

University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

**Thorley Lane,
Wythenshawe,
Manchester,
Archaeological
Evaluation Report**

Client: The Environment
Partnership

Technical Report: Andrew
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Report No: SA/2019/39



Site Location: Thorley Lane, Wythenshawe, Manchester

NGR: Centred at NGR: 381449 386050

Internal Ref: SA/2019/39

Prepared for: The Environment Partnership

Document Title: Thorley Lane, Wythenshawe, Manchester, Archaeological Evaluation Report

Document Type: Archaeological Evaluation


Version: Version 1.0

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Date: May 2019

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Date: May 2019 **Signed:** 

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Contents

Summary	4
1. Introduction	5
2. The Setting	6
3. Methodology	11
4. Evaluation Results	13
5. Finds	26
6. Discussion	27
7. Conclusions	32
8. Archive and Dissemination	33
9. Acknowledgements	34
Sources	35
Appendix 1: Figures	37

Summary

Salford Archaeology, of the University of Salford, was commissioned by The Environment Partnership (TEP) to undertake an archaeological evaluation at an area of Land off Thorley Lane, Wythenshawe, Manchester, centred on NGR: 381449 386050, after consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). This project was brought about by the need for the construction of an electrical substation which included two transformers with associated coolers and a switch house building. GMAAS had advised that there may be buried archaeological remains within the site boundary which would likely be impacted upon by the proposed development works. To offset this impact a desk-based assessment was undertaken by TEP (2019) and a geophysical survey was carried out by Magnitude Surveys (2019). The results of this led to the production of a Written Statement of Investigation (WSI) by TEP for a programme of evaluation trenching.

TEP commissioned Salford Archaeology to carry out the evaluation during May 2019. This consisted of the excavation of five evaluation trenches. Previous map regression had suggested that the site had seen very little impact in the past having been continually used as pasture throughout the available mapping. The evaluation bore this out revealing a few land drains and some patches exhibiting scarring from the use of a harrow. A few features of potential archaeological interest were recorded including the terminus ends of three possible linear features. These linears were not related stratigraphically with any other features within the study area and were not related to any agricultural practices. They contained no finds and were filled with leached out grey material, indicative of considerable age. Their proximity to the excavated Neolithic/Early Bronze Age farmstead at Oversley farm, and to the Bronze Age ditch recorded at White Carr Lane, suggest that there remains the potential for in situ prehistoric remains to be present within the study area.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The development scheme that has led to this project comprises the construction of an electrical substation at land off Thorley Lane, Manchester, NGR: 381449 386050. This substation will include a switch-house building and two transformers. The land which comprises the Site is within the area classified as 'Manchester Airport' by Manchester's Local Development Framework (LDF).

A desk-based assessment was produced by TEP in February 2019, which characterised the site as having a low potential for archaeological remains. Following this desk-based assessment a geophysical survey was carried out by Magnitude Surveys in March 2019. The results of this survey suggested that there were no anomalies of probable archaeological origin.

A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by TEP in April 2019 which allowed for the excavation of 5 archaeological evaluation trenches across the site area.

Following this Salford Archaeology was commissioned by TEP in April 2019 to undertake the archaeological evaluation. The evaluation was carried out in May 2019. This report records the results that archaeological evaluation.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this archaeological evaluation were previously laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (TEP, 2019). The programme of works is designed to allow for the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological investigations to be undertaken. This design is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. The Setting

2.1 Location

The site is centred on NGR 381449 386050, to the north of Thorley Lane, west of Painswick Park, and northeast of the M56. The surrounding area is mostly developed with Manchester Airport immediately to the South, and the large Wythenshawe housing estate to the north (Plate 1; Figure 1).

The bedrock geology is characterised by sedimentary Bollin mudstone which was formed in the Triassic Period c.250 million years ago. The superficial geology is characterised by Devensian till and boulder clay. These deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in an environment previously dominated by ice age conditions (British Geological Survey, 2019).



Plate 1: Satellite image showing the approximate location of the Site boundary

2.2 Contextual Background

As laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (TEP, 2019), there is no archaeological evidence for any prehistoric, Romano-British, early medieval, or medieval activity within 1km of the site boundary, though an unknown series of square probable earthworks are visible in the wooded area immediately to the northeast of the site (Plate 2).

Prehistoric activity within the Greater Manchester area is not particularly well understood and there was no previous evidence of any such activity within the site boundary. Activity is generally better understood in upland areas, such as at nearby Bowdon Hill. However, some such activity is known within the wider area, such as the

finding of several late-Neolithic flint tools from the nearby Timperley Old Hall Site (Nevell, 2013, 6-7), which is located approximately 3 miles to the northwest of the site boundary. During works associated with the construction of runway 2 at Manchester Airport during the late 1990s the site of Oversley Farm was excavated, c. 3km to the south of the study area. This site recorded the remains of two farmstead type structures dated to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, along with an abundance of Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery and flint tools, floral and faunal remains and evidence of earlier Mesolithic activity (Hodgson and Brennand 2007). During 2000s a site was excavated at White Carr Lane, Hale Barns, roughly 1.5km to the northwest of the study area. This site recorded a large ditch radiocarbon dated to the Bronze Age (UMAU 2004)

Romano-British activity is known within the general vicinity of the site, though there is no direct evidence for activity within the site boundary itself. Romano-British activity in this southern area of Greater Manchester is mostly restricted to isolated farmsteads in the various valleys, though only limited excavation has taken place (Nevell, 1997, 17).



Plate 2: Lidar imagery with approximate site boundary

In 1066 the parishes of Bowden and Baguley were under the control of one Alweard (GMAC, 1994, 3-4). By the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, there appeared to be very little activity within the general vicinity of the site with settlements such as Baguley producing no revenue and purportedly containing no households. During the medieval period proper, the area around the site became characterised by farmsteads, moated sites, and halls, while the landscape itself became increasingly agricultural in nature, though Wythenshawe deer park was also located approximately 2 miles north of the site (See Plate 3 for an overview of the settlement pattern in the 16th Century). Such nearby medieval settlements sites included Timperley Old Hall, likely moated in the 13th Century, Baguley Hall constructed in the 14th Century, and Wythenshawe Hall which was constructed in the 16th Century, though settlement was historically recorded from the 13th Century (Plate 3). Perhaps the most significant excavated medieval site

in the vicinity of this site - approximately 1.5 miles to the northwest - was that at Buttery House Lane, a moated settlement which produced gritty-ware ceramics likely dated to the 12-13th Centuries AD (Wilson, 1983, 138-9). The White Carr Lane site excavated in 2004 by UMAU recorded extensive medieval ironworking (UMAU 2004).

The post-medieval period was similarly characterised by agriculture in the general vicinity of the Site. It was not until the 19th Century that land-use began to drastically change in the area, with the expansion of nearby settlements such as Altrincham. As will be demonstrated below, the area within the Site boundary has remained undeveloped to the present day, though the surrounding area has become increasingly characterised by domestic, industrial, and transport-related development through the 20th Century and into the 21st.



Plate 3: Extract of Saxton's 1579 map, Cestriae, showing approximate Site location

2.3 Site Development

The earliest historical map of any detail related to the site was the 1839 Tithe Map for Baguley. This showed that the entire site boundary sat within a plot 26 as recorded at that time. This plot 26 was named as 'Further Rudd Parks' and consisted of 5 acres, 1 rood, and 2 perches. It was located in the Parish of Bowden and the township of Baguley. The land use within this plot was not recorded but the landowner was named as one Thomas William Tatton, while the occupier was one James Wright. Thomas William Tatton, Esq., lived 1816-85 and was the occupier of the nearby Wythenshawe Hall, suggestive that the current investigation area could be considered as part of the greater Wythenshawe estate (a marble bust of Thomas William Tatton can be seen in the anteroom of Wythenshawe Hall). Wythenshawe Hall itself, as stated above, lies approximately 3 miles to the north of the Site boundary, and is a Grade II* listed building.

James Wright, the occupier of the 'Further Rudd Parks' plot was a tenant farmer who exclusively rented from Thomas William Tatton. He worked a total of 24 'plots' as recorded in 1839, in addition to renting his farmhouse, the 'Old Wood', which was located 500m to the north of the Site area which was also owned by Thomas William Tatton.

By the time of the survey for the 1848, 6-inch maps of Cheshire, some limited change had taken place within the site boundary and in the immediate vicinity (Figure 2). The two plots recorded in 1839 as 26 and 27 had been conglomerated into a single larger field, and by 1898 several cottages had been constructed to the southeast of the site in the area which today is partly occupied by the Little Faces Day Nursery (Figure 3). Throughout the early 20th Century no significant development took place within the site boundary or in the immediate vicinity (Figures 4 and 5).

During the 20th Century the area surrounding the Site became increasingly and rapidly developed which is reflected in the historical map sequence. Construction of the Wythenshawe housing estate began in the 1920s, a site that would become the largest area of social housing in Europe. The southernmost area of the estate was located 250m to the north of the site boundary. By the time of the survey for the 1964 OS map, the construction had been completed (Figure 6).

The area immediately to the south of the site is now characterised by Manchester Airport, the 3rd busiest airport in Britain. Work began on original airfield in 1935 and it has been continuously developed and expanded since that time. This has included new runways and motorways, such as the M56, which opened in 1972 and cuts across Thorley Lane forming the western boundary of the fields that make up the study area today. The final record in the historic map sequence is the OS map of 1996, which showed that two new east-west aligned field boundaries had been constructed within the site boundary, which remain standing in the present day (Figure 7).

It is likely then that the area of the current Site boundary remained under the ownership of Wythenshawe Hall until its transfer to the Manchester Corporation in the 1920s. Since that time, the land-use at the Site appeared to have continued in much the same form, generally light agricultural use such as pasture, with no major development (See Plate 4). The rapid development in the mid-20th Century left small islands of undeveloped land such as that around Thorley Lane and Shay Lane, which have undergone only very limited change for at least the last two centuries.



Plate 4: The Site area looking north, prior to excavation

Little can be said of the earliest activity within the site boundary. However, as stated above, the cartographically recorded agricultural nature of the site, the limited development across the 19th Century, and the presence of several significant historical settlements such as Timperley & Wythenshawe in the vicinity, could indicate that the site area had most likely been used for agriculture since at least the post-medieval period.

3. Methodology

3.1 Excavation Methodology

The principal aim of the archaeological excavation was to establish the presence or absence, depth, dimensions, alignment and condition of any below ground remains. This was achieved via the excavation of five evaluation trenches (Figure 8). The southernmost trench, trench 1, had to be repositioned due to the establishment of the ENWL site compound across its originally intended location.

General Methodology: all archaeological work was conducted following the ClfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological field excavation (*Standards and Guidelines for an Archaeological Evaluation* ClfA 2014). Prior to the commencement of any excavation works, the location of the trenches were laid out accurately with respect to the Ordnance Survey national grid. Service plans were inspected and the area scanned for any live services using a cable avoidance tool. The excavations were regularly scanned as work progressed.

Bulk Excavation: this entailed mechanical excavation using a wheeled machine of appropriate power to excavate the overburden, which was undertaken under close archaeological supervision. All material excavated was stockpiled alongside, and a safe distance away from, the trench, and made safe.

Archaeological Excavation: machine excavation was used to define carefully the extent of any surviving remains. Any such remains were cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date. Once the extent of buried archaeological remains was established, key remains were subject to detailed archaeological excavation and recording. Hand excavation was undertaken by trained professional archaeologists. All information identified in the course of the site works was recorded stratigraphically and was accompanied with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features

Machines were operated and provided by Clive Hurt Plant Hire, and all relevant Licences and Permits were checked prior to commencement of working.

Context Recording: a unique text-number site code was created prior to the commencement of the programme of works. Separate contexts were recorded individually and annotated onto drawings and sketches.

Photographic Archive: a comprehensive photographic archive was produced utilising a high-resolution digital camera. All frames, excluding general contextual views, incorporate a graduated metric scale. Photograph records were maintained on special photograph *pro-forma* sheets. All photography was carried out following the latest Historic England guidance (*Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice* HE 2015).

Planning: a 'site location plan' indicating the site north and based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) was prepared. This is supplemented by a trench plan which shows the location of the areas investigated in relation to the investigation area and National Grid.

The precise location of all archaeological remains encountered was surveyed by GPS linked to a datalogging pen computer. This process generates scaled plans within AutoCAD, which are then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings were generated at an accuracy appropriate to the final output scale. All level information is tied in to Ordnance Datum, taken from either GPS or temporary benchmarks set out using GPS. All plan drawings are geo-referenced based on the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

Finds Policy: all finds were collected and handled following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidelines (*Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* ClfA 2014). Unstratified material was not kept unless of exceptional intrinsic interest. Material discarded as a consequence of this policy was described and quantified in the field.

4. Evaluation Results

4.1 Introduction

The archaeological evaluation at Thorley Lane consisted of a total of five trenches which were spread across the proposed development area (Figure 8). These trenches covered an approximate area of 270m². Though the results of the geophysical survey were considered to be inconclusive, the trenches were laid out in a way to target any anomalies with archaeological potential. Trench 1 measured 15 x 2m while trenches 2, 3, 4, and 5 measured 30 x 2m. All trenches were CAT scanned with reference to relevant service drawings prior to excavation and were then mechanically excavated using a JCB 3CX.

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was the most southerly of the trenches excavated during the evaluation, located close to 'Holly Cottage' and the western-end of Thorley Lane. The trench was located within what had previously been a horse paddock associated with Holly Cottage and the stables located there. The remains of some structures were located in the vicinity such as posts for lighting, fencing, and a greenhouse base. As laid out in the WSI (TEP, 2019), Trench 1 was originally aligned northwest-southeast across this southern-most enclosed paddock. However, construction of the compound carpark had already progressed in this area which meant that the trench had to be re-aligned east-west, though within the same enclosed area.

Trench 1 then was aligned east-east, measured a total area of 15 x 1.8m, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.26m (Figure 9).

The uppermost layer within Trench 1 was the topsoil, **100**, which consisted of a dark-brown loose silty-soil which also contained the turf. It had a maximum thickness of 0.07m.

Below layer **100** was the layer of subsoil, **101**, which consisted of a mid-brown clay-silt that contained occasional small stones. It had a maximum thickness of 0.12m.

Below the subsoil was the superficial natural, **102**, which consisted of a light orange-brown-grey boulder clay which contained occasional small-to-large sub-rounded stones.

The cut for a field drain **104** could be seen in plan at the eastern end of the trench, aligned north-south. The fill consisted of redeposited-clay **105** with occasional fragments of orange-red sedimentary stone, thought to be from the mudstone bedrock.

At the western limit of excavation, some faint scarring could be seen in the natural, **103** (Plate 5). The scars were c.0.4m apart, were up to 0.1m in width, and up to 0.025m in depth. These scars were not excavated and were aligned north-south.

No other features of archaeological significance were uncovered within Trench 1.



Plate 5: Trench 1 looking west, with scars and field-drain visible in the foreground

4.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was located in the central area of the site, was aligned northwest-southeast, measured a total of 30 x 1.8m, and was mechanically excavated to a maximum depth of 0.26m (Plate 6; Figure 9).

The uppermost layer within Trench 2 was the topsoil, **202**, which consisted of a dark-brown loose silty-soil which also contained the turf. It had a maximum thickness of 0.08m.

Below layer **202** was the layer of subsoil, **201**, which consisted of a mid-brown clay-silt that contained occasional small stones. It had a maximum thickness of 0.11m.

Below the subsoil was the superficial natural, **200**, which consisted of a light grey-brown boulder clay which contained occasional small-to-large sub-rounded stones.

In the centre of Trench 2 were several post-holes and the remains of concrete bases which were associated with a flood-light that had been recently removed. In addition to this, a curvilinear feature could be seen which was aligned northwest-southeast and had a maximum thickness of 0.15m. This feature led to the concrete light-base and had originally held a low-voltage power-cable. These features were very recent in date and, as such, were merely noted rather than recorded in detail.

At the northwest Trench 2, was the sole feature of any archaeological significance, feature **203** (Figure 11). This feature was the terminus of a shallow, gully, which measured 0.68 x 0.3m with a maximum depth of 0.05m. The sole fill was **204**, a dark brown, slightly loose, clay-silt, which bore a resemblance to the subsoil, **201**. The feature produced no finds.



Plate 6: Trench 2 looking northwest

4.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the centre of Site, measured 30 x 1.8m, was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.25m, and was aligned northwest-southeast (Plate 7; Figure 10).

The uppermost layer within Trench 3 was the topsoil, **302**, which consisted of a dark-brown loose silty-soil which also contained the turf. It had a maximum thickness of 0.07m.

Below layer **302** was a layer of subsoil, **301**, which consisted of a mid-brown clay-silt that contained occasional small stones. It had a maximum thickness of 0.14m.

Below the subsoil was superficial natural, **300**, which consisted of an orange-brown-grey boulder clay which contained occasional small-to-large sub-rounded stones.



Plate 7: Trench 3 looking southeast with scarring visible in the foreground

Occasional plough scarring **307** was visible across Trench 3, particularly at the northwest limit of excavation. These scars were similar to those found in Trench 1, with spacings of c.0.4m and maximum widths of 0.2m. They were aligned north-south.

At the centre-southeast of the trench was a north-south aligned linear feature, **305**, which contained a ceramic field drain (Plate 8). The feature had a maximum width of 0.37m and was excavated to a depth of 0.66m, at which point the field-drain was visible. The sides of feature **305** were near vertical and it was filled solely by a redeposited clay and mudstone, **306**.



*Plate 8: excavated field-drain linear, **305***

Towards the southeast end of the Trench was the sole feature of archaeological interest, **303** (Plate 9; Figure 11). This feature appeared to be the terminus of a possible linear which was aligned northeast-southwest which was filled by **304**. Feature **303** measured 0.6 x 1.12m and had a maximum depth of 0.11m. It had a rounded base and very gently-sloped sides. The fill, **304**, consisted of a firm, light-grey clay which had inclusions of very occasional, small, sub-round stones. No finds were recovered from this feature.



Plate 9: Feature 303, looking southwest

4.5 Trench 4

Trench 4 was located in the centre-north of the site and was aligned northeast-southwest, between Trenches 3 and 5 (Plate 10; Figure 10). It measured 30 x 1.8m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.23m. In the centre of the trench a modern disturbance could be seen pre-excavation. This disturbance continued below the excavated level of the trench and measured 2 x 1.5m in plan. The backfill consisted of

redeposited clay and a high frequency of mudstone. It was thought likely to reflect a geotechnical trial-pit related to the development.

The uppermost layer within Trench 4 was the topsoil, **400**, which consisted of a dark-brown loose silty-soil which also contained the turf. It had a maximum thickness of 0.1m.

Below layer 100 was a layer of subsoil, **401**, which consisted of a mid-brown clay-silt that contained occasional small stones. It had a maximum thickness of 0.13m.

Below the subsoil was superficial natural, **402**, which consisted of a light orange-brown-grey boulder clay which contained occasional small-to-large sub-rounded stones.

There were no features of archaeological significance within Trench 4. However, a single linear feature, **403**, was excavated (Plate 11). This feature contained a ceramic field drain at a depth of 0.53m, or 0.76m from the contemporary ground level. It measured 0.63m in width and was filled by a redeposited clay, **404**.



Plate 10: Trench 4 looking southwest



*Plate 11: Feature **403** with field-drain in plan*

4.6 Trench 5

Trench 5 was the northernmost trench within the evaluation and was aligned east-west. It measured 30 x 1.8m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.35m (Plate 12; Figure 10).

The uppermost layer within Trench 4 was the topsoil, **500**, which consisted of a dark-brown loose silty-soil which also contained the turf. It had a maximum thickness of 0.09m.

Below layer 100 was a layer of subsoil, **501**, which consisted of a mid-brown clay-silt that contained occasional small stones. It had a maximum thickness of 0.18m.

Below the subsoil was superficial natural, **502**, which consisted of a light yellow-brown-grey boulder clay which contained occasional small-to-large sub-rounded stones.



Plate 12: Trench 5 looking east

A linear field-drain, **503**, was excavated towards the western limit of excavation (Plates 13 and 14). The cut was filled by a light-grey to orange redeposited clay, **504**. The cut appeared to be wider and stepped measuring a maximum of 1.7 x 1.9m and was excavated to a depth of 0.47m, at which depth the ceramic drain was uncovered. Due

to the irregular size and shape of the feature, it was thought possible the field drain had cut through and disturbed an earlier feature, though the section was unclear.



*Plate 13: Feature **503** showing field-drain*



*Plate 14: Feature **503** section looking southwest*

To the east of the field-drain feature **503** was a small, somewhat amorphous feature **511**, which measured 0.48 x 0.55m and had a maximum depth of 0.05m (Figure 11). The feature likely continued under the western baulk. The sole fill, **512**, consisted of a somewhat loose sandy-silt, which resembled the topsoil, **500**.

To the east of feature **511** was a potential terminus of a linear feature, **509** (Plate 15; Figure 11). This feature was aligned northeast-southwest and measured 1.02 x 0.53m and had a maximum depth of 0.2m. It had a rounded-flat base and steeply sloped sides which were somewhat irregular in plan. The sole fill was **510**, a solid light-grey clay which produced very few visible inclusions, occasional small sub-rounded stones. This context was similar to **304**, which filled a similar possible linear feature, **303**.



*Plate 15: section of feature **509**, looking southwest*

At the eastern limit of excavation was a further small amorphous feature, **507**, which appeared similar to feature **511** and was located adjacent to the larger feature, **505** (Plate 16; Figure 11). It measured 0.33 x 0.41m in size and had a maximum depth of 0.08m. This feature had an irregularly-flat base and steep sides. The sole fill of feature **507** was **508**, a mid-dark grey-brown clay-silt which contained small-to-mid-sized sub-rounded stones.



*Plate 16: Features **505** and **507**, looking southeast*

Adjacent to feature **507** at the south-eastern limit of excavation was the large, possible linear feature, **505** (Plate 17 & 18; Figure 11). This feature was aligned northeast-southwest and measured 1.02 x 1.33m and had a maximum depth of 0.35m. The feature had gradually sloped sides and a rounded base. As the feature clearly extended under the southwestern baulk of the trench, it was unclear whether the feature was a true linear and what was visible was a terminus. The sole fill was a solid mid-dark grey clay **506** which had infrequent inclusions of small sub-rounded stones.



*Plate 17: Feature **505** looking southeast*



*Plate 18: Section of feature **505**, looking southeast*

5. Finds

No finds were recovered from any archaeological feature during the evaluation at Thorley Lane. Within the topsoil across the site, such as in **400**, very occasional fragments of 20th century material were present, though these were unstratified and not considered of any archaeological interest.

6. Discussion

As shown above, much of the Site could be considered as archaeologically 'blank'. As will be demonstrated below however, this lack of archaeological evidence in itself is likely a form of evidence for less intrusive activity within the site boundary, at least from the post-medieval period to the present-day.

The features found within the five evaluation trenches could be broadly categorised into four different categories, which likely also reflect their dating. These features can be grouped based upon shape, size, and fill. These are field-drains, plough scars, amorphous features, and possible linears.

Likely the most recent archaeologically-excavated activity within site area were the field-drains, three of which were excavated. These field-drains were **503**, **305**, and **403**. Once excavated, the depths at which these field-drains were found were shown to be considerable, c.0.65-85m below the contemporary ground surface. In addition to this, the field-drains cuts were filled by compacted, redeposited clay, which would presumably have been unhelpful in terms of drainage. The ceramic drains themselves were not removed during the excavation process as it was unknown as to whether they remained in use. The drains were made of ceramic tubes which had a width of 0.14m and an unknown length. The somewhat rough construction suggested that they may have been handmade.

The shape of the ceramic drains may shed some light on the date of their deposition. Typologies have shown circular drains such as those found at Thorley Lane replaced D-shaped or 'horseshoe' drains in the early 19th Century (McComish, 2015, 44), which had been used since the post-medieval period. Historical records additionally indicated that machine-made drain-pipes came into widespread use from the 1830s onwards, which drastically reduced the price of drainage and their use in agricultural settings. If the ceramic drains at Thorley Lane were indeed handmade, as they appeared to be on-site, then a date of the early-19th Century, likely pre-1830, could be established for their deposition.

As stated above, plough marks or scars were visible in two of the evaluation trenches (Trenches 1 and 3). Unfortunately, due to their sporadic survival across the site, a relationship between any scar and any other feature was not apparent, which made any attempt to date them accurately somewhat difficult. The scars themselves were almost exclusively aligned north-south and did not seem to overlap at all, which may indicate that any such ploughing was not intensively undertaken or carried on for a prolonged period of time. The alignment of the plough-scars closely correlated to the boundaries of the field as it was laid out prior to the construction of the M56, in the 1970s, as shown in the 1974 OS map clearly in 20th century aerial photography (Plate 19). However, the earliest accurate mapping available, the Baguley Tithe map of 1839,

showed that while the boundaries of the fields had been altered, their orientation had remained almost the same.

In addition to this, the size and spacing of the plough-marks may be more indicative of 'harrowing' rather than strictly traditional ploughing, a process used for 'lighter' tillage, removing weeds, covering seed, etc. There was also no evidence of surviving ridge and furrow within the site, as well as no archaeological evidence for such. The fairly limited nature of the agricultural scarring, lack of ridge and furrow, and lack of finds pre-dating the 20th Century, may indicate that limited harrowing took place, certainly prior to the 1970s though at an unknown date prior to that. This harrowing was likely used for the clearance of weeds or to encourage new growth in fallowed pasture. The evidence available would suggest that the area had primarily been used as pasture rather than as arable land since its original clearance for agriculture. Harrowing itself is known in Britain since at least the Norman Conquest though it likely became more intensively used from the 17th Century onwards (Long, 1963, 20). A modern disk-harrow with a blade diameter of 32" would have a cutting depth of c.0.21m, which would align very closely to those depths at which scarring was visible at Thorley Lane.

As stated above, the plough-marks correlated to the layout of field boundaries from at least the Baguley Tithe map of 1839, though it is possible that such fields as Plot 26, 'Further Rudd Parks' as it was laid out in the tithe map of that year, had existed in a similar form since the post-medieval period or earlier. John Ash in his *New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language*, 1775, suggested that 'rud' was "a colour [...] to make red" while the current Merriam-Webster Dictionary suggested that the word 'rudd/rud/roud', while having various connotations, was first used as a noun in the 15th Century and fell out of use from the 16-18th centuries (Merriam-Webster 2019). This may give some possible indication as to when the 'Further Rudd Parks' was first named, and likely established as a plot. Tentatively then, it is possible to suggest a likely but broad date-range of post-medieval to modern for those plough-scars visible in the archaeological record.

Additionally, the general absence for evidence for considerable agricultural activity and especially the lack of artefactual evidence dating from the post-medieval and industrial periods itself could be understood as a form of evidence of a less intrusive form of activity. It could be argued then, based upon the above results, that although agricultural activity had at least begun at the site by the time of the survey for the Baguley Tithe map of 1839, and probably considerably earlier than that – potentially at the medieval founding of the Wythenshawe Estate, this likely had almost exclusively consisted of less intrusive and thus less archaeologically recognisable agricultural processes, such as for use as pasture, as it is used in the present-day.



Plate 19: Aerial photograph, 1927, showing the approximate location of the site,

The small amorphous and somewhat ambiguous features found across the site included **507**, **511**, and possibly **203**. Features **511** and **507** were both particularly shallow with depths of $<0.1\text{m}$ and were likely not wide either, though both continued under the baulk of Trench 5. No finds were recovered from these features making it difficult to assign them to any date-range. The very similar fills between contexts **508** and **512**, as well as **204**, may indicate that those features are broadly contemporary. Additionally, those fills had the closest resemblance to the top soil, being dark brown in colour and somewhat loose, which again may indicate that they were relatively late in age. Similarly, due to their size and shape, little further information can be gleaned as to their possible function or the cause of these features. Feature **203**, though sharing similarities with **511** and **507**, such as fill-type and depth, had a much more defined shape both in plan and in section. The plan-view of feature **203** was indicative of a small gully aligned north-south while the section showed that it had a rounded mostly even base. Its shallow depth, at 0.05m , could potentially be explained as due to later truncation.

The final and most interesting group of archaeological features excavated during the works at Thorley Lane were three possible linears, **303**, **505**, and **509**. These features were considerably larger than those discussed above and were more convincing as potentially significant archaeological features. Features **303** and **509** were very similar in plan; both had a width of $c.0.6\text{m}$ and appeared to be termini of linears of some form. The fills of these two possible linears, **304** and **510**, were very similar, both were composed of a solid light-grey clay with very few inclusions.

Feature **505** was somewhat different than the linear-termini **509** and **303** and on-site was originally thought to more likely resemble a pit-type feature. After the feature was half-sectioned it became apparent that it more closely resembled a linear terminus, though it continued under the southwestern trench-baulk with a maximum depth of 0.35m. The fill, **506**, was also noticeably different than the fills of the features **509** and **303** as it was composed of a solid, dark-grey clay. Unfortunately, as was the case across the site, no artefactual evidence was recovered from the fill, **506**. Once again, this made any attempt at dating the feature particularly difficult. However, some arguments can be made based upon what was found with support from the historical and cartographic record.

The cartographic record clearly showed the layout of the field-systems in and around the site area from 1839 onwards. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, only minimal changes were recorded within the map-regression until the present day. The most significant changes recorded occurred 1839-1882, when Plot 26, 'Further Rudd Parks', was extended to the west, the construction of the M56 as visible between the OS maps 1964-74, and the construction of the paddock-enclosures in the area of Trench 1 c.1990s, which were first visible in the OS map of 1996. The first changes, c.1839-1882, appear to have had little archaeological impact upon the Site, as the new field boundary was to the west of the Site boundary and therefore outside of the area of this investigation. The construction of the M56 in the 1970s, though a major phase of groundworks, appeared to have little archaeological impact on the Site; the eastern boundary for said highway now forms the western boundary of the Site area. Finally, the small paddocks that were constructed at the southern end of the Site, adjacent to Holly Cottage and Thorley Lane had a limited impact upon the archaeological record. As was described above, some limited features were visible in Trench 2 which were almost certainly associated with the paddocks, such as fence posts and lighting-cables.

It would seem clear then that these changes recorded in the cartographic record were very unlikely to bear any relation to the three possible linear features, **509**, **505**, and **303**. This would indicate that they likely pre-date the earliest accurately surveyed map available at time of writing, the 1839 Tithe map for Baguley. Additionally, due to the probable alignment of these features – which were all different – their depth and size, and the fact that no finds were recovered could indicate that these features were of some considerable age and archaeological significance. The fact that no finds were recovered from any archaeologically excavated feature or anything earlier than 20th material recovered from the topsoil, mean that dating these features is not possible. However, it is perhaps worth noting that only very limited intrusive activity appeared to have taken place within the site, such as the plough-scars described above. This would likely suggest that any earlier activity, such as prehistoric, would conceivably survive *in-situ* to the present-day. Finally, it is also worth noting that within the general vicinity of the site area prehistoric activity is known. This ranges from the Neolithic/Bronze Age farm site at Oversley Farm (Hodgson and Brennand 2007), c.

3km to the south, The Bronze Age ditch recorded at White Carr Lane (UMAU 2004), c. 1.5km to the northwest, and considerable assemblages of prehistoric artefacts such as the Neolithic-Bronze Age activity at the nearby Timperley Old Hall (Nevell, 2013, 6-7), to single-finds such as a Neolithic scraper recovered in Altrincham, at SJ769881 (HE, 2019).

7. Conclusions

7.1 Conclusions

In conclusion then, the results of the evaluation-trenching at Thorley Lane have demonstrated that some buried remains of possible archaeological interest survive within the site boundary. The trenches would indicate that activity appeared to be located to the north of the site, as two of the three most interesting features were within Trench 5. Of the small amorphous features, such as **507** and **511**, little further can be said with the limited evidence available. Clearly the most interesting archaeological features were the larger possible linears, **509**, **505**, and **303**. The constraints of the evaluation in addition to the total lack of artefactual evidence has made any in-depth investigation into their date or purpose difficult. However, these features must be given some consideration given the proximity to the regionally important Oversley Farm site. The nature of these linear features, with grey leached out fills, is broadly similar to those recorded at Oversley farm and dated to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

As Chapter 6 suggests, it is likely that this area of land adjacent to Thorley Lane has been utilised for light agricultural use in a pastoral setting for several centuries and was unlikely ploughed to any great degree in either medieval or post-medieval times. However, the finding of several features of unknown age indicate that other activity has taken place within the site boundary, very likely before the 1839 Baguley Tithe map, and potentially significantly earlier than that.

7.2 Significance

Due to the lack of dateable material from any of the archaeological features during the evaluation, it is difficult to establish a significance of those remains. The plough-marks that were described above, though they are somewhat informative of the site's history of use, are of little archaeological significance with little possible potential for further understanding. The smaller features, such as **507**, are only of a very moderate archaeological interest, due to their size, shape, and probable date. The most important features, as stated above, were those linear-type features, **509**, **505**, and **303**. While it was not possible to date these features, they have the potential to be of some age, potentially even prehistoric, and therefore could be considered of archaeological significance.

8. *Archive and Dissemination*

8.1 *Archive*

The results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards and in line with current ClfA guidelines updated 2014. The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. 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 ClfA in that organisation's code of conduct. As part of the archiving process, the on-line OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations) form will be completed.

The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Northwest of England. All drawn records will be transferred to and stored in digital format, in systems which are easily accessible. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works with the archive ultimately being deposited with Manchester Museum of Science and Industry (MoSI).

8.2 *Dissemination*

The results obtained from the excavation will be placed in the public domain via an appropriate level of dissemination. The appropriate level of dissemination will be determined by GMAAS, in its role as advisors to the local planning authority.

9. Acknowledgements

Salford Archaeology would like to thank The Environment Partnership for commissioning the archaeological works. In particular Salford Archaeology would like to thank Amir Bassir for his support during the project. Salford Archaeology would also like to thank Dr Andrew Myers for providing monitoring support and advice through GMAAS.

The on-site excavations were conducted by Andrew Radford, assisted by Andy Coutts, with support from Graham Mottershead. The report was written by Andrew Radford, and illustrated by Graham Mottershead. The report was edited by Graham Mottershead, who was also responsible for project management.

Sources

Cartographic

Saxtons Map of 1579

Tithe Map for Baguley 1839

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Ordnance Survey 1:10560 (6":1 mile) Town Plan 1882

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1898

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1910

Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1935

Ordnance Survey 1:1250 National Grid Series 1964

Ordnance Survey 1:10000 Series 1996

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Appendix 1: Figures

- Figure 1: Site location map
- Figure 2: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:10560 1848
- Figure 3: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1898
- Figure 4: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1910
- Figure 5: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1935
- Figure 6: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:1250 1964
- Figure 7: Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:10000 1996
- Figure 8: Location of evaluation trenches
- Figure 9: Plan of trenches 1 and 2
- Figure 10: Plan of trenches 3, 4 and 5
- Figure 11: Section drawings

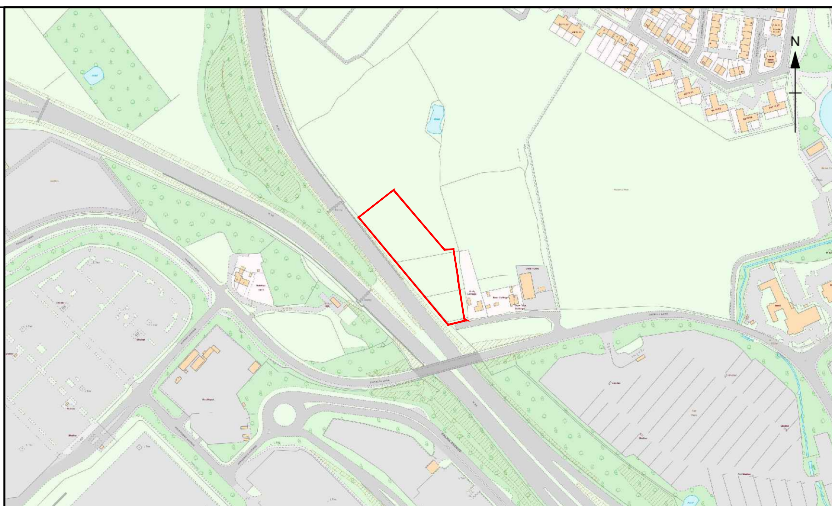
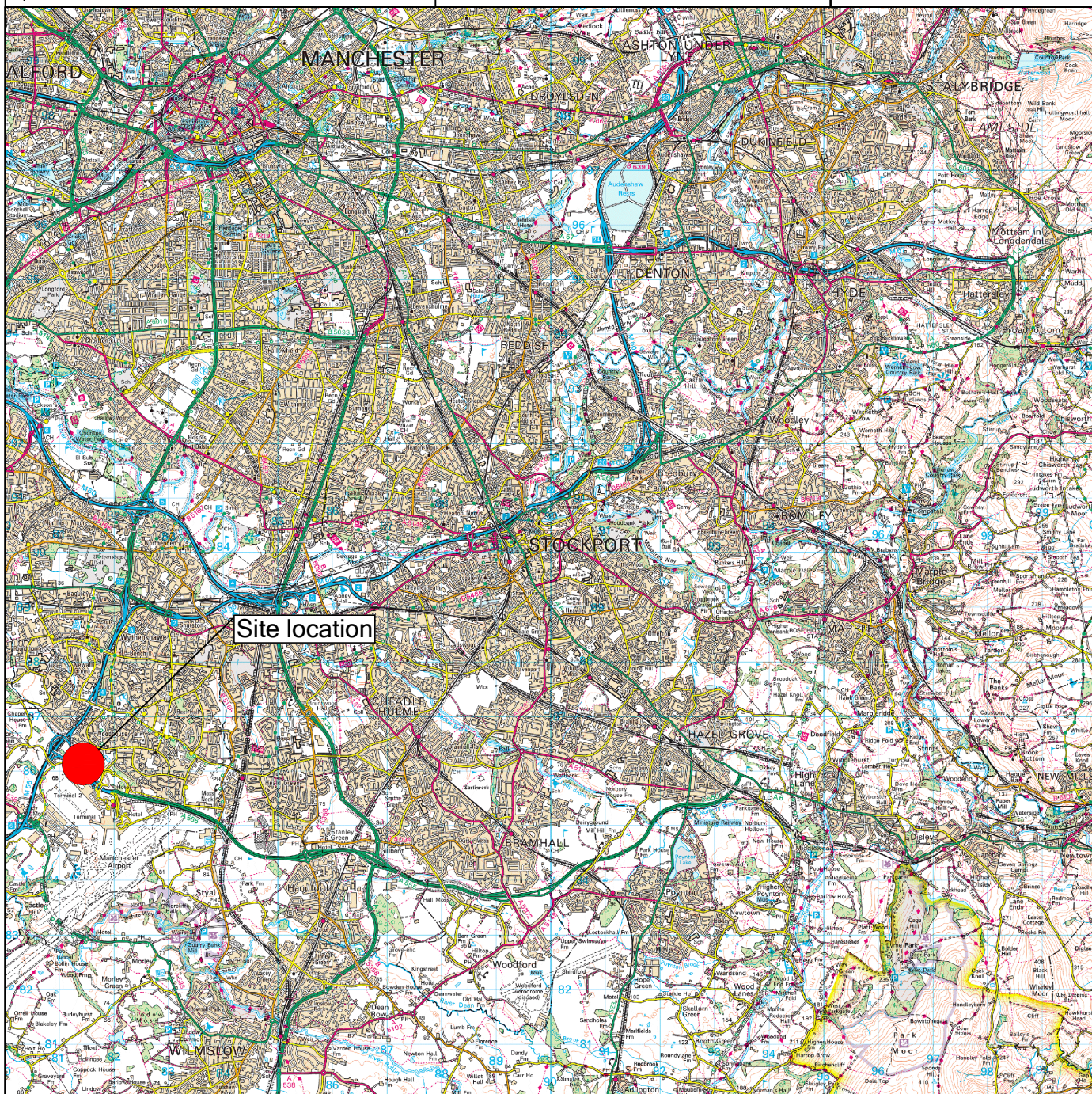


Figure:
Site location



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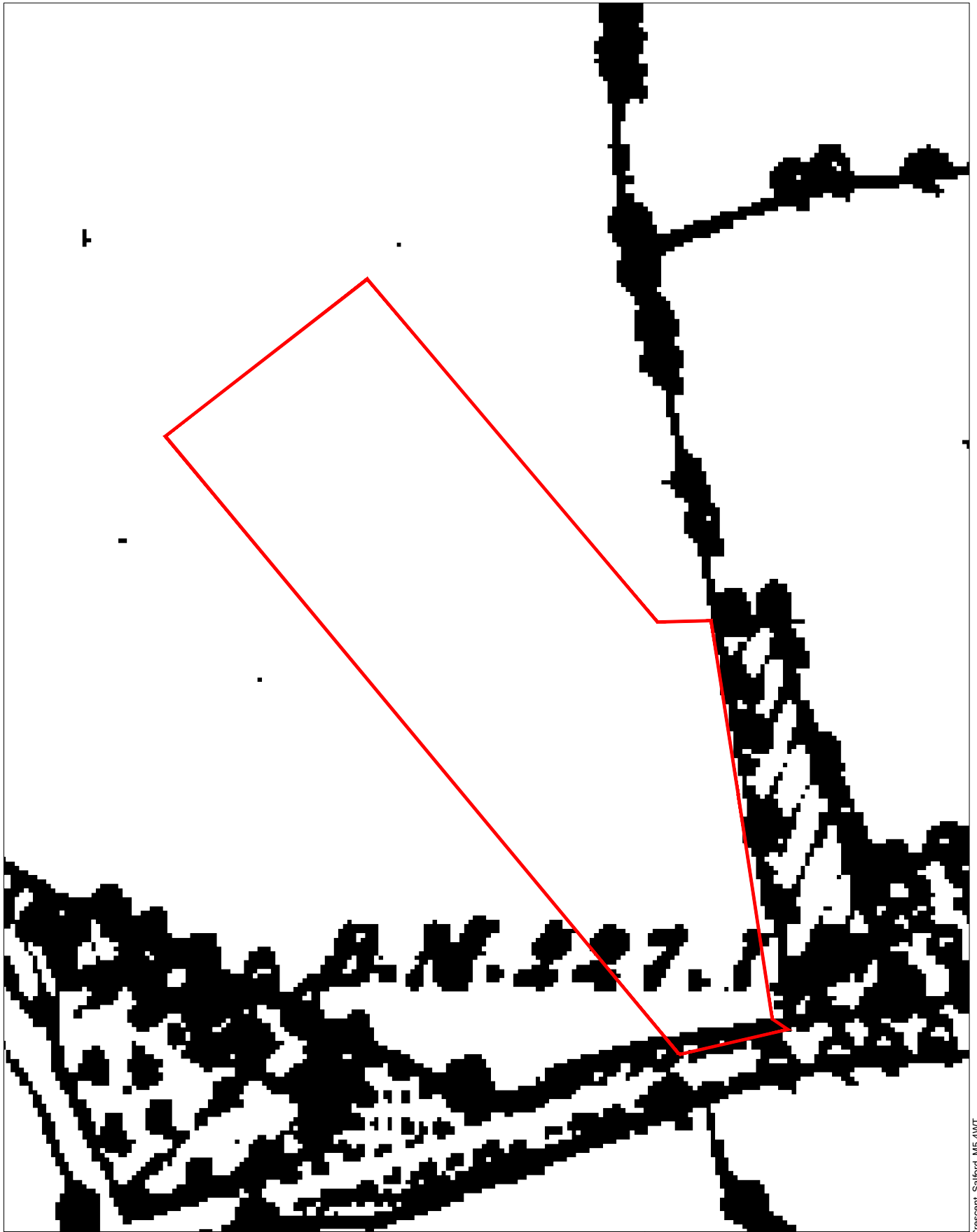


Figure 2:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:10560 (6" to 1 mile) map of 1848



Key:

— Site boundary



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0 50 m
Scale at A4 1:1000

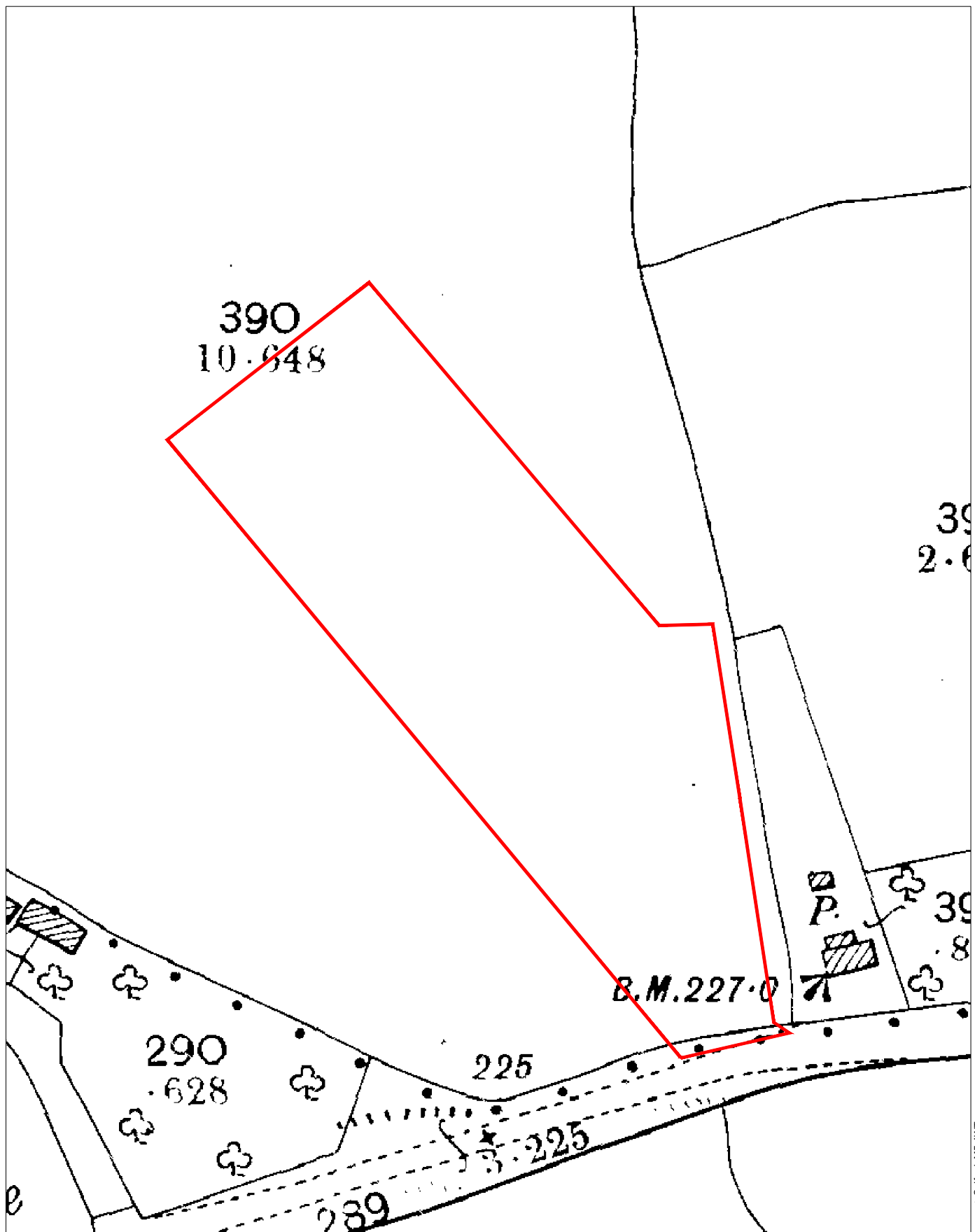


Figure 3:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1898



Key:

— Site boundary



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0

50 m



Scale at A4 1:1000

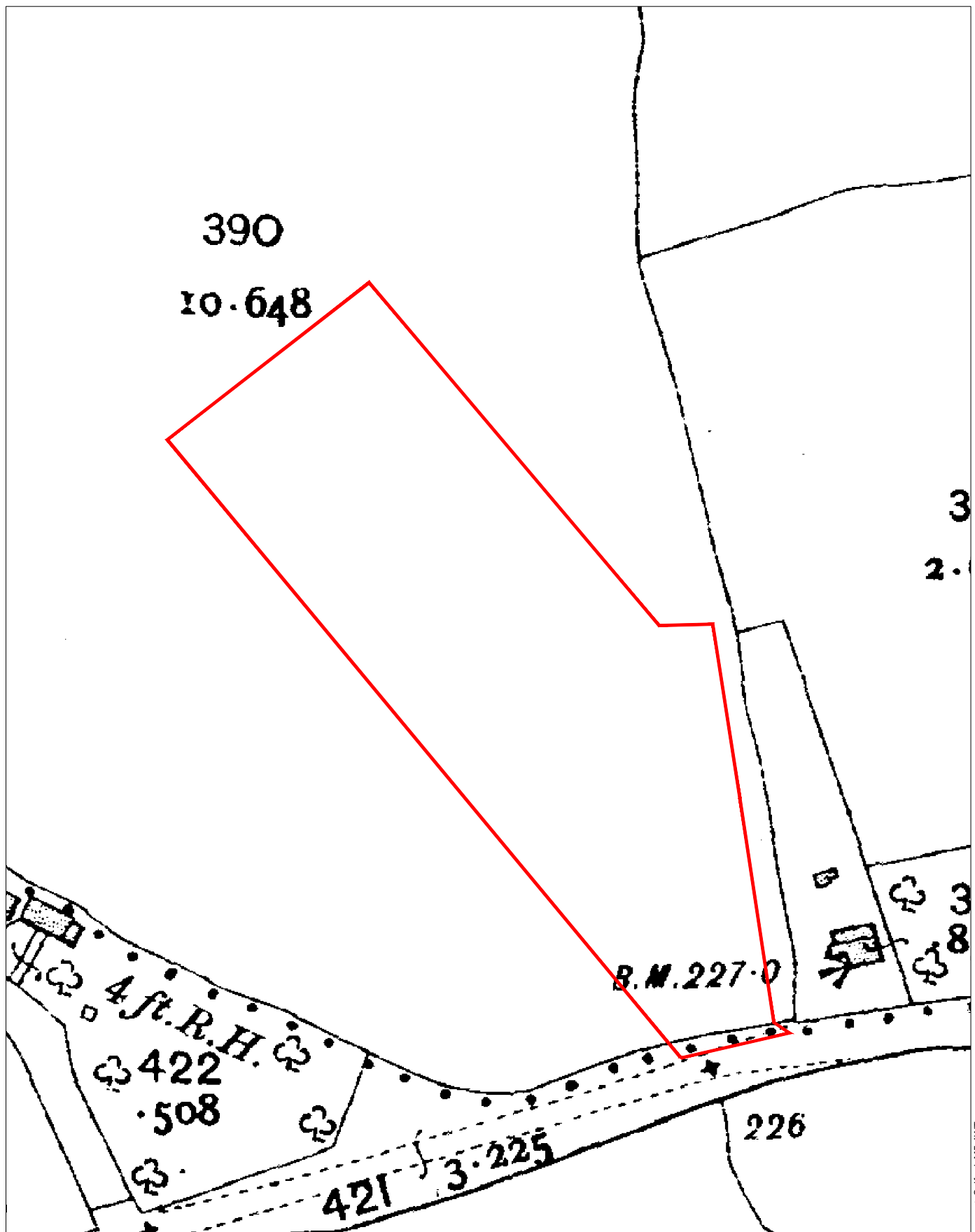


Figure 4:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1910



Key:

— Site boundary



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0

50 m



Scale at A4 1:1000

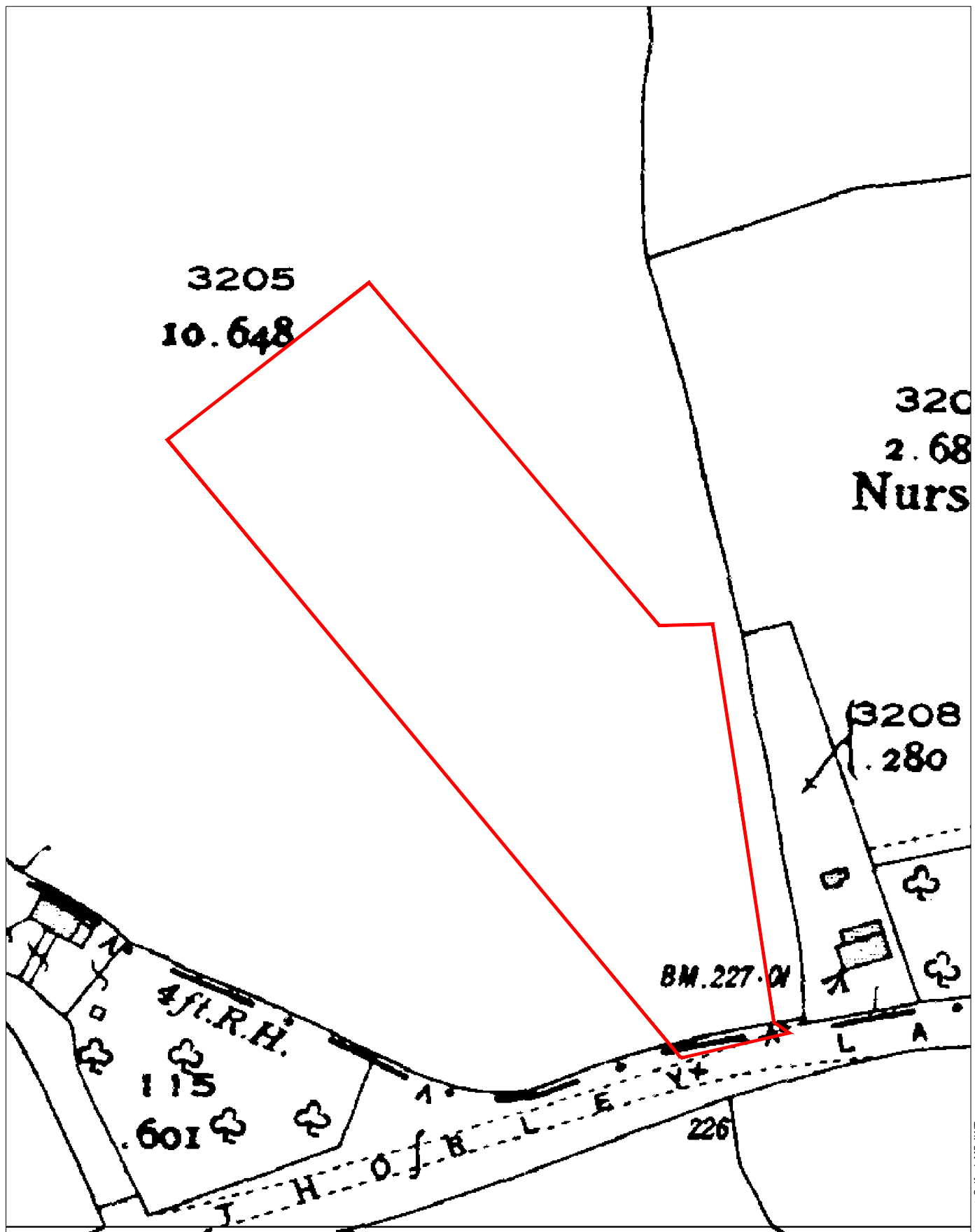


Figure 5:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:2500 County Series 1935



Key:

— Site boundary



**SALFORD
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0

50 m



Scale at A4 1:1000

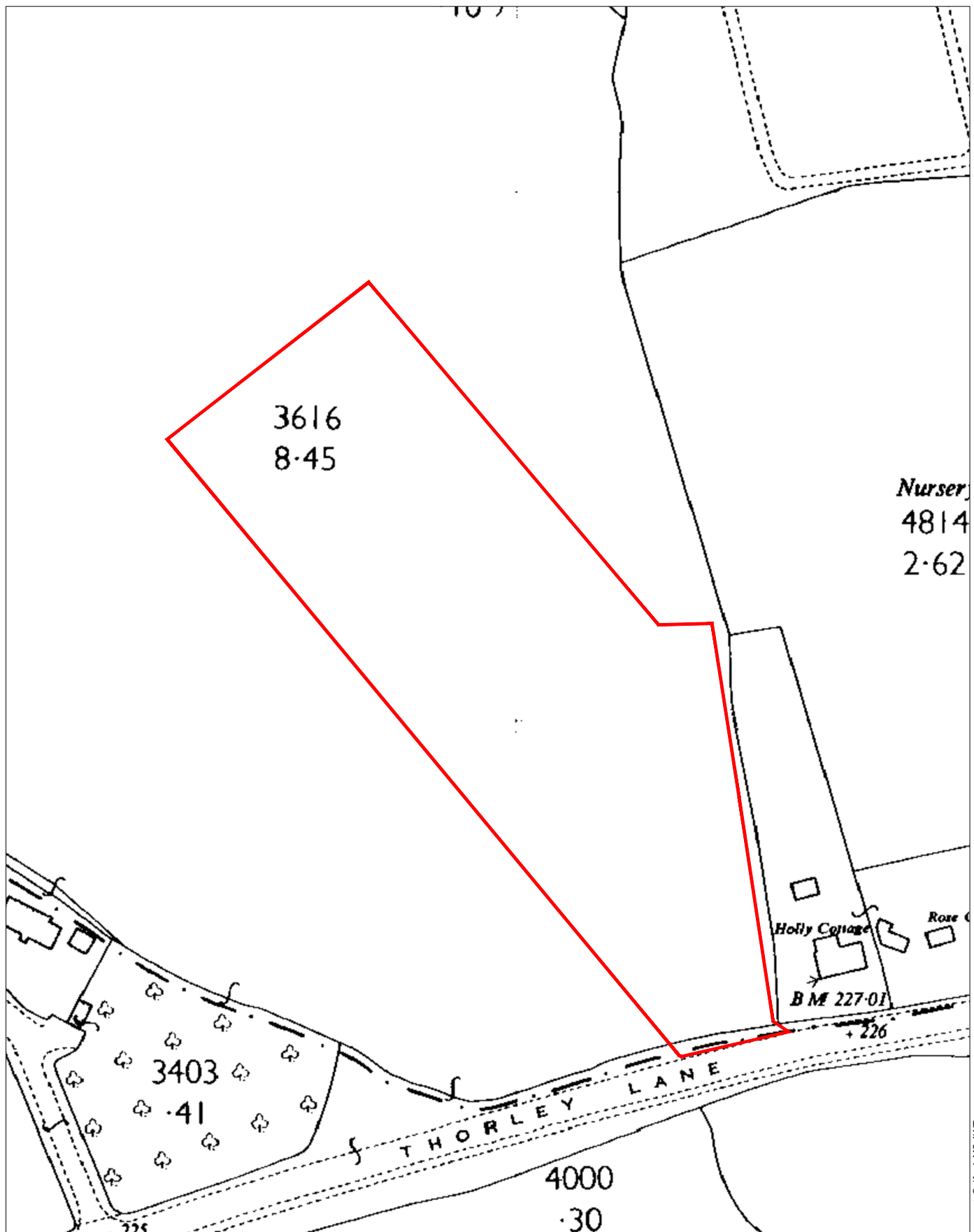


Figure 6:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:1250 National Grid Series 1964

Key:

— Site boundary



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0

50 m

Scale at A4 1:1000

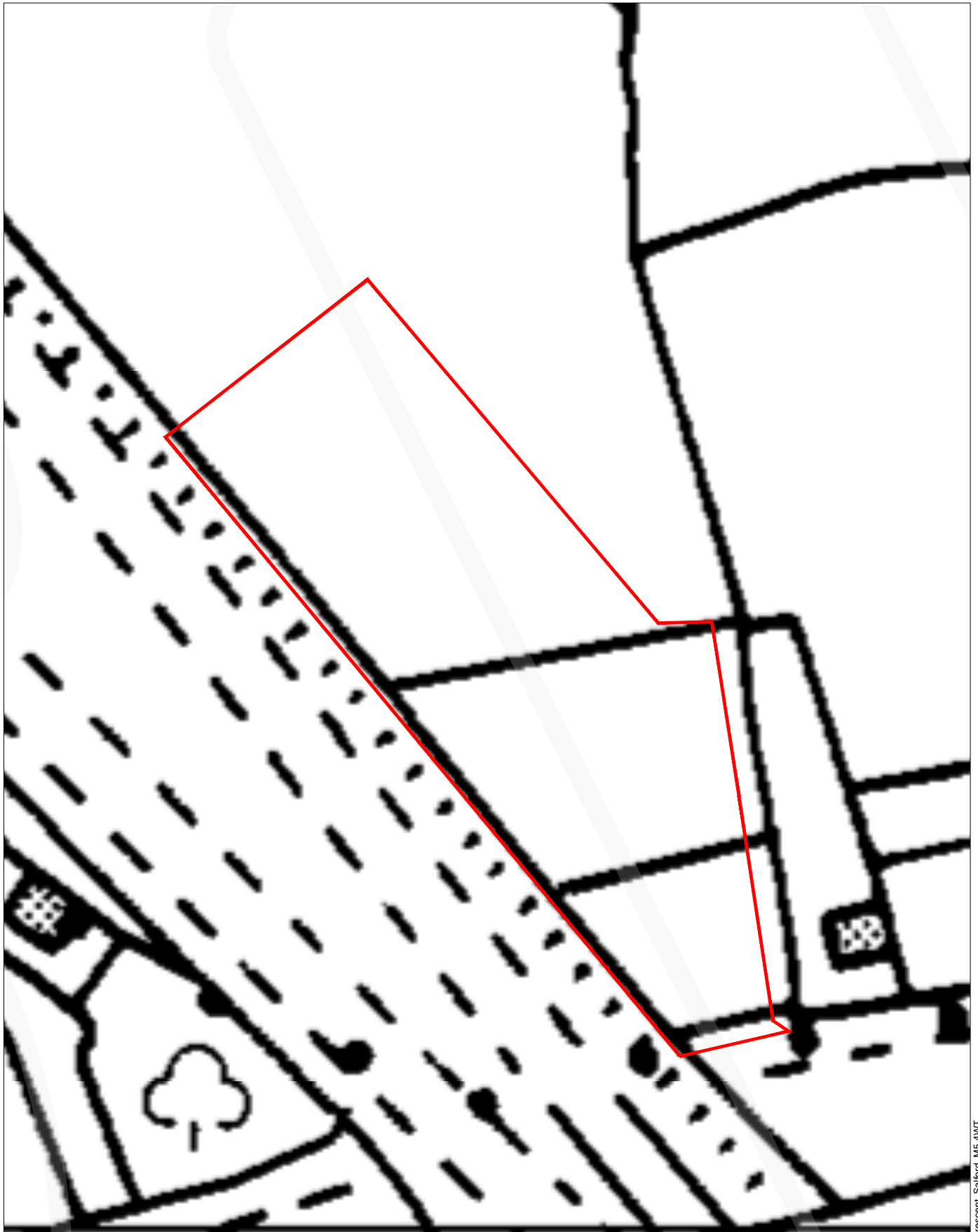


Figure 7:

Site boundary superimposed onto Ordnance Survey 1:10000 Series 1996



Key:

— Site boundary



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0 50 m
Scale at A4 1:1000

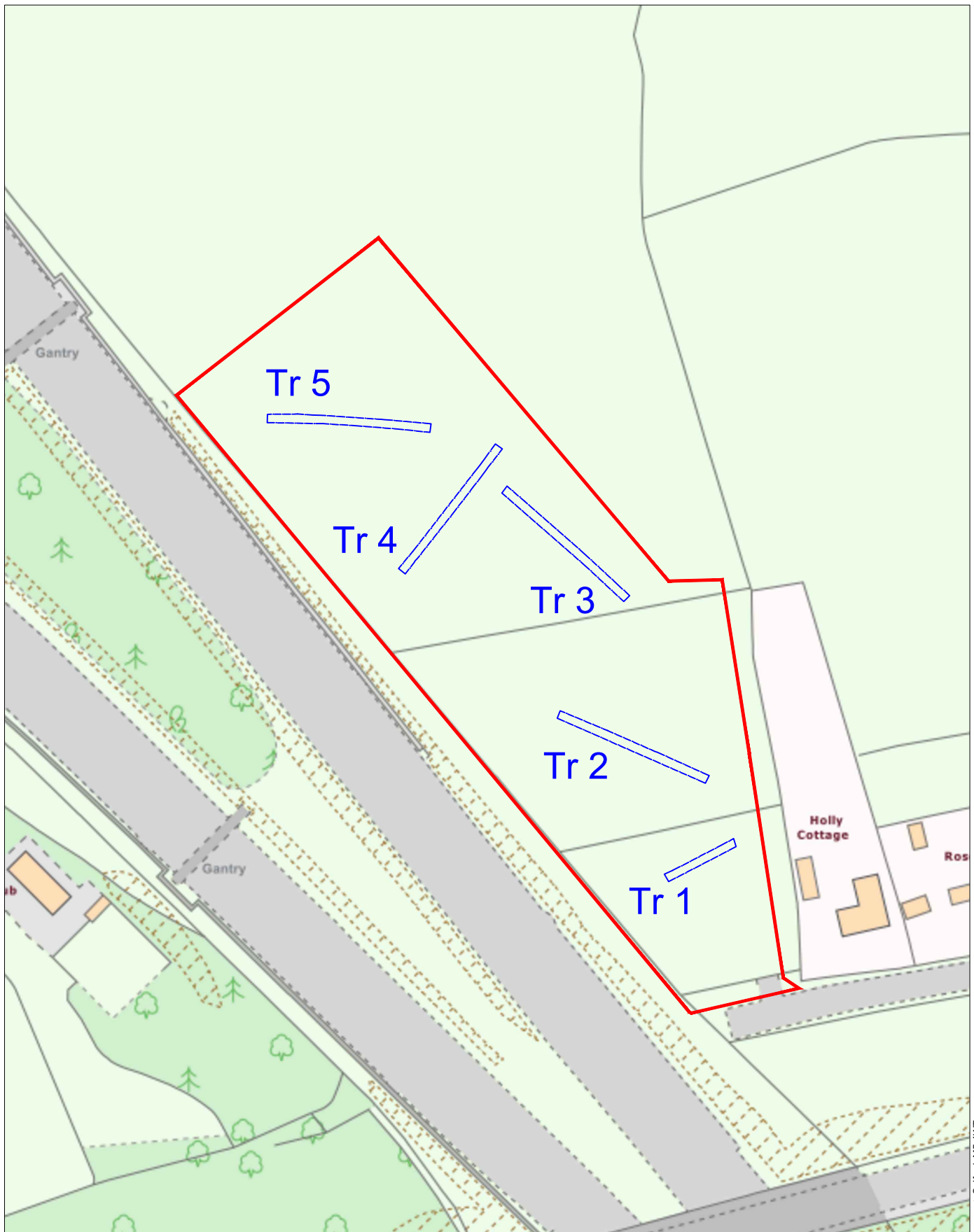


Figure 8:

Location of archaeological evaluation trenches



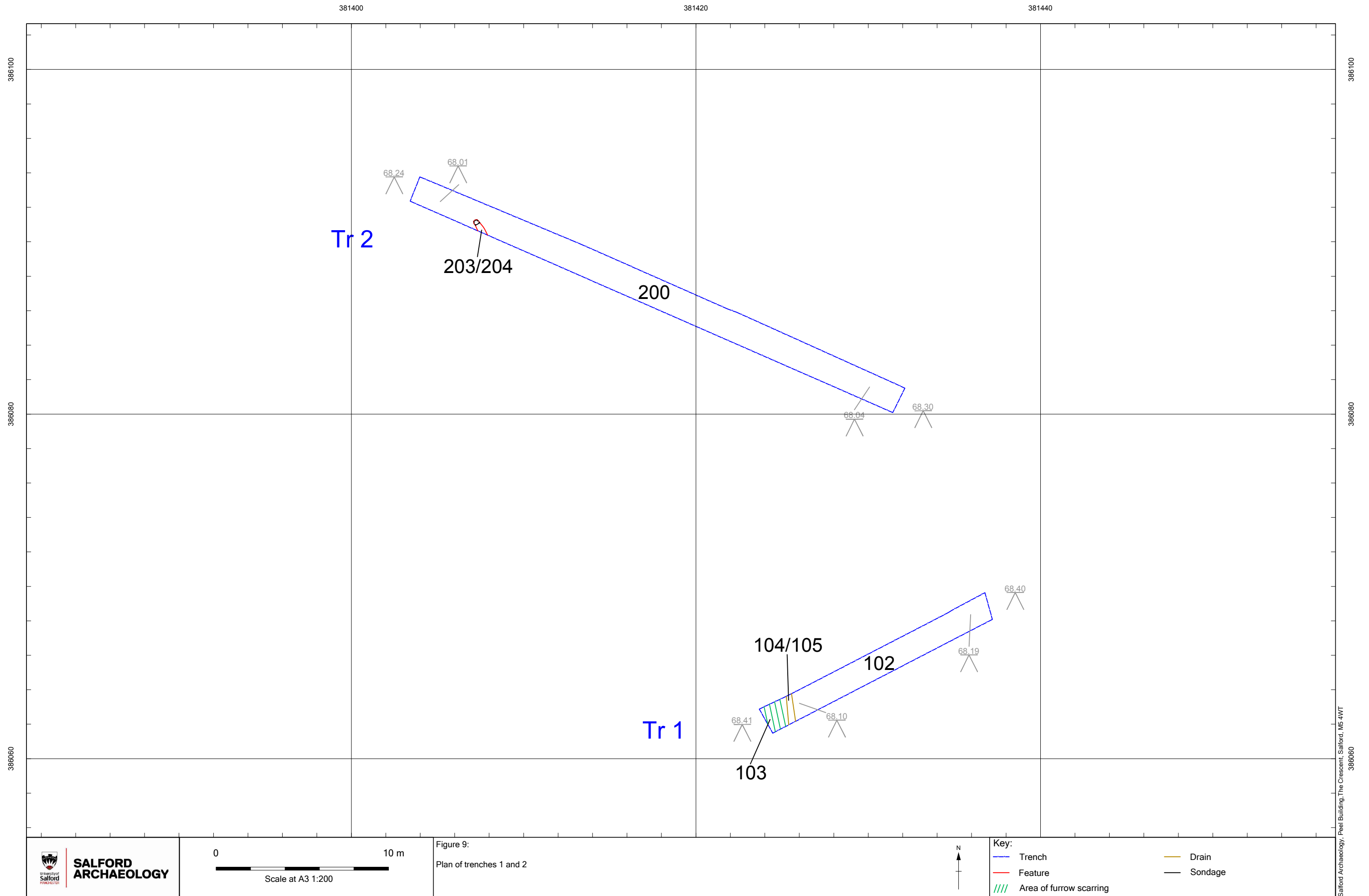
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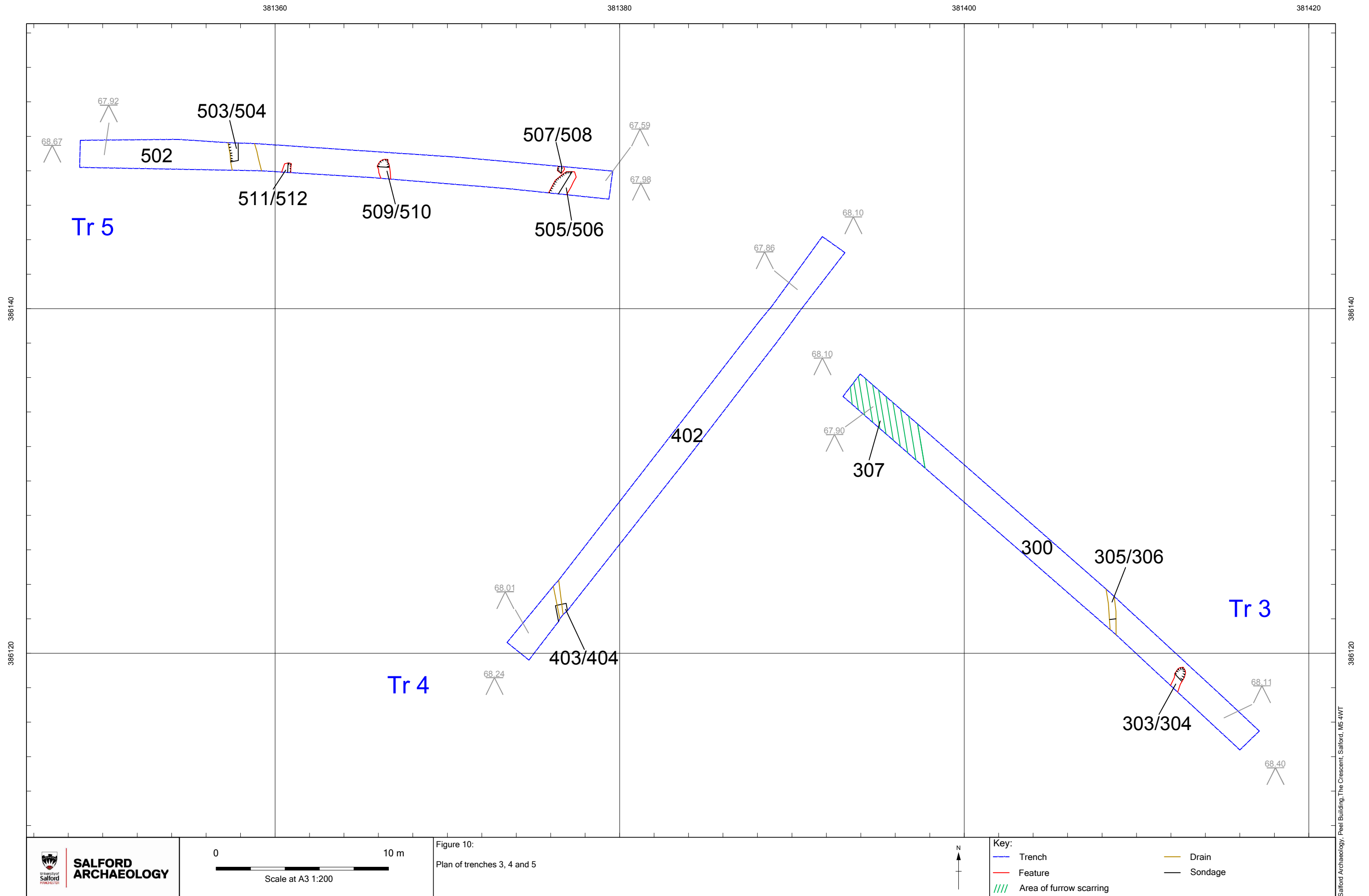
- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench



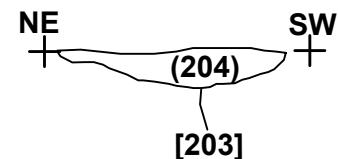
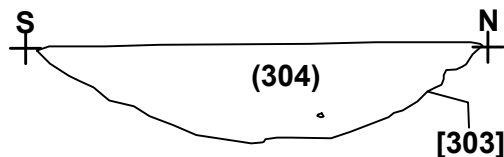
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0 50 m
Scale at A4 1:1000





Drawing No. 3.1: East-facing section of Feature 303.

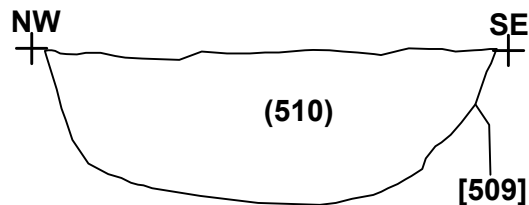
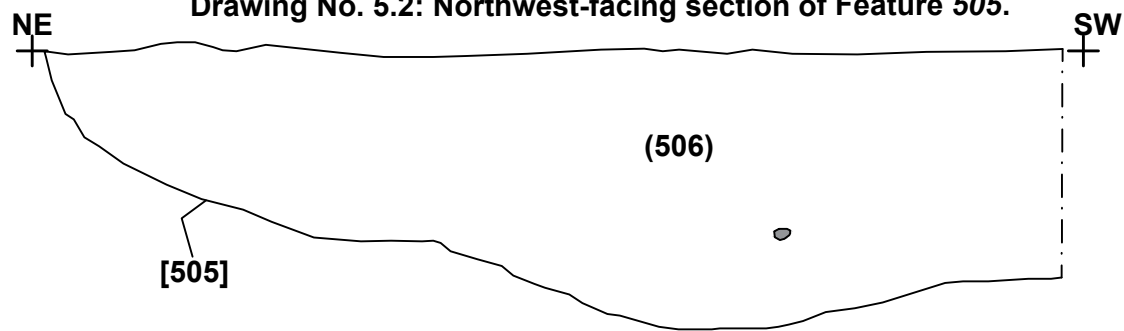


Drawing No. 2.1: Northwest-facing section of Feature 203.

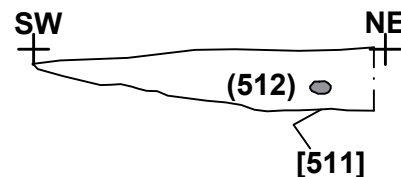
Drawing No. 5.1: West-facing section of Feature 507.



Drawing No. 5.2: Northwest-facing section of Feature 505.



Drawing No. 5.3: South-west-facing section of Feature 509.



Drawing No. 5.4: South-east-facing section of Feature 511.



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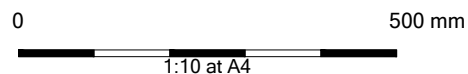


Figure 11: Sections of Drawn
Archaeological Features

	Sondage and trench edge		Feature
	Stone		
	Context		
	Level AOD		