



GMAAS
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
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Lucy Harrison
Senior Planner
Development Management Central Core
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Manchester City Council

Date: 23rd May 2025

Dear Lucy

Archaeological Consultation: 142535/FO/2025 - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 2no. new buildings providing up to 758 apartments (Use Class C3), Class E floorspace (comprising flexible office accommodation (Use Class Eg(i)) and Class Ea and b) and associated hard and soft landscaping (including works within the public highway), formation of vehicle accesses and servicing access together with associated works - 140 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester M4 6DU

Thank you for consulting GMAAS on the above planning application.

The application site does not contain any designated heritage assets and does not lie within a conservation area, but is nevertheless of archaeological and historical interest. In particular, the site is occupied by a former iron and steel warehouse that originated from the amalgamation of two important 19th-century ironworks. The first of these was established in c.1830 by William Fairbairn, one of the leading and most influential mechanical engineers in 19th-century Manchester who gained international reputation for improving transmission systems in steam-powered textile mills and for his work on improving steam boilers, culminating in the introduction of the famous Lancashire boiler. He operated several ironworks in Ancoats, with that in the application area identified on the Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1851 as 'Shooter's Brook Iron Works No. 2' (HER Ref: 11406.1.1). This detailed plan also shows the 'Vulcan Iron Works' (HER Ref: 11406.1.2) immediately to the south of Fairbairn's premises. This was also established in c.1830 by John Hetherington, who similarly emerged as one of Manchester's leading engineers and manufacturer of textile machinery. Fairbairn appears to have vacated Shooter's Brook Iron Works No. 2 in the late 1860s / early 1870s when it was absorbed into Hetherington's Vulcan Works, although it is marked 'disused' on the Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1891.

The two redundant ironworks were reused subsequently as an iron and steel warehouse, which still occupies the application site. Despite the erection of new warehouse buildings, it is likely that some elements of the two early 19th-century ironworks may be embedded in the fabric of the surviving buildings together with below-ground remains such as furnace bases and casting pits, all of which warrant further investigation. This is articulated in an archaeological desk-based assessment prepared by Oxford Archaeology in March 2025 and submitted in support of the application.



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The desk-based assessment describes the historical development of the application site, supported by key historic map extracts and data drawn from the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record data, to assess the significance of the archaeological resource in accordance with Policy 207 of the NPPF. The report is a comprehensive and useful document that allows a clear understanding of the potential archaeological interests.

In view of the archaeological and historical interest, the application site warrants further archaeological investigation. GMAAS therefore recommends that, in the first instance, the site is subject to a historic building investigation to record the former iron and steel warehouse and any surviving elements of the earlier ironworks in advance of their ultimate loss. Following demolition of the buildings, an initial phase of intrusive archaeological evaluation will be required. Should significant archaeological remains be encountered during the initial evaluation, further excavation may be required to offset the harm of the development to the buried archaeological resource, in line with the guidance provided by the National Planning Policy Framework. GMAAS accepts that any archaeological remains that do exist are not going to be of national, but of regional or local significance. As such, GMAAS would be content to see the archaeological investigation secured through a condition worded as follows:

'No development works shall take place until the applicant or their agents or their successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Project Design that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Project Design shall cover the following:

- 1. A phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording that includes:***
 - a historic building investigation commensurate with a Level 2/3 survey;***
 - informed by the above, an archaeological evaluation;***
 - pending the results of the above, a targeted open-area excavation carried out in accordance with an updated Project Design.***
- 2. A programme for post-investigation assessment to include:***
 - production of a final report on the results of the investigations and their significance.***
- 3. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.***
- 4. Dissemination of the results of the archaeological investigations commensurate with their significance, including installation of an information board explaining the historic interest in the site.***
- 5. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.***

Reason: In accordance with NPPF policy 218: To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible, pursuant to policy DM1 of the Core Strategy for the City of Manchester.'

All archaeological work should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological contractor, funded by the applicant. GMAAS will review the Project Design and monitor the implementation of the archaeological works on behalf of Manchester City Council.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Heritage Management Director

[Redacted Name]