

11/09/2012

GGRE11-001 Gorgie Road Evaluation

Data Structure Report Addendum

A redesign of the proposed development at 396-410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh is to be submitted to Edinburgh City Council by the client Covell Matthews Architects. This new building design will reduce the size of the area impacted upon by the proposed development.

The new proposed development will now not impinge on the two upstanding buildings to the W side of the original development area or the area of land located between these two buildings.

The proposed development will require the buildings to the E side of the development area to be demolished. These buildings include the remains of an early 19th century mill that formed part of a larger mill complex originally owned by J & G Cox Ltd. The company was originally set up in 1725 although it was unclear what land the company owned at this time and what buildings they were using. Records indicate that by 1799 the Robert Cox had purchased the surrounding lands around and including Gorgie House. From this period onwards the company expanded building the glue and gelatine factory to the S side of Gorgie Road.

Maps from the 18th century onwards (Laurie 1766 & 1786; Kirkwood 1817; Thompson 1821) show a gradual increase in the number of buildings around the site, although little reliable detail of its layout. On Knox's plan of 1816 the lade runs through a building. The first large scale mapping of the area was the OS 1st edition of 1855 which depicts a range of structures associated with Gorgie House and the mill complex. To the south of the site, Cox's glue works, established by 1799, has a substantial presence. By the early 20th century, the glue manufactory had taken over the entire site north of the road, and had installed turbines within the mill building in order to run some of their industrial processes (RCAHMS: Cowie & Seaton collection). The mill lade ran through the building, with an overflow culvert around the western side. When photographed in 1967 the mill was under the ownership of the Didcock Brothers' upholstery business (RCHAMS archive photo SC590225).

Despite recent demolition work which has removed, without record, most of the original Industrial period mill the site still retains significant historic built heritage, principally the surviving eastern range of the main mill building and the 19th century mill-house/offices. These surviving 19th century mill buildings

must be considered to be of regional archaeological and historic significance, as monuments to Edinburgh's and Scotland's industrial and economic past.

Given that the proposed development will require these buildings to be demolished it is recommended that a suitable programme of archaeological works should be put in place in order to fully record the upstanding remains of the mill buildings. The evaluation also indicated that the floors and foundation walls of the demolished mill buildings still survive to a significant depth below the made ground. It is therefore recommended that a programme of building recording is undertaken prior to the demolition of any buildings, the level of which will be determined in consultation with the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS). This would be followed by a targeted excavation to record any surviving below ground archaeology. Again the size and location of this area would be determined in consultation with CECAS but would be expected to fall within the footprint of the proposed development.