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Eliza Yard

Ancoats

Greater Manchester
Archaeological Evaluation
and Mitigation



Salford
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SUMMARY

This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation and mitigation, which took place at Eliza Yard between November 2023 and January 2024. In 2023, Manchester Life Development Company 3 Ltd gained planning consent (130354/FO/2021) for a mixed-use development of a ...ha site situated at the junction of Jersey Street and Poland Street in Ancoats, Manchester (centred on NGR 385227, 398800).

The archaeological potential of the site was first assessed in a desk-based assessment produced by Salford Archaeology in 2022 (Brogan 2022). This outlined the potential for the site to contain archaeological remains of 18th and 19th-century houses, together workshops and a wharf. Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) in their role as advisors to the Local Planning Authority recommended an initial programme of archaeological investigation to precede the development. In February 2023, Salford Archaeology was commissioned produce a WSI (Mottershead 2023) for the strip-map-and-record investigation.

Salford Archaeology were subsequently commissioned to undertake the evaluation and mitigation within the proposed development area, which encompassed a large open area excavation, completed in December 2023. The excavation revealed structural remains pertaining to the site's development from the late 18th onwards. Three groups of domestic buildings were investigated. Cellared and uncellared buildings, as well as outshuts, privies and yards were revealed. The remains of workshops attached to the rear of the properties signify the occurrence of domestic industries, namely metalworking, brewing and hatting, which are documented for the site. A large expanse of the site was developed as a wharf with frontage onto an arm of the Rochdale Canal. Identifiable structures associated with the wharf included a porter's lodge, weigh bridge, sheds and stables. The site witnessed several episodes of clearance in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reflecting attempts to rid the area of sub-standard housing. The site was redeveloped in the mid-20th century, when a clothes factory was erected at the corner of Jersey Street and Poland Street. Since the late 20th century the site has been vacant.

INTRODUCTION

Circumstances of the project

Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Manchester Life Development Company 3 Ltd to complete an archaeological evaluation. This report details the results of the investigation which took place within Eliza Yard, Ancoats, Greater Manchester (centred on NGR 385227, 398800; Plate 1; Figs 1 and 2). This work was undertaken in advance of the development, in conjunction with a programme of site remediation. The consented scheme of development will include the construction of an 8-storey building to form 118 residential apartments with ground floor commercial floorspace. Externally, there will be space dedicated to amenities, car and cycle parking provisions.



Plate 1: Recent aerial view of Eliza Yard prior to redevelopment with the excavation area highlighted blue

The requirement for the programme of archaeological investigation as part of the planning process as described in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 205 which states that 'Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.'

In response, a programme of archaeological evaluation was proposed in order to inform the Client and Local Planning Authority, Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) of the location, extent and significance of any potential surviving archaeological deposits. The evaluation quickly confirmed the extensive survival of archaeological remains spanning several centuries of the site's development, which triggered a stage of mitigation to oversee their excavation and recording.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Academic Aims

The academic aims of the project were to establish the nature of the archaeological resource within the development site to enable an informed and responsive decision to be made concerning the need for mitigation. The scope of the investigation was discussed with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).

Objectives

The principal objectives of the archaeological investigations were:

- To record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, significance, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;
- To provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made about the need for archaeological mitigation and conduct any responsively carry out the mitigation;
- And to make available the results of the work

Research potential

Further, more detailed research aims may be generated and developed from the results of the archaeological evaluation, with specific reference to the North-West Regional Research Framework (NWRRF). It is envisaged that the evaluation may potentially improve our understanding of the following research questions:

Industrial	
Ind25:	To what extent did houses and shops incorporate workshops and warehousing?
Ind33:	How well studied and understood are the back yards of workers housing and what is their significance?
Ind68:	What can archaeological studies tell us about commodity storage and exchange buildings?

LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Location

The site, known as Eliza Yard, was situated in Ancoats. Manchester centred on NGR 385227, 398800; Plate 1; Figs 1 and 2). Prior to the investigation the site had been used as a car park. The site was bounded by City Court Trading Estate to the north-west, a car park to the north-east, Jersey Street to the south-east and Poland Street to the south-west.

Geology

The underlying solid geology of the area is comprised of mudstone of the Manchester Marls Formation. Due north of the site, the solid geology consists of sandstone of the Collyhurst Sandstone Formation and to the south lies sandstone of the Chester Formation. Within the site, this is overlain by superficial deposits of till (BGS 2024).

Topography

The site lay at a height of approximately 50m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and was enclosed on three sides by metal fencing and by a brick wall, which ran alongside Poland Street. Historically, the north-western and north-eastern limits of the site were defined by the limits of two canal arms emanating from the Rochdale Canal. At the time of the investigation, the site comprised hardstanding with areas of self-seeded vegetation. The course of the north-eastern canal arm could be traced within the site, along its north-eastern boundary; this section of canal arm recently subject to an investigation as part of enabling works in the area (Stitt 2023).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following is based on information provided in a desk-based assessment produced by Salford Archaeology in 2021 (Brogan 2021).



Plate 2: Site boundary superimposed onto Green's map of 1787-94

Development of the site

One of the earliest cartographic sources to show the development site in detail is William Green's *Map of Manchester and Salford*, published in 1794 (Plate 2). This captured Ancoats at an early stage in its industrialisation; a great deal of speculative house building was being carried out and consequently many of the roads shown on the map were also speculated and had not yet been built. The site was bordered by Elliot Street (now Jersey Street) to the south-east, Poland Street to the south-west with vacant plots lying to the north and east. Heath Street is shown intersecting the site. Buildings are shown occupying the south-western end of the development site. A rectangular block is shown extending partway across the projected line of Heath Street. To the south are two distinguishable blocks of houses, one on Elliot Street (Jersey Street) and the other lying at the junction of Elliot Street and Poland Street. The Elliot Street

(Jersey Street) properties are depicted with an enclosed yard and small square outbuildings, likely privies, to the rear.

The 1795 Manchester Rate Book lists 16 occupants of Poland Street (Manchester Rate Books 1706-1900 M 9/40/2/52), which may include some of the occupants of the houses depicted on Green's map. By 1806, the number of occupants had risen to 21 (Manchester Rate Books 1706-1900 M 9/40/2/68).

It has also been possible to place the houses along Elliot Street (Jersey Street) in the late 18th century; in 1798, the houses were listed as N^{os}. 26-30 (Manchester Rate Books 1706-1900 M 9/40/2/56). In 1794, James Hunt – a weaver – was listed as residing at N^o 27 Elliot Street (Scholes 1794, 71), however rate book entries for the following year place him at N^o 32 (Manchester Rate Books 1706-1900 M 9/40/2/52). In 1798, John Ryder – a Flour Dealer – was recorded at N^o 30 Elliott Street; his neighbour at N^o 31 was also engaged in the same line of business. Cross-examination of the rate book entries for the same year however show other individuals at these addresses (Manchester Rate Books 1706-1900 M 9/40/2/56).



Plate 3: Extract from Dean and Pigot's Map of Manchester, 1809