

University of Salford MANCHESTER

# Updated Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

London Road Fire Station,
Piccadilly,
Manchester

**Client:**
Allied London Fire Station Ltd

**Technical Report:**
Ian Miller

**Report No:**
2017/7

**Site Location:** The study area occupies a triangular plot of land bounded by London Road, Fairfield Street and Whitworth Street in the Piccadilly area of Manchester city centre

**NGR:** Centred on NGR 384668 397820

**Project:** London Road Fire Station

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# Summary

In December 2016, Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Allied London Fire Station Ltd to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of the London Road Fire Station in the Piccadilly area of Manchester city centre (centred on NGR 384668 397820). The assessment aimed to identify, as far as possible, the nature, extent and significance of the below-ground archaeological resource, and was required to inform and support a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of the site. The report was updated in November 2019 in the light of a revised design proposal, which omits the proposed excavation for a new basement in the courtyard.

The London Road Fire Station is a Grade II* Listed Building that is located within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area. The historic building complex has been subject to several studies previously and, most recently, a Heritage Significance Impact Assessment has been prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd and Levitt Bernstein to support the current planning application. This assessment is thus concerned primarily with the below-ground archaeological resource, and should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Impact Assessment.

The study area remained undeveloped land on the fringe of Manchester until the late 18th century, when the area experienced rapid growth as a result of the industrial development and expansion of the town. Blocks of closely-packed workers' housing, many containing cellars, were built across the proposed development area during the late 18th century, with the entire plot having been developed intensively by 1819. Demolition of these houses was under way by the early 1890s, and the entire plot had been cleared by 1901 to allow for the construction of the London Road Fire Station. This redevelopment is likely to have removed all physical evidence for the earlier housing within the footprint of the Fire Station complex, although buried foundations are likely survive *in-situ* beneath the surface of the central courtyard. Any such remains would be of high local and potential borough importance, pending the extent to which they survive. Whilst not meriting preservation *in-situ*, these remains would require an appropriate strategy for further archaeological investigation to be implemented if they were to be damaged or removed by development.

The revised design for the London Road Fire Station, however, omits the excavation of a new basement that was proposed originally, thereby negating any substantial impact on below-ground archaeological remains, specifically the buried foundations of workers' housing within the central courtyard of the Fire Station. Nevertheless, any ground-breaking works within the courtyard, such as the excavation of new foundations and / or service trenches may require a programme of archaeological recording. The scope any further archaeological investigation will be decided ultimately by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, in their capacity of archaeological advisors to Manchester City Council. It maybe anticipated, however, that an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of any foundations would represent an appropriate strategy.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Planning Background

Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Allied London Fire Station Ltd to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of the former London Road Fire Station in the Piccadilly area of Manchester city centre (referred to herein as 'the Site'). The London Road Fire Station is a heritage asset of considerable significance, reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade II* listed building.

The desk-based study was required in order to inform a planning application for the proposed refurbishment of the building. The aim of the assessment was to identify as far as possible the nature, extent and significance of the below-ground archaeological resource in the Site so as to enable informed recommendations to be made for the future treatment of any surviving remains. The impact of the development proposals on the significance of the listed building and its setting is considered in detail in a Heritage Significance Impact Assessment that has been prepared to support the planning application (Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd and Levitt Bernstein), which should be read in conjunction with this assessment of below-ground remains.

## 1.2 Government and Local Planning Policies

### 1.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The significance of the archaeological resource identified within this report has been assessed as recommended in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Local Communities, February 2019).

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined by three principles: economic, social and environmental. Of the 12 core planning principles underpinning decision making, conserving 'heritage assets in a manner appropriate to the quality of life of this and future generations' is one.

Section 16 deals specifically with this historic environment (paragraphs 184-202), and states that local planning authorities should consider:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Paragraph 189 states that local planning authorities, when determining applications, should require the applicant to describe the significance of any affected heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting. 'The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.

Paragraph 197 states that the effect of a proposal on non-designated heritage assets (designated assets are covered in paragraphs 193-96) should be taken into account in determining a planning application. Paragraph 199 states that local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner appropriate to their importance and impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible.

### *1.2.2 Local Development Framework*

The NPPF outlines the need for local planning policies to create local plans and frameworks to implement the NPPF at a local level. Manchester adopted a Core Strategy in 2012, which is scheduled until 2027. The heritage strategy is outlined in *Objective 6: Environment*, which summarises the approach the local authority will take in determining planning applications which may affect the historic environment.

Policy EN3 states:

'Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encourage where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.'

Manchester City Council is advised on archaeological matters by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), which has been consulted during the preparation of the present assessment.

# 2. Method Statement

## 2.1 Research

The assessment considers the potential impact of the proposed development upon any buried archaeological remains within the Site, and comprises a desk-based study and site inspection, coupled with a watching brief that was maintained during the excavation of several trial pits that were required for geo-technical purposes. The production of the assessment followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standard and guidance (Institute for Archaeologists, *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment*, 2017).

The desk-based assessment made use of the following sources:

- Published and unpublished cartographic, documentary and photographic sources, including an archaeological assessment of the Site that was produced to support a previous planning application (SLR Consulting 2011);
- The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record, maintained by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service;
- Information held by Manchester Archives in Manchester Central Library;
- The National Heritage List for England;
- Salford Archaeology's extensive library of archaeological work carried out in the vicinity of the Site.

The aim of the research was to provide the relevant historical and archaeological background relating to the development of the Site. The available sequence of historical mapping was the principal source of information, as this provides evidence for the development of the Site since the late 18$^{th}$ century.

## 2.2 Site Inspection and Watching Brief

The aim of the site inspection was to relate the findings of the desk-based study to the existing land use of the Site, in order to identify any evidence for surviving below-ground remains. In addition, a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of a small number of trial pits across the site in 2017.

## 2.3 The Document

The following presents the historical and archaeological evidence for the Site. A gazetteer (Chapter 6) of heritage assets is presented and sites of potential archaeological interest identified within the Site and this information, along with map regression (*Appendix 1*) is used to assess the significance of the remains (Chapter 7) and potential impact of the development (Chapter 8). A strategy for further investigation is outlined in Chapter 9, based on the assessment presented in the previous chapters.

# 3. The Setting

## 3.1 Location, Topography and Land Use

The Site (centred on NGR 384668 397820) is situated in the Piccadilly area of Manchester city centre, occupying a triangular-shaped plot of land bounded by London Road, Fairfield Street, Minshull Street and Whitworth Street (Figure 1). It is afforded statutory protection as a Grade II* listed building, and is located opposite Piccadilly Railway Station within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area (Plate 1). When built in 1906, the site comprised the fire station, a police station, a gas meter testing station, an ambulance station, coroner's court and bank. The fire station was closed in 1986, and it ceased to be used as a coroner's court in 1998. The building has remained vacant since that date, and urgently requires a scheme of redevelopment that will return this important designated heritage asset back to sustainable long-term use.



*Plate 1: Recent aerial view showing the Site boundary*

## 3.2 Geology and Topography

Topographically, the Manchester Conurbation as a region is within an undulating lowland basin, which is bounded by the Pennine uplands to the east and to the north. The region as a whole comprises the Mersey river valley, whilst the rivers Irwell, Medlock, and Irk represent the principal watercourses in Manchester (Countryside Commission 1998, 125).

The underlying solid geology of the area consists mainly of Bunter sandstones of Permo-Triassic age, which were deposited under the marine conditions of the period, between 280 and 195 million years ago (*ibid*). The local bedding dips to the south-west, towards the centre of the Cheshire Basin (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 85, Solid Edition). The overlying drift geology is composed of essentially Pleistocene boulder clays of glacial origin, and sands, gravels, and clays of fluviatile/lacustrine origin, which form an extensive spread around the Lower Irwell and Mersey valleys (Hall *et al* 1995, 8).

## *3.3 Designations*

The London Road Fire Station was built in 1901-06 and is currently afforded statutory protection as a Grade II* listed building (List Entry No 1197918). The building has a very large irregular quadrilateral plan round a central courtyard, and is in ebullient Edwardian Baroque style, with turrets, domes, corner tourelles, and tall south-east tower with a domed belfry. The fabric comprises red brick with liberal dressings of terracotta, and slate roofs. It is of four and three storeys, with attics. The four-storey main range has a giant round-headed central archway with banded surround and inner lintel lettered 'FIRE AND POLICE STATION', large square windows at ground floor, coupled windows at first floor, a giant colonnaded screen to the second and third floors with coupled columns on pedestals, round-headed windows to second floor and coupled windows to third floor, plain frieze and moulded cornice, a balustraded parapet with central upstand lettered 'ERECTED ANNO DOMINI MDCCCCV', and end turrets finished with Baroque cupolas which have life-sized terracotta statues seated at the corners. The three-bay wings, in similar style, have central windows with elaborate architraves including balconies at first floor, a domed turret to the left and a corner tourelles to the right. The very long facades to Fairfield Street (left return) and Whitworth Street (right return) are in generally similar style (without the colonnade and cupolas), but including four open-pedimented bays (segmental in Whitworth Street) and with a series of round-headed arched fire-engine doorways to Fairfield Street. The narrow west end is slightly simpler. The inner courtyard has iron balconies to three levels of the three main ranges (serving domestic accommodation), with standards in Art Nouveau style. The original layout and fabric of the building survives in unusually complete condition.

In addition, the Site lies within the Whitworth Street Conservation Area, which was designated by Manchester City Council in September 1974, and was bounded by Oxford Street, Portland Street, Abingdon Street, Bloom Street, Chorlton Street, Cobourg Street and the Piccadilly to the Oxford Road railway viaduct. It was extended in June 1985 to include an area bounded by Whitworth Street, London Road and the railway viaduct. The London Road Fire Station forms the eastern edge of the Conservation Area.

# 4. Historical Background

This section of the report is based on cartographic and documentary research, and provides a framework to the present study, working chronologically through the periods listed below (Table 1). Each section details evidence of archaeological remains and the potential for their recovery. Key sites are summarised in the Gazetteer of Sites (Chapter 6).

| Period | | Date Range |
|---|---|---|
| Prehistoric | Palaeolithic | Pre-10000 BC |
| | Mesolithic | 10000 – 3500 BC |
| | Neolithic | 3500 – 2200 BC |
| | Bronze Age | 2300 – 700 BC |
| | Iron Age | 700 BC – AD 43 |
| Romano-British | | AD 43 – AD 410 |
| Early Medieval | | AD 410 – AD 1066 |
| Late Medieval | | AD 1066 – AD 1540 |
| Post-Medieval | | AD 1540 – AD 1750 |
| Industrial Period | | AD 1750 – 1914 |
| Modern | | Post- 1914 |

*Table 1: Summary of British archaeological periods and date ranges*

## 4.1 Prehistoric Period

### 4.1.1 Archaeological Evidence

The current understanding of any activity in Manchester during the prehistoric period is very poor, although it is reasonable to suggest that the Castlefield area, situated *c* 1400m to the west of the Site, may have been conducive for late prehistoric settlement on account of the natural topography and its riverside location. However, physical indications for any such settlement are, at best, fragmentary and arguably the best evidence was yielded from an archaeological excavation that was targeted on a plot of land adjacent to Liverpool Road in Castlefield. During the course of this work, two Mesolithic flints, one Neolithic/Bronze Age waste flake, and a single fragment of late Bronze Age/Iron Age pottery were recovered, although none was found in securely stratified deposits (UMAU 2002). Other prehistoric finds have been noted in the general area of the Cathedral (*c* 300m to the south).

### 4.1.2 Archaeological Potential

There are no known prehistoric remains or finds from within Site or its immediate vicinity, and the potential for buried archaeological remains deriving from this period is considered to be low.

## 4.2 Roman Period

### 4.2.1 Archaeological Evidence

The first military occupation of Manchester was established during the governorship of Agricola (AD 77-84), and commenced with a five-acre wooden fort, known as *Mamucium* (Bruton 1909). The site of this encampment is marked today by Camp Street in Castlefield. During the 2nd century, the fort was developed in association with a substantial extramural settlement, or *vicus*, which expanded in both a northerly direction, and along the line of Chester Road to the south (Gregory 2007).

Roads from the fort linked Manchester with Ribchester to the north (HER 14.1.0), Castleshaw, and York to the north-east, Wigan to the north-west, Chester to the south, and Buxton to the south-east (HER 28.1.3). It has been postulated that Store Street, *c* 230m to the north-east of the Site, forms the line of the road to Castleshaw (Margary 1973), although this awaits confirmation.

Based on recent archaeological excavation and the distribution of Roman finds, the limits of this settlement appear to have extended northwards from the fort to approximately Quay Street, westwards along Liverpool Road for *c* 100m from the north-west corner of the fort, eastwards across Deansgate to the area now occupied by the Beetham Tower, and south-eastwards along Chester Road, terminating somewhere in the vicinity of Great Jackson Street. The only indication of Roman activity near the Site, however, is a Roman coin that was found within the basement area of a warehouse in Piccadilly in 1882.

### 4.2.2 Archaeological Potential

The Site lies 1.5km away from a known, established Roman site and the location of the Roman road to Castleshaw is conjectural. This factor, coupled with the intensity of the development that has occurred within the Site over the last 250 years, means that the potential for any Roman remains to survive is considered to be very low.

## 4.3 Medieval Period

### 4.3.1 Archaeological Evidence

There is very little archaeological evidence in the region as a whole that represents the period between the end of the Roman occupation and the Norman Conquest in the 11th century. The area around Manchester came under the control of several kingdoms during this period. In AD 620, Edwin conquered and occupied Manchester, and it may have been at this time that settlement in the town was established around the cathedral (Farrer and Brownbill 1908). However, the physical remains of this period are rare in the North West as a region (Newman 1996), and this is certainly the case in Manchester. One of the few artefacts in the city known to be of an Anglo-Saxon origin is the so-called ‘Angel Stone’, or effigy of the Archangel Michael, which was unearthed by workmen repairing the South Porch of the cathedral in 1871 (Kidd 1996). Another remnant of the period is a Saxon-style funerary urn of probable 6th-century date, which was found to the north of Red Bank in Cheetham during construction work in *c* 1850 (Morris 1983).

In AD 919, the Anglo-Saxon king Edward the Elder established a fortified base, or burh, at Manchester, which was then part of Viking Northumbria. It has been suggested that the burh lay within the area around the cathedral, which is known to have become a focus for settlement by the late 11th century.

Following the Norman Conquest of 1066, William I assigned most of the land between the Ribble and Mersey rivers to Roger of Poitou, who retained the manor of Salford demesne (Tupling 1962, 116), but divided his other newly-acquired land into several fiefdoms (Kidd 1996, 13). The largest of these was the landholding centred on Manchester, created by the grant of extensive lands in the hundreds of Salford, Leyland and West Derby to Albert Grelley (Tupling 1962, 116). By the 13th century, the Grelley family had established a manor house at the confluence of the rivers Irwell and Irk, located over 1km to the north of the Site, and the medieval town grew up around it (Hartwell *et al* 2004, 256).

### *4.3.2 Archaeological Potential*

The Site lay just outside of the medieval town, and is situated approximately 150m to the north-west of the area designated as Medieval Manchester (HER 16050.1.0). There is no known evidence for medieval activity in the study area, and there is little potential for archaeological remains dating to the medieval period to survive within the Site.

## *4.4 Post-medieval and Industrial Periods*

### *4.4.1 Archaeological Evidence*

By 1539, John Leland was able to describe Manchester as the 'finest and busiest town in the whole of Lancashire, with the best buildings and the greatest population' (Chandler 1993, 263), at a time when the textile industries in south Lancashire were beginning to flourish. From the early 17th century, Manchester emerged as a centre for the textile-finishing processes, as woollen cloth was brought in from outlying areas for bleaching and dying. Most importantly, however, Manchester expanded its role as a market centre for textiles produced in the region and, by the 1790s, Manchester's thriving export market was beginning to displace London as a centre of overseas trade in cotton cloth (Edwards 1967, 176).

During the 18th century, south-east Lancashire as a whole was predominantly an agricultural area of isolated settlements and market towns, with the growing town of Manchester at its centre (Williams with Farnie 1992, 3). By the 1780s, the national demand for textiles, particularly cotton, began to rise, resulting in a dramatic increase in mill building that transformed Manchester into a centre of the factory-based cotton manufacturing industry of international repute (Baines 1835).

### *4.4.2 Archaeological Potential*

The Site appears to have gone through much of its development during this period, as a result of the industrialisation of Manchester, stimulated by the boom of the textile industry, and an associated exponential growth of population. As a result, any archaeological remains on the site are likely to be dated to this period.

## 4.5 *Development of the Site*

The development of the study area may be traced reasonably well from the sequence of available historic mapping. The first detailed maps to show the Site at a reasonable scale are Charles Laurent's survey of 1793 (Plate 2) and William Green's *Map of Manchester & Salford*, published in 1794 (Figure 2; *Appendix 1*), which capture this part of Manchester during its early stages of development. These maps show much of the Site to have been occupied with buildings. The form and layout of these buildings are consistent with domestic housing, rather than industrial buildings, which is confirmed by the detail shown on later mapping. These early maps also show the Site to have been bisected by Acton Street, and an unnamed thoroughfare that is identified on later mapping as Back Pump Street. Several streets in the surrounding area are also shown to have been laid out, awaiting development.

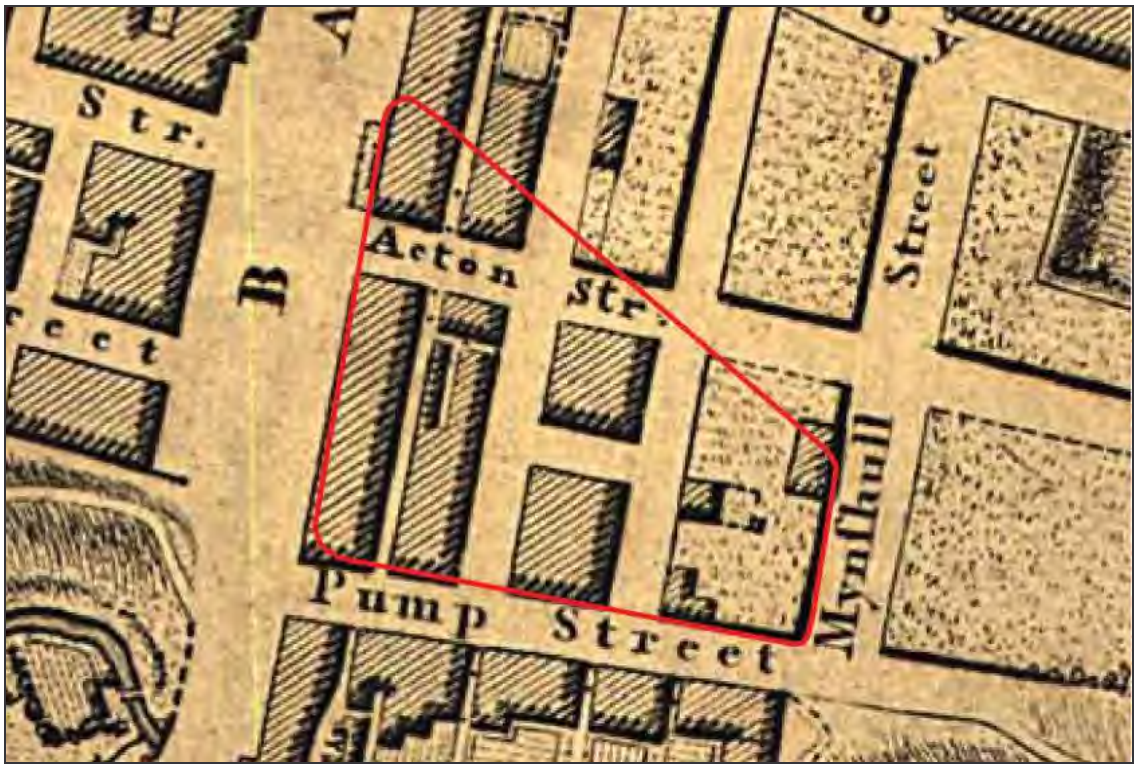



*Plate 2: Extract from William Green's survey of 1787-94, marking the Site boundary*

The detail provided by Green's map is replicated on several maps of the area that were published during the first decade of the 19th century, including Aston's plan of 1804, Johnson's map of 1819 (Figure 2) and Swire's survey of 1824 (Plate 3). Whilst these were all produced at a small scale, and cannot be relied upon for analysing individual buildings, they clearly show that further development had occurred within the Site, which had been developed completely by 1819. A detailed survey of the area, however, is provided on a map produced by Bancks & Co in 1831 (Plate 4). This shows that the buildings fronting onto London Road (**Site 1**) were double-depth, presumably representing shops or commercial properties, with different types of workers' housing to the rear, along Back Pump Street and Back Acton Street (**Sites 2**, **3**, **4** and **5**).

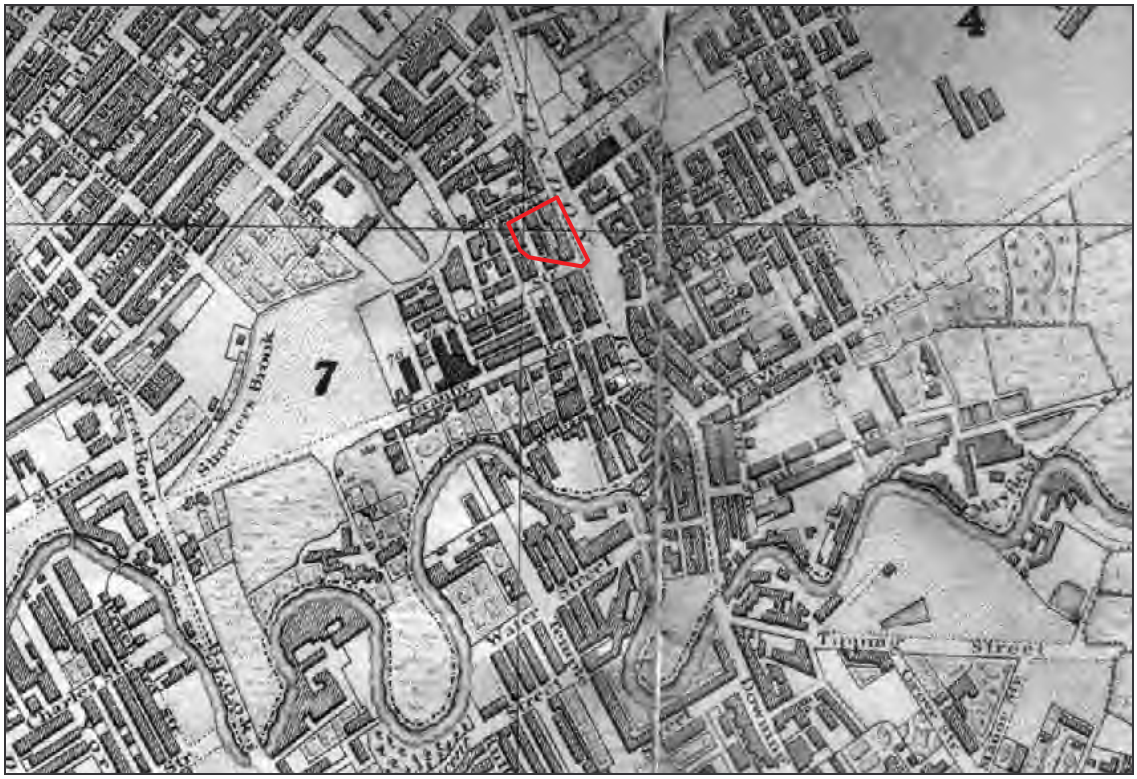



*Plate 3: Extract from William Swire's survey of 1824, marking the Site boundary*




*Plate 4: Extract from Bancks & Co's survey of 1831, marking the Site boundary*

The layout of the Site during the mid-19th century is depicted on two detailed plans: the Ordnance Survey 60": 1 mile map of 1851 (Figure 4; *Appendix 1*); and Adshead's *Plan of the Townships of Manchester*, published in 1851 (Plate 5). These maps show the Site to have been developed intensively, with commercial properties and a pub identified as the Bricklayer's Arms along the London Road frontage (**Site 1**), and workers' housing to the rear. Several small, enclosed courts are shown, including Pump Court (**Site 2**), Brown's Court (**Site 3**), unnamed blocks of housing along Cross Acton Street (**Sites 4** and **5**), Acton Court (**Site 6**), No 1 Shaw's Court (**Site 7**) and Broome Square (**Site 8**).

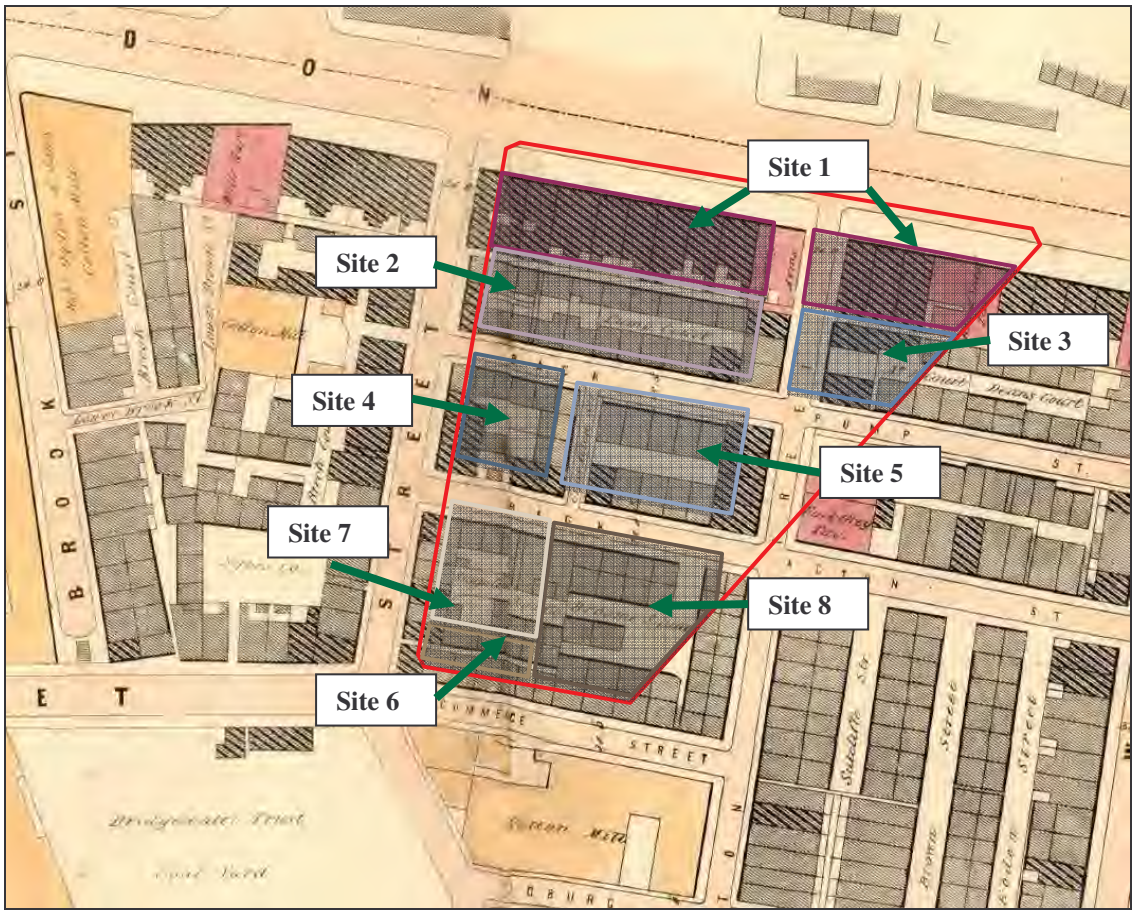



*Plate 5: Extract from Adshead's survey of 1851, marking the Site boundary*

The 15 properties (**Site 1**) along the London Road frontage of the Site are broadly of a consistent depth from the street front (14m), but of variable width, from 2.5 to 6m, indicating that the buildings were erected in small blocks or individually by different property speculators, albeit over a short time period. Ordnance Survey mapping shows pavement lights associated with all these buildings (Figure 4; *Appendix 1*), indicating that they incorporated cellars, some with stairs permitting access from London Road.

The rear of the London Road properties were bounded by a narrow back entry, beyond which lay single-depth workers' houses that formed Pump Court (**Site 2**) to the north of Acton Street, and Brown's Court (**Site 3**) to the south. These enclosed courtyard dwellings were accessed via narrow covered passages from Back Pump Street.

The houses will have provided low-cost accommodation with overcrowded, poorly-lit and unsanitary conditions. The buildings forming the Back Pump Street and Acton Street frontages of the two courts appear to have pavement lights, indicating that they contained cellars, whilst there is no indication of any cellars beneath the remainder of the blocks. The footprint of the houses appears to be built to a more consistent size, but still vary between 4.4 x 4m and 3.8 x 5m, suggesting that they were also built by individual speculators rather than a single developer. Both courts are shown on the maps produced by Laurent and Green, demonstrating their 18th-century origin.

The block of buildings bounded by Pump Street, Back Pump Street, Back Acton Street and Cross Acton Street (**Site 4**), had similarly been erected by the late 18th century, and most appear to have contained cellars. Adshead's map indicates that the majority of this block comprised dwellings, but also included four properties used for commercial purposes. However, the footprint of the buildings shown on Adshead's map to have formed the northern part of the block are somewhat different to that captured by the Ordnance Survey, which shows a covered entrance providing access to a cramped and enclosed central yard, identified on later mapping as Bindloss Court (Figure 5; *Appendix 1*). The buildings forming the block to the east of Cross Acton Street (**Site 5**) were slightly larger, with most seemingly incorporating cellars.

The dense blocks of workers' housing to the west of Back Acton Street (**Sites 6**, **7** and **8**), built between 1794 and 1819, comprise several different plan forms. Those fronting the eastern side of Commerce Street (**Site 6**), along the eastern edge of the Site, included back-to-back cottages and slightly larger single-depth houses. The latter were bounded to the rear by the narrow Acton's Court, and do not appear to have incorporated cellars. Conversely, the back-to-backs at the southern end of the block, backing onto houses in Broome Square (**Site 8**), do seem to have had cellars.

Another block of workers' houses, situated immediately to the east and bounded by Pump Street and Back Acton Street (**Site 7**), incorporated Shaw's Court and No 1 Court. These perhaps represented the most cramped living conditions in the Site, although only those buildings along the Back Acton Street frontage contained cellars. Situated to the south of these was Broome Square, which may similarly be dated to the period between 1794 and 1819. These are shown on the maps by Adshead and the Ordnance Survey as back-to-back cottages, with the latter showing most to have contained cellars.

In 1892, the Ordnance Survey published the first edition 25": 1 mile map of the area, which was surveyed in 1888; the survey was also published in 1891 at a more detailed scale of 10': 1 mile (Figure 5; *Appendix 1*). These maps show little change to the configuration of the buildings in the Site during the second half of the 19th century, although there is some indication for improvements in sanitation. One of the single-depth cottages on Pump Court (**Site 2**), for instance, appears to have been replaced with a row of toilets.

Beyond the boundary of the Site, this part of Manchester had continued to evolve, not least with the development of London Road Railway Station. This major railway terminus contributed to Manchester's regional role as a key transport hub, enhancing its importance as a commercial and distribution centre. Large numbers of warehouses were built, with an associated risk of fire. The need to develop effective response to fires led to the selection of the Site as the location of the new Fire Station Headquarters for Manchester in the late 1890s.

A useful survey of the area is provided by Goad's Fire Insurance Plan of 1893 (not reproduced due to copyright restrictions), which charts the Site and its environs during a period of major redevelopment. Most of the tightly-packed courts and single-depth workers' housing in the Site (**Sites 3**, **4**, **5**, **6** and **8**) had been cleared, leaving just the properties fronting London Road (**Site 1**) and those along Pump Street extant, which included small elements of Pump Court (**Site 2**) and Shaw's Court (**Site 7**). However, Goad's plan also shows the proposed line of Whitworth Street, which was evidently planned as a replacement for Pump Street, and was intended as a much wider thoroughfare. This necessitated the demolition of the properties that fronted Pump Street, including the surviving elements of Pump Court and Shaw's Court.

Fairfield Street was also laid out during this period, creating the triangular plot that was to be occupied within a few years by the new Fire Station Headquarters. The buildings forming the eastern boundary of the Site are identified as 42-82 London Road (**Site 1**), and are annotated as a mix of two- and three-storey buildings, most with basements, in use mainly as shops; these were all demolished during the following few years.

The next available map of the area is that published by the Ordnance Survey in 1908, which shows the Site to have been transformed with the erection of the Fire Station Headquarters (Figure 6; *Appendix 1*). Designed by Woodhouse, Willoughby & Langham, the construction of this immensely impressive building began in 1901 and took five years to complete (Plate 6). This necessitated the demolition of all the previous buildings in the Site and the immediate vicinity, coupled with a re-organisation of the local street plan. This redevelopment will probably have resulted in the complete removal of all physical remains of the 18$^{th}$- and early 19$^{th}$-century houses within the footprint of the London Road Fire Station, although some well-preserved foundations are likely to have survived *in-situ* within the central courtyard.

The resultant layout of the Site remained largely unaltered throughout the 20$^{th}$ century (Figures 7-11; *Appendix 1*).

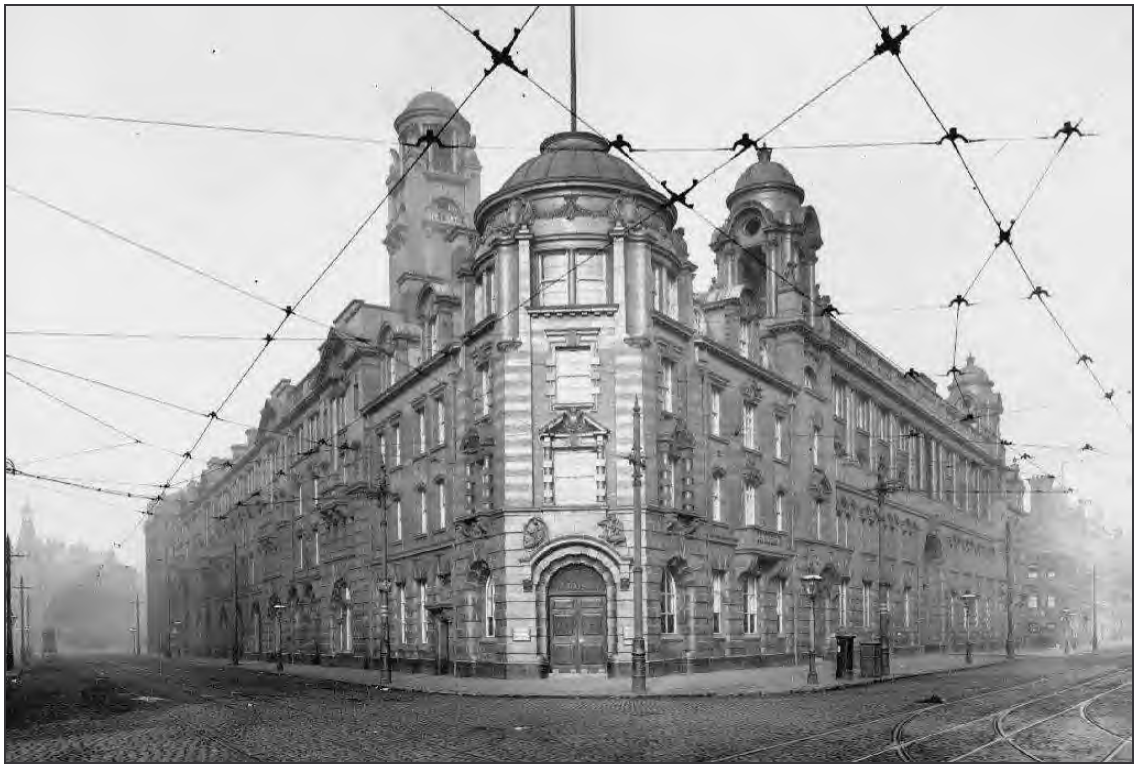


*Plate 6: View of London Road Fire Station in October 1906, shortly after its completion*

## *4.6 Previous Archaeological Work*

Whilst the London Road Fire Station has been the subject of several detailed historical and archaeological studies previously (*eg* Purcell, Miller Tritton 2010; SLR Consulting 2011), there have been no formal archaeological investigations within the Site. Geo-technical site investigations undertaken in 1990, comprising the sinking of three boreholes in the corners of the central courtyard, revealed that thick deposits of demolition rubble exist beneath the modern ground surface. This rubble has been interpreted as material backfilled into the cellars of the late 18th- and early 19th-century houses (SLR 2011).

Several archaeological excavations and watching briefs carried out in the immediate vicinity of the Site have confirmed that extensive buried remains of former domestic cellars can survive *in-situ*. In particular, an archaeological excavation undertaken in 2005 at Piccadilly Place, a short distance to the north of the London Road Fire Station, revealed well-preserved remains of workers' housing along the north side of Pump Street (Plate 7). These included a series of early 19th-century cellar dwellings that were shown to vary in size and layout and were subject to re-modelling during their use, probably in response to increased regulation during the latter part of the 19th century. The results obtained from this excavation demonstrated that archaeological recording can make a significant contribution to an understanding of this period of Manchester's history (Miller *et al* 2010).



*Plate 7: The remains of early 19th-century cellar dwellings revealed during archaeological excavation at Piccadilly Place in 2005*

# 5. Watching Brief

## 5.1 Watching Brief

In order to inform the design proposals, a limited number of geo-technical test pits were excavated in 2017 using a combination of mechanical and manual techniques for geotechnical purposes. These were intended in particular to examine the foundations of the Fire Station, and were monitored archaeologically. It was proposed that four test pits were excavated, together with a series or boreholes and window samples (Plate 8), although only two test pits have been opened to date (TP1 and TP4).

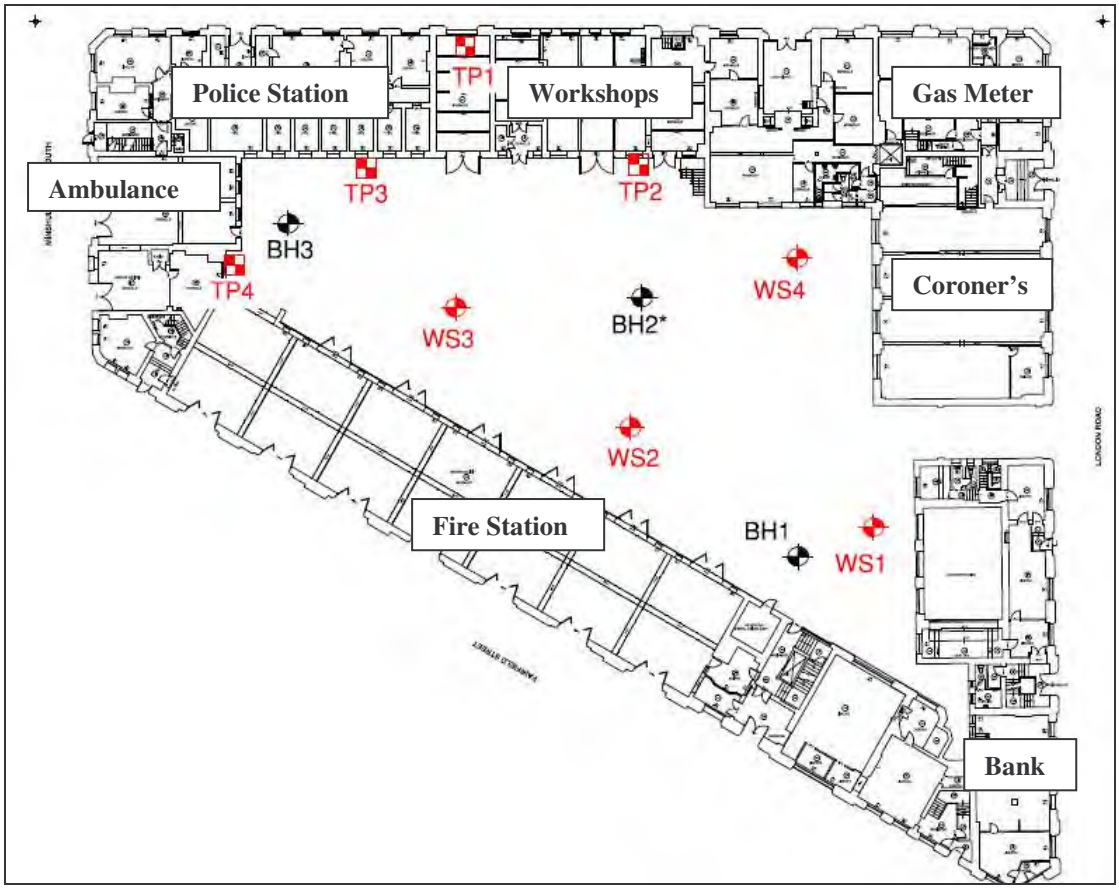



*Plate 8: Proposed location of the test pits and window samples (Curtins Consulting Ltd)*

### 5.1.1 Test Pit 1

Located inside the basement of the workshops in the northern range of buildings, this test pit was excavated by hand to obtain details of the structure's foundations. The test pit was excavated to a depth of 2.20m, although the bottom of the building's foundations was not reached. The stratigraphic sequence comprised a thick deposit of rubble, presumably representing a combination of demolished 18th-century buildings and material backfilled into the foundation trench for the fire station. A cast-iron pipe was encountered at a depth of *c* 1m below the modern ground surface, but no other features of archaeological interest were identified.

### *5.1.2 Test Pit 4*

This test pit was placed in the central courtyard, against the east wall of the former Ambulance Station, and was excavated by machine to a depth of 2.55m. This was again intended to examine the foundations of the building, and was excavated to a depth of 2.55m, whereupon the stepped foundations of the building were revealed (Plate 9). The foundations of a small outrigger were also exposed, comprising a substantial wall that extended eastwards from the wall of the Ambulance Station for a distance of 1.2m before returning to the north (Plate 9). The stratigraphic sequence comprised a thick deposit of rubble that was composed of fragments of common bricks and refractory bricks. This was sealed beneath a 0.15m thick layer of concrete, which formed the modern ground surface.



*Plate 9: View of Test Pit 4 fully excavated, looking west and north*

Whilst providing valuable data regarding the fabric of the foundations of the Fire Station, the trial pits did not yield any physical evidence for the late 18th- and early 19th-century properties that had occupied the site. However, the central courtyard was not subject to any test pits, and the survival of buried remains across this part of the Site awaits confirmation through further intrusive investigation.

# 6. Gazetteer of Sites

The following gazetteer provides a list of the non-designated heritage assets identified within the boundary of the Site.

**Site Number:** **1**
**Site Name:** 42-82 London Road
**NGR:** 384690 397828
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Commercial Buildings (Site of)
**Period:** 18th century
**Description:** A row of double-depth commercial properties, including pubs known in the mid-19th century as the Bricklayer's Arms and the Wheatsheaf Tavern, along the London Road frontage and separated by Acton Street. Dating to the late 18th century, these building all appear to have incorporated cellars, with a narrow passage marked 'Pump Street Entry' situated to the rear. Marked on Goad's map of 1893 as a mix of two- and three-storey buildings occupying 42-82 London Road. Demolished between 1893 and 1901.
**Assessment:** The footprint of 42-82 London Road was subsumed by the London Road Fire Station, the construction of which is likely to have removed most, if not all, physical remains of the buildings.

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**Site Number:** **2**
**Site Name:** Pump Court
**NGR:** 384679 397814
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** 18th century
**Description:** A block of single-depth workers' housing situated either side of Pump Court, which was accessed via a narrow covered entrance from Back Pump Street. Detail on Ordnance Survey mapping published in 1851 and 1891 appears to show the houses on the western side of Pump Court, and fronting onto Back Pump Street, with steps or pavement lights, implying that the houses had cellars. Most of the houses had been cleared by 1893 to enable the London Road Fire Station to be built, and the remainder demolished during the construction of Whitworth Street.
**Assessment:** The footprint of most of the houses lie within the Site, and buried remains of the cellars may survive *in-situ* within the central courtyard of the London Road Fire Station complex.

**Site Number:** **3**
**Site Name:** Brown's Court
**NGR:** 384694 397778
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** 18th century
**Description:** The houses are shown on late 18th-century mapping, and comprised a range of double-depth and single-depth workers' houses, some of which contained cellars. Demolished during the late 19th century, and their footprint subsumed by the London Road Fire Station and Fairfield Street.
**Assessment:** Buried remains of the buildings are likely to have been removed completely during the construction of the London Road Fire Station.

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**Site Number:** **4**
**Site Name:** Bindloss Court (North Side)
**NGR:** 384652 397822
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** 18th century
**Description:** A block of workers' housing forming a densely-packed court, shown on late 18th-century mapping. Demolished during the late 19th century, and their footprint subsumed by the London Road Fire Station.
**Assessment:** Buried remains of the buildings are likely to have been removed completely during the construction of the London Road Fire Station.

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**Site Number:** **5**
**Site Name:** Cross Acton Street (South Side)
**NGR:** 384658 397806
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** 18th century
**Description:** A block of late 18th-century workers' houses arranged around an enclosed central courtyard, with many appearing to have incorporated cellars. Most of the houses had been cleared by 1893 to enable the London Road Fire Station to be built, although the footprint of most of the buildings lies within the central courtyard.
**Assessment:** The footprint of the houses lie within the Site Area, and buried remains of the cellars may survive *in-situ* within the central courtyard of the London Road Fire Station complex (Plate 10).

**Site Number:** **6**
**Site Name:** Acton Court
**NGR:** 384613 397813
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** Early 19th century
**Description:** A block of workers' housing fronting onto Commerce Street along the western boundary of the Site Area, and first shown on Johnson's map of 1819. Most of the houses had been cleared by 1893 to enable the London Road Fire Station to be built.
**Assessment:** Buried remains of the buildings are likely to have been removed completely during the construction of the London Road Fire Station.

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**Site Number:** **7**
**Site Name:** No 1 Shaw's Court
**NGR:** 384625 397810
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** Early 19th century
**Description:** A block of workers' housing that is first shown on Johnson's map of 1819, fronting onto a narrow courtyard. The lack of pavement lights associated with these houses on the historical mapping suggests that they did not contain cellars. Most of the houses had been cleared by 1893 to enable the London Road Fire Station to be built.
**Assessment:** The footprint of most of the houses lies beneath the fire station, which will have removed all physical remains. However, a small component may survive *in-situ* beneath the central courtyard (Plate 10).

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**Site Number:** **8**
**Site Name:** Broome Square
**NGR:** 384630 397793
**Designation:** Conservation Area
**Site Type:** Workers' Housing (Site of)
**Period:** Early 19th century
**Description:** A large block of back-to-back houses arranged around three sides of a central square, first shown on Johnson's map of 1819. Some of the houses appear to have contained cellars, but all had been cleared by 1893.
**Assessment:** The footprint of some of the houses lie within the Site, and buried remains of some of the cellars may survive *in-situ* within the central courtyard of the London Road Fire Station complex (Plate 10).




*Plate 10: Areas of archaeological potential, superimposed on an extract of the Ordnance Survey 10':1 mile map of 1891*

High potential for late 18th-century buried archaeological remains (**Sites 2** and **5**)

High potential for early 19th-century buried archaeological remains (**Sites 7** and **8**)

Low / no potential for buried archaeological remains (**Sites 1**, **3**, **4** and **6**)

1 Gazetteer site

# 7. Significance of the Remains

## 7.1 The Policy Context of Heritage Assets

The archaeological resource of an area can encompass a range of assets, including below-ground remains, earthworks, and standing buildings and other structures. Some of these remains may have statutory protection, as Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings. Others do not but may nevertheless be of archaeological significance. Under both national and local planning policy, as outlined below, both statutory and non-statutory remains are to be considered within the planning process.

The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019) sets out the Secretary of State's policy on planning and includes a section on the conservation of the historic environment (including historic, archaeological, architectural and artistic heritage assets), and its wider economic, environmental and social benefits. The NPPF emphasises the significance of an individual heritage asset within the historic environment and the value that it holds for this and future generations in order to minimise or avoid conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the planning proposals. The NPPF draws a distinction between designated heritage assets of national importance and heritage assets that are not designated but which are of heritage interest and are thus of a material planning consideration. In the case of the former, the presumption should be in favour of conservation; in the case of the latter, where this is warranted by its significance, the developer is required to record and understand the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, in a way that is proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance, by the use of survey, photography, excavation or other methods.

The NPPF states that non-designated assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments should be considered in the same manner as designated sites. Regarding this policy a lack of formal designation does not itself indicate a lower level of significance; in this instance the lack of designation reflects that the site was previously unknown and therefore never considered for formal designation. Wherever possible, development should be located and designed so as to avoid damage to archaeological remains, ensuring that they are preserved *in-situ*. Where this is not possible, or appropriate, the developer will be required to make suitable provision to ensure that the archaeological information is not lost, and in many cases to secure the preservation of the remains.

The Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) act as archaeological curator for the Greater Manchester Region, and provide archaeological advice to Manchester City Council.

## 7.2 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

One accepted methodology for assessing archaeological significance is the Secretary of State's criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments, outlined in Annex 1 of *Scheduled Monuments: identifying, protecting, conserving and investigating nationally important archaeological sites under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979* (DCMS March 2010). These criteria have all been utilised in this assessment and are listed below:

- Period
- Rarity
- Documentation
- Group Value
- Survival/Condition
- Fragility/Vulnerability
- Diversity
- Potential

## 7.3 Baseline Significance Conditions for the land within the Site

### *Period*

The potential buried archaeological remains within the boundary of the Site date exclusively to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with no potential for archaeological remains dating to any other periods.

### *Rarity*

Although there was a large number of workers' housing constructed in the central areas of Manchester during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it was a relatively short-lived type of structure. Slum clearance from the end of the 19th century onwards meant that many of these types of properties were demolished. Therefore, any buried remains of the foundations and cellars of these buildings are of potential archaeological interest. This is particularly the case with back-to-back and single-depth houses with cellars (**Sites 2-8**), the archaeological importance of which has been demonstrated in Manchester previously (*eg* Miller *et al* 2010).

### *Documentation*

The development of the Site can be traced reasonably well from the late 18th century onwards through cartographic sources. Further detail, including more precise dating of the construction of buildings within the Site and the socio-economic status of the occupants, could undoubtedly be gained from documentary sources, but this is unlikely to modify the outcome of this assessment.

### *Group Value*

The archaeological interest within the Site represents different types of workers' housing that were built during the period of Manchester's intensive development in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In this respect, the potential archaeological remains identified in the Site have a high group value.

*Survival / Condition*

The extent to which any remains survive and their condition is presently unknown, although historical mapping indicates that many of the late 18th- and early 19th-century houses in the Site contained cellars. These are likely to survive beneath the modern surface of the Fire Station's central courtyard (**Sites 2**, **5** and **8**), together with more fragmentary remains of those around the edges of the courtyard (**Site 7**). Conversely, buildings that formerly occupied the edges of the Site, beneath the footprint of the Fire Station, are likely to have been severely damaged or destroyed during early 20th-century redevelopment (**Sites 1**, **3**, **4** and **8**).

*Diversity*

The archaeological interest identified in this assessment relates mainly to the industrial expansion of the area, and the associated development of domestic housing. None of the sites within the Site are considered to be significant due to diversity.

*Potential*

There are no known prehistoric sites within the Site, and the potential for remains derived from this period is considered to be very low. The potential for Roman remains to survive *in-situ* within the Site is similarly considered to be very low, given the intensity of later development. There are no known remains from the post-Roman period through to the late 18th century, and the potential for significant remains from these historical periods is also considered to be very low. The greatest potential for buried archaeological remains lies in the industrial period, and specifically late 18th- and early 19th-century workers' dwellings.

## *7.4 Significance*

Based on the information gained from the desk-based research, it can be concluded that the Site as a whole is of some archaeological interest In particular, well-preserved remains of late 18th-century workers' houses (**Sites 2** and **5**), together with early 19th-century variants (**Site 8**), would be of high local, and potentially borough importance, pending the extent to which structural remains survive *in-situ*.

Physical remains of 18th- and 19th-century workers' housing have been recognised as a legitimate avenue of research. This is articulated in the current *Archaeological Research Framework for North West England* (Newman and McNeil 2007; McNeil and Newman 2007), which identified several initiatives that should be prioritised for archaeological research of the industrial and modern periods, including *Initiative 7.6*: 'A study of the development of workers' housing in Greater Manchester and East Lancashire should be undertaken to examine the development of different housing types…' (McNeil and Newman 2007, 139).

Since the publication of the *Research Framework*, a considerable body of significant data has been generated from the archaeological investigation of workers' housing, enabling a variety of plan forms and construction details to be identified. In particular, large-scale excavations in the Shudehill area of Manchester (OA North 2011), together with numerous excavations in Ancoats (Miller and Wild 2007) and excavations in Chorlton-upon-Medlock (*eg* OA North 2013), have recorded the foundations of workers' housing spanning the late 18th to early 20th centuries.

Using the above criteria, and particularly rarity and survival/condition, the Site is likely to contain non-statutory remains of at least local significance and, pending the extent to which buried remains survive *in-situ*, borough significance.

| Gazetteer Site | Potential For Buried Remains | Significance |
|---|---|---|
| **Site 1:** London Road Properties | Low | Low Local |
| **Site 2:** Pump Court | High | High Local / Borough |
| **Site 3:** Brown's Court | Low | Low Local |
| **Site 4:** Bindloss Court | Low | Low Local |
| **Site 5:** Cross Acton Street Houses | High | High Local / Borough |
| **Site 6:** Acton Court | Low | Low Local |
| **Site 7:** Shaw's Court | High | Local |
| **Site 8:** Broome Square | High | High Local / Borough |

*Table 2: Significance of sites of archaeological interest within the Site*

# 8. Impact of Development

## 8.1 Impact of Development on Below-Ground remains

Groundworks for the proposed redevelopment of the Site, including the reduction or other disturbance of ground levels, and the digging of foundations and service trenches across the central courtyard of the London Road Fire Station, have the potential for having a direct impact by damaging or destroying any below-ground archaeological remains that survive *in-situ*.

None of the sites of below-ground archaeological interest identified within the Site are afforded statutory designation, and are thus not considered to necessarily merit preservation *in-situ*. Three of these non-designated heritage assets have been determined to be of at least high local, and possibly borough significance (**Sites 2**, **5** and **8**). Should well-preserved remains of these heritage assets survive as buried remains, then they will merit preservation by record, where they will be directly affected by development. This is in line with the guidance provided by the NPPF, which advises that 'where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified by a development, the developer should be required to record that asset and advance understanding of its significance, and to make this evidence publicly accessible' (NPPF para 189).

# 9 Further Investigation

## 9.1 Further Investigation

The potential impact of revised design proposals can be seen to be minor, as ground-breaking works within the central courtyard of the London Road Fire Station will be limited to shallow foundations and possibly service trenches that are unlikely to result in any significant loss or disturbance of the below-ground archaeological remains identified within this report.

The scope any further archaeological investigation will be decided ultimately by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, in their capacity of archaeological advisors to Manchester City Council. It maybe anticipated, however, that an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of any foundations would represent an appropriate strategy. If considered appropriate, a watching brief could most usefully be targeted on any ground-breaking works within the footprint of the former houses along Pump Court (**Site 2**), the south side of Cross Acton Street (**Site 5**) and Broome Square (**Site 8**), and would be intended to establish whether any buried remains survive *in-situ*.

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The report was compiled by Ian Miller, and the illustrations were prepared by Richard Ker.

# Appendix 1: Figures

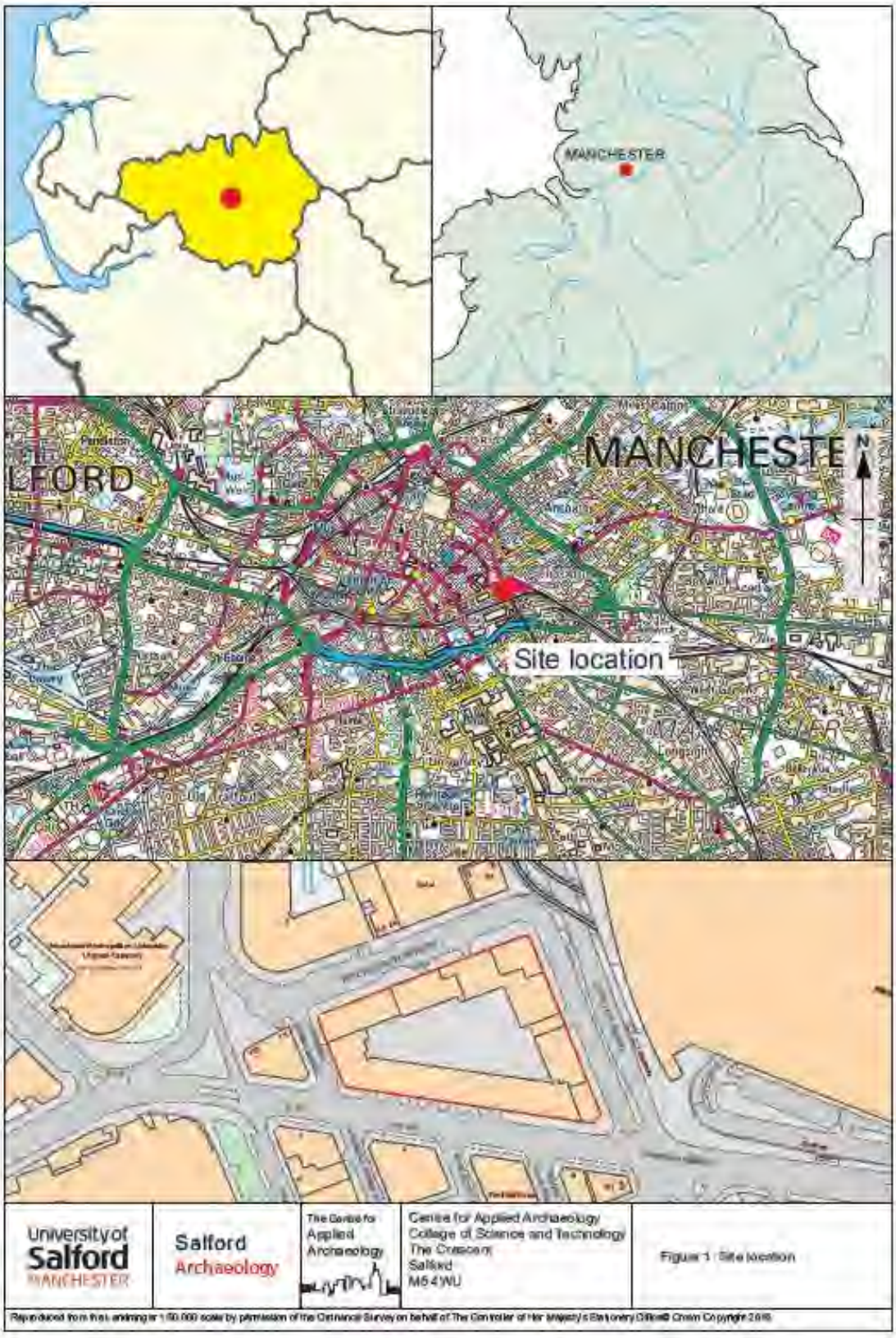



*Figure 1: Location of the Site*

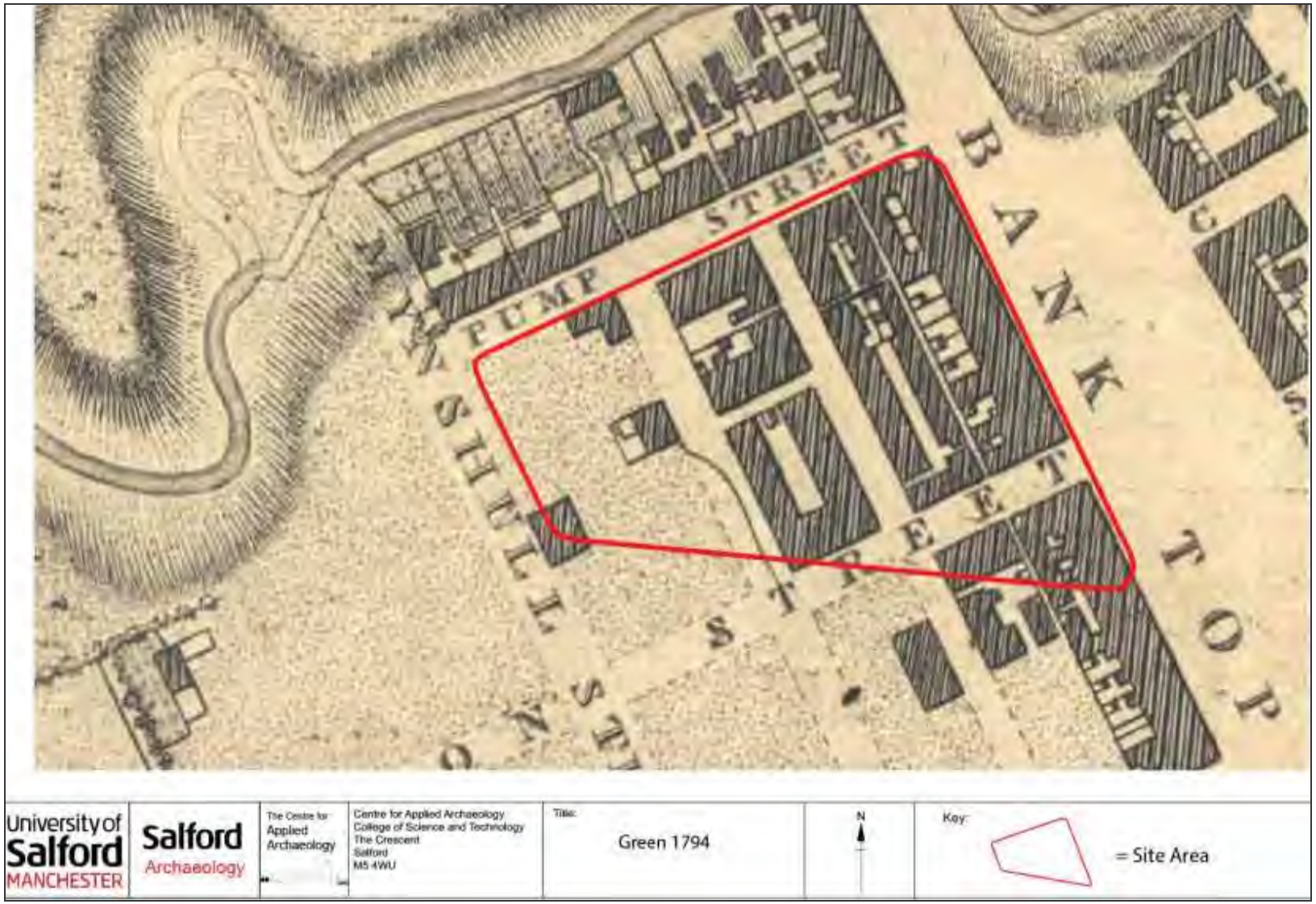



*Figure 2: The Site boundary superimposed on William Green's survey of 1787-94*

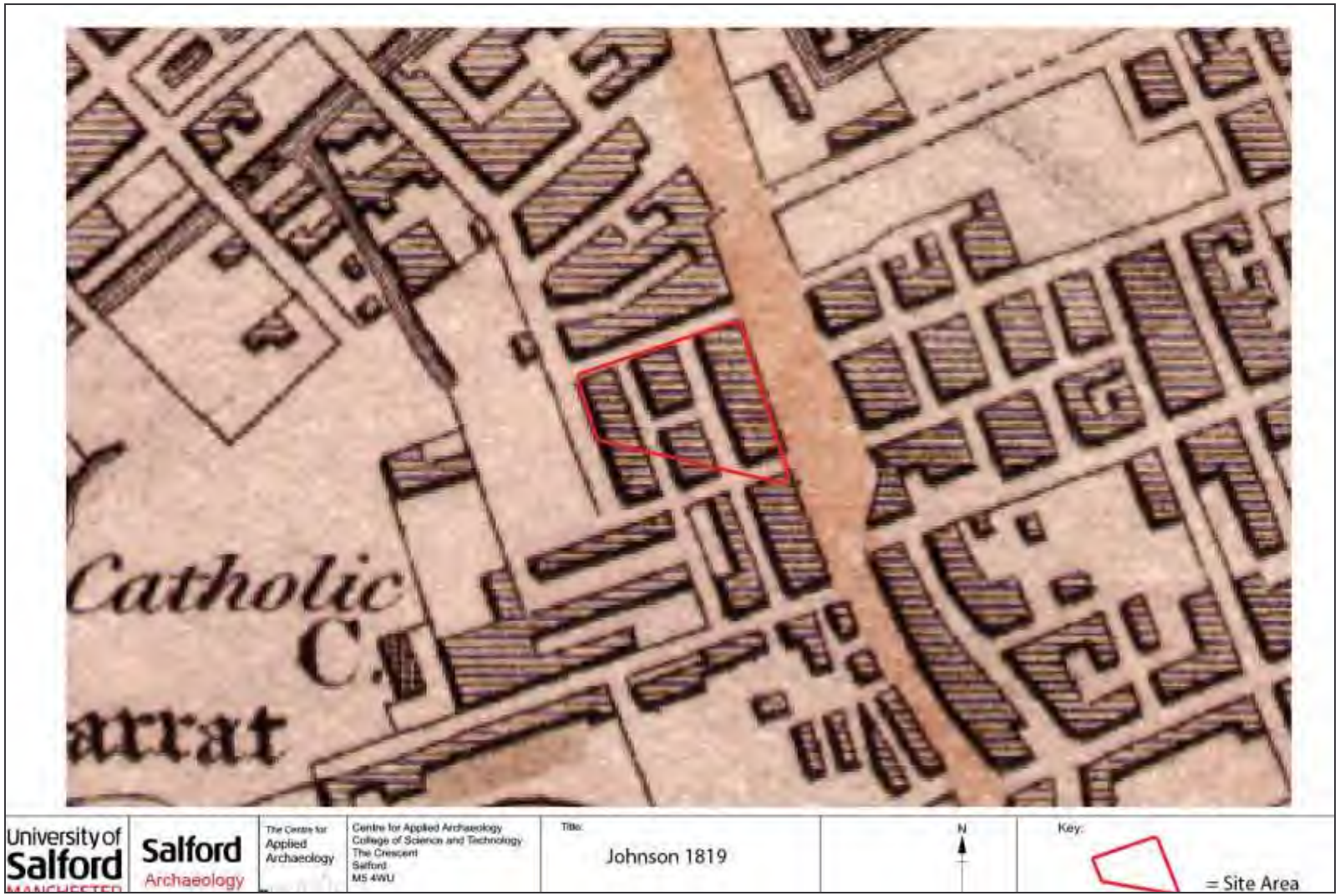



*Figure 3: The Site boundary superimposed on William Johnson's map of 1819*




*Figure 4: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1851*




*Figure 5: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey 10': 1 mile map of 1891*

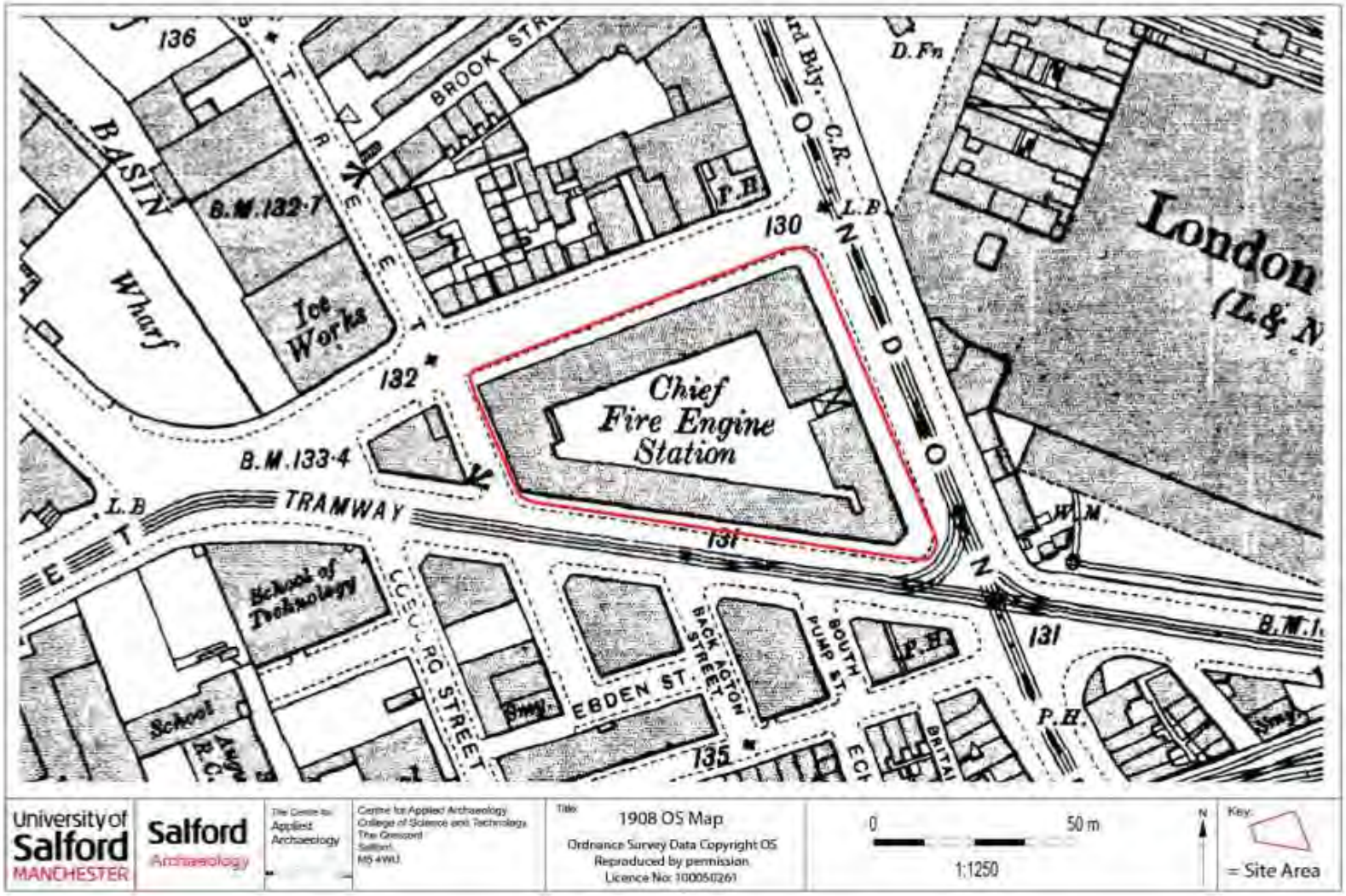



*Figure 6: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1908*

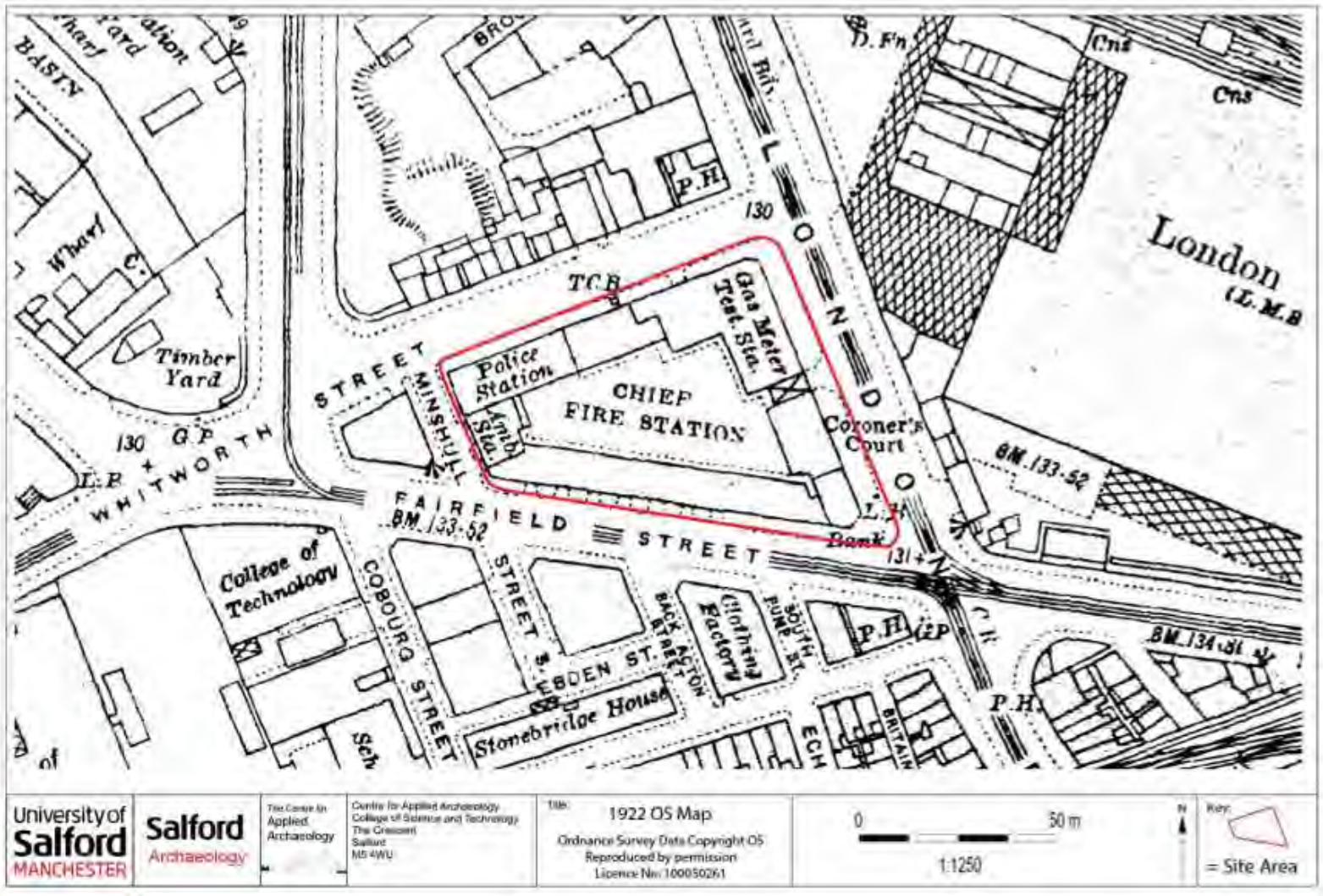



*Figure 7: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1922*

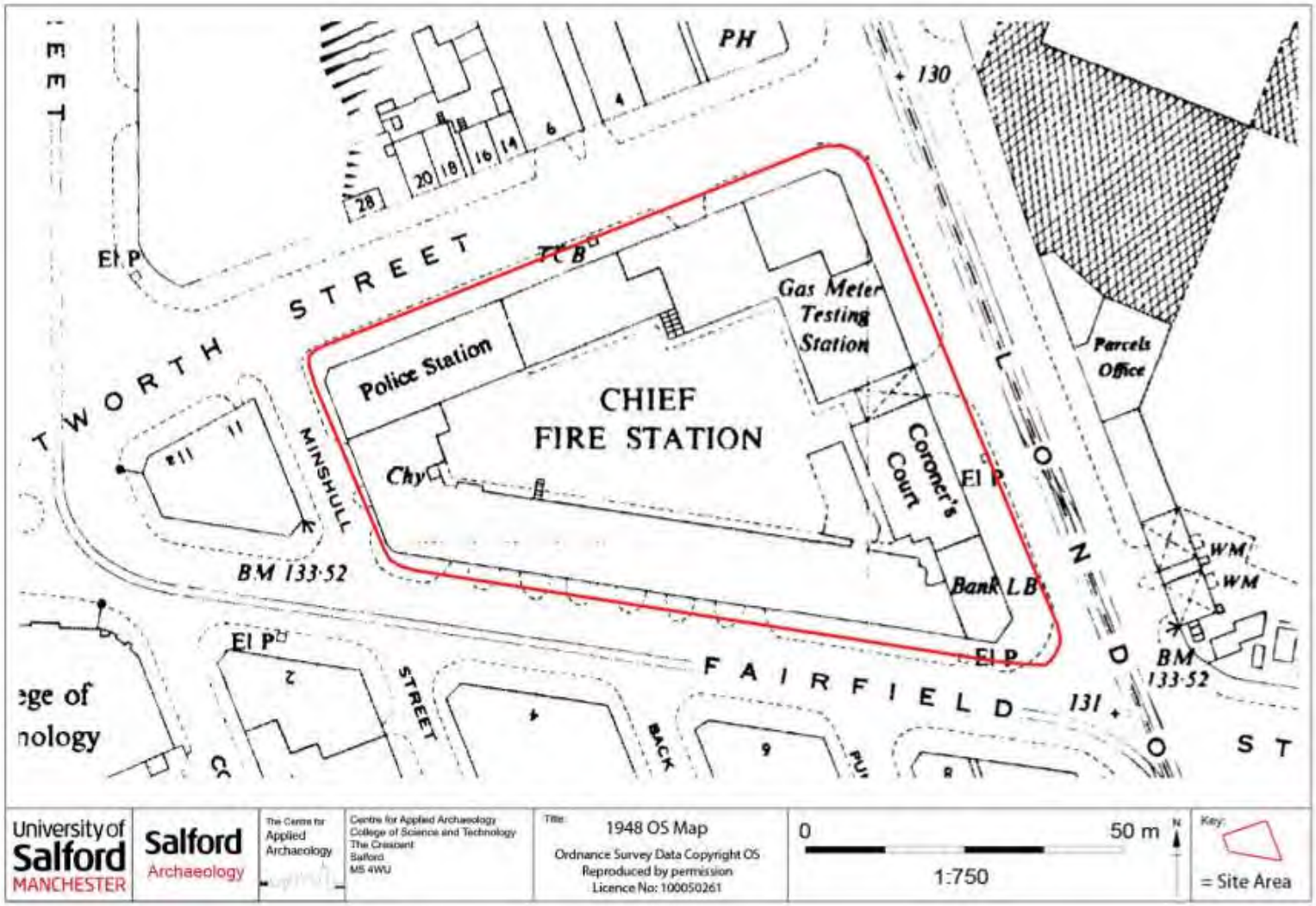



*Figure 8: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1948*

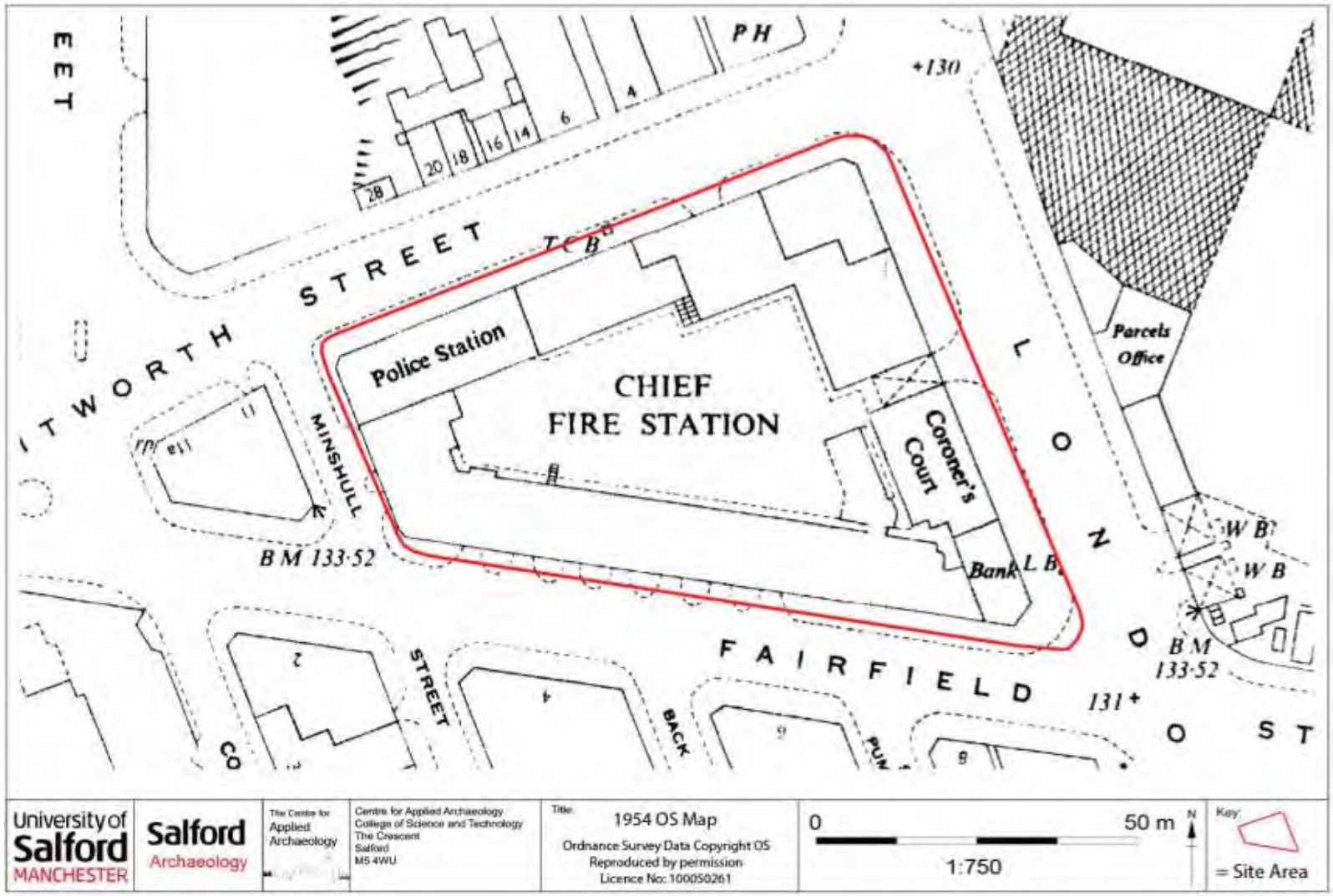



*Figure 9: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1954*

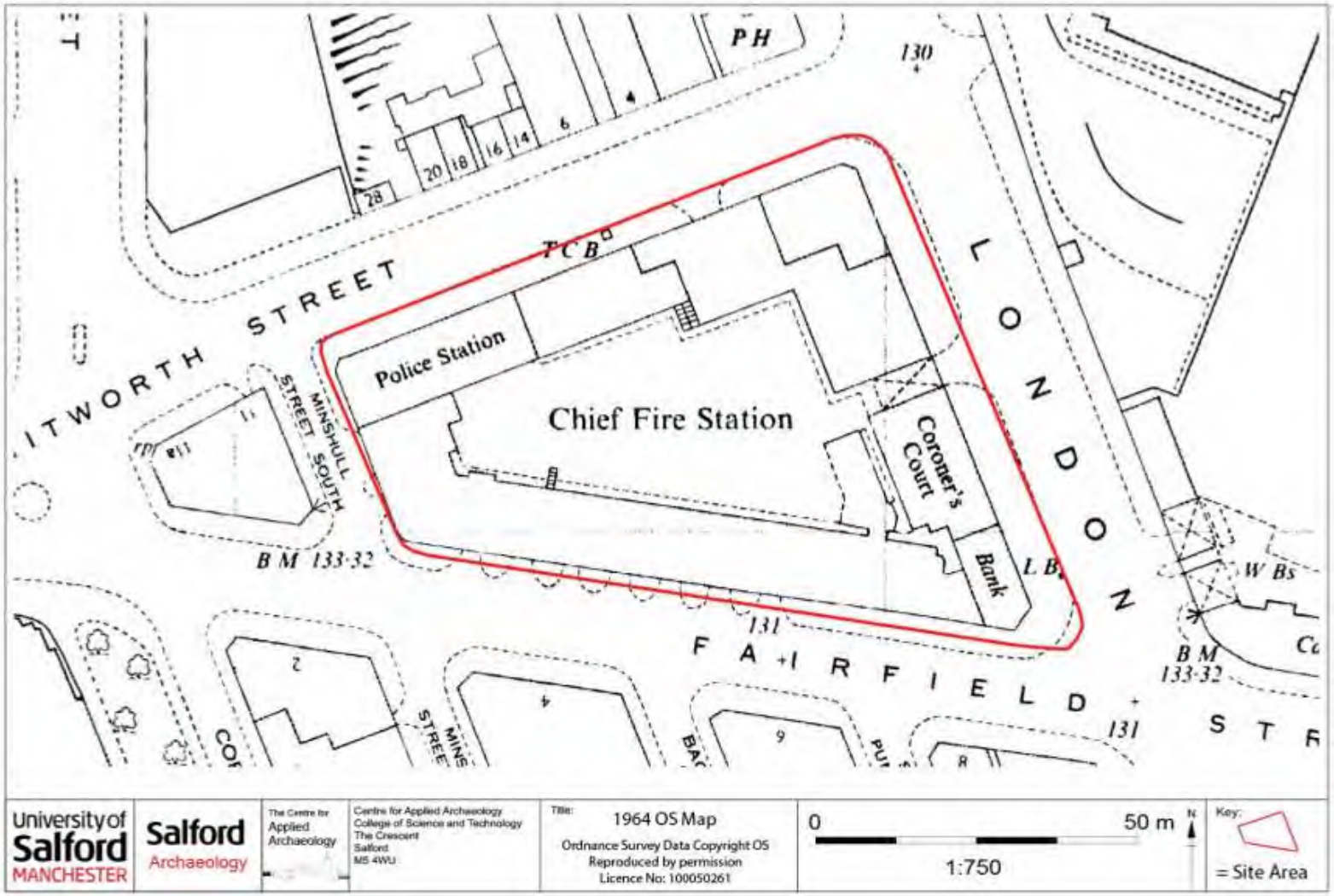



*Figure 10: The Site boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1964*

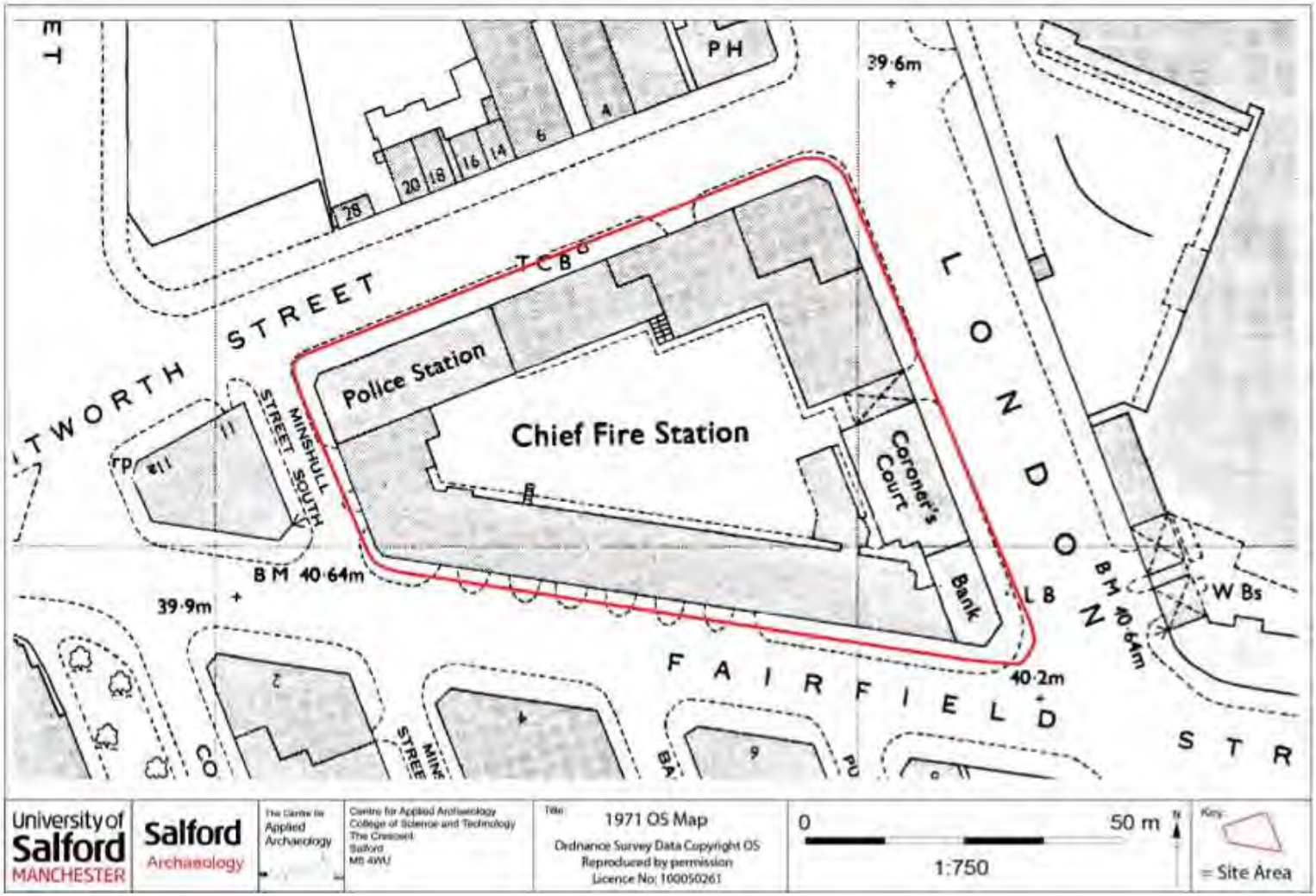



*Figure 11: The Site a boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1964*

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## CONSULTANCY




## DESK BASED ASSESMENTS



## WATCHING BRIEF & EVALUATION



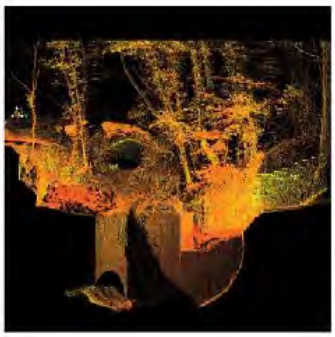
## EXCAVATION



## BUILDING SURVEY



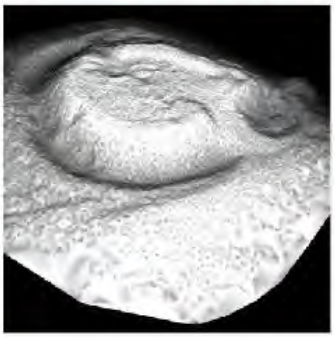
## 3D LASER SCANNING



## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



## LANDSCAPE SURVEYS



## GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS



## WORKSHOPS & VOCATIONAL TRAINING



## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS




## SEMINARS, DAYSCHOOLS CPD EVENTS



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