

MCED/01



MEADOW COURT, EDINBURGH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
PLANNING REF. 17/00316/FUL

commissioned by Arcadis

September 2017

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PROJECT INFO:

HA Job No. **MCED/01** / NGR **NT 2617 7245** / Parish **City of Edinburgh** / Local Authority **City of Edinburgh** / OASIS Ref. **headland1-287991** / Archive Repository **National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE)**

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Archaeological monitoring was required on all groundworks associated with the construction of student flats in the courtyard of Meadow Court, Edinburgh. A number of foundation trenches were excavated along with an attenuation tank trench and associated pipe trenches. The results of the monitoring provided evidence that the ground level across the site had already been reduced and levelled. This was likely to have taken place during the construction of the present student accommodation surrounding the courtyard. As a result the only archaeological remains left in situ were a stone-lined well probably associated with the Georgian gardens and also used by the 19th century distillery. The lower half of the western wall of the distillery was also visible in the Moncrieff Terrace gardens where it forms the boundary wall between the garden and Meadow Court.

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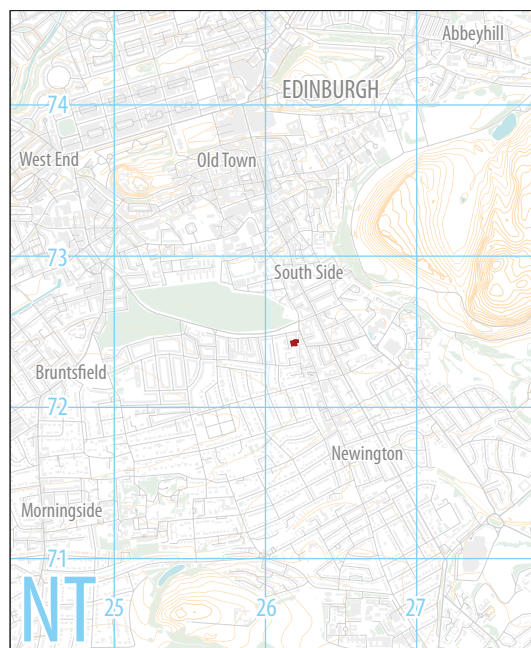
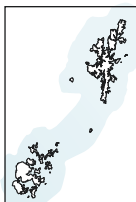
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MCED/01

land at 13 Sciennes
Meadow Court
Edinburgh
Midlothian

0 200km
1:10,000,000 @ A4



0 10m
1:500 @ A4

— development boundary
- - - ownership boundary

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ILLUS 1 Site location

MEADOW COURT, EDINBURGH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Arcadis to undertake a programme of archaeological works in connection with the development of a new student accommodation block within the courtyard of Meadow Court, Edinburgh.

Planning permission for the development was granted by Edinburgh City Council (17/00316/FUL) subject to a number of conditions. The condition attached to the development consent is as follows:

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

In order to fulfil this condition a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Headland Archaeology (Wilson 2017) which set out the proposed strategy for archaeological mitigation. This comprised of archaeological monitoring on all groundworks associated with the development.

The WSI was submitted to and agreed with the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeological Service (CECAS) who advises the Local Planning Authority on archaeological matters. This report details the results of the work.

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is located at Meadow Court, Edinburgh (centred on NGR: NT 2617 7245). It is situated within the courtyard of Meadow Court, enclosed within the buildings facing onto Sciennes Street. The development area had been used for parking for the

properties that form the north, south and east boundaries of the development area. The western boundary is formed by the gardens of properties that face onto Moncrieff Terrace (Illus 1).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

No previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the development area. The site overlies the former site of the Victorian Edinburgh Distillery (Illus 2), first depicted on the 1893 Ordnance Survey map and which replaced an earlier Georgian house/villa depicted on the site from at least Ainslie's 1804 map. The site also occurs along the medieval road connecting Edinburgh with the nearby early 16th century Sciennes Convent.

Although the area has been affected by modern development, significant archaeological deposits relating to the former Victorian distillery buildings and post-medieval development of this area were considered likely to occur across site. Accordingly this development was considered to have a moderate to high archaeological potential.

4 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

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

- › to monitor all ground breaking works associated with the development; and
- › to provide a suitable level of recording to mitigate the loss of any features of archaeological significance by the development.



ILLUS 2 1938 aerial photograph showing Edinburgh Distillery (© Crown copyright. RCAHMS.)

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 SITE WORKS

The work was undertaken between the 12th June and the 10th August 2017 in generally good weather conditions. All the monitoring of groundworks was undertaken as specified in the WSI. A toothed bucket and breaker were used to remove hard deposits and tarmac, and a flat-bladed bucket was used to remove soft deposits in spits. All ground breaking works were carried out under direct archaeological supervision.

5.2 RECORDING

All aspects of the work were undertaken in accordance with the current relevant Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).

Digital photography was used to record archaeological features, and existing site plans were annotated to highlight features. All contexts, were given unique numbers and the recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. A full context and photographic record can be found in Appendix 1.

5.3 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 3) and the OASIS database (headland1-287991).

The complete project archive will be deposited with the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) 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 (2011).

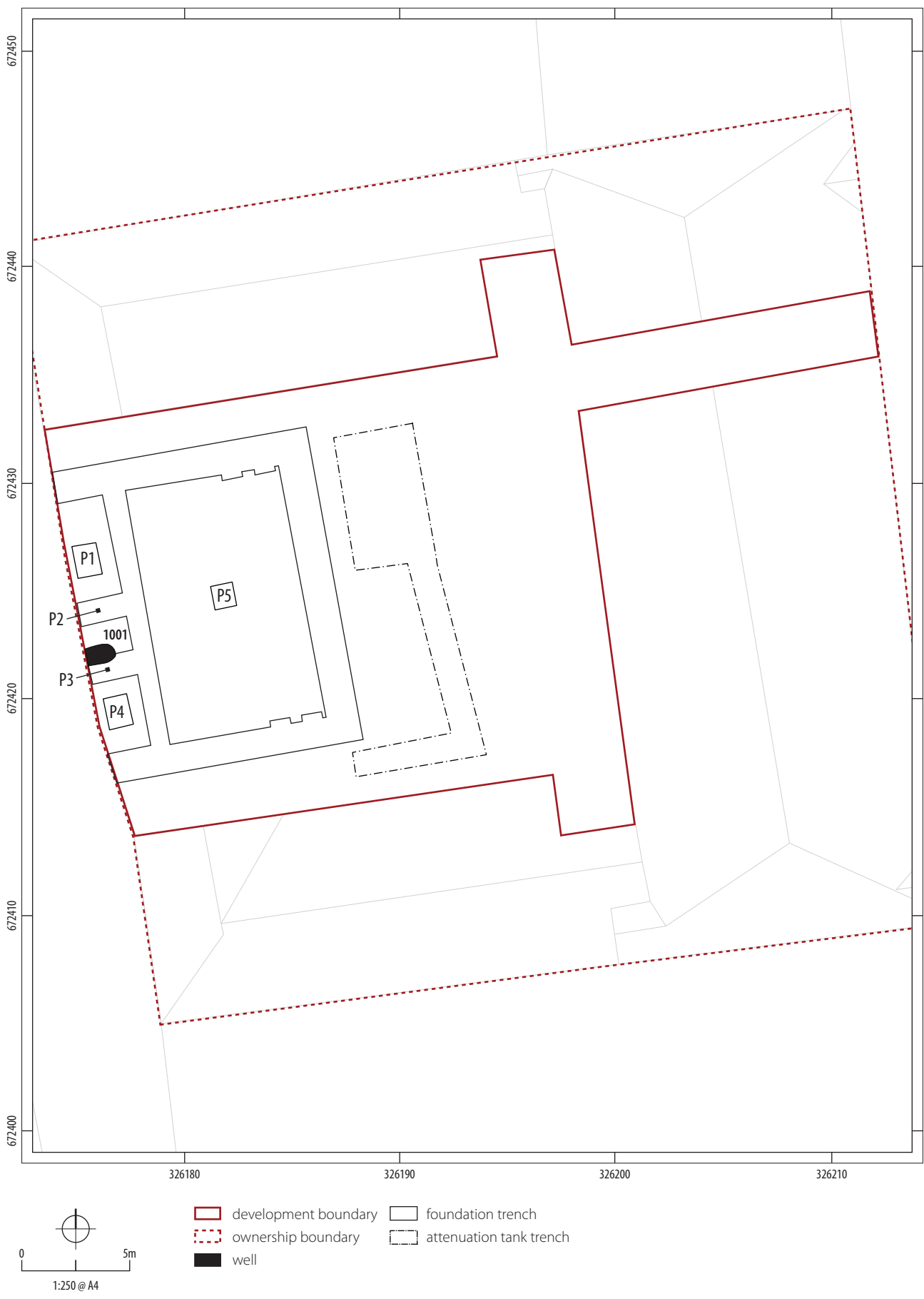
6 RESULTS

6.1 FIELDWORK

During site works monitoring was carried out on the excavation of foundations for the new development in the courtyard of Meadow Court. In addition a trench for the insertion of an attenuation tank was excavated along with associated pipe trenches.

The tarmac and gravel levelling layers were removed across the footprint of the development followed by the excavation of four linear trenches forming the extents of the new development (Illus 3). All four trenches were approximately 0.6m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 1m below the surface level. Five smaller pits (Pits 1–5) were also excavated primarily to the western side of the site. The pits were generally 1m² and excavated to a maximum depth of 1m, although Pits 2 and 3 extended from the west side of the western trench up to the boundary wall. The attenuation tank trench was located to the eastern side of the development area. This measured 5m x 3m and was excavated to a depth of 0.9m.

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ILLUS 3 Site plan



ILLUS 4 W facing shot, northern trench ILLUS 5 S facing shot, eastern trench ILLUS 6 W facing shot, southern trench ILLUS 7 N facing shot, western trench



ILLUS 8 N facing shot, pit 1 **ILLUS 9** W facing shot, pit 2 **ILLUS 10** W facing shot, pit 4 **ILLUS 11** W facing shot, pit 5

The main deposit across site was a reddish-brown clay containing large, irregular sandstone boulders (1004). This deposit was reached 0.3m below the tarmac surface at the western extent of the site, and formed a disturbed natural deposit into which the well and later structures were cut. A layer of modern crushed limestone gravel measuring approximately 0.2m thick overlaid deposit (1004) in the attenuation tank trench and the connecting pipe trenches. Several more disturbed areas with modern gravels were located across the foundation trench areas, measuring up to 0.3m in depth. Based on measurements of the western site wall it was apparent that the tarmac surface was 0.5m lower than surrounding ground level in the area of the attenuation tank.

The main foundation trenches (north, east, south and west; Illus 4–7) consisted of the same clay and sandstone material found across site (1004), with some modern crushed limestone gravel intrusions within existing service trenches. No archaeology was present within these trenches. The same results were encountered in Pits 1, 2, 4, 5 (Illus 8–11), the attenuation tank trench and the connecting pipe trenches (Illus 12 and 13).

To the west end of Pit 3 (Illus 14) the edge of a stone-lined well [1001] was recorded. This structure measured 1.9m x 1.4m in plan, with 1.3m exposed vertically. Its internal dimensions measured 1.38m x 0.97m in plan. Truncation of this feature had occurred above the current ground level – the sides of the well abutting the modern wall were evident once some modern wall elements were removed.

The well consisted of two types of construction – the lower section comprising uneven, rounded stones with no bonding (0.5m in height); whereas the upper section consisted of faced, mortared sandstone blocks (0.8m in height). The internal face of the well had been lined with a cement render. An in situ lead pipe was also seen in the western corner of the well.

Well [1001] was filled by a deposit (1002) of highly compacted blackish-brown clay-silt containing brick fragments, mortar, slate, animal bone and other demolition materials. It is likely therefore that this represents a post-use demolition deposit from the demolition of the distillery.

6.2 FINDS ASSESSMENT

The finds assemblage numbered one sherd (21g) of pottery, eight finds of iron, one find of lead alloy, one glass find and one of ceramic building material. All were found within well [1001] and all are modern. The finds include an iron bucket handle complete with one fixing plate still attached. This is the only find which potentially derives from the use of the well and it cannot be accurately dated. The remaining finds are assumed to be deposits from the demolition of the distillery. They include a sherd of large whiteware dish or bowl, modern iron nails, and wire, a lead alloy sheet offcut, a green wine bottle neck and a sherd of glazed stoneware drain pipe. All indicate a later 19th or 20th century date for this material.



ILLUS 12 Attenuation tank trench **ILLUS 13** Trench leading to attenuation tank
ILLUS 14 SW facing shot, pit 3 with well [1001]

Archive recommendations

The finds should be reported to Treasure Trove. They are of no further archaeological value.

7 DISCUSSION

The levelling events across site are likely to have occurred after the demolition of the distillery on site and associated with the construction of the existing student accommodation at Meadow Court. This seems to have truncated any potential remains that may have existed across the site.

The original western wall of the distillery was seen from Moncrieff Terrace (Illus 15), showing blocked up windows and confirming the height of the original ground level prior to the lowering of the site for modern construction.



ILLUS 15 Client Photo – original distillery wall

It is evident that at the location of the well there is a pump depicted on the 1853 OS map. This may correspond to the lower section of the well. This was then likely re-used when the distillery was built – the top section having been rebuilt using sandstone blocks and the internal surface then coated in cement.

Wilson D 2017 *Meadow Court, Edinburgh: Written Scheme Of Investigation For Archaeologically Monitored Strip* [unpublished client document] Headland Archaeology, Ref. MCED/01

8 REFERENCES

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9 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

Appendix 1.1 Context register

CONTEXT	AREA	DESCRIPTION
1001	Pit 3	A stone-lined well 1.9m long x 1.4m wide and exposed to a depth of 1.3m. The well was constructed of roughly coursed sandstone blocks with lime mortar bonding on the upper courses. The internal face of the well was coated in a cement render and a lead pipe had been inserted into the well.
1002	Pit 3	Infill of the well comprising firm dark brown clayey silt with frequent brick, tile, slate, bone fragment inclusions. Finds included a bucket handle, nails and pottery. General demolition material dating from the distillery.
1003	Site	A mid grey compact silty sand with frequent stone inclusions forming a modern levelling layer above 1004.
1004	Site	A layer of compact mid-brown pick sandy clay with occasional degraded timber fragments and frequent stone inclusions, including large boulders. Likely to be a layer of made ground levelling material formed for the construction of the existing flats constructed in the 1990s.
1005	Attenuation tank	A layer of compact mid-blue grey silty sand recorded between layers 1003 and 1004 at the south end of the Attenuation tank trench. Modern infill.

Appendix 1.2 Photographic register

PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
1001	W	Pre-condition shot
1002	SW	Pre-condition shot
1003	W	Pre-condition shot
1004	SW	Pre-condition shot
1005	—	Pipe within wall foundations
1006	S	Pipe within wall foundations
1007	—	Cumbernauld' markings on pipe
1008	—	'Cumbernauld' markings on pipe
1009	W	Location of pipe segment
1010	W	Location of pipe segment
1011	W	Location of pipe segment
1012	W	Distillery wall visible behind brick wall
1013	W	Distillery wall visible behind brick wall (overexposed)
1014	W	Distillery wall visible behind brick wall (underexposed)
1015	W	Foundation trench (N)

PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
1016	W	Foundation trench (S)
1017	N	Pit 1
1018	N	Section of trench (S)
1019	N	Section of trench (N)
1020	NW	Well [1001]
1021	NW	Well [1001]
1022	W	Well [1001]
1023	W	Well [1001]
1024	W	Pipe in well [1001]
1025	W	Pipe in well [1001]
1026	S	Southern edge of well [1001]
1027	SW	Well [1001]
1028	W	Well [1001]
1029	N	Northern edge of well [1001]
1030	N	Northern edge of well [1001]
1031	N	Northern edge of well [1001]
1032	W	Height of distillery wall
1033	W	Height of distillery wall
1034	W	Pit 2 post-ex
1035	W	Pit 4 post-ex
1036	N	Trench (W) post-ex
1037	N	Well, slot excavated
1038	SE	Pit 5
1039	S	Pit 5
1040	W	Pit 5
1041	E	Southern trench with extension
1042	N	Southern end of eastern trench
1043	E	Southern end of eastern trench
1044	N	Working shot of eastern trench excavation
1045	N	Working shot of eastern trench excavation
1046	S	Trench (E) post-ex
1047	W	Site general shot
1048	SW	Site general shot
1049	W	General shot - tarmac removal
1050	SW	General shot - tarmac removal
1051	N	General shot - tarmac and gravel removed
1052	E	General shot - tarmac and gravel removed
1053	W	Well [1001]

PHOTO	DIRECTION	DESCRIPTION
1054	N	Working shot of tarmac being removed
1055	N	Working shot of tarmac being removed
1056	NE	Working shot of tarmac being removed
1057	—	VOID
1058	SW	Working shot of initial digging for attenuation tank
1059	SW	Shot showing backfill (1004)
1060	S	Post-ex shot of attenuation tank trench
1061	S	Post-ex shot of attenuation tank trench
1062	W	E facing section of attenuation tank trench
1063	W	E facing section of attenuation tank trench
1064	E	W facing section of attenuation tank trench
1065	E	W facing section of attenuation tank trench - at N of trench
1066	N	S facing section of attenuation tank trench
1067	SW	Working shot of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1068	S	Working shot of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1069	SSE	Working shot of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1070	NE	Working shot of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1071	E	W facing section of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1072	E	W facing section of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1073	S	N facing section of S section of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1074	E	Shot of S section of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench
1075	N	Shot of trench for connecting pipe to attenuation tank trench

Appendix 1.3 Drawing register

DRAWING	PLAN	SECTION	DESCRIPTION
001	—	—	Photogrammetry set of well [1001]

APPENDIX 2 FINDS CATALOGUE

CONTEXT	FEATURE	QTY	WEIGHT (G)	MATERIAL	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	SPOT DATE
1002	well 1001	1	53	CBM	Pipe	end of a pipe, ridged pattern	19th–20th
1002	well 1001	1	57	Glass	Bottle	green wine bottle neck	19th–20th
1002	well 1001	1	157	Iron	Bucket Handle	ribbed handle with one fixing still attached	Modern
1002	well 1001	5	36	Iron	Nails	flat heads with rectangular profiles, complete	Modern
1002	well 1001	2	5	Iron	Wire	twisted wire; one piece flattened with a U-shaped profile, the other comprises two thin solid wires twisted together	Modern
1002	well 1001	1	7	Lead Alloy	Sheet	thin, flat object with three straight edges, one curving inward, possible remnant of sheeting	Modern
1002	well 1001	1	21	Pottery (Modern)	Whiteware	large dish or bowl fragment	19th–20th

APPENDIX 3 DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND ENTRY

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Meadow Court, Edinburgh
PROJECT CODE:	MCED17
PARISH:	City of Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Josh Gaunt
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeologically monitored Strip
NMRS NO(S):	—
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Distillery
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Well
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 2617 7245
START DATE (this season)	12/06/2017
END DATE (this season)	10/08/2017
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	—
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:	Archaeological monitoring was required on all groundworks associated with the construction of student flats in the courtyard of Meadow Court, Edinburgh. A number of foundation trenches were excavated along with an attenuation tank trench and associated pipe trenches. The results of the monitoring provided evidence that the ground level across the site had already been reduced and levelled. This was likely to have taken place during the construction of the present student accommodation surrounding the courtyard. As a result the only archaeological remains left in situ were a stone-lined well probably associated with the Georgian gardens and also used by the 19th century distillery. The lower half of the western wall of the distillery was also visible in the Moncrieff Terrace gardens where it forms the boundary wall between the garden and Meadow Court.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Arcadis
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE)



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