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Mavisbank House, Loanhead: Mine Ventilation Shaft Works

Archaeological Recording

Report No. 3040

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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**Mavisbank House, Loanhead:
Mine Ventilation Shaft Works**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report presents the results of archaeological recording work undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) on mine ventilation shaft works at Mavisbank House, Loanhead. The work was commissioned by The Coal Authority.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 24 May 2012 was produced by CFA on behalf of The Coal Authority. The WSI was designed to fulfil the requirements of Historic Scotland, as the work took place within the Scheduled Monument of Mavisbank House, Loanhead (SM 4921) under Scheduled Monument Consent (case ID 201207087)

1.2 Background

Scheduled Monument Consent was granted for works in the grounds of Mavisbank (New Saughton Hall) House, Doocot, Policies and Earthwork (SM 4921), Loanhead to secure and make safe a disused mine ventilation shaft by excavating down to solid ground and constructing a concrete cover (NT 288 653).

The location of the ventilation shaft is in the north-western area within the grounds of Mavisbank House. The shaft itself is within a heavily wooded area and was approached up a steep track from the south. As a result the site is inaccessible to vehicles.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (watching brief) to monitor all ground breaking works.
- To mitigate the effects of construction on any archaeological deposits or features identified through their excavation and recording and produce a report on them.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Fieldwork. Recording of all elements followed established CFA methods, as detailed in the approved WSI.

2.2 Archaeological Excavation and Recording

The terms of the WSI required an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation and recording of the remains of a disused ventilation shaft.

Topsoil and modern overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator equipped with a smooth-bladed bucket. All groundbreaking work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

All further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the WSI was carried out by hand.

The stratification of all excavated areas was recorded, whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

Leaf litter and surface vegetation, consisting of bracken and weeds, was scraped clear of the air shaft prior to excavation works commencing (Fig. 2-3). The air shaft cover was a curved iron vent within a framework of thin iron girders, with perforated metal plates covering the edges of the top of the shaft (Fig. 2-3).

The area excavated around the air ventilation shaft measured approx 3.5m by 3m and was dug to a depth of approx. 1.1m. A tree in the NW corner of the excavated area was left in situ. Roots from this tree had caused some damage to the shaft's stonework (Fig. 8).

The excavation work removed a mixture of topsoil and rubble backfill for the original air shaft construction cut. Natural was not exposed.

The mine ventilation shaft was circular and was exposed to a height of approximately 1m. It was built of roughly hewn, regularly coursed, grey sandstone blocks bonded with concrete. The interior of the shaft was not exposed.

No other archaeological features or deposits were exposed.

4. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological investigation and recording was carried out on the remains of a disused mine ventilation shaft within the grounds of Mavisbank House, Loanhead. All work was carried out under Scheduled Monument Consent.

The ventilation shaft is likely to relate to the mining activities of Bilston Colliery. The ventilation shaft appears on the Ordnance Survey Six Inch 1854 map and is annotated simply as 'Shaft'. It appears on the subsequent OS 1894 map as 'Old Shaft'.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) and copies of reports will be lodged with Historic Scotland and the Midlothian Council Sites and Monument Record.

A summary statement of the results of this watching brief will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 2) and an online OASIS form will be completed.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ordnance Survey 1854 Six Inch Map Edinburghshire Sheet 12.

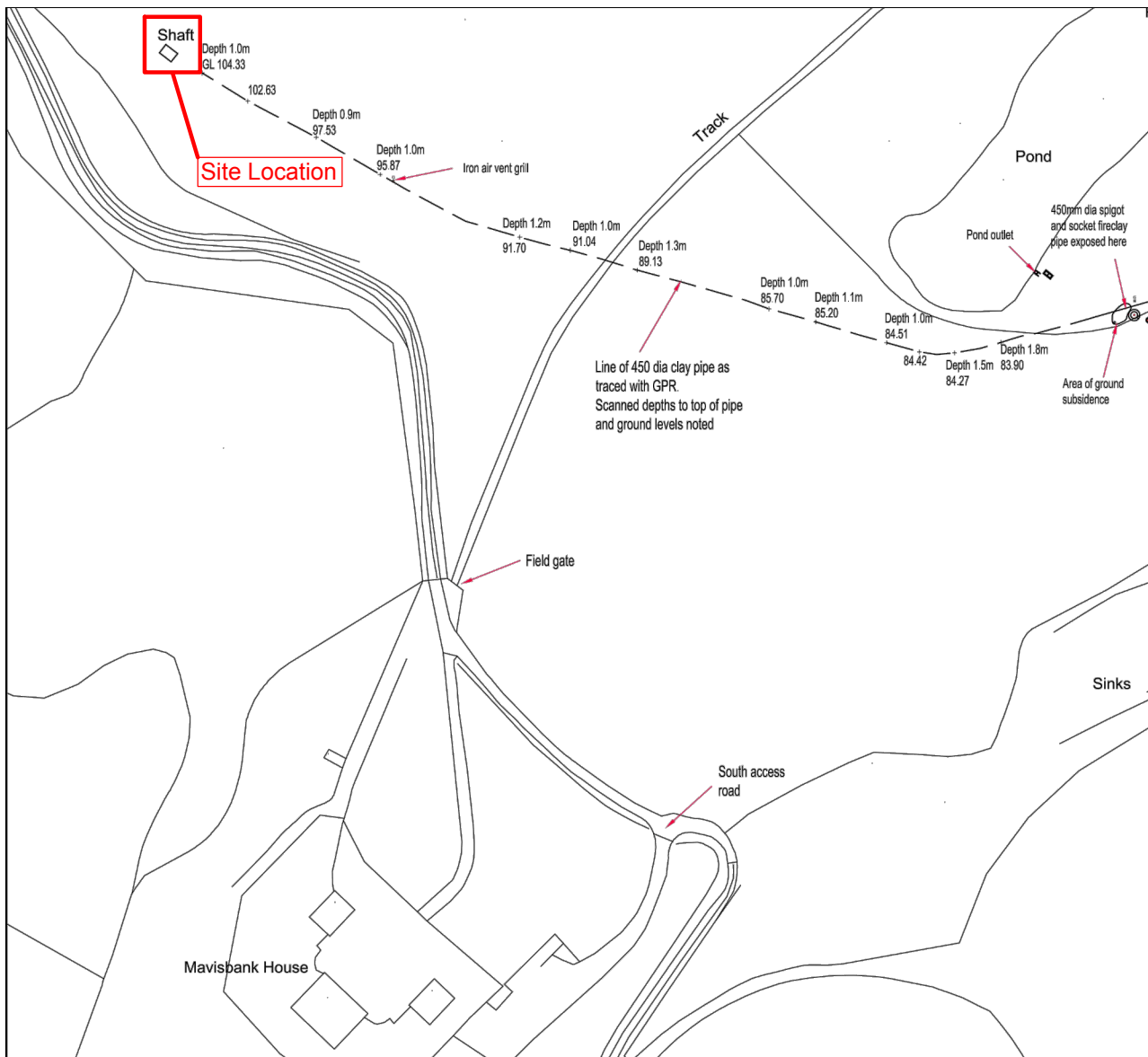
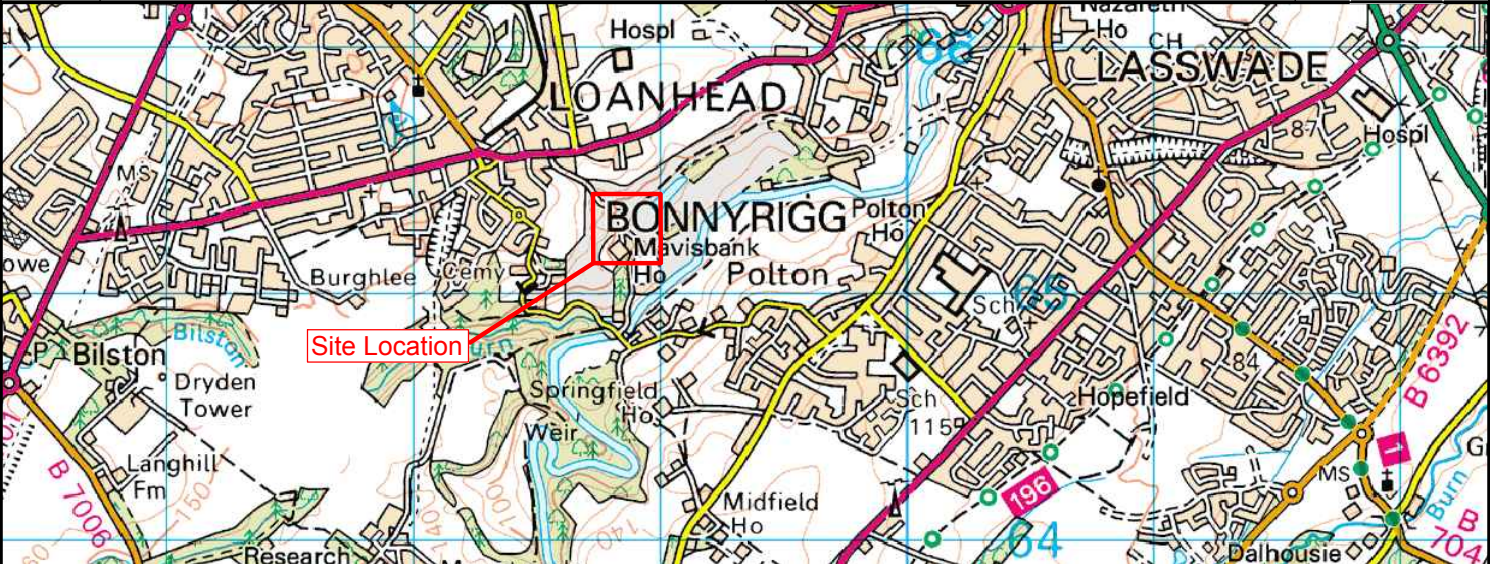
Ordnance Survey 1894 25 Inch to the mile Edinburghshire Sheet 008.09.

APPENDIX 1: Digital Photographic Register

Photo No.	Description	Taken From	Conditions
1	Air vent cover over shaft prior to removal	S	Sunny
2	As above	E	Sunny
3	As above	NW	Sunny
4	As above	SW	Sunny
5	Excavation around airshaft vent	SE	Raining
6	As above	NW	Raining
7	As above	NW	Raining
8	As above	NW	Raining

APPENDIX 2: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Midlothian Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Mavisbank House, Loanhead- Mine ventilation shaft works
PROJECT CODE:	MAVI
PARISH:	Lasswade
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Andrew Brown
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological Recording
NMRS NO(S):	SM no. 4921
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	-
NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)	NT 288 653 (approx)
START DATE (this season)	June 2013
END DATE (this season)	June 2013
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	-
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A programme of archaeological investigation and recording was carried out on the remains of a disused mine ventilation shaft within the grounds of Mavisbank House, Loanhead under Scheduled Monument Consent. The ventilation shaft is likely to relate to the mining activities of Bilston Colliery. The ventilation shaft appears on the Ordnance Survey Six Inch 1854 map and is annotated simply as 'Shaft'. It appears on the subsequent OS 1894 map as 'Old Shaft'. No other archaeological features or deposits were exposed.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	The Coal Authority
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
EMAIL ADDRESS:	cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	National Monuments Record of Scotland (archive) Midlothian Council Sites and Monuments Record (report)







Key:		Fig No: 1	Revision: 0	Client: A	 <p>CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park Musselburgh East Lothian, EH21 7PQ t: 0131 273 4380 f: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk</p>
		Title: Location map			
Scale at A4:	1:1800	Project: Raynesway on behalf of The Coal Authority			



Fig. 2 - Air shaft prior to excavation



Fig. 3 - Air shaft prior to excavation

Fig. No: 2-3	Revision: A	Project: Raynesway on behalf of The Coal Authority			CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park, Musselburgh East Lothian, Eh21 7PQ T: 0131 273 4380 F: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
Drawn by: SW	Checked: MJ	Report No: 3040			



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Fig. 4 - Air shaft post excavation



Fig. 5 - Air shaft post excavation

Fig. No: 4-5		Revision: A	Project: Raynesway on behalf of The Coal Authority			CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD The Old Engine House Eskmills Park, Musselburgh East Lothian, Eh21 7PQ T: 0131 273 4380 F: 0131 273 4381 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk
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