

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

ROTHWELL'S FARM LOWTON ROAD GOLBORNE WIGAN

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Planning • Heritage

October 2013

Planning Authority: Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

Site centred at: SJ 609 987

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Report Status: Final

Issue Date: October 2013

CgMs Ref: RS/15703

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## CONTENTS

## **Executive Summary**

- 1.0 Introduction and Scope of Study
- 2.0 Planning Background and Development Plan Framework
- 3.0 Geology and Topography
- 4.0 Archaeological/Historical Background and Assessment of Significance
- 5.0 Site Conditions, the Proposed Development and Impact on Heritage Assets
- 6.0 Summary and Conclusions

Sources Consulted

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1	Site Lo	ocation				
Figure 2	Site Details					
Figure 3	HER Data Plot					
Figure 4	1786	Yate's Map				
Figure 5	1818	Greenwood's Map				
Figure 6	1838	Golborne Tithe Map				
Figure 7	1890	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 8	1907	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 9	1928	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 10	1951	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 11	1961	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 12	1975	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 13	1992	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 14	2006	Ordnance Survey Map				
Figure 15	2012	Ordnance Survey Map				

# LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1	View looking east along the northern perimeter of the Site
Plate 2	View looking west along the northern perimeter of the Site
Plate 3	View looking south-east along Lowton Road from the junction of Wigan Road
	and Lowton Road
Plate 4	View looking north-east along Rothwell Road
Plate 5	View looking east from the eastern perimeter of the Site
Plate 6	View looking north-east along Wigan Road from the junction of Ashton Road
	and Wigan Road
Plate 7	View looking south-west from the northern perimeter of the Site
Plate 8	View looking north-east from the south of the Site
Plate 9	View looking north-east along the eastern perimeter of the Site
Plate 10	View looking south-west from the north-eastern corner of the Site
Plate 11	View looking south-east towards Rothwell's Farm from the south of the Site
Plate 12	View looking north-east towards Rothwell's Farm from Lowton Road

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This assessment considers land approximately 17 hectares in extent at Rothwell's Farm, Lowton Road, Golborne, Wigan.

In accordance with government policy (National Planning Policy Framework), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, historic, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the site.

The assessment concludes that residential development on the site would not have any impact on any designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields).

Rothwell's Farm buildings are not recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record and are not nationally or locally listed; the original house and barn are of at least late 18th/early 19th century and are therefore considered to have some limited archaeological and historic interest. However, the buildings have suffered serious losses to their historic fabric and local context (due to modern development in the immediate surroundings) rendering them of only limited heritage local significance. In view of the residual historic interest of the Rothwell's Farm buildings, it is anticipated that further work (secured by a planning condition) will accommodate the interest of these buildings prior to demolition.

The assessment has also considered that the site has low/nil potential for other archaeological evidence from all periods.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This assessment has been researched and prepared by Dr Robert Smith of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd.
- 1.2 The assessment examines a site, also referred to as the study site, of land at Rothwell's Farm, Lowton Road, Golborne, Wigan (Figure 1).
- 1.3 The study site is approximately 17 hectares in extent. It is bounded by a dismantled railway line (Plate 1) and commercial premises (Plate 2) to the north, Lowton Road (and built development fronting Lowton Road comprising commercial businesses and residential properties) to the south (Plate 3), bungalows fronting Rothwell Road (Plate 4) and the playing fields of Golborne High School (Plate 5) to the east, and residential dwellings and commercial premises fronting Wigan Road (Plate 6) to the west. The site is centred at National Grid Reference SJ 609 987 (Figure 2).
- 1.4 In accordance with government policy (National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]) this assessment draws together the available archaeological, historic, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the site.
- Additionally, in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments (Institute of Archaeologists 1999 [revised 2012]), the assessment includes the results of a site inspection, an examination of published and unpublished records and charts historic land-use through a map regression exercise. A site inspection was undertaken on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013.
- 1.6 An initial pre-application consultation has been undertaken with Norman Redhead (County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester) and Lesley Mitchell (Historic Environment Record Officer for Greater Manchester).
- 1.7 As a result, the assessment enables relevant parties to assess the significance of heritage/archaeological assets on and close to the site and consider the potential for hitherto undiscovered archaeological assets, thus enabling potential impacts on assets to be identified along with the need for design, civil engineering or archaeological solutions.

## 2.0 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaces previous national policy relating to heritage and archaeology (Planning Policy Statement [PPS]5: Planning for the Historic Environment [2010]).
- 2.1.1 Section 12 of the NPPF, entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 12 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
  - Delivery of sustainable development;
  - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
  - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
  - Recognition of the value that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.1.2 Section 12 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 128 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset, and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential effect of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.1.3 Heritage assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the Local Planning Authority.

2.1.4 Annex 2 also defines archaeological interest as:

A heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

2.1.5 A designated heritage asset comprises a:

World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

2.1.6 Significance is defined as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

- 2.1.7 In short, government policy provides a framework which:
  - Protects nationally important designated heritage assets (which comprise World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas);
  - Protects the settings of such designations;
  - In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk-based assessment and where necessary field evaluation) to enable informed decisions;
  - Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit in-situ preservation.
- 2.1.8 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current development plan policy and by other material considerations.

2.2 The development plan for the site comprises the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy (CS) (2013). This document contains the following policy which provides a framework for the consideration of development proposals affecting heritage and archaeology:

#### Policy CP 11: Historic environment

We will conserve and enhance our historic environment, thereby helping to make the borough a better place to live, visit and work in, by:

- Conserving and enhancing where appropriate our heritage assets and their settings, including scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, locally listed buildings and structures, key historic landscape characteristics and other important features, in accordance with legislation and national planning policy as appropriate.
- Encouraging the sympathetic and appropriate re-use of existing buildings and structures, especially those which make a positive contribution to the special character of their locality and are identified as 'at risk'.
- Promoting the value of our historic environment through signing, interpretation, public art and other measures as appropriate.
- 2.3 There are no designated (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas or Registered Battlefields) and non-designated assets recorded within the study site boundary.
- 2.3.1 Golborne Town Centre Conservation Area is located c. 250 m to the south of the site. It is subject to Policy CP 11 of the Wigan Local Plan CS (2013).
- 2.3.2 Several built heritage assets are situated in the surroundings of the site, these include: a Grade II\* Listed Building (Lightshaw Hall [HER 567.1.0 on Figure 3], c. 600 m to the north of the site) and five Grade II Listed Buildings (Ashton Road Farmhouse [HER 4257.1.0 on Figure 3], c. 650 m to the west of the site; Sundial adjacent to the west entrance of St Luke's Church [HER 4073.2.0 on Figure 3], St Luke's Church [HER 4073.1.0 on Figure 3], and Village Stocks [HER 4055.1.0 on Figure 3], all c. 700 m to the south-east of the site; and Church of St Thomas [HER 15301.1.0 on Figure 3], c. 250 to the south-west of the site). They are subject to Policy CP 11 of the Wigan Local Plan CS (2013).

- 2.3.3 The Conservation Area, Grade II\* and Grade II Listed Buildings are all either in an urban context or far enough away from the site so that no impact upon their settings or significance is expected as a result of the proposed development. As such, they will not be discussed further.
- 2.3.4 An undesignated built heritage asset (Rothwell's Farm), which is not recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record, is located within the south of the site (Figure 3).
- 2.4 In accordance with NPPF and Policy CP 11 of the Wigan Local Plan CS (2013), the assessment will also consider the potential of the site to contain as yet to be discovered archaeological assets.

8

## 3.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

## 3.1 Geology

- 3.1.1 The underlying solid geology of the study site consists of Pebbly (Gravelly) Sandstone of the Chester Pebble Beds Formation, overlain by Devensian Diamicton Till.
- 3.1.2 The soils within and surrounding the site consist of loamy over clayey soils of the Brickfield and Salop Associations.

## 3.2 Topography

- 3.2.1 The study site lies on a gentle east-facing slope, between c. 40 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the west to c. 35 m AOD in the east.
- 3.2.2 The site primarily comprises arable land (Plates 7-8), with the exception of a strip of rough grazing land to the rear of the bungalows fronting Rothwell Road and the playing fields of Golborne High School (Plate 10).
- 3.2.3 Rothwell's Farm (Plate 11) and associated outbuildings (Plate 12) are located within the south of the site.

9

# 4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The timescales used in this report are as follows:

#### **Prehistoric**

Palaeolithic	450,000	-	12,000	BC
Mesolithic	12,000	-	4,000	BC
Neolithic	4,000	-	1,800	BC
Bronze Age	1,800	-	600 B	С
Iron Age	600	-	AD 43	

#### Historic

Roman	AD 43	-	410	
Saxon/Early Medieval	AD 410	-	1066	
Medieval	AD 1066	-	1485	
Post-Medieval	AD 1486	~	1800	
Modern	AD 1800	-	Present	

## 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This assessment is based on a consideration of evidence in the Greater Manchester HER for the study site and a zone 1 km in extent surrounding its boundary. Greater Manchester County Record Office, Wigan Archives and Wigan Local Studies Library were also visited in order to examine historic maps relating to the site.
- 4.1.2 There are no designated assets on the site. Non-designated assets (i.e. archaeological finds and features) on the site and in the wider study area are reviewed below, and their locations shown on Figure 3.
- 4.1.3 This chapter reviews existing archaeological evidence for the site and the archaeological/historical background of the general area and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the potential for as yet undiscovered archaeological evidence on the site.
- 4.1.4 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions and whether the theoretical potential identified in this chapter is likely to survive.

## 4.2 **Prehistoric**

- 4.2.1 There are no recorded prehistoric archaeological assets within or in the vicinity of the study site.
- 4.2.2 The nearest prehistoric archaeological evidence lies to the south of the site, where a Bronze Age cemetery was discovered c. 4 km away (Hall et al. 1995). The cemetery is situated on a ridge which provides one of the few fording points across the River Mersey between Runcorn and Manchester. Another Bronze Age barrow is recorded c. 2.5 km south of the site, near Kenyon Hall (ibid). A number of finds were recovered from within it, including several urns and an awl (ibid).
- 4.2.3 On the basis of the evidence currently available, the potential for archaeological remains of prehistoric date to survive within the site is considered to be low/nil.

#### 4.3 Romano-British

- 4.3.1 There are no recorded Romano-British archaeological assets within the study site boundary or within its immediate surroundings.
- 4.3.2 In the wider surroundings of the site, the course of the Roman road from Wigan to Wilderspool (Chitty and Lewis 2002) passed c. 3 km west of the site. The road linked a large-scale Roman settlement, principally concerned with industrial activity, at Wilderspool (Higham 1993) with a non-military Roman site dated to between the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century and the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century at Wigan (Shotter 1997). It is likely that the study site, located in what was probably rural hinterland at the time, was largely unaffected by the Roman presence.
- 4.3.3 In light of the information above, it is considered that the potential for archaeological remains of Roman date to survive within the site is low/nil.

#### 4.4 Saxon/Medieval

- 4.4.1 There are no recorded archaeological assets of Saxon/Medieval date both within and surrounding the study site.
- 4.4.2 It is probable that the collapse of Roman administration during the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD had little immediate effect on many people, particularly those living isolated in rural areas (Higham 1993). Evidently, life continued much as it had before. The Mersey continued to act as a boundary, this time between the various kingdoms, which filled the vacuum left by the Roman administration. To the south, Warrington may have been the site of an Anglo Saxon 'burh', with a church and settlement certainly in existence by 1086, mainly concentrated around the position of the Norman Castle, the parish church and the moated rectory (Heawood et al 2002). The coming of Christianity during this period is also evident close to the site. The remains of a large cemetery at the site of St Oswald's Church at Winwick, to the south of Golborne, is thought to date from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries (Leah et al 1997).
- 4.4.3 The Saxon/Medieval period provided much conflict and movement of people, with territory changing hands on a regular basis. The arrival of Irish-Norse refugees, probably in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, added still further to the mix (Higham 1993). Quite how strong their influence was within the area is not clear most of the place-names are Old English in origin rather than Norse (Ekwall 1922), and there is little archaeological evidence for Hiberno-Norse settlers.
- 4.4.4 The earliest direct historical references to Golborne occur in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when an Augustinian Friary was established in Warrington together with a market (Heawood et al 2002). In AD 121, the manors of Golborne, that of Lightshaw to the north and Golborne to the south, were held by the Lord of Lowton and Thomas de Golborne, respectively. The earliest recorded member of the Golborne family is that of Augustine de Golborne, who gave three oxgangs to William, son of Hamon, ancestor of the Houghtons who continued to own land in the area into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (ibid).
- 4.4.5 In light of the above, it is considered that the potential for archaeological remains of Saxon/Medieval date to survive within the site is low/nil.

## 4.5 Post-Medieval/Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.5.1 There is no recorded archaeological evidence of Post-Medieval date within the study site.
- 4.5.2 In the surroundings of the site, there are a number of Post-Medieval assets which comprise farm buildings and industrial sites. However, these are not considered to be particularly relevant to the assessment of the site.
- 4.5.3 Golborne is marked on Yate's county map of 1786 (Figure 4) and Greenwood's county map of 1818 (Figure 5). Wigan Road lies to the west of the site and Lowton Road abuts the south. Several buildings are located along Lowton Road; these may relate to Stack House Farm and Rothwell's Farm. Open fields lie to the north and east of the site.
- 4.5.4 The site is shown in more detail on the 1838 Tithe map of Golborne (Figure 6). The site comprises a number of fields which represent surveyed enclosure. These fields reflect a change in the agricultural system which occurred after c. 1750 with the introduction of the Enclosure Acts (Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit 2012). The tithe apportionment was not available to view. Several ponds are evident in the northwest, north-east and south of the site. Rothwell's Farm and its associated outbuildings are situated within the south of the site. Several buildings (including Stack House Farm [and its outbuildings]) are shown along Lowton Road.
- 4.5.5 The Ordnance Survey 1890 edition (Figure 7) shows the removal of a number of field boundaries within the site, along with the majority of the ponds. A path bisects the far west of the site. Another path/track is also evident running along the east of the site from Rothwell's Farm. The Liverpool, St Helens and South Lancashire Railway Line abuts the north of the site. Terraced housing is also evident along Wigan Road and Lowton Road.
- 4.5.6 There is little change between the Ordnance Survey 1890 edition (Figure 7), and the Ordnance Survey maps of 1970 (Figure 8), 1928 (Figure 9) and 1951 (Figure 10), with the exception of the removal of a field boundary in the west of the site, the pond in the west of the site no longer extant and additional modern development along Lowton Road. A pond is also shown in the east of the site.

- 4.5.7 The Ordnance Survey 1961 edition (Figure 11) shows a track which runs from Stack House Farm; this joins the path in the west of the site. The pond in the east of the site is no longer extant. Several field boundaries in the centre and west of the site have been removed. The rear gardens of the bungalows along Rothwell Road abut the east of the site. The railway line is shown as dismantled.
- 4.5.8 There is no change between the Ordnance Survey 1961 edition (Figure 11), and the Ordnance Survey maps of 1975 (Figure 12), 1992 (Figure 13), 2006 (Figure 14) and 2012 (Figure 15).
- 4.5.9 In light of the above, it is considered that the potential for archaeological remains of Post-Medieval date to survive within the site is low/nil.

## 4.6 Assessment of Significance

- 4.6.1 There are no designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas or Registered Battlefields) within the study site boundary.
- 4.6.2 Golborne Town Centre Conservation Area, and a Grade II\* and five Grade II Listed Buildings are located within the surroundings of the site. All are either in an urban context or far enough away from the site such that no impact upon their settings or significance is expected as a result of the proposed development.
- 4.6.3 Rothwell's Farm is located within the south of the site. A farm is shown at this location on the 1838 Tithe map and possibly on early maps of the county (although this identification is less certain) (Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation 2012). The surviving farmhouse and barns, with additional outbuildings added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, are of limited historic interest in terms of their form, scale, date and functions and have suffered serious losses to their historic fabric and local context (due to modern development in its immediate surroundings), so as to be of negligible historic interest. They are therefore considered to be of limited heritage significance.
- 4.6.4 The available HER evidence does not show any prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, Medieval or Post-Medieval archaeological assets recorded within the site boundary, and only Post-

Medieval archaeological evidence in its vicinity. Therefore, the potential for as yet to be discovered archaeological assets from these periods is considered to be low/nil.

# 5.0 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACTS ON HERITAGE ASSESTS

#### 5.1 Site Conditions

5.1.1 A site visit was undertaken on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013. As described above, the study site is approximately 17 hectares in extent. It lies on a gentle east-facing slope, between c. 40 m AOD in the west to c. 35 m AOD in the east. The site primarily comprises arable land, with the exception of a strip of rough grazing land to the rear of the bungalows fronting Rothwell Road and the playing fields of Golborne High School.

## 5.2 The Proposed Development

5.2.1 It is proposed that the site will comprise residential development.

#### 5.3 Impacts on Heritage Assets

- 5.3.1 The assessment has considered that development of the site would not have any impact on designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas or Registered Battlefields).
- 5.3.2 Although Golborne Town Centre Conservation Area, a Grade II\* and five Grade II Listed Buildings are located within the surroundings of the site, they are all either in an urban context or far enough away from the site so that no impact upon their settings or significance is expected as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.3.3 The development proposes the demolition of Rothwell's Farm. However, this assessment concludes that due to the current poor condition of the farmhouse and barns (due to serious losses to their historic fabric and local context), and the subsequent addition of outbuildings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the farmstead is considered to be of negligible historic interest and of only limited heritage significance.
- 5.3.4 This assessment has considered the potential for as yet to be discovered archaeological assets and concludes that there is low/nil potential for evidence from the prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods.

16

#### 6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This archaeological assessment considers the archaeological potential of land approximately 17 hectares in extent at Rothwell's Farm, Lowton Road, Golborne, Wigan.
- 6.2 In accordance with government policy (National Planning Policy Framework), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, historic, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the study site.
- 6.3 The assessment concludes that development of the site would not impact any designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields).
- 6.4 Rothwell's Farm and outbuildings are not recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record and are not nationally or locally listed. The original house and barn are probably of late 18th/early 19th century origin. Equally, they have suffered serious losses to their historic fabric and local context (due to modern development in the immediate surroundings), so as to be of negligible historic interest and of limited heritage significance.
- 6.5 It is also considered that the site has low/nil potential for other archaeological evidence from all periods.
- 6.6 In view of the limited historic interest of Rothwell's Farm, it is anticipated that further work (secured by a planning condition) will accommodate the interest of these buildings by archaeological recording prior to demolition. This will comprise survey, drawings, site photography and a written report (as laid out in Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice [English Heritage 2006]).

#### SOURCES CONSULTED

#### General

Norman Redhead: County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester

Lesley Mitchell: Historic Environment Records Officer for Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester County Record Office Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record Wigan Archives Wigan Local Studies Library

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## Cartographic

1786 Yate's Map

1818 Greenwood's Map

1838 Golborne Tithe Map

1890 Ordnance Survey Map

1907 Ordnance Survey Map

1928 Ordnance Survey Map

1951 Ordnance Survey Map

1961 Ordnance Survey Map

1975 Ordnance Survey Map

1992 Ordnance Survey Map

2006 Ordnance Survey Map

2012 Ordnance Survey Map

#### 4. Website

Archaeological Data Service - ads.ahds.ac.uk

English Heritage: The National Heritage List for England - list.english-heritage.org.uk

Heritage Gateway - www.heritagegateway.org.uk

MAGIC - www.magic.gov.uk

Site location

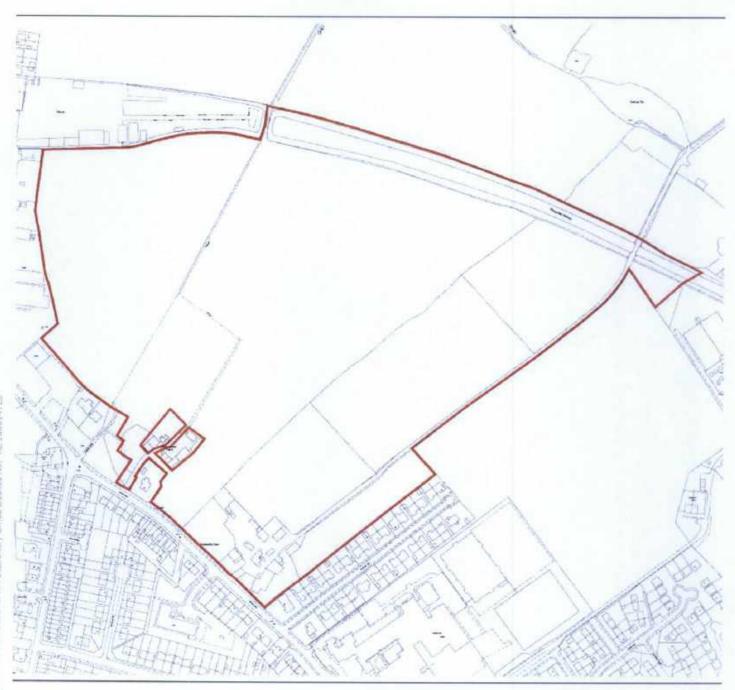


London Cheltenham Kettering

Rothwell's Farm, Golborne Not to scale Illustrative only

Project title:

Date printed: Drawn by:RAJS 04/07/2013 Checked by:RS

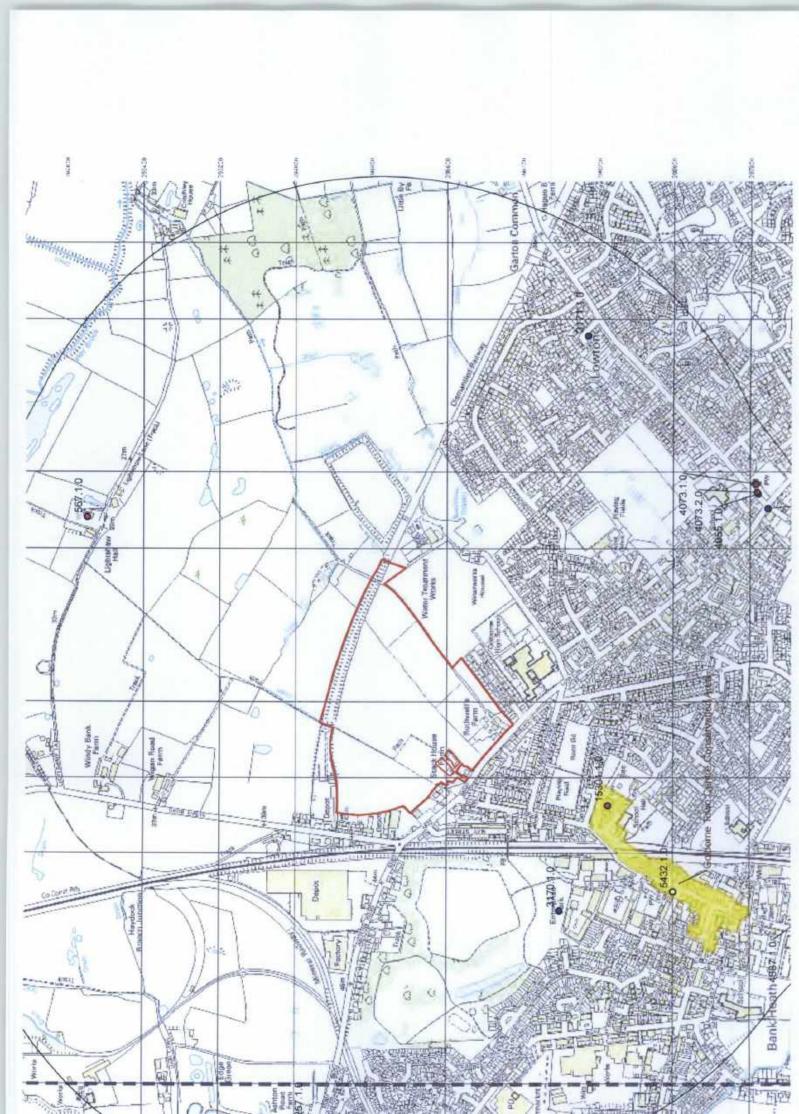


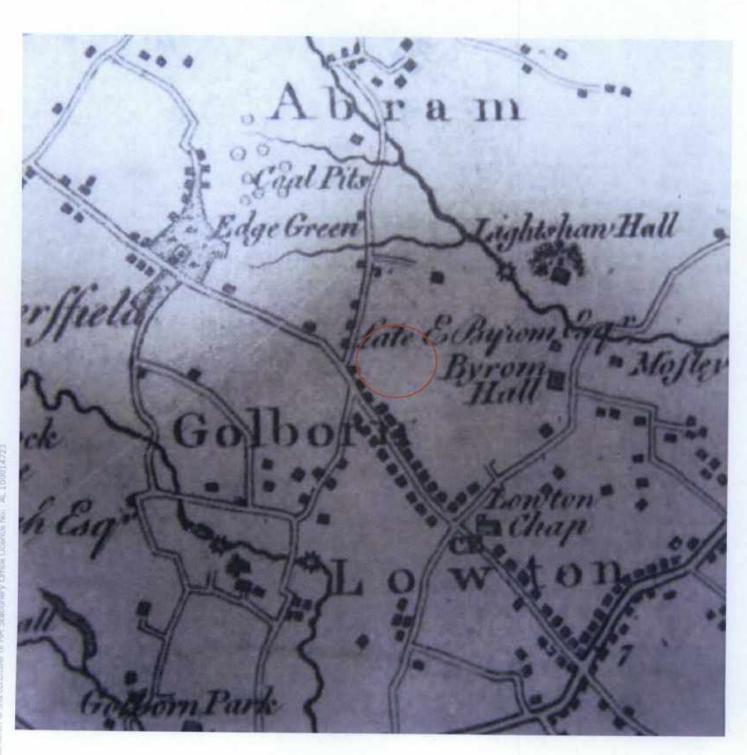


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Approximate Site Location

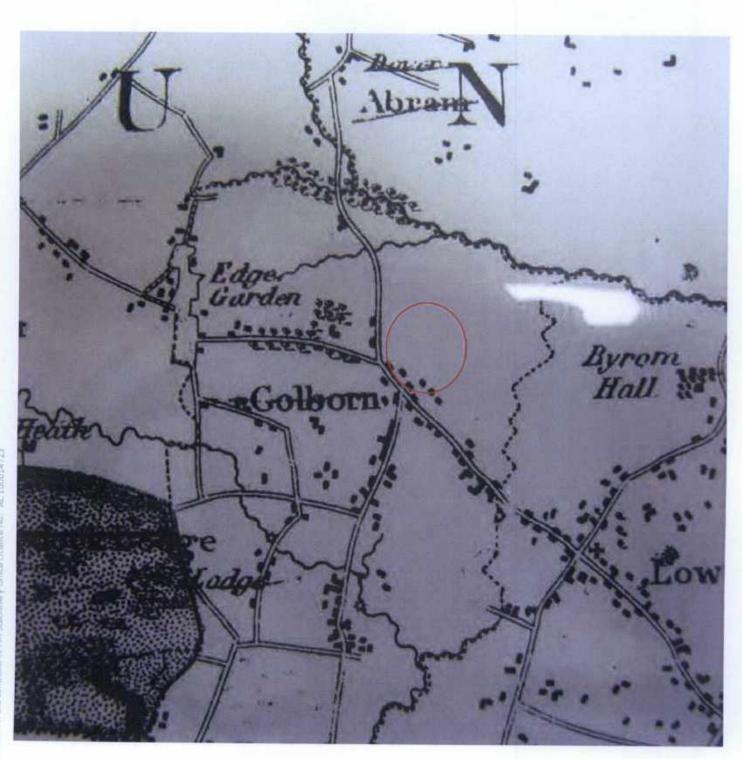


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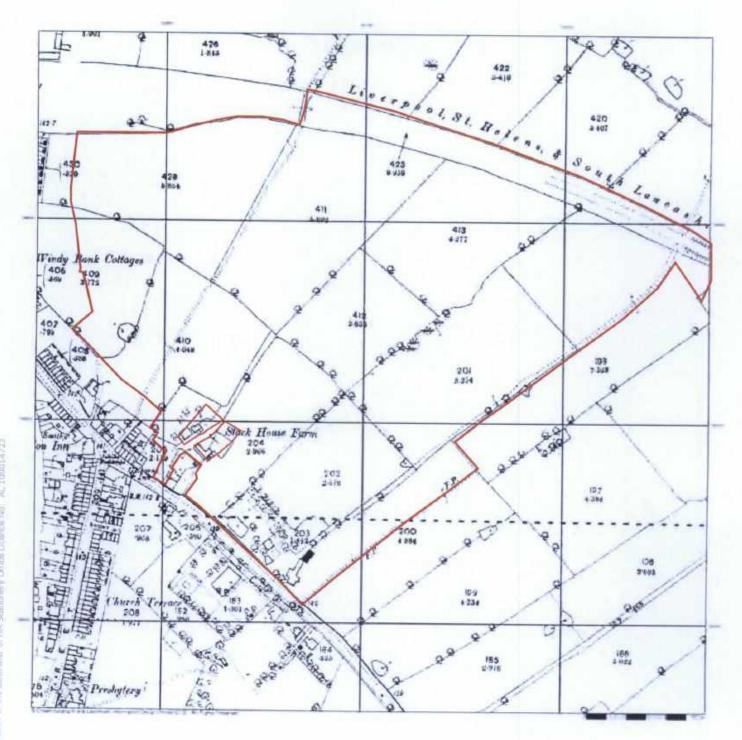




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Site Boundary

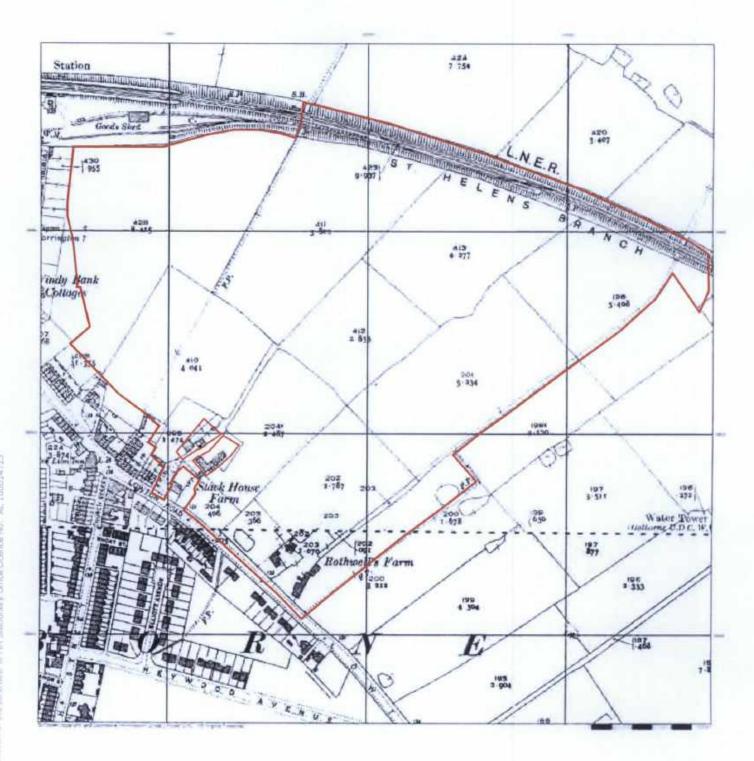


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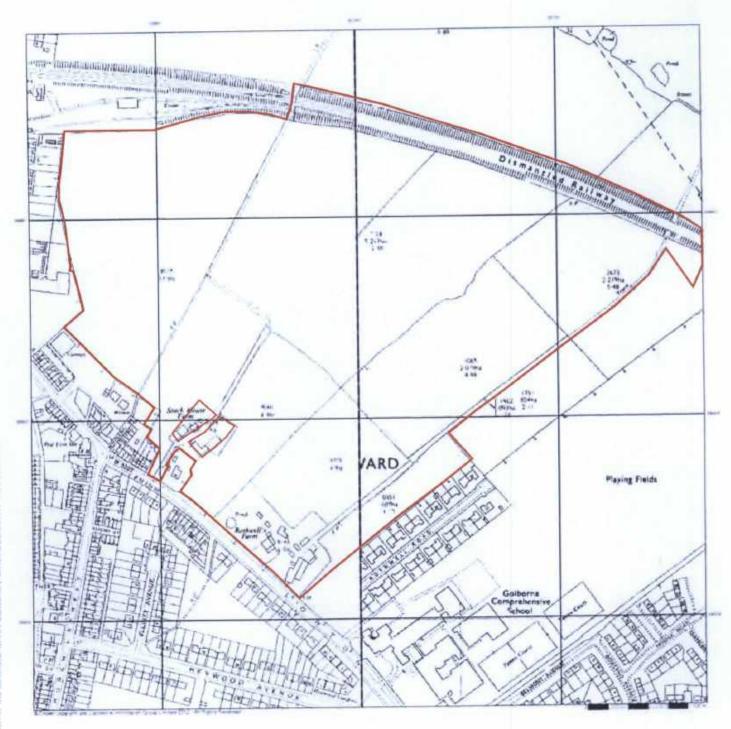




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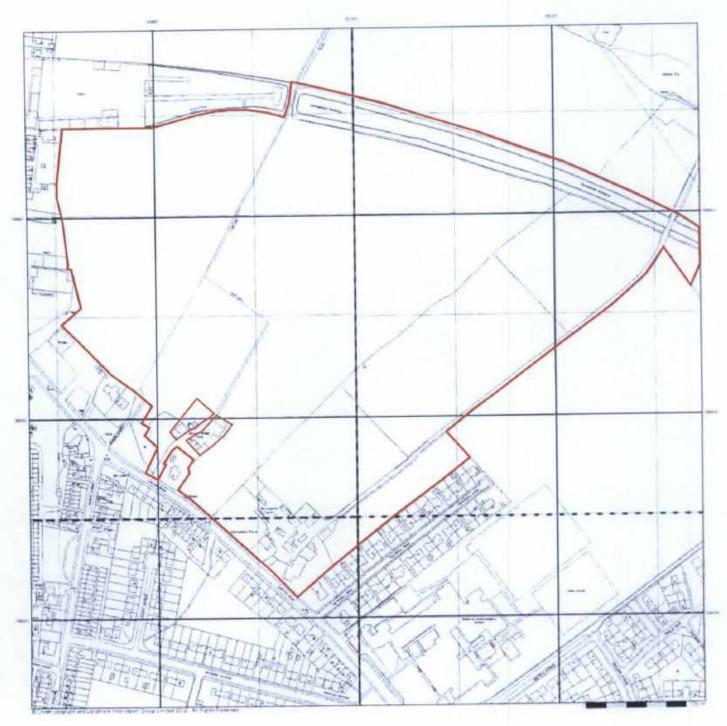
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Plate 1: View looking east along the northern perimeter of the Site

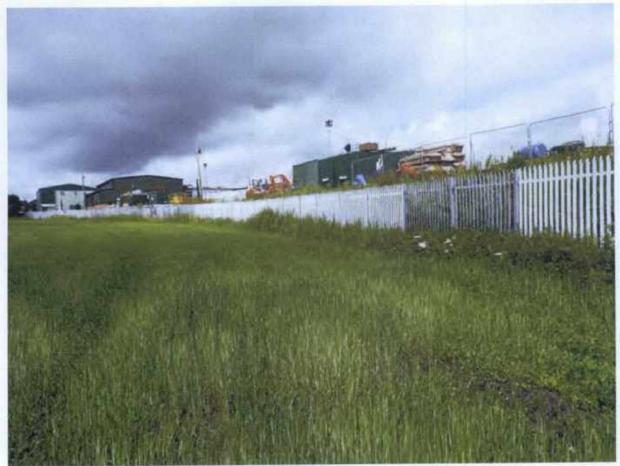


Plate 2: View looking west along the northern perimeter of the Site



Plate 3: View looking south-east along Lowton Road form the junction of Wigan Road and Lowton Road



Plate 4: View looking north-east along Rothwell Road



Plate 5: View looking east from the eastern perimeter of the Site



Plate 6: View looking north-east along Wigan Road from the junction of Ashton Road and Wigan Road





Plate 7: View looking south-west from the northern perimeter of the Site



Plate 8: View looking north-eaast from the south of the Site





Plate 9: View looking north-east along the eastern perimeter of the Site



Plate 10: View looking south-west from the north-eastern corner of the Site





Plate 11: View looking south-east towards Rothwell's Farm from the south of the Site

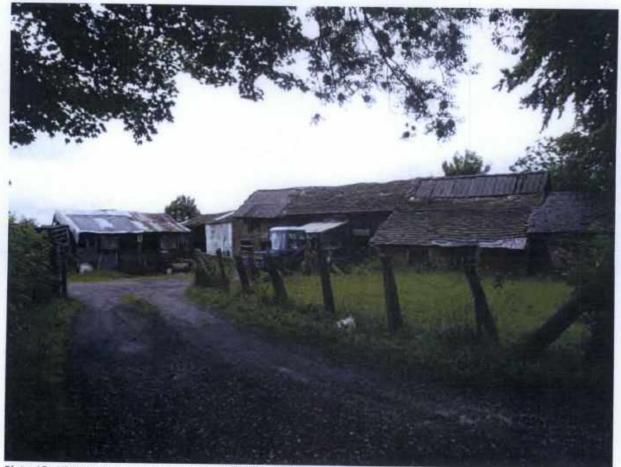


Plate 12: View looking north-east towards Rothwell's Farm from Lowton Road

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