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Geophysical Survey

**85-87 South Bridge,
Edinburgh
Archaeological Building Survey**

Report No 3419

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This report represents the results of an archaeological building survey carried out in March 2016 at 85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh (Figs. 1-3) on behalf of Mr Joe Crolla. The recording work was based on an addendum to the Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Mr John Lawson at the City of Edinburgh Archaeology Service (CECAS). Previous work included a general Level 1 buildings appraisal (Cressey 2015), a Level 2 building recording survey and an archaeological watching brief within the basement (Cressey 2016 and MacNeilage 2016). This report covers the additional recording of vaults and a link bridge.

During refurbishment works on the third floor part of a brick-built wall was taken down which revealed the interior of two barrel-arched vaults (Vaults 1 & 2) lying below South Bridge street.

Stripping work on the fourth floor exposed a blocked door to a disused Link Bridge that formed a covered pedestrian walkway linking Nos. 85-87 with No.79 Southbridge, it is thought to have been constructed c.1929-30 when both properties were under the ownership of J and R Allan, & Co. Edinburgh a large clothing store.

1.2 Background

Number 85-87 South Bridge (otherwise recorded as Nos. 40, 42, 44 Blair Street; and Nos. 208-210 Cowgate is a Grade B-listed tenement/office building forming an integral part of the Robert Kay design (circa 1790) for the South Bridge and it also lies at the centre of the UNESCO world heritage site. A series of 19 vaults run below the street level of South Bridge. Following the construction of the South Bridge and its vaults, two rows of tenement buildings were built on either side of Bridge Street. The rear of tenements were later named as Blair and Niddrie Street.

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) holds a record for the Link Bridge (SC1383612) which includes a photocopy (dated 1929) of drawings for the proposed elevation, cross-sections, pavement deck and railings.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological recording works were:

- Carry out a photographic survey of the Vaults 1 & 2
- Carry out a photographic survey of the interior of the Link Bridge
- Produce an illustrated survey report on the results of the survey.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

CFA Archaeology Ltd followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance as appropriate. The survey was carried according to recording levels outlined in English Heritage (2006).

Photographic recording

The architects drawings were considered suitable as a template for the survey and these are produced as Figures 2 and 3.

A Nikon D300 camera was used to take high-resolution digital photographs of the internal elevations. All photographs taken were recorded onto photographic record sheets which are appended at the back of this report (Appendix 1). Selective representative images have been included in the report (Figs. 4-14) and all photographs are presented at the end in contact sheet format. Figures 2 and 3 show the orientation at which each photograph was taken.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 Vaults 1 & 2

Vault 1 Figs 1-2

Vault 1 measured 6.9m long and 6m wide. The vault was 3.5m high and had been constructed using dressed blocks of sandstone bonded with lime mortar. The north and south-facing long walls were featureless and heavily encrusted with calcium carbonate as a result of the ingress of water through the lime-mortared joints. The only notable feature on the rear west-facing wall was a ventilation grille and traces of white-washed cement render (Fig 4).

The east-facing wall (Fig 5) was built of coursed sandstone and was part of the lower core block of 85-87 South Bridge at Level 3. There was a gap of c.0.2m between the vault arch and the core block wall thus showing that both features were not keyed in together. At the centre of the elevation was a blocked doorway partly in-filled with 20th century brickwork. On the left-hand side of the blocked doorway was a large rectangular opening surmounted by a large composite timber lintel. A stone relieving arch was situated above it. The rectangular opening measured 4.4m long and 1.5m high and appears to have served as the main entrance into the vaults and probably contemporary with the aforementioned brick-blocked doorway. The floor of the vault was compacted rubble.

Vault 2 Figs 1-2

Vault 2 measured 6.7m long, 6.1m wide and 3.4m high (Fig 6). The north, south and west-facing walls were the same as those described above. The east-facing wall was a continuation of the external Level 3 core block wall with the aforementioned large rectangular opening with its relieving arch above (Fig 7). A similar gap c.0.2m wide

was present between the vault arch and the east-facing wall of the core-block elevation. The wall separating the two vaults was 1.5m thick at floor level (Fig 8).

3.2 The Link Bridge

The Link Bridge Exterior (Fig 9)

The Link Bridge west-facing elevation consisted of a segmented elliptical arch with three ashlar-built square-headed windows surmounted by a dental cornice. Wrought iron railings flanked the pedestrian footpath that ran above the Link Bridge roof. The double segmented archway could be seen from the Cowgate street level. The Link Bridge arches contrasted with the barrel vaulted roof line of the 18th century South Bridge.

Link Bridge Interior, Figs 3, 10-14

The interior of the Link Bridge measured 10.2m long, 2.8m wide and 2.6m high (Fig 10-11). The entrance doors were situated at the north and south end of the bridge. The latter entrance was blocked. The walls were lined with a grey marble with black flecks. The west wall (east-facing elevation) contained three windows with splayed reveals that were 0.5m deep. The northern-most window contained its original ornate 1930s window latch (Fig 12), the other two were broken. At the north and south ends of the bridge the door surrounds were a grey marble with bead-mouldings (Figs 13-14).

The floor and ceiling were concrete; the latter was severely eroded at the south end revealing its steel frame.

4. DISCUSSION

The vaults

The two vaults were part of a series of 19 that ran below Bridge Street and were constructed c.1790. The vaults that were surveyed are well preserved but both have suffered from the ingress of rain water resulting in a heavy concretion of calcium carbonate that has leached out of the mortar bonding the sandstone blocks. The vaults and the lower east-facing elevation of 85-87 South Bridge are not keyed in together showing that they are both mutually distinct. The large rectangular opening on the east-facing elevation shows that the vaults were accessible following the construction of the later core block of 85-87 South Bridge and were probably used for storage. Later the large rectangular opening was blocked up and a smaller door allowed access into Vault 1.

The Link Bridge

The exterior of the Link Bridge is of detailed ashlar construction and its arches contrasts sharply with the earlier late 18th century barrel-vaulted South Bridge. The Link Bridge was built c. 1929-30 and its interior is in keeping with the Art-Deco style with its use of marble mouldings and wall panelling. The link bridge was used as a

pedestrian walk way between Nos. 85-87 and No.79 Southbridge. Both properties were owned by clothiers J and R Allan & Co.

5. CONCLUSION

The photographic survey carried out at 85-87 South Bridge has recorded the historical fabric and extant features within the late 18th century vaults and the 1930s Link Bridge. The building recording work is now complete and it is recommended that no further building recording work is necessary. CFA recognises that the final decision on further work rests with CECAS.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the HES and copies of reports will be lodged with the City of Edinburgh Council Sites and Monument Record.

A summary statement on the archaeological recording of the cinema complex will be submitted for publication in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* and will also be reported on through *OASIS Scotland*.

6. REFERENCES

Cressey, M 2015 *85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh Archaeological Building Appraisal* CFA Report No 3302.

Cressey, M 2016 *85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh Archaeological Building Survey*, CFA Report No 3374

MacNeilage, E. 2016 *85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh Archaeological Watching Brief*, Report No 3383

English Heritage (2006) *Understanding Historic Buildings A guide to good recording practice*.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo Number	Area	Description	Facing
001	Vault 1	General shot of the interior	NE
002	Vault 1	General shot of the interior S-facing elevation of the vault	N
003	Vault 1	General shot of the W-facing elevation	E
004	Vault 1	General shot of the W-facing elevation	E
005	Vault 1	General shot of the N-facing elevation	S
006	Vault 1	E-facing elevation and openings to Level 3 on the main block	W
007	Vault 1	E-facing elevation and openings to Level 3 on the main block	W
008	Vault 1	E-facing elevation, blocked doorway	W
009	Vault 1	A gap between the vault and core-block at Level 3	S
010	Vault 2	S-facing elevation with carbonate encrustation	N
011	Vault 2	W-facing rear wall of the vault	E
012	Vault 2	N-facing elevation of the vault	S
013	Vault 2	E-facing elevation with stone wall of the core block at Level 3	W
014	Vault 2	E-facing elevation, part of the relieving arch above a timber lintel	W
015	Vault 2	SE corner of Vault 2, general shot	SE
016	Vault 2	SE corner of Vault 2, general shot	SE
017	Vault 2	Gap between the vault and the core block at Level 2	S
018	Vaults 1&2	Facing east from the interior of the core block at Level 3 on a wide rectangular opening into the vaults	E
019	Link Bridge	1930s period bronze ornate window handle	SW
020	Link Bridge	Window detail on the E-facing elevation	W
021	Link Bridge	S-facing elevation doorway to Level 2	N
022	Link Bridge	S-facing elevation, ornate door moulding	N
023	Link Bridge	S-facing elevation, door surround with ornate moulding	N
024	Link Bridge	General view along the Link Bridge	N
025	Link Bridge	General view along the Link Bridge	N
026	Link Bridge	General view along the Link Bridge	S
027	Link Bridge	Wall panelling between the pilasters	E
028	Link Bridge	North-facing elevation, blocked doorway	S
029	Link Bridge	North-facing elevation, blocked doorway	S
030	Link Bridge	East-facing window detail	W
031	Link Bridge	East-facing, middle window detail	W
032	Link Bridge	East-facing, middle window detail	W
033	Link Bridge	Window handle detailed shot	W
034	Link Bridge	Ceiling detail with steel framework showing through	Oblique
035	Link Bridge	Ceiling detail at the S-end showing steel framework	Oblique
036	Link Bridge	Exterior W-facing elevation of the Link Bridge from the Cowgate	E
037	Link Bridge	Exterior W-facing elevation of the Link Bridge from the Cowgate	E
038	Link Bridge	Barrel vault of the South Bridge from the Cowgate and the segmented arches of the Link Bridge	SE
039	Link Bridge	Barrel vault of the South Bridge from the Cowgate and the segmented arches of the Link Bridge	SE
040	Link Bridge	Barrel vault of the South Bridge from the Cowgate and the segmented arches of the Link Bridge	Oblique
041	Link Bridge	Segmented arches below the Link Bridge	N

APPENDIX 2: DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION IN SCOTLAND

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	85-87 South Bridge, Standing building recording and archaeological watching brief
PROJECT CODE:	SOBR
PARISH:	City of Edinburgh
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	M Cressey
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Historic building recording and archaeological watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT27SE 1340
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	
NGR	NT 25958 73496
START DATE (this season)	June 2015 – March 2016
END DATE (this season)	March 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Numbers 85-87 South Bridge is a former office block of facing onto South Bridge, the Cowgate and Blair Street and is currently undergoing re-development. In 2015 a Level 1 building appraisal identified the remains of a series of domestic fireplaces, floors and staircases relating to the lower foundations of a late 18 th or early 19 th century tenement building. The rest of the building has been greatly altered into shops and offices in the 1930s Follow-up work included more detailed Level 2 recording with the basement preceded by an archaeological watching brief to monitor the removal of rubble. This work revealed the full extent of domestic flagstone flooring near one of the staircases. In March 2016 a further phase of building recording was carried out within two vaults that were revealed during stripping work. The vaults lie below South Bridge street level and were accessible from the third floor. The stone-built barrel-vaults were found to well preserved with a large segmented relieving arch present above their former access door. Also within this tranche of work was a photographic survey of the interior of a link bridge that was built in c.1930 on the west side of the South Bridge spanning the Cowgate. The communication bridge was built for J and R Allan, Edinburgh a large clothing store as access between their offices in 85-87 South Bridge and their main clothing store that once occupied 79 South Bridge and southwards and round onto Chambers Street.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr J.Crolla
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
EMAIL ADDRESS:	mcessey@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS, Reports lodged with SMR and HES

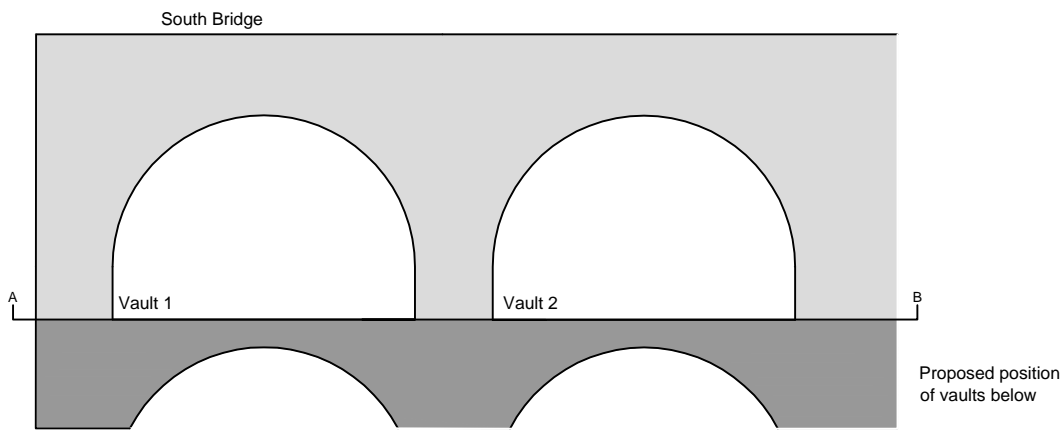


Fig. 1 Elevations of Vaults 1 and 2

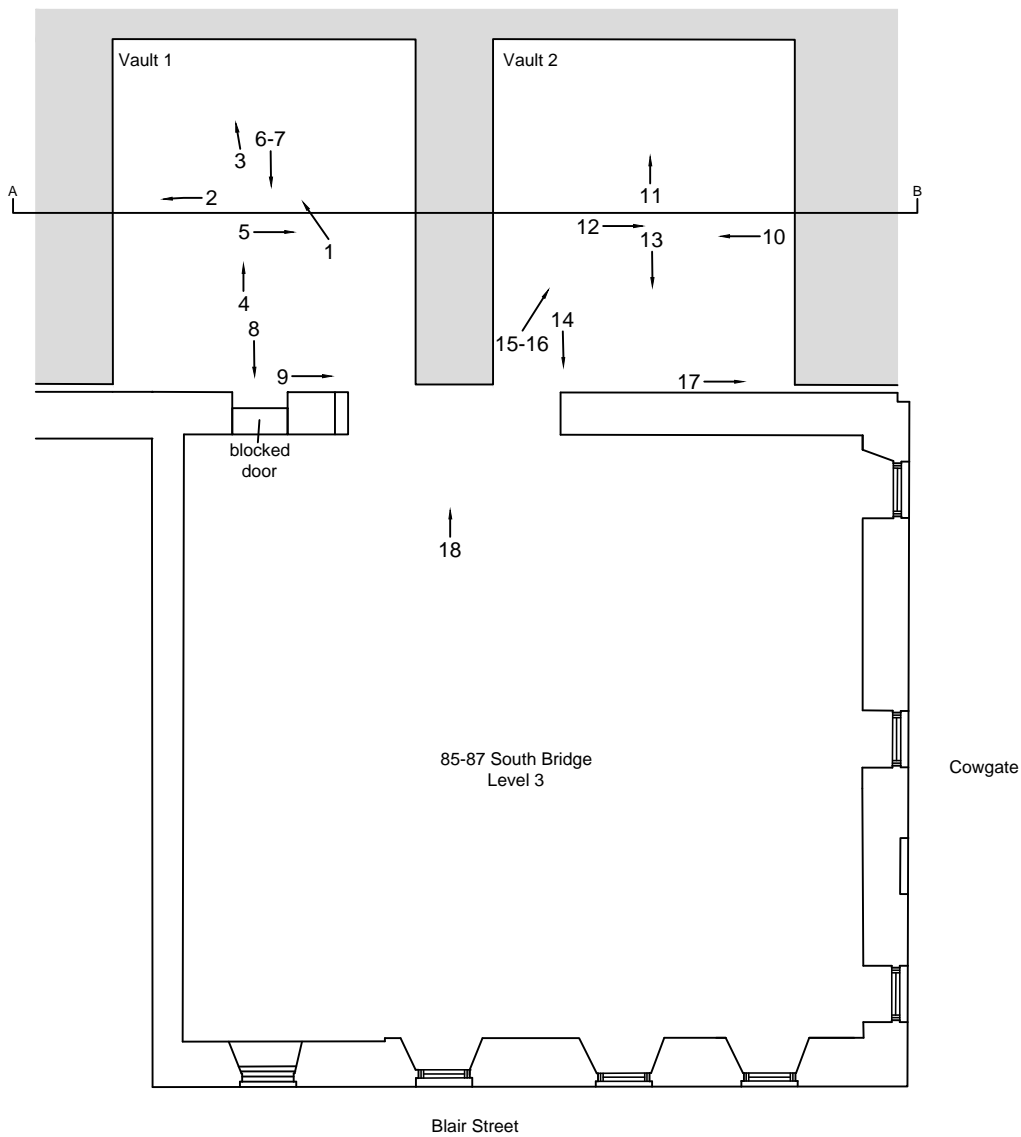
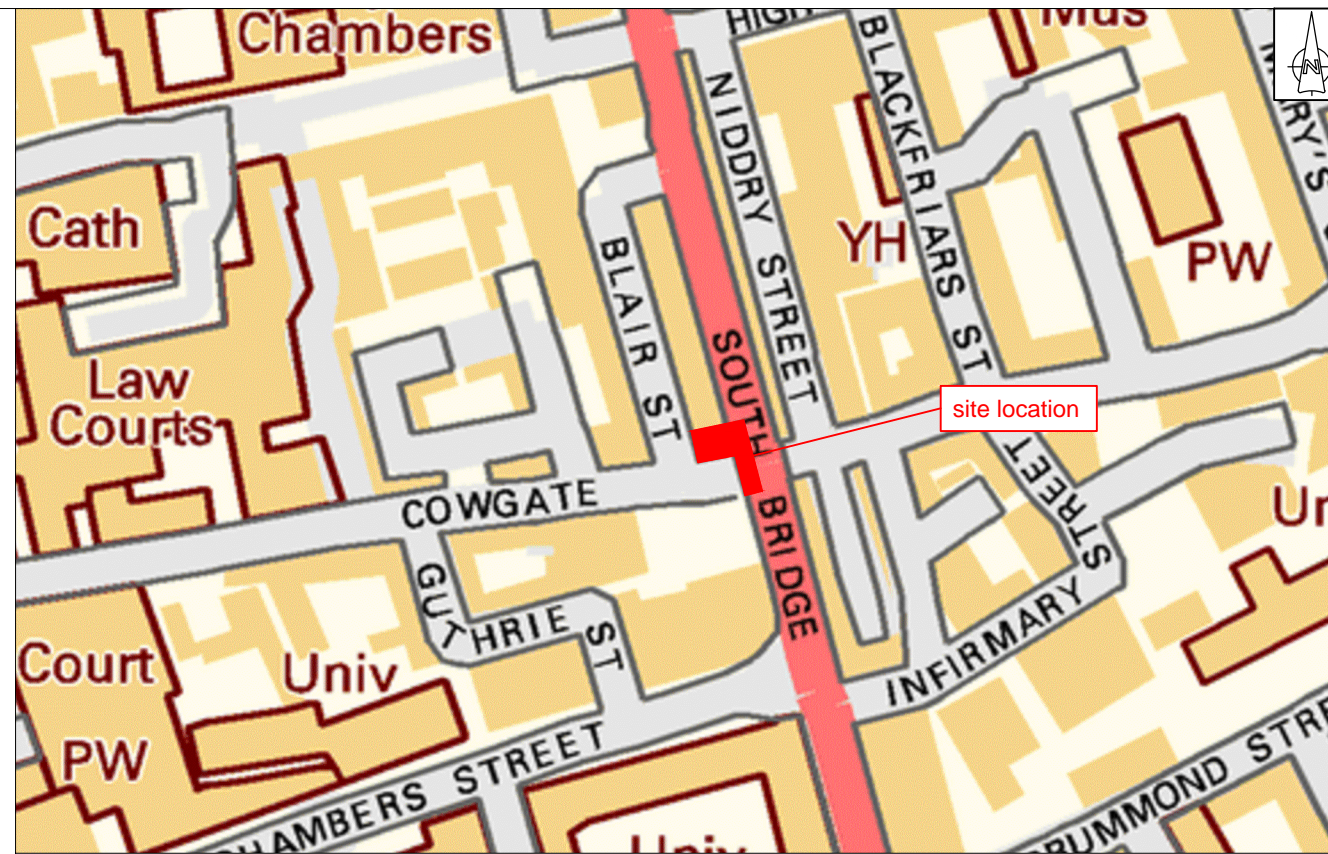


Fig. 2 Plan of Vaults 1 and 2



Key:
 ←12 photo direction
 ←41 photo under the link bridge

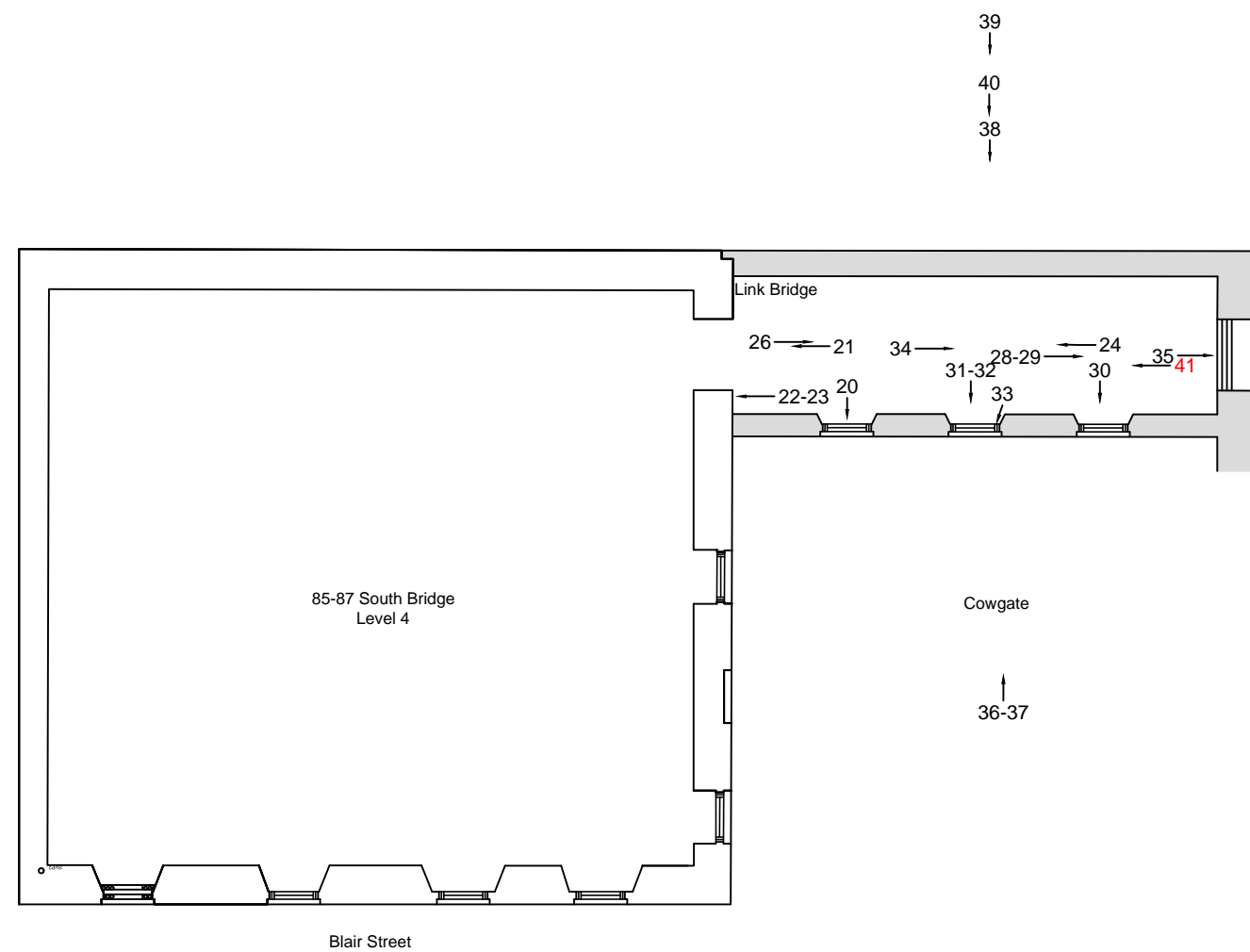


Fig. 3 Floor plan of the link bridge

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Title:
 Site location, photo locations and plans and elevations of Vaults 1 and 2 and plan of the Link Bridge

Project:
 85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh, Archaeological Building Survey

Client:
 Mr Joe Crolla

Scale at A3:
 1:150

Drawn by: GC	Checked: SW	Date: 31/03/2016
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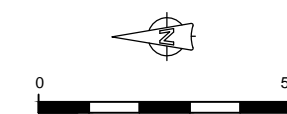




Fig. 4 Interior of the Vault 1



Fig. 5 Vault 1 interior east-facing wall with a central blocked doorway and part of a larger opening with a segmented relieving arch

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Fig. 6 Interior of the Vault 2



Fig. 7 Interior east-facing elevation of Vault 2 showing part of the larger opening with a segmented relieving arch

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Fig. 8 Looking into Vaults 1 and 2 from within the main block of 85-87 South Bridge



Fig. 9 Exterior west-facing elevation of the Link Bridge

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Fig. 10 Interior of the Link Bridge facing north



Fig. 11 Interior of the Link Bridge facing south

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Fig. 12 Northernmost window with original window latch



Fig. 13 Moulded door surround on the north entrance

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Fig. 14 Detail of the bead-moulding around the marble door frame

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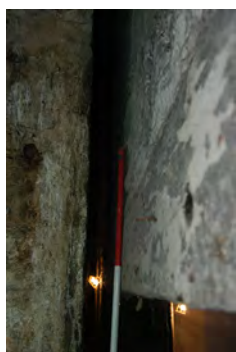
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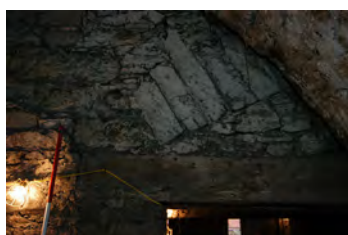
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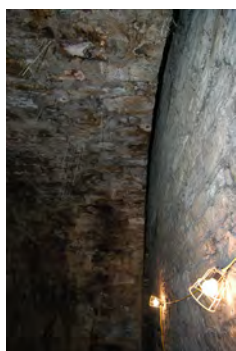
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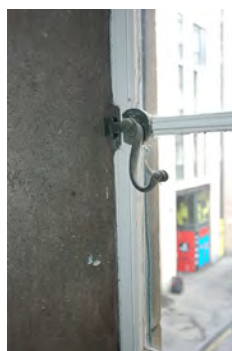
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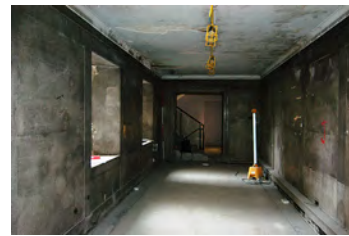
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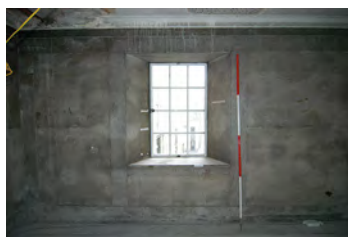
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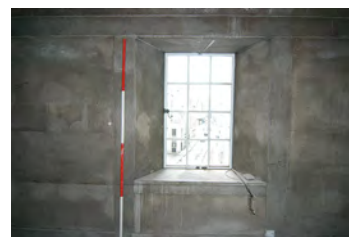
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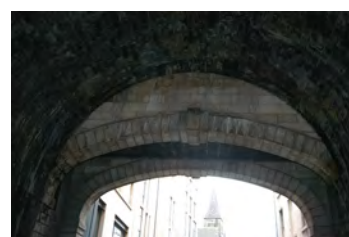
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