

2. INTRODUCTION

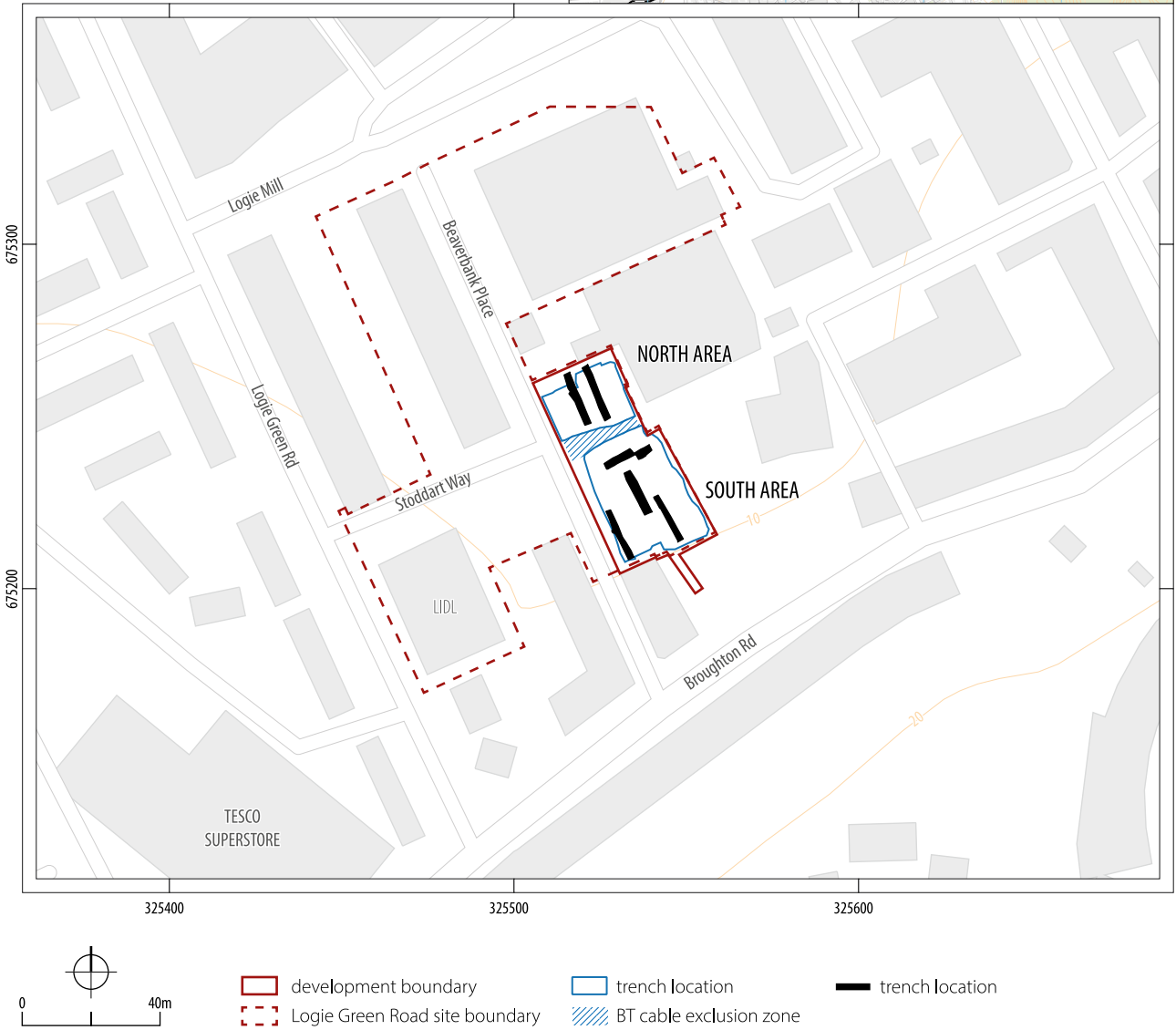
*'Memories of a Country Tannery'**'Now, I concede a tannery located in a city**Is something very few would count as wholesome, sweet, or pretty**And urban sloughs of clayhold sort offend the sense of smelling ...**Adjacent to one's dwelling**... that old tanyard pond where I first learned ... of skating**The chimney of the tannery ... is spouting**Great cheery waves of bluish smoke, and from the door come shouting**Those thawed-out skaters ... ranked about that giant stove, in ruddy fury burning.'**(SLT 1897, 22)*

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by CCG (Scotland) Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological works on the east side of Beaverbank Place, Edinburgh, in connection with the planning conditions set by the City of Edinburgh Archaeological Services (CECAS) on the proposed development site. The archaeological works consisted of trial trenching in March 2018 (Wilson 2018) and a subsequent open area mitigation excavation in July 2018. The proposed development area, centred on NGR: NT 2551 7524, was located immediately to the east of Beaverbank Place in Canonmills – a district of Edinburgh located on the north side of the city – on open rough ground bound by Beaverbank Place to the west, existing industrial units to the north, a car park to the east and by property facing onto Broughton Road and a playground to the south (Illus 1).

No intrusive archaeological works had taken place within the development area prior to the evaluation in March 2018. The area immediately to the west and north was, however, subject to previous archaeological excavations between 2009

and 2018. In 2009, a desk-based assessment and a programme of trial trenching were undertaken at a site on Logie Green Road immediately north-west of the Beaverbank Place site. The areas of an early to mid-18th-century mill lade and mid-19th-century buildings were targeted by the archaeological trenching. This revealed the well-preserved 18th-century lade, perfectly corresponding to cartographic evidence, as well as a substantial late 17th- to early 18th-century cut feature to the south possibly representing an earlier phase of the lade (van Wessel 2009). A watching brief carried out in 2011 to the immediate north of Beaverbank Place identified an organic deposit containing animal bone, cattle horn, 19th- and 20th-century pottery and leather fragments (Scott 2011). In 2013, an archaeological excavation was carried out for a development at Block A1, Logie Green Road (Wilson 2014). The excavation comprised the removal of the overburden across the footprint of the proposed development down to the formation levels; an area of approximately 1,600 m². The excavations exposed sporadic, shallow spreads of homogenised

Land adjacent to
Beaverbank Place
Edinburgh



Illus 1 Site Location

soils derived from cultivation immediately above the geological sediments; indicating much of these deposits had been truncated by later 17th- to 19th-century industrialisation of the area. Remains of the mill lade were also identified and dating evidence from the fill of the lade suggested that it ceased operation by the late 19th century. A well and a sub-rectangular structure, both possibly contemporary in date with the lade, were recorded to the south (Wilson 2014).

The archaeological trial trenching carried out at Beaverbank Place in 2018 comprised the excavation of six 16m long archaeological evaluation trenches to provide a 10% sample of the development area (Illus 1). Upstanding remains were recorded in all six trenches, the majority of which relate to buildings depicted on the 1877 and 1896 Ordnance Survey

maps. The most prominent features were a series of brick-built pits recorded in two trenches. These included brick walls and floors and were interpreted as tanning pits associated with the 19th-century tannery. A limited number of additional brick walls relating to the tannery building were also recorded to the south half of the site. Walls associated with later phases of expansion and alteration were recorded to the north half of the development area.

The original client report has been deposited with the Archaeology Data Service as part of their OASIS programme under OASIS headland1-312319. A summary report has also been submitted to Discovery & Excavation in Scotland. The complete project archive was deposited with the Scottish National Record of the Historic Environment (SNRHE).