NEXUS HERITAGE

Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester



Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

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Creating an overlay of historic mapping (including 1st and 2nd edition OS Maps) and modern OS data can never be completely accurate. Creating a good approximation relies on using digital technologies to estimate and extrapolate the projection, orientation and scale of original maps by correlating known points on the modern OS grid with the historic mapping. This georeferencing 'distorts' the historic mapping to fit the modern grid using a set of known points chosen by the cartographer/illustrator.

Modern digitally produced OS mapping has a stated accuracy tolerance. The most detailed mapping at 1:1,250 (urban) will have a relative error of <±0.5m up to 60m. On the ground that equates to an error between two points which are 60m apart on the ground. 95% of the time the scaled measurement would be between 59.1m and 60.9m (paraphrased from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/land-registry-plans-the-basis-of-land-registryapplications/land-registry-plans-the-basis-of-land-registry-plans-practice-guide-40-supplement-1.)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Historic Envirobnment Desk-Based Assessment (hereafter the Assessment) has been prepared by Nexus Heritage on behalf of Kellen Homes and the Greater Manchester Youth Federation (hereafter GMYF) and is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission at Land at Mount Road, Gorton (hereafter the Site). The description of development is as follows:

Full planning application proposing the erection of a youth, sports and community hub (Use Class E(d)(g)), F2(b)), 2no football pitches combined netball and basketball court, cricket strip (Use Class F2 (c)), a two storey apartment building comprising 36no apartments for young person's accommodation (Use Class C3) and 267no dwellinghouses (Use Class C3a), with associated landscaping, public realm, ecological mitigation, refuse storage, drainage, car parking and other associated works, with access from Wembley Road and Mount Road.

The application site is owned by GMYF in its entirety. GMYF is a charity, originating from the mid 1800s, who work with a wide variety of voluntary youth groups and projects throughout the most disadvantaged communities of Greater Manchester. GMYF's aim is to provide as many opportunities as possible for young people to grow and be the best that they can be, helping them to move beyond their boundaries. In simple terms, it is about getting young people off the streets, into clubs and doing something positive with their time.

The application site was previously in use as football pitches but has been vacant and underutilised since 2019 with no public access. GMYF selected Kellen Homes as their developer partner and together, with their professional teams, they have developed proposals for the site which will secure its future as a youth, community and sports hub whilst also providing much needed housing in Gorton.

The proposed development is described fully in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Gillespies and presented on the application drawings. The application proposals have been developed in consultation with Manchester City Council Officers and other key stakeholders."The aim of the Assessment is to determine, in so far as is reasonable by desk-based research and a site visit, the presence or absence of heritage assets (which include archaeological remains and structures within the historic built environment) and the character, survival and state of preservation of such assets on and in the vicinity of the site.

The assessment comprises an examination of evidence secured from the Lancashire Record Office (LRO), the Greater Manchester County Record Office (GMCRO), the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (GMHER), and other source repositories as appropriate. A site visit and walk-over survey were undertaken.

Based on research undertaken for the Assessment, this report highlights any potential direct and indirect impacts to any heritage assets. This Assessment has been undertaken in compliance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' document, *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2020).

In archaeological terms there is no overt interest at the site, and any archaeological potential would appear to be related to the presence of what is interpreted to be an early medieval earthwork feature – the Nico Ditch – which runs parallel to and just south of the site's southern boundary

With respect to the heritage of the built environment, the principal interest arises from several listed buildings within 1,000m of the site (The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road; Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road; and 46-50 Far Lane). The site forms part of the settings of these Listed Buildings. Consideration has been given to the potential for development of the site to change the setting of these Listed Buildings and subsequently impact on their significances.

The site is not wholly or partly within a Conservation Area and the nearest such Area is the Gore Brook Valley Conservation Area *c.* 750m to the north-north-east. Consideration has been given to the potential for development of the site to change the setting of this Conservation Area and subsequently impact on its significance.

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2. LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND PEDOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Location

The site comprises an area of land at Mount Road, situated within Gorton, a predominantly residential area located to the west of Manchester City Centre and is centred, approximately, at National Grid Reference SJ 88333 95035 (Fig. 1).

The spatial attribute information for the site is provided in the table below and relates to the spatial data as illustrated in Fig. 2 below.

Field Name	Data
Project No.	3602
Project Name	Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester – Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment
Organisation	Nexus Heritage
Date	May 2023
Digitisation Source	Client/Ordance Survey

Topography

The site extends over 9.07ha (Fig. 2) and comprises an area of land at Mount Road, situated within Gorton, a predominantly residential area located to the west of Manchester City Centre.

The site as existing is vacant, with no public access, having previously been used as playing pitches until 2019. The site comprises 9.07ha and is rectangular in shape with the majority formed of grass land aside from an area of hard standing where the former changing facilities once stood. The former vehicular access is from Mount Road.

The northern boundary of the site sits adjacent to a residential development build by Sedona Homes comprising terraced and semi-detached properties, with Mannering Street running in between, separated by fencing. To the east is Wembley Road, which hosts a number of semidetached dwellings, with mature trees lining the site boundary. To the west is Mount Road, also lined with fencing and trees, with Gorton Primary School, Manchester Boxing Centre and Nutsford Vale Park adjacent to the street. To the south lies a footway which connects Mount Road to Wembley Road. Further south is Cedar Mount Academy.

Geology

The British Geological Survey Geology Viewer (https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?_ga=2.184443238.1320875098.1669214624-1333521033.1669214624) records the bedrock at the site as Chester Formation – Sandstone, a. sedimentary bedrock formed between 250 and 247.1 million years ago during the Triassic period.

The superficial deposits are recorded as Till, Devensian - Diamicton. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

Soils

The Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute (CSAI) Soilscapes Viewer (http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/) maps the soil cover at the site as Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils.

Site Investigation

No known archaeological interventions have taken place on site but a geotechnical investigation, comprising trial pits and boreholes, was undertaken on the site in late 2022 by Brownfield Solutions Ltd. A total of 45 trial pits and 12 boreholes was excavated/sunk. On the basis of the site investigation and outside the footprints of former structures and areas of hardstanding the broad stratigraphic sequence can be characterised as a made ground of topsoil (grass over dark brown slightly gravelly clayey to coarse sand with many rootlets, gravel is sub-angular to rounded and fine to coarse mudstone and sandstone) between 250mm and 350mm deep which lies over a made ground of black sandy gravel between 600mm and 800mm thick (sand is fine to coarse with a mixed lithology including ash, the gravel is angular to sub-rounded, fine to coarse brick, clinker, slag, metal, wood, ceramic, glass and mudstone). This lies over a stiff brown, mottled grey slightly sandy slightly gravelly clay, sand is fine to coarse and the mudstone gravel is sub-angular to sub-rounded fine to coarse. The physical properties of this clay are consistent with the description of Devesnian Till – an unsorted and unstratified drift, generally over-consolidated, deposited directly by and underneath a glacier without subsequent reworking by water and consisting of a heterogeneous mixture of clay, sand, gravel.

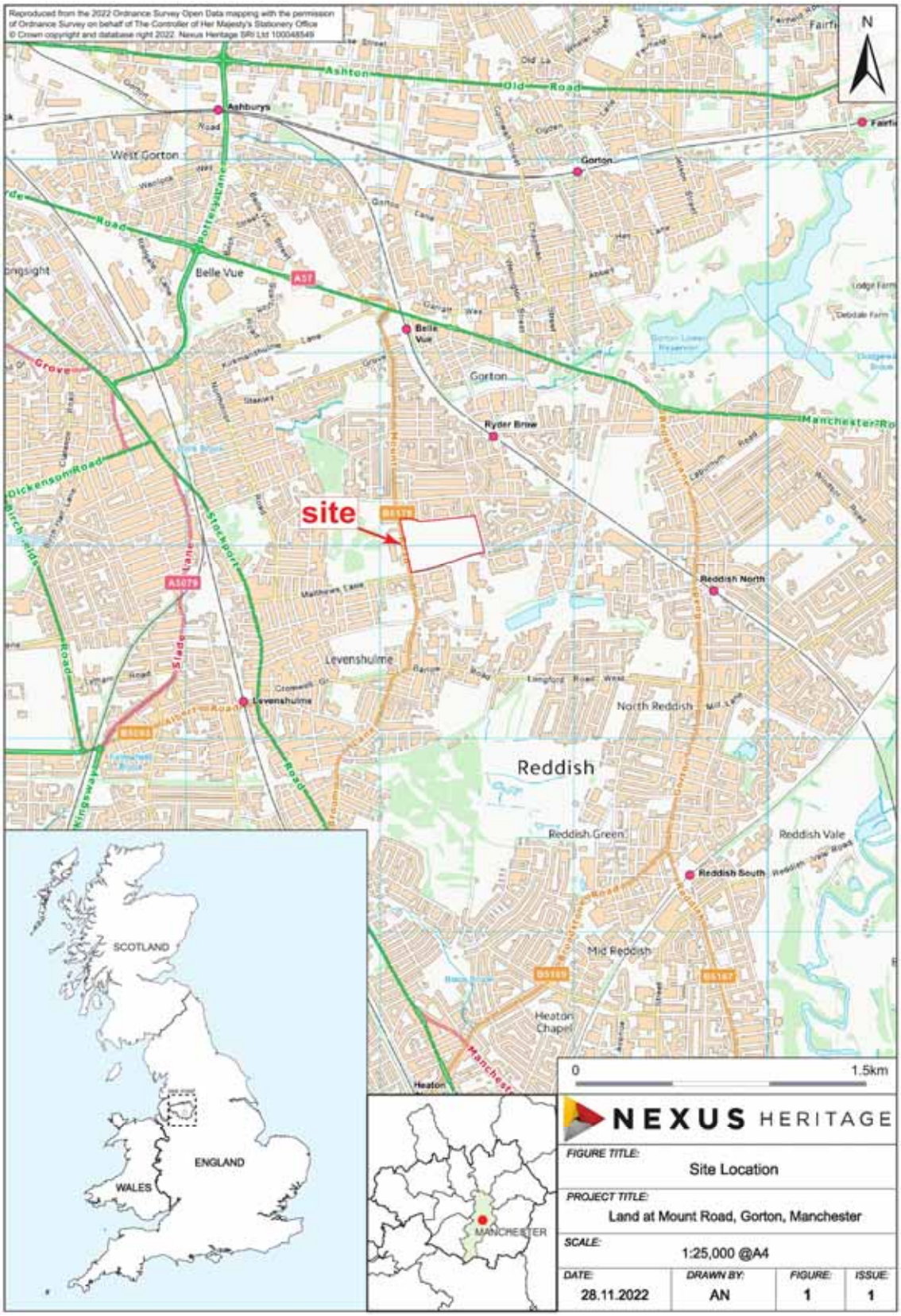


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

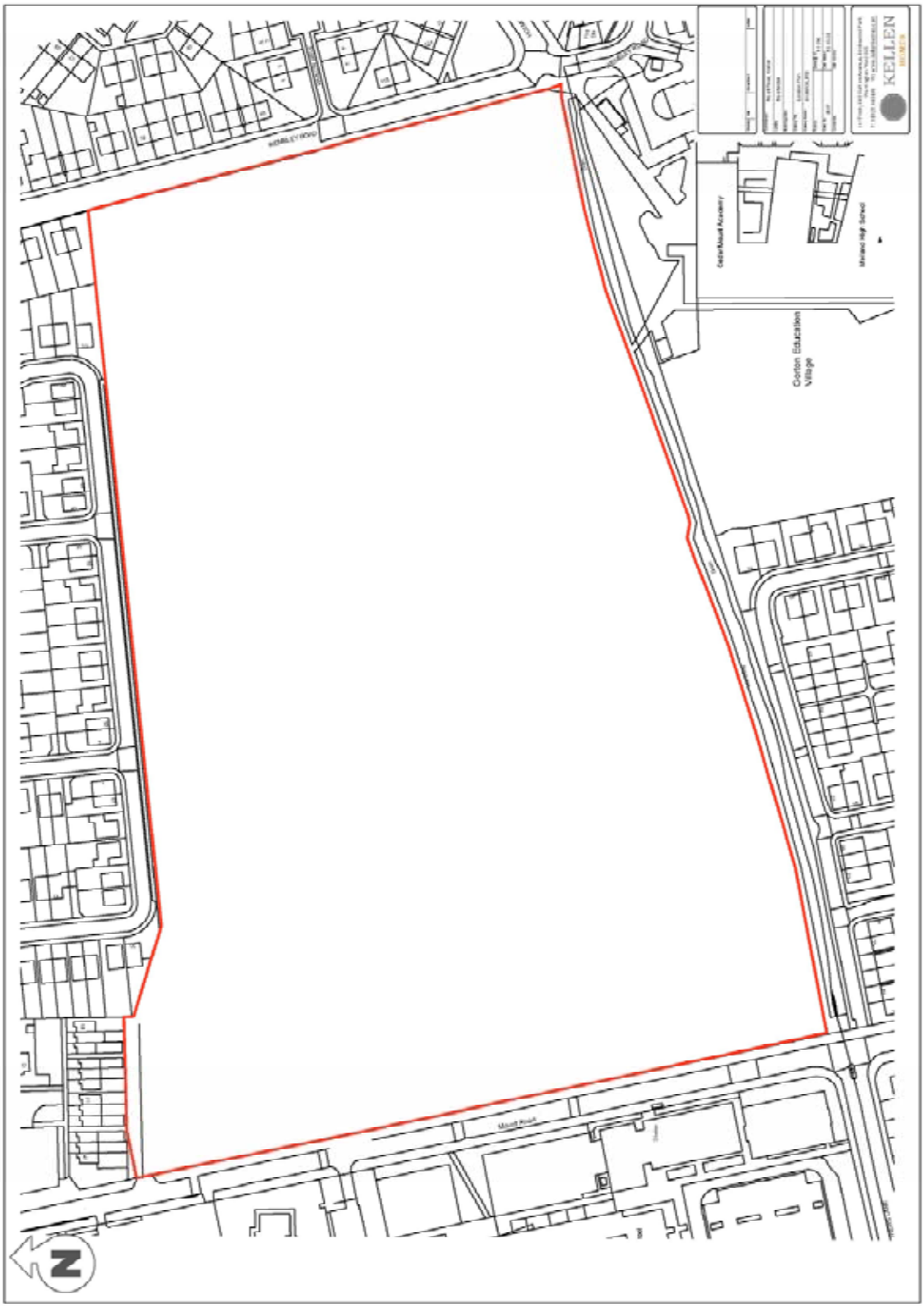


Figure 2: Site Plan

3. LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

Legislation

At the national level, the principal legislation governing the protection and enhancement of archaeological monuments of national importance is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The 1979 Act provides protection to Scheduled Monuments. The consent of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is required for works of demolition, destruction to or damage to a Scheduled Monument. There are no Scheduled Monuments within the site or within 1km of the site.

With respect to the cultural heritage of the built environment the *Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990* applies. The Act sets out the legislative framework within which works and development affecting Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas must be considered. This states that:-

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses" (s66(1))

"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area." (s72(1)).

There are no Listed Buildings within the site, but there are three Listed Buildings within 1,000m of the site - The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1380065); Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1283074); and 46-50 Far Lane (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1200828). The settings of these Listed Buildings would be changed by the proposed development and the Council may engage (s66(1)) of the 1990 Act in the light of the potential for the development to conflict with the preservation of the settings.

The site is not wholly or partly within a Conservation Area and the nearest such Area is the Gore Brook Valley Conservation Area *c.* 0.75km to the north-north-east. Given the separation distance and the characteristics of the intervening topography there is a marked visual and physical barrier between the site and the Conservation Area. There is no inter-visibility and no historical functional relationships between the Conservation Area and the site. The Conservation Area is, therefore, not considered further in this Assessment and it would be inappropriate for the Council to engage (s72(1)) of the 1990 Act.

The *Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill* 2023, by means of amendment via addition to the Town and County Planning Act 1990, imposes a duty of regard to certain heritage assets, which include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens. This duty requires the Council, in considering whether to grant planning permission for the development of land in England which affects a relevant asset or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting. The Bill also amends (S66(1)) of the Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 in that the term "preserving" in (S66(1)) is to be read as "preserving or enhancing" as confirmed above.

The Bill, also makes it a legal requirement for relevant authorities to maintain a historic environment record for its area and defines such a record as a system for storing and making available to the public information about Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens, World Heritage Sites and other sites an authority considers to be of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, objects found in the area in the course of archaeological investigations which the authority considers to be of such interest, and historical, architectural, archaeological or scientific investigations or studies relating to such sites and objects.

Such information is recorded by the GMHER and for the purposes of reporting it is considered useful to treat features entered onto the GMHER as non-designated heritage assets, although this does not admit or confirm that such a status applies.

Hedgerows

Statutory Instrument 1997, No 1160 – *The Hedgerow Regulations 1997* remains in force and deals with hedgerows determined to be 'important' and permits control measures to be applied for their removal. Criteria for determination as 'important' include considerations related to archaeological and historical considerations. There are no hedgerows within or on the boundaries of the site.

National Planning Policy

The place of historic environment assets (both non-designated and designated) within the planning system is informed by the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2023 edition).

Various principles and policies related to heritage and archaeology are set out in the NPPF which guide local planning authorities with respect to the wider historic environment.

The following paragraphs from NPPF are particularly relevant and are quoted in full:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation." Para. 194.

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal." Para. 195.

"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness." Para. 197.

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. " Para. 199.

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional. "* Para. 200.

It should be noted that substantial harm is a high test which has been held to be "tantamount to destruction" (Bedford v SOS and Nuon [2013] EWHC 2847 (Admin)).

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use." Para. 201.

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use." Para. 202.

"*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset*." Para. 203.

In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority must have regard to the national policy framework detailed in NPPF and other material considerations.

Local Planning Policy

With respect to local planning policy the *Manchester's Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Development Plan Document* (Manchester City Council 2012) guides development within Manchester. Policies EN3 Heritage and DM1 Development Management apply.

Policy EN3 states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

Policy DM1 states that all development should have regard to specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document. One of the identified issues is the effect relating to archaeological heritage.

In addition some UDP policies remain in force. Policy DC20.1 Archaeology applies.

Policy DC20.1 states that:

The Council will give particular careful consideration to development proposals which affect Scheduled Ancient [sic] Monuments and sites of archaeological interests, to ensure their preservation in place. In particular:

a. Applications for consent to alter Scheduled Ancient [sic] Monuments or sites of archaeological interest or their settings should be accompanied by an evaluation and assessment of the implications of the proposal.

b. The Council will have special regard to the desirability of securing the preservation of Ancient Monuments and other sites of archaeological interest and their setting in place. It will not permit development that, in its opinion, would adversely affect Scheduled Ancient [sic] Monuments, or other sites of archaeological interests, and their settings, In exceptional cases where development is inevitable, the Council will look at the scope for combining preservation in place with limited investigation and recording.

c. Where the preservation of Scheduled Ancient [sic] Monuments and sites of archaeological interest in place is not appropriate, the Council will seek to gain full and proper recording of the site through early consultation between the applicant and approved archaeological organisation.

Statutory provision, national policies, local policies and local supplementary planning guidance apply a series of formal and informal tests against which the proposed devolvement can be examined and this examination is below in the conclusions below.

Emerging Local Planning Policy

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document – Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan was considered at the Places for Everyone Joint Committee on July 20, 2021 and was subsequently approved by each of the nine districts for publication. The *Places for Everyone* document was submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. An independent examination of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document is being undertaken and the document is not yet adopted.

The Document contains a policy for heritage.

Policy JP-P 2 Heritage

Through this Plan we will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance its historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct identity and sense of place.

Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for safeguarding and enhancing in the future, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive integration of our heritage by:

1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;

2. Utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process, providing opportunities for interpretation and local engagement;

3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;

4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and

5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic value.

Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) and a conservation area should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance including those identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the area. Harm to such elements will only be permitted where this is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological interest and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.

Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use.

Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the

appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.

Professional Standards and Guidance

With respect to good practice in archaeology the professional institute for archaeology in the UK (the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) has developed a range of regulations, standards and guidelines that are binding on all members to ensure that Chartered Institute for Archaeologists members work to high ethical and professional standards. The relevant standard and guidance document for an archaeological assessment is the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (2020).*

In addition to these standards and guidance a number of English Heritage and Historic England publications inform the preparation of historic environment assessment documents*, including Conservation Principles; Policy and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment English Heritage (2008)* and *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (Historic England 2015).*

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

The following section is a summary of the heritage evidence found within a 1,000m radius of the site; this wider area is referred to as the 'Assessment Area'. The evidence has been compiled from the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (GMHER), the Lancashire Archives (LA) and the Greater Manchester County Record Office (GMCRO) which provide an indication of the character, distribution and survival of any potential heritage assets within and in the vicinity of the site and helps define its importance. The locations of the identified assets and archaeological interventions within the Assessment Area are shown in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6 below and basic details for the archaeological monuments are also detailed in a gazetteer (Appendix A).

In summary, the GMHER records three designated assets within the Assessment Area (three Listed Buildings). These are The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1380065); Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1283074); and 46-50 Far Lane (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1200828).

There are 16 archaeological monuments (Fig. 3) within the Assessment Area, none of which is within the site. However, the Nico Ditch (GMHER PRN 1404.1.1, Gaz. 18, Fig. 3) runs parallel to the site's southern boundary at a distance of c. 4-6m from this boundary.

The GMHER correlates the site with one parcel of Historic Landscape Character labelled as *Sports Ground*. This has no particular historical value.

For the sake of baseline clarity it should be noted that there are no Scheduled Monuments wholly or partly within in the site or in the Assessment Area; no World Heritage Sites wholly or partly within in the site or in the Assessment Area; no Registered Parks/Gardens wholly or partly within in the site or in the Assessment Area; and no Registered Battlefields wholly or partly within in the site or the Assessment Area.

The background below includes a statement on the assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site. These assessments are based on information on archaeological assets in the vicinity, the characteristics of current and historic land-use, and available information on the condition and nature of sub-surface deposits. The assessments also take into account any pre-exiting disturbance to the surface and near surface deposits at the site which are likely to have compromised the survival of archaeological remains. The potential is graded from negligible, to low, moderate and high. A negligible potential indicates that archaeological remains are very unlikely to be present; low potential reflects a depressed likelihood for the preservation of archaeological remains; moderate represents an average potential; and high would reflect a demonstrable potential for the survival of archaeological remains.

Previous Archaeological/Heritage Investigations

Several previous archaeological/heritage interventions have taken place within the Assessment Area, but none within the site. These are commonly referred to as 'Events' and are recorded on the GMHER. The locations of these Events are shown on Fig. 4.

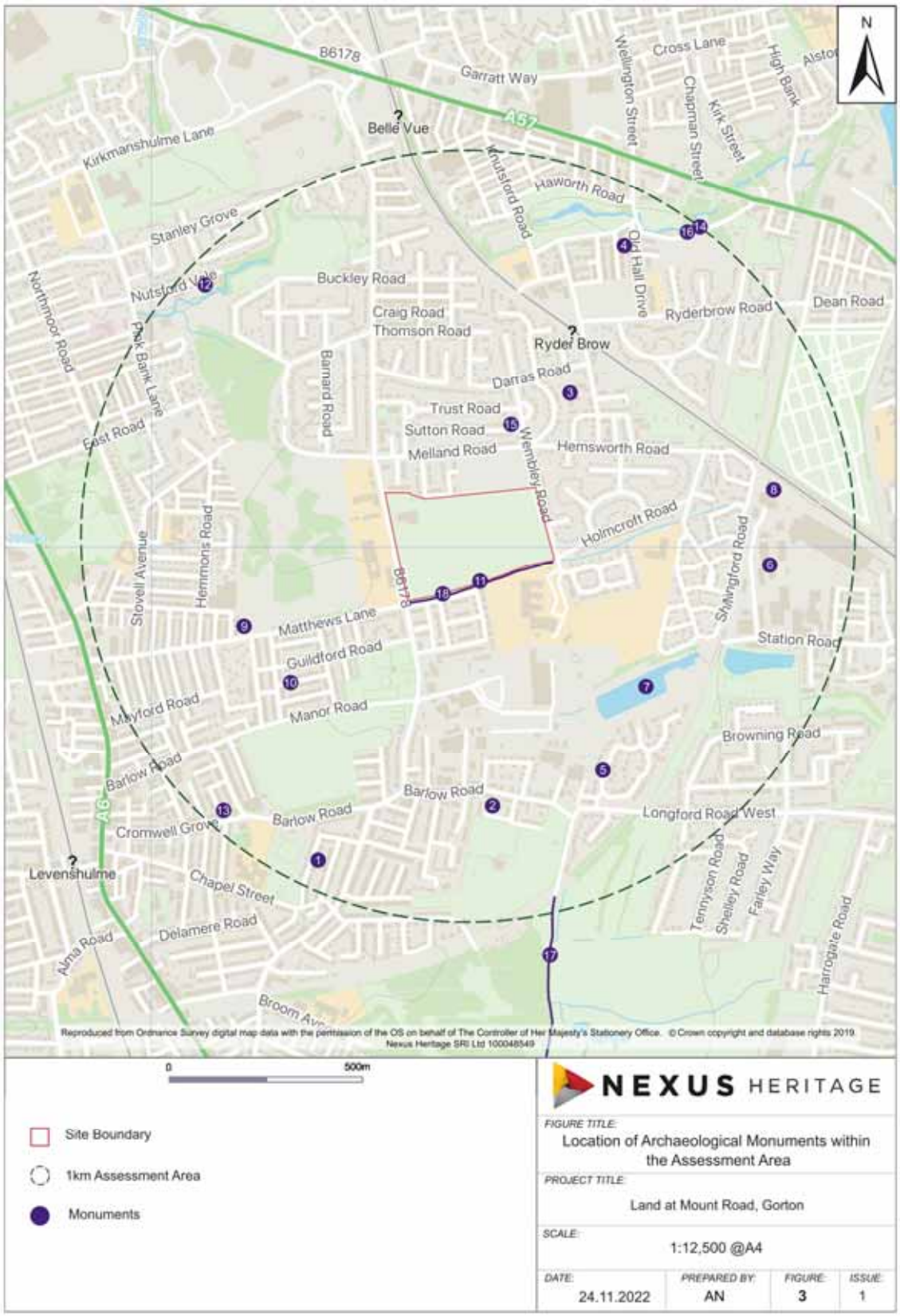


Figure 3: Location of Archaeological Monuments within the Assessment Area



Figure 4: Location of Archaeological Events within the Assessment Area (1km)

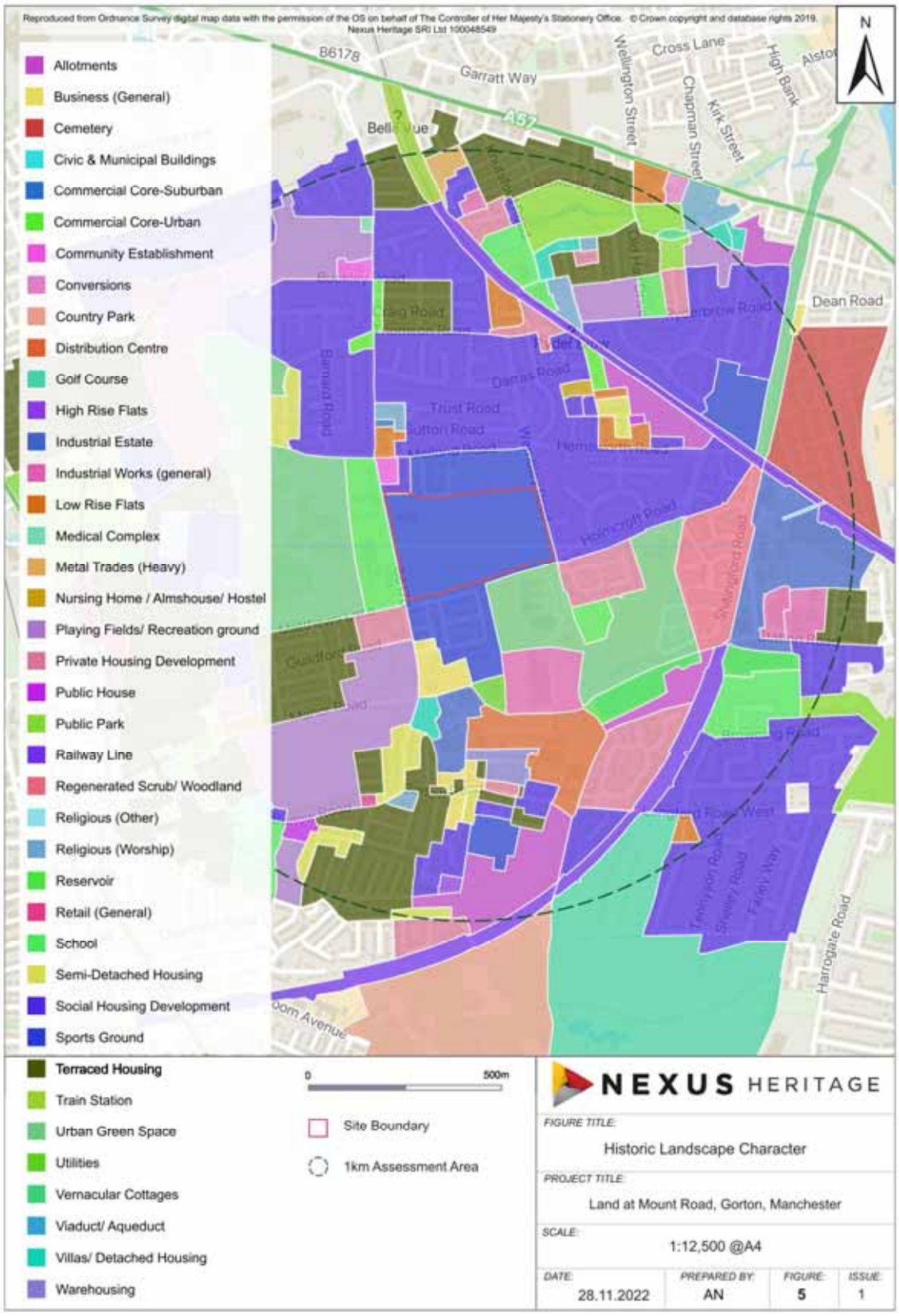


Figure 5: Historic Landscape Character

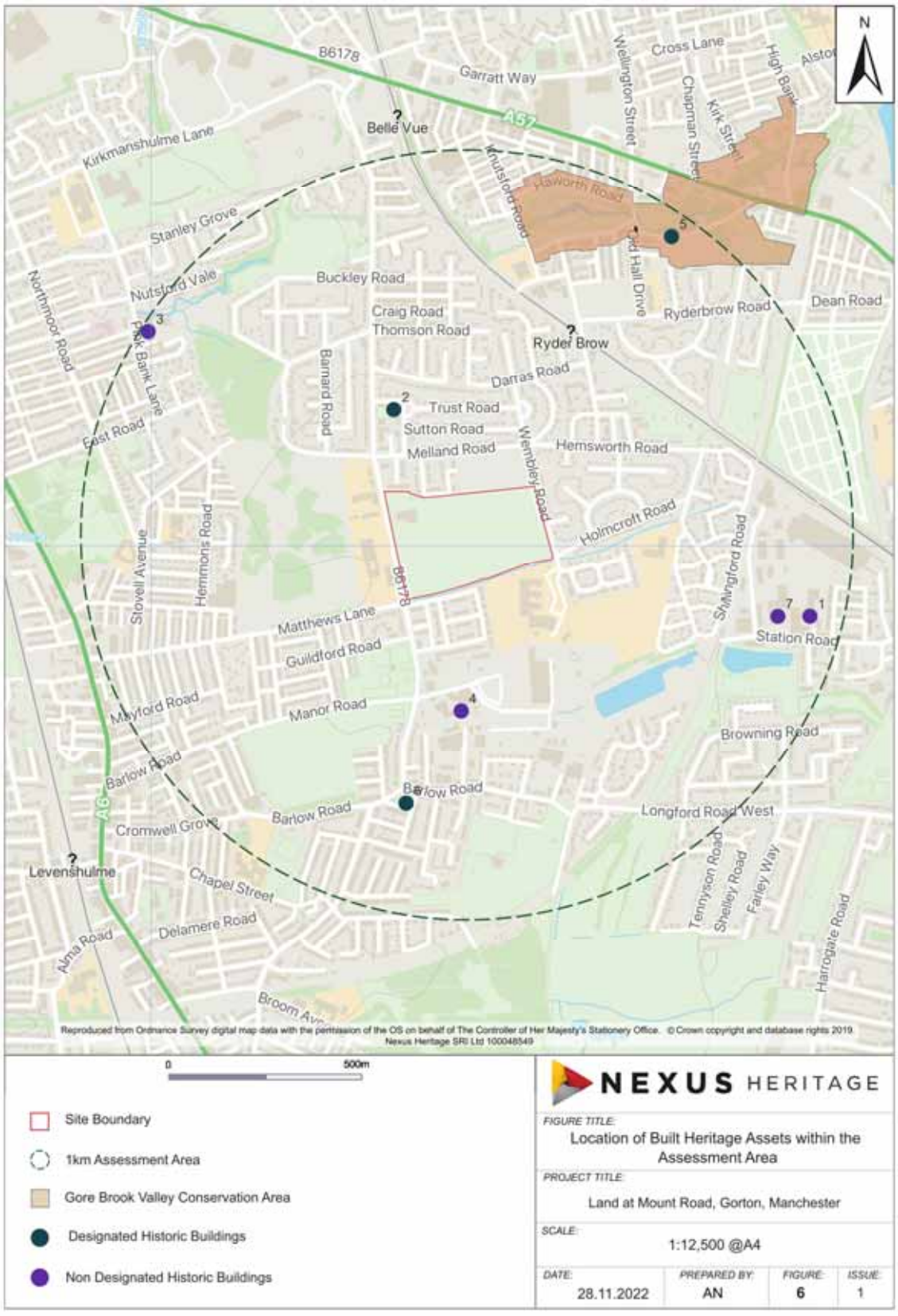


Fig. 6: Location of Built Heritage Assets within the Assessment Area

Prehistoric Period: Palaeolithic (500,000 - 12,000 BC), Mesolithic (12,000 – 4,000 BC) and Neolithic (4,000 – 1,800 BC), Bronze Age (1,800 - 600 BC), Iron Age (600 - 43 AD)

There are no recorded Prehistoric Period archaeological sites or finds within the site or the Assessment Area. The GMHER notes that in 1892, during excavation work in connection with the building of the Manchester-Sheffield-Lincoln railway line, a stone axe, possibly dating to the Neolithic period was found in the Gore Brook area.

Given this background there is a negligible potential for the presence of archaeological remains dating to the Prehistoric Period to be present on the site.

Romano-British Period (43- 410 AD).

The Romano-British period is very well represented in the archaeological record of north-west England and many industrial and military sites, linked by a road network, have been intensively investigated.

There are no records of any Romano-British Period features within the site or the Assessment Area. To the west, however, is the predicted route of a Roman Road on the alignment of Hyde Street – linking Manchester to Buxton. There is also an unproven suspicion that the route of the relic Pink Bank Lane, described in a 1322 survey of Manchester (Crofton 1905, 160) and running *c.* 110m to the north of the site could be a communication route of Roman origin. The current Melland Road is on the alignment of Pink Bank Lane. Crofton describes the lane as an old packhorse route from Stockport to Gorton, which appeared to have been originally laid with cobble stones (Crofton, 1885), said to be still visible not many years prior to publication of the Crofton paper.

The site is therefore, in the vicinity of the certain rote of a Roman Road and possibly close to the alignment of a suspected Roman road. The potential for archaeological remains of the Roman-British period being present on site, however, is negligible/low.

Early Medieval Period (410 - 1066 AD)

There are no confirmed archaeological remains from the Saxon/early medieval period recorded in the site. However, in the wider Assessment Area, what is interpreted as an early medieval landscape feature is recorded by the GMHER. The Nico Ditch (GMHER ref. 1404.1.1, Gaz. 18, Fig. 3) still survives immediately to the south of the site as a steep ditch with V-profile *c.* 4m wide and *c.* 1.5m deep. The cycle-way/footpath running parallel and to the north of the Nico Ditch has removed all traces of a bank. This section of the ditch is one of only three surviving sections (the others are at Denton Golf Course and Unitarian Chapel by Platt Fields, Fallowfield). It was recorded as 'Mykelldiche' in 1200 CE but it remains unclear when the structure was first established, by whom and whether its function was to drain land, act as a territorial demarcation or a militarily defendable barrier. The traditional explanation of the earthwork's origin was that it was created the Saxon communities as protection against the Danish invaders of AD 869–70. Another interpretation is that it was built earlier by the native British population to repel Saxon incursions.

On the basis of place-name evidence the village and township of Gorton would appear to have origins in the early-medieval period. Gorton can, rather unfortunately, be rendered as ‘dirty farm/settlement' the two syllables deriving from Old English *gor* (dirt, dung, filth) and *tūn* the

commonly applied suffix meaning enclosure/farmstead/village and indicates a potentially 7th century date for the naming of a settlement at Gorton (http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Lancashire/Gorton).

The early-medieval period can be poorly represented, especially through artefactual evidence, and the absence of any known archaeological remains for the period in the site should not necessarily be taken as an indication of a lack of activity during this period – especially given the proximity of the Nico Ditch. The place-name evidence nevertheless suggests the presence of a community or communities in the area during the period, but the historic core of Gorton is some distance to the north of the site. The historic and archaeological evidence for the Assessment Area for this period suggests, however, that the archaeological potential for the site for the Saxon/Early Medieval Period is low.

Medieval Period (1066 - 1485 AD)

There are no medieval find spots sites recorded within the site or the Assessment Area.

There nearest settlement centre to the site mentioned in the Domesday Book is Manchester (*Mamcestre*). This was an 11th century settlement in the Hundred of Salford and the county of Cheshire. It had no recorded population (sometimes the case for large towns). Manchester was part of a large grant of territory in the north west of England to Roger of Poitou who in turn bestowed the manor of Manchester on Nigellus, a Norman knight. Gorton was included in the manor and is mentioned in a survey of 1322 which refers to 15 houses and a water mill.

The historic and archaeological evidence for the Assessment Area for this period suggests, however, that the archaeological potential for the Assessment site for the Medieval Period is negligible-low.

Post Medieval Period (1486 – Present)

The known archaeological and heritage assets within Assessment Area are overwhelmingly characterised by features of the later post-medieval period and include the archaeological sites of farmsteads, houses, dye-works, chemical plants, race-courses, roads, workshops, chapels, brickworks and reservoirs. The historic built environment within the Assessment Area includes standing buildings in the form of the lodge to Gorton Hall, Levenshulme Printworks (Printing Works, Bleachery, Finishing Works, Chimney, Boiler House and Weaving Shed) and the Climax Engineering Works. In the wider Assessment Area there are also three Listed Buildings The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1380065); Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1283074); and 46-50 Far Lane (Grade II, NHLE ref. 1200828). There are, however, no known post medieval archaeological remains on the site.

Gorton, in the parish of Manchester, was a separate township with its own overseers of the poor and highways under the Manchester churchwardens until 1837, when it became part of the Chorlton Union by the Order of the Poor Law Commissioners. In 1894 a division was made and the part called West Gorton, two years later in 1896 was made a member of the Township of South Manchester (part of the Chorlton Union), Gorton Township remained in the Chorlton Union. In 1910 all the townships in the Union were consolidated to form the Township of South Manchester for Poor Law purposes. The Gorton Local Board was set up in 1863 and in 1894,

when the area of West Gorton was assimilated into the City of Manchester, the remaining area, Gorton, became an Urban District. Gorton was amalgamated with Manchester in 1909.

The history of the site in the post medieval period is characterised by agricultural use up until the early 20th century when it was given over to recreational use. The name Melland Fields suggests a connection to Frederick Melland (1818-1911), or at least the Melland family. Frederick Melland was a Manchester medical practitioner and local politician who, according to his obituary, had a zeal for play-grounds and open spaces (http://charlesduval.org/frederick_melland). During the 1970s the playing fields were provided with a building 'Melland Sports Centre' for social activities and other sports such as badminton. The sports centre was administered by the Greater Manchester Youth Federation, which can trace its origins back to the founding of 'Lads Clubs' in Manchester and Salford during the 19th century.

The appearance of the west-facing elevation of the' Melland Sports Centre' in 2008 is shown below. The single-storey, flat roof structure in the mid-ground was a changing facility built between the late 1950s and early 1960s to which the sports centre was added. This building has now been demolished.



Google Map, Image, 2008.

The Melland Field was brought into military during the Second Word War. It is claimed that the sports field was used for siting an anti-aircraft battery (http://www.levyboy.com/wartime.htm) and subsequently was employed as the site of a PoW camp, for Italian soldiers and then as a Military Police Camp for the 165 Provost Company (http://www.levyboy.com/wartime.htm).

Some of the first available cartographic sources for the area to depict the site and its wider landscape include Greenwood's Map of Lancashire (Fig. 7). This is a small-scale, schematic map and whilst there is annotation showing the existence of Gorton nothing meaningful about the site at this time can be gleaned.

The Tithe Map of Gorton (Township in the Parish of Manchester), 1846 (Fig. 8) shows towards the mid-point of the 19th century the site ranged over 11 fields. All the fields were owned by

Alex Glendenny and occupied (farmed by) George Barton. The field names are prosaic, giving no hint of any contemporary or previous land use which may have resulted in sub-surface activity of archaeological interest. The exception to this is coffin field. Does this suggest the commemoration of the discovery of an interment it the field? Such naming is not unprecedented. A field near Bath is known locally as the Coffin Field, a result of the discovery in 1948 of a Roman period stone coffin complete with a skeleton of a young man when the farmer was removing a tree (Holly 2019). The field boundaries (which are no longer extant) were probably hedgerows, but the hedgerow may have been aligned on an earthen bank (under which there may have been a sealed land surface) for which there would have been a corresponding ditch

The Ordnance Survey (OS) 1:10,560 (6 inches to 1 mile) map of 1848 (Fig. 9) shows that the site rages over parts of seven fields, with field boundaries crossing the site on approximate north-south and east-west alignments. There appears to be two water bodies, possibly marl pits within the site.

The OS Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500) of 1893-94 (Fig. 10) shows comprehensive reorganization of the site. The site now ranges over one field, highlighting the rationalisation of agricultural and management in the area and the change from many, smaller fields to fewer, larger fields. There are also no water-bodies mapped on the site.

The OS Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), of 1908 (Fig. 11) interestingly shows a small, marshy zone towards the site's north-western corner in an area marked as a water body on the 1848 map. Other than this, there are no changes to the site to report since the publication of the 1893-94 map.

The OS Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500) of 1935 (Fig. 12) identifies the site as Football Ground and shows a number of Pavilions. There also appears to be a formal utility track running to the east from Mount Road, which partially traverses the site. It is useful to compare this map to the aerial photograph (Fig. 17 below) which dates to 1931 and, to all intents and purposes is contemporary with the map, and shows the Pavilions.

The OS Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1952-58 (Fig. 13) shows only one of the pavilions on site, adjacent to the site's northern boundary. A structure has, however, been erected towards the north-western corner of the site within its own enclosure. A much smaller building is present in the south-eastern corner of the enclosure. The site is also formally identified as the Melland Playing Field.

The OS Map, (1:10,000), 1965-68 (Fig. 14) shows further construction of buildings towards the site's north-western corner, with three new structures identifiable. The largest of which is probably the single-storey structure which is shown on the Google Map image from 2008 above.

The OS Map, (1:10,000), 1976-81 (Fig. 15) shows that at the largest building on the 1965-68 map has been extended to the east. This is probably the double-height structure shown on the Google Map image from 2008 above. A running track has been established to the north of the site and the southern extreme of this track extends just into the site.

The OS Map, (1:10,000), 1990-93 (Fig. 16) shows that the small structure in the very north-western corner of the site is no longer depicted.

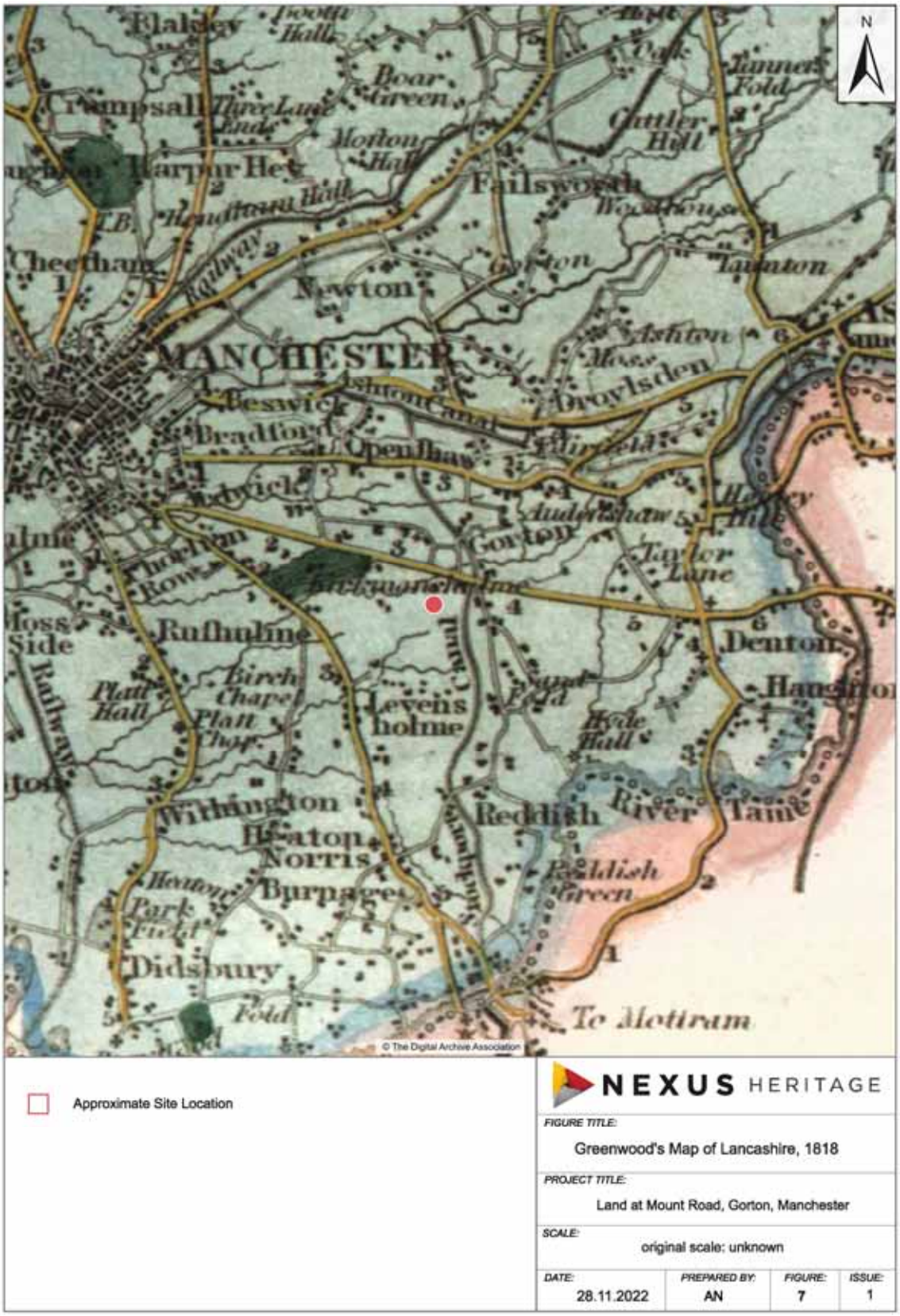


Figure 7: Greenwood's Map of Lancashire, 1818

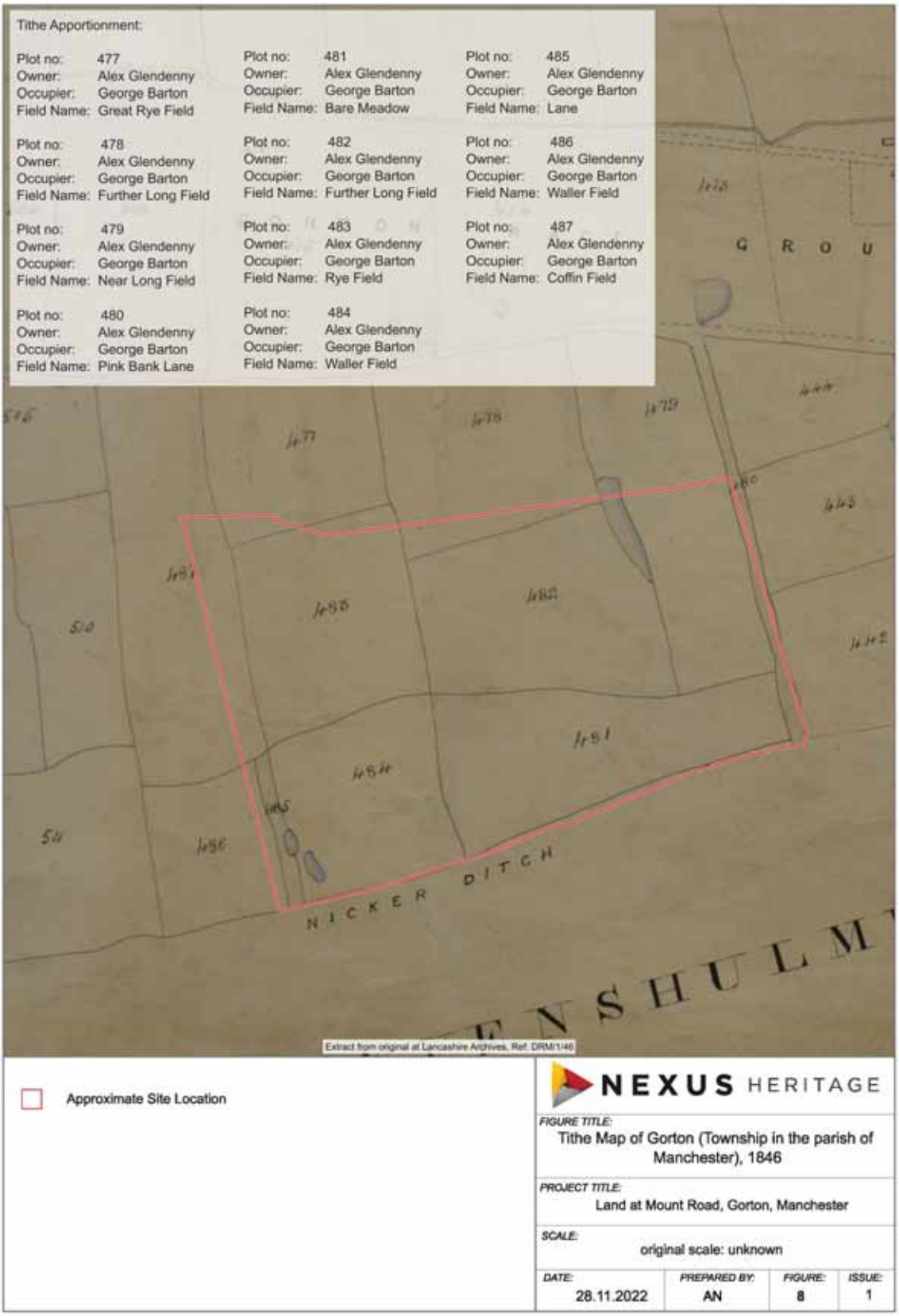


Figure 8: Tithe Map of Gorton (Township in the Parish of Manchester), 1846



Figure 9: Ordnance Survey Map, (6 inches to 1 mile - 1:10,560), 1848

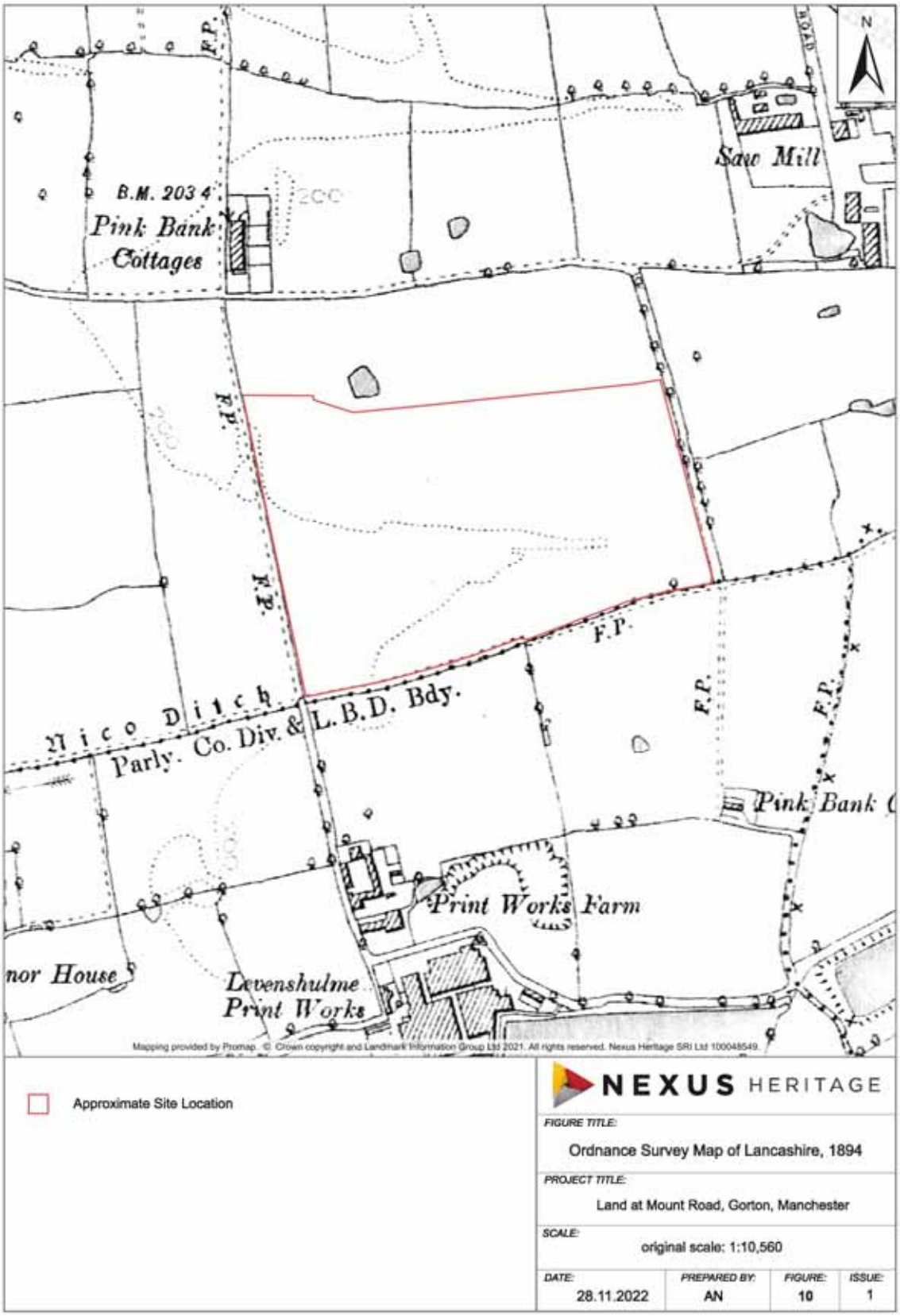


Figure 10: Ordnance Survey Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1893-94

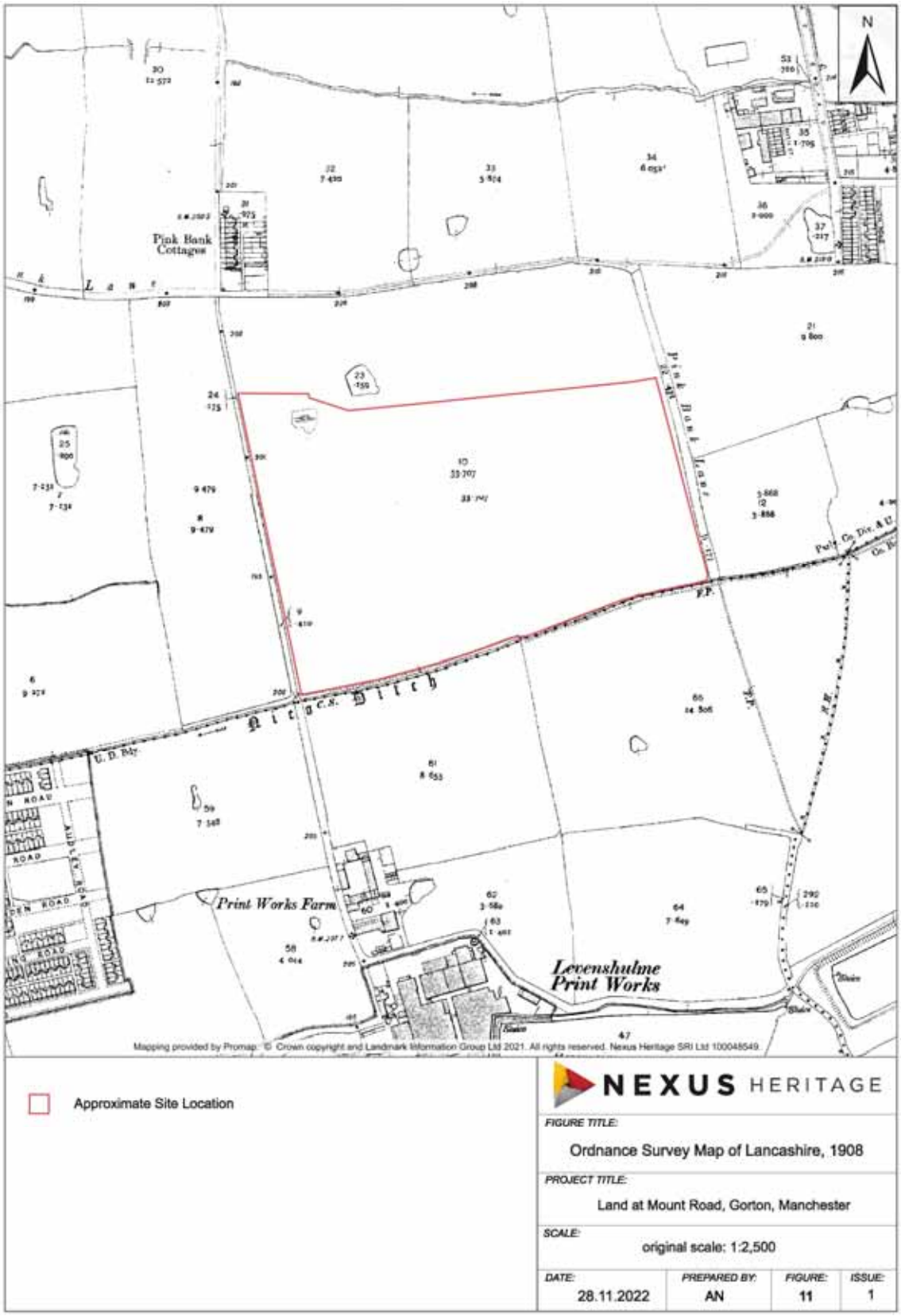


Figure 11: Ordnance Survey Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1908

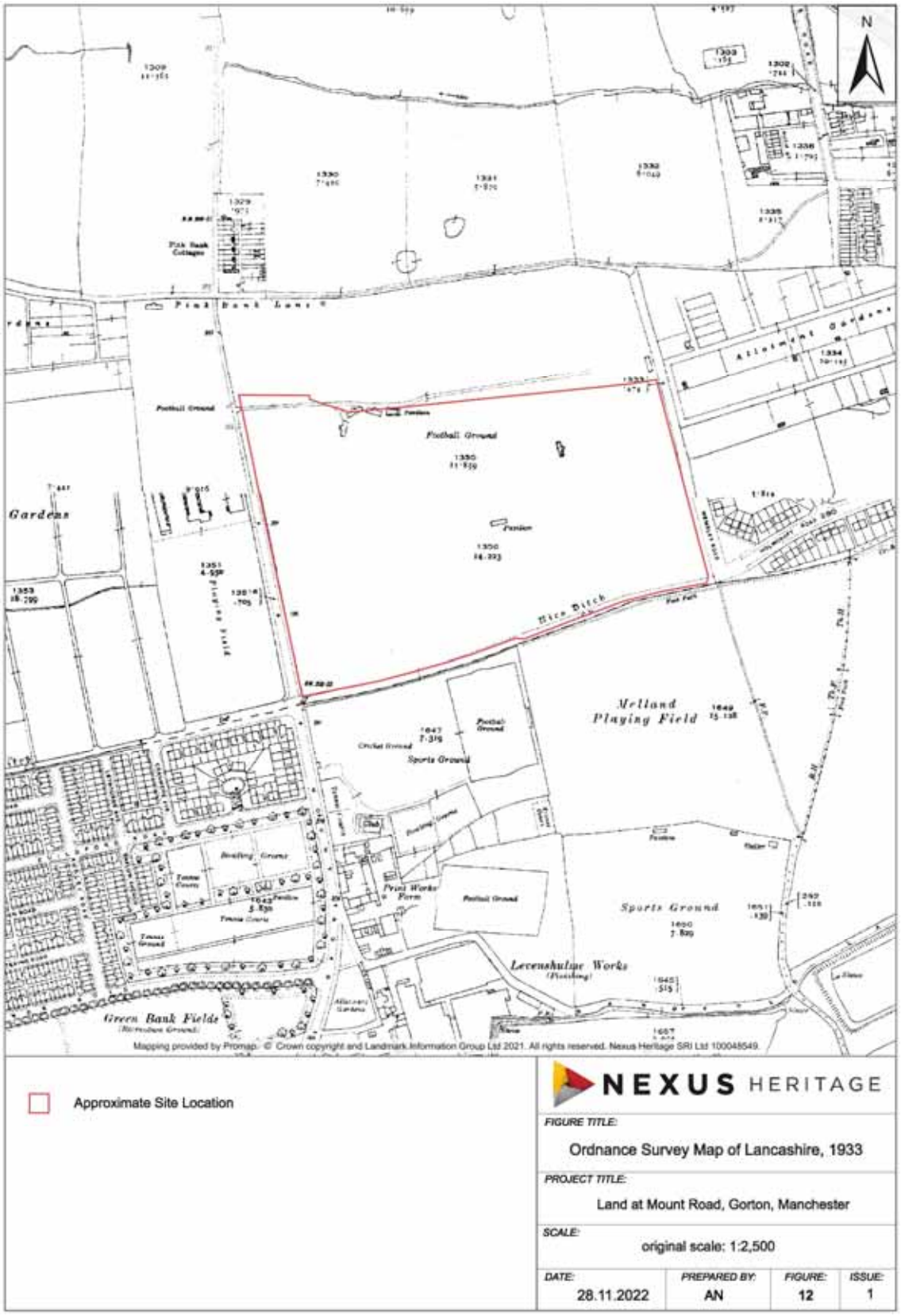


Figure 12: Ordnance Survey Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1933

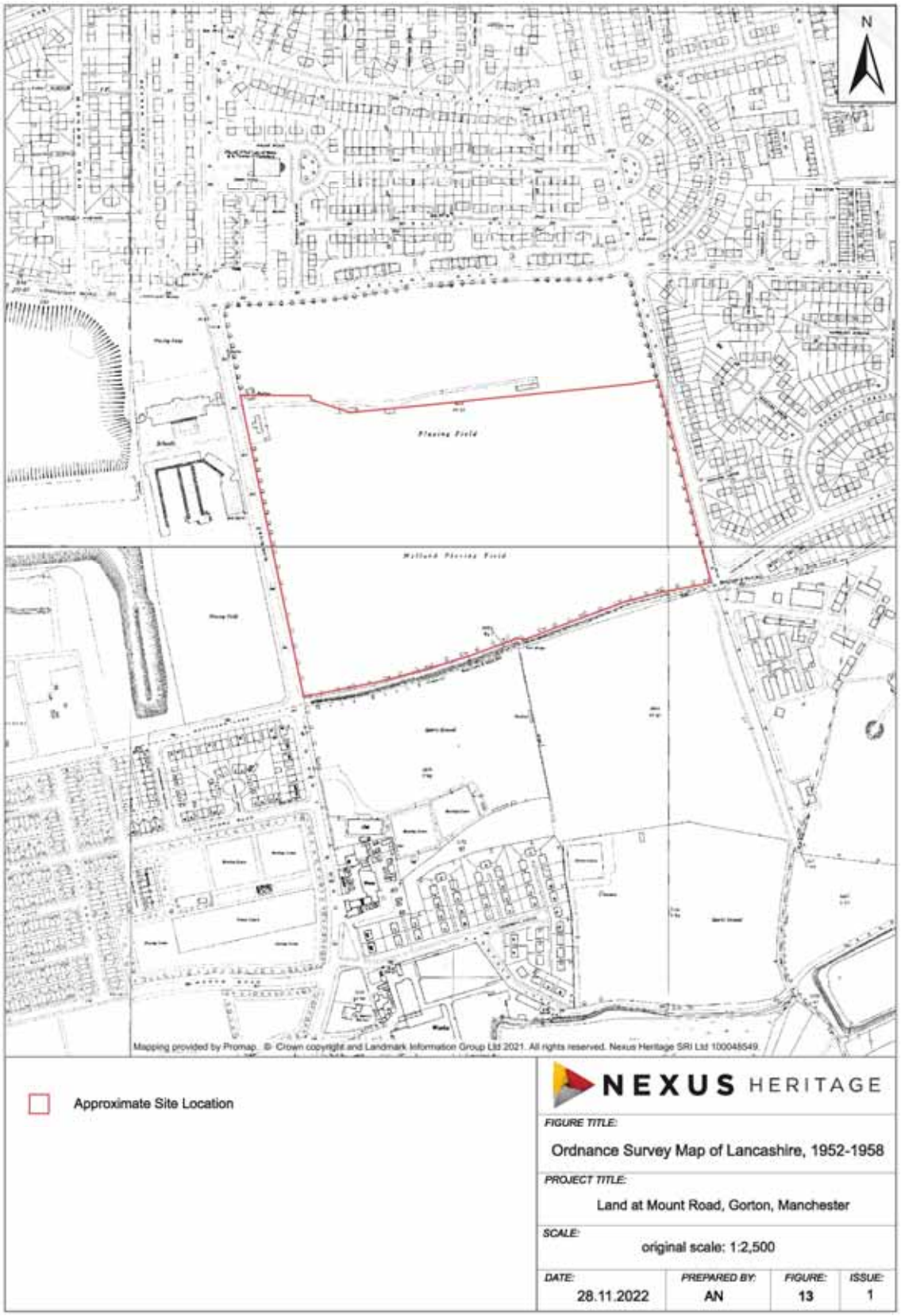


Figure 13: Ordnance Survey Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1952-58

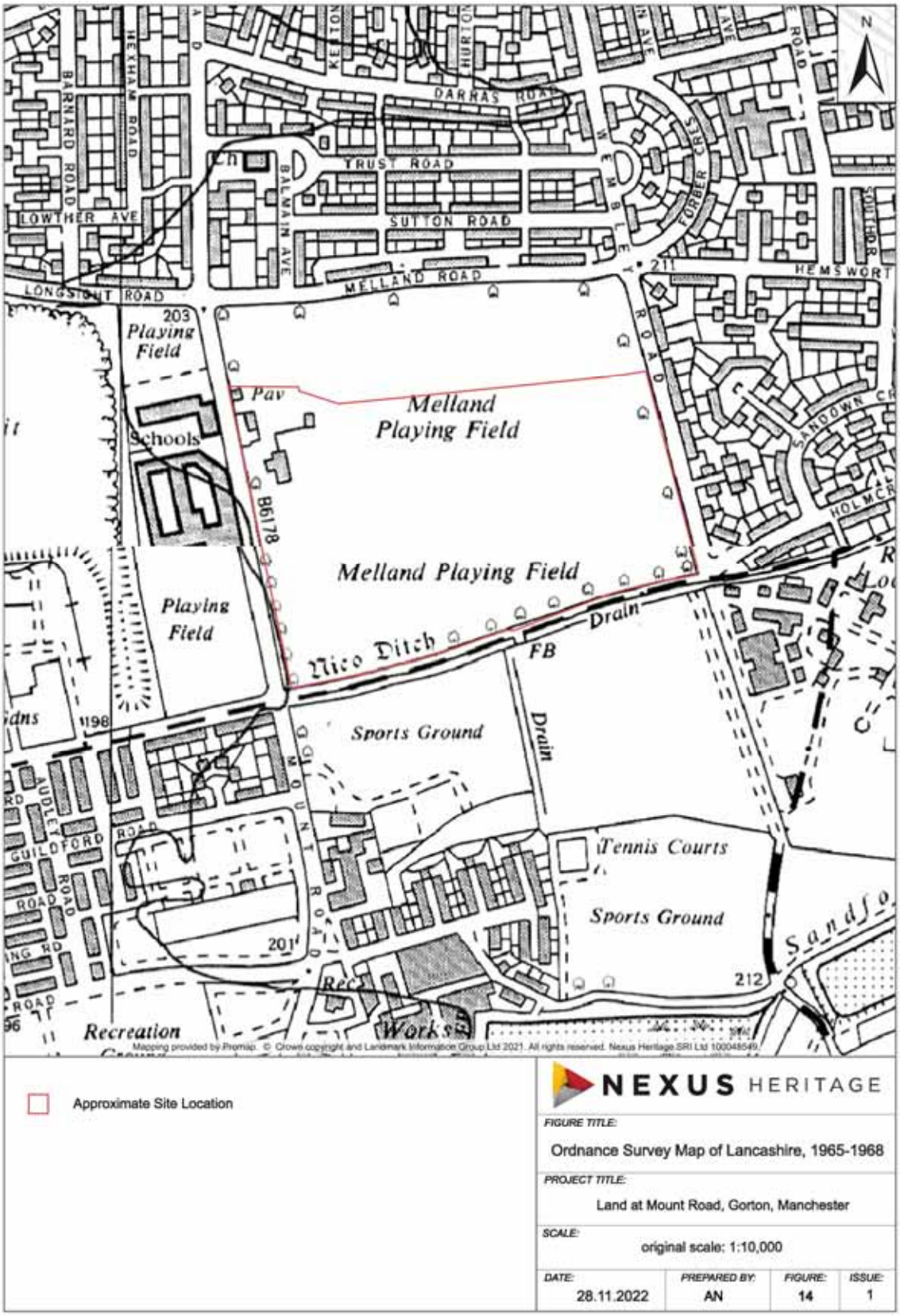


Figure 14: Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1965-68



Figure 15: Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1976-81

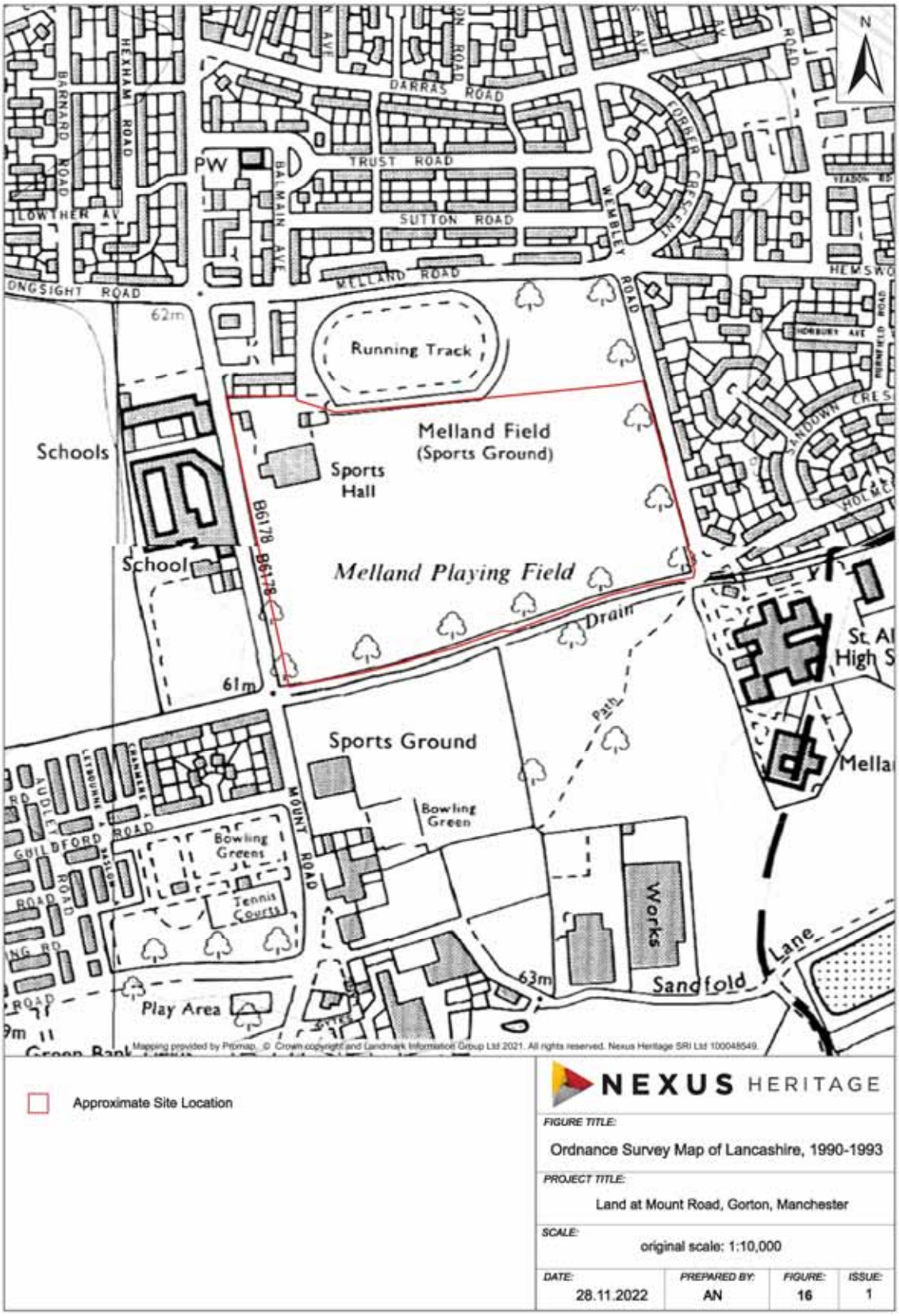


Figure 16: Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1990-93

5. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

There are a number of photographs of the site on the Britain from Above website https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/. These how the site partially and the best image is Melland Sports Field and Environs, Gorton, 1931 (BfA ref. EPW035590) which is reproduced below (Fig. 17).

The image clearly shows the site, bounded to the south by the Nico Ditch and to the west by Mount Road. The site has little to distinguish it, but there do appear to be some (temporary) structures on it and in the south-western portion there appears to have bene some earth-moving operations resulting in a north-south aligned embankment. Was this levelling to improve the surface of the sport pitches – presumably football pitches?

The more recent aerial photograph from 2008 (Fig. 18) shows the featureless expanses of a well-maintained grass playing surface over the vast majority of the site. The Melland Sports Centre, with accompanying expanse of hardstanding is plain to see in the site's north-western corner. The sports centre has now been demolished.

Fig. 17: Aerial Photograph Melland Sports Field and Environs, Gorton, 1931 (BfA ref. EPW035590)



Fig. 18: Google Aerial Photograph 2008

6. LIDAR

A LiDAR image has been secured. The image (Fig. 19) shows no clear earthwork features within the undeveloped parts of the site, which is consistent with its recent use as sports playing fields. However, there is a trace of a narrow linear feature extending on a south-west – north-east alignment across the playing fields. This is likely to be drain.

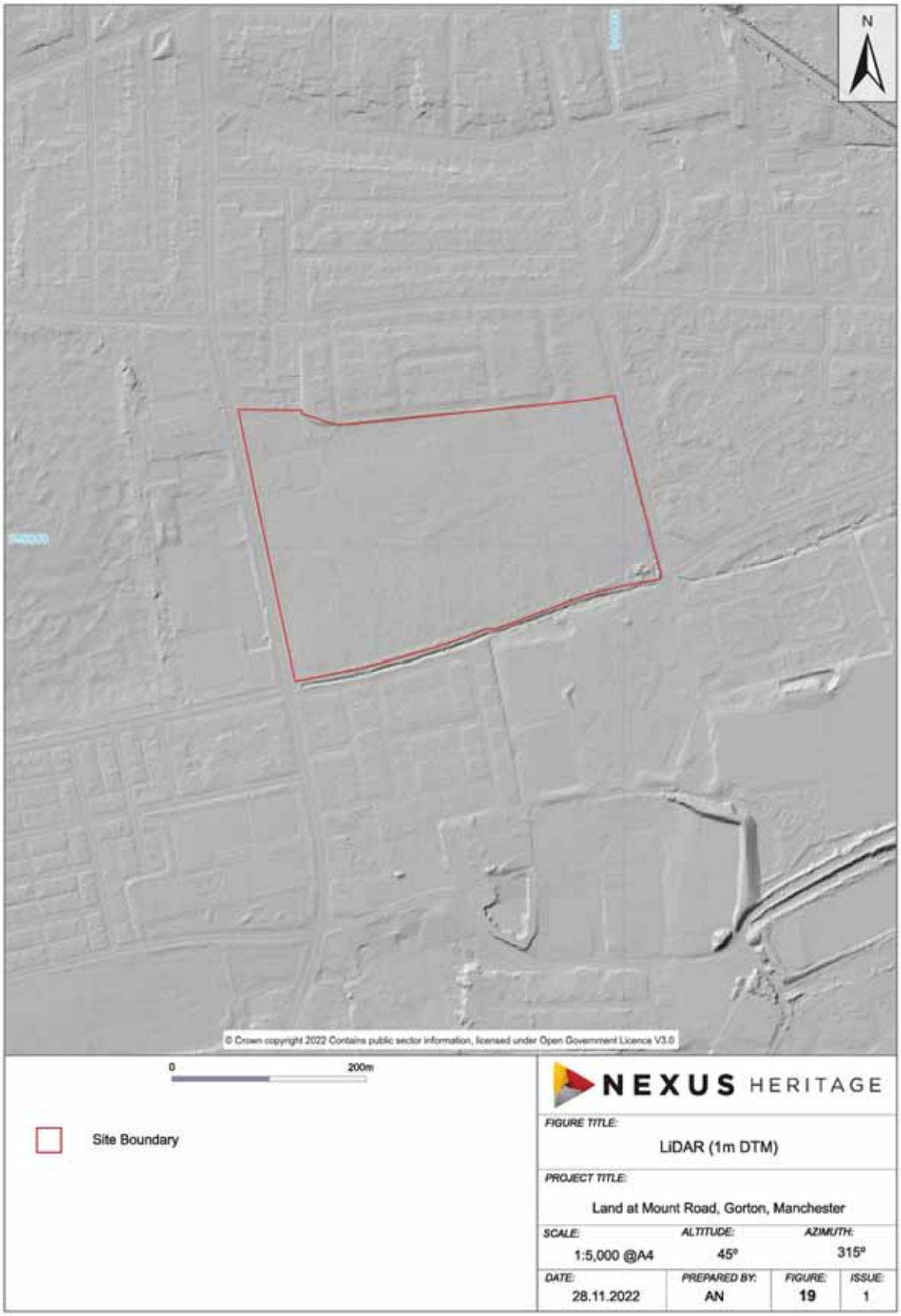


Fig. 19: LiDAR (1m DTM)

7. SITE CONDITIONS

A site visit and walk-over survey were undertaken on the 23rd November 2022 in bright weather conditions with good visibility. The locations from which the photographs were taken and directions of view are shown in Figure 20.

Fig. 20: Photographic Index Plan



Plate 1: Sightline to the east along the site's northern boundary showing area of tarmacadam hardstanding.



Plate 2: Sightline to the south along the site's western boundary.



Plate 3: Sightline to the east across the site.



Plate 4: Sightline to the west showing the ground floor footprint of the former sports /social centre



Plate 5: Sightline to the east towards the site's north-eastern corner



Plate 6: Sightline to the west along the site's northern boundary



Plate 7: Sightline to the west along the site's northern boundary



Plate 8: Sightline to the south along the site's eastern boundary



Plate 9: Sightline to the west from the site's eastern boundary.



Plate 10: Sightline to the north along the site's eastern boundary



Plate 11: Sightline to the north along the site's eastern boundary.



Plate 12: Sightline to the north-west from the site's south-eastern corner



Plate 13: Sightline to the west along the site's southern boundary



Plate 14: Sightline to the west along the site's southern boundary



Plate 15: Sightline to the west along the site's southern boundary



Plate 16: Sightline to the north along the site's western boundary



Plate 17: Sightline to the north-east from the site's southwestern corner



Plate 18: Sightline to the north showing the ground floor footprint of the former sports /social centre



Plate 19: Sightline to the east from Mint Road showing the cycle-way running parallel to the site's southern boundary and to the south of the cycle way is the Nico Ditch (between the red lines).



Plate 20: Sightline to the north-east from Mount Road across the site.



Plate 21: Sightline to the north-east from Mount Road showing the west-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965)



Plate 22: Sightline to the south along Mount Road from the pedestrian walk-way at the Mount Road entrance to The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965).



Plate 23: Sightline to the south along Mount Road from the pedestrian walk-way to the north of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965) which is skylined to the left



Plate 24: Sightline to the south-east from Trust Road showing the north-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965)



Plate 25: Sightline to the south-east from Trust Road showing the north-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965).



Plate 26: Sightline to the south-west from Trust Road showing the north-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965)



Plate 27: Sightline to the west from Trust Road showing the east-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965)



Plate 28: Sightline to the west-north-west from Trust Road showing the east-facing elevation of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1380965)



Plate 29: Sightline to the south along Mount Road at its intersection with Melland Road.

8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDENTIFIED HERITAGE ASSETS

The Nico Ditch and the Listed Buildings of the Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road; Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road; and 46-50 Far Lane warrant significance assessments as these are the archaeological monuments and heritage assets for which a potential impact can be reasonably predicted. The potential impact, will be explored below but it identified as indirect in character and related to changes to within the settings of these assets which would arise on completion of the proposed development.

There are a number of different methodological approaches that can used to estimate the significance of heritage assets, and the one used here proceeds on the basis that the significance is the sum of the cultural heritage value ascribed to the asset. The cultural heritage value is, in turn the sum of four component interests- evidential, historical, archaeological, aesthetic and communal (Historic England 2008).

In the first instance it is prudent to define categories of significance:

Significance	Description/ Threshold
International (Very High)	Archaeological sites or monuments of international importance, including World Heritage Sites. Other buildings or structures of recognised international importance.
National (High)	Ancient monuments scheduled under the AMA Areas Act 1979, or archaeological sites and remains of comparable quality, assessed with reference to the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria. Grade I and II*Listed Buildings, undesignated structures of national importance.
Regional/County (Medium)	Conservation Areas, archaeological sites and remains which are not of national importance. Grade II Listed Buildings. Rare or remarkable historic landscape character
Local (Low)	Archaeological sites which are not of regional/county importance. Historic buildings on a 'local list', curtilage listed buildings, buildings of merit on a Conservation Area. Common or unremarkable historic landscape character.
Negligible/None	Areas in which investigative techniques have produced no or only minimal evidence for archaeological remains, or where previous largescale disturbance or removal of structures and deposits can be demonstrated or predicted with some confidence
Unknown	Archaeological sites whose importance cannot be determined with the information currently at hand. This can include sites where the extent of buried remains is unknown.

The cultural heritage values of the individual archaeological monuments and heritage assets can then be assessed and their significances tested against the significance thresholds.

Heritage Asset	Values and Significance
Nico Ditch	Evidential - the evidential/research value is high. Nico Ditch marked an important landscape division in land between two mosslands and contributes to the corpus of a relatively small number of substantial and defensible boundary features or frontier works marking territories in the early medieval period. The evidential value at this length of the Nico Ditch is, however, compromised as the bank has been slighted and traces of the original ground surface beneath it may have been disturbed. Nonetheless, the ditch is an important and substantial archaeological monument that can play a significant role in telling the history of Manchester. Historic – the Nico Ditch has a strong historic interest and illustrate a specific element of landscape utilisation and modification in south Lancashire. As an extant feature it convincingly express a coherent traces of early-medieval land-management. Aesthetic - there is no formal aesthetic design to a ditch. Communal – a ditch is unlikely to contribute to the identity of the local population and the community will not have emotional links to it. It would probably score poorly in the collective memory and identity of the community but meaning can be understood through information and interpretation. These are freely available on-line but there is some barrier to understanding and appreciation as there is no on-site identification panel. The communal value trends towards the lower end of the spectrum as the ditch has no current civic or public use – other than as a culvert to move drained surface water. Any essential connection between the community and the history of the asset is directly accessible as there is a PRoW adjacent to it – providing excellent vantage points to see the ditch. The associative value is non-existent with no known historical figure directly associable with the ditch. Nothing especially momentous is known to have happened at the ditch and there is little facility to intensify understanding through a link between it and any historical accounts of its use. It retains a semblance of its historic appearance and so can act as tangible testimony to the past. Overall Significance – the Nico Ditch has interests which are of variable value. It is a uncommon and remarkable type of landscape feature of Medium (Regional) Significance.
Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, Trust Road Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road 46-50 Far Lane Grade II Listed Buildings (Designated Heritage Assets)	The significance of these heritage assets is recognised by designation as Grade II Listed Buildings and they are provided with a brief portrayals in the designation descriptions. It is acknowledged that these summary descriptions and any reasons for designation as provided in the Listing description records are primarily a perfunctory narrative and an aid to identification, not a complete statement on the heritage significance of any given designated asset. However, the designation description provides a useful launching point for an emanation of significance. <u>Component Values</u> Evidential – the buildings have high potentials to yield evidence about past human activity and this reservoir of evidence, in the main, resides in their fabric and visual characteristics - the function, materials, design, built form, continuity of purpose and group association with other structures. The ability to understand and interpret the evidential value of the assets is similarly high as the identifications of the churches as places of religious worship and the terrace at Far Lane as dwellings are secure and their functions are readily appreciable. There are some barriers to understanding and interpretation of the evidential value as there is no public right of access and sightlines from the public highway are limited. The buildings nevertheless have high evidential values. Historical – the buildings have moderate/high historic interests as they illustrate the story of past events, people and aspects of life closely related with the provision of places for communal religious observance and dwelling. The buildings can be traced to a specific construction dates. There are few opportunities for historic connection to be directly

	encountered and experienced, as access is limited. There is no right of public access but sightlines towards and away from the buildings provide opportunities for experience and appreciation of the buildings in their urban landscape. The historical value is somewhat concealed from the wider community but the buildings nevertheless contribute positively to the historic built environment of Gorton. Aesthetic - Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place and in this respect the buildings score strongly. Considerable architectural effort was spent on the design of churches, even those built in the early 20th century and the material and quality of work usually match the architectural quality. The Church of St. Mark is notable for its Arts and Crafts style with Art Nouveau detailing. The three cottages at Far Lane are visually pleasing with a gratifying composition employing brick and stone detailing. There is facility for sensory stimulation and intellectual engagement as the buildings embody specific architectural and construction approaches using the media of brick, stone and slate. The aesthetic value is moderate-high. Communal - Communal value derives from the meanings of places for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory and can be commemorative and/or symbolic. Congregations draw elements of their identity from the churches of which they are members but dwellings have few meanings, other than for the residents. The churches have commemorative or symbolic reverberations. The associative values are low. The Church of Our lady of Mercy and St Thomas of Canterbury was designed by Walter Tapper. The Church of St. Mark was designed by C. T. Taylor. Overall Significance (Component Value Integration) – The Listed Buildings are of medium significance with component values of varying, but moderated strengths. In terms of ranking, the evidential historic, aesthetic and communal valves all contribute something to the significances, reflected in the designated status (Grade II Listed Buildings) as buildings of special interest. Medium (Regional) Significance.

With respect to the baseline it is reasonable to test the site against the ambitions of the North-West England Regional Research Agenda (Brennand 2006 and 2007), but as there is no baseline data to suggest the presence of any particular archaeological remains (other than the infilled marl pit/pond and those which have been previously identified and investigated at the site) there is nothing to indicate that the site has any potential contribution to make to the various research themes which constitute the agenda.

In addition the Northwest Regional Research Framework (Updated Research Framework) has been developed as part of a national strategy to create a series of self-sustaining regional historic environment research frameworks for England. It builds on the original North West Region Archaeological Research Framework (Brennand 2006 and 2007). The period and thematically based framework benefits from a series of refreshed research questions https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/industrial/ focused on a number of period-related themes. There is, however, no baseline data to suggest the presence of any particular archaeological remains and there is nothing to indicate that the site has any potential contribution to make to the various research themes which constitute the agenda.

9. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS

A full planning application is being submitted for the erection of a youth, sports and community hub (Use Class E(d)(g)), F2(b)), 2no football pitches combined netball and basketball court, cricket strip (Use Class F2 (c)), a two storey apartment building comprising 36no apartments for young person's accommodation (Use Class C3) and 267no dwellinghouses (Use Class C3a), with associated landscaping, public realm, ecological mitigation, refuse storage, drainage, car parking and other associated works, with access from Wembley Road and Mount Road.

The general characteristics of the proposed development are provided at Fig. 21 (Site Layout).

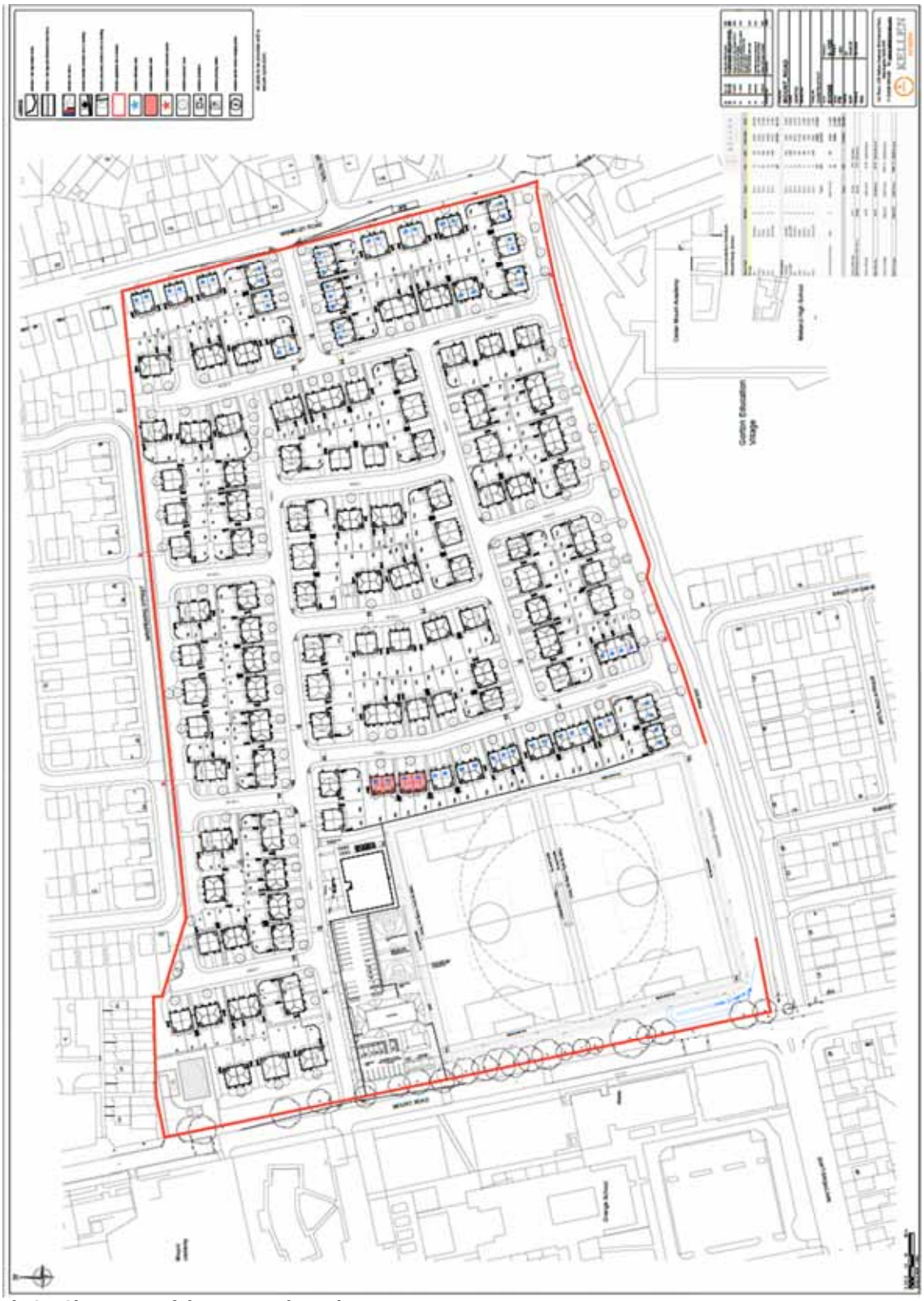


Fig 21: Site Layout of the Proposed Development

Direct Impacts

The assessment of the heritage potential of the site has been undertaken in the knowledge of the uncertainties that arise when trying to assess a resource that is not wholly known and is often less than comprehensively understood. It should be noted that the assessment is based on information held in source repositories and published data. Neither of these represents exhaustive and comprehensive sources of information on the presence/absence of archaeological features. However, from the data available it is possible to quantify and qualify the known archaeological resource, to determine the potential for as yet unknown or unrecorded archaeological sites and historic landscape features to be present and identify areas within the site where activities are likely to have compromised archaeological survival. These factors have been taken into consideration during this preparation of this assessment. This information has in turn been considered against the pre-existing impacts to the site which may have compromised the survival of any archaeological remains.

The proposed development would result in the transformation of parcel of historic landscape character and would result in a frustration of historic land use. The level of harm represented by the estimated direct impact is, substantial, in that to all intents and purposes the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal interests of the historic landscape parcel would be vitiated by the proposed development. The heritage value of a remnant Sports Ground historic landscape, concession to the coherence of which has already taken place, is clearly negligible. The scale of harm equates to total loss of a heritage feature of negligible significance.

Sub-surface evidence of the use of the site by the 48th Battalion Manchester Home Guard and as an anti-aircraft gun location is likely to be ephemeral, perhaps restricted to items in the near-surface casually lost by members of the British Armed Forces. Archaeological evidence of the use of the site as a PoW camp is likely to be ephemeral, perhaps restricted to some drainage infrastructure and items in the near-surface casually lost by occupants and members of the British Armed Forces. Lost items and drainage dating to the middle of the 20th century has no archaeological interest with respect to the meaning of the term as employed by the Council. The likelihood of any sub-surface remains surviving of the Melland Fields' Pavilions and the now demolished structures dating from the first half of the 20th century through to the early 21st century is minimal and in any case any sub-surface traces are unlikely to contribute any meaning information and knowledge about the development of recreational spaces in the City beyond that already in existence form other sources.

The proposed development does not require the abstraction of any ground water. Therefore, there is no scope for the proposed development to alter the moisture content of the soils in and around the Nico Ditch such that palaeoenvironmental evidence within the archaeological record would be harmed.

The southern zone of the Site, to the north of the projected alignment of the Nico Ditch has some archaeological potential to contain evidence of as yet unknown features contemporary with the construction of the Nico Ditch or pre--dating or post-dating this construction. Any such potential may be impacted upon by the proposed development.

There is no scope for the proposed development to lead to trans-frontier impacts to archaeological monuments beyond the boundary of the site.

Indirect Impacts by Means of Changes to the Settings of Heritage Assets

The effect of development on the significance of the setting of heritage assets (including archaeological monuments) is a material consideration in determining a planning application and NPPF advises Local Planning Authorities that they should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

Setting is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and all heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. It is right and proper for this assessment to identify the key attributes of the assets and their settings and the potential impact upon the settings of heritage assets occasioned by proposed development within the site. In order to identify these key attributes it is necessary to consider the physical surroundings of the assets, including relationships with other heritage assets, the way the assets are appreciated and the assets' associations and patterns of use.

A consideration of these attributes allows an estimation to be made of whether, how and to what degree setting makes a contribution to the heritage assets.

Development is capable of affecting the settings of heritage assets and the ability to understand experience and appreciate them. An assessment of the scope of the magnitude and effect of any impact on settings is part of the remit of this assessment and has been undertaken with reference to the Historic England document *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (second edition)..

The value of a heritage asset can be harmed or lost through alteration within or destruction of its setting. Current policy states that the extent of a setting is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. It is acknowledged that a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the value of a heritage asset, it may affect the ability to appreciate that value or it may be neutral.

Setting is most commonly framed with reference to visual considerations and so lines of sight to or from a heritage site will play an important part in considerations of setting. However, non-visual considerations also apply, such as spatial associations and an understanding of the historic relationship between places. There is no overwhelming reason to establish the need for a level of physical and visual connection between a heritage asset and its setting in order for any land to be deemed to be within the setting. To adopt an artificially narrow approach to the issue of setting would be an error. Therefore, to ensure that any assessment does not treat visual connections between any land and a heritage asset as essential and determinative for the purposes of considerations of setting and wide-ranging approach is to be adopted.

In order to undertake an assessment of significance of the settings to a level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the assets, the settings of which may be affected by development on the site, this assessment has sought to examine and consider the setting for each relevant heritage asset and provide a measure of the contribution that the setting plays in the value of the asset.

Many heritage assets within any given landscape may be visible from a number of locations –

publically accessible areas such as footpaths, streets and the open countryside and also private spaces such as dwellings and private land. The majority of sightlines from to, into and across heritage assets are, therefore, incidental and are not intrinsically or intimately associated with the assigned significances. However, there are instances where the characteristics of sightlines may be have been intentionally designed and as part of the setting are integral to the significance. Taking into account these considerations and the absence of any meaningful sight lines between assets, their settings and the site (see Plates above), many of the heritage assets identified in this assessment do not require a detailed setting assessment. In addition, the non-physical and non-visual connections between the identified heritage assets and their settings have also been considered and there are no overt non-physical and non-visual connections between these identified heritage assets and the site that would be adversely impacted upon should the site be subject to a physical change.

On the basis of professional judgment it would not be appropriate to undertake detailed setting assessments for the Listed Buildings Church of St. Mark, Barlow Road; and 46-50 Far Lane. The Church is *c.* 525m from the southern boundary of the site and is *c.* 739m to the north-east of the site's north-eastern corner and the and these separation distances, combined with the dynamic and urban character of the intervening landscape means that the site has no visual bearing on the setting of these assts. Conceptually, the site makes no contribution to the significances of either of these designated heritage assets and so development of the site could not possibly influence the significances of these assets. .

The Listed Building of The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury, is, however, *c.* 208m to the north of the northern boundary of the site and it could be reasonable assumed that it is in the visual envelope of the site and its context, approaches and setting includes the site. With these facts in mind it would be appropriate to undertake detailed setting assessment for this Church.

The Nico Ditch runs parallel to the southern boundary of the site a few metres to the south. It is plainly within the visual envelope of the site and its context, approaches and setting includes the site. With these facts in mind it would be appropriate to undertake detailed setting assessment for this archaeological monument.

The methodological approach to be adopted for the assessment of setting is provided by Historic England and takes the form of a five-step process (Historic England 2017):

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are likely to be affected

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

Please note that the assessment has been advanced without the benefit of any landscape and visual assessment outputs such as the definition of a Zone of Visual Influence or a Zone of Theoretical Visibility.

ID Refs.	Name	Status	Setting Description	The Contribution of Setting to the Significance of the Asset	Effects of the proposed development on significance	Maximising enhancement and minimising harm (Mitigation)	Residual Effects
STEP 1				**STEP 2**	**STEP 3**	**Step 4**	**Step 5**
NHLE ref. 1380065	The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury (Grade II Listed Building)	Designated Heritage Asset	This asset has a distinct, enclosed, immediate setting the characteristics of which are defined the spaces laid to lawn which surround it. The wider setting is characterised on three sides by roads, establishing a dynamic environment with traffic and pedestrians. The Church is broadly screened from the wider landscape by the built-environment which surrounds it. This environment is residential in character. The site, 208m to the south of the asset, is within its setting but there is no direct visual relationship. The site, hitherto a sports field with some ancillary built form has provided a constant aspect to the setting since the asset's construction but makes	The current immediate setting is confined to a restricted envelope, and the contributory values of the immediate setting are mostly positive and thoroughly bound up in the function of the building as a place of worship within an ecclesiastical enclosure. .The wider setting, is also broadly neutral. The Church was built between 1926 and 1928 in an area into which Manchester's south-easterly sub-urban expansion was rapidly reaching. Therefore, a built-up context was present the initial landscape state into which the Church was introduced. The residential estates surrounding the Church were perhaps the community form which the Church congregation was drawn and so there is some positive contribution in the landscape setting which	The proposed development would establish new built form to the south of the asset. The buildings would clearly be new introductions into the landscape which increase the mass and volume of the built environment and transform part of the setting into built-form. This equates to a landscape evolution where there is virtually no precedent for previous built form (other than the sports/social centre and the short-lived military Police/PoW facility). The proposed structures would not dominate the Church and would not adversely influence the approaches to the Church. They would blend in to the existing character of residential built-form which distinguishes the area. The proposed development would not impact on the ability to understand and appreciate it. Upon completion of the proposed development the Church would be divorced from any aspect of the setting upon which its significance relies. Any lines of sight to, between and from the Church and	The proposed development would case no harm to the significance of the Church and by means of good design and landscaping the influence on the setting of the Church can be said to be enhanced.	No harm.

			no positive contribution to the asset's significance.	adds to the significance of the Church.	the wider setting would be fundamentally unaffected. The proposed development would have no adverse impact on the significance of the Church. The proposed development would have no non-visual impacts such as the creation of unacceptable olfactory components. There would be no light spill or auditory insertions from the proposed development which would change the contextual characteristics of the immediate setting of the Church.		
MHER ref. PRN 1404.1.1	Nico Ditch	Archaeological Monument	Ultimately, this is a vast monument – 8km long and it has a correspondingly wide-ranging setting. The particular length of the Nico Ditch here is within a multi-faceted setting. To the north is open space – comprising the site. To the south is Melland High School and the residences of Braton Drive. To the west is the dynamic communication route of Mount Road and beyond there are residential estates. To the east there are dense residential estates.	The setting clearly has o resonance with the landscape in which the monument was created. There has been wholesale landscape change since the late first millennium CE and an urban context speaks nothing constructive to the significance of Nico Ditch. The fact that the site is an open, undeveloped space suggests that it makes some positive contribution to the significance of the monument but its use a sports field is a sundry use of open space completely unknown and unrelated to the lives of the community that built	The proposed development would establish new built form to the north of the Nico Ditch. The buildings would clearly be new introductions into the landscape which increase the mass and volume of the built environment and transform part of the setting into built-form. This equates to a landscape evolution where there is virtually no precedent for previous built form (other than the sports/social centre and the short-lived military Police/PoW facility). The proposed structures would visually influence the setting of the Nico Ditch and its approaches. However, the introduction of built form, in the guise of dwellings would not be an alien introduction into the setting of the Ditch. They would blend in to the existing	The proposed development would case no harm to the significance of the Nico Ditch.	No harm.

				the monument and so it makes no affirmative contribution to the significance of the monument.	character of residential built-form which distinguishes the area. The proposed development would not impact on the ability to understand and appreciate the Ditch. Upon completion of the proposed development the Ditch would be divorced from any aspect of the setting upon which its significance relies. Any lines of sight to, between and from the Ditch and the wider setting would be affected, but not detrimentally so. The proposed development would have no adverse impact on the significance of the Nico Ditch. The proposed development would have no non-visual impacts such as the creation of unacceptable olfactory components. However, light spill and possibly some auditory insertions from the proposed development are likely to change the contextual characteristics.		

10. CONCLUSIONS

This document has carefully considered the potential for the proposed development to impact on archaeological monuments and heritage assets by means of development within the site, and whether any such impacts would harm the significances of the monuments and assets.

The consideration has explored the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of known and potential monuments and assets which may be impacted upon as a consequence of development. It has predicted the nature of any impact and therefore the harm or otherwise that may befall heritage significance.

The main issues have been identified in a manner proportionate to the characteristics of the likely development and in a manner relevant to the characteristics of the monuments and assets.

There are no registered World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks/Gardens or Registered Battlefields wholly or partly within in the site. Therefore, this Assessment confirms that the site does not contain designated heritage assets for which there would be a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ* (and against development which would threaten such preservation).

The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record identifies no archaeological monuments within the site. The Historic Environment Record also notes that the historic landscape character of the site is *Sports Ground*. This is of no noteworthy heritage value and it does not represent any impediment to the proposed development.

The Client is aware of the Council's responsibilities with respect to the historic dimension of the built environment under the *Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990* and the duties arising from *(s66(1))*.

The proposed development is *c.* 200m from a Listed Building (The Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury). This is an imposing building in an urban setting to which the site makes no meaningful contribution. The proposed development is within the setting of this Listed Building and the Council must have:

…special regard to the desirability of preserving the [listed] *building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses* (s66(1)).

The changes to site represented by the proposed development have been considered and assessed using a formal and accepted method and it is concluded that the changes to site represented by the proposed development would lead to no harm to special architectural or historic interests of the Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury or its setting. In having special regard to the desirability of preserving the special architectural or historic interest of any Listed Building and its setting the Council may resolve that the proposed development would lead to no threat to the continuation of the buildings' special architectural or historic interests or the setting. By means of consideration of the results of a professionally competent historic environment assessment and consultation with its heritage advisors the Council can demonstrate that it has addressed its statutory duty.

The potential for a proposed development to harm heritage significance of designated heritage assets is catered for in paras. 199-202 of NPPF.

Para. 199 invites decision makers to give great weight to the conservation[1] of designated heritage assets when considering impacts to them. The weight to be given is independent of the degree of harm and is to be read alongside the whole of paragraphs paras 200 and 201. In following a considered, sequential approach to assessment, in which the proposed development is tested against paras. 199-203 of NPPF a mechanism is provided to the decision-maker within this document to give great weight to the conservation of heritage assets by means of a demonstrable compliance with the NPPF policy steps. The changes to the site represented by the proposed development have been considered and assessed using a formal and accepted method and it is concluded that the changes to site represented by the proposed development would lead to no harm to the significance of any Listed Building.

The potential for a proposed development to harm heritage significance of non-designated heritage assets is catered for in para. 203 of NPPF. As decision-taker, the Council is bound by para. 203 to take into account *the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset*. The Council has not formally acknowledged that the parcel of historic landscape character, is a non-designated heritage asset but under the precautionary principle, and in no way asserting that this landscape character is a non-designated heritage assets, it is useful to treat it if it were and take into account the substantial harm to its significances (loss) which would be occasioned by the proposed development The Council may wish to take into account the effect of the proposed development on this asset and in weighing the planning application may wish to exercise a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss (total) and the significance of the asset (negligible/low).

With respect to the local planning policy there are a number of applicable tests established by the *Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted (Manchester City Council 2012),* specifically Policies EN3 Heritage and DM1 Development Management.

Policy EN3 states that *throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.*

The site does not contain any distinct historic or heritage features the advantages of which could be taken.

Policy DM1 states that all development should have regard to specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document. One of the identified issues is the effect relating to heritage. There is no supplementary planning document for heritage. However, the *Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance* contains statements on heritage and notes that *the rich urban heritage of Manchester and the distinctive qualities of its different neighbourhoods and buildings help to create a strong sense of place and should be respected in new development, to promote high quality environments that combine good design and the best architectural traditions of the City.*. The proposed development qualifies as good design and would lead to a high quality environment.

[1] Conservation is the process of managing change (not preventing it) and a formal assessment process and its consideration by the decision taker with respect to impact can contribute to the application of great weight

In addition some UDP policies remain in force. Policy DC20.1 states that *The Council will give particular careful consideration to development proposals which affect Scheduled Ancient* [sic] *Monuments and sites of archaeological interests, to ensure their preservation in place.* The proposed development does not affect any Scheduled Monument and this policy provision is not applied. The proposed development would not affect any site of archaeological interest and this policy provision is not applied.

Limb b of Policy DC21.1 states that *The Council will have special regard to the desirability of securing the preservation of Ancient Monuments and other sites of archaeological interest and their setting in place. It will not permit development that, in its opinion, would adversely affect Scheduled Ancient* [sic] *Monuments, or other sites of archaeological interests, and their settings. In exceptional cases where development is inevitable, the Council will look at the scope for combining preservation in place with limited investigation and recording.* This policy appears to prohibit the granting of planning permission for any development that adversely affects a site of archaeological interest, and its setting. As the proposed development does not adversely affect any site of archaeological interest, and its setting the test established by this policy provision is passed. With respect to limb c of Policy DC21.1 the proposed development would not threaten the preservation of any Scheduled Monument or site of archaeological interest so there is no reason for the Council to seek *to gain full and proper recording of the site through early consultation between the applicant and approved archaeological organisation.*

The *Places For Everyone Joint Development Plan Document – Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan* Policy JP-P 2 Heritage imposes obligations with respect to the preparation of Local Plans and critically states that *key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. The elements include … sites, buildings and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic value.* The site has no apparent archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic value deserving of protection from harm. In addition, requiring protection from harm is in tension with national policy. The policy clearly establishes a tension with national policy, which acknowledges that when determining planning application Local Planning Authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, but also accepts that there are circumstances in which planning permission will be granted where development would result in a harm to a heritage asset (including sites, buildings and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic value). This should be taken into account where there is any perceived breach of the local policy.

Policy JP-P 2 Heritage also requires development proposals to *identify assets of archaeological interest and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation.* This document has identified assets of archaeological interest beyond the site's boundaries, but none within the site and the information has been used accordingly and responsibly. The policy test thereby established is passed.

Policy JP-P 2 Heritage also requires development proposals to *be informed, by a heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.* This document acts as a comprehensive heritage assessment. The policy test thereby established is passed.

Ultimately, the changes to the environment represented by the proposed development would

not establish any harm to any known heritage asset and the proposed development is not in conflict with any national or local policy provision for archaeological monuments and heritage assets.

There is no reason for the Council to require any further pre-determination archaeological attendances or to withhold planning permission on the basis of archaeological/heritage constraints.

11. SOURCES

General

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The Greater Manchester County Record Office (Central Library)
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Ordnance Survey Map, (25 inches to 1 mile - 1:2,500), 1893-94
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APPENDIX A

Index of Archaeological Monuments within the Assessment Area as Plotted on Fig. 3

and

Index of Built Heritage Assets within the Assessment Area as Plotted on Fig. 6

Numbe	HER Ref	Name
Figure 3: Location of Archaeological Monuments within the Assessment Area		
1	9760.1.0	Brick Works (site of), off Lincoln Avenue
2	9768.1.0	Talleyrand Hall (Barlow House) (site of)
3	9803.1.0	Saw Mill (site of) at Levenshulme Road
4	9820.1.0	Gorton Hall (site of)
5	14185.1.0	Wingate House (site of)
6	14186.1.0	Brick Works, Kenwood Road (site of)
7	1409.1.1	Reservoirs, Sandfold Lane
8	1404.1.2	Nico Ditch (Excavations at Kenwood Road)
9	9928.1.0	Yewtree Farm (site of)
10	9765.1.0	Manor House (site of)
11	1404.1.14	Nico Ditch, Gorton Educational Village, Melland Playing Fields 2008 observations
12	9783.1.1	Chemical Works off Nutsford Vale (site of)
13	9761.1.0	Dye Works (site of), off Cromwell Grove
14	8430.1.1	Gorton Chapel (Dissenting or Independent chapel) (site of)
15	9826.1.0	Gorton Racecourse (site of)
16	2070.1.0	Gorton Village Core
17	14217.1.0	Pink Bank Lane (Nelstrop Road North)
18	1404.1.1	Nico Ditch at Melland Playing Fields
Figure 6: Location of Built Heritage Assets within the Assessment Area		
1	14205.1.0	Climax Works (formerly Wharton Engineering Works)
2	12166.1.0	Church of Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury
3	9784.1.0	Iron Works on Gore Brook (Gorebrook Iron Works) (former)
4	1409.1.0	Levenshulme Printworks
5	11636.1.0	46 to 50 Far Lane
6	11740.1.0	Church of St Mark (St Mark's Church)
7	14187.1.0	Climax Engineering Works (former)
8	9820.1.1	Gorton Hall Lodge