



WYAS
**Archaeological
Services**

**Cowm Top
Rochdale
Greater Manchester**

Archaeological Investigation
(Trial Trenching)

Interim Report

Report no. 4380
October 2025

Client: Barratt Homes Manchester



Cowm Top, Rochdale Greater Manchester

Archaeological Investigation (Trial Trenching)

Interim Report

Summary

ASWYAS Services WYAS (ASWYAS) undertook the first phase of a trial trench evaluation at Cowm Top, Rochdale, Greater Manchester in September and October 2025. The works identified four linear features that were observed as being agricultural in origin, and one undated pit.



Report Information

Client:	TEP
Address:	Bowden Business Village, Market Harborough, Leicestershire
Report Type:	Interim Report
Location:	Cowm Top, Rochdale
County:	Greater Manchester
Grid Reference:	SD 89162 10276
Period(s) of activity represented:	Post-medieval/Modern
Report Number:	4380
Project Number:	XS07
Site Code:	CTR25
Planning Application No.:	22/01190/FUL
Museum Accession No.:	tbc
Date of fieldwork:	29/09/2025 – 08/10/2025
Date of report:	October 2025
Project Management:	Kevin Moon
Fieldwork supervisor:	Haydn Evans
Fieldwork:	Harroon Ahmed, Helena Wilson
Report:	Haydn Evans
Illustrations:	Katarzyna Rygala
Photography:	ASWYAS staff



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Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds LS27 7JQ
Telephone: 0113 535 3007
Email: admin@aswyas.com



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Document Issue Record

Ver	Author(s)	Reviewer	Approver	Date
1.0	HE	JR	KM	Oct 25

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The results and subsequent interpretation of data from archaeological trial trenching should not be treated as an absolute representation of the underlying archaeological and non-archaeological remains.

Confirmation of the presence or absence of archaeological remains beyond the excavated trenches can only be achieved by further investigation of sub-surface deposits.

1 Introduction

Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) was commissioned by TEP on behalf of Barratt Homes Manchester to undertake a trial trench evaluation at Cowm Top, Rochdale, Greater Manchester. The trenches were investigated between the 29th September and 8th October 2025. The work was undertaken in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by TEP and approved by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) (Appendix 1).

The interim report details Phase 1 of the works comprising 23 trenches of the planned 54, including three trenches (49, 50 and 51) which were added to the scheme with approval of GMAAS in lieu of a watching brief and/or excavation work in the south of the site.

Site location, topography and land-use

The development site comprises approximately 20ha of steep hilly pasture farmland situated to the south of Rochdale, Greater Manchester (SD 89162 10262; Fig. 1). The site is bounded to the south by the M62 motorway, to the east by the A627(M) to the north by warehouses, and to the west by a housing estate (Fig. 2).

The ground within the site is undulates greatly (Plates 1 and 2) between 155m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in Trench 54 to 180m aOD in Trench 44.

Soils and geology

The bedrock geology across the site comprises the Old Lawrence Rock - Sandstone Group, described as sedimentary bedrock formed between 319 and 318 million years ago during the Carboniferous period. Superficial deposits of Hummocky (moundy) Glacial Deposits of the Devensian – Diamicton Superficial Geology Group are also recorded (BGS 2025). The overlying soils are part of the 551d Newport 1 Soil association (SSEW 1983).

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

The archaeological and historic background has been provided in the WSI (TEP 2025) and is summarised here.

Prehistoric

The HER records the location of field boundaries and a possible mound approximately 750m to the south-east of the site which are of a possible Bronze Age to Iron Age origin. Mesolithic evidence in the form of worked flints and associated waste flakes have been recovered from higher upland areas within the north and western parts of the Rochdale area and form part of a group of sites which have been identified across the central Pennine area. These sites are frequently located on hilltops and south-facing slopes, particularly where there is natural shelter. Lowland evidence for the Mesolithic is rare within the Rochdale area, as it is across Greater Manchester and North West England.

Later Prehistoric evidence is rare within the Rochdale area and what evidence has been identified is consistent with the concentration of archaeological remains and findspots on better drained soils overlooking watercourses and wetlands that has been found across Greater Manchester. Neolithic polished stone axes and Bronze Age axe-hammers and metal work have been recovered along the course of the river Roch and its tributaries. A single Iron Age artefact has been identified within the Rochdale area: a bronze torque recovered in Calderbrook in 1832.

Despite the lack of evidence within the site and its surrounding area it has been assessed that the development site has a moderate potential for archaeological remains of the prehistoric period, due to the prevalence of sand and gravel and the site's topographic position overlooking the Trub Brook. Such evidence, if present, would likely be located on the raised areas of the site where sand and gravel deposited during the period of glacial retreat provided better drainage and an enhanced potential for human activity.

Roman

No evidence for the Roman period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area. Whilst Roman evidence is relatively plentiful within Greater Manchester, evidence within the Rochdale area is scarce.

Early medieval

No evidence for the early medieval period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area.

Physical evidence of settlement in the early medieval period within Rochdale is very rare and the main indication for a pre-Norman settlement is the inclusion of Rochdale (Recedham) in the Domesday Survey. The Survey lists Rochdale as one of the holdings of Gamel the Thane, one of 21 thanes in the manor of Radcliffe, who held land under Edward the Confessor.

Medieval

No evidence for the medieval period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area.

Following the Norman Conquest, Gamel the Thane continued to hold land under Roger de Poitou. The land holdings eventually passed to Henry, Earl of Lancaster, whose family held the land until the end of the 15th century. A castle is thought to have been located on Castle Hill, approximately 2.5 km to the north of the site. Given the agriculturally marginal nature of the study site, it is likely that it was in use as pasture during the medieval period.

Post-medieval and modern

No post-medieval or modern heritage assets are recorded within the site. The HER records the locations of 33 post medieval and modern non-designated heritage assets in the surrounding area. The majority of these of assets are former or extant structures, the exceptions being an earthwork township and parish boundary located approximately 900m to

the north-east of the site (16901.1.0), a ford located approximately 750m to the north-west of the site (249.1.0), the site of the Trub Smithy settlement located approximately 600m to the south-west of the site (16501.1.0) and 'Kiln Field' located approximately 800m to the north of the site.

The earliest detailed map of the site (1851 Ordnance Survey) shows a number of straight field boundaries within the site with a road passing through the site on a north-east to south-west alignment and connecting to Castleton at the south. Little change is evident on subsequent mapping save for the removal of field boundaries and the road. The surrounding area underwent rapid change during the 19th and 20th centuries with residential and industrial development and road infrastructure.

3 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the evaluation was to gather sufficient information to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains and the extent, condition and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features.

The objective of the work was to monitor the removal of top and subsoil horizons and assess the resultant areas for their archaeological potential. Any remains were then subject to archaeological excavation. Recovered artefacts were subject to analysis and environmental data were sampled.

4 Methodology

The work involved the excavation of 23 trenches, all of which measured 50m by 1.8m. The trenches were positioned to provide a wide sample across the remaining areas of the study site, as no geophysical survey could be carried out (Fig. 2).

All work was undertaken in accordance with accepted professional standards and guidelines (Historic England 2008; CIfA 2023), in accordance with the ASWYAS site recording manual (ASWYAS 2020) and in compliance with the WSI (Appendix 1).

All trenches were set out and the limits resurveyed using a Trimble VRS differential GPS accurate to ± 0.01 m. The trenches were opened in a controlled manner using a 360 excavator using a flat-bladed ditching bucket under direct archaeological supervision. All topsoil deposits were removed in level spits (not more than 0.20m) with the topsoil and subsoil being separated to allow for re-instating in reverse order. Machining stopped at the first archaeological horizon or natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. All excavations of archaeological deposits were undertaken manually with the stripped surface being cleaned and investigated for archaeological remains.

An appropriate sample was excavated through all archaeological features with at least a 20% sample through linear features (with a minimum sample of 1m) and a 50% sample through

discrete features. These were undertaken to investigate the full depth, profile and fills, where possible, and to recover dating evidence from the fills. All excavated sections were, where possible, located adjacent to the trench edge in order to provide a full stratigraphic sequence.

A soil sampling programme was undertaken consisting of bulk soil samples for the identification of plant macro-fossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts. All samples were taken from appropriate archaeological deposits, in accordance with the WSI and Historic England guidelines.

All archaeological features were accurately recorded in plan at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50. Feature sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. All plans and sections include spot heights that relate to Ordnance Datum in metres.

A full written, drawn and photographic record was made of all archaeological work undertaken. An inventory of the primary archive is presented in Appendix 2 and a concordance is given in Appendix 3. ASWYAS currently hold the site archive in a stable and secure location.

5 Results

Below is a description of each trench containing archaeological remains. Trenches devoid of archaeological features are not discussed further but a concordance of contexts yielding artefacts or environmental remains is presented in Appendix 3 and tables displaying the depths and widths of each context along with a brief description are shown in Appendix 4. Photographs of example trenches are presented in Plates 4 and 5.

All features were sealed by a soft, dark greyish black clayey-silt topsoil and in some cases a friable, mid-grey clayey silt subsoil that varied in depth across the site and tended to be deeper at the base of slopes, indicating that it may be the result of hillwash process. The underlying geology varied across the site, in most trenches being predominantly consisted of a of a mid-brownish orange silty-clay, with Trenches 2, 13, 3, 50 and 51 having consisted of a mid-yellowish grey fine silty sand.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

Trench 1 contained one ditch, on a north-south orientation (ditch 103) and measured 1.8m wide and 0.21m deep. Ditch 103 (Fig. 3, S. 5; Plate 6) contained one fill (102) that comprised a dark greyish brown sandy silt that was heavily disturbed by worms and rooting. Fill 103 appeared to be very similar to the topsoil indicating that it was potentially an old field boundary, which looks to be visible on 1937 OS mapping.

Trench 1 also two shallow gullies on a north-south orientation. Gully 104 (Fig. 3, S. 7) was situated just to the west of ditch 103 and measured 1.0m wide and 0.23m deep. It contained one fill (105) that comprised a dark greyish brown, friable silty clay. Gully 106 (Fig. 3, S. 10; Plate 7) was situated towards the southern end of trench 1 and measured 0.40m wide and 0.16m deep. It contained one fill (107) that comprised a dark blackish grey, friable silty clay.

Trench 5 (Fig. 4)

Trench 5 contained one (ditch 503) on a northwest-southeast orientation. Ditch 503 (Fig. 4, S. 8; Plate 8) and measured 1.30m wide and 0.35m deep. It contained one dark brownish-grey fill (504) from which one piece of clay pipe stem was recovered. Fill 504 appeared to very similar to the topsoil, indicating that it may be an agricultural feature dating to the modern period.

Trench 36 (Fig. 5)

Trench 36 contained one possible pit (pit 3602; Fig. 5, S. 3) that measured 0.85m wide and 0.12m deep. It contained one fill (3603) that comprised a very dark blackish brown clayey silt. The cut of pit 3602 was quite irregular and shallow, indicating that it may have been formed from burnt out rooting.

A sondage (Plate 9) was excavated through a deposit of light grey clay at the request of GMAAS to investigate the possibility of a colluvial deposit possibly filling a topological basin. Excavation showed the deposit to be a variation in the underlying geology continuing below the yellow sand geology to the north (uphill) and no regular edge to the south.

Trench 53

Trench 53 contained one ditch that was on the same alignment as ditch 103 and contained large tree roots throughout, with the fill comprising a mix of topsoil and subsoil (Plate 10). This was most probably the remains of a former hedge line boundary, visible on Google Earth historical imagery as late as March 2025.

6 Artefact Record

One piece of clay pipe stem was recovered from ditch 503 (fill 504) and one sherd of blue porcelain ceramic was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 1. These will be reported on in the subsequent assessment report.

7 Environmental Record

Samples were collected from 3 fills (102, 105, and 504). These will be processed in due course. The results of these will be included in the subsequent assessment report.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

The only archaeological remains that were observed during the trial trenching were two gullies and a ditch in Trench 1, a ditch in Trench 5 and a small irregular pit in Trench 36. The linear features were fairly shallow and contained fills that were quite similar to the overlying topsoil. Clay pipe recovered from ditch 503 in Trench 5 indicates this was a fairly recent deposition and there is nothing to indicate the other features were not of a similar date. Ditch

103 corresponds with a hedge line present on Google Earth as late as March 2025 also supporting the view that these features are most likely modern in origin.

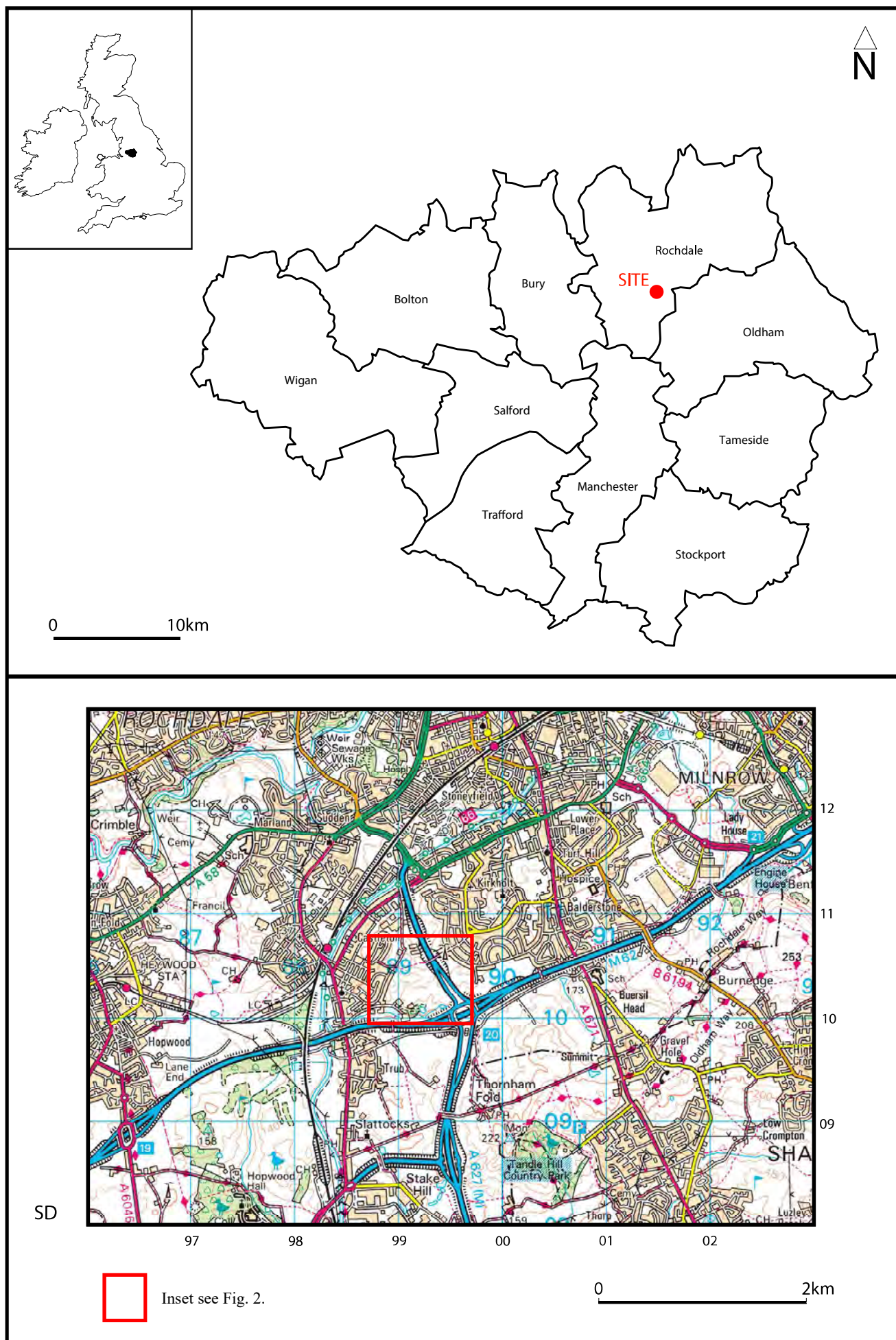
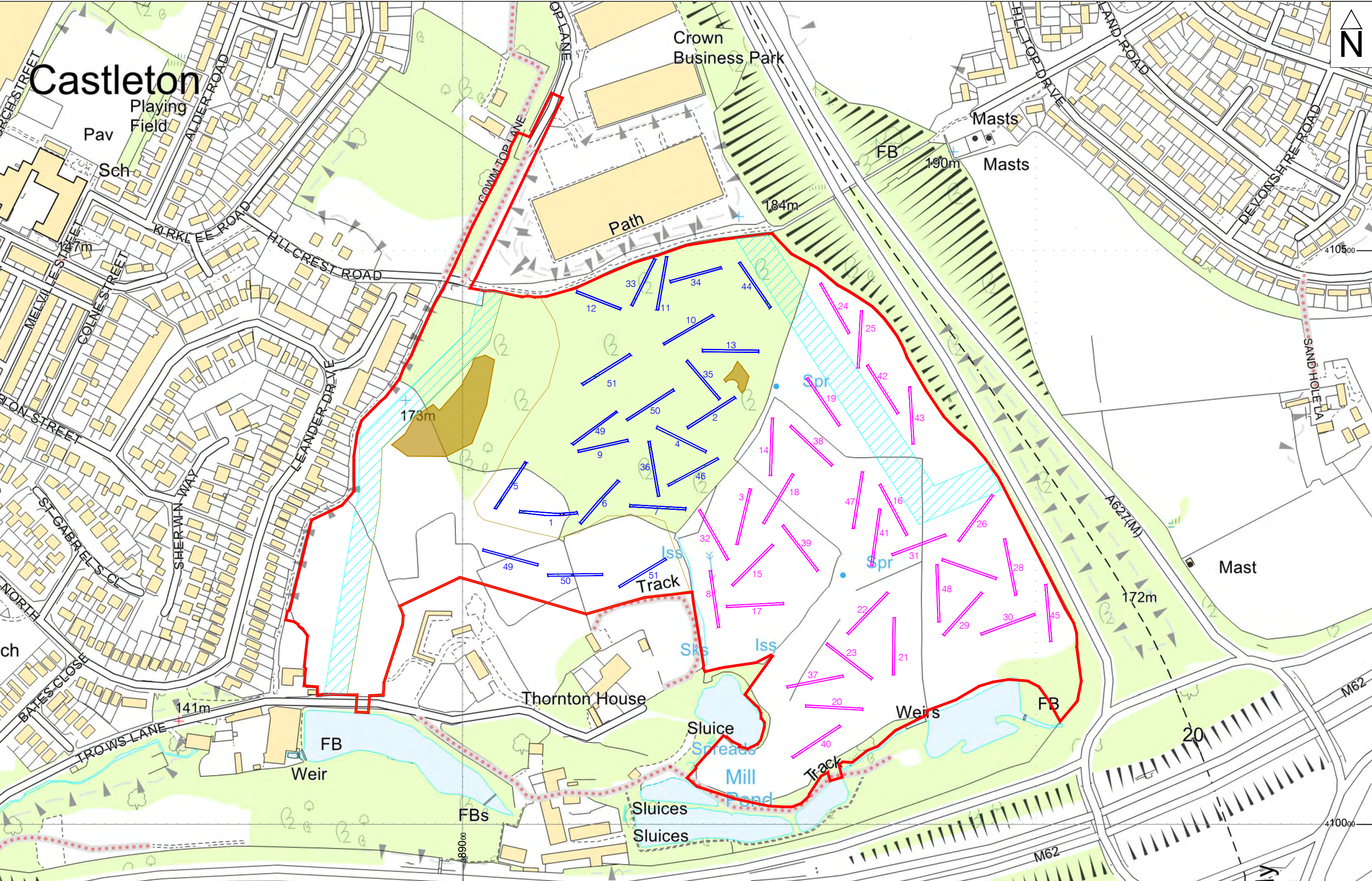


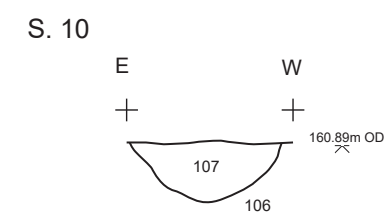
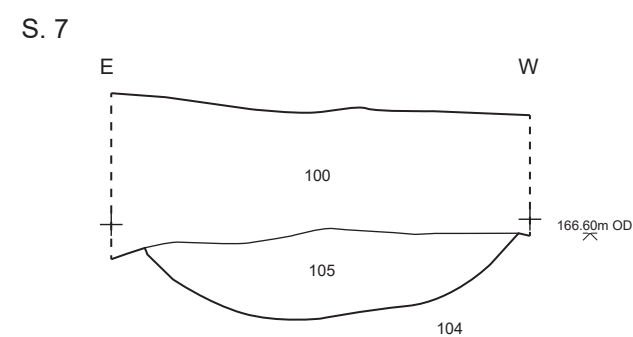
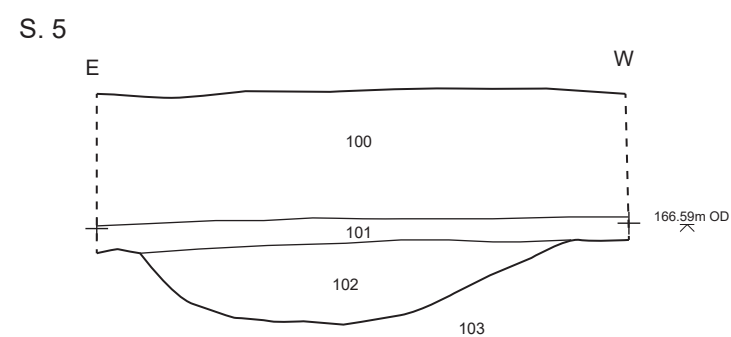
Fig. 1. Site location

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	SITE BOUNDARY		TRIAL TRENCH (PHASE 1)		TRIAL TRENCH (PHASE 2)
	SERVICE		WATCHING BRIEF		ARCHAEOLOGY

	LAND DRAIN
	
	



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Archaeological Services W Y A S,
Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, LS27 7JQ
Tel: 0113 535 3007
Email: archaeology@wyjs.org.uk
www.aswyas.com

Project No. XS07

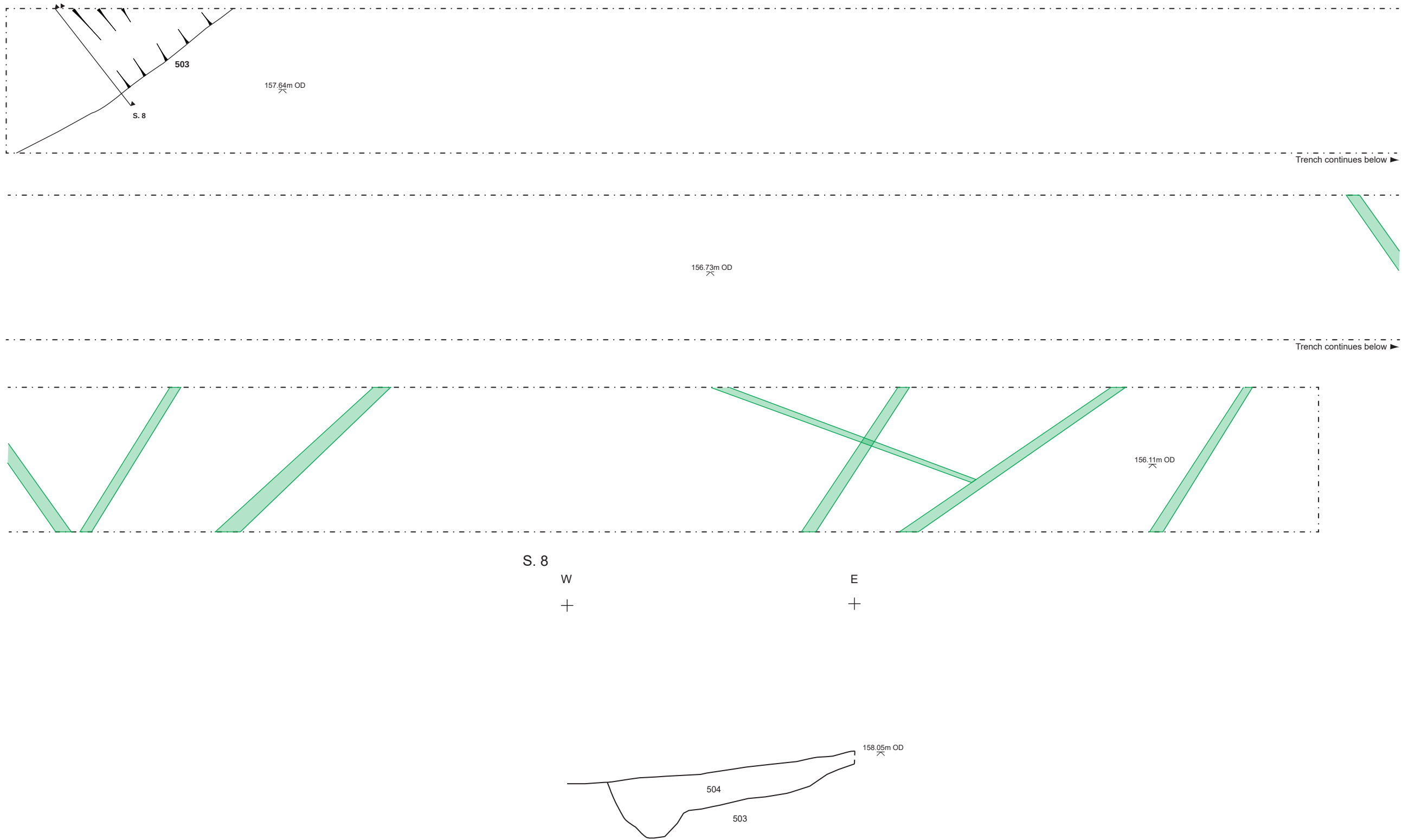
Project Code: CTR25

Fig. 3

Trench 1

Plans 0 2m (1:50)

Sections 0 1m (1:20)



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Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, LS27 7JQ
Tel: 0113 535 3007
Email: archaeology@wyjs.org.uk
www.aswyas.com

Project No. XS07

Project Code: CTR25

Fig. 4

Trench 5

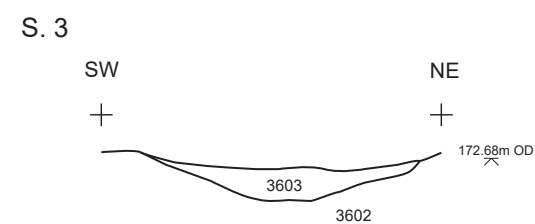
Key



LAND DRAIN

Plans 0 2m (1:50)

Sections 0 1m (1:20)



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Archaeological Services W Y A S,
Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, LS27 7JQ
Tel: 0113 535 3007
Email: archaeology@wyjs.org.uk
www.aswyas.com

Project No. XS07

Project Code: CTR25

Fig. 5

Trench 36

Key



Plans 0 2m (1:50)

Sections 0 1m (1:20)



Plate 1. General view of site, looking southwest



Plate 2. General view of site, looking north



Plate 3. Trench 35, looking southeast



Plate 4. Trench 49, looking southwest



Plate 5. Representative section of Trench 10, looking northwest



Plate 6. Ditch 103, looking south

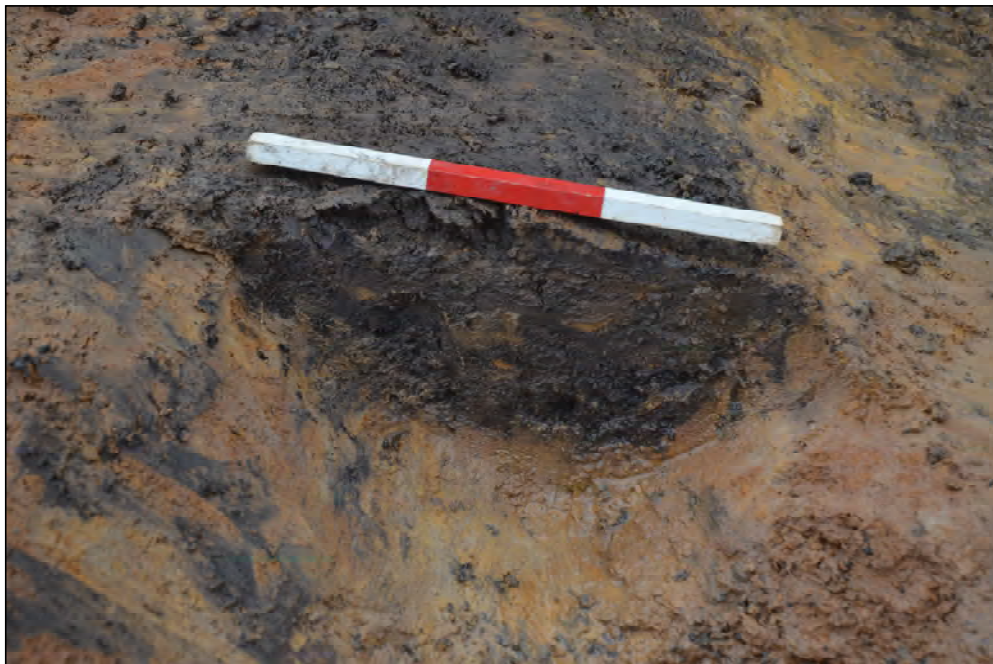


Plate 7. Gully 106, looking north



Plate 8. Ditch 503, looking northwest



Plate 9. Hedgeline in Trench 53, looking south



Plate 10. Sondage in Trench 36, looking northwest

Appendix 1: Written Scheme of Investigation



Cowm Top, Rochdale

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Investigation

Prepared For: Barratt Homes Manchester

Document Reference: 11334.001

September 2025

Version 1.2

TEP
The Reynard Suite
Bowden Business Village
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 7SA
Tel: 01858 383120
Email: mh@tep.uk.com
Offices in Warrington, Market Harborough, Gateshead, London and Cornwall

Document Title	Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Investigation
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Version	1.2
Prepared For	Barratt Homes Manchester

Author	Amir Bassir
Date	09.09.2025
Checked	Stephenie Dalby
Approved	Jason Clarke

Amendment History					
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1.1	15.09.2025	AB	SD	Amendments following GMAAS review	Final
1.2	19.09.2025	AB	JC	Amended drawings	Final



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Appendices

Appendix A: Drawings

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been commissioned by Barratt Homes Manchester in response to a condition of planning permission for a residential development.
- 1.2 The planning application, reference 22/01190/FUL, is for '*residential development of up to 445 dwellings with associated access, car parking, landscaping and infrastructure*' at Land South of Cowm Top, Castleton, Rochdale.
- 1.3 The Site is located to the south of Rochdale, Greater Manchester, OL11 2UE (NGR SD 89162 10276). The site forms a roughly triangular parcel of land and is bound to the south by the M62 and Junction 20, and to the east by the A627. An industrial estate lies to the immediate north and residential development lies to the west. The development site encompasses an area of approximately 20 hectares.
- 1.4 The local planning authority is Rochdale Borough Council. The archaeological advisor to the local authority is the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).
- 1.5 Condition 6 'Archaeological Investigation' provides details for a pre-commencement programme of archaeological works:

6. No development shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The works are to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by Rochdale Borough Council. The WSI shall cover the following:

a. Informed by the updated North West Regional Research Framework (NWRRF), a phased programme and methodology of archaeological fieldwork investigation and recording to include:

i. Geophysical survey of proposed development areas

ii. informed by the above, targeted archaeological evaluation trenching

iii. informed by the above, more detailed targeted excavation (subject of a new WSI)

b. A programme for post fieldwork assessment to include:

i. Analysis of the site investigation records and finds

ii. Production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological and historical interest represented.

c. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.

d. Commensurate with the significance of any remains identified, a scheme to disseminate the results of the archaeological investigations for the benefit of the local and wider community.

e. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation

f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved WSI.

The programme of fieldwork should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological contractor, funded by the applicant, and in accordance with guidance provided by GMAAS who would also monitor the implementation of the programme of works on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council.

Reason: In accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JPA-23, JP-P2, Core Strategy Policy P2 and Paragraph 218 of the NPPF – To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

Reason for Pre-commencement Condition: Construction/clearance works on site have the potential to impact archaeology from the initial stages, which therefore needs to be investigated, evaluated and if necessary mitigated prior to works starting on site.

- 1.6 A desk-based assessment was produced for the site as part of the planning application (RPS, 2021) which concluded that the Site has a moderate potential for the presence of currently unknown Prehistoric archaeological evidence. It noted that such evidence would likely be located within areas of higher ground where the well-drained sandy soils and topographic position overlooking Trub Brook would have provided favourable locations for human settlement and other activities.
- 1.7 The site topography and environmental constraints have been assessed as unsuitable for geophysical survey and therefore the site's archaeological potential is not fully understood, and no specific sites or areas of archaeological interest have been identified.
- 1.8 Consultation with GMAAS was carried out on 5th September to discuss the programme for the groundworks and the archaeological requirements. It was agreed that a combination of archaeological watching brief during enabling works and stripping for the new roads, and trial trench investigation targeting areas of higher ground with greater archaeological potential would be an appropriate strategy, allowing the identification of any areas of archaeological interest and for

any such features or deposits to be investigated and recorded in a manner that is proportionate to their significance.

- 1.9 This WSI sets out the proposed methodology for archaeological watching brief and trial trench evaluation within the development site. The strategy has been informed by the masterplan to ensure that areas most likely to be impacted by development will be assessed, an understanding of the archaeological potential of the site which is linked to the site's topography, and any environmental constraints and the presence of utilities and services.
- 1.10 This WSI has been prepared by The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd, a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in accordance with CIfA guidance (CIfA, 2020). It has been authored and approved by a member of the CIfA.
- 1.11 The archaeological evaluation will be undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS, referred to as the 'Archaeological Contractor' throughout this report.

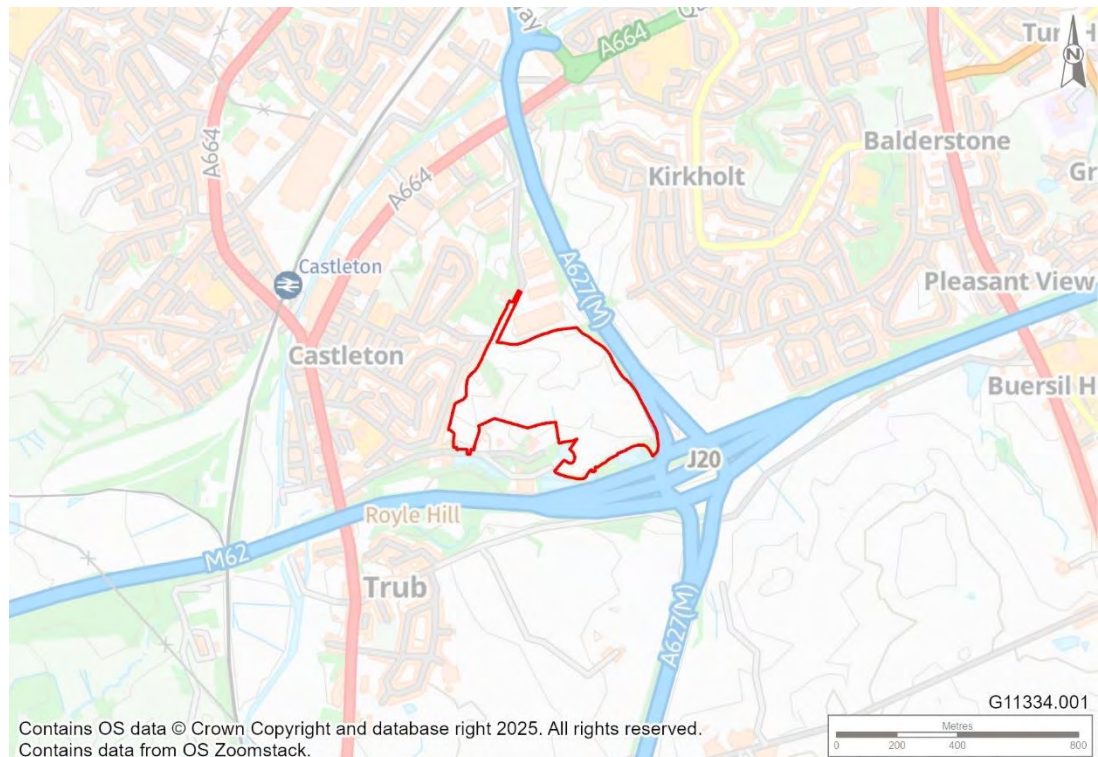


Figure 1 Site Location

Aims and Objectives

- 1.12 The programme of archaeological works has been designed to allow the identification, investigation and evaluation of any archaeological remains present within the development site. The aim of the watching brief is to allow any archaeological remains to be appropriately investigated and recorded prior to impacts from groundworks.
- 1.13 The aim of the evaluation will be to gather sufficient information to establish the extent, condition, significance, and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features, and, where appropriate, inform any further investigation or mitigation strategy.
- 1.14 This approach is in accordance with paragraphs 207 and 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).
- 1.15 The research objectives of the programme of work will be determined by what, if any, archaeological remains are present within the development footprint. However, subsequent assessment and analysis will be in accordance with relevant objectives outlined in the North West England Regional Research Framework. Due to the potential for prehistoric remains to be present within the development site, the results of the archaeological work have specific potential to inform the Prehistory Research Questions.

2.0 Policy, Standards and Guidance

National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) has three overarching objectives to achieve its aim of sustainable development. This includes an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment (Chapter 2, paragraph 8).
- 2.2 Chapter 16 of the NPPF (2024) then goes on to describe provisions specifically relating to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 2.3 Paragraph 207 advises local planning authorities to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by their proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. It states that *“the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”*. In addition, *“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”*.
- 2.4 Paragraph 218 states that *“local planning authorities ... should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible”*. The request for pre-determination works attached to the planning application, and this corresponding WSI, are in accordance with this policy provision of the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.5 The Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (2016) replaces the Unitary Development Plan (2006).
- 2.6 Core Strategy Policy P2 sets out that the council will protect the borough’s heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets and non-statutory heritage assets of local interest; prioritise the conservation of heritage assets at risk from decay and use heritage assets positively to strengthen identity and image.
- 2.7 Paragraph 9.15 in support of this policy confirms that designated and non-designated heritage assets must be conserved in accordance with their significance and the relevant national guidance, standards and good practice guides.

Guidance

- 2.8 The guidance most relevant to this WSI is provided in:
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023, Standard for archaeological field evaluation
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023, Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023, Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023, Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2020, Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials
 - Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2020, Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives
 - Historic England 2015, Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)

Monitoring

- 2.9 The implementation of the works outlined in this WSI will be monitored by the Senior Planning Archaeologist (SPA) at GMAAS, on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council. The SPA will be given a minimum 5 working days' notice of the commencement of works on site and be kept up to date with progress during all phases of the archaeological works.
- 2.10 All archaeological fieldwork will be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist, working under the direction of a full Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, or equivalently qualified project director.

3.0 Background

Site Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The solid geology is recorded by the British Geological Survey as Carboniferous Coal Measures comprising brick clay and coal. The Old Lawrence Rock forms two linear outcrops through the site on a NW-SE alignment. The site is overlain by 'Hummocky (moundy) glacial deposits' comprising mixed sand and gravel.
- 3.2 The general topographic trend is a rise from approximately 165m aOD to 185m aOD from south to north. The topography within the site is highly variable with higher areas of sand and gravel between which lie small valleys, the largest of which bisects the site from south-west to north-east.
- 3.3 Several springs are located within the eastern part of the site and the Trub Brook lies immediately to the south.



Figure 2 LiDAR data demonstrating the variable site topography

Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.4 The archaeological and historic background has been provided in a historic environment desk-based assessment (RPS 2021) and is summarised here.

Prehistoric

- 3.5 The HER records the location of field boundaries and a possible mound approximately 750m to the south-east of the site which are of a possible Bronze Age to Iron Age origin. Mesolithic evidence in the form of worked flints and associated waste flakes have been recovered from higher upland areas within the north and western parts of the Rochdale area and form part of a group of sites which have been identified across the central Pennine area. These sites are frequently located on hilltops and south-facing slopes, particularly where there is natural shelter. Lowland evidence for the Mesolithic is rare within the Rochdale area, as it is across Greater Manchester and North West England.
- 3.6 Later Prehistoric evidence is rare within the Rochdale area and what evidence has been identified is consistent with the concentration of archaeological remains and findspots on better drained soils overlooking watercourses and wetlands that has been found across Greater Manchester. Neolithic polished stone axes and Bronze Age axe-hammers and metal work have been recovered along the course of the river Roch and its tributaries. A single Iron Age artefact has been identified within the Rochdale area: a bronze torque recovered in Calderbrook in 1832.
- 3.7 Despite the lack of evidence within the site and its surrounding area it has been assessed that the development site has a moderate potential for archaeological remains of the prehistoric period, due to the prevalence of sand and gravel and the site's topographic position overlooking the Trub Brook. Such evidence, if present, would likely be located on the raised areas of the site where sand and gravel deposited during the period of glacial retreat provided better drainage and an enhanced potential for human activity.

Roman

- 3.8 No evidence for the Roman period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area. Whilst Roman evidence is relatively plentiful within Greater Manchester, evidence within the Rochdale area is scarce.

Early medieval

- 3.9 No evidence for the Early Medieval period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area.
- 3.10 Physical evidence of settlement in the Early Medieval period within Rochdale is very rare and the main indication for a pre-Norman settlement is the inclusion of

Rochdale (Recedham) in the Domesday Survey. The Survey lists Rochdale as one of the holdings of Gamel the Thane, one of 21 thanes in the manor of Radcliffe, who held land under Edward the Confessor.

Medieval

- 3.11 No evidence for the Medieval period is recorded within the site or immediate surrounding area.
- 3.12 Following the Norman Conquest, Gamel the Thane continued to hold land under Roger de Poitou. The land holdings eventually passed to Henry, Earl of Lancaster, whose family held the land until the end of the 15th century. A castle is thought to have been located on Castle Hill, approximately 2.5 km to the north of the site. Given the agriculturally marginal nature of the study site, it is likely that it was in use as pasture during the Medieval period.

Post Medieval and Modern

- 3.13 No Post Medieval or Modern heritage assets are recorded within the site. The HER records the locations of 33 Post Medieval and Modern non-designated heritage assets in the surrounding area. The majority of these of assets are former or extant structures, the exceptions being an earthwork township and parish boundary located approximately 900m to the north-east of the site (16901.1.0), a ford located approximately 750m to the north-west of the site (249.1.0), the site of the Trub Smithy settlement located approximately 600m to the south-west of the site (16501.1.0) and 'Kiln Field' located approximately 800m to the north of the site.
- 3.14 The earliest detailed map of the site (1851 Ordnance Survey) shows a number of straight field boundaries within the site with a road passing through the site on a north-east to south-west alignment and connecting to Castleton at the south. Little change is evident on subsequent mapping save for the removal of field boundaries and the road. The surrounding area underwent rapid change during the 19th and 20th centuries with residential and industrial development and road infrastructure.

4.0 Programme of Archaeological Works

- 4.1 The archaeological works will comprise two principal phases: watching brief during enabling works, road creation and any stripping to create site compounds, and trial trench evaluation in advance of any cut and fill activity.
- 4.2 All field work will be carried out by suitably qualified archaeologists, working under the direction of a full Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, or equivalently qualified project director.

Archaeological Watching Brief

- 4.3 The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with road and access creation and site compounds. This work will be undertaken in phases between 2025 and 2026. An archaeologist will be present during all groundwork activity which have a potential to reveal archaeological remains and will investigate and record any features or deposits prior to their disturbance.

Method of Excavation

- 4.4 A suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist will undertake continuous monitoring of groundworks and machine excavation within the defined archaeological watching brief area. The contractor will request that intrusive groundworks are carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to maximise the chance for identification of archaeological remains should they be present. However, a toothed bucket may be necessary in areas where substantial obstacles are present.
- 4.5 The supervising archaeologist will be afforded the required access by the main contractor to observe and record any archaeological remains revealed. Groundwork will not be undertaken within the watching brief areas without the presence of the site archaeologist.
- 4.6 The machine will operate in 'spits', removing only an appropriate amount of overburden with each action down to the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural geology, whichever is encountered first. The top of the first significant archaeological horizon can be exposed by the machine but will then be cleaned by hand and inspected for features. The supervising archaeologist will give the command to stop excavations should archaeological deposits, features, surfaces, or structural remains become visible. Machine excavation within the area of identified archaeology will temporarily cease so that the archaeologist can inspect the feature/s and undertake recording. The main contractor will allow the archaeologist reasonable time and resources to undertake the inspection and recording.

- 4.7 The supervising archaeologist will operate strictly within the health and safety parameters of the principal contractor and only enter the excavation areas where it is safe to do so and where there is safe access and egress. If the excavation areas are not safe to enter due to their depth, unsecured or unstable sides or any other reasons preventing work from within then the recording will be conducted from the existing ground level.
- 4.8 Within the parameters of the site health and safety restrictions and where safe access can be gained into the excavation area, all archaeological remains will be hand-excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of the project. The excavation will record the complete stratigraphic sequence, down to naturally occurring deposits or the completed depth of the groundworks and will investigate and record any inter-relationships between features.
- 4.9 If structural remains are identified, they will be left in-situ and any surrounding material hand-excavated stratigraphically leaving the structural remains intact for recording. Structural remains or floor surfaces may be removed, following recording, to allow investigation of underlying features of deposits only after they have been sufficiently recorded and the SPA informed, and approval for their removal confirmed.
- 4.10 All artefacts will be retained for processing and analysis except for unstratified 20th and 21st century material, which can be noted and discarded. Finds will be stored in secure, appropriate conditions.
- 4.11 The archaeologist will work with the site management and groundworks contractor team to ensure that areas and features of interest are not disturbed until the archaeologist has inspected the area and handed it back to the contractor. The archaeologist will do so within an appropriate timescale and will avoid any unnecessary delays to the work programme. Any areas that include archaeological or potential archaeological features must be appropriately tested and investigated and sign off agreed with GMAAS. Monitoring visits by GMAAS may be required as part of the sign off process.

Method of Recording

- 4.12 All archaeological features (stratigraphical layers, cuts, deposits or structures) will be sampled sufficiently to characterise and date them and to determine their significance.
- 4.13 All features will be adequately investigated and recorded in order to understand the date and character of any archaeological remains on the site and to recover sufficient finds assemblages to assess the chronological development and former occupation or usage the site.

- 4.14 Should non-structural features be identified, these will be sampled sufficiently within the constraints of the watching brief area to characterise and date them and to determine their significance. Possible intersections will be investigated to establish strategic relationships. Environmental bulk samples (usually 40 litres) will be taken where a deposit is likely to contain significant environmental assemblage. All records will be undertaken using pro forma record sheets.
- 4.15 Structural remains will be excavated, cleaned, photographed and recorded in-situ in sufficient detail to determine their form, construction methods, dating and any evidence for phasing, based on the best practice and methodology to maximise retrieval of information. All stratigraphic associations are to be recorded. Where possible, structural remains will be related to former buildings visible on historic mapping.
- 4.16 Sampling strategies will be in accordance with the Archaeological Contractor's fieldwork manual as well as the requirements of GMAAS.
- 4.17 The Archaeological Contractor will make appropriate pre-and post-excavation site records. All finds and features will be accurately located and planned accurately at appropriate scales. All site photographs will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a sensor of a minimum of 12 megapixels. All photography will be undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidance, *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice*, 2015.

Trial Trench Evaluation

- 4.18 The trial trench evaluation will comprise the machine excavation of 51no. trenches, each measuring 50m in length and 1.8m width in accordance with the enclosed drawings (Appendix A) The number and location of trenches has been informed by the site conditions, the site topography and archaeological potential, the masterplan, and site constraints including a gas main and overhead electrical cables.
- 4.19 Due to the variable topography and ground conditions, a walkover of the Site will be carried out by the archaeological contractor in advance of the trial trench works. The trenches will be set out using the GPS and any potential constraints to the layout as defined in this WSI which will require a change to the planned trench locations will be logged. An updated trench plan will be produced for submission to and approval by the SPA. There will be no variations to the strategy outlined in this WSI without prior approval from the SPA.
- 4.20 There is a known presence of potentially harmful refuse and asbestos as surface deposits in areas of the site. The walkover survey will also take these into account and adjust trenches accordingly. Where appropriate and practical the principal contractor will remove areas of waste ahead of the survey.

Method of Excavation

- 4.21 Prior to the archaeological trial trenching, a visual inspection of the areas to be evaluated will be undertaken by the Archaeological Contractor.
- 4.22 The trial trenches will be set out using a GPS. The trial trenches will be mechanically excavated using an appropriately powered machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Under archaeological instruction the topsoil and overburden will be removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits of a maximum 0.1m thickness, or the natural geology, whichever occurs first.
- 4.23 All machine work will be carried out under direct archaeological supervision and the machine will be halted if archaeological deposits or features are encountered. The top of the first significant archaeological horizon can be exposed by the machine but will then be cleaned by hand and inspected for features and then hand excavated. At each soil horizon change, the supervising archaeologist will indicate to the machine driver that each stratum should be stored separately.
- 4.24 All archaeological remains will be hand excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of the project. The excavation will record the complete stratigraphic sequence, down to naturally occurring deposits and will investigate and record all inter-relationships between features. In the event of significant or complex remains requiring targeted archaeological excavation, the investigation of feature interrelationships will not be undertaken until the later phase of work.
- 4.25 All artefacts will be retained for processing and analysis except for unstratified 20th and 21st century material, which can be noted and discarded. Finds will be stored in secure, appropriate conditions.
- 4.26 No trenches shall be backfilled unless they have been signed off by the SPA.

Method of Recording

- 4.27 The Archaeological Contractor will make appropriate pre-and post-excavation site records. The archaeological works will be recorded according to the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation. The stratigraphy of each trial trench will be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. Where no archaeological features are present representative sections or soil profile will be recorded and illustrated in the report
- 4.28 All finds and features will be accurately located and planned accurately at appropriate scales. Discrete features will be half-sectioned and 10% of each linear feature should, where possible, be excavated plus terminals and intersections, with slots measuring at least 1m in width wherever possible. Intersections will be

investigated to establish strategic relationships. Sections will be drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate.

- 4.29 Natural features will be investigated, particularly where they are isolated or show any evidence for burning or heat affectation. Where multiple potential features of natural origin are identified within a trench an appropriate sample will be investigated to test for artefacts, in particular prehistoric lithics, which may be present within tree boles and tree throws.
- 4.30 Representative sections of linear and curvilinear features will be sample excavated away from intersections or other features or deposits, to obtain unmixed samples of material. Environmental bulk samples (usually 40 litres) will be taken where the deposit is likely to contain significant environmental assemblage.
- 4.31 All records will be undertaken using pro forma record sheets.
- 4.32 Sampling strategies will be in accordance with the archaeological sub-contractor fieldwork manual and the requirements of the SPA.

General Recording

Photography

- 4.33 All site photographs will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a sensor of a minimum of 12 megapixels. Each image will be supplied as both a JPEG and a TIFF versions (version 6 file of not less than 25Mbs). The Archaeological Contractor will also include metadata embedded in the TIFF file, which will include the following:
 - the commonly used name for the site being photographed,
 - the relevant centred OS grid coordinates for the site to at least six figures,
 - the relevant township name,
 - the date of photograph,
 - the subject of the photograph,
 - the direction of shot, and
 - the name of the organisation taking the photograph.
- 4.34 All photography will be undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidance, Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice, 2015.
- 4.35 All site photography must:
 - be taken in colour;
 - include a north arrow;

- include a legible information board displaying the site code or accession number and the principal context number;
 - include a suitable scale bar.
- 4.36 In addition to standard photographic recording, selected images should also be taken to support public engagement. These should highlight key aspects of the archaeological progress. All such images should be reviewed to ensure they do not compromise site security, personal privacy or confidentiality of sensitive information. Consent will need to be obtained where individuals are identifiable, and images will be used in accordance with relevant data protection guidelines.

Use of Metal Detectors on Site

- 4.37 The site will be scanned during machine excavation to attempt to obtain a sample of artefacts from the top and sub-soils. The exposed site and spoil heaps will also be scanned for both ferrous and non-ferrous metal artefacts using a metal detector capable of making this discrimination, operated by an experienced metal detector user (if necessary, operating under the supervision of the contracting archaeologist). Modern artefacts are to be noted but not retained (19th-century material and earlier will be retained).
- 4.38 The make and model of the instrument used will be given in the methodology section of the Archaeology Contractor's report and metal detected finds identified in the relevant section.

Finds

- 4.39 On completion of the fieldwork, any samples taken will be processed and any finds will be cleaned, identified, assessed/analysed, dated (if possible), marked (if appropriate) and properly packed and stored in accordance with the requirements of national guidelines and best practice.
- 4.40 All finds or environmental samples recovered during the archaeological works will be assessed and reported on by internal and external specialists of the Archaeological Contractor.
- 4.41 All finds will be treated in accordance with current best practice as set out in ClfA and Historic England guidance.

Human Remains

- 4.42 If human remains are encountered during the works, they will be left in situ and the SPA, and the coroner notified. If it is deemed appropriate to excavate human remains, this will be done in accordance with appropriate Historic England and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists guidance (e.g., ClfA Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains, 2017). Excavation, removal from

site, analysis and final placing will all be subject to the requirements of the appropriate Ministry of Justice licence and any local environmental health regulations.

Treasure

- 4.43 If any artefacts are encountered that would constitute ‘treasure’ as defined by The Treasure Act, 1996 and the Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2023, they will be reported to the local Coroner and relevant Finds Liaison Officer. Any artefacts deemed to be Treasure should be excavated on the day they are discovered and removed to a secure site. If this is impractical, then appropriate security provided until full excavation and removal can occur.

Palaeoenvironmental sampling and analysis

- 4.44 Palaeoenvironmental assessment aims to identify areas within the development site where conditions are such that deposits suitable for the study of past environments are preserved. These most commonly occur in the form of subsurface peat layers but are also taken to include all waterlogged deposits. The identification of any suitable areas for sampling will take place during the archaeological evaluation.
- 4.45 Should any such deposits exist within the area of impact, samples will be taken by a suitably qualified specialist sub-contractor. The samples would be assessed for their potential by internal or external specialists of the Archaeological Contractor, and suitable techniques applied to sub-sample from select cores to determine the preservation and taxonomic diversity within the samples. This is likely to include assessing for one or more of the following:
- Pollen (focussing on organic units)
 - Diatoms (focussing upon lithological transitions within and at the base of the Holocene sediment stack)
 - Foraminifera (focussing on mineral strata and in particular on transitions)
 - Plant macro-remains (focussing on organic units)
- 4.46 Having assessed the potential for analysis a project design will be produced that will provide a detailed proposal for analysis (including, for example, C14 dating, loss-on-ignition to measure organic carbon content, humification and mass specific magnetic susceptibility) of any present selected samples.
- 4.47** If necessary and appropriate the advice of the regional Historic England Science Advisor will be sought.

Mitigation Strategy and Unexpectedly Significant and Complex Discoveries

- 4.48 Should archaeological remains be identified whose significance requires further mitigation and more detailed recording than is appropriate within the terms of the WSI, all work in that area will be temporarily paused until TEP have liaised with the SPA with the relevant information to discuss and confirm appropriate actions to resolve the matter. TEP will aim to notify the SPA within two working days of the discovery of significant remains.
- 4.49 Where appropriate a detailed mitigation strategy would be produced, either as an addendum to this WSI or as a new WSI, setting out the methodology and programme for the archaeological work, including provision for post-excavation reporting and analysis, and archiving and publication. Depending on the complexity of the archaeological remains the existing / new WSI will be amended or drafted within 5-10 working days and submitted to the SPA for approval prior to undertaking any of the work.
- 4.50** Should archaeological remains of possible national archaeological significance be observed whose significant merits their retention and preservation in-situ, fieldwork will cease on the relevant part of the site until these remains have been inspected by the SPA, and the regional Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments. TEP will aim to notify the SPA and Historic England immediately upon any such discovery and within a maximum of two working days.

Programme

- 4.51 It is anticipated that the works will happen in accordance with the following programme:
- September 2025 - submit WSI for approval by SPA;
 - September 2025 - commence archaeological watching brief in successive phases until Q3 2026;
 - September - November 2025 - undertake trial trench evaluation;
 - +8 - 10 weeks – report;
 - +6 months - deposit archive.
- 4.52 In the event of the discovery of significant archaeological remains requiring mitigation works an updated programme will be produced and submitted to the SPA.

Organisation and Key Personnel

- 4.53 TEP is a Registered Organisation with the ClfA. The heritage team is under overall management of **Jason Clarke BSc MA MCIfA, Associate Director Historic Environment (TEP)**.
- 4.54 The archaeological works will be undertaken by appropriately qualified archaeologists from **Archaeological Services WYAS**, a ClfA Registered Organisation.
- 4.55 A projected timetable for work on site, including machine hire time and staff structure and numbers, and for all post excavation work, including staff numbers and specialist sub-contractors will be provided by the Archaeological Contractor in the form of a separate RAMS document.
- 4.56 Potential specialists that may input into the project are as follows:
- Prehistoric pottery - Dr Blaise Vyner
 - Roman pottery - Dr Ruth Leary or Ian Rowlandson
 - Medieval pottery - Dr Chris Cumberpatch
 - Ceramic building material - Dr Kevin Hayward or J.M. McComish
 - Flint specialist - Ann Clarke MA
 - Environmental - Dr Diane Alldritt
 - Animal bone - Dr Jane Richardson
 - Human bone - Malin Holst MA or Dr Alice Rose

5.0 Reporting

- 5.1 In accordance with the principles of Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (Historic England 2015) and the Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd Ed (MAP2) (English Heritage 1991), a programme of assessment and reporting will be undertaken, following completion of the archaeological evaluation fieldwork.
- 5.2 In the event of negative, or non-complex findings, a single report will be produced detailing the results of all fieldwork within eight weeks of the end of the fieldwork and archived within six months. The report will include:
- a front cover to include the NGR, and HER reference number;
 - a concise, non-technical summary of the results;
 - the circumstances of the project and the dates on which the fieldwork was undertaken;
 - description of the methodology, including the sources consulted;
 - a very brief summary of the historical background of the study area,
 - a statement, where appropriate, of the archaeological implications of the impact;
 - tabulations of data in relation to site phasing and contexts;
 - a copy of this project design, and indications of any agreed departure from that design;
 - a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived, and a list of any further sources identified but not consulted;
 - a site location plan related to the national grid;
 - appropriate plans showing the location and position of features located;
 - plans and sections showing the positions of deposits and finds;
 - illustrative photographs as appropriate;
 - coordinates (NGR) of relevant sites if archaeological remains have been discovered.
- 5.3 In the event of archaeologically significant finds, the results of fieldwork combined with subsequent archaeological evaluation and mitigation will also be published in a relevant and appropriate journal, or other publicly disseminated publication, as appropriate.
- 5.4 Section drawings will be provided for all evaluation trenches which contain archaeological features (at a minimum scale of 1:20). These will include heights, O.D. Plans (at a minimum scale of 1:50), and O.D. spot heights for all principal

strata and any features. Drawings of one long section of trenches without archaeological deposits will also be provided.

- 5.5 Artefact analysis will include the production of a descriptive catalogue, quantification by context and discussion/interpretation if warranted, with finds critical for dating and interpretation illustrated.
- 5.6 Environmental analysis will include identification of the remains, quantification by context, discussion/interpretation if warranted, and a description of the processing methodology.
- 5.7 Pottery reports will refer to the appropriate type series.
- 5.8 A draft digital copy of the report will be supplied to the SPA for review prior to submission for planning purposes. The final approved report and details of archive deposition will be submitted to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER).

6.0 Archive

- 6.1 An archive of the results of the archaeological work will be produced, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects, Appendix 3, 2nd edition, 1991*) and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (CIfA, 2020). Regional guidance is provided in '*Archaeological Evaluation: Guidance Document, December 2024*'. The archive will contain any site matrices, and summary reports of the artefact record, context records, and any other records or materials recovered.
- 6.2 A digital copy of the report will be submitted to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER). If required, a copy of the report provided as a PDF on disk, and as hard copies, will also be submitted to the HER.
- 6.3 The Touchstones Rochdale museum will be contacted in order to request an accession number and to seek advice of the arrangements to be made for deposition of the project archive and any associated charges.
- 6.4 The original record archive of projects (paper, magnetic and plastic media), and a full copy of the record archive (microform or microfiche), together with the material archive (artefacts, ecofacts, and samples) will be deposited with the relevant local archive. Following the completion of the work, the digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).
- 6.5 Details of the work will be entered on the OASIS database at <https://oasis.ac.uk/>. OASIS is the online system for reporting archaeological investigations and linking research outputs and archives. Reports uploaded to OASIS will become available to the public through the ADS.
- 6.6 Results of the project, even if negative, will be submitted for publication in appropriate academic journals.

7.0 Health and Safety

- 7.1 The archaeologists on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. Where archaeological work is carried out at the same time as the work of other contractors, regard should also be taken of any reasonable additional constraints that these contractors may impose.
- 7.2 All work on site would be undertaken strictly in accordance with the project health and safety plan and task specific risk assessments. All companies working on the project will adhere to the client's required quality, health, safety and environment controls.
- 7.3 Access routes to working areas would be specified by the client and access would only be permitted to those routes and the area of the fieldwork.
- 7.4 All site staff, including subcontractors and visitors, will prove that they have attended a site induction and have the necessary competencies (e.g., CITB training for machine operators and CSCS cards) and any other necessary health and safety qualifications.
- 7.5 The archaeologists will maintain a record of site attendance for each day that they attend site for the archaeological works.
- 7.6 All site staff personnel will wear PPE consisting of gloves, goggles, hardhat, steel toe-capped boots with mid-sole protection and high visibility vest or jacket at all times. All equipment must be 'fit for purpose' and be maintained in a sound working condition that complies with all relevant Health and Safety regulations and recommendations, including:
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and
 - Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 7.7 The Archaeological Contractor will have their own Health and Safety policies compiled using national guidelines, which conform to all relevant Health and Safety legislation and best practice. The RAMS provided by the Archaeological Contractor will include a specific section covering Coronavirus (COVID 19) for working safely.

References

Data Sources

- Archaeological Data Services: <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch>
- British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer: <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/>
- National Heritage List: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>
- National Library of Scotland, Map Images: <https://maps.nls.uk/index.html>
- National Monuments Record: <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway>
- Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record
- North West Regional Research Framework: <https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/>

Legislation and Policy

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979
- National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024
- The Treasure Act, 1996
- Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order, 2023
- Rochdale Borough Council, *Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy*, Adopted October 2016, Available at: <https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/local-planning-policy/core-strategy-local-plan/2>

Best Practice and Guidance

- ClfA (2023) *Standard for archaeological field evaluation*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA (2023) *Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA (2023) *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA (2023) *Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA (2022) *Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology*, Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA (2020) *Standard and guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

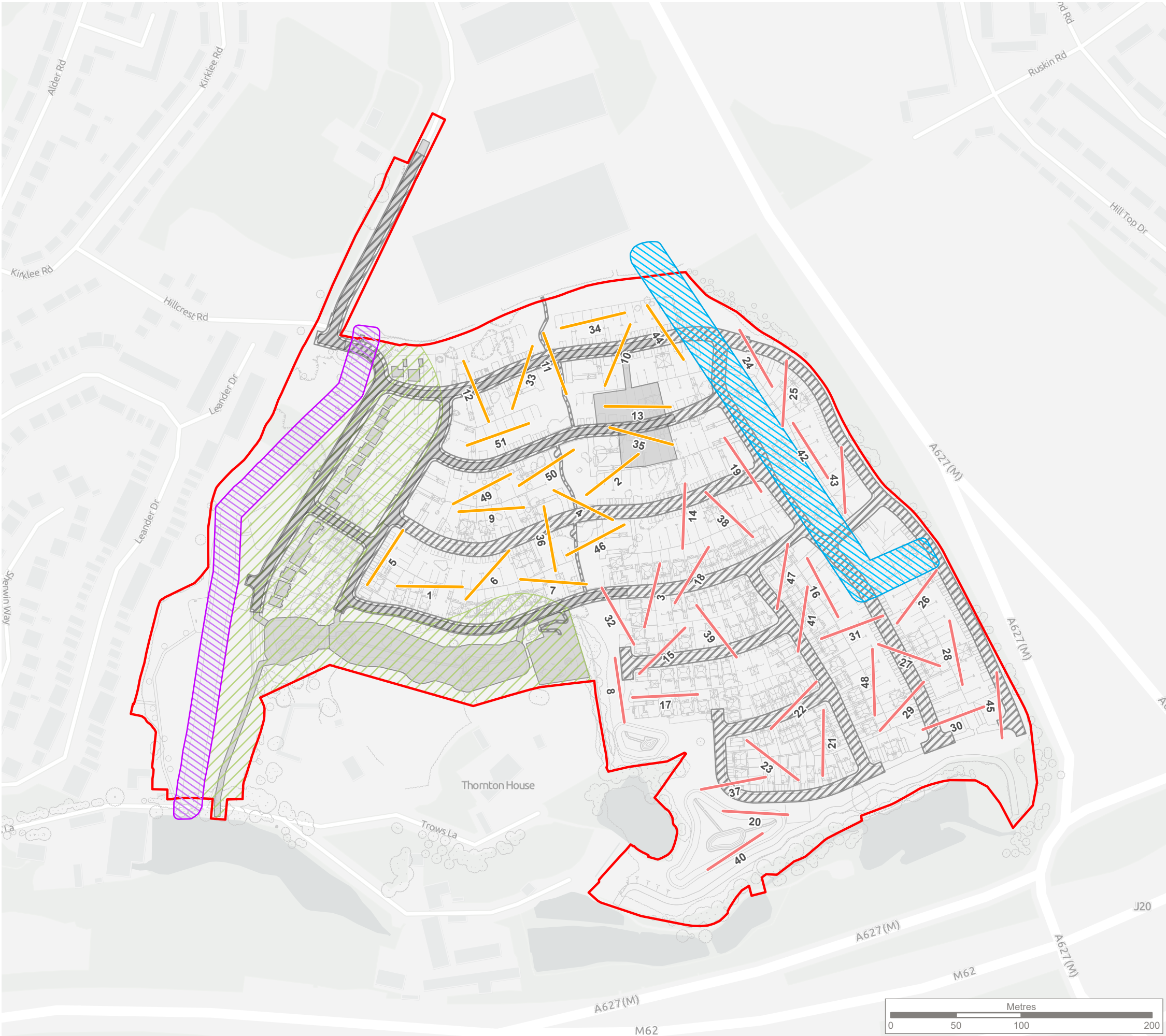
- ClfA (2020) *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA (2020) *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- English Heritage (1991) *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. London: English Heritage.
- English Heritage (2011) *Environmental Archaeology, A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (second edition). Swindon: Historic England.
- Historic England (2015) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*. Swindon: Historic England.
- Historic England (2015) *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice*. Swindon: Historic England.
- Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment, July 2019:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

Other sources

- RPS (2021) *Cowm Top, Rochdale, Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*, JAC26981



Appendix A: Drawings



KEY

- Site boundary
- Gas main
- Overhead cable
- Roads
- Watching brief area

Proposed trenches (50m x 1.8m)

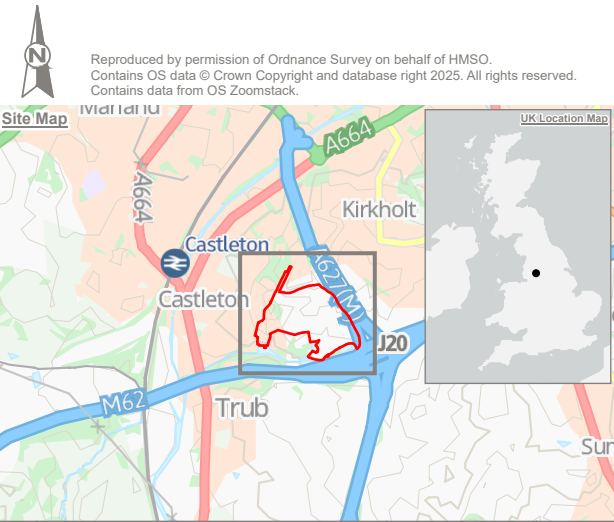
- Phase 1
- Phase 2

Note:

This map contains data from the following sources provided by the client:

Masterplan and roads from 'H8544-BAH-XX-XX-DR-CE-Cut and Fill Appraisal (Bind)'

Gas mains and overhead cables from 'Proposed Trench Plan - 2023'.



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



THE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

The Reynard Suite - First Floor Offices,
Bowden Inn Farm, Market Harborough, LE16 7SA
Tel 01858 353120 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Cowm Top, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Archaeological Areas
OS

Drawing Number
G11334.002

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
OH	BJ	AB	1:3,000 @ A3	19/09/2025



KEY

- Site boundary
- Gas main
- Overhead cable
- Roads
- Watching brief area

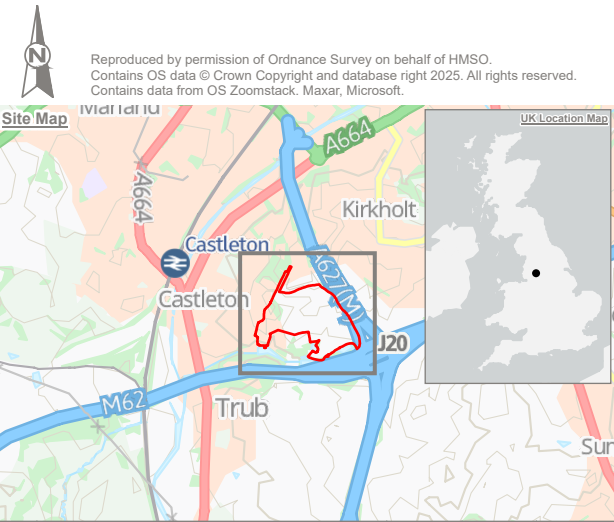
Proposed trenches (50m x 1.8m)

- Phase 1
- Phase 2

Note:

This map contains data from the following sources provided by the client:

Roads from 'H8544-BAH-XX-XX-DR-CE-Cut and Fill Appraisal (Bind)'
Gas mains and overhead cables from 'Proposed Trench Plan - 2023'.



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



THE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

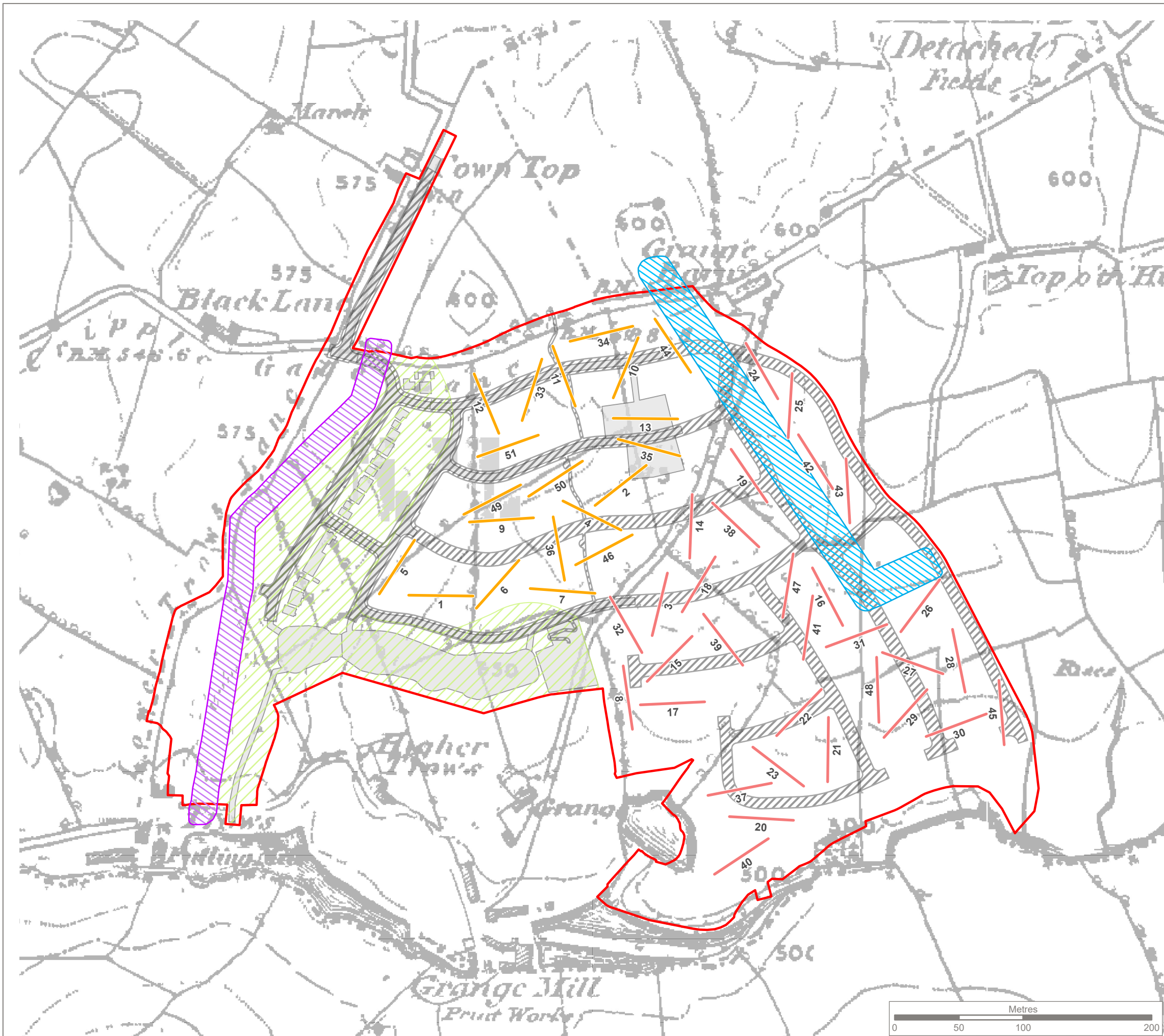
The Reynard Suite - First Floor Offices,
Bowden Inn Farm, Market Harborough, LE16 7SA
Tel 01858 353120 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Cowm Top, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Archaeological Areas
Aerial

Drawing Number
G11334.006

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
OH	BJ	AB	1:3,000 @ A3	19/09/2025



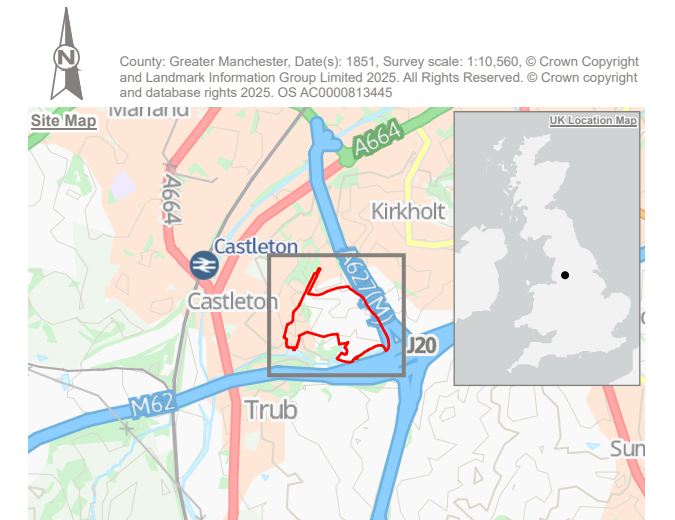
KEY

- Site boundary
- Gas main
- Overhead cable
- Roads
- Watching brief area
- Proposed trenches (50m x 1.8m)**
 - Phase 1
 - Phase 2

Note:

This map contains data from the following sources provided by the client:

Roads from 'H8544-BAH-XX-XX-DR-CE-Cut and Fill Appraisal (Bind)'
Gas mains and overhead cables from 'Proposed Trench Plan - 2023'.



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



THE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP
The Reynard Suite - First Floor Offices,
Bowden Inn Farm, Market Harborough, LE16 7SA
Tel 01858 353120 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Cowm Top, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Archaeological Areas
1851 Historic Map

Drawing Number
G11334.007

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
OH	BJ	AB	1:3,000 @ A3	19/09/2025



KEY

- Site boundary
- Gas main
- Overhead cable
- Roads
- Watching brief area

Proposed trenches (50m x 1.8m)

- Phase 1
- Phase 2

Note:

This map contains data from the following sources provided by the client:

Roads from 'H8544-BAH-XX-XX-DR-CE-Cut and Fill Appraisal (Bind)'
Gas mains and overhead cables from 'Proposed Trench Plan - 2023'.

Shaded relief shown to highlight topographical variation within the landscape.

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Topography contours from drawing 'BH.TS.08_H Trows Lane, Rochdale - Topo Survey' provided by client.

Site Map

Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date



THE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

The Reynard Suite - First Floor Offices,
Bowden Inn Farm, Market Harborough, LE16 7SA
Tel 01858 353120 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Cowm Top, Rochdale

Title
Proposed Archaeological Areas
Terrain

Drawing Number
G11334.008

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
OH	BJ	AB	1:3,000 @ A3	19/09/2025



WARRINGTON

401 Faraday Street
Birchwood Park
Warrington
WA3 6GA

T: 01925 844004
E: tep@tep.uk.com

MARKET HARBOROUGH

The Reynard Suite
Bowden Business Village
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 7SA

T: 01858 383120
E: mh@tep.uk.com

GATESHEAD

Office 26 Gateshead
International Business
Centre
Mulgrave Terrace
Gateshead
NE8 1AN

T: 0191 6053340
E: gateshead@tep.uk.com

LONDON

8 Trinity Street
London
SE1 1DB

T: 020 3096 6050
E: london@tep.uk.com

CORNWALL

Nr Falmouth
Cornwall

T: 01326 240081
E: cornwall@tep.uk.com

Appendix 2: Inventory of primary archive

Phase	File/Box No	Description	Quantity
Evaluation	File no.1	Context register	1
		Sample register	1
		Watching brief daily monitoring form	2
		Photograph record sheet	1
		Daily site recording form	1
		Digital photograph record sheet	3
		Drawing register	1
		Permatrace sheets	4
		Trench sheets	24
		Context record sheets	75

Appendix 3: Concordance of contexts

The following concordance represents the interpretation of the excavation team in the field. The records may have been subject to subsequent interpretation in light of post-excavation analysis of the site, including finds assessments. This later interpretation is represented in the report text.

Context	Trench	Title	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Bulk finds
100	1	Topsoil - Trench 1	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.27 to 0.34	-
101	1	Natural - Trench 1	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: wet, malleable. Composition: medium silty sand. Inclusions: occasional medium to large rounded to well-rounded rounded pebbles, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.49 (avg.)	-
102	1	Fill - Ditch [103]	Fill	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: sandy silt.	1.12	1.8	0.21	-
103	1	Cut - Ditch [103]	Cut	Orientation: E-W. Shape in plan: irregular spread, terminus. Shape in profile: regular, shallow u-shaped. Break at top: sharp. Break at base: gradual. Base: rounded. Sides: moderate, concave.	1.12	1.8	0.21	-
104	1	Cut - Gully [104]	Cut	Shape in plan: regular, linear. Shape in profile: regular, shallow u-shaped. Break at top: sharp. Break at base: gradual. Base: rounded. Sides: moderate, concave.	-	-	-	-
105	1	Fill - Gully [104]	Fill	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	-	-
106	1	Cut - Gully [106]	Cut	Orientation: N-S. Shape in plan: regular, linear. Shape in profile: regular, u-shaped. Break at top: sharp. Break at base: gradual. Base: rounded. Sides: moderate, concave.	> 1.00	0.4	0.16	-
107	1	Fill - Gully [106]	Fill	Colour: dark blackish grey. Compaction: wet, friable. Composition: silty clay.	> 1.00	0.4	0.16	-
200	2	Topsoil - Trench 2	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.20 (avg.)	-
201	2	Subsoil - Trench 2	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.15 (avg.)	-
202	2	Natural - Trench 2	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish grey. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: fine silty sand.	-	-	0.05 to 0.10	-
400	4	Topsoil - Trench 4	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.23 to 0.29	-
401	4	Natural - Trench 4	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.44 (avg.)	-
500	5	Topsoil - Trench 5	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.25 (avg.)	-
501	5	Subsoil - Trench 5	Deposit	Colour: mid grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.20 (avg.)	-
502	5	Natural - Trench 5	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: wet, malleable. Composition: medium silty sand. Inclusions: occasional medium to large rounded to well-rounded rounded pebbles, evenly distributed.	-	-	-	-
503	5	Cut - Ditch [503]	Cut	Orientation: NW-SE. Shape in plan: regular, linear. Shape in profile: regular, u-shaped. Break at top: sharp. Break at base: gradual. Base: rounded. Sides: 1) southwest: moderate, concave 2) northeast: moderate, straight.	> 1.00	1.3	0.35	-
504	5	Fill - Ditch [503]	Fill	Colour: dark brownish grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: silty clay.	> 1.00	1.3	0.35	Clay pipe
600	6	Topsoil - Trench 6	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.67 (avg.)	-
601	6	Natural - Trench 6	Deposit	Colour: mid orangey brown. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.63 (avg.)	-

Context	Trench	Title	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Bulk finds
700	7	Topsoil - Trench 7	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.31 (avg.)	-
701	7	Natural - Trench 7	Deposit	Colour: light yellowish grey. Compaction: wet, malleable. Composition: silty clay. Notes: waterlogged/flooded to the east end.	-	-	0.72 (avg.)	-
900	9	Topsoil - Trench 9	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.27 (avg.)	-
901	9	Subsoil - Trench 9	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.27 (avg.)	-
902	9	Natural - Trench 9	Deposit	Colour: mid pinkish orange. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.47 (avg.)	-
1000	10	Topsoil - Trench 10	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.26 (avg.)	-
1001	10	Natural - Trench 10	Deposit	Colour: yellowish orange. Compaction: moist. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.68 (avg.)	-
1100	11	Topsoil - Trench 11	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.10 (avg.)	-
1101	11	Subsoil - Trench 11	Deposit	Colour: purplish black. Compaction: moist, loose. Composition: lens of industrial deposit.	-	-	0.10 to 0.65	-
1102	11	Subsoil - Trench 11	Deposit	Colour: mid blackish grey. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.65 to 1.10	-
1103	11	Natural - Trench 11	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	1.10 (avg.)	-
1200	12	Topsoil - Trench 12	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.24 to 0.35	-
1201	12	Subsoil - Trench 12	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.25 to 0.74	-
1202	12	Natural - Trench 12	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.76 (avg.)	-
1300	13	Topsoil - Trench 13	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.40 to 0.49	-
1301	13	Subsoil - Trench 13	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.10 to 0.20	-
1302	13	Natural - Trench 13	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish grey. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: fine silty sand.	-	-	0.15 to 0.20	-
3300	33	Topsoil - Trench 33	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.27 to 0.46	-
3301	33	Subsoil - Trench 33	Deposit	Colour: brownish grey. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.46 to 0.76	-
3302	33	Natural - Trench 33	Deposit	Colour: light orangey yellow. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: clay.	-	-	0.76 (avg.)	-
3400	34	Topsoil - Trench 34	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.10 to 0.32	-
3401	34	Natural - Trench 34	Deposit	Colour: mid brownish orange. Compaction: moist. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.54 (avg.)	-
3500	35	Topsoil - Trench 35	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.20 to 0.40	-
3501	35	Subsoil - Trench 35	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.10 to 0.20	-
3502	35	Natural - Trench 35	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish grey. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: fine silty sand.	-	-	0.05 to 0.15	-

Context	Trench	Title	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Bulk finds
3600	36	Topsoil - Trench 36	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.18 to 0.26	-
3601	36	Natural - Trench 36	Deposit	Colour: light greyish yellow. Compaction: moist. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.76 (avg.)	-
3602	36	Cut - Pit [3602]	Cut	Orientation: N/A. Shape in plan: sub-oval. Shape in profile: shallow u-shaped. Break at top: gradual. Break at base: gradual. Base: flat. Sides: gentle, concave.	0.5	0.85	0.12	-
3603	36	Fill - Pit [3602]	Fill	Colour: very dark blackish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	0.5	0.85	0.12	-
4400	44	Topsoil - Trench 44	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.26 to 0.48	-
4401	44	Natural - Trench 44	Deposit	Colour: mid orangey brown. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.68 (avg.)	-
4600	46	Topsoil - Trench 46	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.46 (avg.)	-
4601	46	Subsoil - Trench 46	Deposit	Colour: mid grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.05 to 0.19	-
4602	46	Natural - Trench 46	Deposit	Colour: light greyish yellow. Compaction: wet, firm. Composition: silty clay.	-	-	0.05 to 0.10	-
4900	49	Topsoil - Trench 49	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.24 (avg.)	-
4901	49	Subsoil - Trench 49	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.24 (avg.)	-
4902	49	Natural - Trench 49	Deposit	Colour: mid pinkish orange. Compaction: wet, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.29 (avg.)	-
5000	50	Topsoil - Trench 50	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.25 (avg.)	-
5001	50	Subsoil - Trench 50	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.14 (avg.)	-
5002	50	Natural - Trench 50	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish grey. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: fine silty sand.	-	-	0.05 to 0.10	-
5100	51	Topsoil - Trench 51	Deposit	Colour: very dark greyish black. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: clayey silt.	-	-	0.28 (avg.)	-
5101	51	Subsoil - Trench 51	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.48 (avg.)	-
5102	51	Natural - Trench 51	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish grey. Compaction: dry, friable. Composition: fine silty sand.	-	-	0.47 to 1.00	-
5200	52	Topsoil - Trench 52	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, loose. Composition: loamy clay.	-	-	0.30 (avg.)	-
5201	52	Subsoil - Trench 52	Deposit	Colour: dark brownish grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.40 (avg.)	-
5202	52	Natural - Trench 52	Deposit	Colour: mid yellowish red. Compaction: moist, firm. Composition: sandy clay.	-	-	0.10 (avg.)	-
5300	53	Topsoil - Trench 53	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, loose. Composition: loamy clay.	-	-	0.30 to 0.40	-
5301	53	Subsoil - Trench 53	Deposit	Colour: dark brownish grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.20 (avg.)	-
5302	53	Natural - Trench 53	Deposit	Colour: mid greyish yellow. Compaction: moist, firm. Composition: sandy clay.	-	-	0.10 (avg.)	-
5400	54	Topsoil - Trench 54	Deposit	Colour: dark greyish brown. Compaction: moist, loose. Composition: loamy clay.	-	-	0.30 (avg.)	-

Context	Trench	Title	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Bulk finds
5401	54	Subsoil - Trench 54	Deposit	Colour: dark brownish grey. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: sandy silt. Inclusions: moderate flecks to small very angular to angular spheroidal charcoal, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.30 (avg.)	-
5402	54	Natural - Trench 54	Deposit	Colour: mid greyish orange. Compaction: moist, firm. Composition: sandy clay. Inclusions: moderate small to large rounded spheroidal sandstones, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.10 (avg.)	-
99900	999	Topsoil - Trench 999	Deposit	Colour: dark brownish grey. Compaction: moist, malleable. Composition: medium silty sand.	-	-	0.10 to 0.36	None
99901	999	Subsoil - Trench 999	Deposit	Colour: mid greyish brown. Compaction: moist, friable. Composition: medium clayey sand.	-	-	0.02 to 0.10	None
99902	999	Natural - Trench 999	Deposit	Colour: light orangey yellow. Compaction: dry, loose. Composition: fine sand. Inclusions: 1) occasional flecks to medium very angular to sub-angular spheroidal coal 2) small to medium sub-rounded to well-rounded spheroidal rounded pebbles, evenly distributed.	-	-	0.20 (avg.)	-

Appendix 4: Trench summary table

Number	Notes	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)
1	One ditch, one feature, both dug and drawn	E-W	30	1.8	0.27 to 0.49
2	Tested two features. Non archaeological.	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.48 (avg.)
4	Blank.	NW-SE	30	1.8	0.28 to 0.44
5	Trench contained 1 NW-SE oriented linear ditch that once excavated appears to be a modern drainage ditch. A few drains are present across the trench that are on different orientations	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.30 to 0.45
6	Blank.	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.63 (avg.)
7	5 land drains	E-W	30	1.8	0.58 to 0.72
9	Blank.		30	1.8	0.44 to 0.27
10		NE-SW	30	1.8	0.32 to 0.68
11	Blank.	N-S	30	1.8	0.33 to 1.10
12	Blank. Natural changes from orangey brown at NW end to yellowish grey at SE end		30	1.8	0.30 to 0.73
13	Blank.	E-W	50	1.8	0.52 to 0.80
33	One field drain	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.32 to 0.84
34	Blank.	E-W	30	1.8	0.15 to 0.54
35	Blank.	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.40 to 0.70
36	One small pit to the north of trench - tested One land drain next to the pit	N-S	30	1.8	0.28 to 0.76
44	Three field drains to the south east end of the trench	NW-SE	30	1.8	0.36 to 0.62
46	Blank. Two field drains.	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.74 (avg.)
49	Blank.	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.28 (avg.)
50	Blank.	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.42 (avg.)
51	Blank. 3 land drains.	NE-SW	30	1.8	0.30 to 1.00
52	Blank.	NE-SW	50	1.8	0.30 to 0.80
53	Blank. Former hedge line present in western part of trench, aligned with treeline in field to the south by thornton house.	E-W	50	1.8	0.50 (avg.)
54	Blank.	NW-SE	50	1.8	0.35 to 0.60

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