



**Greenfield Valley Heritage Park,
Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire
CH8 7GH**

March 2023 V 1.0



Archaeological Watching Brief

Project Code: A0397.1

Report no. 0384

Event PRN: 132819



æon archaeology

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Date: 09/03/2023

Client: Flintshire County Council

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Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH

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Figure 01: Location of proposed development site at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH (SJ 19486 77442). Scale 1:20,000 at A4.

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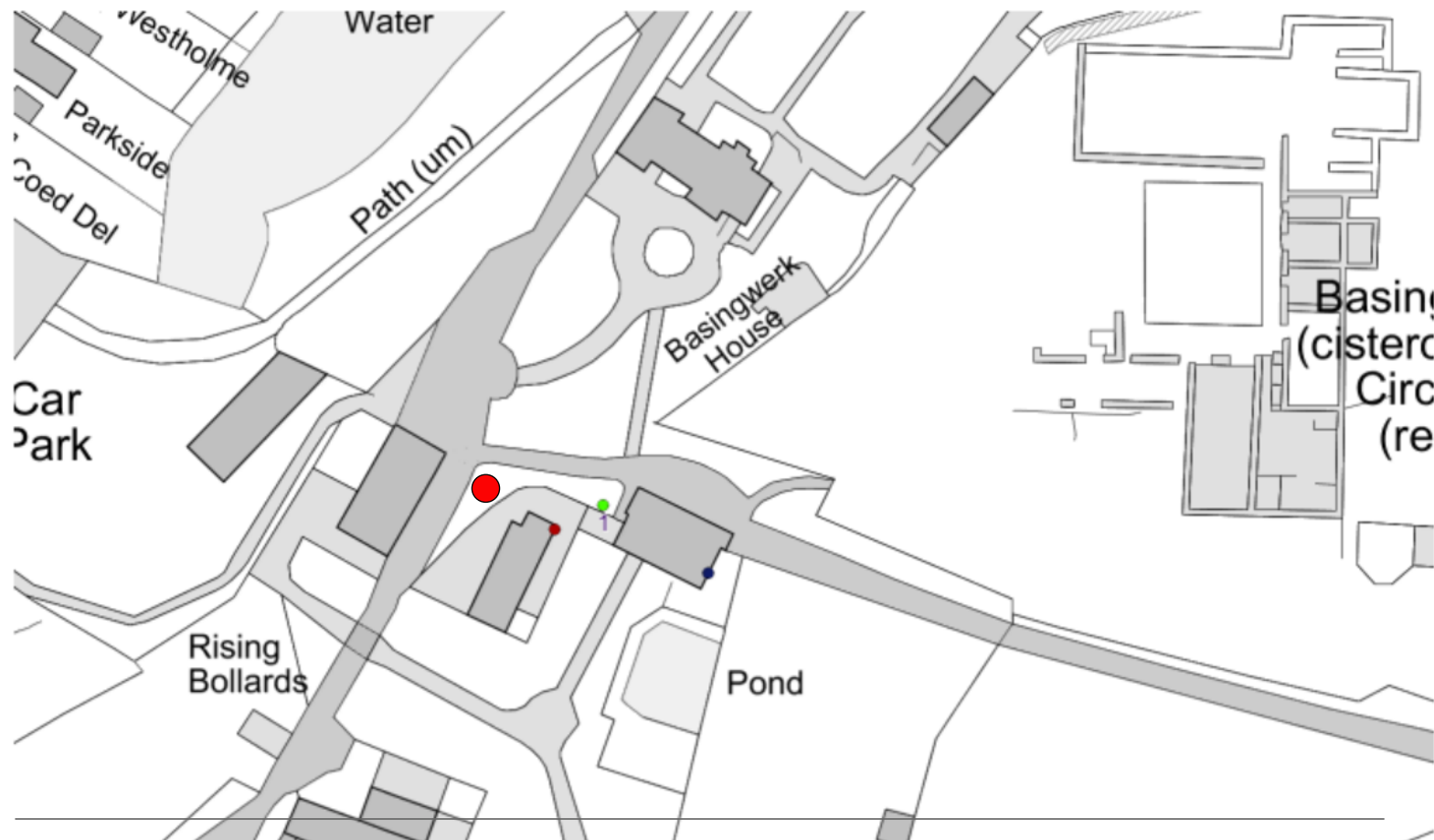


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Figure 02: Location of proposed development site at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH (SJ 19486 77442).
Scale 1:5,000 at A4.

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Figure 03: Location of proposed development site at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH (SJ 19486 77442).
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Figure 04: Location of proposed development site in relation to the Basingwerk Abbey Scheduled Monument (FL001). Scale 1:2,500 at A4.

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1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Comisiynwyd Aeon Archaeology gan Gyngor Sir y Fflint i gynnal briff gwylio archaeolegol yn ystod y gwaith sylfaenol sy'n gysylltiedig ag adeiladu Uned Newid Ystafelloedd newydd ym Mharc Treftadaeth Dyffryn Maes Glas, Maes Glas, Treffynnon, Sir y Fflint

Cynhaliwyd y briff gwylio hwn yn dilyn cyngor Cadw, a'r bwriad oedd arsylwi a fyddai olion archeolegol sy'n gysylltiedig â Chyfdeilad Abaty Dinas Basing yn cael eu datgelu fel rhan o'r gwaith. Yn ystod y gwaith darganfuwyd wyneb brics coch, mae'n debyg bod hwn yn rhan o waith tirlunio hanesyddol, a oedd wedi digwydd yn flaenorol, yn y Parc Treftadaeth yn ystod yr 1980au.

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Flintshire County Council to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new Modular Changing Places Unit at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire

This watching brief was conducted following the advice of Cadw, and was intended to observe whether any archaeological remains pertaining to the Basingwerk Abbey Complex would be revealed as part of the works. During the works a red brick surface was encountered which likely relates to part of the wider landscaping activities which took place in the Heritage Park during the 1980's.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology has been commissioned by Flintshire County Council, hereafter ‘the Client’, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new Modular Changing Places Unit at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH (centred on **NGR SJ 19486 77442**), (figures 01-04).

The development is being undertaken as part of permitted development rights part 12 class A (works carried out by a local authority for a Council function etc) and therefore did not require formal planning application. The proposed development does however lie 27.00m to the southwest of the Basingwerk Abbey Scheduled Monument (SM) (FL001). As the development lies outside of the SM polygon, SM consent was not required, however the Cadw Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology (Designation)/Regional Inspector for North East Wales (Ashley Batten) has requested that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the excavation of foundations (pers comm).

The work will adhere to the guidelines specified in The Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020).

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

At an international level there are two principal agreements concerning the protection of the cultural heritage and archaeological resource – the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, commonly known as the Valetta Convention. The latter was agreed by the Member States of the Council of Europe in 1992, and also became law in 1992. It has been ratified by the UK, and responsibility for its implementation rests with Department for Culture Media and Sport.

The management and protection of the historic environment in Wales is set out within the following legislation:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (As amended)
- The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (As amended)

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act is the most recent legislation for the management of the Historic Environment and amends two pieces of UK legislation — the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The new Act has three main aims:

- to give more effective protection to listed buildings and scheduled monuments;
- to improve the sustainable management of the historic environment; and
- to introduce greater transparency and accountability into decisions taken on the historic environment.

With respect to the cultural heritage of the built environment the Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 applies. The Act sets out the legislative framework within which works and development affecting listed buildings and conservation areas must be considered. This states that:- “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” (s66(1))

Other known sites of cultural heritage/archaeological significance can be entered onto county-based Historic Environment Records under the Town and Country Planning 1995.

Planning Policy Wales sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Chapter 6 covers the historic environment and emphasises that the positive management of change in the historic environment is based on a full understanding of the nature and significance of historic assets and the recognition of the benefits that they can deliver in a vibrant culture and economy.

Various principles and policies related to cultural heritage and archaeology are set out in the Planning Policy Wales which guide local planning authorities with respect to the wider historic environment.

The following paragraphs from Planning Policy Wales are particularly relevant and are quoted in full: Paragraph 6.1.5 concerns planning applications:

The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. The historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life. The historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved. Cadw's published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset.

Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TAN). Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment contains detailed guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan, preparation and decision making on planning and listed building consent applications. TAN 24 replaces the following Welsh Office Circulars:

- 60/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology
- 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas
- 1/98 Planning and the Historic Environment: Directions by the Secretary of State for Wales

4.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the watching brief works was to characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains uncovered during site investigation/ groundworks and the archaeological watching brief shall be maintained:

1. During the excavation of trench for the new Modular Changing Places Unit at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire

The CIfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of CIfA.

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the CIfA as ‘a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons’ (CIfA 2020). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The CIfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief ‘as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works’ (ibid).

It is also important to note that a watching brief provides an opportunity, if needed, for a signal to be made to all interested parties, before the destruction of the archaeological materials, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

The aims of the watching brief are:

To allow, within the resources available, the opportunity to gain information about and record the presence/absence, nature and date of archaeological remains on the Site affected by excavations and groundworks, the presence and nature of which could not be established with sufficient confidence in advance of works which may disturb them.

To provide the facility to signal to the relevant authorities, before irreversible impact to remains that an archaeological and/or historic find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are inadequate to support their treatment to an adequate and satisfactory standard.

The specific objectives of the watching brief are:

- To observe and recover any artefacts of archaeological significance.

- To record the location, dimensions and nature of any deposits, features, structures or artefacts of archaeological significance.
- To recover samples of any deposits considered to have potential for analysis for palaeoenvironmental data should the opportunity arise.

5.0 METHODOLOGY – ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

5.1 Watching Brief

The CIfA maintains a standard for archaeological watching brief which states that:

An archaeological watching brief will record the archaeological resource during development within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices. These will satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of CIfA.

An archaeological watching brief is defined by the CIfA as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (CIfA 2014a). The watching brief will take place within a specified area within the Site where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.

The CIfA further identifies the purpose of a watching brief as allowing, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

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A watching brief is, therefore, not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

All excavations were undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A photographic record was maintained throughout, using a digital SLR camera (Canon 6000D) set to maximum resolution and any subsurface remains were to be recorded photographically, with detailed notations and measured drawings being undertaken if required.

In the event of archaeological discovery features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded using Aeon Archaeology pro-formas, digital photographs, and plan and section drawings taken at a suitable scale (usually 1:20 for plan drawings and 1:10 for section drawings).

The archive produced is held at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0397.1**.

5.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Clwyd-Powys

Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

5.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. They would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the archaeological watching brief. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) Development Control Archaeologist. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

5.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

5.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced, and will be lodged within a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator within six months of the completion of the project.

A draft copy of the report has been sent to the client and upon written approval from them paper and digital copies of the report will be sent to the regional HER, the CPAT Development Control Archaeologist, and will be logged with the RCAHMW. Copies of all notes, plans, and photographs arising from the watching brief will be stored at Aeon Archaeology under the project code **A0397.1** with the originals being lodged in a suitable repository to be agreed with the archaeological curator.

6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The area that was to be subject to development was located on a small area of grass near the junction of footpaths which lay 30m approx. to the east/southeast of the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Visitor Centre.

Given the proximity of the development site to the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Polygon attributed to the Medieval Basingwerk Abbey (FL001), it was reasonable to assume that the historic boundaries of the Abbey complex may have once included this area. Therefore, being a high-status ecclesiastical site, it was possible that hitherto yet, unrecorded burials or other below ground features pertaining to the Medieval Abbey may yet persist in the area and could be disturbed during any proposed groundworks.

Furthermore, In 2015 Earthworks Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation (*PRN 124871*) ahead of an extension to the north side of the Visitor Reception Building. A total of five small trial pits were excavated: two pits were excavated immediately to the north of the existing Visitor Reception Building, and three within a grassed bank located between this building and a boundary wall to the north.

Significant archaeological features consisting of a probable post hole and a cut, pit-like feature, dating to the Romano-British period were identified at the level of the natural geology. The west edge to a ditch, or similar cut feature, containing finds of pottery dating to the 19th century, was recorded in trial pit 3; it is postulated that the deposits encountered within trial pit 2 reflected a continuation of this feature northwards. This specific information has also come to influence management of archaeology/archaeological works in the vicinity of the nationally important scheduled monument. (Earthworks Archaeology 2015).

In addition to the more specific localized archaeological activity found through dedicated works, there have been a number of chance spot finds recovered in the area, and these pertain to a Roman date, these include; a *Roman Coin (PRN 106435)*, a Roman bronze coin dated to c.300 AD - Emperor Maximianus, minted at Aquileia near Trieste, was found in association with several 18th-19th century coins. Another *Roman Coin (PRN 102399)* was found in the Abbey grounds circa. 1876, dated 337-46 AD Emperor Constantine, which is now apparently in Whitford Church. A *Roman Finds scatter (PRN 102391)* consisting of sherds of 1st & 2nd century AD, Roman Pottery - mostly Samian ware with some Coarse Ware, apparently found within a Grave.

Historical Background – The Abbey

Basingwerk Abbey was founded in 1132 by Ranulf de Gernon, the fourth Earl of Chester, who brought the Benedictines from the Savigny monastery in southern Normandy. The abbey became part of the Cistercian order in 1147, when the brothers of Savigny merged with the convent of Cîteaux. Ten years later, at the initiative of King Henry II the Buildwas Abbey in Shropshire received headship over the monastery, thanks to which the Welsh Cistercians received significant salaries, including lands in the English county of Derbyshire. In the same year, Henry II founded the Welsh abbey again, and the monks moved from Hen Blas to Basingwerk, in a place now called Greenfield.

In 1157, Owain Gwynedd encamped with his army at Basingwerk before facing the forces of Henry II at the Battle of Ewloe. The Welsh prince stayed in the abbey because of its strategic importance, blocking the route that Henry II had to overcome. In the fights that followed, Owain crashed the English near Ewloe. In 1188, Gerald of Wales, a monk, chronicler, linguist, and writer visited the abbey,

traveling through Wales with the Archbishop of Canterbury to gather support for the crusade to the Holy Land. He described Basingwerk as a small, unremarkable convent.

In the first half of the thirteenth century, the abbey was under the patronage of Llywelyn the Great, Prince of Gwynedd. His son Dafydd ap Llywelyn gave the monastery the Well of St. Winefrid with the pilgrimage chapel, and the monks used the Holywell stream to run the mill and process wool from their sheep. Later, they benefited greatly from the pilgrimage movement. Even King Henry V came here on foot in 1416, who made a pilgrimage from Shrewsbury to Holywell, while in 1461 another ruler, Edward VI, paid a visit.

In the 70s and 80s of the 13th century, the abbey suffered heavy losses during the Welsh – English wars. In 1284, King Edward gave a compensation of £ 100 for this reason, although the revenues of the devastated monastery were low at the end of the 13th century. The situation was improved by permits obtained from the English kings for weekly markets and yearly fairs. The king also favoured Basingwerk by inviting the abbots to parliamentary sessions in London. It was one of only four Welsh convents that were honored in this way, although in the fourteenth century it was often in debt.

In the fifteenth century, there were disputes in Basingwerk about the appointment of the abbots. In 1430, the monastery was occupied by the Henry Wirral, a self-appointed abbot in conflict with Richard Lee, supported by the court. He ruled until 1454, when was arrested for various offenses, but soon another dispute about the abbacy flared up between Richard Kirby and Edmund Thornbar. Although the latter received the support of the general chapter, Richard held office until 1476. Calming of the situation was brought only by the rule of Abbot Thomas Pennant in the years 1481 – 1523, adored by the bards for generosity and high education.

In 1536, during the reign of Henry VIII, the convent was dissolved and its lands were granted to secular owners. Some buildings were demolished to repair Holt Castle, and some items were taken to Ireland for use in the Dublin Castle. Eventually, Basingwerk Abbey fell into ruin and was almost demolished.

Architecture

The plan of the abbey from the thirteenth century was in line with the rule of the Cistercian Order. The main building was a church on a cruciform plan, orientated on the east-west line. In the south, the monastery buildings were spread around the three sides of a large garth measuring 28×23.7 meters surrounded by cloisters. The monks' infirmary, guest rooms and other buildings related to the everyday life and economy of the abbey were further away.

The first to be built was the church and the eastern part of the abbey buildings. The temple was about 50 meters long, which placed it among the smallest Cistercian churches in Wales. It was a basilica with central nave and two aisles, seven bays in the nave, with transept enlarged from the east by two pairs of four-sided chapels and with a short rectangular chancel. The main entrance to the church was located in the west façade, atypically not on the axis, but shifted to the north, between the second and third lesenes. Traditionally, the southern aisle was connected by two portals with a cloister. The western one was smaller and probably less ornate. It was used mainly by lay brothers occupying the west wing, while the larger, stepped eastern portal was used by monks. In addition, the eastern range was connected to the transept, both on the first floor and on the ground floor.

The southern transept was adjacent to a narrow sacristy (only 1.8 meters wide) behind which the chapter house was in the ground floor of the east wing, initially in the shape of a square. At the beginning of the 13th century, it was rebuilt and extended eastwards by an additional bay. East part of chapter house was separated by two arcades supported in the middle on a single pillar and crowned with a rib vault. On the south side of the chapter house there was a narrow room called parlour, that is, a place where brothers could talk freely without fear of breaking vows. The range was ended with a day room for monks, above which was a dormitory on the first floor, 19.5 meters long. A typical solution was to connect the bedroom through the so-called night stairs with the church's south transept to allow monks to quickly reach night masses.

In the mid-13th century, a refectory was built in the south wing, located on the north-south axis, dimensions of 20.1 x 8.2 meters. Its projecting south beyond the outline of the monastery buildings was a typical feature of Cistercian abbeys, as well as neighbouring with the kitchen on the west side. The refectory lighting was provided by a large pointed window from the south and a few lancet windows in the western wall. In the latter, in the thickening of the wall, there was also a pulpit for a monk reading during meals. The west wing was probably occupied by lay brothers who had their refectory and dormitory there.

In the fourteenth century, new Gothic arcades of the cloisters were created, and the buildings on the south-east side were enlarged. This southern end of the east range was rebuilt again at the end of the Middle Ages. Most likely it was used for economic purposes, there could also be latrines. The arcades of the cloister were pointed, topped with trefoils and supported by pairs of octagonal shafts, which were probably connected by a network of thin masonry (they were very similar to the cloisters in the nearby Valle Crucis). At the end of the 15th century, the abbey was also roofed with lead and decorated with glass windows, and new rooms were built for guests on the south-east side.

To this day, the building of the 13th-century refectory with ogival windows has survived in the best condition, as well as the western wall of the southern church's transept, fragments of the east wing and rooms for the monastery guests on the south-east side. The abbey ruins are currently under the protection of the Cadw government agenda, which makes them available for visitors. During the dissolution of the abbey, some of its furnishings and some architectural elements were to be transferred to the neighboring parish churches. Among other things, the impressive late-medieval roof truss can be found today in the church in Cilcain.

7.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS

7.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological watching brief:

Watching brief day sheets	2
Context Sheets	3
Digital photographs	34

7.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken as part of the watching brief as no suitable archaeological deposits were encountered.

7.3 Artefacts

No artefacts were encountered during the archaeological watching brief.

8.0 DIGITAL DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

8.1 Type of study

an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new Modular Changing Places Unit at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 7GH (centred on **NGR SJ 19486 77442**).

8.2 Types of data

Photographs, measured plans, context sheets, context register, photographic register, trench sheets.

8.3 Format and scale of the data

Photographs taken in *RAW* format and later converted to *TIF* format for long term archiving and *JPEG* format for use in the digital report, converted using *Adobe Photoshop*. All photographs renamed using *AF5* freeware with the prefix (*project code_frame number*) and a photographic metadata created using Microsoft Excel (*.xlsx*) or Access (*.accdb*).

8.4 Methodologies for data collection / generation

Digital data will be collected / generated in line with recommendations made in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020). Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.3 are relevant:

3.3.1 Project specifications, research designs or similar documents should include a project specific Selection Strategy and a Data Management Plan.

3.3.3 Project designs or schedules of works etc should outline the methodology used in recording all information, in order to demonstrate that all aspects of archive creation will ensure consistency; for instance in terminologies and the application of codes in digital data sets, highlighting relevant data standards where appropriate

8.5 Data quality and standards

Consistency and quality of data collection / generation shall be controlled and documented through the use of standardised procedure as outlined in the WSI. This will include the use of standardised data capture file formats, digital proformas, data entry validation, peer review, and use of controlled vocabularies.

8.6 Managing, storing and curating data.

All digital data will be organised into Aeon Archaeology proforma project file systems and backed up to the cloud using *Digital River's Crashplan* with additional copies made to external physical hard drive.

8.7 Metadata standards and data documentation

Digital metadata created using Microsoft Excel (*.xlsx*) or Access (*.accdb*) of all photographic plates.

Paper metadata created from Aeon Archaeology proformas for contexts, artefacts, environmental samples, watching brief day sheets, trench sheets, and basic record sheets and then scanned to create digital .PDF copies.

8.8 Data preservation strategy and standards

Long term data storage will be through the submission of digital (.PDF) reports to the regional Historic Environment Record (HER); submission of digital (.PDF) reports, submission of the scanned (.PDF) archive, photographic plates (.TIF), and metadata (.xlsx) (.accdb) to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS); and retention of copies of all digital files at Aeon Archaeology on physical external hard drive and uploaded to the cloud.

8.9 Suitability for sharing

All digital data will be placed within the public realm (through the channels in 6.8) except for where project confidentiality restricts the sharing of data. All data sets will be selected / discriminated by the Senior Archaeologist at Aeon Archaeology and written permission will be sought from all project specific Clients prior to the sharing of data.

8.10 Discovery by potential users of the research data

Potential users of the generated digital data (outside of the organisation) will be able to source the data and identify whether it could be suitable for their research purposes through access granted via the RCAHMW website. Requests can also be made for data through the regional HER's and directly to Aeon Archaeology (info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk).

8.11 Governance of access

The decision to supply research data to potential new users will be via the associated website request (RCAHMW) or via the Senior Archaeologist when made directly to Aeon Archaeology.

8.12 The study team's exclusive use of the data

Aeon Archaeology's requirement is for timely data sharing, with the understanding that a limited, defined period of exclusive use of data for primary research is reasonable according to the nature and value of the data, and that this restriction on sharing should be based on simple, clear principles. This time period is expected to be six months from completion of the project however Aeon Archaeology reserves the right to extend this period without notice if primary data research dictates.

8.13 Restrictions or delays to sharing, with planned actions to limit such restrictions

Restriction to data sharing may be due to participant confidentiality or consent agreements. Strategies to limit restrictions will include data being anonymised or aggregated; gaining participant consent for data sharing; and gaining copyright permissions. For prospective studies, consent procedures will include provision for data sharing to maximise the value of the data for wider research use, while providing adequate safeguards for participants.

8.14 Regulation of responsibilities of users

External users of the data will be bound by data sharing agreements provided by the relevant organisation or directly through Aeon Archaeology.

8.15 Responsibilities

Responsibility for study-wide data management, metadata creation, data security and quality assurance of data will be through the Senior Archaeologist (Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA) at Aeon Archaeology when concerning data generation and early/mid-term storage. Upon deposition with digital depositories the study-wide data management, metadata creation, data security and quality assurance of data will be the responsibility of the specific organisations' themselves.

8.16 Organisational policies on data sharing and data security

The following Aeon Archaeology policies are relevant:

- Aeon Archaeology Archive Deposition Policy 2019
- Aeon Archaeology Quality Assurance Policy 2019
- Aeon Archaeology Conflict of Interest Policy 2019
- Aeon Archaeology Outreach Policy 2019
- Aeon Archaeology Digital Management Plan 2020

9.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

9.1 Overview

The archaeological watching brief was maintained by Josh Dean BA, archaeological contractor for Aeon Archaeology. The site was attended on the 16th, 17th & 23rd January 2023 and the weather conditions were overcast with episodes of sunshine and snow showers.

The trench was marked out and subsequently reduced by 0.28m overall. This consisted of a soft, 0.12m of mid grey-brown, clay-silt, turf, and topsoil layer (107). Below this was a 0.08m of asphalt hard-standing and this overlay a 0.10m deep deposit of very hard, dark yellow-brown (mottled grey) clinker.

The very hard (almost concreted) deposit mentioned above was an apparent covering of material for a linear red-brick surface (101). This surface was present on the eastern side of the trench, as was aligned northeast to southwest, respecting the alignment of the footpath to the west. It consisted of an amalgam of materials; limestone kerbs, sandstone sets and large brick like blocks, however by far and away the largest contributing material were red terracotta and blue plastic type bricks. The surface measured 3.40m in length by 1.56m in width (truncated) and 0.18m in depth. The gaps between the bricks and other materials of the surface had been infilled with fly-ash or clinker. The western edge of the feature had been truncated along its length by the service cut [104] for a water main. Whereas there had been another truncation to the east by another service cut [109].

The brick surface is likely a former footpath associated with the wider landscaping works which took place in the early 1980's as the Heritage Centre was preparing to open. During this time the Victorian School House was rebuilt on a new location to the west of the newly discovered brick-surface. Furthermore, another building, a likely 19th century farmhouse and byre, originally from Moel Famau (also relocated), was constructed to the east of the suspected footpath. Therefore, this may represent a part of the original infrastructure of the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park as it was conceived over 40 years ago.

As alluded to earlier, the centre-western side of the trench at this level was dominated by a service cut [104] for a water main which had truncated the surface. This had been backfilled with a very hard, light grey-black, stony material (105) and may have been compacted with a pneumatic hammer. On the far western side of the trench there was a small area, 2.88m in length by 0.33m in width, of another soil distinct from that filling the service cut [104]. This was a >0.66m deep deposit of a very firm, mottled orange-brown, ash-sand-silt (106), with abundant sub-angular and sub-rounded cobbles (>70%). On the eastern side of the trench and cutting the surface (101) was a 0.22m deep deposit of soft, light grey-brown, silt-clay which appears to be a secondary backfill (103) of service cut [109]. Beneath this was a 0.48m deep deposit of very-soft bright yellow, sand which was the primary backfill (102) of service cut [109] and which covered the black PVC piping which houses a suspected electrical feed.

Prior to the development of the Heritage Park, it is suggested here that the footpath to the south as it appears now may have sloped down towards the cut of the tramway. When Abbey Farm ceased operating in 1979 and the Heritage Park was conceived of, it is possible that this footpath area was infilled with large quantities of the material (106). It is believed that the very stoney/ashy material (106) has the quality of railway ballast (Claisse & Calla 2006). Which given the presence of the standard gauge railway (*PRN 83550*) or Parry's Railway, to the south and east, could have been readily available in the Valley.

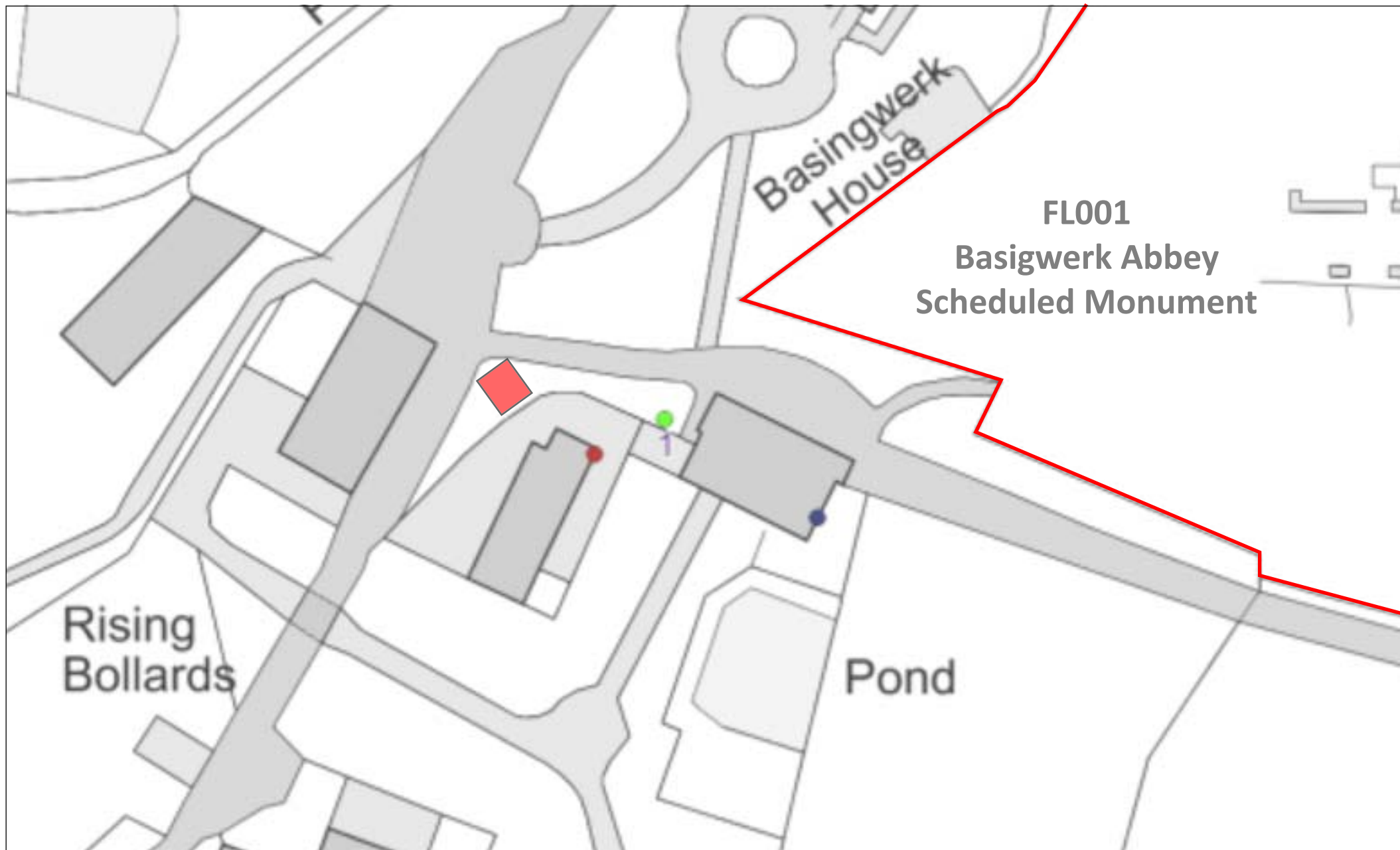


Figure 05: Modular Changing Places Unit Trench Location (in Red) at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 7GH. Scale 1:500 at A4.



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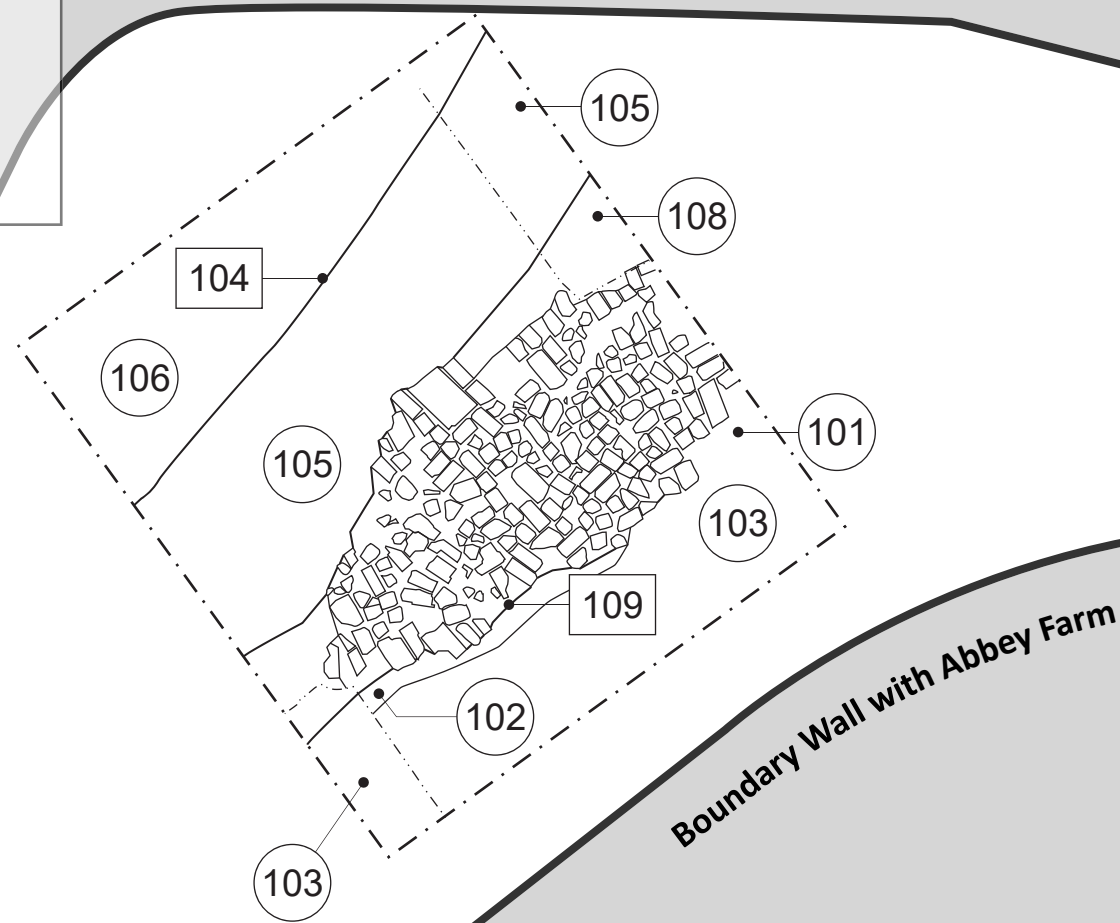
Key

- 101 - Brick Surface
- 102 - Sand Infill (Primary Fill) of 109
- 103 - Stony Grey Silt (Secondary Fill) of 109
- 104 - Cut of western water main
- 106 - Grey Aggregate
- 105 - Backfill of Cut 104
- 107 - Turf & Topsoil
- 108 - Homogenous Backfilled Material
- 109 - Cut of eastern electrical service



Footpath

Footpath



Boundary Wall with Abbey Farm



Figure 06: Plan of trench showing location and orientation of brick surface (101) at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 7GH. Scale 1:500 at A4.

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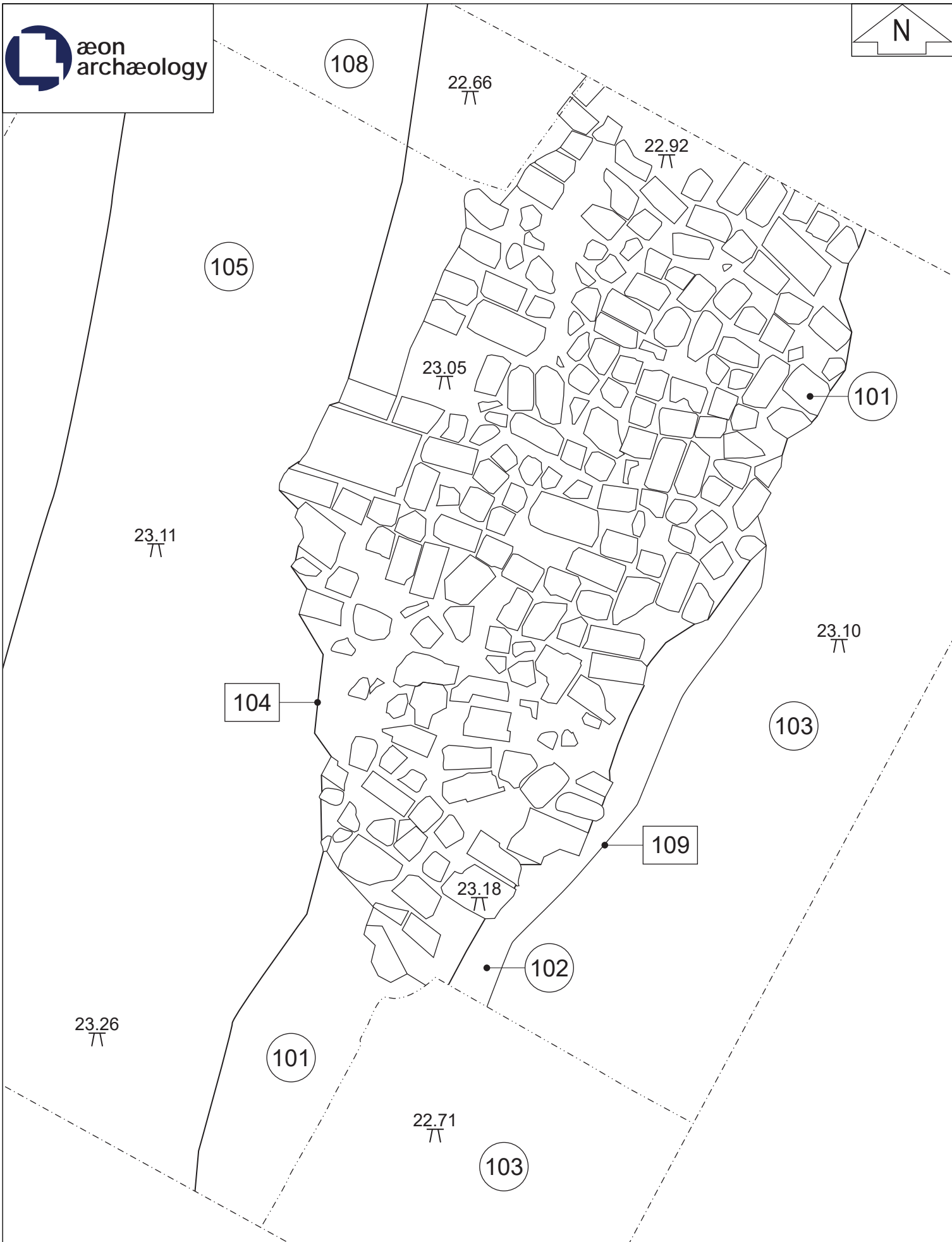


Figure 07: Plan of Brick Surface (101) with levels OD(m) Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 7GH. Scale 1:150 at A4.



Key
2 → Direction of Photograph

Footpath

Footpath

Boundary Wall with Abbey Farm

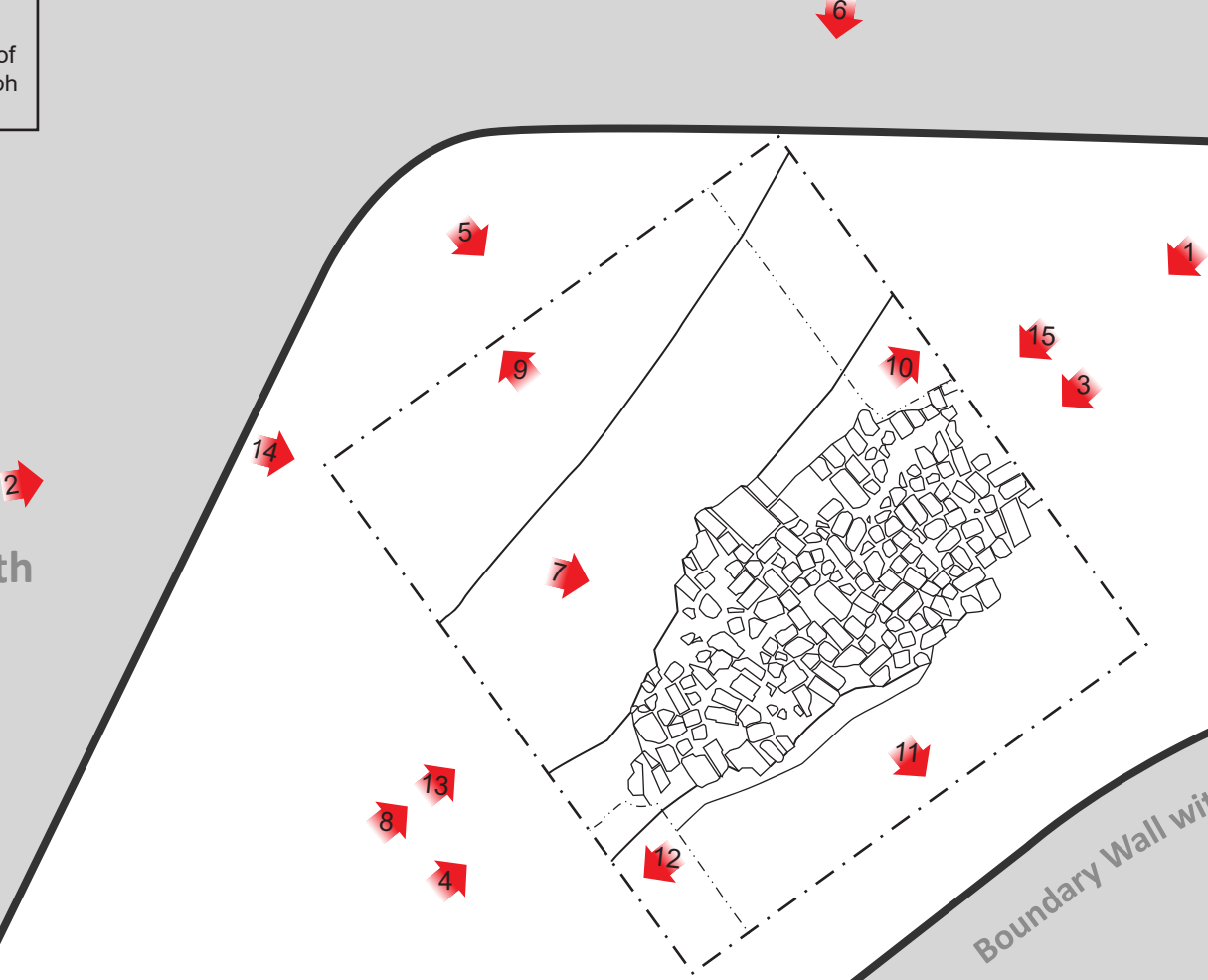
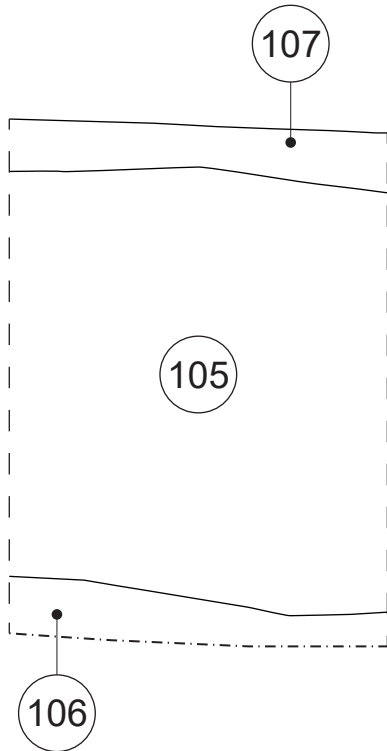


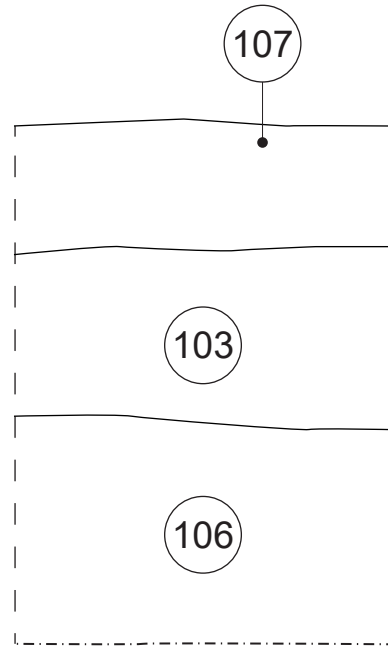
Figure 08: Plan trench showing location of photographic paltes taken at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 7GH. Scale 1:500 at A4.

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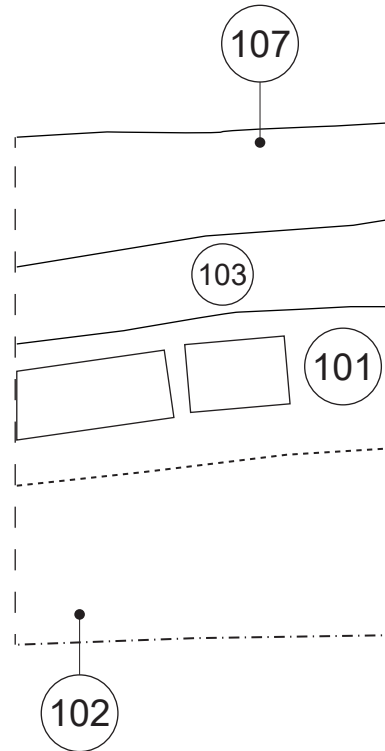
Northwest Section



Northeast Section



Southeast Section



Southwest Section

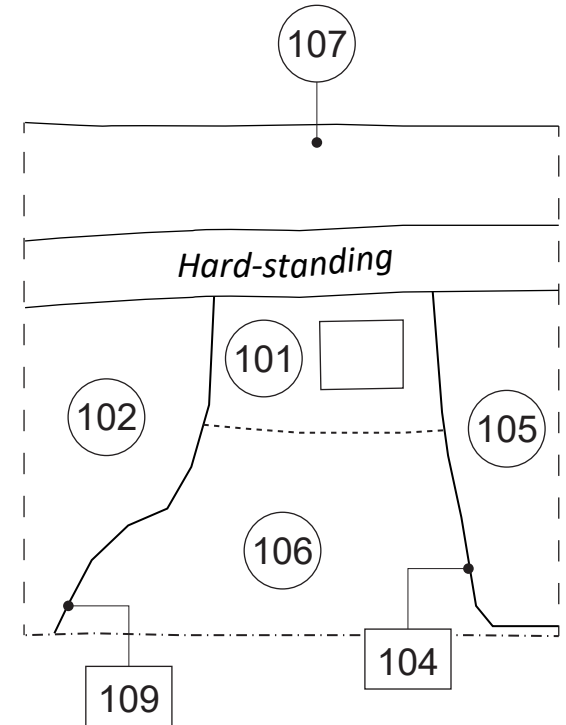




Plate 01: Pre excavation shot of development area, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northeast - 1.00m scale



Plate 02: Pre excavation shot of development area (Basingwerk Abbey Ruins in background), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the southwest - 1.00m scale



Plate 03: Brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northeast - 0.50m scale



Plate 04: Brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the southwest - 0.50m scale



Plate 05: Brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northwest - 0.50m scale



Plate 06: Service cut [104] truncating brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the north - 1.00m scale



Plate 07: Close up shot of service cut [104] truncating brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the west - 1.00m scale



Plate 08: Trench shot showing brick surface (101), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northwest - 1.00m scale



Plate 09: Northwest section of trench (post excavation), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the southeast - 0.50m scale



Plate 10: Northeast section of trench (post excavation), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the southwest - 0.50m scale



Plate 11: Southeast section of trench (post excavation), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northwest - 0.50m scale

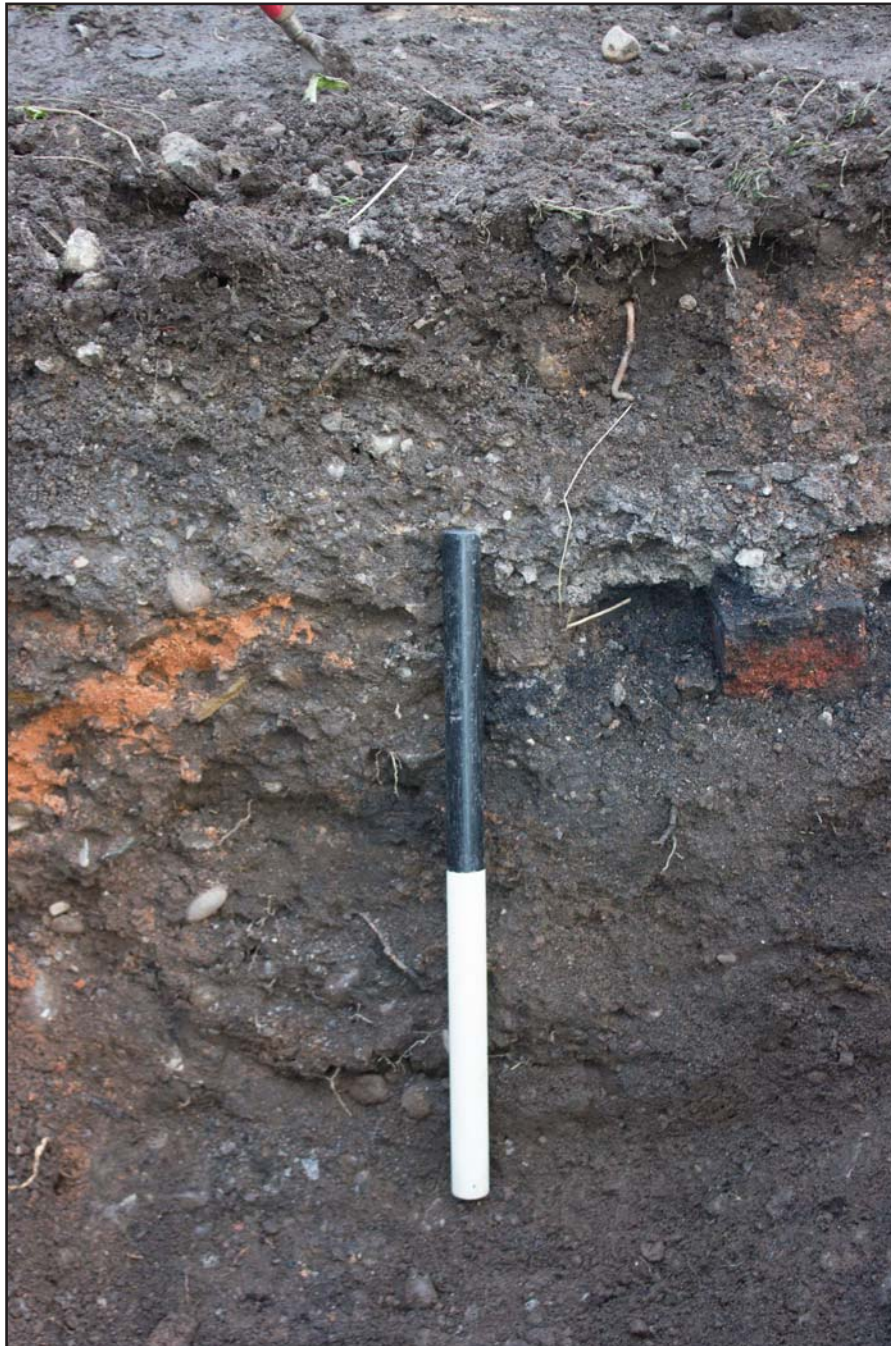


Plate 12: Southwest section of trench (post excavation), Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northeast - 0.50m scale



Plate 13: Post excavation shot of trench, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the southwest - 1.00m scale



Plate 14: Post excavation shot of trench, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the west - 1.00m scale



Plate 15: Post excavation shot of trench, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire - from the northeast - 1.00m scale

10.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An archaeological watching brief was maintained by Josh Dean BA, archaeological contractor for Aeon Archaeology at Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire. The reason for the watching brief was due to its proximity to the Basingwerk Abbey Scheduled Monument (SM) (FL001). As the development lies outside of the SM polygon, SM consent was not required, however the Cadw Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology (Designation)/Regional Inspector for North East Wales, requested that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the excavation of foundations

Following the works it was found that no remains associated with the Medieval Abbey or Roman activity persisted in the area. However a red-brick surface was encountered which was likely associated with the wider landscaping works which took place in the early 1980's as the Heritage Centre was preparing to open. In addition, no soil horizons were encountered which were considered as primary; nor were there any artefacts recovered beyond a 18th-20th century date. The prevalent deposit which was encountered has been interpreted as railway ballast, and its presence is once again, likely associated with the widescale landscaping at the Heritage Park which took place sometime following the closure of Abbey Farm and the opening of the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park (1979-1982).

The *Cadw Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology (Designation)/Regional Inspector for North East Wales* kept in close contact with the archaeological contractor at Aeon throughout these works. Following a verbal report of the findings of the archaeological watching brief, he was satisfied that the works had received satisfactory archaeological supervision and that no further works pertaining to this phase of the project were necessary.

11.0 SOURCES

British Geological Survey website. www.bgs.ac.uk.

British Ordnance survey maps; SJ17NE, SJ17NW, SJ17SE and SJ17SW.

Christiansen, R., (2004). *From a Railway Historian's Notebook*. Journal-Railway and Canal Historical Society., pp.604-604.

Claisse, P.A. and Calla, C. (2006). *Rail ballast: conclusions from a historical perspective*. Proceedings of the ICE - Transport, volume 159 (2): 69-74.

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APPENDIX I: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF