

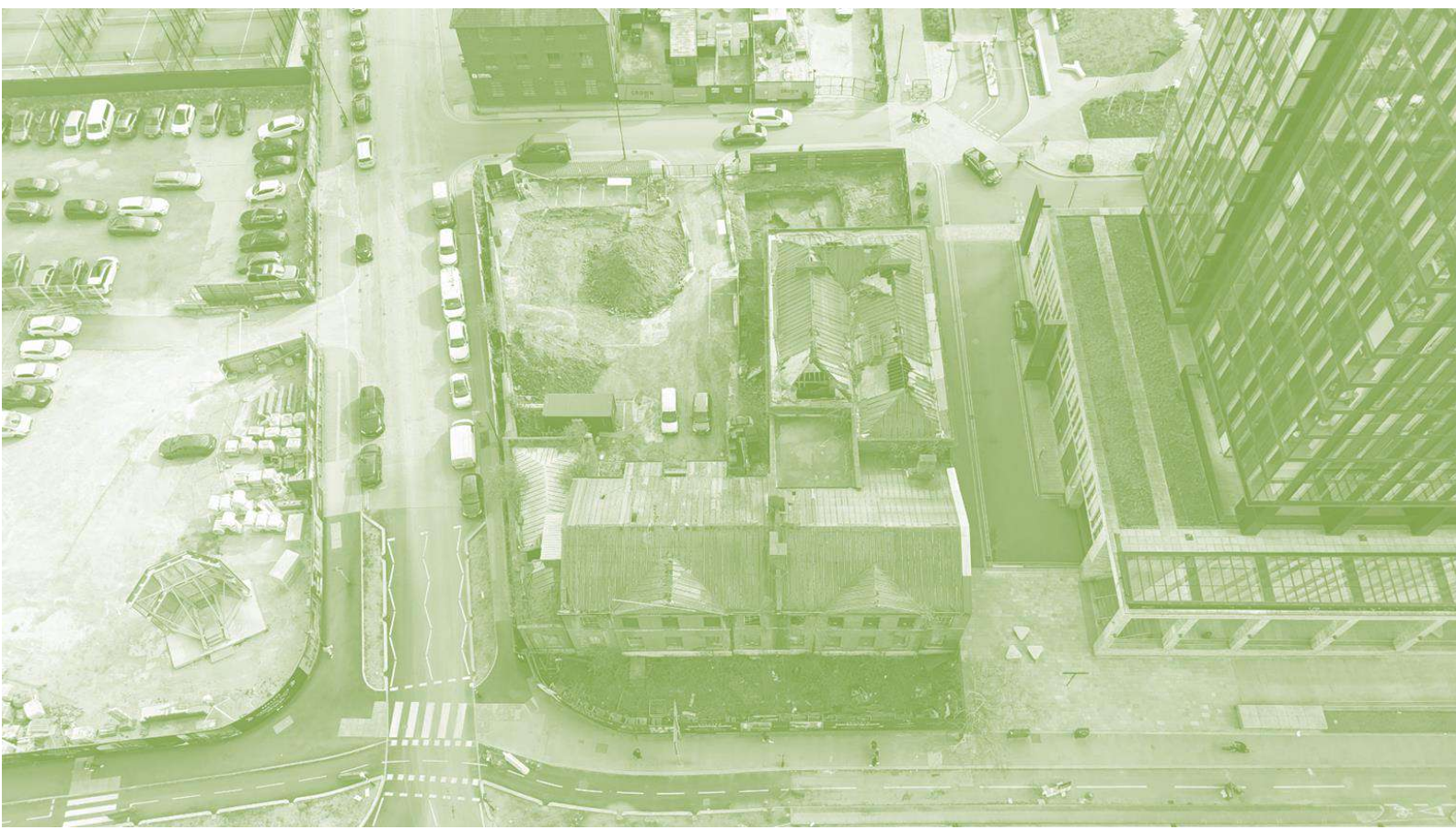
**Bridgewater House,
Great Jackson Street,
Manchester**

Post-Excavation Assessment Report

April 2025

PREPARED FOR

Snook Architects / ADE Properties 4 Ltd.



Post Excavation Assessment Report

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Front Cover	Recent UAV photograph of Bridgewater House (Civic Heritage 2025)

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1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Setting	1
2. Historical Background	3
2.1. Contextual Background	3
2.2. Development of the Site	4
3. Aims and Objectives	8
3.1. Aims.....	8
3.2. North West Regional Framework	8
4. Method Statement.....	9
4.1. Archaeological Works.....	9
5. Excavation Results.....	11
5.1. Area A.....	11
5.2. Area B.....	18
6. Material Assessed	28
6.1. Introduction.....	28
6.2. Assessment Aims and Objectives	28
6.3. Stratigraphic Data.....	29
6.4. Photographic Data.....	29
6.5. Digital Dataset	30
6.6. Artefactual and Environmental Data	30
6.7. Environmental Samples	33
7. Curation and Conservation	34
7.1. Recipient Museum.....	34
8. Discussion and Conclusion	36
8.1. Key Results	36
9. Recommendations	41
Appendix 1: Figures	45

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Planning Background

Civic Heritage were commissioned by Snook Architects and ADE Properties 4 Ltd in February 2025 to undertake a scheme of archaeological fieldwork on the land adjacent to Bridgewater House, Great Jackson Street, Manchester (Centred on NGR 383205 397337) following the results of an Archaeological evaluation undertaken in October 2024 (Civic Heritage, 2024)

The development proposals (Planning ref: 134694/FO/2022) comprise the restoration and conversion of the now abandoned Bridgewater Canal Office building and the redevelopment of the current car park area. This will provide a four-storey new build apartment building, allowing a total of 53 new homes, together with a shared courtyard and private amenity space, bicycle and bin storage and associated landscaping.

The proposed scheme encompasses considerable landscaping and earthmoving activity, which has the potential to cause loss or damage to any below-ground remains present within the site.

In order to support the planning applications for the scheme, a desk-based assessment was presented by RPS Group within an Archaeological Assessment (RPS Group, 2022) which concluded that the site had potential to contain remains of Romano-British activity, and a range of 18th and 19th century buildings and gardens associated with the Grade II Listed Building, Bridgewater House.

During consultations with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), it was recommended that following the results of the evaluation in October 2025 further excavation should be undertaken targeting two areas alongside Silvercroft Street to the rear of Bridgewater House which had potential for Roman remains.

1.2. Setting

1.2.1. Location

The site comprised a c.0.23ha parcel of land located in Manchester City Centre (centred on NGR 383205 397337) at the junction of Chester Road (A56) and Great Jackson Street (Plate 1 and Fig 1). The site was bounded by the pedestrianised Crown Street to the west and by Silvercroft Street to the south. The evaluation trial pit and trenches were located within the Site adjacent to Bridgewater House, which formally served as the Bridgewater Canal Offices.



Plate 1: Recent UAV image of the site, superimposed with the red line development boundary

1.2.2. Topography

Topographically, the Manchester conurbation, as a region, lies within an undulating lowland basin, which is bounded by the Pennine uplands to the east and to the north. The site sits at a height of 32.6 m aOD, located to the south of the junction of the Bridgewater Canal and the Rochdale Canal.

1.2.3. Geology

The solid geology across the study site consists of sandstone comprising the Chester Pebble Beds Formations: sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 246 to 251 million years ago in the Triassic Period with an overlying superficial geology of Devensian Till (British Geological Society, 2025).

2. Historical Background

2.1. Contextual Background

Roman

A Roman fort was founded in the last quarter of the 1st century AD in the area now known as Castlefield. The site is located immediately to the south-western boundary of the fort's ancillary settlement, or vicus, that developed on the periphery of the fort (HER 415.2.0).

The fort and vicus at Manchester developed in phases. The fort was built between AD 77-84 under the governorship of Agricola, during the first military occupation of Manchester. The wooden fort, known as Mamucium, was sited c.300m to the north of the site. Later phases of development saw the earlier defences being reconstructed and improved and the fort complex grew in size from c.1.2ha in size to c.5 ha. The increase in size was thought to accommodate additional granaries, with the fort possibly serving as a supply depot to aid the Roman military expansion northward.

The fort was rebuilt in stone in the early 3rd century, and the excavated evidence indicates that it remained occupied to the end of Roman rule in the early 5th century. Archaeological evidence also suggests that the vicus contracted in size during this period with the construction of outer defensive ditches that encroached on the pre-existing settlement. 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).

The nearest Roman findspots to the site include Mithraic sculptures, coin hoards and a Roman coffin all of which were discovered during the 19th century. A hoard of Roman coins HER (415.4.19) including several from Alexandria, Egypt was discovered in 1897 at Great Jackson Street by navvies working on sewer drains. The coin hoard is recorded as being discovered c 25m north-east of the Site.

In addition, three sculptures attributed to the worship of the god Mithras (HER 415.4.27), a god closely associated with the military were discovered c 30m to the north-east of the Site. The presence of Mithraic sculptures close to Chester Road suggest that a possible temple, or Mithraeum (HER 13951.1.0), stood in the vicinity of the current site, possibly c 55m south of the site.

A Roman coffin (HER 415.3.1) was found, in 1832, during digging on the south side of the river Medlock, c 75m north-east of the site. It was enclosed within a casing of red earthenware, and appeared to have been made of oak, though it soon fell to dust. Bones were seen in it when it was opened, but they crumbled on exposure to air. The coffin was 6ft

long. The reported earthenware was identified from a drawing as roofing tile. Roeder notes this coffin, placing it close to Great Jackson Street "where many other Roman sepulchral stones have been secured".

Roman ditches have been excavated at Crown Street (EGM5226; (Salford Archaeology, 2019)), c 25m south-west of the Site; Great Jackson Street (EGM3912; (Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2007)), c 50m to the east of the Site and Owen Street (EGM5005; (Salford Archaeology, 2018)), c 160m south-east of the Site, which highlights the areas potential for Roman remains.

The archaeologist and antiquarian Charles Roeder also recorded in the late 19th century a fragmentary centurial stone (HER 415.4.7; located c 215m north-east of the site) from the early 2nd century AD. Three altars (HER 415.4.9; 415.4.24; and 415.4.9), two bearing dedications related to the military, were also found during the 19th-century redevelopment of the area. The discovery of the altars, as well as other smaller artefacts including a coffin, coins and pottery, have led to a supposition that the area may have formed part of a Roman cemetery (Oxford Archaeology North, 2008).

To the north of the site, a series of Roman buildings (HER 415.1.9) were uncovered by workmen in 1771 when the north bank of the river Medlock, immediately south of the Roman fort, was levelled for the construction of a canal wharf. These three buildings were postulated by Roeder as being a bath house complex for the Roman fort. Amongst finds were an iron chisel, stag horn, iron knife, and a heap of sheep and ox bones. These were discovered c 125m north of the site.

Other Roman sites and finds include a boundary marker, hand quern and well. Roman pottery and a small hand quern (HER 415.4.25) were found c.170m to the north-east of the site at Knott Mill around 1898. Recent archaeological excavations uncovered a boundary marker (HER 415.5.0), c 190m north-east of the site. A well (HER 415.1.8), thought to be Roman, was uncovered in 1830 c.240m north of the study site. It comprised a square, timber lined feature with several boulders or ballistas at the bottom and was found 'a few yards west of the wall'.

2.2. Development of the Site

The development of the site can be traced reasonably well from the sequence of available historic mapping. Several cartographers began to map Manchester and its suburbs during the second half of the 18th century. Green's map of 1787-94 (Plate 2) provides a detailed survey of the area, showing that the site had already been developed by this time. The site comprised two double fronted and pedimented villas on the north side of Hulme Place.

Gardens had been established to the front and rear of the building, together with a small separate ancillary building, possibly a lodge or stable. This building range ran parallel to Hulme Place (currently Silvercroft Street).

In 1838 the two dwellings that formed Hulme Place were sold to the Bridgewater Trustees by the then owner, the Honourable Algernon Egerton and the Right Honourable Francis Charles Granville Egerton Earl of Ellesmere. Algernon and Francis Egerton were decedents of the Duke of Bridgewater, with Francis being the current Duke at that time (Levrant, 2022).

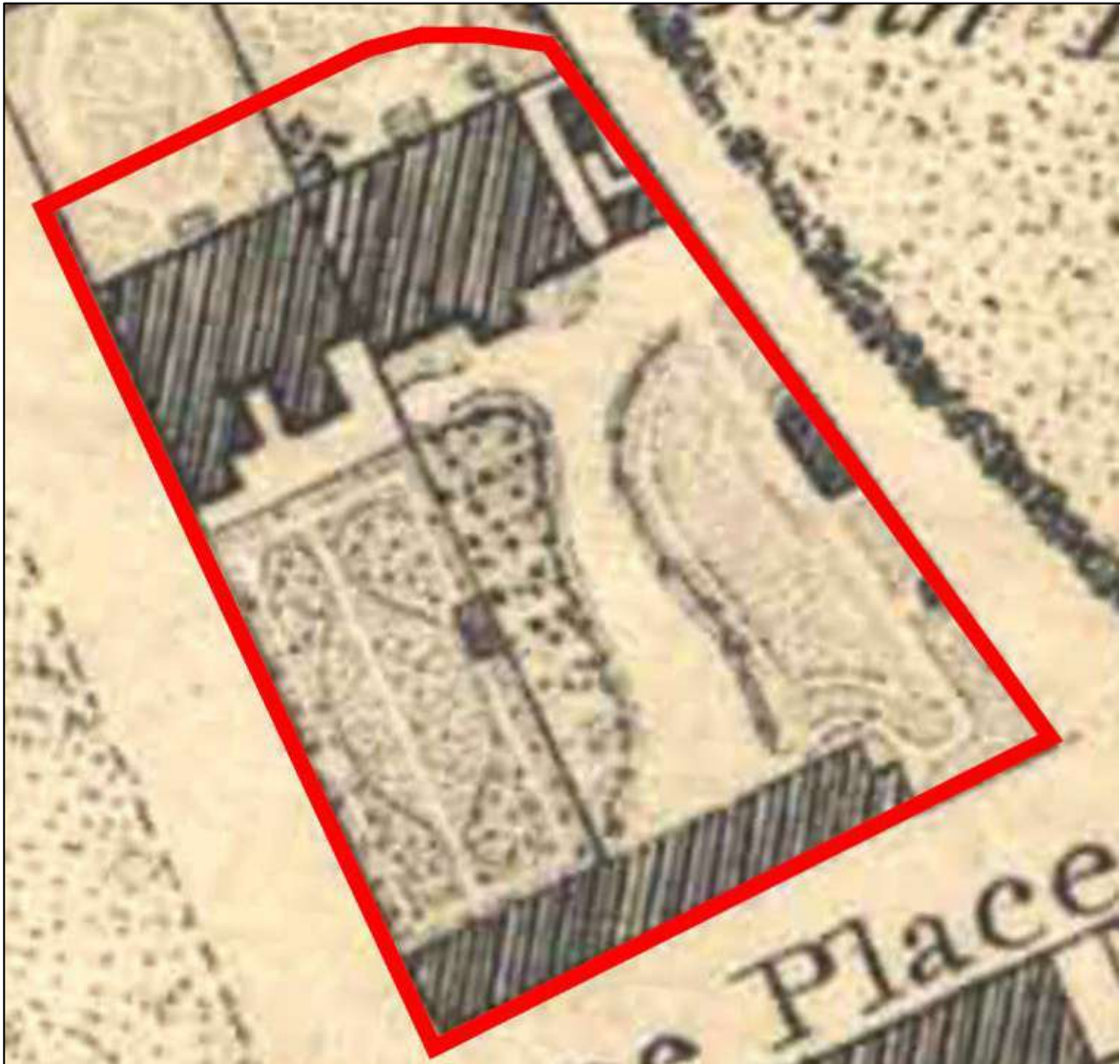


Plate 2: Extract from the Green's Map of 1787-94, showing the Site boundary

Following the purchase of the two Hulme Place dwellings in 1838, in 1842 the Trustees spent over £4,000 on 'new offices for the Bridgewater Trust in Manchester', which formed a new purpose-built office building for the Bridgewater Trust to the rear of the western dwelling on Crown Street, and completed in c1843 (Plate 3) . An additional building had been added to the eastern end of the row of buildings along Silver Street (formerly Hulme Place). A

photograph taken in 1954 shows that the row of buildings consisted of single-depth housing, a corner shop and probable workshops (Plate 4).

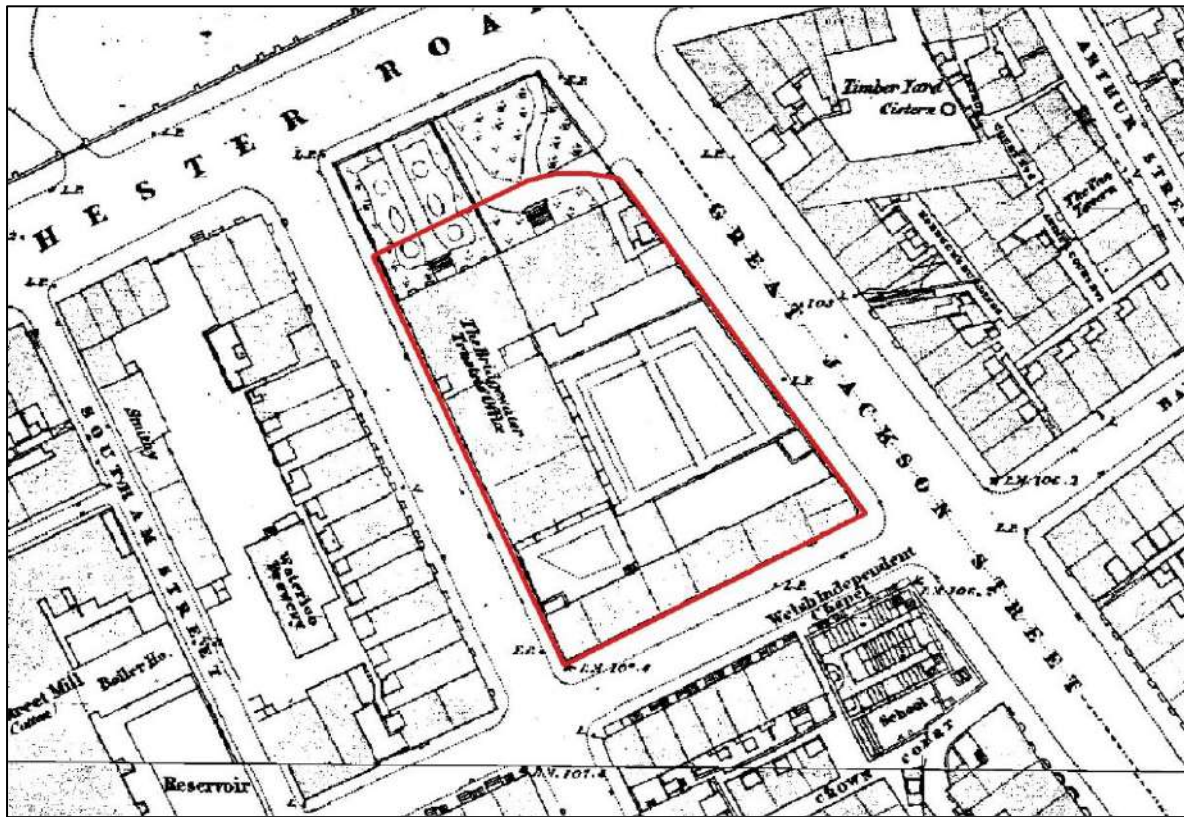


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:1056 Town Plan of 1851, showing the Site Boundary



Plate 4: Silvercroft Street, off Jackson Street, taken in 1954, courtesy of Manchester Local Image Collection

The same arrangement of buildings occupied the Site throughout the majority of the twentieth century. By the Ordnance Survey map of 1969, Chester Road had been significantly widened (Fig 10) resulting in the significant reduction of the area of the gardens to the front of Bridgewater House. The former Bridgewater Canal Offices is currently extant within the Site and is protected as a Grade II Listed Building whilst the range of buildings along Silvercroft Street had been demolished by 1994. The area formerly occupied by gardens and the ancillary range (later converted or redeveloped into housing and workshops) that fronted Silvercroft Street is currently a hard-standing car park.

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1. Aims

The principal aim of the excavation was to further investigate areas of archaeological potential identified by the evaluation undertaken in October 2024 (Civic Heritage, 2024) to establish the extent and nature of survival of the below ground archaeology within the site. This approach to devising proposals to offset the impact of development on the archaeological resource of the development area is in accordance with national guidelines set out in the National Planning Policy Framework: Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

The principal objectives of the archaeological investigation were:

- to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;
- to establish the presence or absence of buried remains relating to Romano-British activity;
- to make available the results of the work.

3.2. North West Regional Framework

It was anticipated that the evaluation may have potential to address research aims within the regional framework (North West England Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment), most notably those relating to the Roman period:

Roman period

R06: How well understood are fort chronologies and construction patterns?

R11: How can we identify typologies and the development of military sites and Roman road systems?

R14: What were the date, extent, function and changes over time of extra-mural settlement (vici) in the region?

4. Method Statement

4.1. Archaeological Works

4.1.1. Area rationale

The archaeological excavation comprised two open areas positioned to the south of the buildings and a hand-dug trial pit at the north end of the site, all of which were primarily excavated to assess the potential for the survival of remains of Romano-British activity.

4.1.2. Methodology

General Methodology

All archaeological work was conducted following the Standards for Archaeological Field Evaluation (ClfA 2023a) and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (ClfA 2023b). Before commencement all interested parties agreed an acceptable method of proceeding.

Prior to the commencement of any works, the location of the areas targeted for archaeological investigation were laid out accurately with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid.

All trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and any demonstrably modern overburden was excavated down to the first significant archaeological horizon or geological deposits, whichever was reached first. Thereafter, remains were cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date. The trial pit in the north of the Site was dug by hand

Context Recording

All contexts were be recorded using pro-forma sheets, allowing details to be incorporated into a Harris matrix. All written recording of survey data, contexts, photographs, artefacts and ecofacts were cross-referenced from record sheets using sequential numbering.

Photography

A full and detailed photographic record of individual contexts was maintained along with general views from standard viewpoints of the overall site at all stages of the excavation. Photography was undertaken in accordance with HE guidance, Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice (July 2015). All frames will include a visible, graduated metric scale. Photographs records were maintained on photographic pro-forma sheets.

Finds Policy

Finds recovery and sampling programmes were in accordance with best practice (following current Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidelines, Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CIfA 2020) and subject to expert advice in order to minimise deterioration. Finds storage during fieldwork and any site archive preparation followed professional guidelines (UKIC 1990).

No finds fell within the definition of 'treasure' during the course of the investigation.

Deposit Sampling

In total, three bulk sediment samples were recovered from suitable contexts during archaeological investigations. At an early stage in the analytical programme the samples collected during the excavation should be processed and checked for waterlogged or charred plant remains (CPR).

The plant remains should be assessed for their suitability for palaeoenvironmental analysis and radiocarbon dating.

5. Excavation Results

Following the results of the archaeological evaluation two open areas, A and B, were targeted for further investigation with the car park to the rear of Bridgewater House. Both were positioned along the boundary with Silvercroft Street, and encompassed area of 10m² to the east (A) and west (B) of the current entrance (Figure 2, Plate 5)



Plate 5: Recent aerial photograph of site with excavation Areas A and B marked

5.1. Area A

Area A (c.10m²) was orientated north-east south-west and had an irregular quadrilateral shape in plan, following the line of the north-east site boundary adjacent to Great Jackson Street and Silvercroft Street to the south-east.



Plate 6: Pre-excavation shot of Area A, looking toward east corner of Site at junction of Great Jackson Street and Silvercroft Street

The modern carpark surface (002) comprised a layer of tarmacadam with a MOT/gravel subbase (0.58m thick) underlain by a previous bitumen surface (003, 0.10m thick). The thin bitumen surface sealed a cobbled yard surface (004) brick wall foundations (015) aligned spanned the south-east end of Area A adjacent to Silvercroft Street. (Plate 7).

The cobbled yard surface (003) comprised a single layer of closely packed, subrounded cobble stones (0.10m) which butted against north-east/south-west aligned brick wall foundations [015] and [017] which spanned the width of the Area A (c.10m), 1.6m from the south-east limit of excavation and likely represent the rear walls of a row of buildings which stood along Silvercroft Street comprising two phases of construction. Wall [015] extended from the south-west limit of excavation and extended to the north-east (4.6m). The wall was two skins wide (0.37m), constructed in a rough English Bond and bonded with a light sandy mortar and was recorded to a depth of six courses (0.70m) including two lower foundational header courses (Plate 8).

The north-east/south-west wall [015] was truncated the northeast end by an L-shaped wall [117], which continued to the north-east on the same alignment (6m long) with a north-west

south-east tied in return at the south-west end, dividing the foundations into two areas. The rear wall [107] was wider than [015] at three skins wide and constructed in an English running bond, bonded with a harder cement mortar. A rectangular brick buttress (1.9m by 0.4m) capped with two stone flags projected from the exterior north-west facing façade of the wall and appeared to contain a void within (Plate 9).

The foundations were filled with a dark greyish sandy clay demolition backfill with inclusions of brick and gravels (018).



Plate 7: Cobbled yard surface (004) underlying bitumen layer (003), looking south-east

Following the removal of the cobbled surface (003) on the north-west side of the brick foundation a number of levelling deposits were recorded. A loose orangey-brown silty clay deposit (005) underlay the cobbles (c.0.4m thick) and butted the wall foundations [015] to the south-east extending to the limit of excavation to the north-west (Plate 10).

Underlying the silty clay was a band (0.1m thick) of a firm reddish-brown clay (006) within which a brick lined drain ran through. Three joining sherds of a dark glazed coarse ware cylindrical jar with upright flanged rim were retrieved from the deposit, dated to the 17th-18th century (See Finds Summary: Section 6).



Plate 8: Wall foundation [015] spanning south-east end of Area A, adjacent to Silvercroft Street



Plate 9: Wall foundation [015](right) truncated by [017] left with brick projection, looking south-west

The clay band (006) overlay a loose, light reddish-brown clayey sand which was 0.4m thick adjacent to the brick foundations but thinned to the north-east.



Plate 10: Upper extent of north-east facing section of Area A annotated with orangey-brown layer (005) underlying bitumen layer (003) and modern surface (002)

The clay band (006) overlay a loose, light reddish-brown clayey sand (007) which was 0.4m thick adjacent to the brick foundations but thinned to the north-east. This deposit overlay the natural reddish-brown clay along the north-east side of Area A, into which a 'cut' was recorded for a large pond [016] although it may have been originally formed in a natural depression (Plate 11). The pond was 8.5m long and 5.4m wide within Area A but looked to extend to the west and north-west beyond the limit of excavation, whilst rising to the east and south. The pond was recorded to a depth of 2.7m (3.7m below the current ground level).



Plate 11: Upper edge of 'pond' [016] cutting natural clay (001) along north-east edge of Area A, looking east

The pond depression was filled with a series of deposits of varying thickness which generally thickened toward the north-west (Figure 14) and were partially excavated to the natural base within a smaller sondage due to the depth.

The pond depression [016] was sealed at the upper extent by a loose light blueish-grey gravelly silty sand deposit (008) which varied in depth from 0.4 to 0.8m to the north-east and comprised frequent inclusions of small pebble with a sorted layer of larger sub-rounded cobbles to the lower boundary of the deposit, overlying an apparent lens of crushed brick (Plate 12).

A firm, light greyish brown clay (009) underlay the looser gravelly silty sand (008) and varied in depth from 0.2m to 0.4m thick (Plate 13). A dark glazed courseware base fragment was retrieved from the possible capping layer broadly dated to the 17th to 19th century (See Finds Summary).

The next deposit encountered was a loose, light greyish brown silty sand, 0.4m thick in the south-east and thickening to the presumed centre of the depression to the north-west. The deposit was relatively sterile, without any archaeological inclusions and may have comprised imported material to deliberately fill the depression (Plate 13).

A firm dark greyish-black organic silty sand (011) underlay the greyish brown sandy silt (010) which was predominantly composed of persevered root matter, twig and leaves (c.85 %) of deposit. The layer was thin (0.05m at the south-east edge of the pond and thickened to c.0.4m to the north-west. An environmental sample was taken of the soil and organic matter within this deposit (Figure 14, Plate 13). This organic later overlay a redeposited or naturally slumped, firm yellowish brown sandy clay (012) which tipped to the north-west in a similar manner as the overlying deposits (0.05m – 0.35m).

A further loose dark greyish black organic clayey silt layer (013), very similar to (011) was recorded below the natural slumped layer (012). The deposit was again composed of mostly organic material such as leaves, twigs and root matter and was a maximum of 0.30m thick at the north-west extent of the sondage. Three pieces of a preserved leather shoe parts were retrieved from the deposit including the complete sole of a child's shoe, a partial sole of an adult shoe and the edge of another sole.

The base of the pond was lined with a firm yellowish brown sandy clay (014) which directly overlay the natural reddish-brown natural clay (001). The deposit (0.2-0.34m thick) may represent a natural silting/ natural transition layer and comprised inclusions of small stones and gravels.

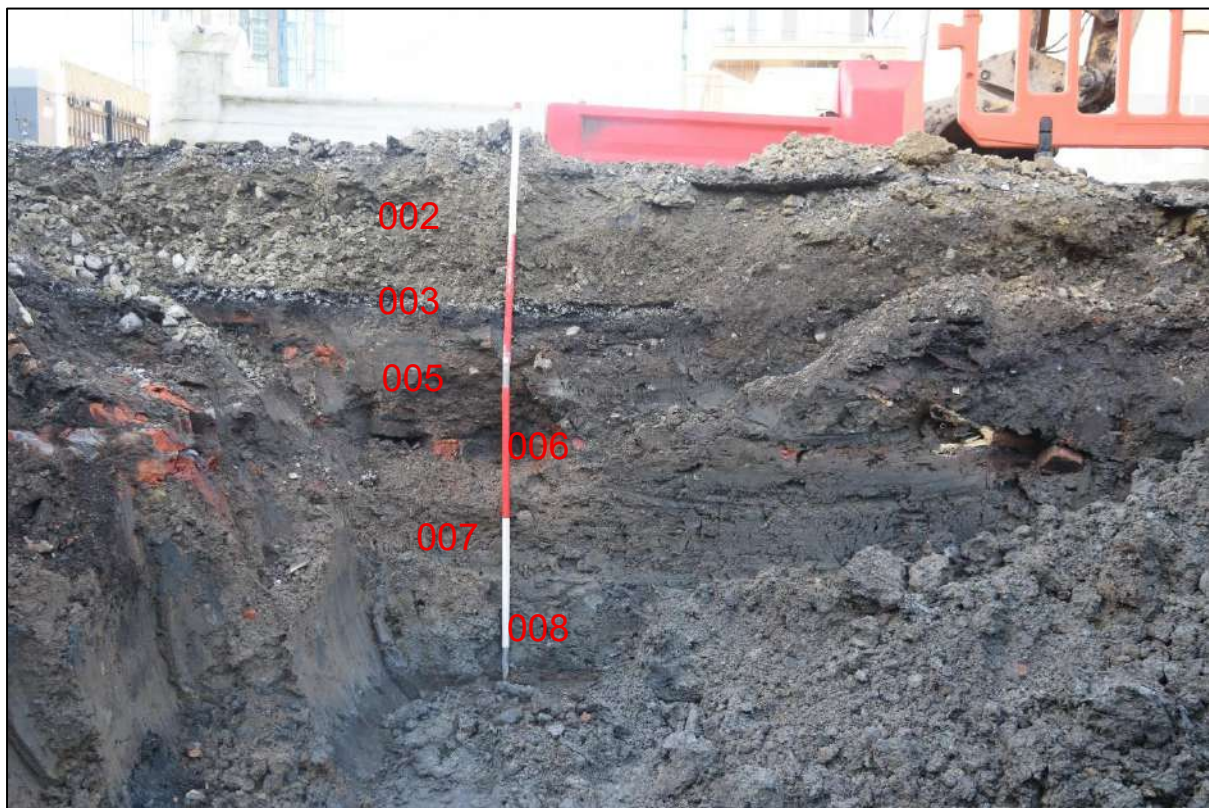


Plate 12: Partial north-east facing section showing blueish-grey deposit (008) at upper extent of pond [016]



Plate 13: North-east facing section of pond [116] continued in sondage showing deposits (009) to (014), looking south-west

5.2. Area B

Area B (10m²) was located 12m to the south-west of Area A, to the rear of the former Bridgewater Trustees Office building (Plate 14). A trench had previously been excavated across the area (Trench 4) which recorded partial building foundations related to the late 18th century row along Silvercroft Street.

The ground cover in Area B comprised a tarmacadam carpark surface with an MOT subbase (102) (0.2m thick) overlying a loose dark greyish-brown sandy silt levelling deposit which modern rubble inclusions (103) which thinned from maximum of 0.45m on the south-east side, adjacent to Silvercroft Street, dissipating to the north-west toward the buildings.

Following the removal of the modern overburden (102) and (103) brick foundations [105] were revealed aligned north-east/south-west, within the south-east half of the area, adjacent to the roadside (4.2m long, Plate 15). The foundations comprised a north-east/south-west rear wall, aligned with the similar rear wall seen in in Area A [015], with two perpendicular walls extending to the south-east, dividing the footprint into three. The walls were constructed of handmade brick and were typically three skins wide (0.48m) and laid a rough English Bond and bonded with a light sandy mortar.

The partial patchy remains of a cobbled yard surface (121) were also observed below the modern carpark surfaces to the north-west of the brick foundations in a similar arrangement to that of Area A (Figure 15).

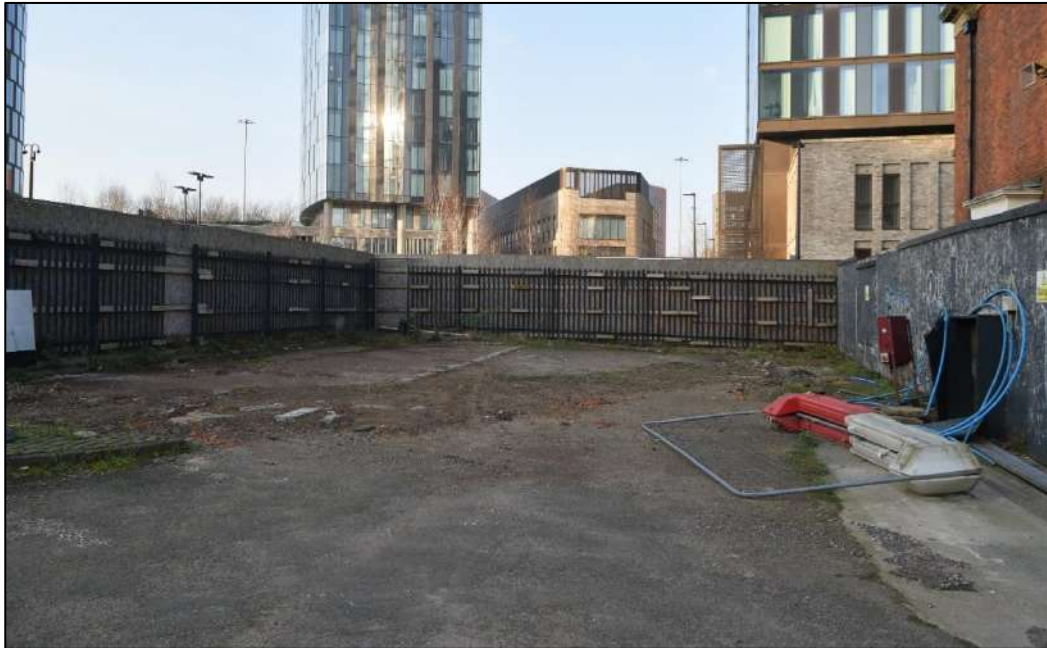


Plate 14: Pre excavation shot of Area B to rear of former Bridgewater Trustee Offices, looking south-west



Plate 15: Aerial UAV shot of brick foundations [105] exposed following removal of modern overburden (102) and (103),

The north-easternmost division (2.2m wide) comprised a flagstone floor surface (106) which was 1.8m² and enclosed by brick walls on three sides, extending into the north-east section (Plate 16). This may represent a small, enclosed yard area to the rear of main terraced building to the southeast.

The north-west/south-east dividing wall [116] continued on the same alignment to the north-west limit of excavation (4.2m long), with the lower foundation courses recorded at a depth of 1.2m below the adjacent flagged floor surface (Plate 17).



Plate 16: Flag surface (106) at north-east end of brick foundations [105]

The central division (14 ft/4.3m wide by >4m long) comprised a rear wall that butted the north-east flagstone division and incorporated an inset niche at the north-west extent. Following the removal of the foundations and reduction of the ground level a brick floor (107) was recorded at the base of the enclosed brick niche at a depth of 0.9m below the level of the surviving walls and flagstone floor (106) (Plate 18). The floor (1.4m by 1.1m) was constructed of unbonded brick (8 ¼ in by 4 ½ in by 2 ½ in).

The sunken- floored niche walls butted the dividing wall to the southwest for the southwestern building division (2.4m wide) and did not lead to any cellared area, which were absent from the all the brick foundations uncovered.

The base of a brick culvert channel (108) was recorded at the same depth as the brick-floored niche to the north-west of the brick foundations (105). The truncated culvert (1.15m wide by

>2.2m long) was aligned on a similar north-east/south-west orientation as the terrace foundations and comprised a shallow concave base of rendered brick. The culvert was truncated to the north-east end but incorporated a sloped inlet on the north-west side and a vertical face at the south-west end (Plate 18).



Plate 17: Brick foundations [116] within north-east corner of Area B, looking north-west



Plate 18: Brick floor (107) at base of niche in rear wall of central division of [105] and base of culvert (108) looking south-west

A construction cut [109] for the south-west brick foundations [105] was observed closely follow the brick foundations to a depth of c.1.4m below ground level, cutting the underlying silty deposits (111) (Plate 19). An incomplete clay pipe bowl was retrieved from the construction backfill (110) which from which a broad 17th-19th century date could be inferred from the 5/64th of an inch diameter bore (Higgins 2017).

The underlying friable mid orangey-brown silty sand was mainly observed toward the south-west half of Area B and was 0.35m thick, overlying gully [114] and the natural sandy clay (101). Several ceramic finds were retrieved from the deposit, the earliest datable being a single bowl or dish sherd of self-coloured earthenware typically dating to c 1650-1730. A single fragment of dark glazed buff ware has broadly 18th century date, whilst a dark glazed coarse ware body sherd may date to the late 18th-19th century based on fabric and glaze. Based on the finds retrieved it is possible that deposition may have occurred in the early to mid-18th century (See Finds Summary).



Plate 19: Construction cut [109] for walls [105], cutting deposit (111), withing north-west facing section

The brick foundations to the northwest were cut into tipped deposits which slumped to the north-east. Deposit (104) overlay deposit (111) and thickened to the north-west (0.30m to 0.60m) and comprised a firm mixed orangey brown silty clay with rubble inclusion, likely the same as deposit (005) seen in Area A (Plate 20).

A rounded depression [120] was within the eastern corner of Area B (3.4m radius from corner), apparently cutting the natural sandy clay. The depression had a shallow irregular slope and may have represented the south-eastern extent of the pond depression seen in Area A. The depression was filled with dark greyish black, organic deposit (120) at a depth of 30.23m aOD (1.4m below ground level) which appeared very similar to organic deposits (011) and (013) within the 'pond' in Area A (Plate 20). The base of the depression was not found, and no finds were retrieved from it.



Plate 20: North-east wall foundations cut (right) into slumped deposit (104), overlying organic deposit (120) looking southeast at northeast end of northwest facing section

Following the removal of the overlying deposits the natural orangey brown sandy clay (101) was encountered at c30.5m aOD (1.3m below ground level). A possible bank of redeposited natural (118) was observed to the south-west of the depression [119] which was recorded within the north-west facing section to a height of 0.35m adjacent to a northeast/south-east orientated gully [114]. The banks comprised a mixed, loose orangey brown clayey sand and may have originated from the upcast from the adjacent gully (Plate 21, Figure 15).

The linear gully [114] was cut into the natural clay (101) and extended north-east from the north-west facing section (5m) prior to being truncated by an evaluation sondage and brick foundation cuts to the north-east (Figure 12).

The gully measured 1.50m wide at it widest point adjacent to the north-west facing section and narrowed to c1.08m at the north-east truncation. The gully had steep 45° sides with a sharp break of slope and an uneven base (Plate 22, Figure 13)



Plate 21: Pre- Excavation view of gully [114] adjacent to possible bank (118), looking south-east



Plate 22: North-east facing sections of gully [114], looking south-west from evaluation sondage

The gully was filled with two deposits (112) and (113). The upper deposit (112) comprised a orangey/reddish- brown sandy clay which looked to have elements of iron-panning or leaching. The deposit was recorded at its widest within the north-west facing section (Plate 23, 1m wide by 0.25m thick) and narrowed to the northeast (Plate 24) prior to petering out prior to the truncated end. No finds were retrieved from this upper deposit.

The primary fill of the gully (113) comprised a firm light grey sandy clay with inclusions of small pebbles (0.25m deep). Four fragments of roman pottery were retrieved from this lower gully fill including three undiagnostic sherds of thin-walled Roman oxidised ware in a soft orange fabric likely to be Cheshire plains dating to c AD 90-180 (Leary Barton Street 2012, 77). An Oxidised ware base with flaring walls was also found within the deposit at the base of the gully (Plate 25). The fabric had similarities to Cheshire plains ware (fabric OAA1) found in Manchester which is micaceous and has also been broadly dated to c. AD 90-180.



Plate 23: Gully [114] within north-west facing section, filled by (113) and (112)- cut by wall foundation [105]/[109]



Plate 24: Detail of north east facing section of middle of gully [114] showing fill (113) and (112)



Plate 25: Roman pottery base in-situ within primary fill (112) of gully [114]

6. Material Assessed

6.1. Introduction

The paper and material archive generated from all stages of the fieldwork has been partially examined to ascertain its potential for further study. The method of assessment used varied with the class of information examined, although in each case it was undertaken in accordance with guidance provided by English Heritage in Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition (English Heritage 1991a) and updated subsequently by MoRPHE (Historic England 2015). Where classes of finds have been examined observations are supplemented by the records generated during the course of the fieldwork and maintained within the project archive. Quantifications are incorporated within the individual assessments. A breakdown of the paper and photographic archive appears in Table 1.

TOTAL CONTEXTS	16 (AREA A) 24 (AREA B)
DRAWINGS	4
PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES	3
TOTAL DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS	213 (SITE PHOTOS); 84 DRONE PHOTOS;
POTTERY FINDS	20
LEATHER FINDS	3
TIMBER FINDS	1

Table 1 Quantification of the paper/digital archive

6.2. Assessment Aims and Objectives

The aim of the assessment was to evaluate all classes of data from the excavation, in order to formulate a project design for a programme of further analysis appropriate to the potential demonstrated by the site archive. A statement of the significance of the results from each element of the archive is given below. The quantification and assessments represent an amalgamation of the total body of work undertaken in 2019-20.

The objectives of this assessment correspond to Appendix 4 of Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition (English Heritage 1991a). They are:

- to assess the quantity, provenance and condition of all classes of material: stratigraphical, artefactual and environmental;
- to comment on the range and variety of that material;
- to assess the potential of the material to address questions raised in the course of the project;

to formulate any further questions arising from the assessment.

This assessment will present:

- a factual summary, characterising the quantity and perceived quality of the data contained within the site archive;
- a statement of the academic potential of the data;
- recommendations for the storage and curation of the data.

6.3. Stratigraphic Data

6.3.1. Stratigraphy

The paper archive represents a percentage of the overall data gathered during the course of the archaeological investigation. In total, 40 contexts were recorded. The context record has confirmed the identification of features ranging in date from the Roman period through to the Industrial period. Within Area A the 18th and 19th century structural remains sealed a sequence of pond deposits which may date back to the late medieval period. In Area B similar 18th century structural remains overlay Roman contexts.

6.3.2. Potential

Re-examination of the stratigraphic data following the processing of environmental sample material could refine the site sequence and add value to the excavated archaeological features.

6.4. Photographic Data

6.4.1. Photographs

In all, there are 213 site images and 84 drone photographs covering both areas of the excavation works.

The images are an invaluable aid in all aspects of post-excavation analysis, providing a general and detailed pictorial record of the site throughout all phases of its excavation and recording.

6.4.2. Potential

The images include archaeological features and finds, and record how the site was excavated and to aid the stratigraphic analysis. The images have been integrated with the site database to provide a visual element and add valuable illustrative material to the final report.

6.5. Digital Dataset

6.5.1. Survey Data / Orthographic Images / Digitised Records

The digital data will include all the records of survey undertaken using differential GPS (Leica GNSS), together with digitised hand-drawn plans and sections, an orthographic photograph of the excavation area and other digitised records.

6.5.2. Potential

The digital data provides an invaluable record of the site. The geo-rectified survey comprises a plot of all the archaeological remains exposed during the excavation. Further detailed analysis of the geo-rectified survey may help to refine the site sequence and establish sub-phases.

6.6. Artefactual and Environmental Data

6.6.1. Introduction

The artefactual assemblage comprises finds from various material categories and includes environmental samples. An assessment of each artefact class is provided in the following sections. The aims of the find assessment will evaluate all classes of archaeological material from the excavation to assess their research potential and regional significance.

6.6.2. Assessment Aims and Objectives

The aim of the finds assessment is to evaluate all classes of archaeological material from the excavation to assess their research potential and regional significance. A statement of the significance of the results from each element of the artefactual assemblage is given below based on the assessment work undertaken and the original research themes expressed in the project design.

The objectives of the assessment correspond to and set out in Management of Research in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Planning Note 3 (PPN3): Archaeological Excavation (Historic England, 2015), with the purpose being to provide an assessment of the potential of the site archive and other gathered data to support research aims and objectives.

The examination of the artefactual assemblage was carried out in accordance with the guidelines set out by Historic England in MoRPHE (2015) and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Universal guidance for archaeological excavation, with particular reference to part 4 concerning Post-excavation assessment (2023), Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014, updated 2020) and Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (2014, updated 2020).

6.6.3. Finds Summary- Pottery (Jeremy Bradley)

Quantification

In total twenty individual pottery finds, weighing 1752g, were recovered from Areas A and B from seven contexts during the mitigation phase at Bridgewater House, Manchester.

Assessment

Area A

Context (006) layer: Dark glazed coarse ware cylindrical jar (3x joining sherds) with upright flanged rim, 17th-18th century.

Context (009) layer: Dark glazed coarse ware base fragment (x1), 17th-18th/19th century. 1x Glazed red earthenware base fragment. Reddish brown translucent glaze over red slip. "[F]rom the mid-17th century an iron-rich slip is frequently used under the lead glaze to produce a more even dark colour." (Barker 2008). Broadly, an 18th-early 19th century date for deposition.

Area B

Context (110)- wall construction backfill: Incomplete Clay Pipe bowl (no diagnostic features) with spur, stem bore diameter: 5/64th of an inch. Only a broad late 17th-19th century can be inferred as 5/64th of an inch diameter bore can occur in from the late 17th century onwards but are more typical from the later 18th century onwards (Higgins 2017).

Context (111) dark brown clay layer: this layer produced three pottery fragments and a single Clay Pipe stem. The earliest pottery was a single bowl or dish sherd of self-coloured earthenware typically dating to c 1650-1730. A single fragment of dark glazed buff ware has broadly 18th century date, whilst a dark glazed coarse ware body sherd may date to the late 18th-19th century based on fabric and glaze. Stem bore diameter of the CTP stem suggests a 17th to early 18th century date (Higgins 2017). Based on the find assemblage, deposition may have occurred in the early to mid-18th century.

Context (113)- fill of gully [114]: The lower fill of the gully yielded five fragments of Roman pottery. Oxidised ware base with flaring walls in a hard red fabric, with lighter core grey in some areas contain poorly sorted rounded quartz sand (common, fine to medium grains), white mica, rare black iron oxide and grog, and very rare pale red quartz sandstone (coarse grains), it is possibly slipped but this could be variation from firing. The fabric has similarities to Cheshire plains ware (fabric OAA1) found in Manchester which is micaceous and OAA3 from Barton Street which was postulated might be Severn valley (Leary Barton Street 2012, 77), or red slipped RSB1 but lacks mica (op cit, 78). A date of c AD 90-180 maybe appropriate here. Three further undiagnostic fragments of thin-walled Roman oxidised ware in a soft

orange fabric containing common, moderately sorted rounded fine to medium quartz sand, and rare iron oxide and mica is also likely to be Cheshire plains also dating to c AD 90-180 (Leary Barton Street 2012, 77).

Context (115) fill of brick culvert [108]: White earthenware (x5), 1x base with footring (undecorated); 1x cup rim with willow pattern decoration, incompletely glazed therefore probably a second, an undulating flared profile, simple rim (diameter: 100mm; 13.75%), probably a tulip shape variation, in production from the early 1850s (Miller 2011). Undecorated cylindrical mug/coffee can (rim diameter: 80mm; 17.5%); saucer (rim diameter: 70mm; 15%) overglaze enamel with underglaze rose border motif. Decorative technique occurs most commonly on vessels manufactured after 1840 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab 2002 & updated 2015 Printed Underglaze Earthenware). Vase or chamber pot, with everted rim rounded form (rim diameter: 260mm; 32.5%) overglaze enamel with underglaze rose border motif (same as saucer FN00). Decorative technique occurs most commonly on vessels manufactured after 1840 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab 2002 & updated 2015 Printed Underglaze Earthenware). Note: This is for British imports into America. Therefore, dates might reflect deposition rather than manufacture. Mid-19th century for deposition would be acceptable.

6.6.4. Leather

Three fragments of preserved leather were retrieved from context (013) within pond feature [016]. All were informally identified as being fragment of shoe leathers, with one seemingly representing a complete sole piece of a child's shoe. A provisional date of the early 16th century has been attributed to the child's leather shoe sole based on the distinctive 'cow mouth' style, although further expert analysis would be beneficial.

Potential:

Analysis of preserved leather finds have potential to provide dating information for the stratigraphy of the pond feature [106]. Further analysis would also provide valuable information regarding potential late-medieval activity within the site.

6.6.5. Timber

One piece of timber was retained from context (013) within pond feature [016] due to indications that it had been worked into a possible stake.

Potential:

Analysis of the preserved timber has potential to provide further information as to whether the fragment had been worked and its potential function, therefore providing valuable information regarding archaeological activity within the site.

6.7. Environmental Samples

Introduction

In total, three bulk sediment samples were recovered from suitable contexts during archaeological investigations at Bridgewater House, Manchester. The aims any sample processing will be to assess the presence, preservation and abundance of any environmental remains and artefactual fragments and to determine the potential of the material for indicating the character and significance of the deposit.

Methods

Three 10 litre samples were taken from each of three contexts across Areas A and B. In Area A two bulk samples were retrieved from two of the lower fills (011) and (013) of the pond feature [016]. Both were dark greyish black sandy silt deposits which retained a large percentage of preserved organic matter including roots, leaves and wood and looked have potential for environmental analysis. In Area B a sample was taken from the lower fill (113) of gully [114]. This was identified as the fill of a Roman gully based on the pottery retrieved from the context.

Potential:

At an early stage in the analytical programme the samples collected during the excavation should be processed and checked for waterlogged and/or charred plant remains (CPR). Any charred plant remains should be assessed for their suitability for palaeoenvironmental analysis and radiocarbon dating. Uncharred plant and seed remains have potential to provide valuable environmental information regarding archaeological activity within the site.

7. Curation and Conservation

7.1. Recipient Museum

Manchester Museum

The University of Manchester,
Oxford Road,
Manchester
M13 9PL

Museum Accession Number: To be confirmed.

7.1.1. Conservation

The stability of the artefacts is unknown at this point prior to full analysis and may need to be conserved ahead of accession.

7.1.2. Storage

The complete project archive, which will include written records, plans, digital plans and photographs, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the guidelines set out in Environmental standards for the permanent storage of excavated material from archaeological sites (UKIC 1984, Conservation Guidelines 3), and in accordance with Manchester Museum's policy for receiving physical archives.

For long-term storage of the digital data, CDs will be used, the content including the reports, plans, scanned images and digital photographs. Each CD will be fully indexed and accompanied by the relevant metadata for provenance. The digital record should ideally be duplicated as a paper record for long-term archiving, including comprehensive printouts of photographs and survey plots, labelled and summarised.

All dry and stable finds will be packed according to the museum's specifications, in either acid-free cardboard boxes, or in airtight plastic boxes for unstable material. The artefactual assemblage is predominantly stable but should be packed carefully with bubble wrap protecting the bags to minimise movement and abrasion in the boxes.

7.1.3. Packing

The assemblage is currently well-packaged and will require no further packaging. Box lists derived from the site database have been compiled and will be updated when the identification of objects is complete. in accordance with Manchester Museum's deposition requirements.

7.1.4. Discard Policy

A discard policy will be prepared, in consultation with the recipient museum. Material of no discernible long-term archaeological potential will be discarded, with the museum's agreement.

8. Discussion and Conclusion

8.1. Key Results

The excavation at Bridgewater House, Manchester recorded evidence of activity within the area of the site spanning nearly 2000 years with archaeological remains dated to the Romano-British period through the Industrial period.

Roman

A linear gully [114] with a possible bank, was recorded extending on a north-east/south-west alignment from the south-east limit of Area B, adjacent to Silvercroft Street (Plate 26). The gully was recorded at a depth of 1.3m below ground level. (c30.5m aOD), cutting the natural clay (101) following the removal of later levelling deposits and the foundations of a row of 18th century building [105].

Pottery retrieved from within the lower fill of the gully (113) included the base with flaring wall of an Oxidised ware vessel made of a fabric with similarities to Cheshire plains ware and has been broadly dated to c. AD 90-180.

The discovery of a surviving section of Roman gully, albeit relatively short in length, supplements previously charted Roman features in the vicinity of the site and adds to our understanding of the date, extent, function and changes over time the extra-mural settlement (vici) as posed by the North West Regional Framework (R14). A Roman enclosure ditch, on a similar north-east/south-west alignment was recorded on the adjacent plot on the east side of Great Jackson Street in 2007 (Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2007) alongside a number of pits and the recovery of a carved Roman altar (Plate 27). Further linear Roman ditches have also been recorded near Owen Street in 2016 (Salford Archaeology, 2018) and on the west side of Crown Street to the immediate south-west of the site (Salford Archaeology, 2019).



Plate 26: Post-excavation aerial UAV of Bridgewater House with Roman gully [114] indicated.



Plate 27: Previous archaeological investigation results in the vicinity of the site showing Roman features in red and orange, yellow and green

Late Medieval

A suspected curvilinear feature with a dark silty fill was identified within Trench 3, in the south-east of the site and was deemed to have to have potential to be of archaeological significance. This area was further investigated within Area A of the excavation and revealed to be the outer extent of a large depression or possible pond [016]. A possible south-western edge of the pond was recorded in Area B (119) indicating a possible width of c.23m (Figure 2).

Green's map of 1787-94 (Plate 28) indicates that the pond within the site had been sealed and the area landscaped by the late 18th century when the villas had been constructed along with gardens and a row of buildings along Hulme Place. However similarly proportioned ponds are shown to remain open to the south of Hulme Place (now Silvercroft Street) around Jackson's Farm prior to the development of the land in the early 19th century.

Excavation of the pond deposit recorded clay capping layers (006) and levelling deposits below a cobble stone yard surface (004) to the rear of the Hulme Place row from which pottery dating to the 17th-18th centuries was retrieved (006)(009) which in some way corroborates the proposal that the pond was sealed to facilitate the construction of the present Bridgewater House and associated buildings on Hulme Place.

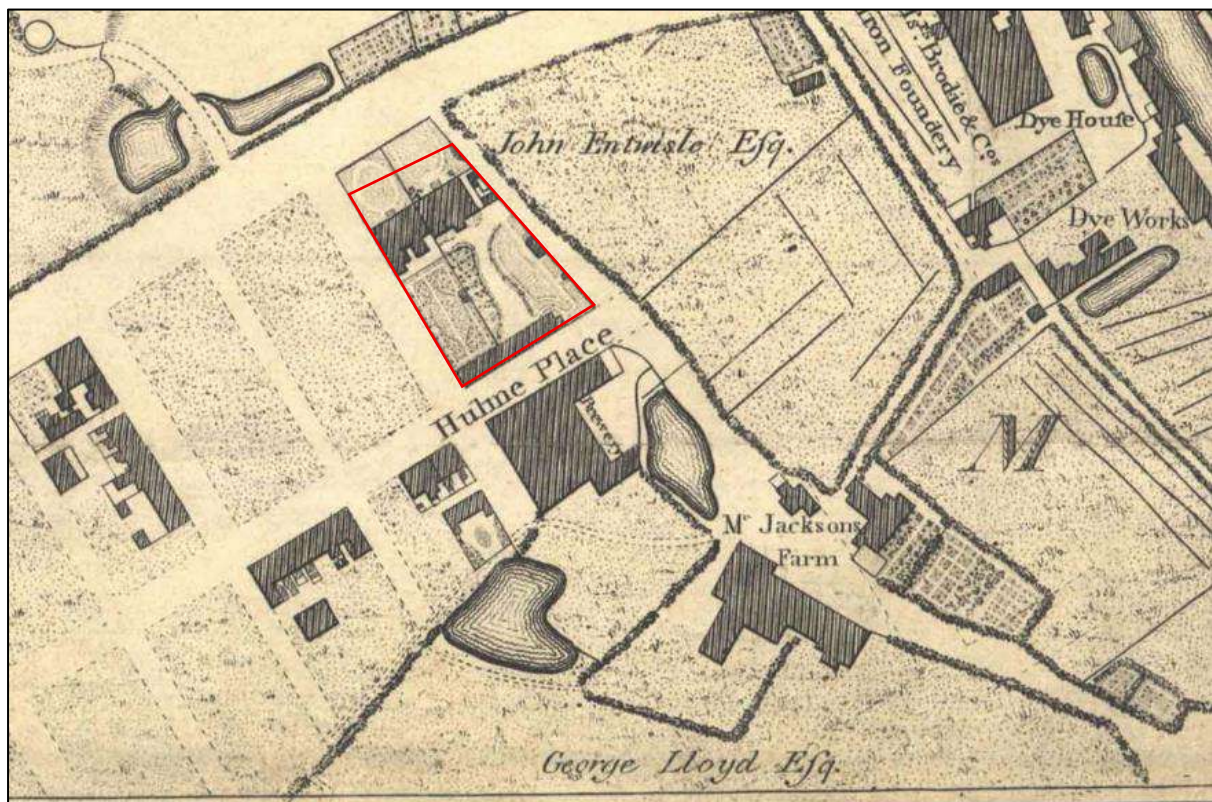


Plate 28: Extract from Green's map of 1787-94, showing the site boundary and large ponds in the vicinity.

Organic root matter, leaves and wood were preserved in two deposits at the lower extent of the pond (011) and (013) which appeared to have been sealed in an anaerobic state by the overlying sandy clay slumped deposits (010) and (012). Three preserved fragments of shoe leather were retrieved from the lower organic deposit (011) including the sole of a child's shoe (Plate 29). A provisional date of the early 16th century has been attributed to the child's leather shoe sole based on the distinctive 'cow mouth' style, although further analysis would be beneficial (Plate 30).



Plate 29: Leather sole of a child's shoe, retrieved from lower deposit (013) and pond (016)

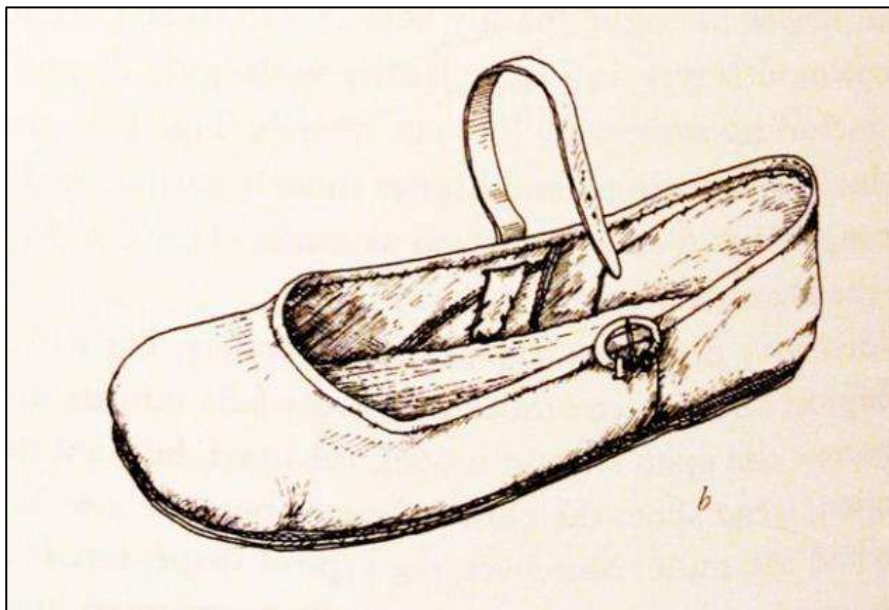


Plate 30: Example of early 16th century cow mouth shoe.

Post-medieval/Industrial

Building on the results of the evaluation, further evidence was recorded across of the late 18th century row of cottage and stables spanning Areas A and B along Silvercroft Street (formerly Hulme Place). Green's map of 1787-94 shows the row to initially stopped short of Great Jackson Street, at the north-east end of the row (Figure 3), prior to a corner building being constructed by 1831 (Figure 4). A junction observed between walls [015] and [017] within the brick foundations in Area A could be seen to coincide with the end of the later 18th century row shown on Green's map (Figure 3) with a cellared end building being subsequently added to the end of the row in the early 19th century, as later shown on a photograph of 1954 (Plate 31).



Plate 31: Silvercroft Street, off Jackson Street, taken in 1954, courtesy of Manchester Local Image Collection

9. Recommendations

The understanding of the archaeological sequence at Bridgewater House would be greatly enhanced by further analysis of the artefactual finds and environmental samples retrieved from the excavation. Further analysis of the shoe leather fragments, possible worked timber and environmental samples from the sealed lower deposits of a large pond feature have the potential to provide valuable information regarding settlement activity in Manchester from the late-medieval period and onwards. Likewise further analysis of environmental sample and artefacts from the fill of a Roman gully recorded within Area B has the potential to provide valuable information concerning Roman Manchester and the extent of the civilian settlement surrounding the fort.

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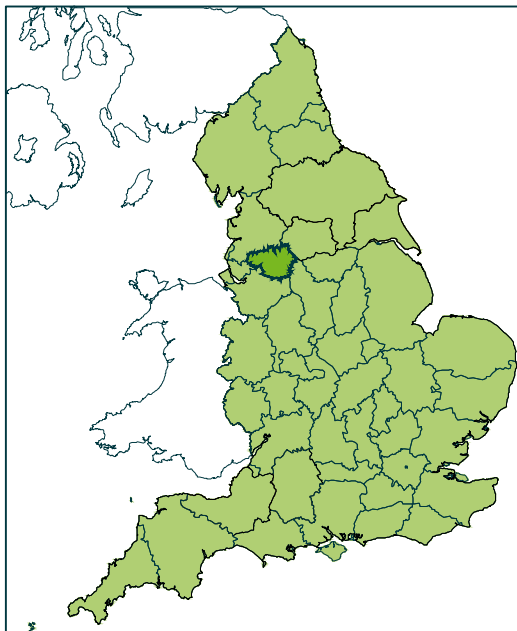
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Appendix 1: Figures

- Figure 1** Site Location
- Figure 2** Area A and B superimposed on modern mapping
- Figure 3** Excavation areas superimposed on Green's 1787-94 plan of Manchester and Salford
- Figure 4:** Excavation areas superimposed on Bancks & Co 1831 plan of Manchester and Salford with their environs
- Figure 5:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1850 Ordnance Survey town plan
- Figure 6:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1891 Ordnance Survey town plan
- Figure 7:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1922 Ordnance Survey national grid 1:2500 plan
- Figure 8:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1934 Ordnance Survey national grid 1:2500 plan
- Figure 9:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1949 Ordnance Survey national grid 1:2500 plan
- Figure 10:** Excavation areas superimposed on 1969 Ordnance Survey national grid 1:2500 plan
- Figure 11:** Plan of excavation Area A
- Figure 12:** Plan of excavation Area B
- Figure 13:** Sections through ditch 114 in Area B
- Figure 14:** North-east facing section of pond 116, Area A
- Figure 15:** Area B sections

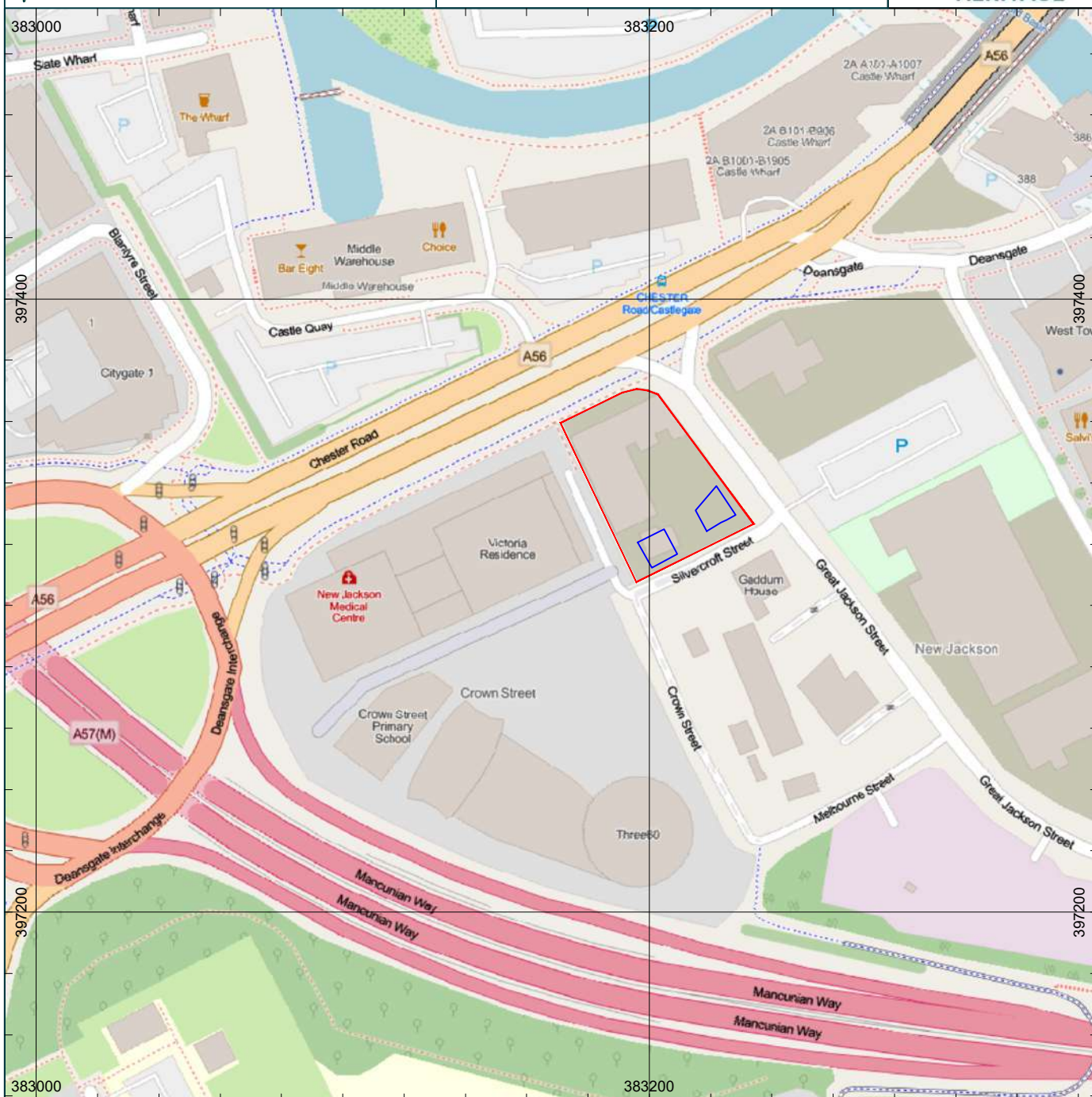


Bridgewater House Excavation, Manchester

Project Code: 61110

Figure 1: site location

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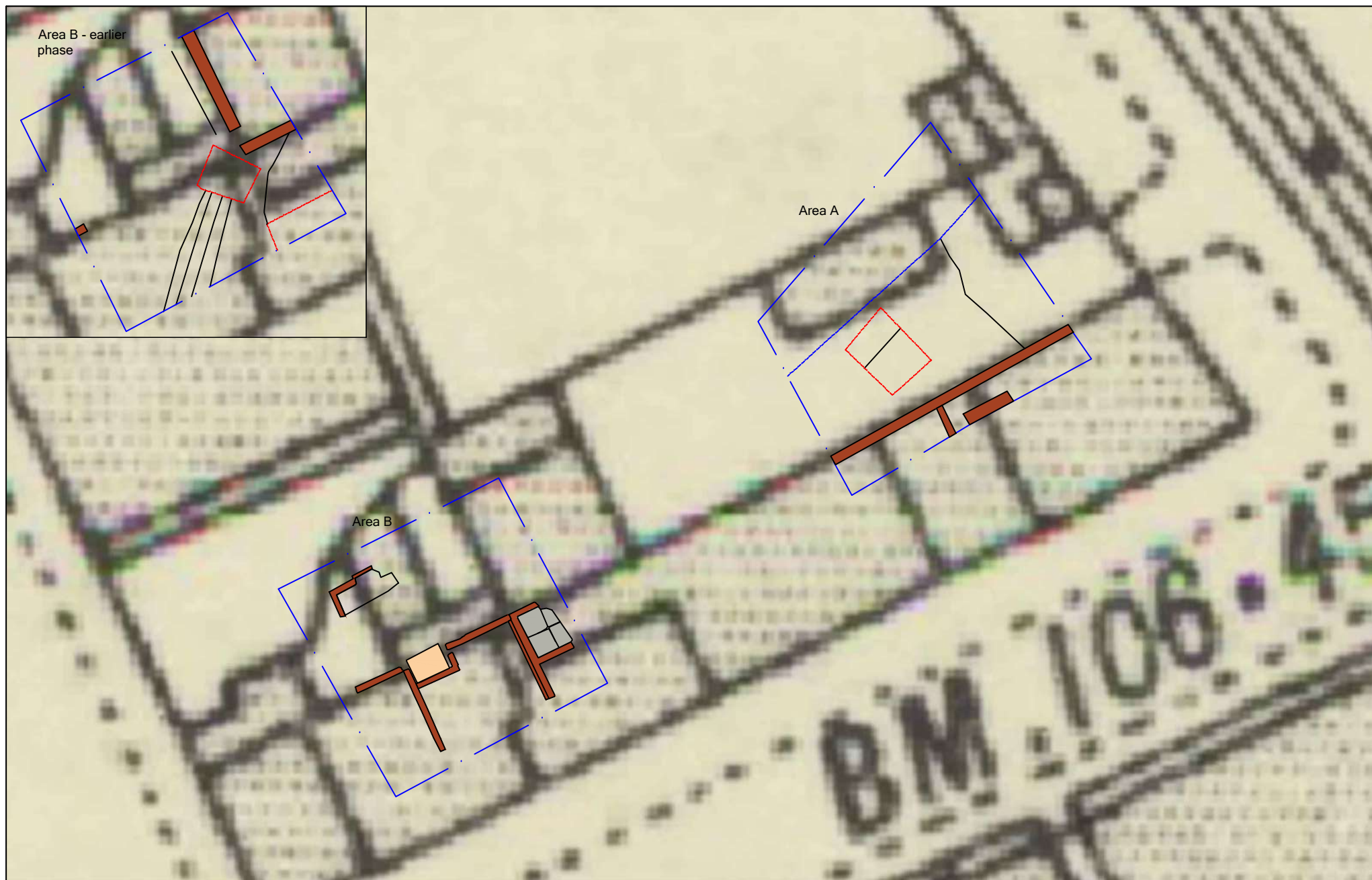






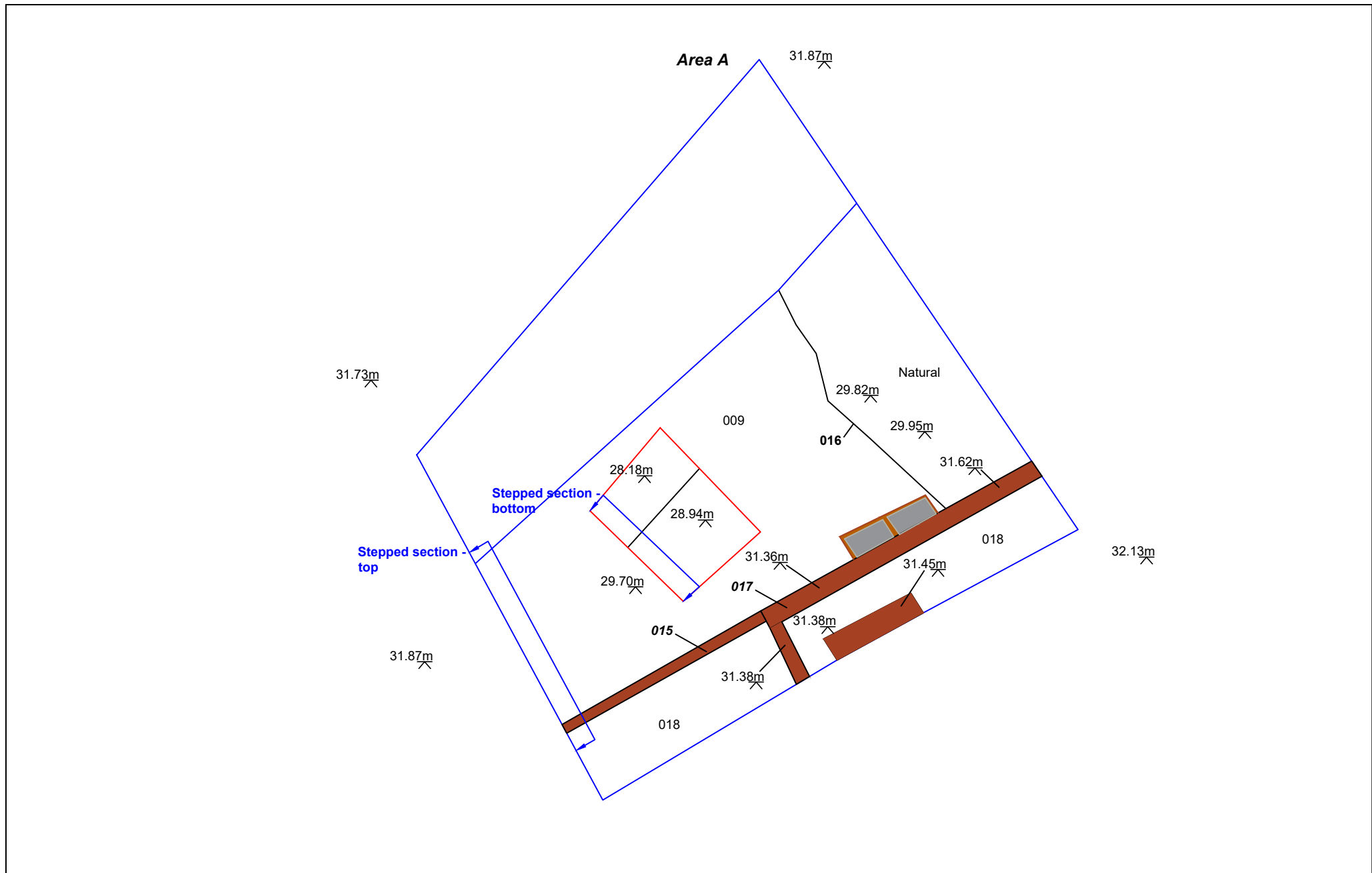






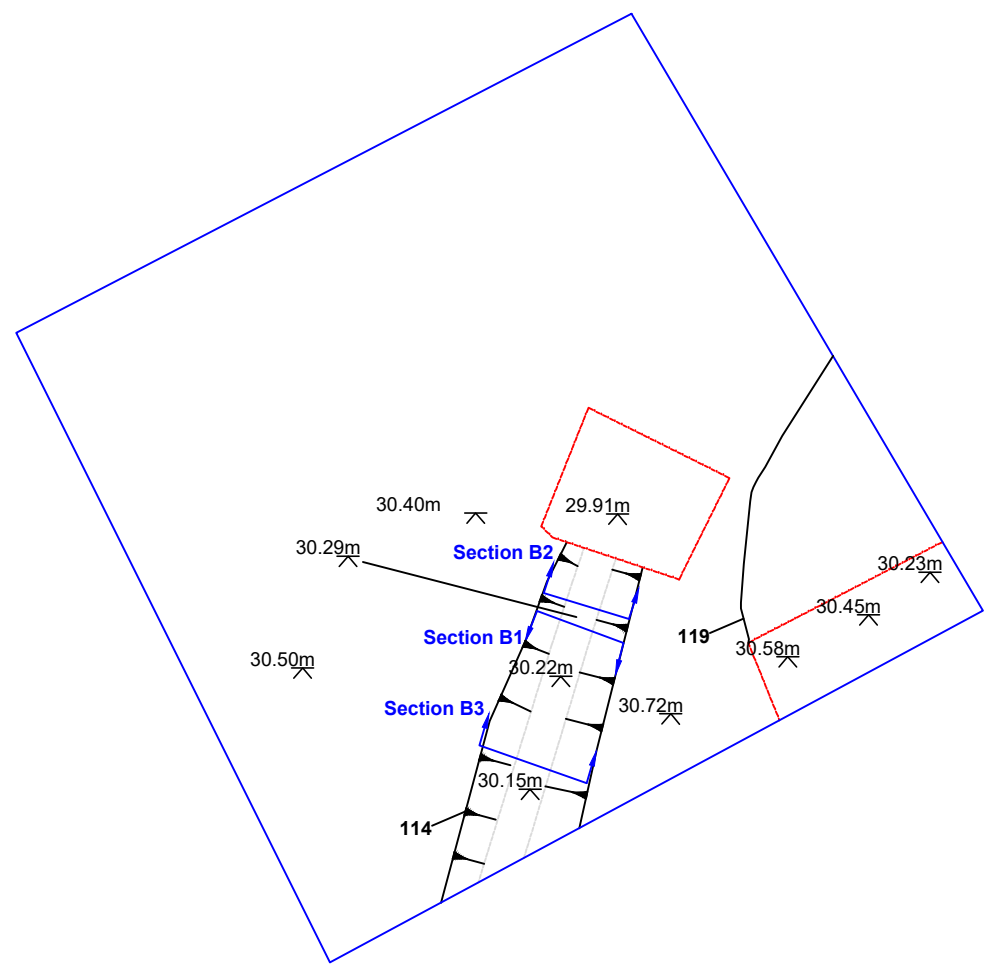
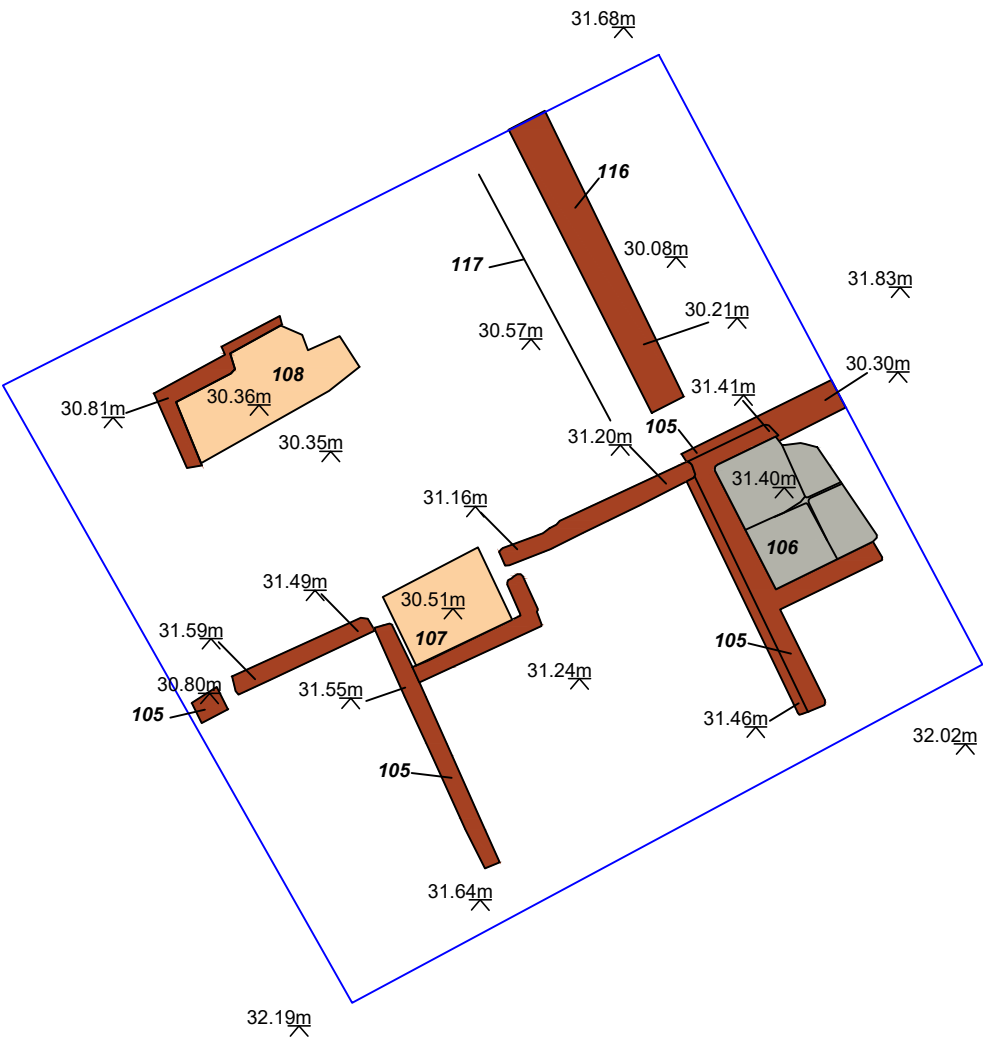


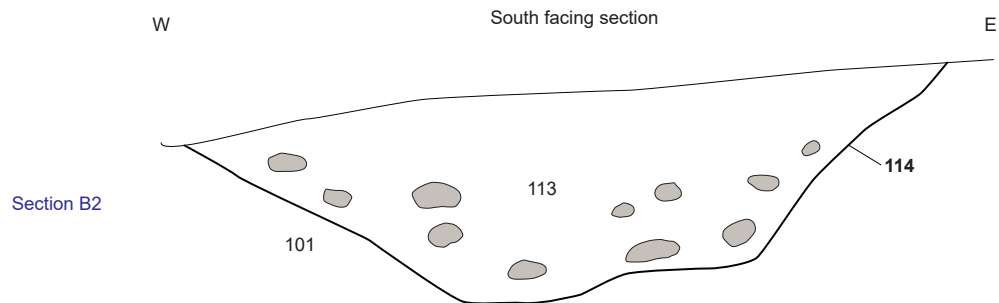




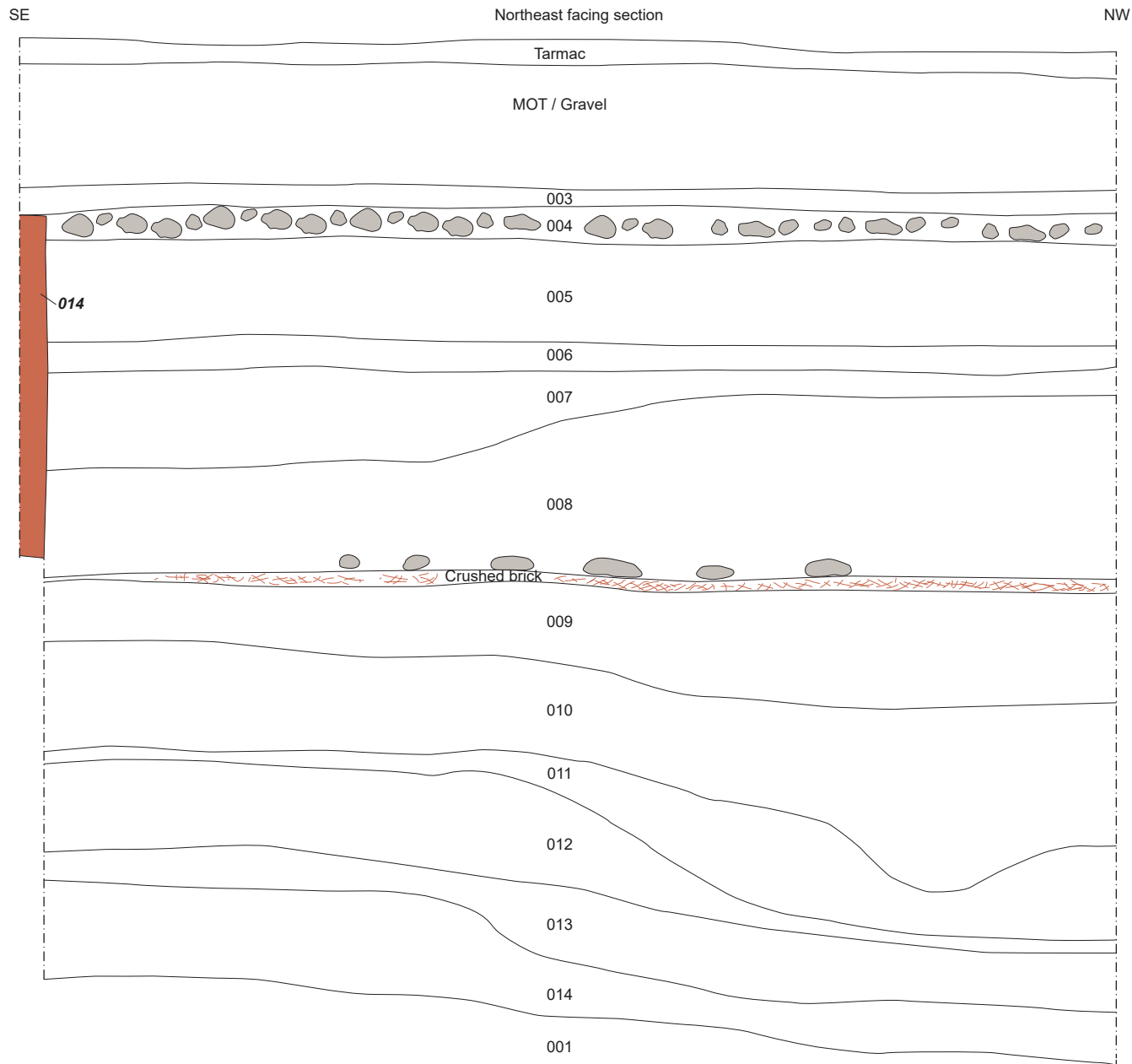
Area B - Romano-British & Early Post-medieval

Area B - Late Post-medieval to Industrial





Key:  Stone

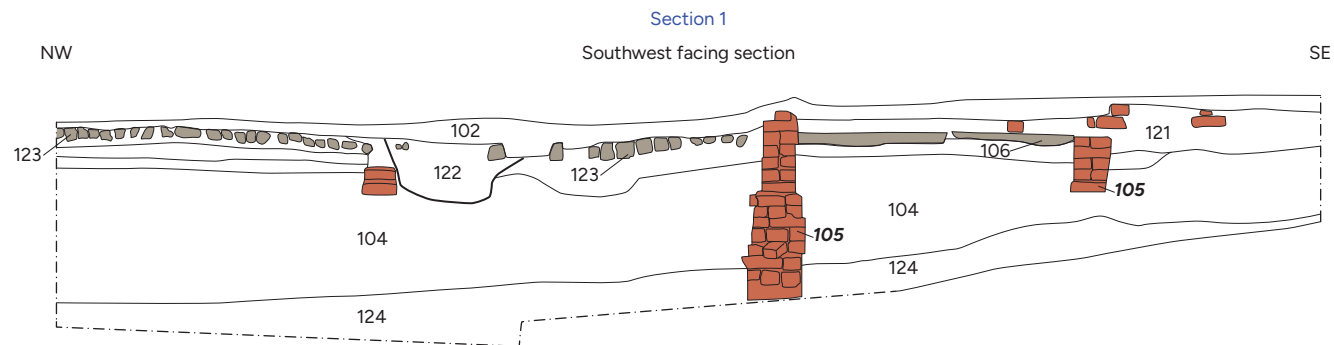
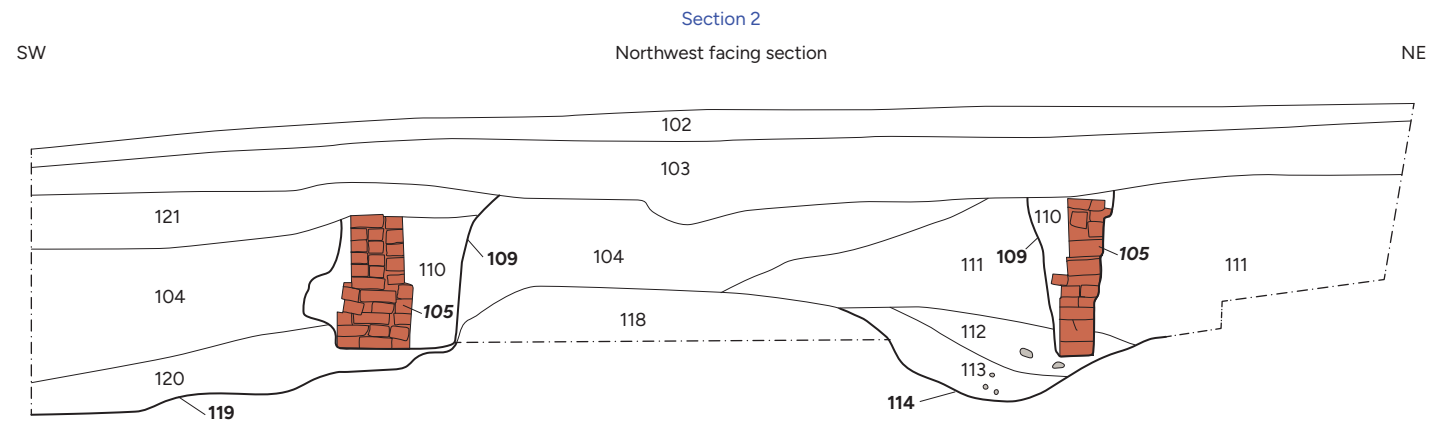
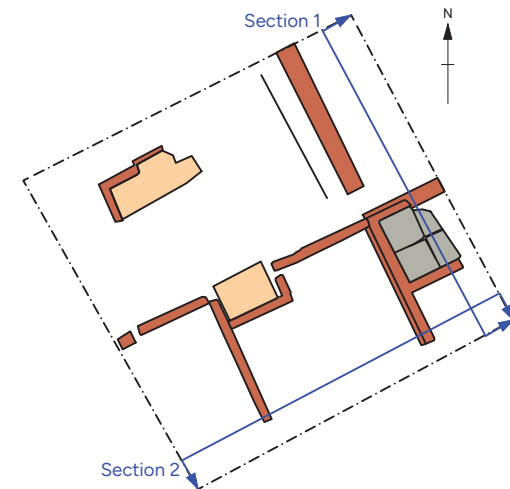


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Scale at A4 1:10

Key:

- Stone
- Brickwall
- Crushed brick



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