

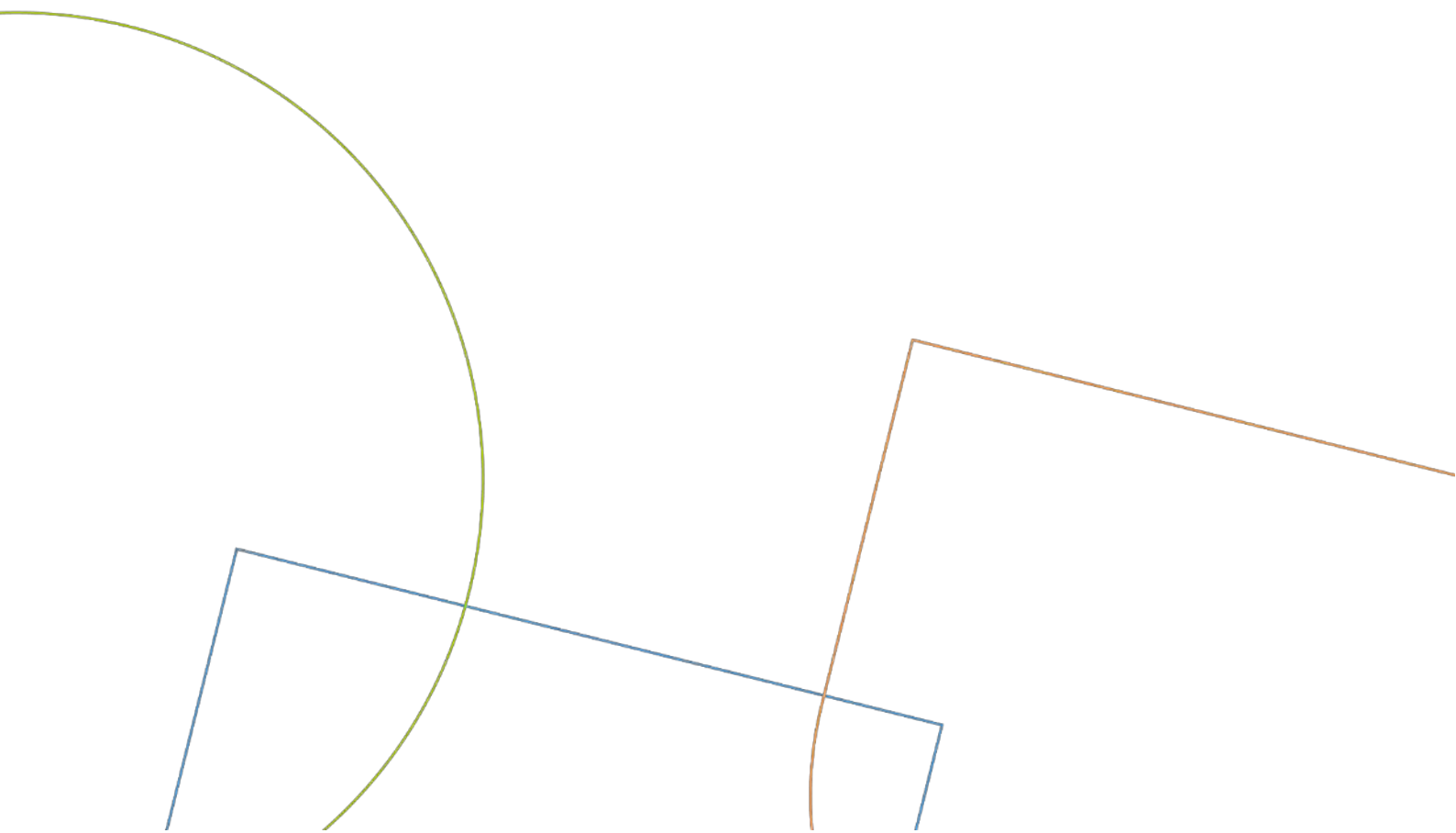


Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester
Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

Project no. 6319

On behalf of Onward Homes

September 2025



Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester

Onward Homes

September 2025

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Issue Sheet

Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

Project no. 6319

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Revision: V1.0

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Non-Technical Summary

Lanpro Services Limited was commissioned by Onward Homes to produce a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment ('HEDBA') to support the planning application for a residential development at Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester. The study site comprises approximately 0.36ha of park land bound to the north by Pennington Street, to the south by Park Grov and to the east by residential development.

The assessment addresses the information requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and provides the proportionate response sought by the NPPF. It draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the site.

This assessment has established that there are no heritage assets in the study site and that the proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets in the surrounding area.

The available archaeological records, suggest there is limited potential for remains dated to the prehistoric and Roman periods to survive within the study site. The study site is likely to have formed the agricultural hinterland of Leverhulme during the medieval period and as such any remains, if once present, in the north of the site are likely to have been of an agricultural nature. Buried remains associated with the Nico Ditch, which is first documented in the early medieval period, potentially survive under the unlabelled road in the south of the study site as identified from the geophysical survey. Any surviving remains within the site would be of no greater than local significance. No substantial development is proposed within a 3.5m buffer of the culvert within the former Nico Ditch, preserving any potential archaeological remains. If once present any remains pre-dating the post medieval period are likely to have been destroyed or severely impacted by 19th century residential activity.

There is a potential for the survival of buried remains associated with the 19th century terraced housing within the study site. The undulation in the ground surface across the study site are likely associated with the demolition of these structures. Any surviving remains are of no greater than local significance.

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Lanpro Services Limited was commissioned by Onward Homes to produce a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (HEDBA) to support the planning application for a residential development at Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester (NGR: SJ 87215 94701). It is located within the administrative boundary of Greater Manchester Council. The assessment addresses the information requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and provides the proportionate response sought by the NPPF. It draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the site.
- 1.1.2 This document provides an assessment of the potential for the survival of archaeological remains within the site and assesses the potential impacts that the proposed development could have on these and other heritage assets in the vicinity.
- 1.1.3 The assessment has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework's Section 16: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (NPPF 2024) and is in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) guidelines Standard and guidance *for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA 2020).

2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

2.1.1 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by current legislation, the policy framework set by government planning policy, by current Local Plan policy and by other material considerations.

2.2 Current Legislation

2.2.1 The applicable legislative framework is summarised as follows:

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (AMAAA) 1979;
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (P(LBCA)) Act 1990.
- National Planning Policy Framework 2024

2.2.1 The national policy framework (NPPF, 2024) states that planning applications should consider the potential impact of the development upon heritage assets which includes both designated heritage assets (for example listed buildings and Conservation Areas) and non-designated heritage assets usually comprising assets recorded on a Local List or the Historic Environment Record.

2.2.2 The AMAAA largely concerns to Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and designated archaeological areas, detailing in particular what can and cannot be undertaken on archaeological grounds.

2.2.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) provides for the protection of listed buildings and Conservation Areas and is largely expressed in the planning process through policies in regional and local planning guidance, as outlined below. This act is the primary legislative instrument addressing the treatment of listed buildings and Conservation Areas through the planning process.

2.2.4 Section 66 of the 1990 Act states that '*...in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*'.

2.2.5 Section 72 then adds that '*..with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

2.2.6 As far as Section 72 is concerned, it has previously been established by the Courts that development which does not detract from the character or appearance of a Conservation Area is deemed to be in accordance with the legislation. In other words, there is no statutory requirement to actively 'enhance'.

2.3 National Planning Policy Framework

2.3.1 Section 16 of the NPPF (2024), entitled ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets.

2.3.2 Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:

- Delivery of sustainable development
- Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment, and
- Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance

2.3.3 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset (and any contribution made by its setting), and that the ‘*level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal upon their significance*’. This is supported by paragraph 208 which states that LPAs should take this into account when considering applications.

2.3.1 Paragraphs 212-215 consider the impact of development proposals upon the significance of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 212 states that where a development is proposed that would affect the significance of a designated heritage asset ‘*great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater this weight should be)*’. Paragraph 215 emphasises that ‘*where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits*’ of the scheme, bearing in mind the great weight highlighted in Paragraph 212.

2.3.2 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: ‘*a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)*’.

2.3.3 Annex 2 also defines ‘Archaeological Interest’ as a heritage asset which ‘*holds or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point*’. Heritage Assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

2.3.4 A Designated Heritage Asset comprises a ‘*World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.*’

2.3.5 In short, government policy provides a framework which:

- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets (which include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas),
- Protects the settings of such designations,

- In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk-based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions,
- Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit in situ preservation.

2.4 Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.4.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG 2019) is a web-based resource which is to be used in conjunction with the NPPF. It is aimed at planning professionals and prescribes best practice within the planning sector. The relevant section is entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. The guidance given in this section sets out the best practice to applying government policy in the NPPF. It provides an interpretation for each of the interests assigned to heritage assets in understanding significance: archaeological, architectural and artistic, and historic (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723).

2.5 Local Planning Policy

- 2.5.1 The Manchester Local Plan, formerly the Local Development Framework, guides development within the city. It comprises the *Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan* (2022–2039, adopted 2024), the *Core Strategy* (key policy document), the *Interactive Proposals Map*, and remaining *Unitary Development Plan* policies. Within this, the following policies are relevant to this report:

Policy EN 3 -Heritage

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

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

2.6 Professional Guidance

- 2.6.1 The ClfA Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (2020) provides guidelines and recommendations for best practice in undertaking archaeological desk-based research and assessment.
- 2.6.2 Guidance on the implementation and interpretation of historic environment policy has been provided by the Historic England publications *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment* (GPA2; Historic England 2015) and the *Historic Environment Good Practice*

Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3; Historic England 2017).

2.6.3 Historic England's GPA2 outlines a seven-stage process for the assembly and analysis of relevant information relating to heritage assets potentially affected by a proposed development:

- Understand the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment,
- Understand the significance of the affected assets,
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance,
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF,
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance,
- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change, and
- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

2.6.4 In order to understand the nature, extent and level of significance GPA2 advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008): *aesthetic*, *communal*, *historic* and *evidential*. However, NPPF (2024) has since provided a definition of significance dependant on the following four interests: archaeological, architectural and artistic, or historic. The following assessment of significance results from a combination of any, some or all of these values and interests.

2.6.5 Historic England's GPA3 recognises that whilst setting is not a heritage asset, elements of a setting 'may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral' (para. 4). Setting is described as being distinct to curtilage, character and context. This guidance also notes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, although the importance of setting lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, and this can be influenced by a number of other factors.

2.6.6 The Historic England advice note, *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. Historic England Advice Note 12 (HEAN 12; Historic England 2019), brings together all of the above guidance in an analysis of an appropriate approach for applicants for heritage and other consents in providing an understanding of the significance of heritage assets in line with NPPF. It emphasises the level of detail required in support of both planning and listed building consent applications, which should be no more than is necessary, i.e. proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected, to reach an informed decision.

3 Methodology

3.1 Information Sources

- 3.1.1 A gazetteer of all records held on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE) within 1km search area is provided in Appendix 1 and their locations illustrated on Figures 1-3. 1km study area has been determined to be appropriate for establishing the archaeological baseline of the site and assessing built heritage assets due to the dense urban grain surrounding the study site.
- 3.1.2 Online repositories for historical maps, plans and relevant documentary sources were consulted in accordance with guidelines laid down by the ClfA (2020).
- 3.1.3 A range of published and unpublished material has been consulted, including the North West England Regional Research Framework (NWRRF 2025).

3.2 Site Visit

- 3.2.1 A site visit was undertaken on the 28th of August 2025 in overcast conditions to conduct an assessment of the character of the study site and to appraise the potential impact of the proposed development on any heritage assets within the vicinity (Plates 1-4). During the site visit it was identified that there are changes in the ground level likely caused by demolition rubble associated with the former terraced housing within the study site.

3.3 Assessment Criteria

Significance

- 3.3.1 NPPF defines significance as:
- The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.*
- 3.3.2 Historic England's Conservation Principles (previously English Heritage, 2008) identified four high level values: evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal. NPPF (2024) defines significance in the planning context as resulting from the heritage interest of an asset determined by the following:
- Archaeological Interest: the potential of an asset to yield evidence of past human activity that could be revealed through future investigation. Archaeological interest includes above-ground structures, as well as earthworks and buried or submerged remains.
 - Architectural and Artistic Interest: derives from a contemporary appreciation of an asset's aesthetics. Architectural interest is an interest in design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures. Artistic interest can include the use, representation or influence of historic places or buildings in artwork. It can also include the skill and emotional impact of works of art that are part of heritage assets or assets in their own right.

- **Historic Interest:** the way in which an asset can illustrate the story of past events, people and aspects of life (illustrative value, or interest). It can be said to hold communal value when associated with the identity of a community.

3.3.3 These values or interests encompass the criteria that Historic England are obliged to consider when statutorily designating heritage assets.

3.3.4 There are no single defining criteria that dictates the overall asset significance; each asset has to be evaluated against the range of criteria listed above on a case-by-case basis. These values are not intended to be restrictive but are identified in order to help establish a method for thinking systematically and consistently about the heritage values that can be ascribed to a place and contribute to a heritage asset's significance.

3.3.5 Assessment of significance has been undertaken in accordance with the Historic England's Statement of Heritage Significance. Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019).

Setting

3.3.6 The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

3.3.7 Historic England's GPA3, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017), was used to inform the methodology for this assessment. The guidance recommends that a systematic and staged '5-step process' to assessment should be adopted, to which this Heritage Statement has adopted steps i) to iv):

- identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected,*
- assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated,*
- assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it,*
- explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm,*
- make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.*

3.3.8 The production of this assessment has taken into account the physical and sensory surroundings of the asset, in order to understand the contribution 'setting' makes to the heritage significance of the asset(s). This has included topography and intervening development and vegetation. It also considers how the asset is currently experienced and understood through its setting, in particular views to and from the asset and the site, along with key views, and the extent to which setting may have already been compromised.

Definition of Harm

3.3.9 Current guidance by Historic England is that ‘change’ does not equate to ‘harm’. The NPPF and its accompanying PPG effectively distinguish between two degrees of harm to heritage assets – substantial and less than substantial (paragraphs 214 and 215).

3.3.10 In determining the effects of the proposed scheme this assessment is cognisant of case law. In particular, that for Flag Station, Mansel Lacy, Herefordshire [22/09/2015] Case Number EWHC 2688, wherein it emphasised the primacy of the 1990 Planning Act and the fact that it is up to the decision makers in the planning system to ‘*have special regard to the desirability of preserving the [listed] building or its setting*’. HH Judge David Cooke stated, in regards to an impact on the setting of a listed building, (Court of Appeal (PALMER and HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL & ANR) in 2016 (Case No: C1/2015/3383) para.34):

It is still plainly the case that it is for the decision taker to assess the nature and degree of harm caused, and in the case of harm to setting rather than directly to a listed building itself, the degree to which the impact on the setting affects the reasons why it is listed.

3.3.11 The judgment was agreed by Lord Justice Lewison at the Court of Appeal, who stated that:

It is also clear as a matter both of law and planning policy that harm (if it exists) is to be measured against both the scale of the harm and the significance of the heritage asset. Although the statutory duty requires special regard to be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a listed building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused.

4 Site Description

- 4.1.1 The study site comprises approximately 0.36ha of park land bound to the north by Pennington Street, to the south by Park Grove, to the east by residential development and to the west by a Crewe-Manchester rail-line (NGR: SJ 87209 94698).
- 4.1.2 The study site is mostly comprised of open grassed parkland with mature trees. The site contains three east-west aligned terraces which correspond to the former terraced housing within the site. The highest of these is at circa 54m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), which steps down to circa 53m aOD and then gently slopes to the south of the site at approximately 52.5m aOD (Plates 1-2).
- 4.1.3 The bedrock geology of the study site is comprised of Chester Formation which is made up of sandstone formed during the Triassic Period. This is overlain by Devensian Till which formed during the Quaternary Period (BGS 2025). The soils within the study site consist of slowly permeable seasonally wet acidic loamy and clayey soils (CU 2025).

5 Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section reviews existing archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological and historical background of the surrounding area, based on a consideration of evidence from the NHLE and HER within the 1km study area, centred on (NGR: SJ 87209 94698). It is not the purpose of this document to create a detailed archaeological or historical narrative of the area, but to provide an assessment of the site's historical development and archaeological potential in accordance with the NPPF.

5.2 Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.2.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the site. There are eight designated heritage assets within the search area, which is the Rashford Park Conservation Area, the Grade II* Slade Hall and five Grade II Listed Buildings.
- 5.2.2 The study site is surrounded by the residential development and the railway on all sides, which obscures views in all directions (Plates 1-4). Therefore, due to intervening residential built environment and distance from the site, the study site does not form part of the setting or significance of any designated heritage assets. Consequently, all of the designated heritage assets within the 1km search area have been scoped out of further assessment. The significance of all of these assets will remain unaffected as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.2.3 Further details of these designated heritage assets can be found in the gazetteer in Appendix 1, and the locations of these assets are illustrated on Figure 1.

5.3 Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 5.3.1 The Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) is currently working with local authorities to compile a list of buildings which are of local significance. At the time of writing this report, no local list has been published.
- 5.3.2 There are no HER 'monument' recorded within the study site.
- 5.3.3 The HER contains a further 30 'monument' records within the search area. The majority of these records are associated with the post-medieval residential, civic and industrial development of Levenshulme. Their details are provided in Appendix 1, and their locations are depicted in Figure 2.

5.4 Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 5.4.1 The HER records an archaeological event as falling partially within the study site (EGM1918), comprising an archaeological evaluation of two trenches targeting the Nico Ditch off Park Grove, which was undertaken by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (1992). The Nico Ditch is a linear earthwork first documented in the medieval period that measures 9.7km in length and runs through the south and east of Manchester. It is probable that the County and Civil Parish Boundary recorded as passing through the study site on the 1893 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Figure 4) corresponds with the Nico Ditch.

The results of the evaluation demonstrated that the Nico Ditch survived as earthworks until the 19th century when it was culverted and buried. The investigation demonstrated that the Nico Ditch had been subjected to multiple recuts into the 19th century when it was finally culverted and flattened in this location.

- 5.4.2 The HER records six further archaeological events within the search area. These comprise archaeological desk-based assessments, watching briefs and archaeological evaluation. Full details of all HER events within the search area can be found in the gazetteer (Appendix 1).

5.5 **Geophysical Survey**

- 5.5.1 In support of this HEDBA an archaeological geophysical (gradiometer) survey was undertaken by West Yorkshire Archaeological Services in August 2025. The preliminary greyscale results of the geophysical survey are included as Appendix 2. The geophysical survey results were heavily affected by significant disturbance, most likely caused by former construction and demolition activity on the study site. Despite this noise, the -50/50nT plot clearly identifies the footprint of former houses (26/28 Park Grove), which correspond with the terraced housing depicted on the 1893 and 1956 ordinance survey mapping of Midway Street (Figures 4-5).

- 5.5.2 The geophysical survey confirmed the alignment of the Nico Ditch within the study site, however the level of disturbance partially obscured the results. The alignment roughly corresponds to the historic mapping, however not perfectly. It is possible that the later culverting of the ditch or the subsequent construction and demolition of X road will have impacted the remains.

5.6 **Prehistoric and Roman Periods (c. 9500 BC – c. AD 410)**

- 5.6.1 There is no recorded evidence of prehistoric activity within the study site or search area.
- 5.6.2 The HER records the projected alignment of the Manchester to Buxton Roman Road (28.1.3 and 28.1.8) aligned north-west to south-east approximately 60m east of the study site. No further Roman period remains or finds are recorded within the search area.
- 5.6.3 There is scant evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity within the study site or its 1km search area. It can be noted that absence of recorded finds is potentially a result of subsequent human activity rather than an indication that the area was never occupied. Within the study site later post-medieval residential activity is likely to have removed any remains dating to these periods. Therefore, there is a very limited potential for surviving prehistoric and Roman archaeological deposits within the study site.

5.7 **Early medieval and Medieval Periods (c. AD 410 – c. 1540)**

- 5.7.1 There is no recorded evidence of medieval activity within the study site.
- 5.7.2 The name of the township of Levenshulme has been traced back to the 1320 name of 'Lyvenis-holme'. This probably means a tract of land belonging to Leven, which may be a derivation of the Saxon word 'Leofne' meaning Lord or Master (Nottingham University

2025). The Site will likely have formed part of the agricultural hinterland supporting Levenshulme, rather than constituting part of the settlement.

- 5.7.3 The Nico Ditch (1404.1.1 and 1404.1.5) is a linear earthwork comprising a single bank and ditch along its southern side, which measures c. 9.7km in length and runs through the south and east of Manchester (GMAU 1992). It originally linked the wetland areas of Hough's and Ouse Moss with Ashton Moss. The name, which evolved from the Anglo-Saxon 'Mickle' (great), has later been interpreted in different ways, though the original sense is likely "great ditch". The Nico Ditch is thought to date to the early medieval period, however, it was first recorded in documents of c.1200 and is variously referred to in medieval deeds as a ditch, wall, or rampart, indicating its perceived antiquity and scale. Its precise function remains uncertain, with interpretations ranging from defensive to administrative or drainage purposes. The Civil and Parish boundary depicted on the 1893 Edition OS (Figure 4), which likely corresponds with the Nico Ditch runs east-east through the south of the Study Site. This is confirmed in the 1956 Edition ordinance survey (OS), that labels the course of the Nico Ditch in the same alignment (Figure 5). The archaeological evaluation (EGM1918) to the immediate east of the study site has confirmed this alignment (GMAU 1992).
- 5.7.4 The HER records no further medieval activity within the search area. There is archaeological potential for the early medieval period associated with the Nico Ditch that passes through the study site. Following the insertion of the culvert the Nico Ditch was covered in the road which followed the same alignment within the study site in the late 19th century. It is likely that the construction of the former terraced housing in this same period will have destroyed any associated activity within the north of the study site. The adjacent archaeological investigation suggests that any remains of the Nico Ditch surviving within the site will be of no more than local significance (GMAU, 1992).
- 5.8 **Post-Medieval and Modern Periods (c. 1540-present)**
- 5.8.1 There are no HER 'monument' records located within the study site relating to the post-medieval or modern periods.
- 5.8.2 Within the surrounding 1km search area, there are 26 HER records relating to post-medieval and modern period activity. These are characterised by heritage assets relating to buildings or monuments of a well-defined extent that do not contribute to the understanding of the study site's archaeological potential. The understanding of settlement, land-use and the utilisation of the landscape is enhanced by cartographic and documentary sources which can give additional detail to data contained within the HER and, notably, to the study site.
- 5.8.3 The 1844 Tithe Plan of the Township of Rushulme (Figure 3) depicts the study site as enclosed pasture with a footpath corresponding to the location of the Nico Ditch (IR 29/18/276), demonstrating the site likely formed agricultural land at this point.
- 5.8.4 The 1893 Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Map (Figure 4) depicts the site as containing three terraces of housing off Pimlott Street, Midway Streed and two semi-detached houses off Park Grove. The location of these terraced housing roughly corresponds to the location of the flattened terracing observed within the study site (Plate 2). The 1956 Edition OS Map

(Figure 5) depict no change within the study site. The former course of the Nico Ditch is labelled within the study site.

5.8.5 The 1982 Edition OS mapping (Figure 6) shows the terrace housing has been demolished within the study site. Instead, the study site is depicted as an open field, demonstrating that the terraces within the study site had been demolished by this point. It depicts a footpath running from the south-west corner towards the former alignment of midway street.

5.8.6 Satellite imagery shows the study site as an open field with no discernible archaeological features (Figure 7). It is likely that the disturbances associated with the construction and demolition of structures across the site will have removed any potential earlier remains.

6 Assessment of Significance and Setting

6.1.1 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the archaeological asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset. Understanding the significance of any heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting (NPPF 2024, paragraph 207) is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change.

6.1.2 It is recognised that not all parts of an archaeological asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain elements could accommodate change without affecting the significance of the asset. Change is only considered harmful if it erodes an asset's significance.

6.2 Heritage Assets

6.2.1 The study site does not contribute to the setting or significance of any designated or non-designated heritage assets. Therefore, heritage assets are not considered to be a material constraint for the development of the study site.

6.3 Potential for Sub-Surface Archaeological Remains

6.3.1 There is no recorded evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the study site and very few HER entries relating to these periods within the wider 1km search area. Later post-medieval residential activity has substantially impacted any earlier remains, if once present. Therefore, it has been established that there is very limited potential for archaeological remains dated to the prehistoric or Roman periods to survive within the study site.

6.3.2 The study site is located within the agricultural hinterlands of Leverhulme in the medieval period. If any remains of this period existed within the north of the study site they are most likely to be reflective of this agricultural exploitation. Where residential development occurred in the 19th century, it is likely to have destroyed any earlier remains. The Nico Ditch potentially survives within the footprint of the former unlabelled road within the site. The geophysical survey identified a potential archaeological feature that corresponded to its recorded location (Appendix 2), suggesting it may partially survive. Based on the archaeological evaluation adjacent to the site it has been demonstrated that if these remains survive within the study site, they have likely been subject to multiple recutting and clearing and be of local significance.

6.3.3 The study site formed pasture in the early 19th century as evidence by the 1844 Tithe map. By the end of the 19th century the study site comprised terraced housing, which had been demolished by 1982. Any surviving remains relating to the terraced housing within the study site would be of no greater than local significance.

7 Impact Assessment

7.1 Proposed Development

- 7.1.1 The proposed development consists of the construction of 14 new homes with an associated new access road, green space and utilities (Appendix 3). No substantial development is proposed within a 3.5m buffer of the culvert within the former Nico Ditch, preserving any potential archaeological remains.
- 7.1.2 Full details of the proposed development can be found in the planning statement which supports this planning application, and the proposed layout can be seen in Appendix 3.

7.2 Previous Impacts

- 7.2.1 The study site contained terraced housing from the end of the 19th century until the end of the 20th century. The construction of and subsequent demolition of these structures will have impacted any archaeological remains within the study site.

7.3 Heritage Assets

- 7.3.1 The proposed development will cause no impact to any designated or non-designated heritage assets.

7.4 Potential Sub-Surface Archaeological Remains

- 7.4.1 Buried remains associated with the Nico Ditch potentially survive under the unlabelled road in the south of the study site. Any surviving remains within the site would be of no greater than local significance. No substantial development is proposed within a 3.5m buffer of the culvert within the former Nico Ditch, preserving any potential archaeological remains.
- 7.4.2 There is a potential for the survival of buried remains associated with the 19th century terraced housing within the study site. The undulation in the ground surface across the study site are likely associated with the demolition of these structures. Any surviving remains are of no greater than local significance.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1.1 This Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the significance and archaeological potential of a site proposed for residential development at Pennington Street, Levenshulme, Manchester (NGR: SJ 87215 94701). This assessment addresses the information requirements set out in the NPPF and provides the proportionate response sought by the NPPF.
- 8.1.2 This assessment has established there are no designated heritage assets in the study site and that the proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets in the surrounding area.
- 8.1.3 The available archaeological records, suggest there is limited potential for remains dated to the prehistoric and Roman periods to survive within the study site. The study site is likely to have formed the agricultural hinterland of Leverhulme during the medieval period and as such any remains, if once present, in the north of the site are likely to have been of an agricultural nature. Buried remains associated with the Nico Ditch, which is first documented in the medieval period, potentially survive under the unlabelled road in the south of the study site as identified from the geophysical survey. Any surviving remains within the site would be of no greater than local significance. No substantial development is proposed within a 3.5m buffer of the culvert within the former Nico Ditch, preserving any potential archaeological remains. If once present any remains pre-dating the post medieval period are likely to have been destroyed or severely impacted by 19th century residential activity.
- 8.1.4 There is a potential for the survival of buried remains associated with the 19th century terraced housing within the study site. The undulation in the ground surface across the study site are likely associated with the demolition of these structures. Any surviving remains are of no greater than local significance.

9 References

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Figures



Pennington Street, Levenshulme

Historic Environment Environment Desk Based Assessment

Figure 1.
The study site and the location of NHLE records within the Search Area

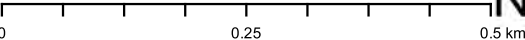
- Legend:
- Study Site
 - Search Area (1km)
 - Listed Building (Grade)
 - I
 - II
 - II*
 - Rushford Park Conservation Area

Data: © Historic England 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.
Ordnance Survey AC0000862729



Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:7729 @ A3





Pennington Street, Levenshulme

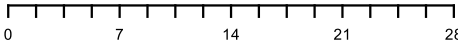
Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

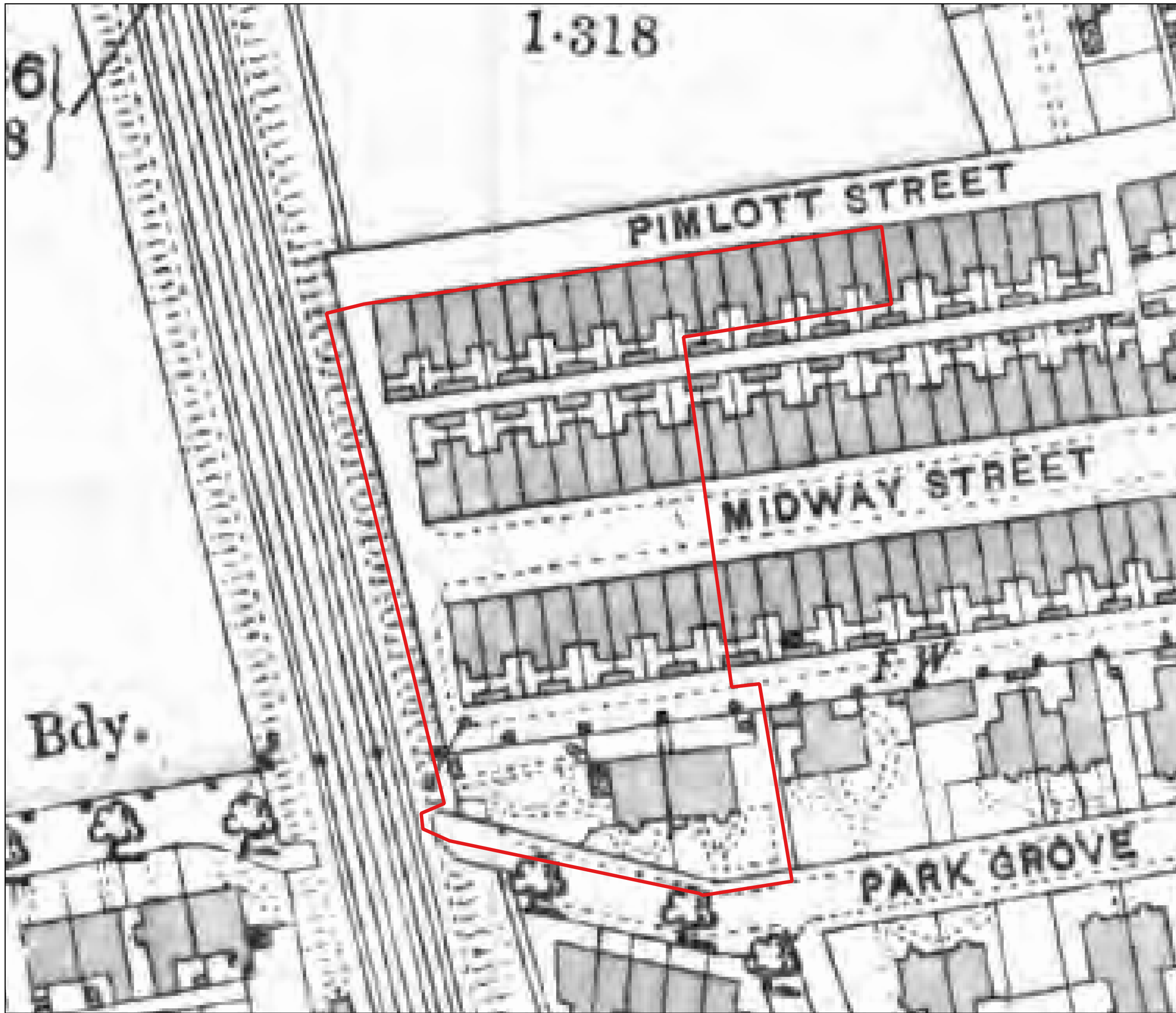
Figure 3.
The study site overlain on the 1844 Tithe Plan of the Township of Rushulme

Legend:
1844 Tithe Plan of the Township of Rushulme

Data: © Genealogist 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.

Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid
Scale: 1:475 @ A3





Pennington Street, Levenshulme

Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Figure 4.
The study site overlain on the 1893 Edition
Ordnance Survey Map

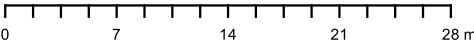
Legend:

1893 Edition OS

Data: © Blackwell's Mapping 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.

Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:475 @ A3





Pennington Street, Levenshulme

Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Figure 5.
The study site overlain on the 1956 Edition
Ordnance Survey Map

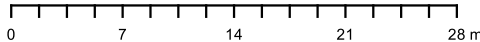
Legend:

1956 Edition OS

Data: © Blackwell's Mapping 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.

Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:475 @ A3



Pennington Street, Levenshulme

Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Figure 6.
The study site overlain on the 1982 Edition
Ordnance Survey Map

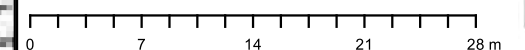
Legend:

1982 Edition OS

Data: © Blackwell's Mapping 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.

Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:475 @ A3





Pennington Street, Levenshulme

Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Figure 7.
The study site overlain on Google Satellite Imagery

Legend:
1982 Edition OS

Data: © Google 2025; Lanpro, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025.

Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid
Scale: 1:475 @ A3



Plates



Plate 1. The view within the study site, facing south-east



Plate 2. The view within the study site, facing south



Plate 3. The view of the study site, facing north-east



Plate 4. The view from the study site towards the Rushford Park Conservation Area, facing west

Appendix 1 Gazetteer

The following tables provide the details of designated heritage assets recorded on the NHLE within 1km of the study site and all records held on the Greater Manchester HER within 1km of the study site. These have been listed in order of their reference numbers, and their locations are marked on Figures 1-3.

Table 2: Designated Heritage Assets within Search Area

NHLE ID	Name	Designation	Period
N/A	Rushford	Conservation Area	Post Medieval
1254632	Slade Hall	II*	16th Century
1254653	Church Of St Agnes	II	1884-5
1254684	Church Of St Peter	II	1860
1270684	Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre	II	19th Century
1271454	Beswick Cooperative Society Building	II	1912
1283074	Church Of St Mark	II	1908

Table 3: HER 'Monument' Records within the Search Area

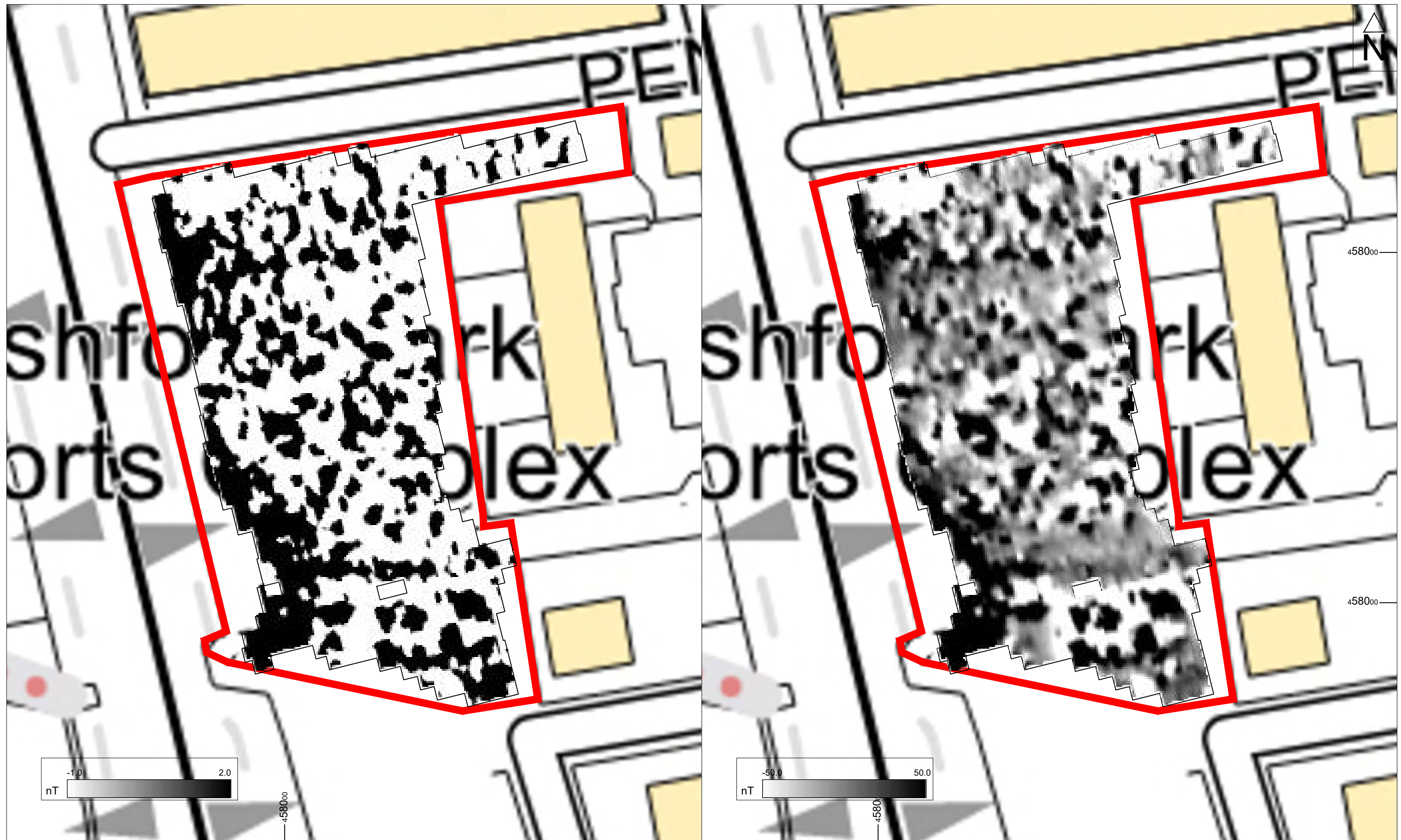
HER PrenRef	Name	Period
HER Monument Records		
12133.1.0	Church of St Agnes (St Agnes's Church)	Post Medieval
12134.1.0	Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre	Post Medieval
1404.1.1	Nico Ditch at Melland Playing Fields	Medieval
1404.1.5	Nico Ditch, excavation at Park Grove	Medieval
1411.1.0	Slade Hall	Post Medieval
19214.1.0	Levenshulme heavy anti-aircraft battery (site of)	Modern
19393.1.0	Manchester Central Station Railway (line of)	Post Medieval
2090.1.0	Atlas Mills (formerly Big Cotton Mill) (site of)	Post Medieval
2091.1.0	Bakery (former)	Post Medieval
28.1.3	Manchester to Buxton Roman road (Manchester to Levenshulme section)	Roman
28.1.8	Manchester to Buxton Roman road (Levenshulme to Offerton section)	Roman
9118.1.0	Crowcroft Park	Post Medieval
9118.2.0	Crowcroft House (site of)	Post Medieval
9134.1.0	Grounds to Slade House (site of)	Post Medieval
9733.1.0	Slade House (Slade Hill) (site of)	Post Medieval

HER PrenRef	Name	Period
9752.1.0	Slade Farm (site of)	Post Medieval
9759.1.0	Albert Mill (Carpet) (formerly Little Cotton Mill) (site of)	Post Medieval
9760.1.0	Brick works (site of), off Lincoln Avenue	Post Medieval
9761.1.0	Dye works (site of), off Cromwell Grove	Post Medieval
9762.1.0	St Peter's Church (Church of St Peter)	Post Medieval
9763.1.0	Levenshulme Station	Post Medieval
9764.1.0	Former Midway public house (formerly Midway Hotel), site of earlier Midway House (inn)	Post Medieval
9765.1.0	Manor House (site of)	Post Medieval
9767.1.0	Rushford Park (site of)	Post Medieval
9774.1.0	Levenshulme settlement cores	Post Medieval
9783.1.0	Dye works on Gore Brook (site of)	Post Medieval
9784.1.0	Iron works on Gore Brook (Gorebrook Iron Works) (former)	Post Medieval
9785.1.0	Brick field south of Gore Brook (site of)	Post Medieval
9823.1.0	Crowcroft Cotton Mill (site of)	Post Medieval
9928.1.0	Yewtree Farm (site of)	Post Medieval

Table 4: HER 'Event' Records within the Search Area

HER ID	Description	Year
HER event records		
EGM4006	Watching Brief at Brynton Road/ Old Hall Lane	2011
EGM3883	Watching Brief at Nico Ditch at Gorton Education Village	2008
EGM1918	Evaluation at Nico Ditch, Park Grove	1992
EGM4630	Evaluation at Matthews Lane (new high school site)	2017
EGM5873	DBA of Land at Mount Road	2023
EGM5874	Evaluation at Land at Mount Road	2024
EGM5874	Evaluation at Land at Mount Road	2024

Appendix 2 Geophysical Survey Greyscale Results



Appendix 3 Proposed Development



Accommodation Schedule

1B2P Bungalow M4(3)	1no.
2B4P House	9no.
3B6P House (3-storey)	4no.
Total	14no.

all units to Manchester City Council space standards

Drawing Title: Proposed Site Plan
Date: 10/06/2025
Drawing no: 1351 - 100
Scale: 1:500 @A3
Drawn: LC

revision: C
revision notes: B 10/07/2025 Amendments made following confirmation of required easement to existing culvert, additional 240L bin provision and general minor changes.
C 28/07/2025 House types amended to suit Onward feedback dated 24/07/2025

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