

---

## 2 Introduction

---

The Edinburgh Park development was undertaken by New Edinburgh Ltd, a joint venture company made up of Miller Developments and Enterprise Edinburgh – Edinburgh City Council’s property development company. The development involved the construction of industrial units, office buildings and housing, as well as large-scale landscaping. The Maybury Park investigations (centred on NGR: NT 178720) undertaken by CECAS covered part of the Phase I Edinburgh Park Development, located at South Gyle on the western edge of Edinburgh ([illus 1](#)).

The area of investigation was bounded to the west by the Edinburgh City Bypass, to the east by South Gyle Broadway and several recently developed sites and to the south by the West One development. In all, the site was over 1km from north to south and 0.5km from east to west, with a total area of 66ha. At the time of the excavation, it was bisected from north to south by the Gogar Burn and from east to west by a farm road giving access to Redheughs and Gogar Green Farms, located at the south of the site on either side of the burn; both farms have since been demolished and the site re-landscaped. The geology consisted of fluvio-glacial sands and gravels.

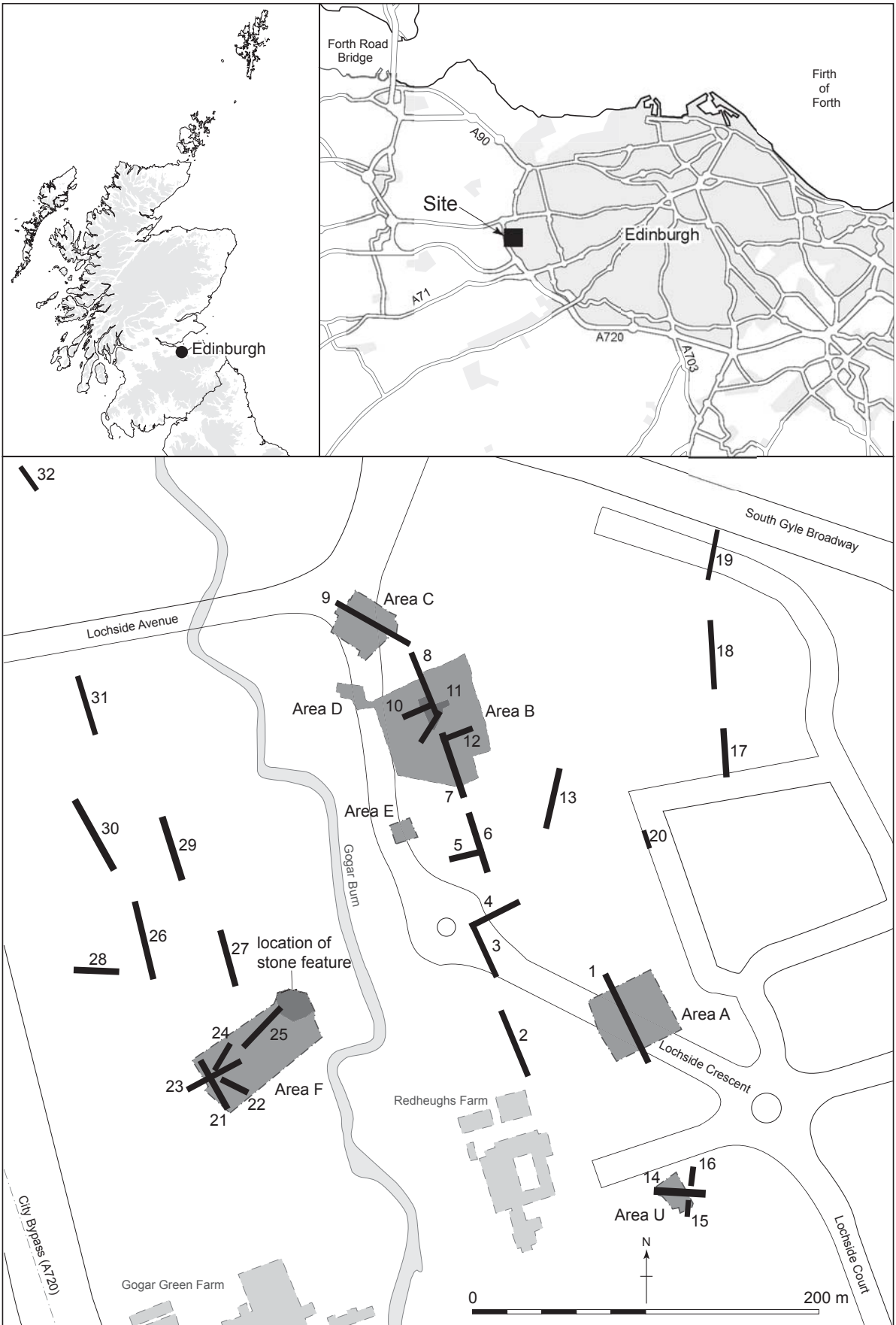
Prior to development the site was characterized by undulating arable farmland forming part of Redheughs Farm. The area to the north of Area C, however, was lower-lying and formed part of the former Gogar Loch which extended eastwards to just south-west of Corstorphine. Geo-technical boreholes sunk by Beattie Watkinson in 1988 across the site of the present-day South Gyle Shopping Centre recorded peat deposits up to 2.50m in depth. These deposits, however, remain undated and it is therefore not possible to state at what point during the prehistoric or Early Historic period the loch stopped being a permanent body of open water.

Historic records indicate that the loch has not been a permanent body of open water since the 17th century. Rather, it is described in 1650 as an area ‘full of bogs and marshes’ ([NSA 1845](#), 245) acting as a natural flood plain for the Gogar Burn. Flooding of this area has been an historic problem as exemplified by Lord James Foresters’s petition to Parliament in 1661 which describes the ‘whole meadow ground and low lying lands...undone by the

overflowing Gogar-burne’ ([NSA 1845](#)). This area still remained susceptible to flooding until the construction of this development which saw the canalization of the Gogar Burn.

The only previously known site or find of archaeological interest within the proposed development site was a small circular cropmark (NGR: NT17SE 21), interpreted as a ring-ditch to the north of Gogar Green Farm ([illus 2](#)). Chance finds of cists (NGR: NT17SE 4 and NT17SE 20) have been fairly common in the surrounding area although none from within the boundary of the study area. Two Roman camps, Millburn Tower and Gogar Green (NGR: NT17SE 23 and NT17SE 24), have been identified in the area. Sections were excavated through the defensive ditches of the Gogar Green camp in 1980 ([Maxwell 1984](#)) in advance of the construction of the City Bypass and it was hoped that the 1990–2 excavations would confirm the eastern extent of this monument. In addition, a possible palisaded enclosure was identified to the south of the site from aerial photographs at Cultins Road (NGR: NT17SE 54). This site was evaluated by CECAS in 1996 ([Collard 1996](#)) and the results seemed to support its identification as a multi-ditched enclosure. However, when the southern extent of the site was opened up and excavated in 2002 ([Jones 2002](#)) in advance of development, the cropmark was demonstrated to be predominately natural in origin, with the outer ditches formerly excavated by CECAS proving to be part of a series of post-medieval field/enclosure boundary ditches.

Based upon this archaeological evidence, an archaeological evaluation was therefore felt to be necessary by the City of Edinburgh Council in advance of development. Overall management of the project was undertaken by the then City Archaeologist Mark Collard, with the field work managed by Daniel Johnson. The evaluation was undertaken during October and November in 1990, with the results leading onto three main phases of archaeological excavation: Areas A and U, December 1990 and January 1991; Areas B–E, October to December 1991; Area F, January to March 1992 ([illus 1](#); [illus 3](#)). The following report is based upon the draft data structure report written by Daniel Johnson for CECAS.



*Illus 1 Site location, showing test trenches and excavation areas*



*Illus 2 Pre-historic / Roman cropmarks in the immediate area of site with the presumed extent of Gogar Loch*



*Illus 3 Aerial view of excavated areas (©RCAHMS)*