

**MESNES PLAYING FIELDS,
MESNES PARK,
WIGAN,
GREATER MANCHESTER**



EVALUATION REPORT

CP. No: 1054/09

01/02/2010

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Quality Assurance

This report covers works as outlined in the brief for the above-named project as issued by the relevant authority, and as outlined in the agreed programme of works. Any deviation to the programme of works has been agreed by all parties. The works have been carried out according to the guidelines set out in the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Standards, Policy Statements and Codes of Conduct. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance set out by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd on the preparation of reports.

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SUMMARY

In December 2009, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Wardell Armstrong LLP, acting on behalf of their clients Onside North West, to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Mesnes Playing Fields in Wigan, Greater Manchester (NGR: SD 5810 0609).

This evaluation was conducted in advance of groundworks relating to the redevelopment of a 1.5 hectare site for a new sports facility, comprising a community sports centre at the southwest end of the site, and a sports pitch with associated buildings and footpaths at the northeast end.

A desk-based assessment, undertaken by SLR (October 2009), established that the site was of low potential for the presence of archaeological remains pre-dating the medieval period, due to sand quarrying occurring at the site during the 19th century. However, the site potentially lies within the projected line of Wigan's medieval town defences, which comprised a deep ditch and bank. Potentially re-dug during the English Civil War, it was possible that these defences may have been up to 5m in width and 3m in depth, and in which case, may have survived the quarrying of the 19th century, albeit in truncated form.

The proposed development was likely to affect these potential archaeological remains, and as a result, the Greater Manchester Planning Department require that an archaeological investigation be undertaken. The results of this investigation would be integrated with those of the desk-based assessment, in order to further inform on both a planning application and the need for mitigation should substantial archaeological remains be encountered.

In accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to, and approved by the Greater Manchester Planning Archaeologist (Martin-Bacon 2009), an evaluation consisting of nine linear trial trenches was undertaken between the 4th and 11th of December, 2009. The position and size of these trenches (50m in length and 2m in width, representing 6% of the development area), were determined in order to target both the projected line of the medieval town defences, and to test otherwise 'blank' areas.

The evaluation found no evidence of the proposed medieval town defences in any of the trenches. Archaeological findings did however comprise the remains of a buried topsoil horizon, potentially dating to the levelling of the land in 1929, and which was observed in all of the nine trenches. A levelling horizon comprising refuse dumps, sealed this topsoil and contained the inclusions of residual materials dating from the 1850's, as well as modern transfer print

pottery types. This deposit was observed in all the trenches, ranging in depth from a maximum of 1.50m to 0.10m. Ceramic drainage and service pipes were observed in all the trenches, with almost all appearing to be obsolete. In Trench 1 the remains of a medium sized dog were found buried within a pit which cut into the natural sand.

The evaluation found evidence to support the findings of the 2009 desk-based assessment which suggested that the development site at Mesnes Playing Fields is of a low archaeological potential. It is possible that remains relating to the medieval town defences lie further over to the north west, and under the current route of the B5375 (New Market Street).

In the north west area of the site, deposits of natural sand were encountered at depths of over 1.80m below the current ground level and contained no truncating features, suggesting that this area has suffered little from the sand quarrying conducted from 1849 to 1908, and further suggesting that the medieval town defences lie elsewhere.

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North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to David Brown of GIS, and all GIS staff at the site, for their help during this project. Further thanks are extended to Eric Walter, Acting Chairperson, and John and Dorothy Waring, of the Wigan Archaeological Society, who all kindly volunteered their help throughout the project. Alan James is also thanked for his diligent metal detecting of the trenches.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Nigel Cavanagh, Project Officer at NPA Ltd, who was assisted by Angus Clark, Kevin Mounsey, Michael McElligott and Helen Noakes. The report was written by Helen Noakes and the drawings were produced by Michael McElligott and Helen Noakes. The project was managed by Frank Giecco, Technical Director at NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Martin Railton, Project Manager for NPA Ltd.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In December 2009, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were invited by Wardell Armstrong LLP, on behalf of their clients, Onside North West, to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Mesnes Playing Fields, Wigan, Greater Manchester (NGR: SD 5810 0609; Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 A desk-based assessment (SLR 2009) identified that the site, although having a low archaeological potential, may be within the projected line of Wigan's medieval town defences. The development at the site, which is the proposed construction of a new sports centre, sports fields and associated footpaths and landscaping of the site, would potentially damage any archaeological remains relating to these defences.
- 1.1.3 As a result, the Greater Manchester Planning Archaeologist requested that an archaeological evaluation be conducted at the site, prior to any groundwork occurring there. This was requested in order to further inform on a planning application, and on potential mitigation should substantial archaeological features be encountered. This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16).
- 1.1.4 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the area, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development, and recommendations for further work.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted by Wardell Armstrong LLP (Martin-Bacon 2009), acting on behalf of their client Onside North West, in response to a request by the Greater Manchester Planning Archaeologist, for an archaeological evaluation of the study area.
- 2.1.2 Following acceptance of this Written Scheme of Investigation, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake the work. The project design was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

- 2.2.1 The field evaluation consisted of the excavation of nine linear trial trenches, Trenches 1-9 (Figure 2), which were excavated in order to produce a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals.
- 2.2.2 The location and size of the trial trenches were determined to coincide with what is proposed to be the projected line of the medieval town defences. Trenches 2, 3, 6 and 9 were subject to relocation when the presence of services and a live sewage pipe were identified within the proposed route of the trenches.
- 2.2.3 The dimensions of the trenches were 50m in length and 2m in width. The site is set within a rectilinear parcel of land, used for recreational purposes and approximately 1.5 hectare in size, located to the north west of Wigan town centre. The total excavation area represents 6% of the entire site.
- 2.2.4 The aims specific to this evaluation can be summarised as follows:
- *to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains encountered, and to establish their significance in order to provide information on the potential impact of the proposed development on these remains;*

- *to establish the extent, date, nature and significance of remains, structural or otherwise, which pre-date the medieval period and which may have survived 19th century sand quarrying;*
- *to determine the extent, date, nature and significance of an remains associated with the medieval town defences of Wigan, in particular the level of survival of the town ditch;*
- *to establish the extent and nature of any re-cutting and/or reinforcing of the medieval town defences during the Civil War period.*

2.3 METHODOLOGY

2.3.1 The trenches were mechanically excavated by a tracked excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision, to the natural substrate or the top of archaeological deposits, whichever was encountered first. Each trench was then manually cleaned and any putative archaeological features investigated and recorded according to the North Pennines Archaeology Ltd standard procedure as set out in the NPA Excavation Manual (Giecco 2009).

2.3.2 Photography was undertaken using Minolta X300, Canon EOS 500 and Pentax P30 Single Lens Reflex (SLR) cameras. A photographic record was made using digital photography, 400 ISO Black and White print and 200 ISO Colour Slide film.

2.4 THE ARCHIVE

2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage Guidelines (1991) and according to the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2007). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository, with copies of the report sent to the Greater Manchester Planning Archaeologist, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA09 MPF-A, CP 1054/09.

2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology supports the **Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project

will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, and can be accessed under the unique identification number northpen3-69663.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION AND GEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 The site lies within a rectilinear parcel of land approximately 1.5 ha in size and located to the north west of Wigan town centre. Lying at 37m AOD, the site lies at approximately 2-3m below the adjacent street level.
- 3.1.2 The site is currently in use as a recreational area, and exists as a flat mown grass field and is bounded to the northwest by Mesnes Park Terrace, to the north east by Mesnes Street, to the south west by Parson's Walk and to the south east by New Market Street.
- 3.1.3 Wigan lies within the Lancashire coal measures, and the underlying geology at the site comprises fluvio-glacial deposits of sand and gravel over coal seams (Countryside Commission, 1998).

3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 3.2.1 *Introduction:* this historical background was compiled by SLR Consulting, and is intended only as a brief summary of historical developments specific to the study area.
- 3.2.2 *Prehistoric:* prehistoric archaeological remains are not well represented in Wigan, primarily due to the effects of the last glacial retreat. Spot finds comprising stone tools have been found within the region but not within the confines of the evaluation area.
- 3.2.3 *Roman:* Wigan has been identified as being within the Roman settlement of *Coccium*, and excavations near to the site at Millgate have uncovered the remains of a 2nd century bathhouse. Possible barracks, comprising timber framed buildings were also identified between the Wiend and Millgate, located to the immediate south-east of the site. It is likely that the site was not part of this settlement and was used more for agricultural purposes.
- 3.2.4 The existence of a Roman road running northwards from Wigan and through to the Roman stronghold at Ribchester has yet to be proven to exist within the confines of the site, although it is likely that it was located along Dicconson Street (SLR 2009).
- 3.2.5 To the south-east of the site, a Roman cremation cemetery comprising the remains of 30-40 urns was discovered in 1848, the site is currently

- occupied by modern gasworks. A single gold aureus dating to AD69 was found at the site in 1850. Furthermore, a coin spot find at Millgate in 1890 and another at the Wiend in 1837 attest to the significant occupation of the area during this period of time.
- 3.2.6 *Medieval*: from the roman period up to the 19th century, the land within the Mesnes playing fields was used for agricultural purposes, and was held by the local Lord of the Manor, who was also the Rector, during the medieval period (*ibid*).
- 3.2.7 Wigan itself was granted the right to hold a market every Monday and an All Saints fair, in 1245. In 1246, the town received a charter from Henry III, making it a free borough, granting it the right to elect a council of Mayor, Aldermen and Bailiffs (Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit 1981).
- 3.2.8 During this period of time the town developed, with the streets of Wallgate, Standishgate and Hallgate being the main concourses. The wealth of the area relied heavily on the coal and textile industries, which were well developed within the area. At this point, medieval town defences would have been dug, the suggested line of which runs within the proposed development area.
- 3.2.9 *Post-medieval and Modern*: during the English Civil War, Wigan was a Royalist stronghold under the command of the Earl of Derby. Work started in January 1642 which comprised reconstruction to, and reinforcing of, the line of the medieval town defences as well as the construction of further entrenchments, and wooden pallisaded gates within the proposed development at Mesnes playing fields. Work in Chester has identified the remains of a similar earthwork, which suggested that these defences may have been up to 5m in width and 3m in depth.
- 3.2.10 The continuation of the industrialization of the area was observed up to the mid 18th century, at which point Wigan was thriving in industries which included brass, copper and textile production, coal mining and iron production. This boom was facilitated due to the construction of the canal network running from Wigan to Ribchester in 1742, followed by the construction of the Liverpool canal systems in 1772 and 1816 (Farrer and Brownbill 1911). Furthermore, the linking of Wigan to the Liverpool to Manchester railway network in 1832 and to Preston in 1838 can be seen as further advancing the industrialization of the area.

- 3.2.11 In 1894, the Ordnance Survey Map shows that the Mesnes playing fields were set within a heavily industrialized area, with collieries to the north and sand extraction taking place within the south-western areas of the playing fields. No mention is made of the Civil War defences being within the playing fields, yet by 1908, the Ordnance Survey shows a raised platform in existence aligned northeast to southwest in the site. This is potentially the remnants of a haul road used during the brief period of sand quarrying occurring within the south of the area.
- 3.2.12 The 1929 Ordnance Survey map shows that the interior of the playing fields are a flat expanse, suggesting the leveling of the site between 1908 and 1929. It is possible that this leveling only represents the removal of the raised platform noted on the 1908 survey, but it is more likely that the area was landscaped as a whole to create the flat playing fields, which were officially established by 1937 and were used by the grammar school, located to the north of the site, and still in existence today.

3.3 PREVIOUS WORK

- 3.3.1 The Mesnes playing fields have been shown to be mainly used for agricultural and recreational purposes during most of the history of Wigan and the surrounding areas. However, the site has been subject to intensive sand quarrying during the late 1800's and potentially has the line of the Civil War and Medieval town defences within it.
- 3.3.2 Sand quarrying, which was conducted in the south-western areas of the site during the late 1800's, suggests that within these areas of the site, all but the most substantially cut archaeological feature would have been removed. The suggestion that the town Civil War defences were cut to 3m in depth may represent such a substantial feature that may well have survived such activities.

4 EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The excavation of trenches down to the first archaeological horizon, followed by further hand excavation of subsequent archaeological horizons, permitted an examination of any archaeological remains. All trench locations are depicted in Figure 2; detailed sections for all Trenches are depicted in Figures 3- 7

4.2 TRENCH 1 (FIGURE 3)

4.2.1 Trench 1, which was orientated northwest to southeast, measured 50m in length and 2m in width and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.58m. A total of three land drains, one ceramic drain and an electricity conduit (see plate 1), were observed within the trench, as well as the skeletal remains of a medium sized dog.

4.2.2 The natural substrate, which was encountered at a depth of 0.50m and was observed to a maximum depth of 1.08m, consisted of moderately compacted reddish-orange sand (**133**).

4.2.3 Truncating the natural, and at approximately 20m from the northwest end of Trench 1, a small oval shaped pit [**138**] was observed. This measured a maximum diameter of 1.50m and was filled to a depth of 0.15m by loosely compacted blackish-brown silty sand (**139**), which also contained the articulated skeletal remains of a medium sized dog (see plate 2).

4.2.4 Overlying this deposit and also sealing the natural, moderately compacted dark blackish-grey silty sand (**136**) was observed to a depth of 0.10m. This layer represents the potential remains of topsoil existing at the site during the quarrying phase and prior to leveling in 1937.

4.2.5 Observed overlying this deposit, compacted orange-brown silty clay (**137**) was 0.50m in depth. This deposit is interpreted as representing a redeposited natural. Potentially, this layer was created by utilizing backfill from within the quarried areas of the site, and spread evenly over the site in order to facilitate the leveling of the playing field.

4.2.6 Overlying the redeposited material, a compacted blackish-grey ashy layer was observed (**135**), which measured a maximum of 0.30m. This

- deposit contained a large quantity of metallic slag and charcoal fragments.
- 4.2.7 Truncating this deposit, three land drains, a ceramic drain and one electricity conduit were observed. The three land drains, observed for a maximum of 2.5m, measured a maximum of 0.20m in width and were all orientated east-west across Trench 1.
- 4.2.8 The ceramic land drain measured a maximum of 0.20m in width and was aligned in a south-east to north-west direction. The electricity conduit measured a maximum of 0.10m in width, was observed to an extent of approximately 7m, and was aligned in a north-south direction.
- 4.2.9 Overlying these services, and sealing the above deposits, topsoil comprising moderately compacted silty sand (**134**) was observed to a depth of 0.20m.
- 4.2.10 A total of 45 pieces of unstratified pottery, dating to the 1900's were found from within Trench 1. Two sherds of pottery were from a bottle which had the logo for the Palatine mineral water bottling company. A further pottery sherd came from a possible small inkbottle, and was stamped with the word Bourne (see section 5.2).

4.3 TRENCH 2 (FIGURE 3)

- 4.3.1 Trench 2 was orientated northeast to southwest and was excavated to a depth of 1.20m. The Trench was excavated in two sections, due to the presence of a large ceramic drain within the southern extent, which also extended in to the northwestern extent of Trench 5. The first section measured 13.5m in length and 2.0m in width. The second section located approximately 0.25m to the south of the previous, measured 37m in length and was 2.0m in width.
- 4.3.2 The natural substrate, which was encountered at a depth of 0.80 m below the current ground level, was composed of moderately compacted reddish-orange sand (**143**).
- 4.3.3 Overlying the natural, a layer of moderately compacted blackish-grey silty clay (**142**) was observed to a depth of 0.20m. Again, this represents probable topsoil leveling of the site prior to the construction of the playing fields in 1937.

- 4.3.4 Observed to a depth of 0.25m, compacted reddish-brown silty clay **(141)** overlaid deposit **(142)**. This layer is probably a redeposited natural, created by spreading materials from within the quarry to create a flat playing ground.
- 4.3.5 A large ceramic drain, measuring approximately 0.50m in width was observed in the first section of Trench 2, and was comprised of red-brown earthenware ceramic, which cut into the redeposited natural **(141)**.
- 4.3.6 Topsoil **(140)** was observed to overlie all the above deposits. This was composed of moderate to loosely compacted blackish-brown silty sand, and was observed to a depth of 0.15m.



Plate 1: North-west facing overview of Trench 1



Plate 2: Pre-excavation photograph of dog burial, taken facing east, Trench 1.

4.3.7 A total of thirty-nine pieces of pottery were found from unstratified contexts in Trench 2. Of these, 4 were fragments from Palatine mineral water bottles, and 1 sherd was from the Balmoral Brewery (see section 5.2).

4.4 TRENCH 3 (FIGURE 4)

4.4.1 Trench 3, which was aligned in a north to south direction, measured 50m in length and was 2m in width. A total of three service drains were observed within Trench 3, including the remains of a robbed out drain. A sondage was excavated to a depth of 2m below the current ground level within the northwestern extent of the Trench.

4.4.2 The natural substrate, which was encountered at a depth of 0.95m below the current ground level, comprised reddish-orange sand (110). Excavation of a sondage observed that the natural substrate existed to

- depths exceeding 2m below the current ground level, and supports records suggesting that the areas to the north were affected less by the 19th century sand quarrying.
- 4.4.3 Truncating the natural, the remains of a partially robbed out stone lined drain **[113]** was observed (see plate 4). This feature, which measured approximately 0.5m in width, was aligned north-south and was filled to a depth of 0.15m by moderately compacted orange-grey sand **(114)**. This deposit contained inclusions of roughly dressed masonry, which had some evidence of Portland cement mortar, but which did not appear to be in their original positions.
- 4.4.4 Overlying the natural substrate, the remains of a topsoil layer, comprising moderately compacted blackish-grey silty clay **(112)** was observed. This measured a maximum of 0.35m in depth and contained inclusions of pottery dating to the 1900's.
- 4.4.5 This deposit was overlaid by a redeposited natural **(116)** which comprised compacted orange-brown sandy clay. This was observed to a depth of 0.3m, and was truncated at the western end by a land drain, which measured 0.15m in width and was aligned in an east-west direction. This deposit also contained inclusions of 19th century pottery forms, oyster shells and glass.
- 4.4.6 A layer containing ash, clinker and the remains of metallic slag **(111)** overlaid the above deposits and was observed to a depth of 0.15m. This layer was likely to have been deposited as part of an extensive bedding layer for the drainage works, which were observed over the whole playing field site.
- 4.4.7 Overlying all the above deposits, topsoil **(109)** was observed to a depth of 0.2m, and contained modern pottery types, oyster shells and fragments of clay tobacco pipe stems which again dated to the late 19th/20th Century.



Plate 3: Overview of Trench 2, taken facing northwest



Plate 4: Southwest overview of partially robbed out stone drain [113], Trench 3



Plate 5: North facing photograph of Trench 4



Plate 6: North facing photograph of ceramic drain within Trench 4.

4.4.8 A total of 15 sherds of pottery and 1 clay tobacco pipe stem were found within unstratified contexts within Trench 3. Of these, 3 more fragments of Palatine mineral water bottles were identified (see section 5.2).

4.5 TRENCH 4 (FIGURE 4)

4.5.1 Trench 4, which was orientated in an east-west direction, measured 50m in length and 2m in width. A total of three land drains were observed within Trench 4.

4.5.2 The natural substrate was encountered at a depth of 1.30m below the current ground level. It comprised moderately compacted red-orange sand (119).

4.5.3 Truncating the natural substrate at the western extent, a large ceramic land drain, measuring approximately 0.5m in width, was observed. This appeared to continue on an orientation of north-east to south-west and was recorded in Trench 6.

- 4.5.4 Sealing the natural substrate, a moderately compacted dark brown-grey silty clay **(120)** measuring 0.40m in depth was recorded. This deposit contained numerous pieces of late 19th/ 20th century pottery types, animal bone, glass and clay tobacco pipe stems (see section 5).
- 4.5.5 This deposit was overlaid by redeposited natural, which comprised moderately compacted orange-grey silty clay **(118)** and was observed to a depth of 0.5m. A total of nine pieces of pottery, including 3 pieces of Palatine mineral water bottle were found within this deposit, as well as clay tobacco pipe stems and a small quantity of oyster shells.
- 4.5.6 Two land drains were observed to cut into deposit **(118)**. Located within the eastern extent of Trench 4, these both measured a maximum of 0.15m in width.
- 4.5.7 Overlying the above, topsoil **(117)** was observed to a depth of 0.4m and comprised moderately compacted dark blackish-brown silty-sand. A fragment of the Palatine mineral water bottle was found within this deposit.

4.6 TRENCH 5 (FIGURE 5)

- 4.6.1 Trench 5, which was orientated north-west to south-east, measured 50m in length and 2m in width. One large ceramic drain was observed at the north-western extent of the Trench and was a continuation of the drain observed within Trench 2.
- 4.6.2 The natural substrate **(100)**, which comprised moderately compacted reddish-orange sand **(115)**, was encountered at a depth of 1.10m below the current ground level.



Plate 7: South-east facing photograph of Trench 5 shows large drain in foreground.

- 4.6.3 Truncating the natural substrate (**100**) at the north-western end of Trench 5, the continuation of a large ceramic drain observed in trench 3, measuring 0.5m in width, was observed (see plate 7).
- 4.6.4 Overlying the natural (**100**), redeposited natural comprising moderately compacted orangey brown silty clay (**106**) was observed measuring 0.50m in depth. This deposit contained fragments of 19th century pottery types including 2 pieces of Palatine mineral water bottles, oyster shells, glass and clay tobacco pipe stems. This deposit was overlaid by a black ashy layer (**105**), which contained fragments of charcoal, metallic slag and clinker, and was 0.25m in depth (see section 5).
- 4.6.5 A layer of topsoil (**126**) was observed sealing context (**105**), comprising a moderately compacted blackish-brown silty sand, measuring 0.10m in depth.

4.7 TRENCH 6 (FIGURE 5)

- 4.7.1 Trench 6, which was orientated in an north-south direction, was excavated in two sections. At the eastern extent, the trench measured 13.50m in length and was 2m in width. At the western extent, the trench measured 36.50m.
- 4.7.2 The eastern section of Trench 6 was excavated to a maximum depth of 3.0m below the current ground level. The natural substrate (**127**) was only encountered at a depth of 2.25m, and was overlain by redeposited natural (**132**) which contained 1900's pottery, tile and clay tobacco pipe stems.
- 4.7.3 In the western extent, the natural substrate (**125**) was encountered at a depth of 1.60m below the ground level. This again, was red-orange sand. This was truncated by a large ceramic pipe, measuring 0.5m in width, and which was also observed within Trench 4.
- 4.7.4 The natural was overlain by a buried topsoil horizon (**124**) which comprised moderately compacted dark black-grey silty clay, and was 0.2m in depth. Glass, CBM and Pottery of 19th century date were found throughout this deposit.
- 4.7.5 Overlying this deposit, redeposited natural (**123**) was observed to a depth of 0.55m, and comprised orange-brown silty clay. This contained oyster shells and clay tobacco pipe stems.
- 4.7.6 Truncating this deposit, a land drain measuring 0.15m in width was observed to be aligned in a south-west to north-east direction.
- 4.7.7 Overlying these deposits, topsoil (**122**) measured 0.15m in depth and comprised moderately compacted dark black-brown silty sand which contained 19th century pottery types, one of which was a Palatine mineral water bottle, and oyster shells (see section 5).

4.8 TRENCH 7 (FIGURE 6)

- 4.8.1 Trench 7, which was orientated northwest-southeast measured 50m in length and was 2m in width, was excavated in two sections due to the presence of live services within the eastern side of the trench. The eastern section measured 15.50m, and the western section measured 32.70m, with a 1.80m baulk separating these two sections.
- 4.8.2 The natural substrate was encountered at a depth of 0.5m below the current ground level. This was composed of red-orange sand (100).
- 4.8.3 Redeposited natural (102), comprising orange-brown silty clay was observed to overlie the natural substrate (100) to a depth of 0.30m in Trench 7. This layer was truncated by modern service pipes (see plate 8). In the eastern extent, these pipes were observed crossing the whole length of the trench, and measured 0.20m in width and aligned in a north-west to south-east direction (see figure 6).



Plate 8: Photograph of Trench 6 facing north-west.



Plate 9: West facing overview of Trench 7

4.8.4 In the western section of the trench yet another modern service pipe measuring 0.20m in width and aligned in a northwest-southeast direction was recorded (see plate 9).

4.8.5 Overlying deposit (102), topsoil was observed to a depth of 0.25m and comprised black-brown silty sand (101).

4.9 TRENCH 8 (FIGURE 6)

4.9.1 Trench 8, which was orientated northwest-southeast, measured 25m in length and 2m in width. This trench had to be shortened due to the presence of rectangular concrete paving, used for cricket practice. A 2m deep sondage was excavated at 18m from the eastern baulk to confirm the nature of the natural substrate (103).

4.9.2 The natural substrate (103) was encountered at a depth of 0.4m below the current ground level, and comprised red-orange sand.

4.9.3 Overlying the natural, a deposit comprising moderately compacted orange-grey silty clay was observed (144) was observed to a depth of 0.25m. This deposit contained modern pottery types. Overlying this,

topsoil (145) comprising moderately compacted dark black-brown silty sand was observed to be a depth of 0.15m.



Plate 10: West facing overview of Trench 8



Plate 11: Overview of Trench 9, taken facing east.

4.10 TRENCH 9 (FIGURE 7)

- 4.10.1 Trench 9, which was orientated east-west, and was shortened due to the presence of a live sewer pipe within the eastern corner of the site and a live service which was running across the middle section of the of the Trench. Trench 9 was therefore excavated in two sections, one measuring 7.4m in length and one measuring 14.80m in length.
- 4.10.2 The first section of Trench 9 was recorded rapidly due to the sides of the trenches becoming unstable, as a cause of the Trench being excavated to a maximum depth of 1.80m. The second section of Trench 9 also failed to locate the natural substrate, and was also excavated to a depth of 1.8m, although the end of the trench was stepped to allow easy access and egress.
- 4.10.3 The natural substrate was not encountered in Trench 9 and the lowest archaeological horizon comprised moderately compacted orange-grey silty clay (**129**), which was 0.75m to 0.90m in depth. The absence of natural at 1.8m indicating that the trench was position over one of the deeper areas of sand quarrying. One sherd of 19th Century pottery and

several pieces of glass and CBM were recovered from within this deposit.

4.10.4 Overlying this deposit, a layer composed of clinker, metallic slags and charcoal (**130**) was observed to a depth of 0.25m to 0.45m. Glass found from within this deposit had the markings identifying that these were made by Cannington, Shaw and Company, based in Lancashire, and Joseph Cadwaller, who was located on Market Street in Wigan in 1881. A single sherd of pottery was also identified as a Palatine mineral water bottle. These finds were again of late 19th to early 20th Century in date (see section 5).

4.10.5 Topsoil (**131**) sealed the above deposits in both sections of Trench 9. This was observed to a depth of 0.30m.

4.11 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

4.11.1 Due to the limited archaeological potential of the site, no environmental samples were taken during the groundworks.

5 FINDS

5.1 FINDS ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.1 A total of three hundred and twenty eight finds from twenty-one different contexts were recovered during the evaluation. These included one hundred and seventy-seven sherds of post-medieval pottery, twenty-five fragments of glass, forty-two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stems and six metal objects. These are listed in Table 1.
- 5.1.2 The finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines, and recorded under the supervision of F.Giecco (NPA Ltd Technical Director). The metalwork was placed in a stable environment and was monitored for corrosion.

5.2 POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY

- 5.2.1 In total one hundred and seventy-seven sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered during the evaluation. Of the post-medieval pottery 134 of the 177 were unstratified topsoil finds. The finds assemblage dated exclusively from the late 19th and early 20th century and has little potential for further study.
- 5.2.2 Within these finds, nineteen sherds (identified in Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9) were identified as being pieces of bottles of mineral water from the Palatine Mineral Water Company Ltd. This company, which was recorded as being founded on December 28th 1892 in the Wigan Observer, had offices situated on Station Road.
- 5.2.3 The works were initially situated at The Folly, off Wigan Lane, until the early 1900's when they moved to Millgate, located to the south-west of the Mesnes playing fields. The company traded until the 1960's, under the name of Palatine Pop. During the company's history it made and distributed soft drinks, beer and water.
- 5.2.4 One sherd of pottery, from an unstratified context in Trench 2, was a bottle from the Balmoral Brewery. This company was initially located in Hindley, Greater Manchester, but by 1881, premises at Lord Street in Wigan are established. In 1924, the Balmoral Brewery was purchased by the Lion Brewery.
- 5.2.5 One sherd of pottery from an unstratified deposit in Trench 1 had a markers stamp of J. Bourne and Son. This was a fragment of an ink

bottle, made by J. Bourne and Son who were located in a pottery in Denby within the city of Derby. The company was trading during the 1840's and up to the early 1900's.

5.3 POST-MEDIEVAL GLASS

- 5.3.1 A total of twenty-nine fragments of post-medieval glass molded glass were recovered during the evaluation. Of these, two fragments contained datable information.
- 5.3.2 Within Trench 9 in context **(130)** one fragment of the base of a bottle was observed to have a C S and Co Ld stamp. This is from Cannington, Shaw and company limited, which was located in St Helens, Lancashire. This company traded from 1875 until 1913. Two separate fragments of glass coming from the same context may have been pieces of the same bottle.
- 5.3.3 One fragment from Trench 9, context **(128)**, was piece of a Joseph Cadwaller bottle, the company of which was located at 34 Market Street, Wigan. This company dealt in china, glass and earthenware products from 1881 and continued well into the 20th century.

5.4 METAL OBJECTS

- 5.4.1 A total of six metal objects were recovered during the evaluation. Of these finds, three were corroded modern tools. From an unstratified deposit in Trench 1, the remains of a possible screwdriver were found.
- 5.4.2 In an unstratified context from Trench 2 and from deposit **(130)** in Trench 9 possible tradesmen's implements were found. These objects appeared to be wood-working implements, potentially raddles. These were both found with fragments of sheet lead.
- 5.4.3 In deposit **(106)**, Trench 5, a corroded iron nail, 8cm in length was recovered.
- 5.4.4 No further work is recommended on the metallic assemblage.

5.5 CLAY TOBACCO PIPES

- 5.5.1 A total of thirty-nine pieces of clay tobacco pipe stems, and three bulbs were found, in context **(106)** in Trench 5 and two unstratified finds in Trench 5, were found during the evaluation. No markers stamps or datable markers could be found on any of these items, and from the

diameter of the pipe stems a generic date of the 19th to early 20th century is ascribed to these finds.

5.5.2 No further work is recommended on the tobacco pipe assemblage.

Table 1: Finds Table of Artefacts Recovered from the Evaluation

Context Number	Trench	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
112	3	Pottery	1 sherd	0.05	Modern- 1900's
121	9	Pottery	2 sherds	0.025	Modern- 1900's
122	6	Pottery	5 sherds	0.3	an 1800's bottle, mostly 1900's
122	6	Oyster Shell	1 shell	0.05	
123	6	Oyster Shell	1 shell	0.02	
123	6	Tile	1 piece	0.04	Modern- 1900's
123	6	Pottery	3 sherds	0.05	Modern- 1900's
123	6	Clay Tobacco Pipe	2 stem	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
102	8	Pottery	2 sherds	0.22	Modern- 1900's
116	3	CBM	3 pieces	0.12	Modern- 1900's
116	3	Pottery	1 sherd	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
116	3	Glass	1 fragment	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
109	3	Oyster Shell	2 shells	0.09	
109	3	Clay Tobacco Pipe	4 pieces	0.01	Modern- 1900's
109	3	Pottery	1 sherd	0.03	Modern- 1900's
120	4	Glass	1 fragment	0.05	Modern- 1900's
120	4	Clay Tobacco Pipe	1 stem	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
120	4	Pottery	7 sherds	0.1	Modern- 1900's
120	4	Animal Bone	2 pieces	0.025	
131	9	Pottery	1 sherd	0.075	Modern- 1900's
106	5	Pottery	29 sherds	0.55	some late 19th bottle fragments, mostly 1900's
106	5	Animal Bone	2 pieces	0.05	
106	5	Glass	3 fragments	0.575	Modern- 1900's
106	5	Oyster Shell	3 shells	0.18	
106	5	Clay Tobacco Pipe	2 stems 1 bulb	0.01	Modern- 1900's
106	5	Metal Object	1 object	0.01	
117	4	Oyster Shell	1 shell	0.025	
117	4	Clay Tobacco Pipe	4 stems	0.01	Modern- 1900's
117	4	Pottery	7 sherds	0.1	some late 19th bottle, mostly 1900's
118	4	Clay Tobacco Pipe	2 pieces	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
118	4	Oyster Shell	2 shells	0.11	
118	4	Pottery	9 sherds	0.375	some late 19th bottle, mostly 1900's

Context Number	Trench	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
124	6	Glass	1 fragment	0.027	Modern- 1900's
124	6	CBM	1 piece	0.025	Modern- 1900's
124	6	Pottery	3 sherds	0.018	Modern- 1900's
128	9	Pottery	5 sherds	0.13	Modern- 1900's
128	9	Oyster Shell	2 shells	0.075	
128	9	Glass	7 fragments	0.13	some late 19th bottle, most 1900's
129	9	Pottery	1 sherd	0.017	Modern- 1900's
129	9	CBM	5 pieces	0.325	Modern- 1900's
129	9	Glass	1 fragment	0.03	Modern- 1900's
130	9	Pottery	8 sherds	0.221	an 1800's bottle, mostly 1900's
130	9	Metal Object	2 pieces	0.175	Modern- 1900's
130	9	Animal Bone	1 piece	0.03	
130	9	Glass	7 fragments	0.21	some late 19th bottle, most 1900+
u/s	1	Oyster Shell	6 shells	0.4	
u/s	1	Pottery	46 sherds	1.875	some late 19th bottle, mostly 1900's
u/s	1	Metal Object	1 piece	0.05	Modern- 1900's
u/s	1	Clay Tobacco Pipe	3 pieces	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
u/s	2	Pottery	39 sherds	0.75	some late 19th beer bottle fragments, mostly 1900's
u/s	2	Clay Tobacco Pipe	7 pieces	0.02	Modern- 1900's
u/s	2	Metal Object	2 pieces	0.1	Modern- 1900's
u/s	3	Pottery	15 sherds	0.8	some 1800's, mostly 1900's
u/s	3	Clay Tobacco Pipe	1 piece	<0.01	Modern- 1900's
u/s	5	Pottery	34 sherds	1.525	Modern- 1900's
u/s	5	Oyster Shell	2 shells	0.05	
u/s	5	Clay Tobacco Pipe	10 stems, 2 bulbs	0.06	Modern- 1900's
u/s	5	Glass	8 fragments	0.4	Modern- 1900's
u/s	8	Clay Tobacco Pipe	3 pieces	0.011	Modern- 1900's

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 No archaeological features associated with the Medieval and Civil War Town defences were observed during the evaluation at Mesnes Playing Fields in Wigan. However, archaeological horizons, comprising buried topsoil, potentially post-medieval in date, and a post-medieval refuse dump layer were observed within all the trenches. Service pipes, dating from the mid to late 1900's were also observed in many of the trenches, and represent the drainage of the site.
- 6.1.2 These findings suggest that the site has been historically used as an area for pastoral and recreational activities, up until the quarrying of sand, which occurred at the southern areas of the site at some point between 1849 and 1894. During this sporadic and short-lived activity, a raised platform, used as a haul road, and noted on the 1908 Ordnance Survey, was constructed.
- 6.1.3 During this sand extraction, waste and refuse from the surrounding industries may have been tipped at the site, especially within areas where intensive quarrying occurred such as at the south-east of the site. These findings are supported by the high incidence of local glass and ceramic finds within the various deposits at the site, including glass from a merchant based at Market Street, Wigan and the Palatine Mineral Water Company.
- 6.1.4 Subsequently, the area was flattened. Potentially, subsoil which would have been within the haul road may have been spread across the site, along with a hardcore containing domestic refuse which contained local glass and ceramic types and a high incidence of oyster shells. It is possible that this material was dumped at the southern areas of the site where the quarrying was more pronounced, and was spread evenly across the site, in order to bring the site to a useable level. A likely date for this leveling would be 1937 when the area was converted into a playing field. The inclusion of domestic refuse such as ceramics and clinker would aid drainage at the site.

- 6.1.5 The playing fields were then used for recreational purposes by the Grammar school, and were eventually amalgamated into recreational use alongside Mesnes Park. The occurrence of modern drainage pipes and services suggests that works undertaken during the late 1900's, including the routing of the mains sewer across the eastern areas of the site (circa 1931), were a frequent occurrence.
- 6.1.6 Although the Civil War defences were not observed during the evaluation, it is possible that they lie within the line of the main road (New Market Street) lying to the south-east of the site.

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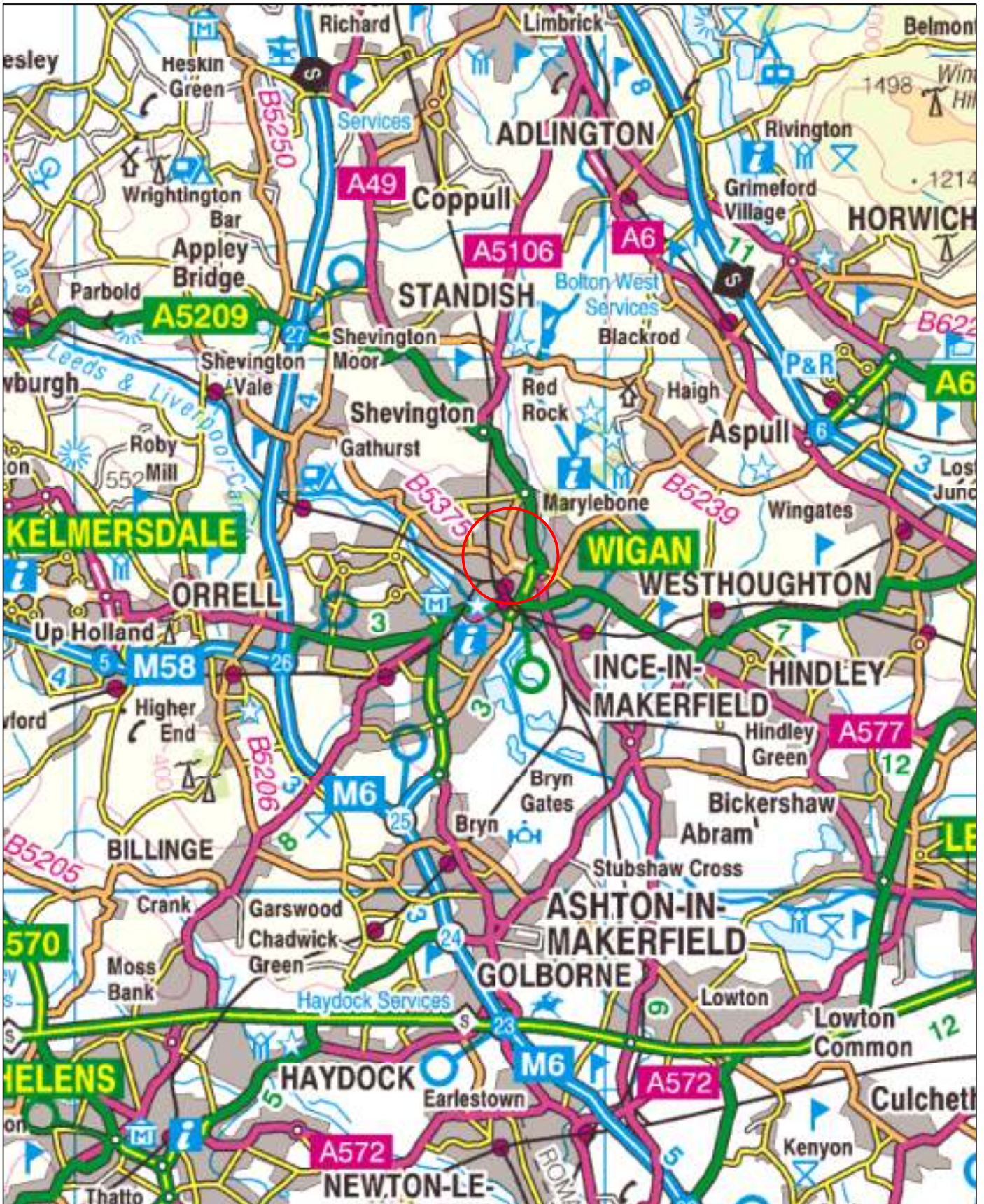
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Table 2: List of Contexts issued during Evaluation

Context Number	Trench	Type	Description
100	7	Deposit	Natural
101	7	Deposit	Topsoil
102	7	Deposit	Redeposited natural
103	8	Deposit	Natural
104	5	Deposit	Ashy layer
105	5	Deposit	Subsoil
106	5	Deposit	Redeposited natural
107	5	Deposit	Redeposited natural
108	5	Deposit	Redeposited natural
109	3	Deposit	Topsoil
110	3	Deposit	Natural
111	3	Deposit	Ashy layer
112	3	Deposit	Buried topsoil
113	3	Cut	Modern drainage pipe
114	3	Deposit	Fill of [113]
115	5	Deposit	Natural
116	3	Deposit	Redeposited natural
117	4	Deposit	Topsoil
118	4	Deposit	Redeposited natural
119	4	Deposit	Natural
120	4	Deposit	Buried topsoil
121	9	Deposit	Redeposited natural
122	6	Deposit	Topsoil
123	6	Deposit	Redeposited natural
124	6	Deposit	Buried topsoil
125	6	Deposit	Natural
126	5	Deposit	Topsoil
127	6	Deposit	Natural
128	9	Deposit	Ashy layer
129	9	Deposit	Redeposited natural
130	9	Deposit	Ashy layer
131	9	Deposit	Topsoil
132	6	Deposit	Redeposited natural
133	1	Deposit	Natural
134	1	Deposit	Topsoil
135	1	Deposit	Ashy layer
136	1	Deposit	Buried topsoil
137	1	Deposit	Redeposited natural
138	1	Cut	Pit, contained dog skeleton
139	1	Deposit	fill of [138]
140	2	Deposit	Topsoil

Context Number	Trench	Type	Description
141	2	Deposit	Natural
142	2	Deposit	Topsoil
143	2	Deposit	Natural
144	8	Deposit	Redeposited natural
145	8	Deposit	Topsoil

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES






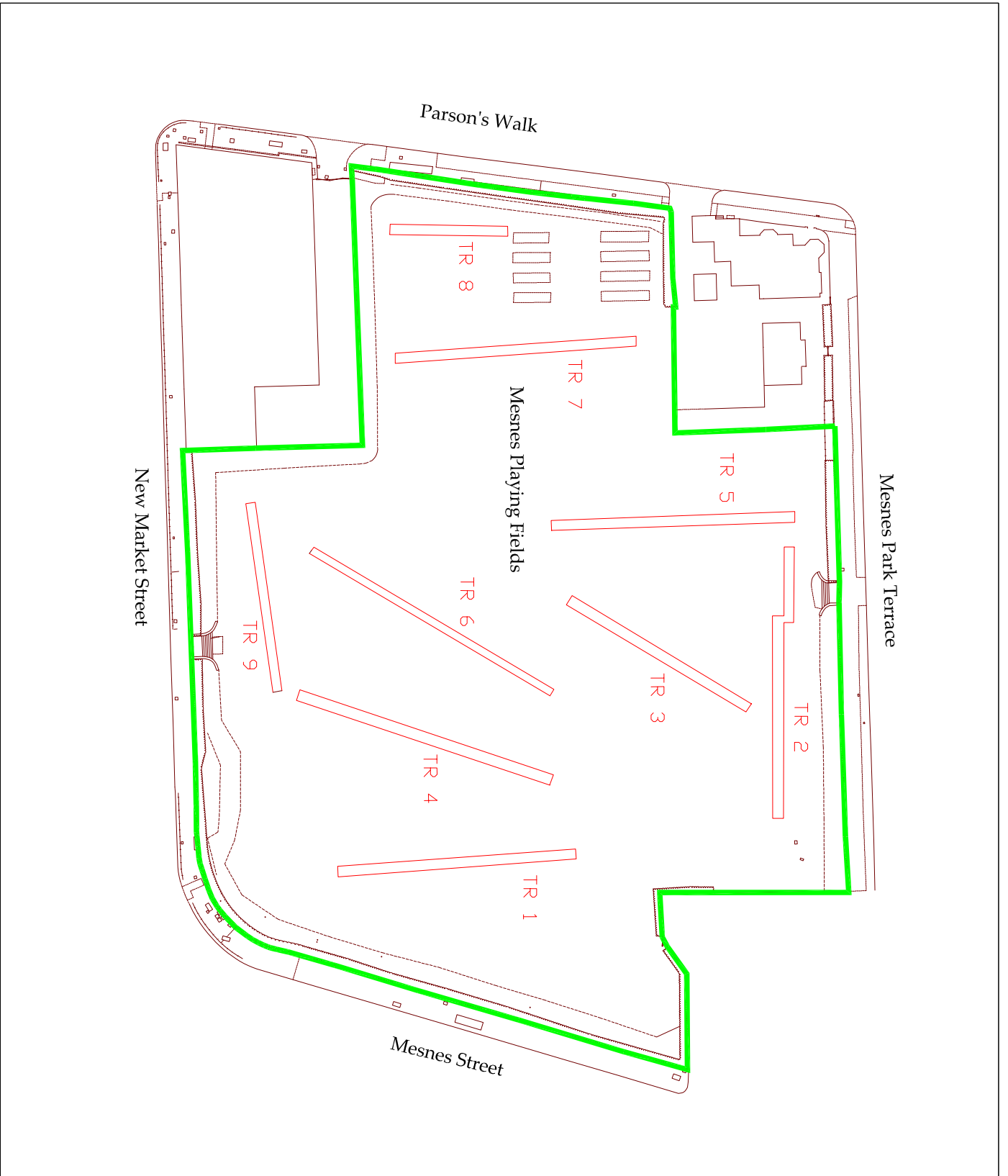
 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2010</p>	<p>PROJECT: Mesnes Playing Fields, Wigan</p> <p>SCALE: 1:10 000 at A4</p> <p>REPORT No: CP1054</p> <p>CLIENT: Onside North West</p> <p>DRAWN BY: AC</p> <p>DATE: January 2010</p> <p>FIGURE: 1</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> Site Location</p>	 <p>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732</p>
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Figure 1 : Site Location





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KEY:

-  Site Boundary
-  Trenches



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FIGURE:
Figure 2

Figure 2: Trench Location Plan



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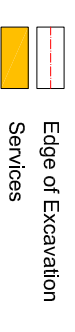
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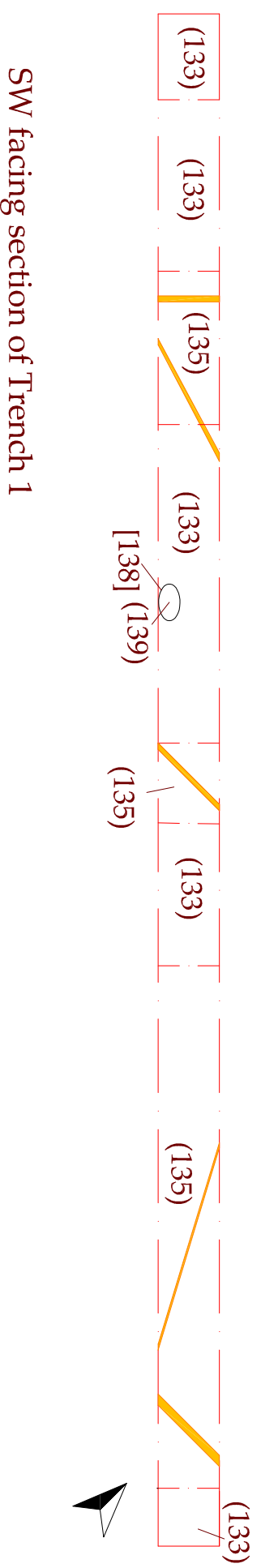
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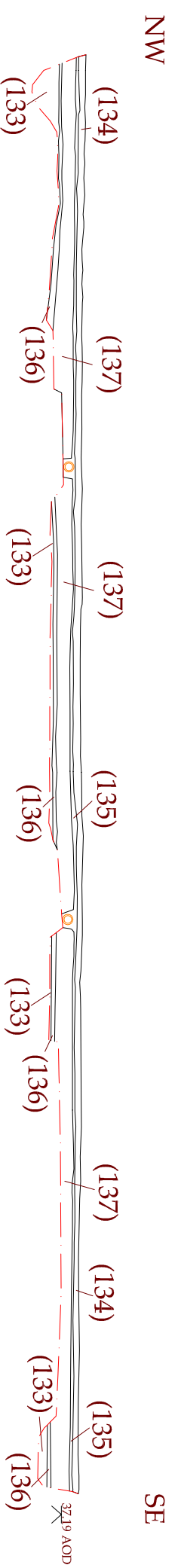


Trench 1

Plan of Trench 1

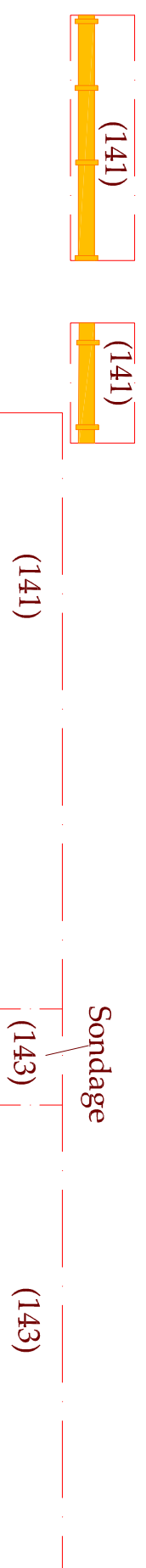


SW facing section of Trench 1

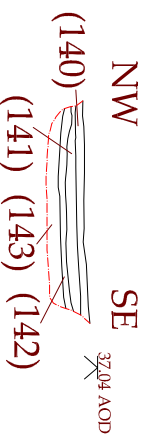


Trench 2

Plan of Trench 2



SW facing section of Trench 2



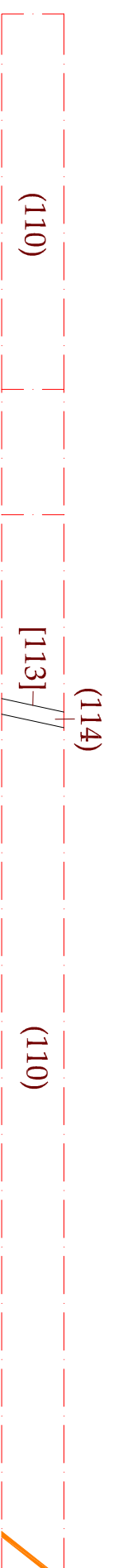
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FIGURE:
Figure No 3

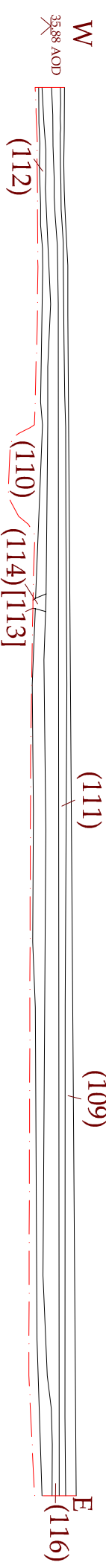
Figure 3 : Trench 1 and 2 plans and sections

Trench 3

Plan of Trench 3

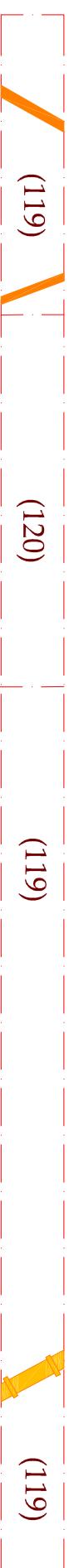


N facing Section of Trench 3

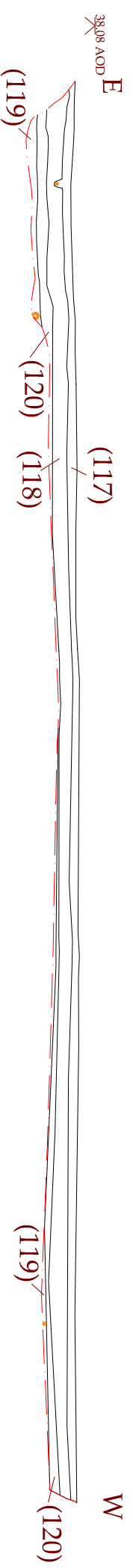


Trench 4

Plan of Trench 4



S facing section of Trench 4



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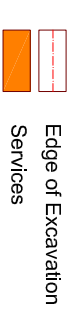
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FIGURE:

Figure No 4

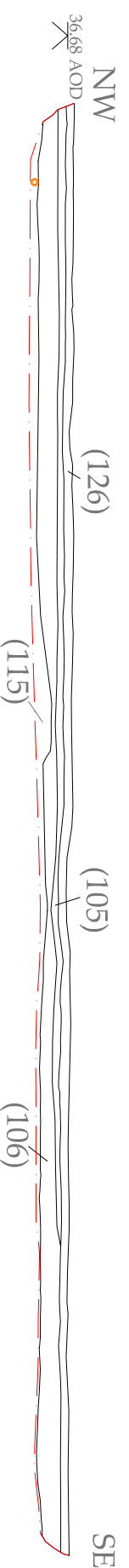
Figure 4: Trench 3 and 4 plans and sections

Trench 5

Plan of Trench 5

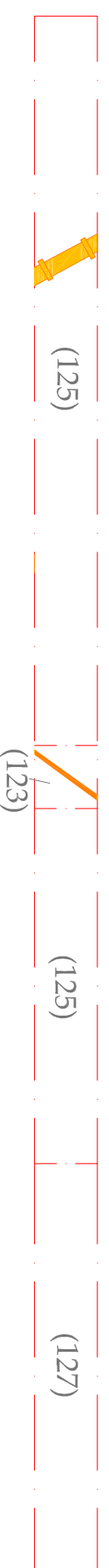


SW Facing Section of Trench 5

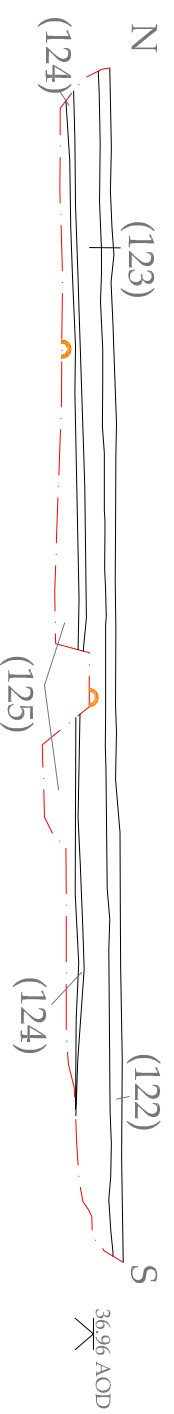


Trench 6

Plan of Trench 6



W Facing Section of Trench 3




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FIGURE:
Figure 5

Figure 5 :Trench 5 and 6 Plans and Sections



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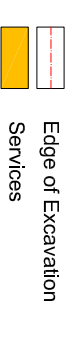
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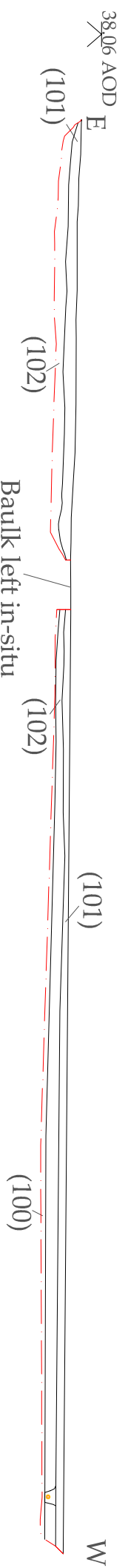


Trench 7

Plan of Trench 7



Section of Trench 7

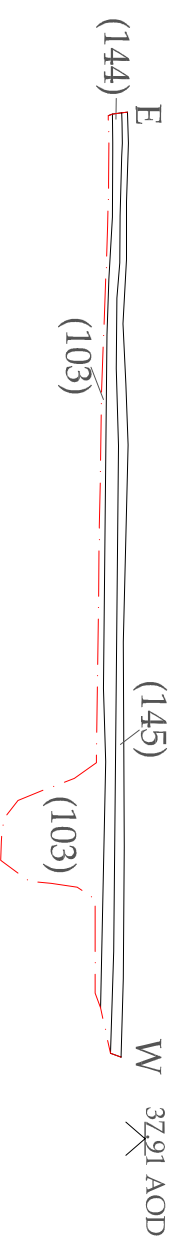


Trench 8

Plan of Trench 8



Section of Trench 8



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FIGURE:
Figure 6

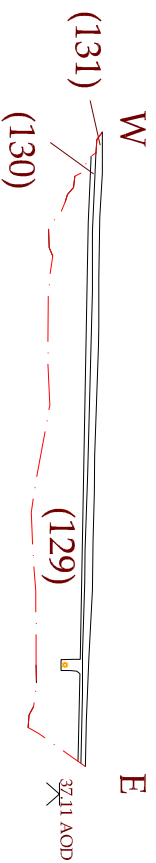
Figure 6 : Trenches 7 and 8 Plans and Sections

Trench 9

Plan of Trench 9



S Facing section of Trench 9





North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2010
Mesnes Playing Fields, Wigan

CLIENT:
Onside North West

SCALE: 1:200 at A4

DRAWN BY: AJW
DATE: January 2010

KEY:

 Edge of
Excavation
Services


REPORT No:
CP1054

FIGURE:
Figure No 7

Figure 7: Trench 9 plan and section