
2 INTRODUCTION

The renewal of water mains within Musselburgh by Scottish Water between March 2003 and May 2004 provided an opportunity for archaeological monitoring of extensive groundworks within and adjacent to the medieval core of the burgh, and adjacent to the *vicus* of the Roman fort in Inveresk. Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Scottish Water's contractor, Morgan Utilities, to monitor the works (Kimber 2004).

The mains replacement involved both open-cut trenching and smaller interventions in the roads and pavements of large parts of the burgh (illus 1). Guided by the area of archaeological potential suggested by the Scottish Burgh Survey for Musselburgh (Dennison & Coleman 1996), the monitoring covered most streets within the town centre. In Inveresk, monitoring was extended outwith this area along Inveresk Village Road and Carberry Road due to the close proximity to the road of Scheduled areas including field systems, prehistoric settlement and Roman camps (SAMs 3610 & 3611). Archaeological monitoring of the renewal works began following the discovery of a stone culvert on Carberry Road at the instigation of the East Lothian Council archaeologist, Biddy Simpson. Most of the open-cut trenching on Musselburgh High Street – one of the key areas of the

medieval burgh – was undertaken without an archaeologist present and thus was largely unrecorded.

The archaeological remains located in the course of the monitoring fall into two categories. The first is that of deposits or structures that can be related to previously known sites. The new information about these three sites – the *vicus* of Inveresk Roman Fort, the Newbigging pottery and the town mill lade – is considered first, along with the implications of future development in their vicinity. The second category of remains – archaeological structures and deposits related to the growth and development of the burgh – is discussed following this, and considered in relation to the development of the burgh from the medieval period.

The final section of this article attempts to explain the much more fragmentary evidence for medieval and later deposits recorded in Musselburgh, as compared with the far better preserved sequences recorded from similar projects in North Berwick (Dingwall 2004, Dingwall forthcoming), Crail (Lowe 2001) and Perth (Glendinning 2002). The implications this comparison has for the preservation of archaeological horizons within Musselburgh and for the methodology of future fieldwork there will then be discussed.

