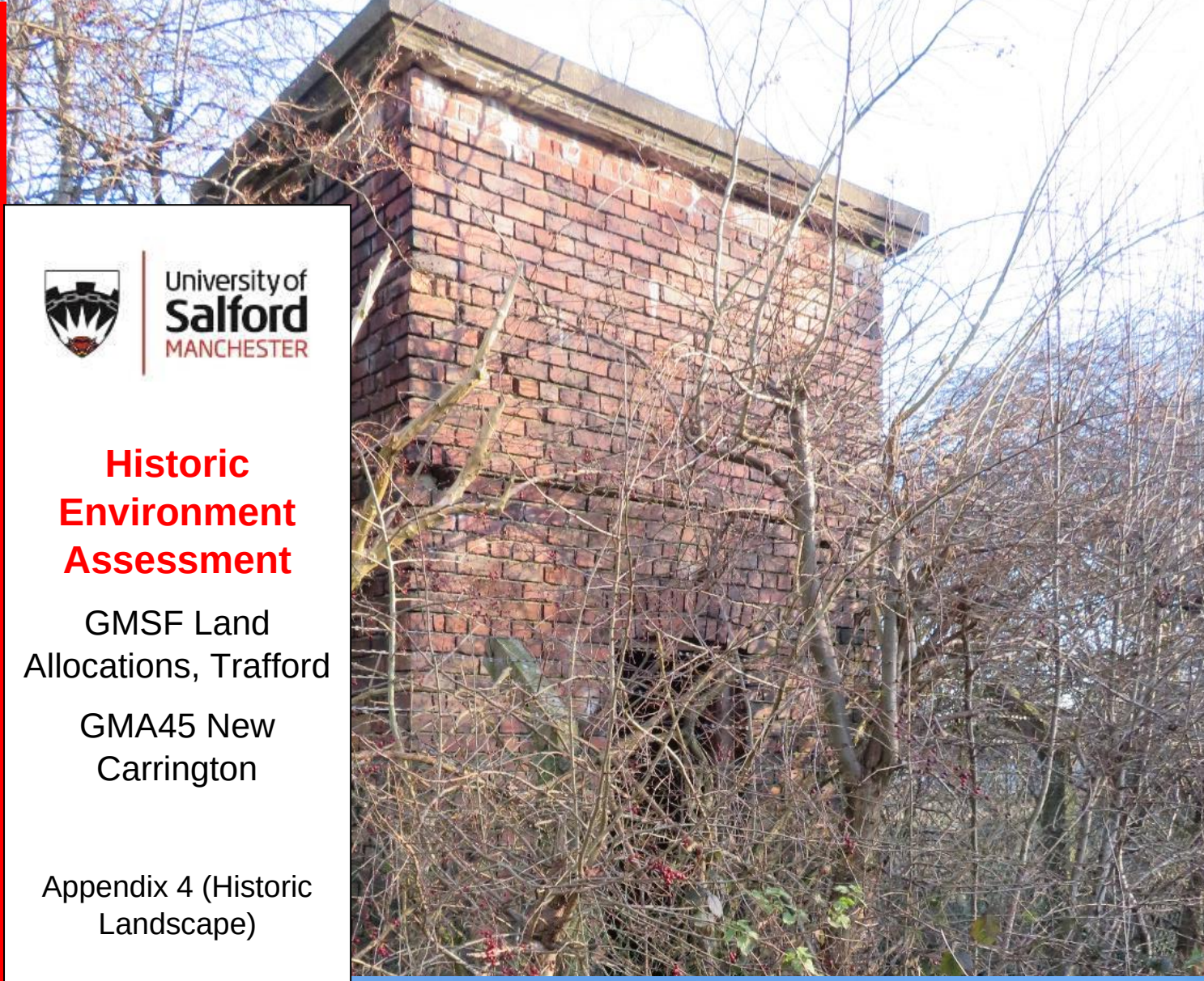


Historic Environment Assessment

GMSF Land Allocations, Trafford

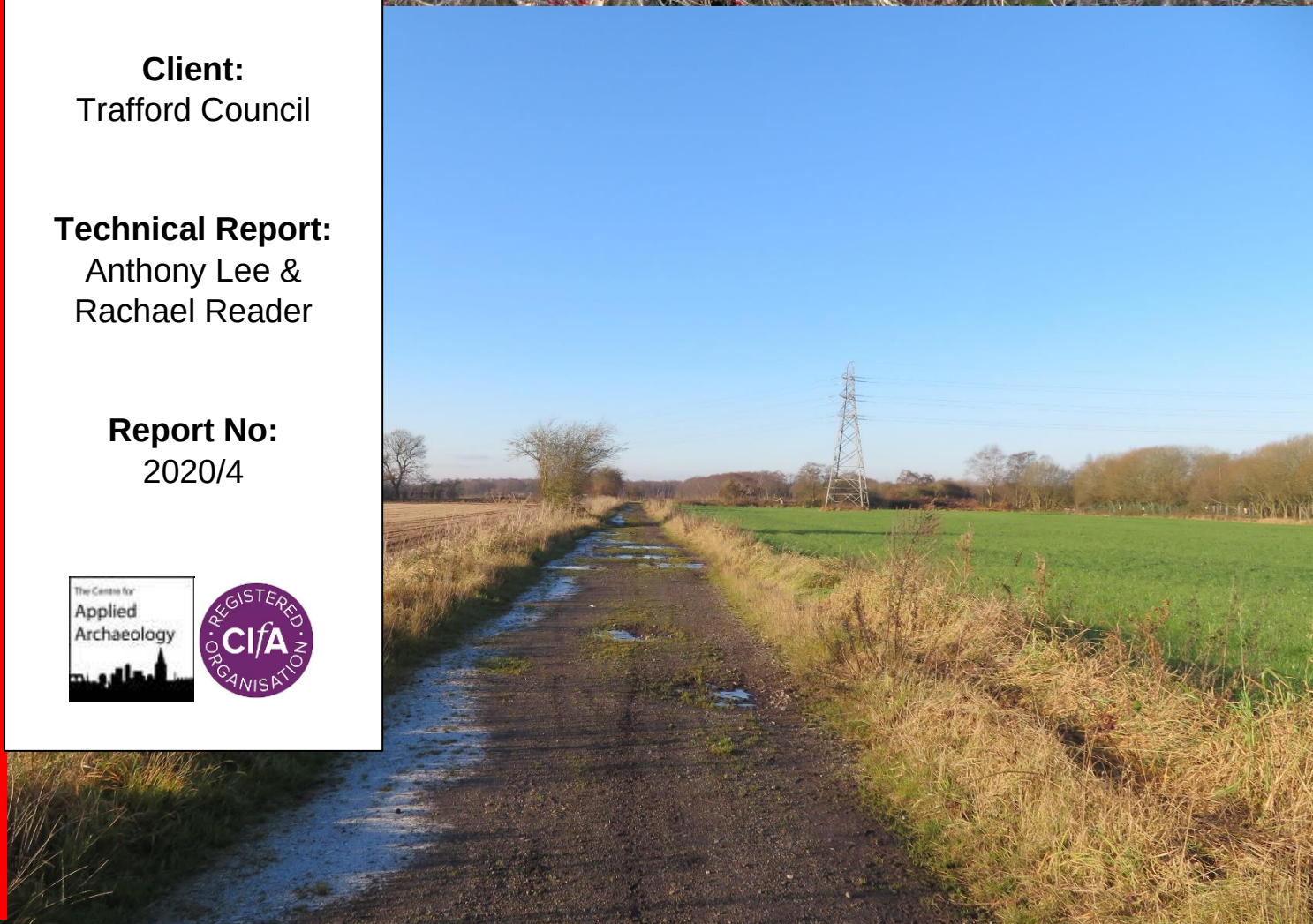
GMA45 New Carrington

Appendix 4 (Historic Landscape)

Client:
Trafford Council

Technical Report:
Anthony Lee &
Rachael Reader

Report No:
2020/4



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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Appendix contains the detailed evidence base for the historic landscape resource within the New Carrington Land Allocation area (herein referred to as 'the Site'.

The rural landscape is a treasured resource and its form and character reflects past human activity as well as topographical and geographical influences. The landscape of an area has many qualities and values including visual character, biodiversity, recreation and economic value. The Site has a varied historic landscape which reflect different influences and patterns of use.

1.2 Approach to Analysis

The methodology is outlined in Appendix 1 and the following is split into several sections, focusing on the different aspects of historic landscape:

- Overall characterisation: the sensitivity of the historic landscape to change has been assessed and is shown in Figure 1. From this assessment, a number of significant landscape features have been highlighted for further analysis, outlined below;
- Historic field boundaries: a rapid assessment has been carried out to identify those boundaries depicted on historic mapping and which add historic character to the Site. These have been digitised and are presented within Figures 2 and 3;
- Historic roads: a rapid assessment has been carried out to identify roads which have survived, either as main roads or tracks/footpaths in the modern landscape;
- Carrington Rides: the historic background has highlighted the significance of the late 19th century infrastructure which was established during the reclamation of the Moss. This section maps the surviving landscape features, standing structures as well as potential archaeological remains associated with this landscape change;
- Other Features: a number of other features were identified that also contribute to the historic character of the Site. This includes, but is not limited to, ancient/semi-natural woodlands (as defined by Natural England), other areas of long standing woodland identified on the ground as well as on historic mapping, and former orchards. There is also the boundary, or 'park pale' of the medieval Warburton deer park.
- All Figures are presented in Chapter 6.

2. Overall Characterisation

2.1 Description of the Carrington Landscape

Trafford's Landscape Character Assessment (Trafford Council 2004) identified seven different landscape types within the local authority area that define the predominantly rural areas. Two of these fall within the Carrington Site: mossland and settled sandlands. Figure 1 of Appendix 2 shows the extent of this mossland, as estimated from the data gathered during the Wetlands Survey in the 1990s (Hall *et al* 1995); the southern and eastern parts of the Site incorporate the settled sandlands.

The historic landscape character within the north-western part of the Site has been significantly eroded due to intensive industrial development of this area from the mid-20th century onwards. There are small fragments, such as some field boundaries and the area around the Church of St George (see Appendix 3: Built Heritage) which are still surviving within this part. The landscape pattern across the Moss is predominantly the product of reclamation from the mid-19th century onwards. This grid-like pattern is a significant historic landscape feature and is discussed in more detail below. There are still elements of the historic landscape surviving to the east of Carrington, particularly with field boundaries. The landscape to the south of the Moss retains a large part of its historic character, with a dispersed settlement pattern, sinuous country lanes and predominantly agricultural land. There has been some boundary loss through 19th and 20th century field agglomeration but this does not detract from the overall character.

Figure 1 shows the sensitivity of the different HECAs in terms of their historic landscape character and features surviving. The sensitivity of each area is summarised below.

HECA No.	HECA Name	Sensitivity of Historic Landscape
01	Petrochemical Works	Low
02	Carrington Power Station	Low
03	Former Partington Gas Works	Low
04	Carrington Village	Medium
05	Altrincham Sewage Works	Low
06	Carrington Training Ground	Low
07	Warburton Park	High
08	Birchmoss Covert	Medium
09	Carrington Moss	High
10	Coroner's Wood	High
11	Enclosed Land, east of the Moss	Medium
12	Enclosed Land, west of Carrington	Low
13	Enclosed Land, south of the Moss	High
14	Scrubland, west of the Gasworks	Low
15	The Church of St George	High
16	Land west and south of the Chapel of St George	Low
17	Scrubland Area, west of the Moss	Medium
18	Enclosed Area, south of the Moss	Medium
19	Rugby/Football Training Ground	Low
20	Ackers Farm	Medium
21	Woodland and Dainewell Park	Low
22	Scrub Woodland, south-east of the Moss	Low

Table 1 Summary of historic landscape sensitivity

2.2 19th Century or Earlier Field Boundaries

Figures 2 and 3 shows the field boundaries identified that can be seen on Tithe Mapping for the Warburton (published 1839), Partington and Carrington (both published 1841) townships and/or the first edition Ordnance Survey (published 1882). Field boundaries running along roads and natural features such as rivers, were difficult to define and it is not clear whether these would have been present historically. The analysis shows that a large part of the agricultural landscape has seen agglomeration of fields from the later 19th century onwards. However a large number of hedgerow boundaries still survive in some form particularly along the southern parts of the Site (HECA7; 13; 18), eastern part of the Site (HECA11), as well as smaller fragments elsewhere.

Plate 1 Field boundary within HECA11 shown on historic mapping. The high bank is probably material from the excavated drainage ditch to the right. It also has a PROW to the left. Looking south-east

Plate 2 Field boundary between Pear Tree and Moss Lane Cottages, looking north incorporating mature trees.

2.3 Historic Roads

Figure 4 shows the survival of historic routeways, shown on tithe maps, which are still in use today (this does not include the roads created for the Moss reclamation – see Section 4.4). The development of the road system clearly shows how much of a barrier Carrington Moss was to transportation across this landscape. The main road routes across the Site are Moss Lane along the southern edge and Warburton Lane, which passes through Partington and becomes Manchester Road along the northern edge. The latter two routes have had parts straightened during the 20th century, particularly within Partington and Carrington though the earlier elements still survive as side roads or footpaths in places. What is also interesting to note is that many elements of the road system for the reclamation had already been laid down at a much earlier stage; a number of roads and tracks, especially from Moss Lane led onto the Moss. There is a distinct lack of formal routes shown that led onto the Moss from the north and the only one appears to be Common Lane. It could suggest that turbary rights for the residents of Carrington was more tightly controlled during the medieval/post-medieval periods.

3. The Landscape of Moss Reclamation

3.1 Introduction

The historic background is covered within Appendix 1; this section presents a summary of the historic landscape features, built heritage and archaeological remains that survive (or potentially in the case of the archaeology) relating to the large-scale reclamation of the moss. These are shown on Figure 5.

3.2 The Trackways, Narrow Gauge Railway, and Drainage Cuts

The main historic landscape features that survive relating to the former light railway are the roads themselves which criss-cross the Moss in a grid pattern. Around 6 miles of roads were constructed for the 2ft 6in narrow gauge railway across the Moss, with steel rails sitting on wooden sleepers and a clinker bed. Most were simply extensions of pre-existing routeways which led from other established roads such as Sinderland Road onto the Moss (see Section 4.4 and Figure 4). The two east-west routes, North Road and Ashton Road, were also established (North Road only partially) and these appear to have been part of the Earl of Stamford's attempt at moss reclamation. This system came into use in 1887, operating on an 'out and back' system (due to the lack of loops) and ceased use in 1937. Sources suggest that the track was lifted during World War II (Jones 1958; Nicholls 1985).

Many of the roads had drainage channels running parallel, many of which can still be seen in the landscape. Further channels were cut for the individually portioned up fields though many of these are no longer visible due to later agglomeration.

3.3 Built Heritage: Narrow Gauge Railway Infrastructure

There are very few physical remnants of the infrastructure of the former narrow gauge railway, however not all of the route was accessible so it is unclear whether any sections of trackway or infrastructure survive beyond those identified during the site walkover, which are:

- *Water Tower (HA96)*: this brick-built water tower sits on Common Lane and was used to supply water to the tram engines from the mains water which ran into the estate along this road. It appears to be capped with concrete and there is a segmental arched opening.
- *Level Crossing barrier (HA105)*: one still survives on the north-western side of Manchester Road. It was the only level crossing required as it was only at this point that the light railway needed to cross a main road to transport the waste from Carrington Wharf to the Moss.

Plate 3 Water Tower on Common Lane to supply the locomotives at Carrington Moss

Plate 4 Part of the level crossing barriers towards Carrington Wharf on Manchester Road

3.4 Built Heritage: Farm Complexes

The farm complexes are dealt with in more detail within Appendix 3. A number of farms were constructed both fringing, and on, the Moss, including Ashpodel Farm, Ash Farm and Swiss Cottage.

- Ashpodel Farm (HA43): the current buildings were constructed in 1896, however it appears to have originated as a wooden-built farm and located close to HA102 (it has not been ascertained whether the building shown on later mapping is the former farm or another building).
- Ash Farm (HA55): this farm dates to the early 20th century and may also have replaced wooden structures
- Swiss Cottage (HA44): this complex dates to the late 19th century.

3.5 Archaeological Remains

Although sources suggest the narrow gauge track was lifted (Jones 1958; Nicholls 1985), there is no firm evidence for this and it could survive along the route of the former tramway. In addition, there are a number of other buildings which no longer stand and are shown on historic mapping, buried archaeological remains of which could exist:

- Carrington Moss Farm (HA46): this appears to have been the Corporation's farmstead, set up to take advantage of the newly created farmland. An orchard was also established, which is recorded on the traditional orchard inventory (see below). The Farm, which later became known as Moss Hall Farm, was also used as a training centre, to provide skills for ex-servicemen in farming, gardening and nursery work. The complex had a farmhouse and accompanying stores and barns and appears to have acted as a localised hub for nightsoil deposition and distribution. The Farm was demolished sometime in the 1980s.

- Birchmoss Covert Buildings (HA45): these appear to have been storage sheds and may have been used for repairs as narrow gauge railway sidings lead directly into these buildings. However, cartographic evidence suggests the railway track had been removed by 1910, and if so, the buildings' subsequent function is unclear. The buildings were demolished in the mid-20th century.
- Brookheyes Cottages (HA47): a small row of cottages constructed immediately north of the narrow gauge railway line. They were late 19th century in date and are thought to have housed workers on the Estate. The cottages were demolished in the late 1990s.
- Brookheyes Road Houses (HA107): these were late 19th century houses, also known as Moss Hall Cottages. There were six in total and they may have housed workers on the Estate. The Houses were demolished during the late 1980s/early 1990s.
- Workshop and Store (HA103): these were two small buildings located on the narrow gauge railway sidings adjacent to the Cheshire Lines Railway. These buildings were probably cleared when the operations on the estate ceased in the late 1930s.
- Platelayer's Cabin (HA104): a small building located on the narrow gauge railway sidings on the Cheshire Lines Railway and was probably cleared when the operations on the Estate ceased in the late 1930s.
- Old Ashpodel Farm (HA102): a small building is shown broadly where the old farm was meant to have been located before being rebuilt further north in 1896. It is not clear if this building was the old farm, however it survived until the late 1950s and it may have been repurposed.
- Nursery (HA53): at least three separate nurseries were established on the newly reclaimed farmland; the northernmost of which (HA53) was utilised by the Corporation's Parks and Gardens department. Glasshouses to this nursery were added during the 1930s, however nurseries eventually withdrew from the Estate during the 1990s and the area is now part of a riding school.
- Nursery (HA54): this was a small nursery, shown with small cultivable plots. It had disappeared from mapping by the 1930s. It appears to have been part of the Parks and Gardens' land.

4. Other Features

A number of other features that form part of the historic landscape have been recorded, including woodland identified by Natural England as ancient/semi-natural, woodland identified on tithe maps, community orchards and trig points. These are all displayed on Figures 6 and 7.

4.1 Warburton deer park

A consideration of Warburton deer park has been provided in Appendix 2, which includes a discussion of both above and below ground elements. Those above-ground elements of the deer park may also be considered as 'historic landscape' however rather than providing a repetition of the evidence provided in Appendix 2, or to attempt to make a somewhat artificial separation of archaeology and historic landscape in relation to the deer park, you are referred to Section 3.5 of Appendix 2, which most usefully incorporates a consideration of both archaeology and historic landscape of the deer park.

Within the Site boundary, the only above-ground remains of the deer park observed during this assessment was a substantial bank, which is likely to represent the northern boundary of the deer park, also known as the 'park pale'. No detailed inspection of this feature, or indeed any other areas of the park, were carried out as part of this assessment, so there is currently a degree of uncertainty regarding the extent of the survival of the park pale within the Site, as well as its survival along the whole of its length. There is also a degree of uncertainty regarding the veracity of the other above ground features of the park that have been identified by this assessment, most of which lie outside the Site boundary, and which have been identified from historic maps but which have not been subject to detailed visual inspection.

Plate 5 Photograph taken from the edge of Coroner's Wood, looking south-westwards across Red Brook. The possible park boundary can be seen beyond the Brook, represented by a substantial bank, the top of which is indicated by the red arrows. This area is within the Site.

Elsewhere within the Site, the physical remains of the park pale do not appear to survive, however the boundary is fossilised in the landscape; the eastern boundary broadly corresponds with modern day Warburton Lane and its western course is fossilised in a field boundary which runs broadly parallel with the Mersey. It is thought to follow part of the Bollin Way and there is a slight change in topography with a slight hollow running parallel with this path which could represent the remains of a boundary ditch (centred at 369933, 389817). On some satellite imagery, this also corresponds with a darker cropmark which follows the projected course of the boundary although this area has historically been used for tipping which may have affected the survival of any remains.

4.2 Woodland and Orchards

A part of Coroner's Wood, along Red Brook, is located within the south-west part of the Site and is designated as Ancient/Semi-Natural Woodland. Two further areas are located along the southern Site boundary, though not within it, at Brookheys and Hogswood Coverts. These wooded areas can be seen on tithe maps, as well as two other areas of woodland at Birchmoss Covert and Broadoak Wood. The latter two have no designation and Birchmoss Covert is thought to have been badly affected by a fire, with most of the trees being replaced (Friends of Carrington Moss 2019).

In addition, two traditional orchards are located within the Site, one at Broadoak Farm and the other on Carrington Moss. The former is actively managed and appears to have been established in the early 20th century; it is privately owned and part of the Broadoak Farm estate. The one on Carrington Moss was also established during the early 20th century and was once part of Carrington Moss Farm, established after the reclamation. The orchard is in poor condition and is not currently actively managed. Analysis of recent aerial photographs suggests that historic fruit trees are still growing within the orchard.

Plate 6 Photograph showing the traditional orchard on Carrington Moss is very overgrown and not actively managed

4.2 Triangulation Pillars

Three triangulation pillars (trig points) have been recorded within the Site; the earliest one is located on Brookheys Road and is a 'Hotine' pillar (the classic square pillar designed by Martin Hotine), which were installed between 1935 and 1960. There are also two triangulation bolts recorded, one within the former Petrochemical Works and one on Carrington Lane, east of Ackers Farm. Only the Hotine pillar was positively identified during the Site Visit, however, and although it has been vandalised and the plug removed, it retains other features including a flush bracket and a spider.

Plate 7 'Hotine' triangulation pillar on Carrington Moss

5. Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of the historic landscape character has found that there are a number of surviving features which could be incorporated into any future development to help create a sense of place and maintain a visual and tactile link with the Site's past.

5.2 Historic Field Boundaries and Roads

5.2.1 Enhancements

The assessment has highlighted those hedgerows which, based on historic map evidence, have 19th century or earlier origins. Such hedgerows are considered to possess some historic and archaeological significance and are worthy of retention as far as possible. The incorporation of 'old' hedgerows within the scheme will help to enhance the time depth and sense of place of the local landscape. It should be noted that the assessment has not attempted to ascertain whether any of the hedgerows located within the Site may be classed as 'Important' according to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, as this was beyond the agreed scope of the assessment. Therefore, any references within this assessment to 'historic field boundaries', or 'historic hedgerows' relates to any hedgerows that have been attributed a 19th century or earlier date.

Those features identified in Figures 2 and 3 are recommended for retention and incorporation as part of the green infrastructure of the area. The rapid assessment has shown that in some areas of the Site, particularly the southern part, the species diversity appears to be greater and trees were noted within some hedgerows (Plate 2).

The main road leading from Warburton, through Partington and across Carrington forms the main arterial link across this area and has been modified and widened to reflect this. However many of the roads within the southern part of the Site are narrow country lanes with no pedestrian walkways. Their character has changed little and these roads contribute to the wider rural landscape setting. The road network leading onto the Moss is also preserved, though many are now closed to traffic and form tracks and/or public footpaths. Whilst it is recommended that this historic pattern is, where practical incorporated within any new development as either roads, cycleways or paths.

5.3. The Landscape of the Moss Reclamation

5.3.1 Enhancements

The assessment has shown that the prevailing character of the Moss is a product of late 19th century moss reclamation, which itself was a significant process that altered this landscape beyond recognition. A programme of archaeological work is recommended at an early stage to determine whether the tracks or any associated infrastructure of the narrow gauge still survive as buried remains, as well as the extent, survival and condition of the demolished farms and railway infrastructure elements on the Moss (those at Carrington Wharf appear to have been removed by extensive tipping activity). This work could probably be undertaken alongside the programme to characterise the palaeoenvironmental deposits across the Moss (see Appendix 2). Nearly all the roads and tracks that were laid down in a regular fashion across this landscape survive and their retention within new development is recommended, along with their historic names (such as Ashton Road, Dunham Road etc). Visible elements of the narrow gauge railway, including the water tower and the level crossing barrier, are also recommended for retention, as well as any other significant surviving elements of the railway which survive on currently inaccessible sections of the Site. The former Cheshire Lines

Railway is also recommended for retention and could form a footpath/cycling route. The route of this Railway was also inaccessible at the time of the Site Visit and so it is presently unclear whether there are any upstanding or buried elements of this former railway that may warrant retention during the area's redevelopment. There are opportunities to link to public transport networks in north Altrincham and the restoration of the former railway bridge over the ship canal can provide links with Cadishead.

5.3.2 Opportunities

There is an opportunity to engage local people and volunteers in carrying out further historical research, creating exhibitions, websites and heritage trails. The archival research that was carried out as part of this assessment has shown that there are a number of original documents relating to the reclamation of the landscape. One of the most interesting is the General Time Book (GB127.M595/3/1, held by Manchester Archives) which documents the names of the workers on the Estate, their tasks for each week and their pay. This is a meticulously kept record and documents the work on the Estate from the Corporation's purchase of the Estate in 1886, through to 1889. The Book offers a detailed look at how the Estate was reclaimed, who was involved, the work that had to be carried out, and how the number of workers swelled from seven to over eighty Consequently, the Book offers excellent source material for a detailed, community-led study of this period of the Site's history.

This can also incorporate information on the farm complexes that were created and there are opportunities also to engage local people in community archaeology projects. Depending on the extent, condition and survival, this could include targeted work on the demolished farmstead at Carrington Moss Farm as well as the possible stores and workshops at Birchmoss Covert.

5.4 Other Features

5.4.1 Enhancements

The historic woodlands identified within this assessment are recommended for retention, however any further work will require the input of ecologists. Traditional orchards are defined as priority habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Orchards are recommended for retention. The one that was at Carrington Moss Farm is not currently in use; it was established in the early 20th century however its condition is poor, and the area is currently overgrown and inaccessible. Further work is needed to assess the viability of bringing this back into use as an orchard. It has the potential to be a focus for the community and provides a historic link to the former use of the Moss for market gardening purposes.

6. Figures

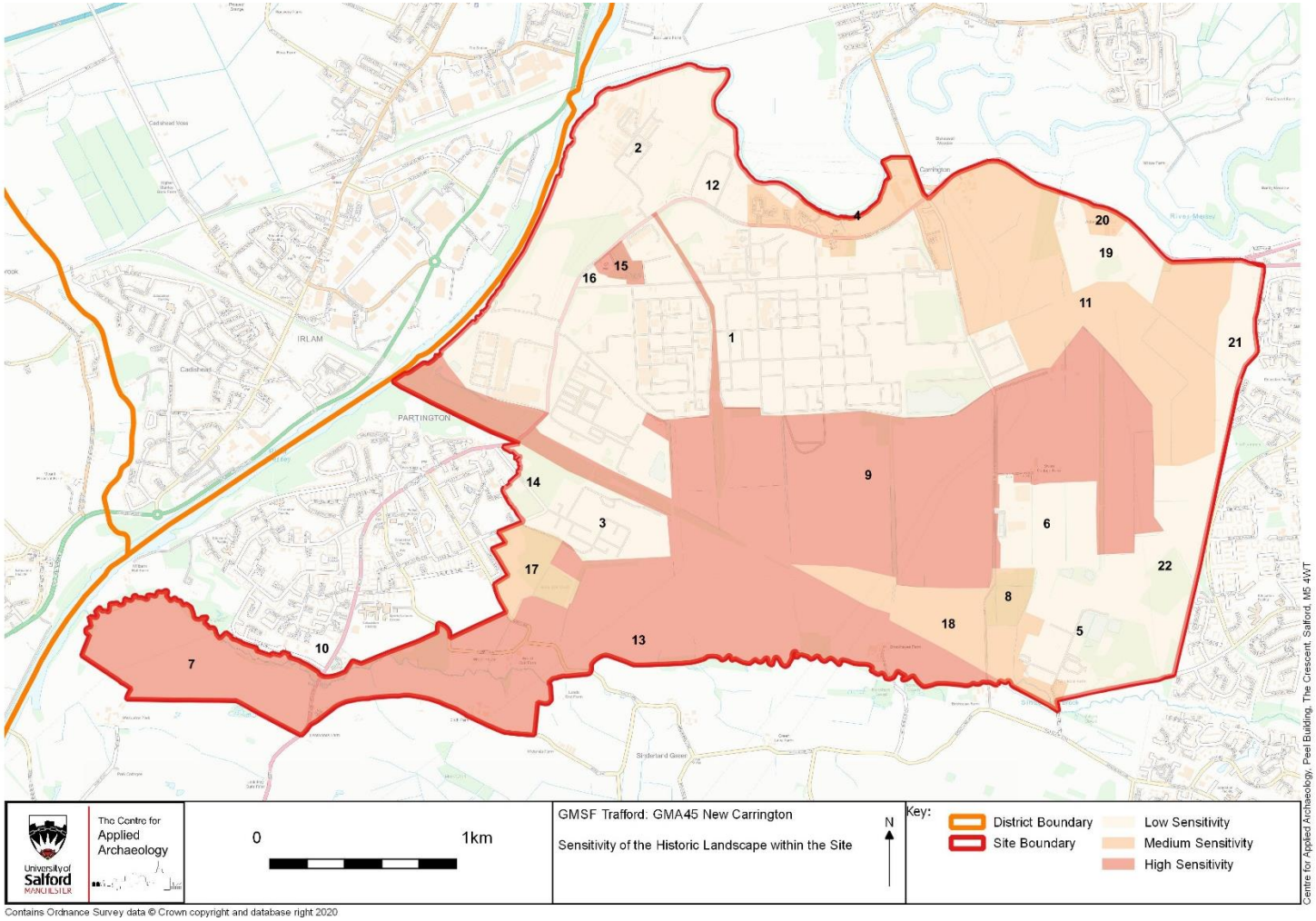

Figure 1 Map of Historic Landscape Sensitivity (numbers indicate HECAs)

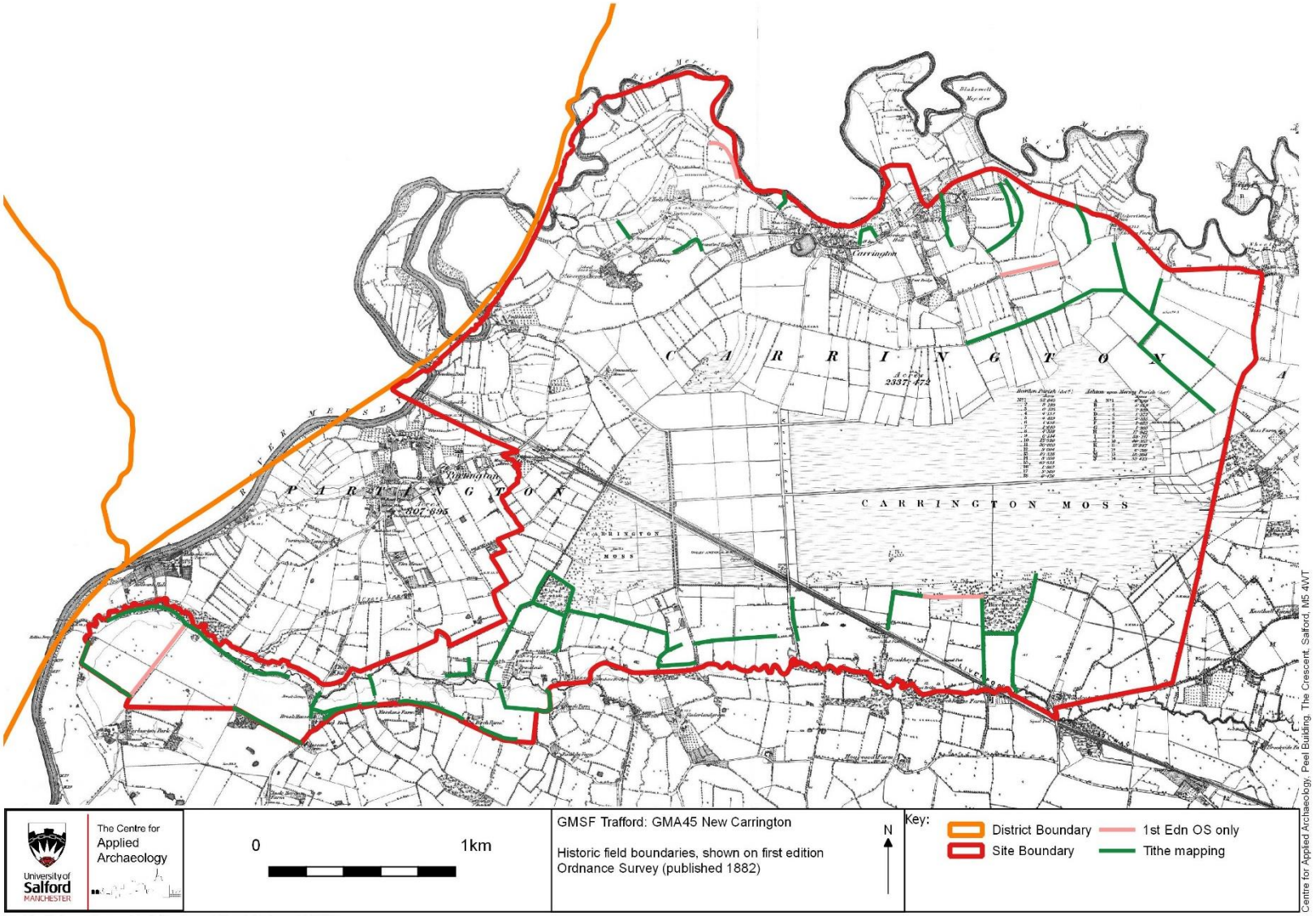

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Figure 2 Map of surviving field boundaries, shown on first edition OS

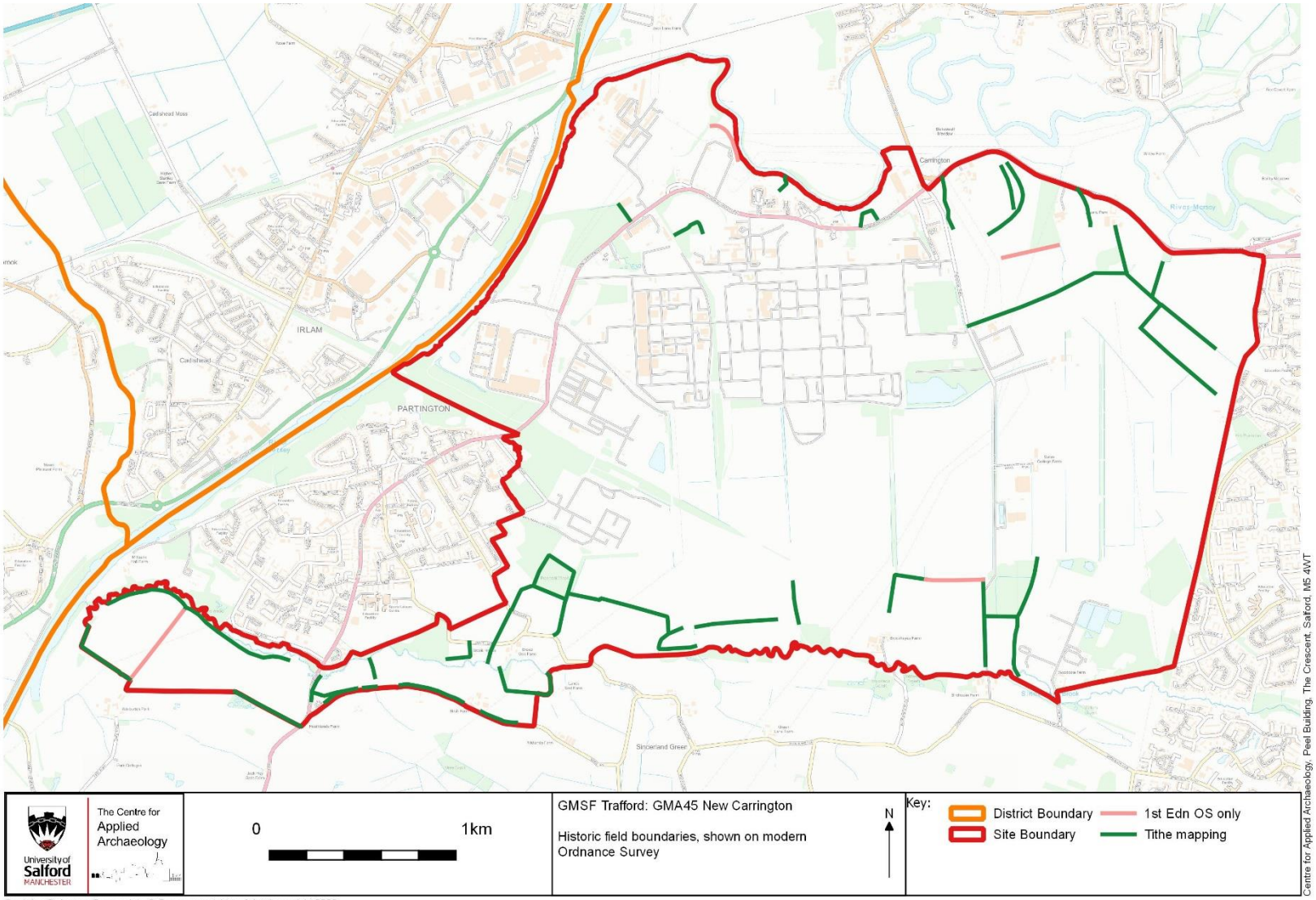

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Figure 3 Map of surviving field boundaries, shown on modern OS

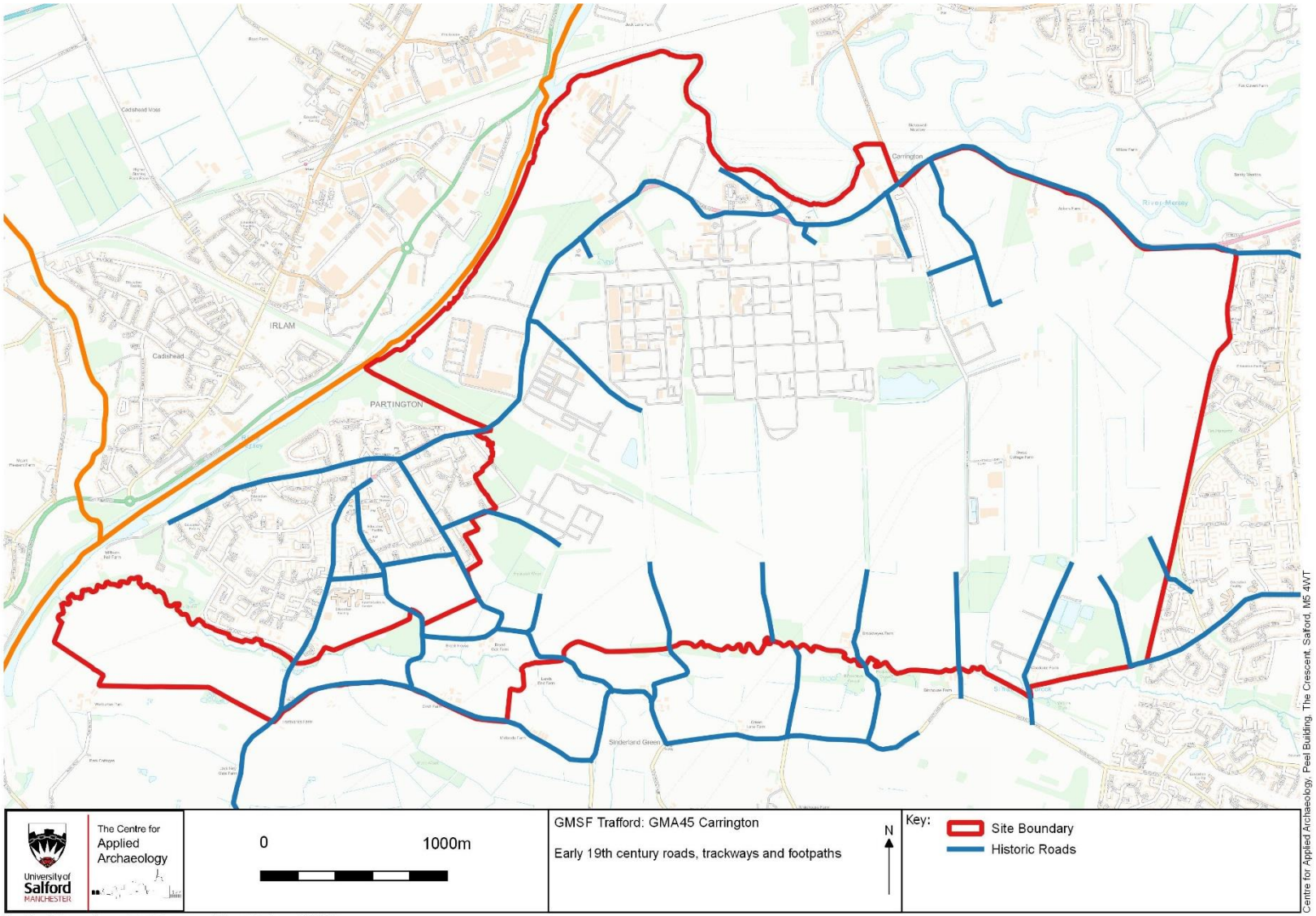

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Figure 4 Early 19th century roads, still surviving as main roads, trackways or footpaths

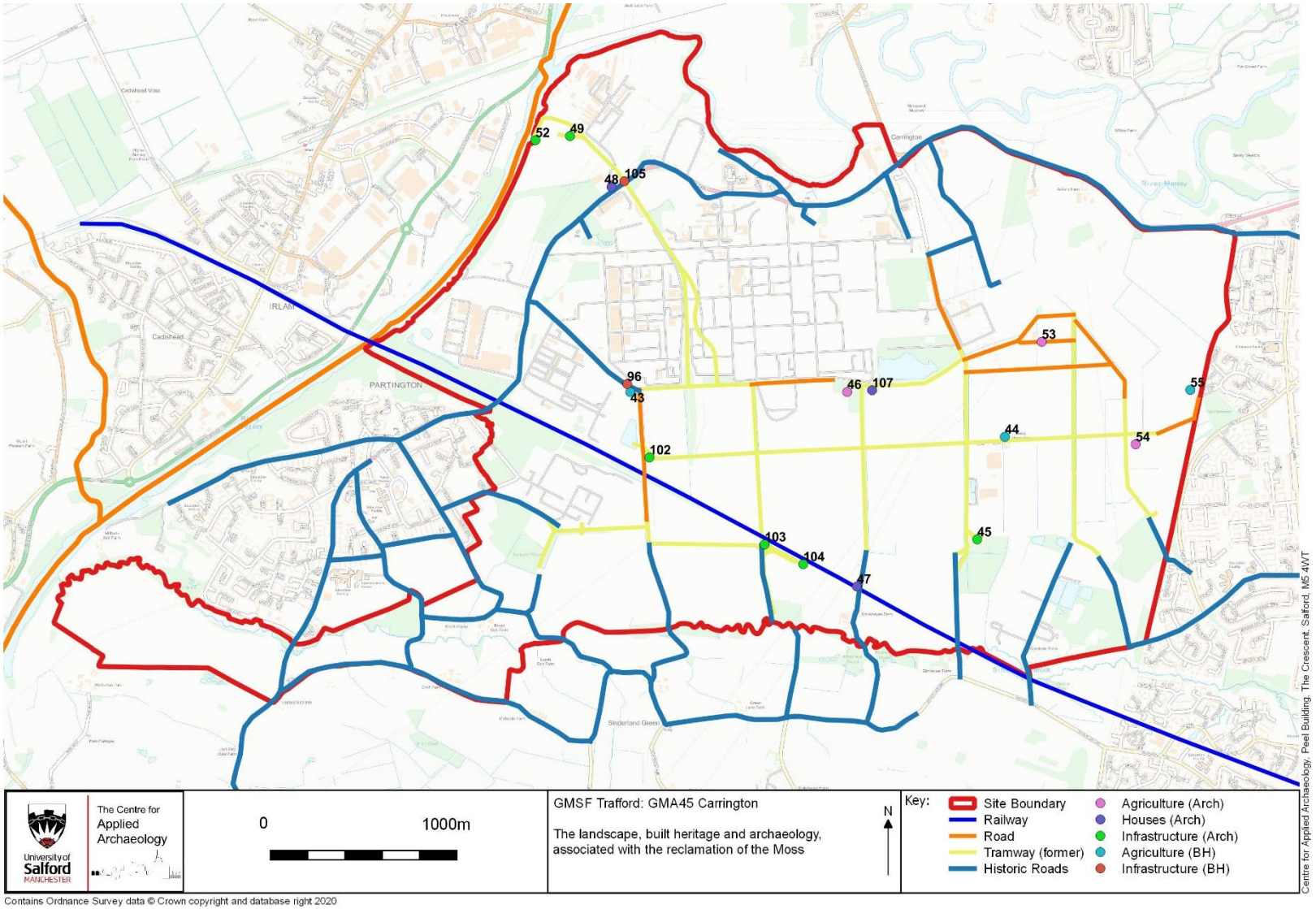

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Figure 5 The features associated with the reclamation of the Moss, including potential archaeological sites and built heritage

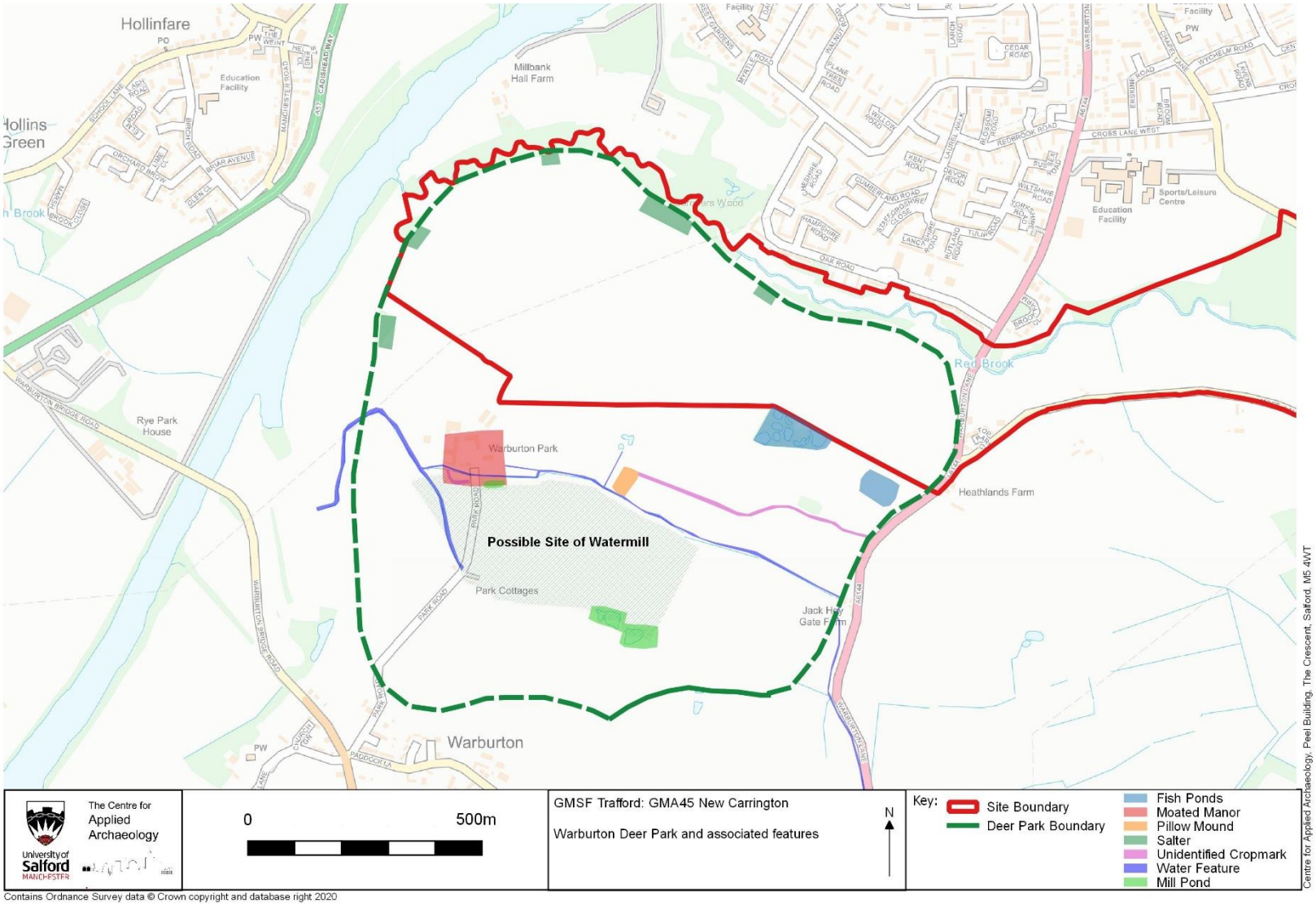

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Figure 6 Map showing possible archaeology and historic landscape features related to Warburton deer park (projected park boundary is shown as a dashed line)

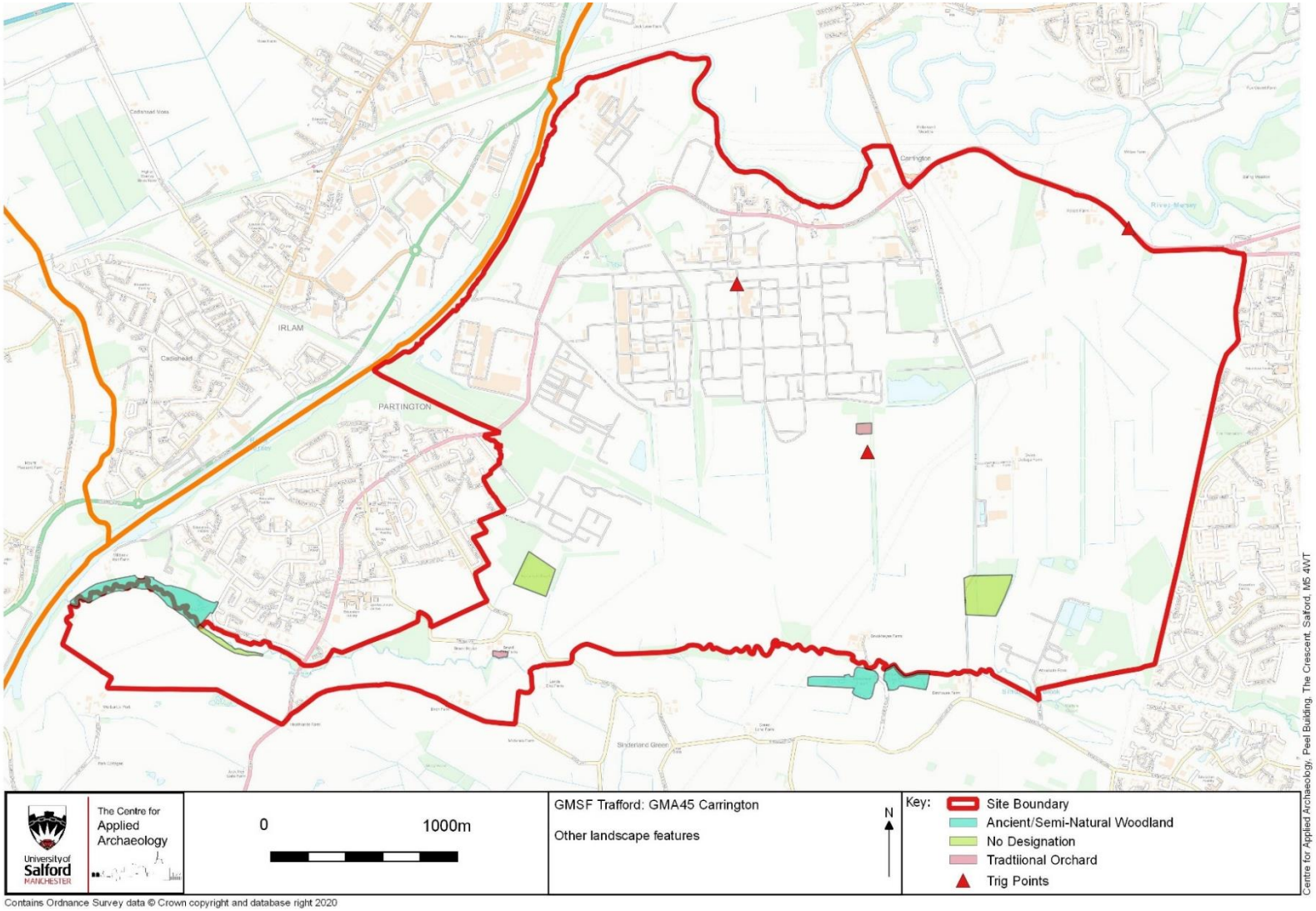

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Figure 7 Other Landscape Features identified