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SUMMARY

Salford Archaeology were commissioned by Renaker Build Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation Port Street, Manchester. The site comprises a former car park at the southeast side of Port Street, Manchester.

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, produced by Salford Archaeology determined that the development site had some potential to contain buried remains of local archaeological significance, in particular, remains associated with nineteenth-century industry in the form of the Rochdale Canal arm and the canal wharf.

In January 2023 Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Renaker Build Limited to produce the WSI detailing the excavation of three archaeological evaluation trenches, which was subsequently carried in that same month.

The evaluation trenching revealed that the infilled canal arm had survived on the site but the deposits were too heavily contaminated for analysis or artefact retrieval and no large structures (E.G. scuttled canal boats) were encountered. Levelling material was observed that was attributed to the preparation of the area for construction of the canal basin and a single fragmentary wall was recorded and attributed to late to mid-19th century, associated with the canal basin. Two phases of demolition were encountered. The first was a narrow band of early 19th-century material attributed to the demolition of the canal basin between 1955 and 1969, much of which was used to infill the canal arm. The second phase of demolition was associated with the removal, during the 1980s, of the buildings that had replaced the canal basin structures during the 1950s and 1960's. The final phase of activity was the sites conversion into a surface car park with the laying of tarmac.

The evaluation concluded that other than the canal arm itself, very little had survived relating to the canal basin and its associated structures. The deposits within the canal, and much of the ground in the lower terrace, were too heavily contaminated to be examined in any detail. Due to the lack of surviving material it was concluded that no further mitigation was required.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Circumstances of the project

- 1.1.1 Salford Archaeology were commissioned by Renaker Build Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation Port Street, Manchester (planning reference: 132489/FO/2021; centred on NGR 384854 398427; Figure 1), herein referred to as 'the Site'. The site comprises a former car park at the southeast side of Port Street, Manchester. The overall proposed scheme will entail the erection of a part-34, part-11, part 9 part 7 storey residential building above semi-basement level, with associated residents' amenity space including gym (Use Class C3) (comprising 485 dwellings), commercial space (Use Class E), basement car parking (47 spaces), cycle parking (485 spaces) landscaping, and other associated works.
- 1.1.2 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been produced by Salford Archaeology (Poundall, 2021). This determined that the development site had some potential to contain buried remains of local archaeological significance, in particular, remains associated with nineteenth-century industry in the form of the Rochdale Canal arm and the canal wharf.
- 1.1.3 Therefore, following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), which provides planning advice to Manchester City Council, it was advised that the submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), and subsequent implementation of a programme of archaeological works prior to the commencement of any demolition, development or development related groundworks be undertaken. The programme of archaeological works comprised an initial programme of archaeological investigation via evaluation trenching, followed by the production of an evaluation report and archive.
- 1.1.4 In January 2023 Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Renaker Build Limited to produce the WSI which detailed the excavation of three archaeological evaluation trenches (Mottershead 2023).
- 1.1.5 Consequently, an archaeological investigation was conducted over three days between 16th and 18th January 2023 which comprised the excavation of three

evaluation trenches (Figure 2). Following the evaluation a watching brief was carried out during the removal of silts from the canal arm.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Academic Aims

- 2.1.1 The main aims of the investigation were to establish the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains on the site and, if present, characterise the level of preservation and significance, and provide a good understanding of their potential.
- 2.1.2 The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trial trenches (Figure 2). This approach to devising proposals to mitigate the impact of development on the archaeological resource of the development area is in accordance with national guidelines set out in the National Planning Policy Framework: Section 16.

2.2 Objectives

- 2.2.1 The principal objectives of the archaeological investigation are:
- / to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;
 - / to provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made about the need for any additional archaeological mitigation; and
 - / to make available the results of the work.

2.3 Development of Aims

- 2.3.1 Further, more detailed research aims may be generated and developed from the results of the archaeological evaluation, with specific reference to the North West Regional Research Framework (NWRRF). It is envisaged that the evaluation may potentially improve our understanding of the following research questions:
- 2.3.2 *Ind40: How well do we understand the historic development of urban transport infrastructure?*
- 2.3.3 *Ind58: How have industrial buildings adapted to new technology and processes?*
- 2.3.4 *Ind91: How were transport infrastructures improved and how was this related to the developing urban and market hierarchy during the industrial period?*

2.3.5 *Ind98: How well understood and recorded are the North-Whats canals, waterways and basins?*

3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1 Location

- 3.1.1 The site (centred on NGR SJ 84854 98427) is situated in the Ancoats area of Manchester. The site was formerly used as a car park accessed from Port Street (Plate 1) and is bounded by Great Ancoats Street to the north, Brownsfield Mill and a surface car park to the east, another surface car park to the south, and Port Street to the west.



Plate 1: Recent aerial view looking north across the site

3.2 Geology

- 3.2.1 The site is located on a band of solid geology comprising the sandstone of the Chester Formation, consisting, in an area previously dominated by rivers and which is overlain by superficial deposits of Devensian Till. Approximately 278m north-east of the site the solid geology comprises of the Manchester Marls Formation, which consists of mudstone (British Geology Society).

3.3 Topography

- 3.3.1 The northwest part of the site, alongside Port Street, lies at a height of approximately 50.7m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The southeast part of the site drops down to a height of c. 47.8m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with a brick revetment wall between the two sections and central access ramp leading downwards from northwest to southeast. The site was primarily covered with tarmac and concrete hard standing.



4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1.1 The following is based on information provided in a desk-based assessment

4.2 Prehistory (Pre- 43 AD)

4.2.1 The current understanding of any human activity in the Manchester region during the prehistoric period is poor, although it is reasonable to suggest that several areas in the centre of the city, such as Castlefield and Ardwick, may have been conducive for late prehistoric settlement on account of the natural topography and the abundance of natural water sources (i.e. rivers) (Gregory, 2007).

4.2.2 Physical indications of human activity in the Manchester area are provided by a small number of residual finds. A Neolithic stone hammer and arrow head, for instance, were unearthed in the Castlefield area of Manchester in 1845 (HER 119.1.0), whilst excavations at 77-83 Liverpool Road (HER 13944.1.0) produced two Mesolithic flints, one Neolithic/Bronze Age waste flake and a single sherd of late Bronze Age/Iron Age pottery. These finds complement a growing regional body of finds representing prehistoric activity, known to be concentrated on well-drained sand and gravel sites in proximity to watercourses and moss lands.

4.3 Romano-British period (43 AD – 410 AD)

4.3.1 The first military occupation of Manchester was established during the governorship of Agricola (AD 77-84), and commenced with a five-acre wooden fort, known as *Mamucium* (Bruton, 1909), situated c 1.8 km south-west of the site. The fort underwent several phases of development subsequently, the earlier defences being deconstructed and improved. The military complex evolved in response to the on-going military campaigns, from a purely defensive site to an established supply depot, essential to the expansion and consolidation of control in the region. The maturation of the military complex can be seen in the growing body of evidence for a military annexe, occupying an area to the north and east of the fort (Arrowsmith, 2016, 9-12). Evidence pertaining to this annexe is relatively scant and thus the exact nature of early settlement is unclear.

4.3.2 As this military complex developed, a grid of roads was laid out and a substantial extramural settlement, or *vicus*, grew up. This settlement was made up of civilians, attracted by the security and commercial benefits of the nearby fort. Based on archaeological excavations and the distribution of Roman finds, the limits of this civilian settlement appear to have extended south-eastwards along Chester Road, terminating somewhere in the vicinity of Great Jackson Street, northwards from the fort to approximately Quay Street, westwards along Liverpool Road for c 100m from the north-west corner of the fort, and eastwards across Deansgate to the area now occupied by Beetham Tower. Roads from the fort linked Manchester with Buxton to the south-east, Chester to the south, Wigan to the north-west, Ribchester to the north, and Castleshaw and York to the north-east. The settlement was well-connected in terms of trade and consequently lasted until the late 3rd century AD.

4.3.3 It is suggested that Store Street, located approximately 450m south of the site, was situated along the road from Manchester to Castleshaw, yet this awaits confirmation. In 1882 a coin of Claudius Gothicus was discovered in a basement in Piccadilly, and this find provides the only indication of Roman activity in the local area (Miller, 2014).

4.4 **Medieval period (410 – 1540)**

4.4.1 There is very little archaeological evidence in the region as a whole that represents the period between the end of the Roman occupation and the Norman Conquest of 1066. The area around Manchester came under the control of several kingdoms during this period. In AD 620, Edwin occupied Manchester, and it may have been at this time that settlement in the town was established around the cathedral (Farrer and Brownbill, 1908).

4.4.2 In AD 919, the Anglo-Saxon king, Edward the Elder, established a fortified base, or burh, at Manchester, which was then part of Viking Northumbria. It has been suggested that the burh lay within the area around the cathedral, which had become a focus for settlement by the late 11th century. The site occupied presently by Chetham's School is thought to have been the site of a castle founded by Manchester's Norman barons and is situated approximately 1km north-west of the site.

- 4.4.3 Following the Norman Conquest, William I assigned most of the land between the Ribble and Mersey rivers to Roger of Poitou, who retained the manor of Salford demesne (Tupling, 1962, 116), but divided his other newly acquired land into several fiefdoms (Kidd, 1996, 13). The largest of these was the landholding centred on Manchester, created by the grant of extensive lands in the hundreds of Salford, Leyland and West Derby to Albert Grelley (Tupling, 1962, 116).
- 4.4.4 By the 13th century, the Grelley family had established a manor house at the confluence of the rivers Irwell and Irk and the medieval town grew up around it (Hartwell *et al*, 2004, 256). It was from this hall that they governed both the manor and the extensive barony. In 1222 Manchester was granted an annual fair, and in 1301 Thomas Grelley was granted the Great Charter of Manchester by Edward I, and thus it became a free borough (*ibid*).
- 4.4.5 The site is situated within the Ancoats area of Manchester. The name Ancoats is believed to originate from *Elnecot*, and the Old English *ana cots*, meaning 'lonely cottage' (Cooper, 2002, 13). The area likely remained rural during the medieval period and is first mentioned in land grants dating back to the 13th century. In 1908 Swindells described it as 'an almost idyllic rural backwater' (Swindell, 1908, 19-26). In 1320 Ancoats was recorded in a survey as forming eight hamlets in the township of Manchester, within the Salford hundred (Harland, 1861). It is believed that these dwellings, formed mainly of cottages and farmhouses, may have been along Ancoats Lane (now Great Ancoats Street), Newton Lane (now Oldham Road) and Butler Lane (Miller, Wild and Little, 2007, 25). Great Ancoats Street runs adjacent to the north- eastern boundary of the site and the junction of Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road is c 290m to the north.

4.5 **Post-medieval (1540 – 1750) and Industrial period (1750 – 1930)**

4.5.1 *Historical Setting*

- 4.5.2 Ancoats likely remained largely rural during the post-medieval period, with the most significant building in the area being Ancoats Hall. The manor of Ancoats was held by the Byrons of Clayton family for over four hundred years until it was sold to Oswald Mosely, who built the timber-framed Ancoats Hall on the

land in 1596. Ancoats Hall overlooked the river Medlock on the eastern fringe of the area (Miller, Wild and Little, 2007, 25) and was described by Bruton as 'beautifully situated above the Medlock with lovely views over the green wooded country'.

- 4.5.3 The Mosleys, lords of the manor of Manchester, would hold the land for the next two centuries until it was bought by mill owner George Murray who altered it into a Victorian brick-built mansion (Rose *et al*, 2011, 5).
- 4.5.4 During the 18th century, south-east Lancashire as a whole was predominantly an agricultural area of isolated settlements and market towns, with the burgeoning town of Manchester at its heart (Williams with Farnie, 1992, 3). By the 1780s, the national demand for textiles and concomitant mill building transformed Manchester into a centre of the factory-based cotton-manufacturing industry (Baines, 1835).
- 4.5.5 The expansion of the population and trade of Manchester at an unprecedented rate, resulted in the transformation of Ancoats into a key industrial suburb (Miller and Wild, 2007). This transformation began in the 1770s, when land owned by the Leigh family was sold to Thomas Bound, a builder, who then sold it on to others for development (Little, 2002, 31). William Green's *Map of Manchester and Salford*, surveyed between 1787 and 1794, shows the focus for initial development to have been at the corner of Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road, and depicts the main elements of the existing street plan laid out on former fields of the area. Building speculation then drove further expansion, with plots of land within a grid-iron pattern of streets being sold for development. The principle driving force of development was the national demand for textiles, particularly cotton, and the introduction of steam-powered spinning mills (Williams and Farnie, 1992, 3).
- 4.5.6 The earliest textile factories in the area included several water-powered mills erected along Shooter's Brook, to the south of Union (now Redhill) Street. There is some evidence to suggest, for instance, that New Islington Mill and Salvin's Factory originated in the late 1780s as water-powered textile mills situated on the bank of Shooter's Brook (Miller and Wild, 2007). However, this was a small watercourse, and in seeking a solution to the inadequate power supplied to their waterwheels from the brook, some manufacturers

experimented with steam power. Notably, John Kennedy is reputed to have first applied steam power to one of his spinning mules whilst renting space at Salvin's Factory in 1793 (Lee, 1972, 9).

- 4.5.7 It was on the basis of a breakthrough in the application of steam power, and the demand for textiles that created the explosion of factory building in Ancoats (Little, 2002, 31). This was fuelled by the potential of cheap and reliable transport for goods and materials offered by the construction of the Rochdale and Ashton under Lyne canals, and led to the creation of a new breed of mill building in Ancoats (Miller and Wild, 2007). These were built on an unprecedented scale, many depending upon the developing network of short branch canals for transport and a source of water for their steam- power plants.
- 4.5.8 Numerous trades ancillary to textile manufacturing were also established in Ancoats during the 19th century, and large areas were developed for workers' housing. In an age when walking was the only viable means of travelling to work, these were built with little regulation around the industrial units. The net result was the creation of the world's first true industrial suburb: an edge-of-town industrial estate with associated housing, community facilities (churches, pubs and charitable refuges) and related businesses.
- 4.5.9 A key component of this new industrial townscape was the canal network, and particularly for the Ashton Canal and the Rochdale Canal, which formed a transport artery through Ancoats and also provided a source of water for the steam engines in the new textile factories. The Ashton Canal was proposed in 1791, and was intended to provide link between Manchester and the collieries in the Ashton and Oldham area. The canal was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1792, and construction commenced immediately under the direction of Edward Banks (Hadfield and Biddle, 1970).

The canal had been completed between Manchester and Ashton by early 1797, although the terminus basin at Piccadilly had yet to be constructed. It seems that James Meadows, the canal company agent, had been overseeing the construction of the canal up to that point but, in June 1798, Benjamin Outram was appointed by the canal company as engineer (Hadfield and Biddle, 1970). In August 1798, the company appointed F. Bellhouse to erect a warehouse at Ducie Street, and Outram was instructed to arrange for one or

more cranes to be erected on the public wharves at the canal terminal. In the same year, Samuel Oldknow, chairman of the Peak Forest Canal Company, entered negotiations with the Ashton Canal Company with a view to purchasing land at the canal terminus. This was coupled with the intention of linking the Peak Forest Canal with the Ashton Canal in Ashton, thereby providing a direct link to Manchester from the limestone quarries in Derbyshire. The Ashton Canal was finally completed in 1799, and several warehouses were established at the terminus in Piccadilly Basin (Hadfield and Biddle, 1970). Ashton Canal acted as catalyst for development in Ancoats, and the canal corridor heading north-eastwards out of Ancoats towards Bradford and Clayton became lined with textile mills.

4.5.10 *Overview of Manchester's Textile Industry*

4.5.11 By the 1780s, the national demand for textiles, particularly cotton, had begun to rise, resulting in a dramatic increase in mill building that transformed Manchester into a centre of the factory-based cotton manufacturing industry of international repute (Baines, 1835). The ebb and flow of business confidence powerfully influenced development, which was concentrated into short and intense bursts of investment (Williams with Farnie, 1992, 19). The high price of land influenced the location of fresh industrial ventures, and thus the new steam-powered mule mills were built on the outskirts of the established nucleus of Manchester. The first of these was established in Ancoats during the 1780s. A commercial boom in 1800-02 saw the number of cotton-spinning firms in the township of Manchester double from 51 in 1799 to 111 in 1802, setting Manchester on its path to becoming the most highly concentrated centre of cotton spinning in the world (Williams with Farnie, 1992, 19).

4.5.12 In broad terms, fluctuations in the cotton market during the 1820s brought 'boom and bust' conditions for Manchester's manufacturers, although a report in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1827 claimed that 'the market for manufactured goods was the briskest which there has been for a very long time'. This favourable economic situation persisted until 1836, and led to numerous new textile mills being established around the fringes of the Manchester. However, a serious depression of trade in 1837 resulted in the loss of inefficient firms. Boom conditions reigned between 1848 and 1853, and the number of cotton

mills in Manchester reached a peak of 108 at the close of 1853 (Williams with Farnie, 1992, 21). It was at this time that Manchester gained its popular designation as 'Cottonopolis' in recognition that the city represented the nucleus of the whole cotton industry, harbouring representatives of all its component branches and ancillary trades.

4.5.13 The number of mills in Manchester declined gradually during the second half of the 19th century, and was surpassed by Bolton as the leading centre for cotton spinning in the 1850s. This reflected the continuing inflation of land values in Manchester in the face of increased competition for development plots, which presented significant issues to individual mill owners that needed to expand their factory premises. Some old, established firms in the city centre relocated their business to the suburbs for the same reason, a notable example being Henry Houldsworth, who moved from his large mill complex on Newton Street in Manchester to Reddish, where he established a 'state of the art' spinning mill in 1865.

4.5.14 By the early 1880s, the number of cotton spindles operating in the city was in the process of absolute decline, exacerbated by the 'Great Depression' of 1873–96. This had a significant impact on many cotton-spinning firms. Some of Manchester's largest firms, such as McConnel & Kennedy and A & G Murray in Ancoats, specialised in the spinning of ultra-fine yarn, a branch of the industry that sustained less impact from the trade depression, whilst other firms were afforded some protection through diversification into the weaving and finishing branches.

4.5.15 *The Rochdale Canal*

4.5.16 The Rochdale Canal is situated c 33m south-east of the site, running adjacent to Brownsfield Mill and 19th century mapping shows that an arm of the canal had been constructed within the boundary of the site. The canal was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1794 and was linked to the Ashton Canal at Piccadilly in 1800. The canal linked Manchester with the ports of the East Coast via the rivers Aire and Trent and also to Liverpool via the Ashton to Bridgewater Canal. The canals were not only vital to power steam engines in factories but these links made Piccadilly Basin a focus for trans-shipment goods and a key location in the canal network (Miller, 2007, 16).

4.5.17 The first design for the Rochdale Canal Basin was proposed in 1796, and revised in 1804, although neither of these proposed schemes were carried out. The Rochdale Canal Company's first warehouse was eventually constructed in 1806, at the end of one of the canal arms to the east of Dale Street and survives today as Dale Warehouse. Dale Street effectively divided the basin into two with a smaller, western section bounded by Lees Street, London Road (later Piccadilly) and Ducie Street. The eastern section was bounded by Back China Lane, Upper Stanley Street, Leech Street and Ducie Street. The eastern section was bounded by Back China Lane, Upper Stanley Street, Leech Street and Ducie Street. A plan drawn up in 1810 closely resembles the final layout, and proposed 23 wharf plots, with two general wharves and the four buildings that had been completed by that stage (Maw *et al*, 2009, 22; Plates 2 and 3).

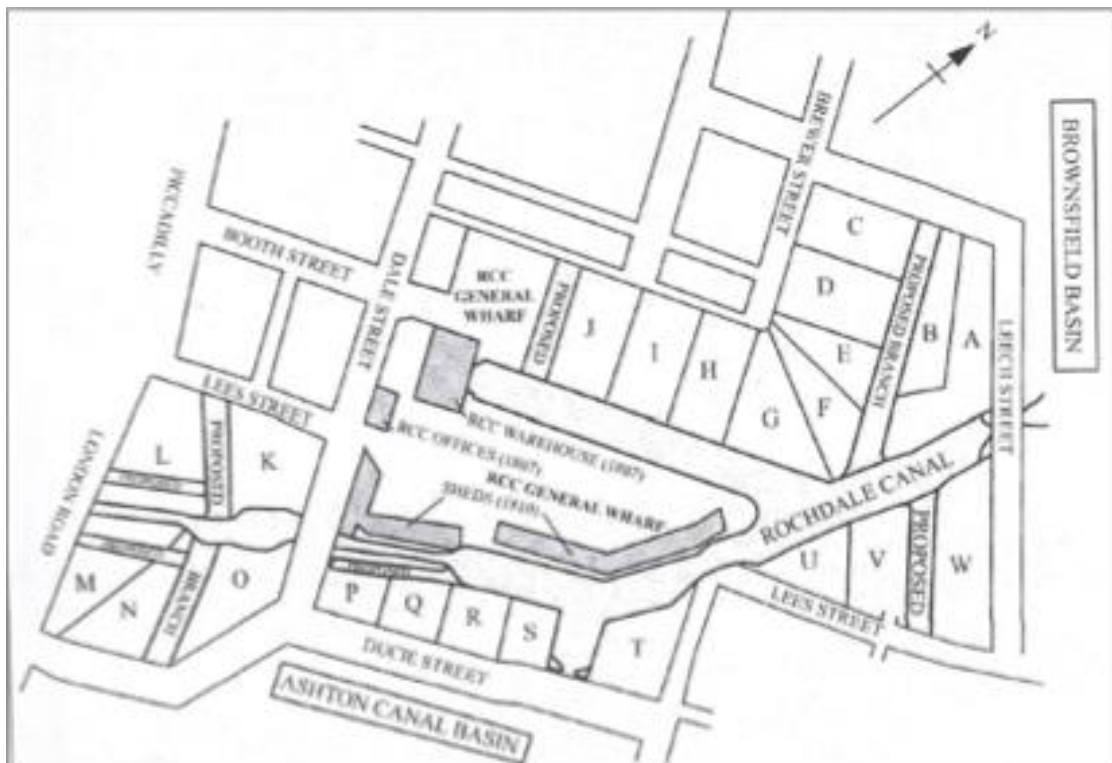


Plate 2: Plan of the Rochdale Canal Basin drawn in 1810

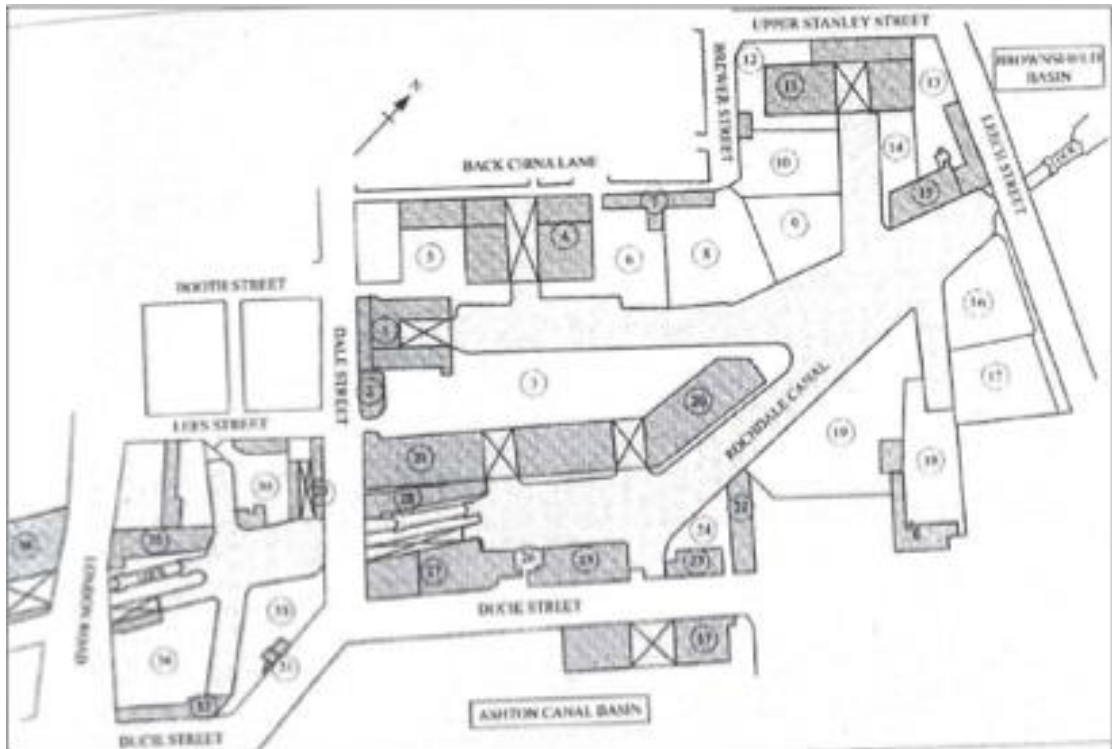


Plate 3: Plan of the Rochdale Canal Basin drawn in 1855. Select Key: 1 - Dale Warehouse (1807); 4 - Merchant's Warehouse (1825); 11 - Jackson's Warehouse; 18 - Stone Wharf; 19 - Stone Wharf & Sand Shed; 22 - Stables; 23 - Stables; 24 - Stable Yard

4.5.18 After the development of the Dale Warehouse, the company's offices were constructed immediately to the south-east in 1807, with two sheds located between the two arms. This range of buildings formed one of the two general wharfs for the Rochdale Canal Company, and was completed by 1810. However, development of the rest of the basin was slow, only being progressed during periods of prosperity. The next major development was not until 1817, when existing warehouses were expanded. Other improvements included new surfacing of the wharfs and installing cranes for loading and unloading goods (*op cit*, 22-3).

4.5.19 New warehousing was built in 1822, replacing the western warehouse of 1810, and was one of the first to employ iron in its structure. Over the next few years, the Rochdale Canal Company made several minor improvements, including renovating warehouse space as well as constructing the Lees Street Branch of the basin on the western edge. As part of traffic regulation, the Rochdale Canal Company ordered the construction of a stone gateway between the offices and the 'new' warehouse, which still stands today (*op cit*, 23).

- 4.5.20 Expansion into the north-eastern part of the basin was carried out in 1825, with the cutting of the Upper Stanley Street canal arm, as well as one further west, near Dale Warehouse, towards Back China Street. Growth stagnated in 1826 and, in 1829, the Merchant's Warehouse was destroyed by fire, leading the Rochdale Canal Company to implement new safety regulations. Trade picked up again during the 1830s, and warehousing was added at the south-west corner of Ducie and Dale Street, as well as around Upper Stanley Street. Jackson's Warehouse was completed in 1836, named after a carrier company that operated between Liverpool and Hull (*op cit*, 23-5).
- 4.5.21 *Railway Competition*: the introduction of a viable railway in the 1820s brought an alternative, and faster, means of transporting bulk goods. The advantages of this new form of transportation were recognised instantly, leading to the rapid expansion of the railway network. The Ashton Canal was purchased by the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway in 1842, and was operated as a single concern together with the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals. The Rochdale Canal Company resisted take-over bids from various railway companies initially but, in 1855, it leased the canal to a consortium of railway companies. The canal remained profitable into the 20th century, but was in sharp decline by the end of the First World War. The final boat journey across the Pennines on the Rochdale Canal was made in 1937 and, in 1952, the canal was closed to navigation, apart from the short section between Castlefield and the Ashton Canal junction at Piccadilly (Hadfield and Biddle, 1970).

4.6 Development of the site

- 4.6.1 The development of the site may be traced reasonably well from the sequence of available historic mapping. The earliest maps that show the study area are Laurent's 1793 map of Manchester and Salford (Plate 4), and Green's map of 1787-1794 (Plate 5). The maps indicate that the site was rural land surrounded by newly laid out streets and buildings. The streets in Ancoats were laid out in a grid pattern, creating series of regular plots, with development apparently focused on the Great Ancoats Street and Newton Lane (Oldham Road) area. Some of the larger streets were named after the original landowning families (George and Henry Cornwall Legh) (Rose *et al*, 2011, 8).

- 4.6.2 Both maps show the site as an undeveloped area of land at the junction of Great Ancoats Street and Port Street and Green's map identifies Mr D Leech as the landowner and whose family had owned the land since 1666. A field boundary split Mr Leech's land into two parcels along the west boundary of the site. Annotations on Green's map also showed the open land within and around the site as divided up by proposed roads that essentially created plots awaiting development.



Plate 4: Laurent's 1793 map of Manchester and Salford showing the location of the site



Plate 5: Site boundary superimposed onto Green's map of 1787-1794

- 4.6.3 Dean and Pigot's map of 1809 showed an arm of the Rochdale Canal had been constructed within the site, but no buildings had yet been developed (Plate 6). The construction of the Rochdale Canal had opened up new locations for canal wharves, including the opportunity for landowners along the

canal to develop their own land for private wharfage in areas close to the centre of Manchester. The Leech family's Brownsfield wharves were classed as the largest private basin in the area. Brownsfield was located north-east of the Piccadilly basin and, within which, the site was situated.

4.6.4 In the late 18th century, a series of legal disputes between Daniel Leech and the Rochdale Canal Company had taken place, concerning the proposed line of the canal which was to pass through Leech land. By 1800 the two parties agreed on the exact route and width of the land needed for the canal and in total, the Leech family sold 16,972 square yards of their land to the Rochdale Canal Company by 1803. However, Leech still owned 30,000 square yards of the Brownsfield estate (Maw, 2013, 182-183). In 1802, George Duckworth, a Manchester Attorney, described the lands potential:

4.6.5 "It will be the best land in the town or neighbourhood of Manchester for the sites of warehouses and wharves. It is nearer the centre of the town and elevated higher than any other land within the same distance, so that large loads of coals and the other heavy articles may be brought from it to any part of the town with one horse. All the high land near it is already sold at high prices for wharves." (Maw, 2013, 183)

4.6.6 Initially the development of the wharves was slow due to low land prices during the Napoleonic wars but sped up between 1819 and 1829 when Thomas Leech inherited his father's estate and built a series of further branches (Maw, 2013, 183).

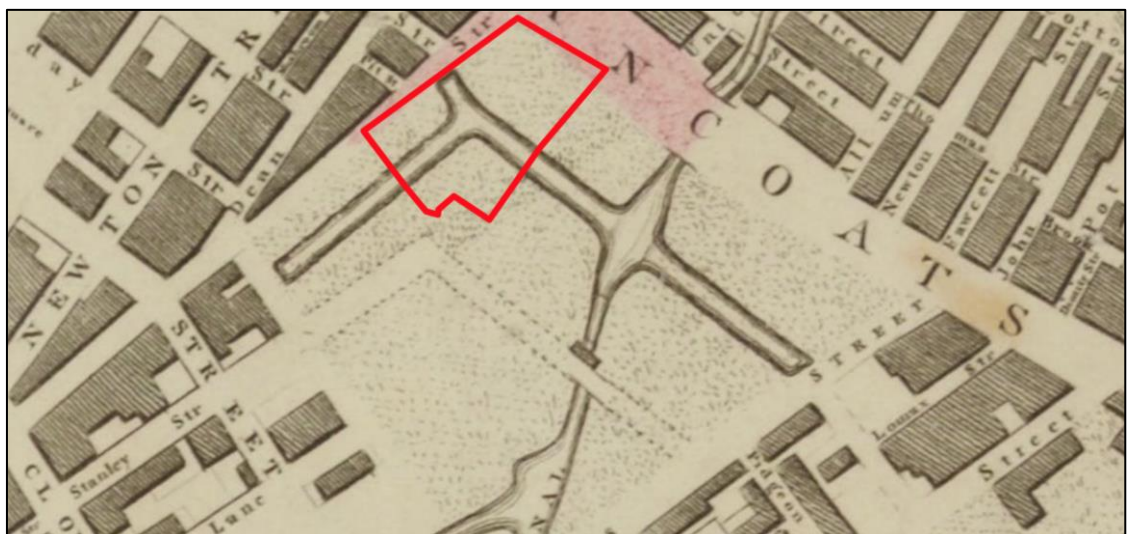


Plate 6: Extract from Dean and Pigot's map of 1809 showing the site and Rochdale Canal

- 4.6.7 The branches within the Brownsfield estate opened seventeen new plots, sixteen of which became wharves and Brownsfield Mill was built on the other. Bancks & Co.'s map of Manchester and Salford shows buildings occupied the site by 1831. The map shows Brownsfield Mill, labelled as Gerrards Mill, outside the south-east boundary of the site (Plate 7). The steam-powered cotton spinning mill was built in 1825 and was soon after extended into an L-shape.
- 4.6.8 Gerrard Mill's plan and form were typical of early Manchester mills and the main block was situated adjacent to the Rochdale canal which would have provided water to power the steam engine in the engine house. The mill survives as a grade II listed building and is notable for having the earliest surviving chimney in Manchester (HER 2119.1.0; Historic England 2021a).
- 4.6.9 The 1831 map also shows that double-depth terraced buildings had been constructed fronting Great Ancoats Street along the north-east boundary of the site and the rest of the site was occupied by a yard and two potential workshops or stores.

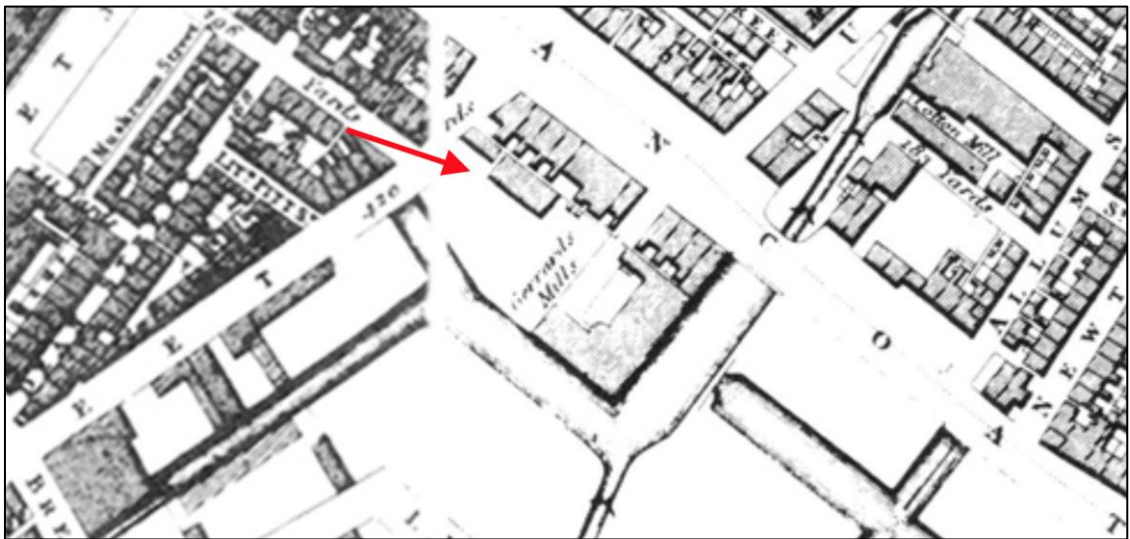


Plate 7: Bancks & Co.'s map of 1831 showing buildings within the site

- 4.6.10 The 1851 Ordnance Survey map showed that development had taken place within the site between 1831 and 1850 (Plate 8). It labelled the site as 'City Wharf' and a large area of it was in use as a timber yard.



Plate 8: Site boundary superimposed on 1851 Ordnance Survey map

- 4.6.11 Timber yards were areas where timber was brought to Manchester by the canal and stored before it was dispersed into the city. Coal wharves had dominated the Brownsfield estate and stone wharves comprised the second largest area, with timber wharves occupying the rest of the land (Maw, 2013, 183). Timber was brought along the Rochdale Canal to Manchester, via Hull, from the Baltic and was a notable part of Ancoats' industry. Small workshops were set up making things such as furniture, picture frames and floorboards (Rose *et al*, 2011, 31). Timber was also brought to Manchester from Liverpool via the Bridgewater Canal and by 1848 the trade of timber between the two cities comprised half the total tonnage of goods exchanged (Maw, 2013, 59). A slate wharf also occupied the area within the southern boundary of the site and access to it could be gained via Upper Stanley Street and Leech Street.
- 4.6.12 The 1851 map also depicted various stores and workshops within the wharf, including a saw mill, saw pit and an office. A footbridge connecting two parcels of the site across the canal arm, a crane and a weighing machine are also labelled. In an 1853 directory of Manchester & Salford, John Kirkham's occupation is listed as 'timber merchant, & timber and marble steam saw mills' on Port Street (Whellan, 1853, 187). Later ordnance survey maps labelled the numbers of the buildings that occupied the site and the footprint of the timber

yard occupied 74 and 76 Port Street (Plate 13). By 1867 Hanmer and Co are listed at 76 Port Street as timber merchants (Seyd and Co, 1867, 101).

- 4.6.13 The buildings fronting Great Ancoats Street on Bancks' map were still present in 1851 and Adshead's map of the same year showed the buildings with the same layout and presented them as commercial properties (Plate 9). Further, the census returns of 1851 listed the occupations of those living at Great Ancoats Street and included a corn dealer, grocers, a baker, shop workers and plasterers and painters. The 1851 map also depicted the properties with stairs suggesting that they were cellared.

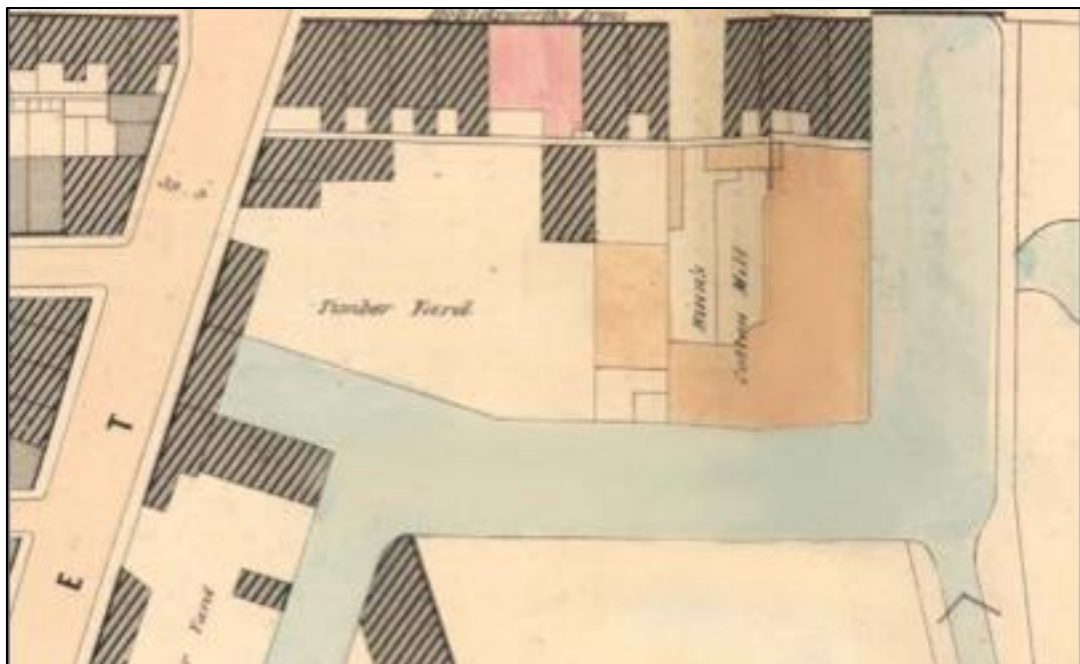


Plate 9: Adshead's map of Manchester, 1851 showing commercial properties

- 4.6.14 A public house labelled as the 'Big Tub' was also shown on the 1851 map. However, Adshead's map called it the 'Houldsworth's Arms'. It is likely that the public house was first named 'Houldsworth's Arms' before it was changed to the 'Big Tub' around the time that Adshead's map was produced. In 1837 a Manchester newspaper reported on the meeting of the Manchester and Salford Licensed Victuallers' Protection Society. A Mr R. G. Stracy of the Houldsworth's Arms, Great Ancoats Street, is described as the chairman of the society (*Morning Advertiser* 24th July 1837). 1851 census returns also listed Mr Stracy at 98 Great Ancoats Street and his occupation was a 'Wholesale & Retail Spirit Dealer'. By 1891, the census returns listed 98 Great Ancoats

Street as the Big Tub, with Mr Terrill as its publican. The buildings fronting Great Ancoats Street would see little further development until the mid-20th century.

- 4.6.15 By the late 19th century further workshops and stores had been constructed within the rest of the site, with some existing buildings extended (Plate 10). Charles Goad's Insurance map, surveyed in 1928, is particularly useful in documenting the use of each building occupying the site in the early 20th century (Plate 12). The map shows the site in a similar layout to the 1891, 1908 (Plate 11) and 1922 Ordnance Survey maps, with the exception that part of the arm of the Rochdale canal had been removed and covered with an extension to an existing building in 1908. This building is labelled on Goad's map as a metal warehouse associated with William Allen's Port Street machinery stores. William Allen owned an engineer and foundry works on the junction of Poland Street and Jersey Street, c 450m north-east from the site (Miller, 2009). The map also showed that 90 Great Ancoats Street was used as a corn store with two hay, straw and flour warehouses at the rear. Census returns listed a baker and flour dealer at the property as early as 1851 and from 1861 it was home to a corn dealer. Goad's map also showed that an iron girder works, saw mill and timber warehouses occupied the eastern area of the site. Further, buildings to the south of the Rochdale Canal arm were noted as sheds associated with Hall and Rogers' brick, tile and pipe wharf.



Plate 10: Site boundary superimposed on 1891 Ordnance Survey map



Plate 11: Site boundary superimposed on 1908 Ordnance Survey map

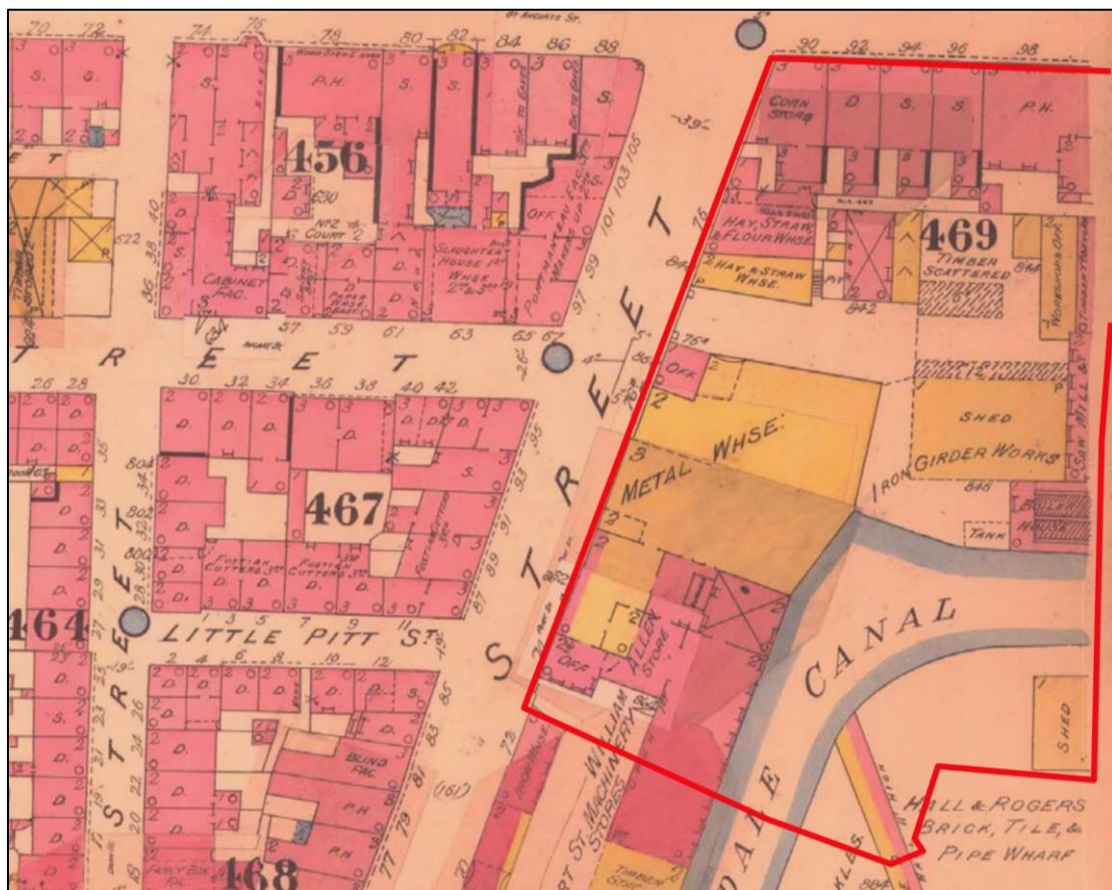


Plate 12: Site boundary superimposed onto Goad's Fire Insurance Plans of 1928

4.6.16 By 1948 the Rochdale Canal arm is no longer visible on mapping and was filled in (Plate 13). A machine tool works and Hill's Service Garage occupied the

area of the site where the canal arm and Allen's machine stores had been situated. By 1948 the Big Tub public house on Great Ancoats Street was renamed the Imperial Hotel.

- 4.6.17 The Ordnance Survey map of 1969 showed that the properties at 90 and 92 Great Ancoats Street had been demolished and replaced with a larger square building (Plate 14). It also showed that part of the machine tool works at 76 Port Street had been replaced by a rectangle building, likely to be Hills Garage with associated yard space at the rear. This change within the site took place between 1955 and 1967 when a picture was taken of the junction of Great Ancoats Street and Port Street. The image showed a car showroom named Hills Garages at 90 and 92 Great Ancoats Street. The sign of Port Street is visible on the image and an arrow on the side of the building points towards a service station, likely directing towards Hill's Garages (Plate 16). A second image, taken a year earlier, shows Port Street leading to Great Ancoats Street and within which the entrance to Hills Garages and a sign advertising 'Allens' is shown (Plate 15). By 1969 the buildings comprising of the timber warehouses and iron girder works at the east of the site had also been demolished.
- 4.6.18 Modern mapping now shows that all of the buildings within the site have been demolished and it is currently occupied by a car park.



Plate 13: Site boundary superimposed on 1948 Ordnance Survey map



Plate 14: Site boundary superimposed on 1969 Ordnance Survey map



Plate 15: Photograph of Hill's Garages at the junction of Port Street and Great Ancoats Street, 1967



Plate 16: Photograph of Port Street, overlooking Great Ancoats Street, 1966

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1.1 all archaeological work was carried out according to the Written Scheme of Investigation and conducted following the ClfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2020). Prior to the commencement of any excavation works, the location of the area targeted for archaeological investigation was laid out accurately with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid. The trench locations were then be scanned for any live services using a cable avoidance tool.
- 5.1.2 Prior to the commencement of any excavation works, the location of the area targeted for archaeological investigation was laid out accurately with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid. The trench locations were then be scanned for any live services using a cable avoidance tool.
- 5.1.3 **Archaeological Excavation:** machine excavation was used to carefully define the extent of any surviving structures, features, and other remains. This was carried out using a mechanical excavator under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Where necessary thereafter, remains were cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date. Where hand excavation was required it was undertaken by trained professional archaeologists.
- 5.1.4 All information identified in the course of the site works was recorded stratigraphically. Results of the evaluation were recorded on *pro-forma* trench record sheets, accompanied with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and high-resolution digital photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features.
- 5.1.5 **Photography:** a full and detailed photographic record of features was maintained. Photography was undertaken in accordance with HE guidance, *Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice* (July 2015). All frames included a visible, graduated metric scale. Photographs records were maintained on photographic *pro-forma* sheets.
- 5.1.6 **Planning:** the precise location of all archaeological remains encountered was surveyed using GPS survey. This process generated scaled plans within

AutoCAD, which were then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings were generated at an accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale, but can be output at any scale required. All information is georectified to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and all levels tied into the Ordnance Datum.

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

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The evaluation comprised three trenches (Figure 2). Trenches 1 and 2 lay over the upper terrace alongside Port Street and trench 3 lay within the lower terrace to the southeast. The excavations encountered five phases of activity.

6.2 Natural Geology

6.2.1 The natural geology comprised light blue grey boulder and was observed in trenches 2 and 3. In trench 2 the natural clay was observed at a depth of 2.3m, or at 48.4m aOD. In trench 3 the clay was observed at a depth of 0.4m, or 47.4m aOD. Clay was not encountered in trench 1, which was excavated to a depth of 2.9m before collapse and flooding meant the trench had to be abandoned.

6.3 Phase 1:

6.3.1 Phase 1 comprised the construction of the canal arm leading from the Rochdale canal. The Rochdale Canal Basin was built between 1804 and 1806, and mapping suggests that the canal arm was completed before 1809. Stone copings forming the southeast edge of the canal were encountered at the northwest end of trench 1, at a depth of 47.37m aOD. They coping stones were cut into the natural clay (Figure 4; Plate 17).

6.3.2 Removal of silts from the canal arm was monitored via watching brief. The deposits were too heavily contaminated to allow for any detailed analysis or retrieval of artefacts. No major structures were observed within the canal deposits.



Plate 17: Canal side coping stones, looking north

6.4 Phase 2:

- 6.4.1 Below the tarmac and bedding stone covering trench 2 was a 1.7m band of mixed ash, cinder and rubble levelling material which likely represented the initial levelling of the area for the construction of the canal basin between 1806 and 1809. This overlay a 0.3m thick deposit of grey silty clay, which may have represented the pre-canal ground surface and lay immediately above the natural clay (Figure 3; Plate 18).



Plate 18: Early 19th-century levelling material, looking north

6.5 Phase 3:

- 6.5.1 At the southeast end of trench 3 was a hand-made brick wall which ran north/south across the trench and then returned west at its north end. It was one stretcher and one header course of brick in width and had no discernible bonding material, suggesting a lime mortar that may have washed away over time. Only a single brick depth of the wall footing had survived, cut into the natural clay (Figure 4; Plate 19).



Plate 19: Early 19th-century brick wall, obscured by contaminated oil, looking west

6.6 Phase 4:

- 6.6.1 Phase 4 comprised the demolition of the buildings associated with the canal basin. A mixed demolition layer was present within trenches 2 to a depth of 0.1m, and within trench 3 to a depth of 0.25m. In trench 1 this material may have been infilling a cellar as it was encountered to a depth of at least 2.9m. At this point the flooding and collapse of the loose demolition material meant that excavation had to be abandoned due to the proximity of the roadside wall and roadway beyond it.

6.7 Phase 5:

- 6.7.1 Phase 5 comprised the demolition of buildings that had replaced the earlier canal basin structures. Following demolition of the canal basin buildings between 1955 and 1969 the buildings had been replaced with a series of garages and a 'works'. No evidence of these structures was encountered but in trench 1 demolition material was observed to a depth of at least 2.9m. At

this point the flooding and collapse of the loose demolition material meant that excavation had to be abandoned due to the proximity of the roadside wall and roadway beyond it. The demolition material was distinctly different from that seen in trenches 2 and 3, and comprised machine-made bricks and steel beams (Plate 20).



Plate 20: Demolition rubble from 20th-century buildings, looking north

6.8 Phase 6:

- 6.8.1 Phase 6 comprised the laying of tarmac and bedding stone across the site to create the car park surface.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Natural Geology

- 7.1.1 The natural geology, comprising light grey clay, suggests that there may have been a slight natural slope downwards from northwest to southeast across the site, although this could also be attributed to all but the northwestern part of the site being reduced in height in preparation for the canal basin construction.

7.2 Phase 1: Canal Construction

- 7.2.1 The coping stones encountered in trench 3 represented the original construction of the canal arm between 1804 and 1806.

7.3 Phase 2: The Canal Basin

- 7.3.1 Levelling deposits in trench 2 were attributed to the construction of the canal basin between 1806 and 1809, following the final completion of the canal arm between 1804 and 1806

7.4 Phase 3: Later Canal Basin Buildings

- 7.4.1 The brick wall encountered in trench 3 represented the southeast wall of a narrow building range first appearing on the mapping of 1851 and continuing through to the mapping of 1928. Therefore it was built between 1831 and 1851, and subsequently demolished between 1928 and 1948. It is unlabelled on any of the maps and lay between two canal wharfs, with a small smithy at its southwest end.

7.5 Phase 4: Demolition of the Canal Basin

- 7.5.1 The buildings at the southwest of the canal arm appear to have been demolished between 1928 and 1948, with the remainder demolished between 1955 and 1969. It also appears that the canal was filled in at this time with much of the demolition material deposited in the canal as backfill. This may be the reason why the demolition deposit is relatively thin across the rest of the site.

7.6 **Phase 5: Demolition of the mid-20th Century Buildings**

- 7.6.1 Following demolition of the canal basin buildings during the mid-20th century, these were replaced with a series of garages and a 'works', all visible on the mapping of 1969. No remains of these structures was encountered in situ but a large amount of demolition rubble was observed within trench 1. This was distinctly different from that seen across the rest of the site and was clearly of a mid-20th century date with the mapping suggesting demolition of these buildings during the 1980's.

7.7 **Phase 6: Formation of the Car Park**

- 7.7.1 The car park surface was laid down following demolition of the 20th-century garages and 'works' during the 1980's. This continued in use until immediately prior to the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in January 2023.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Key Results

8.1.1 In summary, the infilled canal arm had survived on the site but the deposits were too heavily contaminated for analysis or artefact retrieval and no large structures (E.G. scuttled canal boats) were encountered. Levelling material was observed that was attributed to the preparation of the area for construction of the canal basin and a single fragmentary wall was recorded and attributed to late to mid-19th century, associated with the canal basin. Two phases of demolition were encountered. The first was a narrow band of early 19th-century material attributed to the demolition of the canal basin between 1955 and 1969, much of which was used to infill the canal arm. The second phase of demolition was associated with the removal, during the 1980s, of the buildings that had replaced the canal basin structures during the 1950s and 1960's. The final phase of activity was the sites conversion into a surface car park with the laying of tarmac.

8.2 Significance

8.2.1 The archaeological fieldwork has demonstrated that, other than the canal arm itself, very little had survived relating to the canal basin and its associated structures. The deposits within the canal, and much of the ground in the lower terrace, were too heavily contaminated to be examined in any detail.

8.3 Key Initiatives

8.3.1 Due to the lack of surviving evidence, later intrusions and the level of contamination it proved impossible to address any of the initiatives proposed in section 2.3.

8.4 Dissemination

8.4.1 It is felt that the results of the investigation do not merit any further dissemination and the condition will be satisfied by deposition of this report with GMHER.

9 **ARCHIVE**

- 9.1.1 The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards and in line with current ClfA guidelines updated 2014.

10 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 10.1.1 Salford Archaeology would like to thank Renaker Build Limited for commissioning the project and for their support during the site works. We would also like to thank Ian Miller of GMAAS for his support and advice during the project.
- 10.1.2 The evaluation was carried out by Graham Mottershead, assisted by Andy Coutts. The watching brief was carried out by Joe van Miert. The report was written and compiled by Graham Mottershead, with illustrations by Sarah Mottershead. The project was managed by Graham Mottershead.

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APPENDIX 1: FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location
- Figure 2: Location of archaeological evaluation trenches
- Figure 3: Plan of trenches 1 and 2 with annotated levels
- Figure 4: Plan of trench 3 with annotated levels
- Figure 5: Evaluation trenches superimposed onto OS 1:500 Town Plan 1891

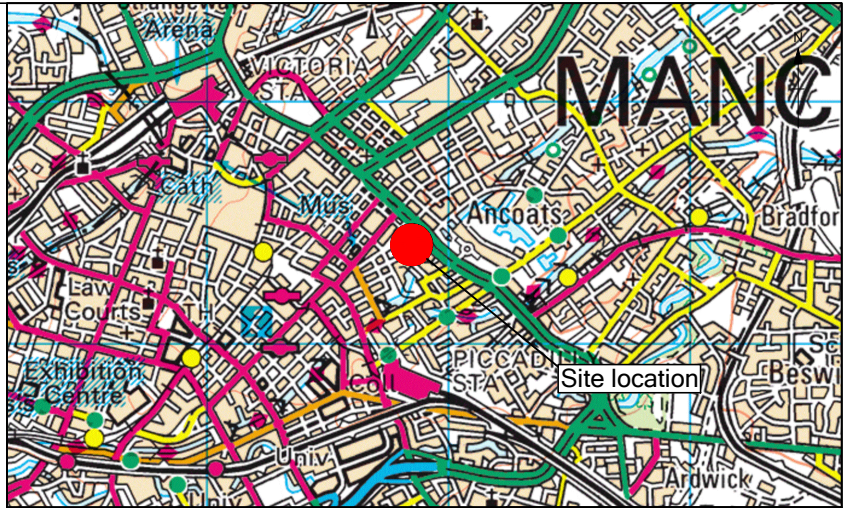


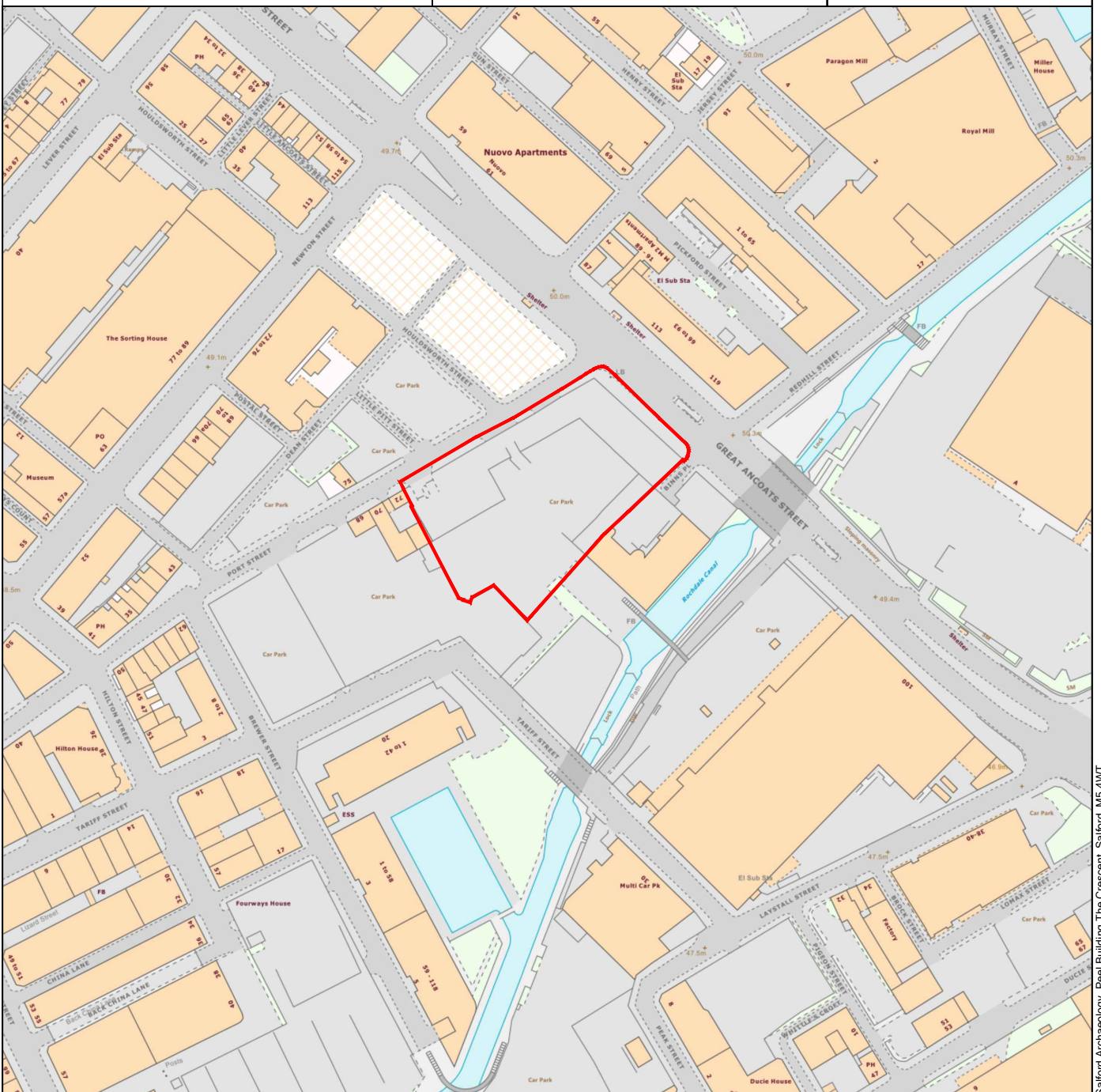
Figure 1:

Site Location

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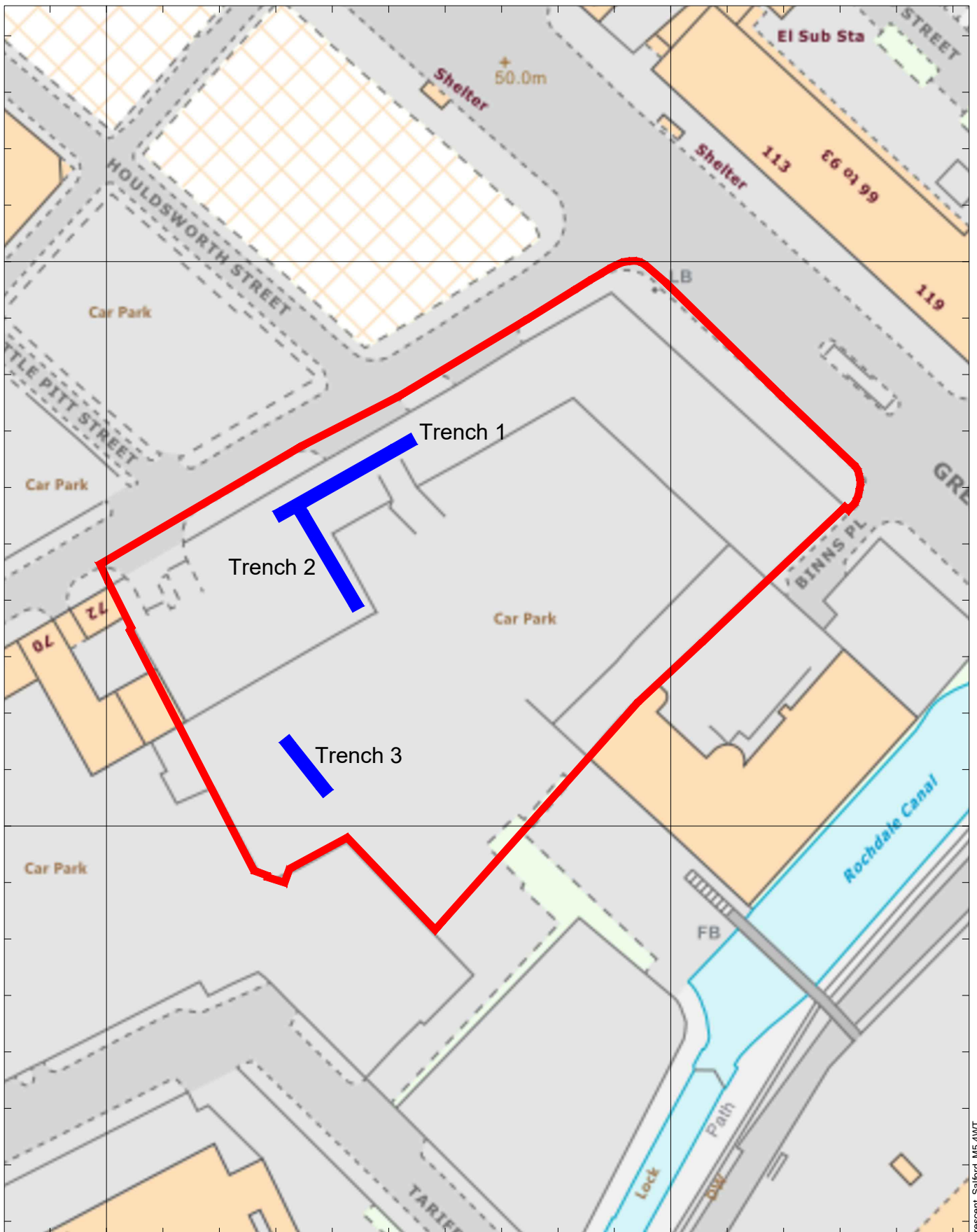


Figure 2:

Trench Locations

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Key:

- Site Boundary
- Trench Locations


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0

50 m



Scale at A4 1:750

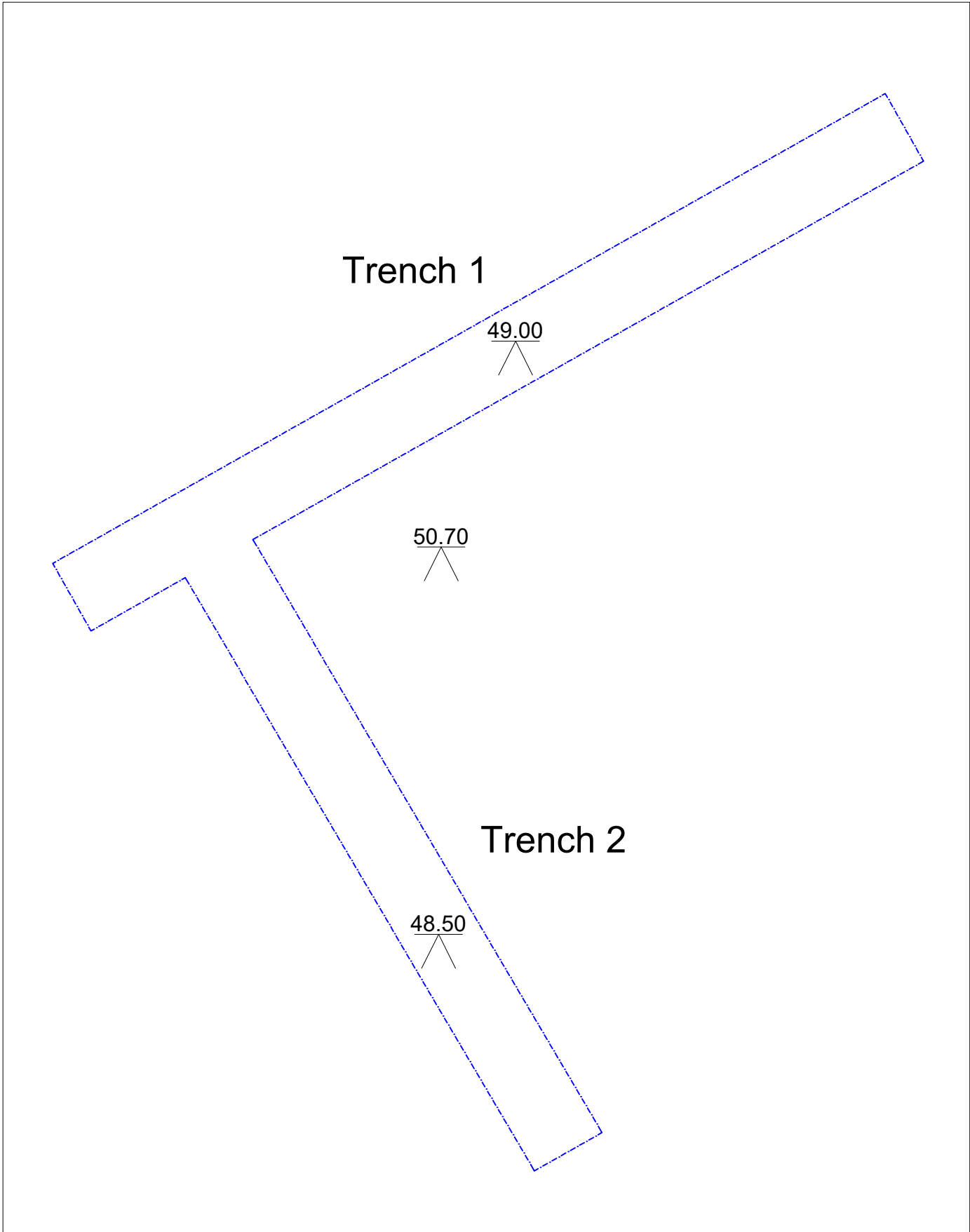


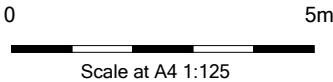
Figure 3:
Trenches 1 and 2 with Levels



Key:
--- Limit of Excavation



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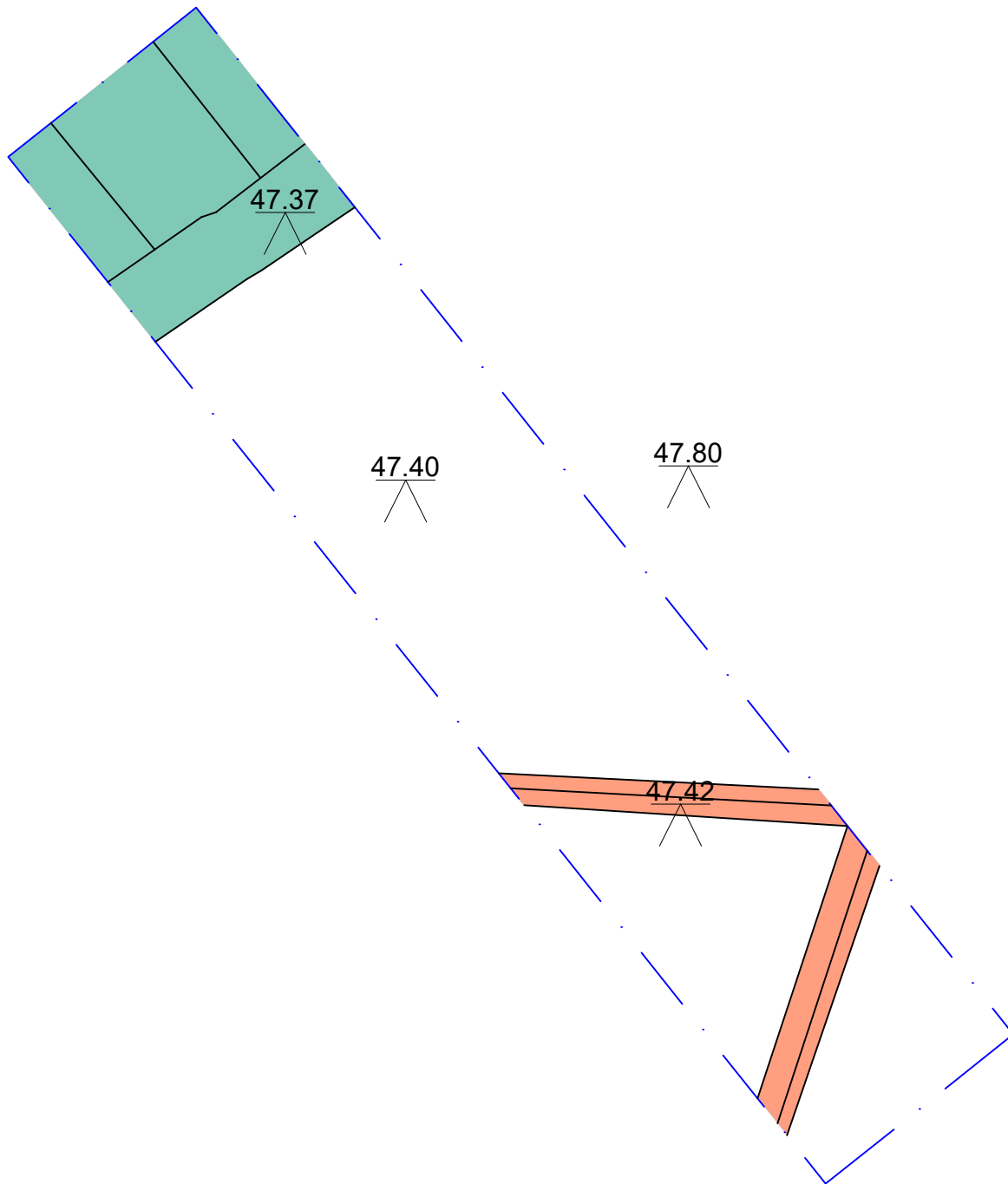


Figure 4:
Trench 3 Evaluation Results



Key:

- Brick Wall
- Stone
- Limit of Excavation



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Scale at A4 1:50

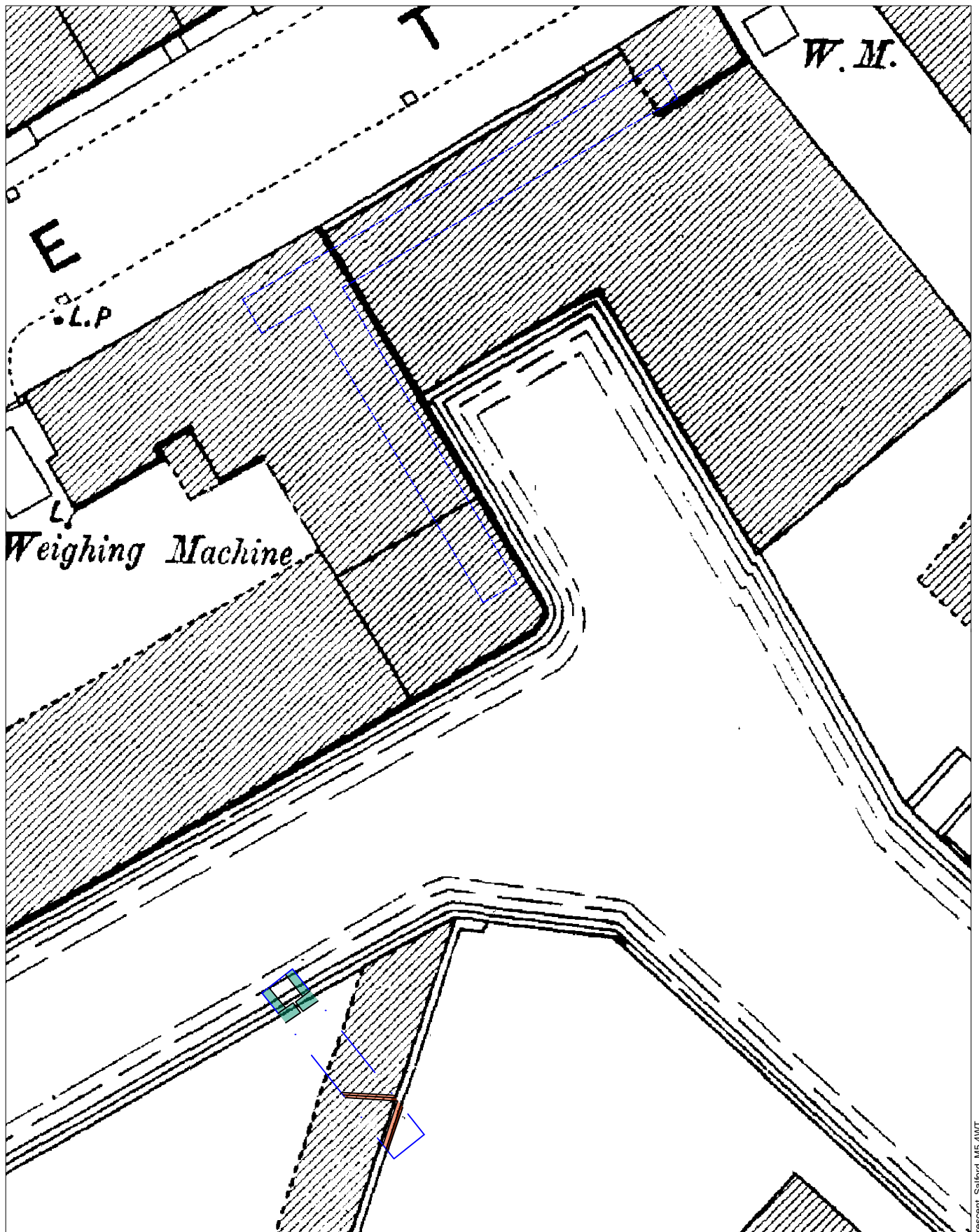


Figure 5:

Evaluation Trenches Superimposed onto the 1:500 Town Plan of 1891

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Key:

- Brick Wall
- Stone
- Limit of Excavation



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0 10 m
Scale at A4 1:250