

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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## **The Leith Programme Foot of the Walk Junction**

### **Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Report No. 3288**

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This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

### **The Leith Programme Foot of the Walk Junction**

### **Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Report No. 3288**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) from February to April 2015 during The Leith Programme, Foot of the Walk Junction works. The Leith Programme is a program of carriageway resurfacing works, footway alterations and environmental improvements to Leith Walk (NT 26960 75898) (Fig. 1) in the City of Edinburgh. The work was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by CFA and agreed by City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS).

With the port at Berwick Upon Tweed changing hands on numerous occasions the port at Leith had during the medieval period established itself as the premier port in Scotland and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with its close proximity to Edinburgh, was a strategically important area. The Siege of Leith begun in 1548 with the French Army and Catholic Scots building enclosing defences around Leith Port and town. Leith was then besieged by an English Army and Protestant Scots. The defences took the form of the new Italian style of stone faced sloping earthen banks and ditches with projecting corner bastions. These provided better cover against artillery fire compared to traditional stone walls and also provided interlocking fields of both musket and cannon fire, (Fig. 7). The Treaty of Edinburgh in 1560 ended the siege and the defences were slighted and the French soldiers were ordered to leave however sections of the defensive banks were however still visible in 1817 and appear on a map by Robert Kirkwood, (Fig. 8).

Two trenches were excavated, one across the junction at the southern end of Constitution Street and the other, (split into two parts), across the junction at the northern end of the Foot of Leith Walk, (Fig. 1). The primary function of the excavation of these trenches was for the principle contractors to lay electrical ducts running across the road at a depth of 0.7m. However, CECAS had identified the potential for archaeological remains, possibly relating to the aforementioned siege works to be indentified within these trenches; a section of one of the defensive ditches had been previously identified in a service diversion trench during the Edinburgh Tram Works, (Humble, 2008). The location of where the ditch was identified was in approximately the same location as the trench that was to be excavated across the junction at the southern end of Constitution Street. The previous work had shown that the area was significantly disturbed by modern services so to stand a chance of indentifying the ditch and get below this disturbance the trenches were to be excavated to a depth of 1.5m where possible.

### **1.2 Objectives**

The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were:

- To conduct an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation (Watching Brief) to monitor the excavation of trenches across the road junctions at the Foot of Leith Walk;

- To identify and record the presence of any archaeological deposits or features, with specific attention being paid to any traces of the siege works that were constructed at the Foot of Leith Walk.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 General**

CFA follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidelines as appropriate.

### **2.2 Watching Brief**

All excavation by mechanical plant was done using a smooth-bladed ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision.

Health and Safety dictated that no access could be gained to the trenches so all recording, including section drawing, were done from the modern road surface level.

## **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **3.1 General**

The watching brief covered the excavation of three trenches (Trenches 1, 2a and 2b), one (Trench 1) crossing the southern junction of Constitution Street and two (Trenches 2a & 2b) at the northern end of The Foot Leith Walk (Figs. 1-3). The trenches were approximately 1 to 1.3m in width. The electricity ducts needed to be installed at a depth of around 0.7m. CECAS had previously determined that the trenches should be excavated, where possible, to a depth of 1.5m. This was required to increase the potential of identifying remains of the siege works by getting below the modern disturbance caused by excavation for services. However, the presence of live services often prevented this being achieved.

In order to minimise traffic flow disruption and public inconvenience Trench 2 was excavated and backfilled in two sections over separate days. Each section was fully excavated, recorded and backfilled prior to the excavation of the next section.

### **3.2 Watching Brief**

#### **3.2.1 Trench 1 (Figs. 1, 2, 4 & 9)**

Trench 1 was situated at the southern end of Constitution Street at the junctions with the Foot of Leith Walk and was located at NGR: NT 26980 75908 (Fig. 1 & 2). The trench measured c.1.m in width and 20m in length.

The road surface tarmac (001) at modern ground level directly overlaid concrete and crushed stone. The trench was crossed by modern plastic service ducts or service pipes along its full length. These services were encountered at various depths across the trench from just under the modern tarmac road surface to just appearing at the

maximum 1.5m trench depth, (Fig. 4). All contexts within the trench were either cut for or fills around these services.

No archaeologically significant remains or finds were discovered throughout the trench. Natural was not observed.

### **3.2.2 Trench 2a (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 5, 10 & 11)**

Trench 2a was excavated across the eastern side of the foot of Leith Walk at NGR: NT 26958 75891 (Fig. 1 & 3). The trench measured 1m in width and 8m in length.

The modern road surface of tarmac (025) overlaid crushed stone road base and concrete. The trench was heavily truncated by modern plastic service ducts or service pipes along its length.

Only a short, 1.2m in length area, was not cut by modern services. The deposits in this area consisted of a 0.3m deep layer of laminated bands of dark grey/black ash and dark brown silts (040) which lay over (041) a 0.05m deep layer of pale yellow sand which in turn lay over (042) a 0.7m deep layer of dark brown silty sand. Deposit (042) continued below the trenches maximum depth of 1.5m. This area of less disturbed ground was cut by a cut for modern plastic ducting at its western end (036) and a cut for a high pressure gas main at its eastern end (043) (Fig. 11).

The high pressure gas main prevented the excavation to full depth in the easternmost end of the trench.

No archaeologically significant remains or finds were discovered throughout the trench. Natural was not identified.

### **3.2.3 Trench 2b (Figs 1, 3, 6, 12 & 13)**

Trench 2b was excavated across on the central portion of the Leith Walk at NGR: NT 26951 75897 (Fig. 3). The trench measured 1.3m wide and measured 9.9m in length. The trench doglegged to the south to accommodate the final connection point for the electrical service, which was altered as the trench was being dug. The trench did not extend to the western side of the Foot of Leith Walk due the pavement being widened at this point and a concrete covering for a service being encountered.

The modern road surface (048) overlaid a 0.2m deep layer of concrete (049). This in turn overlaid a mid to dark brown dirty sand layer (050). Below (050) was a silty, stony layer (053). This was cut (052) by a later feature which was filled with yellow sand (051) containing lenses of pale grey clay. These lenses tipped downwards to the east. Below (052) was a fine yellow, probably natural sand (062) at the base of the trench at a depth of 8.46m OD.

Below 053 was a black silty layer (054). This layer contained fragments of oyster shell, brick, tile and medieval ceramic with a green glaze. Below this was a possible wall feature (058) at a depth of 8.75m OD (Figs. 6, 12 and 13). This feature consisted of a single course of unbonded, sub-rounded stones. The feature crossed the trench in

a north-east, south-west direction and sat within a possible foundation cut **(056)**. The cut **(062)** was filled by a mid brown sand **(057)**.

Apparently abutting the possible wall feature **(058)** on its eastern side was a deposit of very compact orange/brown gritty sand, gravel and crushed shell **(059)**. This merged in to a black gritty, silty layer **(064)**. Due to the confined nature of the trench no excavation could take place and the relationship between **058**, **059** and **064** could not be explored further.

The eastern end of the trench was disturbed by a vertical cut **(055)** for a large brick drainhead **(060)**. This drain contained running water at a depth of 2.5m from the modern road surface.

### **3.3 Finds by Christina Hills**

A small number of finds were recovered from Trench 2b, context **(054)** and are summarised in Appendix 4.

The finds were mixed in date, from medieval to modern and included oyster shell, bone, ceramic building material (CBM), glass and roof slates. The pottery consisted of seven sherds of post-medieval ware, all with a green glaze, of which four sherds were reduced ware and three were oxidised ware. There was also one sherd of modern white ceramic.

As the material was mixed in date and all from the same context no conclusions or dating evidence can be drawn from the assemblage.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) from February to April 2015 during a program of carriageway resurfacing works, footway alterations and environmental improvements to Leith Walk (NT 26960 75898) (Fig. 1) in the City of Edinburgh.

Three trenches were excavated across the junctions at the Foot of Leith Walk in order to lay electrical ducts. These were monitored under watching brief conditions to identify and record any features or deposits of archaeological significance. There was an emphasis on the possibility of identifying siege works relating to the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century siege of Leith. The trenches were to be excavated to 1.5m deep in order to get below the level of modern service disturbance. However, full depth excavation was always not possible as live modern service ducts and pipes were encountered at various depths making deeper excavation impossible. Trenches 1 and 2a were heavily truncated by services and no features of archaeological significance were identified.

In Trench 2b a possible wall **(058)** was found. This feature was abutted by a compact deposit **(059)** which may have been a surface. This lay below a possible midden deposit **(054)** that contained ceramics dating to around the 16/17<sup>th</sup> century as well as modern finds, so should not be taken as secure dating.

A summary statement of the results of this watching brief will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 5) and an *OASIS Scotland* entry will be completed.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) and copies of reports will be lodged with the City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monuments Record.

#### 5. REFERENCES

Harris, S, 1991, *The fortifications and siege of Leith: a further study of the map of the siege, 1560*. Proceeding of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Volume 121

Humble, J, 2008 *Results of watching briefs on service diversions (Leith and Haymarket) and groundworks at the Gogarburn depot* Headland Archaeology Ltd Unpublished Report No. EDT07



## APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context No.	Trench	Description
001	Tr. 1	Tarmac, modern road surface
002	Tr. 1	Sand levelling layer for paving slabs
003	Tr. 1	Type 1
004	Tr. 1	Orange pea gravel fill of 006
005	Tr. 1	Type 1
006	Tr. 1	Cut for service
007	Tr. 1	Cut for service
008	Tr. 1	Fill of cut 007
009	Tr. 1	Concrete
010	Tr. 1	Mid brown dirty silt
011	Tr. 1	Dark brown silt
012	Tr. 1	Cut for service
013	Tr. 1	Pea gravel fill of 012
014	Tr. 1	Concrete
015	Tr. 1	Cut for service, other side to 012
016	Tr. 1	Fill for cast iron services
017	Tr. 1	Concrete
018	Tr. 1	Type 1
019	Tr. 1	Dirty type 1 fill of 022
020	Tr. 1	Concrete
021	Tr. 1	Layer of tarmac
022	Tr. 1	Cut for service
023	Tr. 1	Concrete
024	Tr. 1	Type 1
025	Tr. 2a	Tarmac, modern road surface
026	Tr. 2a	Type 1
027	Tr. 2a	Concrete
028	Tr. 2a	Concrete
029	Tr. 2a	Type 1
030	Tr. 2a	Yellow/grey mortar and sand mix
031	Tr. 2a	Dark brown silty sand
032	Tr. 2a	Ash and clinker layer
033	Tr. 2a	Type 1
034	Tr. 2a	Concrete
035	Tr. 2a	Type 1 fill of 047
036	Tr. 2a	Cut for service
037	Tr. 2a	Type 1 fill of 036
038	Tr. 2a	Type 1
039	Tr. 2a	Broken concrete
040	Tr. 2a	Laminate bands of black sand and brown silt
041	Tr. 2a	Pale yellow sand
042	Tr. 2a	Dark brown silty sandy
043	Tr. 2a	Cut for gas main
044	Tr. 2a	Yellow grey mortar and sand
045	Tr. 2a	Wooden shuttering plank
046	Tr. 2a	Concrete cap for gas main
047	Tr. 2a	Cut for gas main
048	Tr. 2b	Tarmac, modern road surface
049	Tr. 2b	Concrete layer under tarmac
050	Tr. 2b	Layer of dirty sand
051	Tr. 2b	Bands of clay and sand
052	Tr. 2b	Cut
053	Tr. 2b	Silty, stony layer

054	Tr. 2b	Find rich, black silty layer
055	Tr. 2b	Cut for modern drainhead
056	Tr. 2b	Foundation cut for wall 058
057	Tr. 2b	Fill of 056
058	Tr. 2b	Line of stones
059	Tr. 2b	Compact gritty/stone/broken shell/gravel level/surface
060	Tr. 2b	Fill for cut 055
061	Tr. 2b	Brick drainhead
062	Tr. 2b	Natural sand
063	Tr. 1	Cut for modern service
064	Tr2b	Layer at base of Trench 2b

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register

Photo No.	Description	From
1	Tr.1, pre excavation after tarmac removal	W
2	Tr.1, western end showing modern services	W
3	Tr.1, western end showing modern services	SW
4	Tr.1, north-facing section, west end showing services	S
5	Tr.1, post excavation showing services	W
6	Tr.1, modern service fills at base of trench	S
7	Tr.1, small area of possible undisturbed deposits	S
8	Tr. 1, concrete cap and gas main exposed east end of trench	N
9	Tr. 1, two large iron services in base of trench	S
10	Tr. 2a, western section of Foot of the Walk before tarmac removal	W
11	T2. 2a modern tarmac pecked before removal	W
12	Tr. 2a, trench showing various services and concrete capping for gas main in foreground	E
13-14	Tr. 2a, east end showing various services	E
15	Tr. 2a, small section of possible undisturbed ground	S
16	Tr. 2b, trench dug to 0.5m	W
17	Tr. 2b, trench dug to 0.5m	E
18	Tr. 2b, wall 058	W
19	Tr. 2b, wall 058, close up	W
20-22	Tr. 2b, wall 058 from above	S
23	Tr. 2b, looking down trench showing 058 and 059	E
24	Tr. 2b, looking along base of trench and onto Junction Street	E
25-30	Tr. 2b, running shot of s facing section	S
31	Tr. 2b wall 058 covered with sandbags before being covered with 0.7m of type 1	W

### APPENDIX 3: Field Drawing Register

Drawing No.	Sheet No.	Description	Plan/Section	Scale
1	1	South facing section of Tr. 1	Section	1:50
2	1	Plan of Tr. 1	Plan	1:50
3	2	South facing section of Tr. 2a	Section	1:20
4	2	Plan of Tr. 2a	Plan	1:20
5	3	South facing section of Tr. 2b	Section	1:20
6	3	Plan of Tr. 2b	Plan	1:20

### APPENDIX 4: Finds Register




Context	Find type	No.	Wt (g)	Notes	Spotdate
054	Shell	6	67	Oyster	
054	Bone	4	126		
054	CBM	4	301		Modern
054	Glass	1	4		Modern
054	Roof Slates	2	245		
054	Pottery	7	251	Green glazed SPOW/SPRW	Post Medieval
054	Pottery	1	13	White glazed ceramic	Modern

## APPENDIX 5: Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	City of Edinburgh Council
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	The Leith Programme, Foot of the Walk Junction, Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	LEWA2
<b>PARISH:</b>	Edinburgh (City of)
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Graeme Carruthers
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Archaeological Watching Brief
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	None
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	None
<b>NGR</b>	NT 26960 75898
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	23 February 2015
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	17 April 2015
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	N/A
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>Three trenches (Trenches 1, 2a and 2b) were excavated across the junctions at the Foot of Leith Walk in order to lay electrical ducts. These were monitored under watching brief conditions to identify and record any features or deposits of archaeological significance. There was an emphasis on the possibility of identifying siege works relating to the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century siege of Leith. The trenches were to be excavated to 1.5m deep in order to get below the level of modern service disturbance. However, full depth excavation was always not possible as live modern service ducts and pipes were encountered at various depths making deeper excavation impossible. Trenches 1 and 2a were heavily truncated by services and no features of archaeological significance were identified.</p> <p>In Trench 2b a possible wall was found at a depth of around 1.25m from the surface. This feature was abutted by a compact deposit which may have been a surface. This lay below a possible midden deposit that contained ceramics dating to around the 16/17<sup>th</sup> century, although it is possible that the ceramics were residual so should not be taken as secure dating.</p> <p>No features thought to relate to the siege works were identified.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	N/A
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	City of Edinburgh Council
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	<a href="mailto:cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk">cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk</a>
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	RCAHMS and City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monuments Record



Key:

-  Trenches
-  Possible wall 058
-  Service pipe/duct

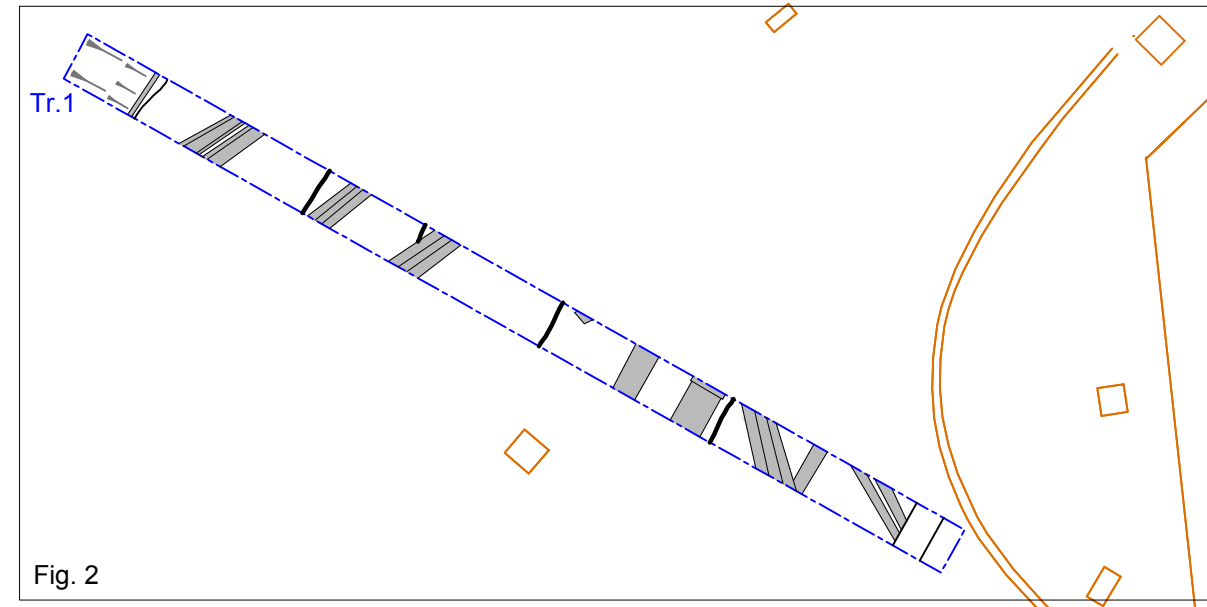


Fig. 2

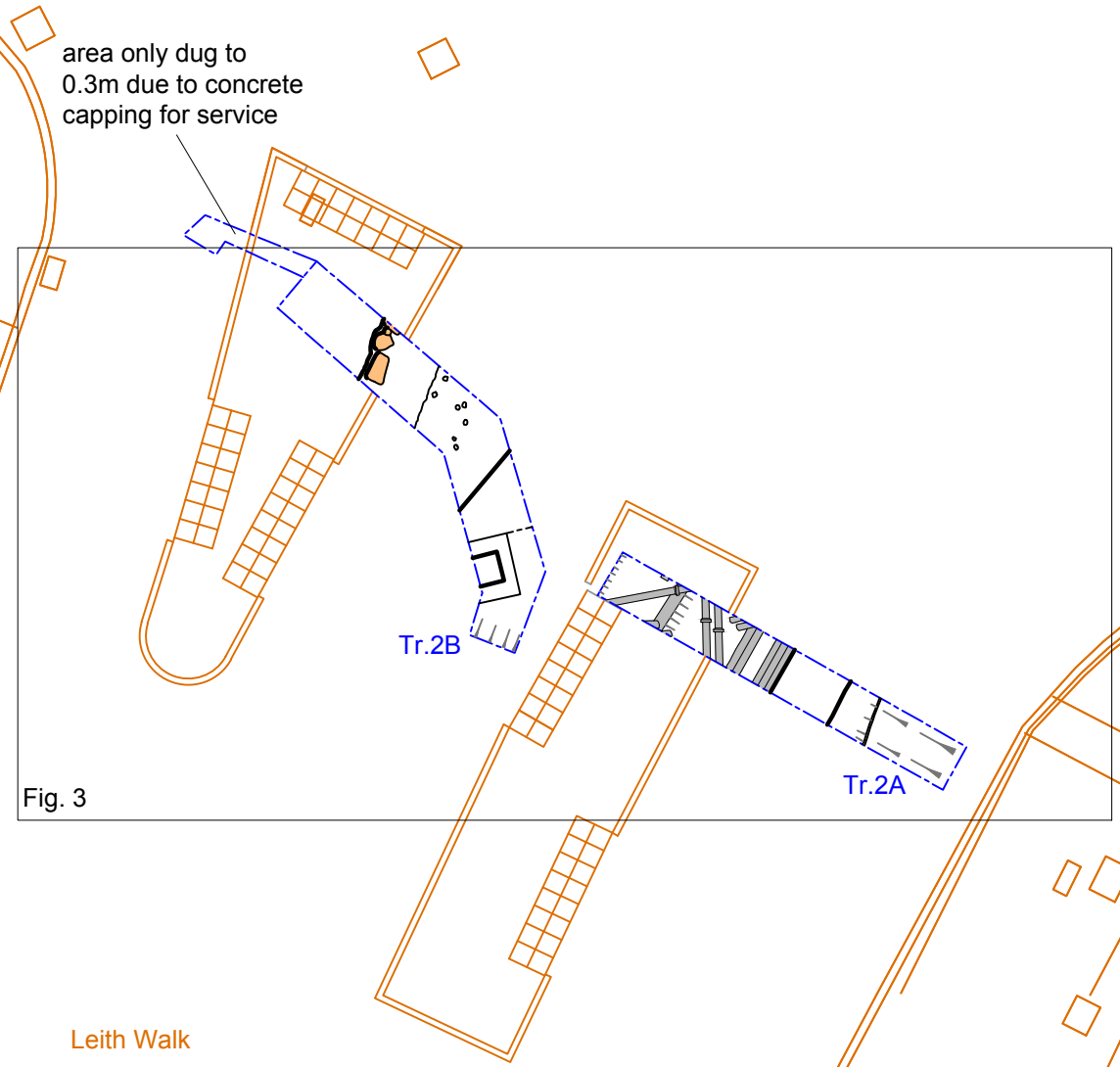


Fig. 3

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Fig. No: 1 Report No: 3288

Title:  
**Site location**

Project:  
**The Leith Programme, Foot of the Walk Junction Archaeological Watching Brief**

Client:  
**City of Edinburgh Council**

Scale at A3:  
**1:150**

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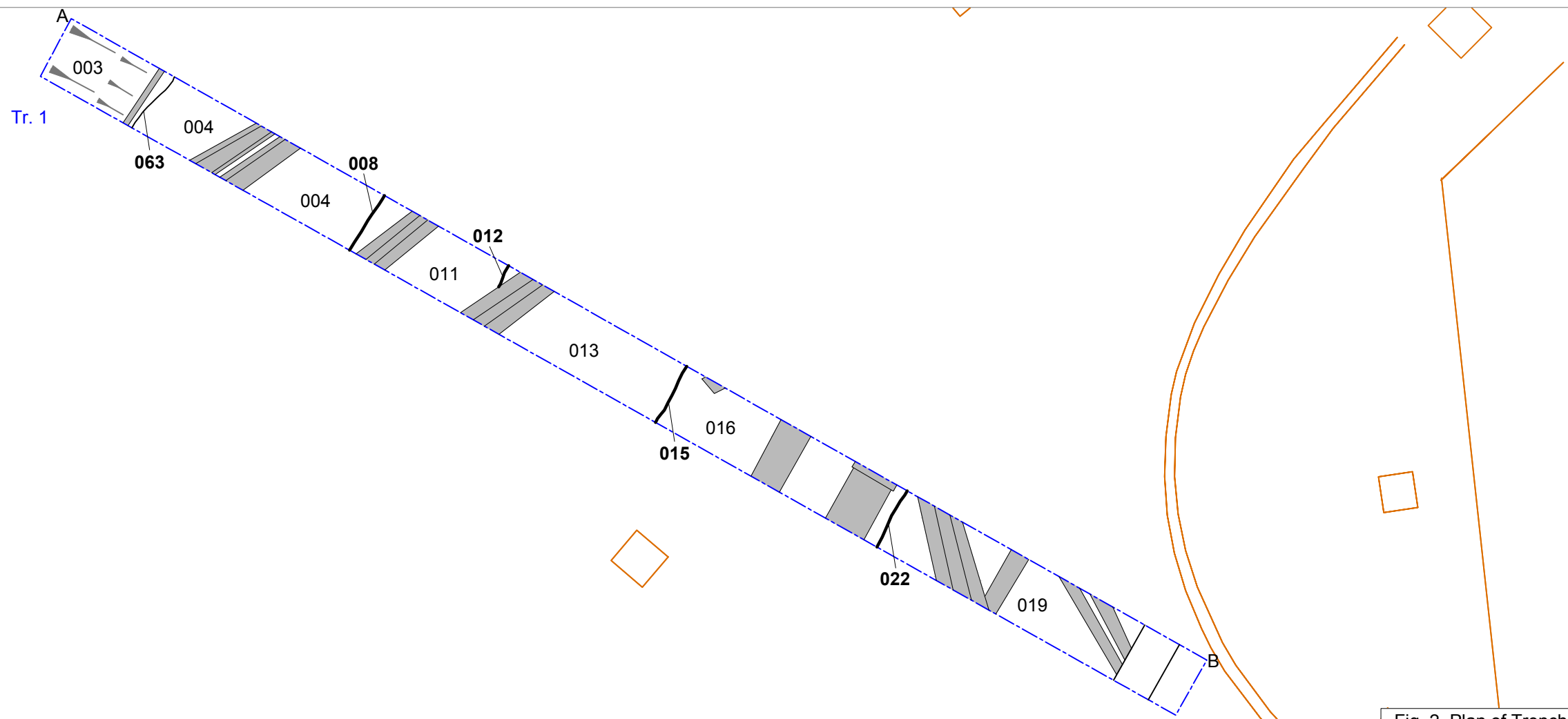


Fig. 2 Plan of Trench 1

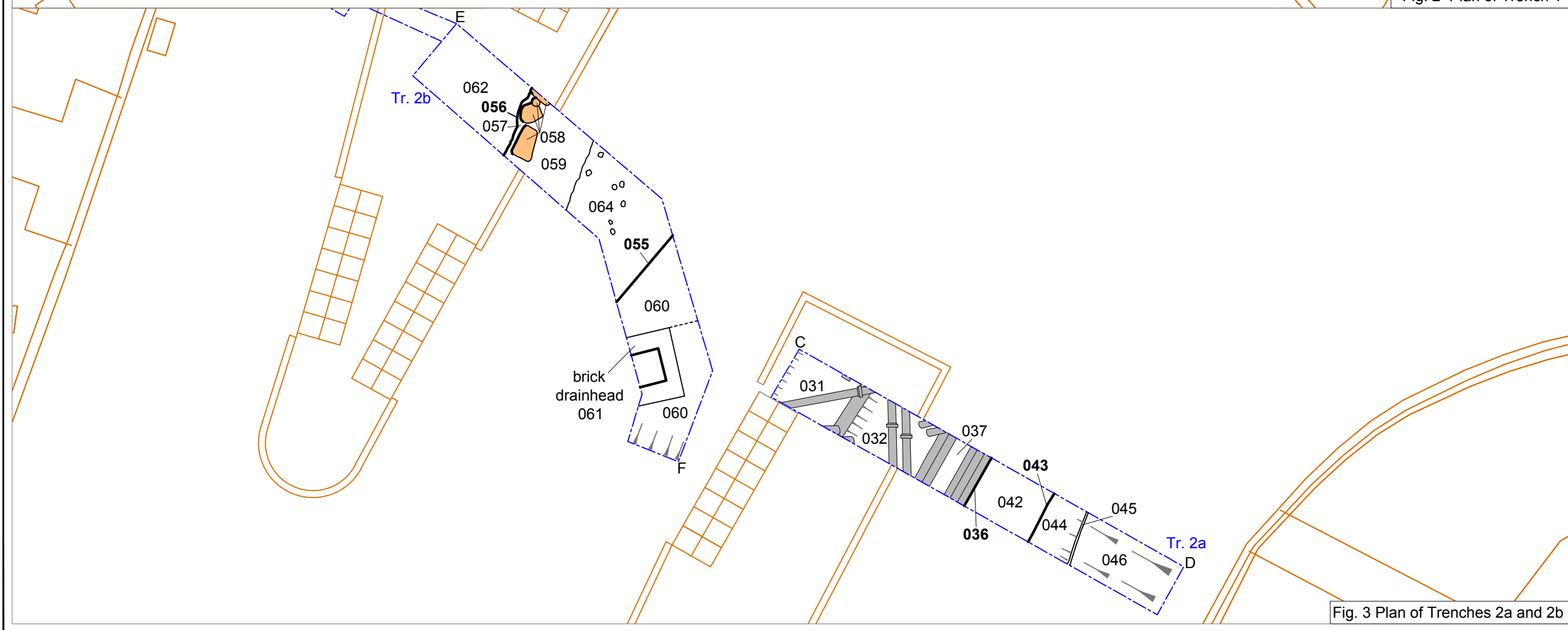


Fig. 3 Plan of Trenches 2a and 2b

**Key:**

- Trenches
- Possible wall 058
- Service pipe/duct

0 5m

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**Key:**

- Service pipe/duct
- Possible wall 058

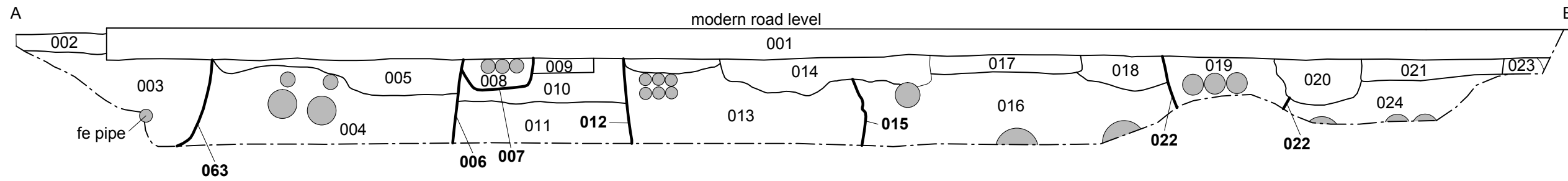


Fig. 4 South-facing section of Trench 1

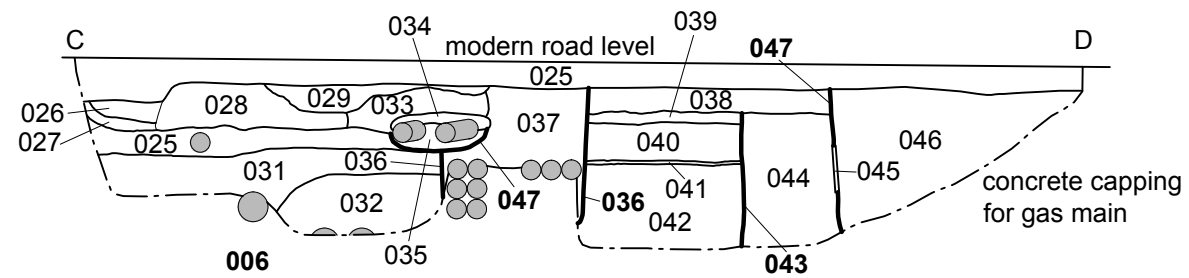


Fig. 5 South-facing section of Trench 2a

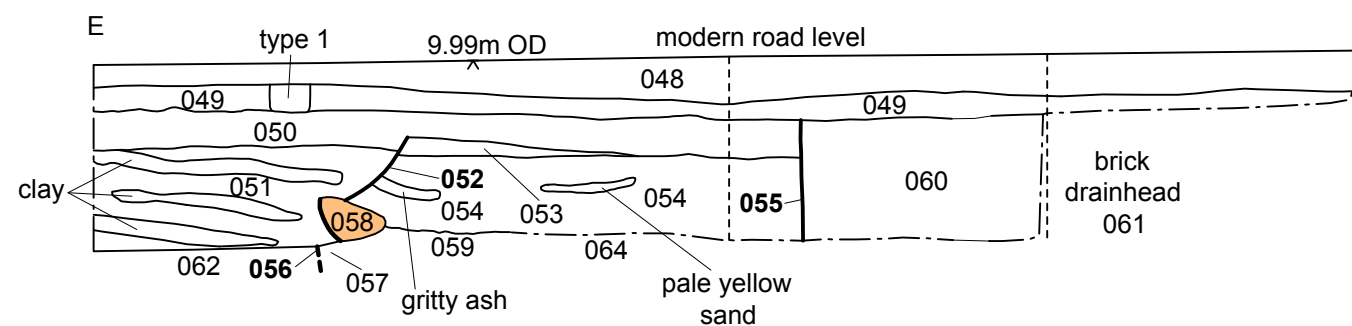


Fig. 6 South-facing section of Trench 2b

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Fig. No:	4-6	Report No:	3288
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Title:

Project:  
 The Leith Programme, Foot of the Walk Junction  
 Archaeological Watching Brief

Client:  
 City of Edinburgh Council

Scale at A3:  
 1:60

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Fig. 7 Detail of the Petworth Map, 1560, showing the Italian style defensive works built around Leith



Fig. 8 Extract from 'An Ancient Plan of the City of Edinburgh and its Environs' by Robert Kirkwood, 1817



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Fig. 9 Trench 1 showing the numerous services crossing the trench



Fig. 10 Trench 2a showing the numerous services crossing the trench



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Project:  
**The Leith Programme, Foot of the Walk Junction Archaeological Watching Brief**



Fig. 11 Trench 2a showing possibly undisturbed area with **040**, **041** and **042**



Fig. 12 Trench 2b showing wall **058**, surface **059** and context **064**



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Fig. 13 Trench 2b showing showing wall **058** and foundation cut **056**



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