

## 5. CONCLUSION

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Excavation at 19 West Tollcross revealed multiple layers of archaeology relating to several hundred years of activity, from the 12th/13th to the 20th century. Although the remains were, in parts, fragmentary and difficult to interpret, when supplemented with documentary research they provided evidence of a dynamic, evolving landscape.

Excavation uncovered the only known archaeological evidence for medieval activity in the Fountainbridge area. Map and documentary evidence suggest that the area was open ground in the 12th century, on the fringes of medieval Edinburgh. It is likely that the area was used for orchards or gardens belonging to the Crown. During the 1500s, when the gardens fell into disrepair, the lands were possibly leased by private market gardeners. The area's rural nature continued until the 18th century, when the land was subdivided and held by the growing merchant classes who were leaving the Old Town, which was now overcrowded, in favour of country houses and the New Town (Easton 1988: 1). Several mansions of various sizes were built in the area during this time. By the mid-19th century many of the mansions had disappeared, eclipsed by new housing programmes (Easton 1988: 9) and

the encroachment of industry on the land that was previously used for agriculture.

The area then developed from open fields into a hub of industry, with the construction and subsequent expansion of Lochrin Distillery and associated byres, used to pen animals in order to keep waste costs down in the distillery. The livestock were also a valuable by-product for sale. Despite undergoing several adaptations over the years, the distillery continued to operate on a much-reduced scale after most of the equipment was sold in 1849. Edinburgh Slaughter-House was constructed in 1850. The proximity of the slaughterhouse and technological advances spurred the construction of the Edinburgh Ice and Cold Storage Company's facility. Due to the relocation of the slaughterhouse, the Ice and Cold Storage Company was forced to diversify in order to keep trading, and therefore they created Lochrin Ice Rink. The ice rink suffered failing usage during the First World War and closed in 1915. After the war, the site became a garage to accommodate the increasing use of commercial and private motorised transport. The Lochrin area provides an example of the development of an area from rural agricultural land to a dynamic industrial development, driven by technological innovations and socio-economic change.