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Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Watching Brief



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Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by ADAS UK Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during permitted development utility groundworks within Vernon Park, Greater Manchester. The cable route ran from an electricity substation in Bredbury to Turncroft Lane in Stockport (NGR 391299 390887 to 390740 390346). Part of the route crossed Vernon Park (a registered park and garden) where, due to the potential for disturbing buried archaeological remains, a watching brief was required.

The watching brief was maintained during the excavation of six trenches in Vernon Park, to the west of the River Goyt (NGR 390880 390838). Only undisturbed natural deposits, made ground and topsoil were recorded and these were uniform across the interventions. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered.

The observed deposits related to changes to the natural topography caused by the construction and landscaping of Vernon Park in the mid-19th century.

The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code 108810. It is intended that the archive will be deposited with Stockport Heritage Library under an accession number to be confirmed. An OASIS form, ID number 208908, has been provisionally completed and will be submitted at the time of deposition.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was commissioned by ADAS UK Ltd and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to them in this regard. The assistance of Andrew Myers of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) is also acknowledged.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill.

Fieldwork was undertaken by Ashley Tuck, Simon Evans and Maria Elena Calderon. This report was written by Ashley Tuck and illustrated by Alix Sperr.



Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Stockport, Greater Manchester

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by ADAS UK Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during permitted development utility groundworks within Vernon Park near Stockport, NGR 390880 390838 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2015) and current industry guidance (ClfA 2014a-d).

1.2 The Scheme

1.2.1 The Scheme comprised the installation of approximately 1.5km of 132kV subsurface electric cabling from Bredbury substation to Turncroft Lane, Stockport (NGR 391299 390887 to 390740 390346; **Figure 1**).

1.2.2 The majority of the Scheme was located within existing highway and residential streets, except where it crossed the northern end of Vernon Park. In the section of the scheme that ran through Vernon Park and under the River Goyt directional drilling was used instead of open-cut trenches in order to minimise the impact of the work. Directional drilling requires the excavation of launch and reception pits.

1.2.3 The six monitored trenches lay within Vernon Park, between the central large fountain to the east and the boundary with New Zealand Road to the west (**Figure 1**).

1.3 Topography and geology

1.3.1 The Scheme crosses the valley of the River Goyt from approximately 85m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the west, dropping to around 45m aOD before rising to c.60m aOD in the east.

1.3.2 The underlying geology of the Scheme consists of sandstone of the Collyhurst Sandstone Formation, sedimentary bedrock formed during the Permian Period. This is overlain by Devensian diamicton and undifferentiated sand and gravel deposits formed up to 3 million years ago during the Quaternary period (British Geological Survey 2015).

1.3.3 Borehole surveys carried out close to the Scheme recorded 0.3m of tarmac and 0.2m of made ground overlying 0.3m of firm brown sandy clay. These layers generally overlay 0.6m of firm, brown, sandy clay on top of 2m of variably soft and firm brown silty clay (ADAS 2015).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following information is derived from an archaeological constraints report which considered a 250m study area around the Scheme (ADAS 2015).

2.2 Summary

2.2.1 Vernon Park is a Grade II listed registered park and garden (monument no 1154811). It was opened as a public park in 1858 and consists of a circular pool and serpentine paths in the northern part of the park and Stockport museum (opened 1866) in the south. In the late 19th century a flower garden was added, along with bowling greens in 1905 and 1908 and a lake that is now drained (Historic England 2015).

2.2.2 Within the wider area there is mainly industrial, commercial and settlement activity dating to the 19th century and the modern period, with a small number of heritage assets dating to the Romano-British and post-medieval periods also in the study area.

2.3 Potential impact of the Scheme

2.3.1 The area of greatest potential for archaeological remains was thought to be within Vernon Park, in the form of deposits relating to the establishment and use of the park, and close to the River Goyt where evidence for earlier activity could survive (ADAS 2015).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General

3.1.1 Detailed methodology for the work can be found in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2015). Wessex Archaeology procedures conform to industry best practice, as outlined in the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a-d).

3.1.2 Monitoring was limited to the area shown on **Figure 1**. Groundworks immediately east and west of the River Goyt were completed without monitoring.

3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The aims of the project were:

- *to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated during groundworks;*
- *to determine the extent, condition, character, importance and date of any archaeological evidence encountered;*
- *to provide information that will enable the archaeological remains to be placed within their local, regional and national contexts; and,*
- *to produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the site works.*



3.3 Machine excavation

- 3.3.1 Topsoil and overburden were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil, overburden and natural geology were removed in a series of level spits down to the required level of the cable installation works.

3.4 Hand excavation

- 3.4.1 The exposed surfaces were hand cleaned as necessary to clarify the extent of the revealed deposits.

3.5 Recording

- 3.5.1 All deposits encountered were recorded using Wessex Archaeology pro forma recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix was compiled to record the relationships between deposits.
- 3.5.2 All trenches were located in relation to features within the park as shown on Ordnance Survey maps. Other plans and sections were drawn as necessary.
- 3.5.3 A photographic record consisting of digital images was maintained.

3.6 Finds

- 3.6.1 No artefacts were retained.

3.7 Environmental samples

- 3.7.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held in the archive. A list of context numbers and descriptions is included in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 General

- 4.2.1 Six trenches were monitored and recorded (Trenches 1-6; **Figure 1, Plates 1-4**). Each contained the same sequence of deposits as described below.
- 4.2.2 The deepest natural substrate was grey gravel and round stones (604), recorded at 2m below ground level (BGL). Above this, from around 0.7-2m, lay a firm clean orange sandy loam (e.g. 603).
- 4.2.3 A thick layer of mixed material (e.g. 602) was seen in all trenches from around 0.2-0.8m BGL). These deposits were brownish orange in colour, suggesting a mixture of disturbed natural and topsoil. It is likely that this was deposited during the construction and landscaping of Vernon Park in the mid-19th century. These deposits also contained charcoal (e.g. 104). No finds were recovered from this layer.
- 4.2.4 The topsoil was 0.2-0.3m thick and consisted of mid-greyish-brown clay silt (e.g. 101). Modern artefacts were present but were not retained.



4.2.5 A deep (greater than 1.2m) straight-sided cut for existing services was seen in Trenches 1, 2 and 4 (e.g. 103). This was filled with re-deposited orange brown silt clay (e.g. 102).

4.2.6 No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during the watching brief..

4.3 Conclusion

4.3.1 Six trenches for the installation of electric cabling were monitored by an archaeologist. Undisturbed natural deposits, made ground and topsoil were recorded in each trench. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered.

5 STORAGE AND CURATION

5.1 Archive and museum

5.1.1 The project archive will be offered to Stockport Heritage Library.

5.1.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions of Stockport Heritage Library, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). All archive elements will be marked with the accession code, and a full index will be prepared.

5.2 Security copy

5.2.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011); on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

5.3 OASIS record

5.3.1 An OASIS form, ID number 208908, has been provisionally completed and will be submitted at the time of deposition (**Appendix 2**).



6 REFERENCES

- ADAS 2015, *Proposed 132kV Cable Installation Bredbury to Adswold: Archaeological Constraints Report*
- ADS 2013, *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice*
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Context descriptions

Trench 1		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
101	Topsoil: mid greyish brown clay silt	0-0.3
102	Fill of 103: re-deposited tertiary fill. Mixed orange brown sandy clay	0-1.2+
103	Cut: cut for electrical services. N-S orientation, straight edges.	0-1.2+
104	Made ground: light brown clay with charcoal throughout	0.3-0.75
105	Natural: soft orange-brown sandy clay	0.75+

Trench 2		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
201	Topsoil: mid greyish brown clay silt	0-0.3
202	Made ground: light brown clay, firm, with charcoal and small nodules of orange clay	0.3-0.75
203	Natural: soft orange sandy clay	0.75+
204	Cut: n-s cut for services	0-1.2+
205	Fill of 204: orange brown silt clay	0-1.2

Trench 3		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
301	Topsoil: mid greyish brown clay silt	0-0.2
302	Made ground: mixed orange-brown clay with charcoal	0-0.6
303	Natural: pale sandy clay with no inclusions	0.6-0.8
304	Natural: orange sandy firm clay	0.8+

Trench 4		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
401	Topsoil: dark grey brown silt	0-0.25
402	Fill of 404: grey and red clay fill of service trench	0.25-1.35



403	Fill of 404: pale grey sand fill of service trench	0.85-1.5+
404	Cut: service trench (electrical ducts)	0.25-1.5
405	Made ground: disturbed grey orange silt clay	0.25-1
406	Natural: orange clay sand	1-1.5+

Trench 5		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
501	Topsoil: mid greyish brown clay silt	0-0.2
502	Layer: tarmac path service	0-0.2
503	Layer: hardcore/loose tarmac/ash bedding under 502	0.2-0.5
504	Made ground: disturbed orange brown loam	0.2-0.9
505	Natural: orange loam	0.9+

Trench 6		
Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
601	Topsoil: mid greyish brown clay silt	0-0.2
602	Made ground: mixed orange-brown clay with charcoal	0.2-0.7
603	Natural: orange loam. Gets gradually greyer towards base	0.7-2
604	Natural: gravel and round stones <0.08m in diameter. Just showing at base of trench.	2+



Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-208908

Project details

Project name	Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Greater Manchester
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by ADAS UK Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during permitted development utility groundworks within the Vernon Park Registered Park and Garden and on the eastern bank of the River Goyt (hereafter 'the Scheme'; NGR 391299 390887 to 390740 390346; Figure 1). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, Wessex Archaeology 2015) detailed how the archaeological requirements of the Scheme were met and has been prepared in accordance with current industry guidance (CIfA 2014a - 2014d), and was submitted to the Client and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) for information. Six interventions for the installation of electric cabling were monitored by an archaeologist. Undisturbed natural deposits, made ground and topsoil were recorded. The deposits were uniform across the interventions. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered. Evidence suggesting that Vernon Park has been heavily landscaped was discovered. It is most likely that any archaeology that may have once existed in this location has been removed by truncation. If anything remains, it will be deeper than 0.7-0.9m below ground level.
Project dates	Start: 15-06-2015 End: 23-07-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	108810 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Electricity Act 1989 Section 36

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER MANCHESTER STOCKPORT STOCKPORT Lower Bredbury to Adswold Utility Work, Stockport
Postcode	SK6 2BP
Study area	0.80 Kilometres
Site coordinates	SJ 91299 90887 53.4144586398 -2.13092178108 53 24 52 N 002 07 51 W Line
Site coordinates	SJ 90740 90346 53.4095857672 -2.13931699551 53 24 34 N 002 08 21 W Line
Height OD / Depth	Min: 45.00m Max: 85.00m

Project creators



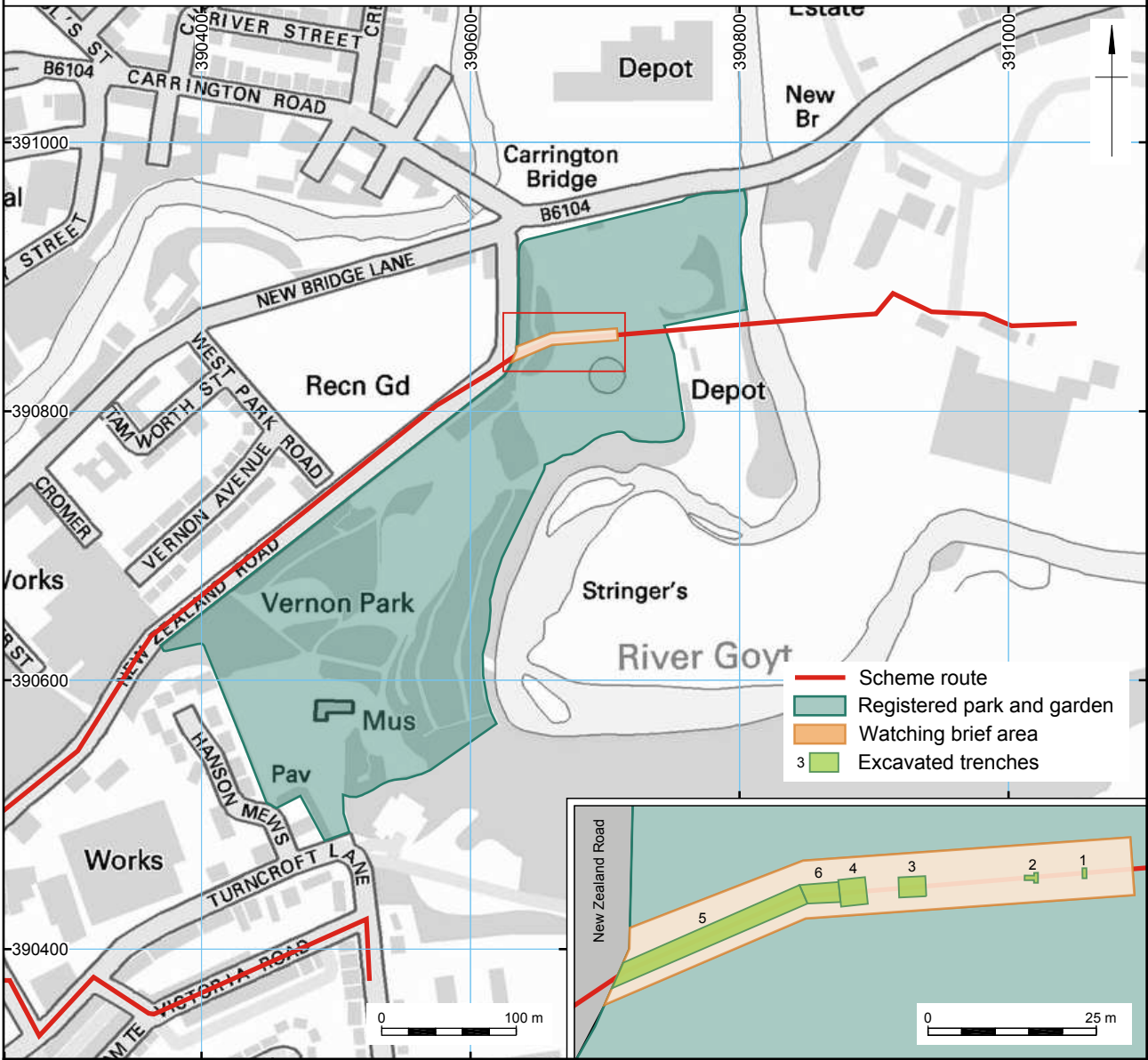
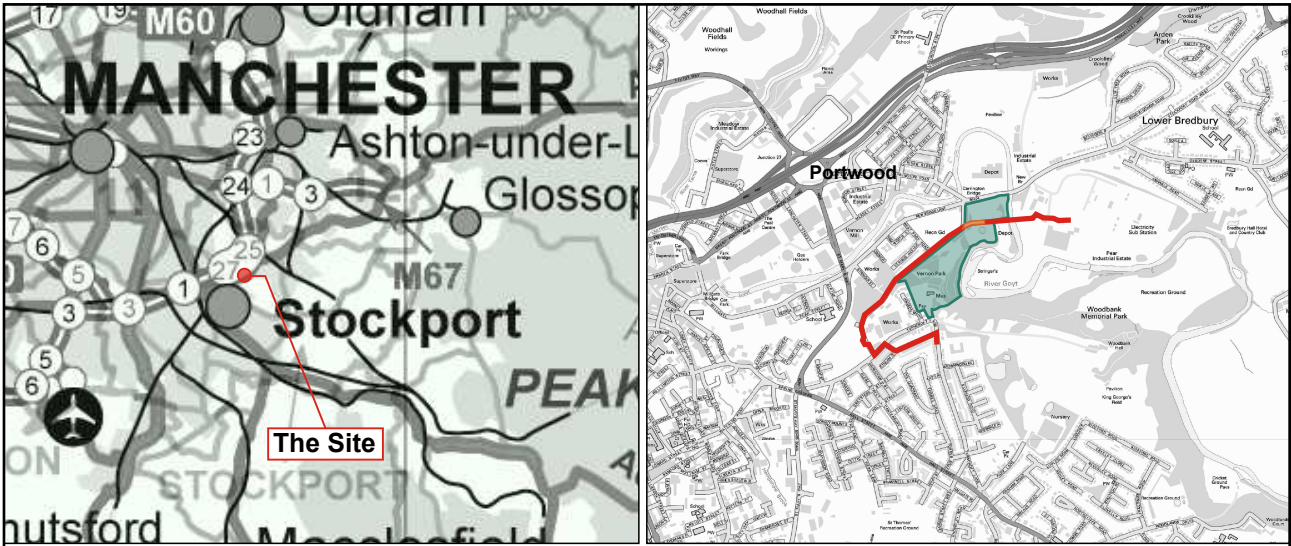
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	ADAS
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	R. O'Neill
Project supervisor	Ashley Tuck
Type of sponsor/funding body	Energy company
Name of sponsor/funding body	ADAS UK Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Stockport Heritage Library
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Stockport Heritage Library
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Site and trench locations

Figure 1



Plate 1: Trench 1 from south



Plate 2: Trench 2 from south showing existing service cut



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Plate 3: Trench 3 from north



Plate 4: Trench 6 from north

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