



Hollingworth Road, Littleborough

Project Design for an Historic Building Survey and Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Bloor Homes North West

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Basis of Report

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1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting Ltd have been commissioned by Bloor Homes North West to prepare a Project Design for a programme of historic building survey and archaeological trial trench evaluation for a site located to the west of Hollingworth Road, Littleborough, Rochdale (centred on NGR SD 93345 15432, Figure 1).

Planning permission has been granted for the residential development of the site with associated access and landscaping (Rochdale Borough Council Planning Ref: 24/00581/HYBR).

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) have requested a programme of archaeological work as a condition to the planning consent:

'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 Project Design (PD) submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (or their archaeological advisors). The Project Design shall cover the following [in relation to the Hollingworth Road site]:

1. *Informed by the North West Environment Research Framework, a phased programme and methodology and recording to include:*
 - i) *Archaeological evaluation trenching of the Hollingworth Road site*
 - ii) *Informed by the above, more detailed targeted excavations (subject of a new Project Design)*
 - iii) *Historic Building Surveys of Cleggswood Farm (Historic England Level 3), and drystone walls (Historic England Level 1)*
 - iv) *Archaeological monitoring and recording during strip-out and/or demolition works that could expose further details that could enhance (iii).*
2. *A programme of post investigation assessment to include;*
 - i) *Analysis of the site investigations records and finds*
 - ii) *Production of final reports on the investigation results.*
3. *Deposition of final reports with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record*
4. *Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance*
5. *Provision for archive deposition of the reports and records of the site investigation*
6. *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved PD*

Reason: In accordance with NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 211 – 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.

Ben Dyson, Senior Planning Archaeologist at Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) was consulted on the 28th November and 5th December 2025 to establish the trial trenching extent/locations.

This Project Design sets out the aims and methodology for undertaking the historic building survey and archaeological trial trench evaluation of the site.



2.0 Site Description

The site is located approximately 4km to the north-east of Rochdale and c.20km to the north-east of the centre of Manchester. It is bounded to the north by the Rochdale Canal, to the east by Hollingworth Road, to the south by Lake Bank and Hollingworth Lake, and to the west by residential properties (Figure 1).

The site is currently mainly agricultural pastureland, but there is a small farmstead, Lower Cleggswood Farm, located within the centre of the site which is accessed via Heald Lane from Lake Bank to the south. Several footpaths cross the site in a north-east to south-west direction, following existing field boundaries.

The bedrock geology of the eastern side of the site is the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation (mudstone, siltstone and sandstone), a sedimentary bedrock formed between 319 and 318 million years ago during the Carboniferous period. The bedrock geology of the western side of the site, the area which is labelled on mapping as 'Brown Brow Hill', is Milnrow Sandstone. Superficial deposits consist of Devensian-Diamicton Till, a sedimentary deposit which was formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period (BGS 2025).

Overlying the superficial deposits, the soils are recorded as being slowly permeable, seasonally wet, acid loamy and clayey (Soilscape 17) (Soilscape Viewer 2025).



3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Desk-Based Research

The site was the subject of an Historic Environment Assessment which was prepared by the Centre for Applied Archaeology, University of Salford in 2020. The assessment was undertaken to aid planners in setting out future development parameters relating to the historic environment in relation to the site, referred to as 'Land North of Smithy Bridge JPA22'. The assessment noted that there is some evidence that Lower Cleggswood Farm, which is located within the site boundary, has been occupied since at least the mid-17th century but that the buildings appear to be predominantly late 18th century in date. There is evidence for coal mining within the site, although there are no shaft entrances present. An arch built into a drystone wall was suggested to possibly represent the remains of a coking oven. The site has been the subject of ground disturbance when a conduit was constructed between Hollingworth Land and the Rochdale Canal. Archaeological trial trenching of the site was recommended prior to any future development, which should include the locations of Brown Bank Top, a row of cottages of probably early 19th century date (which is located partially within the site), and the probable early 19th century farmstead 'Healds' (Brogan 2020).

The site was the subject of an Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment which was prepared in 2022 and revised in 2023. This report set out the historical development of the site and the archaeological potential (Stantec 2022). Relevant information from that report is included below to provide an archaeological and historical context for the trial trench evaluation and historic building survey. For a more comprehensive consideration of the development of the site and its environs, that report should be referred to.

The assessment indicated that the site has an unknown potential to contain prehistoric remains and low to moderate potential to contain evidence of Romano-British activity. Remnants of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow earthworks survive within the eastern and possibly the northern parts of the site, and there is a high potential for medieval to post-medieval features to be present. Several possible 19th century quarry pits have been identified within the site boundary, and there is the potential for features relating to mining to be present.

Extant structural remains associated with Brown Top Bank and Heald Spring were noted during a site visit for the Desk-Based Assessment, and it was noted that below-ground remains associated with these sites would be present.

Lower Cleggswood Farm, which is a non-designated heritage asset, was noted to be an example of an early 19th century farmstead. The assessment referred to the potential for earlier phases to be present within the extant buildings. Numerous drystone walls of low heritage significance were also observed within the site boundary.

In 2025, a Heritage Assessment was prepared in relation to Lower Cleggswood Farm. The assessment concluded that the overall heritage significance of the site was derived from its architectural and historic interest as an example of a linear plan farmstead, including a locally typical laithe-house plan, dating from the late 18th century (Stantec 2025).

3.2 Geophysical Survey

The site was the subject of a Geophysical Survey undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS in 2023. The geophysical (magnetometer) survey of the c.18-hectare site identified anomalies associated with former quarrying in the northern part of the site. Medieval or post medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was also detected along with field boundaries. Uncertain anomalies, possibly associated with drainage and former field boundaries were also recorded as well as rectilinear response which was noted to be of some archaeological interest (Archaeological Services WYAS 2023).



4.0 Historic Building Survey

4.1 Introduction

The historic building survey will be undertaken of Lower Cleggswood Farm and drystone walls that are located within the site boundary.

Lower Cleggswood Farm has been identified as being a non-designated heritage asset. The site is referred to in documentation dating to the mid-17th century, but the historic buildings which currently stand, and which are to be the subject of the historic building survey, date to the late 18th/early 19th century (Brogan 2020 and Stantec 2025).

4.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the survey is to create a publicly accessible written, photographic, drawn and illustrative record of the existing buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm prior to demolition, and of any drystone walls prior to removal.

The main objective is to undertake a Level 3 (analytical) survey of the structures at Lower Cleggswood Farm, and a Level 1 (photographic) survey of the drystone walls.

If the building survey indicates potential for significant below-ground remains of earlier phases of Lower Cleggswood Farm that would be impacted by development works, then there may be a requirement for post-demolition evaluation/monitoring and recording (done via a strip-map methodology if necessary).

4.3 Methodology

The methodology is based on Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016).

A Level 3 survey, as defined by Historic England, is an analytical record and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis (Historic England 2016, 26).

Level 1 is essentially a basic visual record supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type (Historic England 2016, 25).

All on-site work will be undertaken following the standards and guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA): *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2020a) and the *Code of Conduct* (2025).

4.3.1 Background Research

Prior to the historic building survey, information derived from the previous desk-based assessments (Brogan 2020 and Stantec 2022) and the heritage assessment for Lower Cleggswood Farm (Stantec 2025) will be consulted to place the site into its historic context. This will include information derived from historic mapping which will be analysed in relation to the extant historic structures at Lower Cleggswood Farm and in relation to the identified sections of drystone walling.

4.3.2 Historic Building Survey

The Historic Building Survey on site will involve a photographic, measured survey and written record of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm (Level 3) and the drystone walls (Level 1).



It will involve direct observation of the buildings and walls to ascertain what information they can provide on their origins, form, function, date and development.

The Level 1 photographic survey of the drystone walls will include an examination of the walls, assessing for any inclusion of former building fabric, worked stone, and features such as the possible coking oven arch referred to in 3.1.

For a Level 3 survey, as defined by Historic England (2016), this will involve an examination of the external and internal fabric of the buildings, and will include:

- A description of the historical and landscape context of the site
- Building numbers to allow for easy identification
- A digital photographic record, with accompanying register, of general views of the buildings in relation to others on the site, of all external and main internal elevations, roof structure (where accessible), construction phases, overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas, fixtures and fittings, and details such as mouldings, graffiti, mason marks etc. A scale will be included in all photographs (where appropriate), positioned so as not to dominate the image
- A digital photographic record of any unusual and/or important details and elements of the structures
- A photogrammetry survey of the buildings which will capture data that is then processed to create a 3D model, and elevation drawings. Floor plans will be created utilising the data captured by the photogrammetry, and by using a digital measuring device for internal rooms.
- A written description of the buildings, describing each building in detail, how each building relates to the other structures and features on the site, a room-by-room description if applicable, a description of any fixtures and fittings, and features such as windows, fireplaces etc.
- Any requirement for further archaeological work in the form of monitoring and recording during strip out and/or demolition work at Lower Cleggswood Farm.

Prior to the commencement of the historic building survey of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm, the Client will be asked to provide as much information as possible on any health and safety issues, and/or the presence of asbestos in any of the farm buildings. A risk assessment will be prepared prior to the start of the survey work which will take into account this information and identify areas where access is not possible or restricted, and where there is the potential for asbestos, or any other hazardous materials, to be present.

4.3.3 Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

Depending on the results of the historic building survey of Lower Cleggswood Farm, it is possible that archaeological monitoring and recording may be required during strip-out and/or demolition works. This would be undertaken if the historic building survey identifies areas where there is the possibility for hidden fabric/features which could aid enhance the results already obtained through the initial survey of the structures. All monitoring would be undertaken in accordance with the methodology outlined in Section 5.5 to 5.9 below.

If it is identified that archaeological monitoring would be required, a suitably qualified archaeologist will attend site during strip out/demolition work of the historic buildings and will be given the opportunity to stop the works and record features/fabric revealed using digital photography and written descriptions.

The results of the archaeological monitoring will be combined with the report on the historic building survey to provide as comprehensive record as possible of the historic structures at Lower Cleggswood Farm.



The archaeological monitoring, if required, would be undertaken following the preparation of a risk assessment, and would not be undertaken in areas where asbestos is present, or in areas where there are health and safety concerns. Information on the presence of asbestos and any other health and safety issues will be requested from the Client prior to the archaeological monitoring taking place.

4.4 Reporting

The written and illustrated report will draw together the previous desk-based research, the observations from the site visit, the results of the measured survey and the photographic record. It will provide information on the site location, the historic background to the site of Lower Cleggswood Farm, the drystone walls and the wider landscape if applicable, and will describe and interpret the buildings utilising the photographic records and elevation and floor plan drawings. The report will include the following main components:

- The precise location of the site given as an address and an Ordnance Survey National Grid reference
- A note of any statutory or non-statutory designation
- The date when the survey was undertaken and the name of the surveyor
- An introduction which briefly sets out the circumstances in which the survey was undertaken, its objectives, methodology, and any limitations or constraints, which reference made to this Project Design
- The main body of the report will contain an account and evaluation of the documentary sources consulted in relation to the historic development of the site, utilising in particular historic mapping which show the site location clearly marked
- An account of the overall character of the buildings, considering construction material, plan form, evidence for original and subsequent use, relationship to other buildings within the site boundary, and evidence for construction phases. An account of any fixtures and fittings associated with each building, and their purpose, or any evidence for fittings which are no longer present
- Copies of any relevant historic illustrations or photographs, subject to copyright restrictions
- The results of the photogrammetry survey, presented as annotated elevation and floor plan drawings of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm. Room numbers will be utilised within the report and on the drawings to allow for easy identification when describing the buildings
- A list of references including any websites which may have been consulted (in which case the full website address will be given along with the date of access).

Prior to full distribution of the Historic Building Survey report, a draft copy will be sent to the Senior Planning Archaeologist to allow for any amendments, corrections or additions to be made. The final report is intended to be made for public dissemination and will therefore be accessible in terms of the way it is written and presented, and how it can be viewed.

4.5 Archive

A final pdf version of the historic building survey report will be deposited with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record. The project will be registered with OASIS ([OASIS: Home](#)), which is an online reporting form which allows heritage practitioners to provide information about their investigations to regional Historic Environment Records (HERs) and respective national heritage organisations. Upon completion of the final report, and following its approval by the Senior Planning Archaeologist and the Client, a pdf copy will be uploaded



onto OASIS for eventual transfer to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) library ([Archaeology Data Service](#)), where it will be publicly accessible.

The archive for the historic building survey will be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011).

The project archive for the historic building survey will be retained by SLR Consulting until a suitable repository becomes available.

5.0 Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

5.1 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the requested trial trenching is to investigate the potential of the historic and archaeological resource and, where present, to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition significance and quality of any archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The results of the trial trench investigation will determine the scope of further mitigation work to fulfil the requirements of the planning condition.

The general aims of the archaeological trial trenching are to:

- determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the specified targeted areas of the site
- determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits revealed as well as their potential significance
- determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits from later building and landscaping activities
- determine the likely impact on any archaeological deposits present from the consented scheme; and
- disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of recording.

Specific aims, in accordance with the earlier Heritage Statement (Stantec 2023) and Geophysical Survey (WYAS 2023) results, and drawing on research objectives stated in the North West Regional Research Framework:

- the presence/absence of historic field boundaries (Post Medieval/Modern), Ridge and Furrow cultivation
- the character of possible geomorphological deposits and their contents within negative features
- the character of possible archaeological anomalies, and whether the site is completely characterised by post medieval to modern agriculture, or whether more concentrated settlement foci are present (e.g. stone structures)
- site formation processes generally, potentially including water management.

Dependent upon the results of the archaeological trial trenching, research questions presented in the North West Regional Research Framework (RFN 2019/2025) might be addressed, in particular:

- PM15: How well recorded and understood are farming landscapes, field patterns, distributions of buildings and building types?

5.2 Methodology

Prior to the onset of any site works, a unique site code will be issued for the project.



The archaeological trial trenching will adhere to the methodology as set out below, which has been designed in accordance with professional standards. The following documents and guidelines will be adhered to:

- *Standard for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2023a)
- *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2023b)
- *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2023c)
- *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2023d)
- *Code of Conduct*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA revised 2025)

Land access will be confirmed by the Client prior to any on-site archaeological works. Any specific arrangements required will be confirmed by the Client and fully implemented during the fieldwork.

The Client will identify any buried or overhead services and precautions will be taken to avoid damage to any such services during the trial trench evaluation. Relevant service plans will be provided by the Client. Prior to excavation, the proposed excavation area will be scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT). If unrecorded services are identified, the Client will be informed. The preferred risk management method in this instance would be to discontinue excavations within the vicinity of the identified service, following full agreement from the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist at GMAAS. Should this not be possible, excavation within the vicinity of the identified service will continue by hand using insulated tools. SLR Consulting will agree the methods and risk management strategy to be employed during the trial trenching with the Client prior to the start of works.

A condition survey will be undertaken prior to any archaeological work and will be maintained throughout. The condition survey will include as a minimum:

- Digital photographs to illustrate the condition of the site before the start of the archaeological work will be taken with a time and date recording camera
- Similar photographs taken after completion of the site work
- A written record noting the location from which each photograph was taken and the orientation of the shot
- A consistently formatted written record of the condition of each area before the commencement of the site work, setting out ground conditions, weather and any other relevant factors, and
- A written record of any incidents resulting in damage and near misses, including incidents caused by visitors or other contractors on site.

Any factors identified that may result in unavoidable risk will be communicated to the Client. Any proposed changes to the scope of works and/or methodology required to minimise any risk will only be implemented with the full agreement of the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

5.3 Trial Trenching

In accordance with advice provided by Ben Dyson, Senior Planning Archaeologist, GMAAS, the archaeological evaluation will involve the excavation of 25 no. trenches measuring 1.8m by 50m (see Appendix). This provides a c.2% sample of available areas but, more pertinently



targets known anomalies identified by geophysical survey, plus a sample of blank areas (see below).

The trenches are located with the following specific targets in mind:

Trench 1 – samples the northern part of site, to de-risk this area

T2, T8, T18, T22, T25 – sample blank areas

T4, T5 – sample Historic boundaries identified by geophysical survey

T3, T6, T10, T11, T12– target Ridge & Furrow or agricultural anomalies identified by geophysical survey to see if these are masking archaeology

T7, T9, T17, T19, T21, T23 – Target ferrous spikes and Ridge and Furrow identified by geophysical survey to see if these are masking archaeology

T13, T16, T15, T18, T19, T20 – sample geophysical anomalies, possible archaeology identified by geophysical survey.

T14, T15, T16 - target geomorphological features identified by geophysical survey to see if these are masking archaeology

T24 – Targets the footprint of a former farmstead, the 'Healds', depicted on late 19th century mapping, but no longer extant.

See Appendix for trench locations.

If required, there will be an additional 50m of contingency trenching, but this would only be used following consultation with the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

The opening of all trenches will be undertaken using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket to maximise the chance for identification of any archaeological remains. All mechanical works will be monitored by a suitably experienced archaeologists who will control the level of excavation and who will stop machining at the top of the first potentially significant archaeological horizon, or the top of the natural substrate, whichever is encountered first. Should substantial obstructions be encountered, a toothed bucket may be employed on the understanding that it will be removed again once the obstacle is passed.

A mechanical excavator will remain on site to increase the depth of the trenches if deemed necessary.

All trenches will be cleaned by hand, photographed and recorded as appropriate. Once cleaned, all trenches will be inspected and potential features/deposits excavated to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual material, as well as determine the character, significance and date.

5.4 Investigation and Sampling Strategy

Archaeological features will be sampled sufficiently to characterise and date them and to determine their significance i.e. 10% of fills of linear features (unless the linear features are substantial in which case an alternative sampling strategy will be considered and agreed with the Planning Archaeologist), and all ditch terminals and intersections will be excavated. The sampling strategy will include 50% of pit fills and 100% of smaller, discrete features such as postholes.

If the remains of substantial buildings/structures of archaeological interest are identified, these will be cleaned, photographed and recorded *in-situ*, with sample excavation undertaken as necessary to determine their form, construction methods and dating. Any substantial structures may also be subject to a programme of photogrammetric recording where appropriate, where they meet the project's objectives, to create a full 3D model of the remains.

The locations of significance artefacts will be recorded where possible, whilst other artefactual material will be collected in bulk where appropriate. Measures will be taken to protect



particularly significant, valuable or sensitive archaeological remains from exposure, accidental damage and/or theft.

5.5 Recording

Archaeological deposits and features will be recorded according to accepted professional standards, and sufficient data will be recorded to allow the preparation of a report which sets out the results of the trial trench evaluation.

Archaeological contexts will be recorded and numbered individually on pro-forma context recording sheets. A more general record of the work, comprising a description and discussion of the archaeology will be maintained as appropriate.

Plans will be produced highlighting the location of any archaeological features encountered and will be drawn at an appropriate scale on the rear of the pro-forma trench sheet or on polyester-based drafting film as appropriate. In addition, an overall site plan will be created using an appropriate GPS unit with sub-0.05m 3DQ accuracy. The survey will record the location of all excavation areas, and any features revealed relative to Ordnance Survey Datum.

Sections will be drawn at a scale of 1:10. All archaeological features will normally be drawn in plan at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10, as appropriate. All detailed plans and sections will be related to the 1:100 or 1:1250 plans and the latter will be accurately related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

All plans and sections will be levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum (OD) and are to be drawn on polyester-based drafting film and clearly labelled.

A full, digital photographic record of the work will be kept. All images will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a suitable megapixel resolution. The photographs will include general working shots and images suitable for promotional/publication purposes. Each photograph will include a graduated metric scale, appropriately placed within the photograph so as not to obscure the subject or dominate the image. A photographic register will be maintained throughout the fieldwork; the images will be labelled appropriately and cross-referenced in relation to the register once fieldwork has been completed.

The complete site archive, including finds and environmental samples, will be kept in a secure place throughout the period of fieldwork and post excavation works.

5.6 Human Remains

Should human remains (both inhumations and/or cremations) be exposed during the archaeological investigation, the Client and Senior Planning Archaeologist will immediately be made aware. The location, date, depth and preservation of the remains will be recorded and will be covered, protected and left *in-situ* unless it is clear that they are to be damaged in the immediate future. Should the remains be under threat from the impacts of the project, discussions will be held with the Client and Senior Planning Archaeologist on the various options available for their appropriate preservation *in-situ*, or for their removal in accordance with professional standards and guidelines. An appropriately qualified and experienced osteoarchaeologist will be available within the SLR Consulting team or on call to supervise the excavation and removal of any human remains (where this is necessary) from the site.

If human burials are discovered, a Ministry of Justice Licence will be required (in accordance with Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857) before the remains can be lifted. The need for a Ministry of Justice Licence applies to both inhumation and cremated remains.



5.7 Finds Recovery, Processing and Treatment

All artefacts recovered will be recorded by context and location. Initial processing will be undertaken on site during the investigation to provide provisional spot dating of artefacts to aid the assessment of significance of any archaeological remains revealed. Any information obtained from the on-site processing will be provided to the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

All artefacts recovered during the project are the property of the landowner. The landowner will be encouraged to deposit any finds to be retained in an appropriate museum or archive, by gift or long-term loan. Should the landowner wish to retain any significant artefacts, meaning that they would not be deposited within an appropriate museum or archive, then a fuller record than usual of those artefacts may be required as part of the post-excavation analysis, to ensure their long-term survival by record.

All artefacts will be suitably bagged, boxed and marked in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Material* (CIfA 2020b).

All artefacts recovered during the investigation will be reported to assessment level, following relevant guidelines. First aid conservation will be undertaken, but if further conservation is required there will be extensive consultation with appropriate specialists. Finds will be appropriately recorded and processed and submitted for post-excavation assessment.

Records of artefact assemblages will clearly state how they have been recovered, sub-sampled and processed.

Once assessed, all retained material will be packed and stored in optimum conditions, as described in *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998) (information is also provided on the First Aid for Finds website [Home | First Aid for Finds](#)).

On completion of the project, modern material and objects that have been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention will be discarded after a period of six months, unless there is a specific require to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the recipient museum). The final deposition and discard policy will be agreed with the legal owner, the Senior Planning Archaeologist and the recipient museum/archives.

5.8 Treatment of Treasure

Finds falling under the statutory definition of Treasure (as defined by the Treasure Act of 1996 and its revision of 2002) will be reported immediately to the Client, the Senior Planning Archaeologist and the local Coroner's Office. The Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) will be informed following instruction from the Client. A Treasure Receipt (obtainable from either the FLO or the DCMS website) will be completed and a report submitted to the Coroner's Officer and the FLO within 14 days of understanding the find is Treasure. Failure to report within 14 days is a criminal offence.

The Treasure Receipt and report will include the date and circumstances of the discovery in addition to the identity of the finder (the contractor) and the location of the find as exactly as possible.

If the find(s) cannot be removed within a reasonable timeframe, work will cease within the vicinity, and the area will be secured with appropriate fencing. More stringent security arrangements such as a 24-hour security presence will be considered as necessary if the find is at significant risk. If specialist input is required for removal, this will be initiated following initial discussions with the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist. It may be necessary to set out the methodology to be employed during removal and subsequent analysis and conservation, either as a separate Project Design or as an addendum to this document.



5.9 Environmental Sampling

A structured programme of environmental sampling appropriate to the aims of the project will be implemented. The strategy and methodology for the sampling of deposits with palaeo-environmental potential will be in accordance with Historic England's Environmental Archaeology guidelines '*Environmental Archaeology – A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*' (Historic England 2011) and other relevant guidance. SLR Consulting's Environmental and Geo-Archaeological Officers will undertake the processing and examination of deposits of significance.

Where deposits are dry, bulk samples for the recovery of charred plant remains, small bones and finds, will be taken from sealed and dateable features such as pits, ditches, hearths and floors. Each context will normally be sampled. The size of the sample is expected to be in the range of 40-60 litres per context or 100% of smaller contexts. Samples will not be taken from the intersection of features. Mollusc samples of 2 litres each will be taken vertically (via a column-of-samples) from appropriate sections to investigate the changes of vegetation through time. Environmental samples from dry deposits will normally be processed by flotation following the fieldwork and the residues will be sorted to retrieve small bones, small finds and charcoal that has not floated.

Where deposits are wet, waterlogged or peaty, monoliths will be taken along cleaned vertical surfaces for the retrieval of pollen, diatoms, ostracods and foraminifera. The numbers to be taken will be agreed with the Senior Planning Archaeologist. For wet, waterlogged or peaty deposits, bulk samples of 20 litres will be taken from visible layers or spits for retrieval of plant macro-remains and insects.

If hearths, kilns or ovens (of whatever period, date or function) are identified during the fieldwork, provision will be made to collect at least one archaeo-magnetic date to be calculated from each individual hearth surface. Where applicable, samples will be collected from the site and processed by a suitably trained specialist for dating purposes.

Where a deposit or material is encountered that requires a more specialised approach, this will be determined through consultation between SLR Consulting's Environmental Archaeologist, the Senior Planning Archaeologist and Historic England.

5.10 Reporting

A draft post-excavation assessment report (in digital format) will be made available to the Client within eight weeks from completion of fieldwork, unless essential specialist input is necessary. Following authorisation and the implementation of any required amendments, the report will be submitted to the Senior Planning Archaeologist for comment. Once approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist, the final version of the report in digital format (pdf) will be submitted to the Client for distribution to relevant parties. The report will be submitted to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record within three months from the completion of fieldwork and the archive deposition within six months from the completion of fieldwork, unless further analysis and reporting is required in which case the archive will be retained until final discharge of the relevant planning conditions. Along with the report, SLR Consulting will provide the HER with a shapefile showing the final excavated limits of all areas which will be used during production of an Event Record for the project in the GMHER GIS.

The report will include as a minimum:

- A location plan showing the areas of investigation (trench location plan), related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid
- The dates on which the project was undertaken
- A concise, non-technical summary of the results



- A summary of the historical and archaeological background
- A description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and results
- Digital photographs where appropriate
- A description of archaeological features and deposits identified during the fieldwork
- Plans and sections at an appropriate scale showing the position of excavated deposits
- A list of, and spot dates for, any finds recovered, and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified
- A description of any environmental or any other specialist work undertaken, and the results obtained
- A table summarising the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and any spot dating of significant finds
- An interpretation of the results and an assessment of the significance of the archaeological features and finds revealed during the fieldwork
- A consideration of the archaeological evidence obtained in relation to its wider context and landscape setting
- Recommendations for further archaeological investigation/mitigation as appropriate
- Recommendations for further analysis if applicable
- Recommendations for publication of the results if applicable, following consultation with the Senior Planning Archaeologist
- List of references

The level of post-excavation analysis and reporting will correspond to the findings of the fieldwork and will be sufficient to establish the character, scale, date range, artefactual and palaeo-environmental potential and overall significance of the remains. The final extent and scope of post-excavation works will be agreed with the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

External specialists will only be consulted during the preparation of the report if the character of the archaeological resource cannot be adequately determined without their input.

The report, and the project archive, will contain enough detail to allow any further phases of archaeological work to be appropriately designed and planned.

5.11 Final Dissemination

The site archive will be prepared in accordance with the Archaeological Archives Forum (Brown 2011), EAC (EAC 2014) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020c). The project archive will contain the digital photographic images and digitally produced site drawings generated during the fieldwork, as well as a physical archive consisting of pro-forma recording sheets of on-site notes and annotated sketches, hand drawn measured drawings on permatrace, photograph registers, finds and ecofactual material, and a hard copy of the final written and illustrated report.

SLR Consulting will retain the archive until a suitable repository becomes available. SLR Consulting will follow any guidelines from the receiving museum/archive regarding the content and form of the site archive.

The project will be registered with OASIS ([OASIS: Home](#)), which is an online reporting form which allows heritage practitioners to provide information about their investigations to regional Historic Environment Records (HERs) and respective national heritage organisations. Upon



completion of the final report, and following its approval by the Planning Archaeologist and the Client, a pdf copy will be uploaded onto OASIS for eventual transfer to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) library ([Archaeology Data Service](#)), where it will be publicly accessible. Depending on the results of the project, information can be included in the OASIS record in relation to relevant research questions in the North West Regional Research Framework ([The North West England Regional Research Framework - North West Regional Research Framework](#)).

It is possible that a summary report may be produced to be considered for inclusion within an appropriate publication to allow for public dissemination of the archaeology and history of the site. This would be dependent on the results of the fieldwork, and the scope of this would be determined following consultation with the GMAAS Archaeologist.

6.0 Monitoring and Liaison

GMAAS require at least one week's notice prior to commencement of the fieldwork and once fieldwork has commenced, they require direct and regular updates from site.

Any variation from this Project Design should be agreed with the Senior Planning Archaeologist in advance.

SLR Consulting welcome site visits during the fieldwork if required by the Client, representatives of the Client, and the Senior Planning Archaeologist, and will make the site records available to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time during or after the fieldwork.

In addition, should the Client require media events, public visits or any other such community engagement activities, particularly if significant results are revealed, SLR Consulting have extensive experience in such activities and will facilitate this. The company's on-site archaeologists will familiarise themselves with the project and the archaeological potential of the area prior to the start of the fieldwork and will always engage with the public in a professional manner.

The importance of good communication links throughout the project is key to the success of the scheme. Depending on the Client's requirements, updates on the progress of the work can be provided, in a format and at a frequency to be agreed. All such communications would be between SLR Consulting's project manager, the Client and the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

7.0 Health and Safety

SLR Consulting is committed to the promotion of appropriate Health and Safety procedures and practices, and the company employs professional experts in Health and Safety. All staff will have an appropriate level of training to enable them to carry out the work safely. All staff and visitors would need to be inducted and sign relevant documentation on first arrival to site to demonstrate that they have read and understood the contents, and any variations will be communicated as required. SLR Consulting will give safety updates to site staff and any authorised visitors to the site through daily briefings and toolbox talks as appropriate. In the event of working within the same workspace as other contractors, safe working methodologies will be discussed and implemented, and these may include relevant toolbox talks.

SLR Consulting will create an appropriate health and safety methodology and will maintain the site in a safe condition throughout the course of the fieldwork. Hazards will be appropriately identified and managed, such as the identification of services/utilities should they affect the work, and hazards associated with working in the vicinity of roads.

Risk assessments will be prepared prior to the start of all fieldwork (historic building survey, archaeological monitoring if required and trial trench evaluation). Risks and measures to reduce risk will be communicated to all those working on and visiting the site. During the



fieldwork, appropriate PPE will be always worn by staff. The Client will be provided with an approved copy of the site-specific risk assessments.

Once on site, the relevant health and safety documents will be assessed, and any variations will be highlighted and added where appropriate. These will be re-evaluated periodically during the fieldwork to make sure they continue to reflect site-specific risks.

SLR Consulting employ staff who are trained in identifying signs of potential mental health concerns. Mental health support is provided on a 24-hour basis through the company's private welfare scheme.

8.0 Staffing

SLR Consulting Ltd is a Registered Organisation of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, which requires a yearly review to check compliancy, proficiency and professionalism. This means that all staff working for SLR Consulting work to methodologies approved by the Institute and defined by their professional *Code of Conduct* (2025). SLR Consulting is one of the largest employers of professional archaeologists in the United Kingdom and includes staff with qualifications and proficiency in archaeological field techniques and post-excavation assessment and analysis.

All phases of the project would be directly managed by a full member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists or an archaeologist of equivalent standing. The fieldwork will be undertaken by a team of professionally qualified archaeologists; copies of CVs can be provided if required. The senior team member supervising the fieldwork will be suitably experienced and hold appropriate health and safety qualifications. Additional staff, as well as specialist sub-contractors, with the required experience and expertise, can be made available if required.

The following specialist will be made available, if necessary:

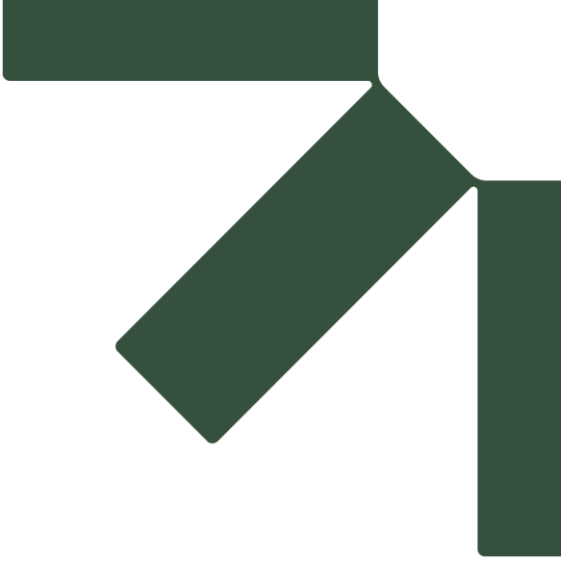
- Environmental Archaeology – John Summers (SLR)
- Finds and Archives – Megan Stoakley (SLR)
- Lithics – Rob Young/Andy Newton
- Osteoarchaeologist – Megan Stoakley (SLR)
- Zooarchaeologist – Megan Stoakley (SLR)
- Archaeometallurgy – David Dungworth
- Numismatics (coins) – Frank Giecco (SLR)
- Prehistoric Ceramics – Rob Young
- Roman Ceramics – Eniko Hudak/Louise Hird
- Medieval Ceramics – Sue Thompson (SLR)
- Post Medieval Ceramics – Sue Thompson (SLR)
- Ceramic Building Material (CBM) – Megan Stoakley (SLR)
- Conservation and X-Ray – Karen Barker
- Conservation (organics) - Gretel Evans



References

- Brogan, A 2020 *Historic Environment Assessment: JPA22 Land North of Smithy Bridge*. University of Salford, Unpublished Report No. 2020/89
- Brown, D H 2011 *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum
- BGS (British Geological Survey) Geology Viewer: [BGS Geology Viewer \(BETA\)](#) – Accessed 01 December 2025
- ClfA 2020a *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2020b *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Material*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2020c *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2023a *Standard for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2023b *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2023c *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2023d *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2025 *Code of Conduct: Professional Ethics in Archaeology*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- EA 2014 *A Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Archaeological Archiving in Europe*. EAC Guidelines 1, Europae Archaeologia Consilium: Namur
- First Aid for Finds: [Home | First Aid for Finds](#) – Accessed 17 November 2025
- Historic England 2011 *Environmental Archaeology – A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*. Second Edition
- Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*
- Soilscapes Viewer: [LandIS - Land Information System - Soilscapes soil types viewer](#) – Accessed 01 December 2025
- Stantec 2022 *Environmental Statement – Volume 3. Hollingworth Road, Littleborough: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*. Unpublished report
- Stantec 2023 *Heritage Assessment: Lower Cleggswood Farm, Heald Lane, Littleborough*. Unpublished report, Project Number: 3332010570
- Watkinson, D and Neal, V 1998 *First Aid for Finds*. RESCUE, The British Archaeological Trust
- WYAS 2023 *Hollingworth Road Littleborough Greater Manchester, Geophysical Survey*. Unpublished report no. 3949





Appendix: Trench Location Plan

Hollingworth Road, Littleborough

Project Design for an Historic Building Survey and Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

Bloor Homes North West

SLR Project No.: 403.66613.00001

17 March 2026



Making Sustainability Happen