

Land at Parkfield House, Manchester Old Road, Middleton

Archaeology Assessment

March 2023

Proposed Development on Land at Manchester Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale Borough



Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

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Rev. a	A. Martin and A. Nash	Date : 28.03.23	
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Local/National Authority Acceptance		Date:	

Muller Property Group
The Point
Crewe Road
Alsager
Cheshire
ST7 2GP

Nexus Heritage
Thursby House
Thursby Road
Bromborough
Wirral
CH62 3PW

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Note on Transcriptions of Historic Maps

Historical mapping, both Ordnance Survey (OS) and individual cartographer's work relies on the accuracy of the data input into it and the projection used to produce a two dimensional image from three dimensional data. Techniques of survey have evolved and improved over the centuries but pre-OS maps are of widely varying quality and their accuracy is limited by the technology used to create them.

Creating an overlay of historic mapping (including 1st and 2nd edition OS Maps) and modern OS data can never be completely accurate. Creating a good approximation relies on using digital technologies to estimate and extrapolate the projection, orientation and scale of original maps by correlating known points on the modern OS grid with the historic mapping. This georeferencing 'distorts' the historic mapping to fit the modern grid using a set of known points chosen by the cartographer/illustrator.

Modern digitally produced OS mapping has a stated accuracy tolerance. The most detailed mapping at 1:1,250 (urban) will have a relative error of $<\pm 0.5\text{m}$ up to 60m. On the ground that equates to an error between two points which are 60m apart on the ground. 95% of the time the scaled measurement would be between 59.1m and 60.9m (paraphrased from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/land-registry-plans-the-basis-of-land-registryapplications/land-registry-plans-the-basis-of-land-registry-plans-practice-guide-40-supplement-1>.)

CONTENTS:

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND PEDOLOGICAL BACKGROUND ..	4
3.	LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND	8
4.	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	11
5.	AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS.....	27
6.	PHOTOGRAPHS.....	29
7.	SITE CONDITIONS	31
8.	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDENTIFIED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS	38
9.	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS	41
10.	CONCLUSIONS	45
11.	SOURCES	48

FIGURES:

Fig 1	Site Location Map
Fig 2	Site Plan
Fig 3	Location of Archaeological Monuments within 1,000m of the Site.
Fig 4	Yate's Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1786
Fig 5	Plan of the Township of Middleton, in the Parish of Middleton in the County of Lancaster, 1839 (Tithe Map)
Fig 6	Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI, 6 inches to 1 mile, Surveyed 1844-1845, Published 1848
Fig 7	Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1889 to 1891, Published 1893
Fig 8	Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1907, Published 1909
Fig 9	Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 6 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1915, Published 1923
Fig 10	Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1932, Published 1934
Fig 11	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500, 1968-1968
Fig 12	Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1984
Fig 13	Aerial Photograph, Limefield, Middleton, 1926 (BfA Image ref. EPW016441)
Fig 14	Photograph Index Plan
Fig 15	Proposed Site Plan Showing Areas of Potential Archaeological Impact

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Index of Archaeological Monuments within the Assessment Area as Plotted on Fig. 3

1. INTRODUCTION

Muller Property Group (the Applicant) has commissioned Nexus Heritage to prepare an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (hereafter the Assessment) for an area of land at Manchester Old Road, Middleton (hereafter the 'Site') for which planning permission is being sought for residential development in the form of a care home and town houses.

The Site includes a derelict and unused built structure complex - Parkfield House - areas of tarmacadam hardstanding previously used for car-parking, landscaping and perimeter boundary treatments in the form of stone-built walls and steel palisade security fencing

It is understood that the Council wishes to understand the implications of the proposed development for the archaeological resource. Accordingly, the Applicant has arranged for the preparation of a suitable assessment in order to inform the relevant parties.

The aim of this Assessment is to determine, in so far as is reasonable by desk-based research and a site visit, the presence or absence of archaeological monuments and the character, survival and state of preservation of such monuments on and in the vicinity of the Site.

The assessment comprises an examination of evidence secured from the Lancashire Record Office (LRO), the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (GMHER), Local Studies Section at Heywood and Middleton Libraries and other source repositories as appropriate. A Site visit and walk-over survey were undertaken.

Based on research undertaken for the Assessment, this report highlights any potential direct and indirect impacts to any archaeological monuments. This Assessment has been undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' document, *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2020).

In archaeological terms there is some interest at the Site, and the archaeological potential would appear to be related to Park Field House and its grounds/gardens. Park Field House was a detached dwelling built in the late Georgian period and after serving as a family home was sold to Middleton Council and became the Town Hall from 1925 until 1980 before being bought by the North West Water Authority. It was demolished in 1978.

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2. LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND PEDOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Location

The Site is situated to the north of Manchester Old Road in Middleton, in the Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester (Fig. 1).

The Site is centred, approximately, at National Grid Reference SD 86276 05572 (Fig. 2) and extends to an area of *c.* 11,279.4m² (1.127ha).

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Organisation	Nexus Heritage
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Topography

The Site consists of single parcel of land which includes a derelict four-storey commercial building occupying a plot on the western part of the site. This building, Parkfield House, was constructed in 1965 as the new Town Hall and has been provided with car parking areas laid to hardstanding and some landscaping in the form of discrete areas of tree and bush planting.

The Site is secured by fencing with numerous semi/mature trees shrubs along the boundaries.

The Site is bordered to the west by the Manchester Old Road War memorial (a Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1415410) and the rear gardens of domestic dwellings on Parkfield Drive; to the south by Manchester Old Road; to the east by a hardstanding parking area for Limefield Playing Fields; and to the north by Limefield Playing Fields.

Geology

The British Geological Survey Geology Viewer (<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/>) records the bedrock at the Site as the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation – comprising mudstone, siltstone and sandstone – a sedimentary bedrock formed between 319 and 318 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.

The superficial deposits are recorded as Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits of Devensian sand and gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

Soils

The Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute (CSAI) Soilsapes Viewer (<http://www.landis.org.uk/soilsapes/>) maps the soil cover at the Site as Freely draining slightly acid sandy soils.

Site Investigation

No known archaeological interventions have taken place on Site.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

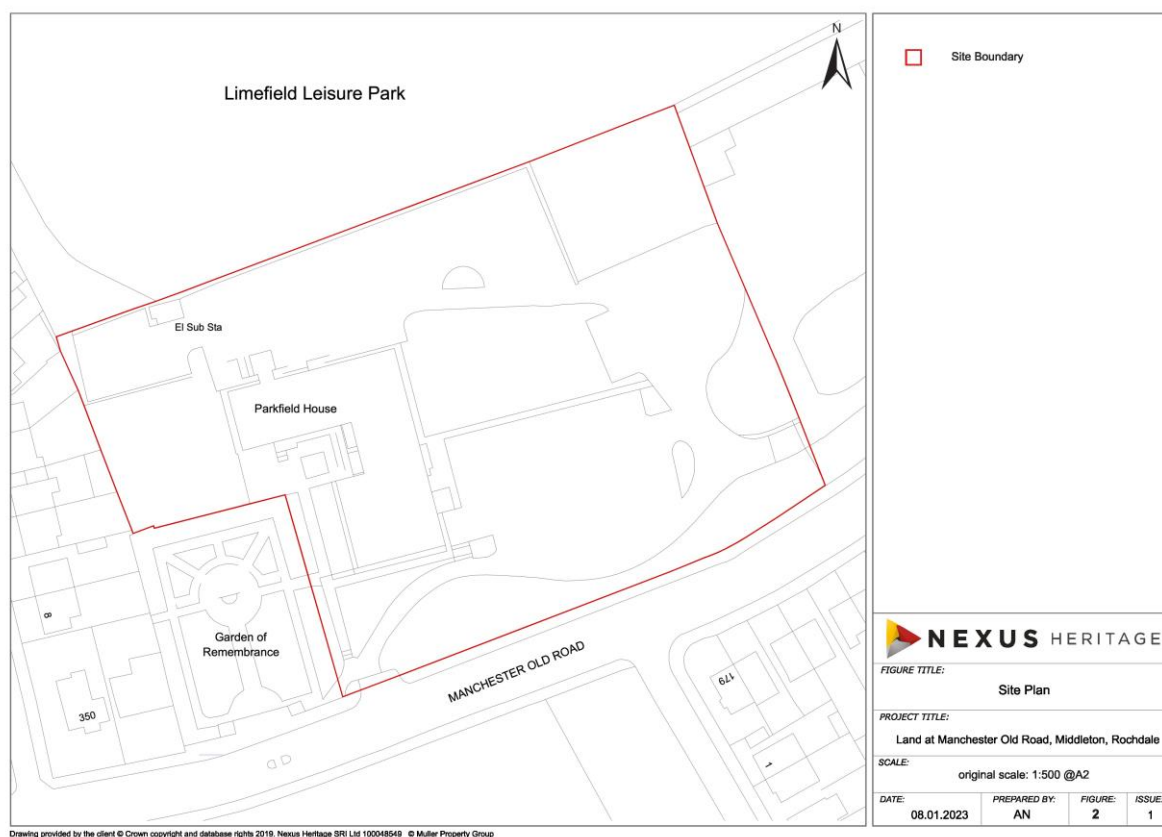


Figure 2: Site Plan

3. LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

Legislation

At the national level, the principal legislation governing the protection and enhancement of archaeological monuments of national importance is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The 1979 Act provides protection to Scheduled Monuments. The consent of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is required for works of demolition, destruction to or damage to a Scheduled Monument. There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Site or within 1km of the Site.

Other known sites of archaeological interest can be entered onto county-based Historic Environment Records under the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*.

National Planning Policy

The place of heritage assets (both non-designated and designated)¹ within the planning system is informed by the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF).

Various principles and policies related to heritage and archaeology are set out in the NPPF which guide local planning authorities with respect to the wider historic environment.

The following paragraphs from NPPF are particularly relevant and are quoted in full:

"Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value⁶⁶. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations." Para 189

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation." Para. 194.

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal." Para. 195.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>) provides advice on the range of designated and non-designated heritage assets, which include World Heritage Sites (designated), Scheduled Monuments (designated) and archaeological monuments (non-designated).

*"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."* Para. 197.

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance." Para. 199.

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."* Para. 200.

It should be noted that substantial harm is a high test which has been held to be "tantamount to destruction" (Bedford v SOS and Nuon [2013] EWHC 2847 (Admin)).

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."* Para. 201.

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use." Para. 202.

"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset." Para. 203.

In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority must have regard to the national policy framework detailed in NPPF and other material considerations.

Local Planning Policy

With respect to local planning policy the *Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy, 2016*, policy P2 applies, particularly clause a, item ii and clause b of limb 2.

2. We will protect the borough's heritage by:

a. Conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:

ii. Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments;

b. Conserving, enhancing and utilising other non-statutory heritage assets of local interest, be they buildings, parks, gardens or archaeological sites, including promoting their sensitive restoration;

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

The following section is a summary of the heritage evidence found within a 1,000m radius of the Site; this wider area is referred to as the 'Assessment Area'. The evidence has been compiled from the GMHER, LA and Local Studies Section at Heywood and Middleton Libraries which provide an indication of the character, distribution and survival of any potential archaeological monuments within and in the vicinity of the Site and helps define the significance of any identified monuments. The locations of the identified assets within the Assessment Area are shown in Figure 3 below and basic details for the archaeological monuments are also detailed in a gazetteer (Appendix A).

In summary, the GMHER records 20 archaeological monuments (Comprising Finds Spots, Monuments and Places) within the Assessment Area, none of which is within the Site (Fig. 3).

The GMHER correlates the Site with two parcels of Historic Landscape Character. The majority of the Site is characterised as *20th century commercial (offices)* and there is another parcel in the north-eastern corner which is labelled as *20th century playing fields/recreation ground*. Neither of these historic landscape identifications has any particular historical value.

For the sake of baseline clarity it should be noted that there are no Scheduled Monuments wholly or partly within in the Site or in the Assessment Area; no World Heritage Sites wholly or partly within in the Site or in the Assessment Area; no Registered Parks/Gardens wholly or partly within in the Site or in the Assessment Area; and no Registered Battlefields wholly or partly within in the Site or the Assessment Area.

The background below includes a statement on the assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the Site. These assessments are based on information on archaeological monuments in the vicinity, the characteristics of current and historic land-use, and available information on the condition and nature of sub-surface deposits. The assessments also take into account any pre-existing disturbance to the surface and near surface deposits at the Site which are likely to have compromised the survival of archaeological remains. The potential is graded from negligible, to low, moderate and high. A negligible potential indicates that archaeological remains are very unlikely to be present; low potential reflects a depressed likelihood for the preservation of archaeological remains; moderate represents an average potential; and high would reflect a demonstrable potential for the survival of archaeological remains.

Previous Archaeological/Heritage Investigations

Several previous archaeological/heritage interventions have taken place within the Assessment Area, but none within the Site. These are commonly referred to as 'Events' and include programmes of historic buildings recording, archaeological desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation

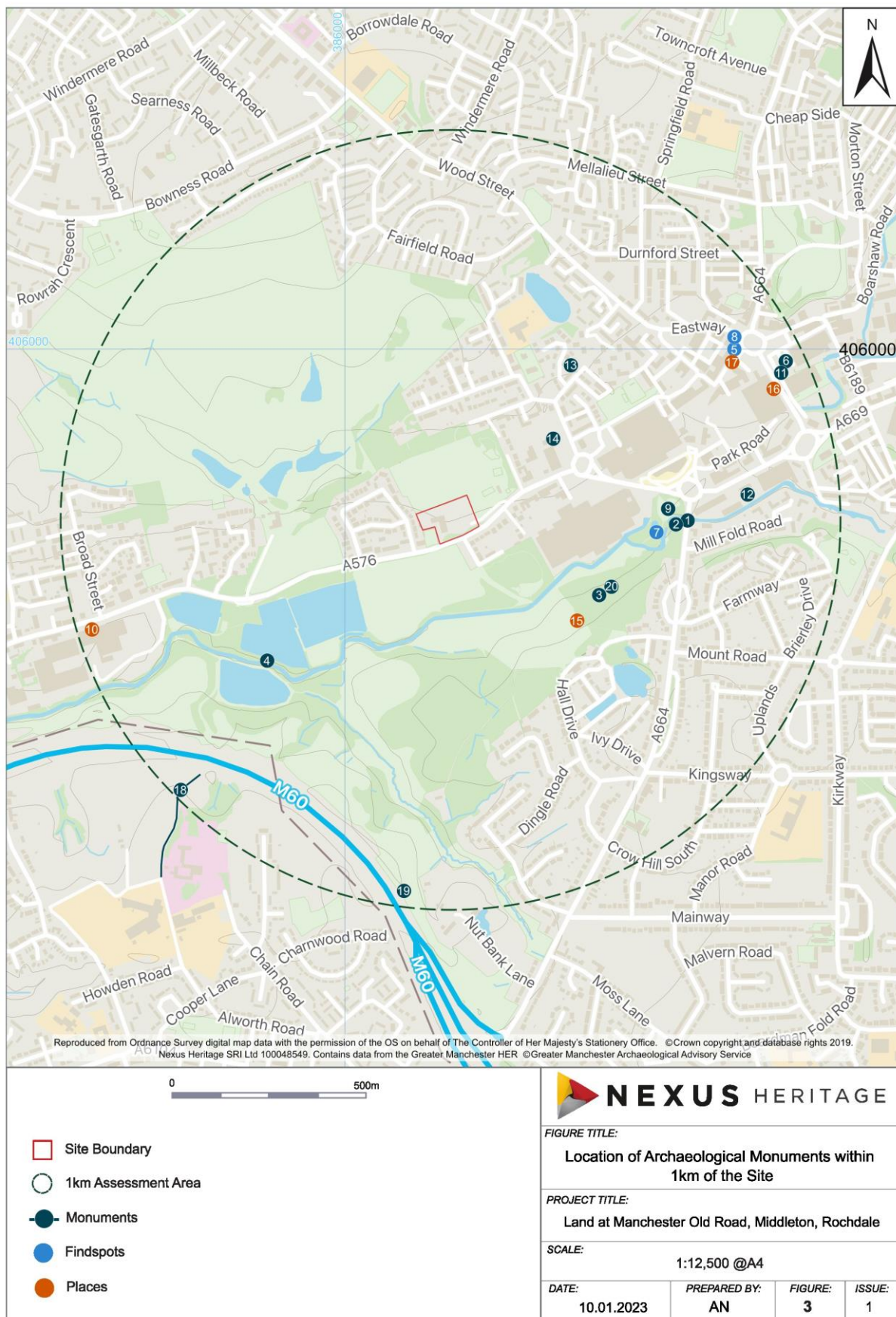


Figure 3: Location of Archaeological Monuments within 1km of the Site

Prehistoric Period: Palaeolithic (500,000 - 12,000 BCE), Mesolithic (12,000 – 4,000 BCE) and Neolithic (4,000 – 1,800 BCE), Bronze Age (1,800 - 600 BCE), Iron Age (600 BCE - 43 CE)

There are no recorded Prehistoric Period archaeological sites or finds within the Site but in the Assessment Area there is an antiquarian report of the find of a Neolithic Stone Hammer find at Middleton (GMHER PRN 2436.1.0, Gaz. 5, Fig. 3). The GMHER notes that small polished Neolithic stone hammer was found in Middleton prior to 1887 in a gravel pit but that the exact findspot is not known.

Given this background there is a negligible potential for the presence of archaeological remains dating to the Prehistoric Period to be present on the Site.

Romano-British Period (43- 410 CE).

The Romano-British period is very well represented in the archaeological record of north-west England and many industrial and military sites, linked by a road network, have been intensively investigated.

There are no records of any Romano-British Period features within the Site but there are two find spot of Roman-British period artefacts within the Assessment Area. The GMHER notes the discovery of Roman Pottery (a possible Roman clay jug found before 1897 at a depth of 8 feet in sand and gravel at Middleton. (GMHER PRN 2744.1.0, Gaz. 8, Fig. 3) and reports the find of a coin, a bronze Antoninianus of Victorinus 268–70 CE found near the junction of the river Irk and the Wince Brook in 1987 (GMHER PRN 2681.1.0, Gaz. 7, Fig. 3).

With respect to the Roman road network the nearest known major Roman road to the Site is that from Manchester to Ribchester (Margary 7b) but this extends on south-east to north-west alignment to the west of Bury.

The Site is therefore, in the vicinity of Roman-British artefacts but a considerable distance from the known Roman road network. The potential for archaeological remains of the Roman-British period being present on Site is negligible/low.

Early Medieval Period (410 - 1066 CE)

There are no confirmed archaeological remains from the Saxon/early medieval period recorded in the Site. However, on the basis of place-name evidence the village and township of Middleton would appear to have origins in the early-medieval period. Middleton can, be rendered as 'middle farm/settlement' deriving from the Old English elements *middel* (middle) and *tūn* (an enclosure, farmstead, village, estate) (<http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Lancashire/Middleton>).

The early-medieval period can be poorly represented, especially through artefactual evidence, and the absence of any known archaeological remains for the period in the Site should not necessarily be taken as an indication of a lack of activity during this period. The place-name evidence nevertheless suggests the presence of a community or communities in the area during the period, but the historic core of Middleton is some distance to the east of the Site. The historic and archaeological evidence for the Assessment Area for this period suggests, however, that the archaeological potential for the Site for the Saxon/Early Medieval Period is negligible.

Medieval Period (1066 - 1540 CE)

There are no medieval find spots sites recorded within the Site. However, there are monuments within the Assessment Area with possible medieval origins. The site of Nut Bank Cottages (GMHER PRN 2308.1.0, Gaz. 19, Fig. 3) on Nut Bank Lane is thought to be the site of Nut Farm, which may have medieval origins. The GMHER notes that five archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated at the Site of Nut Bank Cottages in advance of motorway development works in 1994. These revealed no archaeological remains that could be associated with any form of pre-18th century settlement.

The GMHER notes that settlement centre at Rhodes, to the west of the Site (GMHER PRN 5228.1.0, Gaz. 10, Fig. 3) may trace its origins to the medieval period. Rhodes is mapped on the Yate's map of the County Palatine of Lancaster in 1786 – rendered as 'Roads'.

Middleton has no entry in the Domesday Book and the nearest settlement centres to the Site mentioned in the Domesday Book are Rochdale, Manchester and Radcliffe. All of these were settlements in the Hundred of Salford and the county of Cheshire.

The Victoria County History (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol5/pp161-169>) notes that during the 12th century formed part of the Montbegon fee of Tottington, held later by the Lacys and the Earls and Dukes of Lancaster. The tenants adopted the local surname and the earliest on record is Roger de Middleton. In 1212 he held the fee of one knight (in Middleton) from Roger de Montbegon. His son Robert succeeded, but died by 1242, when his heir held the knight's fee in Middleton. This heir was his son Roger, who in 1243 had a suit with Geoffrey de Middleton respecting the third part of four plough-lands in Middleton. It was a later Roger de Middleton who appears in various ways as lord of the manor in the last quarter of the century who was succeeded by a son, Roger.

In 1313 Roger de Middleton and Agnes his wife made a settlement of the manor, in default of male issue, to his daughters in succession—Maud, Ellen, Alice, Margaret, Margery, and Joan. Roger died in August 1322, his widow Agnes died during the 1350s and the manor went to the representative of the second daughter, Maud. Maud's right passed to her son John de Barton, after whom Thomas de Barton whose grandson died in 1398 seised of the manor of Middleton. The heir was his son Richard, born at Middleton in 1386.

The further descent of the manor is somewhat uncertain but during the mid-15th century a great part of the estate was settled upon the heirs of 'Richard Barton, of Middleton. By 1480 the greater part of the Middleton estate was held by Sir Ralph Ashton and Margery his wife; but Alice Barton widow of Richard, Margery Barton widow of John, and Richard and Ralph Barton, held various messuages and lands 'of the inheritance of Margery.' Early in 1484 he made a lease to Richard his son for twenty years of the manor of Middleton who held the manor of Middleton until his death in 1507. Richard Ashton, his son succeeded and in 1523 he received a perpetual grant of a leet or view of frankpledge from the King in the vill of Middleton, with courts, fines, and amercements belonging; also the park and free warren in his demesne lands in the manor, with all liberties.

The historic and archaeological evidence for the Assessment Area for this period suggests, however, that the archaeological potential for the Assessment Site for the Medieval Period is negligible-low.

Post Medieval Period (1541 – 1750CE)

Sir Richard Ashton died 11 January 1548–9, and was buried at Middleton. His heir Richard died in 1550 and his son, another Richard, died in 1563. His son, yet another Richard died in 1617 and his son, perhaps not surprising named Richard died in 1618, leaving as heir his son, refreshingly named Ralph, then twelve years of age. In the Civil War Ralph took a leading part on the Parliamentary side and was appointed a deputy lieutenant of Lancashire in 1642. He died 1650, and was buried at Middleton. His second son, Ralph became the new lord of Middleton but died five years later and was succeeded by his son Ralph, who died in 1716. Having no son he was succeeded at Middleton by his nephew Ralph.

The GMHER records no post-medieval archaeological monuments, find-spots or places within the Site, but in the wider Assessment Area notes that Alkrington Hall Park, (GMHER PRN 2360.1.1, Gaz. 15, Fig. 3) and the site of Middleton Deer Park (GMHER PRN 2676.1.0, Gaz. 17, Fig. 3) can probably trace their origins to this period.

Industrial Period (1750 CE– present)

The GMHER records no Industrial Period archaeological monuments, find-spots or places within the Site but the known archaeological and heritage assets within Assessment Area are overwhelmingly characterised by features of this period and include the archaeological monuments and sites of dwellings, communication routes, dye works, a hippodrome, mills, finishing works and a vault (associated with Alkrington Hall).

A late 17th century small-scale map of the area, the Yates' map of 1786 (Fig. 4), appears to show no building at the location of Park Field House, suggesting that that Park Field House was, at the earliest a late 18th century structure built after 1786. This would, nevertheless, make it a Georgian construction, perhaps during the reign of George III. It also shows that the area in which the Site sits was regarded as parkland.

Some of the first available large-scale cartographic sources for the area to depict the Site and its wider landscape include Tithe Map, more formally titled *Plan of the Township of Middleton, in the Parish of Middleton in the County of Lancaster*, 1839 (Fig. 5) which shows the Site ranging over three individual land parcels, one of which contains a structural complex of Park Field House², a smaller and separate range to the north and a third, small structure a distance to the north-east.

Park Field House was the residence of Thomas Ashton JP in 1848 but was sold to Harvey Heywood, JP of Springvale House, Tong, who also owned the farm adjoining Park Field, John Lee Fold. Harvey Heywood became the first Mayor of Middleton in 1886. Harvey Heywood died in 1920 and Mrs Heywood sold the house in 1925. Park Field House was home to Middleton's Town Hall from 1925 until 1980 before being bought by the North West Water Authority. It was demolished in 1978.

Park Field House was originally a three bay Georgian block with a canted bay to the east and a porch with Tuscan pilasters (<https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-house>). It was later extended to the west by two bays with a pediment on the west facade. The house

² The Site contained the now demolished Parkfield House and an extant structure also called Parkfield House. The first Parkfield House has, historically, been identified by the Ordnance Survey as 'Parkfield' and 'Park Field House'. In order to differentiate it from the extant Parkfield House it will be referred to as Park Field House in this document.

was enlarged in the mid-19th century with a long wing to the north-east of the main block, with another three storey wing of three bays by two at the end. There was a conservatory off the Drawing Room. Associated buildings included a gardener's cottage, stables, coach house and farm buildings. When it became the Town Hall for Middleton in 1925 it was modified

Under the precautionary principle it would be prudent to acknowledge that archaeological remains of Park Field House and its grounds and formal gardens may be present in the sub-surface of the Site. However, the construction of Parkfield House in the 1960s (see below) will have had a detrimental effect on archaeological remains of the walled garden.

The Ordnance Survey (OS) Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI, 6 inches to 1 mile, Surveyed 1844-1845, Published 1848 (Fig. 6) shows the Park Field House complex comprising eight individual buildings structures and what appears to be formal gardens to the west.

The OS Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1889 to 1891, Published 1893 (Fig. 7) shows changes to the Park Field House complex. The large structure to the north and close to Park Field House has been demolished and what appears to be a large ancillary block (no doubt the stable and coach house block, farm buildings and gardener's cottage), arranged in H-shaped plan-form, has been built to the north-east of the House. The informally laid out pleasure grounds remain to the west and the orthogonally laid out walled garden, with its glasshouse (identifiable by the crossed hatching which denotes a glass covering) is also clearly depicted.

The OS Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1907, Published 1909 (Fig. 8) is a less sophisticated projection and shows no changes to the Site.

The OS Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 6 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1915, Published 1923 (Fig. 9) shows no changes to the Site, and the surroundings appears to have remained static since 1909.

The OS Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1932, Published 1934 (Fig. 10) shows no changes to the Site.

The OS Map, 1:2,500, 1968-1969 (Fig. 11) highlights fundamental changes to the Site and the surroundings. Within the Site, Parkfield House has been constructed in 1965 and is labelled as Municipal Office³. To the north of the Municipal Office there are two buildings in the north-western corner of the Site. One of these is an electricity sub-station which remains on Site. Park Field House is identified as the Town Hall. The Park Field House gardens have been swept away for Parkfield House. To the north of Park Field House, in the north-eastern corner of the Site a playground complete with Public Conveniences has been laid out.

The Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1984 (Fig. 12) confirms the demolition (in 1978) of Park Field House.

Since the 1980's the Site has remained relatively static.

³ Parkfield House, was built as the new Town Hall to a design by the architectural practice of Lyons Israel and Ellis.



Approximate Site Location			
FIGURE TITLE:		Yates Map of Lancashire, 1786	
PROJECT TITLE:		Land at Manchester Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale	
SCALE:		original scale: unknown	
DATE:	PREPARED BY:	FIGURE:	ISSUE:
10.01.2023	AN	4	1

Fig. 4: Yate's Map of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1786

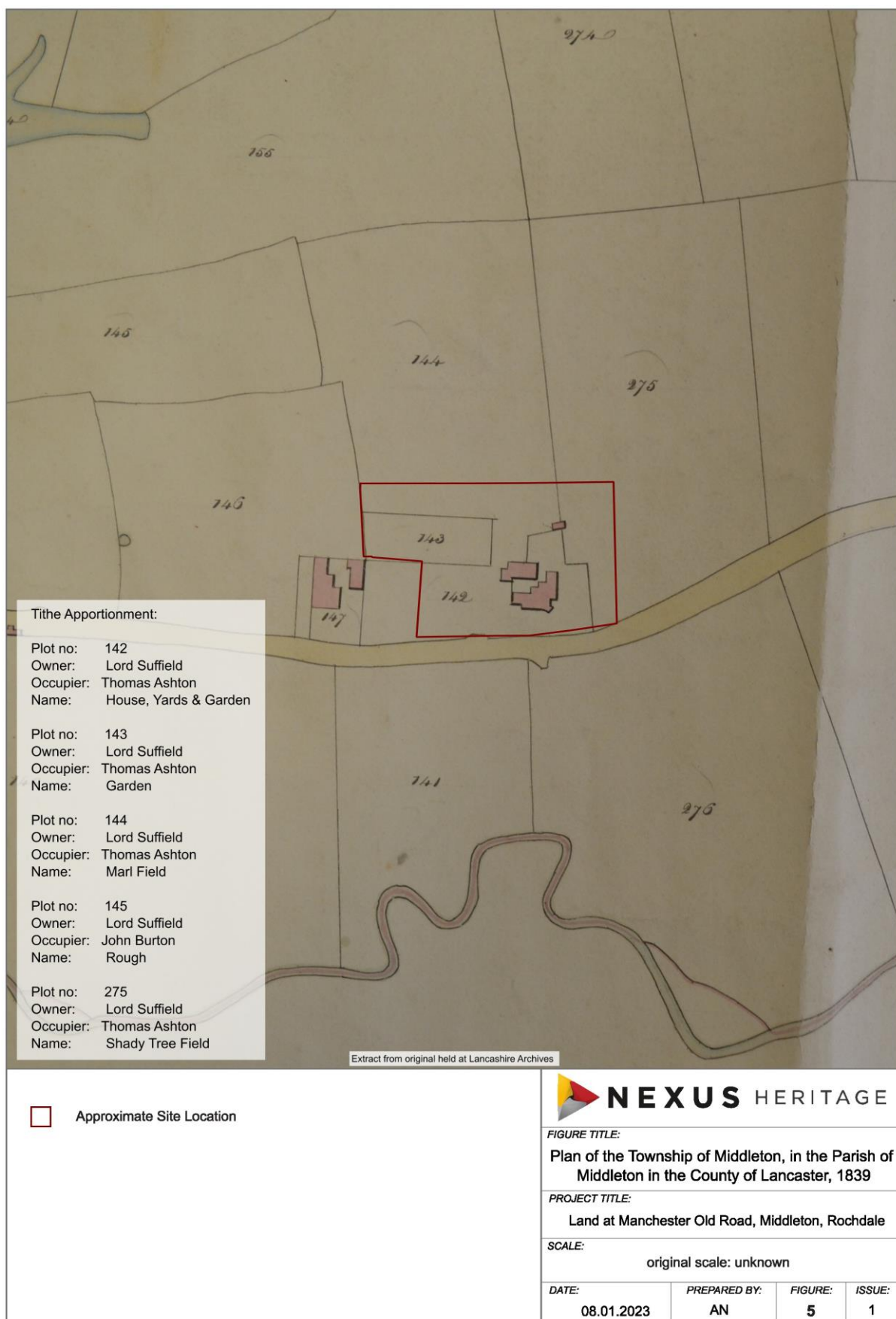


Fig. 5: Plan of the Township of Middleton, in the Parish of Middleton in the County of Lancaster, 1839 (Tithe Map)



Extract from original held at The National Library of Scotland and reproduced with permission under Creative Commons Licence 4.0. © Crown copyright. Nexus Heritage SRI Ltd 100048549.



Approximate Site Location



NEXUS HERITAGE

FIGURE TITLE:

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, sheet XCVI
surveyed: 1844-1845, published: 1848

PROJECT TITLE:

Land at Manchester Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale

SCALE:

original scale: 1:10,560

DATE:

10.01.2023

PREPARED BY:

AN

FIGURE:

6

ISSUE:

1

Fig. 6: Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI, 6 inches to 1 mile, Surveyed 1844-1845, Published 1848

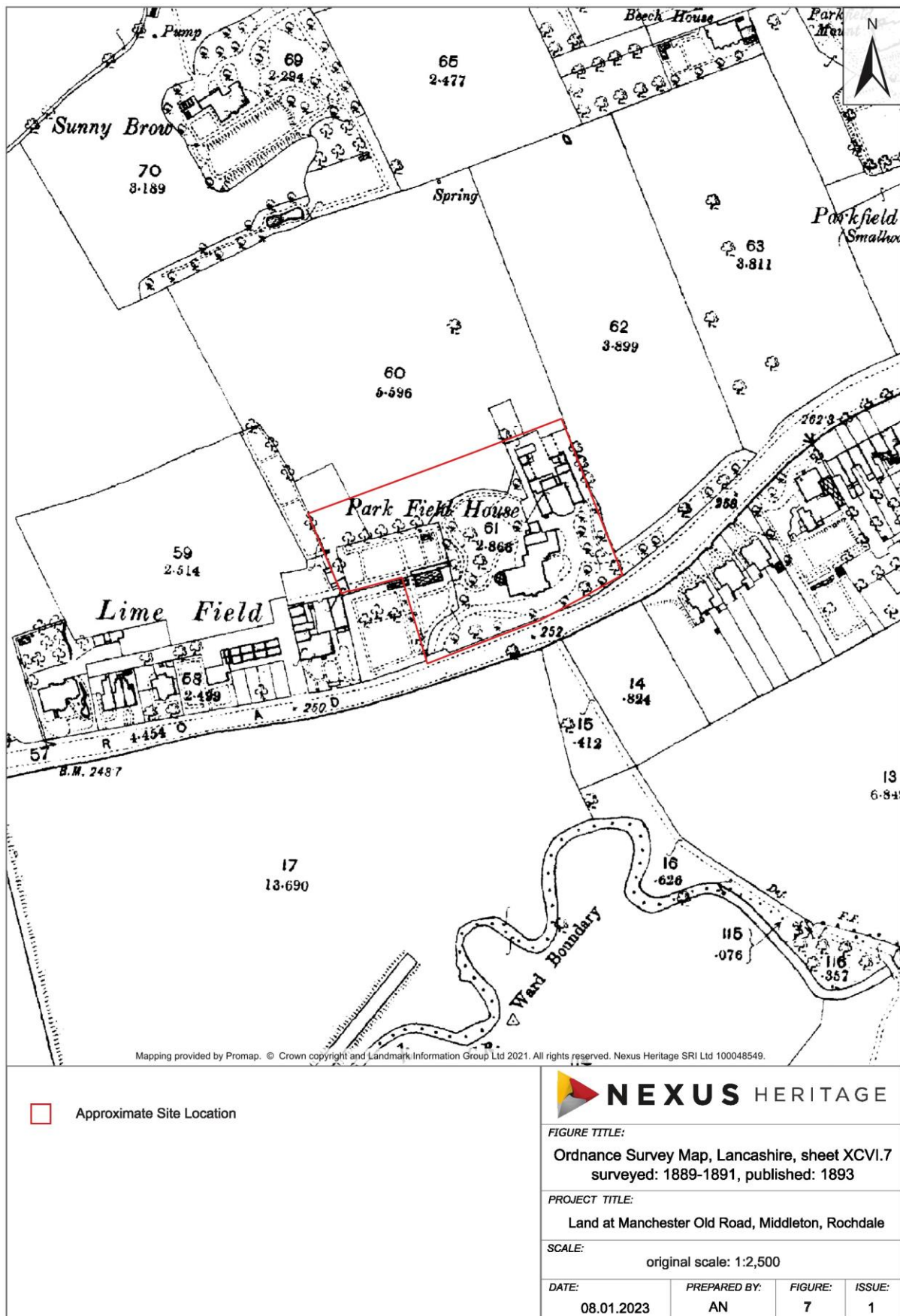


Fig. 7: Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1889 to 1891, Published 1893

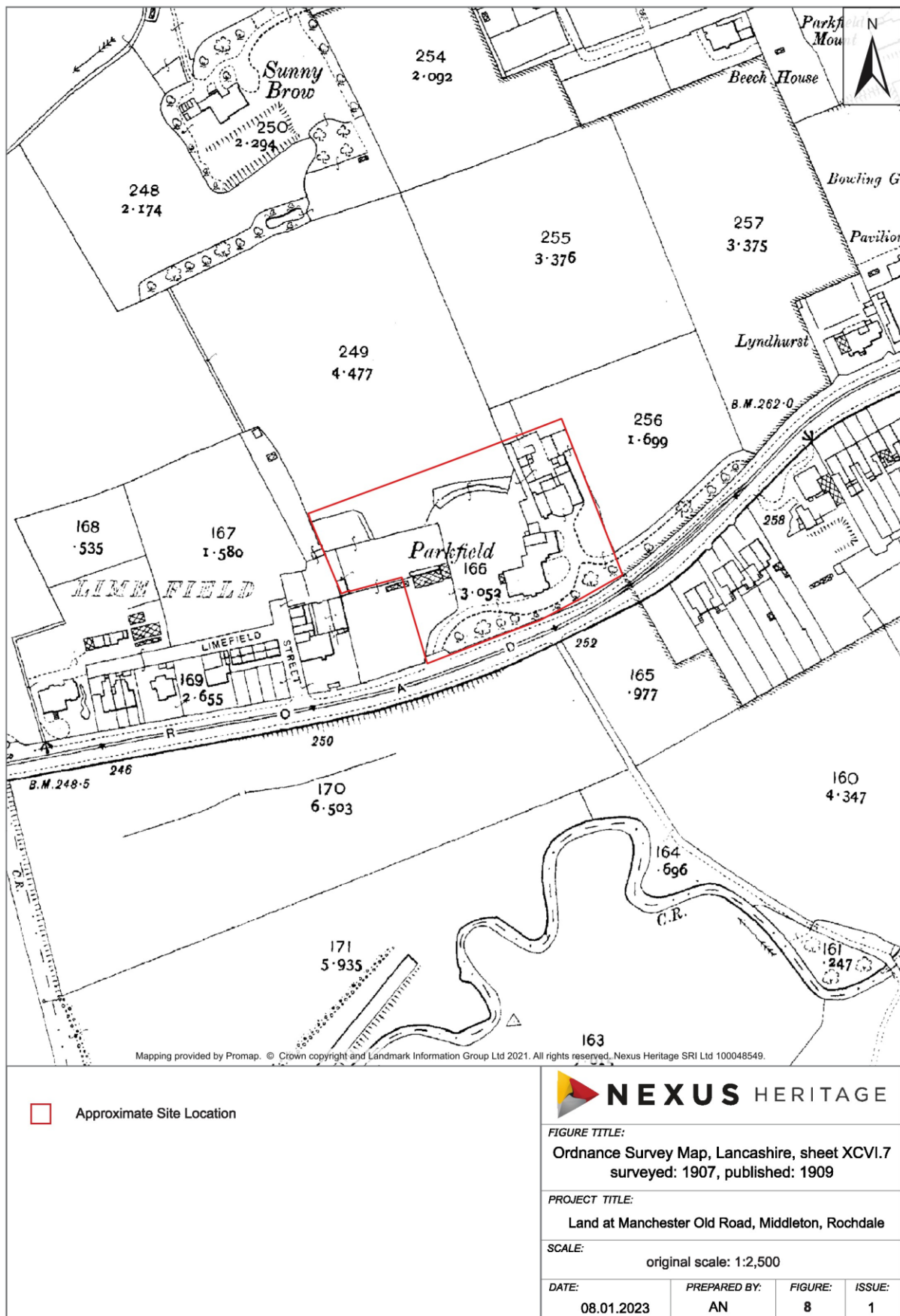


Fig. 8: Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1907, Published 1909



Fig. 9: Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 6 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1915, Published 1923

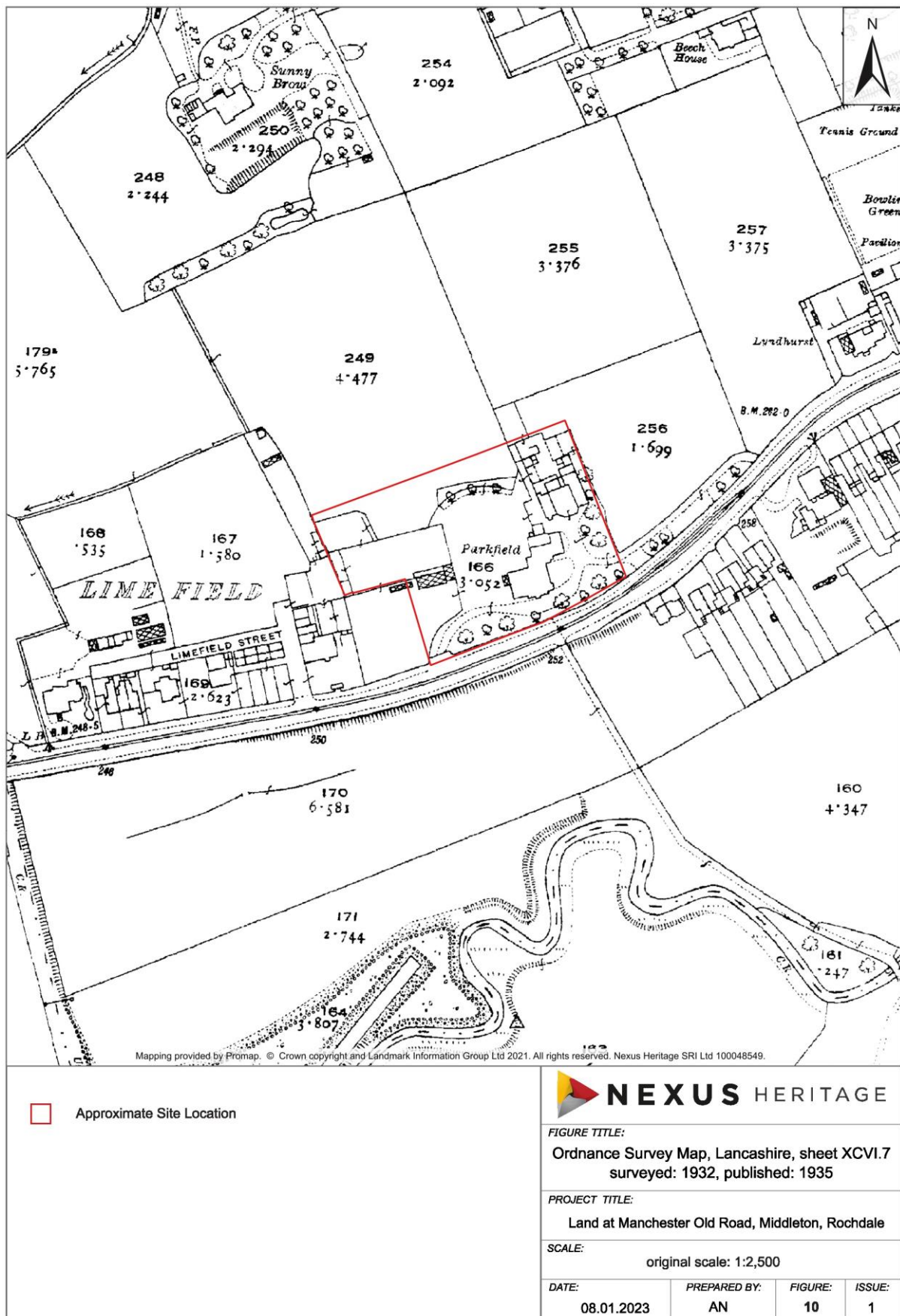


Fig. 10: Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inch to the mile, Surveyed 1932, Published 1934

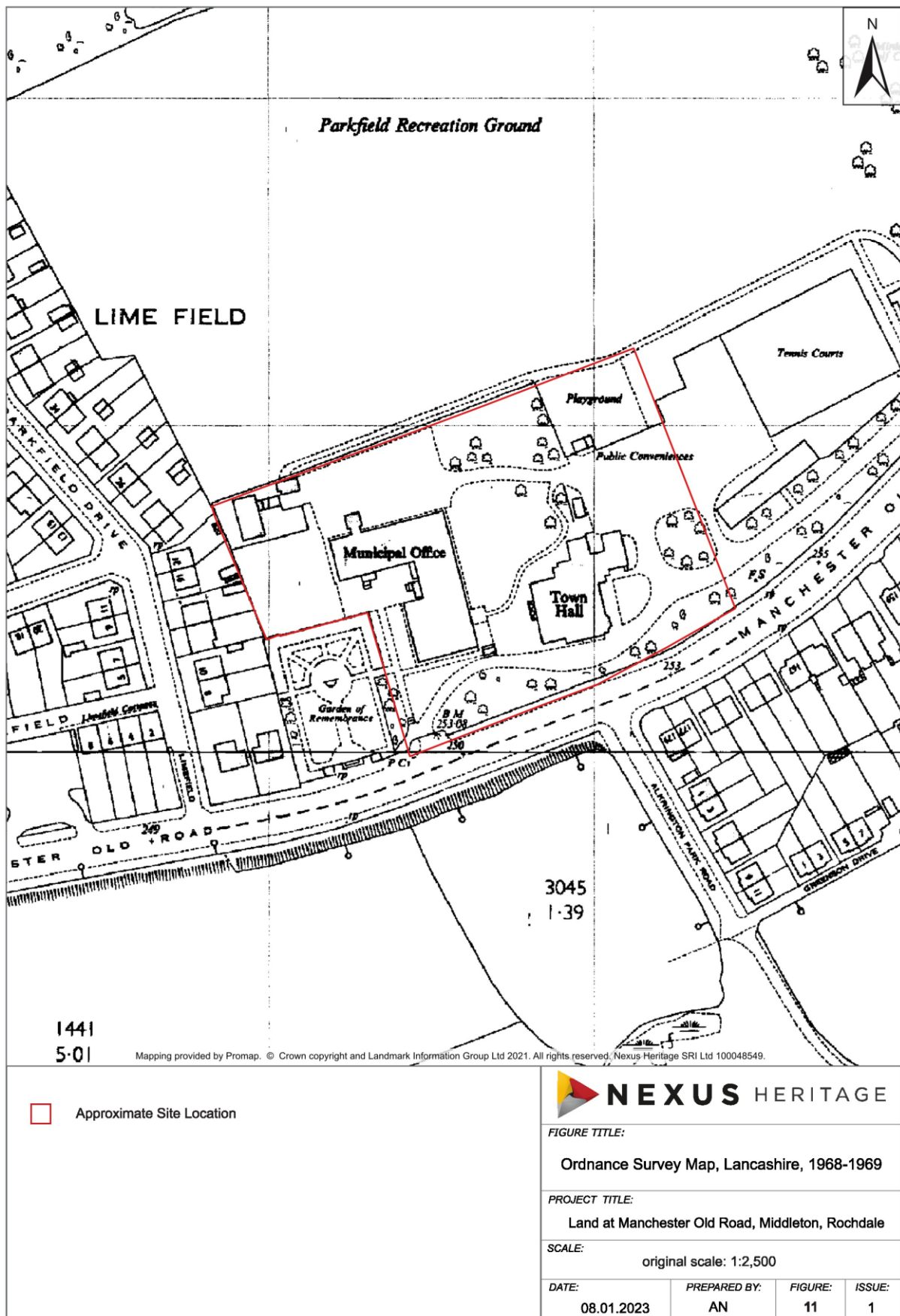


Fig. 11: Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500, 1968-1969

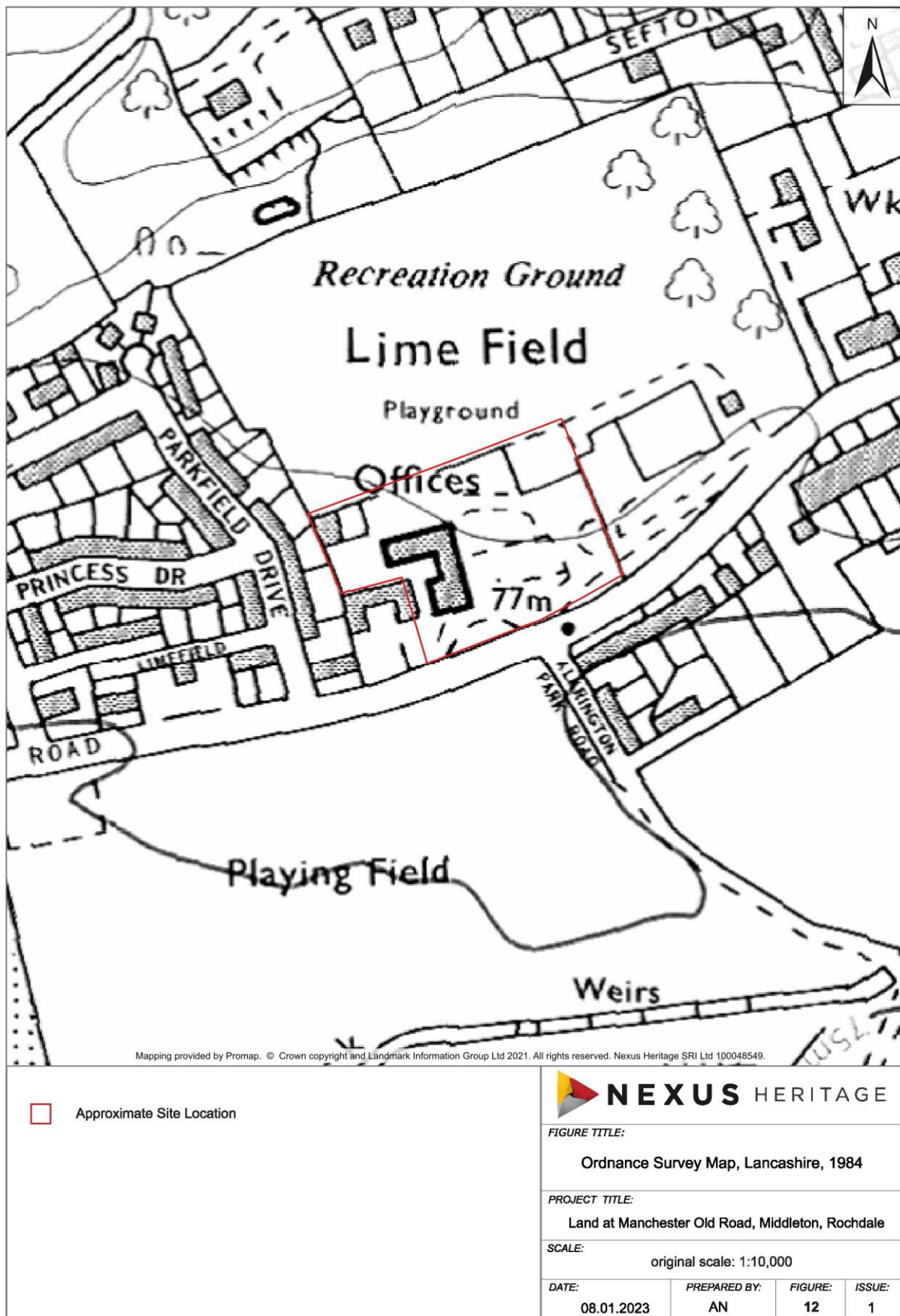


Fig. 12: Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1984

5. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

There is an aerial photograph of the Site on the Britain from Above website <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>. This image, from 1926, (Limefield, Middleton, 1926, BfA Image ref. EPW016441, Fig. 13 below), is particularly useful as it shows the Site prior to the construction of Parkfield House (1965) and the demolition of Park Field House (1978).

The image clearly shows Park Field House, its ancillary buildings, the grounds and walled garden. This photograph was taken the year after Park Field House was purchased and underwent a change of use to become Middleton Town Hall. The image also shows that part of the Site was once part of the field to the north of the Park Field House curtilage.



Fig. 13: Limefield, Middleton, 1926 (BfA Image ref. EPW016441)

6. PHOTOGRAPHS

A number of photographs of Park Field House are available on <https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-house>



North-facing elevation of Park Field House



West-facing elevation of Park Field House from the gardens



West-facing elevations of Park Field House form the walled gardens, also shows a greenhouse and lean-to utility buildings built against the garden wall

7. SITE CONDITIONS

A walk-over survey of the Site was undertaken on the 4 Nov. 2022 in bright weather conditions with moderate visibility.

The locations from which the photographs were taken and directions of view are shown in Figure 13.

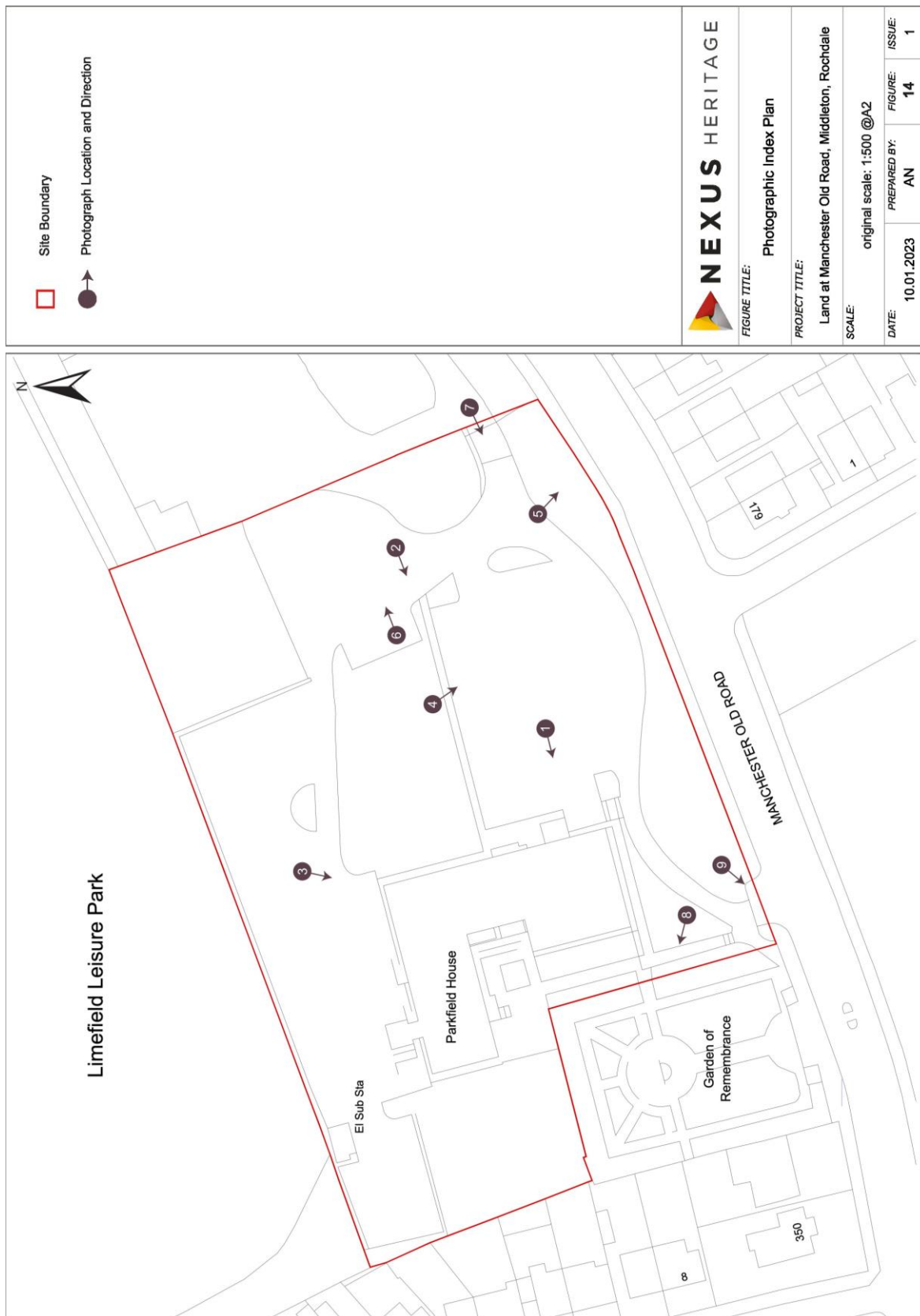




Plate 1: Sightline to the west showing the car parking area laid to hardstanding in front of the east-facing elevation of Parkfield House



Plate 2: Sightline to the west showing the car parking area laid to hardstanding in front of the east-facing elevation of Parkfield House and areas of landscape planting.



Plate 3: Sightline to the south-west towards the east-facing and north-facing elevations of Parkfield House highlighting the car parking areas laid to hardstanding.



Plate 4: Sightline to the south-west across the Parkfield House car park and landscaped area laid to lawn.



Plate 5: Sightline to the south-west across the Parkfield House sylvan margins.



Plate 6: Sightline to the east across areas of hardstanding car-parking and landscaping at Parkfield House



Plate 7: Sightline to the west into the vehicle and pedestrian entrance to the Site



Plate 8: Sightline to the north-east across an area of the Site laid to lawn and the boundary fence towards the War Memorial (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref. 1415410).



Plate 9: Sightline to the south-west towards the relict entrance to Parkfield House from which the carriage drive extended towards the dwelling and stables/coach house

8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDENTIFIED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS

The Park Field House complex warrants a significance assessments as it is a possible archaeological monument for which a potential impact can be reasonably predicted. The potential impact, will be explored below.

There are a number of different methodological approaches that can used to estimate the significance of archaeological monuments, and the one used here proceeds on the basis that the significance is the sum of the cultural heritage values which can be ascribed to the monument. The cultural heritage value is, in turn the sum of four component interests-evidential, historical, archaeological, aesthetic and communal (Historic England 2008).

In the first instance it is prudent to define categories of significance:

Significance	Description/ Threshold
International (Very High)	Archaeological sites or monuments of international importance, including World Heritage Sites.
National (High)	Monuments scheduled under the AMA Areas Act 1979, or archaeological sites and remains of comparable quality, assessed with reference to the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria.
Regional/County (Medium)	Archaeological sites and/or monuments which are not of national importance
Local (Low)	Archaeological sites and/or monuments which are not of regional/county importance.
Negligible/None	Areas or structures in which investigative techniques have produced no or only minimal evidence for archaeological significance, or where previous largescale disturbance or removal of heritage significance can be demonstrated or predicted with some confidence or where, on the basis of current evidence, there is no reason to suspect the presence of archaeological remains.
Unknown	Sites, areas or structures the heritage significance of which cannot be determined with the information currently at hand.

The cultural heritage values of the individual archaeological monuments can then be assessed and their significances tested against the significance thresholds.

Archaeological Monument	Values and Significance
Park Field House	Evidential - the evidential/research value is moderate-high and is encapsulated within the potential archaeological remains of the Park Field House complex. The evidential value of the walled garden is, however, compromised as the construction of Parkfield House will have disturbed the ground beneath it. Historic – Park Field House has a strong historic interest and illustrates a specific (high status) type of county residence in south Lancashire. Aesthetic - there is unlikely to be much of an aesthetic response to any archaeological remains of the built structures of the Park Field House complex. However, garden design has a considerable aesthetic component. It is unlikely, however, that archaeological remains of the walled garden will survive in a sufficiently coherent form to facilitate a two-dimensional rendering of how the garden once looked. Communal – Park Field House is unlikely to contribute strongly to the identity of the local population and the community and few (former employees of the Council or North West Water perhaps) will have emotional links to it. It would probably score poorly in the collective memory and identity of the community but meaning can be understood through information and interpretation. There are some information sources freely available on-line (e.g. https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-house) but there is some barrier to understanding and appreciation as there is no obvious on-site indication that Park Field House once existed. The communal value trends towards the lower end of the spectrum as the site has no current civic or public use. Any essential connection between the community and the history of the asset is not directly accessible. There is some associative value is low, as there is no famous historical figure directly associable with Park Field House, although some owners are known and there is a link with the civic history of Middleton.. Nothing especially momentous is known to have happened at Park Field House and there is little facility to intensify understanding through a link between it and any historical accounts of its use. It retains very little semblance of its historic appearance and its capacity to act as tangible testimony to the past is diminished. Overall Significance – the archaeological remains of Park Field House (should they exist) has interests which are of variable value. It is a common and unremarkable type of potential archaeological monument of Local (Low) Significance.

With respect to the baseline it is reasonable to test the Site against the ambitions of the North-West England Regional Research Agenda (Brennand 2006 and 2007). The predicted archaeological remains at the Site appear to have originated as a consequence of the construction of Park Field House in the Industrial Period. The original agenda noted that opportunities for enquiry to examine the role of country houses and estates as innovators and consumers of technology during this period.

The Northwest Regional Research Framework (Updated Research Framework) has been developed as part of a national strategy to create a series of self-sustaining regional historic environment research frameworks for England. It builds on the original North West Region Archaeological Research Framework (Brennand 2006 and 2007). The period and thematically based framework benefits from a series of research questions <https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/industrial/> focused on a number of period-related themes. The baseline data suggests the archaeological remains of Park Field House may be present on the Site and such archaeological remains would appear to have a resonance with topic Ind07 (which is a continuation of the original theme identified in 2006/2007): *How can*

we understand the role of country houses and estates as innovators and consumers of technology during this period?
(<https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/researchframework/v1/question/question-5e1745f43176c>).

9. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS

Planning consent is being sought for a residential development. The general characteristics of the proposed development are provided at Fig. 15 below onto which the site of Park Field House and walled garden have been overlaid.

The superposition of the no longer extant historic landscape elements onto the general arrangement of the proposed development suggests that both the proposed care home and the residential units would be co-located with the historic positions of those landscape elements. Should any archaeological remains of those elements survive in the sub-surface then such remains would likely be impacted upon by construction. There is a caveat to this, however, in that the construction of Parkfield House in 1965 would appear to have had a detrimental impact on any surviving archaeological remains of the walled garden and the scope for preservation of any coherent archaeological remains of the walled garden in the location of the care home is likely to be severely reduced.



Fig 15: Proposed Site Plan Showing Areas of Potential Archaeological Impact

Drawing provided by the client © Muller Property Group

Direct Impacts

The assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site has been undertaken in the knowledge of the uncertainties that arise when trying to assess a resource that is not wholly known and is often less than comprehensively understood. It should be noted that the assessment is based on information held in source repositories and published data. Neither of these represents exhaustive and comprehensive sources of information on the presence/absence of archaeological features. However, from the data available it is possible to quantify and qualify the known archaeological resource, to determine the potential for as yet unknown or unrecorded archaeological sites and historic landscape features to be present and identify areas within the Site where activities are likely to have compromised archaeological survival. These factors have been taken into consideration during this preparation of this assessment. This information has in turn been considered against the pre-existing impacts to the Site which may have compromised the survival of any archaeological remains.

The proposed development would result in the transformation of parcel of historic landscape character and would result in a frustration of historic land use. The level of harm represented by the estimated direct impact is, substantial, in that to all intents and purposes the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal interests of the historic landscape parcel would be vitiated by the proposed development. The heritage value of a remnant 20th century commercial (offices) and part of a small parcel in the north-eastern corner labelled as 20th century playing fields/recreation ground historic landscape, concession to the coherence of which has already taken place, is clearly negligible. The scale of harm equates to total loss of a heritage feature of negligible significance.

The GMHER records no archaeological monuments, find-spots or places within the Site. However, cartographic and historic evidence confirms that the Site was once occupied by a substantial county villa, its ancillary utility buildings, pleasure grounds and a walled garden. Traces of this occupation may be present in the near-surface of the Site and may be considered to be archaeological remains of low (local) significance.

The impact on any archaeological remains would arise from pre-construction activities – such as ground preparation/improvement/remediation. Construction activities with the potential to impact upon archaeological remains include excavations to remove hard obstructions to permit piling operations to proceed, excavations for ring-beam foundations of buildings, excavations for services such as drains, sewers, outfalls, and excavations in order to lay the sub-grade as a base for roads, paths and circulation areas.

The level of harm represented by the estimated direct impact is, substantial, in that to all intents and purposes the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal interests of archaeological remains could be vitiated by the proposed development.

The proposed development does not require the abstraction of any ground water. Therefore, there is no scope for the proposed development to alter the moisture content of the soils in and around the Nico Ditch such that palaeoenvironmental evidence within the archaeological record would be harmed.

There is no scope for the proposed development to lead to trans-frontier impacts to archaeological monuments beyond the boundary of the Site.

The Site coincides with two parcels of historic landscape character - 20th century commercial (offices) and part of a small parcel in the north-eastern corner labelled as 20th century playing fields/recreation ground. The proposed development would frustrate this recent historic land use of negligible significance.

10. CONCLUSIONS

This document has carefully considered the potential for the proposed development to impact on archaeological monuments by means of development within the Site, and whether any such impacts would harm the significances of the monuments.

The consideration has explored the evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of known and potential monuments which may be impacted upon as a consequence of development. It has predicted the nature of any impact and therefore the harm or otherwise that may befall heritage significance.

The main issues have been identified in a manner proportionate to the characteristics of the likely development and in a manner relevant to the characteristics of the monuments.

There are no registered World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks/Gardens or Registered Battlefields wholly or partly within in the Site. Therefore, this Assessment confirms that the Site does not contain designated heritage assets of archaeological interest for which there would be a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ*.

The GMHER identifies no archaeological monuments within the Site. The GMHER does note that the historic landscape character of the Site is identified as 20th century commercial (offices) and part of a small parcel in the north-eastern corner labelled as 20th century playing fields/recreation ground.

For planning purposes the historic landscape character parcels may be considered as non-designated heritage assets, although this consideration in no way admits or confirms that they are non-designated heritage assets or confirms that they enjoy such status. With respect to this consideration it is useful to examine the potential for the proposed development to harm heritage significance of non-designated heritage assets against the provisions of the NPPF.

In broad terms NPPF exhorts local planning authorities to conserve heritage assets (including archaeological remains) in a manner appropriate to their significance (para. 189). It is noted that the process of conservation is managing change (not preventing it) and a formal assessment process in the light of proposed change and its consideration by the decision taker with respect to impact contributes to the application conservation principles.

The potential for a proposed development to harm heritage significance of non-designated heritage assets is catered for in para. 203 of NPPF. As decision-taker, the Council is bound by para. 203 to take into account *the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset*. The Council has not formally acknowledged that the parcel of historic landscape character, is a non-designated heritage asset but under the precautionary principle, and in no way asserting that this landscape character is a non-designated heritage asset, it is useful to treat it if it were and take into account the substantial harm to its significances (loss) which would be occasioned by the proposed development. The Council may wish to take into account the effect of the proposed development on this asset and in weighing the planning application may wish to exercise a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss (total) and the significance of the asset (negligible).

Neither of these historic landscape identifications has any particular historical value and the development of the Site, whilst frustrating the recent historic land use, is of insufficient consequence. A transformation of historic landscape character would not sustain an objection to the proposed development and represents no impediment to the proposed development.

The Site corresponds to the location of Park Field House, a county villa, with, potentially, late 18th century origins, which remained extant until 1978. Any archaeological remains associated with Park Field House, characterised to be of low (local) significance, would be impacted upon by the proposed development. For planning purposes these remains (should they exist) may be considered as non-designated heritage assets, although this consideration in no way admits or confirms that they are non-designated heritage assets or confirms that they enjoy such status.

With respect to this consideration it is useful to examine the potential for the proposed development to harm heritage significance of non-designated heritage assets against the provisions of the NPPF.

Para. 194 of NPPF alerts the Council to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets (including archaeological remains) that may be affected by the proposals. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should be consulted and where heritage assets with archaeological interest are involved or identified the Council is directed to require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment. It is confirmed that the relevant historic environment record was consulted in order to inform the preparation of this desk-based assessment so the requirements have been met. An understanding of the potential impact of the proposal on significance of archaeological remains that may exist on the Site has been generated and there any further pre-determination archaeological attendances are not warranted.

The potential for a proposed development to harm heritage significance of non-designated heritage assets (including archaeological remains) is catered for in para. 203 of NPPF. As decision-taker, the Council is bound by para. 203 to take into account *the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset*. The Council has not formally acknowledged that archaeological remains of Park Field House are a non-designated heritage asset but under the precautionary principle, and in no way asserting that such remains would be a non-designated heritage asset, it is useful to treat them if they were and take into account the substantial harm to significance (loss) which would be occasioned by the proposed development. The Council may wish to take into account the effect of the proposed development on this asset and in weighing the planning application may wish to exercise a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss (total) and the significance of the asset (low).

Any archaeological remains associated with Park Field House may be impacted upon by the proposed development and there is a risk that heritage significance could be adversely affected. The concept of mitigation, whereby the harm to archaeological monuments can be assuaged or compensated for can be considered by the Council, and any unavoidable harm

to archaeological monuments can be mitigated by recording in advance of that harm taking place and advancing understanding of the significance of any archaeological monuments to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact. Any evidence (and any archive generated) can be made publicly available (promoted). Such an approach is compatible with para. 205 of the NPPF and also appears to be relevant to the regional research agenda for archaeology of the Industrial Period.

With respect to the local planning policy established by the *Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy, 2016*. Policy P2 applies, particularly clause a, item ii and clause b of limb 2.

Clause a notes that the Council will *protect the borough's heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets*. Item ii. identifies scheduled monuments as key heritage assets. There are no scheduled monuments within or in the vicinity of the Site (the nearest one is Clayton Hall moated site NHLE ref. 1009339, c. 7.24km to the south-east) and Item ii is, therefore, not engaged.

Clause b relates to non-statutory heritage assets (analogous to non-designated heritage assets defined in the NPPF) of local interest, including archaeological sites. This is not so much a test for an applicant to pass in configuring an application, but does impose a duty on the Council to protect the archaeological site of Park Field House by conserving, enhancing and promoting it. Conservation is the process of managing change and the application of the planning process contributes to the conservation element of protection. There is no realistic scope to enhance the archaeological remains of Park Field House and no credible latitude to allow for its promotion and so these duties are not engaged.

Ultimately, the changes to the environment represented by the proposed development would not be in conflict with any national or local policy provision for archaeological monuments. There is no reason to withhold planning permission on the basis of archaeological constraints.

11. SOURCES

General

Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record

Lancashire Record Office

Local Studies Section at Heywood and Middleton Libraries

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/448/archives_and_local_history/7377/search_the_archives_catalogue

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

<http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/>

<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>

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<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?clearresults=true>

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/DefraDataDownload/?Mode=survey>

<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

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[https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-](https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-house#:~:text=Parkfield%20House%20was%20the%20residence,Mayor%20of%20Middleton%20in%201886.)

[house#:~:text=Parkfield%20House%20was%20the%20residence,Mayor%20of%20Middleton%20in%201886.](https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/parkfield-house#:~:text=Parkfield%20House%20was%20the%20residence,Mayor%20of%20Middleton%20in%201886.)

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<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/DataManagementPlans10>

ADS (2) *Guides to good practice* <http://guides.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/g2gp/Main>

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Greenwood's Map of Lancashire, 1818

Plan of the Township of Middleton, in the Parish of Middleton in the County of Lancaster, 1839 (Tithe Map)

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI, 6 inches to 1 mile, Surveyed 1844-1845, Published 1848

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1889-1891, Published 1893

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1907, Published 1909

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 6 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1915, Published 1923

Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire, Sheet XCVI.7, 25 inches to the mile, Surveyed 1932, Published 1934

Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2,500, 1968-1968

Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,000, 1984

Aerial Photographs

Limefield, Middleton, 1926 (BfA Image ref. EPW016441)

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APPENDIX A

Index of Archaeological Monuments within the Assessment Area as Plotted on Fig. 3

Number	HER Ref	Record Type	Name
1	2309.1.0	Monument	Manchester Road (turnpike road)
2	2312.1.0	Monument	TA Centre (site of)
3	2360.2.0	Monument	Alkrington Hall Glasshouses (site of)
4	2411.2.0	Monument	Reservoirs/ Leats at Rhodes Print Works
5	2436.1.0	Findspot	Neolithic Stone Hammer find at Middleton (antiquarian report)
6	2439.1.0	Monument	Middleton Hall (site of)
7	2681.1.0	Findspot	Roman Coin (findspot)
8	2744.1.0	Findspot	Roman Pottery find at Middleton (antiquarian report)
9	5178.1.0	Monument	Tonge Dye Works (site of)
10	5228.1.0	Place	Rhodes Settlement
11	13892.1.0	Monument	Hippodrome (site of)
12	2345.1.0	Monument	Irk Mill (previously Park Mill) (site of)
13	5327.1.0	Monument	Cross Street Finishing Works (site of)
14	5176.1.0	Monument	Parkfield Mill (site of)
15	2360.1.1	Place	Alkrington Hall Park
16	2439.2.0	Place	Middleton Hall Park (site of)
17	2676.1.0	Place	Middleton Deer Park (site of)
18	7500.1.0	Monument	Trackway
19	2308.1.0	Monument	Nut Bank Farm/ Nut Bank Cottages (site of)
20	2360.2.1	Monument	Alkrington Hall Vault