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DAVID WILSON HOMES NORTH WEST

FORMER MMU CAMPUS, ALSAGER

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE EXCAVATION

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Former Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) Campus, Alsager

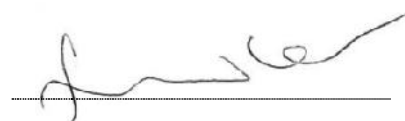
Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation

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SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong was commissioned by David Wilson Homes North West to undertake an archaeological investigation on land at the former Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) Campus, Alsager, Cheshire (site centred on NGR SJ 7857 5594), prior to the redevelopment of the site (Planning Ref: 15/5222C). The archaeological work took the form of a strip, map and sample excavation focusing on the site of a former farmstead, Daisybank Farm, which was depicted on the Tithe Map of 1840. The strip, map and record excavation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced in response to advice given by Vicki Nash, Development Management Archaeologist, acting as the archaeological planning advisor on behalf of Cheshire East Council.

The strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken between the 30th May and 6th June 2017, with two areas excavated at the southwest corner of the proposed development area. The excavation areas (Area 1 and Area 2) were positioned in the location of the recorded buildings at 'Daisybank Farm', as depicted on the Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps of the site, and comprised the excavation of 345m² of land in total, located within a sports pitch.

Archaeological remains were found in both areas investigated and extended across the whole of the study area. The data recovered indicated past activity on the site dating to post-medieval and modern periods, there being no surviving evidence for any activity earlier than the 18th century. The main phase of activity identified appears to relate to the 19th and 20th century occupation of Daisybank Farm. This activity was represented by the brick and timber foundations of at least two buildings, and other small brick structures, and finds of 18th to 20th century date. The survival of the archaeological features was generally poor, with much of the evidence across the site apparently having been removed during the creation of the later sports pitch. Only limited foundations survived across the site, the turf and shallow topsoil being seen to directly overlie the natural sand.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong thanks Chris Williamson, David Wilson Homes North West, for commissioning the project, and for all his assistance throughout the work. Wardell Armstrong also thank Vicki Nash, Development Management Archaeologist, Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service (CAPAS).

The archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was supervised by Kevin Mounsey with the assistance of Kevin Horsley and Michael Mann. The report was written by Martin Railton and Fiona Wooler, and illustrated by Helen Phillips. Finds assessment was by Megan Stoakley, WA Finds Officer. The project was managed by Martin Railton, WA Senior Project Manager. Frank Giocco, WA Technical Director edited the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Circumstances

1.1.1 In June 2017 Wardell Armstrong undertook an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation on land at the former Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) Campus, Alsager, Cheshire (site centred on NGR: SJ 7857 5594). It was commissioned by David Wilson Homes North West who have been granted planning permission for the redevelopment of the site.

1.1.2 Planning permission has been granted by Cheshire East Council for the demolition of all buildings at the former Manchester Metropolitan University Campus site, and the erection of 426 dwellings with associated parking, laying out of new grass pitches, two artificial grass pitches with associated floodlighting and fencing, new changing rooms and ancillary parking, and new accesses onto Hassall Road and Dunnocksfold Road (Planning Ref: 15/5222C).

1.1.3 Condition 11 of the planning consent states that: *'No development of plots 488-500 shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme. Reason: To ensure the appropriate recording of known archaeological remains'*.

1.1.4 Plots 488-500 are located on the site of a former farmstead, Daisybank Farm, which is depicted on the Tithe Map of 1840. In order to satisfy Condition 11, a programme of archaeological work in the form of a strip, map and sample excavation of the site of Daisybank Farm was requested by Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service.

1.2 Project Documentation

1.2.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced to provide a specific methodology for the archaeological strip, map and sample excavation (Wardell Armstrong 2017a). This was approved by the archaeological planning advisor prior to the fieldwork taking place. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).

1.2.2 This report outlines the work undertaken on site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological evaluation.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards and guidance

- 2.2.1 The archaeological excavation was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014a), and in accordance with the Wardell Armstrong Excavation Manual (2017b).
- 2.2.2 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (CIfA 2014b).

2.2 Documentary Research

- 2.2.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken of the site in 2015 to support an outline planning application. The assessment identified the survival of some buildings within the site, associated with 'Heathside Hostel', which was constructed c.1940 to house workers for the nearby Radway Green Royal Ordnance Factory (WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff 2015). Following the end of the Second World War the buildings were incorporated into an Emergency Teacher Training College, and these surviving within a series of subsequent educational establishments.
- 2.2.2 Also identified in the desk-based assessment was the site of Daisybank Farm located to the south-west corner of the site; this was noted to be of local significance. It was recognised that archaeological remains relating to Daisybank Farm would survive sub-surface; these remains would be impacted by the development.
- 2.2.3 A summary of the historical and archaeological background provided in the previous desk-based assessment has been included in Section 3 below to provide the historical context to the site of Daisybank Farm. Additional assessment of historical mapping was undertaken by Wardell Armstrong in 2017 in order to supplement the previous research.

2.3 The Strip, Map and Sample Excavation

- 2.3.1 The strip, map and sample excavation areas were located over two buildings associated with 'Daisybank Farm', as depicted on the Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps of the site. These comprised two separate excavation areas (Area 1 and Area 2) measuring 169m² (Area 1) and 176m² (Area 2) which included a minimum 2m buffer around the locations of the former farm buildings (Figure 2).

2.3.2 The excavation areas were initially stripped of topsoil and subsoil using a 360 mechanical tracked excavator with toothless ditching bucket under constant observation of the attendant archaeologist. Once the first archaeological horizon was encountered, all subsequent excavation was by hand, undertaken by a team of archaeologists. All features encountered were investigated and recorded according to the Wardell Armstrong standard recording procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (Wardell Armstrong 2017b).

2.3.3 The general aims of the investigations were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed in detail, in advance of loss through site works;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces, in order to more fully understand the nature of archaeological remains within these areas; the period(s) of occupation present across the site, and the relationships between the various periods of occupation and activity;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes, and to help inform understanding of the layout, date, function, phasing, development and economic function of each area and the contemporary landscape environment;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.3.3 All finds encountered were retained on site and then taken to the Carlisle office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the Wardell Armstrong Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the broad date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines (Brown 2011; ClfA 2017; EAC 2014 and Watkinson and Neal 1998). Please note, the following categories of material will be discarded after a period of six months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- unstratified material;
- modern pottery;

- material that has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.
- 2.3.4 On completion the excavated areas were reinstated by replacing the excavated material in the order in which it was excavated, which was stored separately to prevent mixing of topsoil and subsoil.
- 2.3.5 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be maintained by Wardell Armstrong until a suitable repository can be identified for long-term curation. Copies of the report sent to the Cheshire Historic Environment Record, where viewing will be made available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier (LE13869/MMU-A).
- 2.3.6 Wardell Armstrong supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: wardella2-287617.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.3.1 Alsager is a town and civil parish in the unitary authority of Cheshire East, and is situated approximately 15km to the north-west of the city of Stoke-on-Trent. The town is located east of Crewe, and to the east of the M6 motorway (Figure 1).
- 3.3.2 The development area is located to the north-west of Alsager, west of Hassall Road and to the north of Dunnocksfold Road. The site is currently occupied by the former Manchester Metropolitan University Campus, and consists of various faculty buildings clustered at the centre of the site, including teaching facilities, dance studios and halls of residence, incorporating the original 1940s buildings. The land currently also comprises several sports pitches, a sports hall, gymnasium and a swimming pool.
- 3.3.3 The site of Daisybank Farm is located to the south-west of the site, on the north side of Dunnocksfold Road, and to the west of modern residential properties on Sunnyside. The site has more latterly been used as playing fields associated with the University campus (site centred on NGR SJ 7818 5575; Figure 2).
- 3.3.4 The geology of the site comprises mudstone, known as Sidmouth Mudstone Formation. This sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 217 to 250 million years ago in the Triassic Period. This is overlain by glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel, formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2017).

3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.2.1 A desk-based assessment was produced, utilising information from the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and other documentary sources, to determine the known historical and archaeological background of the site and the surrounding landscape to a distance of 1km (WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff 2015). It is not intended to repeat that information here and what follows is a brief overview, for further details please refer to the original document.
- 3.2.2 ***Prehistoric (up to c.43AD):*** There are no known archaeological assets of Prehistoric date within the site boundary.
- 3.2.3 Within the 1km study area, one cropmark (HER 1137) has been identified to the east of the site, thought to be the remains of a ring ditch. Archaeological investigations in the surrounding area indicate the area was part of an extensive prehistoric wet-woodland during the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic with limited evidence of

activity.

- 3.2.4 **Roman (c.43AD to 410AD):** There is one known archaeological asset of Roman date within the site, the King's Road which runs diagonally through the west of the site from north-west to south-east (HER 436/1/10). No further Roman sites or finds are recorded in Alsager (Cheshire County Council 2003).
- 3.2.5 **Early Medieval (c.410AD to 1066AD):** There are no known archaeological assets of Early Medieval date known within the site boundary or within the 1km study area. A small settlement, however, was recorded at Domesday (1086AD), although the location is unknown (Cheshire County Council 2003).
- 3.2.6 **Medieval (c.1066AD to 1485AD):** There are no known archaeological assets of medieval date within the site boundary or within the 1km study area.
- 3.2.7 There are numerous references to land transactions in Alsager during the medieval period, including in the reign of Edward I (1272-1307AD) ' ..two messuages, two carucates, 80 acres of waste, [and] for of meadow'. In 1302-7AD an assart (clearing of woodland) was recorded, however these references do not provide information on the location and extent of medieval Alsager (Cheshire County Council 2003).
- 3.2.8 **Post Medieval (c.1485AD to 1901AD):** Throughout the early part of the post medieval period it appears, from historical mapping, that the development site may have been located on Alsager Heath, as suggested by Burdett's small scale county map of 1777, and the annotation 'Alsager Heath' on the First Edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1882 (see Figure 5). Alsager Heath appears to have been enclosed in 1834, and the development site formed part of this enclosure as shown on the Plan of Allotments on Alsager Heath, which depicts the new fields to be laid out, as well as the creation or realignment of roads such as Hassall Road and 'Dunnocks Fold Road'. No buildings are shown at the location of Daisybank Farm (Plot 9) on this map suggesting that it was not in existence in 1834, but may have been constructed as a result of this enclosure (Figure 3).
- 3.2.9 The Tithe Map for Alsager Township and accompanying Award, dating to 1840, shows that by this date the land taking into enclosure had been further subdivided to create small, relatively regularly-spaced, fields, and that buildings are shown at the location of Daisybank Farm, although it is not labelled as such (Figure 4). The Award records that Plot 85 was owned and occupied by Joseph Edwards Jnr, with the buildings described as 'Homestead'. Joseph Edwards Jnr also owned and occupied Plots 79-84,

recorded as either meadow or arable fields, suggesting a relatively small farmstead comprising farm house and buildings and six fields of mixed agricultural economy.

- 3.2.10 The First Edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1882 shows the development site as mostly fields, with Daisybank Farm shown in the south-west corner. Other features within the site boundary include numerous field boundaries, a track to 'Manor House', and a large pond, possibly a marl pit, to the north (Figure 5).
- 3.2.11 **Modern (1901AD onwards):** The rural location of Alsager, away from the major conurbations and railway network, promoted the town as a suitable location for an armaments factory during the Second World War. Therefore the town was selected for a munitions factory, situated at Radway Green. The factory required large numbers of workers and prefabricated houses were constructed to cater for the staff and their families that transferred to ROF Radway from Woolwich Arsenal. The development site is situated on the remains of one of these hostels known as 'Heathside Hostel' which was erected in c.1940.
- 3.2.12 The hostel itself consisted of a central brick-built communal block with sleeping quarters in Laing huts radiating from this in an oval arrangement, which were built of timber, hollow tiles and roofing felt. The Ordnance Survey map of 1951 clearly shows this arrangement, with H-shaped blocks surrounding a central linear range (Figure 6).
- 3.2.13 Following the end of the Second World War, the Hostel became an Emergency Teacher Training College. Although total redevelopment of the site was planned in 1961, the central original buildings remained and were incorporated into the new campus in 1969. By 1974, the college was known as the Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, and by 1991 was incorporated into Manchester Metropolitan University.
- 3.2.14 On cartographic evidence provided in the previous desk-based assessment, Daisybank Farm appears to have been demolished at some point between 1967 and 1981, with the land on which it previously stood forming part of a playing field (WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff 2015).

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE EXCAVATION RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken between the 30th May and 6th June 2017, with two areas excavated at the southwest corner of the proposed development area (Figure 2). The excavation areas (Area 1 and Area 2) were positioned in the location of the recorded buildings at 'Daisybank Farm', as depicted on the Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps of the site, and comprised the excavation of 345m² of land in total.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Following the removal of a 0.25m-deep layer of turf and topsoil (**100**) by machine from the two excavation areas, limited archaeological remains were identified in each area, comprising the foundations of a small square brick structure and L-shaped building in Area 1, and the remains of a wall and timber structure in Area 2.

4.2.2 Across the remainder of the two excavation areas, the natural yellow/orange sand (**101**) was revealed at a depth of approximately 0.25m below ground level (blg). A 1m-deep *sondage* was excavated within each area to confirm that the sand represented the natural substrate, which was found to be the case.

4.2.2 **Area 1:** Area 1 was situated to cover location of a small L-shaped building as depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1882 and later mapping (Figure 7).

4.2.3 The excavation area was aligned northeast to southwest being 12m wide by 14.2m long. The natural substrate (**101**) was identified at a depth of 0.25m with a height of 85.0m aOD (above Ordnance datum) the north of Area 1 and in 85.2m aOD in the south.

4.2.4 At the centre of Area 1 the foundation cut [**108**] for an L-shaped brick structure {**103**} was revealed cutting into the natural sand (**101**). The cut was observed on the northwest, southwest and southeast sides of the structure, with an observed depth of up to 0.5m, but was not visible to the northeast, which was excavated to the full depth of the structure to expose the full elevation of the wall (Plate 1).

4.2.5 Filling the foundation cut [**108**] on the northwest, southwest and southeast sides of the structure was a grey sand (**109**) containing fragments of brick. No finds were recovered from this deposit with which to date the construction of the structure.

- 4.2.6 The brick structure **{103}** was 4.07m long northwest to southeast, and 2.32m wide at the west end, narrowing to 1.12m at the east end (Figure 7). The structure was constructed from red unfrogged bricks bonded with lime mortar each measuring 240mm by 115mm by 75mm and laid in an English bond, made up of alternating courses of stretchers and headers. The northeast wall survived up to 0.76m in height.
- 4.2.7 The Internal space at the northwest side of the structure measured 1.9m by 1.8m and was filled by a c.0.1m-deep layer of orange/grey sand **(106)** containing brick fragments, which was a bedding layer for a floor surface of Staffordshire blue brick tiles **(105)**. These were broken/robbed out at the centre of the structure (Plate 2).
- 4.2.8 The base of an internal brick wall **{136}** measuring 0.62m long and 0.23m wide, and aligned northeast to southwest, was seen to bisect the north side of this space (Plate 1) and appeared to be part of the original design of the structure, as it was respected by the tile floor **(105)**.
- 4.2.9 Another similar wall **{104}** on the same alignment subdivided the northwest and southeast portions of the structure, measuring 0.66m long and 0.24m wide, having almost identical dimensions to wall **{136}**, and surviving to a height of 0.08m.
- 4.2.10 The southeast side of structure **{103}** was filled with a layer of compacted red brick rubble with lime mortar **(107)**, beneath which was the natural sand. No floor surface was evident in the southeast side of the structure.
- 4.2.11 The foundation of an L-shaped red brick wall **{110}** was seen to join the northwest side of the structure **{103}**, and appeared to be part of the original design, as it was bonded into the northern corner of the outer wall, and constructed from similar red bricks bonded with lime mortar, being 0.08 high. The wall defined a square area measuring 1.82m by 1.9m. However, the southern part of the wall for structure **{110}** had been bisected by a modern land drain, and so the relationship in this area was unclear.
- 4.2.12 Filling the interior of the red brick structure **{110}** was a deposit of dark grey sand **(135)**, within which was an alignment of 3 red bricks **(134)** forming a possible drain. The bricks were aligned approximately east to west appearing to form a channel measuring 0.5m long and 0.3m wide, although this was uncertain (Plate 2). Post-medieval finds comprising a glass marble and sherds of stoneware pottery were recovered from the sand **(135)**.
- 4.2.13 The foundations of a separate rectangular brick structure **{133}** was revealed cutting into the natural sand **(101)** on the north side of Area 1. This measured 0.48m wide and

0.63m long, with a height of 0.08m and a sunken brick base (Plate 3). The function of the structure was unclear.

- 4.2.14 Several patches of dark brown/grey stained sand **(102)** were identified in Area 1, which hinted at the presence of further structures, which have since been removed (Plate 1). Fragments of 18th and 19th century ceramics, floor tile, metal and leather were recovered from this layer, which was indicative of the demolition and removal of former structures across the site.
- 4.2.15 This layer, and the structures described above, were directly overlain by the topsoil **(100)** and turf of the former sports pitch, suggesting that the site had been subject to significant truncation for the creation of the sports pitch.
- 4.2.16 **Area 2:** Area 2 was immediately to the north of Area 1 and was located to cover the location of a linear building (or range of buildings) as depicted on historic mapping.
- 4.2.17 The excavation area was aligned northwest to southeast being approximately 7.5m wide by 21m long with a dog-leg extension measuring 10m wide at the east end. The natural substrate was identified at a depth of 0.25m with a height of 85.0m aOD (above Ordnance datum) in the northwest and in 85.1m aOD in the southeast (Figure 8).
- 4.2.18 The foundations of a wall, of two possible phases of construction, was revealed running northwest to southeast across the south side of excavation area, lying directly upon the natural sand **(101)**. The west end of the wall was 1.5m long and 0.38m wide, and comprised three large stones **{112}** with dimensions ranging between 0.3m by 0.25m by 0.08m and 0.59m by 0.3m by 0.15m. These were interpreted as the foundations of the wall of a building with the northeast face probably being internal (Plate 4).
- 4.2.19 Immediately to the east, the wall foundation continued as a single layer of bricks **{113}** measuring 2m long, 0.3m wide and 0.07m high, laid in an English Bond. This provided an overall length of 4.5m for the wall, although it was uncertain whether the two sections were contemporary, or whether the brick foundation was added to extend an earlier wall.
- 4.2.20 At the west end of the brick foundation **{113}**, bisected by a modern land drain, was another rectangular brick structure **{114}**. This measured 0.55m by 0.45m being 0.07m high and made from a single layer of red bricks, similar to the wall foundation **{113}**.

- 4.2.21 To the northwest another section of brick wall **{111}** was revealed which measured 1.11m long, 0.22m wide and 0.36m high, aligned northeast to southwest (Plate 5). This also lay directly on the natural sand (**101**) but the foundations were varied, between one and three bricks deep, presumably because the sand was not level at this location.
- 4.2.22 Two post holes were identified immediately to the west of this wall **{111}**, which were the easternmost examples of a series of seven post holes identified within the northeast portion of Area 2, all cutting the natural sand (Plate 5, Figure 8). The largest of the two post holes **[115]** measured 0.74m by 0.49m and was 0.3m deep, filled by moderately compacted dark grey/brown silty sand (**116**) containing no finds (Figure 9, Section 4). The smaller post hole **[117]** to the north measured 0.27m square and was 0.09m deep filled by similar moderately compacted dark grey/brown silty sand (**118**) also containing no finds.
- 4.2.23 An alignment of three large rectangular post holes was identified to the east of these, aligned northwest to southeast, similar to the wall foundation **{112}/{113}** which was located immediately to the south. The easternmost post hole **[119]** measured 0.69m by 0.59m and was 0.17m deep, filled by loosely compacted dark grey/brown sand (**120**) containing fragments of brick, iron and timber (Figure 9, Section 1). To the west was a square post hole **[123]** measuring 0.6m by 0.6m being 0.12m deep and filled by moderately compacted dark grey/brown silty sand (**124**) containing fragments of ceramic building material (CBM), and the base of a rectangular timber post (**132**) measuring 0.07m by 0.11m (Plate 6, Figure 9, Section 2). West of this was the third rectangular post hole **[121]** which measured 0.48m by 0.45m, and 0.2m deep filled moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand containing fragments of glass, CBM, iron nail fragments and slag. This post hole also contained the remains of a rectangular timber post (**129**) measuring 0.09m by 0.19m (Figure 9, Section 3).
- 4.2.24 A smaller rectangular post hole **[127]** was identified at the northeast corner of Area 2, which measured 0.3m by 0.13m, being 0.3m deep (Figure 9, Section 5) and filled by a wooden post (**128**). Immediately to the west the final post hole identified **[125]** which measured 0.58m by 0.42m and was 0.3m deep, filled by dark/black sand (**126**) containing occasional small pebbles and the remains of two posts (Plate 7). The southern of the two posts (**130**) had a diameter of 0.11m and was 0.28m long. The northern post (**131**) had a similar diameter at 0.1m and was 0.29m long (Figure 9, Section 6).

4.2.25 The arrangement of the post-holes and wall foundations, combined with the finds recovered from the post holes, were indicative of the presence of a timber framed agricultural building of likely 19th century (or later) date in Area 2 with dimensions of at least 13m northwest to southeast by 5.7m northeast to southwest, the building having possibly continued outside of the excavation area to the northeast.

4.3 **Archaeological Finds and Environmental Sampling**

4.3.1 A range of post-medieval and modern finds were recovered during the strip, map and sample investigation, which are discussed in Section 5 below.

4.3.2 No samples suitable for environmental assessment were obtained during the groundworks.

5. FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A total of 140 artefacts, weighing 19,550g, were recovered from seven stratified deposits during an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation on land at the former MMU campus, Alsager.

5.1.2 All finds were dealt with according to the recommendations made by Watkinson & Neal (1998) and to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) Standard & Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CifA 2014b). All artefacts have been boxed according to material type and conforming to the deposition guidelines recommended by Brown (2011) and EAC (2014).

5.1.3 The material archive has been assessed for its local, regional and national potential and further work has been recommended on the potential for the material archive to contribute to the relevant research frameworks.

5.1.4 Quantification of bulk finds by context is visible in Table 1, below.

Context	Material	Qty	Wgt (g)	Date	Comments
102	CBM	2	229	PM	Floor tile
105	CBM	13	5909	PM	Three Staffordshire blue bricks
116	CBM	1	46	PM	Fragment of brick, very friable, dark red fine clay fabric, evidence of burning on exterior surface
120	CBM	2	105	PM	Fragments of brick
122	CBM	12	3243	PM	Fragments of brick, floor or wall kitchen tile - very hard-fired
124	CBM	4	4318	PM	Hand-made brick fragments
102	Ceramic	67	3119	PM	Transfer print (Willow pattern & non-Willow Pattern), RWE - plates, teacups, jars, garish Jardiniere stand; Stoneware jam / preserve jars, 1 x RWE; 18th or 19th century Buckley-type coarse red earthenware pancheon sherds, Mocha ware (?) jar rim sherd; 1 x sherd of refined red earthenware base sherd - strainer? RWE
135	Ceramic	1	10	PM	Stoneware
120	Fe	2	599	PM	
122	Fe	11	101	PM	Nail fragments
124	Fe	7	448	PM	Miscellaneous sheet fragments
120	Fe & Wood	1	96	PM	
102	Glass	11	946	PM	Dickson's Mineral Water Works Hamley codd bottle, several pharmaceutical / medicinal bottles
122	Glass	1	4	PM	Window glass
135	Glass	1	14	PM	Painted toy or decorative fancy marble
102	Leather	1	1	PM	Tiny child's shoe

102	Metal	1	23	PM	Unknown object (rod)
122	Slag	2	339	PM	Blast furnace?
TOTAL		140	19550		

Table 1: Quantification of Finds

5.2 Post-medieval Ceramics

5.2.1 A total of 68 sherds of post-medieval ceramics, weighing 3,129g, was recovered from two deposits (Table 1). The pottery is in very good condition in the main.

5.2.2 Fabric types comprise Buckley-type coarse red earthenware, refined white earthenware, stoneware, refined red earthenware, one sherd of possible Mocha ware as well as Transfer Printed pottery.

5.2.3 Vessel types include plates, teacups, jars, strainers, large pancheons (a wide shallow bowl originally used for bread-making) and a fragment of a garish jardinière stand.

5.2.4 A broad date of 18th to 19th century is appropriate for this assemblage.

5.2.5 No further analysis is warranted at this time.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

5.3.1 A total of 34 fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 13,850g, was recovered from six deposits (Table 1). The fragments are in moderate condition and many of the artefacts exhibit evidence of burning, making them friable and brittle.

5.3.2 The artefacts comprise hand-made and machine-made brick fragments; three Staffordshire blue bricks were recovered from deposit (**105**). These bricks, as the name suggests, would have been produced in Staffordshire by potteries such as Tunstall, a brickworks in Stoke-on-Trent (The Potteries online 2017). This brickworks was producing these types of bricks from the early 19th century onwards and were made from the local bedrock, Etruria marl (*ibid*).

5.3.3 Other fragments comprise partial kitchen/bathroom floor and wall tile.

5.3.4 A broad date of 18th to 20th century is suitable for this assemblage.

5.3.5 No further work is recommended on this material.

5.4 Metal

5.4.1 A total of 22 metal artefacts, weighing 1,267g, was recovered from five deposits (Table 1). The artefacts are in poor condition and much of the iron exhibits heavy rust corrosion. The artefacts are friable and brittle.

5.4.2 The artefacts comprise nail fragments from deposits (**122**) and (**124**) as well as sheet iron fragments and a rod of unknown date or function.

5.4.3 A date of 18th to 20th century is suitable for this assemblage.

5.4.4 No further analysis is warranted on the metal artefacts.

5.5 Archaeometallurgical Waste

5.5.1 Two fragments of possible smithing slag, weighing 339g, was recovered from deposit (**122**). The condition of the slag is moderate to good.

5.5.2 Its presence in deposits on this site would indicate that smithing activities were taking place either on the site and/or in its environs, or that the material was imported from elsewhere. Its recovery with later post-medieval and modern artefacts would suggest that these two fragments are of a contemporary date with the finds assemblage.

5.5.3 No further analysis is warranted.

5.6 Leather

5.6.1 The perforated leather sole of a child's (infant) shoe, weighing 1g, was recovered from deposit (**102**). The condition of the leather is quite good in the main.

5.6.2 It is likely of 18th to 19th century date.

5.6.3 No further analysis is required at this stage.

5.7 Glass

5.7.1 Thirteen glass artefacts, weighing 964g, were recovered from three deposits (Table 1). The artefacts are in good condition.

5.7.2 The assemblage comprises fragments originating from domestic pharmaceutical/ medicinal bottles as well as mineral water codd bottles.

5.7.3 A small decorative marble was recovered from deposit (**135**).

5.7.3 The assemblage is likely of 19th century date.

5.7.4 No further analysis is required.

5.8 Statement of Potential

5.7.1 The finds assemblage recovered from the former MMU campus in Alsager provides evidence of 18th to 20th century domestic and industrial activity both on the site and in its environs. The assemblage is, however, of low archaeological significance on a local, regional and national scale. It will thus not be retained with the archive.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Interpretation

6.1.1 Archaeological remains were found in both areas investigated (Area 1 and Area 2), and extended across the whole study area. The data recovered indicated past activity on the site dating to post-medieval and modern periods, there being no surviving evidence for any activity earlier than the 18th century. The main phase of activity identified appears to relate to the 19th and 20th century occupation of Daisybank Farm. This activity was represented by the brick and timber foundations of at least two buildings, and other small brick structures, and a finds assemblage of 18th to 20th century date.

6.1.3 The archaeological evidence included the remains of an L-shaped building in Area 1, which may represent an outbuilding used for housing animals. The internal division into two stalls, and a possible drain, would support this interpretation, as well as the location of the structure, which could have been accessed from the farm house to the north and with additional access provided into a field to the south. An alternative interpretation would be a wash-house/privy. The presence of a Staffordshire blue brick floor in this building indicates a 19th century date for the structure.

6.1.4 A timber-framed structure in Area 2 was also identified, which is likely represent a agricultural building such as a barn or storage shed, with outer brick wall foundations. Both structures correspond to the locations of buildings as depicted on the Alsager Tithe Map of 1840 and later mapping. Three foundation stones identified on the south side of the structure in Area 2 may relate to an earlier phase, but this is uncertain.

6.1.3 The survival of the archaeological features was generally poor, with much of the evidence across the site having been removed during the creation of the later sports pitch. Only limited foundations survived across the site, the turf and shallow topsoil being seen to directly overly the natural sand.

6.2 Significance

6.2.1 The period 1750-1880 has been recognised as the most important period of farm building development in England and the Archaeological Research Framework for North West England recognises the need for more research into this area (Brennan 2007, 140). However, the significance of the current project is considered to be low, given the relatively poor survival of archaeological remains at the site.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Description	Depth/ thickness	Interpretation
U/S	Unstratified	N/A	N/A	Unstratified finds located around trench area.
(100)	Deposit	Sandy brown loam	0.25m	Topsoil
(101)	Natural Substrate	Yellow-orange sand	>1m	Natural substrate
(102)	Deposit	Dark brown sand/interface between topsoil and natural geology	0.3m	Stained sand representing areas previously occupied by buildings
{103}	Structure	L-shaped red brick structure in Area 1 with lime mortar bonding measuring 2.32m by 4.07m	0.76m	Foundation/walls of former building
{104}	Structure	Red brick north-south wall measuring 0.24m wide by 0.66m long sub-dividing structure {103}	0.08m	Internal dividing wall of building {103}
(105)	Deposit	Surface of blue brick tiles within structure {103} measuring 1.76m by 1.9m	0.05m	Floor surface of building {103}
(106)	Deposit	Orange/grey sand containing occasional fragments of red brick	0.1m	Bedding layer for floor surface (105)
(107)	Deposit	Red brick rubble and mortar layer mixed with orange sand within structure {103}	0.08m	Bedding layer for floor surface (now removed)
[108]	Cut	Cut for structure {103} visible on south, west and east sides of the brick wall	0.8m	Foundation cut for building {103}
(109)	Deposit	Grey sand containing occasional brick rubble	0.8m	Fill of foundation cut [108]
{110}	Structure	L-shaped red brick wall with lime mortar bonding extending on west side of structure {103} and measuring 0.75m by 0.61m	0.08m	Western extension wall to building {103} purpose uncertain
{111}	Structure	Section of red brick wall in Area 2 measuring 1.11m by 0.36m being 3 courses high, aligned northeast to southwest	0.23m	Wall of unknown function
{112}	Structure	Section of stone wall comprising three stones, aligned northwest to southeast, located at the east end of a brick structure in Area 2.	0.14m	Surviving portion of a wall from a building. Northeast face appears to be internal
{113}	Structure	Remains of a red brick wall on the same alignment as	0.07m	Foundations of wall of former building. As with

		stone wall {112} measuring 2m long and 0.3m wide, being one course deep		{112} northeast face appears to be internal
{114}	Structure	Red brick square structure at the west end of wall {113} measuring 0.42m by 0.55m, being one course deep	0.07	Foundations of uncertain purpose associated with walls {111} and {112}
[115]	Cut	Rectangular cut of post hole on the west side of Area 2 measuring 0.74m by 0.49m	0.3m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2
(116)	Deposit	Moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand	0.3m	Fill of post hole [115]
[117]	Cut	Square cut of post hole on the west side of Area 2 measuring 0.27m by 0.27m	0.09m	Post hole adjacent to post hole [115] and probably associated
(118)	Deposit	Moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand	0.09m	Fill of post hole [117]
[119]	Cut	Rectangular cut of post hole on the east side of Area 2 measuring 0.59m by 0.69m	0.17m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2
(120)	Deposit	Moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand containing some fragments of iron and wood	0.17m	Fill of post hole [119]
[121]	Cut	Rectangular cut of post hole on the east side of Area 2 measuring 0.45m by 0.48m	0.20m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2
(122)	Deposit	Moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand containing some fragments of CBM, tile and slag	0.20m	Fill of post hole [121]
[123]	Cut	Square cut of post hole on the east side of Area 2 measuring 0.60m by 0.60m	0.12m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2
(124)	Deposit	Moderately compacted grey/brown silty sand containing the remains of a timber post, iron slag and CBM	0.12m	Fill of post hole [123]
[125]	Cut	Rectangular cut of post hole on the northeast side of Area 2 measuring 0.42m by 0.58m	0.30m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2
(126)	Deposit	Moderately compacted black silty sand containing occasional small pebbles	0.30m	Fill of post hole [125]
[127]	Cut	Rectangular cut of post hole on the northeast side of Area 2 measuring 0.13m by 0.30m	0.30m	One of a series of postholes for a timber structure in Area 2

(128)	Deposit	Rectangular timber post measuring 0.13m by 0.30m filling cut [127]. No other inclusions present.	0.30m	Base of timber post for structure in Area 2
(129)	Deposit	Square timber post measuring 0.09m by 0.09m within post hole [121].	0.20m	Base of timber post for structure in Area 2
(130)	Deposit	Square timber post measuring 0.1m by 0.1m within post hole [125].	0.30m	Base of timber post for structure in Area 2 (southernmost of two posts in post hole [125])
(131)	Deposit	Square timber post measuring 0.1m by 0.1m within post hole [125].	0.29m	Base of timber post for structure in Area 2 (northernmost of two posts in post hole [125])
(132)	Deposit	Rectangular timber post measuring 0.07m by 0.11m within post hole [123].	0.18m	Base of timber post for structure in Area 2
{133}	Structure	Rectangular brick structure measuring 0.48m by 0.63m on the north side of Area 1	0.08m	Foundations of brick structure of unknown purpose
{134}	Structure	Three bricks forming a possible drain were identified in Area 1 to the west of the brick structure {103} measuring 0.5m long by 0.3m wide	0.12m	Possible drain (uncertain) or brick backfill
(135)	Deposit	Dark grey sand containing red brick rubble was identified to the west of brick structure {103} which may be the fill of a former drain	0.12	Uncertain deposit/ possible backfill for drain cut
{136}	Structure	Section of north-south red brick wall within structure {103} in Area 1 measuring 0.62m long and 0.23m wide	0.08m	Foundation of possible internal wall within building {103}

APPENDIX 2: PLATES



Plate 1: L-shaped brick structure {103} in Area 1, showing depth of the northeast wall, looking southwest



Plate 2: L-shaped brick structure {103}, showing tile floor surface (105), looking southeast



Plate 3: Rectangular brick structure {133}, on the north side of Area 1, looking north



Plate 4: Wall foundation {112}/{113} and structure {114}, on the south side of Area 2, looking southwest



Plate 5: Wall foundation {111} and unexcavated post holes [115] and [117] on the west side of Area 2, looking southwest



Plate 6: Half-sectioned post hole [123] showing fill (124) and post (132) on the east side of Area 2, looking west



Plate 7: Half-sectioned post hole [125] showing posts (130) and (131) on the north side of Area 2, looking west

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES






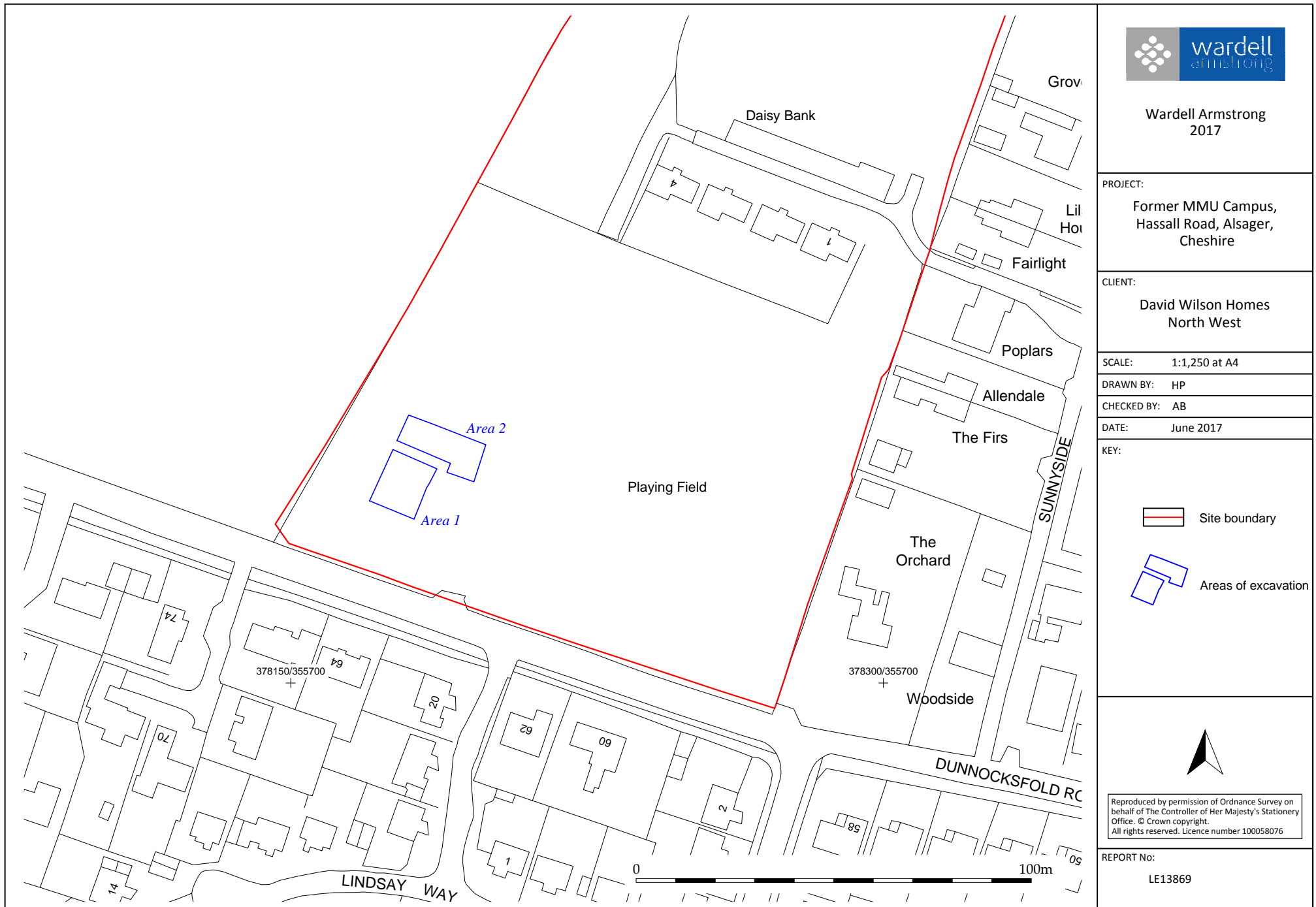
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Figure 1: Site location.



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
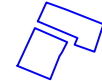
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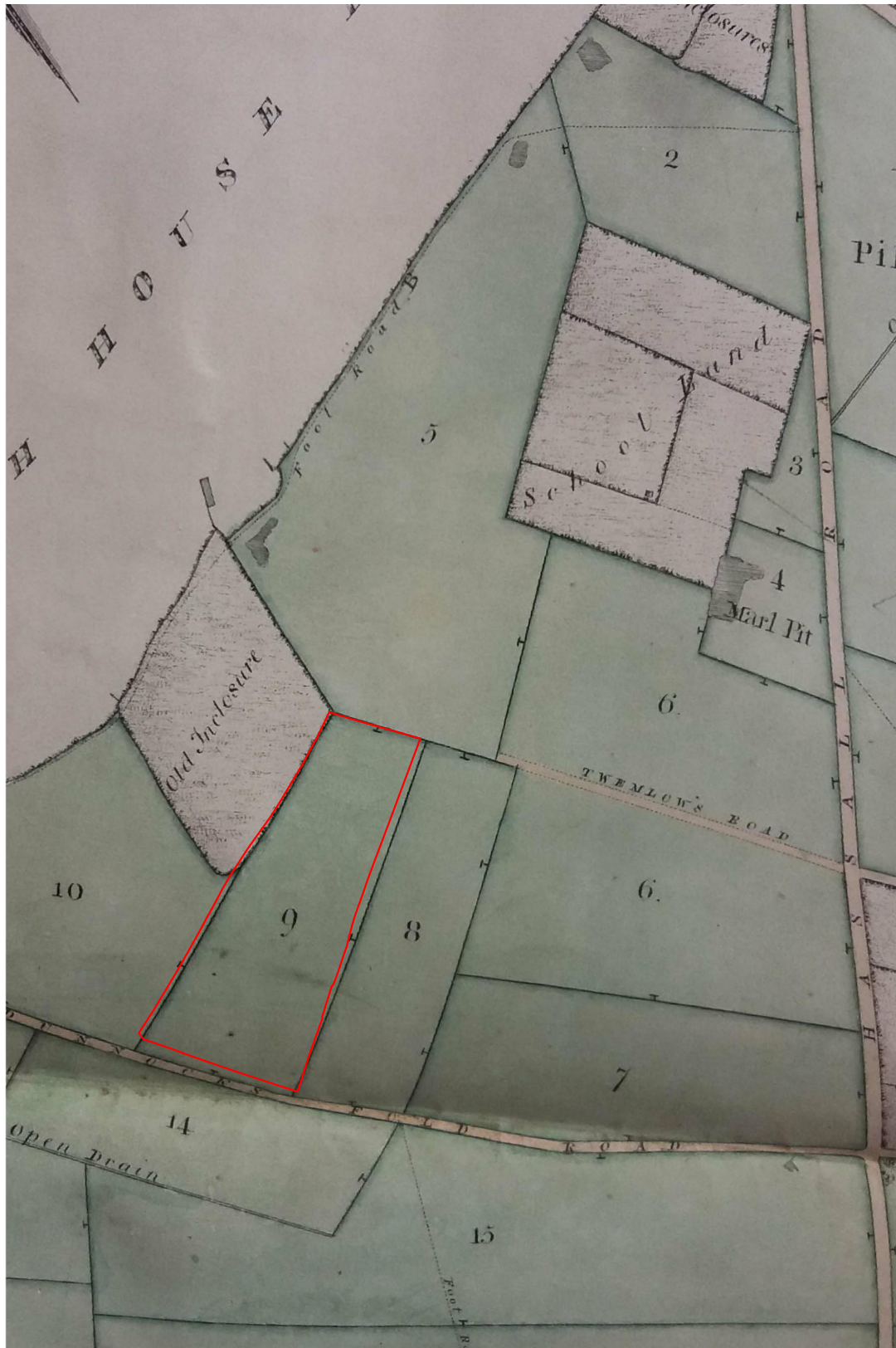
-  Site boundary
-  Areas of excavation



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Figure 2: Detailed site location.





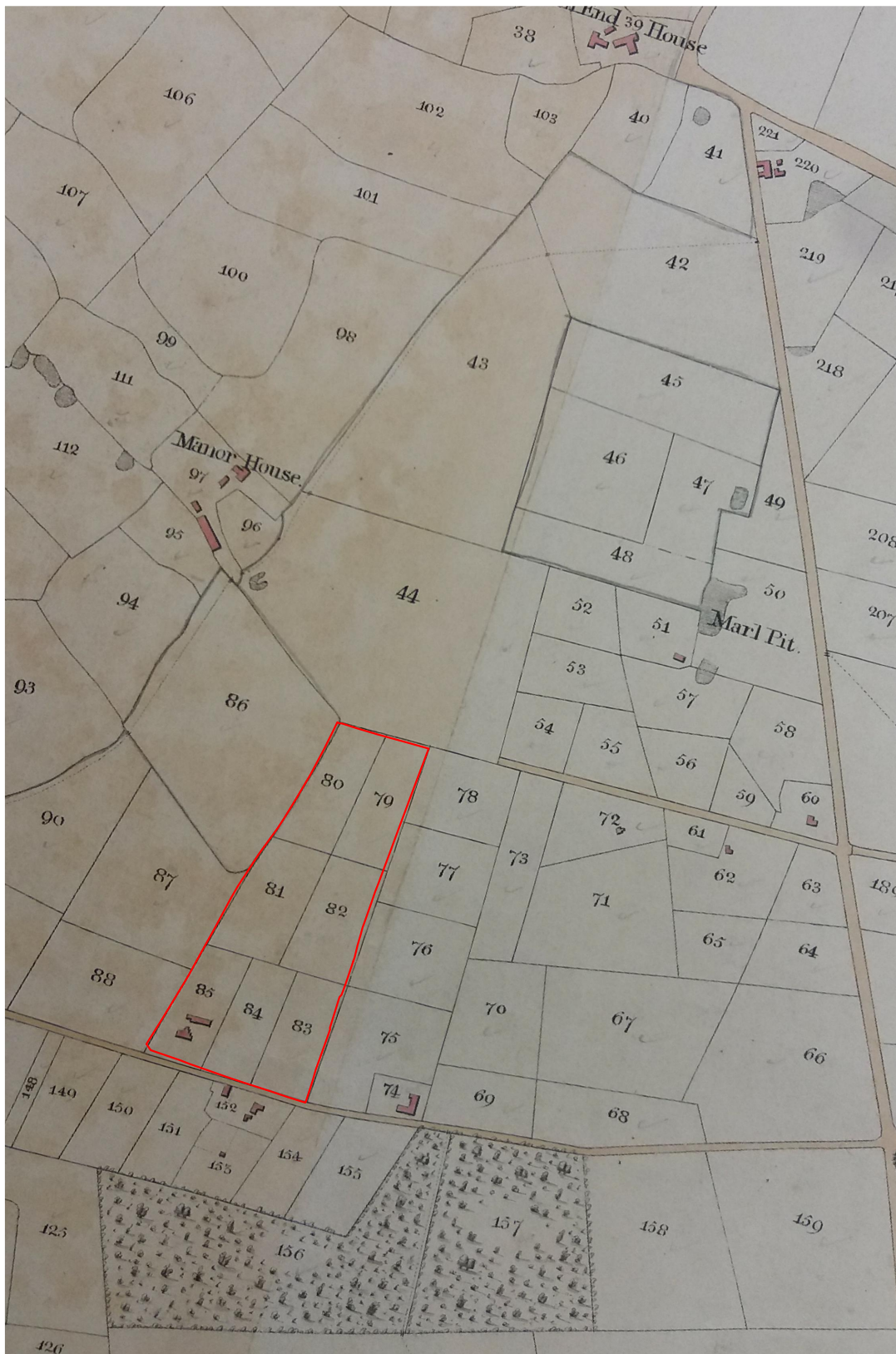
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Figure 3: Plan of Allotments on Alsager Heath, 1834.




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Figure 4: Extract from Alsager Tithe Map, 1840.



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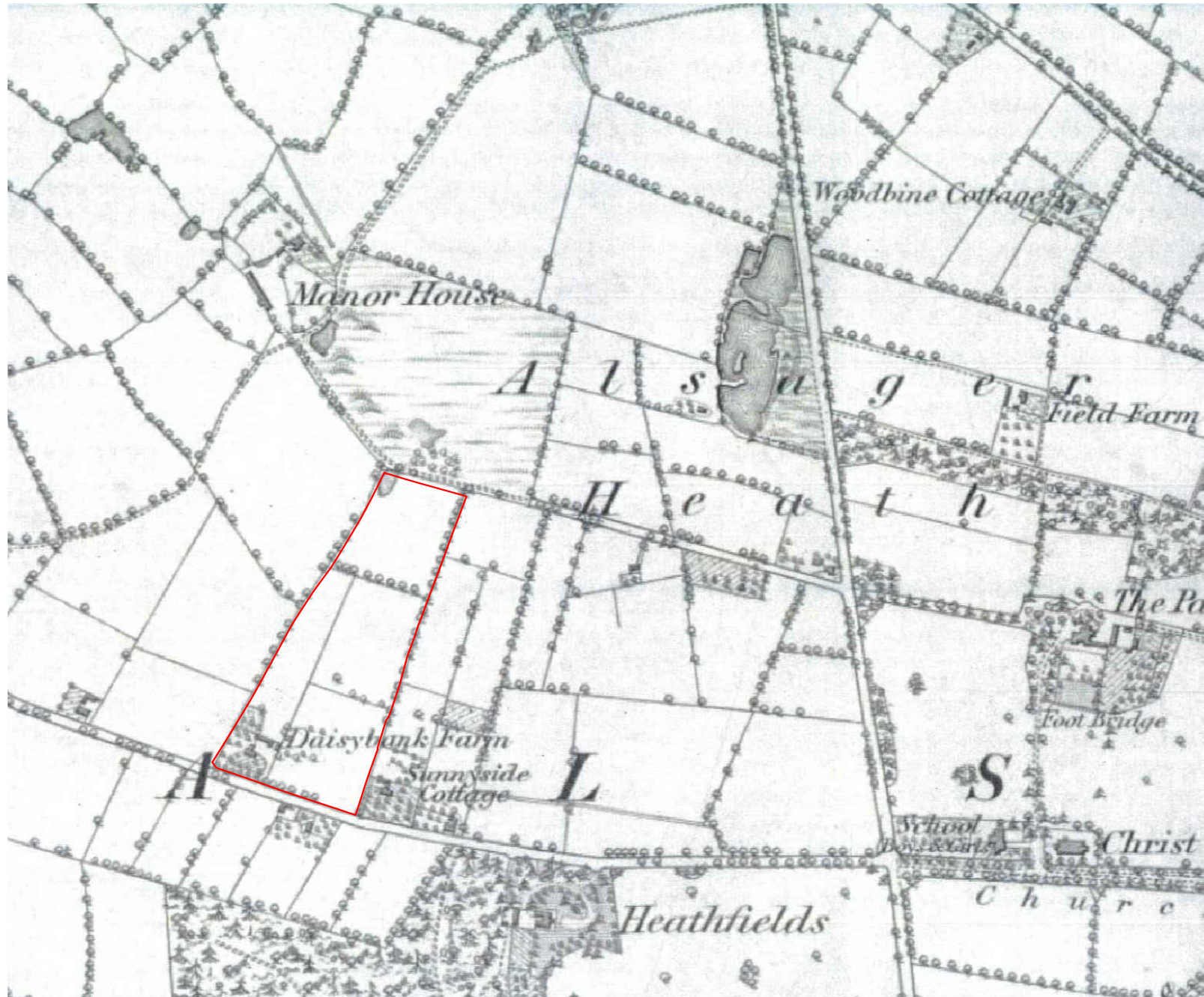


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey Map, 1882 (6 inches to 1 mile scale).

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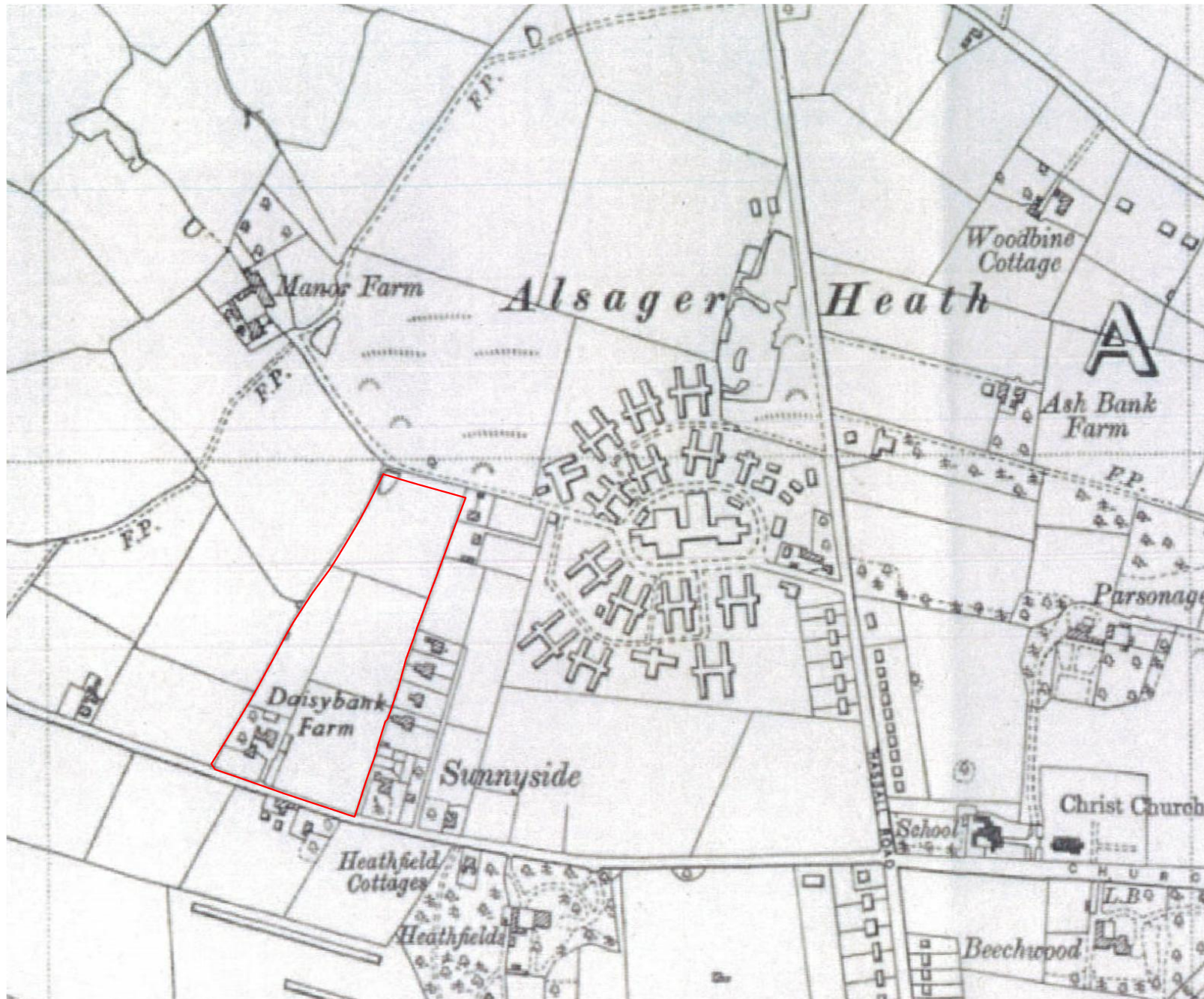


Figure 6: Ordnance Survey Map, 1951 (6 inches to 1 mile scale).



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

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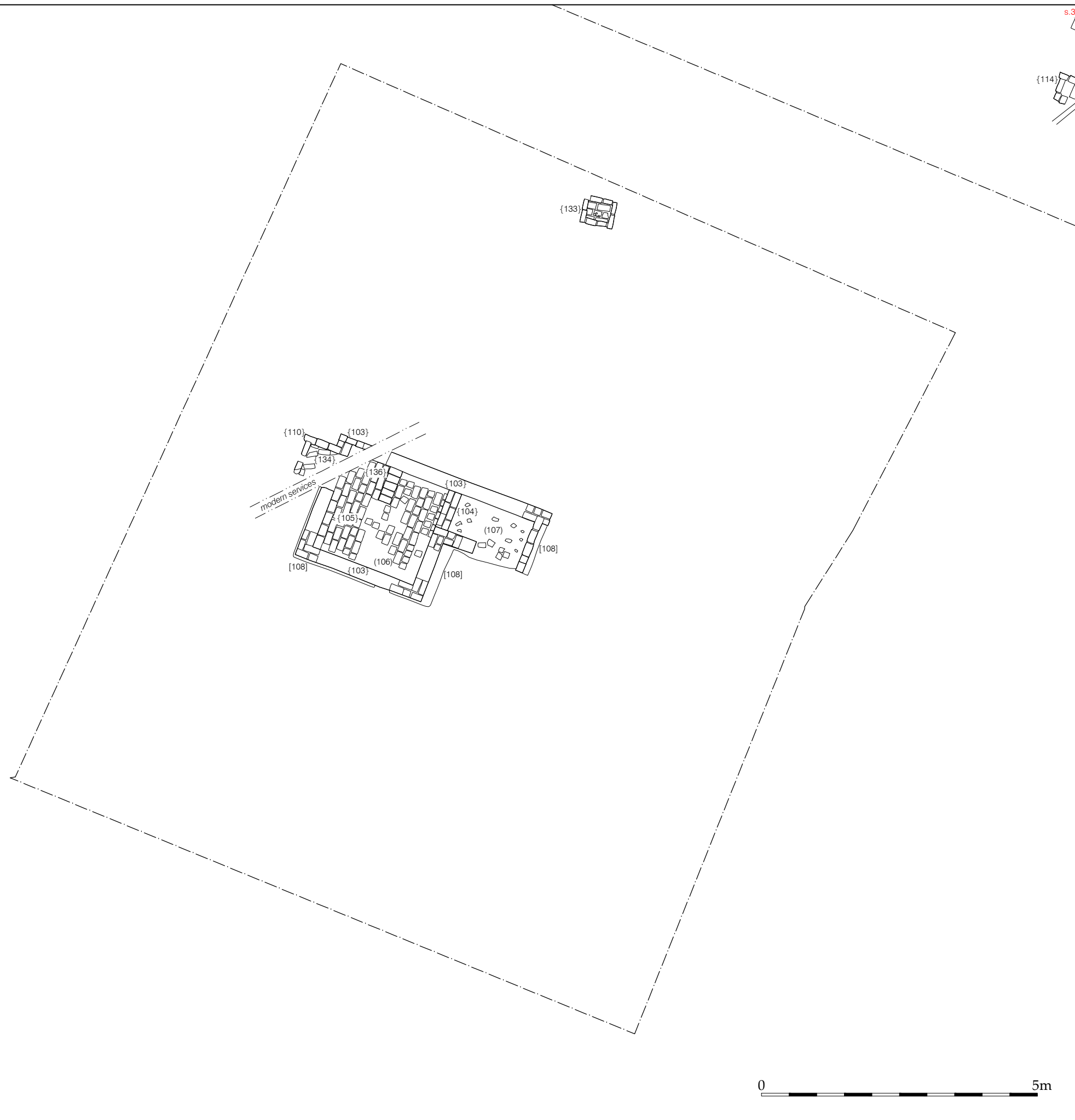


Figure 7: Plan of Area 1.



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- Section location
- Area excavated
- Limit of excavation



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Figure 8: Plan of Area 2.

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
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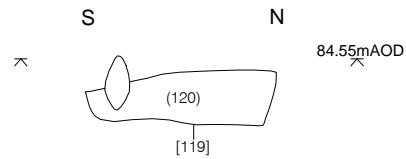
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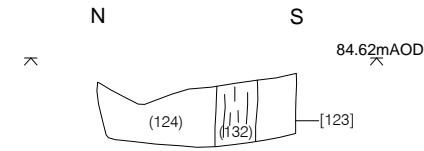
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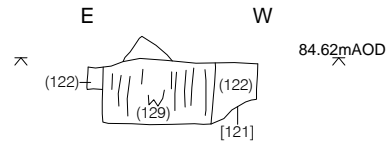
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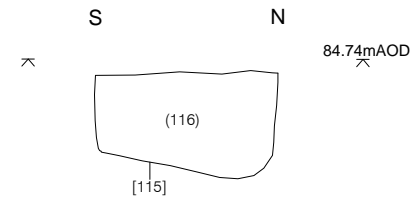
Section 1. East facing section across posthole [119].



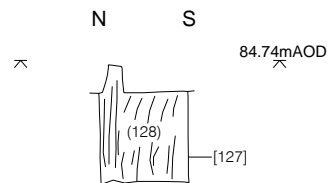
Section 2. West facing section across pit [123].



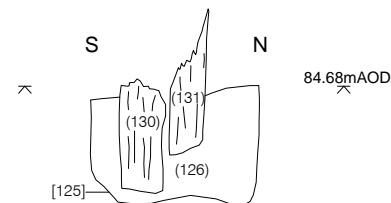
Section 3. North facing section across pit [121].



Section 4. East facing section across posthole [115].



Section 5. West facing section across posthole [127].



Section 6. East facing section across pit [125].



Figure 9: Sections; Area 2.

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