CIVIC HERITAGE

Crown Street Plot E, Manchester

Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation

May 2025

PREPARED FOR

Renaker Build Ltd



Project Design

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Reviewed By	Ollie Cook
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Commissioned by	Renaker Build Ltd
Client	Renaker Build Ltd
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Front Cover	No. 26 Great Jackson Street, situated at the junction of Melbourne Street, taken in the 1960s, courtesy of Manchester Local Image Collection

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Overview of the Site

This Project Design has been produced by Civic Heritage, on behalf of Renaker Build Ltd. The document has been prepared in support of an application for the redevelopment of the northeastern plot of land at Crown Street Plot E, Manchester City Centre (centred on NGR 383311 397307). This document has been commissioned Renaker Build Ltd.

The proposed development will be delivered across two plots, of which this Project Design covers the eastern plot. The proposed development comprises the following principal uses:

Phased construction of four residential buildings (two at 47 storeys and two at 51 storeys) to provide 1,746 homes (Use Class C3), flexible commercial, leisure, food and drink uses (all Use Class E) and / or drinking establishment (Sui Generis), basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm, servicing and access arrangements, highways alterations and associated works.

In order to support the planning application for the scheme, Renaker Build Ltd previously commissioned Salford Archaeology to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of the proposed development site. This was intended to establish, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the sub-surface archaeological resource to enable informed recommendations to be made for the future treatment of any surviving remains. The desk-based assessment identified high archaeological potential in the form of Roman remains associated with settlement activity, fields or Mithraeum, post-medieval field systems, 18th-century farm buildings, tenter fields, an 18th-century brewery, an independent chapel and various types of early 19th-century workers' housing, which together will form the focus of the archaeological investigation.

1.1.2. Planning Background

Renaker Build Ltd have submitted a planning application to support the redevelopment of land to the north of Great Ancoats Street (centred on: NGR 383311 397307). The application (ref: 137226/FO/2023) is currently awaiting approval.

The archaeological potential of the site was formally acknowledged in 2022, in an archaeological desk-based assessment produced by Salford Archaeology (Fletcher 2022). This document outlined the chronological development of the site and highlighted that the site held high potential for below-ground remains, notably in the form of Roman remains, post-medieval agricultural activity and 18th/19th-century urban activity. The sites of archaeological potential include elements of the Romano-British vicus, industry and field systems, a possible Mithraeum, post medieval field system and farm buildings, an 18th-century brewery,18th century chapel and 19th-century workers housing.

In light of the conclusions drawn from the desk-based assessment, and following consultation with the advisory body, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), it was recommended a programme of evaluation proceed any development of the site. The purpose of the fieldwork is to better inform client and GMAAS of the archaeological potential

of the site.

This Project Design for an archaeological evaluation has been prepared by Graham Mottershead of Civic Heritage on behalf of Renaker Build Ltd. Any change to the Project Design must be agreed between the client, GMAAS and Civic Heritage.

1.2. Setting

1.2.1. Location

The proposed development area (centred on NGR383245 397274; 383311 397307) comprises two site boundaries that are situated to the east and west of Great Jackson Street (Plate 1). The east site boundary is bounded by Silvercroft Street to the north, Great Jackson Street to the east, Melbourne Street to the south and Crown Street to the west. The west Site boundary is bounded by a hard-standing car park to the north, Owen Street to the east, industrial units to the south and Great Jackson Street to the west. The site lies on the southern side of the River Medlock in the Castlefield area of Manchester, though it historically lay within the township of Hulme.



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

This Project Design deals only with the eastern portion of the development plot (indicated on Plate 1). The western portion will be dealt with in a subsequent document.

1.2.2. Topography and Geology

Topographically, the Manchester conurbation as a region lies within an undulating lowland basin, which is bounded by the Pennine uplands to the east and to the north. The region as a whole comprises of the Mersey River valley, whilst the rivers Irwell, Medlock and Irk represent the principal watercourses in Manchester. The Site lies at a height of 32m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and is relatively flat.

The solid geology of the Site comprises sandstone of the Chester Formation, formed between 250 and 247.1 million years ago during the Triassic Period. The solid geology is overlain by superficial deposits of Devensian sand and gravel, which formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary Period (British Geological Society, 2025).

1.3. Recommended Activity and Scope

1.3.1. Recommended Activity

The consented scheme for development works will involve landscaping, piling and earthmoving activity, which have the potential to cause loss or damage to any below-ground remains surviving within the site. To mitigate against the impact caused by the development, it is proposed that a programme of archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to better inform the client and GMAAS of the site's archaeological potential. Where significant remains are identified, and if deemed necessary by GMAAS, mitigation in the form of targeted open-area excavation may be required.

This approach to mitigating against the loss or damage to heritage assets and potential heritage assets of archaeological interest follows the guidance of NPPF (revised December 2023; Paragraphs 207-8 and 218).

1.3.2. Scope

The scope of the evaluation will comprise the excavation of seven archaeological evaluation trenches, each measuring 1.8m in width and 30m in length. Should archaeologically significant remains be encountered it may be that GMAAS will require further targeted archaeological excavation to mitigate against their loss as part of the site's development. Any such additional works would be beyond the scope of an evaluation and will require an updated Project Design and a variation in costs.

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

2. Historical Background

2.1. Introduction

The archaeological and historical background of the site and its broader context has been presented in the desk-based assessment produced by Salford Archaeology (Fletcher 2022) and should be referred to for more detailed information regarding the development of the site. Much of the text below has been reproduced or summarised from this assessment.

2.2. Archaeological and Historical Background

The proposed development area lies on the south bank of the River Medlock, opposite the Roman fort of Manchester, in an area of known Roman activity. Castlefield Roman Vicus and Area of Roman Manchester partially lies within the site, together with the possible site of a Mithraeum. Chester Road is believed to follow the Roman road between Manchester and Chester and is situated 80m to the north of the site.

During the post-medieval period, the site most likely remained undeveloped and was presumably agricultural land that lay beyond the medieval core of Manchester. By the 18th-century, the south part of the development area was within an area of farmland and group of buildings known as Jackson's Farm. The north-east of the site contained tenter fields, which were likely associated with a group of dyeworks that lay beyond the east site boundary. In addition, a brewery had been established in the north-west of the site, to the south of Hulme Place (current Silver Street) (Figure 4).

Almost the entire site had been developed by the early 19th-century, consisting of various types of workers' housing, including back-to-back, single-depth, blind-back and double-depth terrace housing. Most of the double-depth houses that fronted Crown Street, Silver Street and Great Jackson Street appear to have contained cellars. A religious building had been erected to serve the new communities, comprising an independent chapel and adjoining school. The brewery and former farm buildings had been demolished to make way for the houses (Figures 5 to 7).

2.3. Previous Archaeological Work

Many archaeological finds and investigations have been carried out within the area of the Roman fort and vicus. The descriptions below will concentrate on those within 200m of the development site.

An excavation was carried out on the junction of Chester Road and Great Jackson Street was undertaken by Pre-construct Archaeology in 2008, immediately to the north of the eastern portion of the site. This provided important new information on the character development of Roman Manchester, and indicated that temples and mausolea probably lined the Roman road from Chester as it dropped down to the ford across the River Medlock. Significantly, a Roman altar was recovered from this excavation. This had been dumped into a pit away from the road, suggesting that the area was re-used for other purposes. Physical evidence for a sequence of inter-cutting pits and an enclosure ditch were also identified (Figure 2).

Excavations at Owen Street in 2016 identified a spread of relict plough soil, containing Roman pottery and a series of ditches, the longest with a total recorded length of 36.8m was lined on

one side by a row of post holes, cut into the bedrock (Salford Archaeology, 2016; Figure 2). These features may have formed part of a field system, delineating a plot of agricultural land. Further evidence for Roman activity in the area was recovered from an archaeological excavation on the south bank of the River Medlock at 2-4 Chester Road, where an assemblage of Roman pottery was recovered, together with some evidence for stone-quarrying activity (Miller & Cook, 2019).

Remains associated with a former Roman cemetery have also been discovered within the study area from at least the 17th-century. Finds include the discovery of Roman Urns believed to have been part of a former cemetery, 240m to the northeast of the site (HER 415.3.0). As well as animal bones and cremated remains, artefacts were also discovered, including a Roman clasp, coin and lachrymatory glass bottle. In addition, a tomb, comprising a wooden coffin in a grave lined with tiles, was found in 1832 near Great Jackson Street, *c* 130m to the northwest of the site.

Other finds are described as having been discovered 90m to the east of the site in the vicinity of Knott Mill, including an altar to the goddess *Fortuna Conservatris*, found in 1612 ‘under the roote of an oak in Medlock neere Knott Mill’ (Bruton, 1909). In 1760, a centurial stone recording the building of a length of wall (presumably of the fort), was found ‘on the south bank of the Medlock near Knott Mill, on the left of the road from Manchester to Stretford’ (Bruton, 1909). Roman pottery and a small hand quern were also found in this area in 1898.

In addition, several Roman findspots including hoards have been discovered in the wider study area. A hoard consisting of over 1600 coins ranging from the 2nd century to the 4th century were discovered during the 18th-century near Knott Mill, *c* 200m to the north-east of the site. Many of the coins dated to the House of Constantine and were probably deposited between AD 375 and 380. The nearest excavated hoard lay *c* 80m to the north of the site, along the course of the Roman road to Ribchester and consisted of 26 coins.

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1. Aims

The main aim of the archaeological work will be to identify any archaeologically significant remains survive within the site. This will be achieved through the excavation of seven archaeological evaluation trenches (Figure 3)

The specific aims of the investigation will be:

- to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;
- to provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made about the need for any additional archaeological mitigation;
- to identify the survival of buried remains associated with Romano-British activity;
- to identify the survival of buried relict soils and features associated with the medieval and post-medieval agricultural activity in the area;
- to identify the survival of structural remains associated with the 18th and 19th-century development of the area;
- establish the survival artefactual/palaeo-environmental remains associated with early activity;
- to produce an evaluation report detailing the results of the investigation and assessing, in consultation with GMAAS, the requirement for further investigation;
- to make available the results of the work.

3.2. Regional Research Framework

Further, more detailed research aims may be generated and developed from the results of the archaeological investigation, with specific reference to the North West Regional Research Framework (NWRRF 2024). The specific research agendas set out within the NWRRF will be taken into account at all stages of the evaluation/mitigation.

4. Method Statement

4.1. Archaeological Works

4.1.1. Overview

The evaluation will comprise the excavation of seven trenches, each measuring 30m by 1.8m, as depicted in figures 3 to 7.

4.1.2. Pre-commencement

Production of this Project Design has been undertaken by Civic Heritage and submitted to the advisory body (GMAAS) for approval prior to the commencement of any onsite activities. In addition to the completion and approval of the Project Design prior to on-site commencement of activity, the nominated Project Manager will:

- Liaise with the client to ensure mutual understanding of the project deliverables, timeframes, access, health and safety, aims and resources.
- Liaise with the archaeological curator or their representative.
- Obtain background information necessary for the project
- Oversee the production of relevant documentation such as Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS).
- Ensure adequate staffing and resources (e.g. plant and welfare) are programmed.

4.1.3. Evaluation Methodology

The principal aim of the archaeological evaluation will be to establish the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest and, if present, sufficiently characterise the remains present to enable an informed decision to be reached regarding the archaeological potential of the site and requirement for mitigation.

General Methodology

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

The trenches will be excavated using a mechanical excavator of appropriate size and power (fitted with a toothless ditching bucket); the excavator will excavate down to the first significant archaeological horizon or geological deposits, whichever is reached first. Thereafter, remains will be cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date.

If it proves necessary for trenches to be excavated deeper than 1.2m, or if the trench sides appear to be loose or unstable at any depth, then trenches may be stepped inwards.

Context Recording

All contexts will be recorded using pro-forma sheets, allowing details to be incorporated into a Harris matrix. All written recording of survey data, contexts, photographs, artefacts and

ecofacts will be cross-referenced from record sheets using sequential numbering.

Photography

A full and detailed digital photographic record of individual contexts and groups will be maintained and similarly general views from standard view points of the overall site at all stages of the excavation will be generated. Photography will be undertaken in accordance with HE guidance, Digital Image Capture and File Storage Guidelines for Best Practice (July 2015). All frames will include a visible, graduated metric scale. Photograph records will be maintained on photographic pro-forma sheets.

Planning

The precise location of all the excavated test pits and any archaeological remains encountered therein will be surveyed using a combination of manual drawing, total station/GPS survey, 3D laser scanning, and/or aerial drone/Hi-view photogrammetry. This process will generate scaled plans within AutoCAD, which will then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings will be generated at an accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale but can be output at any scale required. All information will be georectified to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and all levels will be tied into Ordnance Datum.

Human Remains

Should human remains be found they will be left in-situ covered and protected, and the Ministry of Justice, Local Planning Authority and GMAAS will be informed immediately. Removal of human remains is beyond the scope of this investigation and, should any be encountered, all works will cease until a mitigation strategy has been developed, a Ministry of Justice licence obtained, and an updated Project Design produced.

Finds Policy

Finds recovery and sampling programmes will be in accordance with best practice (following current Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidelines, Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CIfA 2020) and subject to expert advice in order to minimise deterioration. Finds storage during fieldwork and any site archive preparation will follow professional guidelines (UKIC 1990).

Any finds falling within the definition of 'treasure' recovered during the course of the investigation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996.

Deposit Sampling

Samples will be collected from any suitable deposits encountered during the evaluation with the aim of identifying any residual evidence of the past environment or industrial processes and potential dating. The samples should be collected, where possible, in line with the Historic England guidelines (Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation, Second Edition EH 2011), appropriating 30 – 40 litres per sample, and sampled in as close to sterile conditions as feasible in external areas, although these guidelines may have to be adapted to given the small-scale nature of the investigation.

4.2. Report and Archive

4.2.1. Report

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

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

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

4.2.2. Archive

Project Archive

The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current Historic England guidelines, and current CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the CIfA in that organisation's code of conduct. As part of the archiving process, the on-line OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations) form will be completed. In preparation for this an OASIS number will be obtained and the initial record set up at the beginning of the investigation.

The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the North West of England. All drawn records will be transferred to and stored in digital format, in systems which are easily accessible. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works with the archive ultimately being deposited with Science & Industry Museum, should they agree to receive it.

The archaeological archive will consist of the following:

- All original records created throughout the course of the project;
- All original drawings, whether created during fieldwork or post-investigation;
- Indexes to the drawings;
- Indexes to the photographic archive;
- All digital material;
- Digital material created from written, drawn or photographed original records;
- The final project report;
- A list of contents of the archive

It is likely that a large element of the project archive will be in digital format. It would thus be appropriate to deposit a copy of the archive generated from the archaeological investigation with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), through ADS-Easy should this be requested as part of the mitigation strategy. Any records that are created in hard copy during the course of the project will be scanned and added to this digital archive. The integrity of the digital and paper archive will be maintained by Civic Heritage until its deposition with an appropriate repository body.

4.2.3. Dissemination

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

- The report will be submitted to the relevant HER within three months of production of the completed report.
- As a minimum a short summary note of the results obtained from the fieldwork will be

sent for inclusion in the annual roundup of archaeological fieldwork published in a relevant journal.

- Pending what remains are encountered it may be necessary to produce a full article for inclusion in a suitable academic journal and popular publication in booklet format to form part of the *Greater Manchester Past Revealed* series.
- Civic Heritage will register the report with OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations).
- Civic Heritage may utilise social media to communicate the discovery of archaeological findings and any artefacts of interest at any time. Discretion will be taken not to disclose such information or make site locations anonymous if specifically asked to do so by the client.
- The Project Archive, including artefactual material will be deposited as outlined above.

4.3 Outreach and Public Engagement

Due to the nature of the site and the work to be carried out it is not felt that public engagement would be appropriate during the evaluation. Pending the results of the evaluation and any additional fieldwork requirements, there could be scope to hold an open-day or give a public talk / seminar on the results of the investigation.

5. Programme

5.1. Timetable

5.1.1. Fieldwork

The project will commence on a date mutually agreed between the Client and Civic Heritage.

Civic Heritage will notify GMAAS one week prior to commencement of the onsite activities, allowing them to schedule monitoring visits during the course of the evaluation.

An initial phase of archaeological monitoring will be undertaken at an early stage in the project. This will commence on a date mutually agreed between the client and Civic Heritage.

It is anticipated that the evaluation (based on the provisional trench plan) will be completed on-site within five working days. Should extensive or well-preserved remains deemed worthy of further investigation be uncovered, these may require additional phase of works.

5.1.2. Report

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

5.1.3. Project Monitoring

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

6. Staff Proposals

6.1. Team Structure

6.1.1. Responsibilities

The project will be overseen and managed by Graham Mottershead (Associate Director, Civic Heritage). Graham is an experienced field archaeologist with over 35 years' experience and has undertaken many evaluations and excavations across the country. Graham holds current valid SMSTS and PRINCE2 certification.

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

6.1.2. Fieldwork Staff

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

6.1.3. External Specialists

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

- Ceramics Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- CBM Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- Clay tobacco pipes Jeremy Bradley (independent specialist)
- Glass David Dungworth (independent specialist)
- Iron/Steel objects David Dungworth (independent specialist)
- Industrial residues David Dungworth (independent specialist)
- Animal Bone Hannah Russ (Archaeology.Biz)
- Leather Quita Mould (independent specialist)
- Conservation Karen Barker (independent specialist)

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Appendix 1 - Figures

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Previous archaeological investigation results

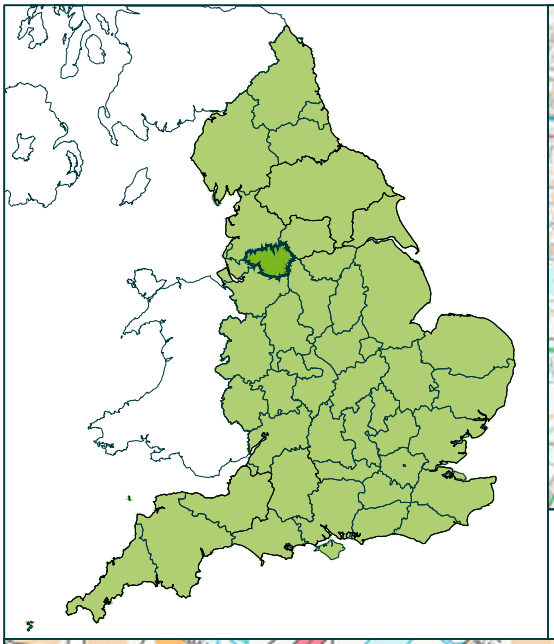
Figure 3 Location of proposed archaeological evaluation trenches

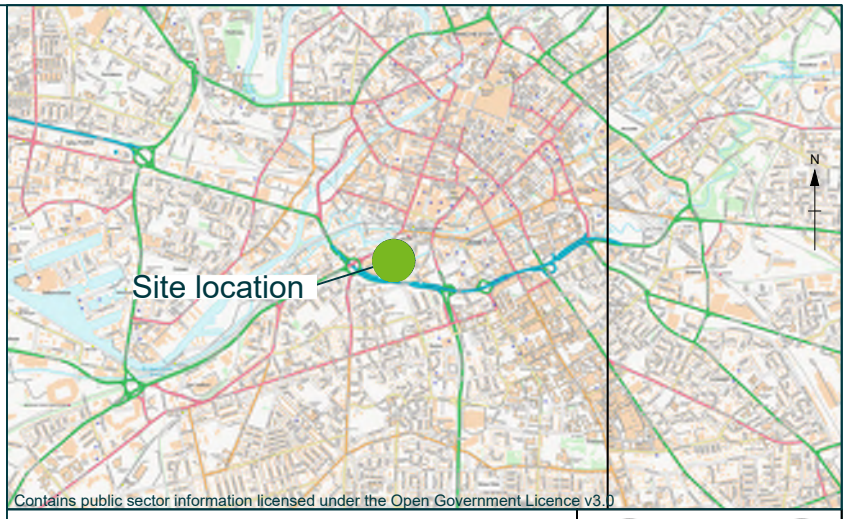
Figure 4 Proposed trenches superimposed onto Green's map of 1787-94

Figure 5 Proposed trenches superimposed onto Bancks & Co's map of 1831

Figure 6 Proposed trenches superimposed onto OS 60" to 1 mile Town Plan 1851

Figure 7 Proposed trenches superimposed onto OS 1:500 Town Plan 1891





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Crown Street Plot E (Eastern Section), Manchester

Project Code: 61181

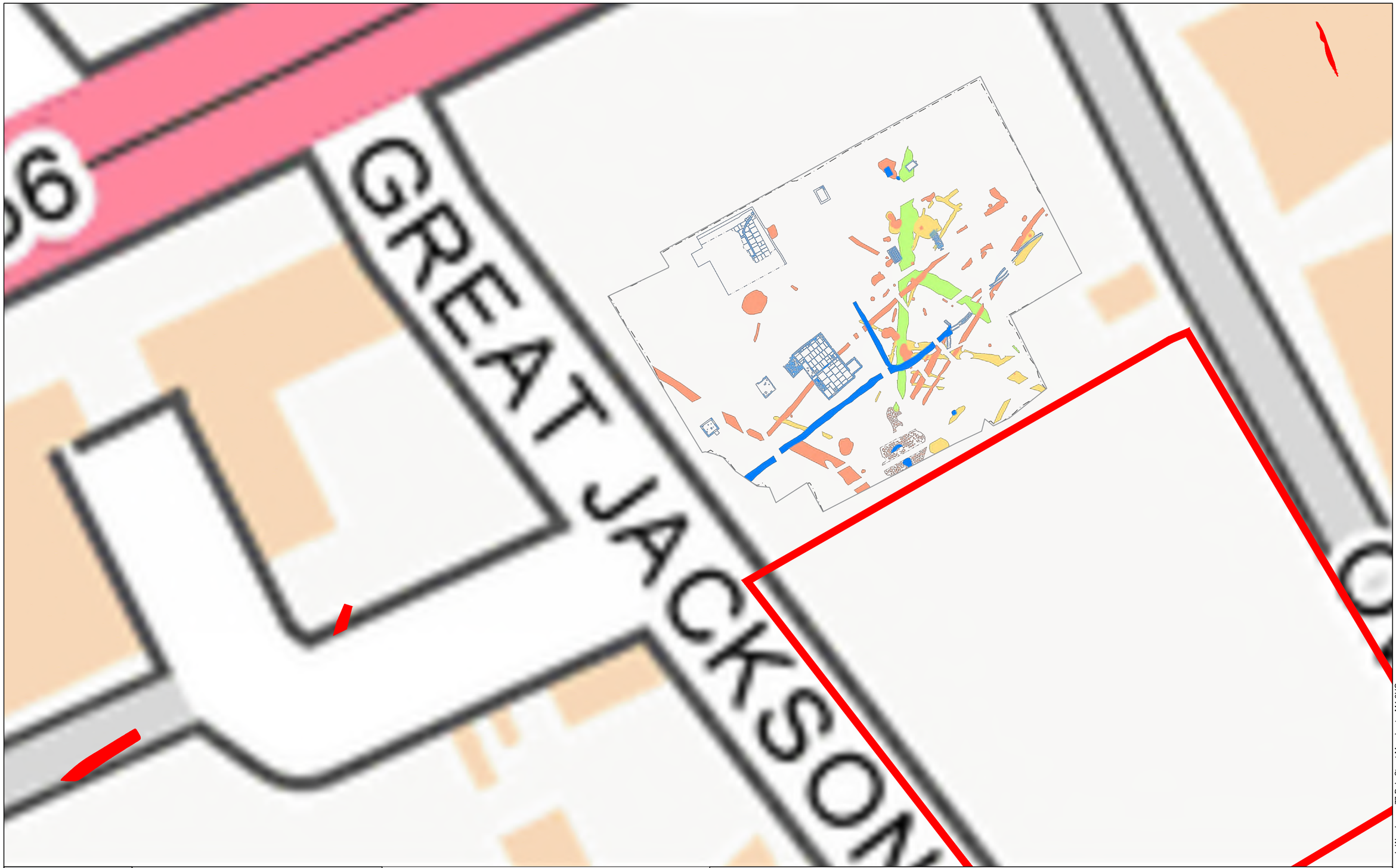
Figure 1: site location

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Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors Microsoft, Facebook, Google, Esri Community Map contributors, Map layer by Esri Powered by Esri

Civic Heritage, Carver's Warehouse 77 Dale Street Manchester M1 2HG



CIVIC HERITAGE

0 20 m

Scale at A3 1:500

Crown Street Plot E (Eastern Section), Manchester

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Figure 2: Previous archaeological investigation results

N

Key:

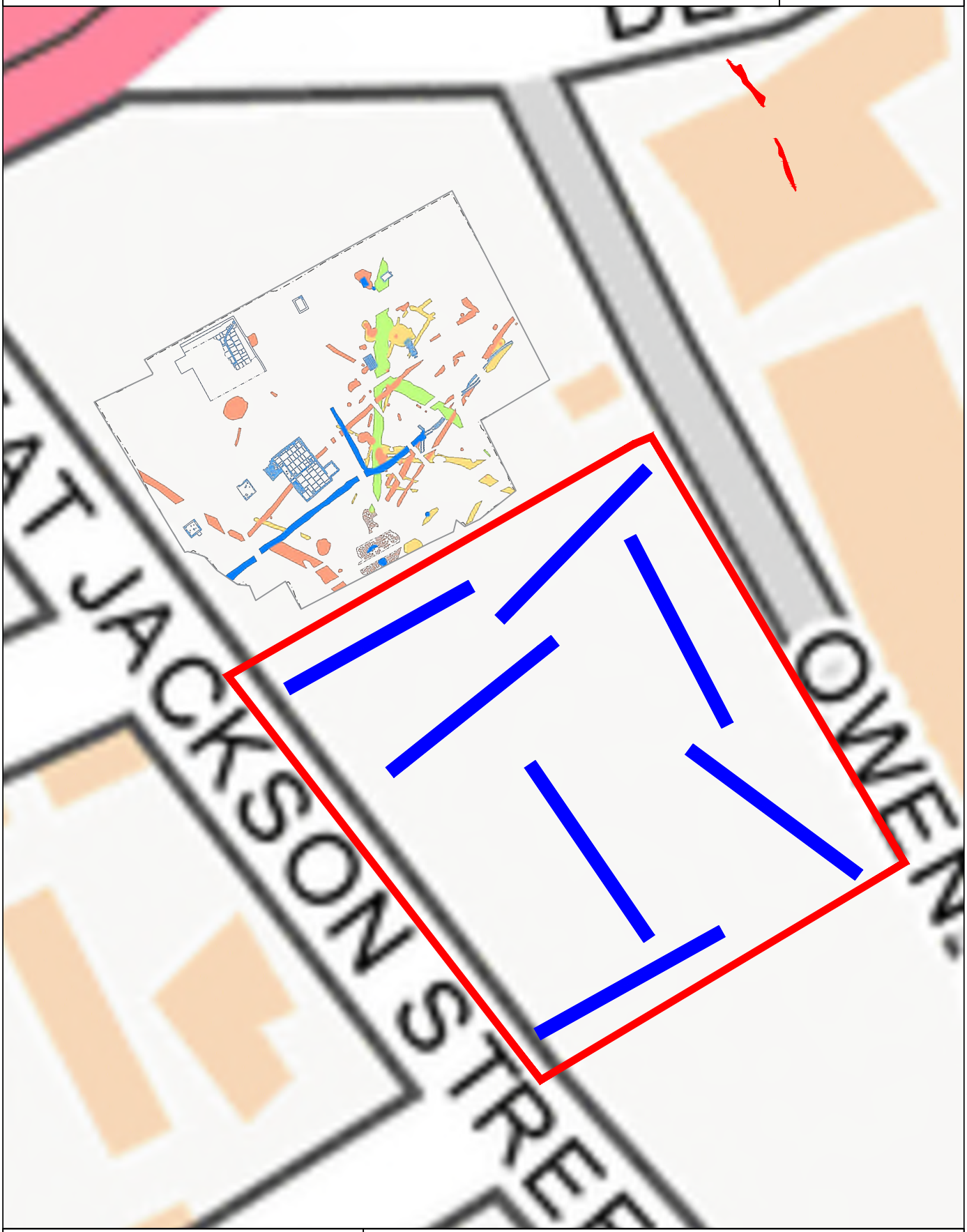
- Site boundary
- Roman features
- Roman features
- Roman features
- Roman features
- Post-medieval features

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Figure 3: Location of proposed archaeological evaluation trenches



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Figure 4: Proposed trenches superimposed onto Green's Map of 1787-94



0 20 m

Scale at A4 1:500

Key:

Site boundary

Proposed evaluation trench

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Figure 5: Proposed trenches superimposed onto Bancks & Co's Map of 1831

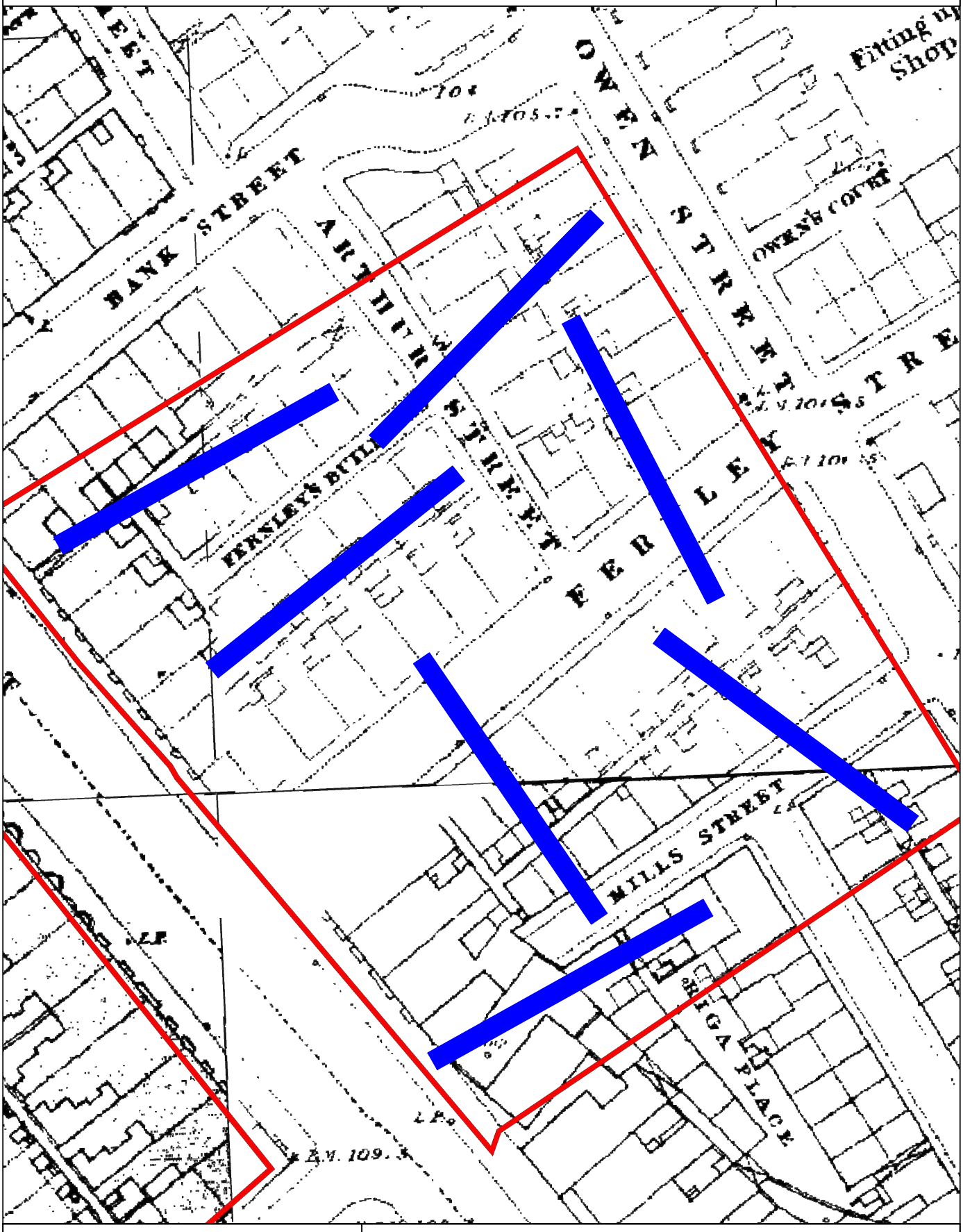


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Figure 6: Proposed trenches superimposed onto OS 60" to 1 mile Town Plan 1851

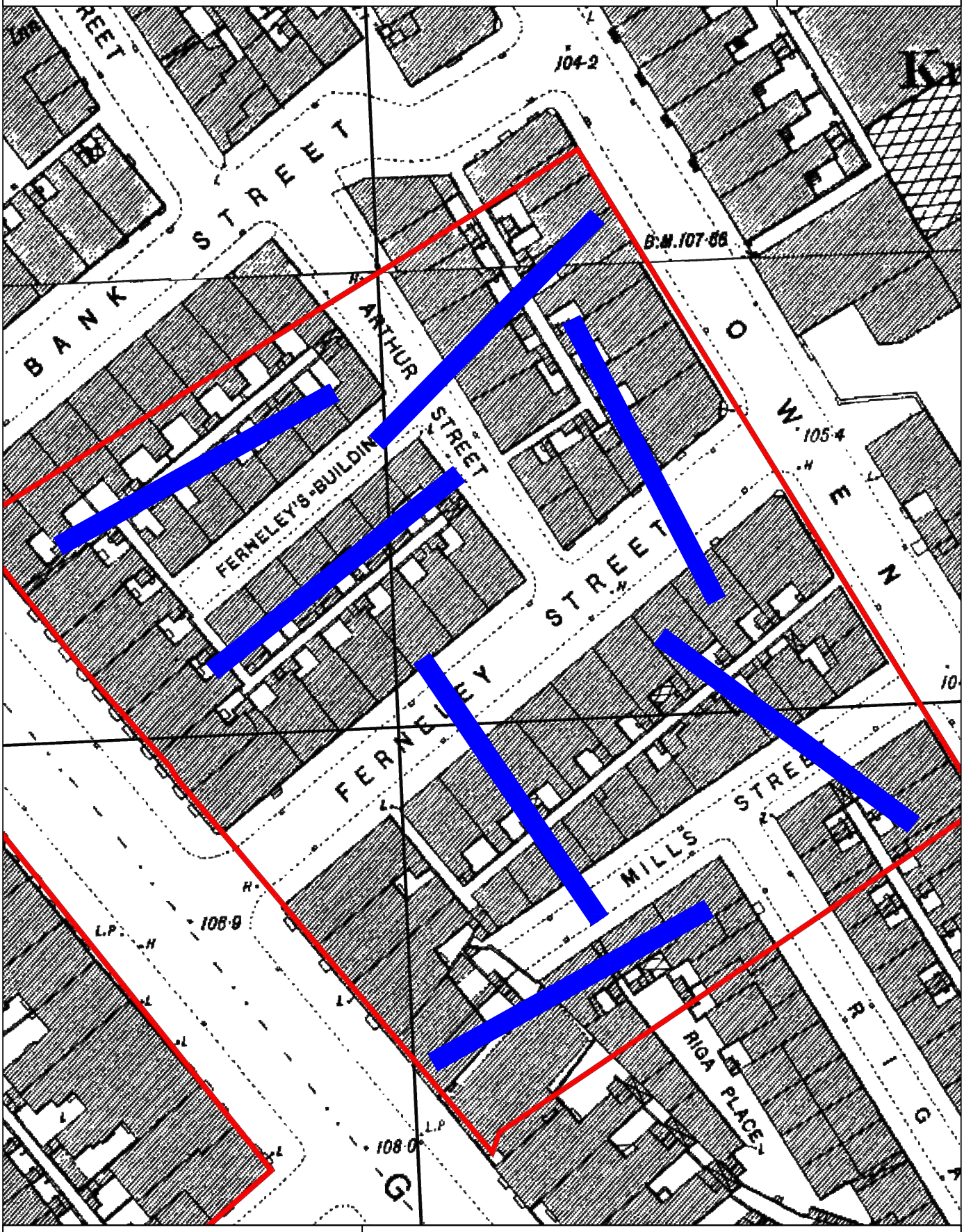


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Figure 7: Proposed trenches superimposed onto OS 1:500 Town Plan 1891



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