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Geophysical Survey

**Hermiston House
Calder Road
Edinburgh**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 1773

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

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) at the site of a former glasshouse within the grounds of Hermiston House, Calder Road, Edinburgh (NGR: NT 17479 70180 centred) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Andrew Isherwood Ltd on behalf of Heriot Watt University.

1.1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 26th March 2010 was produced by CFA on behalf of the client. The WSI was designed to meet the requirements of Mr John Lawson, City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS).

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Hermiston House is a Category B Listed Building (HB 27389). Its origins date back to the 17th century, but the property was largely rebuilt by William Burn in the mid-19th century. The property underwent restoration and modernisation in 1955 by Esme Gordon. In brief, the property is a 2-storey asymmetrical Scots gabled villa, constructed of rubble sandstone with ashlar dressings. The house is currently the residence of the Vice Chancellor of Heriot Watt University.

1.2.2 The Hermiston House estate also comprises west and south lodges and a walled garden and glasshouse. The glasshouse as described in the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS NT17SE 26.04) was a lean-to structure which butted against the north wall immediately to the east of the house. It comprised a brick base coursed foundation, surmounted by a glass structure..

1.2.3 The current application (09/02586/FUL) required a watching brief to be undertaken during all groundbreaking work within the development area in preparation for the construction of a new conservatory which is in the same location and will be constructed to the same dimensions as the existing glasshouse.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

2.1 General

2.1.1 CFA Archaeology Ltd follows the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Fieldwork.

2.2 Watching Brief

2.2.1 A watching brief was conducted during all groundbreaking work in preparation for the construction of a new conservatory within the development area (Fig. 1).

2.2.2 The groundbreaking work comprised two elements; the excavation of trenches for the foundations of the new conservatory and the removal of overburden to formation level within the development area (Fig. 1). Undisturbed natural was not seen in any of the foundation trenches or during other works.

2.2.3 Excavation of trenches for the footprint of the new building removed garden soils to a depth of 0.5m: a soft, dark grey, silty-clay, which on average was 0.2m in depth, overlay mid-brown silty-clay subsoil which was excavated to a depth of 0.3m, whereupon it continued beyond the limit of excavation. The excavation of foundation trenches was undertaken to a depth of c. 0.5m. The maximum width of the trenches was c. 0.85m in width (Fig. 2-5).

2.2.4 Both the above deposits are interpreted as garden soils of relatively modern origin and represent deposits in keeping with the extensive landscaping of the immediate area.

2.2.5 The formation level within the footprint of the new development was achieved by the removal 0.2-0.3m of garden soil. This exposed the continuing masonry of the south-east facing elevation of the garden wall (Fig. 2 & 3).

2.2.6 The watching brief recorded the foundations of a brick wall which had partitioned the glasshouse into two parts, a conservatory and an orangery, prior to demolition. The masonry comprised brickwork 0.25m in width, two courses high set into a 0.75m wide concrete pour. The overall depth of this deposit was 0.5m. Section evidence showed no sign of a cut for the masonry foundations which suggested the ground had been raised in the internal space of the former glasshouse. These remains correlated with a scar running down the south-east facing elevation of the garden wall, measuring approximately 0.1m in width (Fig. 4).

3. CONCLUSION

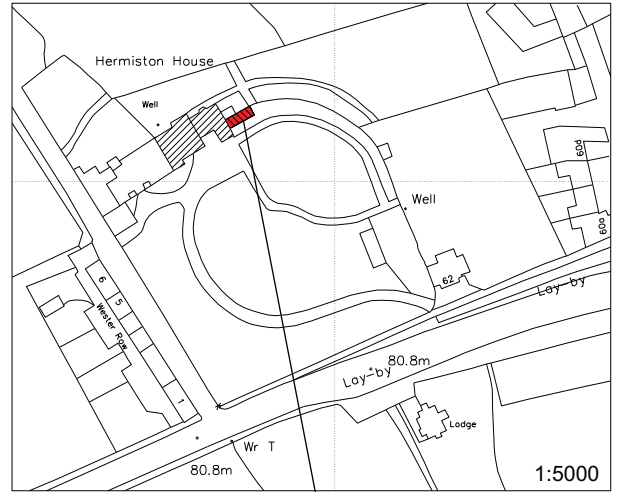
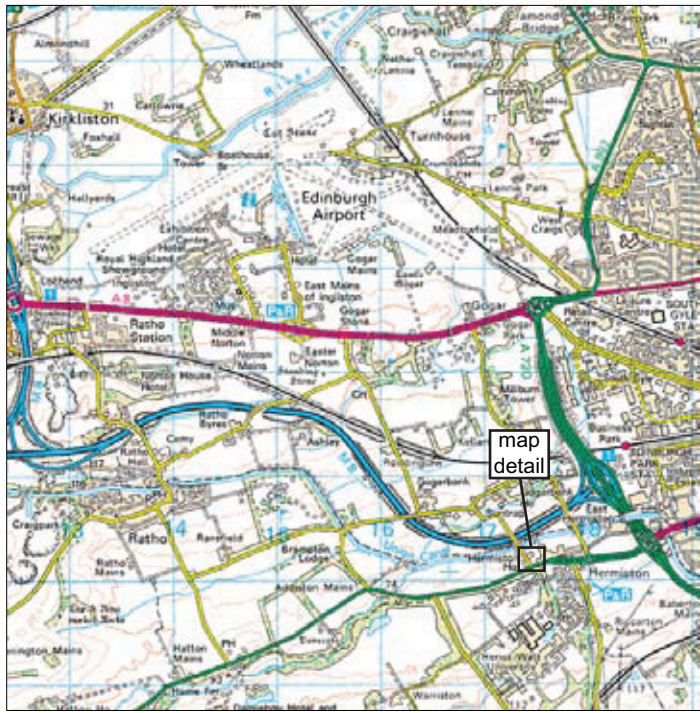
- 3.1 A watching brief was carried out during groundbreaking work for the construction of a new conservatory on the former location of a conservatory and orangery within the grounds of Hermiston House, Calder Road, Edinburgh.
- 3.2 The watching brief recorded the excavation of foundation trenches which removed garden soils up to a depth of 0.5m.
- 3.3 Overburden within the footprint of the new development comprised disturbed garden soil. This was removed to the required formation level (c. 0.3m below the previous ground level) revealing the continuing south-east facing elevation of the existing garden wall.
- 3.4 The foundation footing of the former glasshouse partition was seen in plan. The masonry remains comprised two courses of brickwork embedded into a concrete pour 0.75m in width. These remains correlated with a visible scar on the south-east elevation of the garden wall.
- 3.5 No other features of archaeological significance were discovered.
- 3.6 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 the City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monuments Record.
- 3.7 A summary statement to be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* 2010 (Appendix 2) will be sufficient to disseminate the results of this watching brief.

APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

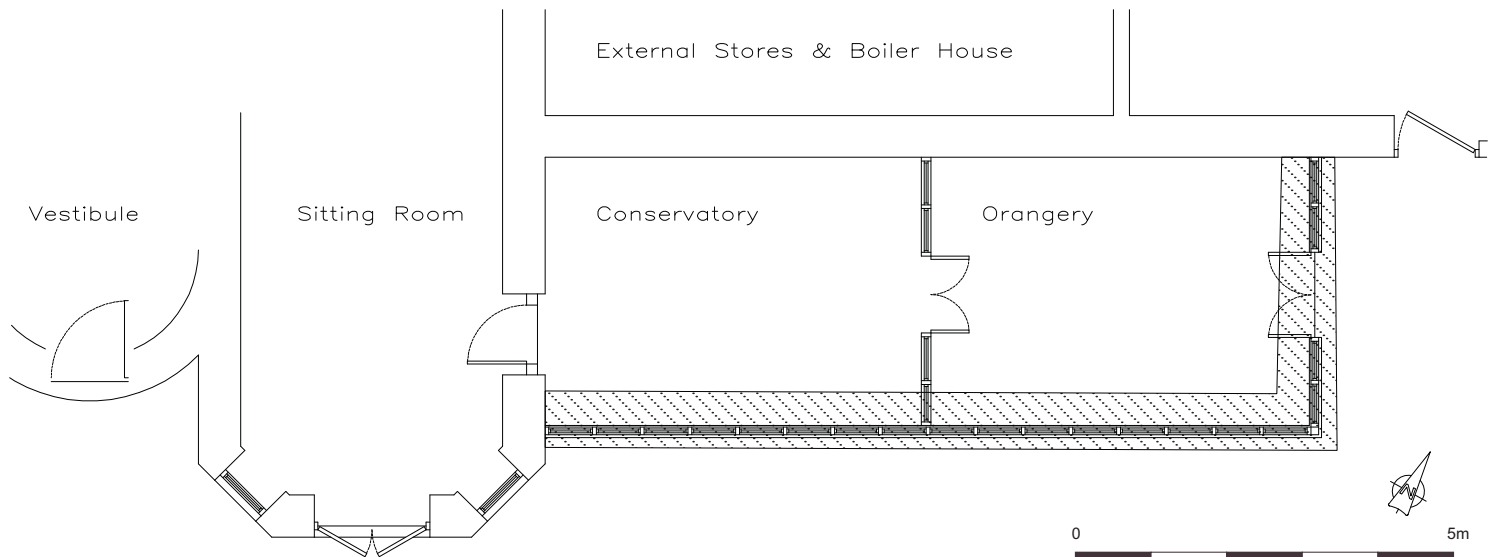
Digi No	Contexts/description	Taken from	Conditions
1	General shot of south-east facing wall and partition foundations	South-east	Overcast
2	General shot of brickwork partition foundations	South-east	Overcast
3	General shot of south-west to north-east orientated foundation trench	North-east	Overcast
4	General shot of south-west to north-east orientated foundation trench & north-east facing elevation of Hermiston House	North-east	Overcast
5-6	General shot of blocked up former access in south-east facing wall	South-east	Overcast
7-8	Shot of brickwork partition foundations	South-west	Overcast
9	General shot of site generic deposits in trench section	North-west	Overcast
10-11	Shot of deposits at eastern corner of site	West	Overcast
12	Shot of south-east facing wall continuing below limit of excavation in north-west to south-east orientated foundation trench	South-east	Overcast
13-14	Shot of south-east facing wall and north-west to south-east orientated foundation trench	South-east	Overcast
15-16	Shot of deposits in north-west to south-east orientated trench	North-east	Overcast
17-18	General shot of site	East	Overcast
19-20	General shot of site	South	Overcast
21	Shot of brickwork partition foundations in plan	South-east	Overcast
22	Shot of brickwork partition foundations in and scar on south-east facing wall elevation	South-east	Overcast
23	Shot of brickwork partition foundations in and scar on south-east facing wall elevation	South-east	Overcast
24	Shot of former access from Hermiston House into the glasshouse	North-east	Overcast
25	Shot of former access from Hermiston House into the glasshouse	North-east	Overcast
26	Shot of brickwork partition foundations in trench section	South-east	Overcast
27	General shot of site	South	Overcast
28-29	Shot of outbuilding to rear correlating with blocked entrance on south-east facing elevation of existing wall	North	Overcast
30-31	Shot of probable foundation of Hermiston House in south corner of foundation trench	North-east	Overcast

APPENDIX 2: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Hermiston House, Calder Road, Edinburgh: Archaeological Watching Brief
PROJECT CODE:	HEHO
PARISH:	Currie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Phil Moore
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching Brief
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	N/A
NGR (2 letters, 10 figures)	NT 1298 7837
START DATE (this season)	May 2010
END DATE (this season)	May 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	N/A
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A watching brief was carried out by CFA Archaeology during groundbreaking work for the construction of a new conservatory in the former location of a conservatory and orangery within the grounds of Hermiston House, Calder Road Edinburgh. Hermiston House is a Category B Listed Building (HB 27389). Its origins date back to the 17th century, but the property was largely rebuilt by William Burn in the mid-19th century. The property underwent restoration and modernisation in 1955 by Esme Gordon.</p> <p>The watching brief recorded the excavation of foundation trenches which removed garden soils up to a depth of 0.5m.</p> <p>Overburden within the footprint of the new development comprised disturbed garden soil. This was removed to the required formation level (c 0.3m below the previous ground level) revealing the continuing south-east facing elevation of the existing garden wall.</p> <p>The foundation footing of the former glasshouse partition was seen in plan. The masonry remains comprised two courses of brickwork embedded into a concrete pour 0.75m in width. These remains correlated with a visible scar on the south-east elevation of the garden wall.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	N/A
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Andrew Isherwood Ltd on behalf of Heriot Watt University
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	The Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ
EMAIL ADDRESS:	pmoore@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	National Monuments Record of Scotland City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monuments Record



Watching brief area



Key: New foundation trench

Fig. No: **1** Revision: Client: **Andrew Isherwood Ltd**

Title: **Site location and plan**

Project: **Hermiston House**

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Scale: **1:100@A4**

Drawn by: **GC** Page No: Report No: **1773**



Fig. 2 General shot of site from east



Fig. 3 General shot of site from south-west

Key:

Scale:

Fig. No: **2-3**

Revision:

Client: **Andrew Isherwood Ltd**

Title:

Project: **Hermiston House**



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Fig. 4 Shot of partition wall foundations



Fig. 5 General shot of south-west facing section of foundation trench

Key:

Scale:

Fig. No: **4-5**

Revision:

Client: **Andrew Isherwood Ltd**

Title:

Project: **Hermiston House**



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