

St. Mary's Medical Centre, Edinburgh: Watching Brief Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21990

7th July 2013

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ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Contents

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| List of illustrations | 4 |
| List of maps | 4 |
| List of plates | 4 |
| List of appendices | 4 |
| Abstract..... | 5 |
| 1 INTRODUCTION | 6 |
| 1.1 Background | 6 |
| 1.2 Location..... | 6 |
| 1.3 Historical & Archaeological background | 6 |
| 2 OBJECTIVES | 7 |
| 3 METHODOLOGY | 8 |
| 4 RESULTS | 9 |
| 5 CONCLUSION..... | 10 |
| 6 RECOMMENDATIONS | 10 |
| 7 REFERENCES | 10 |
| APPENDIX 1: Context Register | 12 |
| APPENDIX 2: Drawing Register | 13 |
| APPENDIX 3: Photographic Record | 13 |
| APPENDIX 4: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report..... | 16 |

List of illustrations

- Figure 1 Location of the St. Mary's Medical Centre, Edinburgh
Figure 2 Plan of area of monitored works

List of maps

- Map 1 1773, Andrew Armstrong '*Map of the Three Lothians*'
Map 2 1812, James Knox, '*Map of the Shire of Edinburgh*'
Map 3 1849, Ordnance Survey Map, 1st Edition

List of plates

- Plate 1 View of wall [1012] from the East
Plate 2 View of culvert [1016] from the southeast

List of appendices

- Appendix 1 Photographic Record
Appendix 2 Archive Location
Appendix 3 '*Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*' Report

Abstract

An archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground breaking works associated with the development on a new medical centre at St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh (NT 2404 7357).

The watching brief works were undertaken on all ground breaking works associated with the development concentrating on the greatest impacts caused by foundations and service tracks respectively.

A few remnants of wall features were uncovered close to Manor Place those are relatively isolated with further excavations across the site not revealing any more of these walls or associated features. Given the extent of the excavations on site and consequent lack of features it is probable to assume that the walls were mere fragments. Careful examination of the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey maps does not readily suggest potential walls meaning the remains pre date the mid 19th century. It is therefore assumed that these walls are most likely part of the landscaped gardens associated with East Coates House built in c.1615.

In summary barring the aforementioned walls no significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the Watching Brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by the NHS Lothian to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief during all ground breaking works associated with the development of a new medical centre within the grounds of St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principles set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government 2010) and *PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011) and were designed to meet the requirements of the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service, CECAS, who advise the City of Edinburgh Council.
- 1.1.3 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (AOC 2012) outlining the programme of archaeological works was agreed with CECAS in advance of the watching brief being undertaken.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The site is located within Edinburgh's West End, within the grounds of the Victorian St. Mary's Cathedral with access via Manor Place. The development is centred on NGR NT 2404 7357.

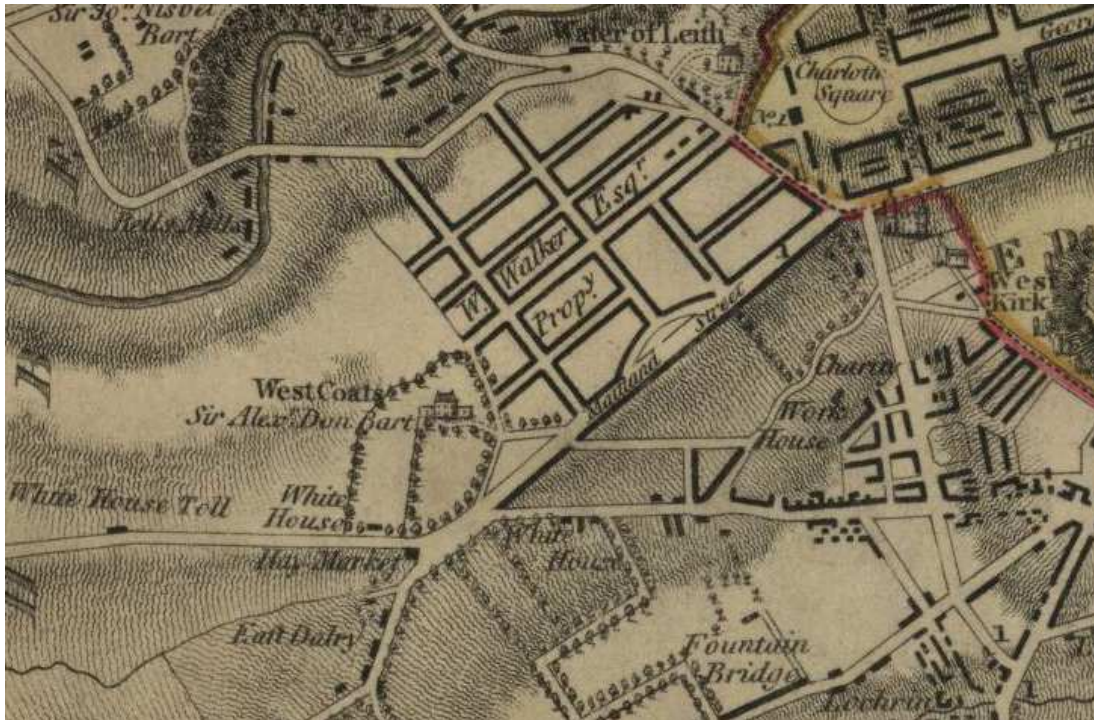


Map 1 1773, Andrew Armstrong 'Map of the Three Lothians'

1.3 Historical & Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The proposed development site lies within the grounds of the Victorian St Mary's Cathedral (NMRS NT27SW240) Manor Place, Edinburgh. The cathedral, a Grade A Listed Building (27441), is a significant ecclesiastical gothic revival cathedral, drawing on early gothic sources and constructed on a monumental scale.
- 1.3.2 Prior to the erection of the cathedral the site had been occupied by East Coates House and its associated landscaped gardens (See Maps 1-3). East Coates House was retained (renamed the Laird's House, NMRS No. NT27SW 29) and the cathedral built within the extensive grounds. East

Coates House is of early 17th century date, with rubble-built walls, a L-shaped plan and comprising two storeys with an attic. The fabric has been restored and shows many signs of earlier alterations throughout since its inception. Most notably there is a 19th century extension at the N end. A surviving dormer pediment is dated 1615. Nothing remains of the landscaped gardens, which as depicted on early cartographic sources may have been quite extensive.



Map 2 1812, James Knox, 'Map of the Shire of Edinburgh'



Map 3 1849, Ordnance Survey Map, 1st Edition

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource from any adverse impacts created by groundworks associated with the creation of the new Medical Centre;
- ii) to liaise with CECAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and /or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 All ground breaking works associated with the development were monitored by an experienced field archaeologist. The ground-breaking works were undertaken with a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a 2.0 m toothless ditching bucket or smaller. The material was removed in shallow spits and the watching brief officer was allowed time to examine open trenches.
- 3.2 A digital photographic record was kept during the Watching Brief (Appendix 2).



Plate 1 View of wall [1012] from the East

4 RESULTS

- 4.1 The watching brief was undertaken on an intermittent basis between 10th April and the 21st May 2013 in mixed weather conditions. Archaeological visibility was nevertheless good.
- 4.2 The watching brief monitored the reduction of topsoil by mechanical excavator across the entire development area as required for the insertion of foundations and services. Where present the topsoil consisted of a brown organic sandy soil between 0.20 to 0.35 m in depth. The natural subsoil was, in the main, a yellow/orange/brown sandy clay encountered at depths from c.0.5 m and deeper.
- 4.3 Close to Manor Place, immediately to the West of the site boundary a large service track encountered two east to west aligned walls. These were present at a depth of c.0.5 m and both survived for up at least two courses. By far the best preserved wall was [1012] which lay c.4.0 m north of wall [1008]. Wall [1012] measured 0.87 m wide with a surviving depth of 0.23 m. It was faced with roughly dressed blocks with a more rubble like core and coarse mortar. Wall [1008] was much more disturbed though careful cleaning of the section revealed a wall, mortared roughly dressed blocks with rubble core up to 0.62 m wide with depth up to 0.50 m. In subsequent trenches to the west of these walls no traces of either wall was encountered.
- 4.4 In a trench some 11.0 m west of Manor Place revealed a stone culvert, [1016]. This feature consisted of edge set stones with capstones creating a voided culvert. It was aligned Northeast to Southwest and measured some 0.89 m wide with an exposed length of 1.61 m. This feature was approximately 1.0 m below ground surface and was able to be left *in situ*.



Plate 2 View of culvert [1016] from the southeast

- 4.5 Further to the west, some 28.0 m from Manor Place was encountered the last definite wall feature on site. Wall [1032], was some 0.90 m below ground surface and comprised two parallel north to south sections of narrow mortared stone wall. The walls comprised single blocks of stone, 0.20 m to 0.22 m wide and survived several courses high, up to 0.88 m. Lying between the two walls sections was c.0.60 m of mixed material including stone, brick fragments and roof tile pieces. This wall was able to remain *in situ*.

- 4.6 Elsewhere on site there was a setting of six stones which may represent the remains of a wall, [1029] but given the very disturbed nature nothing more could be elucidated. Finally there were a few more modern features encountered including a demolition dump of crushed stone and brick [1023] as well as the brick and concrete remnants of the previous building on the site.
- 4.7 Barring the aforementioned walls, [1008] and [1012] and culvert [1016], neither significant structural remains nor negative features were observed during the watching brief. Likewise no significant unstratified artefactual material was recovered though throughout the excavations modern finds and artefactual material dating to the 20th century including pottery and glass was noted.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The wall features uncovered close to Manor Place appeared to be relatively isolated with further excavations across the site not revealing any more of the walls or any associated features. Given the extent of the excavations on site and consequent lack of features it is safe to assume that the walls were mere fragments. Careful examination of the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey maps do not readily suggest potential walls meaning the remains may pre date the mid 19th century. The earlier cartographic sources indicate that the development area formed part of the landscaped grounds of East Coates House from c.1615 onwards. The walls and culvert are therefore believed to be associated with this period of land use.
- 5.2 The watching brief, barring the aforementioned walls, revealed neither significant *in situ* archaeological features nor deposits. Also no significant unstratified artefacts were recovered.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The development site appears archaeologically sterile. No further archaeological works are considered necessary. This recommendation will require confirmation by CECAS on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

7 REFERENCES

Bibliographic references

AOC, 2012. 'St. Mary's Medical Centre Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation, unpublished AOC Client Document

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy* (February 2010).

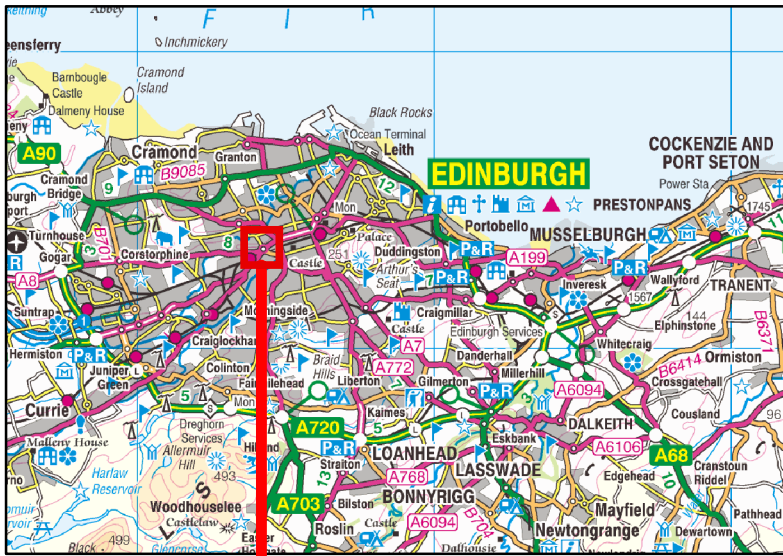
Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*.

Cartographic References

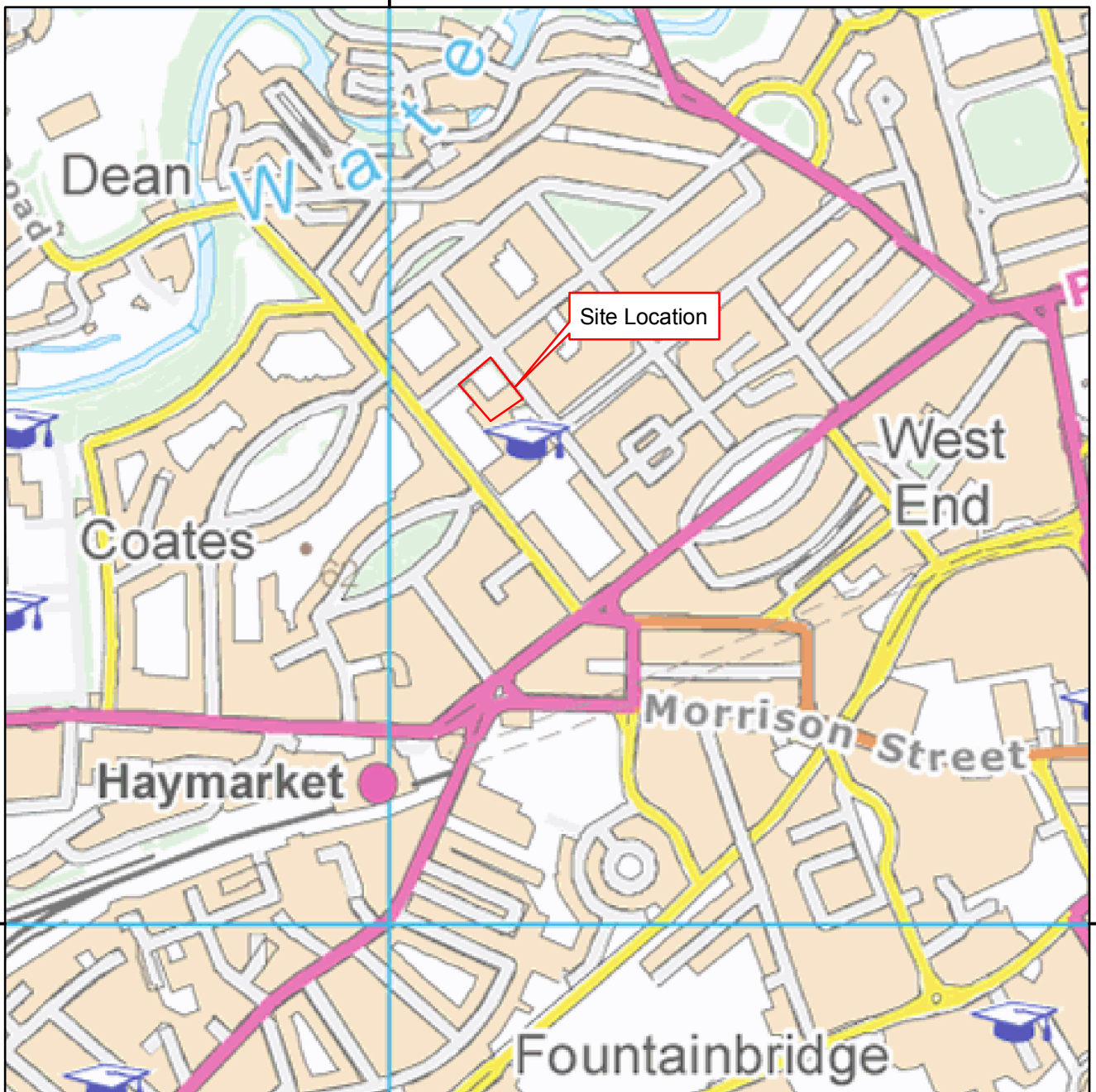
1773, Andrew Armstrong 'Map of the Three Lothians'

1812, James Knox, 'Map of the Shire of Edinburgh'

1849, Ordnance Survey Map, 1st Edition



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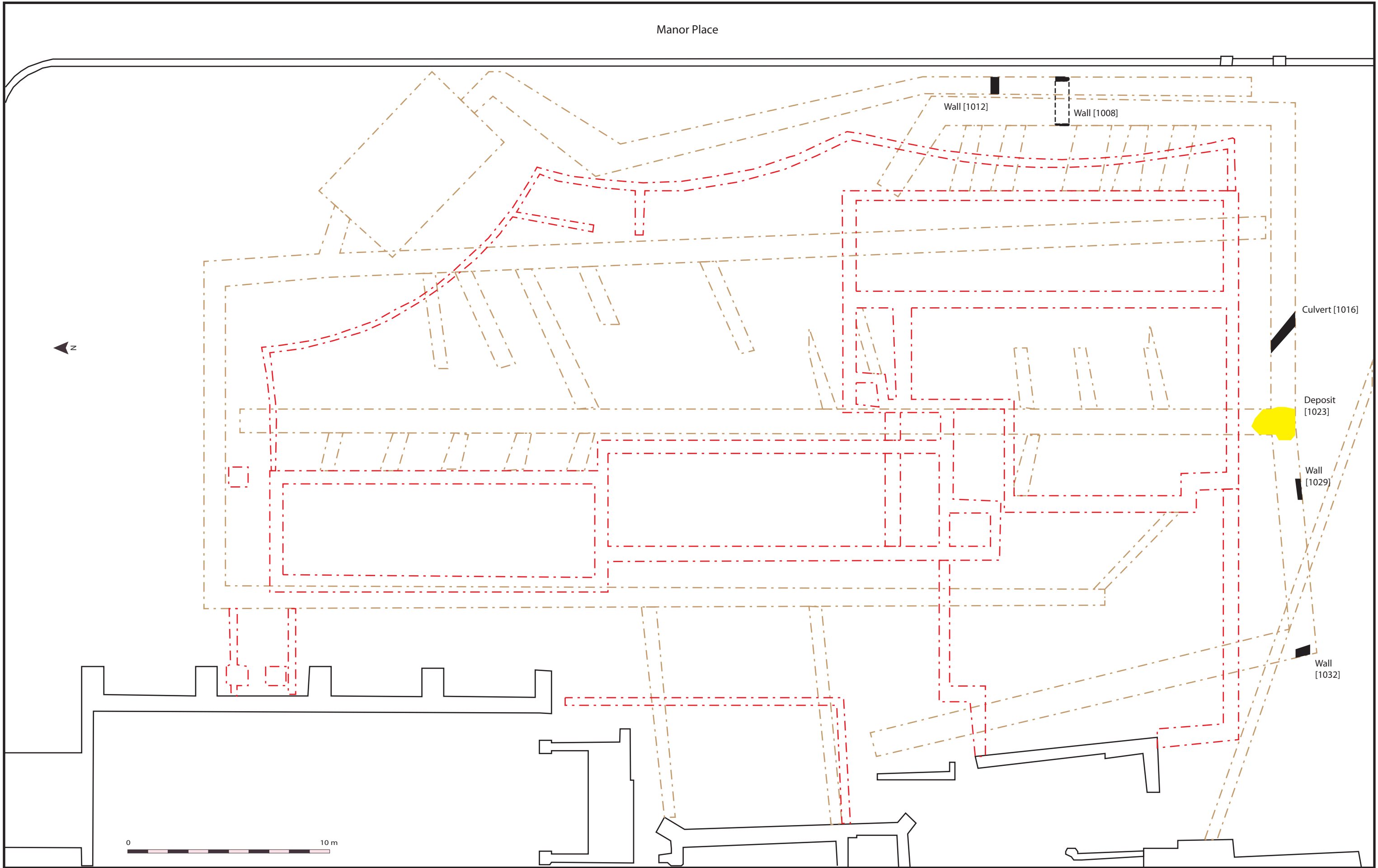
673000

324000



0 75 150 225 300 Meters

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



- Drainage Trenches
- Foundation Trenches
- Existing Buildings

Figure 2: Plan of excavated areas and feature locations

**St.Mary's Medical Centre,
Edinburgh:**

Watching Brief Data Structure Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Context Register

| Context No. | Description |
|-------------|--|
| [1001] | Topsoil |
| [1002] | Redeposited natural – orange/brown sandy clay |
| [1003] | Grey brown sandy clay |
| [1004] | Reddish brown sandy clay deposit |
| [1005] | Pale red brown clay deposit |
| [1006] | Redeposited natural - Medium orange clay deposit |
| [1007] | Stones mixed with clay – next to wall [1008] |
| [1008] | East to West aligned stone wall. Wall [1008] was much more disturbed though careful cleaning of the section revealed a wall, mortared roughly dressed blocks with rubble core up to 0.62 m wide with depth up to 0.50 m. |
| [1009] | Not assigned |
| [1010] | Not assigned |
| [1011] | Medium orange clay deposit – natural geology |
| [1012] | East to West aligned stone wall. Wall [1012] measured 0.87 m wide with a surviving depth of 0.23 m. It was faced with roughly dressed blocks with a more rubble like core and coarse mortar. |
| [1013] | Small spread of stone to south of [1012] |
| [1014] | Modern brick foundation |
| [1015] | Modern brick foundation |
| [1016] | Drystone culvert. It was aligned Northeast to Southwest and measured some 0.89 m wide with an exposed length of 1.61 m. |
| [1017] | Mixed deposit |
| [1018] | Mixed deposit |
| [1019] | Not assigned |
| [1020] | Modern gravel deposit |
| [1021] | Made ground |
| [1022] | Sandy clay deposit |
| [1023] | Demolition dump including crushed brick, tile and stone |
| [1024] | Stones within [1023] |
| [1025] | Mortar within [1023] |
| [1026] | Redeposited natural - Medium orange clay deposit |
| [1027] | Concrete foundations |
| [1028] | Made ground |
| [1029] | Stone setting – remains of wall base |
| [1030] | Sandy silt deposits with brick, stone and tile |
| [1031] | Modern brick foundations |
| [1032] | Cut of ceramic drain |
| [1033] | Fill of drain [1032] |
| [1034] | Made ground |
| [1035] | Redeposited natural - Medium orange clay deposit |

APPENDIX 2: Drawing Register

| Drawing No. | Description | Scale |
|-------------|---|-------|
| 1 | Plan of Trench showing wall [1012] | 1:20 |
| 2 | West facing section showing wall [1008] | 1:20 |
| 3 | East facing section showing wall [1008] | 1:20 |
| 4 | Plan of culvert [1016] as left <i>in situ</i> | 1:20 |
| 5 | Plan of demolition dump [1023] | 1:20 |
| 6 | Plan of possible retaining wall [1029] | 1:20 |
| 7 | East facing section of wall [1032] | 1:20 |

APPENDIX 3: Photographic Record

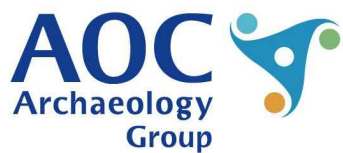
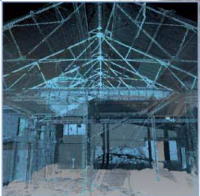
| Frame | Context No. | Description | From |
|---------|-------------|---|------|
| 1 | - | Registration shot | |
| 2-4 | [1012] | SE facing view of wall [1012] | SE |
| 5-6 | [1012] | NW facing view of wall [1012] | NW |
| 7-8 | [1012] | Plan view of wall [1012] from East | E |
| 9-10 | [1008] | West facing section of wall [1008] | W |
| 11-12 | [1008] | East facing section of wall [1008] | E |
| 13 | [1014] | Brick wall foundation [1014] from East | E |
| 14 | [1014] | Brick wall foundation [1014] from South | S |
| 15 | [1014] | View showing depth from ground surface of wall [1014] | S |
| 16 | [1014] | Brick foundations at Southern end of new foundations trench | N |
| 17 - 18 | [1014] | Southern extent of new foundation trench | S |
| 19 | [1015] | Foundation of brick wall [1015] | W |
| 20 | [1015] | Distance of brick wall [1015] from ground surface | E |
| 21 | - | General view of drainage digging | SE |
| 22 | - | Foundation digging at Southern end of site | W |
| 23 | - | Drainage works along north side of site | E |
| 24 | [1014] | Wall foundations [1014] | S |
| 25 | [1014] | Wall foundations [1014] | E |
| 26 – 27 | [1017] | Rubble spread [1017] | W |
| 28 - 29 | [1017] | General view of rubble spread [1017] | E |
| 30 – 32 | [1016] | Culvert feature [1016] | NW |
| 33 | [1016] | Culvert feature [1016] | E |
| 34 | [1016] | Soil profile above [1016] | W |
| 35 - 36 | - | East facing section showing depth of excavation | E |
| 37 - 38 | [1024] | View of possible dump of material | N |
| 39 - 40 | - | North facing section showing depth of excavation | N |
| 41 | [1027] | Concrete foundation | E |
| 42 | [1027] | View showing depth of concrete foundation | S |
| 43 | - | General view of excavation soil profile – foundation pit | SW |
| 44 | [1029] | View of possible retaining wall [1029] | N |
| 45 | [1030] | View of area in front of retaining wall | W |
| 46 – 47 | [1030] | Profile of [1029] and [1030] | E |
| 48 | [1030] | Depth of [1029] and [1030] | N |
| 49 - 50 | [1031] | Foundation wall [1031] | NW |
| 51 -52 | [1031] | Detail of bricks in wall [1031] | NW |
| 53 - 54 | [1031] | Foundation wall [1031] | SW |
| 55 | [1031] | View showing depth of foundation wall [1031] | SE |
| 56 - 58 | [1032] | Possible drain in section | SE |

| | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 59 | - | View of trench for gas service | E |
|----|---|--------------------------------|---|

APPENDIX 4: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

| | |
|---|---|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | City of Edinburgh |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME | St. Mary's Medical Centre Watching Brief |
| PROJECT CODE: | AOC21990 |
| PARISH: | Edinburgh |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR: | Lindsay Dunbar |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | AOC Archaeology |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Watching Brief |
| NMRS NO(S): | NT27SW240 |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Victorian cathedral of St Mary's |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | None |
| NGR (2 letters, 6 figures) | NT 2404 7357 |
| START DATE (this season) | 10 th April 2013 |
| END DATE (this season) | 21 st May 2013 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.) | None |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | <p>An archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on ground breaking works associated with the development on a new medical centre at St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh (NT 2404 7357).</p> <p>A few remnants of wall features were uncovered close to Manor Place those are relatively isolated with further excavations across the site not revealing any more of these walls or associated features. Given the extent of the excavations on site and consequent lack of features it is probable to assume that the walls were mere fragments. Careful examination of the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey maps does not readily suggest potential walls meaning the remains may pre date the mid 19th century. It is therefore assumed that these walls are most likely part of the landscaped gardens associated with East Coates House built in c.1615.</p> <p>In summary barring the aforementioned walls no significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the Watching Brief.</p> |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | None |
| CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS: | - |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Chester Street Properties LP |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN | AOC Archaeology Group, Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Edgefield |

| | |
|---|--|
| CONTRIBUTOR: | Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | edinburgh@acarchaeology.com |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited) | Archive to be deposited in NMRS |



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