An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land Adjacent to Bromborough Court Moat, Pool Lane, Bromborough, Wirral.
NGR SJ 344 840

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Produced for Hantall Developments

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Non-Technical Summary

This report describes the results of a watching brief conducted during groundworks for the construction of a new car showroom on land adjacent to Bromborough Court Moat, Pool Lane, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside. Bromborough Court is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Number 17955) composed of the moat and two fishponds, one of which is within the moated area and the other to the west of the moat.

Bromborough Court Moat is almost certainly the site of Bromborough Manor which was occupied from at least the 13th century when it was owned by the abbot of St. Werburgh's, Chester (now Chester Cathedral). A new brick built house was constructed in 1680 on the eastern side of the enclosure and may have replaced some or all of the earlier structures known to have occupied the site. The house was demolished in 1969 and the site partly built over.

A number of previous investigations have taken place on the site including trial trenching, watching briefs and geophysical surveys. However, little evidence has been found for archaeological deposits.

No significant archaeological deposits were found during this project other than surface scatters of 19th and 20th century pottery and a possible ditch west of the fishpond, no archaeological deposits were present. The finds consisted of domestic pottery found in topsoil, probably the result of the casual dispersal of domestic refuse and is typical of assemblages found on former agricultural land within the Merseyside area.

Contents

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1. Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief conducted at land adjacent to the Bromborough Court Moat, Pool Lane, Bromborough, in June, July, October, November 2007 and January 2008. The site is situated adjacent to the A41 between Bromborough Pool to the north and Pool Lane to the south at NGR SJ 344 840 (Fig. 1.). The western site boundary is defined in part by Bromborough Court Moat, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Number 17955). As a Scheduled Ancient Monument the site is legally protected from disturbance or damage.

2. Background

The Scheduled Ancient Monument comprises the moat and two fishponds, one of which is within the moated area (Fig. 1). The other lies to the west of the moat and partially divides the development site into two halves. The moat survives as a *c*. 10 m deep and 10 m wide ditch with a steep sided V-shaped profile. It is unusual in being a parallelogram in plan, rather than the more common square. The western arm of the moat runs on a north-south alignment down the eastern edge of the development site, the northern arm runs broadly parallel to Bromborough Pool and the southern arm parallel to Pool Lane. The eastern arm appears to have been filled in.

Bromborough Court Moat is almost certainly the site of Bromborough Manor which was owned by the abbot of St. Werburgh's, Chester (now Chester Cathedral). The site is first referred to in 1284, when the Chronicle of St. Werburgh records that buildings on the site were burnt down. However, the site is likely to have earlier origins and it has been suggested that it is the location of a fortified court acting as the centre of a royal estate or *burgh* during the Anglo-Saxon period (Higham 1993). It is also seen by many (e.g. Harding 2002; Bu'Lock 1972, 54) as a possible location for the battle of Brunanburh in 937 AD though there are several other locations across northern England with equal claim to being the site of the battle (Edwards 1998).

Although there is no record of a licence to crenallate, Ormerod (1882) cites a charter of Earl Randle of Chester which suggests that it was fortified to secure the courts; the location is in an excellent defensive position. A full record of the buildings on site exists for 1604 and includes a hall, lower chamber, sealed chamber with glazed windows, bakehouse, kitchen, dayhouse and buttery. These elements would all be consistent with a medieval layout. The documents also include an inventory of the furniture. A new brick built house was constructed in 1680 on the eastern side of the enclosure and may have replaced some or all of these structures. The house was demolished in 1969 and the site partly built over.

A number of investigations have taken place on the site including trial trenching and a resistivity survey (Freke 1978, Jones 1978, David 1978 and Philpott 1989, Adams 2004, Adams & Ahmad 2004) along with various small interventions undertaken by local amateur archaeologists between the 1940's and the 1960's (MSMR site file). A watching brief conducted during the insertion of a sewer outside the western edge of the moat (Philpott 1989) found little evidence for *in situ* archaeological deposits other than a thin layer of material likely to result from periodic cleaning of the moat. The most recent work consisted of a watching brief during the excavation of trial pits and an archaeological evaluation for the present development (Adams 2004, Adams &

Ahmad 2004). This found very little evidence for *in situ* archaeological deposits apart from a possible gully at the east end of the site.

Despite this apparent lack of archaeological deposits in the area it was still deemed necessary to monitor groundworks during development due to the proximity of the site to an archaeologically sensitive area.

2. Methodology

The following is a summary of the methodology which is described in detail in the Project Design (Appendix A).

All site monitoring was undertaken by H. Jones and C. Ahmad.

The watching brief was conducted in two phases. The first phase took place in June and July 2007 during the initial stripping and preparation of the ground in the eastern and southern sectors of the development before construction of a new car showroom. This phase also included monitoring the excavation of test pits dug in advance of piling operations in the southern and eastern areas of the site. Unfortunately these had already been excavated by the time the archaeologist was present although most were able to be photographed and recorded before backfilling commenced. A sketch plan was drawn showing the position of each test pit and supplemented by an AutoCAD drawing provided by the on-site surveyor.

The second phase took place during October, November 2007 and January 2008 on the western side of the development, immediately west of the fishpond and east of the A41, where drainage and petrol/oil interceptor tanks were inserted below ground level coupled with the insertion of a water filtering and drainage system and a 0.5 m reduction in the overall level of this area of the site prior to laying a hard surface for vehicle storage.

All excavation was undertaken with a mechanical excavator operated under archaeological supervision.

Finds were collected from across the site and processed and recorded in accordance with NMLFAU guidelines.

Advice was received from J. Stopford, Inspector of Ancient Monuments (North-West England) English Heritage, regarding the boundaries of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

3. Results

A total of thirty four test pits and small trenches were excavated during the watching brief. Trench numbers run consecutively from those used for the 2004 evaluation of the site (Adams & Ahmad 2004), thus trenches are numbered from XXIII-LVI. Twenty test-pits were excavated in advance of piling operations to an average depth of *c.* 2 metres prior. Seven of these (Trenches XXIII, XXVI, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, XXXII) were situated on grassy areas of the site which were later stripped by machine. All clays and sands referred to in the text are natural deposits.

A further four trenches (XLIII, XLIV, XLV, XLVI) were excavated using a ‘mini’ digger to establish the line of the sewer pipe laid in 1989 and thus establish the extent of previously disturbed ground close to the moat. This work was undertaken at the request of J. Stopford (English Heritage) to assess whether or not the existing plan to

build the new access road to the showroom along the western edge of the moat could proceed. The four trenches were excavated to a depth of *c.* 0.2 - 0.4 m. All trenches revealed signs of the earlier disturbance (Plate 1) and it was agreed to establish a new line for the road to be planned for by the architects. These points were then measured in using a Total Station and forwarded to the client.

Initially, no trenches were excavated on the extreme western side of the site due to the presence of Ministry of Defence oil pipelines. However, during the second phase of the watching brief, a further six test pits (XLVII-LII) were excavated in the north-west quadrant of the site in order to find the exact location of the pipelines. This phase also included the insertion of a drainage system which will filter water into the existing fishpond through a series of drainage channels and filter tanks (LIII, LIV, LV). One final narrow, slot trench (LVI) was hand-dug from the south-east corner of the pond in order to insert an overflow pipe, bringing the total number of excavated pits to thirty four (Fig.2).

3.1 Trench XXIII

This trench was situated in the south-east corner of the site and measured *c*. 3.80 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. Topsoil was removed to a depth of 0.35 m onto a red Boulder Clay and crushed yellow sandstone matrix to a depth of *c*. 1.5 m.

3.2 Trench XXIV

This trench was also situated in the south-east corner of the site, slightly west of Trench I, and measured *c*. 3.70 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. The stratigraphic sequence was similar to Trench XXIII, though the topsoil also contained frogged and unfrogged bricks, as well as concrete flag fragments.

3.3 Trench XXV

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XXIV on the eastern side of the site and measured *c.* 3.70 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. Topsoil was removed to a depth of 0.35 m onto crushed red/yellow sandstone and sand over red Boulder Clay to a depth of *c*. 1.5 m.

3.4 Trench XXVI

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XXIII on the eastern boundary of the site and measured *c.* 3.70 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. The trench was close to the southwest corner of the moat. Topsoil was excavated onto a mixed matrix of natural clays and red sand at a depth of *c.* 0.15 m. The clays and red sand were excavated to a depth of *c.* 1.6 m.

3.5 Trench XXVII

This trench was situated to the north-west of Trench XXVI on the western side of the site and measured *c.* 3.60 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. The trench was close to the southwest corner of the moat. A mixed demolition rubble and topsoil layer overlaid compacted red Boulder Clay to a depth of *c*. 1.5 m.

3.6 Trench XXVIII

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XXVII on the eastern boundary of the site just west of the western arm of the moat. Measurements were not taken as the

trench was back-filled before recording could take place. However the trench had been briefly inspected and showed no visible signs of any archaeological deposits having been present.

3.7 Trench XXIX

This trench was situated to the northwest of Trench XXVIII in the north-eastern area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.50 m north-south. Brown sandy topsoil was removed to a depth of *c.* 0.30 m onto compacted red Boulder Clay with a thickness of *c.* 1.5 m.

3.8 Trench XXX

This trench was situated to the west of Trench XXIX in the north-eastern area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.50 m north-south and 2 m deep. Brown sandy topsoil *c.* 0.30 m deep was removed onto red Boulder Clay.

3.9 Trench XXXI

This trench was situated to the west of Trench XXX in the northern area of the site south-east of the fishpond and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.80 m north-south and *c.* 2 m deep. Topsoil was removed to a depth of *c.* 0.20 m revealing yellow sands and a brown sandy loam above red Boulder Clay.

3.10 Trench XXXII

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XXXI, east of the fishpond and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.70 m north-south a depth of *c.* 2 m. Topsoil was removed to a depth of *c.* 0.20 m revealing yellow sands and a brown sandy loam above red Boulder Clay and crushed red sandstone.

3.11 Trench XXXIII

This trench was situated to the west of Trench XXVI on the western side of the site and measured *c.* 3.10 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. A layer of demolition rubble mixed with a brown sandy loam lay above red clay which was overlying yellow and white sand over layer of red Boulder Clay. The clays and sands were excavated to a depth of *c.* 1.5 m.

3.12 Trench XXXIV

This trench was situated to the north-west of Trench XXXIII in the central area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.50 m north-south. A layer of demolition rubble mixed with a brown sandy loam overlying firm red clay with a thickness of *c.* 1 m was visible with a small deposit of black clinker deposited in the east facing section.

3.13 Trench XXXV

This trench was situated to the south-west of Trench XXXIII in the central area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m northwest-southeast and 3.60 m northeast-southwest. A layer of demolition rubble mixed with a brown sandy loam lay over brown clay with a deposit of black clinker onto red Boulder Clay.

3.14 Trench XXXVI

This trench was situated to the west of Trench XXXIII in the central area of the site and measured *c.* 3.50 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south. A layer of demolition rubble mixed with a brown sandy loam lay over brown clay and a deposit of black clinker onto red Boulder Clay.

3.15 Trench XXXVII

This trench was situated to the south-west of Trench XXXI in the central area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m northeast-southwest and 3.30 m northwest-southeast. A brown sandy loam lay over a yellow and white sand and red sandstone matrix.

3.16 Trench XXXVIII

This trench was situated to the southwest of Trench XXXVI in the central area of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m east-west and 3.80 m north-south. A brown sandy loam overlay firm red Boulder Clay which was excavated to a depth of *c.* 1 m.

3.17 Trench XXXIX

This trench was situated to the south of Trench XXXVI to the east of the original site entrance at the southern edge of the site and measured *c.* 0.80 m northeast-southwest and 3.70 m northwest-southeast. A brown sandy loam overlay firm red boulder clay and crushed red sandstone with an overall depth of *c*. 1.5 m.

3.18 Trench XL

This trench was situated to the west of Trench XXXIX just west of the original site entrance. Measurements were not taken as the trench was back-filled before recording could take place. However the trench had been briefly inspected and showed no visible signs of any archaeological deposits with only naturally deposited sands and clays present.

3.19 Trench XLI

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XL. Measurements were not taken as the trench was back-filled before recording could take place. However the trench had been briefly inspected and showed no visible signs of any archaeological deposits with only naturally deposited sands and clays present, although a modern brick culvert was also seen.

3.20 Trench XLII

This trench was situated to the north of Trench XL just south of the tip of the fishpond. Measurements were not taken as the trench was back-filled before recording could take place. However the trench had been briefly inspected and showed no visible signs of any archaeological deposits with only naturally deposited sands and clays present.

3.21 Trench XLIII

This trench was situated immediately north of Trench XXVI and was excavated to locate any disturbance caused from the insertion of a sewer in 1989. The trench

measured *c.* 2 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south with a total depth of 0.35 m. A red sandy clay was cut for the trench for the drain which was filled by a mid-brown sandy silt loam approximately 1 m wide (Plate 1).

3.22 Trench XLIV

This trench was situated immediately north of Trench XLIII and measured *c.* 2 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south with a total depth of 0.40 m. A red sandy clay was cut for the trench for the drain which was filled with a mid-brown sandy silt loam mixed with yellow sandstone fragments approximately 0.60 m wide.

3.23 Trench XLV

This trench was situated immediately south of Trench XXVIII and measured *c.* 1 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south with a total depth of 0.20 m. A red sandy clay was cut for the trench for the drain which was filled with a mid-brown sandy silt loam approximately 0.60 m wide.

3.24 Trench XLVI

This trench was situated immediately north of Trench XXVIII and measured *c.* 2 m east-west and 0.80 m north-south with a total depth of 0.40 m. A red sandy clay was cut for the trench for the drain which was filled by mid-brown sandy silt loam approximately 0.70 m wide.

3.25 Trench XLVII

This trench was situated in the north-west quadrant of the site near its northern boundary just west of the fishpond and measured 2.0 m north-south and 1.2 m east-west. A dark brown humic layer 0.04 m thick overlay a light brown sandy loam, with heavy root disturbance, measuring 0.20 m thick. Below this was a light brown sandy clay with a thickness of 0.40 m which overlay orange sand and sandstone. The total depth of the trench was 0.75 m.

3.26 Trench XLVIII

This trench was situated immediately west of the central area of the fishpond and measured 1.80 m north-south and 1.20 m east-west. A dark brown humic topsoil measuring 0.10 m thick overlay a light brown sandy loam 0.25 m thick. Below this layer was a band of red/brown sandy clay measuring 0.25 m. The total depth of the trench was 0.60 m.

3.27 Trench XLIX

This trench was situated immediately north-west of Trench XLVIII and measured 1.0 m northwest-southeast and 1.2 m northeast-southwest. A mid brown sandy silty clay matrix was observed to a depth of 0.65 m. Below this was a 0.10 m band of dark brown humic soil which overlay orange sandy clay. The total depth of the trench was 0.85 m.

3.28 Trench L

This trench was situated south of Trench XLVIII approaching the southern tip of the fishpond and measured 1.0 m north-south and 1.2 m east-west. A deposit of mid-

brown sandy clay 0.40 m thick lay over a thin band of dark brown humic soil measuring 0.15 m onto orange sandstone to a total depth of 0.70 m.

3.29 Trench LI

This trench was situated north-west of Trench XLIX and contained three pipelines parallel to the A41. A dark humic layer was visible, 0.05 m thick, overlying red/orange sand and sandstone, 0.15 m thick. This overlay a light brown sandy loam to a total depth of 0.35 m.

East of this trench a possible ditch (Plate 2) was noted when reducing the overall level of the site in this area. The fill consisted of a black loamy silt and measured approximately 2 m wide north-south and extended *c.* 9.5 m west from the west bank of the pond to a point where it was truncated by the insertion of the pipelines. A section across this feature observed in the side of Trench LIV suggests that it was of natural origin. A similar feature (context [6], Trench III) was observed during the evaluation in 2004 (Adams, M & Ahmad, C., 2004).

3.30 Trench LII

This trench was situated in the extreme north-west of the site and measured 1.5 m north-south by 1.2 m east-west with a total depth of 0.80 m. The west-facing section revealed a layer of red sand and sandstone with a thickness of 0.70 m on top of orange sandstone and clay. The east-facing section contained mid-brown sandy clay, again with a thickness of 0.70 m, overlying orange sandstone and clay.

3.31 Trench LIII

A large trench measuring 11 m north-south and 9 m east-west was excavated in order to insert a water storage tank. Several shallow pockets of a dark brown/black silt loam were observed in the upper sections around the trench and probably relate to dredged material from the pond, similar to, or indeed part of, the possible ditch observed east of Trench LI. The trench reached a total depth of *c.* 1 m and consisted of naturally deposited yellow sands and sandstone coupled with red/orange clay, sands and sandstone.

3.32 Trench LIV

A further large trench measuring 6 m east-west and 3 m north-south was excavated immediately south of Trench LIII for the insertion of a petrol/oil interceptor tank. Again, several shallow pockets of black silty material were observed. The silty material in the south-facing section of the trench was part of the ditch observed east of Trench LI (Plate 3). This filled a shallow, dish shaped 'scoop' into the top of natural, reaching a depth of up to 0.6 m at the eastern end of the trench and petered out to the west. Moderate root action was observed within the silted area which implies that the deposit is of an organic nature. Below the silt was a band of gingery yellow sand *c.* 0.2 m deep which was overlying highly compacted red clayey sand to a total depth of 2 m.

3.33 Trench LV

This trench was excavated in order to insert the outfall pipe into the fishpond. A long narrow trench *c.* 1.6 m deep and 0.46 m wide was dug from the edge of the pond to link to the water tank (Trench LIII) *c.* 7 m to the west. Topsoil 0.20 m deep overlying a band of mixed light brown and orange sandy clay with a thickness of 0.30 m was

observed in the north-facing section. Below this was a dark brown silt loam *c.* 0.80 m overlying orange sandy clay. An iron and timber stanchion was removed 5.4 m west from the edge of the fishpond at a depth of 1.3 m.

3.34 Trench LVI

This trench was located at the south-eastern corner of the pond and had been excavated in order to insert an overflow pipe from the fishpond in case of flooding. A long narrow trench *c.* 1.6 m deep and 0.50 m wide was hand dug from the below the perimeter fence and concrete curb to the edge of the pond. The north-east facing section revealed a largely homogenous build-up of loose gingerish brown soil with a high concentration of root action and one pocket of gingerish sand, *c.* 0.30m wide. No archaeological deposits were observed or finds recovered.

4. Finds

Surface scatters of modern ceramics were present. Seven sherds of modern china were found across the site plus one sherd of darkware which is probably 19th century in date. A timber and iron stanchion was also uncovered immediately west of the pond at the point where the outfall pipe was laid. In accordance with NMLFAU guidelines, none of these items were retained as all were late Post-Medieval or modern.

5. Conclusions

No significant archaeological deposits were observed, in most areas topsoil or demolition debris overlay naturally deposited clays, sandstone and sands.

A possible ditch extending west from the western edge of the fishpond was in fact most likely to represent a variation in the upper surface of natural partly truncated by later activity. No boundary is shown on historic mapping of the area and its profile appears very shallow for an anthropogenic feature. The deposits within it probably resulted from natural accumulation of silts and organic matter. It is possible that the material seen in this feature was present as a result of dredging the fishpond, a similar feature was observed to the east during the archaeological evaluation in 2004.

The absence of any evidence for the remains of structural features is not unexpected given that the trenches were all located outside of the moated area, which is the most likely location for any buildings. The total absence of artefactual evidence relating to the medieval occupation of the site is surprising, but fits into an emerging pattern in Merseyside and Wirral where occupation sites appear to have little directly associated artefactual material.

6. Bibliography

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7. Figures

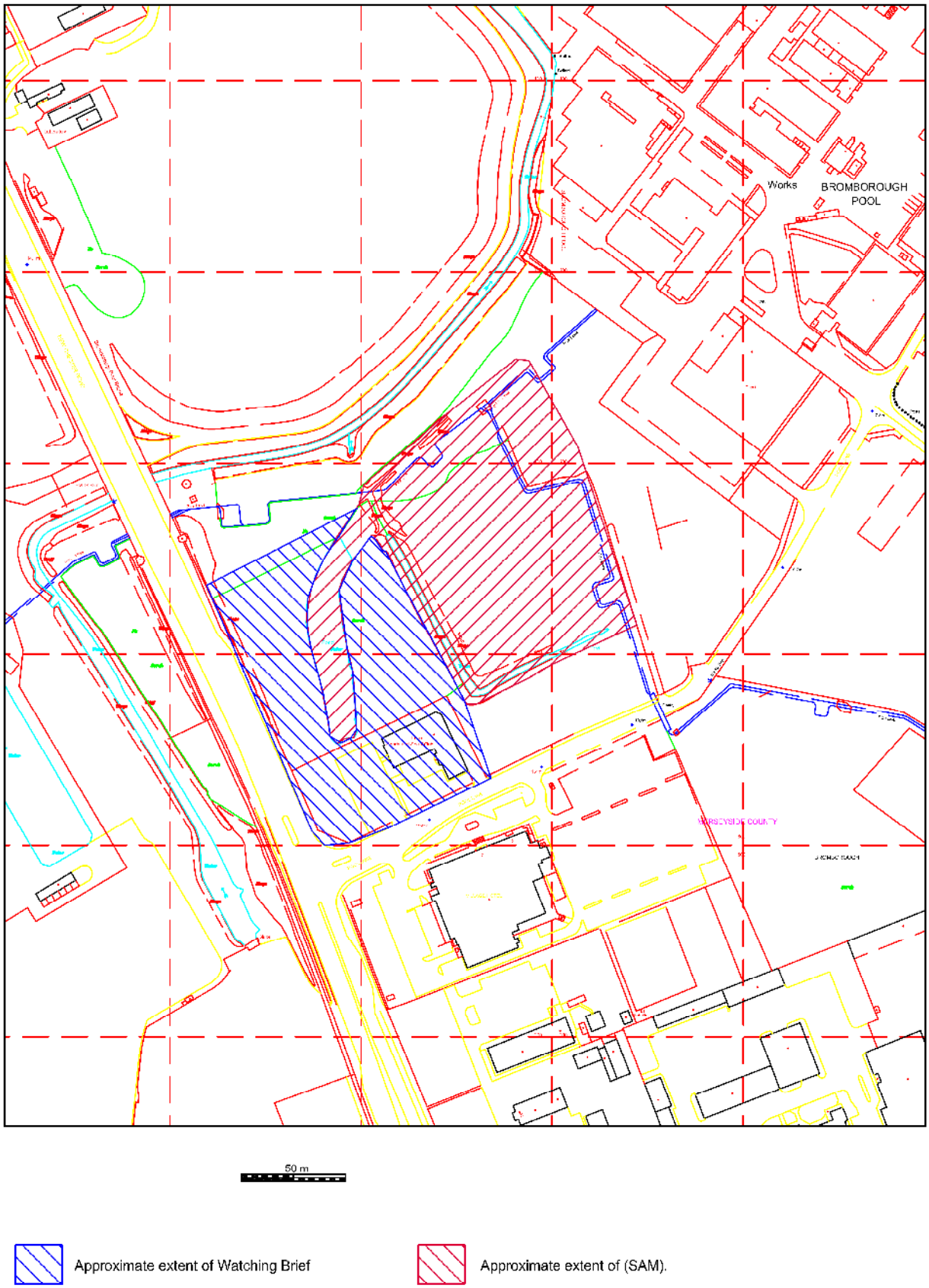

Fig. 1. Site location and approximate extent of Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).

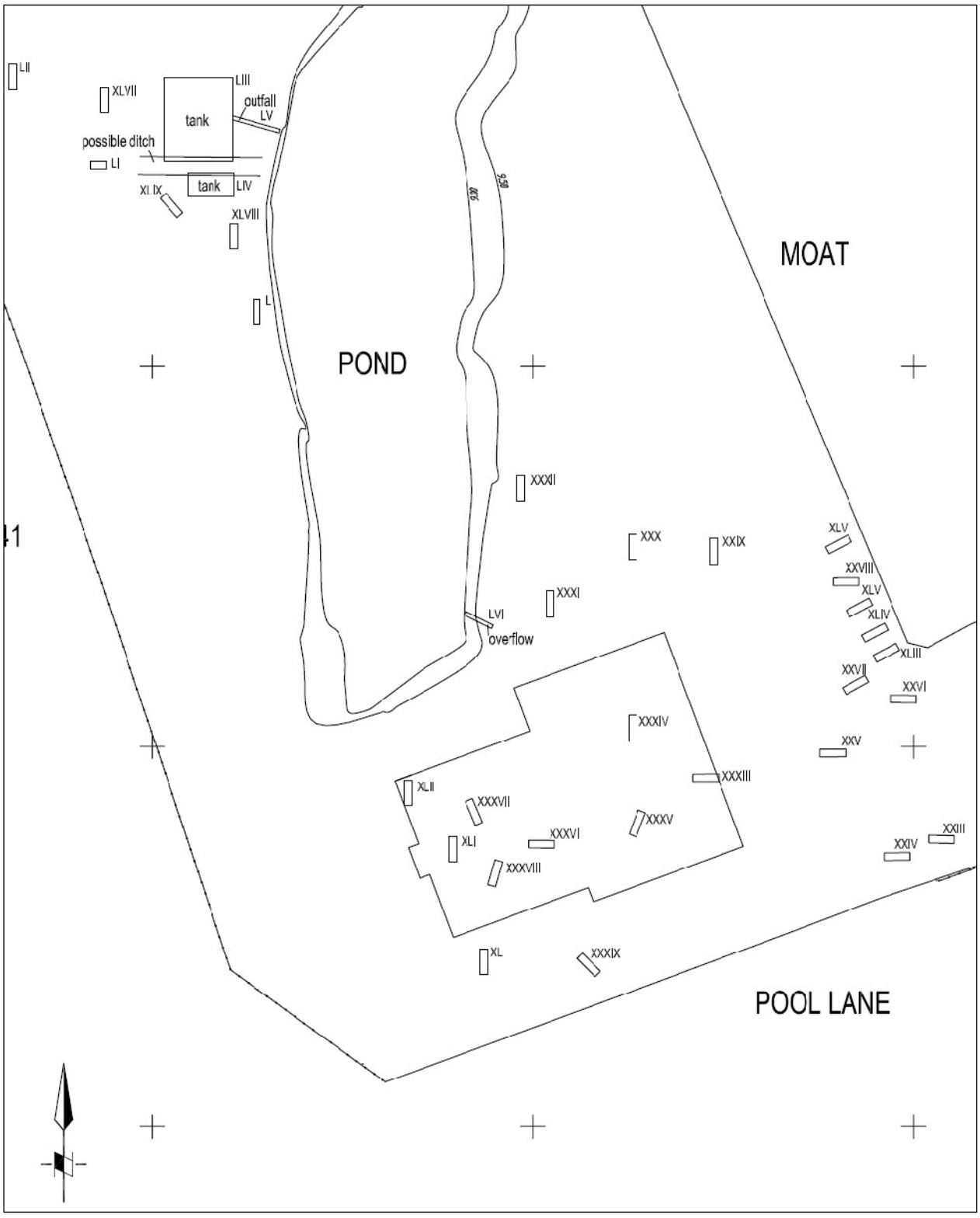

Fig. 2. Test-pit locations.

10 m

8. Plates

Plate 1. Trench XLIII. Disturbed ground resulting from sewer pipe insertion along moat edge.

Plate 2. Possible ditch east of Trench LI.

Plate 3. South-facing section in Trench LIV showing the deposits in section.

Appendix A: Project Design

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Bromborough Court, Bromborough, Wirral. NGR SJ 344 840. Project Design.

Prepared for Hantall Developments

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at Bromborough Court, Bromborough, Wirral. NGR SJ 344 840. Project Design.

A1. Introduction

1.1 National Museums Liverpool Field Archaeology Unit (NMLFAU) have been commissioned by Hantall Developments to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Bromborough Court, Chester Road, Bromborough, Wirral . The investigations are being undertaken in accordance with an archaeological condition on planning permission for the redevelopment of the site .

1.2 The methodology or the watching brief has been prepared by NMLFAU in consultation with Sarah Jane Farr, Archaeological Officer, Merseyside Archaeological Service (MAS).

1.3 This specification defines the areas to be investigated and the methodologies to be used. The initial phase of investigation will be undertaken as part of the client's site investigation works and includes provision for the rapid recording of surface features. If any subsequent archaeological works are required these will be informed by the results of the site investigation. These may require the production of a revised project design.

A2. The Development Area

2.1 The site covers approximately 0.75 hectares and is located immediately to the east of the A41 Birkenhead to Chester Road which forms the western boundary of the site. The southern boundary is defined by Pool Lane, the eastern by a vacant plot to the south of the moat. The northern boundary Is defined by a line *c*. 75 m to the north of Pool Lane.

A3. Geology

3.1 The solid geology in this part of Merseyside consists of Pebble Beds and Upper Mottled Sandstone overlain by Boulder Clay (BGS Sheet 96 (Drift Edition)).

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 Bromborough Moat, A Scheduled Ancient Monument, is almost certainly the site of Bromborough Manor which was owned by the abbot of St. Werburgh's, Chester (now Chester Cathedral). The site is first referred to in 1284, when the Chronicle of St. Werburgh records that the buildings were burnt down. However, the site is likely to have earlier origins and it has been suggested that it is the location of a fortified court acting as the centre of a royal estate during the Anglo-Saxon period (Higham 1993) and also as a possible location for the battle of Brunanburh in 937 AD (Bu'Lock 1972, 54). Although there is no record of a licence to crenallate, Ormerod (1882) cites a charter of Earl Randle of Chester which suggests that it was fortified to secure the courts; the location is in an excellent defensive position. A full record of the buildings on site exists for 1604 and includes a hall, lower chamber, sealed chamber with glazed windows, bakehouse, kitchen, dayhouse and buttery. These elements would all be consistent with a medieval layout. The documents also include an inventory of the furniture. A new brick built house was constructed in 1680 on the eastern side of the enclosure and may have replaced some or all of these structures. The house was demolished in 1969 and the site partly built over.

4.2 The site has been the subject of numerous investigations including trial trenching and a resistivity survey (Freke 1978, Jones 1978, David 1978 and Philpott 1989, Adams 2004, Adams & Ahmad 2004). Various small interventions were undertaken by local

amateur archaeologists from the 1940's to the 1960's (MSMR site file), though these found little evidence of in situ deposits within the moated enclosure. The trial trenches excavated in 1978 found no evidence for construction of the moat prior to the mid-18th century and the resistivity survey found no conclusive evidence for internal buildings within the enclosure. Consequently it was postulated that the moat was a post-medieval creation. However, the trial trench was of only limited extent and it is possible that the lack of medieval deposits was the result of cleaning or widening of the moat at that point. In addition since the resistivity survey was undertaken it has become apparent that the method does not work well on the Boulder Clays of Merseyside, Wirral and north Cheshire and that the absence of geophysical anomalies cannot be taken as evidence of the lack of archaeological deposits (e.g. Adams 1999 & 2002). A watching brief conducted during the insertion of a sewer outside the western edge of the moat (Philpott 1989) found little evidence for *in situ* archaeological deposits other than a thin layer of material likely to result from periodic cleaning of the moat. Clearance of vegetation from the site in 1989 revealed traces of croft/garden boundaries as earthworks (Capstick 1989). There were no traces of building platforms, though a raised area slightly off centre from the moat was detected. The most recent work consisted of a watching brief during the excavation of trial pits and an archaeological evaluation for the present development (Adams 2004, Adams & Ahmad 2004). This found very little evidence *for in situ* archaeological deposits apart from a possible gully at the east end of the site. This area will not be affected by the present works.

5. Areas of Archaeological Potential

5.1 Most of the area covered by the proposed development is of some archaeological potential due to its proximity to the moated site. The only exception to this is a corridor *c.* 10-20 m wide parallel to the A41 on the western side of the site. This has already been extensively disturbed by piplines.

6. Aims and Objectives

6.1 The objective of the watching brief is, where possible, to identify and record the presence/absence, nature, extent, and date of any archaeological deposits or features which are disturbed or revealed during the construction of the proposed development. This involves monitoring the excavation of foundations and other groundworks within the watching brief area. This specification covers all ground remediation work within the watching brief area, until this has been agreed sufficient in consultation with the Archaeological Officer for Merseyside.

7. Location of Watching Brief Areas

7.1 The area of the watching brief is the extent of the proposed development as detailed by the client.

8. Methodology

8.1 All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and with the IFA Code of Conduct.

8.2 Monitoring will be undertaken in the locations specified and agreed with the MAS.

8.3 An archaeologist should be present on site as necessary and appropriate to monitor all excavation and/or soil disturbance. The archaeologist will monitor the area as groundworks proceed, and will, where possible and practicable, view any available trench sections after excavation is completed.

8.4 NMLFAU will record the date, time and duration of all visits and the nature and extent of the works being monitored.

8.5 If archaeological features or deposits are identified the area should be rapidly cleaned. The archaeological sub-contractor will be allowed sufficient time, where required, to record any archaeological deposits identified. This stoppage time will be a minimum of 2 hours and to a maximum of 8 hours.

8.6 **The Archaeological Officer at MAS will be notified by NMLFAU immediately significant/extensive archaeology is uncovered by the watching brief.**

8.7 Any archaeological deposits/features identified will be hand excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of the investigation.

8.8 The areas of excavation/ground disturbance (even if they reveal no archaeological features) will be recorded on a suitable base map/development plan and the stratigraphy and depth of the excavation will be recorded.

8.9 A full written, drawn and photographic record will be made of all archaeological features. Hand drawn plans and sections of features will be produced at an appropriate scale (normally 1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections). Drawings will include spot heights relative to Ordnance Datum in metres, correct to two decimal places.

8.10 Digital and monochrome negative photographs will be taken at a minimum format of 35mm as required. In addition to records of archaeological features, a number of general site photographs will also be taken to give an overview of the site and the scope of the works taking place.

8.11 All non-modern artefacts will be retained. If appropriate all 'small finds' will be recorded three dimensionally. Bulk finds will be collected by context. Finds will be treated in accordance with the English Heritage guidance document 'A strategy for the care and investigation of finds' (1995) and stored in controlled conditions where appropriate. All artefacts will be retained, cleaned, labelled and stored as detailed in the guidelines of the IFA. Conservation, if required, will be undertaken by approved conservators. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) guidelines will apply (UKIC 1998). All ferrous objects and a selection of non-ferrous objects (including all coins) will be x-rayed.

8.12 Should significant archaeological deposits be encountered an appropriate soil sampling strategy will be implemented in accordance with Centre for Archaeology Guidelines (English Heritage 2002).

8.13 Should human remains be discovered during the course of the excavations the remains will be covered and protected and left *in situ* in the first instance. The removal of human remains will only take place in accordance with the appropriate Home Office and Environmental Health regulations and the Burial Act 1857 and Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981. In such an event the contractor will notify MAS immediately.

8.14 Any artefacts which are recovered that fall within the scope of the Treasure Act 1997 will be reported to H. M. Coroner. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

8.15 The intention of the watching brief is not to delay unduly the work of other contractors on site. NMLFAU will make every reasonable effort to complete archaeological excavation and recording works without impacting upon the programme of other site contractors.

9. Reporting

9.1 Immediately after the completion of fieldwork the finds and samples will be processed (cleaned and marked) as appropriate. Each category of find or environmental material will be examined by a suitably qualified archaeologist or specialist. The integrity of the site archive should be curated and maintained.

9.2 An assessment report will be submitted as soon as possible after completion of fieldwork. The report will include the following:

- a non-technical summary
- site location
- archaeological and historical background
- methodology
- aims and objectives
- results (to include full description, assessment of condition, quality and significance of the remains)
- an appraisal of the results within their local, regional and national context
- publication proposals if warranted
- archive storage and curation
- general and detailed plans showing the location of the stripped areas accurately positioned on an OS base map (to a known scale)
- detailed plans and sections as appropriate (to a known scale)
- a cross-referenced index of the project archive

One copy of the complete report will be submitted to the client as a draft.

Five bound copies, one unbound copy and a digital version of the report and illustrations will be required within one week of the receipt of the clients' comments on the draft report. (Digital text to be in Microsoft Word format and illustrations in AutoCAD and/or PDF format).

9.5 NMLFAU will submit a copy of the report to the Archaeological Officer for MAS for deposition in the Merseyside SMR.

10. Publication

10.1 Provision should be made for the publication of the results in an appropriate archaeological journal, if of regional or national significance.

10.2 A summary of findings will be submitted to the regional Council for British Archaeology group, CBA North West (c/o Dr. M. Nevell, UMAU, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL who will provide a pro-forma sheet).

11. Archive Preparation and Deposition

11.1 The archive of finds and records generated during the fieldwork will be kept secure at all stages of the project. All records and materials produced will be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent. The archive will be produced to the standards outlined by English Heritage (1991).

11.2 The archaeological sub-contractor shall, prior to the start of fieldwork, liase with the appropriate museum, in this instance Liverpool Museum, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, to obtain agreement in principle to accept the archive for long term storage and curation. The sub-contractor shall be responsible for identifying any specific requirements or policies of the museum in respect of the archive (National Museums Liverpool (NML) Guidelines on the Deposition of Archaeological Archives), and for adhering to those requirements.

11.3 The deposition of the archive forms the final stage of the project. The archaeological sub-contractor shall provide copies of the communication with the recipient museum and written confirmation of the deposition of the archive. The archive will be presented to the Archive Curator within 12 months of completion of the fieldwork, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.

12. Monitoring

12.1 NMLFAU will liase with the Merseyside Archaeological Service to inform them of the commencement of site works and to offer them the opportunity to visit and monitor the work in progress.

13. Confidentiality and Publicity

13.1 The archaeological sub-contractor will not disseminate information or images associated with the project for publicity or information purposes without the prior written consent of the client.

14. Copyright

14.1 Copyright in all reports and documentation/images produced as part of this project to reside with National Museums Liverpool who retain the right to be identified as the author/originator of the material. This applies to all archaeological aspects of the project.

14.3 The results of the archaeological work will be submitted to the clients and Merseyside Archaeological Service by NMLFAU and will ultimately be made available for public access.

15. Resources and Timetable

15.1 All archaeological personnel involved in the project will be suitably qualified and experienced professionals.

15.2 The timetable for the work will be dependant upon the geo-technical and groundworks contractors programme.

16. Insurances and Health and Safety

16.1 NMLFAU is covered by public and professional indemnity insurance.

16.2 NMLFAU has its own Health and Safety policy compiled using national guidelines and which conform to all relevant Health and Safety legislation. A copy of the Health and Safety policy may be submitted to the client in advance of fieldwork.

16.3 NMLFAU will undertake a risk assessment detailing project specific Health and Safety requirements. The risk assessment shall be submitted to the client and MAS in advance of commencement of site work. Health and Safety will take priority over archaeological issues.

16.4 The archaeological sub-contractor will familiarise themselves with, and comply with, the Health and Safety requirements of the principal contractor on site.

17. References

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