



**æon archaeology**

---

# **Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (138788/FO/2023)**

## **February 2024 v2.0**



Archaeological Strip, Map and Record  
Project Code: A0468.1  
Report no. 0456

---



**æon archaeology**

---

# **Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (138788/FO/2023)**

## **February 2024 v2.0**

Report no. 0456

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record

**Aeon Archaeology  
Obsidian Offices  
Chantry Court  
Chester  
CH1 4QN**

Written by: Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA

Checked by: Josh Dean BA



Project Code: A0468.1

Date: 27/03/2024

Client: Kellen Homes and Greater Manchester Youth Federation  
[info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk)

---



æon archaeology

---

# Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (138788/FO/2023)

## February 2024 v2.0

### Copyright Declaration:

Aeon Archaeology grants permission for the material presented within this report to be used by the archives/repository with which it is deposited, in perpetuity, although Aeon Archaeology retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports, as specified in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (chapter IV, section 79). The permission will allow the repository to reproduce material, including for use by third parties, with the copyright owner suitably acknowledged.

### Disclaimer:

This Report has been prepared solely for the person/party which commissioned it and for the specifically titled project or named part thereof referred to in the Report. The Report should not be relied upon or used for any other project by the commissioning person/party without first obtaining independent verification as to its suitability for such other project, and obtaining the prior written approval of Aeon Archaeology. Aeon Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this Report being relied upon or used for any purpose other than the purpose for which it was specifically commissioned. The entitlement to rely upon this Report rests solely with the person/party which commissioned it and does not extend to any other person/party. Aeon Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for any use of or reliance upon this Report by any person/party other than the commissioning person/party.



# Figures

**Figure 01:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:20,000 at A4.

**Figure 02:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:5,000 at A4.

**Figure 03:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:2,000 at A4.

**Figure 04:** Location of strip, map and record areas. Scale 1:2,000 at A4.

**Figure 05:** Plan of Area 1. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Figure 06:** Location and orientation of photographic plates - area 1. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Figure 07:** Plan of area 2. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Figure 08:** Location and orientation of photographic plates - area 2. Scale 1:250 at A4.

# Plates

**Plate 01:** Pre-excavation photograph of strip, map and record area, from the west.

**Plate 02:** Area 1 (0m-35m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 03:** Area 1 (0m-35m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 04:** Area 1 (35m-50m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 05:** Area 1 (35m-50m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 06:** North facing trench section area 1, from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.

**Plate 07:** Area 2 (0m-20m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 08:** Area 2 (0m-20m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 09:** Area 2 (20m-50m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 10:** Area 2 (20m-50m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.

**Plate 11:** North facing trench section area 2, from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.

## Contents

|      |                                                                                         |    |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.0  | NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY .....                                                             | 2  |
| 2.0  | INTRODUCTION.....                                                                       | 3  |
| 3.0  | SITE LOCATION .....                                                                     | 5  |
| 4.0  | HISTORY OF THE SITE .....                                                               | 6  |
| 5.0  | PROJECT AIMS .....                                                                      | 7  |
| 6.0  | METHODOLOGY .....                                                                       | 8  |
| 6.1  | Data Collection from Site Records .....                                                 | 8  |
| 6.2  | Artefact Methodology .....                                                              | 9  |
| 6.3  | Environmental Samples Methodology .....                                                 | 10 |
| 6.4  | Report and dissemination.....                                                           | 10 |
| 6.5  | Research Framework, Aims and Objectives .....                                           | 10 |
| 7.0  | DIGITAL DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN .....                                                      | 11 |
| 7.1  | Type of study .....                                                                     | 11 |
| 7.2  | Types of data.....                                                                      | 11 |
| 7.3  | Format and scale of the data .....                                                      | 11 |
| 7.4  | Methodologies for data collection / generation.....                                     | 11 |
| 7.5  | Data quality and standards .....                                                        | 12 |
| 7.6  | Managing, storing and curating data.....                                                | 12 |
| 7.7  | Metadata standards and data documentation.....                                          | 12 |
| 7.8  | Data preservation strategy and standards.....                                           | 12 |
| 7.9  | Suitability for sharing .....                                                           | 12 |
| 7.10 | Discovery by potential users of the research data .....                                 | 12 |
| 7.11 | Governance of access.....                                                               | 12 |
| 7.12 | The study team's exclusive use of the data .....                                        | 13 |
| 7.13 | Restrictions or delays to sharing, with planned actions to limit such restrictions..... | 13 |
| 7.14 | Regulation of responsibilities of users .....                                           | 13 |
| 7.15 | Responsibilities .....                                                                  | 13 |
| 7.16 | Organisational policies on data sharing and data security .....                         | 13 |
| 8.0  | QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS.....                                                          | 14 |
| 8.1  | The Documentary Archive.....                                                            | 14 |
| 8.2  | Environmental Samples .....                                                             | 14 |
| 8.3  | Artefacts.....                                                                          | 14 |
| 9.0  | RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND RECORD.....                                | 16 |
| 10.0 | CONCLUSION .....                                                                        | 18 |
| 11.0 | SOURCES .....                                                                           | 19 |

## **1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Kellen Homes and the Greater Manchester Youth Federation to undertake an archaeological investigation involving the excavation of two areas on land at Mount Road, Gorton, Greater Manchester.

The suspected archaeological interest at the Site derived from the close proximity of the suspected early-medieval Nico Ditch earthwork to the immediate south of the Site boundary.

The excavation areas showed that the Site had been previously stripped onto the natural glacial substrata thus removing any potential for all but the deepest cut archaeological remains, of which none were observed. The Site had then been covered with at least three levelling deposits rich in post-medieval / modern inclusions of ceramic, glass, metal, bone and construction building materials. These were likely sourced and used as part of a historical infilling and levelling activity to raise and level the land surface for the creation of the former sports pitches.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Kellen Homes and the Greater Manchester Youth Federation, hereafter ‘the Client’, to carry out a programme of archaeological strip, map & record excavation on an area of land in advance of the *erection of a youth, sports and community hub (Use Class E(d)(g)), F2(b)), 2 grass football pitches, combined netball and basketball court, cricket strip (Use Class F2 (c)), a three storey building comprising 36 no. apartments for young persons 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 on land at Mount Road, Gorton, Greater Manchester M18 7QF – hereafter ‘the Site’ (centred on **NGR: SJ 88333 95035**) (figures 01-03).*

Planning application (138788/FO/2023) has been sought from Manchester City Council, hereafter ‘the Council’ and is awaiting determination (as of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024).

A historic environment desk-based assessment was undertaken by Nexus Heritage in 2022 and identified no overt interest at the Site, and that 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 outside of the site’s southern boundary.

The Council considers that there is an archaeological interest at the Site related to the immediate environs of the Nico Ditch and required an archaeological investigation in order to cater for that interest, to compile an archive record of what archaeological evidence may remain and to disseminate the results in a suitable format(s).

It is anticipated that the Council will apply a condition to a permission (should such be forthcoming) to ensure that suitable archaeological attendances, investigation, reporting, dissemination and archiving is undertaken.

The Client acknowledged the duty of care to the archaeological interest and with this in mind and in compliance with the spirit and intent of the anticipated condition of application 138788/FO/2023 it commissioned Fenix Heritage to prepare a Project Design (PD) (1044.R01b) for a programme of archaeological investigation in line with the Council’s expectations. This PD was approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist (SPA) (Mr Ben Dyson BA MLitt) at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) in their role as archaeological advisor to the Council. Aeon Archaeology undertook the archaeological investigation in accordance with this approved PD.

The use of such a recommended condition is in line with the guidance set out in Paragraph 205, Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (Revised 2021), published by the Department for Communities and Local Government; and Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (Historic England 2015).

This document reports on the details of a programme of archaeological investigation known as strip, map and record, carried out between 12<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

The approved PD undertaken by Fenix Heritage in January 2024 outlined the aims and objectives of the strip, map and record as well as the methods by which they would be met. This formed the basis of a method statement submitted for the work and which was undertaken in accordance with this document. The investigation of the suspected archaeological resource through the excavation of two 50m x 5m areas was deemed adequate for the purposes intended, however it was acknowledged that

there may be some latitude on the size and positioning of the excavation areas due to restraints from existing utilities and/or soil conditions.

This report is offered for consideration to the SPA at GMAAS for verification with reference to the Condition recommended to the planning determination and the relevant provisions in NPPF.

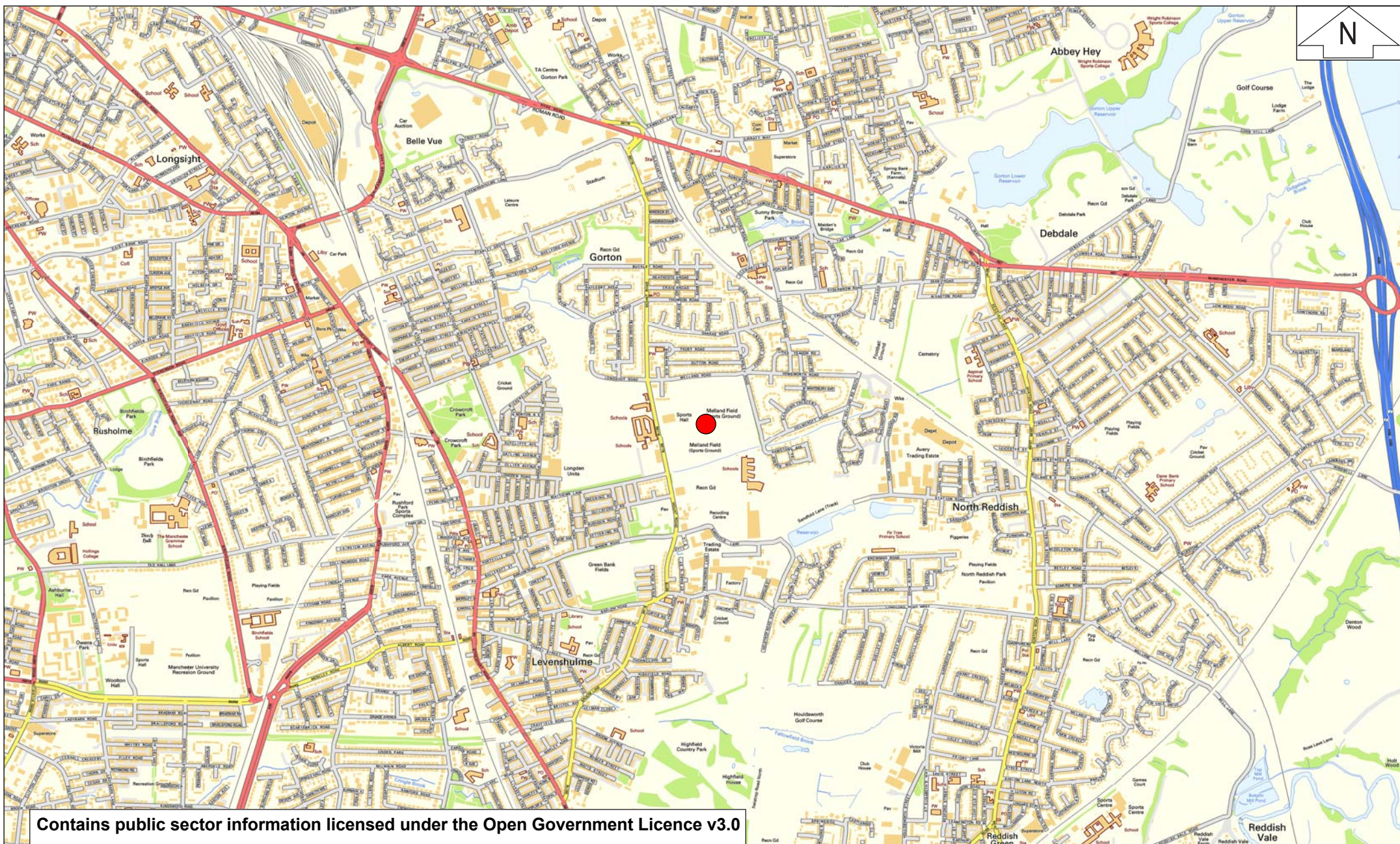
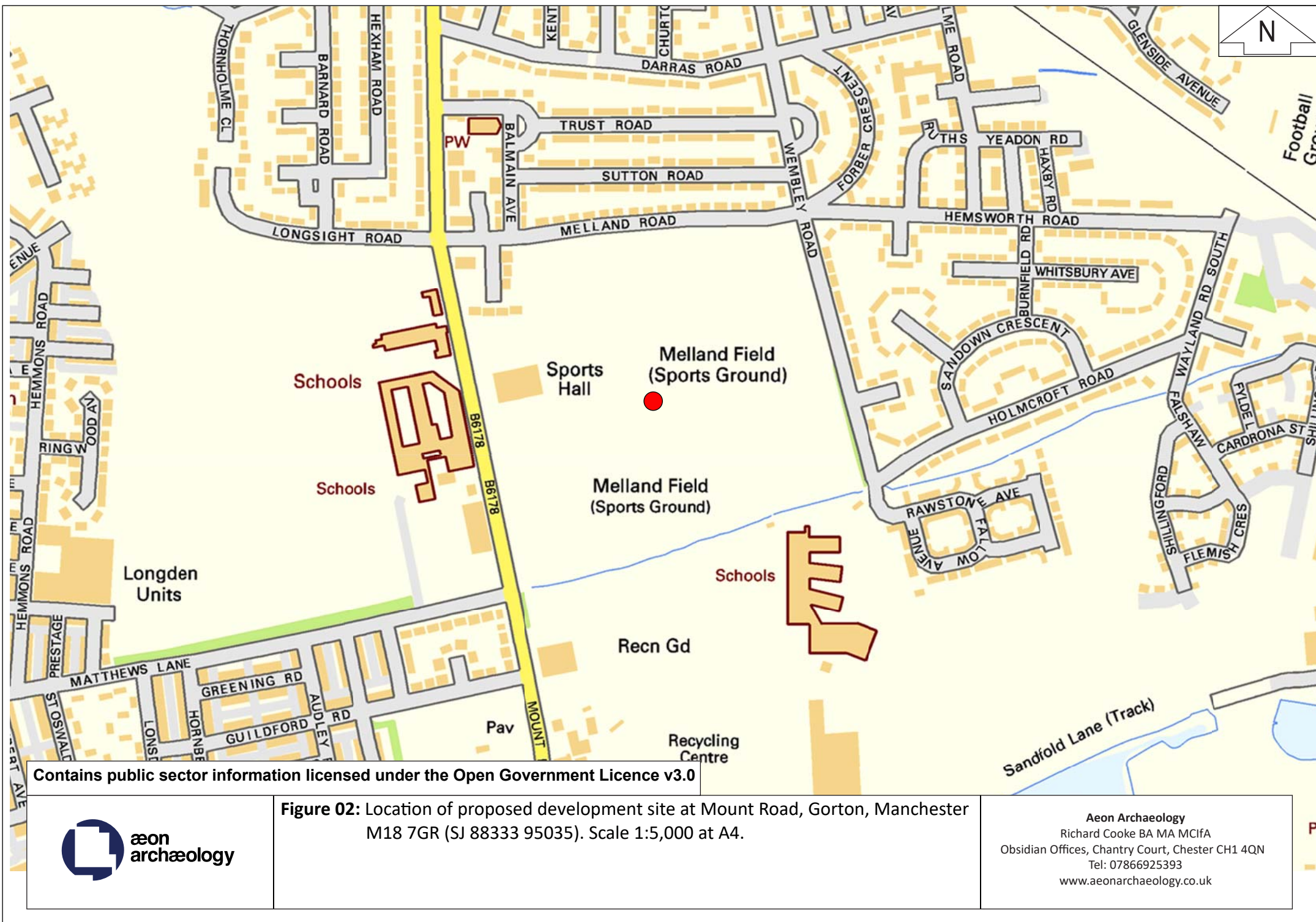


**Figure 01:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:20,000 at A4.



**Aeon Archaeology**  
 Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
 Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court, Chester CH1 4QN  
 Tel: 07866925393  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)

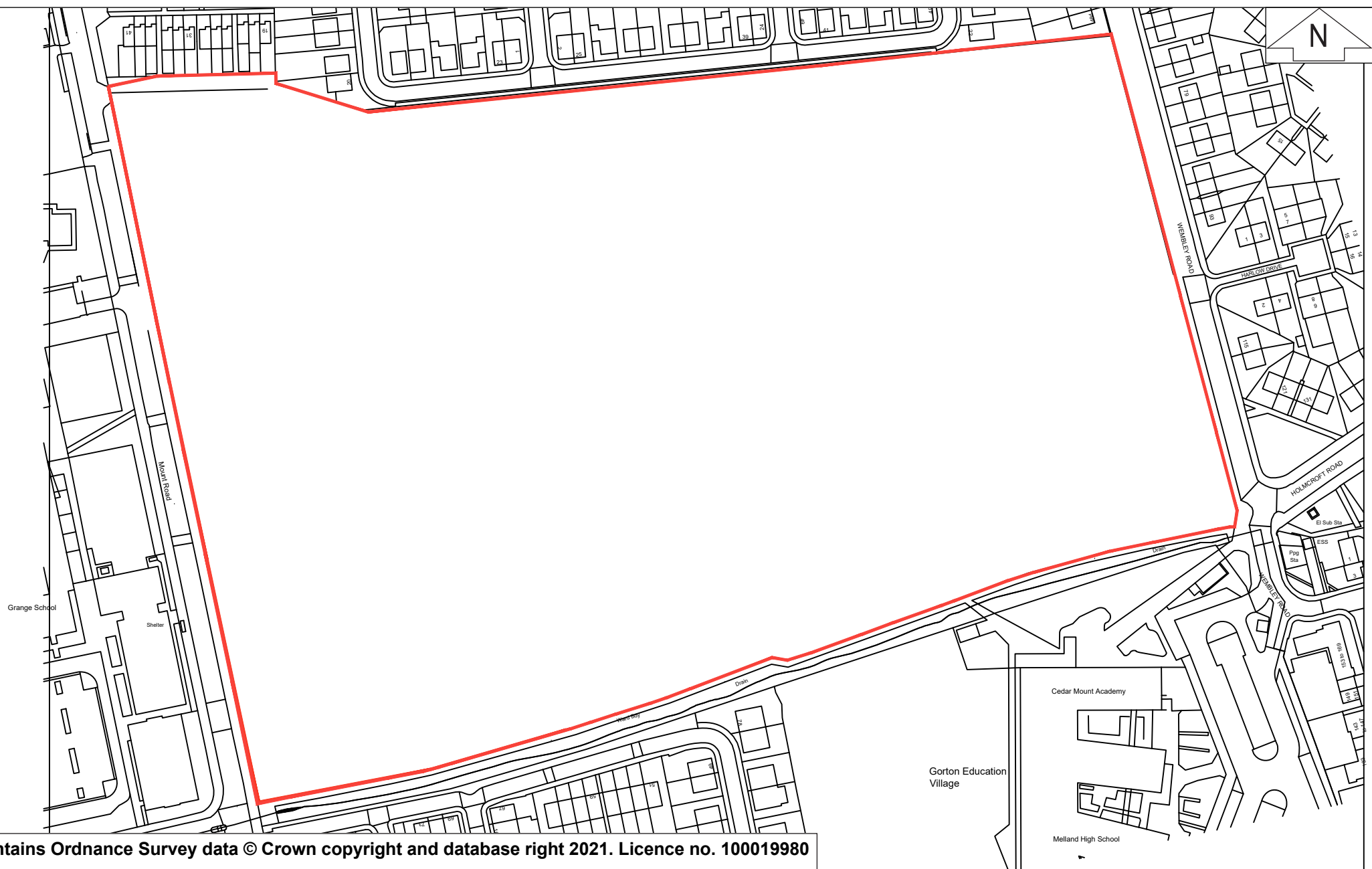


Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0



**Figure 02:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:5,000 at A4.

Aeon Archaeology  
 Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA  
 Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court, Chester CH1 4QN  
 Tel: 07866925393  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980



**Figure 03:** Location of proposed development site at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7GR (SJ 88333 95035). Scale 1:2,000 at A4.

**Aeon Archaeology**  
 Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
 Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
 Chester CH1 4QN  
 Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)



**Plate 01:** Pre-excitation photograph of strip, map and record area, from the west.

### 3.0 SITE 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.

The site extends over 9.07ha 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 sport hall once stood. The former vehicular access is from Mount Road.

The northern boundary of the site sits adjacent to a residential development built by Seddon Homes in partnership with Great Places Housing Group 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 semi-detached 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 Gorton Education Village comprising of Mellands High School, The Bridge and Cedar Mount High.

The British Geological Survey Geology Viewer 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.

The Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute (CSAI) Soilscape Viewer maps the soil cover at the site as Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils.

#### **4.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE**

An archaeological assessment of the proposed development site was undertaken by Nexus Heritage in 2022 and is summarised below.

No confirmed archaeological remains from the Saxon/early medieval era have been documented within the Site. Nevertheless, in the broader Assessment Area, what appears to be an early medieval landscape feature is documented by the GMHER. The Nico Ditch (GMHER ref. 1404.1.1, Gaz. 18) still exists directly to the south of the site as a steep ditch with a V-profile approximately 4 meters wide and 1.5 meters deep. The cycle-way/footpath running parallel and to the north of the Nico Ditch has eradicated all signs of a bank. This portion of the ditch is among only three surviving sections (the others are located at Denton Golf Course and Unitarian Chapel by Platt Fields, Fallowfield). It was documented as 'Mykelldiche' in 1200 CE, but the origins of the structure, who constructed it, and whether its purpose was land drainage, territorial demarcation, or military defence remain unclear. The conventional theory suggests that the earthwork was constructed by Saxon communities as a defence against the Danish invaders of AD 869–70. Alternatively, another interpretation posits that it was erected earlier by the native British population to fend off Saxon encroachments.

## 5.0 PROJECT AIMS

Before the strip, map & record (excavation) commenced an agreed programme of excavation timing, siting, duration, surface re-instatement and health and safety protection measures were agreed with the Client and the SPA at GMAAS.

The size, location and orientation of the excavation areas were agreed in advance so as to best target areas that may contain archaeological features within the development footprint.

The broad aims of the archaeological excavation were:

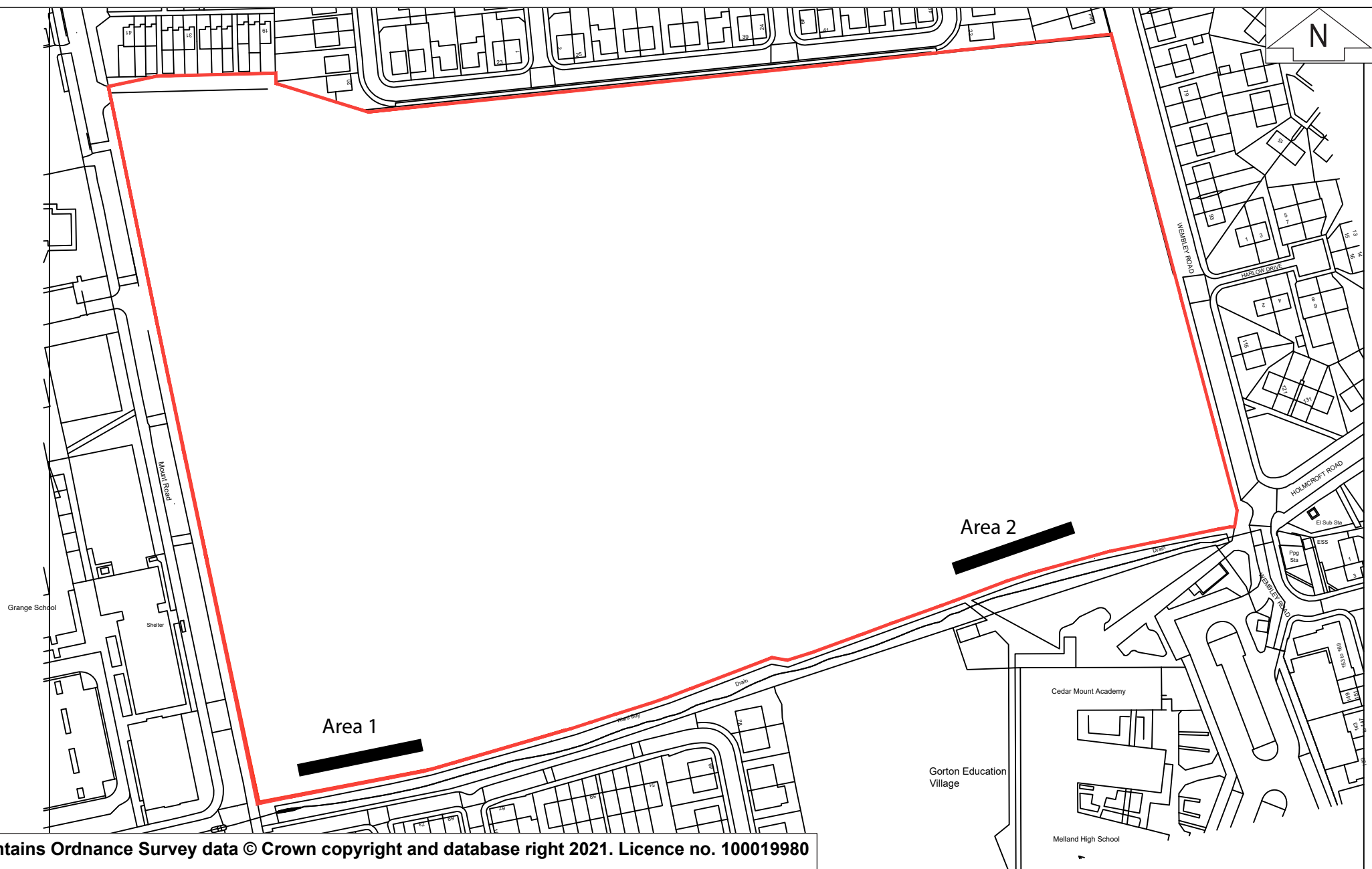
- To determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains on the site, the integrity of which may be threatened by development at the site.
- To establish the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion to sub-surface deposits and, where the data allows, assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits of archaeological significance.
- To enable the client to establish a schedule for archaeological risks.
- To allow the SPA at GMAAS to make an informed decision on the need for and scope of further evaluative and/or mitigatory archaeological works at the site.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological excavation are:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.
- Where the data allows, identify the research implications of the site with reference to the regional research agenda and recent work in Greater Manchester.

The archaeological strip, map & record targeted the following areas (Figure 04):

1. An 50m by 5m area located at the south-western end of the Site in close proximity to the southern boundary and the Nico ditch beyond.
2. An 50m by 5m area located at the south-eastern end of the Site in close proximity to the southern boundary and the Nico ditch beyond.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980

**Figure 04:** Location of strip, map and record areas. Scale 1:2,000 at A4.



**Aeon Archaeology**  
 Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
 Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
 Chester CH1 4QN  
 Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)

## **6.0 METHODOLOGY**

If archaeological deposits are identified they were to be manually cleaned, excavated and recorded to determine extent, function, date and relationship to adjacent features.

Contingency provision would be made for the following:

- Additional excavation of up to 100% of any given feature should the excavated sample prove to be insufficient to provide information on the character and date of the feature.
- Expansion of excavation limits, to clarify the extent of features equivalent to an additional 20% of the core excavation area.

The archaeological works would be surveyed with respect to the nearest Ordnance Survey datum point and with reference to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The excavation area, deposits, features and structures within them would be accurately located on a site plan prepared at most appropriate and largest scale.

A written record of the excavation area content and all identified features would be completed via Aeon Archaeology pro-formas.

Any subsurface remains would be recorded photographically, with detailed notations, measured drawings, and a measured survey. The photographic record would be maintained using a digital SLR camera (Canon 600D) set to maximum resolution (72dpi) with photographs taken in RAW format and later converted to TIFF format for long-term storage and JPEG format for presentation and inclusion in the archive.

The excavation area was opened with a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

To prevent any potential health and safety risk to the public and staff the excavation areas would be made inaccessible through the presence of a perimeter fence at the Site. It was further intended that all excavation areas would be demarcated with a visual barrier.

All excavations, where required, were made safe before departure and Aeon Archaeology left the site in a safe and tidy condition.

### **6.1 Data Collection from Site Records**

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy.

A draft copy of the report has been sent to the Client and the SPA at GMAAS for comment prior to finalisation of the report and dissemination. Digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER along with a summary of the Oasis record as an appendix, the Oasis online database, and the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) for long term archiving.

Scanned copies of all Aeon Archaeology proformae will be stored at Aeon Archaeology, Chester under the project code A0468.1 with the originals being offered to the Manchester Museum.

## 6.2 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts and ecofacts would be retrieved for identification and recording and would be treated in accordance with CIfA 2020 Guidelines for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020).

All artefacts are the property of the landowner but it is recommended that finds are deposited with the rest of the project archive within the Manchester Museum. Furthermore, the client agrees to granting access to all artefacts recovered by Aeon Archaeology for analysis, study and publication as necessary. All finds would be treated according to advice provided within *First Aid for Finds* (Rescue 1999). Aeon Archaeology staff will undertake initial identification, but any additional advice would be sought from a wide range of consultants. If the Client requests the artefacts returned to them then they will be done so along with relevant extracts from *First Aid for Finds* (Rescue 1999) as well as all artefacts having a photograph and description included within this report.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the archaeological works. Any changes in recovery priorities would be under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the SPA at GMAAS. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

It was intended that all finds would be collected and processed, including those found within spoil tips and where quantity / time period dictate as in line with Aeon Archaeology's artefact selection and retention strategy. Their location and height would be plotted (where they originate from secure contexts); finds numbers attributed, bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. Where specialist advice is required provision will be made to do so at the earliest possible convenience.

After processing, artefacts which are suitable would be cleaned and conserved in-house. Artefacts requiring specialist cleaning and conservation would be sent to the relevant specialist. All artefacts would then be sent to a specialist for analysis, the results of which would then be assessed to ascertain the potential of the finds assemblage to meet the research aims of the project. The value of the finds would also be assessed in terms of the wider educational and academic contributions.

Depending upon the material of the remains the following experts would be consulted regarding the conservation of waterlogged material:

- Organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)
- Non-organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)

Depending upon the material of the remains the following experts would be consulted regarding the conservation and analysis of artefacts:

- Bone: Nora Bermingham
- Glass: Hilary Cool, Barbican Research Associates.
- Metal artefacts: Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services, Cardiff.
- Slag, burnt clay, hammerscale: Dr. Tim Young, Geoarch, Cardiff.
- Stone artefacts: George Smith, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Bangor.
- Wood artefacts: Jane Foley, Foley Conservation, Builth Wells.
- Leather: Quita Mould, Barbican Research Associates.
- Environmental Material: Dr Mike Allen, Allen Environmental Archaeology.
- Numismatics: Peter Guest, Barbican Research Associates.
- Ceramics: Leigh Dodd or Aeon Archaeology

### **6.3 Environmental Samples Methodology**

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

### **6.4 Report and dissemination**

A draft copy of the report has been produced and will be sent to the Client and the SPA at GMAAS for comment prior to finalisation of the report and dissemination. Digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER, and the Oasis online database for long term archiving. Furthermore, a summary of the project will be sent to a relevant journal for publication if required.

Scanned copies of all Aeon Archaeology proformae will be stored at Aeon Archaeology, Chester under the project code A0468.1 with the originals being offered to the Manchester Museum.

### **6.5 Research Framework, Aims and Objectives**

The archaeological investigations were implemented with reference to a research design which reflects the ambitions of the North-West England Regional Research Agenda (2007), specifically relating to the Early Medieval Period (McNeil and Newman 2007a and b).

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 - <https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/the-prehistoric-period/> and <https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/the-romano-british-period/>).

The Early Medieval Period benefits from a series of refreshed research questions focused on a number of period-related themes which the Site may be able to address. As the presence/absence of any archaeological remains at the Site was unproven, preparation of a detailed research design was not possible during formulation of the aims and objectives, given the broad thrust of period-focussed and theme-focussed research imperatives in north-west England (<https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/>). Some (but not necessarily all) of the specific research questions to be addressed relative to the Site were:

- What evidence is there for landscape change during the early medieval period?

## 7.0 DIGITAL DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 7.1 Type of study

A strip, map and record excavation on land at Mount Road, Gorton, Greater Manchester M18 7QF (centred on NGR: SJ 88333 95035).

### 7.2 Types of data

| File name                            | File Contents                       | Linked File(s)                           | Number of files |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| A0468.1 Mount Rd, Gorton SMR 1.0.PDF | PDF report                          |                                          | 1               |
| A0468_1_001 - A0468_1_022.JPG        | JPEG site images                    | A0468.1_Metadata                         | 22              |
| A0468_1_001 - A0468_1_022.TIF        | TIF site images                     | A0468.1_Metadata                         | 22              |
| A0468.1_Metadata.XLSX                | Excel file of photographic metadata | A0468_1_001 - A0468_1_022 (JPEG and TIF) | 1               |
| A0468.1 Scanned trench sheets.PDF    | 2 x scanned trench sheets           |                                          | 1               |

All data generated during this project has been selected for archive.

### 7.3 Format and scale of the data

Photographs taken in *RAW* format and later converted to *TIF* format for long term archiving and *JPEG* format for use in the digital report, converted using *Adobe Photoshop*. All photographs renamed using *AF5* freeware with the prefix (*project code\_frame number*) and a photographic metadata created using Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) or Access (.accdb).

All written registers, pro-formas, and scaled drawings scanned as .PDF files.

### 7.4 Methodologies for data collection / generation

Digital data will be collected / generated in line with recommendations made in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2014. Rev 2020). Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.3 are relevant:

*3.3.1 Project specifications, research designs or similar documents should include a project specific Selection Strategy and a Data Management Plan.*

*3.3.3 Project designs or schedules of works etc should outline the methodology used in recording all information, in order to demonstrate that all aspects of archive creation will ensure consistency; for instance, in terminologies and the application of codes in digital data sets, highlighting relevant data standards where appropriate*

## **7.5 Data quality and standards**

Consistency and quality of data collection / generation shall be controlled and documented through the use of standardised procedure as outlined in the WSI. This will include the use of standardised data capture file formats, digital proformas, data entry validation, peer review, and use of controlled vocabularies.

## **7.6 Managing, storing and curating data.**

All digital data will be organised into Aeon Archaeology proforma project file systems and backed up to the cloud using *Acronis Cyber Protect* with additional copies made to external physical hard drive.

## **7.7 Metadata standards and data documentation**

Digital metadata created using Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) or Access (.accdb) of all photographic plates.

Paper metadata created from Aeon Archaeology proformas for contexts, artefacts, environmental samples, watching brief day sheets, trench sheets, and basic record sheets and then scanned to create digital .PDF copies.

## **7.8 Data preservation strategy and standards**

Long term data storage will be through the submission of digital (.PDF) reports to the regional Historic Environment Record (HER); submission of digital (.PDF) reports and the original and digital scanned archive to the Oasis database; and retention of copies of all digital files at Aeon Archaeology on physical external hard drive and uploaded to Acronis Cyber Protect.

## **7.9 Suitability for sharing**

All digital data will be placed within the public realm (through the channels in 7.8) except for where project confidentiality restricts the sharing of data. All data sets will be selected / discriminated by the Senior Archaeologist at Aeon Archaeology and written permission will be sought from all project specific Clients prior to the sharing of data.

## **7.10 Discovery by potential users of the research data**

Potential users of the generated digital data (outside of the organisation) will be able to source the data and identify whether it could be suitable for their research purposes through access granted via the Oasis website. Requests can also be made for data through the regional HER's and directly to Aeon Archaeology ([info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk)).

## **7.11 Governance of access**

The decision to supply research data to potential new users will be via the associated website request (Oasis, HER) or via the Senior Archaeologist when made directly to Aeon Archaeology.

### **7.12 The study team's exclusive use of the data**

Aeon Archaeology's requirement is for timely data sharing, with the understanding that a limited, defined period of exclusive use of data for primary research is reasonable according to the nature and value of the data, and that this restriction on sharing should be based on simple, clear principles. This time period is expected to be six months from completion of the project however Aeon Archaeology reserves the right to extend this period without notice if primary data research dictates.

### **7.13 Restrictions or delays to sharing, with planned actions to limit such restrictions**

Restriction to data sharing may be due to participant confidentiality or consent agreements. Strategies to limit restrictions will include data being anonymised or aggregated; gaining participant consent for data sharing; and gaining copyright permissions. For prospective studies, consent procedures will include provision for data sharing to maximise the value of the data for wider research use, while providing adequate safeguards for participants.

### **7.14 Regulation of responsibilities of users**

External users of the data will be bound by data sharing agreements provided by the relevant organisation or directly through Aeon Archaeology.

### **7.15 Responsibilities**

Responsibility for study-wide data management, metadata creation, data security and quality assurance of data will be through the Senior Archaeologist (Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA) at Aeon Archaeology when concerning data generation and early/mid-term storage. Upon deposition with digital depositories the study-wide data management, metadata creation, data security and quality assurance of data will be the responsibility of the specific organisations' themselves.

### **7.16 Organisational policies on data sharing and data security**

The following Aeon Archaeology policies are relevant:

- Aeon Archaeology Archive Deposition Policy 2022
- Aeon Archaeology Quality Assurance Policy 2022
- Aeon Archaeology Conflict of Interest Policy 2022
- Aeon Archaeology Outreach Policy 2022
- Aeon Archaeology Digital Management Plan 2022

## 8.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS

### 8.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological strip, map and record excavation:

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Trench sheets       | 2  |
| Digital photographs | 22 |

### 8.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken during the archaeological strip, map and record as no suitable deposits were encountered.

### 8.3 Artefacts

The stratigraphy of the excavation areas showed that the Site had had a large quantity of ash and clinker deposits spread across the area to raise and level the Site for the former sports pitches. These deposits contained high quantities of post-medieval ceramic, glass, metal, bone and construction building materials (CBM). Due to the high quantities of these inclusions it was not possible to collect and collate the artefact assemblage beyond generic characterisation. In short, the ceramic was of solely post-medieval date with common wares observed including bone china, stoneware, lustre ware, earthenware, and Delph ware. These took the form of mostly bottles, jars, cups and plates.

An example ceramic jar was collected and consisted of a cream glazed stoneware *Virol* jar. This was ink printed with the following label directly onto the cream glaze:

*IDEAL FOOD*

*VIROL*

*A PREPARATION OF BONE-MARROW  
AN IDEAL FAT FOOD  
FOR CHILDREN  
& INVALIDS*

Virol, also stylised as ViRoL, was a British twentieth century brand of malt extract preparation that also included bone marrow, and was designed as a nutritional supplement for the feeding of infants. The original ingredients of Virol were red marrow extracted by the use of glycerol from the rib bones of cattle and the bones of calves, refined beef fat, diastatic malt (containing a mixture of amylases that convert starch into maltose and dextrin), eggs, lemon syrup and soluble phosphates. This emulsified product was rich in nutrients and the manufacturing process did not destroy the vitamin content. Later, orange juice replaced lemon juice (Purple Pen Pharmacist. 2019).

Virol was first made in 1899 as an experimental product by Bovril in their London factory in Old Street, and was designed as a nutritional supplement for the feeding of infants. A company was set up to manufacture it the following year. Demand grew, and by the 1920s, production was transferred to a larger, more modern factory in Perivale. Before World War II the version "Virol and Milk" was established as a direct competitor to Horlicks. During the war, production ceased as the ingredients became too difficult or costly to acquire. After the war, production resumed and the brand changed hands several times with consolidation in the food processing industry, to Cavenham Foods in 1971, Janks Brothers in 1977, and Optrex in 1979. It was discontinued in the 1980s (Ibid).

In addition to the ceramic an assortment of glass bottles were observed including clear, brown and green glass, some with the remnants of labels such as *OK Sauce*, *Bovril*, and *Champagne*.

The metal artefacts observed during the works mostly took the form of car parts such as wheel trims, as well as food tins and construction rebar also being observed.

The CBM was mostly of red brick, concrete fragments, window glass and timber.

The observed bone was mostly of butchered sheep and cow bones. The skeleton of a small dog was also encountered.

The artefact assemblage, although vast, was clearly of post-medieval date no earlier than the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> / start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and characterised by stoneware and earthenware bottles, mostly for Ginger Beer. The inclusion of car parts and general CBM within the stratigraphy suggests that the inclusions were from deposits ranging into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Given the unstratified nature of the artefacts and their late post-medieval / early modern date, the research potential of the artefacts was deemed to be low. None of the artefacts were retained beyond immediate sample identification, with all artefacts being reburied on Site. This is in accordance with the Aeon Archaeology Artefact Selection and Retention Policy 2024 for post-medieval finds.

## 9.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND RECORD

The archaeological strip, map and record excavation at the Mount Road, Gorton was undertaken between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The following is a description and summary of the soil horizons, stratigraphy, and archaeological resource at the Site.

### **Area 1** (Plates 2-6, figures 1-6)

388167 / 394872 – 388168 / 394867 – 388216 / 394882 – 388217 / 394877

Due to trench depth and public access to site it was agreed with the SPA at GMAAS that the first 35m from the west end of the trench would be opened and cleaned, and if no archaeology encountered, backfilled before undertaking the remaining 15m. The trench was also benched within its 5m wide footprint due to increased trench depth.

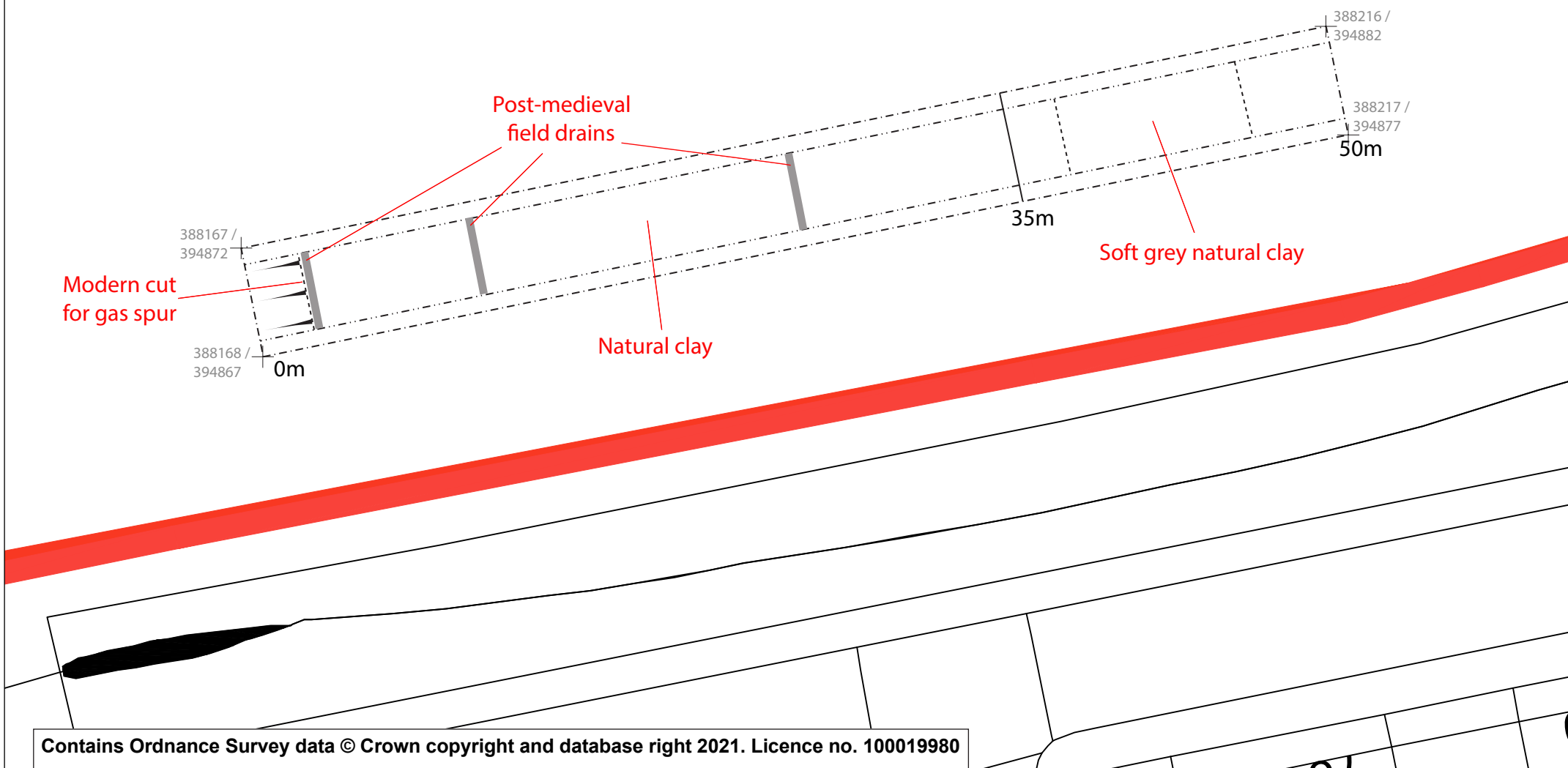
The trench was located at the south-western end of the Site and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.2m but more generally to a depth of 1.8m. It measured 50m in length total by 5m in width, with benches excavated 1.0m depth and 0.75m width.

The trench cut through a 0.6m deep soft / friable, dark brown-black clay-silt with frequent post-medieval CBM, ceramic, glass, metal, bone and inclusions of ash and clinker. This lay above a 0.25m deep, loose dark grey-black ashy-clay, which had frequent post-mediaeval inclusions (as above) as well as lenses of mid / light grey clay. This lay above a 0.45m deep moderately soft, mid / light brown-grey clay, initially thought to be an in-situ subsoil horizon however inclusions of post-medieval brick fragments suggest that this deposit may also be imported. This lay above a light yellow-orange natural clay substrata which was cut by three modern land drains running north-south and equally spaced throughout the trench.

At the western end of the trench the natural had been cut into and sloped downward to the west. This cut contained modern CBM and plastic and is likely the cut for the adjacent gas main spur.

The remaining 15m of the trench exhibited the same stratigraphy as above aside from towards the centre of the trench the natural substrata changed to a light / mid grey-clay with standing water above. This clay was investigated and found to run beneath the lighter clay to the immediate east and west, and was therefore of natural origin.

The trench stratigraphy would suggest that the area has been previously cleared onto the natural substrata with successive levelling deposits spread across the area to form the former sports field.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980



**Figure 05:** Plan of Area 1. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Aeon Archaeology**  
Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
Chester CH1 4QN  
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)



**Plate 02:** Area 1 (0m-35m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 03:** Area 1 (0m-35m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.



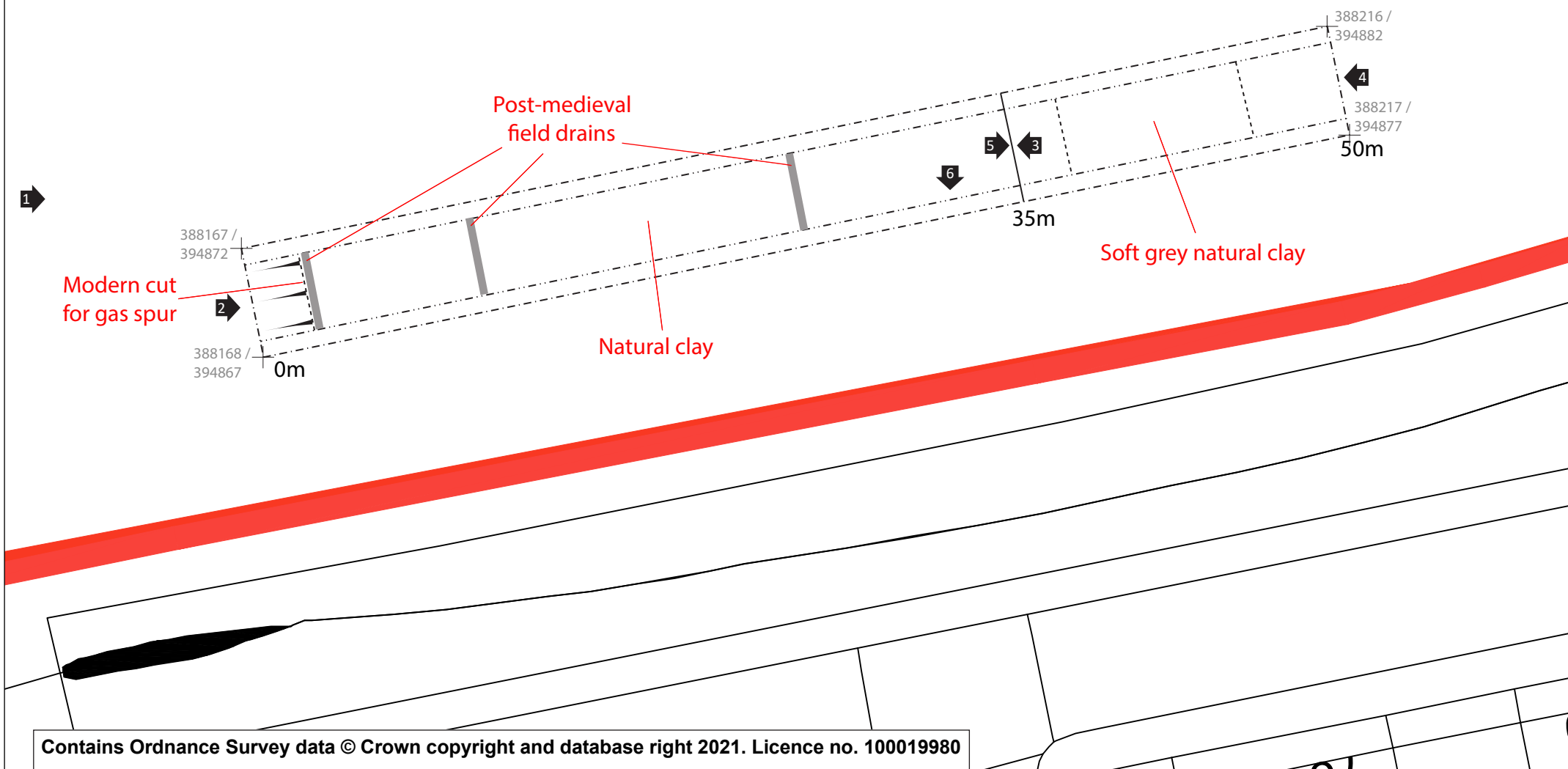
**Plate 04:** Area 1 (35m-50m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 05:** Area 1 (35m-50m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 06:** North facing trench section area 1, from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980



**Figure 06:** Location and orientation of photographic plates - area 1. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Aeon Archaeology**  
Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
Chester CH1 4QN  
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)

**Area 2** (Plates 7-11, figures 1-4, 7 and 8)

388430 / 394952 – 388432 / 394947 – 388478 / 394968 – 388479 / 394963

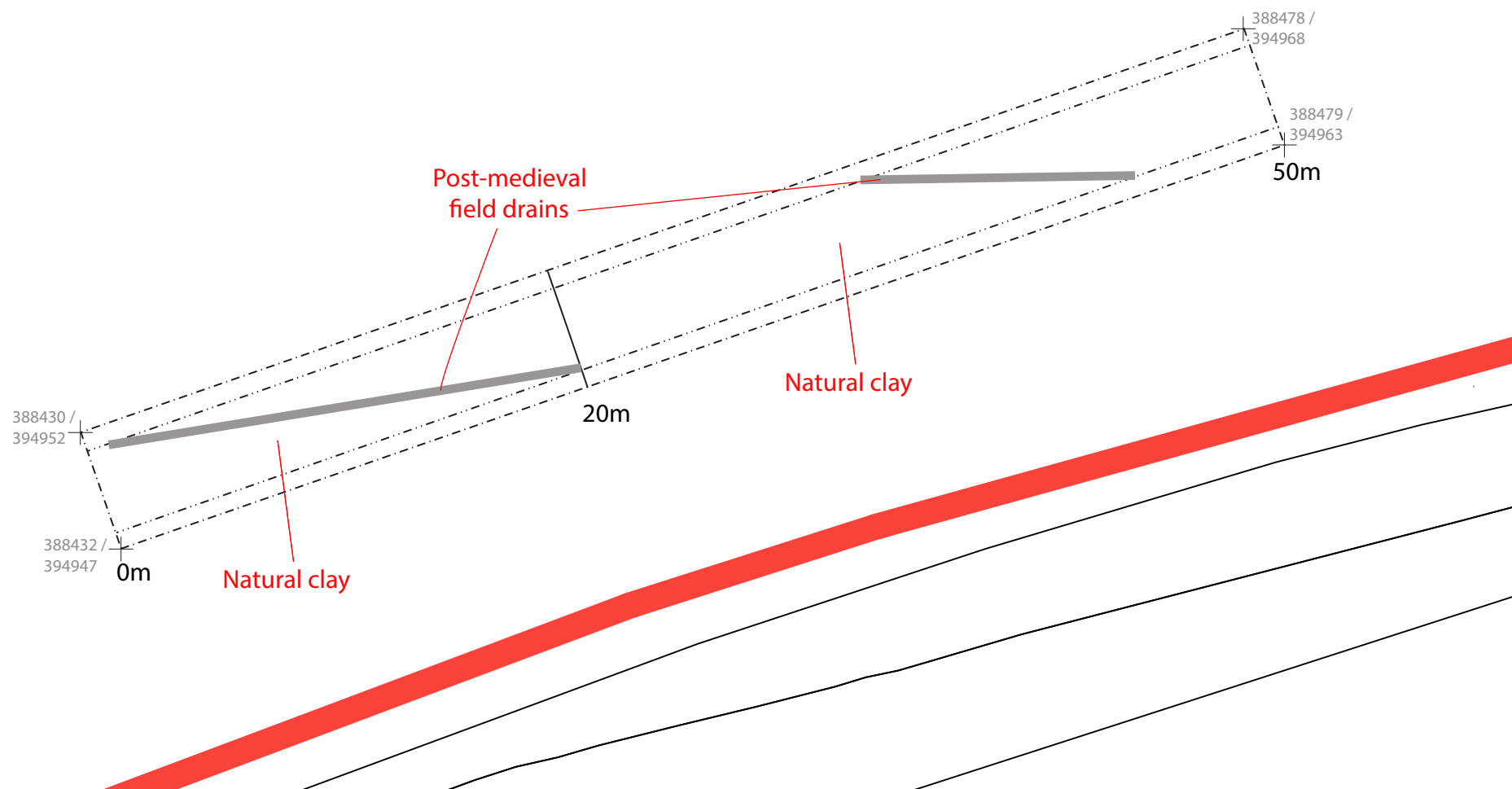
Due to trench depth and public access to site it was agreed with the SPA at GMAAS that the first 30m from the west end of the trench would be opened and cleaned, and if no archaeology encountered, backfilled before undertaking the remaining 20m. The trench was also benched within its 5m wide footprint due to increased trench depth.

The trench was located at the south-eastern end of the Site and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m. It measured 50m in length total by 5m in width, with benches excavated 1.0m depth and 0.75m width.

The trench cut through a 0.65m deep soft / friable, dark brown-black clay-silt with frequent post-medieval CBM, ceramic, glass, metal, bone and inclusions of ash and clinker. This lay above a 0.3m deep, loose dark grey-black ashy-clay, which had frequent post-mediaeval inclusions (as above) as well as lenses of mid / light orange-brown sand. This lay above a 0.45m deep moderately soft, mid / light brown-grey clay, initially thought to be an in-situ subsoil horizon however inclusions of post-medieval brick fragments suggest that this deposit may also be imported. This lay above a light yellow-orange natural clay substrata which was cut by two modern land drains running east-west and equally spaced throughout the trench.

The remaining 20m of the trench exhibited the same stratigraphy as above.

The trench stratigraphy would suggest that the area has been previously cleared onto the natural substrata with successive levelling deposits spread across the area to form the former sports field.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980



**Figure 07:** Plan of area 2. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Aeon Archaeology**  
Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
Chester CH1 4QN  
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)



**Plate 07:** Area 2 (0m-20m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 08:** Area 2 (0m-20m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.



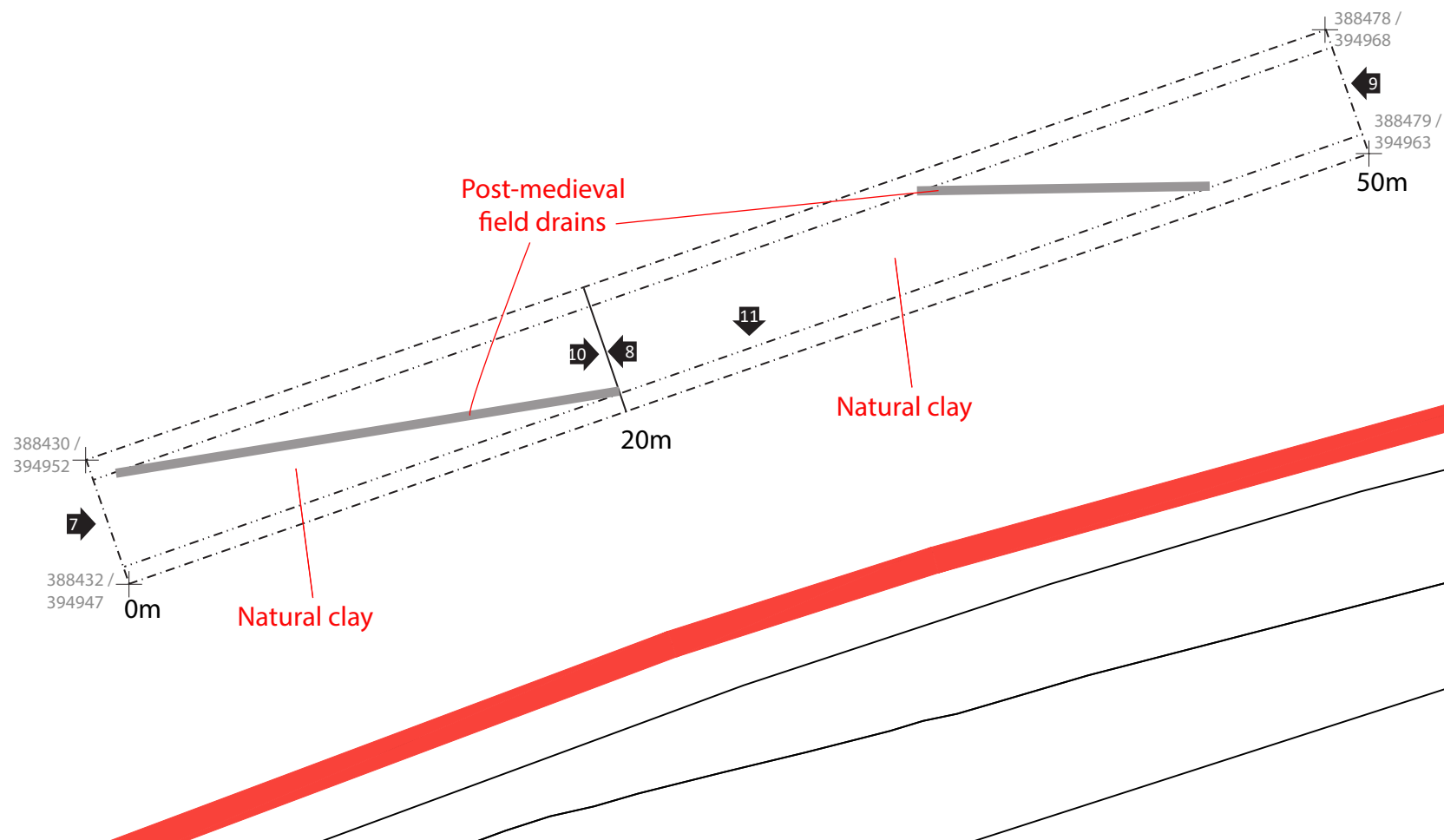
**Plate 09:** Area 2 (20m-50m), from the east. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 10:** Area 2 (20m-50m), from the west. Scale 2 x1.0m.



**Plate 11:** North facing trench section area 2, from the north. Scale 2 x 1.0m.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. Licence no. 100019980



**Figure 08:** Location and orientation of photographic plates - area 2. Scale 1:250 at A4.

**Aeon Archaeology**  
Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA  
Obsidian Offices, Chantry Court,  
Chester CH1 4QN  
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585  
[www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk)

## 10.0 CONCLUSION

The archaeological strip, map and record excavation at Mount Road, Gorton did not reveal any remains of the nearby Nico Ditch earthwork or any other archaeological remains.

The stratigraphy revealed in the two excavation areas showed that the Site had previously been stripped onto the natural glacial substrata, thus removing any potential for all but the deepest cut archaeological remains. These works appear to have taken place as part of the development of the former sports pitches and involved the importation of at least three successive levelling deposits rich in ash / clinker and post-medieval / modern waste ceramic, glass, metal, bone, and CBM. These deposits were likely imported from a nearby source and used to raise the ground level by some 1.6m-1.8m above the natural substrata.

The recovered artefact assemblage constitutes domestic ceramic wares originating in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> / first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as items such as car parts and modern CBM from the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There is a possibility that the deposits were not imported but rather the Site used for historical infilling and levelling activity in its own right, however the area is not labelled as such on the Ordnance Survey maps and it is therefore surmised that these deposits were brought in from a nearby source.

Due to the level of disturbance from the prior stripping of the Site, the potential for any preservation of archaeological remains relating to the Nico Ditch or otherwise is considered to be low. As such the results are unable to inform any research initiatives in the regional research framework.

This strip, map and record excavation enables an informed, sustainable and responsible approach to the development of land at Mount Road, Gorton. The information provided meets the expectations of legislation in that the applicant has mitigated for the presence of archaeological assets that may be affected by development at the Site.

## 11.0 SOURCES

Brown D. H., 2007. Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation. Archaeological Archives Forum

British Geological Survey website. [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)

Cresswell, C. & P. J. Davey, (1989). *Pottery from Twist's House, Prescott Site 28*. *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society*, 5:97-101.

English Heritage, 1991. Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)

English Heritage, 2006. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE)

Laing L. 2014. *Pottery in Britain: 4000BC to AD1900*, Greenlight Publishing, Witham, Essex.

Purple Pen Pharmacist.2019. *The disappearance of Virol*

Richards, J. & Robinson, D., 2000. Digital Archives from Excavation and *Fieldwork: Guide to Good Practice* (Second Edition). The Archaeology Data Service Guide to Good Practice: Oxbow Books

Sussman, L., (1997). *Mocha, Banded, Cat's Eye, and Other Factory-Made Slipware*. *Studies in Northeast Historical Archaeology*. Number 1. Boston University, Boston.

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. *Code of Conduct*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*

Van Rensselear, S. (1966). *Banded cream ware*. *The Magazine Antiques*, September. Reprinted in *English pottery and porcelain: an historical survey*, edited by Paul Atterbury, Universe Books, New York, 1978, pp. 240-244.

