning authority.

The works comprised basic recording of the Quaker Meeting House, and monitoring of ground breaking works elsewhere on the site. A small section of a linear feature of potentially 16th century date was identified to the north of the Theatre Building, and an internal cobbled floor was found during excavations for a lift shaft within 60 Pleasance, which probably represents the original floor of the building. No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified.

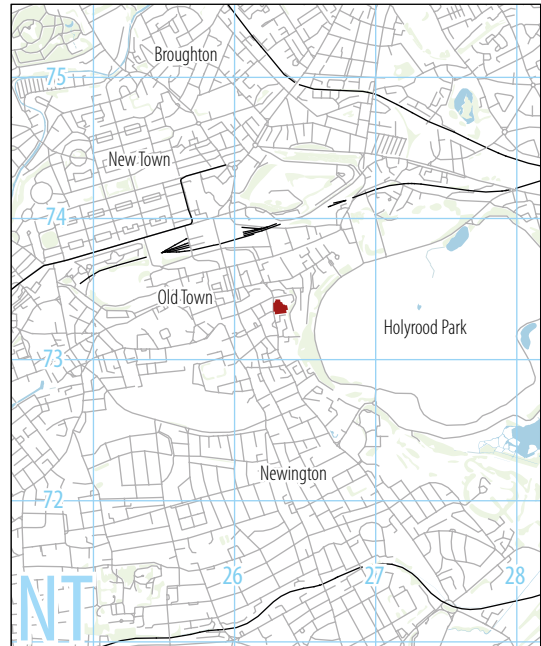
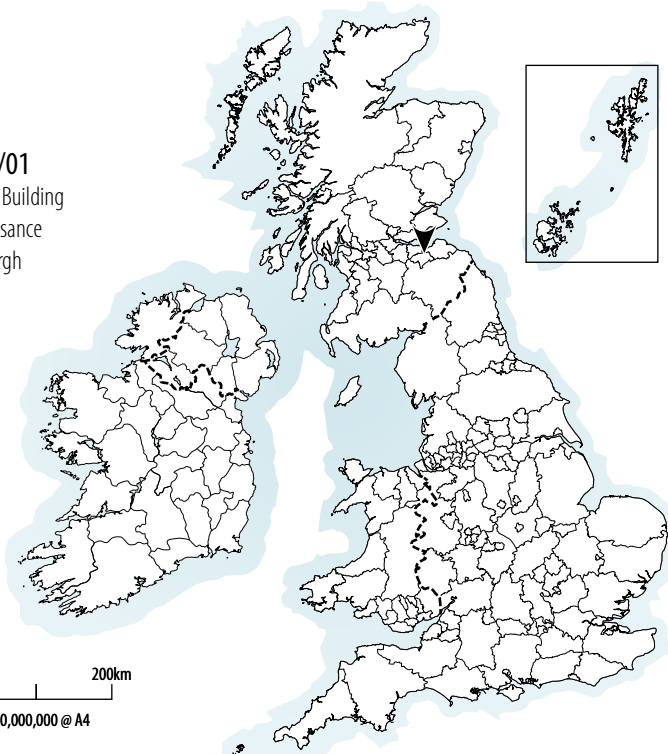
# CONTENTS

1	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
2	<b>SITE DESCRIPTION &amp; BACKGROUND</b>	1
3	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	1
4	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	1
	4.1 FIELDWORK	3
	4.2 RECORDING	3
5	<b>RESULTS</b>	3
	5.1 QUAKER MEETING HOUSE (PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY)	3
	5.2 60 PLEASANCE (LIFT SHAFT EXCAVATIONS)	4
	5.3 NORTH OF THE THEATRE BUILDING (RAISED EXTERNAL ACCESS)	5
6	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	6
7	<b>REFERENCES</b>	6
	7.1 MAPPING	6
8	<b>APPENDICES</b>	8
	APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS	8
	APPENDIX 2 DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND (DES) ENTRY	10

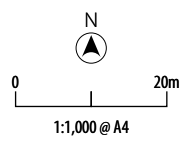
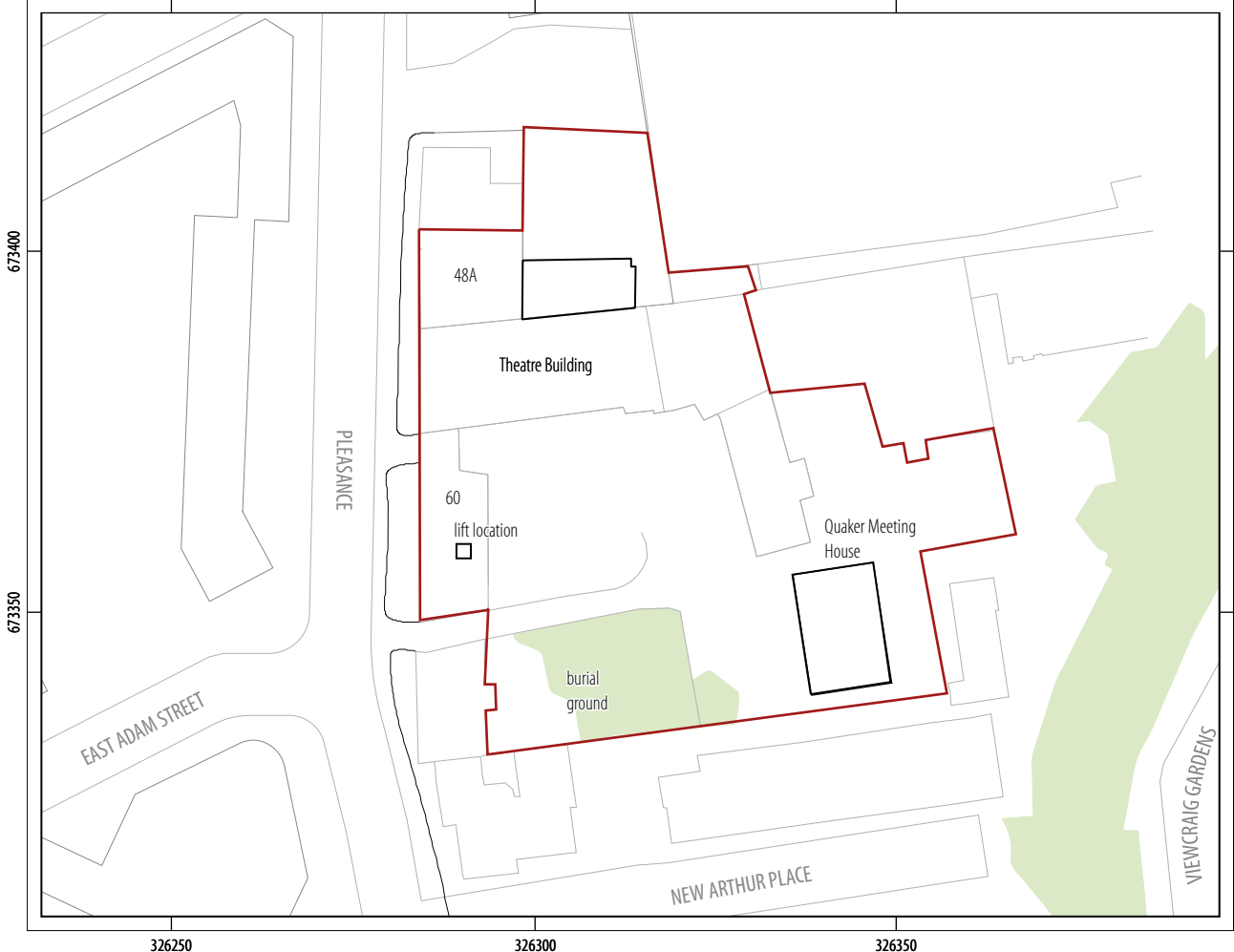
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<b>ILLUS 1</b> SITE LOCATION	VIII
<b>ILLUS 2</b> HISTORIC MAPS RELATING TO THE SITE <b>A)</b> KINCAID'S PLAN OF THE CITY AND SUBURBS OF EDINBURGH (1784) <b>B)</b> ORDNANCE SURVEY 1:10,560 EDINBURGHSHIRE SHEET III.NE (1897). (REPRODUCED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND)	2
<b>ILLUS 3</b> QUAKER MEETING HOUSE – EAST ELEVATION INTERIOR SHOWING ARCHED WINDOWS WITH BLOCKED ARCH AT SOUTH	3
<b>ILLUS 4</b> QUAKER MEETING HOUSE – DETAIL OF BLOCKED ARCH AT SOUTH OF EAST ELEVATION (INTERIOR)	4
<b>ILLUS 5</b> 60 PLEASANCE – VIEW OF LIFT SHAFT EXCAVATIONS FROM SOUTH	4
<b>ILLUS 6</b> THEATRE BUILDING ACCESS – DETAIL OF MONITORED AREA	5
<b>ILLUS 7</b> THEATRE BUILDING ACCESS – WEST FACING SECTION THROUGH LINEAR [1008]	5
<b>ILLUS 8</b> THEATRE BUILDING ACCESS – PRE-EX SHOT OF LINEAR FEATURE [1008], LOOKING NORTH	6

**PQBE/01**  
 Quaker Building  
 60 Pleasance  
 Edinburgh



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**KEY**  
 development boundary  
 monitored area



SCOTLAND

13 Jane Street  
 Edinburgh EH6 5HE  
 0131 467 7705  
[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)



# 60 PLEASANCE AND QUAKER BUILDING EDINBURGH

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring of internal alterations and extension to the Pleasance Theatre Building including the construction of disabled access and photographic survey of the Quaker Meeting House at 42–76 Pleasance, Edinburgh (Illus 1). Planning permission (application nos. 15/02153/FUL and 15/01915/FUL) was granted, subject to a condition that stated:

‘No development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (excavation, analysis & reporting, publication) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority’

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by the University of Edinburgh to undertake an agreed programme of archaeological works with the City of Edinburgh Archaeological Service (the curator). The works were outlined within a written scheme of investigation (WSI; Headland Archaeology 2015) which was approved by the Planning Authority.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

The site was located to the south-east of the city centre on The Pleasance, Edinburgh (NGR NT 26340 73352). At the time of excavation it was used by the University of Edinburgh.

The site lay around 73m AOD and was underlain by superficial geology of glaciofluvial ice contact deposits - sand and gravel formed in the Quaternary period with a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. These overlay sandstone sedimentary rock of the Ballagan Formation, which formed in the Carboniferous period with a local environment previously dominated by rivers (NERC 2016).

The archaeological potential was assessed as moderate within the WSI. The site lay within a late medieval suburb of the Pleasance,

which was situated immediately outside of Edinburgh's medieval town walls. In the 17th century the suburb appears as a single row of houses strung out along the road, with gardens to the rear (east). By the late 18th century, the area occupied by the development site has somewhat expanded, with the first buildings of Bell's Brewery present in the north-east corner (Illus 2a). The majority of the present day Pleasance complex would appear to date to the early 19th century and by the late 19th century the brewery had expanded considerably. Within the areas proposed for development there was potential for ground breaking works to disturb remains from the medieval and post-medieval periods.

The Quaker Meeting House is B-listed and was by Alexander Paterson (mason) and Thomas Dott (wright) in 1791. It was located close to the 1680 Quaker Burial ground, which lay just to the west of the building.

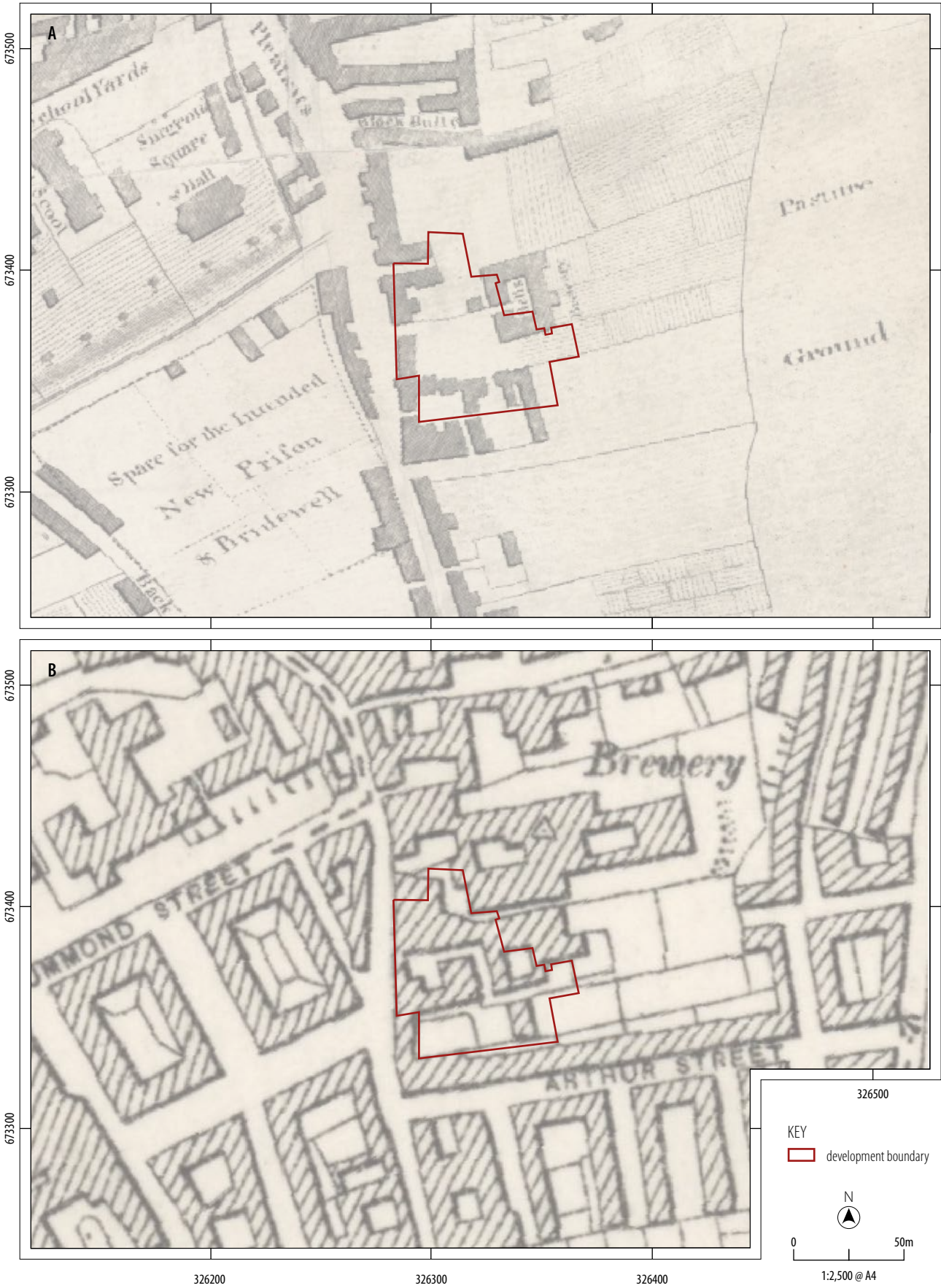
### 3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the watching brief were:

- › to undertake a photographic survey in areas of the building where the original building fabric was exposed during the works.
- › to monitor ground works in order to record any archaeological remains threatened by the proposed development works and to mitigate any adverse impacts on sub-surface remains of archaeological interest.
- › to report on the results and organise and deposit the archive in the NMRS

### 4 METHODOLOGY

The site works comprised two elements; photographic survey and monitoring of ground breaking works.



**ILLUS 2** Historic Maps relating to the site **A)** Kincaid's Plan of the city and suburbs of Edinburgh (1784) **B)** Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 Edinburghshire Sheet III.NE (1897). (Reproduced with the permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)



ILLUS 3 Quaker Meeting House – East elevation interior showing arched windows with blocked arch at south

## 4.1 FIELDWORK

A photographic record of internal elements of the Quaker Meeting House not previously visible was created to provide an archive record. Basic record shots of all internal elevations and any architectural details were taken. A brief written description of the structure and interior was also made.

Two main areas of ground breaking works were to be monitored:

- › A 3.00m x 3.00m lift shaft in the basement of number 60 Pleasance as part of the redevelopment of the building.
- › A topsoil and subsoil strip for the construction of a raised external ramp and steps on the North side of the Theatre Building. This covered an area of approx. 14m x 8m.

All ground breaking works were undertaken under direct archaeological supervision. A toothed bucket was used to remove any hard surfaces/demolition deposits and all soft deposits were removed in spits using a flat bladed ditching bucket. Archaeological features or artefacts exposed during the monitoring were recorded according to normal excavation methodology.

## 4.2 RECORDING

All recording followed Cifa Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological watching brief (Cifa 2014). All contexts, small finds and environmental samples were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. When stratified deposits were encountered, a 'Harris' matrix was compiled. Digital photography was used to record any archaeological features with a graduated metric scale clearly visible.

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 to OD. When appropriate, sections and stratigraphic sequences were recorded digitally. Existing mapped buildings were used to triangulate the locations of monitored areas and features. If additional detailed recording of features and sections was required (ie where their complexity meant that archaeological information could be lost if recorded digitally) then plans and sections were hand-drawn on permatrace at an appropriate scale (normally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections).

## 5 RESULTS

Full context descriptions are included in Appendix 1. Contexts were assigned consecutive numbers for the whole period of works. Cut and structural features are shown as [1001] whilst fills and deposits are expressed as (1002). The results are described in chronological order.

### 5.1 QUAKER MEETING HOUSE (PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY)

Photographic survey was undertaken following the removal of a wooden or plywood floors. The structure consisted of a rectangular stone brick building with a roughcast exterior and plain interior room. The original layout of the structure appeared to have been a single large room, with 3 pairs of arched windows on the eastern and western elevations. A fireplace was located centrally on the southern wall, a small cupboard or niche on the eastern wall and the original entrance door in the western wall. Large fragments of render survived on the walls, although it is unclear if this was original or not.

Extensive later alterations were evident; the arched tops of the southernmost window in the eastern wall and the two windows in



**ILLUS 4** Quaker Meeting House – Detail of blocked arch at south of east elevation (interior) **ILLUS 5** 60 Pleasance – View of lift shaft excavations from south

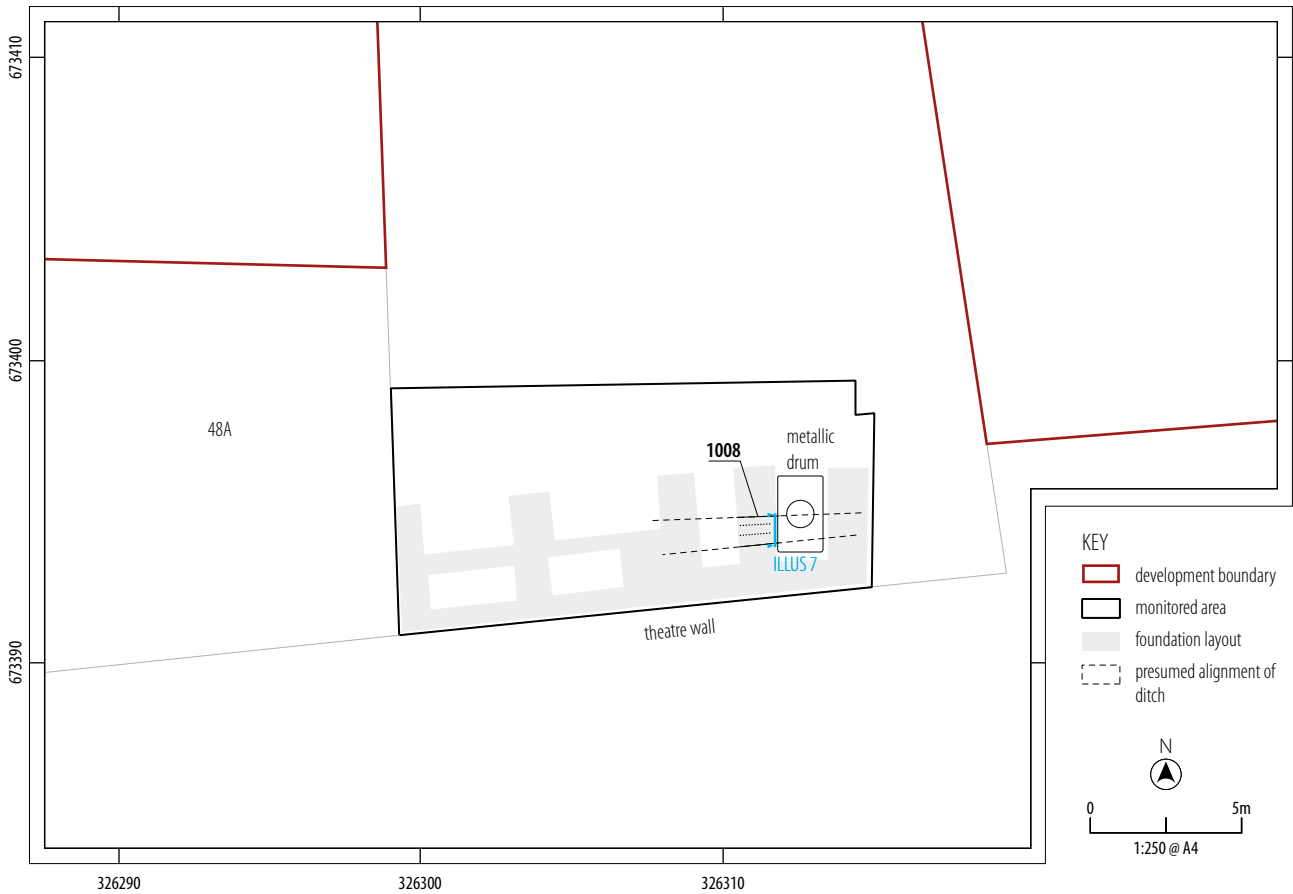
the southern wall, had been squared off, also with roughcast stone. A line of holes for a raised floor level could be seen cutting halfway across the windows, particularly in the southern half of the structure, possible the result of a later addition of a partial mezzanine floor. The southern window on the western wall had been bricked up at some stage, and two additional doors had been punched through the southern wall, one of which had then also been bricked up.

At the north-eastern corner of the building, the arched window had been converted into a door, and evidence of the remnants of a staircase could be seen as a shadow on the eastern wall interior.

Removal of the floorboards of the building revealed concrete floor supports of modern origin, with brick, concrete and breeze block supporting joists for the timbers. There was no evidence of earlier flooring.

## 5.2 60 PLEASANCE (LIFT SHAFT EXCAVATIONS)

The cut for the lift shaft was 1m deep, with the 0.35m cut through mudstone bedrock (1004). Above this was a layer of small rectangular cobbles (1003) up to 0.10m thick, presumably the original interior floor surface of the building. It was not possible to identify any bedding material for the cobbles, but it is presumed they would be laid in rammed earth. Overlying the cobbled surface was a thin mid-dark greyish-brown layer of bedding rubble (1002), up to 0.05m thick in areas. Overlying the bedding rubble was a 0.20m layer of concrete (1001).



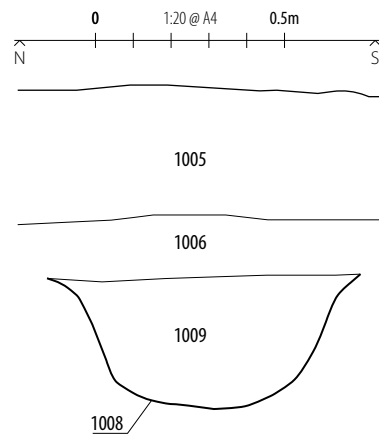
ILLUS 6 Theatre Building Access – Detail of monitored area

### 5.3 NORTH OF THE THEATRE BUILDING (RAISED EXTERNAL ACCESS)

To the north of the Theatre Building, depth of excavation varied between 0.50m–1.00m and monitoring extended over an area of around 14m x 8m. Strip foundations for the current development were monitored, therefore the whole of the area was not seen to the same depth.

The geological subsoil was only encountered in the centre of the monitored area and was a mid-orange-brown sandy clay (1010), between 0.8m and 1m below the current surface. Overlying the natural sandy clay was a pinkish-brown clay (1007), up to 0.2m thick, a made ground consisting of dark brown-black rubble (1005, up to 0.25m thick and modern deposits of gravel, construction bedding material and sand (1004), c 0.3m thick. Broadly speaking, the ground breaking works only extended into the upper, modern deposits, particularly across the northern portion of the monitored area.

A small section of linear feature [1008] was located 4.9m east of the western limit of excavation and 0.9m north of the southern limit of excavation, running roughly east-west. It measured 0.83m wide, 0.35m deep with relatively steeply sloping sides and a curved base. It was visible for 0.74m, with the feature extending into unexcavated ground to the east and west. It was cut into the geological subsoil (1010) and was filled by a midden deposit (1009), containing bone, oyster shell and pottery fragments which consisted of a strap handle and body sherd of a post-medieval reduced ware dating to the 16th Century (Julie Franklin, pers comm).



ILLUS 7 Theatre Building Access – West facing section through linear [1008]

The west of the monitored area had been heavily disturbed by a modern concrete plinth which was removed and was supported by red brick foundation walls running parallel to the limit of excavation on the west end of the trench, with two abutting parallel walls running east-west 2m apart for 3m. The red brick was stamped with the name Winchburgh. These bricks were also present in a red brick housing for a large fuel drum found at the west of the monitored area. The housing structure measured 2.9m x 2.7m and was situated 1.40m west and 0.7m north of the limit of excavation.



ILLUS 8 Theatre Building Access – Pre-ex shot of linear feature [1008], looking north

## 6 DISCUSSION

The photographic record undertaken of the Quaker Meeting House confirmed it has been subject to several phases of alteration since its original construction in the 18th century.

A handful of features of archaeological interest were identified during the archaeological monitoring. To the north of the Theatre Building, the short section of probable ditch could date from as early as the 16th century. Very little can be said about the feature as such a small portion of it was revealed during the monitoring, but it could relate to agricultural activities in the back plots of dwellings in the city suburbs.

The stratigraphy of the layer of cobbles identified in the lift shaft in 60 Pleasance suggests that they are the original floor surface dating to the construction of the building in 1791 as they directly overlie on the natural bedrock with modern concrete above.

The later development of the site was represented in the red brick housing for a fuel tank located to the north of the Theatre Building. This likely related to an extension to 'Bell's Brewery' which began construction in 1884. The Winchburgh stamp on the bricks represent Winchburgh Brickworks which was active to the west of the city of Edinburgh between c 1873 and 1970, which would be consistent with the extension of the brewery (Julie Franklin, pers comm).

## 7 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014 *Code of Conduct* [online document] available from [www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CodesofConduct.pdf](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CodesofConduct.pdf)

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* [online document] available from [http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS&GWatchingbrief\\_2.pdf](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS&GWatchingbrief_2.pdf)

Headland Archaeology 2015 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring, 42–76 Pleasance, Edinburgh* [unpublished document] Planning application: 15/02153/FUL and 15/01915/FUL

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) 2016 *British Geological Survey* [online] accessed 13 December 2016 from [www.bgs.ac.uk/](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/)

### 7.1 MAPPING

Kincaid, A 1784 *Plan of the city and suburbs of Edinburgh* [online map] available from <http://maps.nls.uk/towns/rec/414>

Lizars, WH 1884 *Plan of Edinburgh and Leith. From the best Authorities. Engraved expressly for the Letter Carriers Directory, Edinburgh* [online map] available from <http://maps.nls.uk/towns/rec/4967>

Ordnance Survey 1897 *Edinburghshire Sheet III.NE* [online map] available from <http://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=17&lat=55.9485&lon=-3.1828&layers=6&b=4> (scale 1:10,560, surveyed 1894)

## 8 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

#### Appendix 1.1 Context register

CONTEXT	SUMMARY INTERPRETATION	DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS		
			L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1001	Concrete	Modern concrete layer	–	–	0.20
1002	Made ground	Made ground comprised of loose mid-dark greyish brown layer of type 2 or 3, bedding rubble dor the concrete above.	–	–	0.05
1003	Cobbled surface	Cobbled surface comprised of mall rectangular cobbles directly overlying the natural mudstone.	–	–	0.10
1004	Natural	Natural bedrock comprised of mudstone	–	–	>0.35
1005	Made ground	Made ground comprised of moder deposits of sand, type 1 and gravel	–	–	0.28
1006	Made ground	Made ground comprised of mid-brown-black rubble and clay	–	–	0.25
1007	Subsoil	Subsoil comprised of compact pinkish-brown sandy clay	–	–	0.19
1008	Cut of ditch	Cut of linear ditch with gently sloping sides a rounded base and gradual breaks of slope.	>0.74	0.83	0.35
1009	Fill of ditch [1008]	Fill of ditch [1008] comprised of a compact dark-pinkish-brown silty clay with oyster shell, animal bone pottery and small to medium sub-angular stone inclusions. Midden deposit	>0.74	0.83	0.35
1010	Natural	Natural comprised of compact mid-orangey-brown sandy clay	–	–	>0.05

#### Appendix 1.2 Photo register

PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
001	S	Pre-ex shot of area
002	E	Pre-ex shot of area
003	W	Pre-ex shot of area
004	E	Pre-ex shot of area
005	N	Shot of area with tarmac removed
006	E	Shot of area with tarmac removed
007	E	Shot of foundation of trench at West end

PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
008	N	Post-ex view of foundation trench at West end
009	N	South facing section of foundation trench at West end
010	E	Shot of West end of foundation trench
011	S	Shot of foundation trench at South end
012	S	Shot of foundation trench at South end
013	N	Shot of foundation trench at South end
014	W	Shot of foundation trench at West end
015	E	West facing section of foundation trench along South limit
016	W	Pre-ex shot of area
017	E	Pre-ex shot of area
018	W	Post-ex shot of foundation trench extension to the East
019	NW	Post-ex shot of foundation trench extension to the East
020	N	Sample section of made ground on clay
021	NE	Shot of concrete running North to South
022	W	Shot of South end of red brick housing structure containing metallic drum
023	W	Shot of South end of red brick housing structure containing metallic drum
024	Plan	Shot of red brick from housing structure
025	E	West facing section of foundation trench on Eastern limit of excavation
026	W	Shot of South corner of brick housing structure
027	N	Shot of East wall of brick housing structure
028	W	Shot of metallic drum from within brick housing structure
029	S	Shot of metallic drum from within brick housing structure
030	E	Shot of brick housing structure
031	NE	Shot of foundation trench to the East
032	N	Shot of ditch [1008]
033	S	Shot of ditch [1008]
034	W	East facing section of [1008]
035	E	West facing section of [1008]
036	E	West facing section of [1008]
037	W	East facing section of [1008]
038	W	Shot of foundation trench
039	E	Shot of foundation trench
040	W	Shot of foundation trench
041	E	Shot of foundation trench
042	N	Shot of foundation trench
043	S	Shot of foundation trench
044	E	Working shot moving tank



PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
045	E	View of tank
046	E	General view of beginning of North slot
047	N	South facing section West end of slot
048	-	Close up of brick from rubble layer
049	N	South facing section at East end of slot
050	W	General view of North slot
051	E	View of slot end of day 7/12
052	W	Working shot of machine stripping
053	E	View of slot spoil removed- fully excavated
054	W	View of slot spoil removed- fully excavated
055	NW	General view of site
056	W	General view of site

## APPENDIX 2 DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND (DES) ENTRY

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	60 Pleasance and Quaker Building Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	PQBE15
PARISH:	Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Aisling Fitzpatrick
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	n/a
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	urban
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	none
NGR	NT 26286 73360
START DATE (THIS SEASON)	October 2015
END DATE (THIS SEASON)	December 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (INCL. DES REF.)	—
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (MAY INCLUDE INFORMATION FROM OTHER FIELDS)	<p>Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a watching brief on works associated with internal alterations and extension to the 60 Pleasance, the Pleasance Theatre Building, and the former Quaker Meeting House in Edinburgh.</p> <p>The works comprised basic recording of the Quaker Meeting House, and monitoring of ground breaking works elsewhere on the site. A small section of a linear feature of potentially 16th century date was identified to the north of the Theatre Building, and an internal cobbled floor was found during excavations for a lift shaft within 60 Pleasance, which probably represents the original floor of the building. No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
ARCHIVE LOCATION (INTENDED/ DEPOSITED)	NRHE
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	University of Edinburgh
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	n/a
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 13 Jane St, Edinburgh EH6 5HE
EMAIL ADDRESS:	aisling.fitzpatrick@headlandarchaeology.com





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**SOUTH & EAST**

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

01525 861 578

[southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com)

**MIDLANDS & WEST**

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

01432 364 901

[midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com)

**NORTH**

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

0113 387 6430

[north@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:north@headlandarchaeology.com)

**SCOTLAND**

Headland Archaeology  
13 Jane Street  
Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705

[scotland@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:scotland@headlandarchaeology.com)

[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)