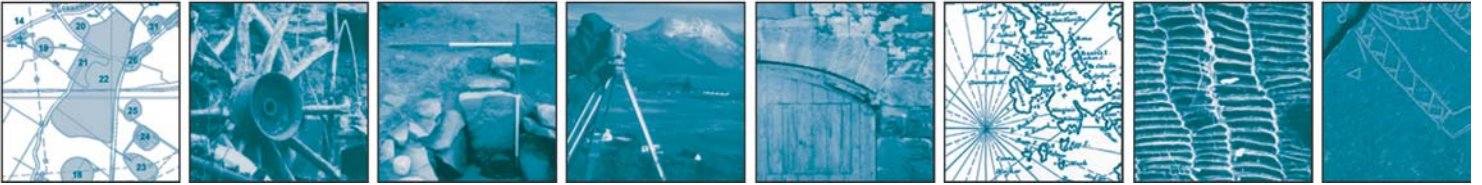


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Client: Ailsa Project Management on behalf of Kenmore Investments Ltd



396-410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh: An Archaeological Appraisal

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HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (GRED07)

Client	Ailsa Project Management
National Grid Reference	NT 2248 7213
Project Manager	Simon Stronach MIFA
Report	Jamie Humble & Mike Kimber
Illustrations	Anna Faris-Pagowska

Summary

An archaeological appraisal of a site at 396-410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh was carried out by Headland Archaeology Ltd. The site of Gorgie House, a probable 17th century structure demolished around 1937, lies within the site boundary. The site was also the location for a post-medieval mill and is now occupied with buildings related to 19th century milling and glue manufacturing. Documents indicate that a mill has existed at Gorgie since the medieval period, and it is possible that this earlier structure was also located within the site.

Site investigation works have recorded substantial made ground deposits and the level of the area may have been raised, perhaps during construction and modification of the standing mill buildings in the 19th century. There is the potential for the survival of sub-surface archaeological remains beneath this overburden. The standing buildings dating to the 19th century, including the mill building itself, have some potential to retain information relating to modern industrial use.

1. INTRODUCTION

Kenmore Investments Ltd is considering applying for planning permission for a combined commercial/student accommodation development at 396-410 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh. Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Ailsa Project Management on behalf of Kenmore Investments Ltd to produce an archaeological appraisal of the site. This was to identify any archaeological issues that might be associated with the proposed development and to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy to deal with any archaeological impacts the development may have.

Correspondence from the City of Edinburgh Council Planning Department indicated that the Council Archaeologist considered there to be significant potential for the survival below ground of late medieval building remains relating to Gorgie House. Additional background research was carried out in order to clarify the location and nature of Gorgie House, and to identify as fully as possible the areas of greatest archaeological potential within the development area.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located on the north side of Gorgie Road (NGR NT 2248 7214; Figure 1). It is currently occupied by a number of commercial operations using standing buildings, car parks and yards. These include some stone-built structures, some brick buildings and modern industrial units. Most of the open areas are surfaced with tarmac and are used for car parking and storage.

3. METHODOLOGY

A systematic search of background information was carried out, comprising:

- Historic maps held by the National Library of Scotland
- Documents and plans held in the National Monuments Record of Scotland
- Archaeological information held in National Databases
- Maps and plans held in the National Archives of Scotland
- The Edinburgh Room of Edinburgh Central Library
- Published sources
- Desk Study and Site Investigation (Ian Farmer Associates 2007)

The site was visited in order to assess topographic factors and archaeological potential.

4. RESULTS

Prehistoric

There are no known prehistoric sites either inside or within 200 m of the development area.

Medieval

Records of a mill at Gorgie exist as far back as the 13th century. It is likely that the mill was located along the Gorgie Burn, later augmented by a lade fed by the Water of Leith. It seems that by the 16th century accommodation for the tenants of the mill was associated with the mill buildings, in what has been described as a 'manor house' (Smith 1928: 268-269). The location and nature of the accommodation at this time is not known.

Post-medieval

Although “Gorgymill” is marked on Bleau’s 1654 map of the Lothians, it is not shown in detail. The earliest detailed plan of the area (Roy 1747-55) shows the location of two or possibly three buildings at “Gorgiehouse” on the eastern bank of the mill lade (Figure 2). The buildings are surrounded by gardens, suggesting a residence was located next to the mill.

A structure known as Gorgie House existed on the site until c.1937, when it was demolished during the construction of the Roxy Cinema to the east (Cant 1995: 28). The date of construction of this structure is uncertain. Smith (1928: 277) dated the structure to 1578. However, on visual assessment the structure was said to date to the 17th century when visited by the RCAHMS in 1929.

All accounts are clear that the building originally took the form of an ‘L’ shape, which was then added to in the 18th century, to create an oblong structure. In the 19th century, after the house had been bought by the Cox family, a new eastern frontage was added (Smith 1928: 279). First edition Ordnance Survey mapping (1855; Figure 2) shows a structure located close to the mill buildings, on the eastern bank of the lade within the development area. Architect’s plans for the glue works held by RCAHMS (Cowie & Seaton collection) and OS mapping from 1905 indicate that this structure was Gorgie House. While some photographs and drawings of architectural detail within Gorgie House exist (in Smith 1928 and, no photographs showing the entire structure were located during the assessment.

Modern

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; probably the standing mill building that still exists. The first large scale mapping of the area was the OS 1st edition of 1855 (Figure 2) which depicts a range of structures associated with Gorgie House and the mill building. To the south of the site, Cox’s glue works, established in 1798, 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).

Site visit

The site continues to be occupied by several sandstone buildings, including the mill, which on outward appearance date to the early 19th century (Plate 1). Several brick industrial structures also exist on the site (Figure 1). Two single storey modern commercial units are also present.

There is a line of manholes to the west of the mill building and an occupant of the site reported that rushing water can be heard from these after heavy rain. This is presumably the still functioning lade overflow culvert.

Much of the site is covered by tarmac and there was no evidence suggesting that there has been any significant ground reduction in the modern period (Plate 2).

Site Investigation

Six boreholes have been logged throughout the site. These have shown a varying amount of make-up material over naturally accumulating sediments. This ranged from 1 m in the southwest of the area to 2.4 m in the north. Much of the noted material may relate to leveling up of the site in the modern period as it contained brick, colliery waste etc, and may relate to the development of the site in the 19th century. An earlier cobbled surface was noted in a borehole in the west of the area. The depth of material is likely to make evaluation of the area using strip trenches unsuitable in some areas and will need to be taken into account in any evaluation methodology.

5. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL

Standing Buildings

The site contains an early 19th century mill and associated buildings. These do not on initial inspection contain original fixtures and fittings related to early use. An assessment by Historic Scotland in 2006 (letter dated 20/9/06) concluded that the structure did not meet the criteria for listing. Nevertheless given its role in the 19th century industry of Gorgie the mill buildings are of some importance.

Sub-surface archaeological remains

Given the history of the site, and the long tradition of a mill in this location, there is potential for archaeological remains relating to the medieval period to exist on site, perhaps related to medieval milling activity and habitation.

Gorgie House was located within the development area (Figure 1). The location appears not to have been built upon since the structure was demolished in c.1937. It is not known if demolition included removing the foundations relating to this structure and these may survive below ground. This structure was dated to the 17th century when visited by the RCHAMS prior to demolition. There is documentary evidence to suggest that a habitation may have existed on the site by the late 16th century.

The mill lade is known to run through the site. There are also likely to be other remains related to the post-medieval/19th century mill and glue works within the development area.

There are substantial deposits of modern overburden within the development area. Deep modern deposits can protect archaeological remains from disturbance by later activity, but present practical problems in their investigation.

The archaeological potential of the location of Gorgie House is considered to be high. Additionally, the entire site has a general untested archaeological potential that could be more accurately quantified by further investigation. Deposits of overburden at the location of

Gorgie House and in the south-western corner of the site are shallower than elsewhere (Figure 1). Investigation of these areas would clarify whether structural remains of Gorgie House survive, and would give an indication of the general archaeological potential of the development area.

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National Monuments Record of Scotland

NT27SW 8 Gorgie House

NT27SW 3126 Gorgie Mills, Grain Mill

NT27SW 3428.02 Gorgie Mills, J and G Cox Ltd, Old Store

NT27 SW 3428.01 Gorgie Mills, Ivy Cottage, Gate Keeper's Cottage

Cowie & Seaton Collection: Various architectural plans of Cox's Glue Works CSE 1920/93/1-12

Ian G Lindsay Collection: Sketches of architectural detail within Gorgie House IGL 1920/8/1

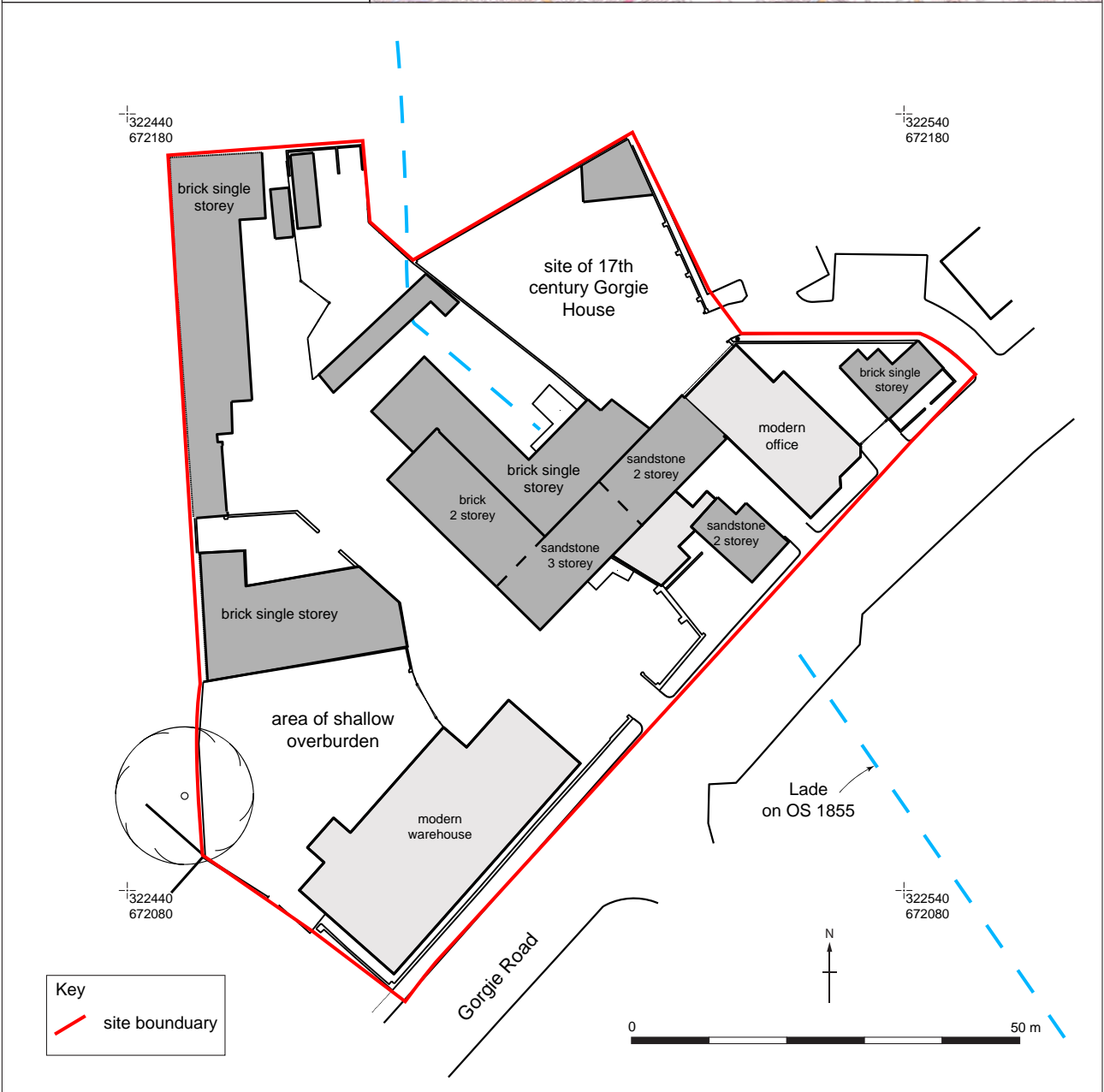
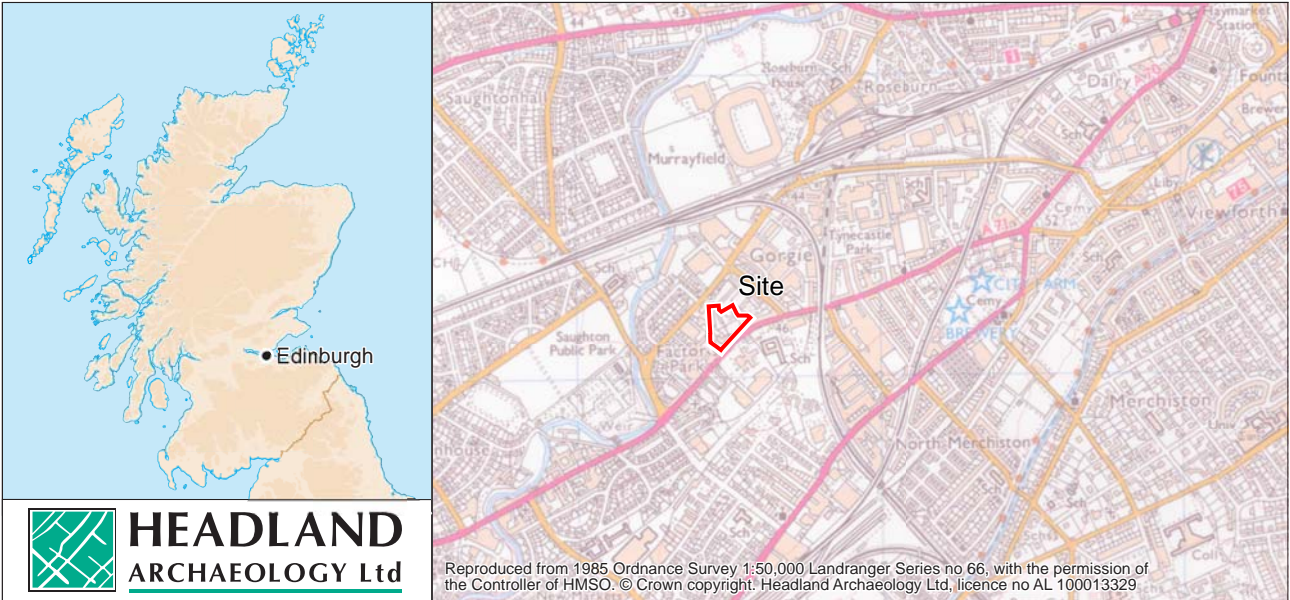
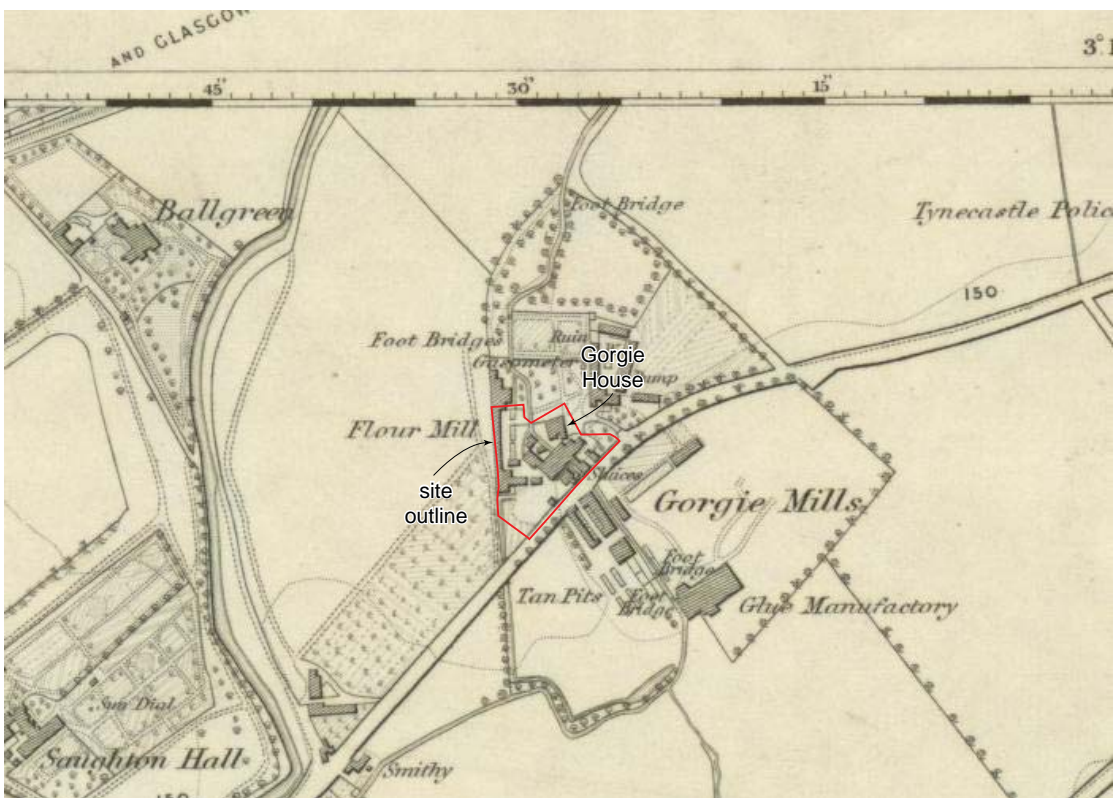


Figure 1 - Gorgie Road, Edinburgh: Site location and current buildings



Roy 1747-55



OS 1st Edition 1855

Figure 2: Historic map extracts



Plate 1: View of standing mill building



Plate 2: Brick extension to rear of mill showing current ground surface