



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Archaeological Watching Brief

London Road Fire
Station, Piccadilly,
Manchester

Client:

Allied London Fire
Station Developments
Limited

Planning Reference:

125712/FO/2019

Technical Report:

Graham Mottershead

Report No:

SA/2021/50



Location: The site comprises trial pits excavated around the sides of the central courtyard within the fire station

NGR: 374560 430899 (centred)

Project: London Road Fire Station

Planning Ref: 125712/FO/2019

Internal Ref: SECL2098

Report No: SA/2020/50

Prepared for: Allied London Fire Station Developments Limited

Document: Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Version: Version 1

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Date: July 2021

Signed: 

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Summary

Salford Archaeology were commissioned by Allied London Fire Station Developments Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief whilst trial pit were excavated against the walls within the courtyard of London Road Fire Station. The London Road Fire Station is a heritage asset of considerable significance, reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade II* listed building.

Salford Archaeology were commissioned to undertake the watching brief and subsequent report in April 2021. The watching brief was carried out During May and June 2021.

A total of eight trial pits were monitored. No remains of archaeological significance were encountered.

The foundation cuts for the fire station courtyard walls had removed any earlier remains around the edges of the courtyard. High potential still remains for earlier remains to have survived below ground within the rest of the courtyard, further away from the walls.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

Salford Archaeology were commissioned by Allied London Fire Station Developments Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief whilst trial pit were excavated against the walls within the courtyard of London Road Fire Station (Figure 1; Planning Reference 125712/FO/2019). The London Road Fire Station is a heritage asset of considerable significance, reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade II* listed building.

Salford Archaeology were commissioned to undertake the watching brief and subsequent report in April 2021. The watching brief was carried out During May and June 2021 and consisted of three monitoring visits.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project was to monitor any excavations remains pre-dating the fire station.

1.3 Objectives

The principal objectives of the archaeological investigation are:

- to monitor trial pit excavations within the courtyard;
- to record any archaeologically significant remains that may be encountered;
- to produce a full written and illustrated report of the findings of the excavation;
- to produce an ordered archive for the project;
- to make available the results of the work.

2. Methodology

2.1 Archaeological Watching Brief

The principal aim of the archaeological watching brief was to monitor excavations for grave markers and charnel, and to ensure that no excavations affected *in situ* burials.

2.2 General Methodology

All archaeological work was be conducted following the ClfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs (*Standards and Guidelines for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, ClfA 2020).

All excavations were carried out by the client, who was also responsible for ensuring that no live services were damaged during the works. All health and safety requirements detailed by the client were adhered to during the watching brief.

2.3 Photographic Archive

A comprehensive photographic archive was produced utilising a high-resolution digital camera. All frames, excluding general contextual views, incorporate a graduated metric scale. Photograph records were maintained on special photograph *pro-forma* sheets. All photography was carried out following the latest Historic England guidance (*Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice* HE 2015).

3. Watching Brief Results

In total eight trial pits were excavated, of varying dimensions and depths (Figure 2).

No features or structures of archaeological significance were encountered in any of the pits and no artefacts were recovered. The pits were overlain with tarmac laid onto a stone bedding layer. Below this a homogenous deposit of mixed stone, clay and rubble fragments was encountered and was not bottomed.



Plate 1: Trial pit along northern interior wall



Plate 2: Natural clay within trial pit along southern interior wall

4. Conclusion

No archaeological remains were present around the edges of the courtyard. This is likely due to the construction of the fire station with the walls built into wide foundation cuts which were then backfilled with the homogenous stone, clay and rubble deposit as a levelling/infill layer.

It is, however, highly likely that the foundation cuts did not extend much beyond the trial pits and that there is a high potential for earlier remains to have survived within the rest of courtyard.

5. Archive and Dissemination

5.1 Archive

The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards and in line with current ClfA guidelines updated 2020. The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the ClfA in that organisation's code of conduct. As part of the archiving process, the on-line OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations) form will be completed.

The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Northwest of England. All drawn records will be transferred to and stored in digital format, in systems which are easily accessible. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works. The archive will be stored with Salford Archaeology until a suitable repository can be arranged.

5.2 Dissemination

The results obtained from the watching brief will be placed in the public domain via an appropriate level of dissemination.

This will be achieved by deposition of this technical report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (GMHER).

Acknowledgments

Salford Archaeology would like to thank Allied London Fire Station Developments Limited for commissioning the archaeological works. In particular Salford Archaeology would like to thank Ted Hewins, Liam Skinner and Gary Shea for their support during the project.

The watching brief was carried out by Andy Coutts and Graham Mottershead. The report was written and illustrated by Graham Mottershead, who was also responsible for the management of the project.

Sources

ClfA Regulations, Standards and Guidelines, updated 2014, *Standards and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*

ClfA Regulations, Standards and Guidelines, updated 2014, *Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*

ClfA Regulations, Standards and Guidelines, updated 2014, *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Historic England, 2015, *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice*

Miller I F, 2017 *London Road Fire Station, Piccadilly, Manchester: Updated Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* Salford Archaeology unpublished client report

Mottershead G, 2021 *London Road Fire Station, Piccadilly, Manchester: Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation* Salford Archaeology unpublished client document

Appendix 1: Figures

Figure 1: Site location map

Figure 2: Plan showing the location of monitored trial pits

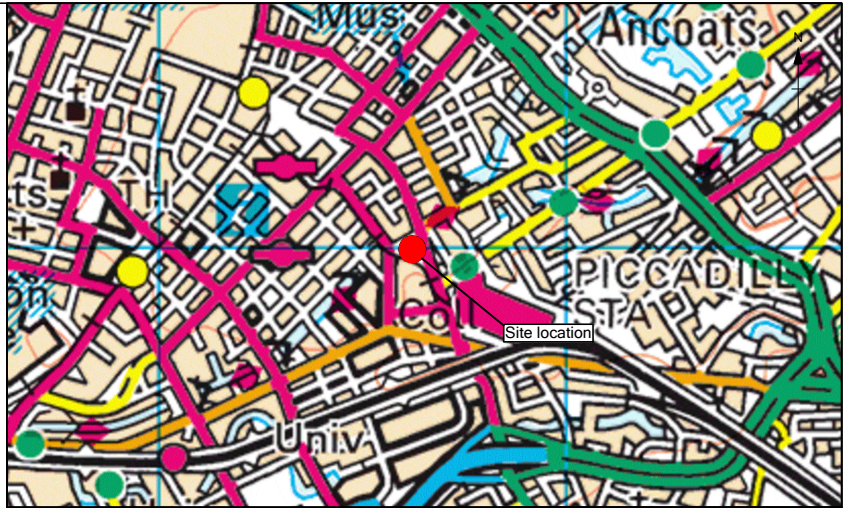


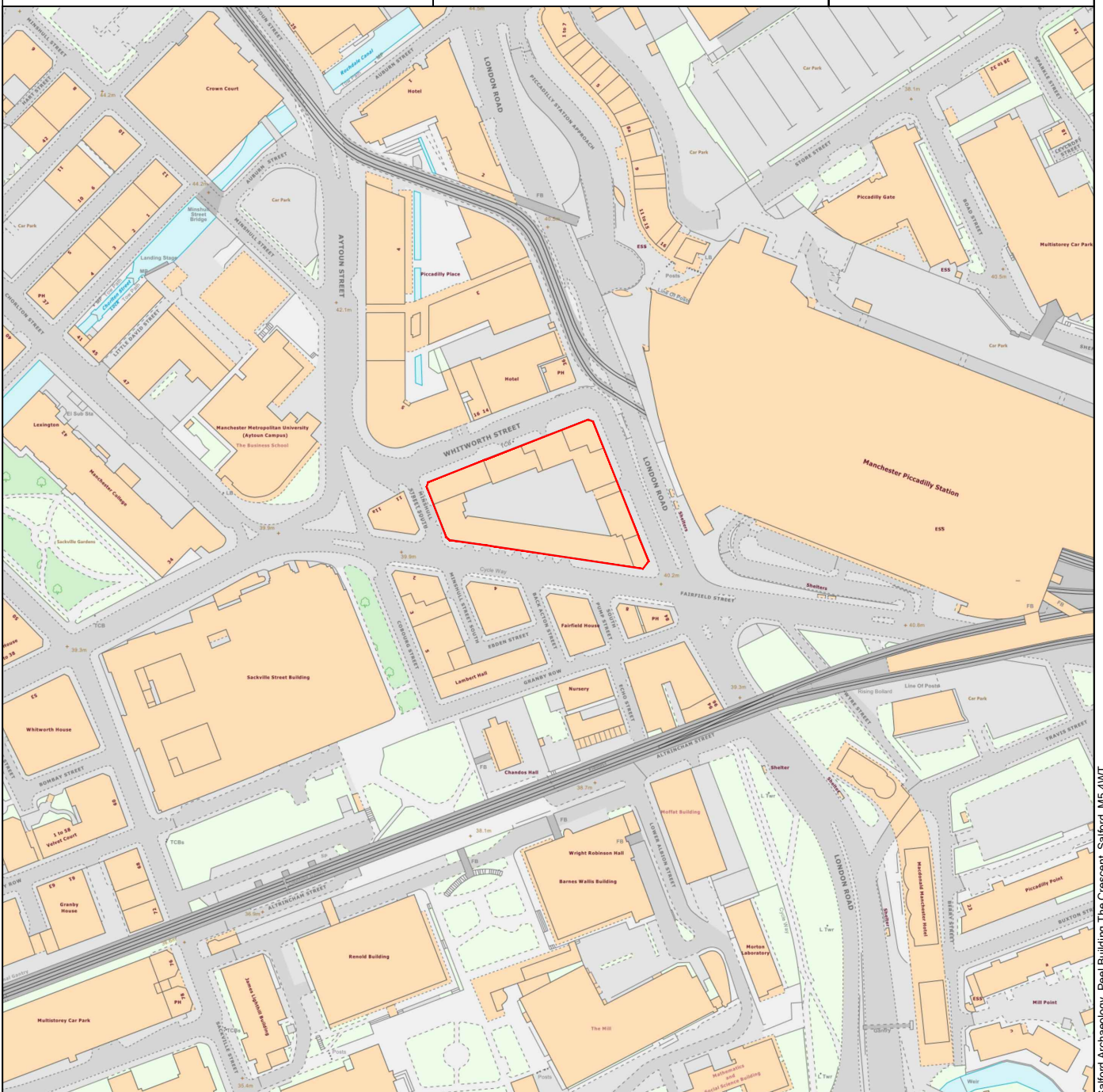
Figure 1:

Site location

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Figure 2:

Location of monitored trial pits

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Key:

- Site boundary
- Monitored trial pit



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0 20 m
Scale at A4 1:500