



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Community- Based Archaeological Investigation

Town Hall Square,
Rochdale

Client:
Rochdale
Development Agency

Planning Ref:
N/A

Technical Report:
Joe Brooks

Report No:
SA/2021/95



Location: The site encompasses Rochdale Town Hall in Rochdale town centre and is bounded by Packer Street to the east, The Esplanade to the north, St Chad's churchyard to the south and Vicar's Gate to the west.

NGR: SD 89585 13255

Project: Community-Based Archaeological Investigation: Town Hall Square, Rochdale

Planning Ref: N/A

Internal Ref: SECL2118

Report No: SA/2021/95

Prepared for: Rochdale Development Agency

Document Type: Archaeological Excavation Report

Version: 1

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Date: April 2022

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Date: April 2022

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SUMMARY

This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological excavation at Town Hall Square, Rochdale, Greater Manchester (NGR SD 89585 13255). The project was undertaken by Salford Archaeology between 5th July and 6th of August 2021 and was commissioned by Rochdale Development Agency which is carrying out a scheme of refurbishment and landscaping works at Town Hall Square in Rochdale. Following an archaeological desk-based assessment (Miller, 2020) of the site it was suggested that there was considerable scope for a community-led archaeological excavation which could engage local communities and elucidate the early origins of settlement in Rochdale, potentially stretching back to the early medieval period.

The earliest deposits recorded during the excavation comprised glacial sands and gravels. A layer of reworked natural sand represented a combination of agricultural activity and bioturbation on the site pre-dating the 18th century. In the northern part of the site undated structural remains formed of brick and worked stone were sealed beneath thick layers of made ground. Late 18th / early 19th-century structures were found in the southern part of the site. These included a brick wall oriented north-north-east by south-south-west – interpreted as the boundary between properties to the east, fronting Packer Street – and the formal gardens of The Wood, a mansion house which stood in the western part of the site. A thick silty horizon deposited against the western side of the boundary wall probably represented horticultural activity within the grounds of The Wood. A rectangular brick structure with a flag stone and brick floor discovered on the eastern side of the boundary wall was interpreted as a rear extension of a building fronting Packer Street. Two large intercutting pits found to the north of the building were interpreted as backfilled cess pools. Structures dating to the mid-19th century included two outhouses containing latrines, cobbled surfaces and drainage features. A later 19th-century yard surface formed of glazed bricks was discovered in the southern part of the site. Evidence for the construction of Rochdale Town Hall was represented by an area of stone chippings and by extensive made ground deposits used for landscaping Town Hall Square. The site was sealed with a layer of 20th-century made ground capped with tarmac forming the current ground surface.

The excavation and recording of the site was undertaken by community participants and schools / youth groups who were provided with training and guidance by staff from Salford Archaeology. A daily site tour took place during the works, plus a public open day. A temporary Arts and Heritage Resource Centre was also set up on site. The community excavation was featured in an episode of *Digging For Britain*, which was shown on BBC television in late 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Salford Archaeology was commissioned by Rochdale Development Agency to undertake a programme of community led engagement including an archaeological excavation at Rochdale Town Hall, Rochdale, Greater Manchester OL16 1AB, centred at NGR SD 89585 13255 (Figure 1). The site was bounded by Packer Street to the east, The Esplanade to the north, St Chad's churchyard to the south and Vicar's Gate to the west.
- 1.1.2 The site has been the subject of an archaeological desk-based assessment (Miller, 2020). This document identified there is circumstantial evidence suggesting the medieval town of Rochdale was focused on Packer Street although there is no firm archaeological evidence to support this. By the 18th century Rochdale was a regional centre for the woollen-cloth trade. Cartographic sources show that by this time Packer Street was lined with buildings which were likely to have had domestic and commercial functions. An iron and brass foundry was established in the northern part of the site and by the early 19th century a large villa residence with extensive gardens occupied much of the western part of the study area. By 1866 most of the buildings on the site were cleared during the construction of Rochdale Town Hall and Town Hall Square.
- 1.1.3 In November 2020 a programme of five targeted test pits were excavated to establish the presence, absence and condition of archaeological remains on the site. The evaluation indicated that the remains of structures and relict soils survived in the south-eastern part of the site (Cook, 2020). It was concluded that the site had considerable potential for further archaeological investigation and was suitable for a community based archaeological investigation.
- 1.1.4 The community based archaeological investigation commence on the 5th July 2021 and continued until the 6th of August. The investigation area comprised a rectangular shaped trench, located in the south-east part of the development site (Figure 2).
- 1.1.5 The archaeological work was supervised by Jeremy Bradley, Ashley Brogan and Joe Brooks and the project was managed by Graham Mottershead all of Salford Archaeology. The community archaeological excavation comprised volunteer participation in a range of activities such as excavation and finds processing, and a schools education programme including the excavation of test pits in the northern part of the trench (Area B).

1.1.6 The work was monitored by Ian Miller on behalf of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).

1.2 **Aims**

1.2.1 The principal aim of the project is to engage all sectors of the local community, including schools, with the archaeology and heritage of Rochdale, its immensely impressive Town Hall and Town Hall Square, and provide an enjoyable learning experience for those who like to be involved directly in an archaeological excavation or simply observe the activities as a visitor.

1.3 **Objectives**

1.3.1 The principal objectives of the archaeological investigation were:

- to highlight the immense historical and archaeological significance of Rochdale Town Hall and Town Hall Square;
- to establish the extent and character of medieval Rochdale;
- to explore one of the busiest commercial areas of post-medieval Rochdale;
- to investigate the late 18th- / early 19th-century Roch Iron Foundry;
- to direct and supervise the excavation and recording of an archaeologically significant part of Rochdale town centre by community participants and schools / youth groups, providing training and guidance where necessary;
- to facilitate participation by the community in various public open events;
- to undertake any post-excavation works required and create a site archive;
- to produce a full excavation report that can be passed on in digital format to all stakeholders at the end of the project;
- to make the results of the work publicly available.

2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.1.1 The underlying solid geology consists of the Pennine Lower Coal Measures (Westphalian A) and millstone grit of the Carboniferous period. The predominant drift geology comprises glacial sands and gravels, with some alluvium (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/beta.html>).
- 2.1.2 The current topography of the site slopes downwards from a level of 121.65m AOD in the south to 120.41m AOD in the north. Natural deposits were recorded at a maximum level of 118.84m AOD in the southern part of the trench. Natural deposits were not recorded in the northern part of the trench.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following section comprises the historical background stated in a desk-based assessment of the site to support the planning application for the development (Miller, 2020). This draws on both published and unpublished literature, documentary research and cartographic evidence and aims to contextualise the results of the archaeological investigation.

3.2 Early Medieval

- 3.2.1 Evidence for early medieval activity in the region as a whole is drawn largely from place-names and the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Newman, 1996). The site lay within the parish of Rochdale during the medieval period. This parish formed the most extensive of the parishes contained within the Hundred of Salford, which formed a large Anglo-Saxon territorial unit immediately north of the River Mersey and including the Irwell Valley (Fishwick, 1889:1).
- 3.2.2 Although the origins of the parish of Rochdale are unclear, it is possible that it was created in the middle Anglo-Saxon period, when the wider area was incorporated into the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria (Pounds, 2000: 3; Newman, 2006). The parish may eventually have been coextensive with the manor of Rochdale, which according to Domesday was held in 1066 by Gamel the Thane who still held some land here in 1086 (Morgan, 1978). The major Anglo-Saxon settlement within the Rochdale parish was probably located in the area now covered by the modern town.
- 3.2.3 Rochdale is mentioned by name as 'Recedham' in the Domesday Survey, and the 'ham' element of the place-name is Old English in origin referring to a settlement, which was perhaps a product of Anglo-Saxon colonisation dating to the 7th or 8th century

(Ekwall, 1922: 55). Similarly, although the element 'Reced' might have been the Celtic name for the River Roch, it is also possible that it has an Old English origin meaning 'hall'. The presence of an Anglo-Saxon settlement at Rochdale also tallies well with the dedication of its parish church to St Chad, the late 7th-century Anglo-Saxon bishop of Lichfield (Fishwick, 1889: 127).

3.3 Medieval

- 3.3.1 By the late 12th century, a motte-and-bailey castle had been established at the northern end of the triangular spur of Castle Hill, half a mile to the south-west of the parish church. Whilst this site is now entirely destroyed and built over, 19th-century surveys show that it had consisted of an irregular bailey, some 30m x 35m, surrounded by earthen ramparts that were probably originally surmounted by a wooden palisade (GMAU, 2010: 30).
- 3.3.2 By 1212, the whole manor had been assigned to the Lord of Clitheroe, and was held by Roger de Lacy, and several under tenants. By 1251, Rochdale had become important enough to have been granted a charter for a weekly market, and an annual fair on the feast of St Simon and St Jude in October. It has been suggested that the original market place was located in Church Stile, near the parish church, although firm evidence is lacking. It was probably during this period that a borough was also created (Fishwick, 1889).
- 3.3.3 The Church of St Chad is thought to have served an enormous parish, rather than a substantial town. The oldest part of the existing church, which occupies high ground on the south side of the town overlooking the river, dates to the 13th century (Hartwell *et al*, 2004: 588). However, there is some evidence to suggest that an earlier church occupied the same site, and fragments of Norman masonry are said to have been discovered during renovation in 1815 (Fishwick, 1889: 12). It is certainly clear that considerable investment was expended in reconstructing the church during the 13th century, although there is some evidence to suggest that the 13th-century chancel was not notably bigger than its predecessor, which may thus have been comparatively large (Farrer and Brownbill, 1911).
- 3.3.4 Following the death of Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, in 1311 Rochdale passed to the Earls of Lancaster who held the manor until the end of the 15th century (Fishwick, 1889: 21). During the 15th century the manor was also leased to various stewards, and from 1462 until 1616 these were members of the influential Byron family with large land holdings across the area. The focus of medieval activity in the area remains uncertain, and the pattern of settlement may have comprised a spread of innumerable folds,

representing little clusters of agricultural and proto-industrial buildings (Hartwell *et al*, 2004: 585).

- 3.3.5 Whilst it is tempting to suggest that the centre of the medieval town probably lay on the south side of the River Roch, in proximity to the Church of St Chad, firm evidence is lacking. However, Packer Street is clearly associated with the medieval church, providing a direct route to Rochdale Bridge. The date at which the first bridge across the River Roch in Rochdale was constructed is not known; it seems likely that it existed by 1324, as a document of that date refers to 'John of the Brig', which may be associated with a bridge (Taylor, 1956). In addition, it is likely that there was a ford across the river at The Butts during the medieval period; a ford is referred to in early 17th-century documents (Curren, 1610), and Sir Robert Heath's *Survey of the Manor of* 1626 (Fishwick, 1913).

3.4 **Post-medieval period**

- 3.4.1 In 1582, Camden described Rochdale as 'a market town well frequented'. The regional importance of the town at this time is implicit from the detail provided by Saxton's map of Lancashire, which was published in 1577, and marks the town in bold letters. Manufacturing and mining industries became of increasing importance to the local economy during this period; the confiscation of the lands that had belonged to Whalley Abbey, and the general suppression of religious houses following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, produced a new type of landlord, whose number was increased by the sale of Byron estates in the early part of the 17th century (Fishwick, 1913).
- 3.4.2 The town certainly began to expand significantly during the 1600s, indicated to some degree by the Hearth Tax Returns; in 1666, 228 hearths were recorded for Rochdale. The 1626 *Survey of the Manor* notes that the bridge across the River Roch to the west of the ford was 'in decay', although it was not known who was responsible for the repairs (Fishwick, 1913). Records in the Lancashire Quarter Sessions dated 23 July 1663 make further reference to the perilous state of the bridge, but in 1676 Gabriel Gartside and Joseph Dearden are reported to have expended £75 5s 2d on repairs to the bridge. The bulk of the costs incurred were for transporting 'free stone', indicating that the bridge was of stone construction.
- 3.4.3 Celia Fiennes, writing in c 1700, described Rochdale as 'a pretty neat town, built all of stone', whilst some 25 years later Defoe considered it 'a good market town, and of late much improved in the woollen manufacture, as are also the villages in its neighbourhood' (Furbank, 1991). Some indication of the form and distribution of the settlement during this period is provided by a *Plan of the Rochdale Glebe* (Plate 2),

which was produced in 1754-7. This plan shows the core of the town to have been focused on the parish church, around what is now Drake Street, King Street, and Packer Street, the latter probably deriving its name from its medieval use as a packhorse route between the Church of St Chad and the Rochdale Bridge. This is annotated as 'A Stone Bridge', with a second river crossing a short distance to the west named 'Capt Ogden Bridge'.

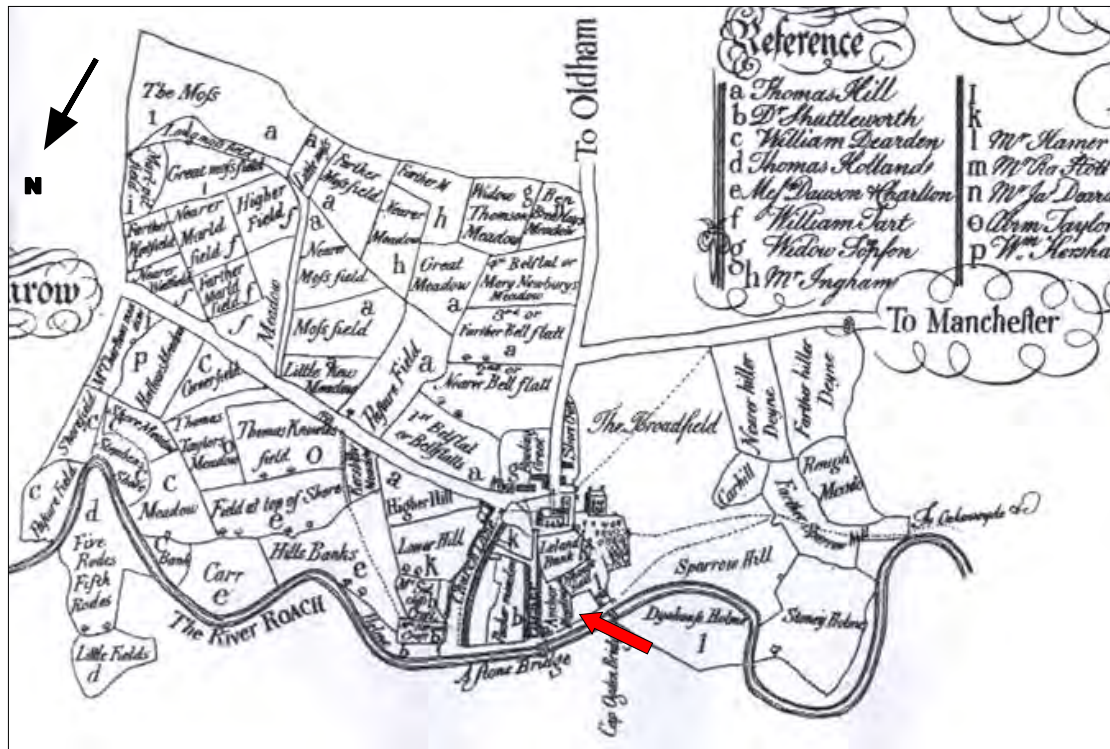


Plate 2: plan of the Rochdale Glebe in 1754-7, with arrow marking the location of the later Town Hall Square

3.4.4 The town is shown to have a similar layout on *A Plan of the Vicarage* of 1764 (Plate 3), which also shows the 'new' settlement on the north bank of the river, with ribbon development extending northwards along Whitworth Road and north-eastwards along Yorkshire Street. These plans also show Church Lane as a principal thoroughfare; this lane probably superseded Packer Street as the medieval packhorse road northwards from the parish church. Church Lane provided a gentler gradient for wheeled traffic, although its broad sweep north eastwards from the church necessitated a sharp westward dog-leg at the river, in order to connect with Yorkshire Street at Rochdale Bridge. The effect of the shift in emphasis from Packer Street to Church Lane was considerable. In 1625 there were reportedly only six dwellings along Church Lane, however by the mid-17th century the road was far more populous with houses stretching from the church down to the River Roch.



Plate 3: extract from A Plan of the Vicarage, 1764

- 3.4.5 The growth of the town throughout the 18th century can largely be attributed to its involvement in industry and trade. During this period, Rochdale developed a formidable reputation as a centre for the production of woollen cloth, and the town benefited from a lucrative export trade in woollen goods to Holland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Russia and Germany (Aiken, 1795: 248).
- 3.4.6 Rochdale also became an important centre for the cross-Pennine trade in woollen cloth, represented by the numerous merchant's houses, warehouses and inns that were established in the town during the late 1700s to service this trade. An important group of these buildings survives along Yorkshire Street and connected streets, reflecting the position of the area at the terminus of the Georgian trade route across the Pennines to Yorkshire. The surviving warehouses in the town centre span the 1790s to the 1850s, and will thus incorporate the innovative design features that were adopted during this key period in the evolution of structural engineering. The evidence available, however, suggests that another important group of warehouses and buildings connected with the pack horse trade occupied the Site, focused along Packer Street on the approach to Rochdale Bridge and the southern bank of the River Roch.

- 3.4.7 In 1771, Samuel Curwen visited Rochdale, and noted that it was 'remarkable for (its) many wool merchants; it has a large woollen market, the merchants from Halifax etc, repairing hither weekly'. He also noted that 'every considerable house is a manufactory, and is supplied with a rivulet or little stream, without which the business cannot be carried on' (Fishwick, 1889: 57-8). The River Roch was also exploited as a source of power during this period, although it was subject to sudden flooding (Robertson, 1875: 265-6).



Plate 4: extract from Yates' map of Lancashire of 1786, with arrow marking Packer Street

- 3.4.8 A useful description of Rochdale Bridge during this period is provided by Edmond Holme in 1787. The bridge formed part of the road from Manchester to Halifax, and consisted of three arches. Holme also noted that there was a very dangerous turn from Church Lane on the New Wall (South Parade), although 'Mr Thomas Smith, a leases under the vicar, offered to takedown the old buildings and remove them so far back as to make the road easy and convenient for £30'. An undated footnote added subsequently to Holmes' transcript notes that, in 1802, 'the north-east wing was totally taken down and a new one made in lieu thereof' (Holme, 1787: 54).
- 3.4.9 The extent of the town at this time is depicted on William Yates' map of Lancashire (Plate 4), which provides the earliest reliable map of the town, albeit published at a small scale; it is likely that the layout of the town as depicted by Yates reflected the medieval street pattern. This map shows that the core of the 18th-century town was focused to the north of the parish church, around St Mary's Gate and what is now Drake

Street, and by the river crossing at The Butts. The eastern part of the site is shown to have contained a continuous row of buildings along Parker Street, with a riverside frontage to the north.

3.5 Industrial period

- 3.5.1 Rochdale became a boomtown of the Industrial Revolution during the late 18th century, and amongst the first ever industrialised towns. The Rochdale Canal, one of the major navigable broad canals of Great Britain, was a highway of commerce during this time used for the haulage of cotton, wool, and coal to and from the area. The canal was opened between Rochdale and Manchester by 1799, and was completed as the first trans-Pennine route in 1804 (Hadfield, 1994). The growth of the population as Rochdale became a manufacturing centre led to the enlargement of St Chad's.
- 3.5.2 A flavour of the character of the settlement on the north bank of the River Roch, known as The Butts, in the late 18th and early 19th century, is provided by a painting of c. 1780 (Plate 5) and print of c. 1810 (Plate 6). These depict an array of building types, including small cottages, large Georgian town houses, warehouses, public buildings and industrial premises. Yorkshire Street and Toad Lane represented the main thoroughfares to Yorkshire and central Lancashire respectively. The market was held on the north bank of the river from at least the 16th century, and there were also water-powered corn mills and fulling mills in the area; it is possible, although unconfirmed, that both occupied the sites of medieval predecessors (Tindall, nd: 13). The precise location of these mills is uncertain, although Water Side is one possible site.



Plate 5: partial view of Rochdale Bridge in c. 1780 from the south-west corner of South Parade

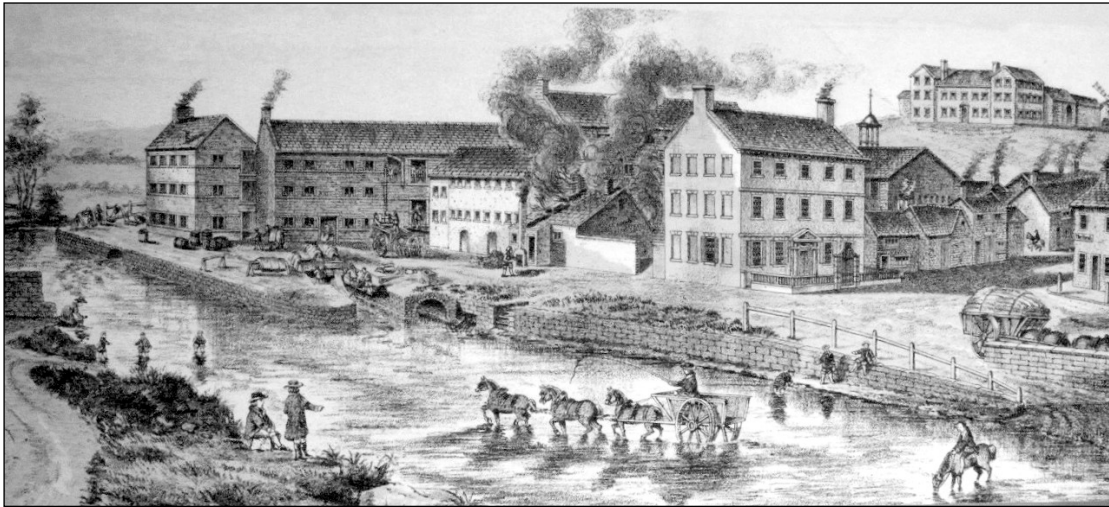


Plate 6: the ford across the River Roch at The Butts, c. 1810

- 3.5.3 Rochdale rose to prominence during the 19th century as an important centre for the production of cotton goods, whilst maintaining a strong woollen industry, focusing in particular on the manufacture of flannel and baize. New cotton mills were established along the River Roch and, with the advent of steam power, throughout the town along the river valleys and canal banks. However, the town enjoyed a 'golden age' during the Cotton Famine of the 1860s, when woollens became once more price-competitive with cotton goods; the population of the town increased by over 60% during this period (Williams with Farnie, 1992: 43; Pigot, 1822).
- 3.5.4 The first detailed map of Rochdale is provided by Swire's survey of 1824 (Plate 7), which was produced at a scale of 9": 1 mile. This map shows Rochdale Bridge to have been the principal thoroughfare connecting the medieval core of Rochdale on the south bank of the river with the expanding settlement on the north bank. A row of commercial / residential properties line the side of Packer Street as it crosses the site, with the Roch Foundry to the rear, set in the large gardens of a villa residence known as The Wood. Buildings on Water Side are also shown, together with the footbridge across the River Roch. The map shows the turnpiked 'New Road' which crossed the river and Town Meadows by means of a new bridge – later known as Manchester Road Bridge - opened in 1824. The road now known as Manchester Road further diverted traffic away from the historic centre of the town.



Plate 7: Swire's plan of Rochdale, surveyed in 1824

3.5.5 The next available plan of Rochdale is that provided by Murphy's survey of 1831, which was produced at a scale of 1": 5 chains and shows broadly the same configuration of buildings shown by Swire. Greater detail of individual buildings, however, is provided by the 1844 tithe map for Castleton (Plate 8). This shows that the properties lining the west side of Packer Street within the site boundary to have comprised 20 houses, all of slightly different sizes and plan forms, many with outshuts and yards to the rear. The Roch Foundry is shown to have been expanded to comprise three main buildings set at a right angle to Packer Street. The villa residence in the centre of the site is identified as The Wood, with a non-residential building to the rear probably representing a stable and coach house.



Plate 8: extract from the 1844 tithe map for Castleton

- 3.5.6 In 1851, the Ordnance Survey published the first edition 1:1056 Town Plan of Rochdale, provides further detail of the buildings occupying the site, although essentially replicates the configuration shown on the 1844 tithe map. This again shows the layout of the Roch Brass and Iron Foundry to have comprised three main buildings broadly aligned north-east /south-west, separated by two yards that were both served by gated entrances that providing access via a narrow lane to Water Side. A furnace shown against the southern elevation of the central building will almost certainly have been a cupola. This type of furnace developed in its modern form in the 1790s, and typically consisted of a barrel that was approximately 1m in diameter and 3m high, frequently made of cast-iron staves held together with wrought-iron hoops. It is likely that the casting area was housed adjacent to the cupola (Miller, 2020).
- 3.5.7 In 1858, the newly elected Town Council raised the idea of building a new town hall. Land was purchased on the south bank of the River Roch in November 1863 and, in January 1864, a competition was announced for architects to submit designs for the new town hall. This competition was won by William Henry Crossland - a pupil of George Gilbert Scott - and the foundation stone was eventually laid by John Bright in March 1866. The grand building was provided with a spacious esplanade in front, and a steep wooded slope as a backdrop.

3.5.8 The magnificent gothic hall was completed in 1871 and set the tone for Rochdale's town centre (Plate 9). However, this new symbol of the town's civic pride overlooked the River Roch, which was little more than an open sewer by the late 19th century; a prominent visitor to Rochdale in 1857 described the town as having 'a little bridge that spans like a rocking horse an imaginary stream in which there is nothing liquid but mud...the town is in the shape of a tea-cup, with a gutter at the bottom' (quoted in Milne, 1977). In redressing this situation, a decision was taken to gradually cover the river and, by July 1904, the first phase of this ambitious project, from Yorkshire Street to Wellington Bridge, was completed (Cole, 1988: 35). The entire scheme was completed in 1924, combining seven bridges. The covering of this entire area also allowed the council to build a tramway centre.



Plate 9: perspective of the Town Hall by Edward Walker in 1875

3.5.9 The project evidently necessitated the clearance of all the other buildings within the vicinity of the town hall, including The Wood, the properties along Packer Street and the Roch Foundry. Similarly, buildings lining the southern bank of the River Roch along Water Side to the west of Rochdale Bridge were also cleared and replaced with The Esplanade, which opened in 1871. The scale of the Town Hall, its associated square

and The Esplanade reflect the considerable civic pride of Rochdale at this time. The extent of remodelling is captured on the Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1892.



Plate 10: extract from the Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1892

3.5.10 In 1868, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners sold several plots of land on the glebe to the Corporation, including Broadfield and Sparrow Hill. They were landscaped and opened as Broadfield Park on 1 August 1874, complementing the splendour of the new Town Hall. Similarly, the buildings along the east side of Packer Street were steadily rebuilt from 1870 onwards, with a mixture of civic and commercial buildings such as a bank of 1870, the Post Office of 1875, the Central Hotel of 1880 and the Empire Hall of c. 1904. Another public building established during this period was a mortuary, which was opened along the southern boundary of the Site in 1894 (Mattley, 1899: 110).

3.5.11 The Town Hall Square was also created in the early 1870s as the principal centrally located public space of Rochdale. It connected areas north of the Roch with those to the south and it is enclosed by commercial buildings to north and east, the Town Hall to west and the Church of St Chad to the south. Access from the south was via Church Steps, and the focal point was a statue of John Bright statue, which was created by the famous sculptor Hamo Thornycroft, which could be seen from all four directions. The statue was unveiled in October 1891, and was nine feet high, atop an 11-feet high pedestal, and cost £2000 to erect (Mattley, 1899: 104). It was relocated to Broadfield Park in the 1930s as part of a proposed scheme to redevelop Town Hall Square as a

bus station, although this was a hugely unpopular proposal that was abandoned before any development work commenced.

3.6 Packer Street

- 3.6.1 The evidence available raises the possibility that Packer Street formed part of the medieval settlement of Rochdale, providing a direct route between the Church of St Chads and Rochdale Bridge. Packer Street was certainly a major thoroughfare in the Castleton township prior to the construction of Drake Street and Manchester Road, and was described as the 'leading business street' in 1600 (Mattley, 1899: 4). The name 'Packer Street' supposedly derives from its association to the pack-horse trade.
- 3.6.2 Packer street supposedly witnessed a surge in building activity during the late 17th century. At this time, the glebe land was rented out to 'prosperous and overcrowded' citizens who crossed over the River Roch to build new houses, and as a result created two handsome streets: Packer Street and Church Lane. The later development of the area can be gleaned in part from 18th-century plans of the town. Additional evidence is provided by documentary sources from this period. Parish records provide a certain amount of detail regarding the occupations of the inhabitants residing on Packer Street, which included all manner of trades and crafts. As a commercial street it generated a considerable amount of wealth and was reputedly 'the locality of the most respectable shops' and 'two of the leading hotels' (Miller, 2020).



Plate 11: Packer Street c.1866 looking south-west towards St Chads in the distance (courtesy of Touchstones, Rochdale)

- 3.6.3 A large proportion of the trades listed in the parish records were either weavers or were engaged in textile-related roles, providing good evidence for domestic handloom weaving. Anecdotal evidence suggests this household industry persisted into the 19th century. Henry Kelsall, a prominent figurehead and industrialist was said to have started out with a 'few handlooms and jennies in a Packer Street house' in the early 19th century. Other trades included shoemaking, tailoring and hatting. A notice printed in 1793 advised that a John Ashworth, described as a bread baker and grocer of Packer Street in Rochdale, had assigned his estate and effects to Benjamin Meanley, an iron monger, Robert Holt, a butcher, and James Holt, innkeeper (*The Leeds Intelligencer*, 15th May 1793).



Plate 12: the southern end of Packer Street, looking south towards the church steps.

- 3.6.4 A further notice printed in newspapers in 1797 advertised the sale by auction of the estate of Mr Richard Gore, deceased (*The Leeds Intelligencer*, 15th May 1797). This comprised 'several cottages or dwelling houses, shops, warehouses and premises standing and being at the Waterside in Rochdale, now in the several possessions or occupations of Mr T Gore, Mr Benjamin Meanley, Mr John Bowcock, Widow Collier, Richard Whitworth and others, together with a large plot of very eligible building land adjoining, containing 1,581 square yards, being part of the Anchor Meadow, and now

divided into several gardens'; this plot was developed subsequently as the Roch Brass and Iron Foundry.

- 3.6.5 Other properties advertised for auction 'cottages or dwelling house situate at the lower end of the Packer Street used as a public house, and called the Lower Anchor, with stabling and appurtenances thereto belonging' and another cottage on Packer Street that was used as a public house known as the Higher Anchor, with outbuildings. The latter was said to be in the possession of Mrs Stott, a widow, at the annual rent of £8 plus two-yearly ground rents. All of the properties were held by lease under the Vicarage of Rochdale. Buildings are shown lining the west side of the street within the site on plans produced in 1757 and 1764. Some, if not all, of these buildings may be referred to in an auction sale in 1797. The detailed Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1851 does not show any pavement lights against any of the buildings, suggesting that none contained cellars. An indication of the age and condition of the housing stock that survived until this period is provided in a few early photographs taken prior to the clearance of the buildings in the 1860s. The buildings along the western side of the street were cleared in the early 1860s to enable the construction of the Town Hall and associated square, whilst those on the east side of Packer Street were rebuilt with higher status civic and commercial buildings. Several properties at the southern end of the street at the foot of the church steps were retained. These formed part of the Leyland's Chambers or House, which was photographed in 1913.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1.1 The archaeological excavation methodology was described in a risk assessment method statement (RAMS) (Thompson, 2021).
- 4.1.2 A trench measuring c. 50m was set out (Figure 3) and a diamond tipped saw was employed to cut through the tarmac forming the current ground surface. Once the layer of tarmac capping the trench was removed, a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket was used – under the supervision of Salford Archaeology staff - to remove layers of made ground until structural remains or earlier archaeological deposits were discovered.
- 4.1.3 In the southern part of the trench (Area A) structural remains were encountered at approximately 0.3m below ground level. A ramp was formed in the western side of Area A allowing safe access and egress to the trench.
- 4.1.4 In the northern part of the trench (Area B) made ground extended to a depth of 1.2m below ground level (BGL). To ensure trench stability machine reduction did not continue beyond 1.2m BGL.
- 4.1.5 In Area A archaeological surfaces were hand cleaned revealing walls, pits and layers. To investigate early deposits and determine the depth of natural horizons, a stepped slot was excavated against the western side of a substantial brick wall located in the western part of Area A (Figure 3). Due to volunteer participation, which caused excavation and recording to progress slowly, the trench did not extend below c. 0.50m across the south-eastern part of Area A.
- 4.1.6 In Area B seven test pits were hand excavated in the base of the trench (Figure 3) to determine the character of basal made ground deposits and recover dating evidence. Preceding the backfilling of the trench, a sondage was excavated by machine in the northern end of the trench to a depth of 119.09m AOD, to establish what lay beneath the basal made ground deposits.
- 4.1.7 Standard archaeological recording methods were employed during the excavation, comprising a written record (both description and interpretation with annotated sketches where appropriate), scaled drawings both in plan and in section, a photographic record, and the retrieval of archaeological finds.
- 4.1.8 A maximum of 20 participants who registered to take part in the project were allowed on the site at any one time and were supervised by two members of staff. Attendance on site was by prior arrangement, with all participants required to wear footwear and clothing appropriate to the tasks undertaken. All participants were over the age of 16;

volunteers between the ages of 8 and 16 were also permitted to participate, but had to be supervised at all times by a parent or guardian.

- 4.1.9 A daily signing in and out book was maintained by Salford Archaeology throughout the duration of the works. Prior to the start of the work, all staff and community participants received a site induction which included an introduction to site health and safety procedures and an explanation of the risk assessment.
- 4.1.10 Groups of pupils from local schools were also involved in the project. Each school party of 30 pupils, was separated into two groups of 15. Group 1 was taken on a site tour with a member of staff, learnt about the history of the site, and participated in an activity relevant to the site; the nature of the activities was tailored to the age range of each group. Group 2 was given a site health and safety briefing and then took part in the excavation of test pits in Area B (Figure 3).
- 4.1.11 Community participants were encouraged to take part in the archaeological recording of the site. Archaeological planning was achieved by a combination of instrument and manual survey and the data was digitally incorporated into a CAD system. The drawings were generated at an accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale but can be output at any scale required. Section drawings were produced manually.
- 4.1.12 Part of the pottery assemblage recovered from the site will be used as a resource for a community project based at Touchstones Museum, Rochdale. The aim of the project would be to allow volunteers to fully process, catalogue and analyse the assemblage under the guidance of Salford Archaeology. The outcome being to, not merely to create a ceramic typology, but could potentially identify how the pottery was used, where it was manufactured and where the people of Rochdale purchased what was a utilitarian but essential part of everyday life.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The archaeological excavation comprised a single open area measuring c. 50m north-south by c. 8m wide in the southern part of the trench and c. 4m wide in the northern part of the trench. The trench was located in the south-east part of the development site (Figure 2). The trench targeted properties fronting Packer Street which were demolished during the construction of Town Hall Square in the 1860's.

5.1.2 As part of the post-excavation analysis, each archaeological context has been assigned to a phase. Eight phases were identified during the archaeological investigation:

- Phase 1: natural deposits
- Phase 2: layer of reworked natural sand pre-dating the 18th century
- Phase 3: late 18th / early 19th-century structures
- Phase 4: 19th-century outhouse
- Phase 5: mid-19th century structures
- Phase 6: 19th-century glazed brick yard surface
- Phase 7: landscaping associated with the construction of Town Hall Square
- Phase 8: 20th-century re-surfacing of Town Hall Square

5.2 Phase 1: natural deposits (Plate 13; Figure 4)

5.2.1 The earliest deposit discovered on site was a layer of loosely compacted brownish-yellow sand [1082] recorded at the base of an investigation slot in the south of the site (Area A). This deposit represented Devensian glaciofluvial sand and gravel as described by the British Geological Survey (BGS, 2021). The natural sand [1082] was recorded at a maximum level of 118.84m AOD. No other natural deposits were exposed during the excavation.



*Plate 13: slot next to boundary wall [1006]/[1018]. Natural sand in base [1082], looking east,
scale: 1m*

5.3 **Phase 2: sub-soil (pre-18th century)**

- 5.3.1 The natural sand horizon [1082] was sealed by a 0.24m thick layer of reworked natural sand [1043] containing frequent flecks of coal and occasional flecks of clay. No dating evidence was recovered from this deposit [1043] which probably represented natural sand disturbed by ploughing and bioturbation.

5.4 **Phase 3: Late 18th / early 19th-century structures (Figure 5; Plate 1 & 2)**

- 5.4.1 The reworked natural sand [1043] was sealed by a layer of made ground [1042] formed from firm but friable mid-brownish grey sandy silt [1042] containing frequent flecks of coal and ceramic building material (CBM). The made ground layer [1042] was 0.65m thick and was recorded at a maximum height of 119.84m AOD. It contained pottery produced between the late 17th century and mid-18th century (Appendix 2).
- 5.4.2 The made ground layer [1042] was truncated by the construction cut [1041] of a trench-built wall foundation from a maximum level of 119.82m AOD. The construction cut [1041] had straight sides, a flat base and was 0.67m deep. Only the western side of the construction cut was observed during the excavation. The eastern side of the cut [1041] remained concealed by later deposits.
- 5.4.3 The cut [1041] was filled by a wall foundation [1083] formed from an uncoursed mixture of rounded boulders, roughly squared blocks and reused stone roof tiles (Plate 13). The wall foundation extended to a maximum height of 119.80m AOD. A sherd of pottery, dated to the 18th century, was found embedded in the wall foundation [1083] (Appendix 2). The space between the wall foundation [1083] and the construction cut [1041] was filled with firm dark-brownish sandy silt [1040] containing frequent flecks of coal.
- 5.4.4 The wall foundation [1083] supported a wall [1006]/[1018] constructed from brownish-orange handmade unfrogged bricks bound with pale grey sandy mortar (Plate 14; Figure 6). The wall [1006]/[1018], which was 8.70m long and 0.37m wide, was oriented north-north-east by south-south-west. A small buttress measuring 1.08m long by one brick course wide, projected westwards from the western side of the wall [1006]/[1018]. Wall [1006]/[1018] was interpreted as a late 18th-century boundary wall demarcating the eastern extent of the grounds of The Wood and the western extent of properties fronting Packer Street.
- 5.4.5 Deposited against the boundary wall [1006]/[1018] was a c. 0.50m thick layer of very dark brown silt [1036] containing clay clasts and occasional sub-rounded pebbles. The

silt layer [1036], which probably represented horticultural activity, was recorded at a maximum level of 120.10m AOD.



Plate 14: late 18th/ early 19th-century boundary wall [1006]/[1018] with later structures behind, looking east



Plate 15: part of western wall of Building 1, looking west

- 5.4.6 A layer of firm dark brownish-grey sandy silt [1097] with occasional flecks of coal and mortar was deposited against the eastern side of the boundary wall [1006]/[1018]. This layer [1097] was truncated to the north by the construction cut [1096] for a south-east-east by north-west-west wall [1102] built of orangey-brown unfrogged handmade bricks. The wall [1102] was bonded with pale yellowish-grey sandy mortar and

measured 0.24m north-south by 1.04m east-west by 0.10m high. The construction cut backfill [1095] was formed of firm dark greyish-brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of coal.

- 5.4.7 Another wall [1101] constructed of similar orangey-brown unfrogged handmade bricks bonded with pale yellowish-grey sandy mortar almost certainly represented the north-north-east by south-south-west oriented return of wall [1102], however the relationship between these two walls was obscured by later deposits which remain *in situ* (Figure 6).
- 5.4.8 A wall [1035], formed of orangey-brown handmade unfrogged bricks, abutted the boundary wall [1006]/[1018] to the east (Plate 15). Wall [1035] was one course thick, nine courses high and 3.18m long, and was irregularly coursed and bonded with friable pale yellowish-grey sandy mortar. The wall [1035], which had been repointed in places, was oriented north-north-east by south-south-west and was recorded at a maximum level of 120.76m AOD. The wall [1035] likely represented the northern continuation of wall [1101].
- 5.4.9 The northern end of wall [1035] was abutted perpendicularly by another wall [1064] which was built from brownish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks bonded with soft sandy yellowish-brown mortar.
- 5.4.10 To clarify, walls [1102], [1101], [1064] and [1035] are interpreted as representing the western, southern and northern sides of a late 18th-century building. This building is designated Building 1 (Figure 6).
- 5.4.11 A floor surface [1065] formed of sandstone slabs measuring c. 800mm by c. 800mm with a thickness of c. 20mm abutted the northern part of the western wall [1035] of Building 1. The stone floor surface [1065], which was not entirely exposed during the excavation, extended across an area measuring 0.64m north-south by 2.00m east-west and was recorded at a maximum height of 120.32m AOD.
- 5.4.12 The southern part of the wall [1035] was abutted by a floor surface [1081] formed of re-used purplish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks laid in rows recorded at a maximum level of 120.51m AOD. The brick floor surface [1081] was also laid against the eastern side of the north-south oriented walls [1101] and [1102], further supporting the interpretation that walls [1035], [1101] and [1102] all represent parts of the same structure (Building 1).
- 5.4.13 The exact location where the floor surfaces [1065] and [1081] met was obscured by later deposits that remained *in situ*, and so the relationship between the two floor

surfaces [1065] and [1081] was not established. The contexts described above [1065]/[1081] are interpreted as the floor surfaces of Building 1.

- 5.4.14 In the north-east part of Area A, a layer of loose light grey sandy silt [1103] containing frequent fragments of CBM and mortar was deposited against wall [1006]/[1018]. The layer of loose light grey sandy silt [1103] was truncated by the south-west corner of a square or rectangular pit [1079] with straight edges (Figure 6). The pit [1079] was recorded at a maximum height of 120.05m AOD and was filled with firm dark brown fine sandy silt [1078].
- 5.4.15 The pit [1079] appeared to be truncated by the cut of a later pit [1062] which also had straight sides and was rectangular in shape, however the relationship between the pits [1079] and [1062] could not be confirmed as they were not fully excavated. The pit [1062] was filled with firm but friable dark grey sandy silt [1076] containing inclusions of coal, clinker, slag, pebbles and shell.
- 5.4.16 The fill [1076] of the pit [1062] was deposited against the partially surviving remains of two walls [1057]/[1017]. The walls [1057]/[1017] formed a structure measuring 0.90m north-south by 0.50m east-west by 0.40m high, which was constructed from pinkish-orange unfrosted handmade bricks bonded with soft sandy yellowish-brown mortar. It is possible that walls [1057]/[1017] represent the remains of a brick lined pit constructed against the northern end of Building 1 (Plate 16).
- 5.4.17 A machine excavated slot in the northern end of Area B revealed the possible remains of a floor surface recorded at a level of 118.26m AOD (Plate 17; Figure 3). The extensive depth and unstable sides of the slot prevented safe access, therefore it was not possible to clean and examine the remains.



Plate 16: Area A looking south



Plate 17: slot excavated in north part of Area B with possible remains of floor surface at base, looking south



Plate 18: 19th-century outhouse (Building 2), looking north, scale: 1m

5.5 Phase 4: Building 2 (Plate 18; Figure 6)

- 5.5.1 The flag stone floor [1065] of Building 1 was sealed by a layer of loose dark grey sandy silt [1066] with frequent inclusions of coal, mortar and CBM. The sandy silt [1066] was recorded at a maximum level of 120.94m AOD. The layer [1066] formed a make-up deposit for a north-north-east by south-south-west oriented wall [1019] made of reddish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks bonded with brownish-yellow sandy mortar.
- 5.5.2 Two smaller walls [1020] & [1034] were arranged perpendicularly to and abutted the northern part of the north-north-east by south-south-west oriented wall [1019]. The smaller walls [1020] & [1034] were built with reddish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks bonded with brownish-yellow sandy mortar, the same materials as the larger wall [1019]. Two reused stone roof tiles [1100] were laid between the smaller walls [1020] & [1034]. The stone roof tiles [1100] were recorded at a maximum level of 120.81m AOD and sloped down towards the south. A gap in the wall [1034] to the south corresponded with the bottom of the sloping reused roof tile [1100]. This arrangement probably functioned as a chute facilitating drainage into a chamber to the south formed by the roughly north-west by south-east oriented wall [1034] which abutted the north-north-east by south-south-west oriented wall [1019].
- 5.5.3 Another wall [1008], situated approximately a meter south of the roughly north-west by south-east oriented wall [1034], formed the southern extent of the chamber described above. The wall [1008] was constructed with reddish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks and bonded with yellow, very friable sandy mortar.
- 5.5.4 The walls [1019], [1020], [1008] and [1034] formed a single structure which has been designated as Building 2.



Plate 19: 19th-century floor surface [1051], looking west, scale: 1m



Plate 20: 19th-century drain [1085], looking east, scale: 1m

5.6 Phase 5 (Plate 19 & 20, Figure 6)

- 5.6.1 A layer of firm dark greyish-brown sandy silt made ground [1045] with occasional flecks of coal was recorded in the south-east part of Area A. The made ground [1045] extended 3.08m north-south by 3.90m east-west and was recorded at a maximum level of 121.04m AOD. As the deposit remained unexcavated the thickness is not known.
- 5.6.2 Set into layer [1045] was a surface [1051] formed of squared gritstone and sandstone slabs (measuring 500mm X 400mm X 40mm thick) which were surrounded with rows of reused bricks and cobbles (Plate 19). The surface [1051] was recorded at a maximum level of 121.08m AOD and extended across an area measuring 1.74m north-south by 0.76m east-west.
- 5.6.3 The surface [1045] was truncated by the construction cut [1090] for a north-south oriented drain [1085] (Plate 20). The sides of the drain [1085] were made from fragments of reused purplish orange unfrogged handmade bricks and small slabs of sandstone. An iron plate and irregular shaped sandstone slabs formed the top of the drain [1085] which extended 0.36m north-south by 0.34m wide by 0.13m deep. The drain [1085] was filled with dark brownish-grey silt [1084] containing pottery dated to the 19th century (Appendix 2).
- 5.6.4 A structure designated Building 3, was identified in the southern part of Area A. The western edge of the made ground [1045] was truncated by a construction cut [1092] containing a wall [1048] oriented north-north-east by south-south-west (Plate 21). The wall [1048] was constructed from pinkish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks and was bonded with light yellowish-brown sandy mortar. At its northern end, the wall [1048] turned at right angles towards the west and continued beneath a squared sandstone slab [1047] measuring 1000mm X 500mm X 40mm thick, which probably formed a threshold. To the west of the threshold [1047] a brick wall [1007] identical to the north-north-east by south-south-west oriented wall [1048] continued on a west-north-west by east-south-east orientation and abutted the eastern side of the boundary wall [1006].
- 5.6.5 Laid up against the walls [1048] and [1007] was an irregular floor surface [1049]/[1050]/[1086]. In the northern part of Building 3 the floor [1049] was constructed from randomly coursed reused bricks, sandstone slabs and cobbles which formed a surface at a maximum level of 121.00m AOD. To the south of [1049] was a large 40mm thick stone slab [1050] measuring 0.86m north-south by 0.90m east-west (Plate 22). The stone slab [1050] had a 0.10m by 0.10m notch removed from its western side and large letter 'W' or 'M' inscribed in the north-eastern corner (Plate 22). East of the large

stone slab [1050], the brick floor surface [1086] continued beyond the eastern extent of the wall [1048] forming a threshold in the south-east of Building 3.



Plate 21: 19th-century outhouse (Building 3), looking north, scale: 1m



Plate 22: inscribed stone slab in Building 3, looking north, scale: 0.16m

5.6.6 A wall [1094] formed of pinkish-orange handmade bricks was recorded in the south-west corner of Building 3, to the west of the large stone slab [1050]. The wall [1094] was coursed in stretchers two bricks thick and was bonded with light grey sandy mortar. The wall [1094] constituted the northern side of a square brick lined pit, the other side of which was formed by the boundary wall [1006] to the east. The eastern side of the

pit lay beneath the large stone slab [1050] and southern side extended beyond the southern limit of excavation. The brick-lined pit was filled with loose mid-grey sandy silt [1046] which was not fully excavated for safety reasons.

- 5.6.7 To the north of Building 3, a cut [1099] with a straight side measuring 2.90m east-west by 1.40m north-south was identified on a west-north-west by east-south-east orientation. The cut [1099], which was recorded at a highest level of 121.08m AOD, was not excavated and its full dimensions were not determined. The cut [1099] was filled with loose light grey coarse sandy silt [1098] containing very frequent fragments of mortar and CBM.
- 5.6.8 The southern chamber of Building 2 was filled with a deposit of mixed loose soil, ash, clinker brick and stone [1030] forming a make-up layer. A roughly hewn sandstone block [1080] measuring 350mm X 600mm X 150mm had been deposited on top of the make-up layer [1030] forming a flat surface at a level of 120.92m AOD. The northern chamber of Building 2 was filled with a deposit of friable very dark brown fine sandy silt [1031] contain frequent CBM and mortar flecks.
- 5.6.9 The sandy silt deposit [1031] and the north-east corner of Building 2 was truncated by a cut [1061] containing a wall [1060]/[1015] with a west-north-west by east-south-east alignment. The wall [1060]/[1015] was built from brownish orange unfrogged handmade bricks in stretcher course which was bonded with hard grey mortar and was recorded at a maximum level of 120.97m AOD. The cut [1061] of the wall [1060]/[1015] also truncated the fill [1076] of the pit [1062] discussed in Phase 3.
- 5.6.10 The fill [1076] of the pit [1062] was also truncated by a cut [1077] containing two parallel rows of bricks, possibly representing a drain, which was not recorded. The cut [1077] measured 0.50m north-south by 1.20m east-west and was recorded at a highest level of 120.14m OD. It was filled with firm dark grey sandy silt [1058] containing coal, clinker, slag, pebbles and shell.
- 5.6.11 Overlying the fill [1076] of the pit [1062] were three floor surface areas [1054], [1055] & [1056]. The south-western floor surface [1054] was formed with three sandstone slabs laid against the northern wall [1017] of Building 1. The floor surface [1054] covered an area measuring 0.60m north-south by 0.50m east-west and was recorded at a maximum level of 120.24m AOD.
- 5.6.12 Another area of floor surface [1055] formed from orangey-purple unfrogged brick and a slab of sandstone was recorded abutting the northern foundation [1060] of wall [1015]. The floor surface [1055] covered an area measuring 0.46m north-south by 1.06m east-west and was recorded at a maximum level of 120.39m AOD.

5.6.13 To the north, an area of floor [1056] measuring 2.28m north-south by 2.00m east-west, formed from purplish-orange brick, irregular shaped sandstone slabs and also cobbles, was recorded at a highest level of 120.31m AOD.



Plate 23: 19th-century yard surface, looking north-west

5.7 Phase 6: 19th-century glazed brick yard surface (Plate 23)

5.7.1 The remains described in Phase 5 were sealed by made ground layers [1032]/[1028]/[1037] formed of demolition material and industrial waste. A curving linear shaped cut [1088] truncated the made ground layer [1037] in the southern part of the site. The northern end of the drain [1085] described in Phase 5 was also truncated by cut [1088] suggesting that [1088] may have been created as a result of deliberately removing part of the drain [1085].

5.7.2 In the southern part of Area A, the made ground layers [1028]/[1037] formed a base on which a surface [1002]/[1003]/[1005] predominantly constructed of salt glazed bricks - each measuring c. 235mm X 110mm X 70mm - had been built. The southern part of the surface [1005] was coursed in stretcher bond and measured 2.00m north-south by 5.00m east-west. To the north of [1005] the surface was made of bricks laid flat [1002] which was itself bounded to the north by a narrow strip of unglazed purplish-orange unfrogged handmade bricks [1003]. The brick surface [1002]/[1003]/[1005] was relatively flat and was recorded at a maximum level of c. 121.50m AOD.

5.7.3 In Area B, a pit [1075] with a concave base and curved shallow sloping sides measuring 0.2m north-south by 0.56m east-west and 0.30m deep was recorded in Test Pit 4 (Figure 3). The pit [1075], which was recorded at a maximum level of 119.81m AOD was filled with mixed light brown silty sand (1074) containing frequent fragments of stone and CBM.

5.8 Phase 7: landscaping associated with the construction of Town hall Square

5.8.1 The remains described in the earlier phases were sealed across the entire trench by multiple dump layers that represented extensive ground consolidation probably deposited during the construction of Town Hall Square. The various layers are described in the table below:

context	description
1004	Compact dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent clinker, coal and CBM
1009	Not recorded
1010	Friable pale yellow sand with frequent angular sandstone fragments
1011	Friable purplish grey silty sand with coal and sandstone fragments
1012	Friable ash clinker layer
1013	Friable ash clinker layer with coal
1014	Friable greyish dark red fine sand
1016	Friable purplish silty sand with very frequent ash and clinker
1022	Loose dark grey sandy silt with frequent CBM, clinker, slag and rounded pebbles
1023	Loose yellowish grey sand with occasional sub rounded sandstone pebbles
1024	Loosely compacted light grey sand with frequent CBM and mortar
1025	Friable dark yellowish brown coarse sand with frequent sub rounded pebbles, clinker and occasional CBM
1026	Friable pale yellowish silty sand with frequent CBM and sandstone fragments
1027	Purplish ashy clinker with occasional fragments of burnt slate and coal
1033	Loose dark grey sandy silt with frequent fragments of CBM, clinker, slag and rounded pebbles
1038	Friable ash clinker with occasional CBM and sandstone fragments
1039	Friable dark grey silt with very frequent ash, clinker and occasional CBM
1063	Loose dark reddish brown fine silt with very frequent clinker
1067	Loose light brown sand with frequent rounded pebbles
1068	Firm dark grey brown clayey silt with occasional CBM and coal
1069	Loose light brown sand with frequent rounded pebbles
1070	Mixed mid brown clay with occasional CBM
1071	Dark greyish brown clayey silt
1072	Dark grey silty clay with frequent flecks of CBM and coal
1073	Dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional CBM

5.8.2 In the north-western part of Area A, between the consolidation layers [1063]/[1039] and [1022]/[1033] were several deposits [1053] and [1052]/[1021], which probably represented stone working (Plate 11). A spread [1053], measuring 3.84m north-south by 3.50m east-west, of loose greenish brown poorly sorted very angular flakes of stone was discovered in the north-west part of Area A. The spread of stone chippings [1053] – which lay on ground sloping steeply downwards to the east – was recorded at a maximum level of 120.60m AOD at its western extent and at 120.26m AOD in the east. To the south of the stone chippings [1053] was a collapsed pile of sandstone blocks

[1052] which covered an area measuring approximately 1.40m north-south by 1.40m east-west. The blocks had been faced and roughly squared.



Plate 11: Area A with spread of stone chippings [1053] in top right, looking west

5.9 Phase 8: 20th-century re-surfacing of Town Hall Square (Figure 9)

- 5.9.1 The 19th-century consolidation layers were sealed by a layer of compact, dark grey silty sand [1029] made ground. The made ground layer was capped with a skin of tarmac [1001] which formed the current ground surface at 121.65m AOD at the southern end of Area A and at 121.19m AOD at the northern end. At the northern end of Area B the tarmac surface lay at 120.41m AOD.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Phase 1: natural

6.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded in the trench was a layer of loosely compacted brownish-yellow sand recorded at a maximum level of 118.84m AOD. No other exposures of natural sand were made during the excavation. A layer of sand recorded during the evaluation (Cook, 2020) in the northern end of the site most likely does not represent a natural deposit. This interpretation has been made because, during the community excavation, archaeological remains were found in the northern part of the trench at a greater depth than the layer of sand was during the evaluation. Additionally, thick deposits of redeposited natural sand and gravel, which could easily be misinterpreted as natural deposits, were identified in the northern part of the excavation area.

6.1.2 As only a single exposure of natural sand was made during the investigation the character of the natural topography cannot be inferred. However, archaeological remains possibly representing a floor surface were revealed in a slot excavated in the northern part of the trench. The possible floor surface was recorded at 118.26m AOD and it can be assumed that natural deposits exist at a greater depth than this. Therefore, the natural topography of the site probably slopes fairly steeply down from the south of the site to the north.

6.2 Phase 2: sub-soil (pre-18th century)

6.2.1 An undated layer of reworked natural sand, which sealed natural deposits, probably represents a combination of agricultural activity, such as ploughing, and bioturbation on the site before the 18th century.

6.3 Phase 3: late 18th/early 19th-century structures

6.3.1 A substantial brick wall, oriented on a north-north-east by south-south-west, likely formed the boundary between the properties fronting Packer Street to the east and the gardens of The Wood, a large villa residence situated to the west of the site. This can be seen when the recorded archaeological remains are superimposed over the 1851 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 7).

6.3.2 The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) entry notes that The Wood is not shown on Yates' map of 1786, but is depicted on Swire's survey of 1824 (Miller, 2020). The artefactual evidence from the excavation suggests that the boundary wall was constructed around the same time as The Wood, in the late 18th / early 19th century. The northern end of the boundary wall appeared to have been truncated,

possibly by the edge of a large rectangular pit described below. However, this could not be confirmed as the pit was not fully excavated.

- 6.3.3 A layer of silty made ground deposited against the western side of the boundary wall likely represented horticultural landscaping within the grounds of The Wood.
- 6.3.4 Abutting the eastern side of the boundary wall was a rectangular structure – designated Building 1 – formed of three brick walls and a brick and stone slab floor surface. Being quite large, measuring at least 4m east-west by 4m north-south, and having a substantial, relatively well-made floor, Building 1 probably represents a rectilinear structure extending from the rear of properties fronting Packer Street. This structure is shown on the 1844 tithe map of Castleton (Plate 12).



Plate 12: tithe map of Castleton from 1844 showing Building 1 (outlined in blue)

- 6.3.5 Two intercutting pits were recorded to the north of Building 1. The southern, later pit, which was partially brick lined, appeared to cut through the boundary wall. The pits were interpreted as cess pools as their backfills contained large quantities of ash and pottery, both materials commonly used to seal up cess pools when they were put out of use (Jefferies, 2006: 286). Neither of the pits were fully excavated.
- 6.3.6 An area of open ground is shown to the north of Building 1 on the 1844 tithe map (Plate 12).

6.4 **Phase 4: 19th-century outhouse (Building 2)**

6.4.1 The first edition Ordnance Survey map suggests that by 1851 (Figure 7) the rectilinear structure (Building 1) was no-longer extant and instead a smaller, nearly square structure (Building 2) stood to the west of an open yard.

6.4.2 These alterations were manifested in the archaeological remains recorded. A layer, sealing the floor of Building 1, had been deposited to provide a base on which to build a narrow rectangular structure (Building 2) against the western wall of Building 1. Building 2, which was comprised of two small square chambers divided by a raised platform with a sloping surface, probably represented an outhouse containing a latrine. As with the cess pit described in Phase 3, the chambers in Building 2 were filled with ash and pottery suggesting they had been deliberately put out of use.

6.5 **Phase 5: 19th-century structures (Building 3)**

6.5.1 During Phase 5, Building 2 appears to have been demolished and the southern wall of Building 1 was robbed out. Demolition material was deposited behind an east-west oriented retaining wall that truncated the north-east corner of Building 2. The construction of the retaining wall and deposition of demolition material was presumably part of a landscaping event used to raise the ground level.

6.5.2 Additional structures were constructed in the southern part of Area A. Building 3, which had two entrances and an internal brick-lined pit, was interpreted as an outhouse containing a latrine. The outhouse was constructed from a range of reused materials, including a large stone slab inscribed with the letter 'W' or 'M', which may have been sourced from the demolition of Building 1.

6.5.3 To the east of Building 3, a floor surface made from an assortment of different reused materials may represent the floor of another outbuilding. At the southern end of the floor surface was a brick drain capped with reused stone roof tiles and an iron plate.

6.5.4 In the northern part of Area A, a cobbled floor surface was laid over the top of the pits described in Phase 3. The presence of this cobbled surface suggests that this area probably functioned as an external yard.

6.6 Phase 6: 19th-century glazed brick yard surface

- 6.6.1 During Phase 6 the structures described in the southern part of Area A were demolished and the area was levelled. This created a surface on which a yard surface, formed of glazed bricks, was constructed. It is likely that the glazed brick surface represents a yard area. When superimposed on the Ordnance Survey Town Plan of 1890 (Figure 8) it can be seen that the southern part of the trench, where the glazed-brick surface was recorded, falls within an open area that was accessed from Packer Street by an archway beneath a building fronting Packer Street.

6.7 Phase 7: landscaping associated with the construction of Town hall Square

- 6.7.1 The entire excavation area was sealed with made ground formed from tips of sand, industrial waste such as clinker and ash, and demolition material. This made ground was used to level off the slope down to the river and create Town Hall Square. Town Hall Square was presumably established by 1871 when The Town Hall was completed.
- 6.7.2 A spread of stone chippings in the west part of Area A may represent the location where masonry was worked before it was used to build the Town Hall.

6.8 Phase 8: 20th-century re-surfacing of Town Hall Square

- 6.8.1 The 19th-century layers were covered by modern tarmac which formed the current ground surface of Town Hall Square which was resurfaced during the 20th century.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Significance

7.1.1 The archaeological investigation undertaken at Rochdale Town Hall has provided a valuable opportunity to assess the development an important thoroughfare located in central Rochdale. The excavation indicates that archaeological remains pre-dating the 18th century may be present on the site and remain relatively undisturbed on the site. Overall, the excavation can be regarded as being of local importance.

7.1.2 The excavation confirmed that well preserved archaeological remains existed on the site dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Service buildings and structures related to properties fronting Packer Street and evidence of the formal gardens associated with 'The Wood', an 18th-century mansion were discovered in the southern part of the site. Undated structural archaeological remains, possibly relating to the Roch foundry, were also identified existing beneath made ground in the northern part of the site.

7.1.3 In the southern part of the site, the excavation recorded several large pits and a building with a shallow cellar, which may have impacted on deposits pre-dating the 18th century. However, there is certainly scope for earlier deposits to remain across much of the site in the areas where later truncation was not identified.

7.2 Project aims

7.2.1 The community-based archaeological investigation sought to address the following project aims:

7.3 Highlight the immense historical and archaeological significance of Rochdale Town Hall and Town Hall Square

7.3.1 The investigation has demonstrated that sealed beneath layers of made ground in Town Hall Square there is the potential for remains to exist of local or regional significance. These remains may pertain to pre-industrial Rochdale.

7.3.2 The community excavation was featured in an episode of *Digging For Britain*, which was shown on BBC television in late 2021.

7.4 Establish the extent and character of medieval Rochdale

7.4.1 No remains discovered on the site could be dated to the medieval period. However, relatively undisturbed archaeological deposits potentially pre-dating the 18th century were encountered during the investigation.

7.5 Explore one of the busiest commercial areas of post-medieval Rochdale

7.5.1 The footprint of the trench was situated over the rear parts of properties that fronted Packer Street, which had been one of the busiest commercial streets in Rochdale. The investigation was able to determine that latrines had been installed in the rear parts of the properties.

7.6 **Investigate the late 18th- / early 19th-century Roch Iron Foundry**

7.6.1 Remains possibly pertaining to the Roch Iron Foundry were located in the northern part of the site. However, these remains were identified beneath several metres of made ground. This meant that the bottom of the trench could not be safely accessed and so detailed investigation and recording of the remains could not be undertaken.

7.7 **Direct and supervise the excavation and recording of an archaeologically significant part of Rochdale town centre by community participants and schools / youth groups, providing training and guidance where necessary**

7.7.1 Community participants took part in open area excavations in the southern part of the site where they learnt how to clean archaeological surfaces using trowels, remove thicker deposits and also record in plan and section.

7.7.2 In the northern part of the site community participants and schools / youth groups undertook the excavation of test pits where they learnt basic excavation techniques and finds identification.

7.7.3 In total 474 school pupils and community group participants took part in the excavation and were provided training by Salford Archaeology staff members. The majority of participants had not taken part in an archaeological excavation before but following their attendance a vast proportion said that they would like to take part in another dig in the future (Appendix 3). What is particularly encouraging is that the majority of participants were aged between 0-18 years old and thus the community excavation has played a part in inspiring a new generation of archaeologists.

7.7.4 A total of 20 people attended the Arts and Heritage Resource Centre that was set up on site. Those who answered a questionnaire stated that seeing the collection of finds was the highlight of their visit (Appendix 3).

7.8 **Facilitate participation by the community in various public open events**

7.8.1 Each day a site tour took place which was attended by the public. The tour included an overview of the site's historical background, a tour and explanation of the excavation area, and a presentation of the finds retrieved from the site. In total 658 members of the public attended the public open days and midday tours given by Salford

Archaeology employees. A huge majority of those who attended the tour and answered a questionnaire highly rated their experience (Appendix 3).

7.9 Undertake any post-excavation works required and create a site archive

7.9.1 Post-excavation work has been completed and informs this report. It included checking of all records compiled on site and analysis of the stratigraphic matrix. All of the finds were cleaned and analysed, and a finds report was produced (Appendix 2).

7.10 To make the results of the work publicly available

7.10.1 The information gathered during the investigation will be disseminated through the deposition of the digital archive with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), and a copy of the final report will be provided to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) and Touchstones in Rochdale.

7.11 Key initiatives

7.11.1 Several key initiatives in the current North West Archaeological Research Framework (2021) have been addressed in the course of the archaeological investigation:

7.12 Medieval agenda

7.13 Initiative 5.14: There is a need to examine the street frontages in medieval towns as well as the back plots.

7.13.1 The excavation area afforded the investigation of back plots to properties fronting Packer Street, which is likely a medieval thoroughfare. As medieval archaeological horizons were not reached during the investigation it was not possible to draw any conclusions relating to the use of medieval back plots.

7.14 Post-medieval agenda

7.15 Initiative 6.1: The available data set should be greatly enlarged. Stratified artefact sequences from both small towns and rural settlements need to be collected, in order to establish the character of ceramic use throughout the region and to create the basis for socio-economic interpretation.

7.15.1 The only ceramic artefact dating to the post-medieval period recovered during the investigation was a rim sherd of mid- to late 17th-century sgraffito ware (Appendix 2).

7.16 Industrial agenda

7.17 Initiative 7.41: The retention of later period artefacts and their routine analysis as part of all archaeological excavation projects.

7.17.1 A large artefactual assemblage was recovered from the excavation almost entirely deriving from the 18th-19th century. The majority of the assemblage is represented by pottery, but lesser quantities of clay tobacco pipes, metalwork, ceramic building materials, glass, animal bone and marine molluscs, leather and stone were also recovered (Appendix 2).

8. ARCHIVE

8.1 Archive

- 8.1.1 The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards and in line with current ClfA guidelines updated 2014. 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 ClfA 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. The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Northwest 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 Rochdale Town Hall.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1.1 Salford Archaeology would like to thank Rochdale Development Agency for commissioning the archaeological works. Thanks to Ian Miller of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service for monitoring the work.
- 9.1.2 The site was supervised by Joe Brooks, Jeremy Bradley and Ashley Brogan. Many thanks are extended to all the volunteers and school pupils who participated in the excavation. The author would also like to thank Graham Mottershead for managing the project and Richard Ker for creating the figures.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context Number	Type	Description
1000	Layer	Unstratified
1001	Layer	Tarmac
1002	Masonry	Part of yard surface formed with glazed brick
1003	Masonry	Part of yard surface formed with glazed brick
1004	Layer	Demolition layer
1005	Masonry	Part of yard surface formed with glazed brick
1006	Masonry	N/S brick boundary wall (same as [1018])
1007	Masonry	E/W internal brick wall
1008	Masonry	E/W brick wall abutting [1006] to west
1009	Layer	Cleaning layer above [1028]
1010	Layer	Sandy levelling layer
1011	Layer	Mixed sand levelling layer
1012	Layer	Levelling layer formed of ash and clinker
1013	Layer	Levelling layer formed of ash and clinker located in S/W corner of trench
1014	Layer	Levelling layer formed of 'purple sand'
1015	Masonry	E/W aligned brick wall
1016	Layer	Levelling layer
1017	Masonry	E/W brick wall between [1015] & [1018]
1018	Masonry	N/S brick boundary wall (same as [1006])

1019	Masonry	E/W aligned internal wall
1020	Masonry	E/W oriented brick wall
1021	Masonry	Same as [1052]
1022	Layer	Ashy layer (same as 1033)
1023	Layer	Sand levelling layer
1024	Layer	Demolition layer
1025	Layer	Made ground deposited after horticultural landuse
1026	Layer	Demolition layer
1027	Layer	Levelling layer formed of ash clinker
1028	Layer	Levelling layer
1029	Layer	Levelling layer
1030	Layer	Levelling layer
1031	Layer	Levelling layer formed of ash and clinker
1032	Layer	Levelling layer
1033	Layer	Levelling layer formed on ash and clinker
1034	Masonry	E/W oriented brick wall
1035	Masonry	Internal brick wall
1036	Layer	Horticultural deposit
1037	Layer	Levelling layer
1038	Layer	Levelling layer
1039	Layer	Levelling layer
1040	Fill	Backfill of construction cut for wall [1006]

1041	Cut	Construction cut for wall [1006]
1042	Fill	Made ground formed of sandy silt
1043	Layer	Re-deposited natural
1044	-	Void
1045	Layer	Levelling layer
1046	Fill	Backfill of cess pit
1047	Masonry	Slab of sandstone laid as threshold
1048	Masonry	Brick wall
1049	Masonry	Floor surface
1050	Masonry	Internal floor surface
1051	Masonry	Floor surface
1052	Masonry	Collapsed stack of worked stone
1053	Layer	Spread of stone chippings
1054	Masonry	Floor surface formed of sandstone slabs
1055	Masonry	Brick floor surface
1056	Masonry	Surface formed of brick, sandstone slabs and cobbles
1057	Masonry	Brick lined cess pit
1058	Fill	Backfill of drain
1059	-	Void
1060	Masonry	Wall foundation
1061	Cut	Construction cut for [1060]
1062	Cut	Cut of possible cess pit

1063	Layer	Dump layer
1064	Masonry	N/S oriented brick wall
1065	Masonry	Floor surface formed of sandstone slabs
1066	Layer	Levelling layer
1067	-	Void
1068	-	Void
1069	-	Void
1070	-	Void
1071	-	Void
1072	-	Void
1073	-	Void
1074	-	Void
1075	-	Void
1076	Fill	Backfill of cess pit
1077	Cut	Cut for drain
1078	Fill	Backfill of pit
1079	Cut	Cut of pit
1080	Masonry	Sandstone threshold
1081	Masonry	Brick floor surface
1082	Layer	Natural
1083	Masonry	Stone foundation for wall
1084	Fill	Fill of drain [1085]

1085	Masonry	Brick drain
1086	Masonry	Brick surface
1087	Fill	Backfill of robber cut
1088	Cut	Robber cut
1089	Fill	Backfill of construction cut for drain [1085]
1090	Cut	Construction cut for drain [1085]
1091	Fill	Backfill of construction cut
1092	Cut	Construction cut for wall [1048]
1093	Fill	Bedding layer for floor [1049]
1094	Masonry	Wall of brick lined pit
1095	Fill	Backfill of construction cut for [1008]
1096	Cut	Construction cut for [1008]
1097	Layer	Made ground
1098	Fill	Backfill of robber cut
1099	Cut	Robber cut
1100	Masonry	Floor surface formed from roof tiles
1101	Masonry	Brick wall
1102	Masonry	Brick wall
1103	Layer	Levelling layer

APPENDIX 2: FINDS REPORT

Introduction

A large artefactual assemblage was recovered from the excavation and comprises a significant archaeological resource. The artefactual and ecofactual assemblage comprises finds from various material categories, the majority of which is pottery (18th-19th century), together with lesser quantities of clay tobacco pipes, metalwork, ceramic building materials, glass, animal bone and marine mollusc, leather (shoes) and stone. An assessment of each class of artefact/ecofact is provided in the following sections. The aim of the finds assessment is to evaluate all classes of archaeological material from the excavation to assess their research potential and significance

Methodology

Finds were collected using a 100% collection policy when recovered from discrete features. All finds were returned to the Salford Archaeology finds' laboratory in sealed and labelled polyethylene bags. All finds were washed, except organic material and metal, which were dry brushed, and grouped by material for assessment. Due to the large quantity of material recovered from the excavations, in particular pottery and glass, these parts of the assemblage have been quantified by weight only. It is anticipated that part of the pottery assemblage is then used as a resource for a community project based at Touchstones Museum, Rochdale. The aim of the project would be to allow volunteers to fully process, catalogue and analyse the assemblage under the guidance of Salford Archaeology. The outcome being to, not merely to create a ceramic typology, but could potentially identify how the pottery was used, where it was manufactured and where the people of Rochdale purchased what was a utilitarian but essential part of everyday life.

Overview

Material	Number of contexts/Test pits	Count	Weight (g)	% of total assemblage
Pottery	26/5	*	121,085	75.3
Ceramic objects	6/1	8	432	0.3
Clay tobacco pipe	22/5	514	1425	0.9
Iron	9/2	39	8844	5.5
Copper alloy	5/3	22	18.8	<0.1
Lead	5/1	9	110	<0.09
CBM	6/1	14	7951	5
Worked stone	5	10	10233	6.4
Bone objects	6	8	12.5	<0.1
Leather	1/1	25	127	<0.09
Glass	19/5	*	6749.3	4.2

Wood	1	1	15	<0.1
Animal bone	14/2	250	1785	1.1
Marine mollusc	13/1		1874	1.2
Organic (miscellaneous)	3/2	18	87.2	<0.1
Sub total			160,749	100
Unstratified material**			**44328	
Total			205,077	

Table x1: all material recovered. *Weight only, **estimated

The excavation resulted in the recovery of stratified artefacts with a total combined weight of 160.7491kg with an estimated 44.328kg recovered unstratified (Table x1). The finds were catalogued by material and weighed before being assessed in-house, and where necessary being sent to external specialists. The assemblage predominantly ranges in date to the late 18th-19th centuries, with a small number of pottery sherds dating from the 16th or 17th or earlier 18th century. The assemblage is dominated by pottery which constitutes 75.3% of the stratified assemblage, with next category being worked stone (comprising 6.7%), followed by glass (4.4%).

Some 121.085kg of pottery was retrieved from 26 stratified contexts with an estimated further 44.328kg** being collected unstratified. By weight some 55.6% (85366g) of the pottery assemblage comprises coarse wares, that is pottery used for food or drink preparation and storage with a large element made up of dark-glazed coarse earthenware and stoneware. Finewares, for example those vessels used to drink or eat from, are dominated by factory produced refined white earthenware, often transfer printed, with a small quantity (3360g; 2.8%) of industrial slipware.

Amongst the 514 fragments of clay tobacco pipe recovered during the excavations there are a group of important mid-to late 19th-century decorated bowls and stems manufactured by both local and French companies. These stems and bowls have the potential to examine the tobacco pipe trade and explore social status through tobacco pipe usage.

Together with the tobacco pipes, the wealth and range of the pottery forms recovered from the site reflects the high research potential of the assemblage. The majority of the finds derive from stratified 19th-century deposits associated with Buildings 1 and 2 and their subsequent demolition, and has good potential for identifying the range, style and forms of pottery utilised in Rochdale particularly during the 19th century.

Further study of the collection will enable reconstruction of many of the forms, and will provide a key dating of the contexts associated with construction and subsequent demolition of

Buildings 1 and 2. The proposed community project to study the pottery assemblage will also provide a unique opportunity to place the pottery within 18th-and 19th-century context of Packer Street and the wider town of Rochdale. Moreover, along with the food remains comprising animal bone and marine molluscs may also contribute to a better understanding of diet and lifestyles within the town.

The pottery

Quantification

Some 121.085kg of pottery were retrieved from 26 contexts, and the material was scanned to identify the major ware types and forms present. The fragments are generally in good condition, and include near-complete vessels, together with many large fragments, significant proportions of rims and bases, and many joining sherds. The majority of the assemblage undoubtedly reflects the disposal of not only a domestic assemblage, however the presence of dark-glazed earthenware storage vessels, including a bunghole jar, as well stoneware jars and bottles, and industrial slipwares may suggest that parts of the assemblage were connected with brewing or inns and taverns. Their deposition being the result of deliberate clearance either when buildings on the site were demolished or when the contents of a property were no longer fashionable or of use. This assessment provides a summary of the assemblage and its potential for further detailed study.

Ware type	Number of contexts/Test pits	Weight (g)	% of total assemblage by weight	Period
Dark-glazed coarse earthenware	21/5	39,796	32.9	16 th -20 th century
Stoneware	8/2	30195	24.9	18 th -20 th century
Dark-glazed fineware	4/1	243	0.2	17 th -20 th century
Refined white earthenware/China	23/5	29644	24.5	Mid-18 th -20 th century
Industrial slipware	12/4	3360	2.8	Late 18 th -20 th century
White slip-coated ware	9/3	7709	6.4	19 th -20 th century
Decorated slipware	4/1	74	0.1	17 th -18 th century
Slip coated buff ware	3/3	509	0.4	18 th century
Brown glazed earthenware	9/2	1010	0.8	Late 18 th -20 th century
Self -coloured earthenware	3/1	66	0.1	16 th -18 th century
Mottled ware	10/3	774	0.6	18 th century
Unglazed red earthenware	15/4	6826	5.6	17 th -20 th century

White salt-glazed stoneware	5/1	227	0.2	Early 18 th -19 th century
yellow-glazed earthenware (modern full glaze)	2/0	343	0.3	19 th -20 th century
Yellow glazed fine earthenware	1/1	27	<0.1	16 th -17 th century
Miscellaneous wares		282	0.2	N/A
Total		121085	100	

Table x2: all material recovered

Assessment

the assemblage is dominated by three main ware types (see Table x2 for quantities) comprising dark-glazed coarse earthenware, stoneware, and refined white earthenware, the latter often with transfer printed decoration. Dark-glazed coarse earthenware and stoneware from this site are primarily represented by storage vessels, particularly large jars and bottles. Amongst the stoneware, however, there also cup and bowl forms which form a minor element of assemblage. In contrast, the refined white earthenware consists for the most part of fine or table wares. These are typified by plates and cup forms, with a few more utilitarian forms such as jars.

There was also significant quantities of white slip-coated ware and unglazed red earthenware. The latter comprises almost exclusively large pancheons and in terms of numbers of fragments represent a limited number of vessels. Unglazed red earthenware sherds were for the most part represented by flowerpots with lesser amounts or large storage jars.

There are smaller quantities of industrial slipwares, a highly decorated pottery type that as the 19th century progressed became a much more quotidian pottery, finding use within inns and taverns (Barker 1993; Rickard 2006). Other minor ware types within the assemblage include 19th-century brown glazed earthenware, typically represented by teapots and mottled ware consisting of jars, bowls and mug forms.

The earliest pottery present is base of a possible cup-salt dating to the 16th-17th century. Other early pottery comprises small quantities of decorated slipware. Decorated slipware includes fragments of sgraffito and slip trailed hollow wares, which date from the later 17th to early 18th century.

Phasing

The bulk of the pottery was derived from Phase 6 (49.508kg) and Phase 7 (43.450kg) made ground layers and dump deposits. Particularly productive pot bearing contexts were Phase 6

made ground layers [1032], [1037] and [1028], and Phase 7 dump layer [1016], this latter deposit representing extensive ground consolidation landscaping associated with the construction of Town hall Square. A relatively large assemblage was recovered from Phase 7 stone working layer [1022=1033] (see Table x3 for context totals). Fairly large assemblages of pottery were also recovered from Phase 5 fill [1031] within northern chamber of Building 2 and fill [1058] of cut [1077].

Much of the pottery, therefore, is associated with demolition and ground consolidation. However, small amounts of pottery were evident in Phase 2 and 3. Phase 2 sub-soil, a reworked sand deposit [1043] yielded a single sherd of early 18th-century trailed slipware. Phase 3 deposits, construction horizon [1040 and 1042] associated with the construction of late 18th/early 19th-century structures, produced 18th-century dark-glazed coarseware, 17th-18th-century dark-glazed finewares and a single rim sherd of mid- to late 17th-century sgraffito ware reminiscent of that produced at Buckley, North Wales. No pottery was recovered from Phase 4 during the construction of Building 2.

During Phase 5 when Building 2 appears to have been demolished, within the northern chamber of Building 2 some 5901g of pottery was recovered from fill [1031]. A large proportion of this material was composed of refined white earthenware, which contained Pearlware with neoclassically-inspired scalloped rims that date to c. 1800-1830 and Lustre ware using the resist technique of decoration that appeared around c. 1810 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory 2015a; Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory 2015b). This deposit also contained a porringer, or handled bowl in Brown stoneware can be dated to c. 1825. A deposition date of c. 1800-30 would be appropriate for this context. Some 2911g of pottery was retrieved from the fill of the southern chamber of the Building 2 [1030]. The pottery mainly comprising unremarkable refined white earthenware, stoneware and dark-glazed coarseware, however the presence of White slip coated ware would indicate a deposition date of the mid-19th century or later.

Made ground layer [1045] contained mostly generic transfer printed refined white earthenware broadly datable only to the 19th century. Elements of the pottery from a brick lined pit associated with Building 3 [1046], such as sheet pattern transfer printed, sprig painted wares in chrome colours and sponge wares suggest a deposition date of c. 1820-1860. By far the largest quantity of pottery (7978g) within this phase was recovered from the fill [1058] of a possible drain cut [1077]. Much of the material was dark-glazed coarseware and generic unglazed earthenware (plant pots) was not closely datable other than to a broad 19th-century date. The transfer printed refined white earthenware from this fill, however, suggest a deposition date of c. 1820-1860.

Phase 6 structure, Building 3, located in the southern part of Area A, when demolished was sealed by made ground layers [1028], [1032], [1036] and [1037]. These deposits produced between them some 49.508kg of pottery. Pottery from these layers had a broad date range with material dating from the late 18th century and spanning the first three quarters of the 19th century. Such a large quantity perhaps representing the clearance of the contents of the Building 3.

Phase 7, which consisted of the landscaping associated with the construction of Town hall Square yielded 43.450kg of pottery. Nearly 80% of this material was recovered from dump layers [1016] and [1023], and stone working layer [1022=1033]. Both deposits [1016] and [1023], perhaps because they are associated with landscaping episodes contained a broad range of material from Cream wares to jam jars that span the later 18th century to the 1870s. In contrast deposition within stone working layer [1022=1033] produced a less varied assemblage in terms of dating. Included within this layer was a toothpaste jar, first introduced in the 1850s, and a James Keiler Marmalade jar, the label of which would suggest it was manufactured after 1862 or 1873. A deposition date of the third quarter of the 19th century would be applicable for this context.

Contexts number	Weight (g)	% of total assemblage	Phase
Unstratified Pottery Recorded Finds	418	0.35	Not phased
1009	3067	2.53	Phase 7
1011	314	0.26	Phase 7
1013	3704	3.06	Phase 7
1016	19,945	16.47	Phase 7
1022=1033	9212	7.61	Phase 7
1023	5496	4.54	Phase 7
1024	38	0.03	Phase 7
1025	827	0.68	Phase 7
1026	163	0.13	Phase 7
1027	25	0.02	Phase 7
1028	7244	5.98	Phase 6
1030	2911	2.4	Phase 5
1031	5901	4.87	Phase 5
1032	17514	14.46	Phase 6
1036	663	0.55	Phase 6
1037	24087	19.89	Phase 6
1039	397	0.33	Phase 7
1040	334	0.28	Phase 3
1042	48	0.04	Phase 3
1043	6	0.005	Phase 2
1044	2471	2.26	Not phased
1045	799	0.66	Phase 5
1046	916	0.76	Phase 5

1053	262	0.22	Phase 7
1058	7978	6.59	Phase 5
1082	21	0.02	Phase 1
Test pits	6324	5.22	Not phased

Table x3: pottery bearing contexts by weight and phase

Dark-glazed coarseware

Dark-glazed coarseware forms the largest percentage of the pottery from Rochdale Town Hall and is present in the majority pot bearing contexts. A total of 39.796kg of was recovered, with much of it deriving from contexts [1037], [1032], [1028] and [1016]. This is not unusual as dark-glazed wares generally forms a large proportion of urban assemblages in the North West region. Forms include small and large storage jars, a bung-hole jar and pancheons. The large fragment size of the vessels retrieved from deposit [1032] perhaps indicates that they were disposed of complete or near complete after they were no longer required. The precise dating of the dark-glazed coarseware from Rochdale and indeed elsewhere is difficult, as these typically utilitarian forms change little over time. This difficulty is compounded by difficulty of attributing products of individual pot houses due to the similarity of fabrics since most of the potteries south of the River Ribble used the coal measures clays, which are effectively indistinguishable (Miller et al 2018). The very even and thickly applied glaze noted on the majority of these pots, does however suggest a broad 19th-century date for manufacture.

Manufacturing of such wares was carried out throughout Lancashire with potteries known from Prescott and Rainford in the South, Lancaster and Preston in the north, and Blackburn in the east. Whether such bulky items were transported from these production centres presumably via canal is a moot point, particularly as the growing number of pottery assemblages now recorded in the Greater Manchester area may point to an unknown kiln site in Salford or Manchester (pers. Comm. Ian Miller Oct 2019). It is also possible that potteries in neighbouring West Yorkshire might also be the source. Potteries producing dark-glazed earthenware including thickly black glazed vessels are recorded from around Halifax and Huddersfield (Lawrence 1974).

Stoneware

Stoneware forms the second largest percentage of the pottery within the assemblage and is also present in the majority of pot bearing contexts (see Table x2). The earliest sherds were residual in layer [1013] and deposit [1016] and are from a jug or bottle dating from the second half of the 18th century (Plate 13). This a probable German import in the form a mineral water or spirit bottle. As only the shoulder and neck with part of the handle of the vessel was recovered and it is not clear whether it was bullet-shaped or cylindrical. Such bottles were produced by the specialist potters known as Krugbacker, or pot bakers, in the Westerwald

region of Germany (NMSC Archeology & Museum Blog 2015). An 18th-century date for this bottle appears more appropriate as it displays the characteristic mottled iron oxide glaze of Rhenish potters, rather than the lustrous smooth brown glaze of 19th-century brown stoneware.



Plate 13: stoneware jug or bottle dating from the second half of the 18th century

The greater part of the stoneware likely dates from the late 18th century and into the period 1860-70. Both table wares and coarse wares are evident within the assemblage, with the majority belonging to the latter. Good examples of a cups and bowls with lustrous amber glaze can be seen in Phase 5 deposit [1031] and Phase 7 dump layer [1016]. Vessels used for storage are more common and include large bottles, storage jars, ink bottles and ginger beer bottles. Two examples of the latter form are inscribed with the name “Casson” whose ginger beer company started on Packer Street (Plate 14).



Plate 14: ginger beer bottle with the name 'S.Casson'

Refined white earthenware

Some 29.644kg of stratified refined white earthenware was collected during the excavations. Refined white earthenwares can be characterised as having a hard, somewhat porous body, with various substances traditionally being added to the clay, including calcined flint, feldspar, ball clay, and occasionally kaolin, to produce the white body. Other white firing fabric types have also been included within this assessment including porcelain, pearlware and creamware. Porcelain is a white firing kaolin clay with the addition of feldspathic rock and fired at a very high temperature. The difference between pearlware and creamware is the small amount of cobalt that was added to the glaze of pearlware giving it very pale bluish hue (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory 2015c). Porcelain, although first made in China in the 9th century AD, was not widely manufactured in the Britain until the second half of the 18th century. Creamware also dates to this period, too, whilst pearlware dates to the 1780s (Draper 1984, 47-53). The more generic name of China, however, is defined as a combination of ware and decoration (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory 2015c). China makes up the bulk of the white earthenware assemblage.

For the purposes of this assessment the material was scanned to allow identification of the range of wares and provide basic mean dates for the deposition within individual contexts to aid the phasing of the site. The spot dating identified a number of fabric types and decorative motifs that permit dating to within a few decades. For instance, two plates from Phase 7 landscaping layers [1013 and 1016] featuring verses from the nursery rhyme Old Mother Hubbard date between c. 1813-34 (Plate 15). Other transfer printed wares included "field dots" type with oak leaf border dating approximately between c. 1820-50, continuous repeating floral designs produced most commonly between 1820 and 1836, pastoral scenes largely produced between 1819 and 1836 and geometric patterns such as "basket weave" mainly produced between 1819-29 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory 2015d).

Painted refined white earthenware vessels were also noted such as a cobalt blue tea bowl dating to c. 1815-1830 and blue floral painted Pearlware (c. 1815-1830) both from layer [1044]. Shell-edged wares were also present such as a Neoclassical scalloped edge plate from Phase 7 landscaping layers [1016] dating to c. 1800-1830 and non-impressed shell-edgware from fill [1058] dating to c. 1860-90.

It is anticipated that the large volume of refined white earthenware recovered from both the stratified contexts and unstratified material will form part of a community-based programme of further analysis including identification of ware types and chronology and places of manufacture.



Plate 15: refined white earthenware plate featuring verses from the nursery rhyme *Old Mother Hubbard* (c. 1813-34)

Industrial slipware

A small amount of industrial slip ware (weighing 3360g) comprising 2.8% of the pottery assemblage was also present. The presence of such wares was noted within 13 stratified contexts. These colourful wares, produced from c. 1770 and continuing through the 19th century, gradually decreased in quality and social status becoming common place pottery of the working classes (Barker 1993). They are notable for their bold designs such as the tree-like Mocha, cabling and cat's eye. By the second half of the 19th century Mocha ware in particular, but by no means the only type, was associated with pub and market use (Rickard 2006, 54-5). This maybe significant as there are four non-Mocha sherds of industrial slipware exhibiting the type of transfer printed motifs associated with pubs, generally a sub-circular belt or garter fastened by a buckle containing text. Recorded Find 21 was inscribed with "BRITANNIA INN/R.SUDBURY" (Plate 16). A pub of this name was formerly located on Lomax street, Rochdale and was demolished in 2013 (The Lost Pubs Project 2021). A further fragment (RF40) displaying a similar motif contained the words "...NEW TOWN..", whilst a third and fourth (RFs 50 and 76) displayed parts of the transfer printed belt motifs.

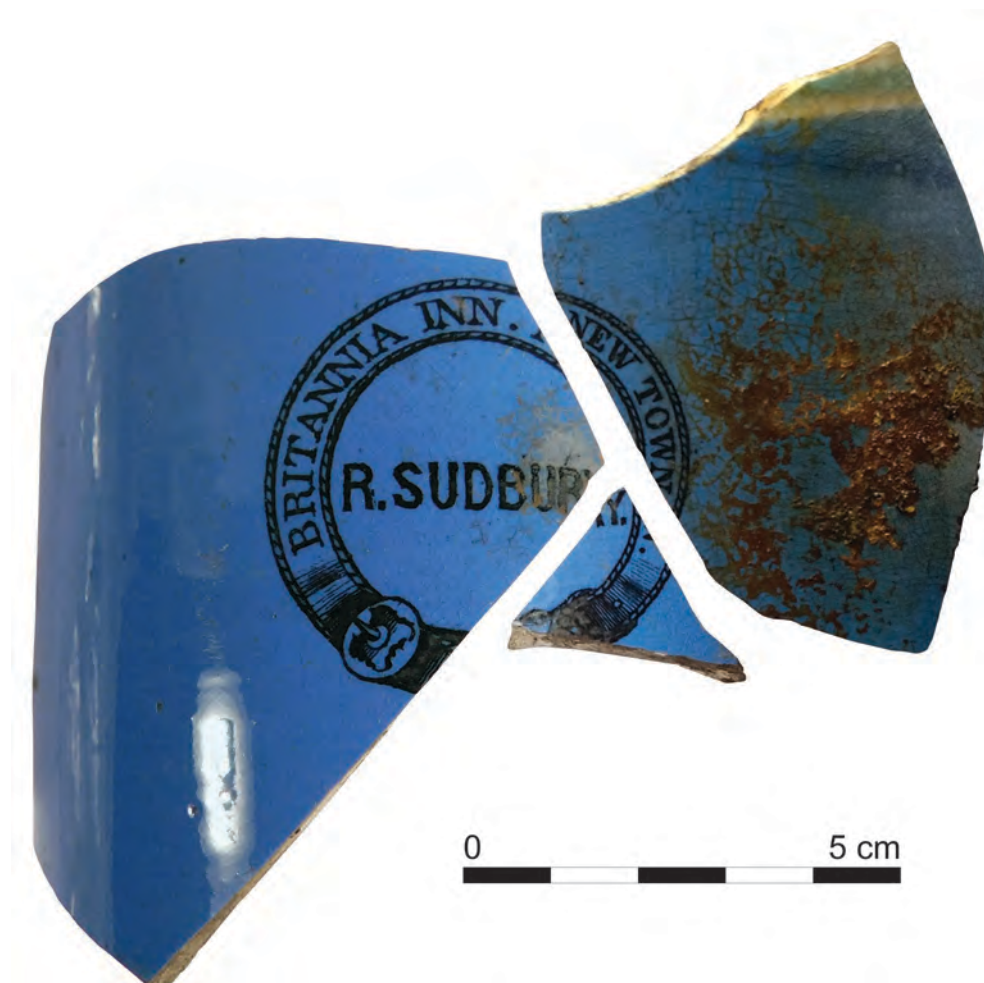


Plate 16: industrial slip ware inscribed with "BRITANNIA INN/R.SUDBURY"

Unglazed red earthenware

A total of 6826g of unglazed red earthenware was excavated from 14 stratified contexts. Most of this material was in the form of flowerpot fragments, although there were also sherds of storage jars. Unglazed storage jars are known from Liverpool in layers dating to before 1726 and described as being part of the butter pot tradition, whilst unglazed vessels used in sugar refining are also known from sites in Prescott (Miller et al 2018, 12, 38; McNeil 1983; Innes and Philpott 1981).

Large scale production of flowerpots began in the early 18th century with production increasing as the century progressed. By the 19th century, with the rise of industrialisation and the concomitant expansion of the railway network aiding mass production in the ceramic industry, many smaller local potteries turned to more everyday wares such as flowerpots. Their prevalence in the 19th-century layers at Rochdale may chart the rise of urban gardening.

Other ware types

A number of other ware types are also represented in the assemblage, which although they appear in very small quantities have the potential to aid the dating of some of the earlier contexts or indicate early activity on the site. Dark-glazed finewares, a development of late medieval Cistercian-type tradition, and dating from the late 16th to 18th centuries were residual in Phase 3 and 7. Representing some of the earliest pottery on site was a part of a pedestal cup reminiscent of cup-salts dating to the late 16-17th century (Pearce 1992, 38-9, fig 44; Philpott 2015, 81, fig 43-8). The vessel (Plate 17) was recovered from TP1 and was residual within the landscaping layers being investigated by the test pits. The base of cup was found in from Phase 3 layer [1083], with further residual sherds being recovered from Phase 7 landscaping layers [1016] and [1037].

Stratified fragments of decorated slipware were restricted to Phase 3 reworked natural sand [1043] and made ground layer [1042] and were respectively from a press moulded plate with trailed decoration (Plate 17) and rim sherd from a Buckley Sgraffito/North midlands slipware vessel (Longworth 2004). The Buckley Sgraffito/North midlands slipwares date from the c. 1640-1690, while the trailed slipware dates to late 17th or early 18th century. Residual fragments of decorated slip ware were recovered from Phase 7 landscaping layer [1037] and TP5.

A small sherd of glazed green and yellow creamware with rouletted lines and was found in Phase 3 silt layer [1036] and dates to c. 1760-80 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab 2015e), although a cup sherd also found would suggest a *terminus ante quem* of the early 19th century for this context.



Plate 17: base of possible cup-salt dating to the 16th-17th century

Some 596 grammes of Mottled ware, all of which was residual, were recovered during the excavation from Phases 5 and 6 and TPs 1 and 2. Mottled ware was produced during the first half of the 18th century with known production centres in south-west Lancashire (Philpot 2015,147).

A small number other miscellaneous wares are also part of the pottery assemblage, six fragments in total, comprising tin-glaze earthenware, fine red earthenware, Agate ware, a Basalt ware teapot lid and a sherd of Lustre ware. These wares are 18th or 19th century in date.

Potential

The pottery assemblage from Rochdale Town Hall is of regional significance, the site having produced a large and significant assemblage of industrial period pottery (predominantly dating to c. 1800-1870) from 26 stratified contexts along with some 44.328kg of unstratified material, the majority of which is pottery. The bulk of the pottery was derived from Phase 6 made ground layers [1037 and 1032], and in particular Phase 7 dump layers [1009,1013, 1016 and 1023], and stone working layer [1022=1033]. There were, however, also significant assemblages

from Phase 5 layers [1030] and [1031] associated with Building 2, fill [1058] of drain cut [1077], and unphased layer [1044].

The assemblage has the potential to make a significant contribution towards a greater understanding of industrial period ceramic traditions in Greater Manchester and, indeed, the North West in general. As such, the assemblage is considered to be of regional interest, and to have considerable research potential. In particular, the material offers a rare opportunity to examine the everyday pottery used by less affluent element of the Rochdale population.

The assemblage also has the potential to address a number of research questions within the Post-medieval and Industrial periods of the North West Regional Research Agenda. For the instance given the Casson family first started brewing ginger beer on Packer Street, can the pottery help understand the historic development and character of retail outlets (North West Regional Research Framework 2021, Industrial Research Agenda question 37)? Given the amount of pottery recovered from the site, it may be possible that the assemblage can answer questions about the production and use of consumer products and their typologies from the late 18th to early 20th centuries (North West Regional Research Framework 2021, Industrial Research Agenda question 53). Following on from this, that the pottery assemblage is composed of large amounts of coarsewares usually produced in small rural production sites and factory produced finewares, is it possible to tie products to source with identifiable typologies and to examine differences in technology, organisation and marketing between the large factories and smaller rural potteries? Moreover, can pottery traditions and production tell us about trade and commerce in the region (North West Regional Research Framework 2021, Post-medieval Research Agenda question 34)? Is it possible to identify new types of food and methods of food preparation and consumption that were introduced into North West England and their origins. This will also tie in with evidence from the animal bone and marine shell assemblages (North West Regional Research Framework 2021, Post-medieval Research Agenda question 39)?

It is envisaged that the finewares, particularly the refined white earthenware, has the potential to form the basis of a community project. The aim would be, in collaboration with Touchstones Museum, Rochdale, to use the stratified fineware and pottery and the unstratified material as a resource, whereby volunteers could gain knowledge of how pottery is recorded, analysed and interpreted by archaeologists. The outcome being to, not only to create a ceramic typology, but potentially identify uses, place of manufacturer and where the people of Rochdale purchased what was a utilitarian but essential part of everyday life. This research would make use of the extensive local studies and archives housed in the museum and via a range of printed and online resources. The combination of historic documents and

archaeological finds could be used to reveal insights into the life of the 19th-century inhabitants of Packer Street in areas such as diet and food drink preparation.

Ceramic objects

Quantification and Assessment

A small assemblage of non-pottery ceramic objects was also recovered during the excavations. Three ceramic gaming counters (Plate 18) were found, two from Phase 7 stone working layer [1022=1033], and a third from fill of the southern chamber of the Building 2 [1030] in Phase 5. All three objects (RFs 13, 47 and 54) were similar in form being moulded cubes with two opposed flat faces and four opposed faces with grooves on each side. The counters measuring between 17mm x 17.5mm and 17mm x 20mm. All had been glazed, with two being composed of white firing clay (RFs 13 and 47) and the third of red earthenware.

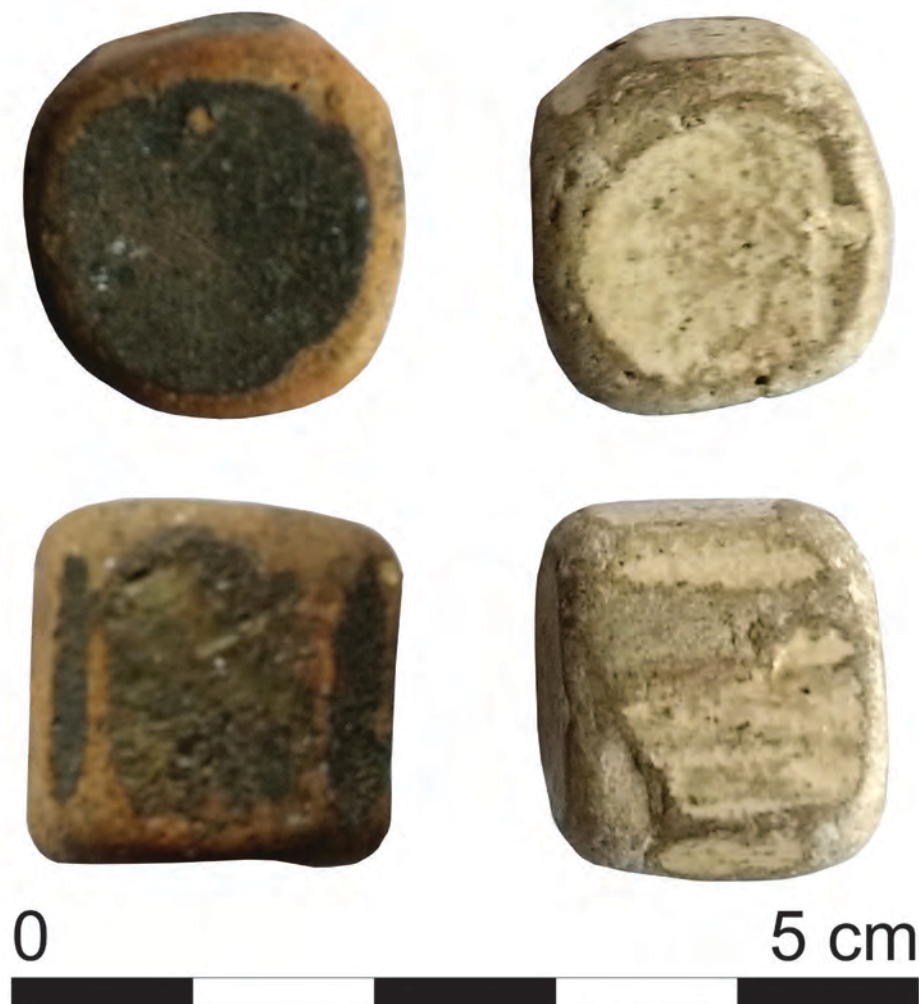


Plate X: ceramic gaming counters

Phase 7 deposit [1039] and TP1 yielded two ceramic 'keys' (Plate 19); (RFs 56 and 57). These objects are made from pipe clay with smooth, rounded and glazed depression in the centre. Such objects were used in the pottery industry to locate the two halves of plaster moulds used in slip casting (Higgins pers comm). Similar objects have been found at Rainford in Merseyside, and on sites as far south Herefordshire (Higgins 2012). Their presence on a site not connected with the ceramic industry, as far as is known, is not clear. Other examples of ceramic 'keys' that are associated with the pottery industry indicate a date of c. 1860-90 (Higgins pers comm).



Plate 19: ceramic 'keys'

Also found was a ceramic button (RF55) from Phase 6 made ground layers [1037]. This was a one-piece domed button in a glazed white earthenware fabric that appears to have been overfired or subject to secondary burning. Finally, part of a crucible (RF25) from Phase 5 deposit [1046], was likely to have been from the Roch Foundry which was active between 1792 and the 1860s.

Potential

The ceramic objects have no further potential to inform the dating or interpretation of the site. The presence of the ceramic keys, gaming counters and other objects should be mentioned in the report prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.

Clay tobacco pipes

Quantification and Assessment

A total of 514 fragments clay tobacco pipe weighing 1425g were retrieved from 18 stratified contexts or were unstratified. The pipes consist of 58 complete or partially complete bowls, weighing 297g, and 448 stem fragments, including mouth pieces weighing 1105.5g. All the pipes appear to be 19th century in date and were recovered from deposits associated with mid-19th century structures (Phase 5), 19th century glazed brick yard surface (Phase 6) and the landscaping associated with the construction of Town Hall Square (Phase 7).

Bowls

The bowl fragments included nine decorated examples that were given recorded finds numbers (See Table x4). Recorded Find (RF) 1, which was unstratified depicted a dragon head motif typical of the period 1880-1930. Also, of note was RF9 from Phase 7, layer [1022=1033], the design of which shows a crocodile in rushes wrapped around the bowl (Plate 20). The original pipe would also have included a reclining female figure with dagger and hatchet on the stem. This particular pipe has been identified as one of the designs produced by the Manchester pipemaker Thomas Holland. Thomas Holland's pipe manufacturing business flourished from the early 1870s until the early 1880s when he sold the company. The pipe is likely to date from this period (D. Higgins pers comm 08/11/2021).



Plate 20: clay pipe with crocodile in rushes wrapped around bowl

An incomplete tobacco pipe bowl (Plate 21) depicting the lower half of a partially nude figure, and inscribed with the name of the French pipe manufacturer Fiolet of St Omer, was recovered from the same context. An exact parallel has not been identified and therefore a broad date only of 1840-1900 has been applied to this pipe. These and the remaining decorated bowls are listed in Table x4, below.



Plate 21: incomplete tobacco pipe bowl depicting the lower half of a partially nude figure, and inscribed with the name of the French pipe manufacturer Fiolet of St Omer

Contexts number	description	Small find number	Phase
1000	Tobacco pipe bowl, Dragoon Head Motif (1880-1930)	1	Un-phased
1000	Bowl with spur missing, mould seams disguised by leaf decoration, (19th century)	5	Un-phased
1022	Tobacco pipe bowl displaying crocodilian-type creature (1850-1914)	9	Phase 7
1022	Mermaid motif	10	Phase 7
1022	Partially nude figure? Inscribed: "Fiolet/St Omer" (c1840-1900)	12	Phase 7
1033	leaf moulded bowl with spur (1800-1910)	18	Phase 7
1030	Bowl with spur missing, rustic thorn decoration (second half of 19th century)	22	Phase 5
8002 (TP8)	Alternating lines of moulded pellets and linear, lobed and hachured panels (19th century)	35	Un-phased
TP3	Incomplete bowl with "cord decoration" (late 19 th century-1914)	48	Un-phased
1025	Leaf decorated seam 1830-1860; plain with spur c 1810-1850		Phase 7
1022	Decorated tobacco pipe stem	15	Phase 7
1022	Partially glazed and inscribed: "L. Fiolet/à St Omer".	65	Phase 7
1022	Round and octagonal stem section	66	Phase 7
1022	Thorn pattern (second half of 19th century)	67	Phase 7
1011	Stem with Manufacturers' moulded inscription: "HOLLAND"	77	Phase 7

Table x4: decorated and stamped tobacco pipe bowls and stems catalogue

Stems

Some 448 tobacco pipe stems were recovered during the excavation. Seven examples were either decorated or displayed the manufacturers' name. These included an imported French example with relief moulding containing the inscription "L. Fiolet/à St Omer", which also displayed evidence of enamelling (SF65; See Table x4). Fiolet were a Northern French pipe manufacturer based in the town of St Omer. They were active from 1764 until c. 1920, although the stems from Rochdale are likely to date to the second half of the 19th century. Two pipe stems stamped "HOLLAND" are likely to have been manufactured by Manchester pipe manufacturer Thomas Holland who was active during the 1870s and early 1880s (see above; Slater's Directory 1895). Stems with glazed mouthpieces were also evident.

Potential

The clay tobacco pipe assemblage is relatively large and consists of decorated bowls and stems (see Table x4). The diagnostic pipe bowls and stems from the excavation which are datable by bowl typology and/or makers' marks will assist in establishing a chronology of the site's development during the 19th century. The stems which dominate the clay tobacco pipe assemblage, including mouth pieces with glazed coatings, should be recorded in terms of bore size and variation, stem curvature (or lack of it), stem length and mouthpiece types and finish as such features might be characteristic of a particular production centre or individual (Higgins 2017). The presence of both locally produced and imported pipes within the assemblage has the potential to elucidate trade and marketing patterns. There is also potential to study social status as this can be explored through pipes, since different styles and qualities would have been used by different sections of society or on different social occasions. The measurable characteristics they exhibit in terms of bowl form, production quality, makers' marks, stem length and finishing techniques allow them to be compared and assessed (ibid).

Ironwork

Quantification and Assessment

In total 39 objects of Iron weighing 8844g was recovered during the excavations, with eight items being given recorded finds numbers (RFs:19, 24, 36 and 68). RF68 comprised five separate artefacts, only one of which was readily identifiable as a small, handled pot and was found *in situ* against wall [1017] in Phase 5 made ground layer [1032] (Plate 22). The assemblage also included two bone cutlery handles, both were scale tang implements but were missing their respective blade and fork. Recorded Find 24, from unphased deposit [1044], has an incised spiral carved handle with a heavily corroded stem and missing tines. Knife handle (RF19; Phase 7 stone working layer [1022=1033]) is composed of bone with lateral incised grooves and is heavily corroded where the blade is missing. Recorded find 36 is an L-shaped hinge pivot or wall hook, with tapered tang and was found in Test pit 2. The remainder of the iron objects were either nails or were unidentified due to corrosion deposits.



Plate 22: iron pot (RF68) seen in situ against Phase 5 wall [1017]

Potential

The iron assemblage has only limited potential for further work, but a minimal record should be completed of each object. It is proposed that this is undertaken in a time-economical manner, by means of digital photography with a prominently displayed scale and brief written records. An outline report will be prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.

Non-ferrous (copper alloy and lead)

Quantification and Assessment

The assemblage of 31 non-ferrous objects weighing 128.8g comprised a mixture of domestic and structural items. Copper alloy items included dress accessories, such as a belt mount (RF26) and buttons (RFs 32 and 43), whilst craft items comprised pins (RFs 28, 29, 30 and 45) and thimble fragments (Rf11). There was a single coin, a Queen Victoria halfpenny (RF2), with date on the obverse side but obscured, dating to 1838-1858. Structural finds comprised lead window came

The earliest object was a belt mount (Plate 23) from Test pit 8. It is a quatrefoil in shape with pointed knobs between each of the four lobes. Its presence in what are effectively Phase 7 deposits indicates that it is residual in this context. The mount is in poor condition of the mount requires conservation.



Plate 23: belt mount

The pins, 11 in total, comprised both complete and partial examples and are likely to be manufactured by machine stamping, a machine for performing this task being patented in 1824 (Hume 1969, 254). A single pin was retrieved from Phase 5 deposit [1046], with the remainder from Test Pits or unstratified. Those recovered from the Test Pits are likely to derive from the Phase 7 and the landscaping associated with the construction of Town Hall Square. The pins require stabilisation and conservation to enable their long-term storage. Other objects include a fragmentary thimble dating to the later 18th- and 19th-century (Flynn and Geake 2019) and buttons of the same date.

Lead objects comprised four sections of window came (RFs 23, 74 and 80), a button (RF69). The window came has the characteristic H-shaped cross-section and the gutter is visible. No glass survives. The window came is of post-medieval and dates to c. 1500-1800. A fragment of lead off-cut (RF78) was also recovered.

The lead button (RF69) is a flat cast disc, which at its centre contains a shaft/rivet like projection retaining the remains of an attachment loop. The button is Post-medieval and dates to c. 1600-1800.

Potential

The non-ferrous metal assemblage has only limited potential for further work. The copper alloy mount and pins require conservation work to stabilise them for long-term storage. The mount should be subject to further analysis to provide a comparisons and date range. A minimal record should be completed of each object and an outline report prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.

Ceramic Building Material

Quantification and Assessment

A small assemblage of ceramic building material, weighing 7951g, was found from five stratified contexts and one test pit from Phases 6 and 7. The assemblage comprised brick and tile and fragments of salt-glazed sewer pipe. Two bricks (Plate 24) were sampled from Phase 6 brick yard surface [1002]/[1003]/[1005]. The bricks are salt glazed with the glaze resembling that found on salt glazed sewer pipes (see below). The bricks measure 230mm x 110mm x 32mm, with some displaying semi-circular scars that are up to 10mm deep and are possibly the impression left by separators within the kiln. The bricks were utilised to form a probable yard surface. It is not clear whether the bricks were specifically chosen as a surfacing material, or whether they represent a fortuitous use of a material left over from the construction of the Town Hall. It should be noted, however, that no bricks of this type were noted during the Salford Archaeology building survey of the town hall (pers comm, Lewis Stitt).

The five fragments of salt glazed sewer pipe were all from Phase 7. Such pipes were first manufactured between 1830-40 (thepotteries.org 2021).



Plate 24: salt glazed bricks

Potential

The ceramic building material has no further potential to inform the dating or interpretation of the site.

Worked stone

Quantification and Assessment

A total of 11 stone objects weight 10.233kg were recorded during the excavation. These comprised part of a slate pencil (RF53), two grinding wheels (RFs 72 and 79), one complete sandstone roof tile (RF82) and two fragmentary examples (RFs 62 and 75). The circular

grinding wheels, recorded in Phase 7 dump deposit [1022=1033] and Phase 9 layer [1029] respectively, were in two sizes (diameters), both are composed of sandstone with the larger stone (RF79) exhibiting a coarser grain than the smaller example.

The three stone roof tiles probably represent the common form of roofing prior to the arrival of the railways in the late 1830s which allowed the cheap transportation of welsh slate. The complete example (RF82) measures 400mm x 305mm x 32mm thick and is, like the other two fragments, composed of Milnrow Sandstone of the Westphalian, Pennine Lower Coal Measures Group (Historic England 2017). It is named for the settlement east of Rochdale where the stone was quarried.

Potential

The worked stone assemblage has only limited potential for further work. A minimal record should be completed of each object and an outline report prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.

Worked bone

Quantification and Assessment

Eight bone objects weighing 12.5g were retrieved from five stratified and unstratified contexts. Recorded finds 3 and 39 (Plate 25), unstratified and from Phase 5 make up layer [1030] respectively, were possible lace/crochet making tools. Both were lathe-turned with cylindrical bodies, cordons and balusters with tapered ends. Recovered from Phase 7 layer [1022=1033] were part of a bone comb for holding hair in place (RF14), as well as a round, one piece bone button (RF41) with four piercings and a tobacco pipe mouthpiece (RF17). A second tobacco pipe mouthpiece (RF16) was found in Phase 7 deposit [1025] (Plate 26). Two further bone buttons were also found, one unstratified (RF44) and one from Phase 6 deposit [1037] (RF52).

Potential

The worked bone assemblage has only limited potential for further work. A minimal record should be completed of each object and an outline report prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.



Plate 25: possible lace/crochet making tool



Plate 26: bone tobacco pipe mouth pieces

Leather and other organics

Quantification and Assessment

Forty-two leather and other organic artefacts were during the excavations. Most of the items were recovered from the test pits excavated in the southern arm of the trench. As the test pits targeted the landscaping layers associated with the construction of Town hall Square, they are effectively part of Phase 7.

Twenty footwear fragments were recovered during the excavations, none were complete. Two boots were found in Test pit 8 at the southern end of the trench, a child's and adults'. The child's boot comprised the quarters, sole, insole, part of the rand for the heel and heel itself. The adult boot comprised parts of the vamp or upper, rand, sole and insole. Both are in poor condition. Phase 7 layer [1013] produced parts of two shoes/boots, namely a leather sole (RF37), with the individual lifts visible which are attached with nails and parts of a rand and two heel fragments. The latter was in poor condition.

Also, from the test pits, including Test pit 8, were 16 possible boar bristles (RFS 27, 31, 33 and 64); (Plate 27). These objects were formerly used in shoe making before the advent of sewing machines. Linen thread is twisted round the split end of the bristle, which being very fine (less than 1mm thick) and tapered, are ideally suited for passing through awl holes pierced through the leather. Phase 7 stone working layer [1022=1033] produced two fragments of horse hoof. An unusual find and one presumably related to the use of horse transport when the town hall was being constructed and the need of a farrier to tend to horses' hooves.

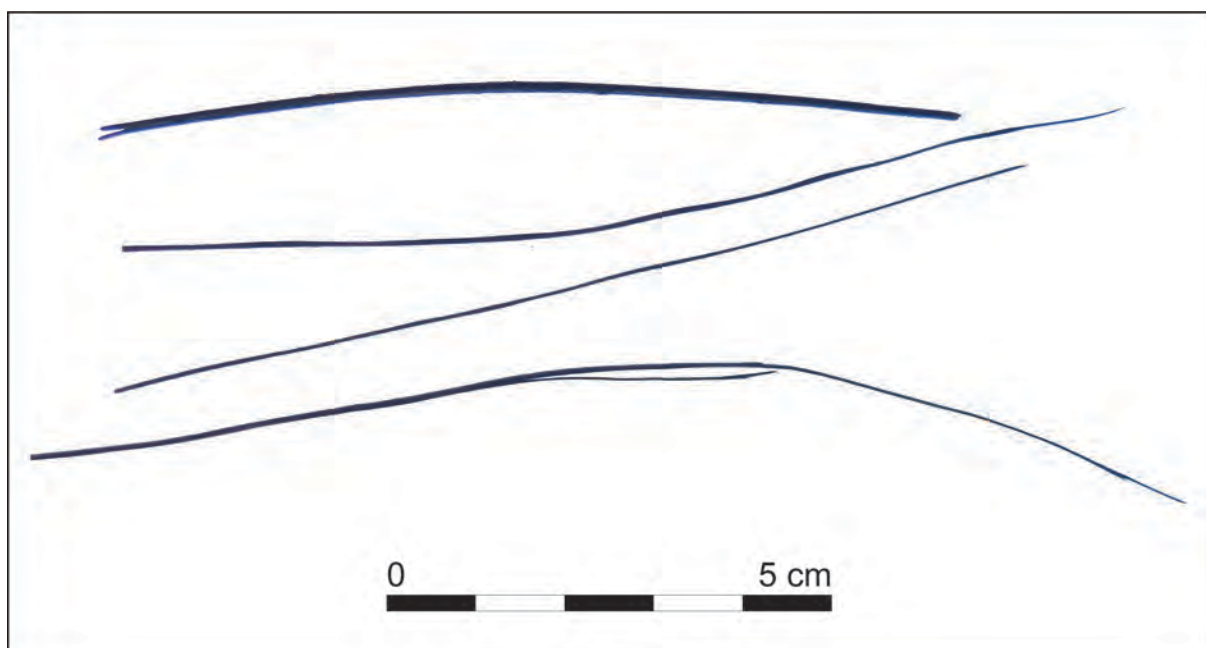


Plate 27: possible boar bristles

Potential

The Leather and other organics assemblage has only limited potential for further work. The possible boar bristle should be sent to an appropriate specialist for formal identification. A minimal record should be completed of each object and an outline report prepared for archival purposes, and a brief illustrated note prepared for the final publication.

Glass

Quantification and Assessment

The assemblage consists of 6294.3g of glass was recovered from 23 stratified contexts and a small amount of unstratified material. This can be further broken down into three different types comprising two glass buttons, 5723g of bottle or vessel glass and 704g of window glass.

The vessel glass represented in the assemblage comprises green glass bottles dating from the later 18th century (Hume 1969), along with embossed bottles, such as round bottomed Hamilton types which came into general use in the 1840s and later Codd bottles and screw top opening of the later 19th century.

Window glass (Plate 28) of various thicknesses illustrating the changing techniques of manufacture were recovered from 14 contexts, the majority of which derived from Phase 7, with lesser amounts from Phases 3, 5 and 6. Therefore, as might be expected, much of the window glass was deposited during the demolition of buildings in advance of the construction of the town hall. However, the presence of lead window came (see above) suggests the presence of earlier lead glazed windows or that the earliest glazing of the buildings on site were leaded. This method of glazing remained popular throughout much of the 18th century (Wychaven District Council 2007).

Potential

Both elements of the assemblage merit comparative analysis with similar assemblages and, where possible, research into bottles from identifiable sources and a chronology of the window glass.



Plate 28: etched window glass

Marine shell

Quantification and Assessment

A total of 1874g of marine molluscs were collected from 13 contexts and one test pit. Some 51%, by weight, were oysters shells, with cockle shells forming 38%, the remaining assemblage consisting of mussel, scallop and whelks (Chart 1). It should be noted that the quantity of mussels shells are likely to be underrepresented as they did not survive well in ground conditions found on site. The bulk of the marine mollusc, some 59.28%, was collected from Phase 6 (deposits associated with 19th century glazed brick yard surface), whilst Phase 7 landscaping deposits associated with the construction of Town hall Square yielded 28.87%, with remainder being derived from Phase 5 and TP1. Only the Phase 5 deposits can be identified with deliberate rubbish disposal whilst those in Phase 6 and 7 were recovered from made ground layers.

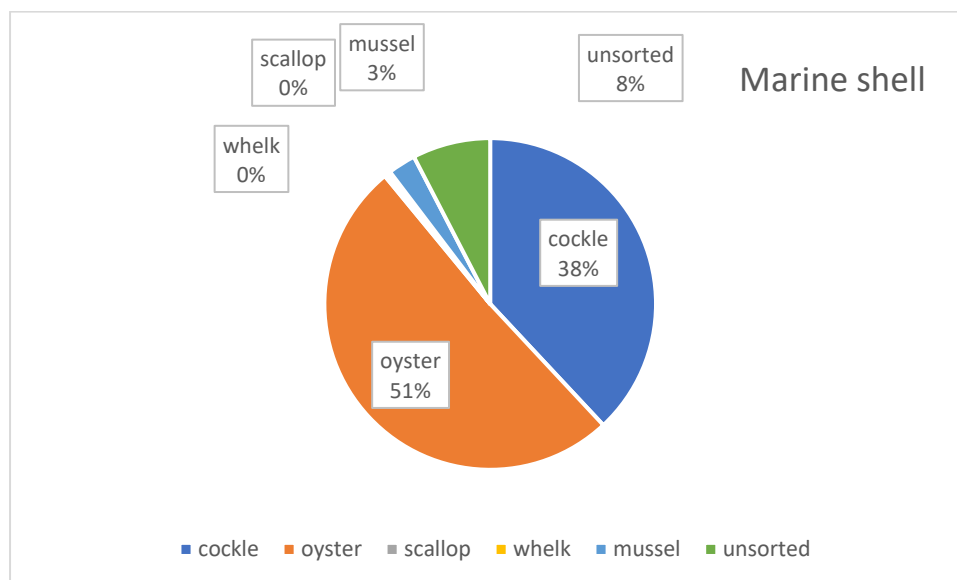


Chart 1: marine shell

Shellfish in the 19th century are often seen as poverty food. Dickens in *Pickwick Papers* remarks 'that poverty and oysters always seem to go together...the poorer a place is, the greater call there seems to be for oysters' (1836-37). The advent of the railways brought oysters, and presumably shellfish in general, cheaply into inland industrial cities. Henry Mayhew in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851-51) reports that 500 million oysters passed through London's Billingsgate Market during this period (Stott 2004).

Potential

As food remains, shells are considered to be informative about such things as the role of the coast and the marine environment played in diet of past societies. Potentially shell remains can reveal the range of resources and habitats exploited, and the effects of that exploitation

on wild populations. Furthermore, because of the perishable nature of the marine shell, their bulk, distance from the sea, in the case of Rochdale, exchange networks and the speed and efficiency of transportation can be discerned (Campbell 2015).

Given the way the shells were deposited, the majority being derived from made ground layers the shells they have limited potential to indicate diet within Phases 5-7. It is considered that statistically useful sample of marine shell should be between 200-600 shells from a separate deposit (Campbell 2015). Whereas the quantity from the whole site has been estimated to be about 550 shells of all species (based on average weights of individual shells), does not fall this sample size.

Although the marine shell, therefore, has limited potential for further work. The relative frequency that such artefacts were recovered suggests that marine shell was part of the 19th-century diet in Rochdale. Further work on historical sources may reveal how marine shell was transported to Rochdale, from which locations and how it was sold and by who in the locality.

Although the marine shell offer only limited potential for further work, their presence and transportation to Rochdale do allow questions proposed in the North West Research Framework to be addressed. For instance when considering what new types of food and methods of food preparation and consumption were introduced into North West England and where did they come from? In particular, identifying food types and consumption practices from publications, journals/diaries and relating them to excavated artifacts (North West Regional Research Framework 2021, Post-medieval Research Agenda question 39).

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APPENDIX 3: DATA FROM THE BIG DIG FEEDBACK FORMS

How old are you?

0-12	13-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-54	55+
19	27	0	7	7	6	6

Have you ever been to Rochdale Town Hall before?

Yes	No
42	25

Have you ever taken part in an archaeological dig before?

Yes	No
14	54

What did you like most about the big dig?

Digging	Finding Artefacts	Learning	Friendly Staff	Whole experience
20	18	12	9	9

What did you like least about the big dig?

Weather	Didn't find anything	Cleaning	Drawing	Dirty Clothes	N/A
9	2	6	7	3	32

Out of 10 how would you rate your experience at the big dig?

>5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1	3	6	18	39

Would you like to take part in another dig in the future?

Yes	No	Maybe
58	2	8

After your time at the big dig how do you feel?

Awful	Not very good	Okay	Really good	Fantastic
0	0	2	20	46

The Big Dig Tour

How old are you?

0-12	13-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-54	55+
16	3	2	9	10	12	24

Have you ever been to Rochdale Town Hall before?

Yes	No
61	8

Have you ever taken part in an archaeological dig before?

Yes	No
10	59

What did you like most about the tour today?

Talk with the experts	Learning	Friendly staff	Whole experience	Handling artefacts
4	39	11	4	14

What did you like least about the tour today?

Weather	Too short	Couldn't handle items	Couldn't dig (needed to be clearer)	Need an inside area	N/A
10	4	2	5	2	40

Out of 10 how would you rate your experience at the big dig?

>5	6	7	8	9	10
1	0	0	4	8	54

Would you like to take part in another dig in the future?

Yes	No	Maybe
64	0	5

After your time at the big dig how do you feel?

Awful	Not very good	Okay	Really good	Fantastic
0	0	2	11	56

The Big Dig Tour of the Arts & Heritage Resource Centre

How old are you?

0-12	13-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-54	55+
0	0	1	1	0	1	12

Have you ever been to the Arts and Heritage Resource Centre before?

Yes	No
5	10

Have you ever been to Rochdale Town Hall before?

Yes	No
14	1

What did you like most about your tour today?

Seeing the collection	Hearing the stories	Factual information	Everything
11	1	3	3

What did you like least about your tour today?

Insufficient funding	Couldn't handle artefacts	N/A
1	2	12

Out of 10 how would you rate your experience on the tour?

>5	6	7	8	9	10
0	0	0	1	3	10

After your time on the tour how do you feel?

Awful	Not very good	Okay	Really good	Fantastic
0	0	0	4	11

Joined the mailing list?

Yes	No
6	9

APPENDIX 4: FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Trench location

Figure 3: Plan showing sondage and Area locations

Figure 4: Section 1

Figure 5: Section 2a and 2b

Figure 6: Excavation plan

Figure 7: Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1851

Figure 8: Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1892

Figure 9: Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1959

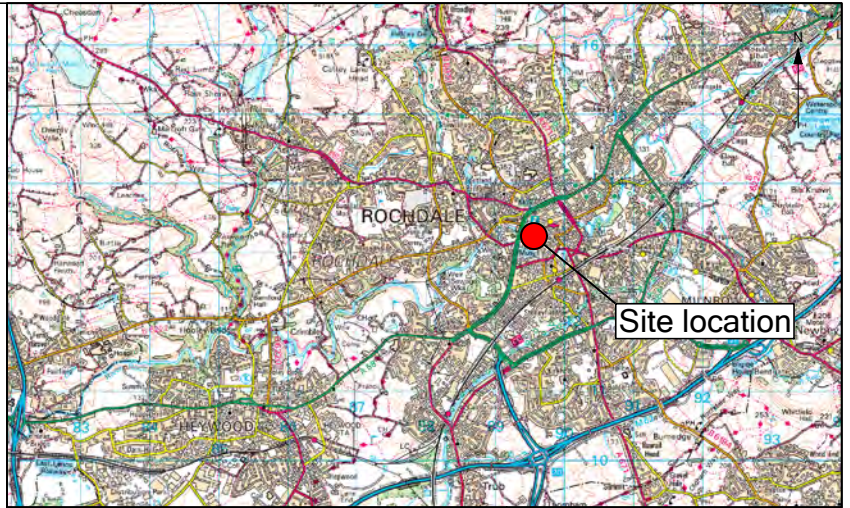
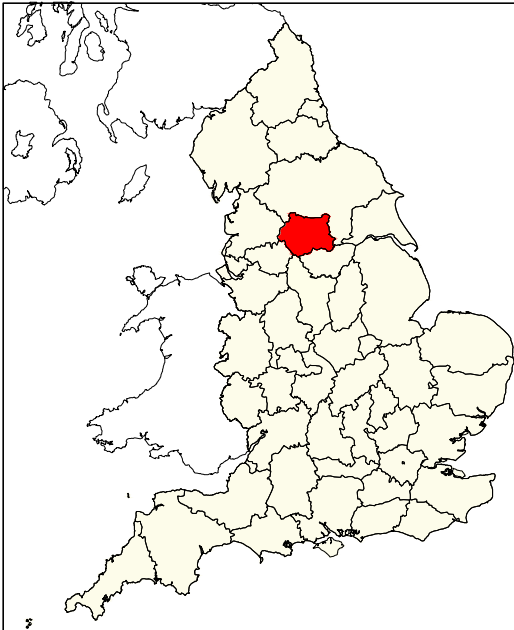
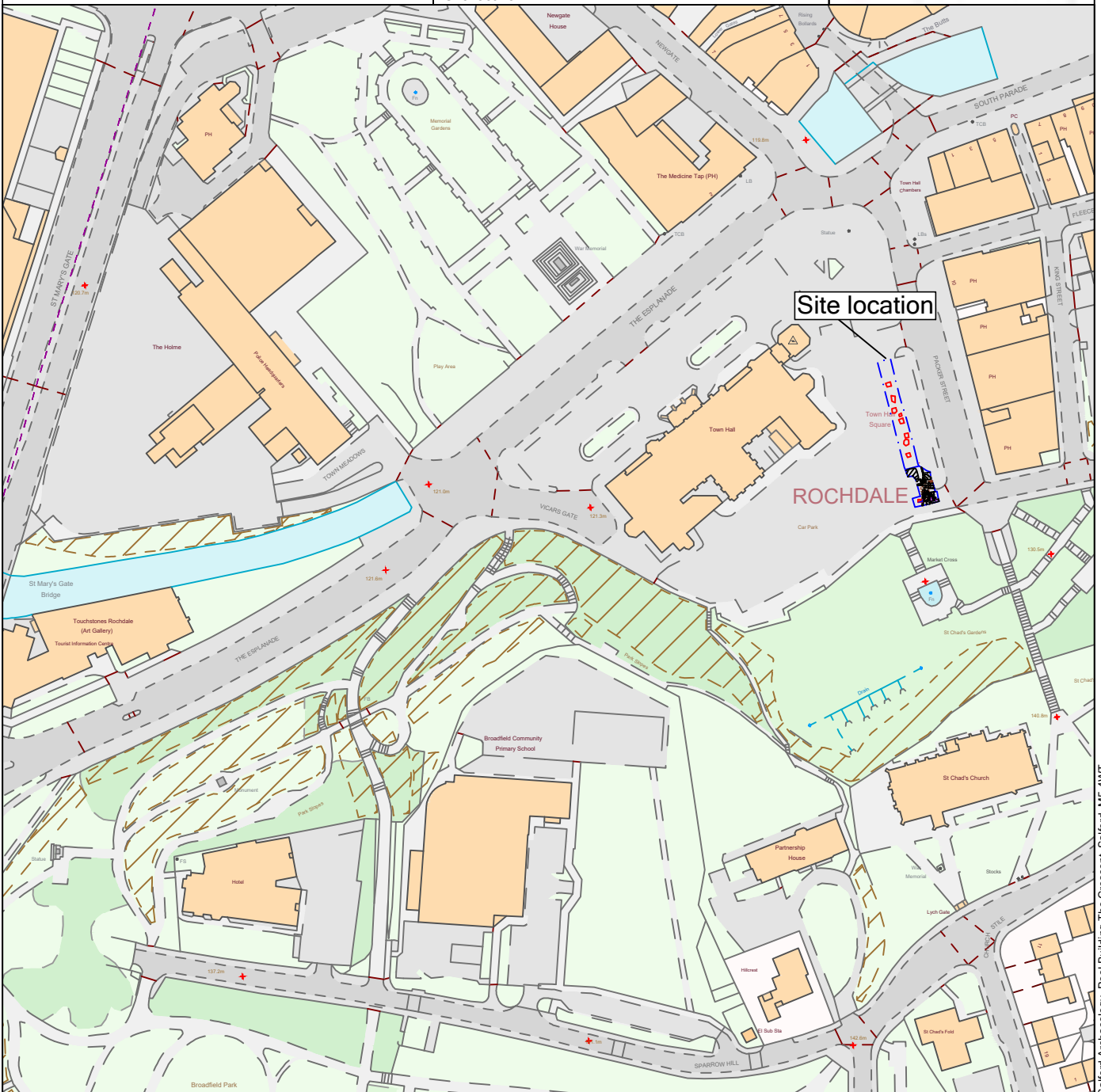
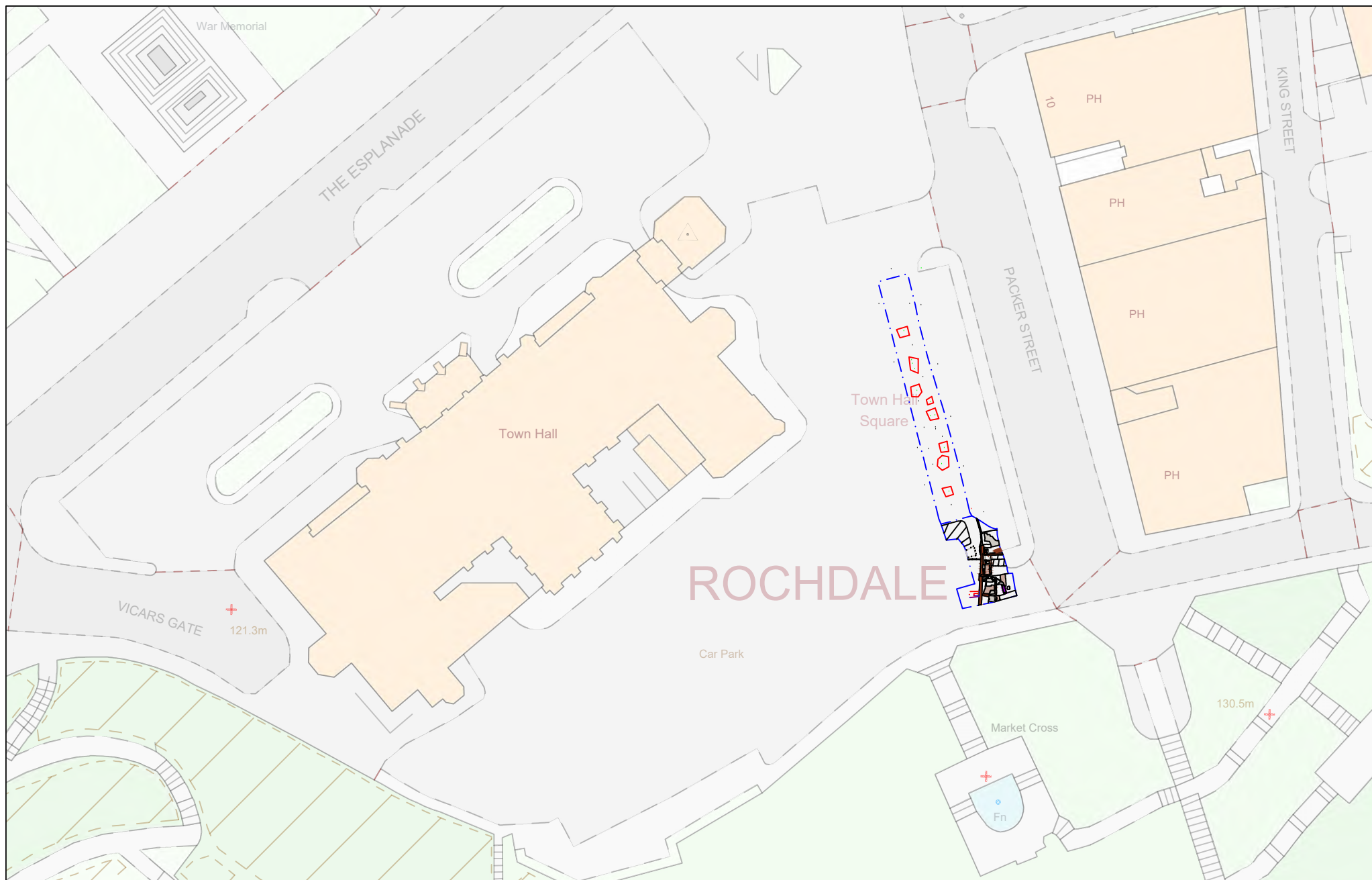


Figure 1:
Rochdale Town Hall
Site location



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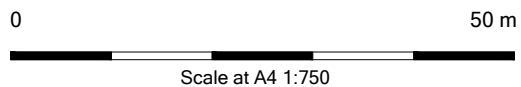


Figure 2:

Trench location superimposed on the modern Ordnance Survey map



Key:

 Site location

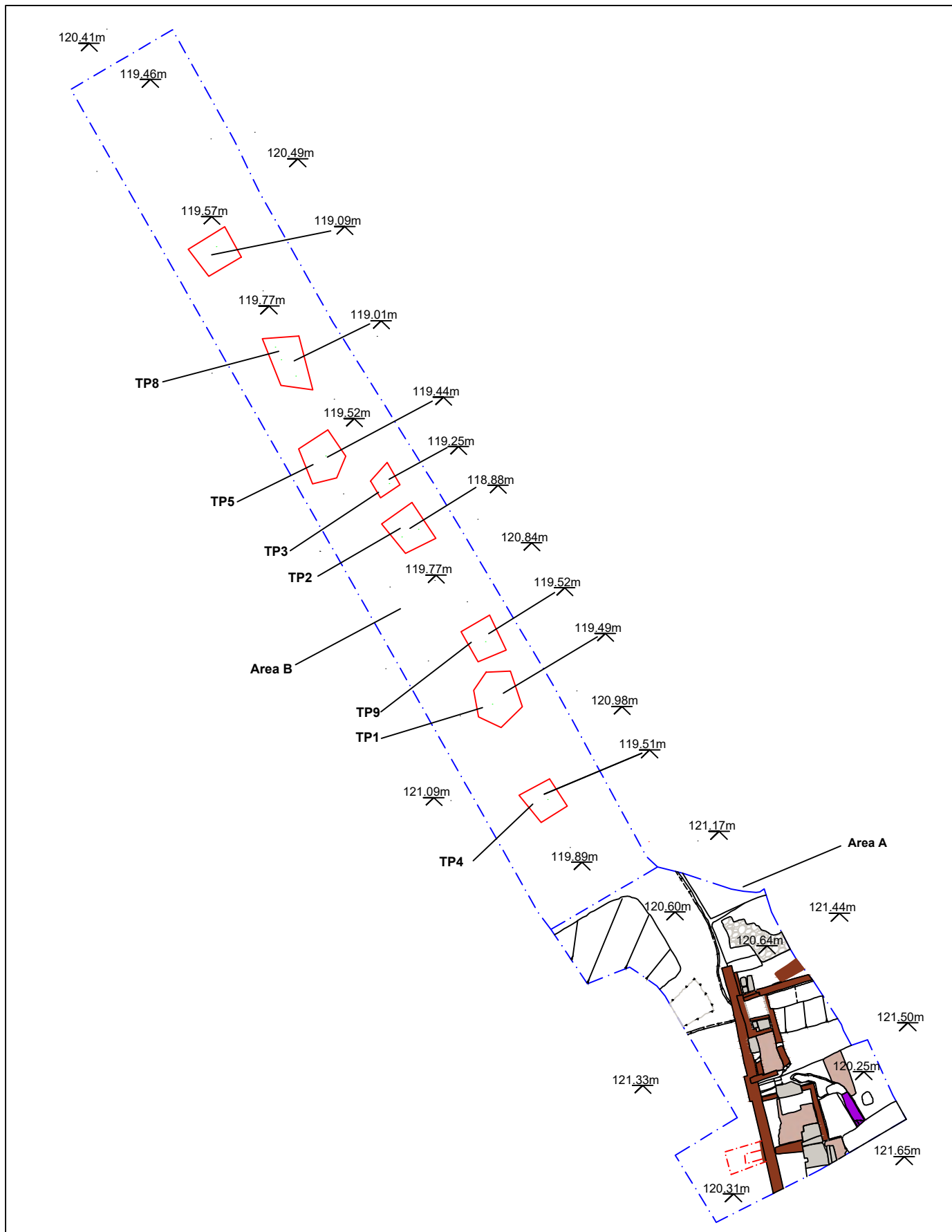


Figure 3:

Plan showing sondage
and Area locations



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0 10 m
Scale at A4 1:200

Key:

- Brick wall
- Brick surface
- Flag / Stone
- Cobbles
- Drain
- Test pit

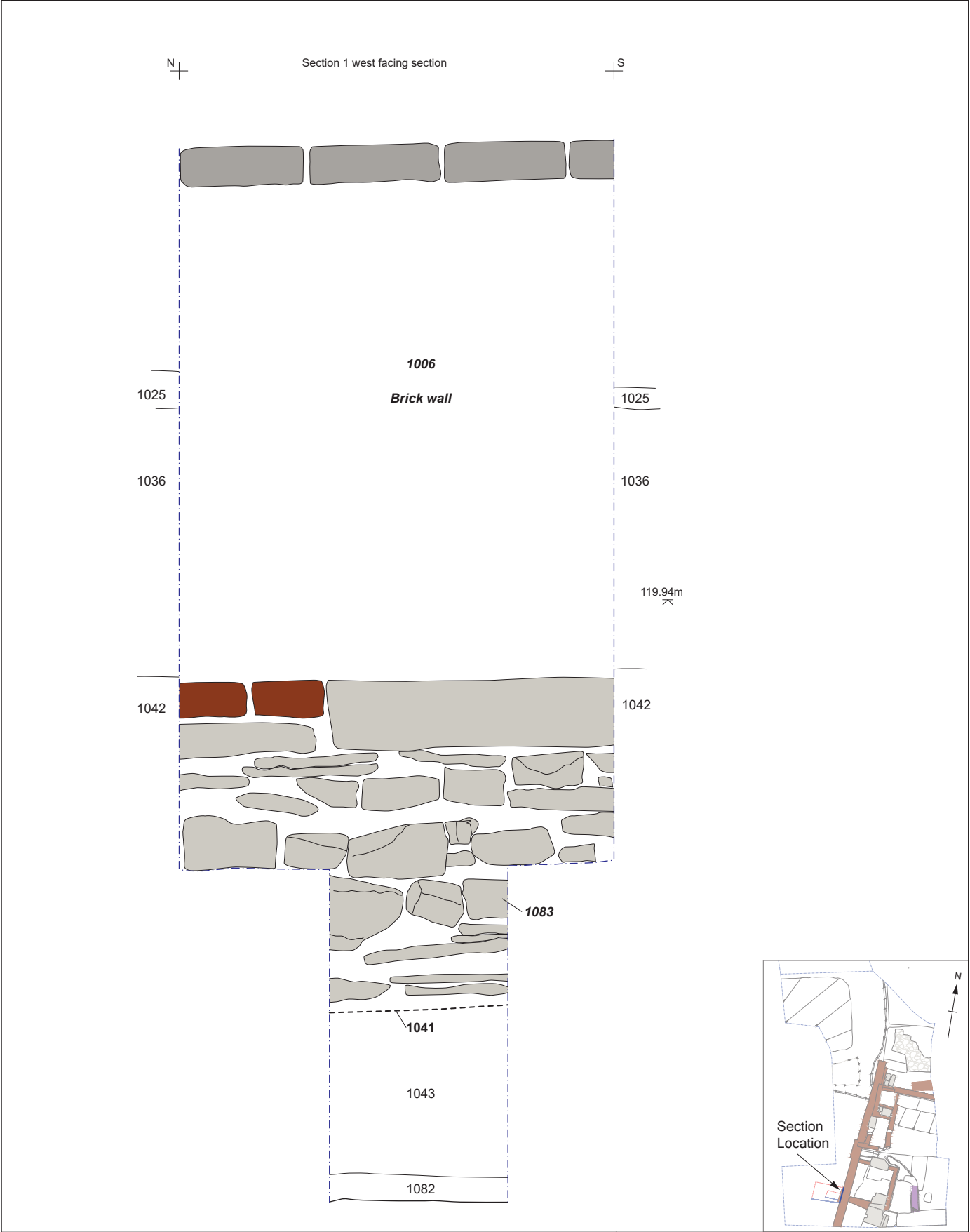


Figure 4: Section 1

- Key:
- Brick
 - Stone
 - Kerb
 - 1000 Fill / layer
 - 1000** Cut
 - 1000** Structure / group

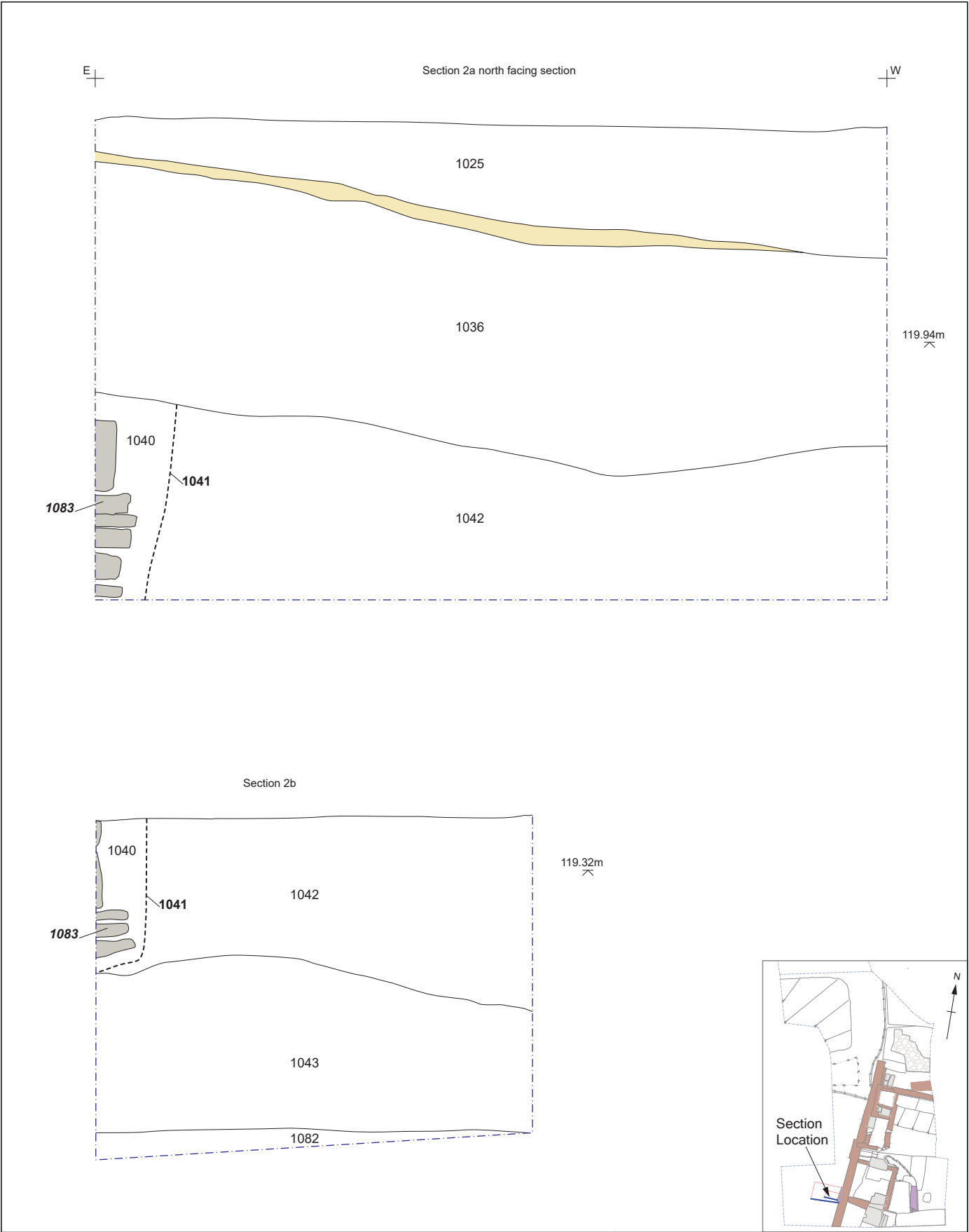
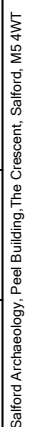
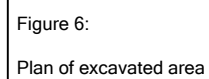


Figure 5:
Section 2a and 2b

Key:

	Brick	1000	Fill / layer
	Stone	1000	Cut
	Kerb	1000	Structure / group
	Mortar		



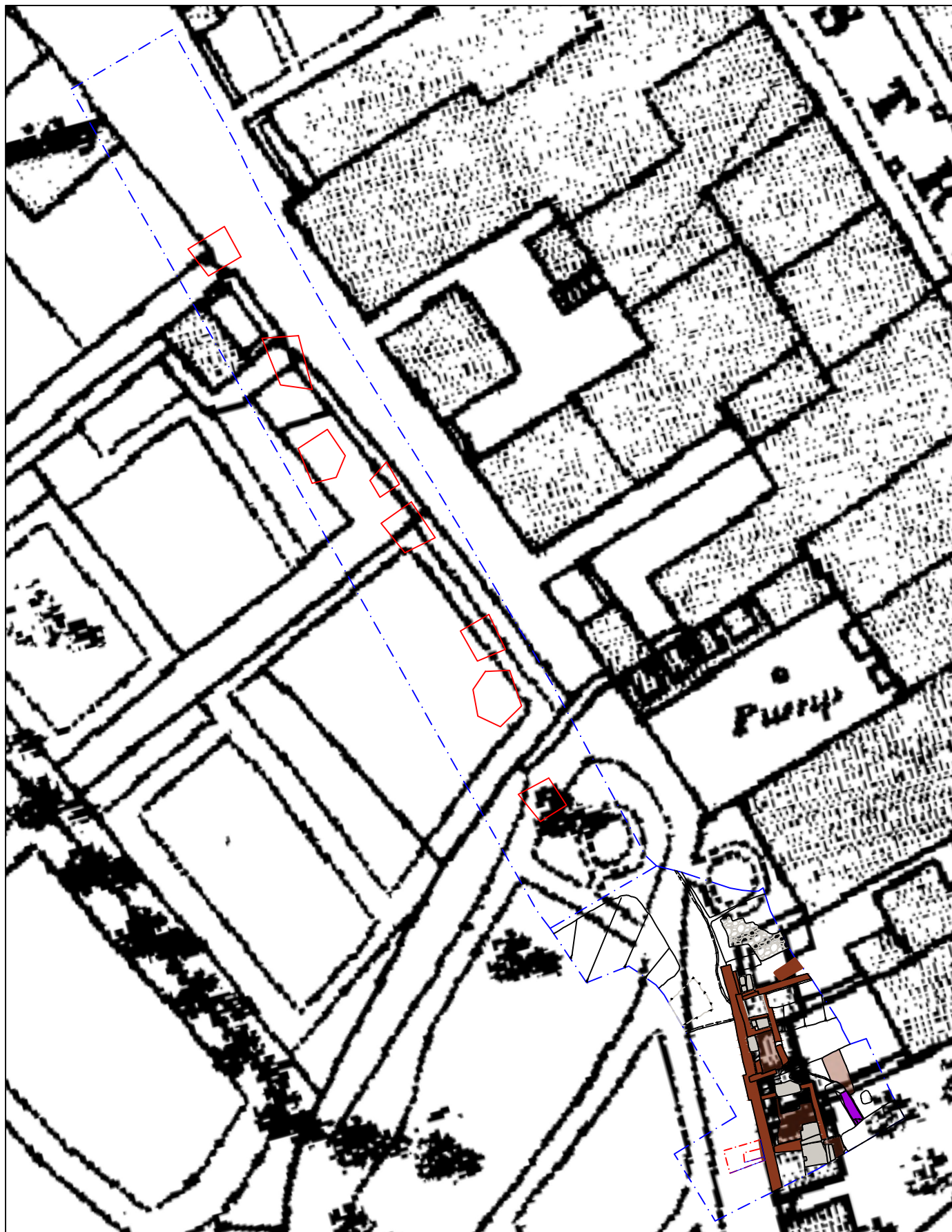


Figure 7:

Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1851



Key:

-  Brick wall
-  Brick surface
-  Flag / Stone
-  Cobbles
-  Drain
-  Test pit



**SALFORD
ARCHAEOLOGY**

0 10 m
Scale at A4 1:200

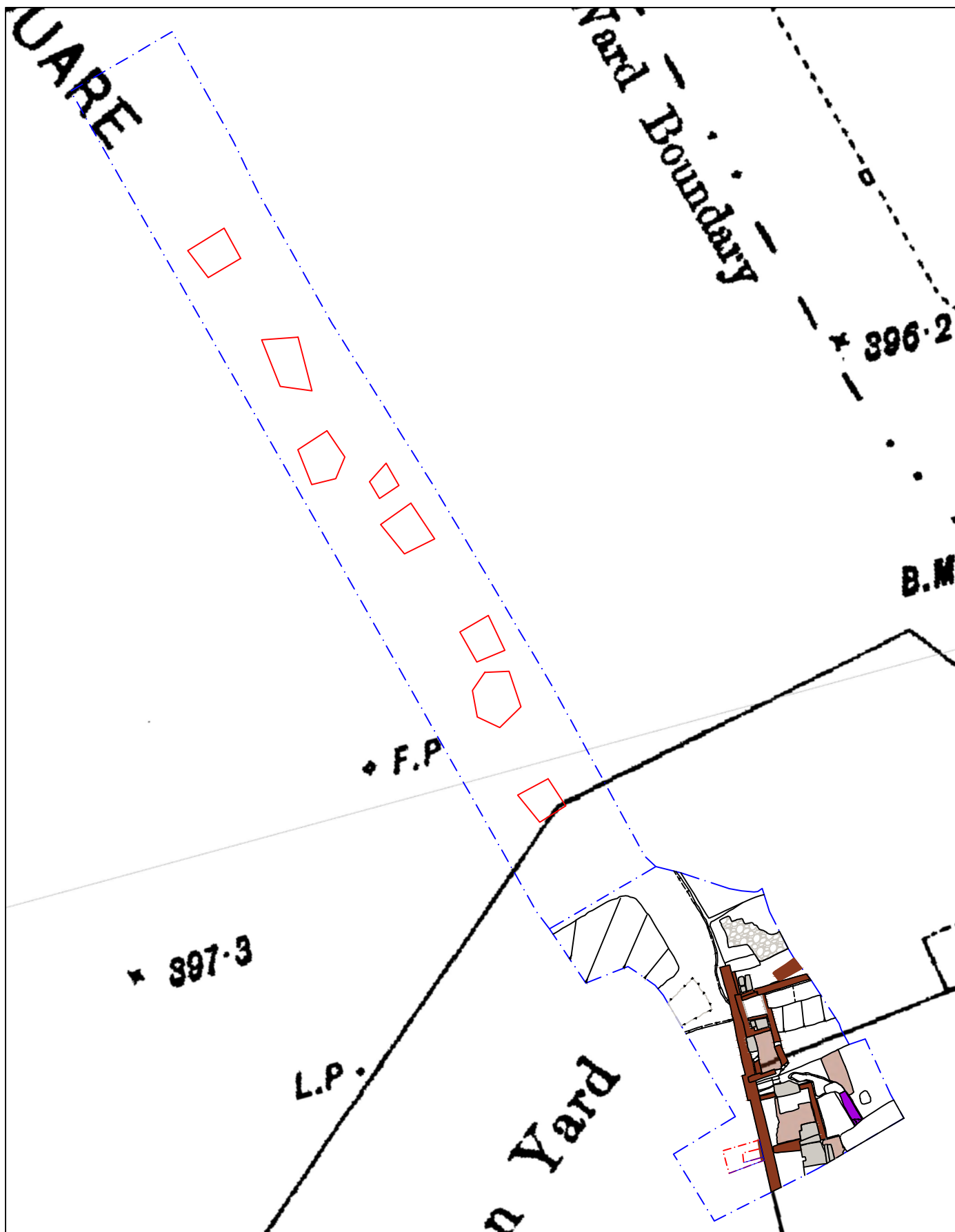


Figure 8

Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1892

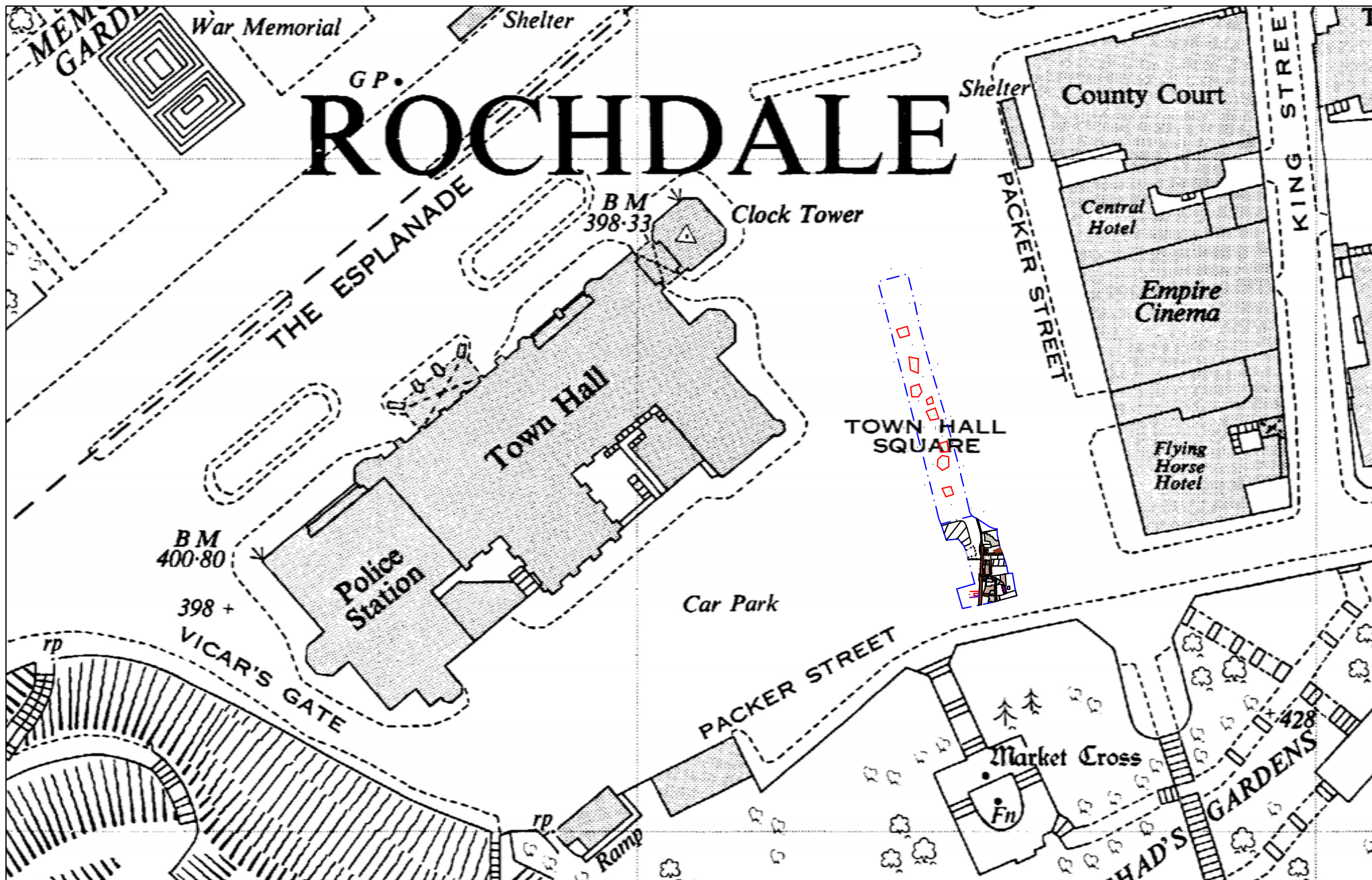
Key:

- Brick wall
- Brick surface
- Flag / Stone
- Cobbles
- Drain
- Test pit

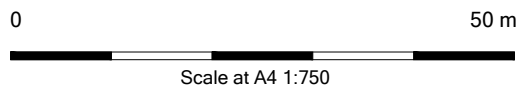


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0 10 m
Scale at A4 1:200



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Rochdale Town Hall

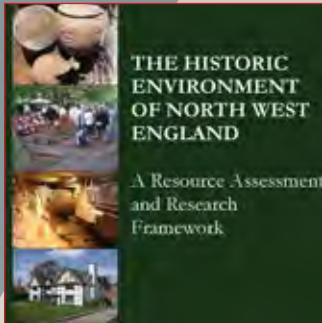
Site location superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1959



Key: Site location



CONSULTANCY



DESK-BASED ASSESSMENTS



WATCHING BRIEF & EVALUATION



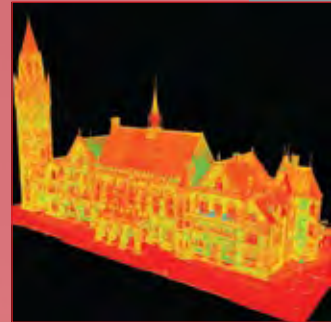
EXCAVATION



BUILDING SURVEY



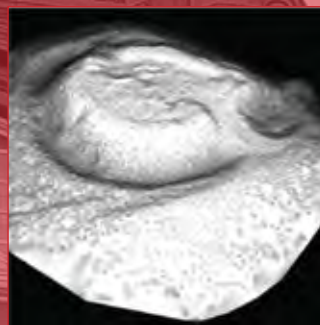
3D LASER SCANNING



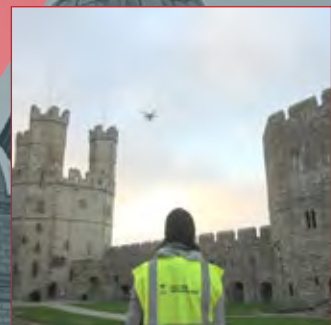
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



LANDSCAPE SURVEYS



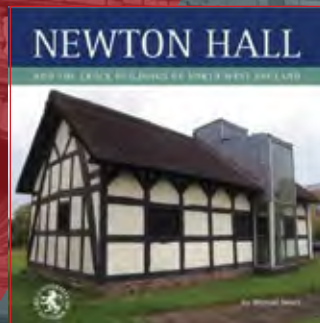
DRONE SURVEYS



WORKSHOPS & VOCATIONAL TRAINING



RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS



SEMINARS, DAYSCHOOLS CPD EVENTS

