

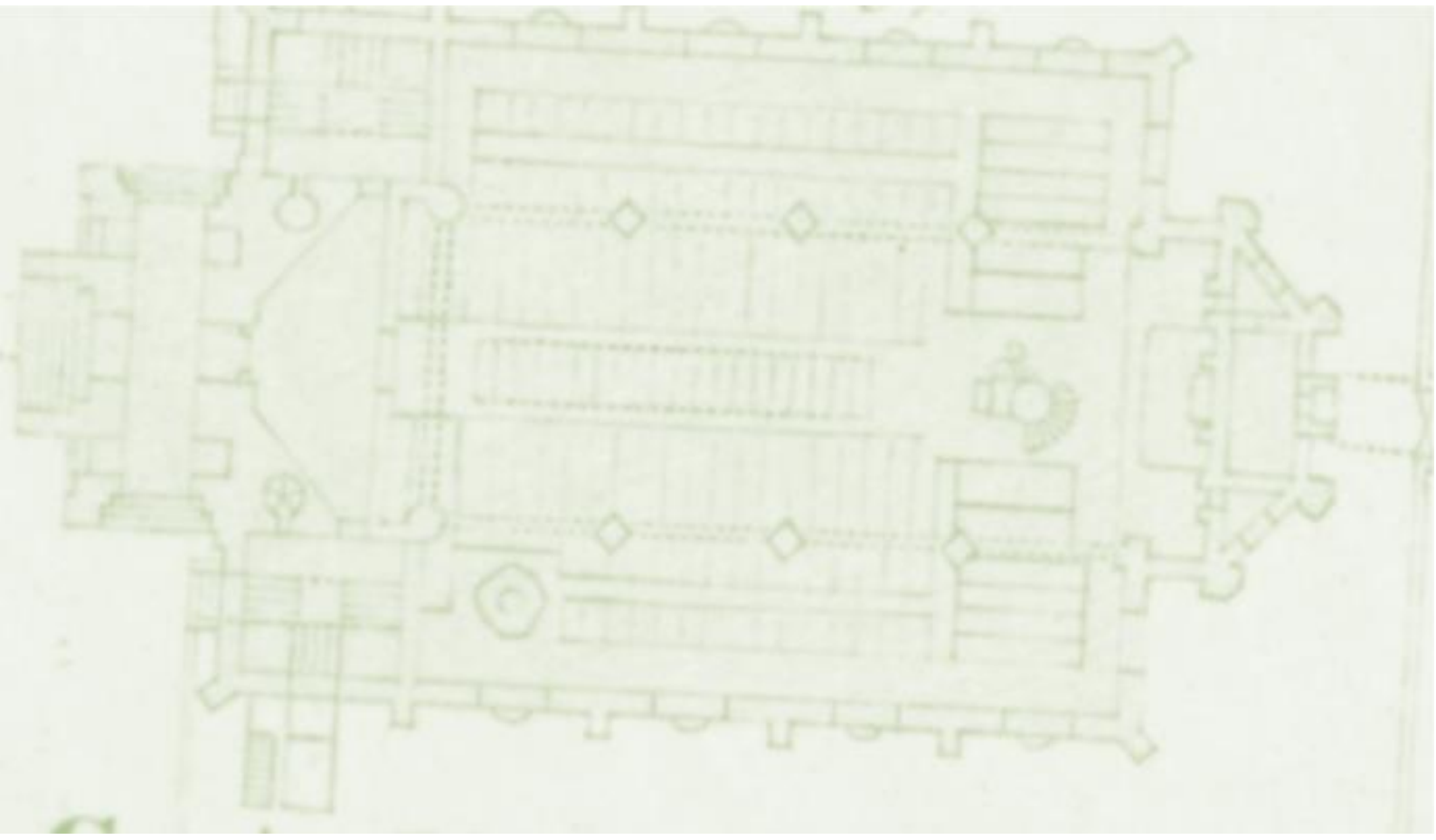
Castlefield House, Manchester

WSI: Watching Brief

March 2025

PREPARED FOR

Castlefield House Properties Limited / OBI Property



Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) / Project Design

Project Name	Castlefield House, Manchester
Report Type	Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
Project Number	61155
NGR	SJ 83347 97758
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Client	Castlefield House Properties Limited / OBI Property
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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Setting	1
1.3. Proposed Development.....	2
1.4. Recommended Activity and Scope	2
1.5. Historical Background	2
2. Aims and Objectives	3
2.1. Aims.....	3
2.2. North West England Regional Research Framework	3
3. Method Statement.....	4
3.1. Archaeological Works.....	4
3.2. Report and Archive.....	7
4. Programme.....	9
4.1. Timetable.....	9
5. Staff Proposals	10
5.1. Team Structure	10
Secondary Sources	11
Appendix 1 - Figures	12

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Overview of the Site

The site is situated in Manchester city centre (Fig 1; centred on NGR SJ 83347 97758) comprising a rectangular plot of land occupied by Castlefield House. The archaeological significance of the site relates primarily to the known proximity of Roman remains of the fort and vicus. Previous excavations in the vicinity have encountered significant archaeological remains at depths of approx. 300mm.

1.1.2. Circumstances of the project

The proposed development will exterior alterations to elevations of the building and public realm improvements, including alterations to parking at Castlefield House (Planning Ref: 141586/FO/2024).



Plate 1: Recent satellite image of the site, showing the red line development boundary

1.2. Setting

1.2.1. Location and description

Castlefield House is located on Liverpool Road, in the Castlefield area of Manchester (centred on: NGR SJ 83347 97758). The approximate postcode for the site is **M3 4SB**. The red line development boundary encompasses the footprint of Castlefield House and external space. The site is bounded by Tonman Street to the north, Liverpool Road to the south, Barton Road to the east, and Byrom Street to the west.

1.3. Proposed Development

1.3.1. Proposals

The proposed development will exterior alterations to elevations of the building and public realm improvements, including alterations to parking at Castlefield House.

1.4. Recommended Activity and Scope

1.4.1. Recommended Activity

The proposed scheme includes new drainage strategy and improvements to the public realm which will involve groundworks, landscaping and planting; these activities have the potential to cause loss or damage to any below-ground remains surviving within the site. Monitoring and recording of intrusive works in the form of an archaeological watching brief will be undertaken to ensure any archaeological remains encountered are appropriately recorded. This approach to mitigating against the loss or damage to heritage assets and potential heritage assets of archaeological interest follows the guidance of NPPF (Paragraph 218).

1.4.2. Scope

The scope of the watching brief will include monitoring of a groundworks relating to the public realm improvements. It is anticipated that the works will comprise intermittent visits throughout the duration of the works with the need for permanent presence watching briefs during specified groundworks, particularly any deep or extensive excavations such as tree pits or drainage trenches and any trenching for the foundations of the new buildings.

The archaeological watching brief shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved Project Design (formerly referred to as a 'Written Scheme of Investigation') as stated in planning documentation (CIfA 2023).

Should significant remains be encountered, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) will be informed. Detailed investigation of such remains would fall beyond the scope of the watching brief. In such a scenario, a revised Project Design for an archaeological mitigation and updated cost proposal would be required.

1.5. Historical Background

The background of the site and its broader context has been presented in a Heritage Statement produced by Zerum (2024); this document should be referred to for more detailed information regarding the development of the site.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1. Aims

The main aim of the archaeological watching brief will be to undertake a programme of archaeological watching brief, to accurately record the location, extent and character of any surviving archaeological features. More specific aims of the investigation are to:

- to establish, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;
- to confirm any surviving Roman stratigraphy within the site
- to identify any Roman artefactual material
- to ensure preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered;
- to make available the results of the work

2.2. North West England Regional Research Framework

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

Roman:

- **R11:** How can we identify typologies and the development of military sites and Roman road systems?
- **R16:** How can we improve interpretations of the later phases of Romano-British towns?
- **R17:** What was the extent of Roman rural and urban settlement interaction?
- **R32:** How does military resourcing affect civilian sites?

3. Method Statement

3.1. Archaeological Works

3.1.1. Watching Brief

The principal aim of the archaeological monitoring and recording will be to establish the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest and, if present, record the remains.

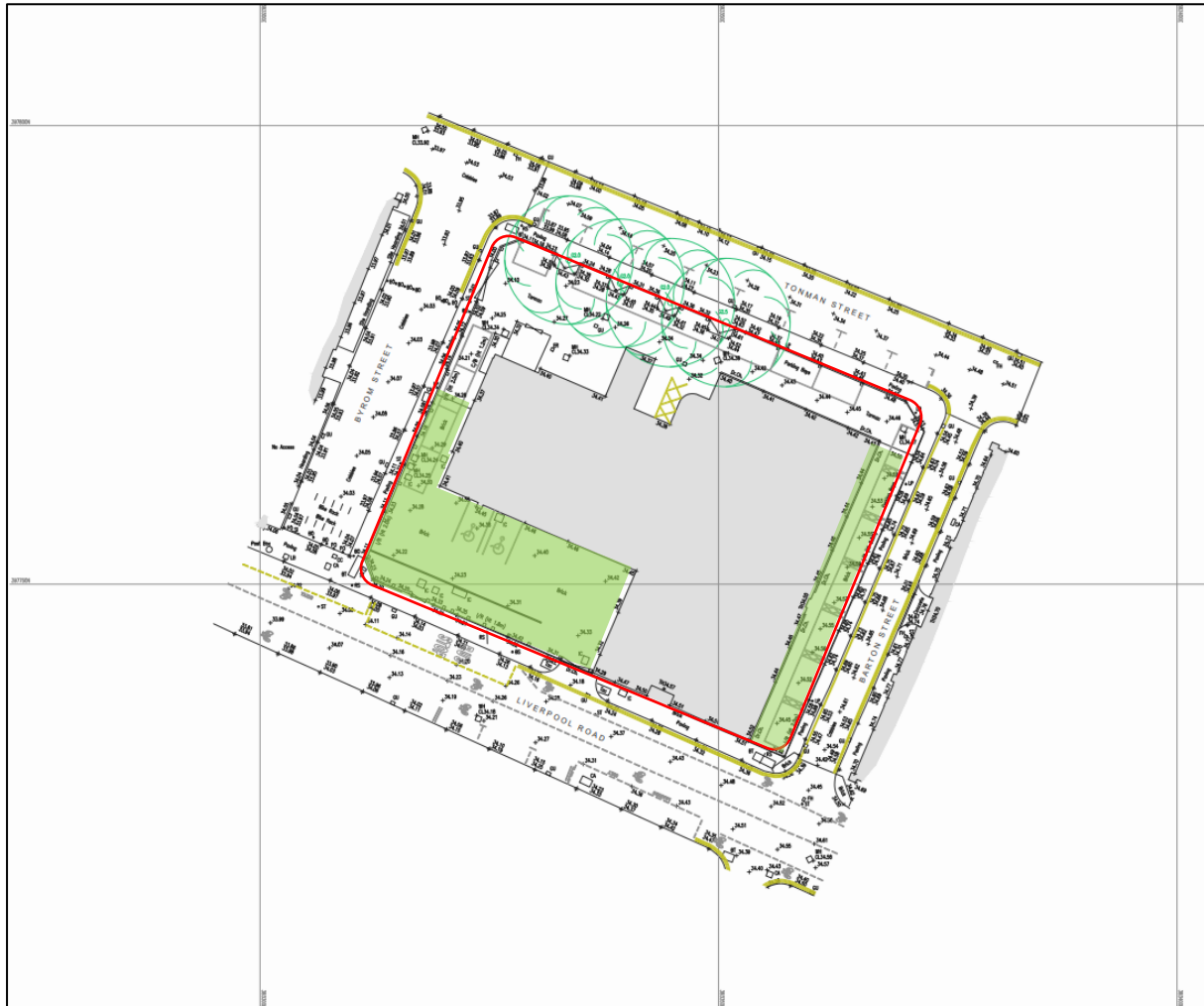


Plate 2: Watching Brief Locations to be monitored (green)

3.1.2. Rationale

The rationale for the watching brief areas is outlined below and will include monitoring and recording of groundworks relating to:

- The construction of the proposed bike shed, including trenches for footings or foundation slabs or associated service runs
- Excavations for any attenuation tank and associated drainage trenches
- Tree pits
- General site reduction or landscaping

The watching brief zones (Plate 2; Figure 2) will encompass the enclosed courtyard to the east and south-west of Castlefield House.

Any machine or hand-dug excavations needed in these locations will be subject to archaeological monitoring.

3.1.3. Pre-commencement

Production of this Project Design has been undertaken by Civic Heritage. Any changes to this agreed PD will only be made in consultation with GMAAS acting on behalf of the local planning authority. In addition to the completion and approval of the Project Design prior to on-site commencement of activity, the nominated Project Manager will:

- Liaise with the client to ensure mutual understanding of the project deliverables, timeframes, access, health and safety, aims and resources.
- Liaise with the archaeological curator or their representative.
- Obtain background information necessary for the project (topographic surveys, service plans, proposed groundworks/drainage and building designs, previous reports)
- Ensure the production of relevant documentation such as Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) taking into consideration the archaeological methodology.
- Ensure adequate staffing and resources (e.g. plant and welfare) are programmed.

3.1.4. Methodology

General Methodology

All archaeological work shall be conducted following the Standards for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording (ClfA 2023a) and Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording (ClfA 2023b). Before commencement all interested parties will agree an acceptable method of proceeding. Prior to the commencement of any works, the location of the trial pits to be monitored archaeologically will be laid out accurately with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid.

Permanent Presence Watching Brief:

A suitably qualified archaeologist will be in attendance for the duration of any intrusive below ground works. It is expected that attendance will be required during specified groundworks, as stipulated above (3.1.2).

The purpose of this work will be to create a record of the survival, thickness and characteristics of the archaeological deposits, and to establish the survival of any surviving features or structural remains, particularly those that can be dated to the Roman or post-Roman occupation of the site.

If archaeological remains are encountered, the monitoring archaeologist will have the opportunity to halt the excavation. Adequate time will be afforded to allow cleaning and recording of any exposed archaeology. In the eventuality that significantly complex or unexpected remains (e.g. complex Roman, medieval or later stratigraphy, roads, negative archaeology or masonry etc.) are encountered that would incur a noticeable delay to the programme of works, Civic will immediately contact the client (Obi Properties / TJM) and

GMAAS to agree an acceptable course of action. This will may involve discrete areas of controlled mitigation to fully record any remains present or where this is not practical, the relocation or redesign of trenching/excavations to avoid damage or loss to sensitive remains.

If it proves necessary for excavations to exceed more than 1.2m and / or if the trench sides appear to be loose or unstable at any depth, then provision may be made to widen and step the trenches to facilitate access. In instances where no archaeological remains are present, excavations exceeding 1.2m below ground level will be inspected and recorded from the trench edge.

Context Recording

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

Photography

A full and detailed photographic record of individual contexts will be maintained and similarly general views from standard viewpoints of the overall site at all stages of the excavation will be generated. Photography will be 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 will be maintained on photographic pro-forma sheets.

Planning

The location of all the excavated trenches and any archaeological remains encountered therein will be surveyed using a combination of manual drawing (supplemented by total station/drone/GPS or other survey methods, as required). This process will generate scaled plans within AutoCAD, which will then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings will be generated at an accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale but can be output at any scale required. All information will be georectified to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and all levels will be tied into Ordnance Datum.

Human Remains

If in situ human remains and/or graves are encountered these will not be removed. A Ministry of Justice Licence will be obtained. The presence will be recorded and a mitigation strategy developed, most likely to be moving the drainage/service trenches or excavations away from the burial area.

Finds Policy

Finds recovery and sampling programmes will be 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 will follow professional guidelines (UKIC). Any artefacts identified as grave goods will not be removed.

The recovery of a large or significant finds assemblage during the works may require further stages of analysis and reporting, beyond the scope of a watching brief report.

Any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996.

Deposit Sampling

Samples will be collected from any suitable deposits encountered during the watching with the aim of identifying any residual evidence of the past environment or industrial processes and potential dating. The samples should be collected, in as close to sterile conditions as feasibly possible.

3.2. Report and Archive

3.2.1. Report

A draft copy of the watching brief report will be submitted for comment to the client and GMAAS within eight weeks of the completion of the final phase of investigation fieldwork. This will present the results obtained from the archaeological investigation, and will include:

- a title page detailing site address, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address;
- full content's listing;
- a non-technical summary of the findings of the fieldwork;
- a description of the archaeological background;
- an account of the historical development of the site;
- a description of the findings of the fieldwork;
- detailed drawings (plans and relevant sections) at appropriate scales of the excavated trenches, showing the archaeological features exposed;
- photographs with a good depth of field, appropriately lit and in clear focus of the trial pits and any archaeological features of potential significance;
- a catalogue and assessment of each category of artefact recovered during the investigation and biological samples, including the potential for further analysis;
- a summary, assessment, and interpretation of the results of the archaeological investigation;
- a consideration of the importance of the archaeological remains present on the site in local, regional and national terms;
- recommendations for any further work and dissemination, made in consultation with GMAAS

The client will be provided with a digital copy of the report (pdf format), printed copies will be available upon request and may be subject to an additional fee.

3.2.2. Archive

The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current Historic England guidelines, and current

ClfA guidance (Standards and Guidelines for the Creation, Compilation, Transportation and Deposition of Archaeological Archives ClfA 2020). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data gathered during the course of the project.

The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the ClfA in that organisation's code of conduct.

The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in Greater Manchester. All drawn records will be transferred to and stored in digital format, in systems which are easily accessible. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works and will be maintained by Civic Heritage. Pending the results of the fieldwork a digital copy of the archive ultimately being deposited alongside any artefactual material.

Finds

The integrity of the finds' assemblage will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works with the archive ultimately being deposited with a suitable recipient museum.

3.2.3. Dissemination

The results of the investigation will ultimately be disseminated through deposit of the findings of the investigation in a technical report, together with some form of publication, if required.

- The report will be submitted to the relevant HER within three months of production of the completed report.
- Civic Heritage will register the report with OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations).
- Civic Heritage may utilise social media to communicate the discovery of archaeological findings and any artefacts of interest at any time. Discretion will be taken not to disclose such information or make site locations anonymous if specifically asked to do so by the client.
- The Project Archive will be maintained by Civic Heritage.
- Any artefactual material will be offered to an agreed recipient museum, or otherwise will be subject to selective discard

4. Programme

4.1. Timetable

4.1.1. Fieldwork

The project will commence on a date mutually agreed between the Client and Civic Heritage. The programme of archaeological works will be dependent on the duration of the groundworks and overall construction programme. Archaeological attendance is likely to be required towards the start of this programme.

Civic Heritage will have notified GMAAS one week prior to commencement of the onsite activities, allowing them to schedule monitoring visits during the course of the watching brief and to arrange a permanent presence watching brief during specific intrusive works.

4.1.2. Report

A draft report will be submitted to GMAAS and the Client for comment within eight weeks of completion of the final phase of fieldwork. The project archive will be deposited with the receiving museum (where applicable) within six months of completion of the fieldwork.

4.1.3. Project Monitoring

Civic Heritage will notify GMAAS of any discoveries of archaeological significance so that site visits can be made, as necessary. Any changes to this agreed PD will only be made in consultation with GMAAS acting on behalf of the local planning authority.

5. Staff Proposals

5.1. Team Structure

5.1.1. Responsibilities

The project will be overseen and managed by Oliver Cook (Director, Civic Heritage). Oliver is an experienced field archaeologist with over 11 years' experience and has undertaken many investigations and excavations across the country. Oliver holds current valid CSCS certification.

His role will be to ensure that the Project Design is implemented within the framework of the Project Objectives and will be responsible for all aspects of staff and resource logistics, ensuring the smooth running of the project programme.

5.1.2. Fieldwork Staff

It is not possible to provide details of specific archaeologists that will be involved with the fieldwork at this stage, but all shall be suitably qualified archaeologists with proven relevant experience

5.1.3. External Specialists

The following list of internal and external specialists can be called if required:

- Roman, Medieval and post-medieval pottery - Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- CBM - Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- Clay tobacco pipes - Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- Glass - David Dungworth (independent specialist)
- Iron/Steel objects - David Dungworth (independent specialist)
- Industrial residues - Gerry McDonnell (independent specialist)
- Animal bone – Hannah Russ (Archaeology.biz)
- Leather - Quita Mould (independent specialist)
- Conservation - Karen Barker (independent specialist)

Bibliography

Secondary Sources

Zerum. 2024. Castlefield House Heritage Statement: Proposed Exterior Alterations to Elevations and Public Realm Improvements. Zerum, unpubl. report

ClfA, 2020. *Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*, Reading

ClfA, 2020. *Standards and Guidelines for the Creation, Compilation, Transportation and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*, Reading

ClfA, 2023a *Standards for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Reading

ClfA, 2023b *Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Reading

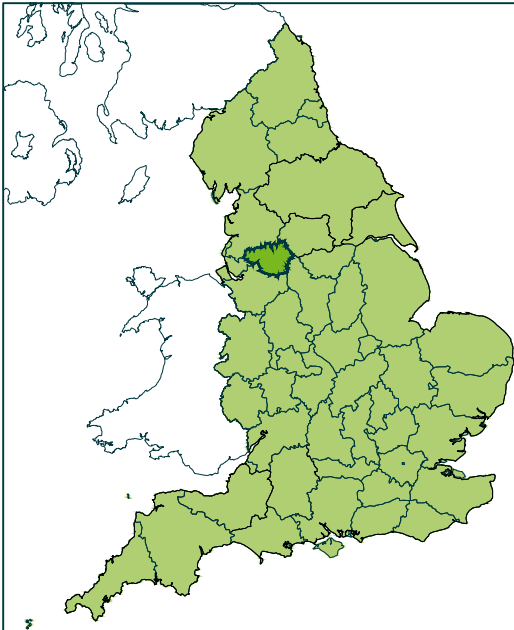
Appendix 1 - Figures

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Watching Brief Area

Figure 3 Watching Brief Area Superimposed onto the 1850 OS Town Plan

Figure 4 Watching Brief Area Superimposed onto the 1891 OS Town Plan



Castlefield House, Liverpool Road, Manchester

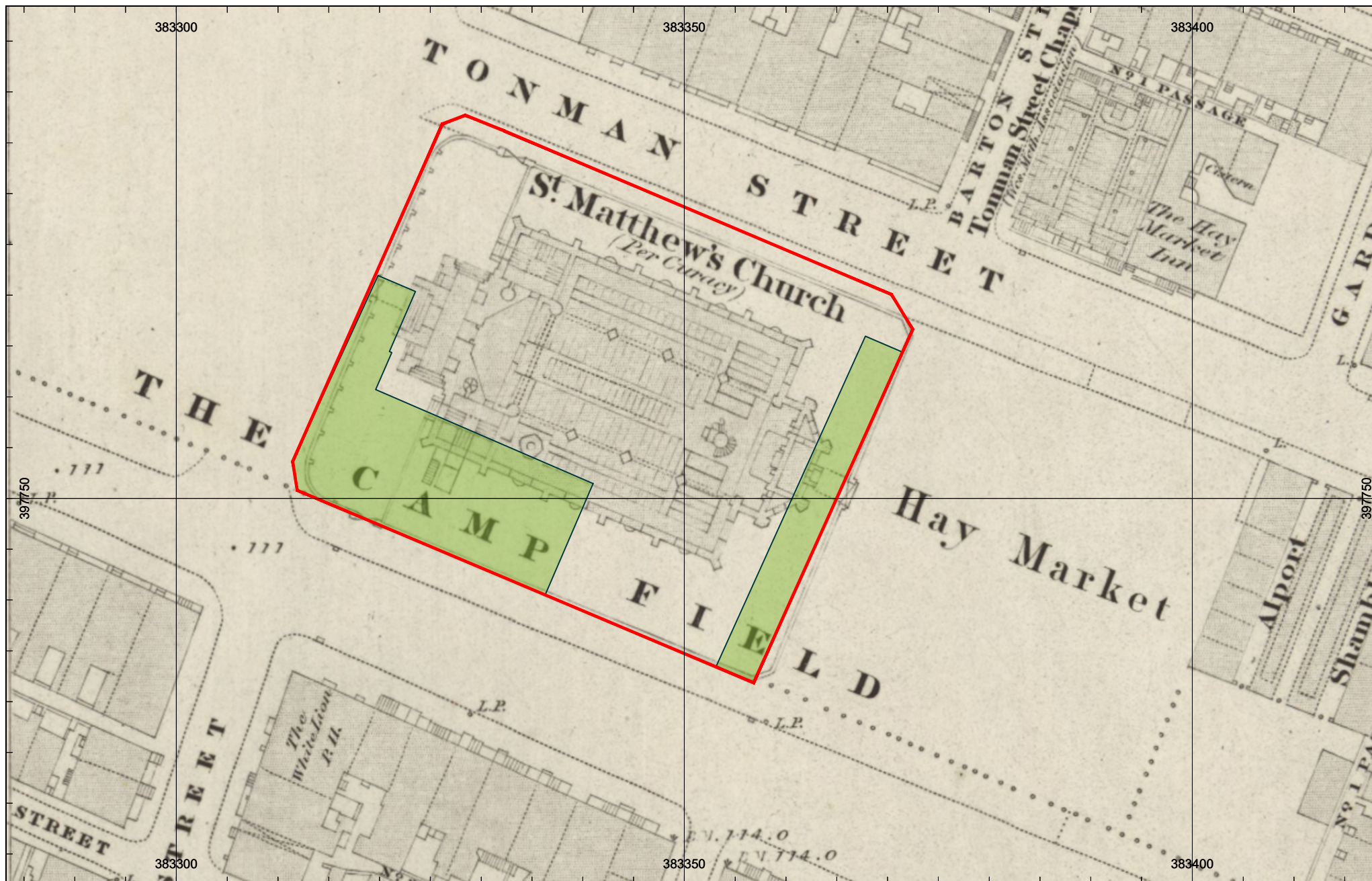
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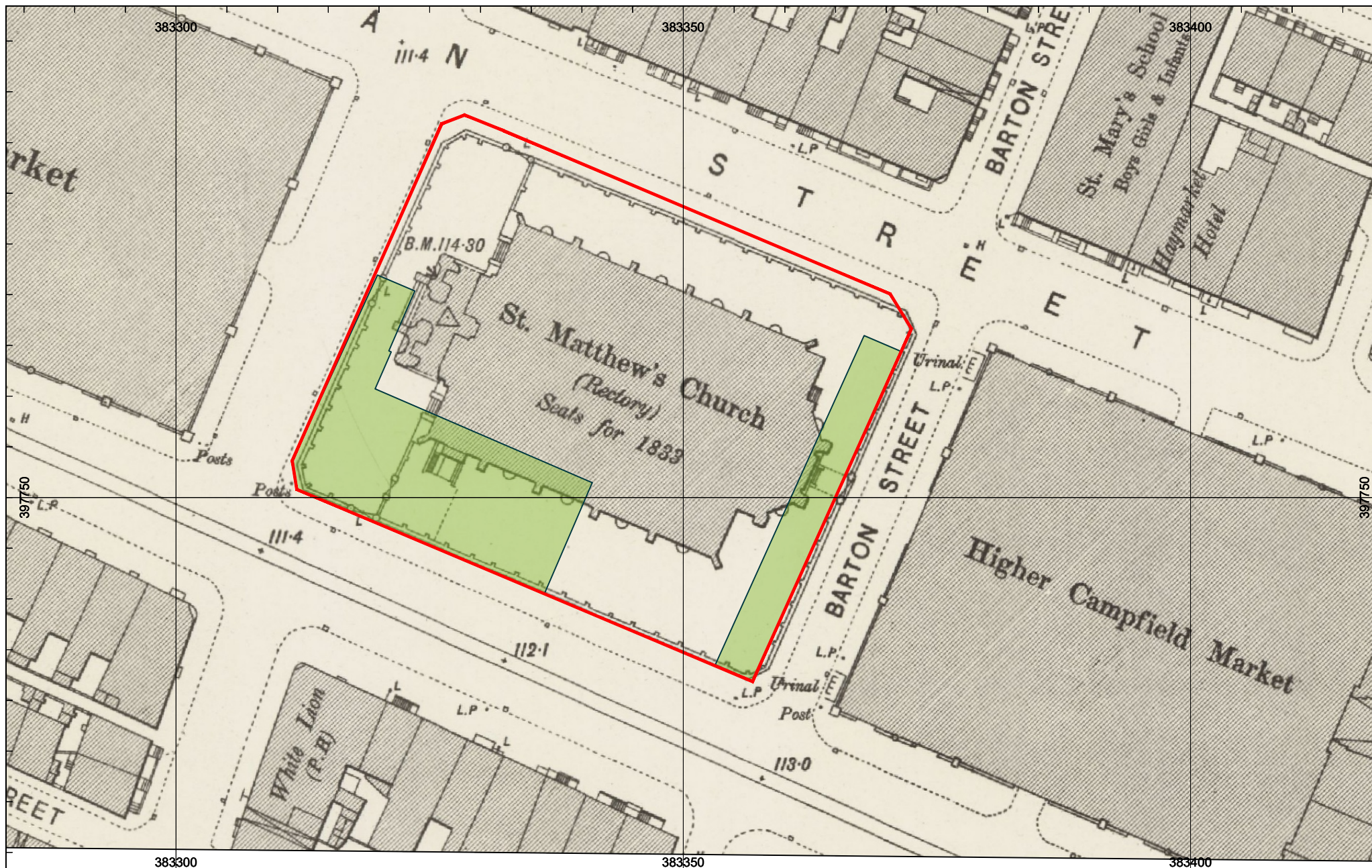
Figure 1: site location

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