



Joint Service Centre, Millgate, Wigan

Greater Manchester

Desk-based Assessment



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SUMMARY

In May 2007, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC) to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of land bounded by Millgate, Rodney Street, Library Street and the Wiend, in the centre of Wigan, Greater Manchester (centred on NGR SD 58356 05569). The principle aim of the assessment was to identify, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the sub-surface archaeological resource within the study area, and to inform and support a planning application by WMBC for the redevelopment of the site. The development proposals are for a Joint Service Centre, which will provide a range of council services on a single integrated site, the construction of which will require some substantial earth-moving works.

The proposed site for the Joint Service Centre lies on the eastern fringe of the town's medieval core, and incorporates an area of known important archaeological remains. In particular, archaeological excavations during the 1980s immediately to the north of the present Municipal Buildings on Hewlett Street provided significant evidence for Roman activity. More recently, the remarkable remains of a Roman bath house were discovered during archaeological excavations carried out in advance of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development on Millgate. These results obtained from these excavations indicate that the focus of Roman settlement in Wigan lies within the present study area. In addition, important archaeological evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity has been recovered from the present study area and its immediate vicinity.

Buried archaeological remains across most of the study area, however, will undoubtedly have been destroyed during redevelopment work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In particular, the construction of the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College (the present Town Hall) in 1903, and its extension in 1929, will have destroyed any archaeological remains between Hewlett Street and College Avenue. The construction of the public baths and its modern successor will similarly have had a major impact on any buried remains between College Avenue and Rodney Street, although fragmentary evidence for archaeological activity may survive beneath the extant building and a small grassed area immediately to the north. However, the northern part of the study area, which is currently used for car parking, has considerable potential to contain important archaeological remains pertaining to the Roman, medieval, and post-medieval periods. This will require a programme of intrusive investigation, most probably in the form of trial trenching in the first instance, which will be designed to establish the presence or absence, extent, and character of buried archaeological remains.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Steve Thompson, of the Environmental Services Department within Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council, for commissioning and supporting the project. Thanks are also expressed to Mel Kennedy, also of Wigan Borough Council, for facilitating access to the suite of available service plans for the study area. OA North is also grateful to Norman Redhead, of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, for his advice and guidance. Thanks are also expressed to the staff of the History Shop in Wigan, the Local Studies Unit in Manchester Central Library, the Greater Manchester Record Office, and the Lancashire Record Office, for assistance with the documentary research.

The desk-based assessment and site visit was carried out by Ian Miller, and the illustrations were produced by Mark Tidmarsh and Marie Rowland. The report was approved by Alan Lupton.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC) is presently devising a proposal to develop a new Joint Service Centre in Wigan town centre. It is envisaged that this facility will provide a range of council services on a single integrated site, together with improved leisure facilities that include a new swimming pool. It is proposed that the new development is focused on an area bounded by Millgate, Rodney Street, Library Street and the Wiend (Fig 1). Whilst design proposals have yet to be finalised, it is anticipated that the scheme will involve some substantial earth-moving works, including the construction of new buildings with deep basements.
- 1.1.2 The site lies on the eastern fringe of the town's medieval core, and occupies part of the Wigan Town Centre Conservation Area, reflecting the architectural and historic merit of the townscape in this part of Wigan; a detailed assessment of the built heritage within the Scheme Area and its environs has been compiled as part of the Joint Service Centre Proposal (Architectural History Practice 2006). Significant buried archaeological remains have been discovered within the boundary of the study area, to the south of the Wiend in particular, and also in the immediate vicinity, including along the eastern side of Millgate.
- 1.1.3 In order to secure archaeological interests, the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester recommended that an archaeological desk-based assessment of the site was carried out to support and inform the planning process. The principle aim of the assessment was to identify, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the sub-surface archaeological resource within the study area, and to establish the impact of the proposed development upon this resource. In accordance with the recommendation, WMBC commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment in May 2007.

1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 **Location:** Wigan lies close to the western boundary of the modern county of Greater Manchester, some 30km to the west of Manchester and 35km to the north-east of Liverpool. The proposed Scheme Area comprises a broadly rectangular plot of land, totalling some 12,200m², on the eastern side of the town centre (centred on SD 58356 05569). It is bounded by Millgate, Rodney Street, Library Street and the Wiend (Fig 1).
- 1.2.2 **Geology:** the geology of the Wigan area forms part of the Lancashire Coal Measures, which extend from the Mersey Valley in the south to the Amounderness Plain in the north-west (Countryside Commission 1998, 172). The solid geology comprises productive coal measures, with Bunter sandstone and marls to the south (Ordnance Survey 1951). The overlying drift geology consists of glacial and post-glacial tills, with fluvial deposits of gravel along

the course of the river Douglas (Countryside Commission 1998, 128), which lies a short distance from the study area; the river was canalised into its present course during the 19th century.

- 1.2.3 **Topography:** the historic core of Wigan is situated on a low hill that rises from the valley of the river Douglas, which takes a broad loop around the eastern and southern sides of the town. Millgate lies on the eastern fringe of the historic core, and rises fairly steeply from a height of 35m aOD at its south-eastern end, by its junction with Rodney Street (Plate 1), to a high point in excess of 50m aOD near its junction with the Wiend. Beyond the Wiend, Millgate falls to a height of 45.5m aOD at its north-western end. Library Street rises uniformly, but less steeply, from 36.5m aOD at its junction with Rodney Street, to 47m aOD at its north-western end. College Avenue and Hewlett Street rise to the north-east from their junctions with Library Street and Millgate (39.5 - 42m aOD and 42 - 46m aOD respectively).



Plate 1: View looking up Millgate from Rodney Street

- 1.2.4 The study area is largely a built environment. In particular, apart from a small grassed area on the south side of College Avenue (Plate 2), the southern part of the study area is developed entirely. The part of the site between Hewlett Street and the Wiend, however, contains a lower density of buildings, and incorporates a large area of car parking. A recreational area on land immediately to the north of the study area, occupying the highest point on Millgate, is similarly undeveloped.



Plate 2: Grassed area on south side of College Avenue

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.1.1 The assessment has focused on the site of the proposed development, referred to hereafter as the Scheme Area, although information for the immediate environs has been considered in order to provide an essential contextual background. The assessment was carried out in accordance with a specification devised by the Assistant County Archaeologist, and conformed to the guidelines provided by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1996). The principal sources of information consulted were historical and modern maps, although published and unpublished secondary sources were also reviewed. Plans of modern service trenches, held by Wigan Borough Council, were also consulted. The following repositories were visited during the data-gathering process:

- **Wigan History Shop:** holds most of the available published maps of the area. All available Ordnance Survey maps for the study area were examined, covering the period from 1850 to 1992;
- **Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (SMR):** the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), a database of all known archaeological sites in the county, was consulted to establish the sites of archaeological interest already known within the Scheme Area;
- **Greater Manchester Record Office, Manchester (GMRO(M)):** the catalogue of the Greater Manchester Record Office was searched for information relating to the study area;
- **Lancashire Record Office, Preston (LRO(P)):** before the county boundaries were changed during the mid-1970s, Wigan lay within the county of Lancashire, and therefore some primary archives pertaining to the study area are held in Lancashire Record Office in Preston;
- **Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library (MCL):** the catalogue of the Archives and Local Studies section of Manchester Central Library was searched for information relating to the study area, and relevant data was incorporated into the report.
- **Oxford Archaeology North:** OA North has an extensive archive of secondary sources relevant to the Scheme Area, as well as numerous unpublished client reports on work carried out in the vicinity.

2.1.2 All archaeological sites within the Scheme Area have been included in the Site Gazetteer (*Section 4, below*). The results were analysed using the Secretary of State's criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments, outlined in Annex 4 of *Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990).

2.2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 The results of the assessment have identified the significance of the archaeological resource of the Scheme Area. In order to assess the potential impact of any future development, consideration has been afforded to:

- assessing in detail any impact and the significance of the effects arising from any future development of the Scheme Area;
- reviewing the evidence for past impacts that may have affected the archaeological sites of interest identified during the desk-based assessment;
- outlining suitable mitigation measures, where possible at this stage, to avoid, reduce, or remedy adverse impacts.

2.2.2 Such impacts on the identified archaeological sites may be:

- positive or negative;
- short, medium or long term;
- direct or indirect;
- reversible or irreversible.

2.2.3 Key impacts have been identified as those that would potentially lead to a change to the archaeological site. Each potential impact has been determined as the predicted deviation from the baseline conditions, in accordance with current knowledge of the site and the proposed development.

2.2.4 Table 1 shows the sensitivity of the site scaled in accordance with its relative importance using the following terms for the cultural heritage and archaeology issues, with guideline recommendations for a mitigation strategy.

Importance	Examples of Site Type	Mitigation
National	Scheduled Monuments (SMs), Grade I and II* Listed Buildings	To be avoided
Regional/County	Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens (Statutory Designated Sites), Grade II Listed Buildings Sites and Monuments Record/Historic Environment Record	Avoidance recommended
Local/Borough	Sites with a local or borough archaeological value or interest Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Low Local	Sites with a low local archaeological value Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Negligible	Sites or features with no significant archaeological value or interest	Avoidance unnecessary

Table 1: Criteria used to determine Importance of Sites

2.2.5 The impact is assessed in terms of the sensitivity or importance of the site to the magnitude of change or potential scale of impact during any future redevelopment scheme. The magnitude, or scale of an impact is often difficult to define, but will be termed as substantial, moderate, slight, or negligible, as shown in Table 2.

Scale of Impact	Description
Substantial	Significant change in environmental factors; Complete destruction of the site or feature; Change to the site or feature resulting in a fundamental change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Moderate	Significant change in environmental factors; Change to the site or feature resulting in an appreciable change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Slight	Change to the site or feature resulting in a small change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Negligible	Negligible change or no material changes to the site or feature. No real change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.

Table 2: Criteria used to determine Scale of Impact

2.2.6 The interaction of the scale of impact (Table 2) and the importance of the archaeological site (Table 1) produce the impact significance. This may be calculated by using the matrix shown in Table 3:

Resource Value (Importance)	Scale of Impact Upon Archaeological Site			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
National	Major	Major	Intermediate/Minor	Neutral
Regional/County	Major	Major/Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local/Borough	Intermediate	Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local (low)	Intermediate / Minor	Minor	Minor/Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Table 3: Impact Significance Matrix

2.2.7 The impact significance category for each identified archaeological site of interest will also be qualified, and recommended mitigation measures will be provided, where possible at this stage, to impacts that are of moderate significance or above; any measures to reduce any impact will be promoted in the report. It is also normal practice to state that impacts above moderate significance are regarded as significant impacts. It is important that the residual impact assessment takes into consideration the ability of the mitigation to reduce the impact, and its likely success.

2.2.8 It is also considered important to attribute a level of confidence by which the predicted impact has been assessed. For the purpose of this assessment, the criteria for these definitions are set out in the table below.

Confidence in Predictions	
Confidence Level	Description
High/Certain	The predicted impact is either certain, <i>ie</i> a direct impact, or believed to be very likely to occur, based on reliable information or previous experience, and may be estimated at 95% chance or higher.
Medium/Probable	The probability can be estimated to be above 50%, but below 95%.
Low/Unlikely	The predicted impact and its levels are best estimates, generally derived from the experience of the assessor. More information may be needed to improve the level of confidence, which can be estimated using the present information at above 5% but less than 50%.
Extremely Unlikely	The probability can be estimated at less than 5%.

Table 4: Impact Prediction Confidence

2.2.9 It should be noted that this report is concerned specifically with the sub-surface archaeological resource within the Scheme Area. The heritage of the built environment has been assessed in a separate report (Architectural History Practice 2006), which should be consulted in conjunction with the present document.

2.3 SITE VISIT

2.3.6 The study area was subject of a site visit to assess the information pertaining to the baseline conditions, and to relate the past landscape and surroundings to that of the present. Additional information on the sites of significance and an understanding of the potential environmental effects has been added to the Site Gazetteer (*Section 4, below*), where appropriate.

3. BASELINE CONDITION

3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The following section presents a summary historical background of the general area, and is presented by historical period.

Period	Date Range
Palaeolithic	30,000 – 10,000 BC
Mesolithic	10,000 – 3,500 BC
Neolithic	3,500 – 2,200 BC
Bronze Age	2,200 – 700 BC
Iron Age	700 BC – AD 43
Romano-British	AD 43 – AD 410
Early Medieval	AD 410 – AD 1066
Late Medieval	AD 1066 – AD 1540
Post-medieval	AD 1540 – c1750
Industrial Period	cAD1750 – 1901
Modern	Post-1901

Table 1: Summary of British archaeological periods and date ranges

3.1.2 **Prehistoric Period:** there is relatively little evidence for prehistoric activity in Wigan, and none at all in the vicinity of the Scheme Area. Stray finds are, however, known from the wider area, including a Neolithic polished stone axe found at Gidlow (Jackson 1936, 74), and a polished stone axe recovered from Leigh cricket ground in 1912 (Aldridge 1999). In light of the intensive development of Wigan during subsequent periods, however, the survival of any prehistoric remains within the Scheme Area would seem unlikely.

3.1.3 **Roman Period:** Wigan has long been associated with the Roman site of *Coccium*, which is recorded as lying 17 miles from Manchester in a listing of roads, known as the Antonine Itinerary, which was probably compiled during the 2nd century AD (Margary 1973). Firm evidence for this association had, however, been lacking, although antiquarian observations and chance finds of Roman artefacts indicated that occupation of some kind had occurred in Wigan during the Roman period. Numerous artefacts were discovered in the 19th century when construction works were carried out in the Wallgate, King Street and Darlington Street area of the town (Hannavy 1990, 8), and a particular concentration of finds was identified on the higher ground around Library Street and Millgate (Hawkes 1935, 43). The remains of a probable Roman cemetery, which typically lay beyond the boundary of Roman settlements, were also discovered during the construction of a gas works on the southern edge of Wigan between 1822 and 1830 (Watkin 1883, 20).

3.1.4 It was not until archaeological excavations were carried out by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit at the Wiend, on the western side of Millgate, during the 1980s that actual settlement remains of Roman date were first identified in Wigan (*Section 3.2.1 below*). Whilst the results of the excavations added weight to the hypothesis that Wigan was indeed the site of *Coccium*, the nature, function, and longevity of Roman settlement remained uncertain.

Indeed, the main phase of intensive activity at the Wiend appears to have tailed off during the early years of the 3rd century, and the nature of Roman activity during the 3rd and 4th centuries remain entirely obscure. The results obtained from the Wiend excavations were enhanced considerably by a major programme of archaeological investigations along the eastern site of Millgate, carried out by OA North in 2004-6 in advance of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development (*Section 3.2.4 below*).

- 3.1.5 **Early Medieval Period:** the character of occupation following the collapse of formal Roman administration in the early 5th century remains entirely obscure. Place-name evidence points to some form of native settlement (Tindall 1985, 20), and the name Wigan is thought to come either from an Old English personal name (*ibid*), or from the Saxon word *waeg* meaning way, which is often associated with the existence of a Roman road (GMAU 2001, 9). There is no direct evidence for activity in the study area during this period, but the name Standishgate includes the Viking word for street, ‘*gata*’ (Hannavy 2003, 15), which suggests it was a road of some significance. Folkard (1909, vii) claims that there was a church at Wigan before the Norman Conquest, but ‘of subsequent re-buildings and restorations there remains no record until 1620, when the chancel was rebuilt’. It has similarly been postulated that the settlement at Scholes originated during the 9th century (Fletcher 2005, 7), but physical evidence is lacking.
- 3.1.6 **Medieval Period:** following the Norman Conquest, William I assigned most of the land between the Ribble and Mersey rivers to Roger of Poitou, who made Wigan the administrative centre of the barony of Makerfield (*op cit*, 14). Wigan is not named in the Domesday survey, but is thought to be the ‘church of the manor’ of Newton (Powell 1998, 6). Nevertheless, much of the surrounding area was probably of little importance (Hall *et al* 1995, 122). Wigan began to prosper during the 13th century, in part due to the granting of a market charter and three-day fair in 1245 (Hannavy 1990, 20). The town attained Royal Borough status a year later and gradually grew in size and prosperity. As a Royal Borough the citizens received the rights and privileges of freemen, or burgesses, which included the right to rent burgage plots as free tenants of the lord of the manor. The size of the burgage plots was specified as five roods of land, for which an annual rent of 12d was levied (Bridgeman 1888-90, 9-10).
- 3.1.7 During this period, Wigan was influenced by the control of several prominent families, including the Norrises, Banastres, Standishes, and Gerards, all of whom owned large halls and land in the vicinity. By the end of the 13th century, however, the Bradshaighs began to emerge as the most influential family in the region, and acquired Haigh Hall in 1295 (Fletcher 2005, 14).
- 3.1.8 By the early 14th century Wigan was one of the larger chartered towns of Lancashire, together with Lancaster, Preston, Liverpool, Manchester and Warrington (White 1996, 129), as demonstrated by its assessment as a borough in the exchequer lay subsidies of 1332 (Morris 1983). During the reign of Edward III (1327-77), charters were awarded to the town for the streets to be paved. The expansion of Wigan at this time was also reflected in

the construction of a bridge over the river Douglas at the bottom of Millgate, which was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1334 (Hannavy 1990, 36).

- 3.1.9 Whilst medieval Wigan was essentially an agricultural town, industrial activity is known to have developed at an early date, such as textile manufacture, coal mining and metal working, including the production of iron, pewter and brass (Powell 1998, 8). The manufacture of felt hats was also carried out, and whilst this was originally a cottage-based industry, mills for this purpose were built in 1782 (*ibid*). Nevertheless, textile production during this period was dominated by the woollen industry, which was sufficiently well-established by the early 14th century to support three fulling mills (Hannavy 1990, 34). However, there was a significant decline in trade during the mid-15th century, and many burgage plots may have been wholly or partly abandoned at this time. Despite this, it is probable that the modern street pattern in the town centre reflects the medieval development of the settlement and that many of the late post-medieval properties in the historic core originated during the medieval period (Architectural History Practice 2006).
- 3.1.10 It has been suggested that the town was provided with some kind of defensive circuit during the late medieval period, possibly in the form of an earthen bank and ditch (Powell 1998, 8). The putative defences may have enclosed an irregular, oval-shaped area bounded (approximately) by the river Douglas, Dicconson Street (towards the southern end of Standishgate), New Market Street, Dorning Street and King Street (*ibid*); the projected route of the putative defensive circuit crosses the south-eastern boundary of the proposed Scheme Area (WMBC 1995).
- 3.1.11 **Post-medieval Period:** in broad terms, the period from the 16th to 18th centuries was one of increased growth and prosperity for Wigan. By 1538, for instance, John Leland was able to describe the settlement as ‘a paved town as big as Warrington, but better builded...’. The town probably increased in size by almost a third during the 16th century, attaining a population of approximately 4000 by 1600 (Hannavy 1990, 46), and by the 1630s Wigan had become one of the principal boroughs in Lancashire, a fact reflected in the size of the contribution the town made to Charles I’s ‘ship-money’ levy; Wigan contributed £50 to this fund, whilst Preston, Lancaster and Liverpool contributed £40, £30 and £25 respectively (Folkard 1909, ix). As a result of this population increase, new buildings appear to have been constructed in the central part of the town, infilling many of the medieval burgage tails.
- 3.1.12 In 1627 the Wigan Company of Pewterers was founded, and the town emerged as one of the most important centres for pewter production in the county (Powell 1998, 10), whilst other metal-working industries also developed (Tindall 1985, 23). In particular, the manufacture of brass products, bell founding and watch-making emerged as important industries during the 17th century. However, the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 resulted in a severe check to the town’s fortunes. Wigan entered the war as a Royalist stronghold, but was captured by Sir John Seaton in April 1643 and was later subjected to punitive taxation under the Commonwealth (Hannavy 2003).

- 3.1.13 It was not until the 18th century that the town once again achieved economic success and renewed expansion. An eyewitness account of Wigan towards the end of the century gives the impression that development at this time was rather *ad hoc*: ‘The main streets of the town are broad, but irregularly built, with a mixture of old and modern houses’ (Aiken 1795, 294). The growth of Wigan during this period was largely due to the coal, iron and textile industries, and in particular the manufacture of woollen cloths, linen, calicos and checks. The town specialised in woollen bedding textiles, which were produced in cottage hand-loom shops (Powell 1998, 9). The metal-working trades continued to be of importance to the town, as illustrated by a contemporary account of 1754, which observed that Wigan was noted for the design and manufacture of clocks and for its non-ferrous metal foundries producing small bells, candlesticks and other household goods (Berg and Berg 2001, 295). Wigan also had a flourishing pottery trade, which can be traced back on documentary evidence at least as far as the mid-17th century; in 1664, the rector allowed that ‘the potters of Wigan for the tyme (*sic*) being may dig clay in the waste of the said manor as heretofore potters of Wigan have used to do...’ (Folkard 1909, xiv). Pottery manufacture had ceased by the early part of the 19th century, however, presumably due to the growth of the industry in areas such as Stoke-on-Trent and Merseyside.
- 3.1.14 Coal mining in the Wigan area during the medieval period had been carried out on what was essentially small-scale, open-cast sites, but by the 16th century mining was mostly underground (Hannavy 1990, 69). A document of 1619 provides one of the earliest references to a coal pit on Millgate itself, whereby the rector gave permission to Peter Platt to drain ‘water from his coal-pit near the Millgate into the street’ (Folkard 1909, xi). By the late 18th century the Wigan coalfield had become the centre of the region’s coal trade, and was recognised as one of the most important of the Lancashire coalfields (Farrer and Brownbill 1908, 357). This was partially on account of rich deposits of cannel coal, which burns with a bright flame and produces very little ash, and thus was in great demand for household use and invariably sold for a higher price than ordinary coal.
- 3.1.15 An important factor in the industrial development of the town was the completion of the Douglas Navigation in 1740. The advantages to trade provided by the Douglas Navigation were enhanced by the opening of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in 1774, which generated large amounts of trade, not least with Ireland (Clarke 1994, 43).
- 3.1.16 ***The Industrial Period:*** by the later 18th century, cotton was beginning to be the dominant element of the textile industry. In 1754, the Swedish industrial spy RR Angerstein noted that ‘large numbers of women and children were occupied with the spinning of cotton’ (Berg and Berg 2001, 295). Some 40 years later, Aiken (1795, 294) commented that ‘the cotton manufactory, as in all other places, intrudes upon the old staple of the place’. Although slow by national standards, the introduction of steam-powered mills during the early part of the 19th century meant that the textile industry remained an important part of the local economy, and at one point accounted for over 50% of the employment in the town (Hannavy 1990, 116).

- 3.1.17 Further improvement of transport links, including a canal branch to Manchester (completed in 1820) and the construction of the railways, continued to enhance Wigan's productivity during the 19th century. The construction of the Central Station a short distance to the east of Millgate is of particular relevance to the present study. This was the third railway station to be built in Wigan and was erected in 1892 by the Grand Central Railway Company (Hannavy 1990, 96). Its construction demanded considerable landscaping works, which included infilling the original course of the river Douglas (which was canalised into its present course) and the raising of ground levels along the western side of the Douglas Valley.
- 3.1.18 The continuing prosperity of the town meant that the population increased at a tremendous rate. Many of the inhabitants were housed in tightly-packed courts and small terraces, which resulted in an infilling of the plots to the rear of the buildings that fronted onto the main streets, as shown on historical mapping; workers' dwellings such as those on Smith's Yard and Moore's Yard were well established by 1848 (Fig 3). The latter is described in a report of 1849 as 'close and crowded with houses back to back. There is court within court, with narrow passages. There are slaughter houses and a tallow boiler' (quoted in Powell 1998, 25). Many of these houses were poorly serviced with sanitation, and various 19th-century commissions considered Wigan to be one of the unhealthiest towns in the country, with an abnormally high death rate (Powell 1998, 12). In response, the Wigan Improvement Act (1874) and the Library Act (1876) were passed, which led to radical changes in the town centre as public utilities, including the waterworks and gasworks, were improved. Several new streets were built within the town centre, including King Street West and Market Street (1877), Station Road (1892), and Library Street (1895). In 1882, public swimming baths were built on the western side of Millgate (on the opposite side of the road to the Roman bath house). These housed 'two swimming baths for gentlemen and one for ladies', together with 22 private baths, three vapour and three slipper baths (Kelly 1905).
- 3.1.19 The coal industry continued to expand through the 19th century; by 1874 there were 140 collieries operating in the Wigan area, many of which continued in use into the 20th century (Ashmore 1982). During the 20th century, however, Wigan's two main industries, coal and textiles, declined, although engineering and food processing became increasingly important and contributed greatly to the area's economy (McNeil and Nevell 2000, 66). The Central Station was closed in 1965 and had been demolished by 1982. During the 1960s the street plan in the vicinity of the study area was remodelled through the construction of the modern ring road (UMAU 2001, 12). Of particular relevance to the present study is that part of the ring road known as River Way, which was driven across the old course of the river Douglas to the east of the development site.

3.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 **Roman Remains:** notwithstanding the antiquarian observations carried out in the 19th century, the historic core of Wigan was not the subject of any formal archaeological investigation until the 1980s, when the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit excavated a series of trenches adjacent to the Wiend, within the northern part of the proposed Scheme Area. The work was carried out prior to the development of the Wiend Centre on the western side of Millgate, and was undertaken as an MSC Community Enterprise Programme. Important archaeological deposits of Roman and medieval date were excavated, although some of these had been disturbed or destroyed by post-medieval development and the construction of cellars during the 19th century. In particular, those parts of the site that lay closest to the Wiend street frontage were largely devoid of Roman and medieval remains as a result of subsequent truncation.
- 3.2.2 Four trenches were excavated over a period of 12 months in 1982-3, which examined a total of some 275 square metres within three adjacent properties: inside the former Sidebotham's Printing Works (Trench 2), beneath a garage to the rear of the Wiend car park (Trench 3), and in an open courtyard between the two (Trenches 1 and 4) (Tindall 1983). Another area (Trench 5) was excavated in 1984, following the demolition of the surrounding buildings. Significant archaeological remains were encountered in each of the trenches, although these were generally concentrated within their southern parts, whilst Roman and medieval remains closer to the Wiend street frontage had evidently been destroyed by post-medieval development of the area.
- 3.2.3 The archaeological data generated from these excavations have never been subject to detailed analysis, and a full report awaits production and publication, although interim summaries demonstrated the immense significance of the results (Tindall 1983; Jones and Price 1985). The earliest phase of Roman activity was represented by the remains of timber-framed buildings, which dated broadly to between *c* AD70 and AD120. The next phase represented an intensification of activity, including the construction of a cobbled surface and a remodelling and expansion of the timber-framed buildings. Within a short period, however, these buildings appeared to have been deliberately dismantled, and the site was seemingly cleared and levelled. Precise dating for these events could not be ascertained, although it was considered likely to have occurred during the first half of the 2nd century (Jones and Price 1985, 27); evidence from archaeological excavation has indicated that many other Roman settlements in the North West experienced a major change, or even temporary abandonment, during this period, which has been linked with the military campaign in Scotland during the AD140s.
- 3.2.4 The conclusions drawn from the Wiend excavations suggested that the settlement may have been primarily a manufacturing and supply base for the Roman military, whilst the size and nature of the excavated buildings can be paralleled with those excavated at Wilderspool and Walton-le-Dale. A reassessment of this interpretation has been called for as a result of the major programme of archaeological excavation carried out along the eastern side of

Millgate, in advance of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development in 2004-6. In particular, the well-preserved remains of a stone-built bath house were discovered. This spectacular building appears to have been built during the early 2nd century, but was abandoned and efficiently dismantled in *c* AD140 (OA North 2006). Archaeological excavation a short distance to the north, within the former Ship Yard, revealed a series of Roman ditches, which seemingly represented military activity. Fragments of pottery recovered from these ditches have been dated to the late 1st century, and perhaps represent the earliest phase of Roman activity in Wigan.

- 3.2.5 Recent work by the Wigan Archaeological Society (WAS) has furnished information regarding the route of Roman roads in the vicinity of the town. One of the most important routes was that between Wigan and Manchester, which, in general terms, is thought to take the same course as the modern A577 (Aldridge 2005). This has been investigated in several places, including Small Brook Lane, near Atherton, Hatton Fold, Amberwood Common in Higher Ince, and in Ellesmere Park (*ibid*). The course of the Roman roads in the centre of Wigan, however, remains uncertain, and whilst it seems likely that Millgate follows the route of the Roman road from the south, further archaeological excavation is required to provide firm evidence.
- 3.2.6 **Post-Roman Remains:** physical remains of medieval Wigan have been uncovered in several excavations within the town centre. Cultivation soils and a timber-lined well or cistern were excavated at the Wiend (Jones and Price 1985, 29), whilst postholes and pottery dated provisionally to the 14th or 15th centuries were uncovered at Chapel Street (GMAU 1987, 2). The remains of two medieval burgage plots and a substantial town house constructed of timber were also discovered on Hallgate (GMAU 2001). The excavated burgage plots were found to be at least 5m wide, and between 30m and 40m in length. Excavations associated with the Grand Arcade Shopping Development similarly yielded evidence for medieval activity, represented by probable burgage plot boundary ditches and several rubbish pits. These excavations also provided important evidence for the development of town during the post-medieval period.

3.3 MAP REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- 3.3.1 One of the earliest maps of Wigan (LRO DP175) was produced in 1712 to illustrate the proposed river Douglas Navigation (Plate 3). Whilst somewhat schematic, the map clearly shows the main streets converging on the church and market place, essentially depicting the layout of the medieval town. The main streets at this time were Standishgate, Wallgate, Hallgate, and Millgate, all of which are shown to have had densely developed street frontages. The development along Millgate is shown to have extended across the river Douglas.

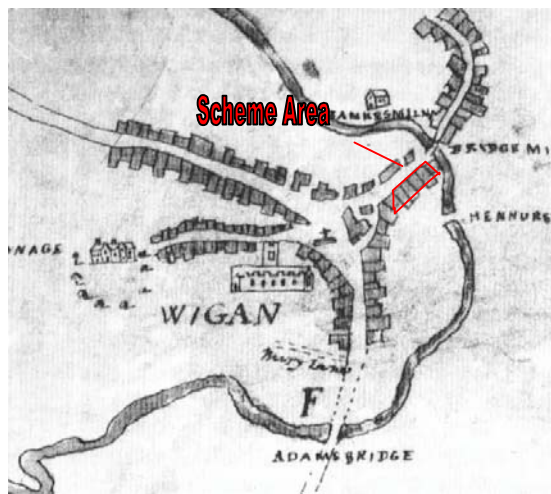


Plate 3: Extract from a map of 1712

- 3.3.2 The earliest detailed survey of Wigan is provided by a map of the town drawn by Mather in 1827 (Plate 4). This map again shows clearly the main streets in Wigan radiating out from the church, and the outlines of long plots of medieval origin to the rear of buildings. In particular, the properties fronting onto Millgate, lying within the proposed Scheme Area, are shown to have long burgage plots, with those on the eastern side of the street seemingly extending down the bank to the river Douglas. Several long, narrow blocks of buildings are depicted extending from Millgate and across the Scheme Area. Whilst it is likely that these buildings represent late 18th- or early 19th-century development, their layout appears to respect medieval boundaries (Fig 2).



Plate 4: Extract from Mather's plan of 1827

- 3.3.3 The nature of the buildings within the Scheme Area cannot be ascertained from Mather's plan, although some details are provided by Ordnance Survey mapping published in 1848 (Fig 3). This shows the two parallel building ranges across the central part of the Scheme Area to have been Crispin's Court and Collier's Row, which almost certainly comprised workers' dwellings. The properties on Collier's Row are depicted as back-to-back houses, with entrance steps on both sides, whilst those on Crispin's Court are considerably smaller, and presumably represent single-room houses. Both types of houses

contrast with the larger, commercial, properties fronting onto Millgate and Rodney Street.

- 3.3.4 The parallel street of domestic properties to the north, marked as Elbow Lane, seemingly developed after the completion of Mather's map in 1827. The Ordnance Survey map of 1848 also shows the infilling of the northern part of the Scheme Area with a dense concentration of buildings, bounded by Smith's Yard and Moore's Yard (Fig 3). The relative paucity of formal industrial premises amongst these buildings is notable, although it seems likely that many of the houses will have been used as domestic workshops in addition to dwelling places. Exceptions include the rope walk to the south of Collier's Row, and a long range of buildings on the north side of Rodney Street. The Ordnance Survey map indicates these buildings to have been fitted with cellar lights, suggesting that they incorporated basements. The land to the rear of these buildings is marked as a playground, presumably associated with the Free Grammar School, representing the only open space within the Scheme Area.
- 3.3.5 The next edition of Ordnance Survey mapping to show the study area was published in 1890, and shows several changes to the layout of buildings (Fig 4). In particular, most of the houses forming Crispin's Court have been demolished, leaving an open space. Conversely, the school playground to the south has been developed with the erection of the Mining and Mechanical School and a public baths (built in 1882). The buildings fronting Rodney Street are also shown to have been remodelled and expanded slightly, although no indication of their function is provided. Similarly, the rope walk shown on the 1848 map had been subsumed by new buildings, which may similarly have been commercial premises. The layout of the buildings within the Scheme Area is replicated on the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map of 1894 (Fig 5).
- 3.3.6 The character of the Scheme Area had been altered considerably by the time of the next Ordnance Survey map, published in 1909 (Fig 6). Library Street was built in 1895, and was connected with Millgate shortly after by College Avenue and Hewlett Street. The area between these two streets was occupied largely by the new Wigan and District Mining and Technical College, which was built in 1903, and what are now the Municipal Buildings on the northern side of Hewlett Street. The latter originated as commercial offices, with seven shops on the ground floor, and a deep basement, as shown on architect's drawings (Architectural History Practice 2006). The new building abutted a warehouse, which formed the southern end of Moore's Yard; the former warehouse survives extant, albeit heavily remodelled. In general terms, however, the construction of these new streets necessitated the demolition of numerous court dwellings, including Walthew's Yard, Gaskell's Yard, Crispin's Court, Collier's Row, and Elbow Lane. The net result was a transformation from crowded and unplanned premises, to a planned development of a primarily commercial and civic character. However, the dense layout of buildings to the north, in Moore's (Park's) Yard and Hilton's Yard, remained largely unaltered. Remodelling within the southern part of the Scheme Area evidently involved the demolition of the original Mining and Mechanical School, and the slight expansion of the group of buildings fronting

onto Rodney Street. The buildings clustered around Banks' Yard, immediately to the north of the public baths, have also been demolished.

3.3.7 The subsequent edition of Ordnance Survey mapping, published in 1929, shows little alteration to the layout of buildings within the Scheme Area, although it was during that year that the Mining and Technical College was extended along College Street up to Millgate; this extension incorporated a basement (Plate 5), the construction of which will have had a negative impact on any buried archaeological remains. Some ten years later, the commercial offices that now constitute the Municipal Buildings were extended along the north side of Hewlett Street to Millgate (Architectural History Practice 2006, 37). This extension, however, did not incorporate a basement, offering some potential for the survival of archaeological remains.



Plate 5: The Town Hall, with cellar lights

- 3.3.8 Other development within the Scheme Area that may be elucidated from the 1929 Ordnance Survey map include the construction of a 'picture theatre' adjacent to the public baths. The baths were also extended, with the construction of a rectangular block fronting onto College Avenue (Fig 7). The north-western corner of the plot between College Avenue and Rodney Street, however, remained undeveloped.
- 3.3.9 The next major development within the Scheme Area was the construction of new public baths, which were built in 1965-6. These replaced the original public baths of 1882, but occupied a larger footprint, which extended up to the Rodney Street frontage.

4. GAZETTEER OF SITES

Site number	01
Site name	The Wiend
NGR	SD 5833 0565
Site type	Excavation Site
Period	Romano-British
SMR No	4814.1.0
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Tindall 1985; Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description	Five archaeological trenches excavated by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit in 1982-3. Roman and medieval deposits were exposed. The earliest phases dated to the late 1 st and early 2 nd centuries, and comprised timber buildings that were interpreted as store rooms or warehouses.
Assessment	The excavation site lies within the Scheme Area, and whilst all archaeological remains within the footprint of these excavations will have been destroyed, there is considerable potential for significant archaeological deposits to survive in the immediate vicinity.

Site number	02
Site name	Roman Samian Ware
NGR	SD 5832 0556
Site type	Findspot
Period	Roman
SMR No	4199.1.0
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description	A fragment of Samian reported to have been discovered during the construction of the technical college on Library Street in 1883.
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	03
Site name	Millgate
NGR	SD 5835 0568
Site type	Findspot
Period	Roman
SMR No	4200.1.0
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description	Roman coins discovered in 1890 during building work. Present location of the coins is unknown.

Assessment Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number 04
Site name The Wiend
NGR SD 5827 0567
Site type Findspot
Period Roman
SMR No 4198.1.0
Stat. Designation None
Sources Watkins 1875; Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description Roman coins found in 1837, excavated in stone work near the Wiend and the Market Place. Present location of the coins is unknown.
Assessment Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number 05
Site name Altar
NGR SD 5817 0568
Site type Site of
Period Roman
SMR No 4175.1.1
Stat. Designation None
Sources Watkin 1883; Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description A parallel stone with two scrolls on the top, believed to be part of a Roman altar, set in the east joint of the north window of the tower of the Church of All Saints. It was discovered under the communion table in c 1847, and was then placed in its present position.
Assessment The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number 06
Site name Roman Fort??
NGR SD 5820 0560
Site type Site of
Period Roman
SMR No 576.1.0
Stat. Designation None
Sources Greater Manchester SMR
Description The postulated location of the Roman fort in Wigan, although firm evidence is lacking.
Assessment The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	07
Site name	Roman Bath House
NGR	SD 5842 0559
Site type	Excavation Site
Period	Roman
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	OA North 2006
Description	The well-preserved remains of a Roman bath house, dated to the early 2 nd century, exposed during archaeological excavations in advance of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development.
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	08
Site name	Ditches
NGR	SD 5836 0574
Site type	Excavation Site
Period	Roman
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	OA North 2006
Description	A series of three ditches, dating to the late 1 st century, revealed during archaeological excavations in the former Ship Yard in advance of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development.
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	09
Site name	Station Road
NGR	SD 5844 0563
Site type	Excavation Site
Period	Roman – Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	OA North 2005
Description	A series of three trial trenches excavated across a former car park to the west of Station Road (Area G8) as part of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development. A range of archaeological deposits was identified, which can be dated broadly between the Roman period through to the 20 th century. Further archaeological investigation was not carried out, as the remains were preserved <i>in situ</i> .
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	10
Site name	Station Road
NGR	SD 5842 0567
Site type	Excavation Site
Period	Roman – Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	OA North 2005
Description	A series of eight trial trenches excavated across a former car park to the west of Station Road (Area G6) as part of the Grand Arcade Shopping Development. A range of archaeological deposits was identified, which can be dated broadly between the Roman period through to the 20 th century. Further archaeological investigation was not carried out, as the remains were preserved <i>in situ</i> .
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	11
Site name	The Galleries
NGR	SD 5825 0575
Site type	Excavation site
Period	Roman – Post-medieval
SMR No	4203.1.0
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	GMAU Annual Report 1987-8; Greater Manchester SMR; NMR
Description	An archaeological trial trench excavated by GMAU in 1987 on the site of the Galleries Development, situated close to the old market hall. A large assemblage of artefacts dating from the 13 th century onwards was recovered, including fragments of medieval glazed and decorated pottery. Several fragments of Roman samian ware were also recovered from medieval layers.
Assessment	Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number	12
Site name	Wigan Gaol and Police Office
NGR	SJ 5833 0565
Site type	Site of
Period	16 th century
SMR No	4270.1.0
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Greater Manchester SMR
Description	Wigan Gaol, or Bridewell, was built on the western side of Millgate, at the junction of the Wiend, in the early 16 th century.

Assessment It demolished in 1868, when the police station transferred to the Town Hall buildings on King Street.
The site lies in the north-eastern corner of the proposed Scheme Area, and is largely occupied currently by The Wiend Children's Library.

Site number 13
Site name Hallgate Medieval Tenements
NGR SJ 5814 0573
Site type Excavation site
Period 1250 - 1350
SMR No -
Stat. Designation None
Sources GMAU 1991; NMR
Description An archaeological watching brief and subsequent excavation of 19-23 Hallgate, carried out by GMAU in 1991, revealed a sequence of archaeological deposits dating from the late 14th century. This included the partial ground plan of a late medieval timber-framed town house, and a series of subsequent cellared tenements.
Assessment Site destroyed, although there is potential for other remains to survive in the immediate vicinity. The site lies outside of the proposed Scheme Area.

Site number 14
Site name Crispin's Court
NGR SJ 5835 0555
Site type Terraced housing
Period Post-medieval
SMR No -
Stat. Designation None
Sources Mather's map 1827, Ordnance Survey mapping 1848, 1890.
Description A row or worker's cottages, aligned north-east/south-west across the central part of the Scheme Area, shown on Mather's map of 1827 and the Ordnance Survey map of 1848. Most of the houses, however, had been demolished by 1890, as they are not shown on Ordnance Survey mapping published in that year. The character of these houses is uncertain, although their dimensions as shown on historical mapping suggest that they may have been single-roomed dwellings. In 1903, the site was redeveloped as the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College, which was extended up to the Millgate street frontage in 1929.
Assessment Site almost certainly destroyed during redevelopment in the early 20th century; the site lies beneath the present Town Hall building.

Site number	15
Site name	Collier's Row
NGR	SJ 5836 0553
Site type	Terraced Housing
Period	Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Mather's map 1827, Ordnance Survey mapping 1848, 1890.
Description	A row of workers' cottages, aligned north-east/south-west across the central part of the Scheme Area, shown on Mather's map of 1827. Marked as Worthington's Row on the Ordnance Survey map of 1890, most of these houses are depicted clearly as back-to-back dwellings; the map does not show any cellar light windows, suggesting that these properties did not have basements. The buildings were all cleared as part of development during the late 19 th century to allow for the construction of College Avenue.
Assessment	Site almost certainly destroyed during redevelopment in the early 20 th century, although fragmentary elements may survive beneath College Avenue.

Site number	16
Site name	Moore's Yard
NGR	SJ 5829 0563
Site type	Terraced Housing
Period	Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Mather's map 1827, Ordnance Survey mapping 1848, 1890.
Description	A row of workers' cottages, aligned north-west/south-east across the northern part of the Scheme Area, shown on Mather's map of 1827. Marked as Moore's Yard on the Ordnance Survey map of 1848, and as Park's Yard on subsequent maps.
Assessment	The site lies in the north-western part of the proposed Scheme Area, and is used currently as a car park. The site has some potential for important archaeological remains of all periods.

Site number	17
Site name	Banks' Yard
NGR	SJ 5839 0554
Site type	Terraced Housing
Period	Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Mather's map 1827, Ordnance Survey mapping 1848, 1890.
Description	A yard area shown, but not named, on Mather's map and the Ordnance Survey map of 1848. The buildings around the yard are shown to have been remodelled by the time of the Ordnance

Survey map of 1890, by which time the site is known as Banks' Yard. The yard is shown as having been cleared of buildings on the 1909 Ordnance Survey map, and the site subsumed by an extension to the public baths by 1929.

Assessment The site lies in the southern part of the proposed Scheme Area, beneath the northern edge of the swimming baths. The site has some potential to retain important archaeological remains of all periods.

Site number 18
Site name Smith's Yard
NGR SJ 5834 0561
Site type Terraced Housing
Period Post-medieval
SMR No -
Stat. Designation None
Sources Mather's map 1827, Ordnance Survey mapping 1848, 1890.
Description A yard area shown, but not named, on Mather's map. Marked as Smith's Yard on the Ordnance Survey map of 1848. Remodelled and extended slightly by the time of the 1890 Ordnance Survey map, which marks the site as Walthew's Yard. Site cleared during the early 20th century, and redeveloped as the present Municipal Buildings, although western extent of the former housing lies beneath Hewlett Street.

Assessment The site lies in the southern part of the proposed Scheme Area, beneath the Municipal Buildings and Hewlett Street. The site is likely to have largely destroyed, although fragmentary remains may survive.

Site number 19
Site name Defensive Circuit
NGR SJ 5843 0549
Site type Earthen Defensives
Period Medieval – Post-medieval
SMR No -
Stat. Designation None
Sources WMBC 1995; Powell 1998
Description A medieval town wall, probably in the form of an earth bank and ditch, is thought to have enclosed an irregular oval-shaped area bounded by the original course of the river Douglas, Dicconson Street, New Market Street, Dorning Street, and King Street. The projected route of this feature lies along the northern edge of Rodney Street.

Assessment The site crosses the southern boundary of the proposed Scheme Area. Any physical remains are likely to have been largely destroyed by the construction of the modern swimming baths and service trenches, although some fragmentary remains may

	survive beneath the pavement at the junction of Rodney Street and Library Street.
Site number	20
Site name	College Avenue
NGR	SJ 5837 0554
Site type	Road
Period	1890s
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Ordnance Survey mapping, 1909
Description	A road constructed during the late 1890s to connect Library Street with Millgate. Built across large part of Collier's Row (Site 15).
Assessment	Site lies in the central part of the proposed Scheme Area, and has some potential to overlie fragmentary, but important, archaeological remains of all periods.

Site number	21
Site name	Hewlett Street
NGR	SJ 5834 0559
Site type	Road
Period	1890s
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Ordnance Survey mapping, 1909
Description	A road constructed in the late 1890s to connect Library Street with Millgate. Built across west end of Smith's Yard (Site 18).
Assessment	Site lies in the central part of the proposed Scheme Area, and has some potential to overlie fragmentary, but important, archaeological remains of all periods.

Site number	22
Site name	The Wiend
NGR	SJ 5832 0559
Site type	Recreational Area
Period	Roman – Post-medieval
SMR No	-
Stat. Designation	None
Sources	Ordnance Survey mapping
Description	An area to the north of the Wiend used currently as a recreational area.
Assessment	The site lies beyond the northern boundary of the proposed Scheme Area. Map regression analysis has indicated that parts of this site have never been developed, and it is considered likely that significant archaeological remains of all periods will survive <i>in-situ</i> . Whilst beyond the scope of the present study, any future development that affects this site will require archaeological investigation.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REMAINS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 In total, ten sites of archaeological interest have been identified within the proposed Scheme Area, and an additional 12 known sites lie in the immediate environs (Fig 9). None of the archaeological sites within the proposed Scheme Area have any legal designation, although there are two Grade II Listed Buildings (Architectural History Practice 2006).

5.2 CRITERIA

5.2.1 There are a number of different methodologies used to assess the archaeological significance or importance of sites; that to be used here is the 'Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling ancient monuments' which is included as Annex 4 of PPG 16 (DoE 1990). The sites previously listed (Section 4, above) were each considered using the criteria, with the results below.

5.2.2 **Period:** the sites identified within the boundary of the proposed Scheme Area span from the Roman to Modern periods.

5.2.3 **Rarity:** any physical remains pertaining to the Roman and medieval periods can be considered to be of Regional/County rarity. The *in situ* remains of late 18th- and early 19th-century workers' housing and cottage-based industries are considered to be of Local/Borough rarity.

5.2.4 **Documentation:** the historical development of the study area from the late 18th century can be traced reasonably well from cartographic sources, and is enhanced by entries in commercial directories. Further documentary research may furnish additional evidence, including more precise dating of the construction of the relevant buildings, although this is unlikely to alter the outline presented in this assessment.

5.2.5 **Group value:** the remains have a high group value potential, providing evidence for a range of domestic, commercial, and industrial activities for all periods represented.

5.2.6 **Survival/Condition:** it is likely that the survival and condition of buried remains will vary across the Scheme Area. In general terms, any buried remains within the central and southern parts of the site will have been largely destroyed by late 19th- and 20th-century development, although there is considerable potential for buried remains to survive *in situ* to the north of Hewlett Street. The precise extent to which any buried archaeological remains survive beneath the modern ground surface, however, is unknown. There is also some potential for buried remains to survive beneath Hewlett Street and College Avenue; service trenches laid along these streets are restricted to the pavement areas.

- 5.2.7 **Fragility:** any surviving buried remains will be adversely affected by the proposed development, which is likely to require some substantial earth-moving works.
- 5.2.8 **Potential:** all sites have the potential to reveal specific information that is not available from other sources. This potential is applicable to the Roman, medieval, and post-medieval periods.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.3.1 All of the archaeological sites identified within the boundary of the proposed Scheme Area are considered to be of either Regional/County (Sites **01**) or Local/Borough importance (Sites **12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20** and **21**). The archaeological sites identified in the immediate environs of the scheme area are considered to be of either Regional/County or Local/Borough importance.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND LIKELY IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 POTENTIAL

6.1.1 In its Planning Policy Guidance *Note 16*, the Department of the Environment (DoE) advises that archaeological remains are a continually diminishing resource and ‘should be seen as finite, and non-renewable resource, in many cases, highly fragile and vulnerable to destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed’. It has been the intention of this study to identify the sub-surface archaeological potential of the study area, and assess the impact of redevelopment, thus allowing the advice of the DoE to be enacted upon.

6.1.2 The extent of any previous disturbance to buried archaeological levels is an important factor in assessing the potential impact of the proposed scheme of redevelopment. It is clear that any archaeological deposits across a considerable part of the Scheme Area will have been destroyed during the remodelling of this part of Wigan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the construction of the swimming pool in the 1960s. Nevertheless, it is likely that isolated pockets of archaeological remains and stratigraphy will survive *in-situ* across the site.

6.1.3 The northern part of the Scheme Area is considered to have the highest archaeological potential (Fig 10). In particular, the car-parking area to the west of The Wiend Children’s Library is likely to contain significant archaeological deposits. This has been testified by the excavations carried out during the 1980s, although these investigations by their very nature will have destroyed all archaeological remains within their footprint, including the area beneath The Wiend Children’s Library. Similarly, much of the southern part of the car park, including the entrance from Millgate, will have been affected, although pockets of remains are likely to survive *in situ*.



Plate 6: The car park to the north of the Municipal Building

6.1.4 The north-western end of the car park, to the rear of 8-14 Library Street, was not available for excavation previously. Whilst the results from the Wiend

excavations demonstrated a low-level occurrence of Roman and medieval remains on the higher ground, elements of this part of the site nevertheless offer a potential for significant archaeological deposits of all periods. In particular, Moore's (latterly Park's) Yard does not appear to have sustained any development, other than a modern electricity cable. Moreover, the buried remains of workers' housing, depicted on Mather's map (1827), are likely to survive *in situ* on either side of the yard.

- 6.1.5 The areas between the wings on the northern side of the Municipal Buildings on Hewlett Street also have considerable potential to retain pockets of Roman and medieval remains, particularly beneath the former Smith's Yard. Workers' housing, moreover, had been built along the edges of Smith's Yard by the early 19th century, and it is likely that the buried remains of these structures will survive. The western wing of the Municipal Buildings is formed by a 19th-century warehouse (Plate 7) which, in contrast to the main building, does not incorporate a basement.



Plate 7: Area between wing to north of Municipal Building

- 6.1.6 The area between the adjacent wings of the Municipal Building to the east, currently used as a car-parking area, also has considerable potential for buried archaeological remains to survive *in situ*. This includes a potential for remains of Roman and medieval date.
- 6.1.7 The construction of the Town Hall and the succession of public baths erected within the central and southern parts of the proposed Scheme Area will have almost certainly have destroyed the majority of buried archaeological remains, and it is unlikely anything other than deeply cut features, such as wells or large pits, will survive *in situ*. Similarly, the installation of a dense network of modern service trenches beneath the pavement along the northern side of Rodney Street is likely to have destroyed any archaeological remains in that area. There is however, some potential for archaeological remains to survive within the small landscaped area at the junction of College Avenue and Millgate, which occupies the site of Banks' Yard, and beneath the footprint of the north-western end of the swimming pool.
- 6.1.8 Another area of considerable archaeological potential lies immediately to the north of the proposed Scheme Area, within land that is currently landscaped, open space. Whilst historical mapping shows a cluster of buildings along the Wiend and Millgate street frontages, the yard area to their rear remained undeveloped.

6.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.2.1 Following on from the above considerations, the significance of impact has been determined as substantial based on an assumption that there will be earth-moving works associated with the development. The results are summarised in Table 5.

Site Number	Importance	Impact	Significance of Impact
01	Regional/County	Substantial	Major
02	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
03	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
04	Local/Borough y	Negligible	Neutral
05	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
06	Regional/County	Negligible	Neutral
07	Regional/County	Negligible	Neutral
08	Regional/County	Negligible	Neutral
09	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
10	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
11	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
12	Local/Borough	Moderate	Intermediate
13	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
14	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
15	Local/Borough	Negligible	Neutral
16	Local/Borough	Substantial	Intermediate
17	Local/Borough	Substantial	Intermediate
18	Local/Borough	Substantial	Intermediate
19	Local/Borough	Slight	Minor
20	Local/Borough	Moderate	Intermediate
21	Local/Borough	Moderate	Intermediate
22	Regional/County	Negligible	Neutral

Table 5: Assessment of the impact significance on each site during development

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Current legislation draws a distinction between archaeological remains of national importance and other remains considered to be of lesser significance. Those perceived to be of national importance may require preservation *in situ*, whilst those of lesser significance may undergo preservation by record, where Regional/County or Local/Borough significance can be demonstrated.

7.1.1 No buried archaeological sites have been identified within the proposed Scheme Area that may be considered as being of national importance and therefore merit preservation *in situ*. However, the study area has a potential to contain *in situ* buried remains of Regional/County and Local/Borough importance, which would require preservation by record should they be directly affected by future development proposals. The scope and specification of any archaeological recording required in advance of redevelopment would be devised in consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester. However, in general terms, it may be anticipated that, in the first instance, a programme of archaeological evaluation will be required.

7.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

7.2.1 It is envisaged that a programme of archaeological evaluation will be required as part of the planning process. The primary objectives of any such evaluation would be to establish to presence, character, date and extent of any buried archaeological remains, and to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy. In the first instance, the evaluation should be targeted upon the northern part of the Scheme Area, within the car park to the north of the Municipal Buildings, together with a limited programme of trenching across the open land immediately to the north of the swimming baths; the suggested location of these trenches is presented in Figure 11.

7.2.2 It should be noted that the evaluation trenching would form an initial phase of intrusive archaeological investigation; it is anticipated that further excavation work be required should significant archaeological remains be discovered within the evaluation trenches. The results obtained from geo-technical investigation, once these are known, may also identify areas of archaeological significance beneath the extant buildings, which may also require mitigation.

7.2.3 It is further recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be implemented during the demolition of the swimming baths. This would be targeted at providing an archaeological record of any surviving remains within the vertical sections immediately beyond the footprint of the extant building. More detailed excavation may be required beneath the north-western corner of the swimming baths, although an indication of the presence or absence of archaeological remains within this part of the Scheme Area may be informed by geotechnical investigations.

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8 ILLUSTRATIONS

8.1 FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location map
- Figure 2: Extract from Mather's Map, 1827
- Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 60": 1 mile map, 1848
- Figure 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 10': 1 mile map, 1890
- Figure 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1894
- Figure 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1909
- Figure 7: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1929
- Figure 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1956
- Figure 9: Location of the Grand Arcade Excavation and the Wiend Excavations, superimposed upon the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1894
- Figure 10: Scheme Area, showing areas of high archaeological potential
- Figure 11: Suggested location of evaluation trenches required



Figure 1: Site Location





Figure 2: Extract from Mather's Map, 1827



Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 60" : 1 mile map, 1848

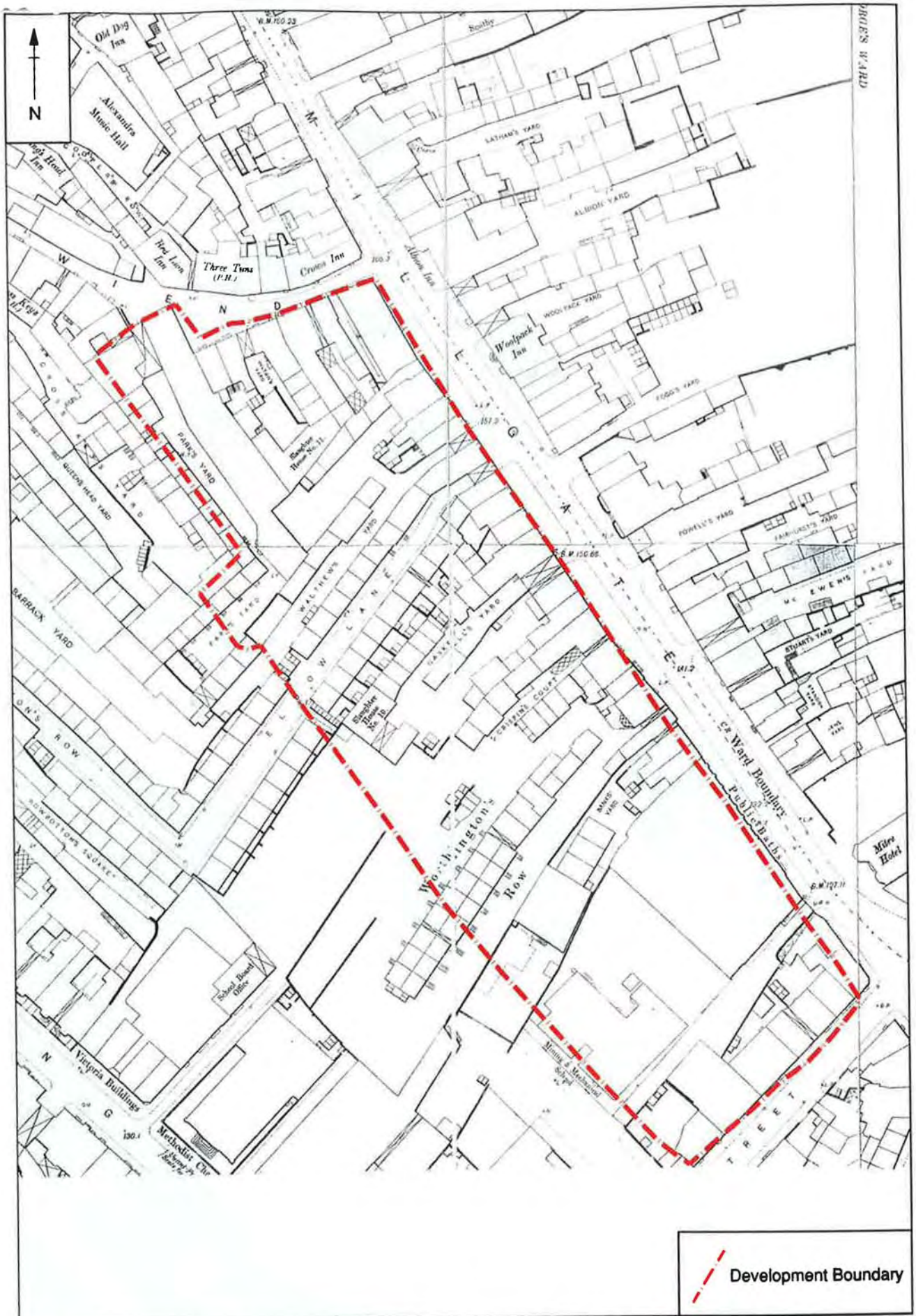


Figure 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 10' : 1 mile map, 1890



Figure 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25": 1 mile map, 1894

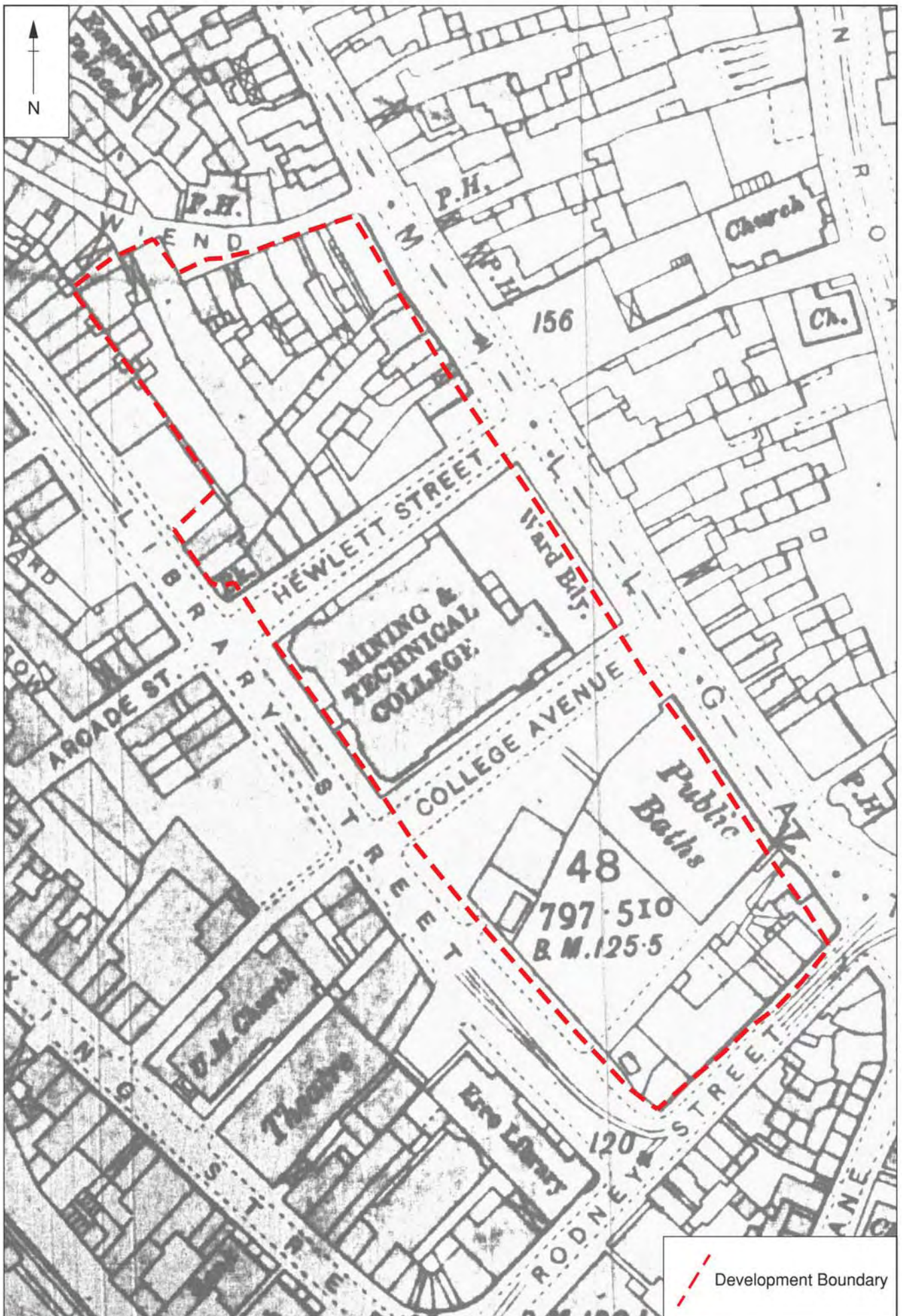


Figure 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1909



Figure 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile map, 1956

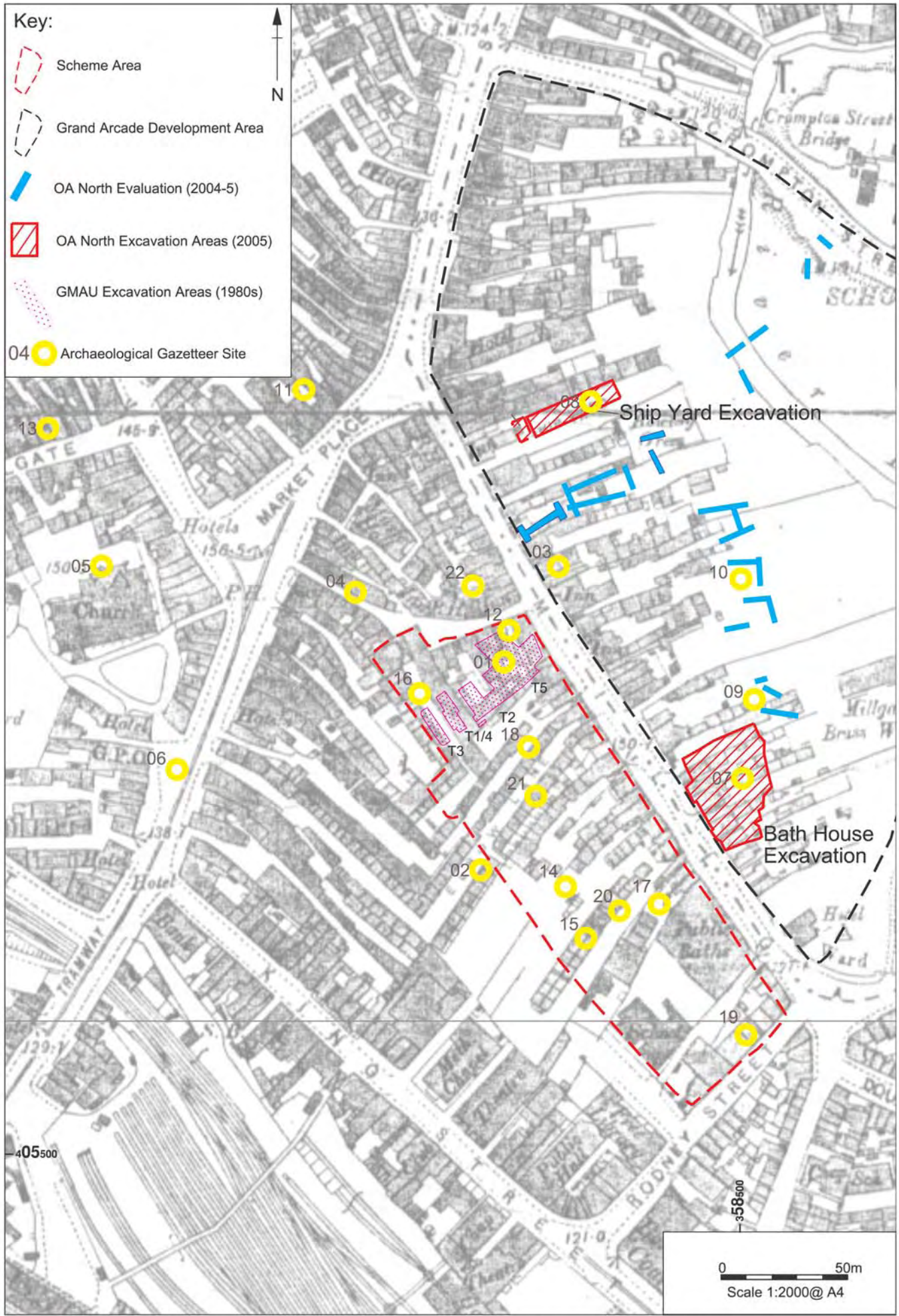


Figure 9: Location of the Grand Arcade Excavation and the Wiend Excavations, superimposed upon the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1894



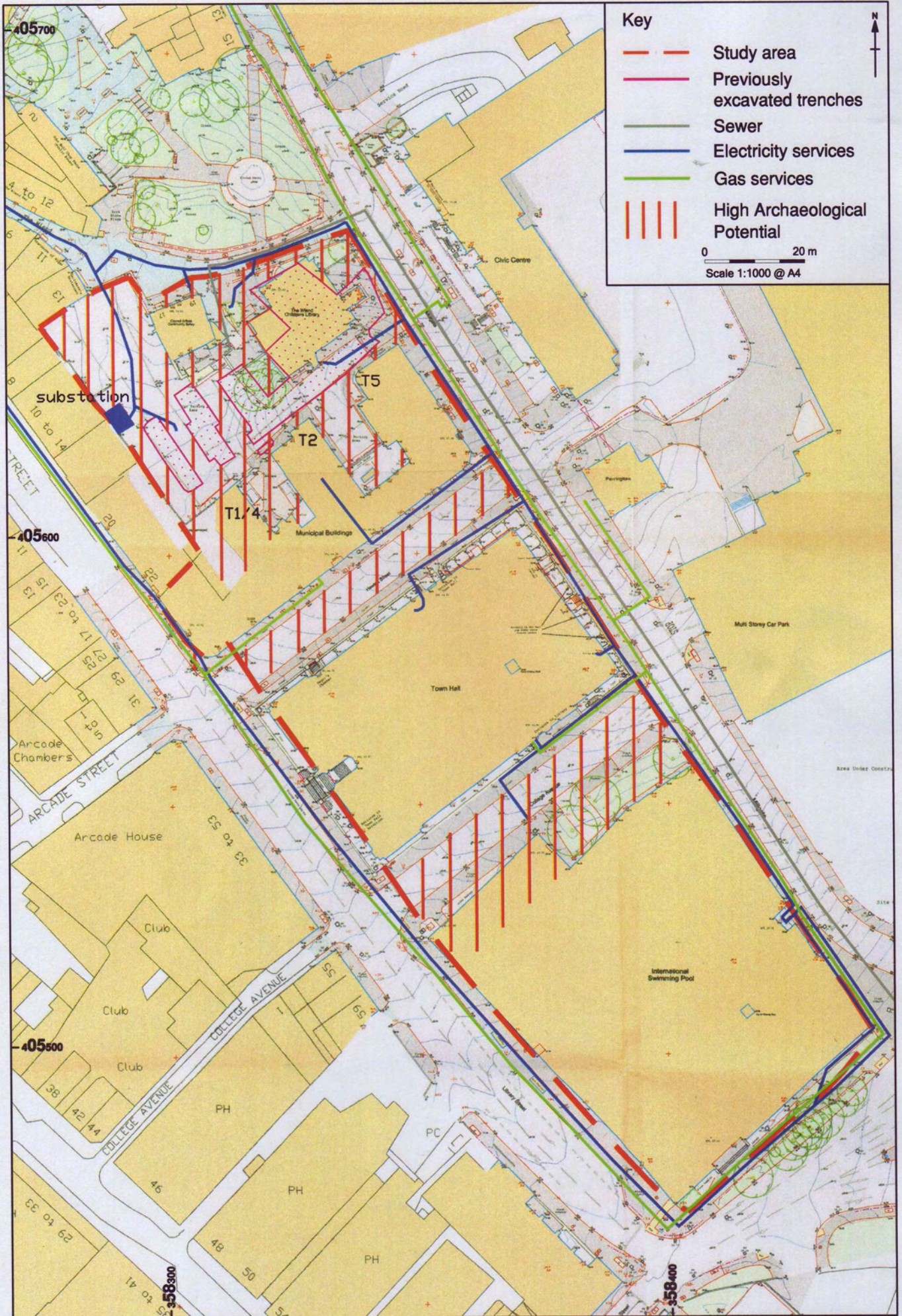


Figure 10: Scheme Area, showing areas of high archaeological potential

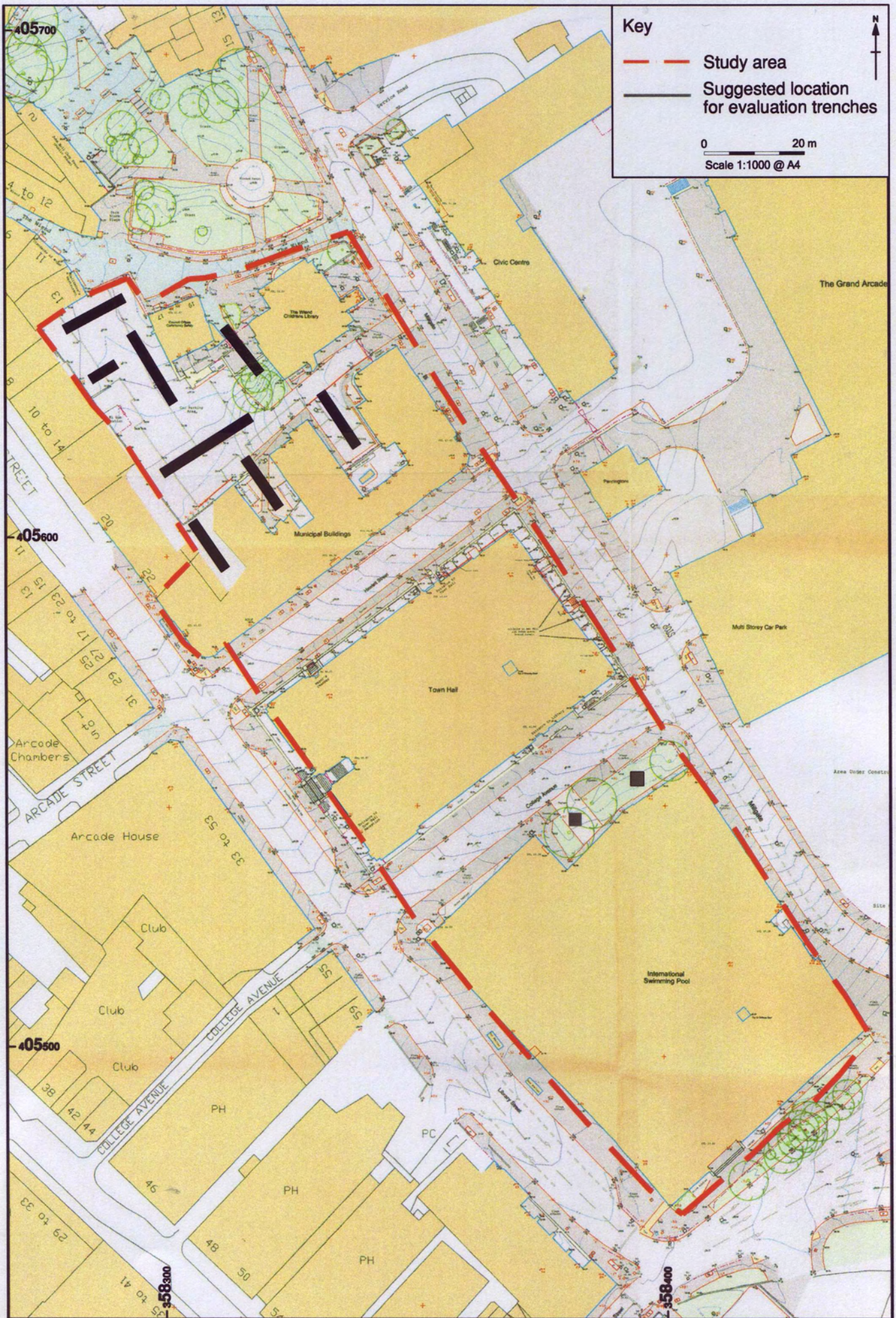


Figure 11: Suggested location of evaluation trenches required



Aerial view of Wigan taken during the 1980s, showing position of the Wiend excavations



View looking north-west along Millgate from Rodney Street



View looking north-west along Millgate from junction with College Avenue



View looking south across the car park



View looking north across car park



View looking north-east across entrance to car park from Millgate



View across south-eastern extent of the car park



Strip of land at the junction of College Avenue with Millgate