

Archaeological Evaluation Report

# **FORMER ORB MILL OLDHAM**

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For Oldham Council

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Claire Statter BA AIfA

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L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Archaeological Evaluation Report

# FORMER ORB MILL OLDHAM

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Client: Oldham Council

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Local Authority: Oldham Council

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## L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

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# Abstract

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the former Orb Mill, Oldham. The evaluation was implemented due to the potential for archaeological remains on the site. The work was carried out by L - P : Archaeology. This report has been prepared by Claire Statter of L – P : Archaeology on behalf of Oldham Council.*

*The site comprised open fields until the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the opening of Paulden Wood Colliery. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century New Royd Mill was constructed on the site followed by Orb Mill and a Sunday School in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The site has remained vacant since the demolition of the last standing building, Orb Mill, in 2004.*

*The objectives of the evaluation were to assess the extent of the remains of Orb Mill, New Royd Mill, Paulden Wood Colliery and the Sunday School all present on the site.*

*A total of nine trenches were excavated across the site located in order to examine the buildings. Several of the trenches revealed remnants of Orb Mill, the Sunday School and a small section of New Royd Mill. It was clear however that much of the previous buildings on the site had been destroyed during the demolition process.*

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This evaluation report has been prepared by Claire Statter of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Oldham Council. Additional research was carried out by Blair Poole.
- 1.2. The fieldwork was carried out by Claire Statter, Blair Poole and Mandy Stanton of L – P : Archaeology between 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010.
- 1.3. The site is located at the former Orb Mill, Huddersfield Road within Oldham (FIGURE 1). The NGR is 395362,406002.
- 1.4. The site code allocated by L – P : Archaeology is OLD/OMC 10.
- 1.5. The work was carried out in accordance with the specification prepared by Claire Statter of L – P : Archaeology (STATTER 2010).

## 2. Site Background

### 2.1. PLANNING

- 2.1.1. This evaluation has been carried out in response to a condition attached to planning application PA/056493/09.
- 2.1.2. The Local Planning Authority is Oldham Council who have taken advice from Andrew Myers of Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.
- 2.1.3. When considering an application, Oldham Council is bound by local policy C1.12 regarding archaeology and planning. As such, the following condition was attached to the development.

*The applicant will design and implement a scheme for the display of industrial archaeological remains/information commemorating the industrial heritage of the site. The scheme to be approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority.*

- 2.1.4. Oldham Council have agreed the methodology for these works in STATTER 2010. The specification was based on a brief provided by Andrew Myers Oldham Council's Advisor.

### 2.2. GEOLOGY

- 2.2.1. The site is located on glacial till overlaying coal measures (QUADERY 2009).
- 2.2.2. Scott Wilson undertook a flood risk assessment on the site in 2009. The drift deposit was identified as Boulder Clay, with weathered sandstone and sandstone forming the solid geology (QUADERY 2009). Coal seams are also present on the site.
- 2.2.3. The River Medlock runs through the site from the northeast to southwest. The river is only visible in the northeastern corner as it is then culverted under the site and emerges at the southern side of Huddersfield Road.

### 2.3. TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.3.1. The site is located to the north of Huddersfield Road, A62, which runs through the centre of Oldham (FIGURE 1).
- 2.3.2. The site is bounded to the south by Huddersfield Road, to the west by Culvert



Street and the northwest by Holgate Street (FIGURE 2).

2.3.3. The site itself is relatively flat lying at c. 207mOD. However to the north, east and southeast of the site there are steep slopes running down to the site. The highest point of the site is located at the northeast and lies at c. 214mOD.

2.3.4. The site was clear of all buildings. The site surface was made up of concrete slabs, areas of rubble and a tarmac road.

## **2.4.SITE CONDITIONS**

2.4.1. The site once held two mills, Orb Mill and New Royd Mill along with a Sunday school. The site is now clear of all buildings.

## **2.5.ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

2.5.1. For a more detailed summary of the archaeology and history please refer to the desk based assessment carried out on the site (STATTER & POOLE 2010), from which this information is taken.

2.5.2. There is no evidence for any Prehistoric activity within the vicinity of the site.

2.5.3. There is a lack of evidence for any Roman activity within the vicinity of the site. However a Roman road from Manchester to Leeds did run through Oldham (MARGARY 1957:366). The only evidence of that that can still be seen is the line of Honeywell Lane c. 3km to the south west of the site.

2.5.4. Research into the Domesday book failed to show any results for Oldham, or the smaller settlement of Waterhead, where the mill was located. It would appear that the area was a rural region with sparse or little settlement.

2.5.5. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century it is clear that several small hamlets did exist in the area. Some of these hamlets are thought to have been consolidated to form a larger settlement given the name Lees. It could be said that the settlement of Waterhead, where the site is located, also grew up in this manner.

2.5.6. During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries woollen production was a cottage industry. Each family member will have had a specific task, for example the women would be the spinners with the men doing the weaving. This type of industry,

along with agriculture, prevailed into the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

2.5.7. It was during the 1770s and 1780s that the woollen industry began to be superseded by cotton. By 1788 there were a total of 11 cotton mills in the township of Oldham, five of which had been built between 1778 and 1788 (BUTTERWORTH 1981:131).

2.5.8. A boom in the industry took place in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century with the invention of the steam engine which also led to an increase in coal mining. The Paulden Wood Colliery was located at the north western boundary of the site area. It is unclear as to when this colliery was first opened however it does appear on the Ordnance Survey Map dating to 1848.

2.5.9. The New Royd Mill was erected on the site c. 1826 by Lees and Mills (MYERS 2010). It is thought that Paulden Wood Colliery went out of use soon after 1878 (FANNINE ND:88).

2.5.10. It is unclear as to when the Sunday School was constructed on the site however it is shown on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map. The construction of Orb Mill began between 1902-1911.

2.5.11. It is thought that in 1927 a local flood caused a culvert which ran under a corner of the Orb Mill to collapse causing flooding in the main entrance, boiler house and warehouse (REED ND).

2.5.12. New Royd Mill was closed in 1958 and cotton production ceased at Orb Mill in 1961. New Royd Mill was later demolished in 1970 (GURR & HUNT 1998:83).

2.5.13. Orb Mill was demolished in 2004.

### 3. Aims

3.1. The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were to assess the character, date, type, state of preservation, and extent of any archaeological remains on site.

3.2. The specific aims of the archaeological evaluation, as defined by Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit were:

- ◆ To target areas within the site with the potential for archaeology relating to the buildings, shafts and associated structures of Paulden Wood Colliery.
- ◆ To target the buildings and power systems of New Royd Mill and Orb Mill.
- ◆ To target past housing on the site and to investigate the Sunday school.

3.2.1. The objective of this report is to provide enough information for a suitable mitigation strategy to be devised.

## 4. Methodology

- 4.1. For a full description of the archaeological methodology please refer to section 4 of Specification for Archaeological Evaluation Former Orb Mill Oldham (STATTER 2010).
- 4.2. A total of 11 trenches were planned to be excavated on site. Nine were to measure 30m by 2m with the remaining two to measure 15m by 2m (FIGURE 2).
- 4.3. Due to site conditions Trench 11 was not excavated, it was located within an open car park area frequently used by the public. The allocated area which would have been excavated for Trench 11 was utilised, upon agreement with Andrew Myers GMAU, for the extension of Trench 1.
- 4.4. Trench 10 also had to be closed down shortly after opening due to the presence of a substance with the potential for asbestos.

## 5. Results

5.1. Results are given below trench by trench. Trench is abbreviated below to Tr. Not all context numbers referred to in the text are illustrated, but all are represented in the archive. Deposit numbers are given in (parentheses) and cut numbers are given in [square brackets]. Structures are shown underlined. All levels are shown Below Ground Level, BGL.

### 5.2. TRENCH 1 (FIGURE 3)

5.2.1. Tr. 1 was located 115m to the north of the site entrance and aligned on an east west orientation. The trench measured 30m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 207.58mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate the eastern wall of Orb Mill and part of the mill's interior.

5.2.2. The first context recorded in this trench was (100) a loose deposit of modern demolition rubble, with a maximum depth of 0.25m. This rubble overlay a redeposited natural layer (101) which sloped from the west down to the east. At its thickest it measured 0.9m. (101) was seen as a made up deposit on the site.

5.2.3. Sealed by (101) at the west end of the trench was 103 a red brick lined structure which had been later filled with concrete. As seen this structure was two courses wide and one course deep. The structure was square at the west end however curved to the north at its eastern extent. The radius of this curve was 1.5m. It is thought that this structure relates to the workings of the mill and may be housed within the engine house/room although this is not clear.

5.2.4. The only plans available of the mill are those submitted to gain permission for its construction. The construction of the mill did not take place until approximately eight years later and the plans appear to have altered slightly between the planning and construction stages. As a result it is unclear as to where exactly the engine house will have been within the mill. However we can assume that the overall layout of the mill would have largely stayed the same with only slight alterations to the internal layout.



Plate 1 - 103 facing north. 1m scale.

- 5.2.5. Tr. 1 was extended 5m to the north at this point in order to ascertain the extent of 103. The extension of the trench showed that only the area already uncovered remained. The rest had been removed or severely damaged during demolition of the mill.
- 5.2.6. Also sealed below (101) was a red brick structure orientated east west measuring 4.8m long. This structure 105 ran along the edge of the trench with a metal girder, 0.6m by 1.5m by 0.2m, attached to its northern side running perpendicular to it. The wall seems to be an internal division within the mill, with the steel girder acting as part of a machine base.
- 5.2.7. Below (101) to the east end of the trench was (107), a deposit of hard grey concrete with brick and a metal chain bonded to its surface. As seen the concrete measured 1.6m north south by 1.2m east west. This concrete appears to be a later addition to the internal area of Orb Mill.
- 5.2.8. (106) was recorded as below both (107) and 105. (106) was a loose grey black silt deposit. This deposit contained Post Medieval ceramic and is thought to be a make up deposit brought into this area in order to build up the site for the construction of Orb Mill.
- 5.2.9. Below (106) was (102), a loose dark brown silt deposit. This deposit extended beyond the base of the trench at 1.7m BGL. As seen the deposit exceeded 1.4m

thick. This trench also sloped significantly from west to east. This deposit is thought to relate to the River Medlock, it is possible that (102) was a previous bank for the river before it was channelled for use in the mills.

5.2.10. Prior to the mills being on the site the river will have been open and running along its natural course. Due to the requirement of water from the river to power the mill either directly or to be used in the steam engine the course of the river was altered to fit the needs of the building. Therefore a section of the the river will have been diverted across the site closer to the mill with the diversion continuing to meet up with the river further down the flow.

5.2.11. Sealed by (102) was (108) the natural light brown clay as seen across the site.

### 5.3. TRENCH 2 (FIGURE 4)

5.3.1. Tr. 2 was located 5m to the north of Tr. 1 and aligned on a north west orientation. The trench measured 30m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 207.84mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate the potential engine house of Orb Mill.

5.3.2. The first context recorded was (200) a demolition rubble also seen in Tr. 1. Within Tr. 2 the demolition rubble extended to a maximum thickness of 0.5m. Below (200) was (201) a compacted yellow redeposited natural clay measuring 0.25m thick. (201) contained 20<sup>th</sup> century plastic and glass.

5.3.3. Sealed by (201) were 202 a concrete base and 205 a 20<sup>th</sup> century red brick wall. 202 measured 1.6m east west by 2.5m north south and 0.5m thick. The cut for this concrete was given number [212]. This is a modern concrete base and had been inserted into the floor of the mill. 205 was also a later inserted red brick wall measuring 0.24m high by 0.25m wide. The cut for 205 was given context number [211].

5.3.4. Both [211] and [215] cut 203 a red brick floor. The floor consists of smooth red bricks measuring 230mm by 90mm by 110mm laid on edge bonded with a soft grey mortar. As seen the floor extended beyond the sides of the trench and measured 14.4m north south. It is uncertain at present what this floor represents however from examining the original drawings for the mill it is

certain that the floor is within the engine area of the mill. This is also evidenced by three metal fixings built into the floor at the north end. Each fixing measured 0.09m in diameter.



Plate 2 - Floor 203 cut by concrete 205. Facing south. Scale 1m.

- 5.3.5. With the disturbance of 203 caused by the insertion of 205 it could be clearly seen that floor 203 sealed 204, a hard red stone and concrete base for the floor. The presence of this concrete indicates that this area of the mill would have housed a significant amount of machinery in order to warrant this level of support.
- 5.3.6. At the southern end of Tr.2 below the redeposited clay (201) was (206) a loose light brown silt and rubble deposit with brick and concrete fragments inclusions. This has been interpreted as a further layer of demolition debris moved around site.



5.3.7. Sealed by (206) in this area was (210) a large dump of red brick rubble measuring 6m north south by 2.2m east west. This deposit was not fully excavated due to it's instability. It did however extend beyond the base of the trench at 1.8m BGL.

5.3.8. Wall 207 bounded northern extent of (210) with 208 bounding it to the south. Wall 207 comprised smooth red bricks bonded with hard grey mortar in an English Garden Wall form. Unusually there was a coursing band of red tiles recorded four courses below the surface. This is a possible decorative feature which does not however appear in wall 208.



Plate 3 - Wall 207 showing (210) in the foreground.  
Looking North. Scale 1m.

5.3.9. Wall 208 was again constructed of smooth red bricks with a hard grey mortar in an English Garden Wall bond. Both walls 207 and 208 were aligned east west with (210) filling the void between them. A member of the local community informed us that the canteen for the workers at Orb Mill was located within this area and was housed in a cellar. It is possible that this deep area bounded by walls 207 and 208 make up the cellar area of the mill.

5.3.10. Wall 208 was seen to have been built onto a compacted brown silt (209). This context was only seen at the southern extent of the trench however it is thought be a pre-mill deposit upon which the mill was constructed.

#### 5.4.TRENCH 3 (FIGURE 5)

- 5.4.1. Tr. 3 was located 38m to the north of Tr. 1 and aligned on a northeast southwest orientation. The trench measured 15m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 208.54mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate the area once housing Paulden Wood Colliery.
- 5.4.2. A modern spread of rubble mixed with a small amount of topsoil (300) covered the trench to a depth of 0.1m BGL. Sealed by (300) was (301) a loose mid to dark brown silt with late 19<sup>th</sup> century brick, ceramic and glass inclusions. This deposit measured a maximum of 1.1m thick. The 2009 Ordnance Survey map shows three circular structures on this area of the site. Photographic evidence from the demolition of the mill show large green bowers being housed in this area. It is thought that deposit (301) therefore was as make up deposit brought in as a base for these bowers.
- 5.4.3. Sealed by (301) within the initial 2.2m at the northeastern end of the trench was (302) a loose black cinder with shale making up more than 50% of the deposit. As excavated the deposit measured 0.5m thick however it did extend below the base of the trench at 1.7m BGL. Deposit (302) is thought to be a waste dump relating to the colliery.



Plate 4 - Context (302) facing southwest. Scale 1m.

5.4.4. Below (302) was (303) a natural compact yellow clay. The top of which began at a maximum height of 1.1m BGL.

#### 5.5. TRENCH 4 (FIGURE 2 & FIGURE 6)

5.5.1. Tr. 4 was located c.58m to the south west of Tr. 1 and aligned on a north south orientation. The trench measured 20m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 208.42mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate the area once housing the Sunday School.

5.5.2. Tr. 4 was covered with a 0.1m thick deposit of friable mid brown silty loam topsoil (400). Sealed by (400) was (401) a 0.3m thick friable yellow beige clay as seen as (201) within Tr. 2.

5.5.3. Below (401) was 406 a yellow stone wall with an average block measuring 0.56m by 1.56m by 0.23m, smaller fragments of stone are also included within the construction. This wall was aligned east west and is thought to be the northern wall of the Sunday School. The majority of the wall has been removed by demolition and only the base foundations seen here remain.



Plate 5 - Wall 406 facing north. Scale 1m.

5.5.4. 406 was constructed above context (402) a friable dark brown silt loam measuring 0.08m thick. This deposit has been interpreted as a previous surface open to the air due to its dark loamy nature. It is not thought to be have been

open to the elements for any length of time.

5.5.5. Sealed by (402) was (403) a loose layer of demolition rubble mixed with redeposited clay, measuring 0.25m thick. Due to its nature this deposit has been interpreted as a make up deposit to stabilise the ground prior to the erection of the Sunday School. Below (403) was (404) a 0.1m thick black humic loam. This deposit is also thought to be an earlier soil layer due to its humic nature and its presence above (405) the natural clay as seen across the site.

#### 5.6. TRENCH 5 (FIGURE 2 & FIGURE 7)

5.6.1. Tr. 5 was located c.47m to the south west of Tr. 1 and aligned on a north south orientation. The trench measured 35m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 207.66mOD. This trench was located in order to expose the front wall and interior of Orb Mill.

5.6.2. As with trenches 1 to 3 the initial context recorded was a layer of demolition rubble (500) measuring 0.25m thick. Below which lay (501) a firm mid brown black demolition layer measuring a maximum of 0.28m thick. This deposit is thought to be the demolition rubble created by the removal of the floor of Orb Mill.

5.6.3. Sealed by (501) was (502) located within the northern end of the trench. (502) was a loose dark brown silt with late 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic inclusions, it measured a maximum thickness of 0.48m. This deposit is thought to be the make up deposit for the mill floor. The area around this trench would have been undulating due to its proximity to the River Medlock. This area will have had to be levelled for the construction of the mill with material being brought on to the site.

5.6.4. To the south of the trench underlying (501) was (503) a loose dark brown silt measuring a maximum of 1.6m thick. This deposit contained brick fragments along with an intact fragment of brick wall not in situ. Due to its inclusions and depth this deposit is thought to be the build up of the site following the 'great flood' in July 1927. Local newspaper evidence shows that the River Medlock which ran through a culvert at the south eastern corner of Orb Mill

collapsed due to the flood leading to a flood within a part of the mill and the destruction of several cottages on New Royd Road (no longer in existence).

5.6.5. Below both (502) and (503) was 505 a red brick foundation wall with a concrete base. Eleven courses of this foundation wall survived each of which stepped out 50mm. The wall itself was constructed in English bond and measured 1.8m wide by 0.8m high. The concrete base for the bricks measured 2.4m wide by 0.12m thick. These foundations are very substantial and from looking at the location map (FIGURE 8) it can be certain that 505 is the main front wall for Orb Mill.



Plate 6 - Wall 505 facing north. Scale 1m.



Plate 7 - Wall 505 facing west. Scale 1m.

5.6.6. Wall 505 was constructed upon the natural yellow clay (504). The top of the clay was seen at 1m BGL.

#### 5.7. TRENCH 6 (FIGURE 2 AND FIGURE 8)

5.7.1. Tr. 6 was located c.54m to the south east of Tr. 1 and aligned on a north south orientation. The trench measured 35m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 207.84mOD. This trench was located over the southeastern corner of New Royd Mill and its interior.

5.7.2. The first context recorded within this trench was (600) a 0.2m thick layer of demolition rubble. This rubble however is thought to be the remains of the last structure to be demolished on the site, that of the 1970s warehouse erected on the site for storage. Below (600) was (601) a loose dark brown silt containing modern services. This context was restricted to the south end of the trench. Due to the amount of modern services in this area and surface water running

odd off the fields to the south this end of the trench was not excavated below 0.2m BGL.

5.7.3. Below this lay (603) a loose deposit of brick rubble measuring a maximum of 0.45m thick covering the whole trench. This rubble is thought to represent the demolition of New Royd Mill. Sealed by (603) lay 602 a two course orange brick wall orientated northwest southeast. This wall is thought to date to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the inclusions of butterfly clips in its construction. Therefore this wall has been interpreted as a later extension to New Royd Mill.

5.7.4. Also below (603) was 605 one block of stone measuring 0.95m north south by 0.14m thick, its east west extent was not seen within the trench. One stone block remained in situ and makes up part demolished wall running northeast southwest. It is unclear as to what this wall relates to as it is c. 15m to the north of the back wall for New Royd Mill.



Plate 8 - Wall 605 facing north. Scale 1m.

5.7.5. Also sealed by (603) to the south of wall 605 was context (604) a firm brown grey clay silt. This deposit extended beyond the base of the trench at 1.4m BGL. This deposit was a clean silt with no inclusions or finds, as a result it is thought to be the build up of silt within the area from the period in which the River Medlock was an open river and probably flooded on a regular basis.

5.7.6. Underlying both 605 and (604) was (606) the natural yellow clay as seen

across site

#### 5.8.TRENCH 7 (FIGURE 9)

- 5.8.1. Tr. 7 was located c.40m to the northeast of Tr. 1 and aligned on an east west orientation. The trench measured 28m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 207.68mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate the interior of New Royd Mill.
- 5.8.2. This trench was once again covered with a layer of demolition rubble (700) measuring a maximum depth of 0.25m BGL. Sealed by (700) at the western end of the trench was (701) a 20<sup>th</sup> century red brick square man hole which had been filled with a large piece of reinforced concrete presumably during the demolition process.
- 5.8.3. Also sealed by (700) at the eastern end of the trench was 702 a cobbled floor surface made up of rounded square grey cobbles measuring an average 0.25m by 0.25m. As seen this surface extended beyond the sides of the trench at 2.2m north south and measured 2m east west. The floor did however extend beyond the eastern extent of the trench. This floor is thought to be an internal floor within New Royd Mill.





Plate 9 - Cobbled floor 702. Scale 1m.

### 5.9.TRENCH 8

5.9.1. Tr. 8 was located c.99m to the northeast of Tr. 1 and aligned on a north south orientation. The trench measured 30m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 209.76mOD. This trench was located over the eastern extent of New Royd Mill.

5.9.2. The first context recorded in this trench was (800) the grey demolition rubble covering much of the site. The rubble in this trench measured a maximum 0.15m thick.

5.9.3. Below (800) was (801) a natural firm beige alluvial gravel. No features were recorded in this trench.

### 5.10.TRENCH 9 (FIGURE 2 & FIGURE 10)

5.10.1.Tr. 9 was located c.101m to the northwest of Tr. 1 and aligned on an east west

orientation. The trench measured 28m long by 2.2m wide the top of the trench was recorded as 209.80mOD. This trench was located in order to investigate an open area of land in the recent past however was close to the reservoir constructed for use by New Royd Mill.

5.10.2. Within this trench the first context recorded was (900) a 0.03m thick topsoil with root inclusions. This overlay (901) a 0.35m firm silt with rubble inclusions. In turn this overlay (902) a firm orange brown redeposited clay measuring a maximum of 0.5m thick.

5.10.3. Below (902) is (903) a hard dark brown layer of demolition rubble containing brick and stone measuring a maximum 0.4m thick. Deposits (902) and (903) are thought to be deposits dumped in this area as a result of the excavation of the reservoir for New Royd Mill. The reservoir was located directly to the north of Tr. 9. The rubble is thought to have been introduced to the site to underlay the construction of New Royd Mill and then been re-excavated along with the natural clay and placed here in order to construct the reservoir.

5.10.4. Underlying (903) was (904) a dark brown black silty deposit measuring a maximum of 0.4m thick. This deposit contained infrequent brick fragments. This deposit is thought to be an earlier surface possibly dating to the period when the colliery was in use prior to the construction of New Royd Mill. Sealed by (904) was (905) the natural orange yellow clean clay which extended beyond the base of the trench at 1.88mBGL.

5.10.5. At the south of the trench several stone blocks could be seen to be running in a northeast southwest orientation below (903). It was decided on site to extend the trench by 3m in a southwesterly direction to chase these blocks. This extension revealed a stone block wall 906. 906 comprised dressed stone blocks constructed in regular form with a soft grey mortar bond. Historic maps reveal that this wall most likely the northwestern wall of New Royd Mill. The remainder of the mill has been removed during demolition however this wall appears to have survived.



Plate 10 - Wall 906 facing southeast. Scale 1m.

## 6. Finds

6.1. This evaluation produced a total of 356 sherds of ceramic, 19 pieces of clay pipe and 2 pieces of glass. The majority of the finds were recovered from the upper demolition layers on the site.

6.2. It is clear from the assemblage that all the finds are domestic in form and date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century during which time the site was in use as a working mill. As such each context will not be discussed in detail. A brief summary table can be seen below.

CONTEXT	MATERIAL	QUANTITY	WEIGHT
101	Ceramic	70	1810g
	Clay Pipe	3	21g
102	Ceramic	18	1261g
	Clay Pipe	2	10g
104	Ceramic	9	172g
	Clay Pipe	1	6g
106	Ceramic	12	95g
	Glass	1	212g
200	Ceramic	2	37g
201	Ceramic	1	94g
209	Ceramic	24	410g
	Clay Pipe	3	14g
401	Ceramic	5	47g
	Clay Pipe	2	7g
402	Ceramic	27	280g
501	Ceramic	13	450g

	Glass	1	59g
502	Ceramic	41	790g
502	Clay Pipe	4	10g
503	Ceramic	25	875g
	Clay Pipe	4	17g
Services in 503	Ceramic	18	452g

## 7. Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1. A site at the Former Orb Mill, Oldham is proposed for redevelopment. The proposed redevelopment involves the construction of a new secondary school academy with associated sports facilities.
- 7.2. Examination of the available data indicates that the site does not contain any Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Listed Buildings.
- 7.3. Archaeological and historic background research has shown that the site lay open with only the River Medlock running through it up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the construction of Paulden Wood Colliery, New Royd Mill, Orb Mill and a Sunday School on the site. Each of these buildings have since been demolished and the site has once again remained vacant since 2004.
- 7.4. The construction of the mills and Sunday School would have impacted any previous archaeology, and no archaeological features pre-dating these structures were recorded.
- 7.5. The mills themselves have been almost completely removed except small areas of Orb Mill. As such the impact upon the existing mill remains on the site by any development would be low.

## 8. Sources Consulted

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- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1854, 1:10,560 SCALE MAP OF YORKSHIRE
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1880, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1894, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1906, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1909, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1922, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1933, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP COUNTY SERIES
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1952, 1:2,500 SCALE MAP NATIONAL GRID
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1981, 1:1,250 SCALE MAP NATIONAL GRID
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 1996, 1:1,250 SCALE MAP NATIONAL GRID
- ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP, 2009, 1:1,250 SCALE MAP MASTER MAP

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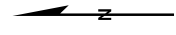
# FIGURES



FIGURE 1 // Site Location General



Scale 1:25,000 @ A4



PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Site Location General

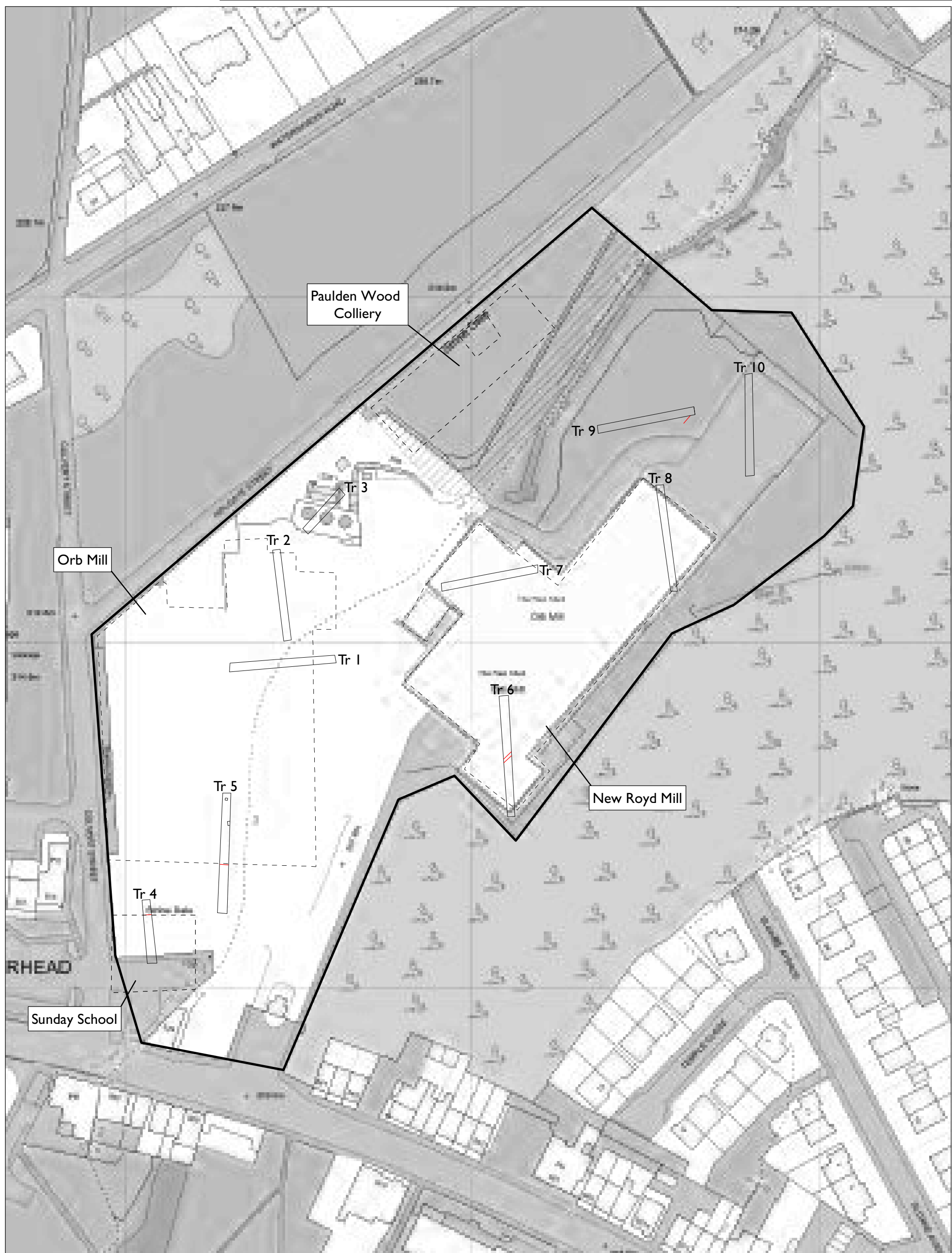
Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100030862

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

0 2,500 m

FIGURE 2 // Site Location Detail and Trench Plan



Scale 1:1,000 @ A3

— Denotes location of wall features

0 50m

PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

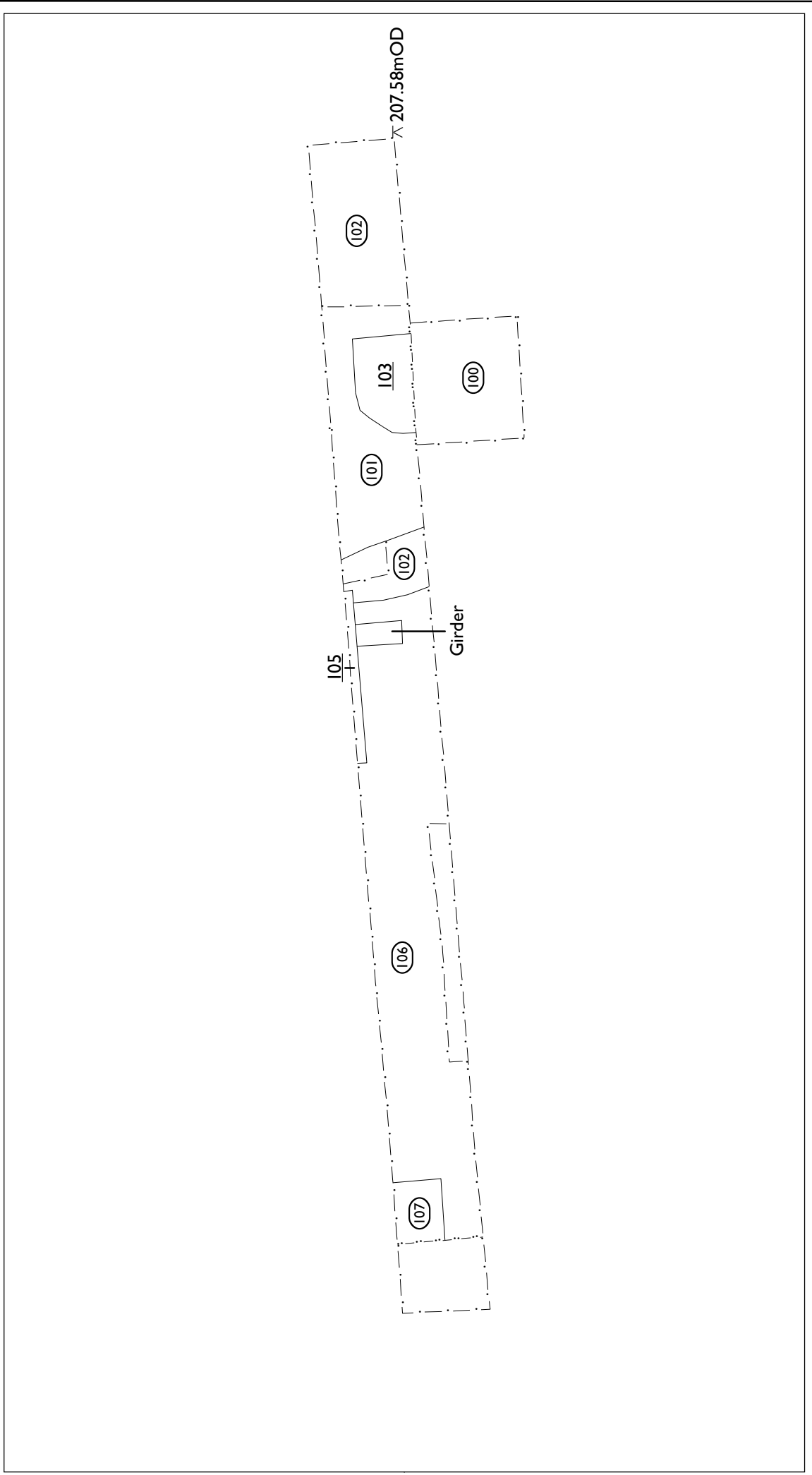
DESCRIPTION // Site location detail and trench plan

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DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

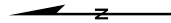
L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 3 // Plan of Trench I



Scale 1:150 @ A4

0 10m



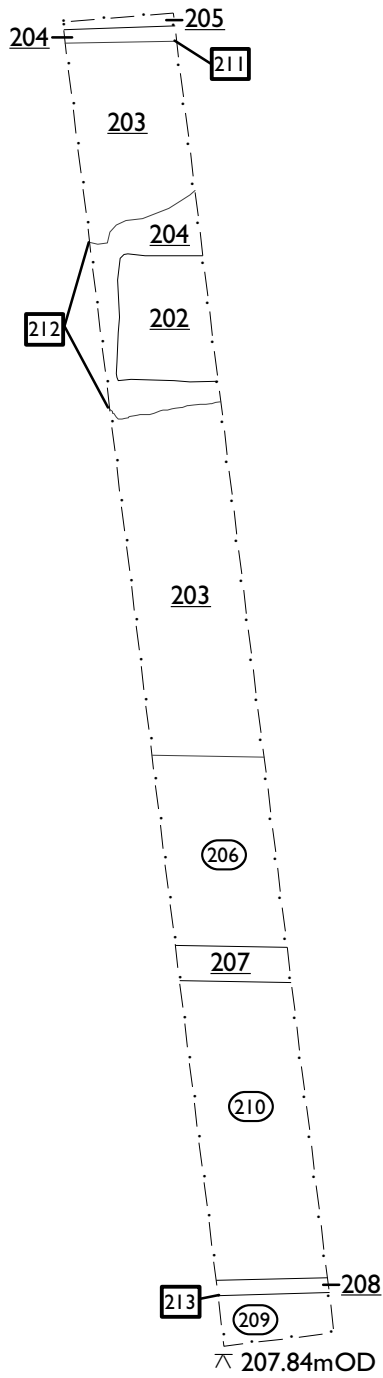
PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Plan of trench I

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

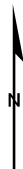
L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 4 // Plan of Trench 2



Scale 1:150 @ A4

0 10m



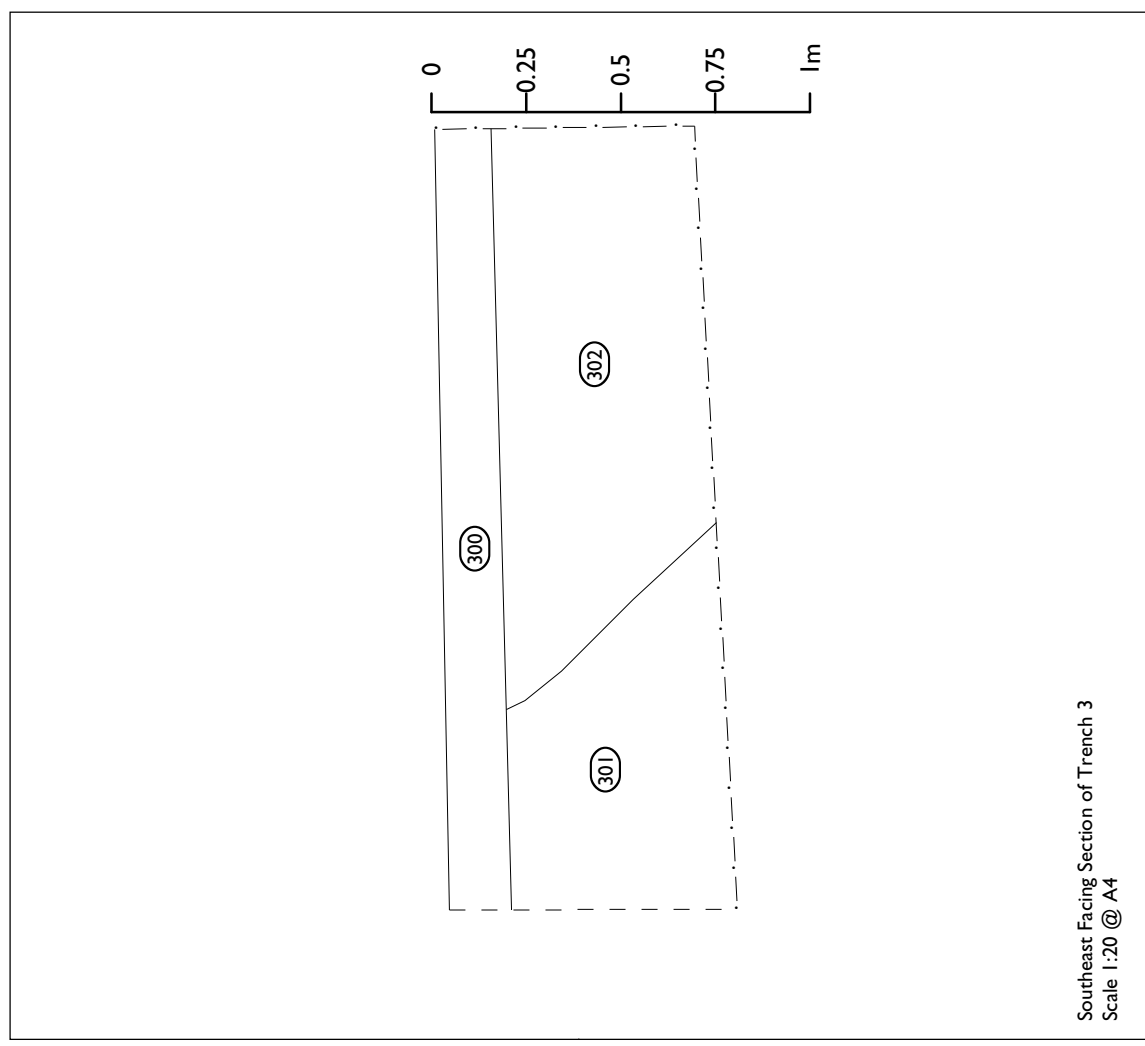
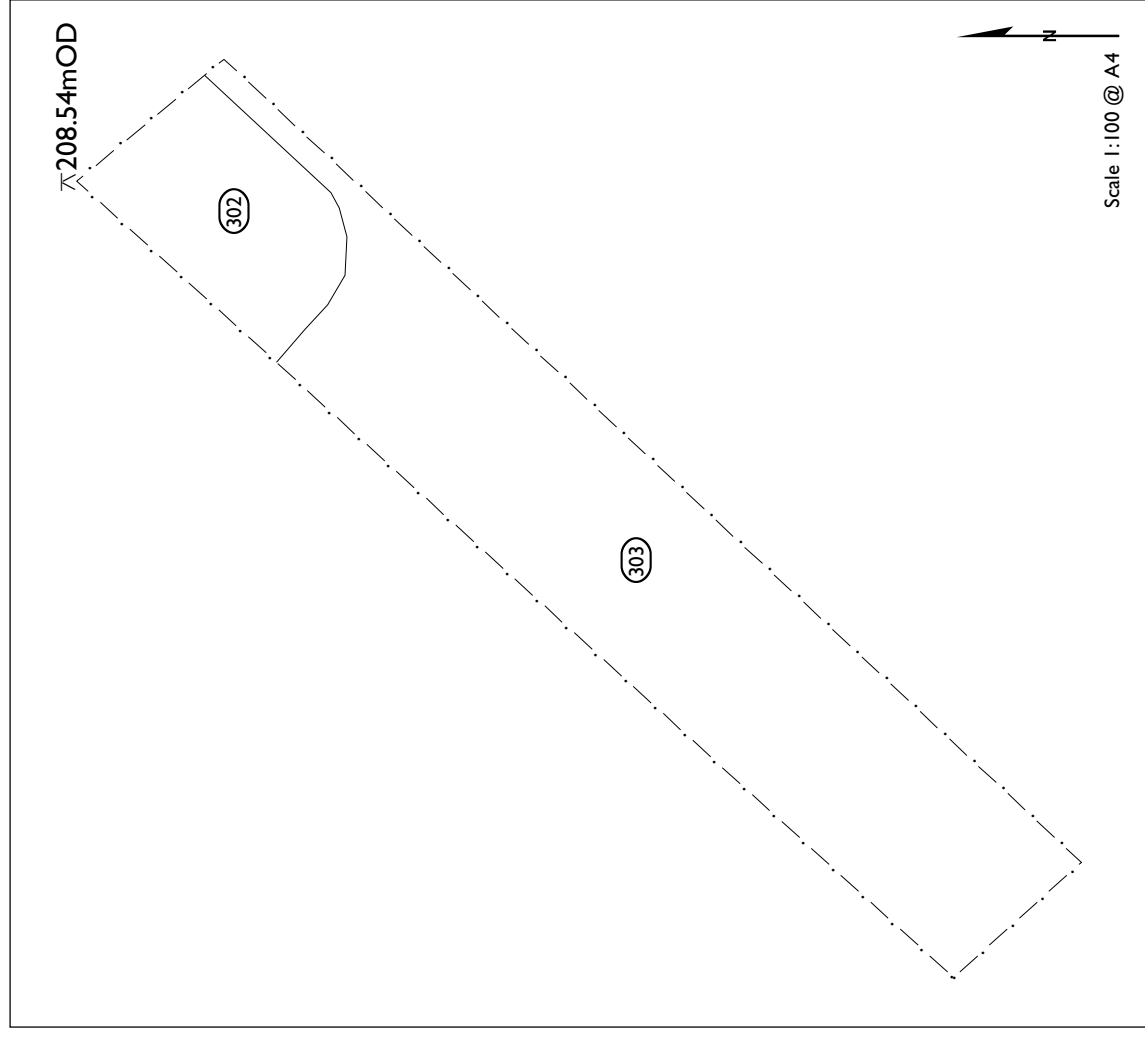
PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Plan of trench 2

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 5 // Plan and Section of Trench 3



Southeast Facing Section of Trench 3  
Scale 1:20 @ A4

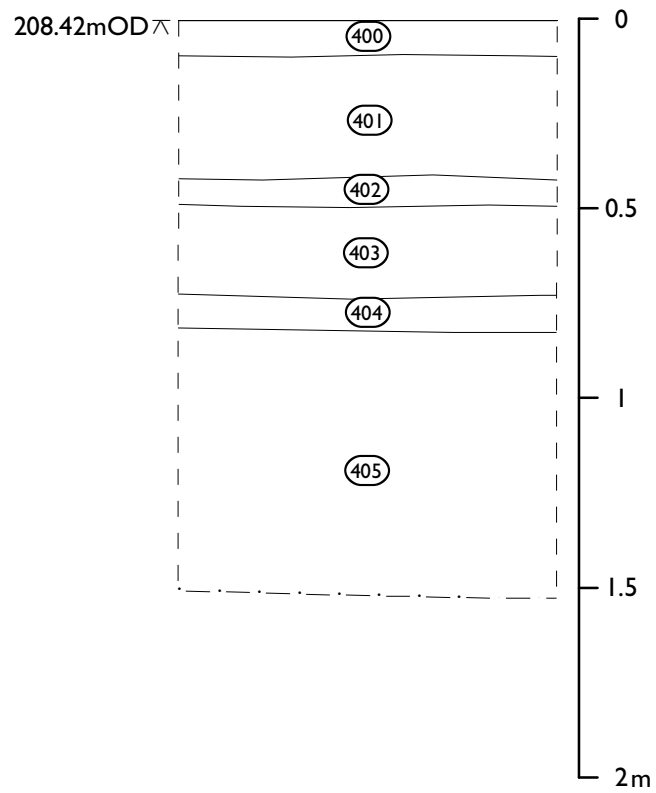
PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Plan and section of trench 3

DOC REF: LP0755C-AMR-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 6 // East Facing Section Trench 4



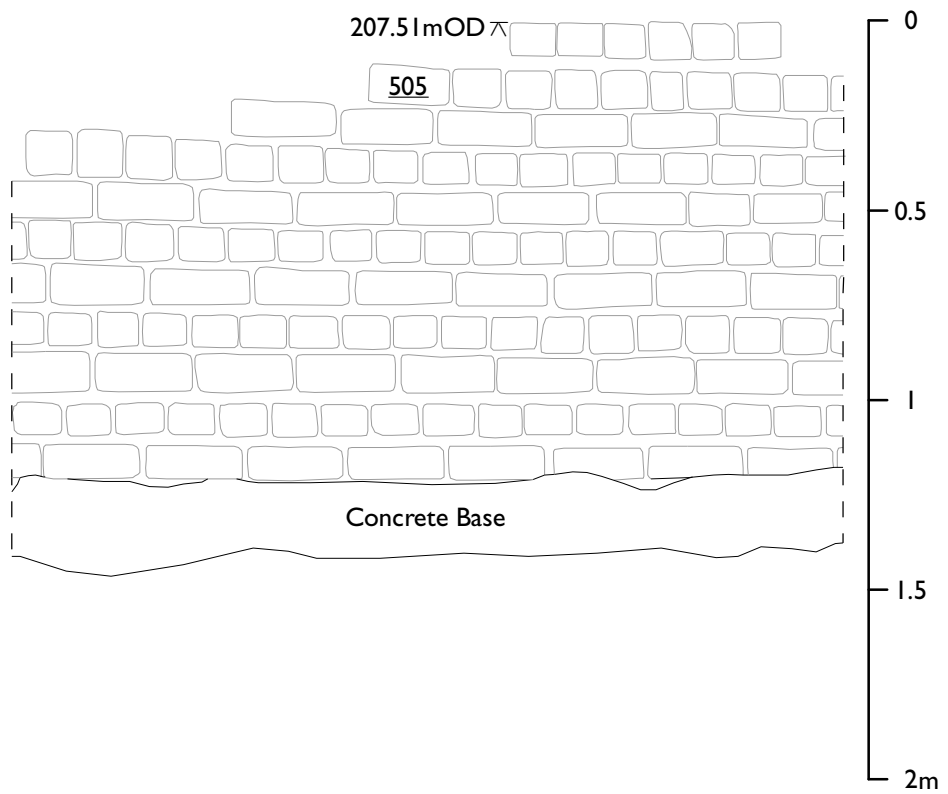
Scale 1:20 @ A4

PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Sample section from trench 4 facing east

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY



Scale 1:20 @ A4

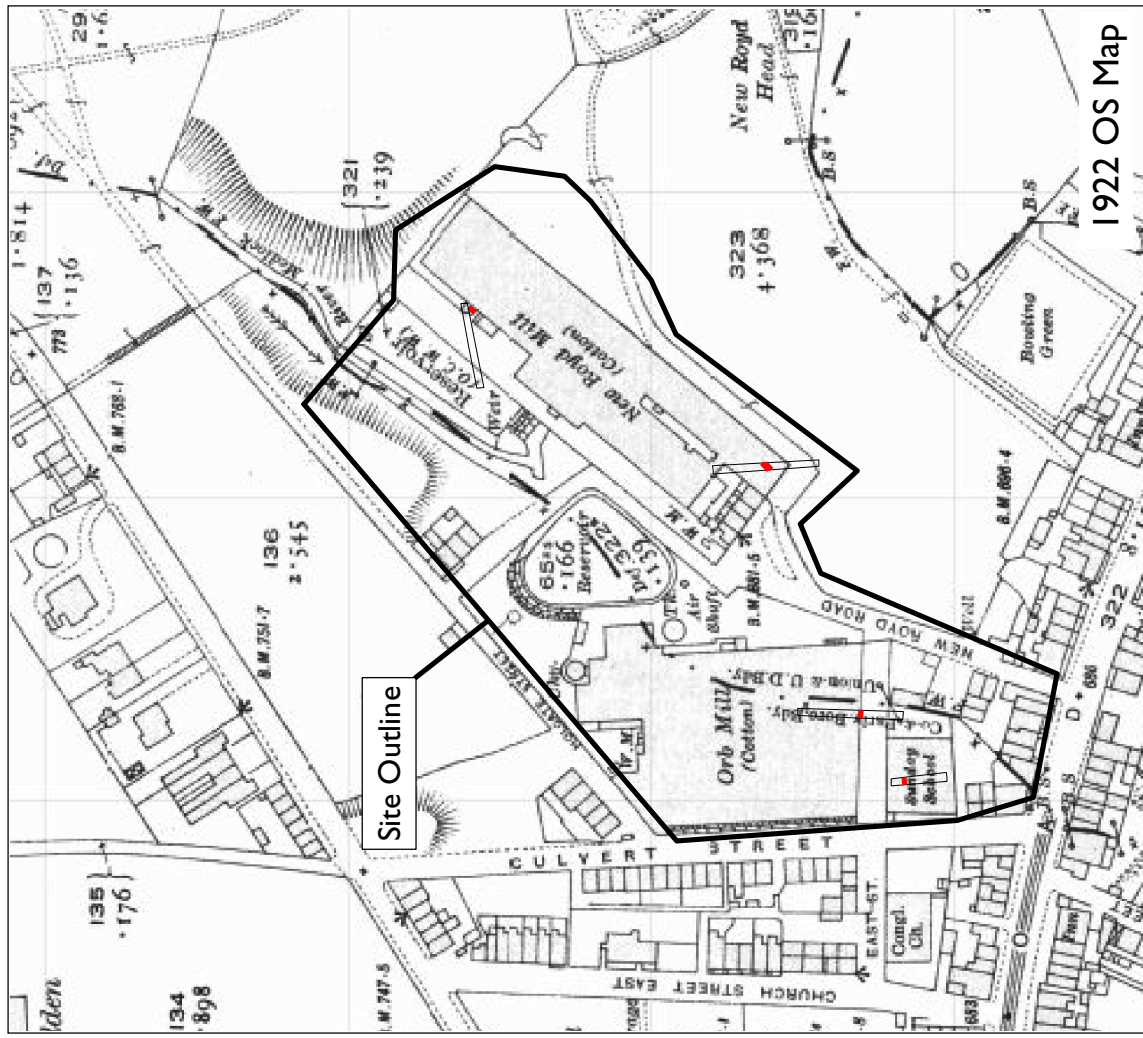
PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Wall in trench 5

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

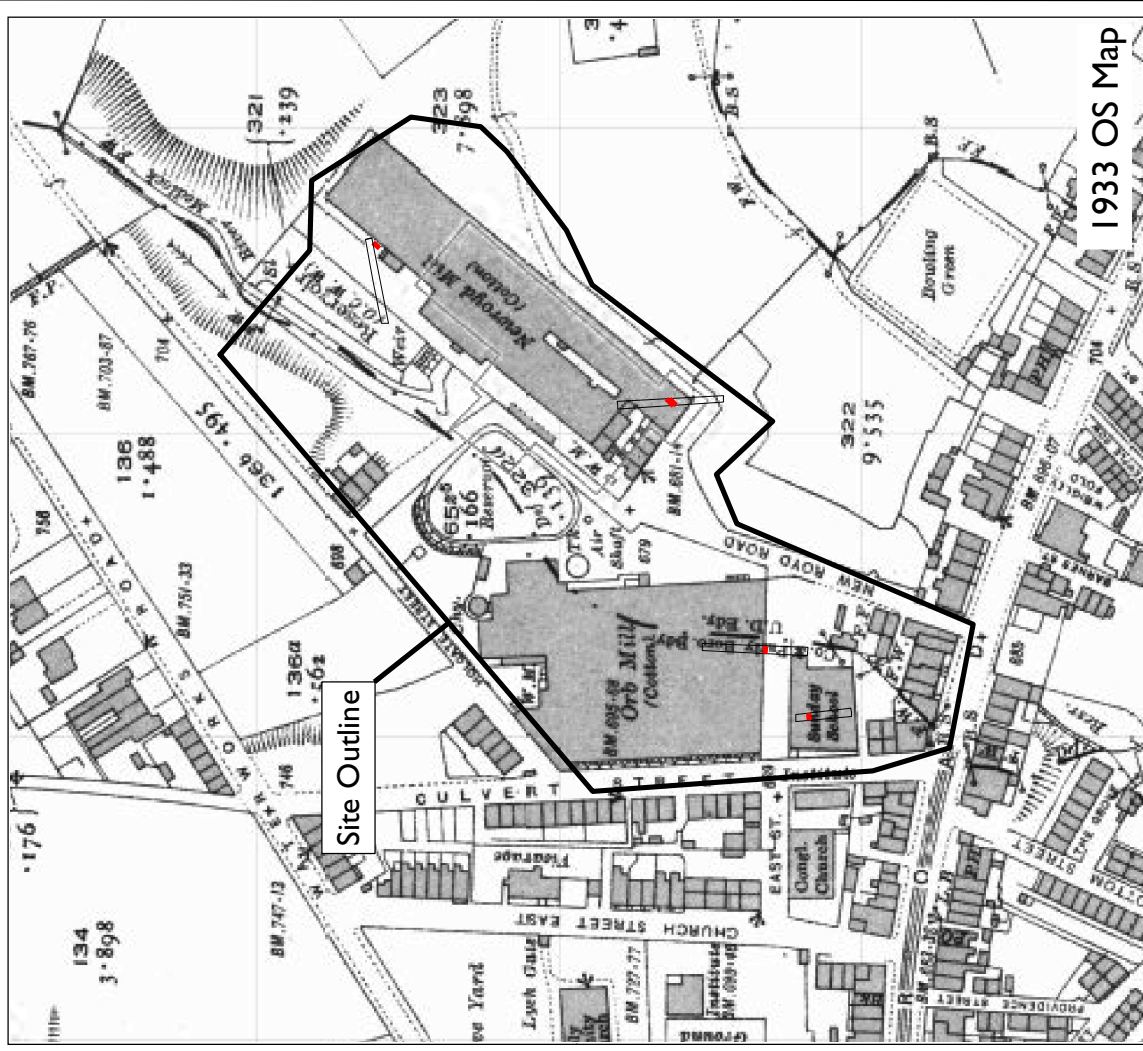
L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

FIGURE 8 // Recorded Wall Locations



Scale 1:2,500 @ A4

0 100m



PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

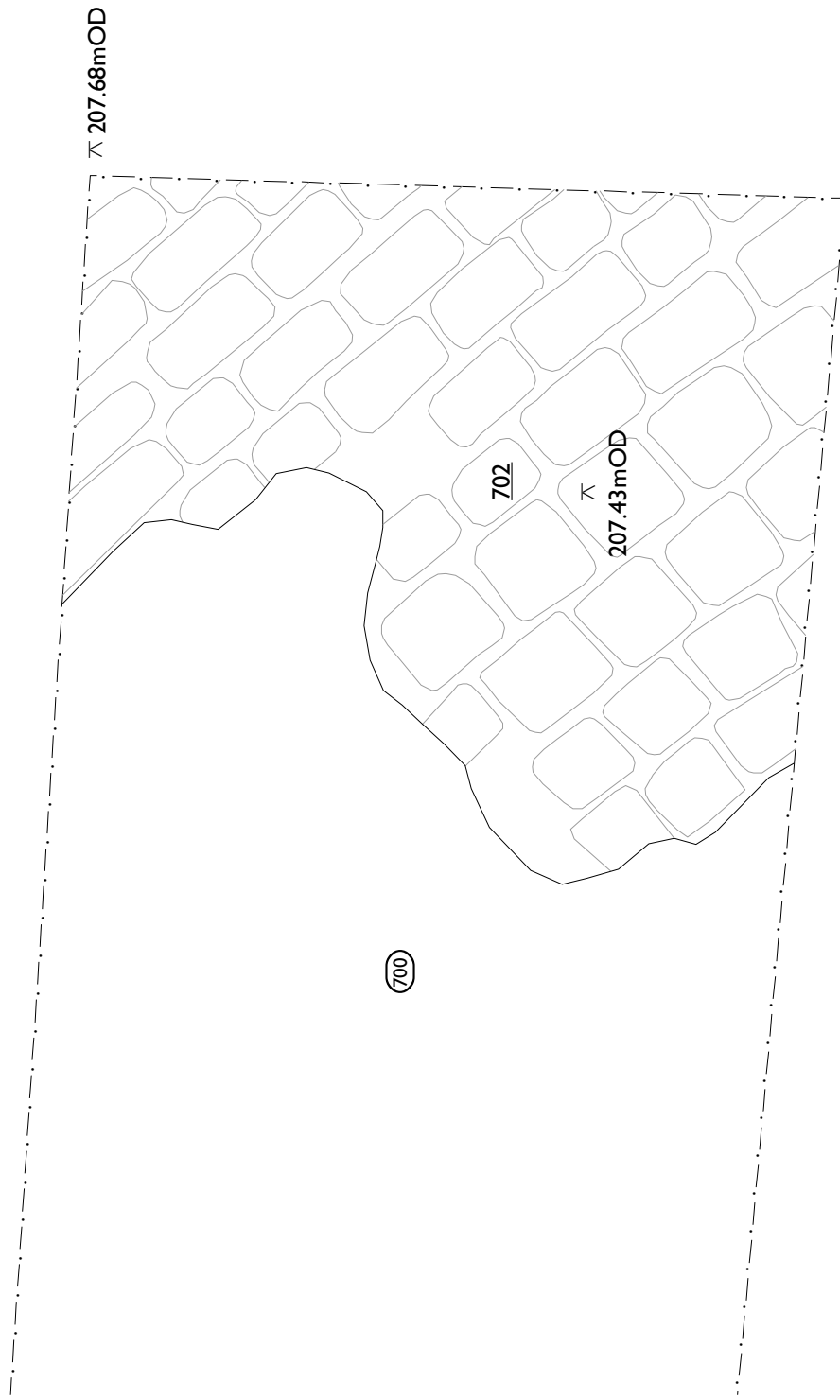
DESCRIPTION // Recorded wall locations

DOC REF: LP0755C-AMR-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

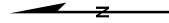


FIGURE 9 // Cobbles Recorded in Trench 7



Scale 1:20 @ A4

0 1 m

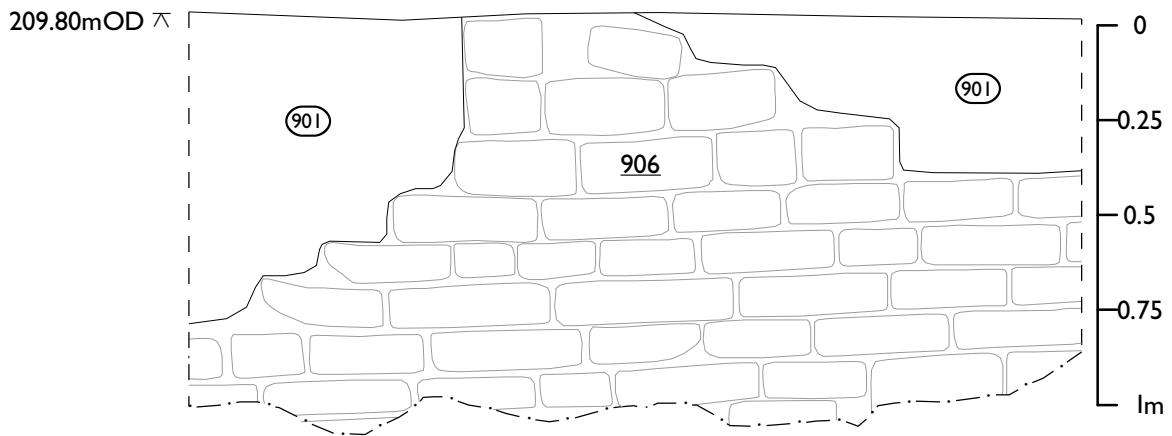


PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Cobbles recorded in trench 7

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY



Scale 1:20 @ A4

PROJECT // 0975C - Former Orb Mill, Oldham

DESCRIPTION // Wall in trench 9

DOC REF: LP0975C-AER-v1

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

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# OASIS FORM

## APPENDIX I

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

## Printable version

**OASIS ID: lparchae1-78832**

### Project details

Project name	Former Orb Mill, Oldham
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation at the Former Orb Mill, Oldham. The site once housed a colliery, two mills and a Sunday school all dating to the later 19th and early 20th century.
Project dates	Start: 14-06-2010 End: 18-06-2010
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	OLD/OMC 10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER MANCHESTER OLDHAM OLDHAM Former Orb Mill
Postcode	OL4 2ST
Study area	2.73 Hectares
Site coordinates	SD 395362 406002 53.8578925108 -2.9193864204 53 51 28 N 002 55 09 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 207.00m Max: 214.00m

### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	L - P : Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	L - P : Archaeology
Project director/manager	Claire Statter
Project supervisor	Blair Poole
Type of sponsor/funding body	Oldham Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Oldham Council

### **Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient	Unknown TBC
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Glass'
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Unknown TBC
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation Report. Former Orb Mill Oldham
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Statter, C
Date	2010
Issuer or publisher	L - P : Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Chester
Description	A4 spiral bound report
Entered by	Claire Statter (c.statter@lparchaeology.com)
Entered on	2 July 2010