

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

*archaeological consultants*

*Advice on Archaeology & Planning*

*Environmental Impact Assessment*

*Field Evaluation & Excavation*

*Finds / Environmental Analysis*

*Geophysical Survey*

*Historic Building Recording*

*Site & Landscape Survey*

*Interpretation, Design & Display*

**Land Adjacent to Christ Church,  
Brooklands, Eccleston, St Helens**

**Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**Report No. Y082/13**

## **CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

Unit 22  
Moorlands Business Centre  
Balme Road  
Cleckheaton  
BD19 4EZ

Tel: 01274 864 245  
Fax 01274 878 494

email: [Yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk](mailto:Yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk)  
web: [www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk](http://www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk)

Author	Martin Lightfoot BA MA MifA
Illustrator	Shelly Werner BA MPhil PhD
Editor	Phil Mann BA
Commissioned by	United Utilities
Date issued	February 2013
Version	1.0
National Grid Ref.	SJ 4846 9956

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard procedures.

**Land Adjacent to Christ Church,  
Brooklands, Eccleston, St Helens**

**Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**Report No. Y082/13**

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. OBJECTIVES .....	4
3. METHODS AND STANDARDS.....	4
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BASELINE .....	5
5. CONCLUSION.....	8
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	9

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets

## Plates

Plate 1: View of the ‘enclosed mound’ looking north-east

Plate 2: Curving revetment wall along the northern side of the ‘enclosed mound’

Plate 3: Collapsed and disturbed wall along the western side of the ‘enclosed mound,  
looking north

Plate 4: Wall along the eastern side of the ‘enclosed mound, looking west

Plate 5: General shot of the setting of the ‘enclosed mound’ with Christ Church in the  
background

## Figures

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: HER events and sites within 100m

Figure 3: Historic Maps

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

A desk-based assessment was undertaken by CFA Archaeology on behalf of United Utilities on the proposed route of an access road through land adjacent to Christ Church, Eccleston, St Helens, Merseyside.

### **1.1 Project Background**

This report presents the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) during February 2013. The work was commissioned by United Utilities to evaluate the potential for archaeological remains to exist within the route of a proposed access road, in particular the significance on a wall and raised area within an area in a field adjacent to Christ Church.

### **1.2 Proposed Development**

The proposed works are to be undertaken to relieve the risk flooding which occurs at properties in the area. The works involve constructing an underground detention tank, associated pipework and above ground apparatus (to include a telemetry kiosk) in the field adjacent to Christ Church and Mill Brook.

To facilitate maintenance, a new permanent access road will be taken off Church Lane to the tank area which will be approximately 4m wide. A temporary access of approximately 6m wide is proposed to facilitate construction. The route of this access road has been determined by the most appropriate path through the trees. There is a blanket tree protection order (TPO) in the area and it has been agreed with the tree officer which trees can be removed.

The wall will also be affected by an underground pipe. In order to keep tree works to a minimum, the path of this pipe will follow the path of the access road. A section of the wall will need to be removed for construction requirements.

There will be a change in ground level above the tank therefore re-profiling of the field is required. As part of the landscaping strategy, there will be new areas of planting at the northern end of the field near Mill Brook.

This desk-based assessment was undertaken as a result of a consultation response from Howard Dickenson, the conservation officer for St Helens Council (email dated 18 February 2013).

### **1.3 Site Description**

The site area comprises the working width for the construction of an access road connecting Church Lane with a new detention tank in a field to the north-west of Christ Church, Eccleston. The proposed road will pass east to west, through a wall and raised mound within a partially wooded, overgrown and grassed area to the north of the church (Fig. 1, NGR SJ 4846 9956).

This area (henceforth 'the site') is at approximately 40m above the ordnance datum (AOD), sloping gradually to the north, where it is bounded by 'Mill Brook'. The site

is bounded to the east by an open field, south by a wall enclosing the grounds and graveyard of the church and to the east by a low wall, pavement and Church Lane.

## **1.4 Soils and Geology**

The underlying bedrock consists of Kinnerton Sandstone Formation sandstone beneath superficial deposits of Devensian-Diamicton Till, (BGS 2013). The soils of the area are described as ‘glacial till, loam to clayey loam’ (NERC 2013).

## **1.5 Previous Archaeological work**

To date no intrusive archaeological fieldwork is known to have taken place within the proposed development area or within the study area.

# **2. OBJECTIVES**

## **2.1 General Objectives**

The general objective of the desk-based assessment is to produce a report to enable judgements to be made on the condition and significance of remains and any mitigation that may be necessary on the site in relation to the proposed development.

## **2.2 Research Objectives**

The research objectives were to interpret any archaeological or historic remains according to their significance in contributing to the further understanding of the periods they may relate to. The regional research framework for Merseyside is the North-West Archaeological Research Framework (Brennand 2007).

# **3. METHODS AND STANDARDS**

CFA Archaeology is a registered organisation (RO) with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All work was conducted in accordance with relevant IfA Standards and Guidance documents (IfA 1994), English Heritage guidance (EH 2006 and 2008), and CFA’s standard methodology.

## **3.1 Desk-based Research**

Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) was visited on 8 February 2013, for sites, find spots or monuments within the proposed development area or within a 100m study area, historic mapping, and relevant secondary documentary sources. The local Study Section of St Helens Library was visited on the same day for local histories, historic mapping and other secondary sources.

In addition to the above, internet sources were consulted for information relating to general background, listed buildings and other heritage resources within the study area, and CFA’s Yorkshire Office library was consulted where relevant.

### 3.2 Site Walkover

The walkover of the site took place on 8 February 2013. General photographs were taken of the site area, the wall and notes were taken as to the general topography and any potential archaeological remains, or any indication of former land use. Locations were recorded using a handheld GPS.

At the time of the walkover, conditions were dry and sunny and visibility very good. The site was systematically traversed with particular emphasis on the walled feature.

### 3.3 Archiving

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, finds, plans, reports, and photographs will be ordered to nationally recognised standards (Brown 2011).

The archive currently consists of:

Digital Photographs	1 x CD
Notes and Research materials	1 x A4 folder
Survey data and photographs	
All non-confidential correspondence	
This Report	-

Should further work be undertaken on the site then the archive resulting from such work would be incorporated into the current archive to be deposited together.

## 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BASELINE

### 4.1 Desk-Based Research

There was very little documentary evidence for activity on the site; however, information from the immediate and adjoining areas does provide evidence for activity which may have had an impact on the site or allow inference as to past land use. The following is compiled from secondary sources. All sources consulted appear in the bibliography.

There are no prehistoric archaeological remains in the area of the site though in the region there are examples of Bronze Age round barrows to the east near Winwick, and prehistoric cup-and-ring marks and a standing stone near Liverpool to the south-west. Later prehistoric and Romano-British settlements and field systems are also known in the wider area, often as a result of being identified as crop marks from aerial photographs (Chitty 2002, 181). Eccleston was the site of a Manor during the medieval period and a medieval moat and fishpond has been identified and excavated (Chitty 2002, 185).

Although part of the growing town of St Helens from the 18th century, Eccleston remained a dispersed small rural village until relatively recently when housing developments gave the area a more suburban character. The name Eccleston derives from the celtic *eglēs* or welsh *eglwys* for church (from the Latin form *ecclesia*) and the OE *tūn* for settlement. This may attest to a post Roman origin for the settlement,

and even the presence of an early church, though there is no archaeological or documentary evidence supporting this (Chitty 2002, 174).

Christ Church Eccleston was consecrated in 1838, designed and paid for by Samuel Taylor, owner of Eccleston Hall and estate (Free 1979 and Presland 1995). It seems likely that the field to the north was given to the church at this time.

## 4.2 Historic Maps

The following presents a selection of Ordnance Survey and other maps from the 19th century to the recent past. Pre 19th-century maps are small scale and schematic, only 19th-century maps are considered here in detail. The 1789 William Yates Map (Surveyed 1780) shows 'St Helen' as a fair sized settlement, Eccleston appears laid out along the principle roads, and 'Eccleston Hall' is also prominently shown, with the owner named as 'B. J. Eccleston Esq.' (Presland 1995).

The area of the present Christ Church is depicted on estate plans of 1770 and 1811 as well as the Tithe Map of 1840 belonging to Lord Derby with the field names 'Higher Meadow' and 'Hollands Hey' both suggesting pasture as land use. There are no structures or features within these areas on these maps.

### 1850 1st Edition *Ordnance Survey 25'' Map*

Christ Church is shown along with the field to the north, boundaries confirming to those of the present day (Fig. 3). Church Lane is shown as is Mill Brook and Pikes Bridge. There is nothing shown within the site area. The surrounding area shows agricultural land with small fields, presumably much of it is managed estate land.

### 1894 25'' *Map*

Christ Church is shown in some detail (Fig. 3), with surrounding trees, the field boundaries remain the same as on earlier OS maps. There are some small buildings, possibly dwellings in the north-west corner of the site area and the vicarage stands to the north of Mill Brook. There is an oval-shaped feature depicted within which is a small irregular shaped feature. Trees are depicted within the features and outside. It appears that the feature abutts the wall to the grounds of the church and the boundary to the field to the east. There is no indication what this feature might be, though it has the appearance of a small pond surrounded by a wall.

### 1908 *Ordnance Survey 6'' Map*

The graveyard to Christ Church is labelled and the paths within the grounds of the church are shown. There is now no trace of a 'pond' and there is no 'wall' though the course of the wall appears to have been preserved by the course of a footpath leading to the brook. There are a two small structures remaining in the north-west corner of the site, though they appear to be too small to be dwellings and are more likely to be out houses. The numerous trees throughout the site suggest the possibility that the field was used as an orchard during this period.

The 1927 to 1938 6'' OS maps show no changes to previous maps.

### *1956 Ordnance Survey 6'' Map*

The Church and grounds are shown more formerly laid out and it appears the church yard and grounds have been through a period of landscaping. The site may have been partially cleared during this time as the tree cover is less prominent and at the position of the pond or wall previously depicted is an irregular, though broadly rectangular feature, possibly a wall.

Modern 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey maps do not depict the feature and do not show the site in sufficient detail to enable any conclusions, though the area is substantially built up with housing, schools and new roads.

### **4.3 Historic Environment Record**

The list of records of monuments and archaeological events recorded within the vicinity of the site appear as Appendix 1 and are plotted on Figure 2.

The most significant entry in the historic environment record (HER) is Christ Church (7251). The building is grade II listed (1392651), built in 1838 and celebrates 175 years since consecration this year.

There is one findspot within 100m of the site, in the grounds of Christ Church. Although attributed to the Bronze Age, the object is described as an 'unidentified stone' (7230). The other entries in the HER are buildings or structures, the most notable being the bridge over Mill Brook (7232), the Vicarage (7240), a Blacksmiths Workshop, now a residence (7257) and a pinfold (7258).

### **4.4 Walkover Survey**

The general character of the area is suburban with modern housing, much of which appears to have been built during the 1960's and 70s. Christ Church itself is an imposing building, constructed of local distinctive red sandstone, set back on higher ground above the road, within its own grounds and grave yard, with surrounding mature trees.

#### *The Enclosed Mound*

To the north of the church, in an adjacent field was a low mound enclosed by a wall in places.

Although the mound appeared to have been recently partly cleared, observations were still difficult due to recent overgrowth and the presence of mature trees. However, the 'enclosed mound' measured approximately 15 by 35m.

The west side of the mound (Plate 1), facing the road was formed by a collapsed wall made from in frogged and unmarked bricks and machine cut stone of various sizes.



The north side the wall was well preserved, made of cut sandstone and seemed to have undergone recent repair with some brick patching bonded with concrete (Plate 2). The wall formed a revetment to the mound, which bowed out along this side, though whether this was due to the presence of root action from a tree sitting on top of the wall or was a deliberate feature is unclear. On the north-west side there has been an attempt to continue the revetting with concrete blocks/paving.

On the east side the wall forms a similar revetting and is well preserved along most of the length, though is buried in part (Plate 4). The sandstone here is similar to that of the church wall and indeed the church itself; with some of the wall constructed or patched up with the same stone curbing as used in the church graveyard.

The mound itself was up to a metre higher than the surrounding ground and there were a number of large and mature trees, as well as some more recent sprouting. Large voids were present; tree boles caused by the removal or collapse of trees as well as animal burrows. Some irregular stone, and concrete debris was also observed scattered across the mound (Plate 3).

There were no pre-modern finds, including stone or brickwork observed and neither the structure nor the stone or brickwork shed any light as to what the function of the feature might be. There were no other archaeological features within the site area.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The function of the 'enclosed mound' remains unknown, though it is certain that the wall is not an ancient feature and that it is contemporary with the church, being that there is no trace of it on historic maps prior to the construction of the church and that the wall is constructed in part from the same materials as the church, the graveyard and the boundary wall. The wall where it is visible abuts the wall to the graveyard.

It is possible that the wall encloses an earlier feature, though again there is no trace of such a feature on earlier maps. Later 19th-century maps seem to show an oval feature, contemporary with the church, which may have been a pond with a surrounding wall; such a pond may have been an ornamental feature within the grounds of the church, which for some reason was later in-filled with trees being allowed to establish and the mound to become overgrown.

In terms of its intrinsic value and in its contribution to the setting of the church, the enclosed mound is considered to be of low significance. However, this significance, in terms of understanding the feature in terms of its date and function may be increased, by its partial excavation during construction under archaeological observation.

## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brennand, M., 2006, (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England, North West Region*, Volume 1, Resource Assessment, Archaeology North West, Volume 8

Brennand, M., 2007, (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England, An Archaeological Research Framework for, North West England*, Volume 2, Research Agenda and Strategy, Archaeology North West, Volume 9

Brennand, M., Chitty G., and Newman R., 2007, 'Research Strategy' in Brennand, M., 2007 (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England, An Archaeological Research Framework for, North West England*, Volume 2, 159-197

Brown, D. H, 2011, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Chitty, G., 2002, (ed. Lewis), 'St Helens rural fringes survey', *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society*, Vol. 11, 167-206

EH, 2006, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, Project Managers' Guide, English Heritage

EH, 2008, *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, English Heritage

Free, F. W., 1979, *Our Heritage in Eccleston and District*, (2nd edition).

Greenall, W, 1796, *Perambulation of the manor, Lordship and Township of Eccleston*, HER, DDKE 197/10, 8 November 1796

Hodgeson J., and Brennand, M., 2006, 'The Prehistoric Period' in Brennand, M., 2006, (ed.) *Research and Archaeology in North West England, North West Region*, Volume 1, Resource Assessment, Archaeology North West, Volume 8, 23-58

IfA, 1994, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*, Institute for Archaeologists, Revised October 2008

McNeil R., and Newman R., 2006 'The Post-Medieval Period' in Brennand, M., 2006, (ed.) *Research and Archaeology in North West England, North West Region*, Volume 1, Resource Assessment, Archaeology North West, Volume 8, 145-164

McNeil R., and Newman R., 2006 The Industrial and Modern Period Resource Assessment in Brennand, M., 2006, (ed.) *Research and Archaeology in North West England, North West Region*, Volume 1, Resource Assessment, Archaeology North West, Volume 8, 165-194

Newman C., and Newman R., 2007 'The Medieval Period' in Brennand, M., 2007 (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England, An Archaeological Research Framework for, North West England*, Volume 2, 94-114

Newman R., and McNeil R., 2007, 'The Post-Medieval Period' in Brennand, M., 2007 (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England*, An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England, Volume 2, 115-132

Newman R., and McNeil R., 2007, 'The Industrial and Modern Period' in Brennand M., 2007 (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England*, An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England, Volume 2, 133-158

Philpott, R., 2006, 'The Romano-British Period' in Brennand, M., 2006, (ed.), *Research and Archaeology in North West England*, North West Region, Volume 1, Resource Assessment, 59-90

Philpott R., and Brennand M., 2007, The Romano-British Period, in Brennand, M., 2007 (ed.) *Research and Archaeology in North West England*, An Archaeological Research Framework for, North West England, Volume 2, 55-60

Presland, M., 1995, *St Helens, A Pictorial History*

### **Cartography**

1770 Eccleston Estate plan

1811 Eccleston Estate plan

1840 Tithe Map

1850 25'' Ordnance Survey Map (1st edition, surveyed 1845-7)

1850 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1893 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1894 25'' Ordnance Survey Map

1908 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1909 25'' Ordnance Survey Map

1927 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1928 25'' Ordnance Survey Map

1937 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1955 25'' Ordnance Survey Map

1956 6'' Ordnance Survey Map

1965 25'' Ordnance Survey Map

1974 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

1980 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

1992 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

### **On-line Resources**

Heritage Gateway; <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

Old Maps; <http://www.old-maps.co.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

BGS, 2013, British Geological Survey, <http://www.bgs.ac.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

Images of England, <http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

Pastscape, <http://www.pastscape.org.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

NERC, 2013, Natural Environment Research Council, <http://www.nerc.ac.uk> (Accessed 22/02/13)

## **APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF HERITAGE ASSETS**

Her Ref.	Source	Monument	Description	NGR	Period
7229	HER	Farm, Eccleston	Farm	SJ 4834 9540	1540-1750
7230	HER	Findspot, Eccleston	Findspot	SJ 4843 9553	2350-751 BC
7231	HER	House, Eccleston	House	SJ 4840 9570	1540-1750
7232	HER	Bridge, Eccleston	Bridge	SJ 4840 9567	1540-present
7240	HER	Vicarage, Eccleston	Vicarage	SJ 4848 9570	1540-1750
7245	HER	House, Eccleston	House	SJ 4838 9546	Undated
7246	HER	Griffin Inn (Formerly Magpie Arms)	Inn	SJ 4841 9542	1540-present
7247	HER	House, Eccleston	House	SJ 4830 9535	Undated
7251	HER	Church, Eccleston	Church	SJ 4845 9555	1940-present
7257	HER	Griffin Smithies	Blacksmiths Workshop	SJ 4842 9544	1836-1900
7258	HER	Pinfold	Pound	SJ 4829 9533	1836-1900

## **Plates 1 - 5**





Plate 1: View of the ‘enclosed mound’ looking north-east



Plate 2: Curving revetment wall along the northern side of the ‘enclosed mound’





Plate 3: Collapsed and disturbed wall along the western side of the 'enclosed mound,  
looking north





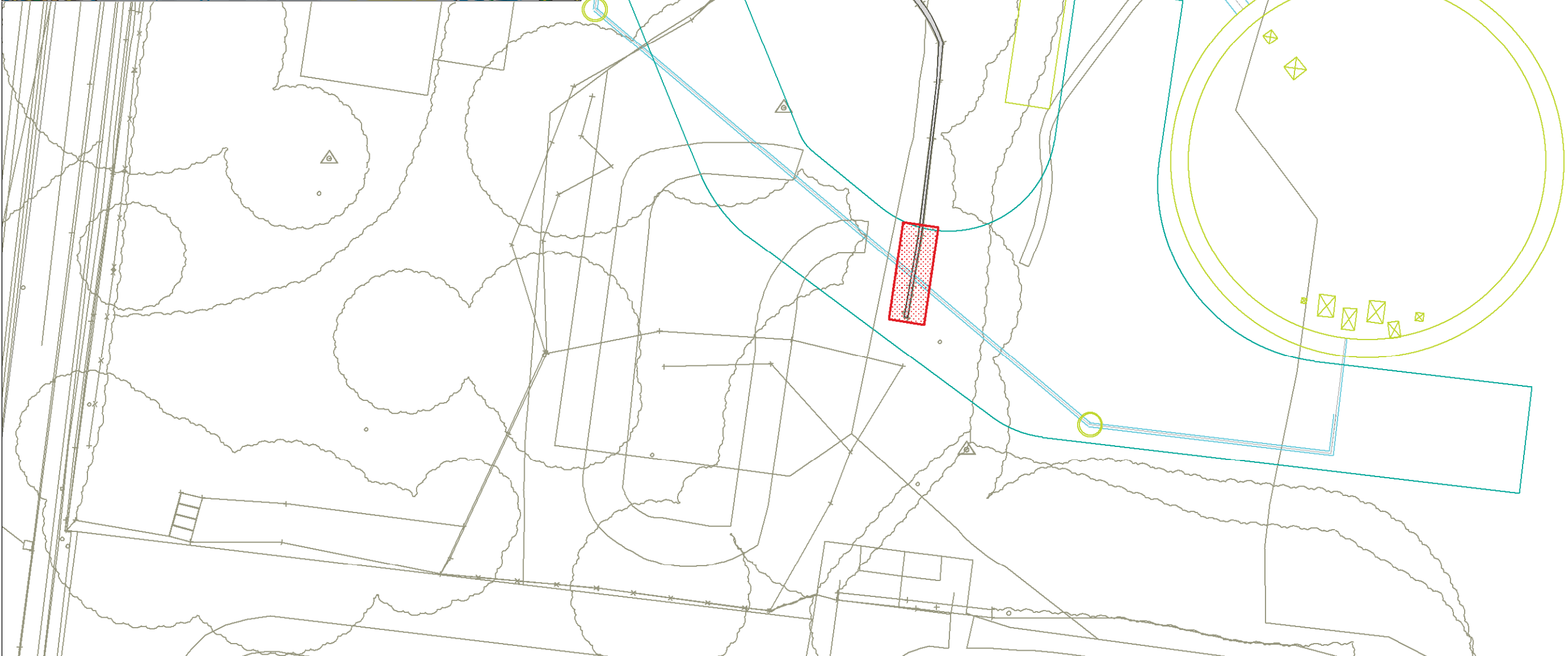
Plate 4: Wall along the eastern side of the 'enclosed mound, looking west



Plate 5: General shot of the setting of the 'enclosed mound' with Christ Church in the background

## **Figures 1-3**





- Key
- Area of impact to wall
  - Stone wall



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
Unit 22  
Moorlands Business Centre  
Balme Road, Cleckheaton  
West Yorkshire, BD19 4EZ  
T: 01274 864245  
F: 01274 878494  
yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Fig. No	1	Revision
Title	Site location and area of archaeological impact	
Project	Brooklands Road, St Helens	
Scale at A3	1:250	
Client	United Utilities	
Drawn by:	SW	Report No: Y082/13
Checked by:	ML	






Key  
● HER Site



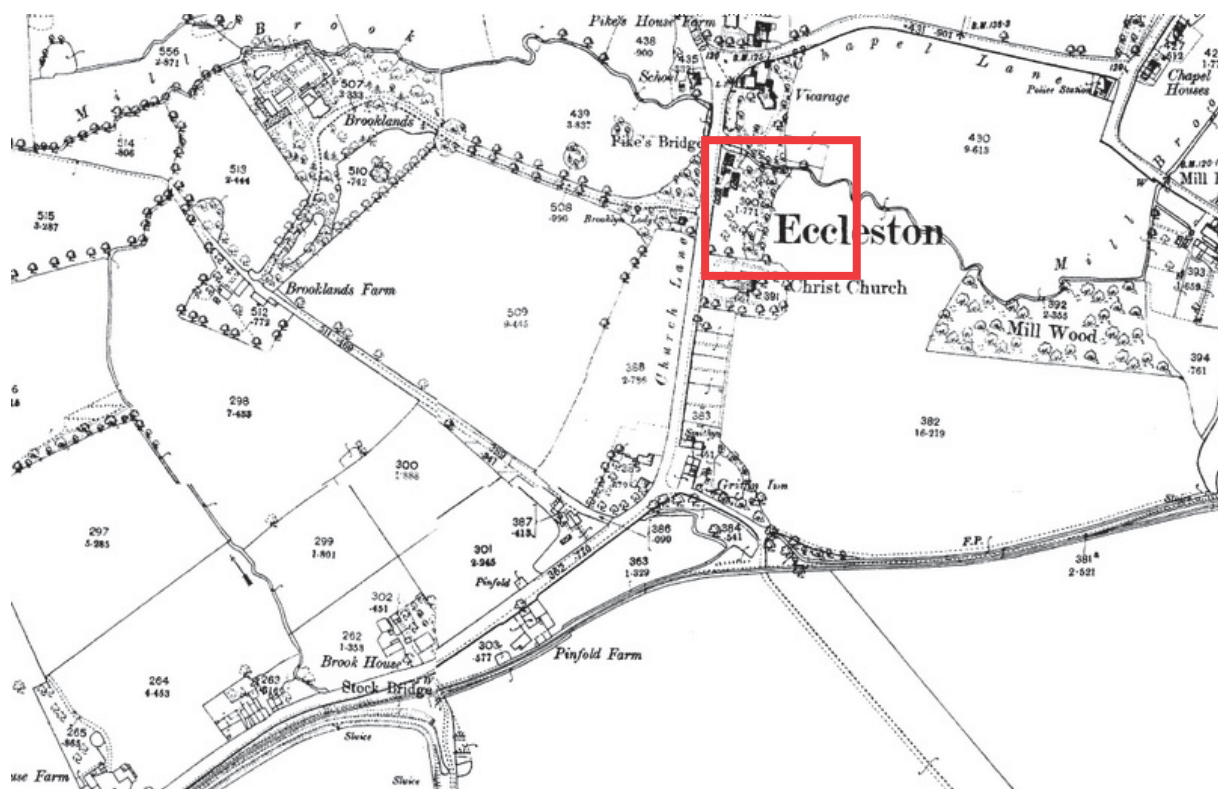
CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
Unit 22  
Moorlands Business Centre  
Balme Road, Cleckheaton  
West Yorkshire, BD19 4EZ  
T: 01274 864245  
F: 01274 878494  
yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Fig. No	2	Revision
Title	HER events and sites within 100m	
Project	Brooklands Road, St Helens	
Scale at A3	1:2,500	
Client	United Utilities	
Drawn by:	SW	Report No: Y082/13
Checked by:	ML	





OS 1st Edition map, Lancashire, Sheet 107, 1850.



OS 1894 Edition map, Lancashire.

Key:



Location of area of archaeological impact



Fig. No:

3

Revision:

A

Client:

United Utilities

Title:

Historic Maps

Project:

Brooklands Road, St Helens



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
Unit 22  
Moorland's Business Centre  
Balme Road, Cleckheaton  
West Yorkshire, BD19 4EZ  
T: 01274 864245  
F: 01274 878494  
yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Drawn by:

SW

Checked:

ML

Report No:

Y082/13

Scale at A4: NTS