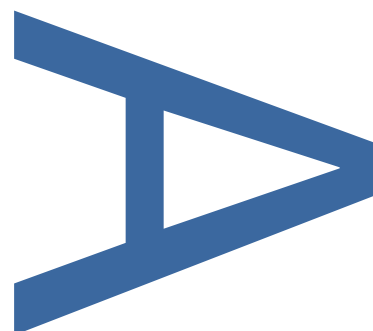
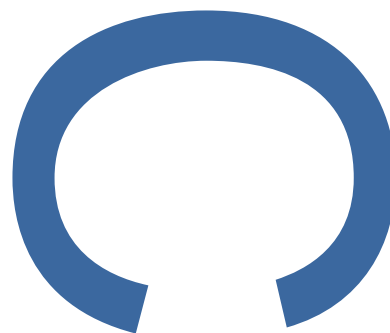


**MINSHULL HOUSE, AYTOUN
STREET, MANCHESTER M1 3FY**

SUMMARY OF TEST PITS



PCA REPORT NO: R12657

OCTOBER 2016


PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

A SUMMARY OF THE TEST PITS EXCAVATED AT
MINSHULL HOUSE, AYTOUN STREET,
MANCHESTER M1 3FY

Quality Control

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A summary of the test pits excavated at Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester M1 3FY

By Rosemary Banens, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, 28th September 2016

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This summary report details the results and working methods of an archaeological recording exercise that was undertaken at Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester M1 3FY. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Zerum to undertake archaeological recording of two test-pits which had already been excavated by others within Minshull House; this was carried out on the 14th September 2016 by Rosemary Banens of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, who was accompanied by Carl Pendlebury of Buro Happold.
- 1.2 The purpose of these test pits had been to determine the depth of the footings associated with the cast iron columns throughout the building. A plan showing the locations of the test pits has been included at the end of this report. The test pits were cleaned with a trowel, then recorded by photographs, pro-forma context sheets, and hand drawn plans and sections at a scale 1:20 and 1:10 respectively.
- 1.3 Both test pits exposed the footing for the columns, the construction of which had truncated earlier made ground layers. The same sequence of layers was seen in both test pits, and it would appear as though there has only been localised impact on the underlying archaeological horizons during the construction of Minshull House. A wall thought to be part of an earlier phase of Minshull House was exposed in Test Pit 2. The maximum depth reached was 1.65m BGL (below ground level) in Test Pit 2, with the maximum depth of Test Pit 1 at 1.35m BGL. Both trenches were sealed by modern levelling layers and capped by concrete.
- 1.4 Thanks are given to Buro Happold for providing the plan of Minshull House and associated information, Carl Pendlebury for accompanying the author during archaeological recording, and to the security staff for providing access to the site. Thanks are also given to Chris Mayo for his project management and editing.

2 TEST PIT RESULTS

2.1 Test Pit 1 (2.74m x 1.17m; slot 1.50m x 1.17m)

- 2.1.1 Demolition layer [4] lay across the base of the trench, at 1.08m BGL, with its highest point in section at 0.75m BGL. This layer was composed of light grey sandy lime mortar with chalk and charcoal fragments, and included large fragments of broken red brick. It was sealed by ground-raising layer [3], which was a dark brown sandy silt. Measuring 0.55m thick, inclusions consisted of occasional CBM fragments, mortar, glass, and slate; its highest point was at 0.20m BGL.

- 2.1.2 The footing [1] for the column was exposed in the north-west section of the trench. The footing was located within construction cut [2], which was backfilled with loose mid grey-brown sandy silt [11], and truncated layers [3] and [4]. Capped by a large concrete block, 0.4m-thick, the footing was composed of red unfrosted bricks in an English bond pattern bonded by a light grey mortar with chalk and charcoal flecks. The footing measured 1.10m across, stretching south-west to north-east, and extended 0.93m down to continue below the limit of excavation. The footing stepped out at a depth of 0.60m, and the individual bricks measured 220x110x70mm.
- 2.1.3 The above were capped by a thin modern levelling layer, 0.15m of concrete, and a 20mm-thick layer of tarmac/concrete.



Figure 1: Test Pit 1, Looking North-West



Figure 2: Footing [1] for Column



Figure 3: Layers [3] and [4], North-West Facing Section



Figure 4: Test Pit 1, Looking North-East

2.2 Test Pit 2 (3m x 2.65m; slot 1.25m x 0.50m)

2.2.1 Within Test Pit 2, the footing [5] for the column was exposed in the south-east section of the trench. Like the footing in Test Pit 1, it was capped by a large block of concrete, measuring 0.35m thick. The hard dark grey mortar on footing [5] covered its surface, so the bonding pattern of the red unfrosted bricks was not visible. At 1.24m in height, with its highest point at 0.38m BGL, it stepped out at a depth of 0.72m, 1.10m BGL. At the same depth, it tied into wall [6], which ran south-east to north-west across the trench. Also composed of red unfrosted brick, it had a yellowish brown sandy lime mortar with chalk and charcoal flecks as its bonding material. Likely to be from an earlier configuration of Minshull House, it stepped out at 1.16m BGL, reaching a depth of 1.62m BGL.

2.2.2 To the north-east of wall [6] was a rubble made ground layer, recorded in plan at 1.1m BGL, which was composed of a loose mid-grey brown sandy silt.

2.2.3 The south-west side of the wall had been further excavated to a depth of 1.62m BGL. Visible in the south-west section of the trench were layers [7], [8], and [9]. Layer [9] was only just visible in section, measuring 0.15m down from 1.35m BGL to the limit of excavation. Thought to be possibly a made ground layer, it was composed of a firm dark grey brown silty sand with occasional chalk flecks and small CBM fragments. Sealing this layer was demolition later [8]. With a thickness of 0.65m, its highest point was 0.70m BGL. The layer was made up of a light yellowish grey sandy lime mortar with chalk and charcoal flecks, and occasional CBM fragments. Layer [8], despite the slight colour difference, is believed to be the same as layer [4] in Test Pit 1, given the similar composition and location below ground level. Sealing this layer was made ground layer [7], a friable dark brown-black sandy silt with occasional CBM and mortar fragments. Measuring 0.50m thick, its highest point was 0.20m BGL. Layer [7] is thought to be the same as layer [3] in Test Pit 1. It was sealed by a 50mm thick modern levelling layer, which in turn was capped by 0.15m of concrete.



Figure 5: Test Pit 2, Looking East



Figure 6: Test Pit 2, Looking East



Figure 7: Layers [7], [8], [9] in North-East Facing Section

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1.1 The excavated test-pits have demonstrated that the upper horizons at the site, to a depth of around 1.6m below ground level, comprise made ground and demolition layers which may relate to the clearance of the site in the early to mid-19th century prior to the construction of Minshull House. The upper layers are considered to represent levelling surfaces contemporary to the construction of the building.

4 OASIS REPORT FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-265210	
Project details	
Project name	A summary of the test pits excavated at Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester M1 3FY
Short description of the project	An archaeological recording exercise was undertaken inside Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester M1 3FY to record two test-pits which had already been excavated by others within Minshull House. Both test pits exposed the footing for the columns, the construction of which had truncated earlier made ground layers. The same sequence of layers was seen in both test pits, and it would appear as though there has only been localised impact on the underlying archaeological horizons during the construction of Minshull House. A wall thought to be part of an earlier phase of Minshull House was exposed in Test Pit 2. Both trenches were sealed by modern levelling layers and capped by concrete.

Project dates	Start: 14-09-2016 End: 14-09-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	1283092 - LBS No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Recorded Observation"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER MANCHESTER MANCHESTER MANCHESTER Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester
Postcode	M1 3FY
Study area	50 Square metres
Site coordinates	SJ 84486 97879 53.477156633196 -2.233779393446 53 28 37 N 002 14 01 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Mayo
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Rosemary Banens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Zerum
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	A summary of the test pits excavated at Minshull House, Aytoun Street, Manchester M1 3FY
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Entered on	11-Oct-16

Figure 8: Trench Location Plan

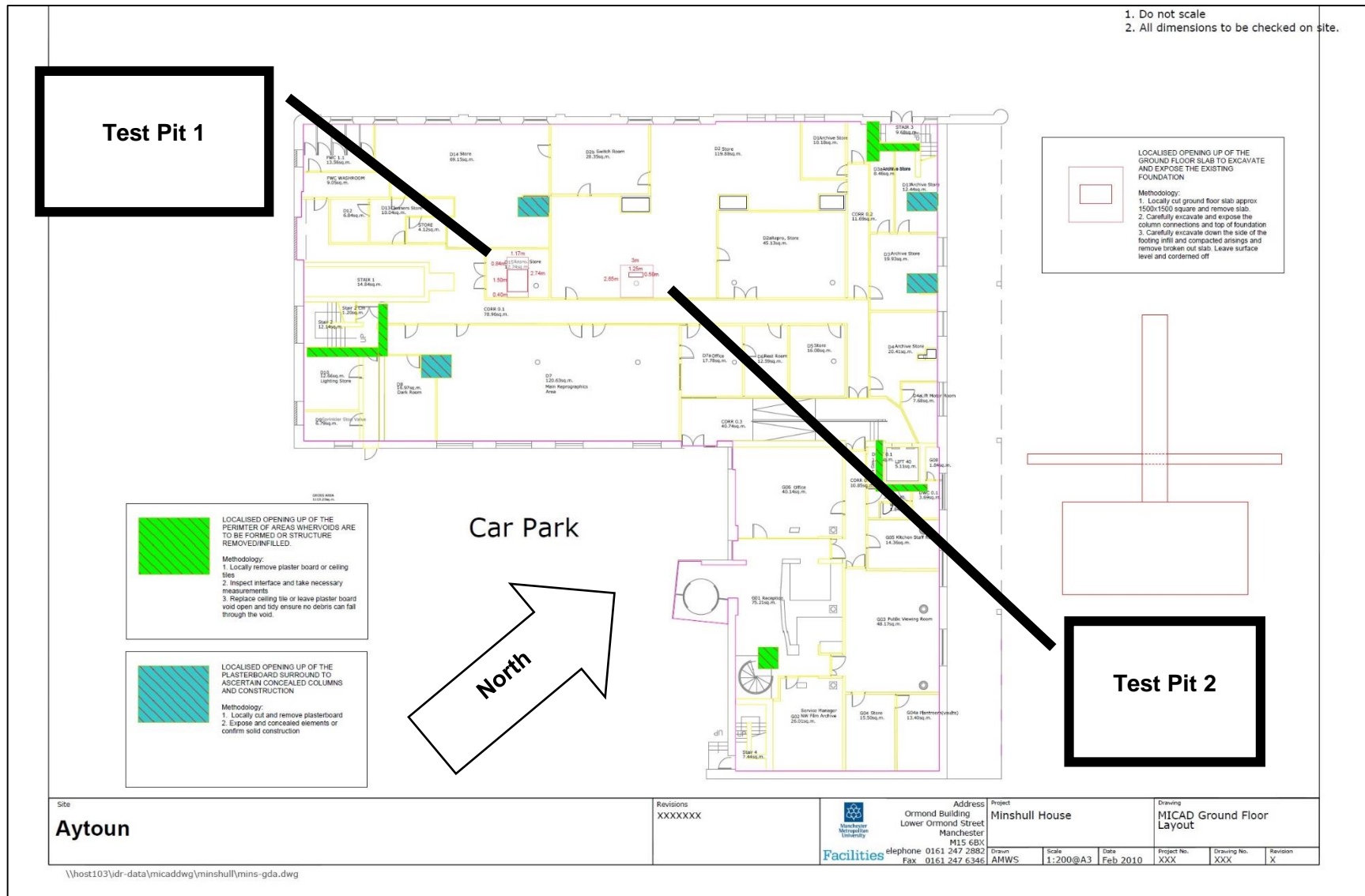
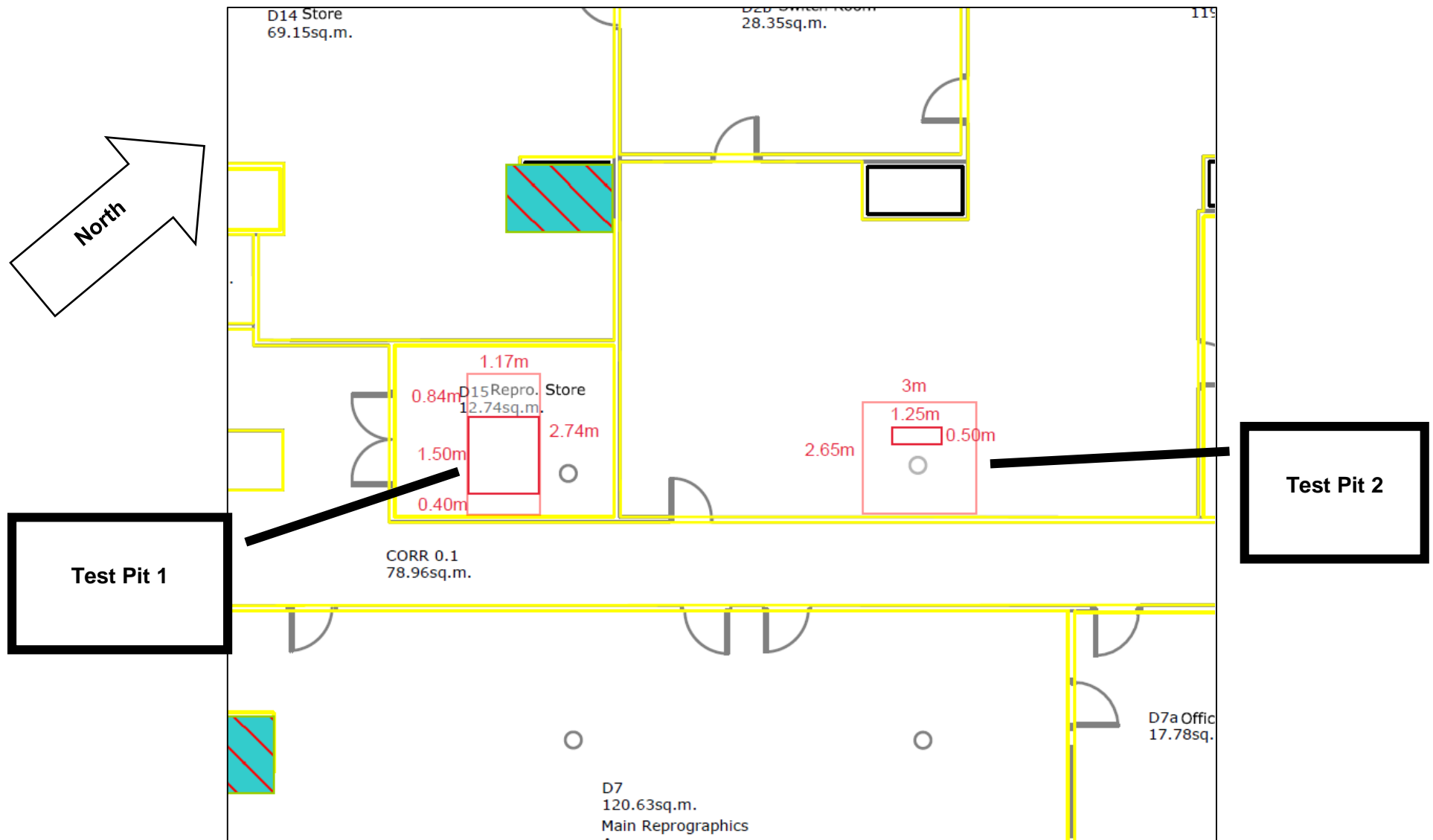


Figure 9: Detailed Trench Location Plan



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