



# LAND AT GEORGE LEIGH STREET, ANCOATS, Manchester

## Archaeological Excavation



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## SUMMARY

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Mr Gary Finch has obtained planning consent (107484/FO/2014/N1) for the development of land situated at the junction of George Leigh Street and Loom Street in the Ancoats area of Manchester (centred on SJ 8498 9877). The development proposals allow for the erection of 14 four-bedroom, three-storey terraced houses. An archaeological desk-based assessment carried out in 2014 traced its development from the late eighteenth century to the present day, and concluded that the site was likely to contain buried remains of local significance. In particular, it was considered likely that the remains of nineteenth-century workers' dwellings would survive beneath the modern ground surface.

Following on from the desk-based assessment, and in accordance with Conditions 5b and 5c attached to the planning consent, the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, who provides planning advice to Manchester City Council, recommended that a programme of intrusive investigation was undertaken in advance of the development of the site. In the first instance, an archaeological evaluation was carried out, which was intended to establish the presence or absence of buried remains, assess their significance, and the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. The evaluation was carried out by OA North in September 2015, and comprised the removal of the modern surfacing over the maximum feasible area of the proposed development site. This confirmed that well-preserved buried remains of archaeological interest survived *in-situ*, namely the remains of twelve late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century structures associated with workers' dwellings. Following consultation with the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, it was recommended that a programme of further targeted investigation was carried out to compile a detailed archaeological record of the buried remains to mitigate their ultimate destruction as part of the development.

Detailed excavation of an area of some 80m<sup>2</sup> was carried out in September 2015, and comprised the detailed examination of four dwellings and a privy block within a courtyard. Both phases of the project revealed archaeological remains of high local, or even regional significance. In particular, the remains of late eighteenth-century workers' dwellings were revealed that are probably amongst the earliest purpose-built examples of workers housing in the rapidly expanding inner suburbs, and certainly amongst the earliest examined in the region.

The investigation has provided a detailed mitigation record of the buried remains of archaeological significance across the site in advance of their potential destruction as part of the proposed redevelopment of the site. This record should satisfy the requirements of the archaeological condition attached to planning consent for redevelopment.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The archaeological excavations were directed by Graham Mottershead and Chris Wild, assisted by Phil Cooke, Andy McGuire, Sarah Mottershead, and Lewis Stitt. The report was compiled by Chris Wild and Ian Miller, and the illustrations were produced by Mark Tidmarsh. The report was edited by Alan Lupton, who was also responsible for project management with Ian Miller. The project was funded entirely by Sale Property Consultants Ltd.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Mr Gary Finch has obtained planning consent for the development of land situated at the junction of George Leigh Street and Loom Street in the Ancoats area of Manchester (centred on SJ 8498 9877; Fig 1). The development proposals allow for the erection of 14 four-bedroom, three-storey terraced houses in two rows, together with garden decks over integral garages, and vehicular access from Sherratt Street. The design proposals will inevitably necessitate earth-moving works, with potential to impact on below-ground archaeological remains of interest. (Planning Application 107484/FO/2014/N1). In consideration of these proposals, Manchester City Council attached a condition to planning consent that required an appropriate scheme of archaeological investigation to be carried out in advance of development. In the first instance, an archaeological desk-based assessment was required to identify, as far as possible, the nature of the study area's archaeological resource (Condition 5a). This was undertaken in October 2014 by Archaeological Recording and Research in October 2014 (Price 2014), and traced the development of the application site from the late eighteenth century to the present day, and concluded that the site was likely to contain buried remains of early nineteenth-century workers' dwellings. Moreover, it was considered probable that any surviving remains would be immediately below the modern ground surface, and that development of the site might have an archaeological impact on buried remains, involving their damage or destruction as a result of ground-reduction works. Whilst these remains were not considered to be of sufficient archaeological significance to merit preservation *in-situ*, it was concluded that a detailed archaeological record would be required to mitigate their ultimate destruction.
- 1.1.2 Following on from the desk-based assessment, and in accordance with Conditions 5b and 5c attached to the planning application, the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester recommended that a programme of intrusive investigation was undertaken in advance of the development of the site. In the first instance, a machine strip of the available areas within the site boundary was carried out under archaeological supervision, which was intended to establish the presence or absence of buried remains and assess their significance. This evaluation was carried out by OA North in September 2015, and comprised the removal of the modern surfacing over the maximum feasible area of the proposed development site. This confirmed that well-preserved buried remains of archaeological interest survived *in-situ*, namely the remains of early nineteenth-century workers' dwellings. Following discussions held on site with the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, it was recommended that a programme of further targeted investigation, coupled with an appropriate level of post-excavation analysis, be carried out in advance of development, and in accordance with a Project Design (*Appendix 1*). This work was also undertaken by OA North in September 2015, and comprised two targeted areas on a block of two apparently cellared buildings, and a privy block in the yard to the rear (Fig 2).



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## 2. METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The fieldwork undertaken followed the method statement detailed in the approved Project Design (*Appendix 1*), and was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures provided by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and their code of conduct.

### 2.2 EXCAVATION TRENCHING

2.2.1 The uppermost levels were excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The same machine was then used to define carefully the extent of any surviving walls, foundations and other remains, after which all further excavation was undertaken manually.

2.2.2 All information was recorded stratigraphically with accompanying documentation (plans, sections and both colour slide and black and white print photographs, both of individual contexts and overall site shots from standard view points). Photography was undertaken with 35mm cameras on archivable black-and-white print film, as well as colour transparency, all frames including a visible, graduated metric scale. Digital photography was used extensively throughout the course of the fieldwork for presentation purposes. Photographic records were also maintained on special photographic *pro-forma* sheets.

### 2.3 FINDS

2.3.1 **Artefactual procedures:** all finds recovered during the excavations were lifted, cleaned, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) *First Aid For Finds* (1998). Recovery and sampling programmes were in accordance with best practice (current IFA guidelines) and subject to expert advice.

### 2.4 ARCHIVE

2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the Updated Project Design (*Appendix 1*), and in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record on completion of the project.

## 3. BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 An understanding of the archaeological and historical background of a site provides the local context within which the extant structures and buried remains can be assessed archaeologically. The following section provides an outline of the natural setting of the study area, and summarises the historical development of Ancoats, although the early periods of the area's history are largely omitted, as they are of little direct consequence to the present study. The historical background has been compiled largely from secondary sources and the sequence of available historic maps, and includes a chronological account of the development of the site in terms of its occupants and uses.

### 3.2 LOCATION

3.2.1 The study area (centred on SJ 8498 9877) is situated within the Ancoats area of Manchester, which lies on the north-east side of the city centre (Fig 1). The site forms part of a plot of land bounded by George Leigh Street, Sherratt Street, Loom Street and by St Michael's Church on its western side, and forms part of the Ancoats Conservation Area. The site comprises approximately 525m<sup>2</sup> (Plate 1).



*Plate 1: Recent aerial view of the study area*

### 3.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.3.1 Topographically, the Manchester Conurbation as a region is within an undulating lowland basin, which is bounded by the Pennine uplands to the east and to the north. The region as a whole comprises the Mersey river valley, whilst the rivers Irwell, Medlock, and Irk represent the principal watercourses in Manchester (Countryside Commission 1998, 125). The topography of Ancoats, however, reflects the shallow valley of Shooter's Brook, a rivulet that flows westwards from Newton Heath, through Ancoats and into the river Medlock (Ashworth 1987, 22). Shooter's Brook was culverted during the early nineteenth century, and the topography of the valley has since been masked considerably by urban expansion. The study area lies some 300m to the north-west of Shooter's Brook.
- 3.3.2 The solid geology of the area comprises Carboniferous sedimentary material and a series of Permo-Triassic rocks, consisting mainly of New Red Sandstone. The overlying drift incorporates Pleistocene boulder clays of glacial origin, and sands, gravels, and clays of fluvial/lacustrine origin (Hall *et al* 1995, 8).

### 3.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: DEVELOPMENT OF ANCOATS

- 3.4.1 The origin of the name Ancoats is uncertain, although it is likely to have derived from the Old English *ana cots*, which may be translated as 'lonely cottage' (Cooper 2002, 13). It was an area of open land throughout the medieval period, considered by Swindells (1908, 19-26) to have been 'an almost idyllic rural backwater', and was recorded in a survey of 1320 to have formed one of eight hamlets within the township of Manchester (Harland 1861). It is likely that settlement comprised a few cottages and farmhouses along Ancoats Lane, Newton Lane and Butler Lane, although the most notable building in the area by the end of the medieval period was undoubtedly the timber-framed Ancoats Hall, which overlooked the river Medlock on the eastern fringe of the area (Miller and Wild 2007, 25).
- 3.4.2 Ancoats retained a semi-rural aspect until the late eighteenth century, when the population of Manchester expanded at an unprecedented rate, and resulted in the transformation of Ancoats into a key industrial suburb. This process of industrialisation began in the 1770s, when land owned by the Leigh family was sold to Thomas Bound, a builder, who then sold it on to others for development. The focus for initial development was at the corner of Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road, and contemporary maps depict the main elements of the existing street plan laid out on former fields of the area. Building speculation then drove further expansion, with plots of land within a grid pattern of streets being sold for development. An early stage in the development of the area is depicted on William Green's *Map of Manchester and Salford*, which was surveyed between 1787 and 1794, and shows in excess of 60 plots laid out.
- 3.4.3 The earliest factories in the area included several water-powered mills erected along Shooter's Brook, to the south of Union (now Redhill) Street. However,

in seeking a solution to the inadequate power supplied to their waterwheels from Shooter's Brook, several firms experimented with steam power. A notable example was Salvins' Factory, where John Kennedy is reputed to have first applied steam power to one of his spinning mules in 1793 (Lee 1972, 9). In order to achieve this, Kennedy utilised a steam-powered pumping engine that delivered water to a waterwheel, which remained the primary source of motive power. Nevertheless, it was the breakthrough in the application of steam power that created the explosion of factory building in Ancoats (Little 2004, 31).

- 3.4.4 The completion of the Ashton-under-Lyne Canal in 1796, and a proposal to construct the Rochdale Canal through the area, offered the potential of cheap and reliable transport for goods and materials to and from Ancoats. The completion of the Rochdale Canal in 1804 coincided broadly with the efficient application of steam power to cotton-spinning machinery, and a growth in the national demand for textiles. A small number of enterprising firms seized the opportunity presented by this combination of factors, resulting in the evolution of a new breed of steam-powered mill building in Ancoats, and the creation of the world's first industrial suburb based on steam power (Miller and Wild 2007).
- 3.4.5 *Aspects of housing conditions in Ancoats:* the rapid industrialisation of Manchester from the last quarter of the eighteenth century was accompanied with an explosion in the population; a local census in 1774 estimated a total of 22,481 inhabitants within the township of Manchester, whilst the census of 1801 recorded over 70,000 people, of which 11,039 resided in Ancoats (Lloyd-Jones and Lewis 1993). By 1851, the total number of residents within Ancoats alone had risen to 53,737, representing a local population far larger than other entire towns in Lancashire, such as Burnley, Blackburn, Rochdale or Wigan, and yet it lacked the basic amenities and institutions of self-government.
- 3.4.6 Swindells (1908, 236) identified Thomas Bound as a pioneering force in the early development of Ancoats during the 1770s, after acquiring part of the estate of the Legh family and then land belonging to Manchester Free Grammar School. It seems that Bound divided his newly-acquired land into small plots, which were then sold individually for development. He is listed in a trade directory of that decade as a 'builder' (Raffald 1777), but in Bancks' directory for 1800 Thomas Bound is registered as a 'gentleman', suggesting that he had generated considerable wealth from property dealing.
- 3.4.7 The earliest dwellings for the new breed of factory worker were erected with little legislative control. The Manchester Police Commissioners had sought to apply a rudimentary form of building regulations as early as 1792, including a requirement to provide party walls between properties. However, in the absence of any practical way of enforcement, the regulations were largely ignored (Hylton 2003, 152). Most of the workers' houses built during this period were erected without any form of water supply or sanitation; at best, an open drain from an ashpit privy might have been installed down the middle of the street or court (Parkinson-Bailey 2000, 35).

- 3.4.8 There are several contemporary descriptions of Manchester's nineteenth-century housing stock, including that provided by Dr J Farriar in the proceedings of the Board of Health in 1805, who noted that 'the number of damp and very ill-ventilated cellars inhabited in many parts of the town is a most extensive and prominent evil...'. Farriar goes on to describe the average Manchester workers' dwelling as consisting of 'two rooms, the first of which is used as a kitchen, and though frequently noxious by its dampness and closeness, is generally preferable to the back room. The latter has only one small window, which, through on a level with the outer ground, is near the roof of the cellar' (quoted in Aspin 1995, 130).
- 3.4.9 A major step forward in housing improvement was provided by the Manchester Borough Police Act of 1844, whereby all new houses were to be provided with a properly built privy, and all existing houses were to have one installed. The important effect of this Act was that it effectively outlawed the building of back-to-back houses, and none were built in Manchester after this date (Lloyd-Jones and Lewis 1993). Unlike earlier legislation, the 1844 Act was enforced by a dedicated committee, which investigated some 9,400 dwellings in the first year alone, and by 1850 over one third of Manchester's dwellings had been 'reconditioned' (Hylton 2003, 153).
- 3.4.10 Further legislation introduced in 1853 had sought to address specifically the problems of cellar dwellings. Investigations completed in preparation for the legislation discovered 65 people living in eight cellars in one workers' tenement in Ancoats. However, organised opposition from the property owners, united as the Home Owners' Guardian Association, ensured that action against this class of dwelling was largely ineffectual (*op cit*, 154). Renewed efforts commenced in 1867 with the introduction of the Manchester Waterworks and Improvement Act, which specified the minimum requirements for room sizes and window areas in dwellings, and also required that every new house had a yard at the rear, which had to be at least 70'<sup>2</sup>. The Act also required a minimum street width of 30' (9.14m), or 36' (10.97m) where buildings were two storeys, and 45' (13.71m) for buildings of three storeys or more. The enforcement of these new regulations were facilitated by a Medical Officer of Health, introduced by Manchester Council in 1868 as part of the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act of that year. However, the Act only dealt with single houses, providing for the gradual improvement or demolition of sub-standard housing, and for the building and maintenance of improved dwellings (Parkinson-Bailey 2000). In 1875, the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act was introduced to provide the mechanism of slum clearance, although no major slum clearance was carried out until the 1880s.
- 3.4.11 In 1901, Manchester City Council bought 238 acres of land at Blackley with a view to erecting affordable housing and addressing the problem of sub-standard dwellings. Nearly 25,000 sub-standard houses were demolished during the following 18 years, and back-to-back housing was 'virtually eliminated by 1913' (Hylton 2003, 184). Nevertheless, as late 1954, there were an estimated 70,000 homes unfit for human habitation in Manchester, including many in Ancoats.



### 3.5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE STUDY AREA

- 3.5.1 A desk-based assessment of the development of the site was undertaken in October 2014 (Price 2014). The key elements of the cartographic sequence have been re-interpreted below:
- 3.5.2 The development of the study area may be traced reasonably well from the sequence of available historic mapping. The earliest reliable maps that show the study area at a reasonable scale are Charles Laurent's *Map of Manchester & Salford*, published in 1793, and William Green's survey that was published in 1794 (Plate 2). These show the streets in Ancoats laid out in a grid pattern, creating series of regular plots, with development apparently focused on the Great Ancoats Street and Newton Lane (Oldham Road) area. George Leigh Street, Spittal Street, Loom Street, and Cotton Street have all been developed to a significant level (Plate 2). Two blocks of structures are shown within the study area, comprising a rectangular block fronting George Leigh Street, with a smaller L-shaped structure on the junction of Spittal Street and Loom Street, with a large enclosed space to the rear (Plate 2). The northern block appears to comprise four structures, with a passage between the western two, and with two small buildings, probably representing privies, within two small yards to the rear (Plate 2).



Plate 2: Extract from William Green's map of 1794

- 3.5.3 The subsequent maps of the early nineteenth century, show far less detail, making detailed analysis of the structures unreliable, but both Banks and Thornton's map of 1800 (Plate 3), and Pigot's map of 1819 (Plate 4) show that the site has been completely infilled.





Plate 3: Extract from Bancks and Thornton's map of 1800



Plate 4: Extract from Pigot's map of 1819

3.5.4 Bancks and Co's *Map of Manchester and Salford*, published in 1832, provides the first detailed nineteenth-century survey of the study area (Plate 5). This shows four rectangular properties fronting George Leigh Street within the site boundary, with a passage between the western two, and with a block of apparent back-to-back houses extending along the street frontage to the west



(Plate 5). It also shows a series of small yards and small buildings, probably privies and ash pits, within these yards to the rear of the George Leigh Street frontage. Six rectangular properties are depicted along Spittal Street (Plate 5), with a passageway between the building on its junction with Loom Street, and four further properties along the Loom Street frontage within the site boundary (Plate 5). The western of these is shown as a large building with a rear extension, adjacent to a block of four apparent back-to-back houses, with a small rectangular structure at the eastern end. The passage lead to a large enclosed courtyard to the rear (Plate 5).



Plate 5: Extract from Bancks and Co's map of 1832

3.5.5 The layout of the study area during the mid nineteenth-century is depicted on two detailed plans: the Ordnance Survey 60": 1 mile map of 1850 (Fig 3); and Adshead's *Plan of the Townships of Manchester*, published in 1851 (Plate 6). Both maps show largely the same configuration of buildings as shown on Bancks and Co's map of 1832, but the internal detail within the properties differs slightly between the three plans. The most significant of these inconsistencies is the depiction of the two buildings on the eastern side of the court shown as No 1 Court on the Ordnance Survey map of 1850 (Fig 3). This shows the buildings as comprising four square dwellings, typically interpreted as back-to-back cottages, whereas Bancks and Co (Plate 5) and Adshead (Plate 6) show them as two rectangular dwellings. The Bancks and Co map (Plate 5) and the Ordnance Survey map (Fig 3) also show the structures on the southern side of Bennett's, or Bennet's, Court as forming part of the properties fronting Loom Street, whereas Adshead's map suggests that they formed separate blind-backed dwellings facing the courtyard to the north (Plate 6).

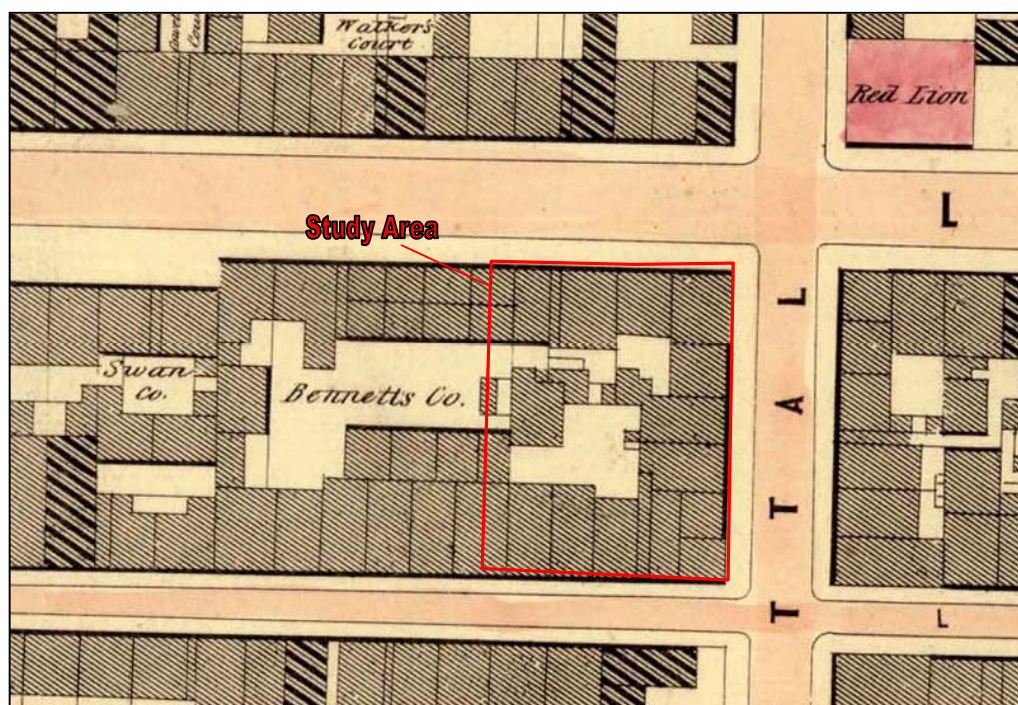


Plate 6: Extract from Adhead's map of 1851

3.5.6 In 1893, the Ordnance Survey published the First Edition 25": 1 mile plan of the area, which shows a similar layout to that of the Bancks and Co map of 1832, highlighting the early completion of infilling the areas behind the street frontages within this part of Ancoats. The following edition of the Ordnance Survey mapping, published in 1908 (Plate 7), shows some clearance within the site, with the removal of one of the properties on Loom Street, and those within the courtyard to the rear. Individual back yards have also been added to the rear of the properties on Loom Street, suggesting the change from communal privy blocks to individual outhouses, showing cartographic evidence for the improvements in ventilation and sanitation associated with the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries (Plate 7). Two of the best regional examples of the large-scale municipal projects undertaken during this important phase in the development of workers' housing within the inner suburbs are strikingly shown to the immediate north and north-east of the site, comprising the Victoria Buildings, erected around Victoria Square, and the rebuilding of the terraces to the north and south of the re-named Sanitary Street (Plate 7).





Plate 7: Extract from the 1908 Ordnance Survey map

3.5.7 The Ordnance Survey map of the area published in 1931 shows that all properties apart from those fronting George Leigh Street had been demolished, with a large rectangular school building erected centrally within the block, recessed slightly from the Loom Street frontage (Price 2014). An associated small rectangular structure was also placed at its north-eastern corner, adjacent to Sherratt Street.

## 4. FIELDWORK RESULTS

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The archaeological fieldwork initially comprised the stripping of a single rectangular trench measuring approximately 22 x 15m, with an additional area of 9 x 9m projecting north from the western end of the trench (Fig 2). This was targeted on a complex of workers' dwellings, the earliest of which may represent structures depicted on late eighteenth-century mapping of Ancoats (Plate 2). This method of evaluation provided a clear indication of the nature and extent of the buried remains, and allowed for the accurate identification of those remains that merited a more detailed archaeological record in advance of development.
- 4.1.2 Evidence for archaeological structures and deposits were revealed across the entire trench, with the upper *in-situ* deposits surviving at a depth of less than 150mm below the present ground surface (Fig 2). The stratigraphic sequence was dominated by the remains of workers' housing constructed during the late eighteenth-century (Plate 8), although elements of earlier dwellings were also revealed, together with deposits that represented agricultural activity, pre-dating the urbanisation of Ancoats in the late eighteenth century. The eastern-central part of the excavated area was selected for more detailed excavation, where the structures were cellared, with *in-situ* fabric surviving to a much greater depth than the foundation level remains revealed for the vast majority of structures elsewhere within the site. The detailed excavation examined an area measuring some 8m x 8m, with an extension of 5 x 1.5m from its north-western corner, to examine a potential privy block apparently placed within a courtyard (Fig 2). A further small trench was excavated in the eastern corner of the northern spur, measuring approximately 2 x 2m, in order to further examine potential agricultural deposits observed during the initial evaluation.



Plate 8: View looking east across the excavated area

- 4.1.3 The dwellings are described below in four areas; those erected on Loom Street; those fronting George Leigh Street; the fully excavated structures on Sherratt Street (formerly Spittal Street); and structures within the internal courtyards (Figs 2 and 3).

## 4.2 PROPERTIES FRONTING LOOM STREET

- 4.2.1 The rear of five properties fronting Loom Street was observed after the initial strip of the site. All comprised rectangular structures, built in hand-made, mould-thrown red brick, exposed immediately below the modern ground make-up layer, and surviving to a maximum depth of only three courses (Plate 8).
- 4.2.2 The earliest of these structures was placed at the eastern end, and comprised an L-shaped structure, of apparently three rooms (Building A). Although the trench did not extend to the original street frontage of Loom Street (Fig 3), two external, and two internal walls were observed. The structure is shown on William Green's plan of 1794 (Plate 2), on the junction of Loom Street and Spittal Street, and the observed external wall aligns with the L-shaped return of the western side of the building (Fig 2), strongly suggesting that the observed remains represent those of this original structure. However, the wall, which was of full-brick thickness throughout, appeared to comprise two phases of construction, with the east/west return of the wall (**102**) butting the northern part of the wall (**101**) (Plate 9). The slightly offset alignment of the bricks between the two elements of the wall is the strongest indicator of the joint representing a change in construction phase, as a butt joint only exposed in plan, may merely represent a joint at this course level, as can be observed in many keyed wall junctions. Both walls are bonded with pale lime grey mortar, with the north/south aligned element continuing slightly beyond that to the west, before terminating or having been truncated (Fig 2; Plate 9). A further 1.1m length of full-brick thickness wall (**104**), on a similar alignment to Wall **101** almost certainly represents an internal partition within the structure (Fig 3). It was of slightly darker red brick, and had significantly less lime plaster adhering to its surface (Plate 10), possibly suggesting a later date of insertion, or a slightly different construction methodology for the internal walls. Wall **105** was of similar fabric and construction to Wall **104**, and formed a further internal partition. A 1½ x 1 brick projection on its southern side almost certainly represent the cheek of a fireplace (Fig 2; Plate 11), the other potentially laying beyond the limit of excavation, although it is more likely to have been removed, to the west of that extant, within a centrally-placed hearth.





Plate 9: Walls **101** (centre) and **102** (left) forming the original external walls of Building A



Plate 10: Building A from the north-east, with darker internal partitions **104** and **105**





*Plate 11: Probable footing of internal wall 105, with projecting fireplace cheek*

4.2.3 No evidence for the north wall of Building A was observed, with a passage surviving to the immediate north of the structure, not shown on any of the historic mapping. A further passage survived to the immediate west of Building A, but unlike that to the north, this is depicted on Bancks and Co's plan of 1832 (Plate 5), the Ordnance Survey edition of 1850 (Fig 3), and Adshead's plan of 1851 (Plate 6). It was of 3' (0.91m) width, with the eastern wall being formed by the west wall of Building A, and the west wall, which formed the east wall of Building B at ground floor level, being of only a single-skin thickness (Plate 12). Nothing survived of the flooring of the passage, although one displaced sandstone flag appears to represent a remnant. Sections of broken salt-glazed ceramic pipe were also revealed (Plate 12), demonstrating that the sanitation of the dwellings was improved in the late nineteenth-century, with the passage being used to link the court to the main sewer beneath Loom Street.



*Plate 12: East wall of Building B, with ceramic pipe within the passage beyond, and with partial survival of brick flooring*



4.2.4 Bancks and Thornton's map of 1800 (Plate 3) suggests that the remaining properties fronting Loom Street had been constructed by this date, with the area also being infilled on Pigot's map of 1819 (Plate 4). Bancks and Co's more detailed map of 1832 (Plate 5), Adshead's plan of 1851 (Plate 6), and the Ordnance Survey edition of 1850 (Fig 3), all depict the properties in greater detail, and suggest that Building B, at the eastern end of this infilled block, was of different plan form to the neighbouring structures. Excavation revealed a structure of 11'6" (3.54m) width, and with an apparent 12' (3.66m) depth of the front room, based on the position of the front wall shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3). However, this plan showed a much greater depth to the property, of approximately 15'5" (4.72m), in contrast to the excavated remains (Fig 3). The rear wall of the front room, **108**, was of only single skin construction (Plate 13), strongly suggesting that it represented an internal partition, and was keyed into the western wall of Building B, which was also of only single-skin construction. This was intermittent in its survival of up to two courses (Plate 13), but continued beyond Wall **108**, to the north, being keyed into the return of full brick thickness wall (**114**), that represented the rear wall of Buildings B, C, and D, demonstrating them to all be of contemporary construction. The eastern part of Wall **114** was destroyed by a late brick and concrete platform, and its angled return, shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3), had similarly been removed. However, the surviving element demonstrated that the building was of similar proportions to that shown on the Ordnance Survey plan, but with a larger rear room of 11'6" (3.54m) depth, similar to the front room (Fig 2).



Plate 13: Building B from the north,

4.2.5 An L-shaped, single-skin wall, of similar orangey-red, hand-made brick construction to the other walls of Building B, butted the north face of cross-wall **108** (Fig 2; Plate 13). It formed an open-ended area of 3'6" x 4'2" (1.07 x 1.27m) which retained elements of a rough floor of broken brick (Plate 14). This probably represents the position of a staircase, placed against the cross-

wall, although the feature is slightly wider than the normal 2-3' width expected for such a structure. A gap in the extant wall foundation at its eastern end probably marks the position of a doorway between front and rear rooms of the dwelling (Fig 2). A further small element of brick flooring, measuring approximately 1.3 x 0.5m survived in the south-eastern corner of Building B (Plate 12), and probably represented a fragment of the original floor surface. The west wall, **107**, also displayed evidence for internal features, with full-brick thickness projections on its eastern face within both 'front' and 'rear' rooms of Building B (Fig 2; Plate 13). These represent single surviving fireplace cheeks, with the southern cheek of the front room possibly surviving beyond the limit of excavation to the south.



Plate 14: Probable staircase within rear room of Building B, looking south

4.2.6 Building C was of contemporary construction with Building B, forming the central structure of a three cottage terrace (Fig 3). It was of similar 11'6" (3.54m) width to Building B, and with an apparent 12' (3.66m) depth for the 'front' room. The cross-wall, **109**, was again of only single-skin construction, and had a 2'6" (0.76m) wide gap at its eastern end (Fig 2), again suggestive of a doorway position, although elements of the badly-truncated wall were also missing to the west (Fig 2). The position of the west wall of Building C (**111**) was also obscured in the southern part of the structure, beneath a concrete ring beam. It did survive for the majority of its length in the northern room, and again comprised only a single skin (Fig 2; Plate 15). It had the complete survival, in plan, of a 3' (0.91m) wide fireplace, with full-brick thickness cheeks extending 16" (0.41m) into the room (Plate 15). The rear room was much larger than that of Building B, extending a further 3' (0.91m) to the north (Fig 2), forming a room of 11'6" x 14'2" (3.54 x 4.32m). This again had a central structure against the north side of cross-wall **109**, but unlike that in Building B, had its open side to the north (Fig 2). It was of similar 4'4" x 3'4" (1.33 x 1.01m) size with an extant row of bricks along its western and eastern edges (Plate 16). The eastern of these carries a row of broken flagstones,



supported on their western side by a further course of bricks (Plate 16), with a further course of flags set at a lower level to the north, forming a shallow step (Plate 16). This overlay a rough broken brick floor against the northern opening, which presumably formed part the original floor of within the structure.



Plate 15: Wall III, with fireplace cheeks in rear room of Building C



Plate 16: Probable staircase within rear room of Building C, looking south

4.2.7 Building D, to the immediate west, was of similar proportions to Building C, and formed part of a contemporary construction of a pair of similar single-fronted cottages (Fig 3). Its cross-wall (I10) was again of single-skin construction, and with an apparent gap at its eastern end marking the position



of a doorway, although preservation was particularly poor in this area (Plate 17). The west wall (*II2*) differed from that in Building C (*III*), being of full-brick thickness (Plates 17 and 18), demonstrating it to be an original external wall, predating the construction of Building E (Figs 2 and 3). At its northern end it returned to form the continuous north wall (*II4*) along the rear of Buildings B, C, and D (Figs 2 and 3; Plate 18). As with the two buildings to the east, Building D also had a structure placed against the northern side of the internal cross wall (Fig 2). This was the best-preserved of the three (Plates 17-19), having a complete single-skin around the 5' x 3'6" (1.52 x 1.07m) structure (Fig 2; Plate 19). It also retained a short, single-skin central spine wall, projecting 18" (0.46m) from the north wall (Fig 2; Plate 19). A further L-shaped wall was placed along the internal west face (Fig 2; Plate 19), similar to those observed within Building C. This overlay an extant floor of rough broken bricks (Plate 19), which was heavily sooted, suggesting use as a coal store, although it may have originally housed a steep stair.



*Plate 17: Building D from the east*



*Plate 18: Building D from the north-west*





Plate 19: Probable staircase within rear room of Building D, looking south

4.2.8 Building E was the westernmost structure observed along the Loom Street frontage within the excavation area (Fig 2). Most of the structure lay beyond the limit of excavation (Fig 3), but structural internal features were revealed, alluding to its original form. Its eastern wall (*I12*) was formed by the external wall of Building D, which was butted by a full-brick thickness cross wall (*I13*), placed 2'6" to the north of the single-skin cross-wall in Buildings B-D (Fig 2; Plate 20), and creating a front room of approximately 14'6" (4.42m) depth, again in slight contrast to that shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3). The wall was continuous across the trench, suggesting that any doorway between front and rear rooms either lay at the very western end, beyond the limit of excavation, was placed above the level of the survival of the wall, or more probably, given the full-brick thickness of the wall, was not included in the original construction.



Plate 20: View across Building E, from the east



4.2.9 The rear room of Building E was also bounded on its northern side by a wall of full-brick thickness, **115** (Fig 2; Plate 20). This had an offset butt joint with the north wall of the adjacent building (**114**), overlapping its northern side by half a brick (Fig 2; Plates 20 and 21). The wall returned to the north, to form part of a building within No 1 Court to the north (Fig 3), comprising a wall of 1½-brick thickness (Fig 2; Plate 21). The inner brick width of this return is of darker red brick, with a darker bond than the original pale lime bond and orangey brick of the north wall of Building E (Plate 21), suggesting that it represented an addition, but the outer skin of the wall is of similar fabric and bond to the wall to the west, suggesting that it may represent a single-skin return of Wall **115**, forming the structure within No 1 Court, shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3). The rear room measured approximately 13'9" x 11'8" (4.18 x 3.55m), and had a feature of some similarity to those in Buildings B-D against its eastern, rather than rear, wall (Fig 2; Plates 20 and 21). This comprised a single-skin wall of 2'6" (0.76m) length forming the northern edge of a sooted area of broken brick floor (Plates 20 and 21), measuring 6' x 2'6" (1.83 x 0.76m).



*Plate 21: Rear room of Building E, from the north*

### 4.3 PROPERTIES FRONTING GEORGE LEIGH STREET

- 4.3.1 Due to the position of overhead cabling, only a 9m wide trench was targeted on properties fronting George Leigh Street, in the north-western part of the site (Fig 3). Excavation revealed similar levels of preservation to that on the Loom Street frontage, comprising foundational wall remains with limited survival of brick floor surfaces (Fig 2; Plate 22).



Plate 22: View across the buildings fronting George Leigh Street, from the north-west

- 4.3.2 As with the Loom Street frontage, this part of George Leigh Street was primarily developed closer to its junction with Spittal Street, with a row of structures shown within this part of the site on Green's map of 1794 (Plate 2). The western end of this block was revealed within the excavation trench, comprising a two-roomed dwelling, Building F (Fig 2). The northern, front, wall lay beyond the northern limit of excavation (Fig 3), with the whole block apparently being placed 2'6" to the north of its position depicted on the Ordnance Survey map of 1850 (Fig 3). This suggests that the room sizes were similar to those shown on the map, with a building width of 14'6" (4.52m), a front room of 11'6" (3.51m) and a slightly smaller rear room of 10'4" (3.15m).
- 4.3.3 The west wall, **201**, was of full brick thickness, comprising orangey-red hand-made brick, bonded in a pale orangey-brown lime-based mortar (Plate 23). It was butted, in plan, by cross-wall **204**, although this was probably keyed within other courses. The cross-wall was of similar construction to the outer wall, being of full-brick thickness (Fig 2; Plate 23). At its eastern end, the cross-wall had a similar joint with the single-skinned east wall of Building F, Wall **203** (Fig 2; Plate 24). This suggests that Building F formed a contemporary build with the properties to the east, with single-skinned party walls between each property, typical of the period, and as seen in the Loom Street properties. No features were observed to the east of Wall **203**, where a narrow passage is depicted on Green's plan of 1794 (Plate 2), and more clearly on the Ordnance Survey edition of 1850 (Fig 3). At its southern end, Wall **203** had a full-brick thickness return (**202**), forming the rear wall of Building F (Fig 2). At its western end, this had a butt-joint with the west wall (**201**), but was almost certainly keyed within other courses, forming a contemporary construction as part of the erection of Building F, and the properties to the east. Wall **201** continued to the south of this junction, beyond the rear wall of



the property. This appears to have formed a boundary wall to a yard to the rear of the properties fronting George Leigh Street, as shown on Green's plan (Plate 2), and which later became the western boundary wall of Radcliffe's Court (Fig 3).



*Plate 23: West wall of Building F, butted on its external face by the east wall of Building G*



*Plate 24: East wall of Building F, 203, with adjacent survival of brick flooring*

- 4.3.4 On its inner face, Wall **201** retained the projecting cheeks of a fireplace within the front room (Fig 2; Plate 23), and the northern cheek of a further fireplace in the rear room (Fig 2; Plate 23). The only other internal feature preserved within Building F was a 1.6m<sup>2</sup> area of broken brick flooring, adjacent to the east wall (**203**), within the front room (Fig 2; Plate 24). This probably represents the sole survival of original floor within the building. To the immediate west, a similar-sized area of buried soil horizon survived to a depth of only 80mm, apparently representing a partial survival of the ground horizon



of the agrarian landscape that pre-dated the industrial expansion of Ancoats in the late eighteenth-century.

- 4.3.5 No door apertures were observed within any of the external walls, or within the cross-wall (Fig 2). Whilst it is likely that only the front wall, which was not identified within the excavation trench, housed a doorway, one might have been expected within the cross-wall. However, this was only preserved to a level below that of the extant flooring to the north-east, strongly suggesting that only the foundational level of the wall survived, below any possible door threshold.
- 4.3.6 The western side of Wall **201** was butted by a further wall of full-brick thickness (**205**). This comprised slightly darker brick, bonded in a paler lime-based mortar (Plates 23 and 25). It formed the eastern wall of Building G, which was the eastern of a secondary row of dwellings constructed on the George Leigh Street frontage, and shown on the detailed mapping of Banks' and Co (1832; Plate 5), and Ordnance Survey first edition (1850; Fig 3) as back-to-back cottages. The wall projected beyond Building F, level with the end of the probable boundary wall, where it returned westward, surviving for only a short length of 0.50m (Fig 2). As with the properties to the east, this appears to have been located slightly to the north of the position shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3), comprising two apparently equal-sized rooms of 13'6" (4.15m) depth. A 0.35m length of the full-brick thickness cross-wall (**206**) was observed (Fig 2; Plate 25). Both 1½-brick width cheeks of a fireplace in the front room were also observed on the western face of Wall **205**, and the hollow 1½-brick width northern cheek of a similar fireplace in the rear room (Fig 2; Plate 25), demonstrating a different construction methodology than that used for the fireplaces in the earlier dwellings to the east.



*Plate 25: East wall of Building G butting earlier wall of Building F, with stub of internal cross-wall 206 (top) and check of fireplace (right)*



#### 4.4 PROPERTIES FRONTING SHERRATT (FORMERLY SPITTAL) STREET

- 4.4.1 The initial machine strip of the site revealed a rectangular block of properties fronting Sherratt Street (Plate 26). Unlike those elsewhere on the site, the exposed remains were not cut directly into the natural clay subsoils, but were instead infilled with demolition debris, suggesting some depth to the extant remains. Following discussion with the client and the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, a detailed mitigation exercise was undertaken in the interior of these structures (Fig 2). Excavation revealed four partly-celled rooms, within two properties (Buildings H and I), each approximately 13 x 12' (3.96 x 3.66m), and surviving to a depth of 13 courses (1.01m) to original floor level (Plate 27).



*Plate 26: View across properties fronting Sherratt Street following the initial machine strip, looking south-east*



*Plate 27: View across properties fronting Sherratt Street following the detailed excavation, looking south-east*

4.4.2 The front wall (**304**), adjacent to Spittal Street, comprised 13 courses of hand-made brick below original flagstone pavement level (Plates 27 and 28), elements of which were preserved in section, below the present asphalt kerb (Plate 29). The inner face of the wall was constructed in English Bond, and had a 2.15m wide rebuild central section (Fig 2; Plate 28), bonded in black sooty mortar, representing the late-nineteenth or early-twentieth century blocking of a pair of doorways, mirrored either side of a single-skin cross-wall (**305**), which formed the dividing wall between Building H, to the north, and Building I, to the south (Fig 2). This survived up to six courses in height, with remnants of white and pale “dolly blue” plaster adhering to both faces (Plate 30). At its western end, the cross-wall was keyed into the full-brick thickness west wall of Building H and I (**302**). This was of the more common English Garden Wall bond construction, with plaster adhering to the inner face, and surviving to a height of six courses (Plates 30 and 32). This had a return at either end, forming Wall **301**, at the southern end of Building I, and Wall **303** at the northern side of Building H (Fig 2; Plates 30 and 27). Both were also of English Garden Wall bond construction, and with plaster adhering to their inner faces, with Wall **303** surviving to a height of eight courses (Plate 33), and Wall **301** to a maximum of seven courses, although it only survived to a height of five courses for the majority of its length (Plate 30). Both walls had single-skin cross-walls keyed into their inner faces, although that within Building I (**307**) only survived as a wall scar within Wall **301**, and at floor level across the building (Fig 2; Plates 30 and 33). The northern dividing wall (**306**) survived to a height of seven courses at its junction with Wall **303** (Plate 32), but was cut for the insertion of a two-brick wide sleeper wall associated with a structure erected in the early-twentieth century, following the demolition of the dwellings. To the south of this insertion, the single-skin cross-wall survived only to floor level, with the exception of the southern end, which retained an additional course (Plates 30 and 34). Wall **303** also retained one extant full-brick wide cheek of a fireplace in the front and rear rooms of Building H, with the outer cheek of each hearth surviving only as a floor and wall scar (Plate 32). Wall **301** similarly retained only a single cheek of the fireplace in the rear room of Building I (Fig 2; Plate 33), but retained both cheeks of the 5’6” (1.68m) wide chimney-breast in the front room (Fig 2; Plate 35).



Plate 28: Front wall of Buildings H and I, **304**, with blocked doorways either side of cross-wall **305**





*Plate 29: Flagstone pavement of Spittal Street preserved beneath modern asphalt surface*



*Plate 30: View across excavated Buildings H and I, looking south-west*





*Plate 31: Detail of inner face of Wall 302, within Building I*



*Plate 32: Butt joint in Wall 303,*





*Plate 33: Excavated remains of Building I, from the east*



*Plate 34: Excavated remains of Building H, from the east*





Plate 35: Fireplace in the eastern room of Building I, with partial double layer of flagstone floor and in-situ timber flooring

- 4.4.3 A vertical butt joint in Wall **303**, located between the cross wall in building H, and the fireplace in its rear room, had ragged brickwork on its eastern side (Plate 32), and appeared to represent a return of Wall **414**, which formed part of the property to the north, which lay beyond the limit of excavation (Figs 2 and 3). The ragged nature of the internal face of Wall **303** to the immediate east of Wall **414** almost certainly demonstrates that it in fact represents a return of the perpendicular Wall **414**, with the ragged brickwork representing the unseen external face of the cellar wall, placed directly against the cut through the natural clay subsoil.
- 4.4.4 No other features were observed within the upstanding walls, except for two concrete post footings which were cut through Wall **304** in the twentieth century (Fig 2; Plate 27).
- 4.4.5 The floors of both Buildings H and I were far better-preserved than those within the other dwellings (Plates 33 and 34), primarily due to their greater depth below present ground level, but also due to being sealed below a later structure in the early-twentieth century. The rear room of Building H had a hand-made brick floor, comprising whole and broken brick, laid in east/west aligned rows, but with several missing patches, and a relaid area of badly broken and irregular brick adjacent to Wall **305** (Plate 34). The front room appears to have been floored with 2" (0.05m) local sandstone flags of varying sizes, although the majority of the floor had been removed or damaged prior to demolition (Fig 2; Plate 34). A similar pattern was observed within Building I, although the rear room did include an approximately 3'6"² (1.07m) area of sandstone flags, placed adjacent to Wall **307**, and offset slightly to the south of the centre of the room (Fig 2; Plates 33 and 35). The front room of Building I retained further displaced and *in-situ* flagstones (Fig 2; Plate 33), up to two layers thick adjacent to the south wall (Plate 35), but also retained five *in-situ*



timber planks, representing a remarkable survival of such a feature (Fig 2; Plates 33 and 35). These were aligned east/west, with the southern row of flagstones, and varied in width from 6 to 10" (0.15-0.25m). It is unlikely that they represent the original flooring of the room, but appear to be a replacement that must have pre-dated the erection of a new building on the site between 1908 and 1931 (Price 2014).

- 4.4.6 A row of unbonded bricks, placed 0.15m from Wall 305, within Building I (Plate 33) represented the cover of an internal drain. Excavation of the feature revealed a shallow drain of 4" (0.10m) width, with side walls of a single skin of brick and with the observed row of bricks forming its capping (Plate 36). The drain cut cross-wall **307**, at its northern end, demonstrating it to have been an insertion, and possibly contemporary with the insertion of the timber flooring. Excavation on the opposite side of Wall **305**, within Building H, revealed that the rough broken brick floor within the rear room (Plate 36), and the sandstone flags against the south wall of the front room represented the repair of the floor, following the insertion of a further drain, within Building H. This differed considerably from that within Building I, not only being set 0.1m deeper, but also having a very different construction, comprising edge-set brick side walls below a fragmentary sandstone flag capping, the void created housing a 2½" (0.08m) diameter, segmental round clay drain pipe (Plate 36).



Plate 36: Drains below floor within Buildings H (right) and I (left)

- 4.4.7 To the south of Building I, a passageway was observed at the level of the surviving height of Wall **301** (Plate 37). This comprised a sandstone flag floor of 2' (0.61m) width, all elements of which were broken and slumped (Plate 37), probably as a result of demolition of the adjacent structures. The flags



were set on two single-skin unbonded sleeper walls of only a single course height (Plate 37). These were placed on a surface of bricks, observed to the full width of the passage, and of high enough quality to possibly represent an original floor surface within Building A, possibly suggesting that the Building was remodelled prior to, or during the construction of the properties fronting Spittal Street. The plan form of Building A shown on the 1850 Ordnance Survey plan (Fig 3) differs significantly from that shown on Greens map of 1794 (Plate 2, although none of the historic plans show a passage in this position.



Plate 37: Passage to the south of Building I, looking east



#### 4.5 STRUCTURES WITHIN NO 1 COURT AND RADCLIFFE'S COURT

- 4.5.1 Several features relating to two courtyards, named 'No 1 Court' and 'Radcliffe's Court' on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3), were observed to the rear of the properties along the street frontages.
- 4.5.2 The earliest of these was an enclosed yard to the rear of the properties fronting George Leigh Street, with a continuation of the west wall of this early block of dwellings (201) continuing beyond the building to form its western boundary wall. A 9m survival of a perpendicular, full-brick thickness wall (411) appeared to represent the return of this wall, creating a yard 11'4" (3.45m) wide (Fig 2). The wall was of orangey-red hand-made brick, bonded in a pale lime mortar, and had several features butting either face (Plate 38). A 10' x 3' (3.05 x 0.91m) rectangular projection (408) on the southern side of Wall 411 also had walls of similar fabric, constructed to full-brick thickness at all but the ends of the south wall (Fig 2; Plate 38) aligned with a structure also shown on Greens map of 1794 (Plate 2), probably representing a large shared privy at the rear of the yard (Building L). It retained a well-preserved, reasonable quality floor of whole and part brick (Plate 38), with a perpendicular central row of bricks suggesting a spine wall between two closets. The narrowing, or lack of survival of brickwork at either end of the south wall suggests a remodelling to form entrances from the later No 1 Court on its southern side (Fig 3).



Plate 38: Privy block, Building L, from the west

4.5.3 Building L appears to have been extended at either end subsequently, with that at the eastern end being the far better preserved. This comprised an additional L-shaped wall of full-brick thickness (**407**), forming an additional closet of 2'6" (0.76m) width, also retaining a partial brick floor (Plate 39), and either representing a further privy or an ash closet for No 1 Court (Fig 3). This was butted on its eastern face by a further wall of full-brick thickness (**406**), which appears to have formed the rear wall of an L-shaped structure inserted between Building L and Building H, separating No 1 Court from Radcliffe's Court to the north (Fig 3; Plate 6). At the opposite end of Building L, an area of 3' x 2'6" (0.91 x 0.76m) of up to three courses of brick flooring (Plate 38) appears to have represented a further structure within the block by the early nineteenth-century. Its western edge may have represented the survival of a small section of the east wall of a large rectangular building (Building K) of approximately 16'6" x 13'9" (5.03 x 4.19m), placed in the north-west corner of No 1 Court (Fig 3), prior to 1832 (Plate 5).



*Plate 39: Eastern extension to Building L, looking south, with wall 406 to left*

4.5.4 It is likely that the western part of Wall **411** formed the north wall of this later building, with the entirety of the south wall (**405**), including stubs of the return at either end, being observed during the excavation (Fig 2; Plate 40). This comprised a full-brick thickness of orangey-red hand-made brick, with the extant course laid in header bond, suggesting construction in either English or English Garden Wall bond. A rectangular area of 1.1m<sup>2</sup> of brick floor, similar to those observed elsewhere (Plate 40) survived in the eastern part of Building K, with the outer edge possibly representing an extant element of its eastern wall (Fig 3).





Plate 40: Wall 405, with associated brick floors, and late-twentieth century brick structure in foreground

- 4.5.5 Two short 0.7m length stubs of single skin wall butted the northern face of the early boundary wall **411** (Fig 2; Plate 38). The western of these, Wall **410**, survived at a level of one course lower than the wall it butted, and was possibly of contemporary construction, probably representing a boundary wall within what became Radcliffe's Court, shown on the Bancks and Co map of 1832 (Plate 5). That to the east (**412**), was less substantial, and appears to represent part of a structure built within Radcliffe's Court by 1850 (Fig 3).
- 4.5.6 A 9' (2.74m) length of extant wall (**413**), immediately to the north of the north wall of Building H (Fig 2; Plates 27 and 32) appears to represent the offset continuation of this boundary wall, also shown on Green's map of 1794 (Plate 2), and representing the boundary of the rear courtyard of the property on the corner of George Leigh Street and Spittal Street.
- 4.5.7 At its eastern end, Wall **413** appeared to butt a single-skin, perpendicular wall, **414**, which was only exposed for a very short length within the excavation trench (Fig 2). However, it survived in section within the detailed excavation of the properties fronting Sherratt Street (Plate 32), demonstrating it to have been constructed to at least the full depth of these cellars. It aligns with the rear wall of the structure to the north, shown on the Ordnance Survey plan of 1850 (Fig 3), suggesting that it almost certainly comprised a full-brick thickness beyond the limit of excavation to the north.
- 4.5.8 In the south-west corner of No 1 Court, two north/south aligned walls, **404**, and the return/continuation of walls **112/115** (Fig 2; Plate 21) appear to represent the external walls of a 7' (2.13m) wide structure, Building J, first shown in detail on the Bancks and Co map of 1832 (Plate 5), and almost certainly representing a small dwelling. The walls were of full brick thickness, in orangey-red hand-made brick, with the extant course of Wall **404** again

being laid in header bond, suggesting construction in either English or English Garden Wall bond (Plate 21).

- 4.5.9 To the immediate east of Building J, a 1.27m survival of a wall perpendicular to its east wall formed a small rectangular enclosure of approximately 4' x 3' (1.22 x 0.91m; Fig 2; Plate 41). The walls were bonded with black sooty mortar, suggesting a late-nineteenth, or early-twentieth century date of construction. The structure is not shown on the Ordnance Survey edition of 1893, nor in detail on the following edition of 1908, although this does show rear yards to the properties fronting Loom Street (Plate 7), suggesting that the structure represents a privy or outhouse within a newly-formed rear yard. A similar structure was observed in the south-western corner of the yard formed to the rear of Building C (Fig 2). This comprised two walls of full-brick thickness (**402**), each laid in header bond within the exposed course (Plate 42), using a black sooty mortar, and with a return at the northern end, forming an open-fronted rectangular structure of approximately 4' x 2'8" (1.21 x 0.80m) internal dimensions (Fig 2). Two rows of unbonded brick continued for 0.9m beyond Structure **402**, possibly forming a foundation plinth for the boundary wall between Buildings C and D, constructed around the turn of the twentieth century. A perpendicular surface of bricks (**415**), measuring approximately 2.15 x 0.30m (Fig 2), and only separated from those to the south by the cut and insertion of a modern concrete beam (Fig 2; Plate 42), may have represented the foundation of the northern return of the yard wall, although its increased width might possibly suggest that it represented an earlier floor within No 1 Court.



Plate 41: Probable outhouse/privy to the rear of Building D, looking south-west





*Plate 42: Probable outhouse/privy to the rear of Building C, looking south-east*

4.5.10 At the eastern end of the rear of Building C, level with its projection beyond Building B, a length of wall projected into the courtyard to the north (Fig 2). Its southern end comprised a large cracked sandstone step of 4'4" (1.32m) length (Fig 2; Plate 43), which almost certainly formed a threshold step into the yard to the rear of Building C, the Ordnance Survey edition of 1908 showing that Building B had been demolished by this date, to increase the rear access of the remaining properties fronting Loom Street (Plate). To the north of the large threshold step, only a 0.5m length of broken brick wall survived, representing the only survival of the boundary wall to the inserted yard.



*Plate 43: Probable outhouse/privy to the rear of Building B, looking south-west*

## 4.6 FINDS

- 4.6.1 Very few artefacts were recovered from the excavation, the majority of which date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. The assemblage was composed mainly of pottery sherds, and glass bottle fragments, with fewer metal artefacts. All finds were recovered from the demolition overburden, and are thus essentially unstratified. The possibility that the finds were imported to the site during demolition cannot therefore be discounted.
- 4.6.2 **Pottery:** several distinct types of fabrics were recognised amongst the group of pottery, including utilitarian dark-glazed red earthenware vessels, and underglaze transfer printed wares. The fragments of pottery were all in a reasonable condition, with little indication of abrasion, implying that they had not moved far from their original place of deposition. and have a date range spanning the late eighteenth to early twentieth century.
- 4.6.3 *Dark-glazed red earthenwares:* the largest group of ceramics comprised dark-glazed red earthenwares. This particular ware was ubiquitous in the North West, and largely represents utilitarian kitchen wares, and could have been produced at any of a number of different local manufacturing sites using the clays of the South Lancashire coalfields. The excavated examples are likely to have been manufactured locally, and whilst a firm date cannot be ascribed with any degree of confidence, they are likely to have been manufactured during the late eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. The lack of chronological precision is a reflection on the longevity of the dark-glazed red earthenware tradition, which has a long life-span and is notoriously difficult to date, unless accompanied by other, more precisely dated, pottery types.
- 4.6.4 *Underglaze transfer-printed ware:* this type of pottery characterised the ceramic supply during the nineteenth century, although all fragments recovered during the excavation were relatively undiagnostic.
- 4.6.5 **Other finds:** several fragments of undiagnostic tobacco pipe stems were recovered. However, there was a complete lack of diagnostic bowls. Broken glass bottles were also recovered, typically comprising nineteenth-century beer and water bottles, with smaller fragments of brown glass bottles, probably for medical use. The lack of complete or even diagnostic bottles is somewhat unusual in such demolition contexts.
- 4.6.6 The finds recovered from the evaluation trenches were all of typical form for workers' dwellings that continued in occupation into the early twentieth century. All were recovered from unstratified contexts, reducing their archaeological importance. It is thus recommended that the finds are ultimately discarded.



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## 5. DISCUSSION

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 Ancoats is widely acknowledged as the world's first industrial suburb based on steam power (Miller and Wild 2007), and the programme of archaeological investigation has provided a valuable opportunity to investigate the physical remains of the initial development and urbanisation of part of the area during the late eighteenth century. In particular, the excavation has facilitated the examination of a compact but complex area of workers' housing, a key characteristic of this new urban landscape, and the evolution of the buildings through to their ultimate demolition in the twentieth century.

5.1.2 The results obtained from the excavation inform several of the initiatives for archaeological research of the industrial and modern periods stated in the current *Archaeological Research Framework for North West England* (Newman and McNeil 2007; McNeil and Newman 2007). In particular:

- *Initiative 6.10*: 'Sample appropriate deposits for palaeo-environmental evidence wherever possible to gain information on the exploitation of plants and animals...' (Newman and McNeil 2007, 119);
- *Initiative 7.6*: 'A study of the development of workers' housing in Greater Manchester and East Lancashire should be undertaken to examine the development of different housing types...' (McNeil and Newman 2007, 139);
- *Initiative 7.7*: 'Study the material culture of industrial workers' households...' (*ibid*);
- *Initiative 7.25*: 'Where threatened with possible redevelopment excavations are required of now undeveloped and cleared former working class areas regarded as slums' (*op cit*, 147);

5.1.3 The following section discusses the phased development of the site, based on the results of the archaeological investigation. This is coupled with relevant documentary and cartographic evidence, upon which the broad dating ascribed to each of the identified phases has been largely derived.

### 5.2 PHASE 1 (POST-MEDIEVAL)

5.2.1 A small, heavily truncated patch of a buried ground horizon was revealed beneath the floor levels of the properties fronting George Leigh Street. Unfortunately, these were too insubstantial to warrant detailed analysis, but serve as a physical reminder of the agrarian landscape that survived within the within the inner regions of Manchester until the late eighteenth-century.

### 5.3 PHASE 2 (c 1780)

- 5.3.1 Lewis' undetailed map of Manchester of 1788 does show that some form of development has taken place on George Leigh Street and Loom Street, to the east of Spittal Street by this date, the structures almost certainly representing those depicted more clearly on William Green's map, published in 1794 (Plate 2). The map of 1794 shows the initial stages of development of the area, which was focused on the main thoroughfares of Newton Lane (Oldham Road) and Ancoats Lane (Great Ancoats Street). This pattern of ribbon development is consistent with the growth of Manchester during this period. Development had generally reached as far east as Bengal Street by this date, but with large tracts of unused space still available on the street frontages (Plate 2).
- 5.3.2 Two dwellings from this period were examined during the excavation, comprising an L-shaped structure (Building A) on the corner of Spittal and Loom Streets, and a two-roomed structure (Building F) fronting George Leigh Street (Figs 2 and 3). Building A was relatively poorly-preserved, with little internal detail exposed, and the presence of full-brick thickness internal walls strongly suggesting that these represented foundational plinths below single-skinned walls above, and that preservation survived at only the lowest foundational level of the building. However, evidence for a fireplace was observed within the south-eastern room of the property, which almost certainly represented a merchant's shop/dwelling.
- 5.3.3 The excavated remains of Building F were also heavily truncated, with the cross-wall (204) again suggesting that it formed a foundational plinth. This is also the most plausible explanation for the lack of a doorway within the wall, rather than one not having been included. Although the practice of constructing dwellings on back-to-back plan form almost certainly has its origins in the late eighteenth-century (Muthesius 1982, 107), they were not common in Manchester by this date (Miller and Wild 2007 30f), the majority of new buildings in the emerging inner suburbs comprising artisans and merchants' housing and workshops (OA North 2011). The plan form of the property is also consistent with that of a single-fronted cottage, with a large parlour at the front of the house, with a slightly smaller kitchen to the rear. Both rooms had fireplaces, typical of late eighteenth-century dwellings observed in Manchester (*ibid*), and although these initially represented a relatively high status, with heating in both ground-floor rooms, it later facilitated easy conversion into back-to-back type dwellings, as pressure on accommodation increased through the early nineteenth-century, and the more affluent classes removed themselves to the outer suburbs.
- 5.3.4 The passage to the east of Building F afforded access to the rear yard. In areas where there was less pressure on space, access was generally afforded down the side of a property, but even at this early date, land value was at a premium in Ancoats, and thus developers built up to their property boundaries wherever possible. The survival of several elements of the enclosed shared yard to the rear, with an apparent privy block, represents the rare survival of such early features, and demonstrate the relatively haphazard early development of the inner suburbs that led to the evolution of cramped courtyard dwellings.



## 5.4 PHASE 3 (LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY)

- 5.4.1 The most striking and important feature of this second phase of construction within the site, is that the new dwellings were clearly constructed for the rapidly-increasing working-class population of the expanding inner suburbs, rather than for the incumbent middle class. Phase 3 represents the completion of the courtyards within the site, and is typical of the early to mid-nineteenth-century, when the population of Manchester expanded at an exceptional rate. Again, the archaeological evidence suggests that streets were formed of several properties built by individual property speculators, rather than as whole rows, as suggested by the mapping. This led to the creation of blind courtyards, and irregularly-shaped structures, which typify the inner suburbs of Manchester.
- 5.4.2 The early nineteenth-century mapping is somewhat lacking in both detail and accuracy, with Bancks and Thornton's map of 1800 (Plate), and Pigot's maps of 1800 and 1819 (Plate 4) showing the block of land bounded by George Leigh Street, Loom Street, Spittal Street and Cotton Street, as having been entirely infilled. The first detailed map of the expansion of housing within the site, produced by Bancks and Co in 1832, shows several inconsistencies with the less detailed earlier maps, mainly the inclusion of courtyards behind the street frontages (Plate 5).
- 5.4.3 Although the layout of the site appears to have been complete by the turn of the nineteenth century, the plan form of the secondary structures allows a broad chronology to be established. The excavation demonstrated that Buildings B, C, and D were constructed as a single episode (*Section 4.2*), and the angled north-eastern wall of Building B, was presumably only erected on that alignment to facilitate access to the rear of the properties, around the projecting south-western corner of Building I. If Buildings B-D predated Buildings H and I, it is almost certain that they would have been erected as three identical properties, which would still have afforded access to the yard to the rear via a passage adjacent to Building A. However, the arrangement depicted on the Ordnance Survey editions of 1850 (Fig 3) and 1893, with the chamfered north-eastern corner of Building B, shows that modifications to the standard plan were required to maintain access around the south-western corner of the by then extant, Building I. It is unclear whether Buildings H and I predated the infilling of the north-western corner of Building A, but both almost certainly pre-date the construction of the three dwellings fronting Loom Street, Buildings B-D.
- 5.4.4 Again, the excavation demonstrated that Buildings H and I represent a single episode of construction. The north wall of Building H also butted the earlier infilling of the yard to the north, which clearly housed a further cellared structure. This shows that the infilling of the yard, or possibly even garden, of the building on the corner of George Leigh Street and Spittal Street predated the construction of Buildings H and I, which completed the Spittal Street frontage. Bancks and Co's map of 1832 (Plate 5), and Adshead's map of 1851 (Plate 6), clearly show Buildings H and I to represent a pair of single-fronted through houses, whilst the very detailed Ordnance Survey map of 1850 (Fig 3), suggests that the development represented a block of four back-to-back

properties. Such inconsistencies between the historic sequence of maps are typical, having been observed elsewhere within the locality (OA North 2007; OA North 2009), and are not even consistent between editions of the Ordnance Survey mapping, demonstrating the importance of examining the archaeological, as well as the cartographic, record. The 1850 Ordnance Survey plan shows steps on the Spittal Street frontage (Fig 3), and the excavation confirmed the position of central, mirrored, blocked doorways into the semi-basemented dwellings. Steps presumably also afforded access to the upper ground floor, which would have been positioned approximately 3' above pavement height, given the typical height of a cellar in properties of the period as around 7' (2.13m). A similar-looking feature shown on the map to the west of the dwellings (Fig 3), might easily be interpreted as a similar access arrangement to the rear dwellings, but the archaeological evidence clearly demonstrated a lack of doorways in this wall, and that the structure comprised two single-fronted two-room dwellings, of mirrored plan form, and with fireplaces on the outer wall of each room. Adshead's map of 1851 (Plate 6) suggests that the feature to the immediate west of the buildings represents a small structure, possibly a privy or ash pit, within No 1 Court.

5.4.5 As well as revealing that Buildings B-D post-dated those fronting Spittal Street, the excavation also revealed details of their construction. Whilst the historic mapping may be interpreted to suggest that Buildings B-D formed back-to-back houses, with entrances fronting Loom Street, and the contemporary No 1 Court, the excavation results strongly suggest that they were actually constructed as single-fronted through cottages, constructed on a repeated, rather than mirrored plan form. Whilst no direct evidence for doorways was revealed within any of the walls, the lack of completeness of the continuous cross-wall at the eastern side of each building, provided strong suggestions that doorways were located in this position. Fireplaces were again provided in each room, on the west wall. The rectangular structures on the north side of the cross-wall within each dwelling was unusual, each having evidence for sooting, and of greater width than would be expected for a staircase, particularly when compared to other excavated stairwells and extant stairs within the area (OA North 2007; OA North 2009; OA North 2011). However, the presence of *in-situ* flagstones and spine walls within two of the structures, suggests that the features housed steep quarter-turn brick stairwells, with sandstone treads, presumably with winders around the tight turn, which appears to have been placed on the left (western) side. Coal was probably stored beneath the stair, accounting for the sooting. Communication between floors is not commonly preserved within excavated dwellings, as in the other structures excavated on the site, and thus the survival of such features within Buildings B-D, further enhances the understanding of plan forms within early workers' housing.

5.4.6 All the historic mapping suggests that Building K represents part of the creation of No 1 Court, probably as a contemporary construction to Buildings B-D, as access was provided during the construction of the properties fronting Loom Street. Indeed, given that all the other structures on the perimeter of No 1 Court have been shown to have their entrances on the principal street frontages, Building K would appear to be the only structure reliant on No 1



Court for access. It appears to have utilised the existing boundary wall of the properties fronting George Leigh Street, possibly suggesting that Radcliffe's Court was formed concurrently, with the rear yard to the houses changing use. An entrance into Building K may also have been provided from Radcliffe's Court, as again, all of the other structures on the yard had entrances on the street frontages (Fig 3). The relatively large 16'6" x 13'9" size of Building K is also unusual for workers' dwellings, being generally considered too large for a single dwelling, but small even for a block of back-to-backs, suggesting that it may have comprised two L-shaped dwellings, one entered from each court, and suggesting that the western extension of Building L represented part of Building K, rather than an increase in the size of the privy block. It is still highly likely that the privy block was itself remodelled at this time, to serve all the properties with walls onto both courts, and that doorways may have survived in the rear wall of each dwelling at a higher level than that preserved. However, the rear walls of Buildings H and I were clearly demonstrated to have housed no such doorways at cellar/lower ground floor level, with access to the privies to the rear presumably being afforded via the passage from the Spittal Street frontage between Buildings A and I (Fig 3). Indeed, the same may have been true for all the dwellings, which all had conveniently-placed access passages from the street frontage to the courts. This may possibly suggest that the early courts in the inner suburbs were more representative of detached sanitation and possibly laundry facilities, rather than as an opportunity to afford access to the rear rooms of buildings to afford access to one roomed dwellings.

5.4.7 The detailed historic mapping differs markedly in its portrayal of Building E; the Bancks and Co map of 1832 (Plate 5), and the Ordnance Survey edition of 1850 (Fig 3), show it as a dwelling not dissimilar to the adjacent Buildings B-D, and probably incorporating Building J as a contemporary rear extension, or outshut, so typical of the terraced houses of the late nineteenth-century, but also having been identified in contemporary late eighteenth-century housing on Charter Street, Angel Meadow (OA North 2011); Adshead's map of 1851 however, whilst depicting Building E in a similar fashion to Buildings C and D, appears to show Building J as the smallest property at the eastern end of a row of four blind-backed cottages fronting the larger Bennett's Court to the north and west (Plate 6). The excavation clearly demonstrated that Building E was appended to the western side of the pre-existing Building D, although little else was revealed about its internal layout, save for a larger difference between the proportions of the front and rear rooms than the earlier dwellings to the east. Unfortunately, the dividing wall between Buildings E and J did not survive to a height where a doorway may have been preserved, although the position of an apparent stairwell against the east wall of the rear room within Building E (Fig 2), would have significantly hampered any access between the two structures, suggesting that Adshead's map of 1851 depicts the more accurate arrangement, and that Building J represented a relatively early example of a blind-backed cottage.

5.4.8 Building G, located in the north-western corner of the site, on George Leigh Street, also represents an extension to the original structures on the main street frontages. Only its eastern wall was revealed within the excavation trench, but

this was clearly shown to be built against the wall of the earlier Building F, and to contain fireplaces within both front and rear rooms, which appear to have been of similar 13'6 x 10' size. Adsheads' plan of 1851 (Plate 6) does not show the internal partition, as it does with the dwellings to the west, although it does appear to suggest frontages on both George Leigh Street and Bennett's Court. The detailed Ordnance Survey edition of 1850 (Fig 3), however, does show the internal cross wall, and also shows steps, and even potential cellar-light windows along both Bennet's Court and George Leigh Street (Fig 3), highly suggestive of the row of four properties forming back-to-back dwellings.

## 5.5 PHASE 4 (LATE NINETEENTH TO EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES)

- 5.5.1 This phase is dated between the Ordnance Survey editions of 1893 and 1908, which represents the next structural change observable in the cartographic sources. It is almost inevitable, however, that significant internal changes in both arrangement and usage was undertaken in the intervening period, of almost a century, which represented the most important period of the growth of Manchester and the Industrial Revolution as a whole. Whilst living conditions, health and overcrowding became an increasingly severe problem in Manchester throughout the nineteenth century, the cartographic and archaeological evidence within the site does not reflect this at all. This is almost entirely due to the exceptionally early date by which the infilling of this plot of land was undertaken, acting almost as a template for the pattern of expansion seen throughout the inner suburbs over the following few decades.
- 5.5.2 The structural changes observed at the end of the nineteenth century within the site also demonstrate that whilst the buildings were amongst the oldest of their type within Manchester, they were certainly not among the first to be modernised following successive council and government legislative acts in the second half of the nineteenth century, which aimed to improve the health and living conditions of the urban poor. Sanitation of workers' dwellings had become a major political issue by the mid nineteenth-century, as it had been identified as one of the main factors in the appalling mortality rates amongst the urban poor. As late as 1890 the Medical Officer for Health reported that he could find no other reason for the abnormally high rate of mortality in the city than bad housing conditions (Pearlman 1956). The mortality rate had averaged 26.9 deaths per thousand per year over the previous five years, compared with a figure of only 20.9 in Liverpool (*ibid*). This was almost certainly in no small part due to the continued use of privy middens, and a lack of willingness to embrace the use of water closets. Research into the incidence of typhoid fever in Nottingham, undertaken by Dr Boobyer between 1887 and 1896, demonstrated clearly the health benefits gained by using water closets, with the incidence being only a single case in 588 houses, compared with a case for every 120 houses with pail closets, and for every 37 houses still using privy middens (Moore 1909, 14).
- 5.5.3 However, in 1871, the Sanitary Committee had reiterated the opinion that privies and ashpits, properly regulated, were the best sanitation system for Manchester, although a loophole in both the 1867 and 1868 Acts meant that



the number of privies actually provided was woefully inadequate; rather than providing one privy for every three houses, a single privy with four seats was often installed for a row of 12 houses, each of which might contain several dwellings. Even by this relatively enlightened stage of the nineteenth century, large blocks of back-to-backs were commonly only provided with a pair of privies, with a common midden between.

- 5.5.4 In 1890, a consolidation of previous acts led to the production of a further Artisans' Dwellings Act, which not only extended the demolition rights of the corporation, but sanctioned the principle of municipal house building, effectively making the council responsible for slum clearance and rebuilding. The previously ineffectual Unhealthy Dwellings Committee, formed in 1885, used the new legislation to implement its powers. In Ancoats, the corporation declared that the area bounded by Cornwall Street, George Leigh Street, Bengal Street and Oldham Road was an 'unhealthy area' which could only be remedied by redevelopment of the whole area under the Manchester Labourers' Dwellings Scheme of 1890 (Pearlman 1956). This led to the construction of the Victoria Buildings, on the opposite corner of the junction of Sherratt Street and George Leigh Street to the site (Plate 44), which were completed in 1894, and represented a rare extant example an early triumph in municipal social housing, comprising 237 two-roomed and 48 single-room dwellings within a five-storey structure, with a lobby, sink and water closet for each pair of dwellings. A further, less imposing construction of through cottages on Sanitary (now Anita) Street, immediately to the west, provided single- and two-roomed flats, with much larger three-bedroomed houses constructed on the George Leigh Street frontage, all under municipal ownership, and erected directly opposite the site (Plate 44). These schemes, accompanied the sanctioning of an effective waste-water sewerage scheme in 1889, completed by 1894 (Vogele 1998), following the construction of the Davyhulme Sewage Works (Parkinson-Bailey 2000, 40), which acted as a catalyst for the adoption of water closets within workers' dwellings, with 24,300 installed that year, and 46,000 having been installed in 1902, although still a secondary alternative to pail closets, which still numbered close to 80,000 (Stanbridge 1976). The conversion continued apace, but even by 1924, when 230,046 water closets had been installed, there were still 1,108 pail closets and 35 privy middens in use (Parkinson-Bailey 2000, 40).



*Plate 44: View across excavation site to the Victoria Buildings, and late nineteenth-century dwellings forming part of the Sanitary Street re-development, on the north side of George Leigh Street*

- 5.5.5 Following the successful transformation of the ‘unhealthy area’ to the immediate north of the site, attention appears to have finally turned to the marginally less unhealthy streets to the south (and east (OA North 2009)). The Ordnance Survey 1908 map shows this housing modernisation programme to have been completed, with the creation of something resembling the ‘typical’ Mancunian terraces along the Loom Street and George Leigh Street Frontages (Plate). Buildings B, J, K, and L were demolished, and rear yards were constructed to each remaining property (Buildings C, D, E, F, and G within the site), with those on Loom Street retaining evidence for an outhouse, almost certainly containing a water closet, marking an important change in the sanitation system of the city, as water closets began to replace the previously favoured pail closets and privy middens. Whilst no direct evidence for water closets themselves was observed, as is often the case on similar sites (OA North 2007; OA North 2009; OA North 2011; OA North forthcoming), the salt-glazed ceramic drain observed beneath the floor of the passage between Building A and B, which clearly led to the yard to the rear, almost certainly indicates the use of such features, suggesting that the level of preservation was too truncated to preserve evidence of the water closets themselves.
- 5.5.6 The blind-backed properties on Bennett’s Court were demolished, and it is certain that the back-to-back properties to the north (including Building G) were ‘knocked through’ at this time, forming a single, two-up-two-down dwelling. This demolition within several adjoining courtyards, and the subsequent construction of yards and remodelling of existing property could only be undertaken at municipal level. This provides evidence for an increased effort to improve the conditions of the poorest housing during this period. This would undoubtedly have improved air and light quality, in addition to relieving some of the pressure on sanitation facilities; new outhouses



constructed during this period may have been intended to reduce the spread of infection that was rife in areas of such close-quarter living. As a phase represented almost solely by demolition, it is difficult to identify within the archaeological record, demonstrating the value of combining intrusive excavation with detailed map regression analysis

- 5.5.7 The excavated remains demonstrate a complimentary, and more cost-efficient alternative to the fine extant municipal examples of inner city regeneration seen on the opposite side of George Leigh Street to the site, further enhancing the importance of these remains.
- 5.5.8 Whilst major municipal improvements were being undertaken to the properties fronting Loom Street and George Leigh Street, the excavation revealed much smaller-scale evidence for improvements in sanitation within Buildings H and I. The fact that both employed very different drain construction techniques strongly suggests that this was undertaken independently by individual property owners, probably at the insistence of the local authorities, rather than as part of the larger municipal programme. Indeed, the lack of alteration to the Sherratt Street properties during the major remodelling of the site may be as a result of the smaller-scale, yet potentially as important, drainage improvements having been already undertaken by property owners.
- 5.5.9 The extant timber flooring within Building I probably relates to this phase, and represents the rare survival, and possibly usage of, timber flooring within cellared dwellings within the locality.

## **5.6 PHASE 5 (EARLY TO MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY)**

- 5.6.1 This phase comprises the ultimate demolition of all but the houses fronting George Leigh Street, and the subsequent re-use of the land as a school, with the construction of a large building in the southern part of the site prior to 1931. The archaeological deposits suggest a rapid episode of demolition, probably as a result of slum clearance by the local authority, a programme which was widespread throughout the city by the end of Phase 5.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

- 5.7.1 The archaeological investigation of the study area has provided a detailed record of buried archaeological remains of high local, if not regional significance. In particular, the excavated remains of former workers' dwellings represent a key element in the character of Ancoats: tracts of housing intended solely for the occupation of the new urban working class (Roberts 1993, 15). The net result was one of the most intensely-developed industrial townscapes in the world, forming the manufacturing heart of Manchester: 'Ancoats is to Manchester what Manchester is to London' (*Manchester Chronicle* 1849). Whilst the remains were certainly not the best-preserved of those excavated locally (OA North 2007; UMAU 2008; OA North 2011), they possibly represent the earliest purpose-built workers' dwellings that have been subject to detailed archaeological recording within the industrial suburbs of Manchester.

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## APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESIGN

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Mr Gary Finch has obtained planning consent for the development of land situated at the junction of George Leigh Street and Loom Street in the Ancoats area of Manchester (Planning Application 107484/FO/2014/N1). The development proposals allow for the erection of 14 four-bedroom, three-storey terraced houses in two rows, together with garden decks over integral garages, and vehicular access from Sherratt Street. The design proposals will inevitably necessitate earth-moving works, with potential to impact on below-ground archaeological remains of interest.

1.1.2 The site is currently occupied by a modern two-storey building (Figure 1), although it previously contained several back-to-back houses dating to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The archaeological interest in these former buildings has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment that was produced to support the planning application (Price 2014).



*Figure 1: Recent aerial view of the development site*

1.1.3 In order to secure archaeological interests, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), in their capacity as archaeological advisor to Manchester City Council, provided a consultation response to the planning application that recommended a condition was attached to consent. In the light of this recommendation, Manchester City

Council attached a condition (Condition 16) to planning consent, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 141:

‘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 to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The WSI shall cover the following:

1. A phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording to include:

- archaeological trial trenching
- (dependent on the above) more detailed archaeological excavation and recording

2. A programme for post investigation assessment to include:

- analysis of the site investigation records and finds
- production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological and historical interest represented.

3. Provision for dissemination of the investigation results commensurate with their significance

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

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

Reason - To investigate the archaeological interest of the site and record and preserve any remains of archaeological interest, pursuant to saved Policy DC20.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and in accordance with NPPF Section 12, Paragraph 141( - To record and advance understanding of heritage assets to be lost and to make information about the archaeological heritage interest publicly accessible), and policies SP1, H1,EN1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy for Manchester.

- 1.1.4 This document presents the required Written Scheme of Investigation for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. It has been produced by OA North at the request of Sale Property Consultants Ltd, and has been formulated in consultation with GMAAS. In the first instance, the scheme of archaeological works allows for the mechanical stripping of the proposed development area, under close archaeological supervision, to establish whether any buried remains of interest survive *in-situ*. Pending the results obtained from this initial investigation, further archaeological excavation may be required to ensure that a complete record of any significant buried remains is compiled.



## 1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

- 1.2.1 OA North is the largest archaeological contractor in north-west England, with unsurpassed experience of working in the region. OA North has the professional expertise and resource to undertake the project to a high level of quality and efficiency. OA North is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation, registration number 17, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IfA Code of Conduct.
- 1.2.2 OA North has established itself as one of the country's leading practitioners in the field of industrial archaeology, and has generated an impressive portfolio of projects that include those completed at the Derwentcote Steel Furnace in County Durham (Cranstone *et al* 1997), the Carlton Alum Works in North Yorkshire (Miller 2002), the Pilkington's Sheet Glass Works in St Helens (Krupa and Heawood 2002), Thomas Telford's Holyhead Road in North Wales (Quartermaine *et al* 2003), and the Percival, Vickers Flint Glass Works in Manchester (Miller 2007). A large proportion of the industrial archaeology projects carried out by OA North, however, have been focused on the development workers' housing. Of particular relevance, OA North has recently undertaken a series of evaluations and excavations of former workers' housing in Manchester, including those at New Islington Wharf, Bengal Street, and George Leigh Street in Ancoats, Piccadilly Place in Piccadilly, and a large part of Shudehill as part of the NOMA Regeneration scheme.
- 1.2.3 All work on the project will be undertaken in accordance with relevant professional standards, including:
- **IfA's Code of Conduct, (2012); Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, (2010); Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations, (2010); Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs, (2012);**
  - **English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), 2006;**
  - **The European Association of Archaeologists Principles of Conduct for Archaeologists Involved in Contract Archaeological Work (1998).**

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 In the first instance, the archaeological works will comprise the mechanical stripping of the site under close archaeological supervision, once the modern building occupying the site has been demolished. The area will be targeted on the footprint of the former back-to-back cottages along George Leigh Street and Loom Street, as these appear to have incorporated cellars, whilst the south-western corner of the study area will be used for stockpiling spoil generated from the excavation.

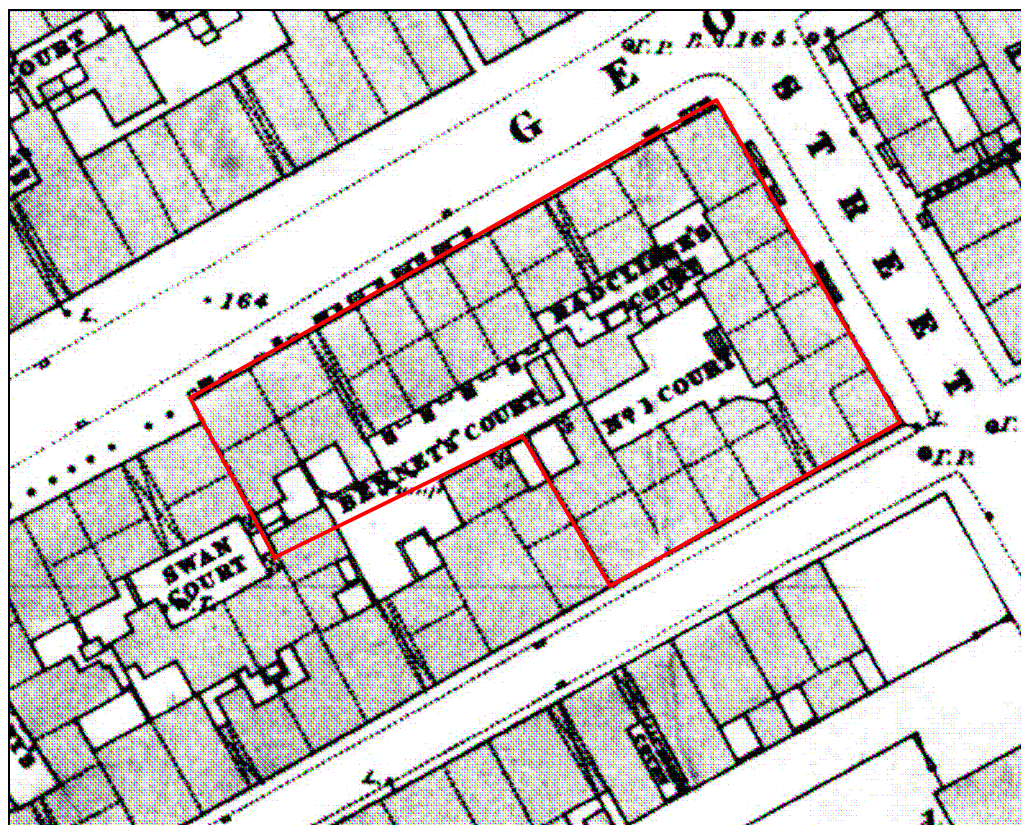


Figure 2: Area to be subject to archaeological investigation, superimposed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1850

- 2.2 The main research aim of the investigation, in the first instance, will be to assess the presence or absence of any archaeological remains pertaining to the former workers' housing, and establish whether any further archaeological investigation of the site is merited.
- 2.3 The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:
- **Strip, Map and Record:** the initial stage of the works will comprise the mechanical removal of modern hard-standing and grassed areas, followed by manual excavation, to determine the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest. The strip and record is also intended to establish the extent of any further work, if any, which

will be required in advance of the groundworks associated with the proposed development.

- Where significant buried remains are found to survive, and will be damaged or destroyed during the proposed development, further excavation will be required. This will aim to provide a detailed record of the remains of a selected sample of the workers' housing, and will be carried out in accordance with an updated Written Scheme of Investigation that will be formulated in consultation with GMAAS;
- **Post-excavation Assessment and Reporting:** a programme of post-excavation work, leading to the production of a fully illustrated report and project archive will be carried out on completion of the fieldwork. The report will provide an assessment of the significance of any buried archaeological remains that are found to survive beneath the modern ground surface.



### 3. METHOD STATEMENT

#### 3.1 STRIP, MAP AND RECORD

- 3.2.1 In the first instance, the excavation area will be marked out precisely on the ground, according to Ordnance Survey (OS) co-ordinates. The modern surfacing will then be excavated by a mechanical excavator of appropriate power using a toothless ditching bucket, and operating under constant and close archaeological supervision. Mechanical stripping, with selective excavation to determine depth and character of features and deposits, will be followed by the rapid manual cleaning to allow a basic record to be compiled of any exposed remains of archaeological interest. This will be intended to establish the presence or absence of any buried remains of interest, and, if established, will then test their date, nature, depth and quality of preservation, enabling a mitigation strategy to be formulated in consultation with GMAAS.
- 3.2.2 Where significant buried remains are found to survive, and will be destroyed during the construction works, further archaeological investigation will be required. This is likely to involve detailed excavation of targeted features.
- 3.2.3 **Recording:** machine excavation will be used to define carefully the extent of any surviving walls, foundations, and other remains. Thereafter, structural remains will be cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date. If the excavation is to proceed below a depth of 1.2m, then the trench will be widened sufficiently to allow the sides to be stepped in or battered back to a safe angle of repose.
- 3.2.4 All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system adapted from that used by the Centre for Archaeology Service of English Heritage. Results of the 'strip and record' evaluation will be recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets, and will be accompanied with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.
- 3.2.5 The precise location of the evaluation trenches, and the position of all archaeological structures encountered, will be surveyed by EDM tacheometry using a total station linked to a pen computer data logger. This process will generate scaled plans within AutoCAD, which will then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings will be generated at an accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale, but can be output at any scale required. Sections will be manually drafted as appropriate at a scale of 1:10. All information will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 3.2.6 A full and detailed photographic record of individual contexts will be maintained and similarly general views from standard view points of the overall site at all stages of the evaluation will be generated. Photographs records will be maintained on special photographic *pro-forma* sheets. Accurate

large-scale plans and sections will also be produced at an appropriate scale (1:50, 1:20 and 1:10).

### 3.3 POST-EXCAVATION

3.3.1 **Report:** the content of the fully illustrated report will comprise the following:

- (i) a title page detailing site address, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address a site location plan related to the national grid;
- (ii) full content's listing;
- (iii) a summary account of the results;
- (iv) an explanation to any agreed variations to this Written Scheme of Investigation, including any justification for any analyses not undertaken;
- (v) a description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and results obtained;
- (vi) a description of the archaeological background, and an account of the historical development of the site;
- (vii) copies of plans, photographs, and other illustrations as appropriate;
- (viii) plans of each of the stripped trench showing the archaeological features exposed;
- (ix) an overall phased plan with sections of the excavated archaeological features;
- (x) a consideration of the importance of the archaeological remains present on the site in local, regional and national terms;
- (xi) recommendations for further archaeological investigation where appropriate;
- (xii) a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived.

3.2.2 The report will be in the same basic format as this written scheme of investigation; a copy of the report can be provided on CD, if required. Copies of the report will be supplied to the client as requested, and further digital copies will go to the appropriate repository.

3.2.3 **Archive:** the results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines. The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project.

3.2.4 The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the IfA in that organisation's code of conduct. OA North conforms to best practice in the preparation of project archives for long-term storage. OA North practice is to deposit the original record archive of projects with the appropriate County Record Office.

- 3.2.5 The Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database project *Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.
- 3.2.6 The paper and finds archive for the archaeological work undertaken at the site will be deposited with the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. The archive will be deposited with the museum within six months of the completion of the fieldwork. Except for items subject to the Treasure Act, all artefacts found during the course of the project will be donated to the museum.
- 3.2.7 **Confidentiality:** all internal reports to the client are designed as documents for the specific use of the Client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project brief and project design, and should be treated as such. They are not suitable for publication as academic documents or otherwise without amendment or revision.



## 4. OTHER MATTERS

- 4.1 **Health and Safety:** archaeological staff and visitors will respect Health and Safety provisions and site-specific safety regulations. It is the policy of OA North ('the Employer') to conform fully with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and all site procedures will be in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1997). Attention will also be paid to the requirements of more recent legislation, including the provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations (1992), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992), and the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (1994).
- 4.2 In furtherance of the duty of care imposed by the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Employer shall make available to his employees whatever reasonable facilities are required by particular circumstances, *eg* appropriate protective clothing, safety equipment, rest breaks for specialised tasks, etc. A written risk assessment will be undertaken in advance of project commencement, and copies will be made available on request.
- 4.3 **Insurance:** evidence of Public Liability Insurance to the minimum value of £5m, and Professional Indemnity Insurance to the minimum of £2m, will be provided prior to the commencement of the archaeological works.
- 4.4 **Project Monitoring:** the aims of monitoring are to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set by the Written Scheme of Investigation, and to the satisfaction of the curatorial archaeologist at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). The curatorial archaeologist will be given at least five days' notice of when work is due to commence, and will be free to visit the site by prior arrangement with the project director. It is anticipated that there will be at least one formal monitoring meeting during the course of the archaeological works, which should also be attended by the Client or his representative.
- 4.5 **Contingencies:** if there are more complex or generally deeper deposits than can be anticipated from the evidence available, there may need to be a corresponding increase in costs, which will be subject to agreement with the Client and the archaeological curator. These contingency costs are in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' guidance.
- 4.6 **Confidentiality:** the report is designed as a document for the specific use of the Client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project design, and should be treated as such; it is not suitable for publication as an academic report, or otherwise, without amendment or revision. Any requirement to revise or reorder the material for submission or presentation to third parties beyond the project design, or for any other explicit purpose can be fulfilled, but will require separate discussion and funding.

## 5. WORK TIMETABLE

- 5.1.1 **Strip, Map and Record:** a ten-day period should be allowed to carry out the initial strip and record exercise. The time required for any additional excavation cannot be determined until the results of the strip and record are known.
- 5.1.2 **Report/Archive:** the report and archive will be produced within six weeks of completion of the fieldwork. OA North can execute projects at very short notice once a formal written agreement has been received from the client.

## 6. STAFFING

- 6.1 The project will be under the overall charge of **Ian Miller BA FSA** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed. Ian has considerable experience and particular research interests in Lancashire's textile industries. Ian managed the archaeological fieldwork, analysis and ultimate publication at Murrays' Mills (Miller and Wild 2007), and has managed numerous excavations of former textile mills and textile-finishing works throughout Greater Manchester and Lancashire. He is presently managing the Lancashire Textile Mills Survey, a strategic research project funded by English Heritage.
- 6.2 The fieldwork is likely to be undertaken by **Graham Mottershead BA** (OA North Project Officer). Graham is an highly experienced field archaeologist, with over 20 years continuous experience of field archaeology. It is not possible to provide details of specific technicians that will be involved with the fieldwork at this stage, but all shall be suitably qualified archaeologists with proven relevant experience. It is anticipated that up to two technician will be required for the initial stage of the fieldwork.

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

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### **FIGURES**

Figure 1: Location Map

Figure 2: Plan of excavated area

Figure 3: Plan of excavated area superimposed on the Ordnance Survey 60": 1 mile map of 1850





Figure 1: Site location





Figure 2: Plan of excavated area





Figure 3: Plan of excavated area superimposed on the Ordnance Survey 60":1 mile map of 1850