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Client: Martin McFadden



## CRAMOND GLEBE ROAD, EDINBURGH

### Archaeological Test Pits

Kirsty Dingwall  
*BA(Hons) AJfA*

# PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Client</i>	MARTIN MCFADDEN
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	NT 1892 7690
<i>Address</i>	45B CRAMOND GLEBE ROAD CRAMOND EDINBURGH
<i>Parish</i>	CRAMOND
<i>Council</i>	CITY OF EDINBURGH
<i>Planning Ref No</i>	09/02079/FUL
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<i>Oasis No</i>	HEADLAND1-80104
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<i> Finds Assessment</i>	JULIE FRANKLIN
<i>Schedule</i>	
<i>Fieldwork</i>	14TH JULY 2010
<i>Report</i>	1ST SEPTEMBER 2010

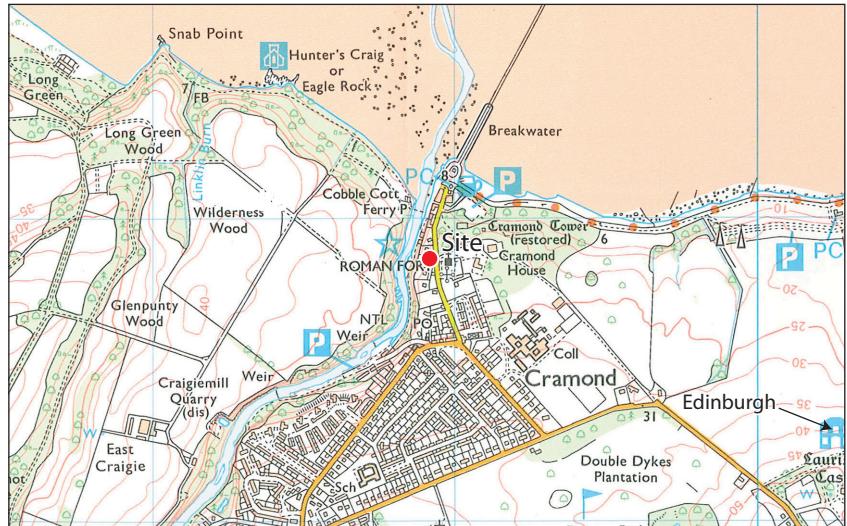
*Signed off by:* .....

*Dr Sorina Spanou, MA(Hons) PhD*

*Date:*.....

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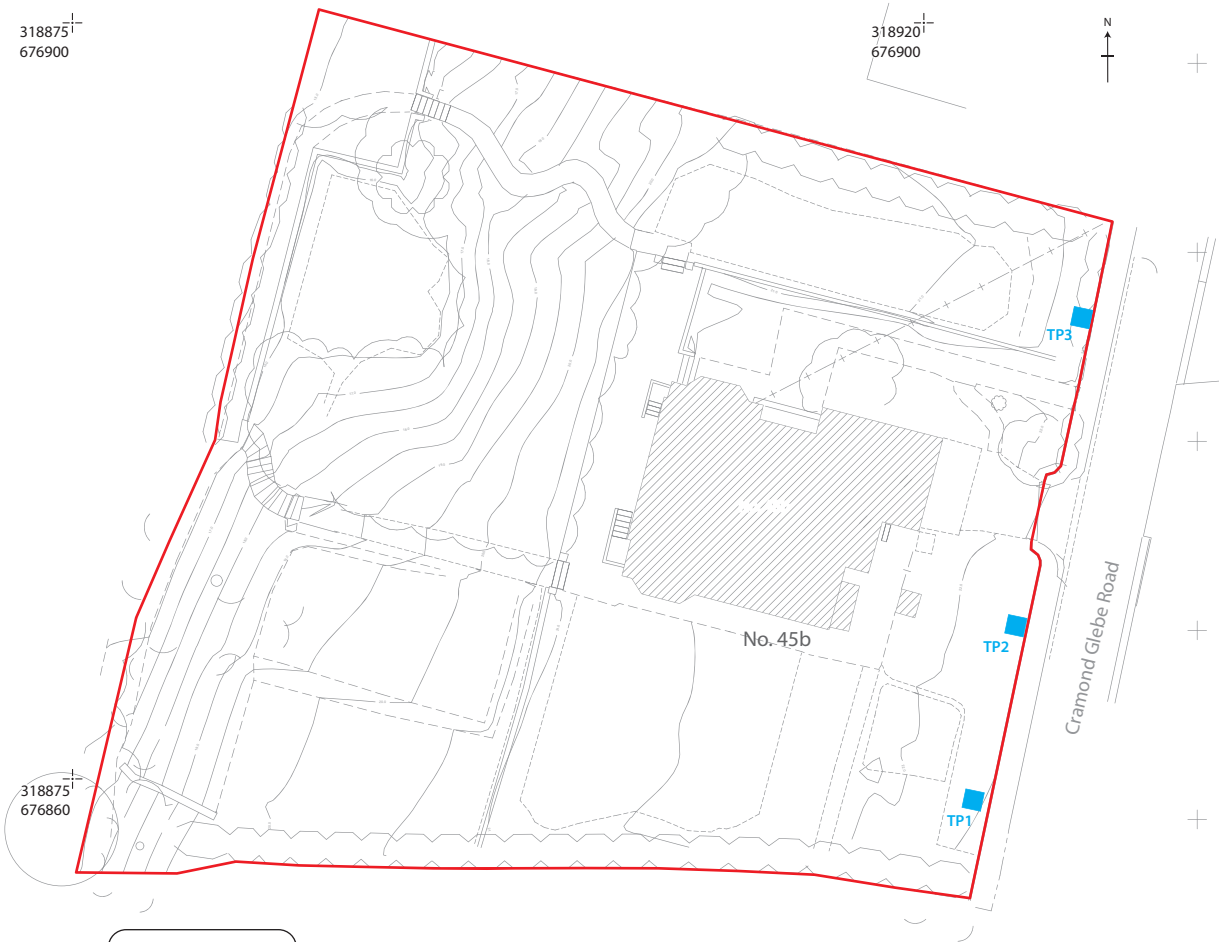
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318875  
676900

318920  
676900



318875  
676860

**Key**

- site boundary
- test pit

0 10m  
1:400@A4

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**Illus 1**  
Location of test pits

# CRAMOND GLEBE ROAD, EDINBURGH

## Archaeological Test Pits

by Kirsty Dingwall

*Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd excavated three test pits at 45b Glebe Road, Cramond, Edinburgh, in connection with a planning condition placed by City of Edinburgh Council on a development at the site. The test pits were excavated against a newly built wall to assess the impact of the development on deposits of archaeological significance.*

*The test pits revealed Roman archaeological deposits and features of 2nd–3rd century AD date lying below 0.8m of topsoil and relatively recent deposits. The development had not impacted on the archaeological deposits. The discovery of a prehistoric flint and a post-medieval coin in the topsoil of the test pits are indication of activity in the vicinity beyond the Roman period.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Richard Hall Architects on behalf of Martin McFadden to undertake the digging of three test pits in connection with a planning condition placed by City of Edinburgh Council on a development (Planning Ref 09/02079/FUL) at 45b Glebe Road, Edinburgh. The site is considered to be of potential archaeological significance due to its proximity to known archaeological remains. The works comprised test pits against a newly built wall to assess the impact of the development on deposits of archaeological significance.

### 2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

The site is a house plot with an existing building at 45b Cramond Glebe Road; the main road through the village of Cramond leading down to the shore (Illus 1). The plot is flat in its eastern part and slopes down towards the River Almond at the west. The new wall has been built along the eastern boundary, fronting onto Cramond Glebe Road. The ground adjacent to the wall is currently a mix of flowerbeds and bare earth with some patches of turf.

The plot overlies the western side of the Roman fort at Cramond, which was constructed c. 140 AD as part of the Antonine Wall frontier system. The fort was extensively re-occupied during the Severan invasion of Scotland during the early 3rd century AD, with Cramond likely to have been continuously occupied since the Anglian period (7–9th centuries AD). Excavations carried out at Cramond in areas other than the Scheduled Monument have demonstrated that well stratified Roman and medieval remains survived in situ beneath present day gardens.

The site lies in the south-west corner of the fort, with the ditches probably running through the plot to the rear (west) of the house. The test pits were therefore located fully within the known limits of the fort.

### 3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- To establish the presence or absence, quality, condition, nature and extent of archaeological deposits.
- To determine the likely impact of the development on any such remains.

Three test pits were excavated along the line of the new wall built at the eastern frontage of the site. Excavation continued until deposits of archaeological significance were encountered, or until the likely impact of the development on potential remains could be established. Where significant stratified deposits were encountered, test pits were planned at 1:20, and all test pits were located on a background map tied into Ordnance Survey mapping. Sections of the test pits were drawn at 1:10 where appropriate.

All recording followed IfA standards and guidance. All contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was on pro forma record cards. The stratigraphy of each test pit was recorded in full. Colour transparency and digital photographs were taken and recorded in a photographic register. Record shots of archaeological contexts had a metric scale visible.

### 4. RESULTS

In total, three test pits were excavated along the line of the wall, numbered 1–3 from south to north. Test pits 2

and 3 were located immediately next to the wall, with test pit 1 lying 0.4m away from it, due to the presence of tree roots and concrete.

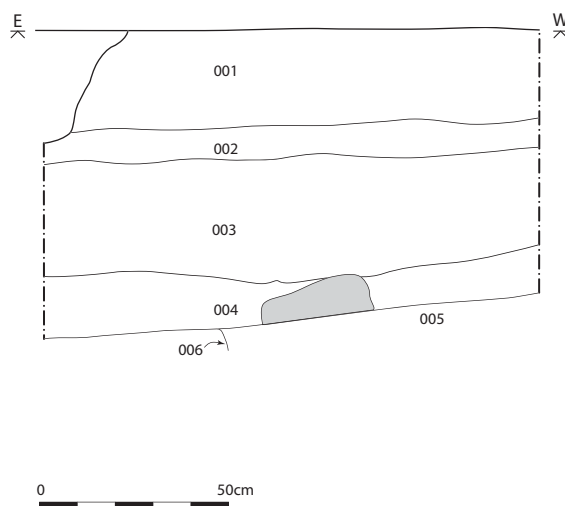
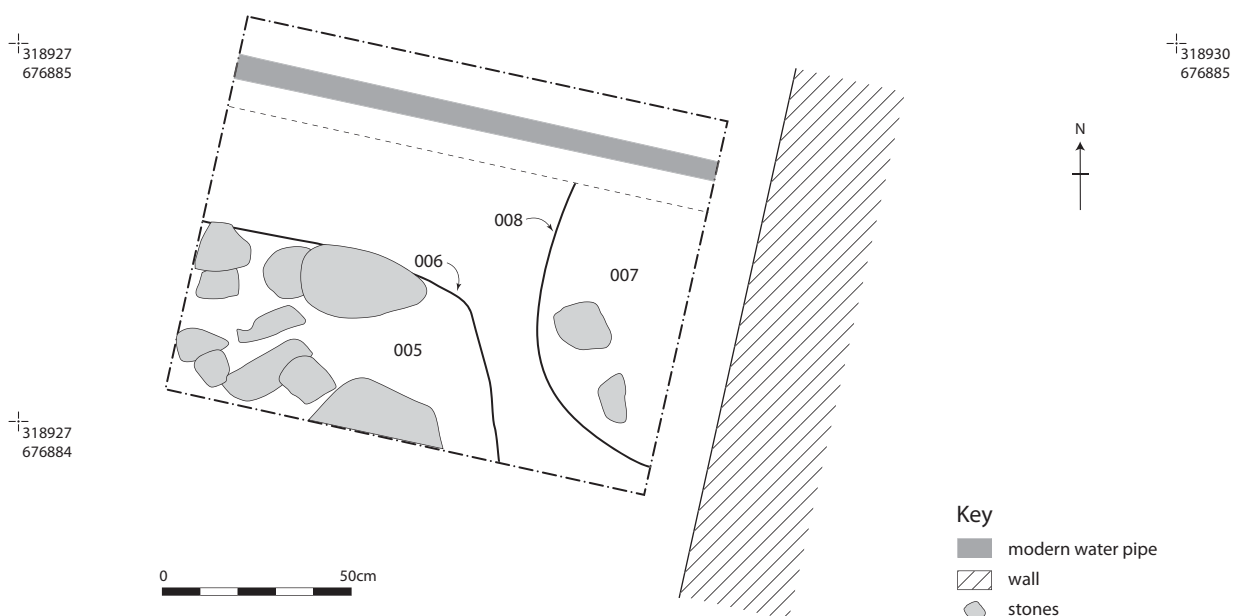
#### 4.1 Test Pit 1

Excavated through *c.* 0.15m of topsoil (011), the test pit was stopped due to the presence of a recent animal burial. No archaeological features were identified at this depth, although a coin was recovered from the disturbed topsoil in the vicinity of the burial. With the agreement of the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeologist, excavation of this test pit was not taken any further.

#### 4.2 Test Pit 2

The test pit was excavated through a series of layers of topsoil (001, 002, 003) of varying colour and consistency. All are thought to post-date the construction of the house to the west (*c.* 1930s?) due to the presence of modern pottery throughout the layers. They may have been laid down as landscaping deposits during its construction. Also present in the upper layer was a retouched flint flake. Although the flake is not diagnostic in terms of date, it could indicate prehistoric activity in the vicinity.

Below these was a layer of much cleaner, lighter clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and stones (004). This layer is thought to be a buried ground



**Illus 2**  
Plan and section of test pit 2, showing features of Roman date



**Illus 3**  
Pit [006] in corner of test pit 2

surface, predating the construction of the house. It survived to a depth of *c.* 0.15m, and appeared at a depth of *c.* 0.65m below the current ground level (which was *c.* 22m OD at this location).

An interface layer with geological deposits was observed at a depth of 0.8m below contemporary ground surface. Into this were cut two probable pits (006 and 008). The pits extended beyond the limits of the test pit, but were seen to be at least 0.9m and 0.65m in length. They were recorded in plan, with no excavation of the features taking place. The fills of both pits were a similar clayey silt, although the fill of 006 (005) was much stonier (Illus 3). Sherds of pottery of Roman date were recovered from the surface of both fills, and these pits are thought to date from that period.

A modern water pipe cut across the test pit on its northern edge, running east-west. The concrete foundations of the new wall extend to a depth of 0.3m and only cut into the topsoil layers. The Roman levels were not disturbed by its construction.

#### 4.3 Test Pit 3

The test pit was located within one of the existing flowerbeds lining the wall, and the deposits encountered reflected that. A layer of very mottled and mixed clayey silt, with large amounts of roots, charcoal, and partially burnt bits of wooden plank was present, forming a topsoil *c.* 0.3m in depth. Below this was another layer of more compacted topsoil, at least 0.3m in depth. Excavation was stopped at this depth as it was apparent that the concrete forming the base of the new wall only extended to a depth of 0.5m and therefore only disturbed modern topsoil layers. No evidence for Roman material was seen within the test pit.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The test pits showed that features of probable Roman date are present at a depth of *c.* 0.8m below the current ground level. They appear to be cut through a contemporary ground surface although the wider extent of this layer is unknown. The features appear to be two fairly similar pits of unknown function. They would have been located in the south-west corner of the fort, within the *retentura* which would have held barracks for troops, or potentially any cavalry cohorts who might have been present.

The layers of topsoil present above the buried ground surface are an indication that there was some substantial dumping of material on the site, probably during the late 19th or early 20th century. The construction of the new wall only disturbed these layers, and did not extend down into the Roman deposits.

While the depth of the topsoil layers was not seen across the full section of the site, due to the abandonment of the southern test pit, it seems likely that a similar sequence would be present in the south of the area, with extensive layers of topsoil overlying the earlier ground surface.

Features of Roman date would not be unexpected, given the location of the test pits. Their presence adds to the knowledge of the extent, nature and survival of archaeology of the Roman period in Cramond. The pottery does not date the pits any more closely than the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD, and therefore it is not possible to say whether they might date from the original Antonine construction or the later Severan reoccupation.

It should also be noted that the finds recovered from the topsoil layers of the pits suggest that activity in this area of Cramond may considerably pre-date the Romans, and extend back into the prehistoric period. Other finds indicated activity in the post-medieval period.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Finds Summary

Julie Franklin

#### Introduction

The finds were recovered from a series of test pits hand excavated within the perimeter of Cramond Roman Fort. The assemblage was small, numbering ten sherds of pottery, a coin, a flint flake and 12 sherds of ceramic and other building materials. Two of the pot sherds are of Roman date. Some of the ceramic building materials may also be Roman. The rest of the finds appear to date to the post-medieval and modern periods.

#### Pottery

The two sherds of Roman pottery were both found in Test Pit 2, in the fills of two pits (fills 005 and 007). Both appeared to be of Black Burnished Ware and presumably date to the period of the fort's occupation (140 AD to the early 3rd century).

Later pottery was all found in the topsoil of Test Pit 2, (001) and Test Pit 3 (009). It included one post-medieval greyware sherd probably dating to the 17th or early 18th

century (001). Other sherds were all of 19th and 20th century date, including flower pot sherds, kitchen and dining wares.

#### Finds

The finds all derived from the topsoil, in all three Test Pits: Test Pit 1 (011); Test Pit 2 (001); and Test Pit 3 (009).

Potentially the earliest find was a retouched flint flake, (001). It is unfortunately not diagnostic in terms of dating but might suggest a prehistoric presence in the vicinity.

Other finds include a coin of post-medieval date (011). Following conservation, it appears to be a 17th century Turner, though somewhat worn.

The remaining finds are of building materials: brick, tile and cement (001 & 009). These are all fragmentary but the fabric and form of most indicates a modern origin, in keeping with the associated pottery. However there were a number of fragments from the topsoil (001), overlying the Roman pottery, which may be of Roman date. These are four fragments of brick and tile, of a red sandy fabric. It is possible that these are all in fact modern, as are the pottery and other finds from this context but two of the sherds are extremely abraded and appear to be of some age compared to modern brick fragments from the same context.

**Table A1.1**  
Finds catalogue

Trench	Context	Material	Qty	Object	Description	Spot Date	Period
2	001	Pottery	5	Modern	Red earthenware, blue shell edged, blue banded, rockingham - flower pots, plate, etc	19th-20th	Mod
2	001	Pottery	1	Post-Medieval	PMR olive glazed sherd	16th-e.18th	PM
2	001	Lithics	1	Flint Flake	Retouched, orange flint	-	-
2	001	Building Material	1	Cement	Curved sherd of cementing from drain pipe join, riling at end of pipe moulded into concrete	19th-20th	Mod
2	001	CBM	1	Brick	Corner sherd, pale pink/orange gritty fabric	-	Mod
2	001	CBM	3	Brick	Fragments, orange fabric with iron inclusions	-	Mod
2	001	CBM	2	Brick	Fragments, dark red soft sandy fabric, abraded	-	Rom/Mod
2	001	CBM	1	Tile	Slightly curving tile, red sandy fabric	-	Rom/Mod
2	001	CBM	1	Tile?	Fragment of sandy red earthenware, possibly pottery or tile, slightly sooted on one side	-	Rom/Mod
2	005	Pottery	1	Roman	Black Burnished Ware? - pale grey fabric with black surfaces, criss crossed incised lines on exterior	-	Rom
2	007	Pottery	1	Roman	Black Burnished Ware? - pale grey fabric with black surfaces, thin walled sherd with sharp carination	-	Rom
3	009	Pottery	2	Modern	Whiteware, slip lined redware	19th-20th	Mod
3	009	CBM	2	Pan Tile	Large edge & corner sherds	17th-20th	Mod
3	009	CBM	1	Pan Tile	Similar in appearance to pan tile form same context but coarse sandy surface with large white inclusions, possibly older	-	Mod
1	011	Copper Alloy	1	Coin	Coin with detail obscured by corrosion, small, thin, imperfectly rounded, lettering around edge. Possibly a 17th century Turner. Diam 20mm	L.Medi-PM	Medi/PM



**Discussion**

As the site lies within the Roman Fort, a certain amount of Roman finds might be expected. The only evidence for Roman activity came from Test Pit 2. Other finds relate to the occupation of the existing house, with some indication of activity in the vicinity during the post-medieval and possibly also prehistoric periods.



**Illus 4**

Coin of probable post-medieval date (following conservation)

## Appendix 2 – Site Registers

### Test Pit Register

Test pit No.	Location	Contexts	Dimensions (m)	Comments
1	South section of wall	011	1 x 1 x 0.15	Excavation halted at this depth due to presence of recent animal burial.
2	Middle section of wall	001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008	1 x 1.3 x 0.8	Contained pits 006 and 008
3	Northern section of wall	009, 010	1 x 1 x 0.6	No archaeological features seen

### Context Register

Context No.	Description	Dimensions (m)
001	Mid brownish grey soft mixed clayey silt, mottled with orange material. Topsoil.	D: 0.27
002	Mid orangey grey clayey sandy silt. Similar to 001. Recent topsoil.	D: 0.1
003	Moderately compact mid orangey brown clayey silt, with occasional stones. Recent topsoil.	D: 0.33
004	Moderately compact light to mid brownish orange clayey silt. Contains occasional flecks of charcoal and stones and feels much 'cleaner' than the deposits above. Buried ground surface.	D: 0.17
005	Fill of pit 006. Firm mid brownish orange clayey silt, with frequent large stones within the fill and occasional flecks of charcoal. Fragment of Black Burnished Ware recovered from deposit.	L: 0.9 (at least) W: 0.44 (at least)
006	Cut of pit. Not fully seen due to limits of excavation. Appears sub-circular in plan.	L: 0.9 (at least) W: 0.44 (at least)
007	Fill of pit 008. Moderately firm mid to light greyish brown clayey silt with occasional medium sized stones and fleck of charcoal. Fragment of Black Burnished Ware recovered from deposit.	L: 0.65 (at least) W: 0.4 (at least)
008	Cut of pit. Not fully seen due to limits of excavations. Appears sub-circular in plan.	L: 0.65 (at least) W: 0.4 (at least)
009	Loose mottled mixed orangey brown clayey silt, containing moderate amounts of charcoal, large fragments of partially charred wooden planks, roots and compost material.	D: 0.31
010	Firm dark greyish brown slightly sandy silt with occasional flecks of charcoal. Recent topsoil.	D: 0.29
011	Fairly loose dark greyish brown clayey silt, with much root disturbance and small stones. Topsoil.	D: 0.15

### Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Scale	Description
1	1:10	N-facing section through Test Pit 2
2	1:20	Plan of Test Pit 2
3	1:10	N-facing section through Test Pit 3

*Photographic Register*

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<b>Photo No.</b>	<b>Colour Slide</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Direction Facing</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Y	Y	N	TP 1
2	Y	Y	N	TP 1
3	Y	Y	S	N-facing section through TP 2
4	Y	Y	E	Pit 006 and 007 in TP 2
5	Y	Y	S	N-facing section through TP3

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### Appendix 3 – Discovery & Excavation Scotland

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	City of Edinburgh Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh. Archaeological Test Pits
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	CGRE10
<b>PARISH:</b>	Cramond
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):</b>	K. Dingwall
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	Headland Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological evaluation
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NT17NE 3.0
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Roman archaeological deposits.
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	Post-medieval coin
<b>NGR</b>	NT 18918 76872
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	14/7/10
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	1/9/10
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	–
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)</b>	<p>Three test pits were excavated at 45b Glebe Road, Cramond, Edinburgh, in connection with a planning condition placed by City of Edinburgh Council on a development at the site. The test pits were excavated against a newly built wall to assess the impact of the development on deposits of archaeological significance.</p> <p>The test pits revealed Roman archaeological deposits and features of 2nd -3rd century AD date lying below 0.8m of topsoil and relatively recent deposits. The development had not impacted on the archaeological deposits. The discovery of a prehistoric flint and a post-medieval coin in the topsoil of the test pits are indication of activity in the vicinity beyond the Roman period.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	–
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/ deposited)</b>	Archive to be deposited in NMRS
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Martin McFadden
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	–
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Headland Archaeology Ltd, 13 Jane St, Edinburgh. EH6 5HE
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