



Orchard Mount, Chorlton Fold, Eccles, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Evaluation Report



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SUMMARY

Salford City Council has proposed to sell for redevelopment Orchard Mount, a former school in Monton, Greater Manchester (SJ 7696 9994). The site occupied part of a hamlet known as Chorlton Fold, and potentially contained buried remains of the Manchester to Wigan Roman road. Recent investigations on an adjacent development site, on the opposite side of Chorlton Fold Lane, revealed the remains of a medieval ditch, iron smelting debris (probably of the same date), and the footings of Rose Cottage, which had early post-medieval origins (UMAU 2007). There was no evidence for the Roman road at that site, and it was concluded that the course may well be further west within Orchard Mount. Previous archaeological investigations undertaken to the west of Orchard Mount by the Ellesmere Residents Association, aided by Wigan Archaeological Society, revealed a well preserved section of the Roman road in Ellesmere Park (Rabbit 2005). In addition, there was considered to be some potential for the buried remains of one, if not two, Roman road alignments under the existing farmstead at Chorlton Fold.

In light of these factors, the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester recommended that an archaeological evaluation was required in advance of any future development of the Orchard Mount site, in order to establish the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains. In particular, it was intended that an evaluation would establish the presence or absence of both the Roman road between the settlements at Manchester and Wigan, and a putative north branch route believed to follow a similar course to the modern A6.

In June 2007, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by Urban Vision Partnership Ltd to carry out the recommended programme of evaluation at Orchard Mount. Five trenches of varying lengths were excavated around the former school building. No identifiable Roman or medieval remains were encountered during any part of the investigation, although several foundations of buildings associated with Orchard House, a post-medieval farm complex, were exposed along the eastern side of the site within Trenches 1, 2 and 3. Several sherds of pottery dating from at least the 16th century were recovered from subsoil deposits, which imply some activity in the area during the later medieval period. The absence of any significant archaeological features on the site, however, indicated that the redevelopment of the site would have a negligible archaeological impact, and it is not envisaged that any further investigation will be required.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Andrew Cartwright of Urban Vision Partnership Ltd for commissioning and supporting the project. Thanks are also extended to Norman Redhead, the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, and Joe Martin, the Salford Conservation Officer, for their invaluable input. Particular thanks are expressed to John Rabbitt, of the Ellesmere Park Residents Association, for his support and advice. Additional thanks are also due to the staff of the Greater Manchester County Record Office in Manchester, the staff of Salford Local Studies Unit, and to the residents of Chorlton Fold for all their help.

The evaluation was directed by Sean McPhillips, who also compiled the report. He was assisted in the field by Jo Wright, Thomas Mace, Claire Riley, and Steve Clarke. Marie Rowland produced the drawings, and Rebekah Pressler assessed the finds. The report was edited by Ian Miller, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In June 2007, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by Urban Vision Partnership Ltd, acting on behalf of Salford City Council, to carry out an archaeological evaluation of Orchard Mount, in Eccles, Greater Manchester (NGR SJ 7696 9994); the site is occupied presently by a former school. The work was intended to assess the potential for buried archaeological remains to survive across the site, and thereby inform any future proposals for redevelopment.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The study area is bounded by Chorlton Fold Lane, which surrounded the eastern and southern part of the site, and an alley to the west that ran to the rear of houses fronting onto Rocky Lane (Fig 1).
- 1.2.2 The underlying solid geology, as mapped by the Ordnance Survey geological survey, comprises Bunter Sandstone and Manchester marls of the Triassic to Permian periods (Countryside Commission 1998). The drift geology comprises boulder clay.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The scope of the required archaeological work was specified in a Project Brief, which was devised by the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester (*Appendix 1*). This allowed for the intrusive investigation of the site, via the excavation of a series of trial trenches.

2.2 EVALUATION TRENCHES

- 2.2.1 Five trenches of varying lengths, each measuring 1.6m wide, were excavated across the site, as shown on the trench location plan (Fig 2). These comprised one trench of 40m length, two of 20m, and two of 15m, giving a total combined length of 110m. The trenches were excavated by machine using a toothless ditching bucket, followed by hand cleaning and recording, with selective excavation to determine depth and character of features and deposits.

2.3 FINDS

- 2.3.1 Finds' recovery and sampling programmes were carried out in accordance with best practice (following current Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines), and subject to expert advice in order to minimise deterioration. All artefacts recovered from the evaluation trenches were retained.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 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 (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). The original record archive of project will be deposited with Salford Museum.
- 2.4.2 The Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database *Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1 The historical sources for the area, and particularly Orchard Mount itself, are limited. There is some evidence, however, to suggest that the route of a Roman road crosses the southern end of the study area, and important evidence for probable medieval activity in the immediate vicinity has been recovered from recent archaeological investigation (UMAU 2007). The following brief account summarises the current evidence for both the Roman and medieval periods, and examines the post-medieval development of the site from cartographic sources in order to place the results of the evaluation into an historical context.
- 3.1.2 **Roman:** according to both Watkin (1883, 37) and Margary (1957, 101), a Roman road, some 16 miles long and connecting the Roman Fort at Manchester to Roman Wigan, takes a course through the environs of Chorlton Fold (Fig 3). Although the SMR places this road to the south of the site, recent excavations have concluded that this projection is incorrect, increasing the likelihood that the road lies beneath the farm buildings at Chorlton Fold. Recent excavations conducted by Wigan Archaeological Society (WAS), in conjunction with the Ellesmere Park Residents Association and the Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit, have attempted to uncover a section of this road in the waste-ground to the immediate north of the farm, with mixed success (WAS 2006). Although a ‘metalled’ road surface and accompanying ditch were uncovered, the structure was very different to a section of the Roman road found less than half a mile away at the Three Sisters (*ibid*). Iron tap slag formed the upper surface, overlying a layer of larger sandstone blocks, which were severely angled, keying the slag into a hard, durable structure. The north/south alignment of the ditch was also at odds with the general east/west alignment of the road from Manchester to Wigan. A theory put forward is that this could be the branch road leading to Blackrod via the A6, which was suggested by the antiquarians in the 19th century (Watkin 1883).
- 3.1.3 **Medieval:** whilst the name of Eccles did not appear in the Domesday Book, the manor of Barton has had a long history, the lords of this manor having the right of nomination to the benefice of Eccles. The Lordship of Barton passed to the Booth family by marriage and then, again through the female line, to the de Traffords who were lords of the neighbouring manor of Trafford, which they held in unbroken succession from Norman times until 1896. Other notable local families were the Worsleys and the Breretons, both of whom figured in the Eccles story. Chorlton Fold lies within the old Barton-upon-Irwell township. ‘Chorlton’ may have come from an old English word “*ceorl*”, meaning ‘farmstead’ of peasants or freemen.
- 3.1.4 Whilst it was thought initially that the road uncovered during the recent excavations was Roman, it would appear more likely to date from the high to late medieval period; pottery recovered from the ditch has been dated

preliminarily to the late 14th century. The presence of the slag nodules almost certainly means an iron smelting operation was active in the area, and estimates suggest it to be at least 600 years old.

3.1.5 **Post-medieval:** little evidence for any specific activity in the area during the late medieval and early post-medieval periods is known from documentary sources, although it may be assumed that the local economy was dominated by agriculture. A site known as ‘Seven Pits’, situated to the west of Chorlton Fold, may have been used to extract marl, and similarly associated with agricultural activity. Various coal industries were exploited within the vicinity of Chorlton Fold during the 19th century, taking advantage of the coal seams and outcrops.

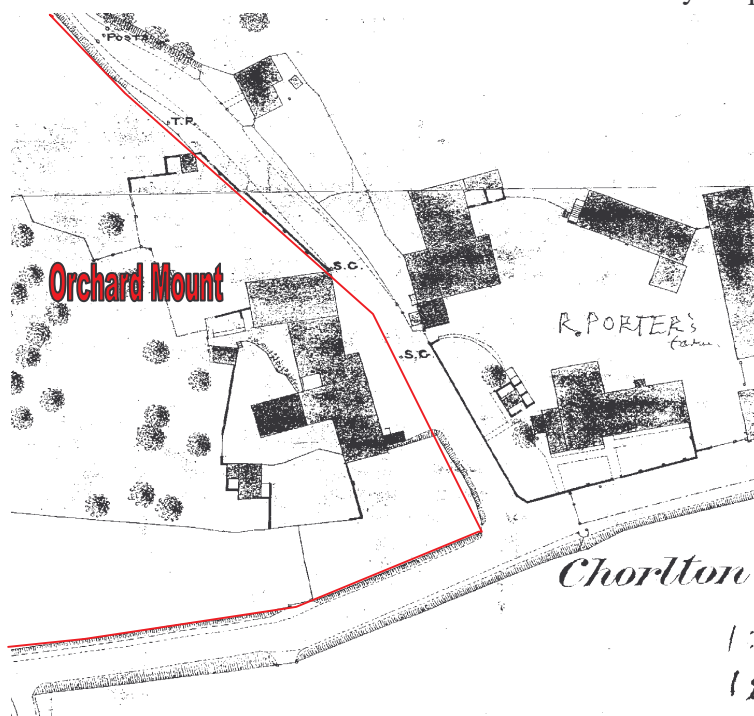
3.1.6 Chorlton Fold is marked on William Yates’ map of Lancashire, which was produced in 1786 and provides the earliest available cartographic source for the hamlet, although the scale is too small for detailed analysis. The map nevertheless depicts a cluster of buildings around and to the east of Rocky Lane, north of Monton, indicating that Chorlton Fold was an established hamlet by the end of the 18th century. The 1848 Ordnance Survey map similarly identifies Chorlton Fold as a cluster of three buildings to the east of the road (Fig 3), representing Chorlton Fold Farm.



Extract from Yates' map of Lancashire, 1786

3.1.7 Chorlton Fold farmhouse was built during the 18th century as a two-unit dwelling, which was expanded subsequently with a further bay to the west elevation, followed by a rear wing during the late 18th or early 19th century. The barn to the north of the farmhouse, and the more westerly of the outbuildings to the north-east, were also constructed during this original phase of construction. During the 19th century, as farming trends shifted from arable farming to dairy farming, a second outbuilding, used as a cattle-shed, was built, as was the Dutch barn to the east of the farmstead (OA North 2007). An extensive range of buildings is also shown along the western side of the lane, within the present study area, forming the farm complex at Orchard Mount. Three enclosed plots of land immediately to the west, seemingly forming part of the farm complex landholding, perhaps comprised orchards.

- 3.1.8 The Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, published in 1894, shows the farm complex to have been remodelled slightly, forming a configuration of buildings that is depicted on successive editions of Ordnance Survey mapping. The farm complex appears to have contracted; a large rectangular building along the southern end of the site shown on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map has been demolished, and a smaller structure at the northern end of the complex appears to have been replaced by a larger building. Some smaller ancillary structures also appear to have been added to the site, and only one of the enclosed plots of land immediately to the west of the site is depicted clearly as an orchard.



Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1894

- 3.1.9 The farm complex is shown partially on a photograph dating to the 1950s, which depicts Orchard House and an adjacent barn, which formed the core of the farm complex. It is interesting to note that the layout of the farm, with the farmhouse and barn forming a contiguous range, contrast with the layout of Chorlton Fold Farm (OA North 2007). The owners of Orchard House also owned Laburnum Cottage, located along the eastern side of Chorlton Fold, used as accommodation by the Banister family (J Rabbitt pers comm).



View of Orchard Mount Farm in c 1955

4. EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 In total, five evaluation trenches were excavated across the site (Fig 2). The trenches were excavated, as far as was possible, in accordance with the Project Brief (*Appendix 1*). However, one trench (Trench 5), placed across the north-western part of the site to the rear of the school, was not excavated to its full length due to dense vegetation, including trees; the trench was restricted to a total length of 20m.
- 4.1.2 The trenches were positioned in order to establish the presence or absence of the projected course of the Roman road across the southern part of the site (Trenches 1, 2 and 3), and the post-medieval farm complex (Trench 1 and 2) along the eastern part, as shown on the 1848 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig 3). Trenches 4 and 5 were placed across former field boundaries to the north-west of Orchard House in order to evaluate the archaeological potential along the north-western edge of the site.

4.2 TRENCH 1

- 4.2.1 The trench measured 40m in length, and was aligned north-west/south-east, parallel to the western side of Chorlton Fold Lane (Plates 1 and 2). It was excavated to the surface of the natural geology (**220**), which was exposed at a maximum depth of 1.3m in the central part of the trench, but within 1m below the modern ground surface at both ends of the trench. No evidence for Roman or medieval activity was encountered, although several brick walls surviving across many parts of the trench correspond to the position of structures shown on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map, and almost certainly represented the vestiges of the Orchard Mount farm complex.
- 4.2.2 The natural geology comprised pale red sand, which appeared as a natural sloping horizon along the eastern side of the site. Within the south-eastern part of the trench, sand **220** contained patches of yellow sandy-clay and streaks of water-trailed mineral concretions (Fig 4). The sand was diffused across the central part of the trench with spreads of yellowish-red clay (**216**), which may represent a natural ridge. Some of the clay was seemingly redeposited in order to create a level foundation, presumably associated with the development of Orchard Farm. The clay was sealed by 0.50m thick deposit of dark brown moist silty-clay topsoil (**218**), which contained abundant fuel waste and building debris.
- 4.2.3 In total, the remains of five walls were exposed in the trench, of which three (**214**, **221**, and **222**) survived in close proximity, representing the remains of a single building (Plate 3). Walls **212** (Plate 4) and **225** (Plate 5) represented external wall remains of buildings along the northern and southern row of structures shown on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map. All the wall components comprised thin-cut hand-made orange brick of probable 18th century origin,

many of which retained a residue of pale red sand lime-speckled mortar. The bricks varied in size between 230mm by 110mm by 55mm, to 260mm by 140mm by 70mm. The walls were all cut into the natural geology.

- 4.2.4 Wall **225** was aligned north/south across the central part of the trench. It survived for a total length of 1.8m, with an average width of 0.4m, and depth of two brick courses. It was two brick skins wide at the southern end, and three brick skins at the northern end, suggesting the wall was load bearing. Traces of a wall measuring 0.3m long was located 2.3m north of wall **225**, and was likely to represent a continuation of the same wall. Both sections of wall were laid above a dark brown silty-clay layer (**217**), spread over a distance of 2m, representing a redeposition of natural clay horizon **216**.
- 4.2.5 Wall **212** located at the northern end of the trench possibly represented the external boundary of a building. It was aligned north-east/south-west, measured three brick skins wide and three courses high, and was laid in courses of stretchers and headers with the upper surviving course of stretchers laid side on. The brick components in the wall measured 230mm by 110mm by 55mm. The thinness of the component bricks resembled a type of brick commonly used in Tudor building construction, although the size may be a result of economy rather than age. The wall was butted along its southern edge by a firm mixed clay (**213**), which yielded fragments of pottery and clay tobacco pipe dated to the 19th century. The northern edge of the wall was bordered by a cobble surface (**215**), which comprised medium-sized water-worn granite and quartz pebbles, extending 0.5m from the northern face of the wall to the trench edge, and was laid above yellow clay (**216**). It is possible that the surface represented a yard or entrance into a building.
- 4.2.6 Wall **214** was aligned north/south, and was exposed along the western side of the trench, and continued south beyond the trench section edge (Fig 5). It was exposed for a distance of 1m, and was abutted along its western face by the remnants of a stone-flagged floor. The wall (Plate 6) was extremely degraded with just a single course surviving, with no visible mortar. It is probable that the wall represented a continuation of a north/south-aligned wall (**209**) revealed in Trench 2 (4.3.2 below). Wall **221** was aligned east/west across the trench comprising a single skin thick construction that probably represented a partition dividing a room, possibly within the same building. It survived to a height of two courses, although much of it was badly disturbed by tree roots and the truncation level created by the buildings demolition (**219**). A similarly aligned wall (**222**), located 2m south of wall **221** (Plate 7), represented the external wall of a building. The fairly substantial construction of three brick skins (0.45m) wide survived to a height of five courses above natural sand **220**. The wall incorporated a layer of slates in its uppermost surviving course, seemingly representing an attempt at damp-proofing. Further drainage associated with this building was exposed along its southern face, bordered with a 20mm-diameter lead water pipe, which was in turn was lined by a 150mm-diameter ceramic drain pipe.
- 4.2.7 All of the walls in the central area of the trench were sealed by 0.38m thick demolition layer (**219**), which comprised abundant fragments of slate and brick rubble associated with the demolition of the farm buildings. This was

overlaid by 1m thick deposit of overburden constituting redeposited silty-clay topsoil and sand, which was probably used to level the site prior to the construction of the school during the latter half of the 20th century.

- 4.2.8 An east/west-aligned rectangular-shaped feature (**223**), exposed at the southern end of the trench, cut through the topsoil and into sand **220** to a depth of 1.18m. It had steep vertical edges and measured 0.30m wide, extending 0.5m across the trench. The feature was backfilled with several complete bricks, within a silty-clay and sand matrix (**224**), which yielded fragments of 19th- and early 20th-century pottery. The intended function of the feature was not ascertained, although it was clearly of modern origin and of no archaeological interest.

4.3 TRENCH 2

- 4.3.1 The trench was aligned east/west (Plate 8), extending from the western edge of Trench 1 to form part of the F-shaped plan of Trenches 1, 2 and 3 (Fig 2). It measured 15m in length, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.87m. The natural geology comprised friable red/orange sandy-clay (**202**), which was overlain by a thin layer of light brown clay-silt (**201**). No evidence of the Roman road or medieval activity existed in the trench, although structural remains that correspond to farm buildings shown on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map were uncovered.
- 4.3.2 Fragmentary remains of three brick walls (**205**, **206** and **209**), possibly representing a single building, survived across the central part of the trench, where they had been cut into the natural geology (Fig 5). Wall **209** was aligned north/south and survived as a single-brick thick partition, presumably internal to a larger structure. The wall comprised hand-made bricks, each measuring 240mm by 120mm, which were bonded with a lime-speckled red sandy mortar, similar to that surviving in the fabric of walls **214**, **221** and **222** in Trench 1 (4.2.3 above). Wall **205**, aligned east/west against the northern edge of the trench, survived as a single foundation course and was exposed for a distance of 0.75m. It was 0.38m wide and comprised two brick skins, each brick measuring 240mm by 120mm. The eastern edge of the wall appeared to be finished, possibly representing a terminal, such as an entrance, although no corresponding threshold was identified with confidence. Wall **206** followed a similar alignment to wall **205**, and possibly represented its continuation. The wall was aligned east/west, and comprised three courses of bricks, each of an identical size to those within wall **205**. Wall **206** was contained within a 0.79m-wide foundation trench (**208**). It is possible that walls **205** and **206** represented the southern entrance into a single building, and that wall **209** possibly formed the eastern end of the same structure.
- 4.3.3 Wall **209** was butted along its western edge by a compacted spread of dark grey-brown silt (**210**), which contained numerous rubble inclusions. This layer was overlaid by a 0.34m-thick deposit of dark brown silty-clay (**200**) topsoil, which probably derived from landscaping work associated with the construction of Orchard Mount school.

4.4 TRENCH 3

- 4.4.1 This east/west-aligned trench was placed at the southern end of Trench 1, and bordered the east/west-aligned section of Chorlton Fold Lane (Fig 2). It was intended to investigate the projected course of the Roman road, and was excavated to a length of 40m and to a maximum depth of 0.30m. No evidence for Roman activity was encountered within the trench, although structural remains pertaining to post-medieval occupation were uncovered along the eastern side.
- 4.4.2 The natural geology within the trench comprised an undulating level of yellow clay (232), exposed at a depth of 0.30m below the modern turf level. The eastern part of the clay, at the junction with Trench 1, was diffused with pale red sand (231). Layer 232 was cut by numerous features, including a posthole (229), a shallow ditch (236), and three field drains (226, 228 and 237), all probably associated with the former farm complex (Fig 4).
- 4.4.3 A spread of cobbles (235) across the southern edge of the trench resembled the type of material used in the make-up for a stretch of road recently excavated nearby at Ellesmere Park. However, upon investigation, brick rubble, fragments of pottery, and other inclusions sealed securely below the cobbles demonstrated that the surface could not have been laid earlier than the late 18th/early 19th century. Cobble spread 235 measured 3m in length, and was seemingly contained within a 0.20m deep hollow in the topsoil. The spread comprised poorly sorted water-worn cobbles of varying sizes, which had been deliberately laid to form an even, level surface. The trench was extended 3.5m by 2.5m beyond the southern area of surface 235 in order to investigate its extent (Fig 4). Further traces of the cobbles were encountered 0.05m beneath the turf (Plate 10), extending for a maximum distance of 2.5m by 1.5m, dissipating to the east and abutting an east/west-aligned wall (239) to the south.
- 4.4.4 Wall 239 was two brick skins wide, and was composed of hand-made bricks measuring 230mm by 120mm by 60mm, which were bonded with lime-speckled pinkish-red sandy mortar. The position of the wall corresponds to a building depicted on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map, and represented the only structural remains of the post-medieval farm buildings encountered within the trench.
- 4.4.5 The western end of the trench was dominated by an extensive east/west-aligned broken ceramic pipe (234), which was contained within a 0.40m-wide trench filled with dark brown clay. Sherds of pottery dating no earlier than the late 19th century were recovered from the fill. This feature had probably been a drainage feature within the enclosed land to the rear of the farm complex.
- 4.4.6 Drain 228 measured 1.7m long by 0.31m wide, and was aligned east/west across the eastern end of the trench (Fig 4). It comprised two single-skin thick walls constructed from two courses of hand-made brick (210mm by 120mm by 60mm), which were loosely bonded with pale reddish-brown mortar. The western end of the drain was terminated with a brick laid north/south across the surviving upper surface of each wall. The entire drain was contained

within a vertical-sided and flat-bottomed linear trench (**226**), which had been excavated into natural geology **232**. Trench **226** had a uniform width of 0.40m and depth of 0.18m, and was exposed for a distance of 3.86m (Plate 9). It was filled with a matrix of rubble and silt (**227**), which yielded numerous sherds of 18th- and 19th-century pottery. Another brick drain (**237**), which had been seemingly abandoned, was located along the central part of the trench. Drain **237** comprised two parallel brick walls aligned north/south and set 0.15m apart, surviving as a single course foundation.

- 4.4.7 A spread of cobbles (**236**), compacted within grey clay and contained within a shallow hollow measuring 3m wide, was revealed to the immediate west of drain **237**, and followed a north/south alignment sloping down slightly to the edge of the trench. The hollow possibly represented another drainage feature, perhaps a precursor to drain **228**.
- 4.4.8 All the features within the trench were sealed by 0.28m thick deposit of dark brown silty-clay topsoil (**238**), which varied in thickness throughout the trench. The soil contained numerous inclusions, including fuel waste and demolition debris, and had probably derived from landscaping works associated with the construction of Orchard Mount school.

4.5 TRENCH 4

- 4.5.1 The trench was intended to evaluate archaeological activity within the north-western part of the site, and was placed across a plot boundary depicted on the 1848 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 3). The trench was devoid of archaeological features, although buried soil horizons containing early post-medieval pottery was observed throughout the trench. The trench measured 15m long, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1m into saturated sticky yellow clay (**240**). This deposit sloped east/west across the central part of the trench, and clearly represented the natural geology. Another probable natural clay horizon occurred within the western part of the trench, represented by light red friable clay (**244**), which was recorded at a depth of 0.50m beneath the modern turf level.
- 4.5.2 Clay **240** was overlaid by 0.80m thick deposit of grey-brown humic clay (**241**), which extended for a distance of 12m along the trench (Plate 11). The western extent of deposit **241** decreased to 0.50m in thickness where it diffused with clay deposit **244**. Several sherds of pottery dating to between the late 17th and early 18th centuries were recovered from the lower part of the deposit, although modern 20th-century glass was also recovered.
- 4.5.3 A 0.35m thick band of yellow clay (**242**), measuring 3m long, was observed within the upper surface of layer **241**. This was in turn overlaid by 0.15m-thick deposit of compacted gravel (**243**), spread over a distance of 1.5m across the width of the trench. Both deposits probably represent levelling layers for a north/south-aligned surface or track of possible 19th-century origin. No evidence for the plot boundary shown on historical mapping was identified in the trench.

4.6 TRENCH 5

- 4.6.1 The trench (Plate 12) was aligned east/west, and placed parallel to and to the south of Trench 4 (Fig 2). No archaeological remains were encountered, and the stratigraphic sequence mirrored that observed within Trench 4. Deposits of yellow clay (244) diffused with pale red sandy-clay (245) represented the natural geology. Clay 244 was encountered at a depth of 1m below the modern ground surface at the western end of the trench, and sloped gradually to a depth of 1.3m at the eastern end. Clay 245 measured less than 0.05m thick, and was observed over a distance of 4m. It was cut by two small tree throws at the eastern end of the trench, and retained manganese patches across its upper surface, reflecting a degree of water dilution.
- 4.6.2 The natural geology was overlaid by a 0.30m-thick deposit of dark grey-brown silty-clay (246), which was similar in composition to the horizon 241 in Trench 4 (4.5.2 above). It contained matted areas of decayed trees and shrubs, together with patches of fuel waste and 19th-century pottery. The layer was in turn overlaid by dark brown clay topsoil (249), which measured 0.15m thick in the west and 0.40m thick at the eastern end of the trench.
- 4.6.3 Both layers were cut by a rectangular-shaped feature (247), which was exposed at the western end of the trench within the north-facing section (Plate 13). The exposed dimensions measured 1m long by 0.5m wide, with an estimated depth of at least 1m, although the feature was not fully excavated. Its fill (248) comprised stick yellow clay and, whilst it did not contain any finds, it was clearly of modern origin.

5. FINDS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 In total, 142 artefacts were recovered during the evaluation. Of these, 117 fragments were pottery, nearly all of which were post-medieval in date. Other material categories within the assemblage included glass vessels (10 fragments), iron objects (6), complete bricks (3), clay tobacco pipe (3), and iron slag (2). The assemblage was dominated by material dating between the 17th and 20th centuries, with a few fragments possibly dating to the 16th century. A summary finds catalogue is presented in *Appendix 3*.

5.2 POTTERY

- 5.2.1 Many of the sherds of pottery were collected from essentially disturbed deposits across the site, including demolition layers and truncated cultivation deposits. Nevertheless, a relatively large group of stratified post-medieval pottery was recovered from the backfill of drain **226 (227/228)**, and lesser amounts recovered from the fill of posthole **229 (230)**, both within Trench 3.
- 5.2.2 **Late medieval/early post-medieval:** medieval pottery from stratified deposits is not common in Lancashire/Greater Manchester, especially in a rural environment, although recent excavations (UMAU 2007) on the adjacent site yielded pottery that has been attributed to the 14th century.
- 5.2.3 Two sherds retrieved from a cleaning layer (**210**) from Trench 2 reflected possible late medieval activity on the site. The remainder of the material from the deposit was, however, no earlier than 18th century and dated up to the second half of the 19th century. The sherds were from a small square-rimmed jar, in a sparsely-gritted white fabric, slipped and yellow-glazed. The source of this fabric is unknown, although it is possible that it may represent an early Yellow Ware, which might have had a currency as early as the 15th or 16th century (pers comm Jeremy Bradley). Yellow lead glazes were, indeed, used on white sandy wares produced at Ewloe, in Cheshire, during the 15th century. The bulk of Yellow Wares were produced in the Midlands from the early 17th century, and they might also have been produced at the Prescott kilns, on Merseyside, around the same time, although evidence remains inconclusive.
- 5.2.4 **Post-medieval:** the assemblage as a whole represents a typical cross-section of post-medieval and more recent domestic pottery types, and is dominated by dark-glazed coarse red earthenwares, which represented 40% of the entire collection. The earliest material dates to the 17th and 18th centuries, and includes fragments of Blackware cups, a Creamware plate, a Mottled ware bowl, a lead-glazed brown earthenware bowl, and a piecrust-rimmed Staffordshire Slipware plate. A Cistercian-style tyg derivative dated to the 15th to 16th century was noted during recent analysis of the pottery from the adjacent site (UMAU 2007), which might suggest that some of the Blackwares recovered from this evaluation, possibly had an earlier origin. It is interesting

to note that there are few pottery types representing the early post-medieval period, such as Midlands Purple or Reduced Greenwares that are commonly recovered from excavations in North Lancashire, although this might reflect a lack of domestic activity on the site prior to the construction of the farmstead and later buildings during the latter half of the 18th century.

- 5.2.5 The domination of the dark-glazed coarse red earthenwares also reflect this event, and they continue in use throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. These utilitarian wares were used alongside other domestic wares, such as English brown stoneware teapots and bowls of types produced in Nottingham and Derby during the late 18th century (although the Orchard Mount examples probably represent a later stoneware tradition during the 19th century), alongside dark brown glazed buff wares and a highly decorative hand painted porcelain plate. Products from the 19th century include later brown stoneware bottles, sponge-printed and transfer-printed wares, and an industrial slipware mug.

5.3 GLASS

- 5.3.1 This group largely comprised fragments of green and brown bottles, dating no earlier than the 18th century, with lesser amounts of colourless drinking vessels from the 19th and 20th centuries. Two 18th-century wine bottle fragments were collected from cultivation layer **241** in Trench 4, and the fill of drain **226 (228)** in Trench 3. The remaining eight fragments were retrieved from disturbed deposits across the site.

5.4 IRON

- 5.4.1 Six iron objects were recovered; three round-sectioned nails, two spikes, and a bolt. Most derived from demolition or topsoil deposits and cannot be dated with confidence, although the bolt and spike recovered from subsoil layer **217** was found amongst pottery with a date range between the 18th and 19th centuries, suggesting they derived from the former farm buildings.

5.5 CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

- 5.5.1 Three complete hand-made 18th-century bricks in a dense orange fabric were retained. A mortared example was from wall **212** at the northern end of Trench 1. The others were from drain **228 (227/1034)** in Trench 3, and demolition deposit **219** in Trench 1. The example from drain **227** was over-fired, suggesting it was possibly produced locally, although no other over-fired examples were identified.
- 5.5.2 Large amounts of slate and stone masonry were observed amongst the demolition debris. This was mostly removed during the excavation of the trenches, and none was retained.

5.6 CLAY TOBACCO PIPE

- 5.6.1 In total, three fragments, (two plain stems and a decorated bowl) were recovered from demolition deposits from Trenches 1 and 2. Neither stem could be dated by the bore diameter, but the scroll decoration on the bowl suggests a 19th-century date.

5.7 INDUSTRIAL RESIDUE

- 5.7.1 Two pieces of ferrous tap slag were recovered from the fill of cut **223 (224)** and cultivation deposit **241** in Trench 4. The presence of the slag, albeit in very small amounts, suggests some association with the bloomery smelting activities thought to have been undertaken in close proximity to the site during the medieval period (UMAU 2007).

5.8 CONCLUSION

- 5.5.1 Although a relatively small finds assemblage was recovered from the evaluation, it provided a good example of the type of finds commonly recovered from post-medieval rural farmsteads. More interestingly, the assemblage contrasts with that recovered from the adjacent excavation (UMAU 2007), hinting that the two sites were subject to differing uses, during the medieval period, despite their close proximity.

6. DISCUSSION AND IMPACT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation did not produce any evidence for Roman or medieval activity, and specifically the Roman road. Cultivation soils yielded pottery with a broad date range dating between the 16th and 19th centuries, providing some evidence for post-medieval agriculture on the site. In addition, the wall remains located along the eastern side of the site pertained to the Orchard Mount Farm complex, which seems to have occupied the site from at least the early 18th century. It is possible these buildings were broadly contemporary with the adjacent Chorlton Fold farmstead.

6.2 PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

- 6.2.1 The earliest phase of activity on the site was represented by cultivation soil spread across the site observed in all the trenches. The single fragment of possible late medieval pottery recovered from this soil in Trench 2 represented the earliest material produced from the evaluation, although for the most part the deposit also contained numerous fragments of 18th- and 19th-century pottery.
- 6.2.2 The remains of the post-medieval farm complex within the eastern part of the site were represented by the fragmentary wall foundations exposed within Trenches 1 and 2. Elements of at least three structures were identified, although these were fragmentary. Indeed, the paucity of internal features of the farm buildings was notable, implying that the buildings were comprehensively destroyed during redevelopment in the mid-20th century. In addition, there were no finds recovered from the foundations that could provide a general date of its construction, although fragments of pottery dating to at least the early 18th century were recovered amongst the building demolition. However, the presence of thin hand-made brick within the wall foundation is consistent with an 18th-century date for construction.

6.3 IMPACT

- 6.3.1 The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated that there is little potential for significant archaeological remains to survive on the site. It is therefore considered unlikely that any future redevelopment of the site will have a negative archaeological impact. It is not envisaged that the site will require further archaeological investigation.

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APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESIGN

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ORCHARD MOUNT, CHORLTON FOLD, MONTON, ECCLES

It is proposed to redevelop Orchard Mount, a former school in the ownership of Salford CC, located at SJ 7696 9994. This site occupies part of the former Chorlton Fold and may contain remains of the Manchester to Wigan Roman road. Recent investigations on a different development site on the opposite side of Chorlton Fold Lane identified remains of a medieval ditch, iron smelting debris (probably of the same date), and footings of Rose Cottage which had early post medieval origins (UMAU 2007 – Chorlton Fold, Monton, Eccles: an archaeological excavation). There was no evidence for the Roman road at this site and it is felt that the course may well be further west within the Orchard Mount site. Further west, John Rabbit of the Ellesmere Residents Association, aided by Wigan Archaeological Society, has excavated a well preserved section of the road in Ellesmere Park (John Rabbit 2005). These groups also helped on the recent Rose Cottage dig.

Chorlton Fold Farm has been recently surveyed and reported on (OAN 2007) and the buildings are all of late 18th or early 19th century origin. However, the discovery of medieval pottery and features at the adjacent excavation site has raised the real possibility of further medieval and early post-medieval remains being unearthed, relating to the origins of Chorlton Fold. Oxford Archaeology North are due to undertake evaluation trial trenching following demolition of the farm house and outbuildings.

Within the Orchard Mount the OS 6" map of 1848 shows large (outbuildings?) occupying most of what is now the lawned area on the south-east quarter of the development site. It is likely that these buildings will have removed remains of the Roman road if they existed here, but there is good archaeological potential for the buildings themselves in terms of understanding the origins and development of the Chorlton Fold site.

The evaluation exercise will determine the extent, depth, function, chronology and relative significance of archaeological deposits to inform a mitigation strategy for a final stage of more detailed archaeological excavation of significant remains that will be destroyed by development. This final stage of excavation would be followed by a programme of post excavation work including specialist finds analysis, report production, archive deposition and publication to an appropriate level. The evaluation is also designed to determine whether or not the Roman road survives; if it does it is proposed to preserve a length of it from development. The evaluation and any subsequent work, coupled with investigation results from the opposite side of Chorlton Fold Lane, will be used for an information board to be erected in a publicly accessible place as part of the development of Orchard Mount.

Evaluation Methodology

i) Five trenches 1.6m wide will be excavated across the grassed areas as shown on the trench location plan. These comprise three trenches of 40 metres length and two of 15 metres giving a total of 150 metres. An additional 10 metres trenching will be used at the discretion of the site supervisor to maximum information from the investigation. Trenches will be dug by machine using a toothless ditching bucket, followed by hand cleaning and recording, with selective excavation to determine depth and character of features and deposits.

ii)) A programme of post excavation will be undertaken in accordance with IFA standards, including assessment of finds and palaeo-environmental sampling (as appropriate).

iii)) A report on the evaluation and historical analysis will be produced which will include the following:

- a non-technical summary
- the site's historical and archaeological background
- an outline of the methodology of the evaluation
- summary of results, to include: the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits (to include reduced plans, sections and photographs where appropriate)
- assessment of the finds with dating evidence
- an assessment of the significance of the remains and finds
- a plan showing areas of archaeological sensitivity as defined by the evaluation.

iv) A site archive will be completed in accordance with the specifications given in MAP 2, Appendix 3. Arrangements should be made for depositing the archive with an Salford Museum. A copy of the list of archive items should be sent to GMAU.

v) The Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the SMR, the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer at Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record.

vi) Other Considerations

- Arrangements will be made by the contractor for the archaeological curator(GMAU) to make monitoring visits to the site during excavation. There will be a site meeting between all interested parties to review the archaeological work towards the end of the evaluation.
- The curator will be consulted on the interim and final evaluation report before it is sent out to the client.
- The archaeological contractor will abide by the Institute of Field Archaeologists Bye-Laws of Approved Practice.
- Contractors shall comply with the requirements of all relevant Health & Safety legislation and adopt procedures according to guidance set out in the Health & Safety Manual of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers.
- The practical requirements of the evaluation, including access arrangements, the safety and security requirements of the site, the presence of services, on-site facilities, and the re-instatement of the site, should be discussed in advance with the client.
- The level of publicity/confidentiality and relevant contacts should be agreed between the archaeological contractor and developer prior to commencement of the excavation.
- Copies of the evaluation report will be sent to: the client (x2), Salford Planning (Urban Vision), Salford Conservation Officer, Salford Local Studies Library, Salford Museums Service, The Assistant County Archaeologist, GMAU (to enter on to the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record), John Rabbit (Ellesmere Residents Association) and Bill Aldridge (Wigan Archaeology Society)

Prepared by:

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Assistant County Archaeologist (GMAU)
13/4/07

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST

Context	Trench	Description
200	2	Topsoil
201	2	Light brown clay-silt interface
202	2	Red sandy layer
203	2	Fill of pit 204
204	2	Pit
205	2	East/west aligned brick wall
206	2	Brick wall
207	2	Fill of foundation trench 208
208	2	Wall foundation trench
209	2	North/south aligned brick wall (possible eastern wall of building)
210	2	Dark brown clay and rubble demolition
211	2	Dark brown clay and rubble demolition (same as 210)
212	1	East/west aligned brick wall at the northern end of the trench
213	1	Mixed clay/sand butting wall 212
214	1	North/south aligned brick wall within the central area of the trench
215	1	Cobble surface beneath clay 213 at the northern end of the trench
216	1	Sandy clay glacial till beneath clay 213
217	1	Dark brown silty clay layer above clay 216
218	1	Topsoil above clay 217
219	1	Demolition debris associated with farm buildings located along the eastern side of Chorlton Fold
220	1	Reddish-brown natural sand
221	1	East/west aligned brick wall above sand 220
222	1	East/west aligned brick wall parallel with wall 221
223	1	Rectangular-shaped cut at the southern end of the trench
224	1	Fill of feature 223
225	1	North/south aligned brick wall within the central area of the trench
226	3	North-east/south-west aligned linear cut
227	3	Fill of cut 226
228	3	Brick drain within 226
229	3	Posthole
230	3	Fill of posthole 229
231	3	Pale red sand at the eastern end of the trench
232	3	Yellow clay natural
233	3	Gravel bands within clay 232
234	3	East/west aligned land drain
235	3	Cobble spread observed within the south-facing trench section
236	3	Possible old water course/drain
237	3	North/south aligned brick drain
238	3	Topsoil
239	3	East/west aligned brick wall along the southern area of cobbles 235
240	4	Yellow clay natural
241	4	Dark grey-brown clay (cultivation?) layer above clay 240
242	4	Yellow clay lens/levelling deposit within layer 241
243	4	Gravel layer above deposit 242
244	5	Yellow clay natural
245	5	Pale red sandy clay above clay 244
246	5	Dark brown silty clay overlying clay layers 244 and 245
247	5	Rectangular-shaped feature cutting topsoil 249 and layer 246
248	5	Fill of 247
249	5	Topsoil

APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE

OR No	Context	Trench	Material	Count	Description	Period
1001	210	2	Pottery	2	White ware (gritty) square rimmed jar with an internal clear/yellow glaze. Unattributed source	15th/16th century?
1001	210	2	Pottery	1	Blackware (purple red fabric)	17th/18th century
1001	210	2	Pottery	2	Dark brown glazed buff ware	17th/18th century
1001	210	2	Pottery	2	English brown stoneware; Derby/Nottingham type	18th/19th century
1001	210	2	Pottery	11	Dark glazed coarse red earthenware	17th-19th century
1001	210	2	Pottery	3	English brown stoneware; Staffordshire type	19th century
1001	210	2	Pottery	4	Glazed white earthenware; bowl, cup	19th/20th century
1007	210	2	Glass	2	Clear vessel; jar	19th/20th century
1010	210	2	Clay Tobacco Pipe	1	Undecorated stem with medium bore	18th/19th century
1011	210	2	Iron	2	Nails	20th century
1025	212	1	Ceramic Building Material	1	Brick; mortared sample	18th century
1013	217	1	Iron	2	Bolt and spike	18th-20th century
1014	217	1	Pottery	1	Mottled ware	18th century
1014	217	1	Pottery	2	Blackware; cup	17th/18th century
1014	217	1	Pottery	3	Dark brown glazed coarse red earthenware; pancheon, storage jar, flower pot	17th-19th century
1014	217	1	Pottery	2	Glazed white earthenware; plate	19th century
1009	218	1	Glass	3	Green bottle (2), brown beer bottle	19th/20th century
1000	219	1	Ceramic Building Material	1	Brick; overfired complete	18th century
1015	219	1	Iron	1	Spike	18th-20th century
1016	219	1	Clay Tobacco Pipe	2	Scroll-decorated bowl and undecorated stem	19th century
1017	219	1	Pottery	2	Dark brown glazed coarse red earthenware; probable storage jar	17th-19th century
1017	219	1	Pottery	2	English brown stoneware; rouletted style decorated teapot	19th century
1017	219	1	Pottery	1	Blackware	18th century
1017	219	1	Pottery	1	Glazed white earthenware; blue sponge printed plate	19th century
1019	224	2	Industrial Residue	1	Slag (ferrous)	Unknown
1018	224	2	Pottery	1	Creamware; bowl	18th century

1018	224	2	Pottery	1	Dark glazed fine earthenware cup	18th century
1018	224	2	Pottery	1	Blue transfer ware plate	18th/19th century
1019	224	2	Glass	1	Clear vessel fragments	19th/20th century
1024	227	3	Ceramic Building Material	1	Brick; overfired complete	18th century
1027	227	3	Pottery	21	Dark brown glazed coarse red earthenware; large storage jar, square rimmed vessel	17th-19th century
1027	227	3	Pottery	2	Dark brown glazed fine red earthenware (possible Blackware)	18th century
1027	227	3	Pottery	13	Creamware plate (one vessel)	18th century
1027	227	3	Pottery	7	Brown stoneware; Nottingham/Derby type	19th century
1027	227	3	Pottery	1	Industrial slipware; cable decorated cup	19th century
1026	228	3	Pottery	19	Dark brown glazed coarse red earthenware; pancheon, large storage pot	17th-19th century
1026	228	3	Pottery	1	Brown glazed fineware jar	18th/19th century
1026	228	3	Pottery	1	Brown stoneware; Nottingham type	19th century
1021	228	3	Glass	2	Wine bottle base (iridescent), brown beer bottle	17th/18th century, 19th century
1022	230	3	Pottery	1	Dark brown glazed earthenware with gritty fabric, probable local source	18th/19th century?
1008	238	3	Pottery	1	Willow patterned plate	18th-20th century
1023	241	4	Industrial Residue	1	Slag	Unknown
1002	241	4	Glass	1	Green wine bottle	18th/19th century?
1005	241	4	Pottery	1	Press moulded 'pie crust' rimmed feather-trailed slipware plate	Late 17th-early 18th century
1005	241	4	Pottery	1	Mid-brown lead-glazed earthenware	17th/18th century
1005	241	4	Pottery	1	Dark brown/black glazed coarse red earthenware	17th-19th century
1012	241	4	Clay	1	Bung (industrial)	19th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	1	Dark brown glazed fine red earthenware	18th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	1	Brown stoneware; cup	18th/19th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	1	Hand-painted (imported?) porcelain	18th-20th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	1	Willow patterned plate	19th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	1	Light brown stoneware jar	19th century
1003	246	5	Pottery	3	Unglazed red earthenware; flower pot	19th-20th century
1004	249	5	Glass	1	Clear vessel	19th-20th century
1004	249	5	Iron	1	Spike	18th-20th century

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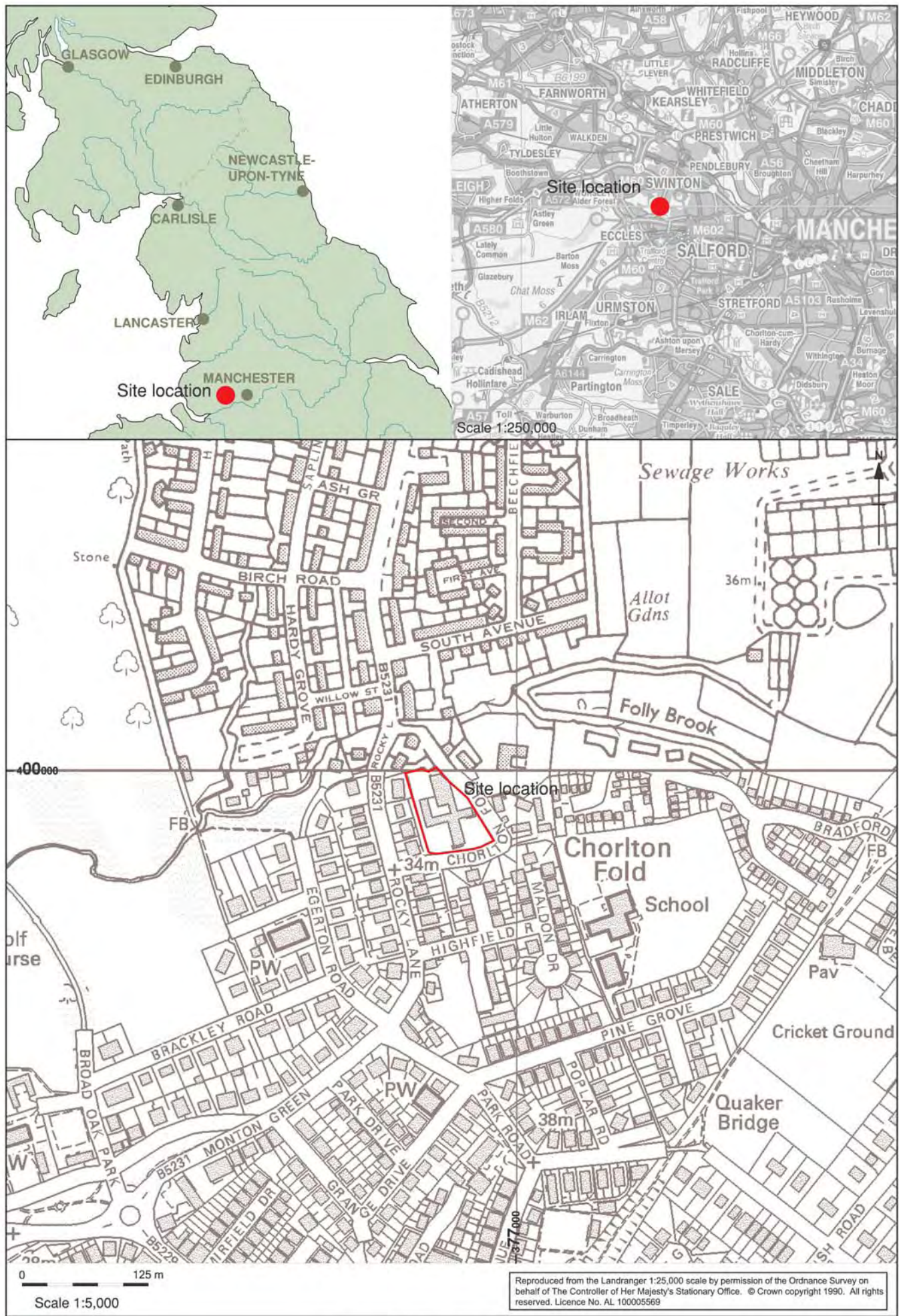


Figure 1: Site Location

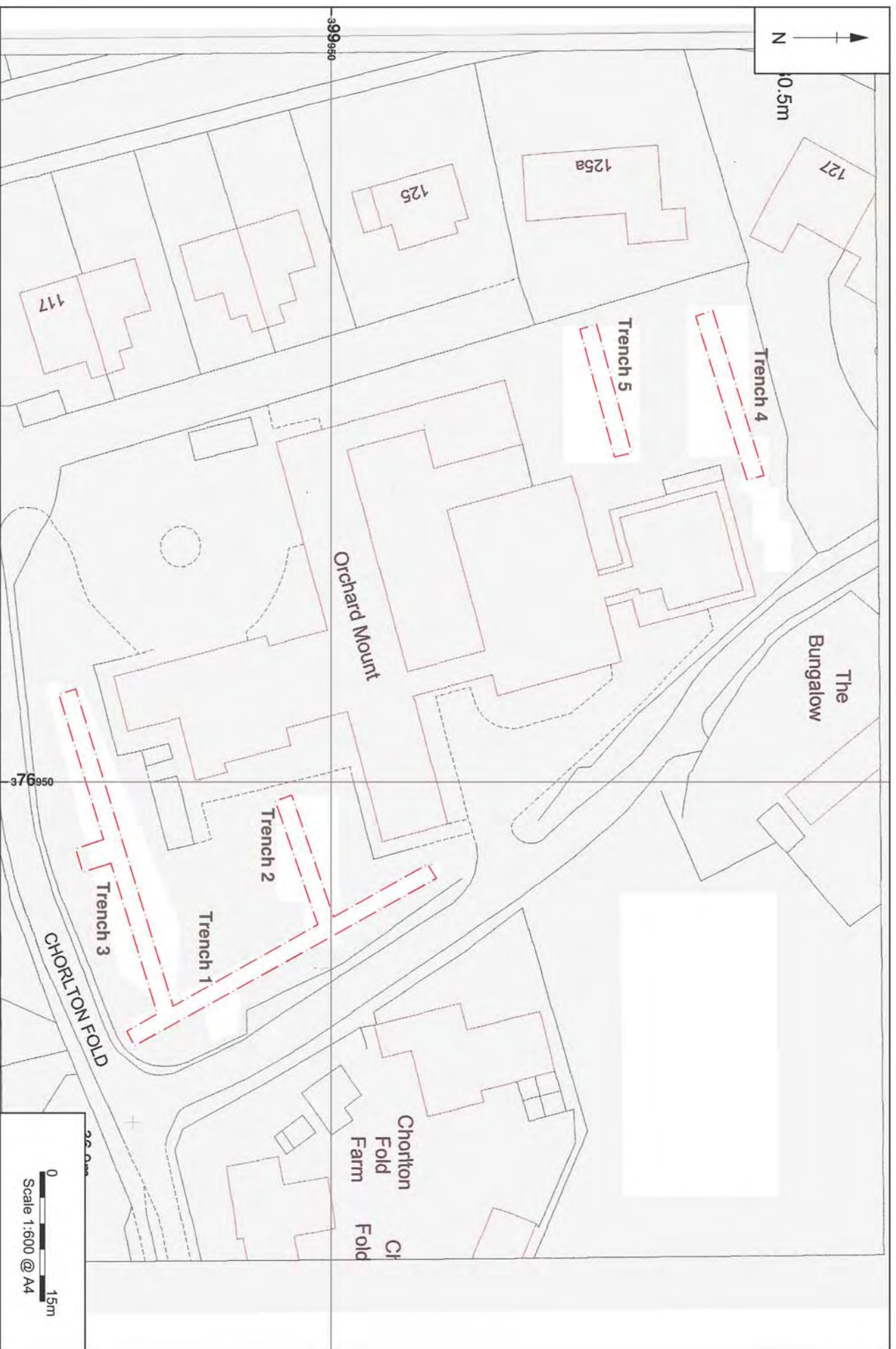
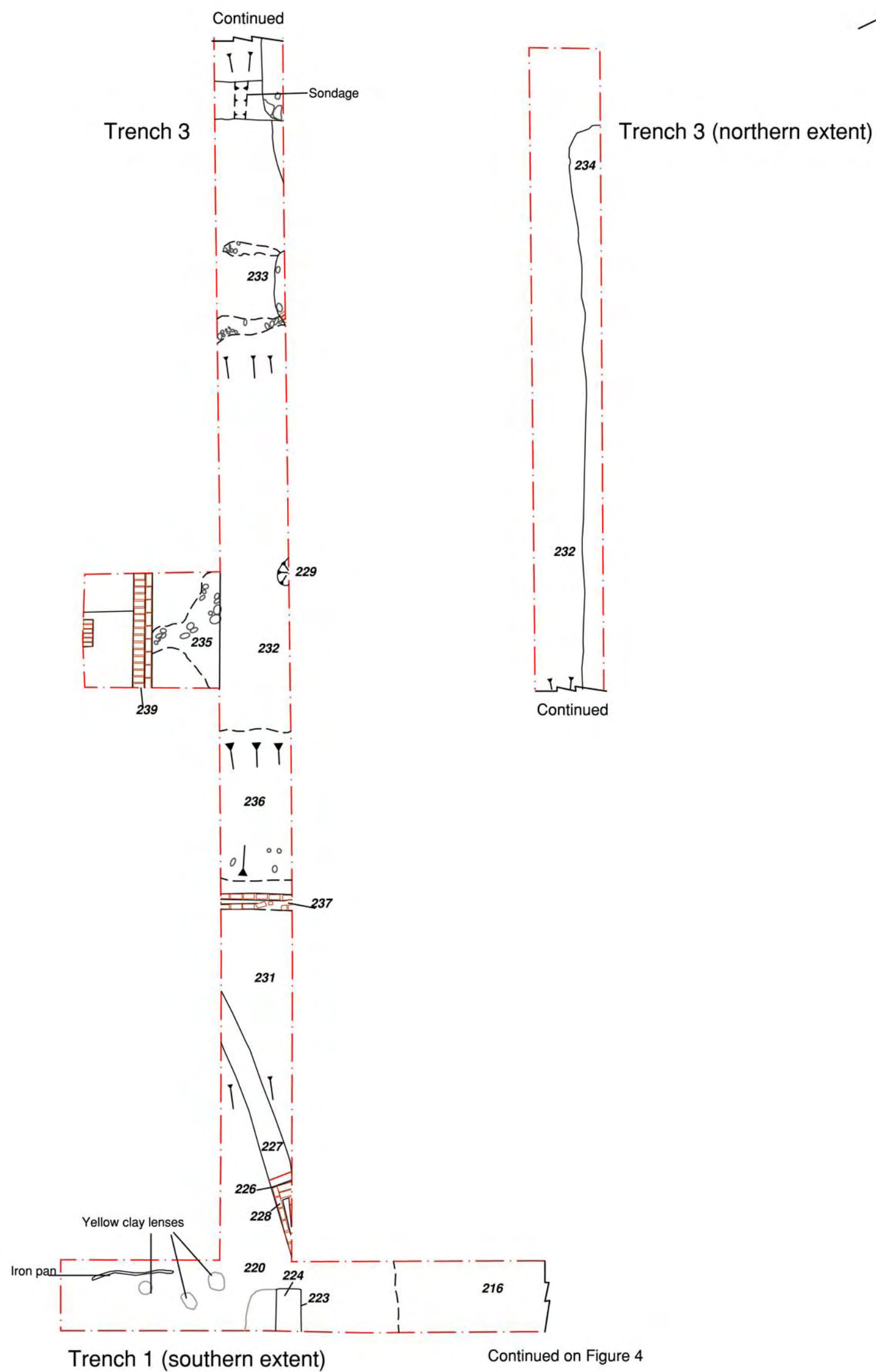


Figure 2: Trench location plan

Figure 3: Trenches superimposed upon the 1848 Ordnance Survey map, showing the projected course of the Roman road





Key

- Limit of excavation
- Feature
- Brick
- Sandstone
- 106 Context number

0 2 m
1:100 @ A3

Figure 4: Detailed plan of Trench 1 (part of) and Trench 3

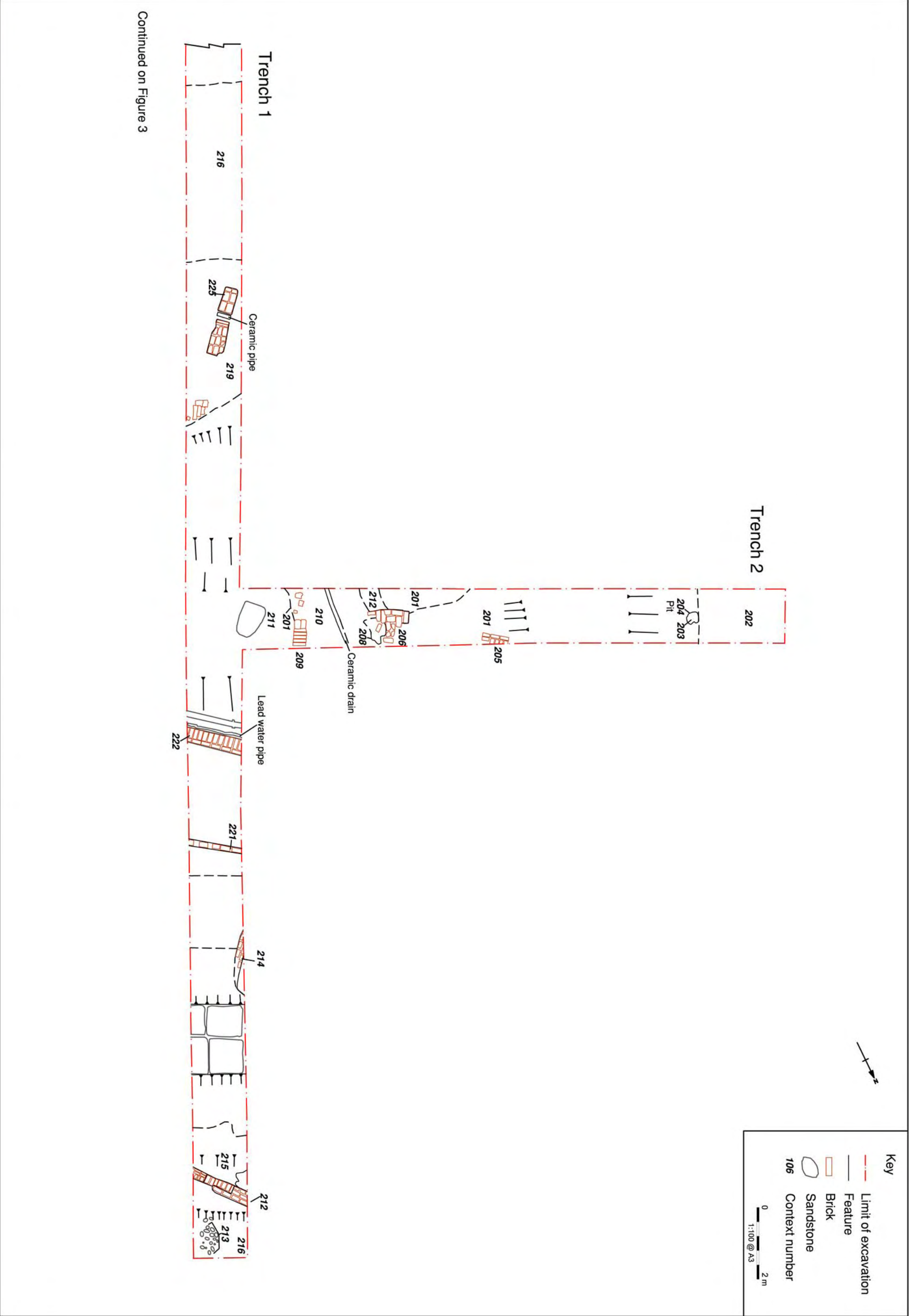


Figure 5: Detailed plan of Trench 1 (part of) and Trench 2



Plate 1: View of the northern end of Trench 1, looking north



Plate 2: View of the southern end of Trench 1, looking south



Plate 3: Walls **221** and **222** within Trench 1



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Plate 11: North-facing section of Trench 4, looking south-west showing layer **241**



Plate 12: View of Trench 5, looking west



Plate 13: Feature **247** within the north-facing section in Trench 5, looking south-west