

# Avenue Wall, James Gillespies High School, Edinburgh Historic Building Recording Report

AOC 23282

11<sup>th</sup> November 2015



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

# Avenue Wall, James Gillespies High School, Edinburgh

## Historical Building Recording Report

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|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>On Behalf of:</b>                  | <b>Morrison Construction Scotland<br/>2<sup>nd</sup> Floor<br/>Rowan House<br/>1 Robroyston Oval<br/>Glasgow<br/>G33 1AP</b> |
| <b>National Grid Reference (NGR):</b> | <b>NT 25064 72149</b>  |
| <b>AOC Project No:</b>                | <b>23282</b>   |
| <b>Planning Application No:</b>       | <b>15/03327/LBC</b>  |
| <b>Prepared by:</b>                   | <b>Diana Sproat</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>                          | <b>11<sup>th</sup> November 2015</b>   |

**This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.**

**Author: Diana Sproat**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**Approved by: Graeme Cavers**

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**Enquiries to:** AOC Archaeology Group  
Edgefield Industrial Estate  
Edgefield Road  
Loanhead  
EH20 9SY

Tel. 0131 440 3593  
Fax. 0131 440 3422  
e-mail. [admin@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:admin@aocarchaeology.com)

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## **SUMMARY**

*AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Morrison Construction Scotland Ltd to undertake an historic building survey of the newly exposed area of the avenue wall at James Gillespies High School prior to its being faced with concrete as part of the new development there.*

*The stone rubble faced wall was identified with no features apparent to a depth of approximately 0.80m lower than previously exposed. There was a small projecting section to the east which, looking at the historic mapping, was added later between 1897 – 1909. No further historic building or archaeological works are recommended prior to the facing of the wall, although this will need to be confirmed by CEC Archaeology Service on behalf of CEC.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Site background and location

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Morrison Construction Scotland Ltd to undertake an historic building survey of the newly exposed avenue wall at James Gillespies High School, Edinburgh, as part of a condition on the planning application to front the wall with concrete facing. The extent of the works was defined by the City of Edinburgh Council as advised by the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service and consisted of a written and photographic record of the wall prior to any on-site renovation works.

### 1.2 Site location

- 1.2.1 The area of exposed wall is located to the north side of the 2015 James Gillespies High School development and is centred on NGR: NT 25064 72149 (Figure 1). It is centred in the centre of the development at the avenue walk to the immediate south-west of the former Bruntisfield House and to the south-east of James Gillespies Primary School.

## 2 OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 The objective of this survey work was to undertake a 'preservation by record' of the exposed section of wall through written and photographic record for the Historical Environment Record (HER) and the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A photographic record was made of the exterior and interior of the newly exposed wall in black and white print and colour digital using a 35mm SLR and digital SLR respectively. A 1m ranging pole was used in all shots for scale. A running register of all photographs taken was made on site and can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 A written record of the building was made using AOC's *pro forma* recording sheets which made comment on condition, construction, materials, architectural features and any evidence for phasing and function.

## 4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The site of James Gillespie's High School is most commonly associated historically with Bruntisfield House, a 16<sup>th</sup> century tower house located over the site of an earlier structure. James Adair's 1682 map clearly shows it as an important residence to the south of the city (Figure 2). The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1855 shows a large house set within its own gardens and surrounding boundary walls (Figure 3). By the time of the 1897 Ordnance Survey map, however, there has been a lot of housing development surrounding Bruntisfield which has encroached on all sides of it apart from the east (Figure 4), although by the 1909 map, a new wave of houses appears here (Figure 5). By the 1944 map this has expanded even more with the establishment of Lauderdale Street to the east (Figure 6). In the 1960s, James Gillespie's School was constructed greatly affecting the original setting of Bruntisfield House which had been used for many years itself as a school. However, many original features, such as the retaining boundary walls, have survived.

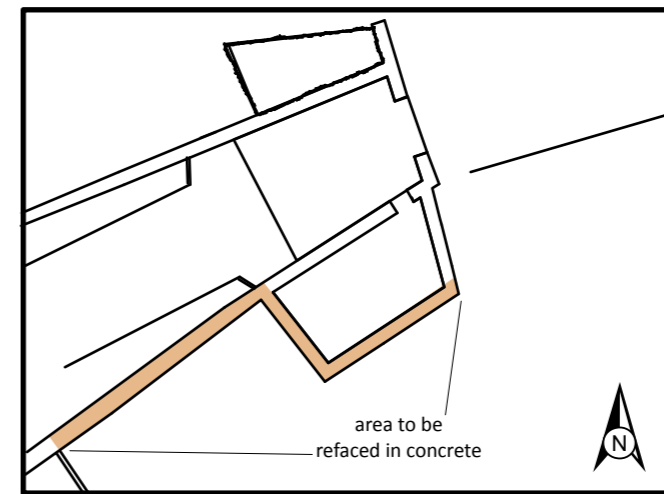
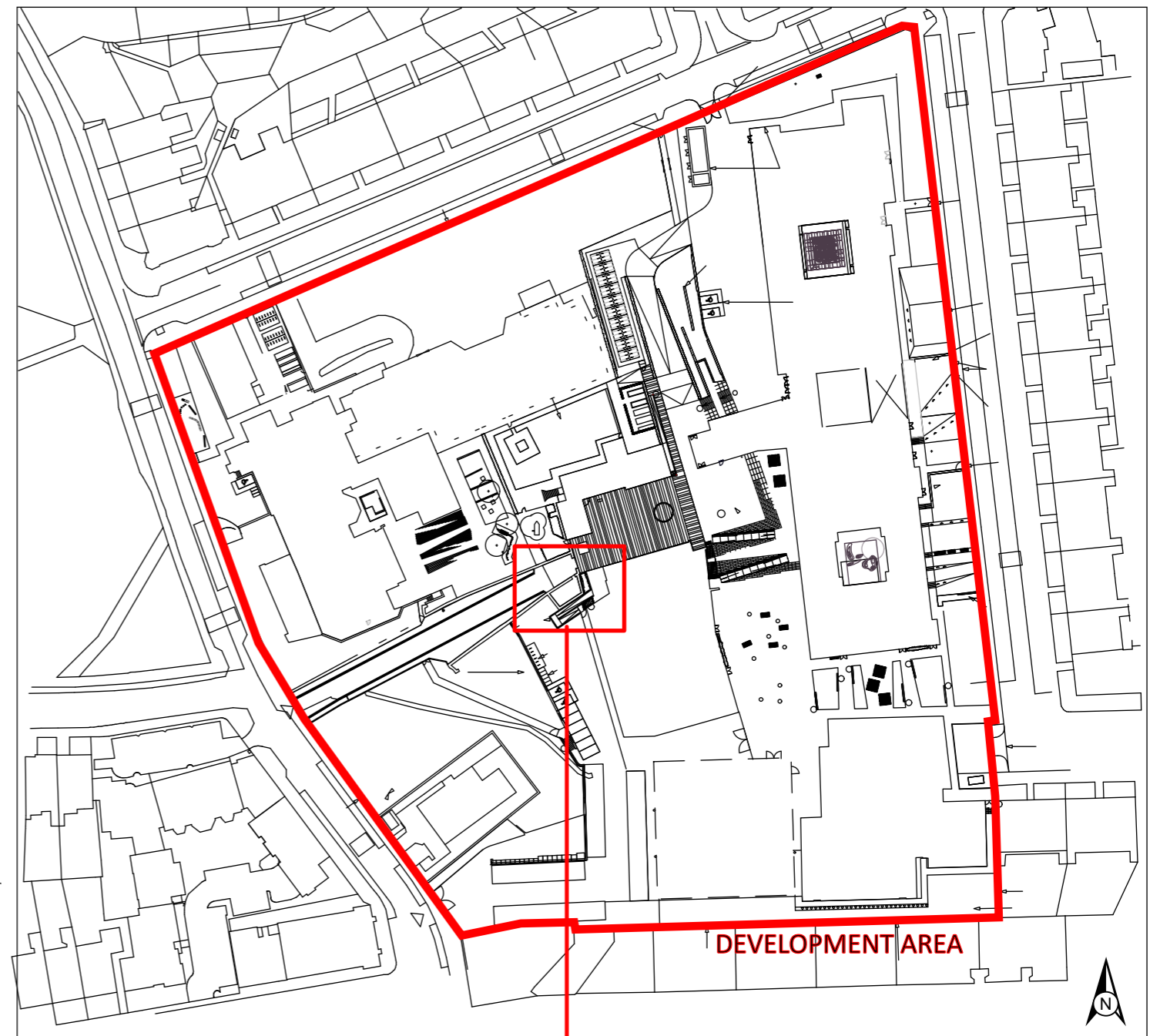
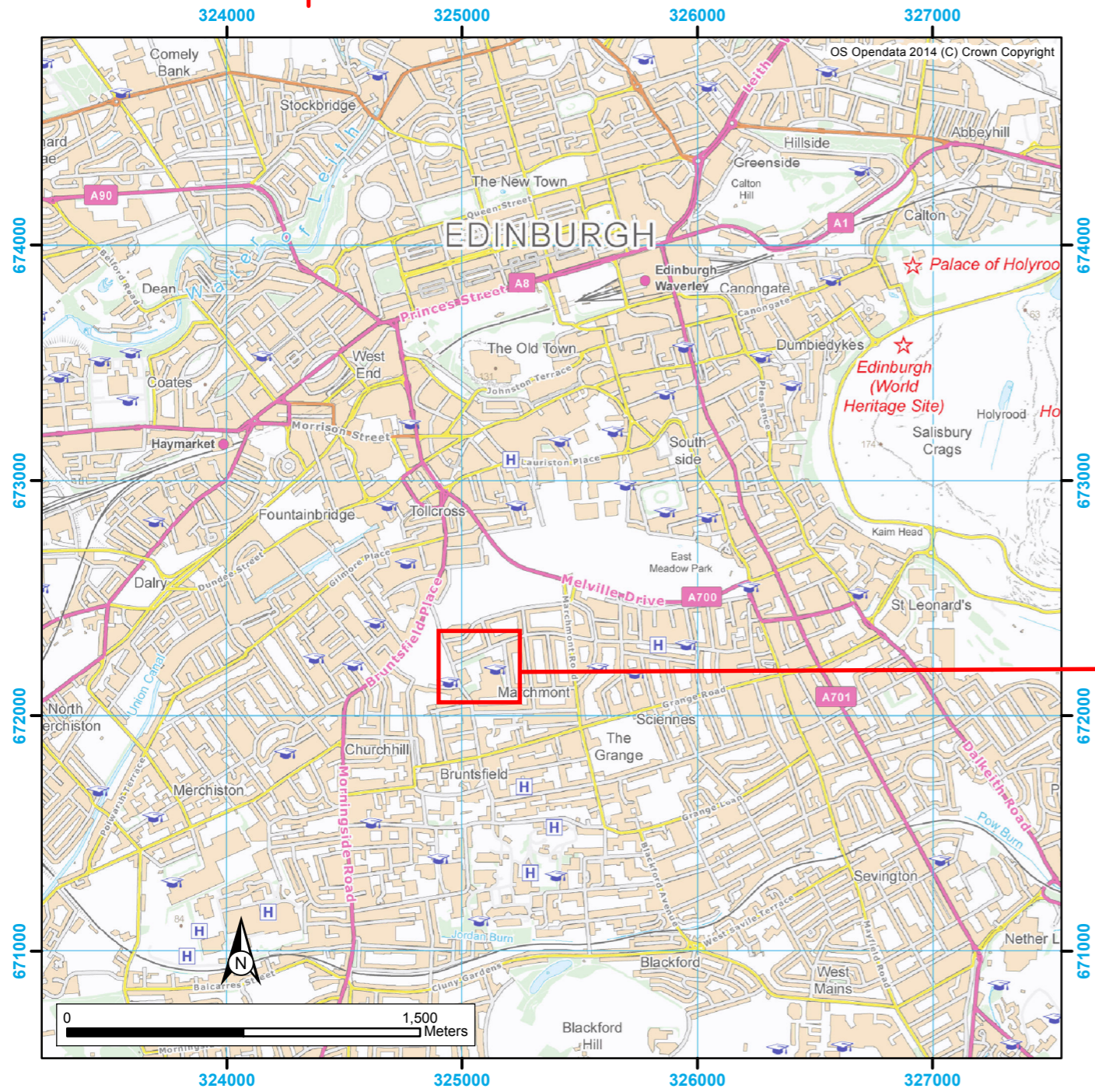
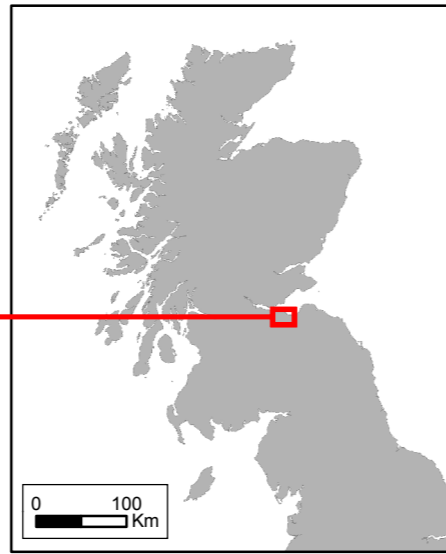
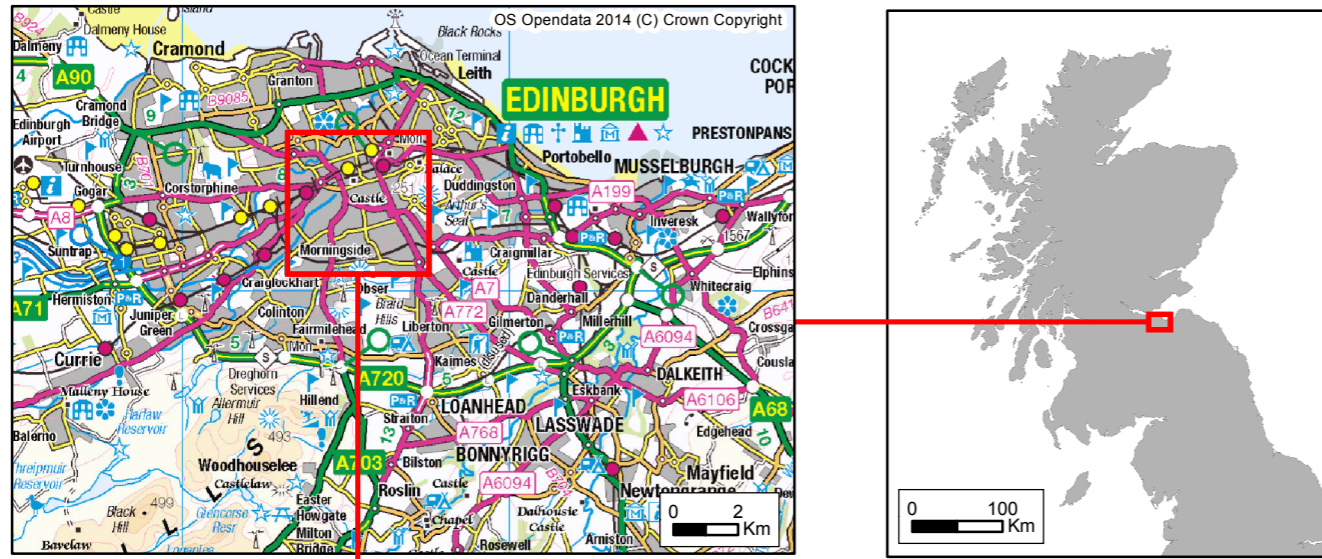


Figure 1: Site location plan and detailed site plan showing area of avenue wall to be refaced with concrete



Figure 2: Extract from Adair's map, 1682



Figure 3: Extract from Ordnance Survey map, 1855







Figure 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey map, 1944

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The exposed area of wall is constructed of stone rubble with a stone cap (Plate 1). It consists of a small stretch to the west side and a smaller projecting area to the east, a later addition to the wall in a less pinkish sandstone (Plates 2 - 4). No features were identified within this stretch of wall, although there is a small area near the top of the west side of the wall that looks knocked through, although it is unsure whether this represents the position of a former feature or an area of damage (Plate 5).



Plate 1: General view of the exposed avenue wall to the west from the east



Plate 2: General view of the later added building from the south



Plate 3: General view of the later added building from the south-west



Plate 4: Detail of junction between original wall (left) and later building (east) from the south



Plate 5: Detail of broken away area of stonework to the top of the west wall from the south-west

## 6 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The historical mapping identifies that the stretch of wall to the west side dates back to the origins of Bruntisfield House, it first appearing on the 1855 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4). However, the small projecting stretch of wall to the east first appears in the 1909 map as the south wall of a small enclosed area, its exact function unknown (see circled on Figure 5).
- 6.2 No further historic building or archaeological works are recommended prior to the facing of the wall, although this will need to be confirmed by CEC Archaeology Service on behalf of CEC.

## 7 References

### 7.1 Bibliographical references

AOC Archaeology 2015 *Avenue Wall, James Gillespies High School: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Client Method Statement

Scottish Planning Policy SPP23. 2008 *Archaeology and Planning*. Scottish Government Nov 2008.

Scottish Government 2011 *Planning and Archaeology 2/2011*.

### 7.2 Cartographic references

|           |                         |   |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| 1747 - 55 | William Roy             | <i>Military Map of Scotland</i>                 |
| 1771      | Armstrong and Armstrong | <i>Map of the County of Berwick</i>             |
| 1797      | James Blackadder        | <i>Berwickshire</i>                             |
| 1821      | Jameson & Thomson       | <i>Berwick-Shire</i>                            |
| 1854      | Ordnance Survey         | <i>Berwickshire Sheet XIII</i>                  |
| 1900      | Ordnance Survey         | <i>Berwickshire Sheet XIII.NE Surveyed 1897</i> |
| 1908      | Ordnance Survey         | <i>Berwickshire Sheet XIII.NE Surveyed 1906</i> |

**APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD****Black & White Print & Colour Digital Film # 1**

| <i>Digital Photo Ref:</i> | <i>Black &amp; White Print Frame:</i> | <i>Description</i>                        | <i>Taken From</i> | <i>Date</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------|
| 1 – 2                     | 35 - 36                               | General view of the west side of the wall | S                 | 11/11/2015  |
| 3 – 4                     | 34                                    | General view of the entire wall           | S                 | 11/11/2015  |
| 5 - 6                     | 32 - 33                               | General view of the east side of the wall | S                 | 11/11/2015  |
| 7 – 8                     | -                                     | General view of the east side of the wall | SSE               | 11/11/2015  |
| 9 – 10                    | -                                     | General view of the east side of the wall | SSW               | 11/11/2015  |

**Black & White Print & Colour Digital Film # 2 (after removal of the spoil against the wall)**

| <i>Digital Photo Ref:</i> | <i>Black &amp; White Print Frame:</i> | <i>Description</i>   | <i>Taken From</i> | <i>Date</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------|
| 1 – 2                     | 36                                    | General view of the west side of the wall                        | E                 | 24/22/2015  |
| 3 – 4                     | 35                                    | General view of the SW-facing wall of later building to the east | SW                | 24/22/2015  |
| 5 – 6                     | 34                                    | Detail of corner between west wall and later building            | S                 | 24/22/2015  |
| 7 – 8                     | 33                                    | Detail of broken away area of walling to earlier west wall       | S                 | 24/22/2015  |
| 9 – 10                    | 30 – 32                               | General view of W side of the wall                               | SE                | 24/22/2015  |
| 11 – 12                   | 29                                    | General view of later building to the east                       | S                 | 24/22/2015  |

**APPENDIX 2: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND (DES) ENTRY**

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>              | City of Edinburgh Council   |
| <b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME</b>       | Avenue Wall, James Gillespies High School   |
| <b>PROJECT CODE:</b>                 | AOC 23282   |
| <b>PARISH:</b>                       | Edinburgh (City of)   |
| <b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>          | Diana Sproat  |
| <b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>         | AOC Archaeology Group   |
| <b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>           | Historic Building Recording   |
| <b>NMRS NO(S):</b>                   | NT27SE 75   |
| <b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>        | Avenue Wall   |
| <b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>            | None  |
| <b>NGR</b>                           | NT 25064 72149  |
| <b>START DATE</b>                    | 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015  |
| <b>END DATE</b>                      | 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015  |
| <b>PREVIOUS WORK</b>                 | None.   |
| <b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> | AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Morrison Construction Scotland Ltd to undertake an historic building survey of the newly exposed area of the avenue wall at James Gillespies High School prior to its being faced with concrete as part of the new development there. The stone rubble faced wall was identified with no features apparent to a depth of approximately 0.80m lower than previously exposed. There was a small projecting section to the east which, looking at the historic mapping, was added later between 1897 – 1909. |
| <b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>         | None  |
| <b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>      | None  |
| <b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>      | Morrison Construction Scotland Ltd  |
| <b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>  | AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY   |
| <b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>                | edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com  |
| <b>ARCHIVE LOCATION:</b>             | Archive to be deposited in NMRS   |



AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Industrial Estate, Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9SY  
tel: 0131 440 3593 | fax: 0131 440 3422 | e-mail: [edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com](mailto:edinburgh@aocarchaeology.com)

[www.aocarchaeology.com](http://www.aocarchaeology.com)