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MANCHESTER

Archaeological Building Recording and Watching Brief

Mabel Tylecote Building,
Cavendish Street,
Manchester

Client:
Morgan Sindall

Planning Reference:
115648/FO/2017

Technical Report:
Oliver Cook

Report No:
SA/2018/13



Site Location: The study area lies on Cavendish Street, off Oxford Road, on the southern fringe of Manchester city centre

NGR: Centred at NGR 384320 397030

Internal Ref: SA/2018/13

Prepared for: Morgan Sindall


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Summary

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) has obtained planning consent for the erection of a new arts and media building to provide a theatre, poetry library, exhibition and performance space, cafe / restaurant / bar, social space including roof terrace, university teaching, studio and office accommodation and associated storage, plant and operational floorspace (Planning Ref: 115648/FO/2017). The design proposals allow for the reinstatement of the historic and Grade II listed portico façade of the former Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall, where it will form the new main entrance and frontispiece to the new building. This impressive historic structure previously formed subsidiary façade on the former Mabel Tylecote Building (centred on NGR 384320 397030).

Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, it was recommended that implementation of the design proposals should be monitored by an archaeological watching brief and survey to establish the condition of the archaeological resource and accurately record the position of any additional surviving remains of the former town hall. A preliminary study concluded that the site was occupied formerly by a police station, operating within Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall. Of particular interest were the nine police holding cells and associated structures dating from the 1830s.

Four cellared rooms were exposed and recorded during the watching brief in Area 1. The fabric of the buried structures appeared to be consistent with the early 19th-century construction date for the town hall. It has been suggested that these represented the remains of a police station, perhaps intended to accommodate on-duty policemen. These rooms were connected by doors and openings in the front wall of the town hall (the existing wall of the façade) to a barrel-vaulted corridor. The corridor ran parallel to the front of the building and provided access to six police cells. A laser scan successfully captured the police cells and adjoining corridor located to the north-east of the standing façade. Five were exposed and subject to the survey.

This exercise revealed a suite of hitherto forgotten remains dating to an important era of civil reform, which occurred in during the early 19th-century during the rapid industrial expansion of Manchester. The work succeeded in recording elements of the former town hall, specifically below-ground elements of the police station that included six police cells. These cells belong to station built 1830-31, and stand out as being the earliest known surviving cells of their kind. Earlier stations and lock-ups certainly existed in Manchester, but none have of yet been subject to archaeological investigation. The discovery of elements of a fire surround raise the significance of the site, representing a relic of the now demolished town hall building, dating from the latter half of the 19th century. Altogether, these combined elements constitute a rare and significant heritage asset.

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning Background

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) has obtained planning consent for the erection of a new arts and media building to provide a theatre, poetry library, exhibition and performance space, cafe / restaurant / bar, social space including roof terrace, university teaching, studio and office accommodation and associated storage, plant and operational floorspace (Planning Ref: 115648/FO/2017). The design proposals allow for the reinstatement of the historic and Grade II listed portico façade of the former Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall into the new building, where it will form the new main entrance and frontispiece to the new building. This impressive historic structure was previously incorporated as subsidiary façade on the existing Mabel Tylecote Building (centred on NGR 384320 397030).

Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), in their capacity as Archaeological Advisors to Manchester City Council, a condition was attached to planning consent that required a programme of archaeological investigation to be implemented in advance of, and during, development works:

1. Archaeological recording of the former police cells, recording and analysis of the dismantled fire place;
2. A programme for post investigation assessment to include assessment of the fireplace for restoration and display;
3. A scheme to commemorate the site's heritage;
4. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.

The remains of brick-built cellars were exposed at a depth of approximately 0.3m below the modern ground surface between July and August 2017, during ground work around the concrete structure supporting the façade of the Mabel Tylecote Building. In order to further investigate the presence, dimensions, alignment and condition of these cellars, it was proposed to excavate the buried structures as part of a watching brief. This work also provided an opportunity to identify and attain a safe means of access to the adjoining police cells.

Morgan Sindall subsequently commissioned Salford Archaeology to maintain a watching brief during the continued excavation, and conduct a 3D-laser scan of the police cells, with a view to satisfying the requirements of the archaeological planning condition.

1.2 *Aims and Methodology*

The area subject to archaeological monitoring via a watching brief was excavated mechanically by the main contractor, operating under close supervision of a single member of staff from Salford Archaeology, and in accordance with relevant CIfA Standards and Guidance. All information identified during the site works was recorded stratigraphically on *pro-forma* context sheets, accompanied with sufficient pictorial record (high-resolution digital photographs) and measured survey. The size and depth of the excavated areas, however, precluded any physical entry during this process. Close inspection of the structural remains was not possible until access was deemed safe by the contractor.

Once safe access was made available, six of the former police cells were recorded by laser scanning. This provided a three-dimensional point cloud of the police cells. Final plans, elevations and cross-sections of the police cells were produced from this point cloud data, and include such features as light-wells, apertures and door openings, an indication of ground and ceiling level, and changes in building material. Final drawings were produced at an appropriate scale.

The fireplace stored in the police cells was removed from the site to a safe location, where it was cleaned and subject to a preliminary study.

2. The Setting

2.1 Location

The study area (centred on NGR 384320 397030) lies on the western side of Oxford Road, at the junction of the Cavendish Street and Oxford Road (Plate 1), on the southern fringe on Manchester city centre. The immediate area is characterised 19th- and 20th-century commercial development, interspersed with more recent residential and university buildings. The site was formerly occupied by the Mabel Tylecote Building, belonging to Manchester Metropolitan University, and is being redeveloped as an arts and media building.

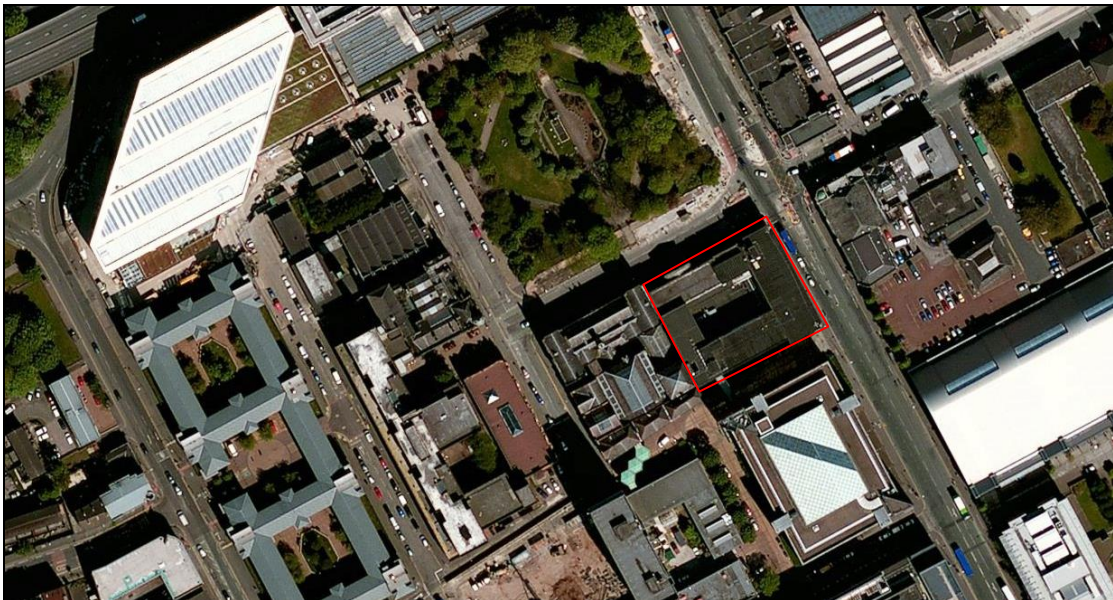


Plate 1: Recent aerial view of the site area showing the location of the on-site works looking north

2.2 Geology

The solid geology of the area comprises the Chester Sandstone Formation, which is overlain by glacial deposits. These superficial deposits consist of sand and gravel and till (predominantly clay) formed up to 2 million years ago during the Quarternary Period (British Geology Society).

3. Historical Background

3.1 Chorlton-upon-Medlock

Historically, the development area lay within the township of Chorlton-upon-Medlock, known formerly as Chorlton Row, and originally simply as Chorlton. The character of the area was transformed from an agricultural landscape after the late 18th century by the rapid expansion of Manchester. Charles Laurent's map indicates that the plot was undeveloped in the early 1790s (Plate 2). At that time, it was under the ownership of Sir Gore Booth, baronet. The Gore Booth family were heirs to the estate of Humphrey Booth, the 17th-century Salford merchant and benefactor who is recorded as holding land in Chorlton in the 1630s (Farrer and Brownbill 1911, 208-9). This family connection is presumed to have given rise to the name of Booth Street. Laurent's map provides an indication of the area's rurality prior to the onset of development.



Plate 2: Extract from Laurent's map of 1793 showing the approximate study area prior to development

Shortly after the opening of Oxford Road in the early 1790s, the Chorlton Hall estate was bought by local entrepreneurs with an intention to develop the land as a suburb to Manchester. The centrepiece of this development was to be a new square, originally known as Grosvenor Square and later as All Saints after the church that was built there in 1819-20. The intended developments were clearly known to Laurent, who marked on the co-axial lines of the proposed streets (*ie* Cavendish Street) as well as existing roads, field boundaries and drains.

3.2 *Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall and Police Station*

Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall stands on Cavendish Street, on the west side of Oxford Road (Plate 1). This newly developed area lay on the fringe of early 19th-century Manchester in the township of Chorlton-upon-Medlock, and was formerly dominated by agricultural fields (Plate 2). The building occupied a position on Grosvenor Square, opposite the All Saints Church that had been built ten years previously. The Police Commissioners for Chorlton Row commissioned the building, which was completed in one year between 1830 and 1831 (Bailey 2000, 61). The building also served as the home of the Chorlton-upon-Medlock Poor Law Guardians Dispensary, which had been established in 1825 as a welfare and medical charity to meet the needs of the growing working-class population.

In June 1832, an Act was passed to improve local governance in the township of Chorlton Row, henceforth known as Chorlton-upon-Medlock. The township was incorporated into Manchester Borough Council in 1838. This caused some tension between existing Town Clerk and Watch Committee, responsible for policing the borough, which revolved around the transfer the police station and lock-ups, which occurred in 1839. This incident is documented by an application for the use of the existing lock-ups dated July 18th 1838.

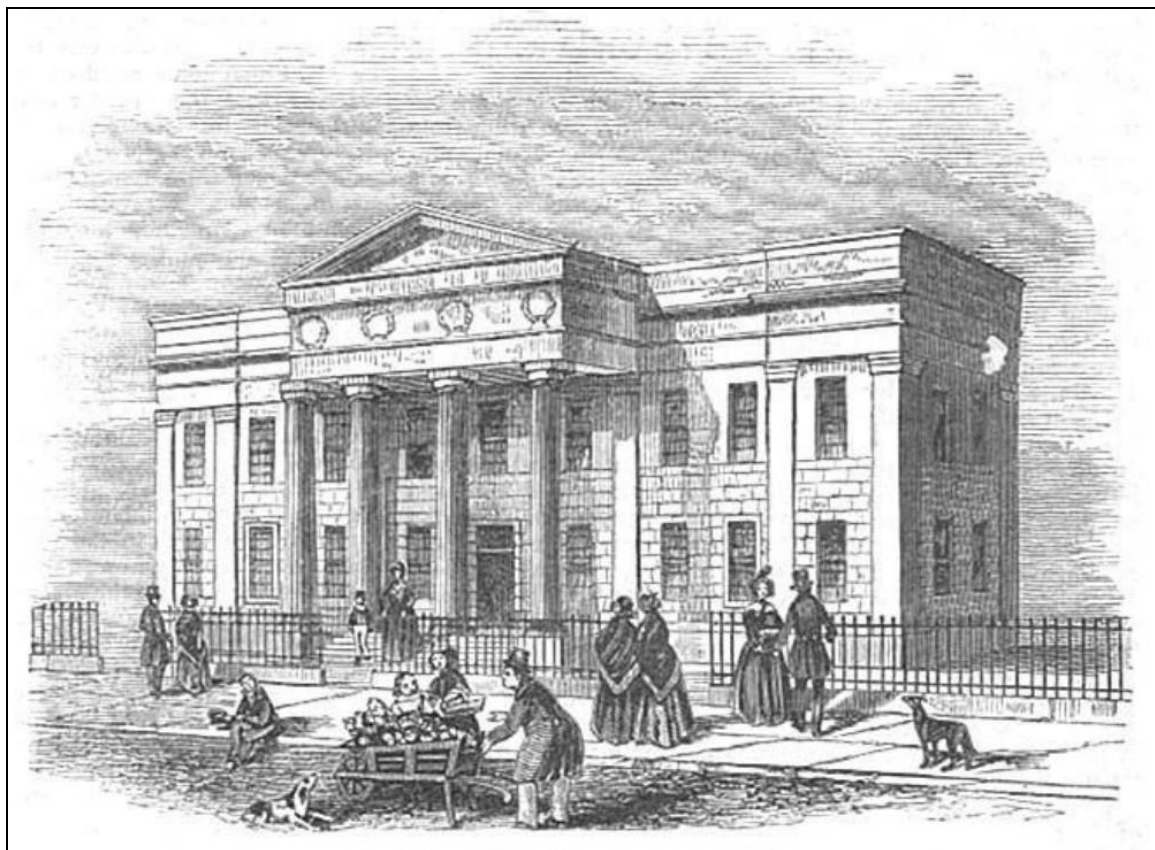


Plate 3: Engraving of Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall, dated to 1843

The architect, Richard Lane, designed the town hall in a Greek revival style; other examples of his work include other notable civic buildings: Salford Town Hall and the Great Bolton Exchange and Library (Cornish 1857, 18-19). The building was built with nine bays partitioned with plain pilasters with an impressive tetrastyla portico of Doric columns (Plate 3). The building's construction is poorly understood, although the remaining walls and structures are known to be constructed in brick. The frontage was clad with plain and rusticated stone.

The internal layout of the ground floor is shown clearly on the Ordnance Survey Manchester and Salford 5ft to 1 mile Map of 1851 (Plate 5). This is mirrored in a later edition from 1891, showing the distinction between the Police Station and Dispensary (Plate 6). The cells are not marked on either of these maps, but were located in the front of the building beneath the portico. The Police Station appears to have been extended to the south-east (indicated by a rear extension to the original building).

The former town hall was used subsequently by the local community for a variety of functions, but ultimately it became redundant. In 1970 the interior was removed, and a new structure known as the Mabel Tylecote Building was added to the rear. The main part of the building was demolished recently. It was during a subsequent phase of ground investigation works that the potential for further work was brought to light.



Plate 4: Police cell in belonging to the former town hall taken in 1933 (Manchester Local Image Collection)

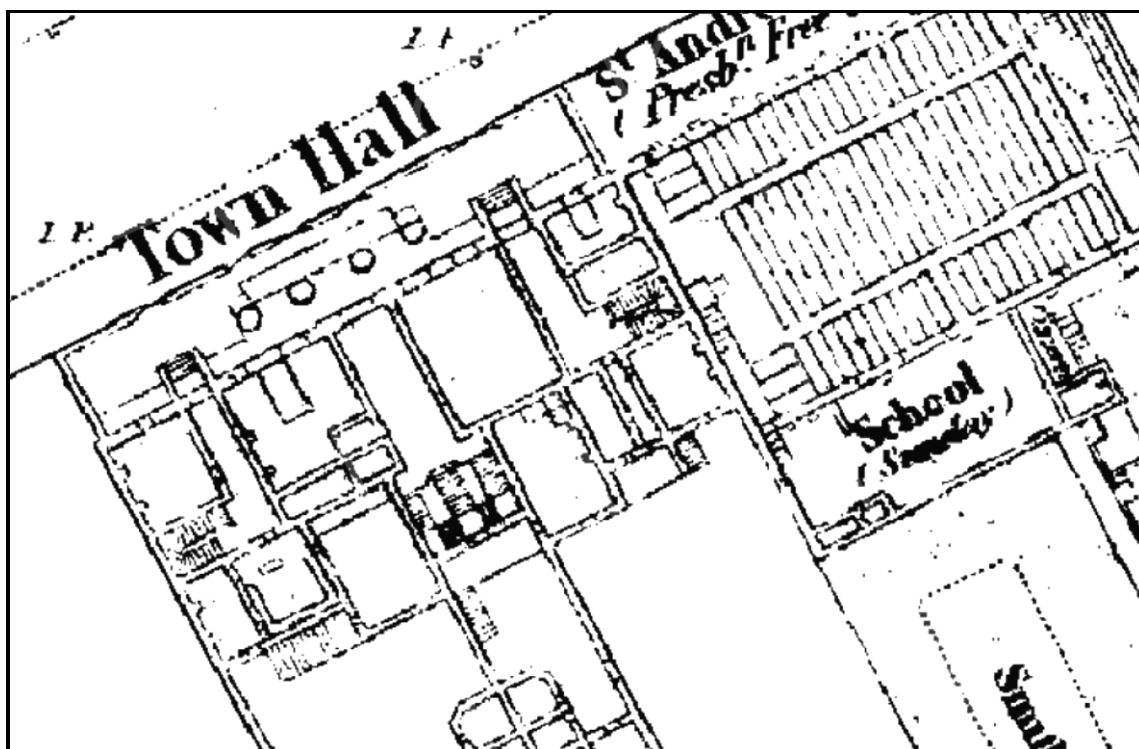


Plate 5: Extract from the 1851 Ordnance Survey Map with internal floor plan

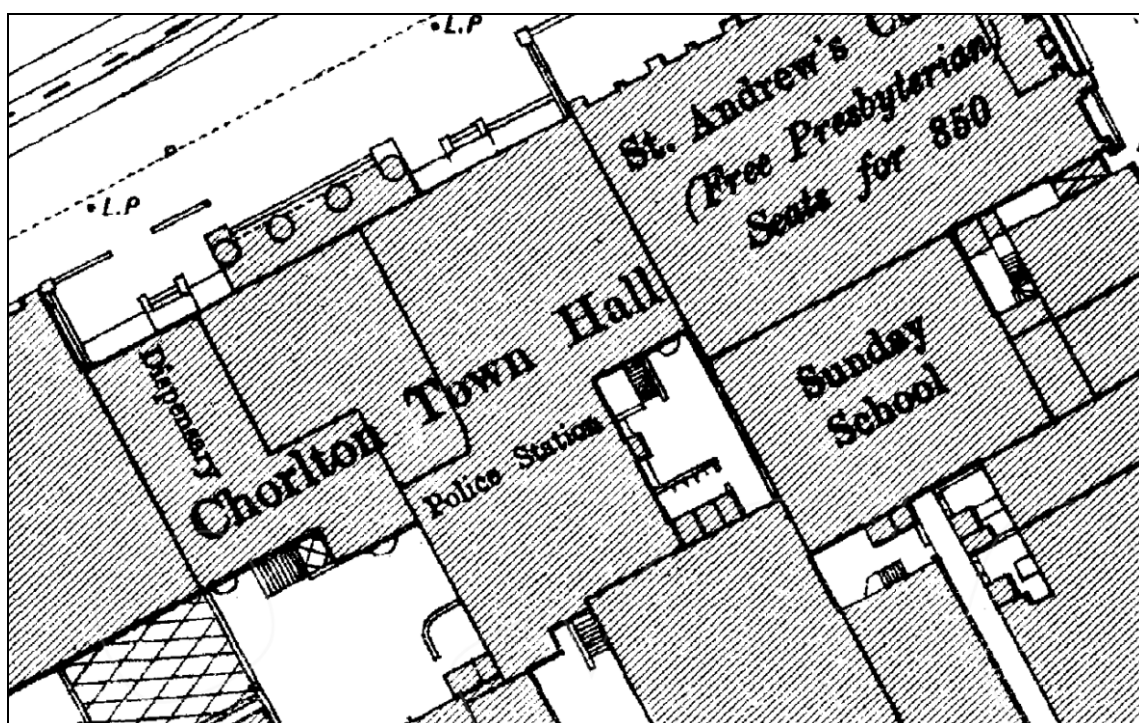


Plate 6: Extract from the 1891 Ordnance Survey Town Plan, showing the Police Station and Dispensary

4. *The Standing Buildings*

4.1 *Introduction*

The standing remains comprise elements of the former town hall, which were identified within the study area. These include the façade of the town hall visible from Cavendish Street (*Paragraph 4.2*), and the below-ground remains of the police cells (A-F) and adjoining corridor (*Paragraph 4.3*) (as well as a number of partially surviving cellared rooms discussed as part of the Watching Brief Results).

4.2 *The Façade*

The surviving north-west elevation of the building consists of the main wall and projecting portico built in the Greek-revival style. On-site investigation revealed the front wall of the building was constructed of brick, extending to a length of 28m. The wall widened at its base to a width of 0.54m, stepping out further at its foundations, which were cut into natural clay. The frontage is two-storeys high with symmetrical bays arranged one-two-three-two-one. The outer bays break forward ever so slightly adding a sense of depth to the façade. The bays are separated by plain pilasters. At the centre lies a three-bay portico with channelled rusticated stonework on the ground-floor pilasters to the end bays. This is surmounted by an entablature of a plain frieze, cornice and parapet. The portico has four fluted Doric columns; above each column are *paterae* (reef-shaped motifs). Stairs lead up to the columned portico from the level of the pavement. The doorway is located centrally and has moulded architraving. The doors themselves are panelled, double doors with rectangular two-panelled over lights. Two additional smaller doorways are found in the second and eighth bays in the same style. The windows adorning the front of the building have 12 panes and have plain reveals.

4.3 *The Police Cells*

A suite of structural remains were shown to have survived in-tact around the existing façade of the town hall building. The cells (A-F) were located beneath the portico, accessed from a corridor running parallel to the front wall of the building (Fig 2). These relate to six of nine potential cells identified through CCTV investigation of potential voids in front of the building's façade.

4.3.1 *The Corridor*

Part of the brick-built corridor running along the front building was recorded at cellar level. This utilised hand-made bricks bonded with lime mortar; the walls were finished with lime wash, similar to the wash observed on brickwork exposed during the watching brief. The corridor was formed by the main wall of the façade and parallel wall, topped with a barrel-vaulted roof. Large slabs of sandstone were built into the brickwork of the vaulted roof directly below the standing portico.

It is possible these sandstone slabs relate to the upstanding structure above. The corridor was only partially excavated and no floor surface was observed; it is known from historic photographs to have been floored with flagstones. A solid brick wall of 19th-century date divided the corridor between cells B and C.



Plate 7: Arched entrance to Cell D

4.3.2 The Cells

The fabric of the adjoining cells also comprised hand-made brick, which was also used to floor the cells. The cells were accessed by means entranceways built into the north-west wall of the corridor. The entrances to each cell were arched. The entranceway to Cell F was partially bricked up to form a smaller doorway. Selected plans and elevations are found in *Appendix 1* of this report.

Cell A

Cell A was rectangular in plan, measuring 3.13m long and 2.24m wide, with a maximum height of 1.75m. This cell was located at the south-west extent of the investigated area and in plan was similar to Cell E. The barrel-vaulted roof of the cell had been punched through by a vertical shaft.

Cell B

Cell B had a T-shaped plan formed by a rectangular cell accessed by a narrower rebated entranceway. The south-western half of the room was slightly wider than the right. The corners of the rebated entrance were chamfered. The entire cell measured 3.16m long and 3.19m wide, with a maximum height of 1.75m.

Cell C

Cell C had a T-shaped plan. The form was more symmetrical than the cells either side. The entranceway was wider than Cells B and D. The cell measured 3.16m in length and 3.01m in width. It had a maximum height of 1.72m.

Cell D

Cell C had an unsymmetrical T-shaped plan, measuring 3.16m long, 3.18m wide and 1.58m high. The plan of the cell closely resembled Cell B.

Cell E

Cell E had a rectangular plan, which measured 3.20m in length and 2.18m in width (Plate 8a). Similarly to Cell A, the roof of the cell was punched through by a vertical shaft. It had a height of 1.72m.



Plate 8a: General view of Cell E; Plate 8b: Detailed view of stone block fitted with door pintel built into later wall addition in entranceway of Cell F

Cell F

Cell F was different again in plan, with a broadly rectangular plan and adjoining narrow entranceway formed by a partially blocked arch.



Plate 9: View of the corridor taken in 1933



Plate 10: View of the corridor taken during the laser scanning

5. *Watching Brief Results*

5.1 *Introduction*

An area extending to 89m² was excavated in July 2017 to establish the presence, depth, dimensions, alignment and condition of structural remains, relating to the partially demolished Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall. The remains were exposed initially during recent investigation works associated with the demolition of the Mabel Tylecote Building, part of MMU redevelopment. This phase of the watching brief was reserved to the south-eastern side of the building's façade. The structural remains survived to a depth of 3m below-ground level. These were truncated during the construction of the Mabel Tylecote building, and only survived around a concrete and metal framework supporting the original building's façade. Following this phase of work, attempts were made to secure a safe means of access to the police cells on the north-western side of the façade.

5.2 *Results*

Four cellared rooms were exposed behind the surviving front wall of the original building. Unless otherwise specified, all walls were all made of reddish-orange hand-made brick bonded with lime-based mortar (brick sizes: 230 x 110 x 70mm). The walls were finished with blue and white lime-based whitewash. These remains belong to the early 19th-century Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall, which incorporated a dispensary and police-holding cells.

Room 1

Room 1 was located at the north-east end of the excavation, and measured 8.65m². This room was formed by internal walls 006, 007 and front wall 005 (Fig 2).

The front wall of the former town hall survived to its original height, although had received repair over the course of the last century. The lower portion of this wall, formerly visible within the cellared level of the town hall, was exposed across the watching brief excavation area. A total length of 18.05m of wall 005 was exposed below ground level. This wall ran the length of the watching brief area, and was exposed in all four rooms.

A bricked-up aperture through wall 005 measured 1.95 x 1.25m (Plate 11). This had been bricked-up with machine-made bricks 024. Behind the bricked aperture were courses of stacked unbonded bricks.

A length of a partially truncated internal wall 006 was exposed close to the north-east limit of excavation. The wall was aligned north-west/south-east. This was a one-brick wall (0.24m wide) and survived to a maximum height of 2.69m, although truncated horizontally by the later support structure 002. The south-east extent of the wall was in poor condition, and was reduced in height to ground level during the works.



Plate 11: General view of bricked-up aperture in Room 1, looking north-west (1m scale)

A second partition wall (007) formed the south-west side of Room 1 (Fig 2). This was aligned north-west/south-east and survived to a height of 2.7m. This formed a dividing wall between Rooms 1 and 2. This formed a one-and-a-half-brick wall (0.35m wide).

A surviving flag stone floor was observed. This consisted of regularly laid, rectangular flagstones, ranging from 0.47 x 0.51 x 0.06m to 0.53 x 0.78 x 0.07m. The floor was laid above a thin layer of bedding sand 029, 0.05-0.09m in thickness. This lay above natural deposits of boulder clay 030. The natural was stiff, mid-brown with occasional bluish-grey veining.

Room 2

Room 2 was located to the south-west of Room 1, and measured 23.50m². This was formed by internal walls 007, 008 and front wall 005 (Plate 12). Walls 005 and 007 are discussed above.

A door-way and window/opening were constructed within the face of wall 005. The doorway 025 was rectangular in shape measuring 1.05m in width and was 2.00m in height. The window or opening 023 was 1.65m wide and had a recorded height of 1.51m; the top of the window was obscured by poured concrete, which lay beneath a later concrete beam. Both the door and window had been sealed up with modern, machine-made bricks.

The fragmentary remains of a flagstone floor were exposed in this room. This consisted of regularly laid, rectangular flagstones. The average dimensions were not dissimilar to those recorded in Room 1.

A hollow brick-built pillar serving as a flue for a fireplace built against wall 007 was uncovered on the north-eastern side of the Room. This section of wall was relatively well preserved, with indications that it had been used in the form of soot adhered to the interior faces of the flue (Plate 13).



Plate 12: General view of Rooms 1 and 2, looking north-west (1m scale)



Plate 13: General view of brick fireplace column in Room 2 looking east (1m scale)

Room 3

Room 3 was located to the south-west of Room 2, and measured 10.04m². This was formed by internal walls 008, 013 and front wall 005 (Fig 2). The springing points for a brick-arched vault 009 and 012 were constructed against the internal walls. Two additional skins of brick were added to the internal faces of 012 and 009. The combined thickness of each of the walls forming Room 3 equated to 0.52m.

Fragments of broken flagstones were observed during the machine clearance of this structure. These were attributed to a floor surface 017 at the same depth as in the adjacent rooms.



Plate 14: General view of Room 3 looking north

Room 4

Room 4 was located to the south-west of Room 3, and measured 22.96m² (Fig 2). This was formed by internal walls 013, 014 and front wall 005. The south-western half of this room was subject to a brief intervention to manually clean and photograph this well-preserved area.

The north-eastern part of Room 4 was less well-preserved. Nevertheless, a bricked-up doorway was visible within wall 005. This measured 1.16 x 2.10m, and had been bricked up with machine-made bricks.

The south-eastern part of Room 4 survived to a greater degree. The walls and floor surface were in good structural condition. Wall 014 was a one-and-a-half brick wall (0.38m) wide. It survived to a length of 4m within the footprint of the concrete framework supporting the portico façade. Built against this wall was a solid brick pillar of a fireplace, measuring 0.51 x 0.36m.

The floor surface within this room consisted of regularly laid flagstones (measuring 0.81 x 0.38 x 0.05m). A layer of fragmented and full bricks 021 were laid flat above the floor surface in the northern part of the room (measuring an area of 2.97 x 1.60m).



Plate 15: View of south-western half of Room 4 looking north-west (1m scale)



Plate 16: View of south-western half of Room 4 looking west (1m scale)



Plates 17 and 18: Brick fireplace in Room 4, looking west (1m scale), and bricked-up door 026

6. *The Fire Surround*

6.1 *Introduction*

The project was partly motivated by the discovery of elements of a fireplace, identified during an initial programme of CCTV investigation. The fireplace was considered to be 19th-century in date, and perhaps originally installed in the town hall. Pending safe access to the police cells, it was the intention that the fireplace be removed for further work, in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition (*Section 2*).

6.2 *Technical Description*

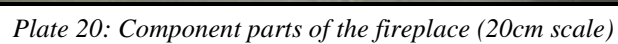
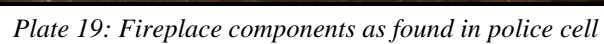
Three individual pieces were recovered from police Cell 3: two stone pilasters, and a ceramic-tiled panel insert. These were found in association with a collection of worked and shaped stone. It is possible the entirety of this assemblage derived from the town hall. A preliminary description of the finds is detailed below.

Stone-clad Pilasters (height: 1170mm; width: 215mm; thickness: 80mm)

Each stone clad pilaster consists of six component parts: foot, jamb, inner and outer returns, corbel and shelf-support. These parts are made of cleaved slabs of slate that have been sawn to size. The jamb was incised with a simplistic line and dot pattern, forming a rectangle. The slabs of slate were finished subsequently by faux-marbling; traces of the dark paint can be seen as drip marks on the rear of the pilaster. The base of each pilaster is fitted with a foot. The upper part of the jamb is surmounted by a decorative corbel, which sits flush with the top edge of the jamb. This decorative element would have also served to support a shelf above.

Indications of its manufacture and assembly can be found on the rear of the pilasters. Striations are visible on the sides of returns, indicating that the slate was cut to size by sawing. Once the components were shaped, the surfaces were presumably finished by sanding or other means of abrasion to achieve smoothness akin to marble. Incised decoration was then applied to the front face of the jamb; the soft quality of slate lends itself easily to this sort of decoration. The scrolled corbels were presumably chiselled and finished. A half-spherical glass or enamel decoration was applied to the front face of the corbel. The pieces were then assembled. Numbers corresponding to the right and left side of the fireplace were inscribed on hidden sides of the components, evidently to aid in their assembly. Hard, white cement and rivets were used to join the component parts; these fittings are visible on the reverse and top side of the pilaster.

The style and finish of the clad elements are telling. A linear geometric pattern on the jamb and simplistic scrolled corbel help place the cladding in the second half of the 19th century. The technique of faux-marbling goes was applied to the visible elements of the cladding, which are consistent with a surround of this date.



Tiled Insert (height: 965mm; width: 270mm; thickness: 40mm)

The tiles were laid on a hard setting of hard sandy cement. Three decorative tiles were surrounded by a laddered tricolour border formed of brown and green tiles.

A central rectangular tile depicted a naturalistic garden flower still life (Plate 21). This is surrounded by a simple graduated linear border with swastika motifs in each corner. The tile measured 165 x 200 mm. Two further tiles (measuring 151 x 200mm) were positioned above and below of the centrepiece. These consisted of stylised floral-geometric pattern (Plate 22). A central rosette sits at the middle of a cruciform of closed flower buds. A ring of stems and leaves links the bud, encircling the central rosette. These tiles had the same border as the centrepiece. The decorative tiles were surrounded by a border dark green glazed tiles, which together form a ladder pattern. This was again bordered by tiles of a light yellow-green colour and an additional border of reddish brown colour.

The plain tiles closely resemble bulk tiles produced by various manufacturers across Britain during this period, and are thus hard to trace to a specific manufacturer.

The decorative tiles are in Aesthetic style, a decorative arts movement that prioritised utility over decoration, whilst endeavouring to achieve beauty. This movement began in the latter half of the 19th century. Several elements of the tiles help tie it to this movement, namely the geometric patterns, use of floral and Orientalising elements. The flowers represented on the central tile are *crysthanamum*, a Japanese-inspired motif which along with the sunflower became a hallmark of the movement. The naturalistic depiction of the sinewy stems and asymmetric flowers and their composition, draping over the edges of the border are particularly characteristic. The use of the swastika and rosette motifs has different roots, originating in the cultures of Indian subcontinent and Near East, respectively. It should be stressed that the original meaning and symbolism of the swastika bears no relation to its modern connotations and was used throughout history as a geometric motif. Many designers of this period were frequently drawn to ancient artistic sources. A prominent aesthetic designer Christopher Dresser was known for drawing influence from a wide range of sources, creating ceramics and furniture in the style of ancient Egyptian, Islamic and Far Eastern objects (*see*: MMoA/V&A). The conflation of the motifs seen in the tiles is therefore consistent with the Aesthetic movement.

It has not been possible to tie-down the tiles to a particular designer or manufacturer. Nevertheless, similar designs and decorative elements appear in the works of William De Morgan and Christopher Dresser, which were produced by Minton and the Fulham Factory, respectively. Examples of their work can be found on the Victoria and Albert Museum website (V&A).



Plate 21: Central tile



Plate 22: Geometric tile

7. Discussion

7.1 Structural Remains

The investigative work has provided a rare and valuable opportunity to record a suite of structural remains and finds associated with the early 19th-century Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall, on Cavendish Street. It is known from documentary evidence that town hall was completed in 1831, designed by the prominent architect Richard Lane, known for his Grecian inspired Neo-classical architecture.

This building served a range of civil and administrative roles, which would formerly have been divided between separate institutions. It housed the Chorlton-upon-Medlock Poor Law Guardian's dispensary, which provided welfare and medical charity to the burgeoning working classes. It also contained a police station. Other rooms within the building were used for town meetings (Cornish 1857, 18-19). This agglomeration of offices under the guise of the Town Hall occurred in other townships in the area (including Hulme, Manchester and Salford). This process is aptly described by Kolne (2014) as the manifestation of 'local power' in urban contexts. The challenging social environment in the early 19th century prompted reorganization of civil administration. This was realised in Manchester and Salford through the construction of the town hall.

A key component of the station on Cavendish Street was the police holding cells, or lock-ups, that were established in the 1830s. Six cells were exposed and recorded during the survey, although previous CCTV investigation suggests nine such structures exist. These were built to the front of the main town hall building, beneath the pavement level and below the building's impressive portico. These served as temporary confinement for minor offenders and those awaiting trial. Photographs taken in 1933 (Plate 4) provide a glimpse of the cells, which remained relatively unchanged from their original condition in the early 19th century. Details visible in the photographs can be easily related to the entrances and apertures recorded during the investigative works.

The buried structures located to the south-west of the standing façade appear to relate to parts of the police station, as evidenced by 19th-century mapping. Four rooms were uncovered. It is likely these rooms, two of which contained fireplaces, served as offices. Access to the cells was gained via two of the rooms via doorways.

The cells, corridor and office rooms were found to be in good structural condition, located beyond the area of later developments. Their position below the existing pavement owes much to their exceptional preservation. The cells and corridor were found to be intentionally sealed and blocked up. This act probably occurred in the late 20th century around the time of the construction of the Mabel Tylecote building; such a date is consistent with the later brickwork, sealing the doors and apertures through wall 005.

5.2 Comparative Sites

Mealhouse Brow Gaol, Stockport

There is just one other archaeological project that has taken place across Greater Manchester that allows a brief comparison of the below-ground architectural elements revealed to be made. The following site produced evidence of cells for holding offenders during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Three barrel-vaulted holding cells, predating the police cells in Chorlton Town Hall, were excavated during a scheme of works in the late-1990s in Stockport (Nevell 1998). These cells belonged to the Mealhouse Brow Gaol, which was in operation from the 18th to the mid-19th century. This complex served as a gaol for the nearby court and, as such, housed cells for the temporary confinement of individuals awaiting trial. These cells measured 2m in height, 4m in length and 2m wide (Arrowsmith 2010, 79). The vaulted construction and subterranean location of the cells bears a remarkable resemblance to those found Cavendish Street.

Early Police Stations and Lock-ups of Manchester

A range of broadly contemporary buildings spanning the late 18th to early 19th century have been identified from a range of historic sources. These buildings pre-date the process of incorporation that took place in 1838, and existed as stations with a small number of lock-ups operating in a manner not dissimilar to more archaic village detention cells or keeps (VPS, 2018). By comparison, the Chorlton-upon-Medlock was a moderately large complex with up to nine cells, reflecting the need for increased cell capacity created by the townships growing population. In this respect, the complex as a whole can be regarded as transitional; it was clearly designed in response to the increased urban, industrial nature of the township, but far from meeting the ever-pressing operational needs.

Name	Location
Old Town Hall Police Headquarters	King Street, Manchester
Ridgefield Station House	John Dalton Street, Manchester
Deansgate Police Station	Deansgate, Knott Mill District
Swan Street Police Station	Swan Street, New Cross District
Oldham Road Police Station	Oldham Road, New Cross District
Kirby Street Police Station	Kirby Street, Ancoats

Table 1: A list of contemporary sites within Manchester

5.3 *The Fire Surround*

The recovery and preliminary study of a group of fireplace furniture (cladding and ceramic insert) has been studied and assessed and considered of high local significance. The simply finished slate pilasters and tiled insert have been dated to the latter half of the 19th century, most likely from the 1870s, and bear strong resemblances to the works of Aesthetic movement designers. As such, they represent a later addition to the interior of the Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall, which was built in the early 1830s. The fireplace would have formed a small and modest addition to the interior, but nevertheless marks a trend for the inclusion of Aesthetic movement arts and crafts appearing in civic settings; a notable yet more lavish comparison would be the frescoes of Ford Madox Brown (pre-Raphaelite artist) in the Great Hall of the Manchester Town Hall.

5.4 *Conclusion*

The ground-investigation works required excavation around a concrete structure supporting the standing façade, in order to establish its structural integrity. This provided a rare opportunity to excavate and record key remnants of the police station and town hall, which survived in isolation in the northern half of the site. The proposed redevelopment of the site effectively precluded any future access to and investigation of the surviving police cells; it was thus deemed necessary that these should be recorded prior to any construction work. The information recovered has proved useful in assessing the position, condition and characteristics of the surviving archaeology.

The overall impact of the project on the condition of the remains has been minimal, with the cells themselves lying directly outside the development area. Notwithstanding its probable later 19th-century date, the recovery of elements of an Aesthetic movement fireplace proved a most worthwhile and rewarding exercise, with considerable potential for restoration and subsequent long-term display as testament to the site's rich heritage.

A detailed scheme to commemorate the heritage of the site, as required by the planning condition, awaits formulation but will necessarily include appropriate explanation and interpretation of the basement police cells, potentially the oldest of their type in Manchester, and extremely rare surviving examples.

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Archive and Acknowledgements

Archive

The archive is currently held by Salford Archaeology, but will be deposited ultimately with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record in the form of this report. The digital archive consists of survey drawings, digital photographs, and electronic data: no artefacts were recovered from the watching brief. As part of the archiving process, the on-line OASIS (On-line Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations) form has been completed.

Acknowledgements

Salford Archaeology would like to thank Morgan Sindall, specifically Justin Kay, for commissioning and supporting the watching brief on behalf of Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU).

The watching brief was carried out by Oliver Cook. The laser scanning of the police holding cells was conducted by Lewis Stitt. The report was written by Oliver Cook. The illustrations were compiled by Richard Ker and Oliver Cook. This report was edited by Ian Miller, who was also responsible for project management.

Appendix 1: Figures

- Figure 1: Site location
- Figure 2: Plan of the walls and police cells
- Figure 3: Elevation of watching brief findings
- Figure 4: Orthographic plan and elevations produced from the laser scan results
- Figure 5: Orthographic plan and elevations produced from the laser scan results
- Figure 6: Results of the project overlaid to the OS Manchester and Salford 5ft to 1 mile map of 1851
- Figure 7: Results of the project overlaid to OS 10ft to 1 mile, Lancashire, Manchester map of 1891

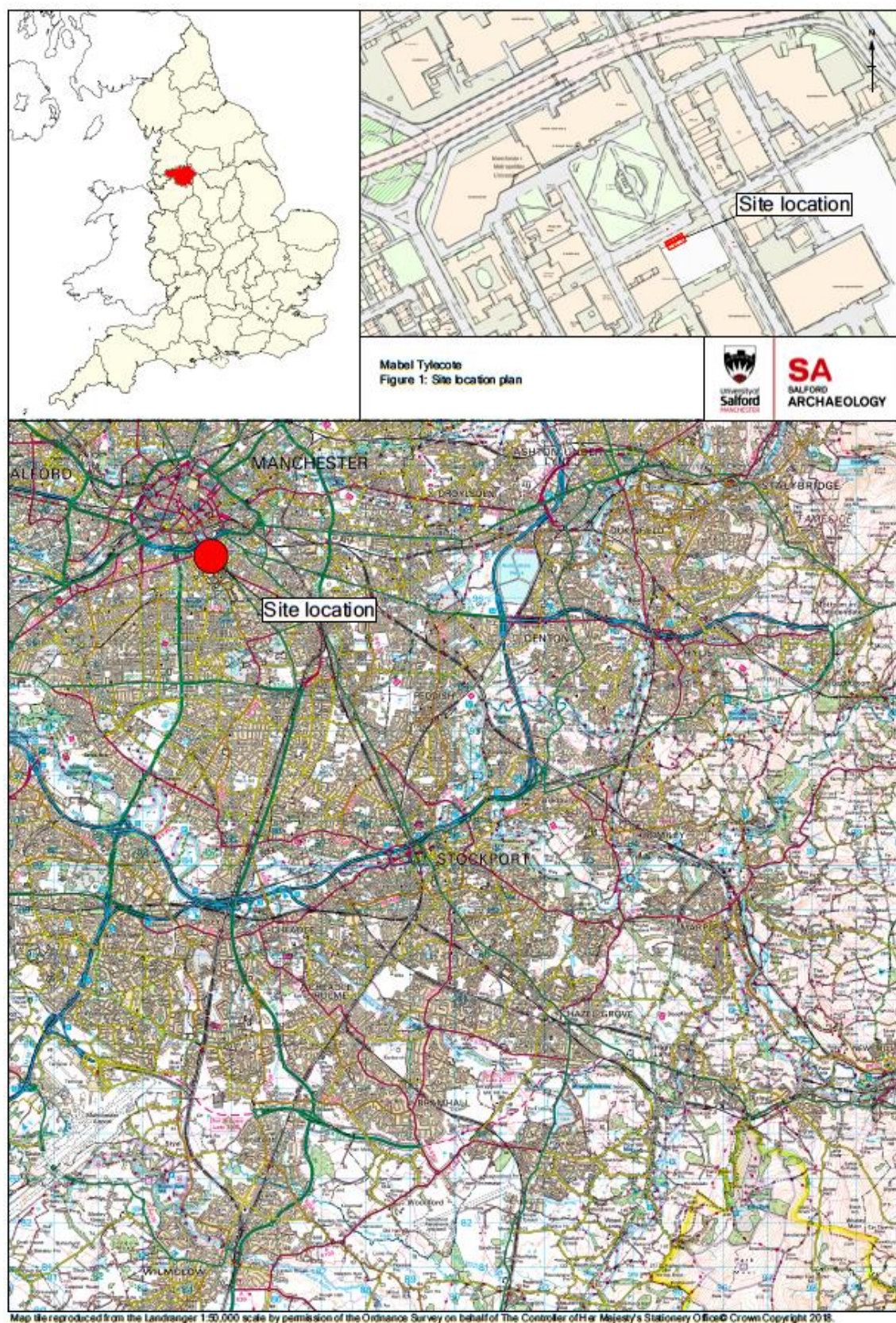


Figure 1: Site location

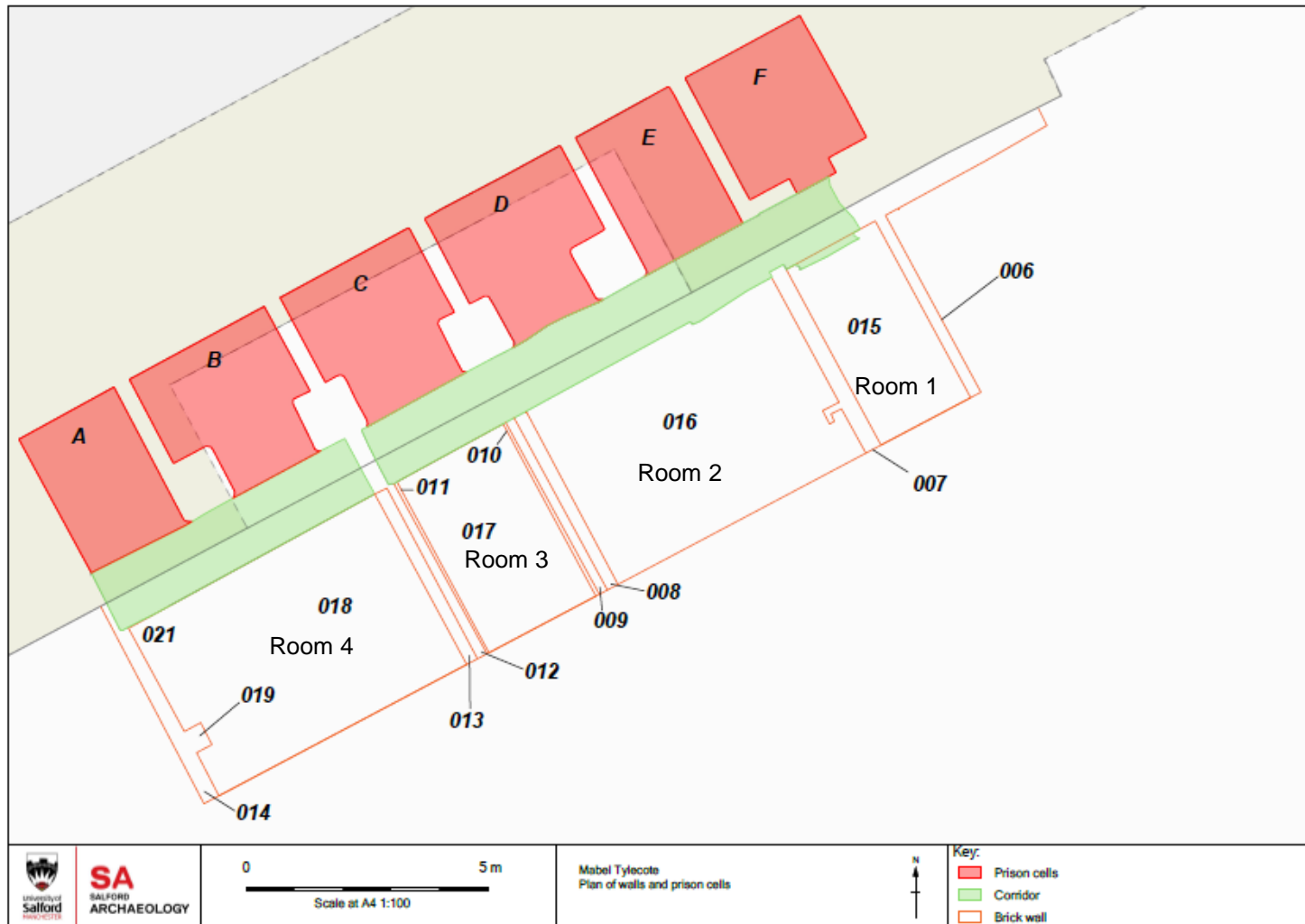


Figure 2: Plan of the walls and police cells

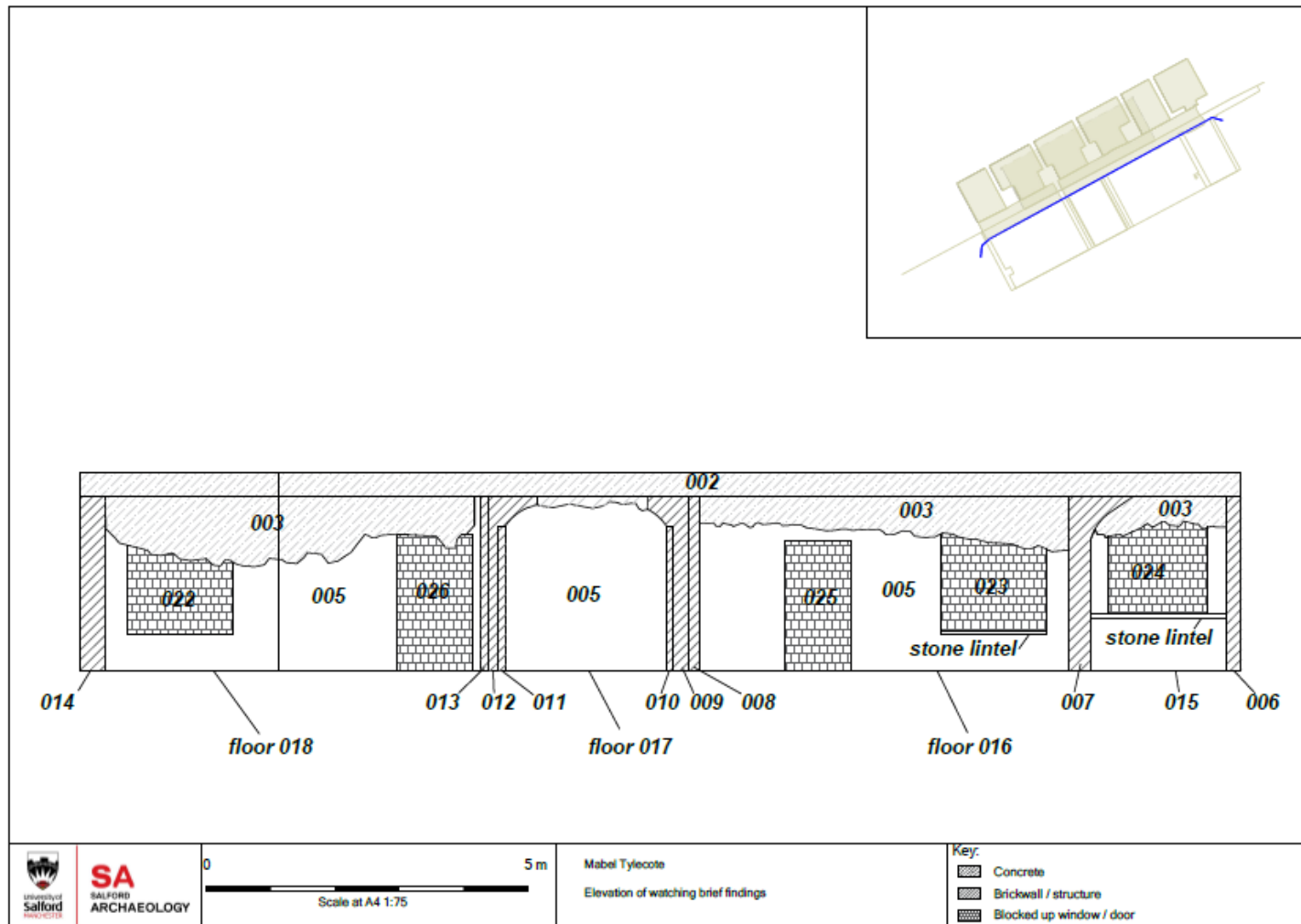


Figure 3: Elevation of watching brief findings

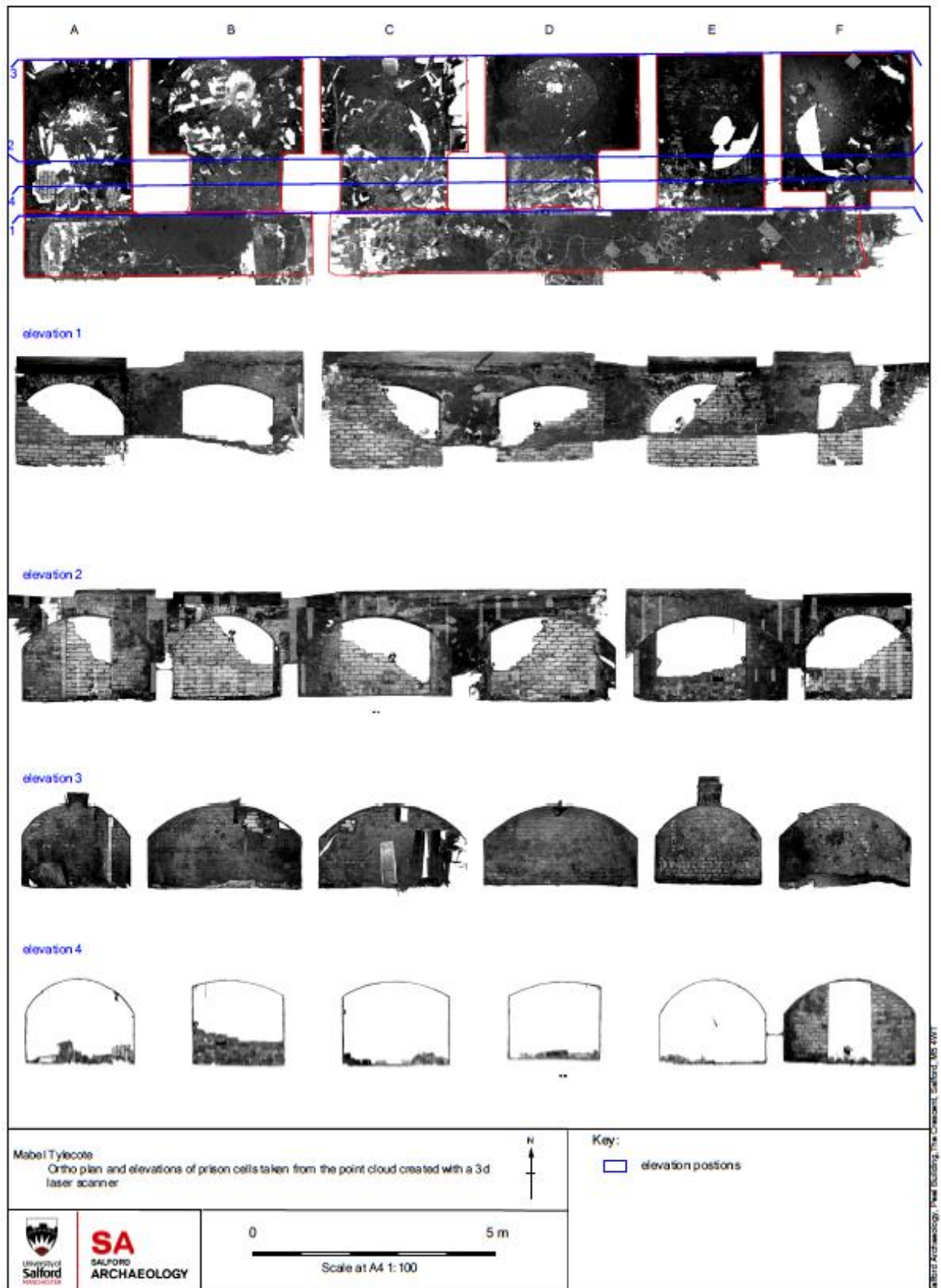


Figure 4: Orthographic plan and elevations produced from the laser scan results



Figure 5: Orthographic plan and elevations produced from the laser scan results

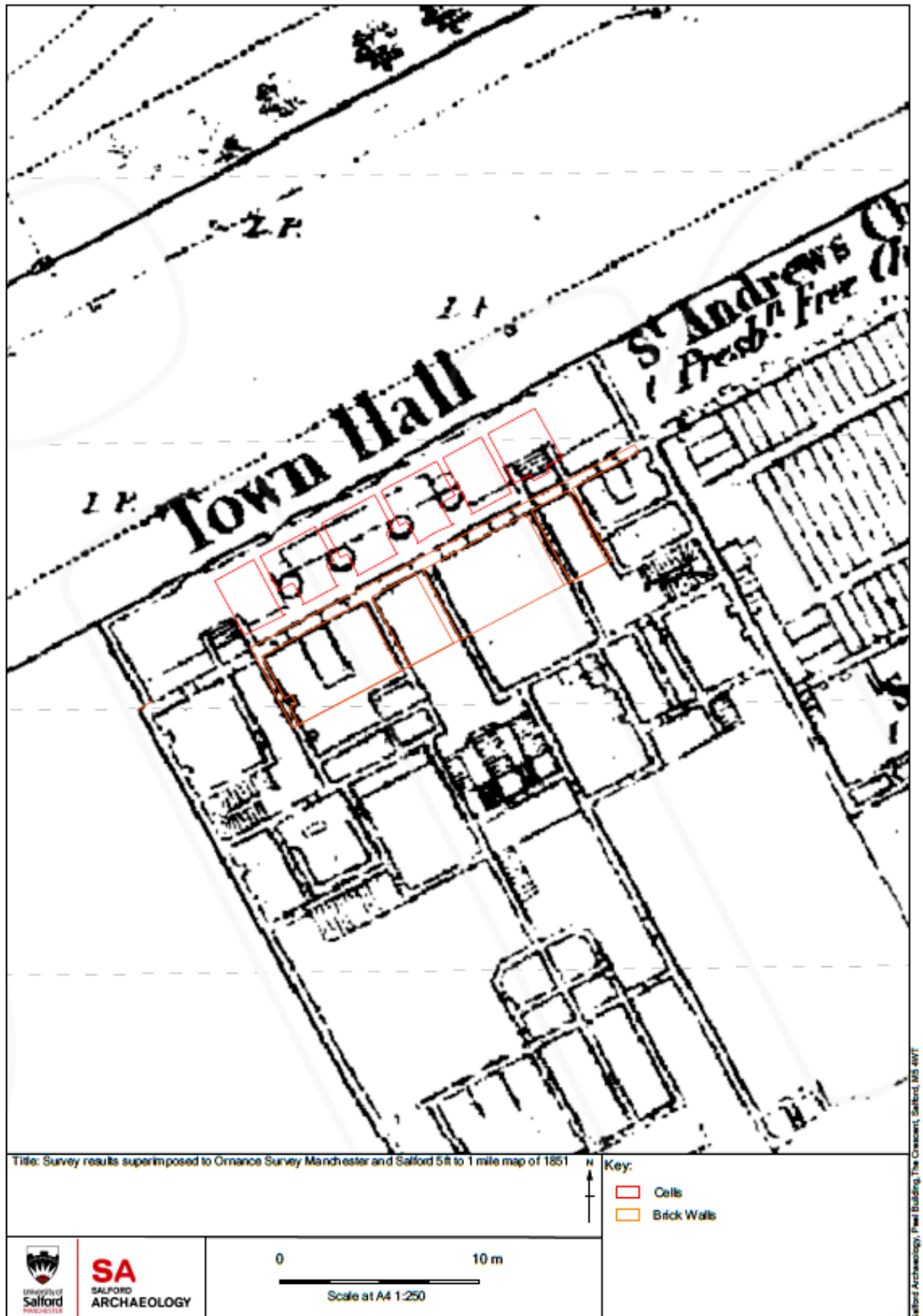


Figure 6: Results of the project overlaid to the OS Manchester and Salford 5ft to 1 mile map of 1851

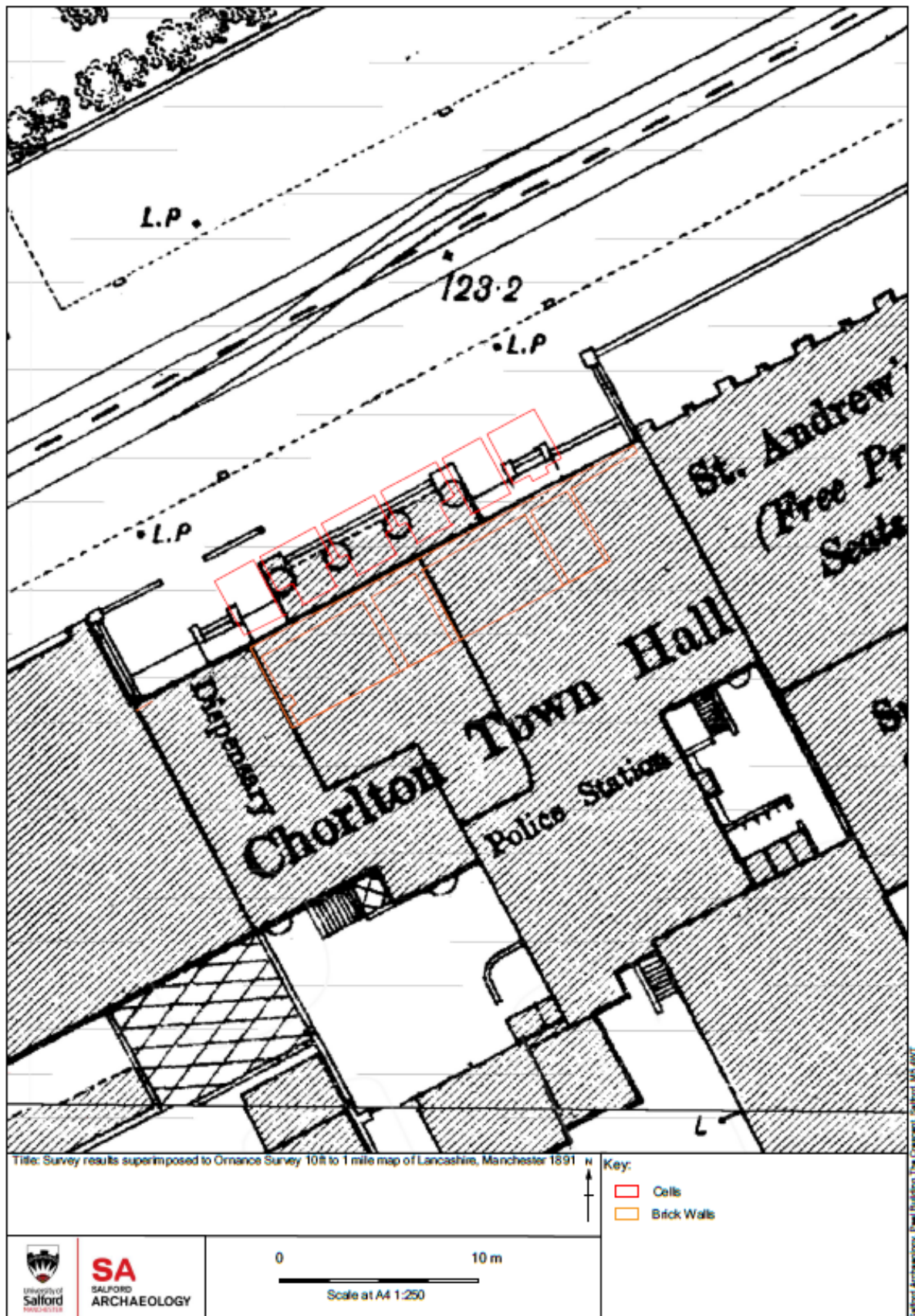


Figure 7: Results of the project overlaid to OS 10ft to 1 mile, Lancashire, Manchester map of 1891

Appendix 2: Context List

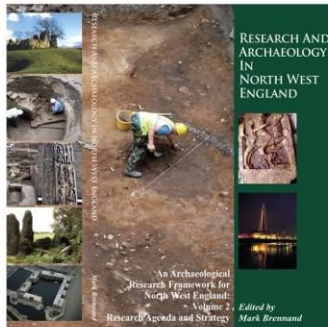
Area	Context	Category	Feature
1	001	Layer	Redeposited demolition rubble
1	002	Structure	Concrete beams and stanchions
1	003	Layer	Poured concrete below stanchions
1	004	Fill	Rubble infill above 19 th -century remains
1	005	Structure	Front wall of former town hall
1	006	Structure	Internal wall
1	007	Structure	Internal wall
1	008	Structure	Internal wall
1	009	Structure	Springing point for vaulted ceiling
1	010	Structure	Extra skin of bricks abutting 009
1	011	Structure	Extra skin of bricks abutting 012
1	012	Structure	Springing point for vaulted ceiling
1	013	Structure	Internal wall
1	014	Structure	Internal wall
1	015	Surface	Flagstone floor in Room 1
1	016	Surface	Flagstone floor in Room 2
1	017	Surface	Flagstone floor in Room 3
1	018	Surface	Flagstone floor in Room 4
1	019	Structure	Brick pier for fireplace in Room 1
1	020	Structure	Brick pier for fireplace in Room 2
1	021	Structure	Additional flagstones in Room 4
1	022	Structure	Bricked-up window in Room 4
1	023	Structure	Bricked-up window in Room 2
1	024	Structure	Bricked-up window in Room 1
1	025	Structure	Bricked-up door in Room 2
1	026	Structure	Bricked-up door in Room 4
1	027	Layer	Modern hardcore levelling
1	028	Structure	Stacked bricks in Room 1
1	029	Layer	Sand bedding for flagstone surfaces
1	030	Layer	Natural clay geology

Appendix 3: Police Cell Dimensions

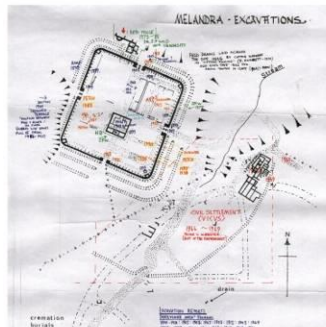
Cell	Height (m)	Length (m)	Width (m)	Entrance (m)
A	1.75	3.13	2.24	2.34
B	1.75	3.16	3.19	2.06
C	1.72	3.16	3.01	2.23
D	1.58	3.16	3.18	2.13
E	1.72	3.20	3.18	2.30
F	1.73	3.11	2.71	0.91

Dimensions of the recorded police cells

CONSULTANCY



DESK BASED ASSESMENTS



WATCHING BRIEF & EVALUATION



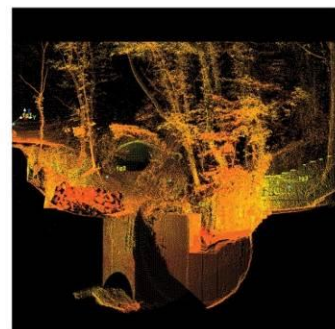
EXCAVATION



BUILDING SURVEY



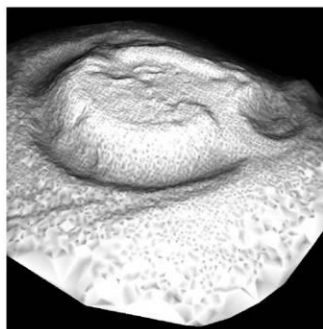
3D LASER SCANNING



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



LANDSCAPE SURVEYS



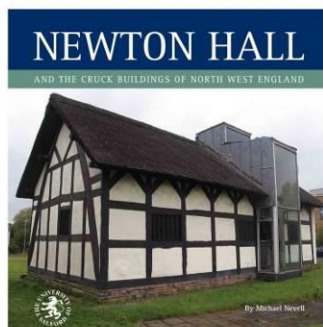
GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS



WORKSHOPS & VOCATIONAL TRAINING



RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS



SEMINARS, DAYSCHOOLS CPD EVENTS

