

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

LAND NORTH OF WHYCHURCH FARM AND WEST OF CRUDWELL
ROAD

794-PLN-HER-01072
Malmesbury 3 and 4
2
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The site known Land North of Whychurch Farm and West of Crudwell Road (Phase 3 and 4), Malmesbury has been assessed for its archaeological potential.

There are no designated archaeological assets on the site.

Anomalies of potential archaeological interest have been identified on the LiDAR survey in the west of the Phase 4 site. These anomalies possibly represent remains of Medieval/Post Medieval strip fields farmed prior to enclosure. Certainly, evidence of ridge and furrow have been recorded in this area. However, they could represent at least in part evidence of a nucleated settlement potentially associated with the Medieval settlement identified during the recent archaeological evaluation of Phase 3. Evidence of the anomalies within Phase 4 were also picked up during the geophysical survey across the site.

Archaeological Trial trenching undertaken in 2022 across the Phase 3 site recorded two localised areas of archaeological interest representing Medieval settlement remains of a local to regional significance.

Based on the available evidence it is considered that the potential for as yet to be discovered in situ archaeological evidence on the Phase 4 site is good for evidence of settlement evidence dating to the Mediaeval period and low for all other past periods although evidence of Post Medieval agricultural activity can be anticipated. Any remains will be of a local to at most regional significance.

Following the granting of outline planning consent of Phase 3 at Appeal (APP/Y39040/W/22/3290305) a condition was placed on the approved scheme to secure a programme of archaeological mitigation measures. When considering that the potential development impact on the known archaeological assets within Phase 3 can be suitably mitigated by a programme of archaeological fieldwork post consent secured by condition it is suggested that a similar approach should be considered for the Phase 3 and 4 site (particularly when archaeological remains of a similar significance can be anticipated).

A programme of archaeological trial trenching within the Phase 4 Site was completed in January 2025 and the pending assessment report will be submitted as an addendum to this planning application.

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1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This below ground archaeological desk-based assessment was prepared by Suzanne Gailey of RPS on behalf of Gleeson Land.
- 1.2 The subject of this assessment, also known as the study site, is land north of Whychurch Farm and West of Crudwell Road (Malmesbury Phase 3 and 4) and is located to the north of Malmesbury in Wiltshire. The site area is approximately 12ha and is centred on National Grid Reference ST 93691 88179 (Fig. 2).
- 1.3 In accordance with government policy on archaeology within the planning process (Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework) this assessment draws together the available archaeological, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the archaeological potential of the study site.
- 1.4 Additionally, in accordance with the 'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2020), it incorporates an examination of evidence in the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER), and incorporates published and unpublished material and charts historic land-use through a map regression exercise.
- 1.5 As a result, the assessment enables relevant parties to assess the significance of any designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study site, assess the potential for as yet to be discovered archaeological assets and enables potential impacts on assets to be identified, along with the need for design, civil engineering or archaeological solutions.

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and it was last updated in December 2024. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014 and last updated 22 February 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>).
- 2.2 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

National Planning Policy

- 2.3 Section 16 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 16 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 that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.4 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 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 impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.5 *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 during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 A *Nationally Important Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 2.8 *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.
- 2.9 *Setting* is defined as: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

- 2.10 In short, government policy provides a framework which:
- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets;
 - Protects the settings of such designations;
 - In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions;
 - Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit *in-situ* preservation.
- 2.11 The NPPG reiterates that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Importantly, the guidance states that if complete, or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance and make the interpretation publicly available. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Additionally, it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed. The level of 'substantial harm' is considered to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF. Importantly, harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may be more extensive than the curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.12 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.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.13 The Wiltshire Council Core Strategy was adopted in 2015 and contains the following relevant policy:

Core Policy 58:

Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.

Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- i. nationally significant archaeological remains
- ii. World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire
- iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest
- iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas
- v. historic parks and gardens
- vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural,

economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping).

Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications.

- 2.14 The Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2015. No policies directly referencing below ground archaeological matters are included.
- 2.15 The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan (Pre-Submission Draft Reg 19 2020-2038) dated September 2023 contains the following draft policy relating to the historic environment:

Policy 99

Ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment

Development should conserve or enhance the historic environment.

Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- i. nationally significant archaeological remains;**
- ii. world heritage sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire;**
- iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest;**
- iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas;**
- v. historic parks and gardens;**
- vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.**

Any harm to the significance of designated heritage assets which will result from development proposals will be required to be justified and outweighed by public benefits (including heritage benefits) at a level appropriate to the significance of the asset and the harm caused.

Any harm to the significance of undesignated assets which will result from development proposals must be carefully balanced considering the significance of the asset and the harm caused.

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

The potential contribution of heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Policy 98 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping). The sensitive reuse of historic buildings and spaces will be supported and opportunities for the historic environment to inform and shape new development and regeneration projects will be encouraged.

The adaptation of heritage assets in accordance with Policy 85 (Sustainable construction and low carbon energy) using appropriate materials and techniques which conserve their fabric and significance will be encouraged.

Proposals for change affecting the historic environment (which require planning permission or listed building consent) should be accompanied and informed by an assessment of heritage significance and the impact of the proposals on this significance, making reference to the information held in the Historic Environment Record. Where a proposal includes potential archaeological interest a desk

based assessment, and if necessary, field evaluation should be carried out and submitted with the proposal.

Development proposals that improve the condition of heritage assets at risk will be supported.

- 2.16 No designated heritage assets lie on the site. Two Listed Buildings (Whychurch Farmhouse and Outbuilding) lie to the south-east of the Phase 4 site boundary whilst Malmesbury Abbey Scheduled Monument and Malmesbury Conservation Area lie some distance to the south. The setting of these designated assets will be considered in a separate built heritage assessment.
- 2.17 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk-based assessment therefore seeks to clarify the site's archaeological potential and the likely significance of that potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures in accordance with national planning policy.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Geology

- 3.1 The solid geology of the study site comprises mudstone of the Kellaway Clay Member and Oxford Clay Formation. No superficial geology is recorded across the study site (BGS Mapviewer).
- 3.2 An archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) across the Phase 3 site in 2022 (OA 2022) recorded that the natural geology, derived from weathered Mudstone bedrock, comprising yellowish brown clay with grey streaks. The natural was revealed below a 0.10m to 0.15m thick reddish brown silty clay loam subsoil with occasional charcoal specks. This was sealed below 0.15 - 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil, with occasional charcoal flecks and limestone fragments.

Topography

- 3.3 The site gently undulates with a slight southern gradient but overall is generally flat at approximately 90m AOD.
- 3.4 The nearest major watercourse is the River Avon which lies approximately 1km south of the site. A minor tributary to the Avon lies approximately 500m south of the site. A further water channel lies approximately 400m north-east at its closest point.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Timescales used in this report

Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000 -	12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000 -	4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000 -	1,800 BC
Bronze Age	1,800 -	600 BC
Iron Age	600 -	AD 43

Historic

Roman	AD 43 -	410
Saxon/Early Medieval	AD 410 -	1066
Medieval	AD 1066 -	1485
Post Medieval	AD 1486 -	1799
Modern	AD 1800 -	Present

Introduction

- 4.1 This assessment comprises a review of known archaeological assets within a 1km radius of the study site (see Appendix A), also referred to as the study area, held on the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the late 18th century onwards until the present day. The results of recent archaeological investigations on the site (a geophysical survey across the entire Site (Magnitude Surveys 2020 Appendix D) and a programme of archaeological trial trenching across the Phase 3 site (OA 2022)) confirm the baseline archaeological conditions.
- 4.2 This chapter reviews existing archaeological evidence for the site and the archaeological/historic background of the general area and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the archaeological interest of the site.
- 4.3 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions and whether the proposed development will impact the theoretical archaeological potential identified in Chapter 4.

Previous Archaeological Work

- 4.4 A geophysical survey was undertaken across the site in 2020 (Magnitude Survey 2020 Appendix D). Across the Phase 3 Site evidence of Medieval/Post Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was identified. In the west of the Phase 4 site two concentrations of anomalies were identified. The northern concentration have defined edges and appear to be of archaeological origin. The outline of these anomalies are also seen on LIDAR (Appendix C). They could indicate the presence of debris or rubble of unknown date. To the south-east a further concentration of anomalies were identified but these do not appear to form clear shapes. The angular and well-defined anomalies suggest an anthropogenic origin. Evidence of two former ponds may also have been identified from the survey in this part of the site (Fig. 2).

- 4.5 A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken across the Phase 3 site to support the outline application (PL/2021/08453). Two areas of medieval archaeological interest were discovered. The first, located in the south-east of Phase 3 comprised a series of substantial masonry wall foundations associated with a gravel floor or yard surfaces. The second focus, located in the north-east of the Phase 3 site comprised a group of ditches and pits, which were overlain and partially infilled with stony rubble deposits, possibly from another former masonry building. The relatively large pottery assemblages from both locations appear to have a strong 12th-13th century focus, with some possible continuation into the early 14th century. The trenches across the remainder of the site were either void of archaeology or contained plough furrows as identified from the geophysical survey (OA 2022 Fig. 3).
- 4.6 A programme of archaeological fieldwork was undertaken on land immediately adjacent to the north-west of the study site in association with the Malmesbury Phase 2 planning application. Archaeological investigations comprising geophysical survey (EW17604 Stratascan 2014) and trial trench evaluation (EW17836 Cotswold Archaeology 2014) were undertaken in 2014. The geophysical survey recorded three linear anomalies interpreted as probable plough scar and one possible archaeological cut feature. The subsequent evaluation revealed four pits and seven ditch segments, attributed to the Medieval period on the basis of recovered pottery (RPS 2019).
- 4.7 Approximately 300m west of the study site the same programme of geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation was followed by excavation. The geophysical survey (EW17604 Stratascan 2014) recorded areas of ridge and furrow along with four possible archaeological features.. The ensuing evaluation identified ditches likely to be Iron Age origin as well as a number of pit and ditches attributed to the Medieval period (EW17836 Cotswold Archaeology 2014 RPS 2019). The final excavation phase identified relatively dense clusters of archaeological remains; with the majority dated to the Bronze Age and including two post-built structures as well as quantities of cultural material deposited in tree-throws. Iron Age and Medieval/Post-Medieval material was also recovered from boundary ditches across the area (EW18879 ST93418851 Cotswold Archaeology 2017).
- 4.8 Archaeological evaluation at Malmesbury Garden Centre approximately 250m east of the study site recorded a single pit with associated Roman pottery (EW17968 ST94038840 EW19280 ST93998847).
- 4.9 The HER records a large number of archaeological work within the wider vicinity of the study site. The bulk of which lies within the historic core of Malmesbury and is associated with the towns historic development.

Prehistoric

- 4.10 No evidence of prehistoric occupation was recorded on the Phase 3 site during the recent archaeological investigations. As noted above, settlement activity dating to the Bronze Age was recorded approximately 300m west of the north-western part of the Phase 3 Site. This includes structural remains in the form of two semi-circular, post-built structures as well as quantities of artefactual material in the form of struck flint and pottery redeposited in tree-throws. Small quantities of cremated human bone were also recovered from these features. Iron Age agricultural activity is also attested to in this area with the recovery of diagnostic pottery from boundary ditch remains (RPS 2019, Cotswold Archaeology 2017 MW175290 ST93448850 MW174312 ST93398849). No evidence of prehistoric activity was identified during the fieldwork immediately adjacent to the Phase 3 Site.
- 4.11 In the wider vicinity investigations at Tetbury Hill approximately 600m west of the study site recorded evidence of Middle to Late Bronze Age activity comprising a single ditch with associated cultural material (MW174799 ST92728805).

- 4.12 Iron Age post hole and ditches was found during excavations at Abbey Row approximately 750m south-west of the study site (MW176240 ST93118739 MW176239 ST93118739) whilst fragments of Iron Age querns were found during a watching brief approximately 650m south of the study site (MW175518 ST93528731).
- 4.13 Haslam (1976, 35) suggested the existence of an Iron Age hillfort as a precursor to the Saxon and Medieval settlement of Malmesbury, situated over 600m south of the study site (Wiltshire County Archaeology Service 2004, 6 MW15345 ST93398714). The discovery of substantial defences of Iron Age date in the north-east of Malmesbury during a research excavation in 2000 (BARAS 2002) confirmed Haslam's theory (MW174953 ST93568733). During the Iron Age period, the natural defensive position of the hillfort at Malmesbury may have represented the primary settlement focus. The study site may have been situated within the agricultural hinterland of the hillfort.
- 4.14 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of the recent investigations on the Phase 3 site, the Phase 4 Site is considered to have a low potential for significant prehistoric settlement evidence and the Phase 3 Site a nil potential.

Roman

- 4.15 No evidence of Roman activity was recorded on the Phase 3 Site during the recent archaeological investigations (OA 2022).
- 4.16 Archaeological investigations approximately 300m east of the study site recorded a single Roman pit (MW176694 ST94028847)
- 4.17 Geophysical survey and excavation carried out c650m east of the study site identified an extensive Romano-British villa site (MW15360 ST94568828 EW1933 ST94338824). The remains included demolition materials from the Roman villa buildings, stock pens, pits/post holes and ditched enclosures.
- 4.18 Excavations at Tetbury Hill, c600m west of the study site, identified four phases of activity between the late 1st and mid-3rd centuries AD, comprising rectilinear features (EWI7971). The artefact assemblages from the excavation were consistent with a low status Roman rural farmstead.
- 4.19 Despite the presence of additional isolated findspots of Romano-British material recorded within the search area (ST98NW315), no further evidence for Romano-British settlement activity has been recorded. The Romano-British settlement identified 650m to the east of the study site (ST98NW314) may have represented the main settlement focus in the local landscape, of which the study site may have been situated within its agricultural hinterland.
- 4.20 Given the absence of evidence on the Phase 3 site, the Phase 4 Site is considered to have a low potential for Roman period activity.

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- 4.21 The study site is situated c 500m north of the Saxon Abbey and historic core of Malmesbury, founded during the mid-7th century (Wiltshire County Archaeology Service 2004, 6; Luce 1979, 4-5) (SAM 1010136, ST98NW400). Nearly all the land around the town of Malmesbury belonged to the abbey, possibly from soon after its founding. It is likely to have been agricultural and worked by the abbey and its tenants throughout the Middle Ages (VCH 1991, 229-240).
- 4.22 The evaluation undertaken on the Phase 3 site in 2022 identified two apparently distinct foci of medieval activity. The first, located in the south east of the Phase 3 site (in Trench 29 (extending slightly into Trench 28) Fig 3), comprised a series of NE-SW aligned masonry wall foundations associated with gravel floor or yard surfaces. These substantial structural remains were overlain by

stony demolition deposits containing iron nails, horseshoe nails, a horseshoe fragment, medieval pottery and animal bone.

- 4.23 The second focus of medieval archaeology, located along the eastern edge of the Phase 3 site (Trench 8 Fig 3), comprised a group of ditches and pits, which were overlain and partially infilled with stony rubble deposits, possibly from another former masonry building. The relatively large pottery assemblages from both locations appear to have a strong 12th-13th century focus, with some possible continuation into the early 14th century. This may reflect the settlement's most economically prosperous phase and does not necessarily indicate that it was completely abandoned in the post-medieval period.
- 4.24 Incorporated into the building of Whitchurch Farm, which lies south-east of the Phase 4 Site are the remains of the Medieval chapel of St James (originally built before the conquest) (MW15375 ST93828793) and it is therefore possible that the settlement evidence recorded during the recent archaeological evaluation may be associated with this former chapel. The anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey in the Phase 4 site (Appendix D) and the LiDAR (Appendix C) comprise a cluster of anomalies of possible archaeological interest in the west of Phase 4 and may represent evidence potentially linked to the settlement of the Medieval Whitchurch manorial complex.
- 4.25 Previous trial trench evaluation adjacent to the Phase 3 Site to the northwest recorded a small number of pits and ditches indicative of agricultural activity, which contained pottery spot-dated to the 12-15th centuries. Excavations undertaken on land approximately 300m west of the Phase 3 Site recorded a large rectilinear enclosure of Medieval date and evidence of ridge and furrow. Ridge and furrow has also been recorded from within the site itself.
- 4.26 The historic core of Malmesbury continued to develop around the Abbey some distance to the south of the study site. The majority of archaeological evidence dating to this period relates to the development of the Abbey and the historic (MW174970, MW174969 ST93318728, MW174954 ST93568733, MW164300 ST93328717, MW136705 ST93328730, MW15411 ST93218731, MW15400 ST93348732, MW15399 ST93318728, MW15372 ST93388716, MW1563 ST93388713, MW13676 ST93108738).
- 4.27 The potential for evidence of Medieval occupation comprising settlement or agricultural activity on the Phase 4 Site is therefore considered to be good. There is known evidence of settlement remains dating to the Medieval period on the Phase 3 site.

Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.28 The Post Medieval abandonment of the settlement recorded in the east of the Phase 3 Site during the recent archaeological evaluation (OA 2022) may have been connected with the Black Death and other demographic disasters of the 14th century. The 17th-century revival on a new site at Whychurch Farm to the south-east of the Phase 4 Site, next to the main road running north from Malmesbury probably reflects widespread economic expansion and the realignment of the rural landscape along new or reinvigorated local and regional trade networks in the post-medieval period (OA 2022/23). Whychurch Farm (formerly Whitchurch Farm) is a Grade II Listed building (MW166275 ST93808796).
- 4.29 Following the Dissolution, the lands owned by Malmesbury Abbey passed to the Crown and the study site formed part of the manor of Whitchurch and (or with) Milbourne. From the mid 16th century, the study site lay within an area known as Whitchurch Marsh, an area of common pasture (VCH 1991). By the 18th century the site lay within the estate of Whitchurch Manor comprising agricultural land (Fig. 4).

- 4.30 The 1803 estate map of the Manor of Whitchurch Cum Milbourne shows the site in more detail comprising enclosed fields to the north of Whitchurch Farm (Fig. 5).
- 4.31 The Malmesbury Tithe Map of 1840 confirms the site continued to comprise pasture forming part of Whitchurch marsh (Fig. 6).
- 4.32 By the late 19th century, the study site comprised tree lined fields. A small pond was located in the north-western most corner of the Phase 3 Site, a further pond in the south and south-west of the Phase 4 site. Two footpaths traversed the site (Fig. 7). There was no change by 1900 (Fig. 8).
- 4.33 There was no apparent change to the study site until the 1970s when field boundaries enclosing two small plots of land in the east of the Phase 4 site had been removed. The former ponds had been backfilled by this date. A water tower had been constructed to the east by this date (fig. 9 and 10).
- 4.34 A new north-south aligned field boundary had been laid out by the late 1980s (Fig. 11) which was removed more recently (Fig. 12 and 13).
- 4.35 The archaeological potential for significant settlement evidence dating to these periods is therefore considered to be low/nil.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 4.36 The study site is likely to have formed part of an agricultural landscape from at least the early Medieval period and continued as such up to the present day. During the latter half of the 20th century, residential development expanded from the south towards the south-western site boundary.
- 4.37 The extant field boundaries within the site date back to the 1803 Estate Map (Fig. 5) and could potentially be in part remnant of a pre-enclosure strip field system in particular the backward S shape field boundary in the west of the site.
- 4.38 The Hedgerow Regulations (1997), Schedule I, Part II, Paragraph 5. state that a hedgerow will be classified as being of historic importance if it pre-dates the Enclosure Acts. Consequently, the hedgerows that form the backward S shape are likely to predate the Enclosure Acts and hence should be considered to be of local historic importance.

LiDAR Survey

- 4.39 A review of LiDAR data records a cluster of anomalies of possible archaeological interest in the west of the Phase 4 site (Appendix C). These anomalies possibly represent remains of Medieval/Post Medieval strip fields farmed prior to enclosure. Certainly, evidence of ridge and furrow have been recorded in this area. However, they could represent at least in part evidence of a nucleated settlement associated with the remains identified during the recent archaeological evaluation of Phase 3. The geophysical survey confirms the presence of potential archaeological anomalies in these locations (Appendix D and Figure 2).

Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets)

- 4.40 Existing national policy guidance for archaeology (the NPPF as referenced in section 2) enshrines the concept of the 'significance' of heritage assets. Significance as defined in the NPPF centres on the value of an archaeological or historic asset for its 'heritage interest' to this or future generations.
- 4.41 There are no designated archaeological assets on the site.

Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets)

- 4.42 Anomalies of potential archaeological interest have been identified on the LiDAR survey. These anomalies possibly represent remains of Medieval/Post Medieval strip fields farmed prior to

enclosure. Certainly, evidence of ridge and furrow have been recorded in this area. However, they could represent at least in part evidence of a nucleated settlement potentially associated with the settlement identified during the recent archaeological evaluation of Phase 3.

- 4.43 Evidence of these anomalies were also picked up during the geophysical survey across the site undertaken in 2020 (Appendix D). In the west of the Phase 4 site two concentrations of anomalies were identified. The northern concentration had defined edges and appear to be of archaeological origin. They could indicate the presence of debris or rubble of unknown date. To the south-east a further concentration of anomalies were identified but these do not appear to form clear shapes. The angular and well defined anomalies suggest an anthropogenic origin.
- 4.44 Archaeological Trial trenching undertaken in 2022 across the Phase 3 site recorded two areas of medieval archaeological interest. The first, located in the south-east of Phase 3 comprised a series of substantial masonry wall foundations associated with a gravel floor or yard surfaces. The second focus, located in the north-east of the Phase 3 site comprised a group of ditches and pits, which were overlain and partially infilled with stony rubble deposits, possibly from another former masonry building. The relatively large pottery assemblages from both locations appear to have a strong 12th-13th century focus, with some possible continuation into the early 14th century. The trenches across the remainder of the site were either void of archaeology or contained plough furrows as identified from the geophysical survey.
- 4.45 Extant field boundaries are considered likely to date from the Post Medieval if not earlier Medieval period. In particular the backward S shaped field boundary could be remnant of Medieval strip farming. Consequently, these boundaries are considered to be non-designated heritage assets of a very local significance.
- 4.46 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of a recent programme of geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching in addition to the LiDAR survey data, it is considered that the potential for as yet to be discovered in situ archaeological evidence on the Phase 4 site is good for evidence of settlement evidence dating to the Mediaeval period and low for all other past periods although evidence of Post Medieval agricultural activity can be anticipated.
- 4.47 As identified by desk-based work, archaeological potential by period the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present is summarised in table form below:

Period:	Identified Archaeological Potential	Identified Archaeological Significance
Prehistoric Agricultural evidence	Low	Local
Roman settlement	Low	Local
Anglo-Saxon	Low	Local
Medieval Settlement	Good	Local - Regional
Post Medieval settlement	Low	Local
Medieval/Post Medieval agricultural evidence	Good	Local

5 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS

Site Conditions

- 5.1 The site currently comprises agricultural (pastoral) land grazed by livestock.
- 5.2 Centuries of past ploughing of the site is likely to have had a widespread below ground archaeological impact. The cutting of ponds will have had a localised below ground impact.

Proposed Development

- 5.3 The Proposed Development comprises outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for residential development, including the construction of up to 148 dwellings, new vehicular access with footways and cycleways, public open space, landscape and associated infrastructure.

Review of Potential Development Impacts on Designated Archaeological Assets

- 5.4 The proposed development would not have a direct physical impact any designated archaeological assets.

Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Assets

- 5.5 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of the recent archaeological investigations, the proposed development has the potential to impact known and potential archaeological remains of a local – regional interest.
- 5.6 Following the granting of outline planning consent of Phase 3 at Appeal (APP/Y39040/W/22/3290305) the following condition was placed on the outline scheme.
10) No development shall take place within the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been previously submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, in consultation with the County Council's archaeological officers.
- 5.7 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared to address the requirements of Condition 10 and was approved by the Wiltshire County Council Archaeologist in 2023. A copy of the WSI is appended to this report to set out the archaeological mitigation measures required to satisfy any condition of consent of this revised application in relation to Phase 3.
- 5.8 When considering the potential development impact on the known archaeological assets within Phase 3 can be suitably mitigated by a programme of archaeological fieldwork post consent secured by condition, it is suggested that a similar approach should be considered for the Phase 4 site (particularly when considering archaeological remains of a similar significance can be anticipated).

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The study site has been assessed for its below ground archaeological potential.
- 6.2 Anomalies of potential archaeological interest have been identified on the LiDAR survey. These anomalies possibly represent remains of Medieval/Post Medieval strip fields farmed prior to enclosure. Certainly, evidence of ridge and furrow have been recorded in this area. However, they could represent at least in part evidence of a nucleated settlement potentially associated with the settlement identified during the recent archaeological evaluation of Phase 3. Evidence of these anomalies were also picked up during the geophysical survey across the site undertaken in 2020 (Appendix D).
- 6.3 Archaeological Trial trenching undertaken in 2022 across the Phase 3 site recorded two localised areas of archaeological interest representing Medieval settlement remains of a local to regional significance.
- 6.4 Extant field boundaries are considered likely to date from the Post Medieval if not earlier Medieval period. In particular the backward S shaped field boundary could be remnant of Medieval strip farming. Consequently, these boundaries are considered to be non-designated heritage assets of a very local significance.
- 6.5 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of a recent programme of geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching in addition to the LiDAR survey data, it is considered that the potential for as yet to be discovered in situ archaeological evidence on the Phase 4 site is good for evidence of settlement evidence dating to the Medieval period of local to regional significance and low for all other past periods although evidence of Post Medieval agricultural activity can be anticipated.
- 6.6 The proposed development therefore has the potential to impact archaeological remains of a likely local to regional interest.
- 6.7 Following the granting of outline planning consent of Phase 3 at Appeal (APP/Y39040/W/22/3290305) a condition was placed on the approved scheme to secure a programme of archaeological mitigation measures. When considering that the potential development impact on the known archaeological assets within Phase 3 can be suitably mitigated by a programme of archaeological fieldwork post consent secured by condition it is suggested that a similar approach should be considered for the Phase 3 and 4 site (particularly when archaeological remains of a similar significance can be anticipated).
- 6.8 Consequently, archaeology will not constrain any future development of the site.
- 6.9 A programme of archaeological trial trenching within the Phase 4 Site was completed in January 2025 and the pending assessment report will be submitted as an addendum to this planning application.

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Cartographic

1803 Manor of Whitchurch Cum Milboroune

1840 Malmesbury Tithe Map

1866 Ordnance Survey

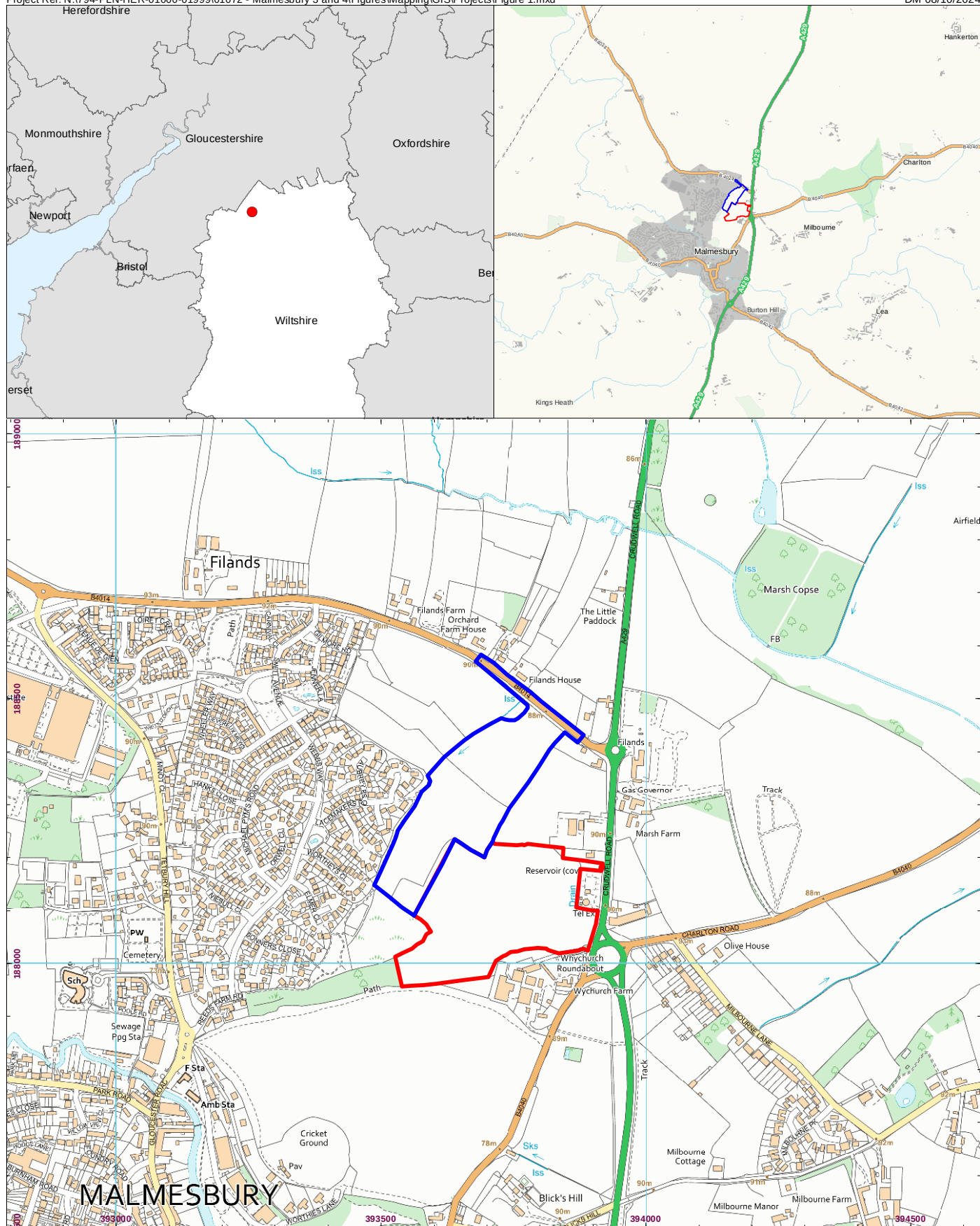
1900 Ordnance Survey

1921 Ordnance Survey

1979 Ordnance Survey

1988 Ordnance Survey

2011 Ordnance Survey



- Phase 4 Site Boundary
- Phase 3 Site Boundary

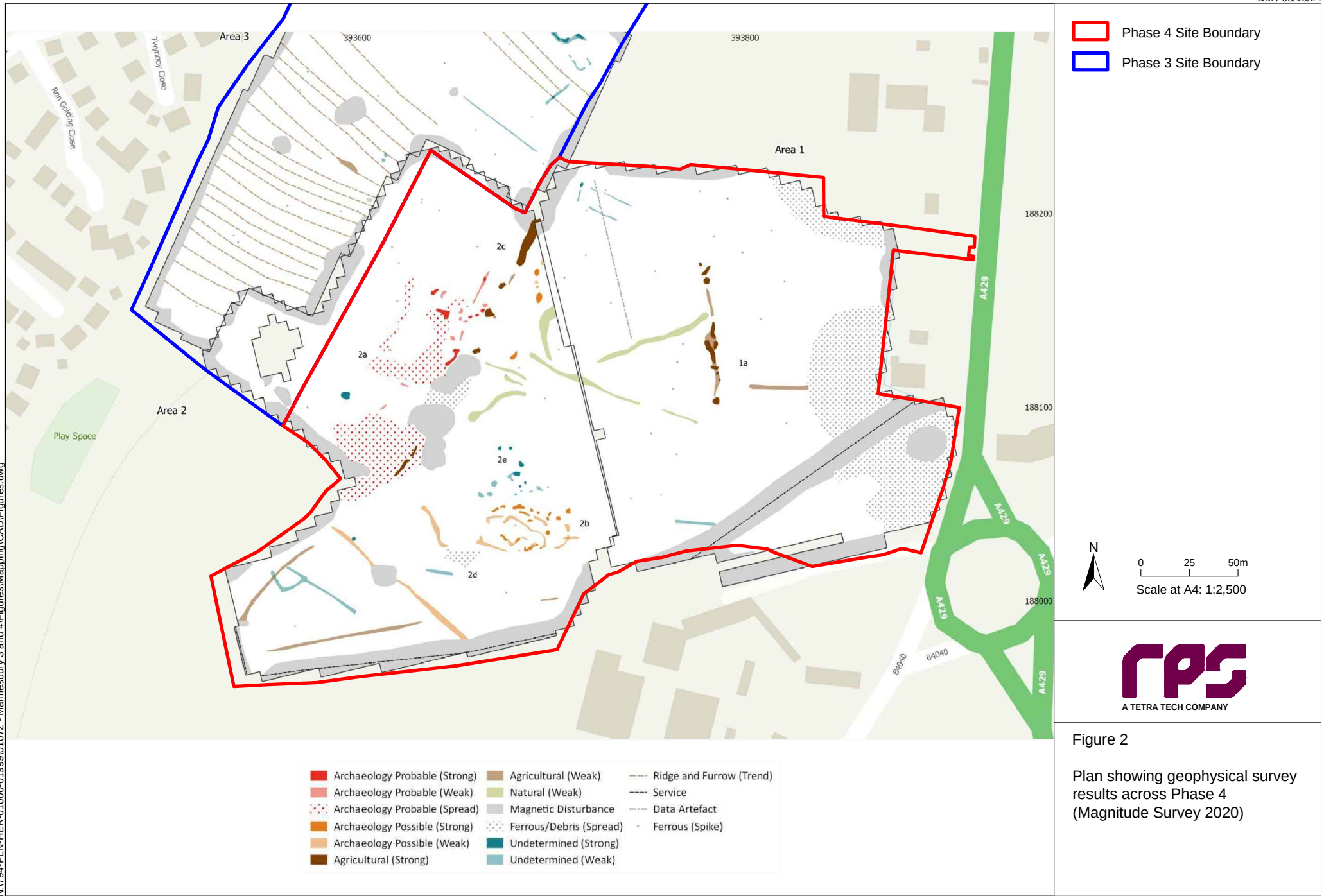


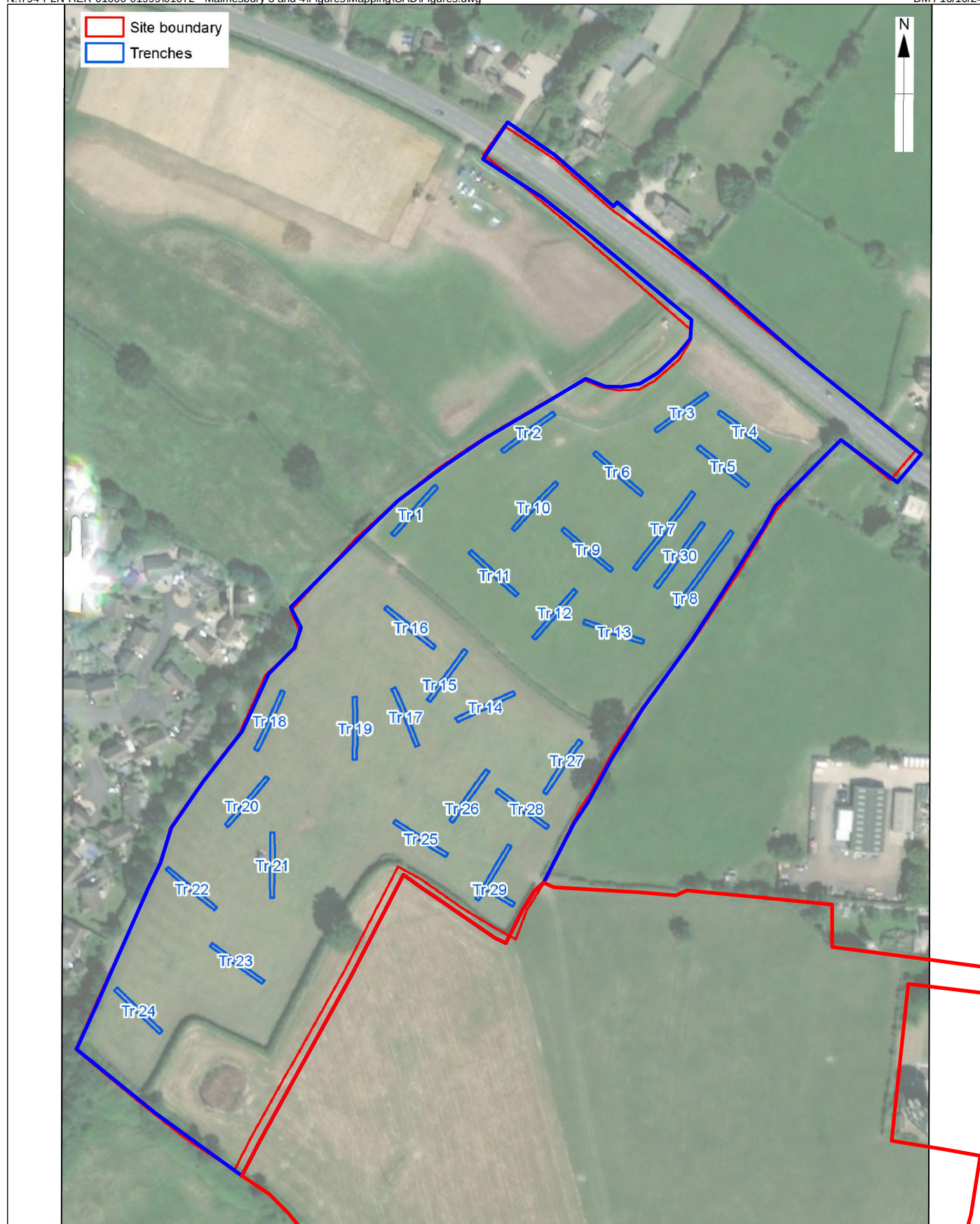
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Figure 1

Site Location





Phase 4 Site Boundary

Phase 3 Site Boundary



0 50 100m

Scale at A4: 1:5,000

rps

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Figure 3

Plan showing trench locations
from 2022 Evaluation (OA 2022)



Phase 4 Site Location



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 4

1773 Andrews and Drury

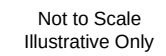
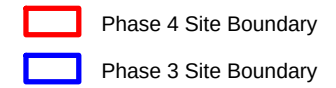
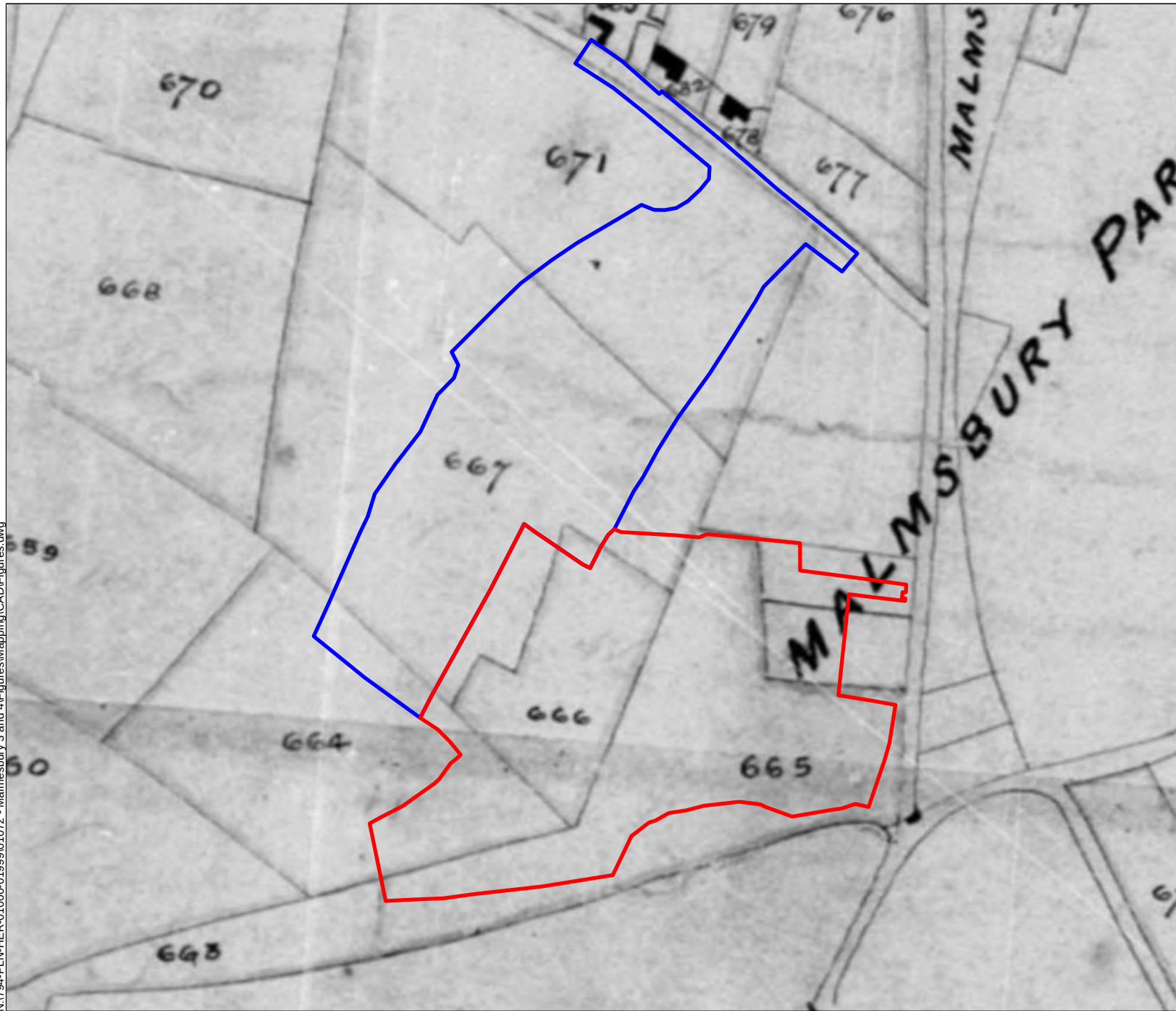


Figure 5

1803 Manor of Whitchurch Cum Milbourne



-  Phase 4 Site Boundary
-  Phase 3 Site Boundary

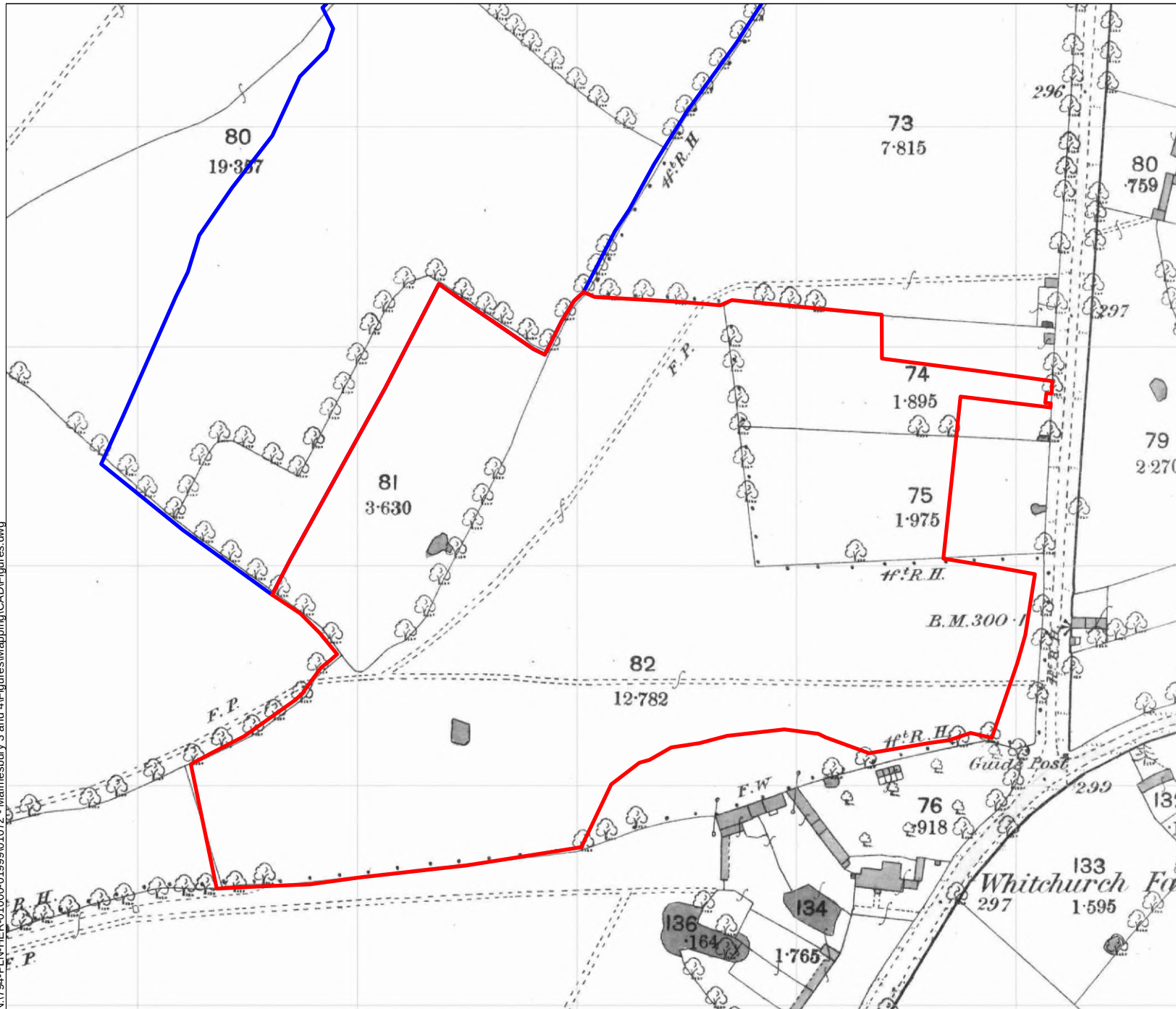


Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 6

1840 Malmesbury Tithe Map



- Phase 4 Site Boundary
- Phase 3 Site Boundary

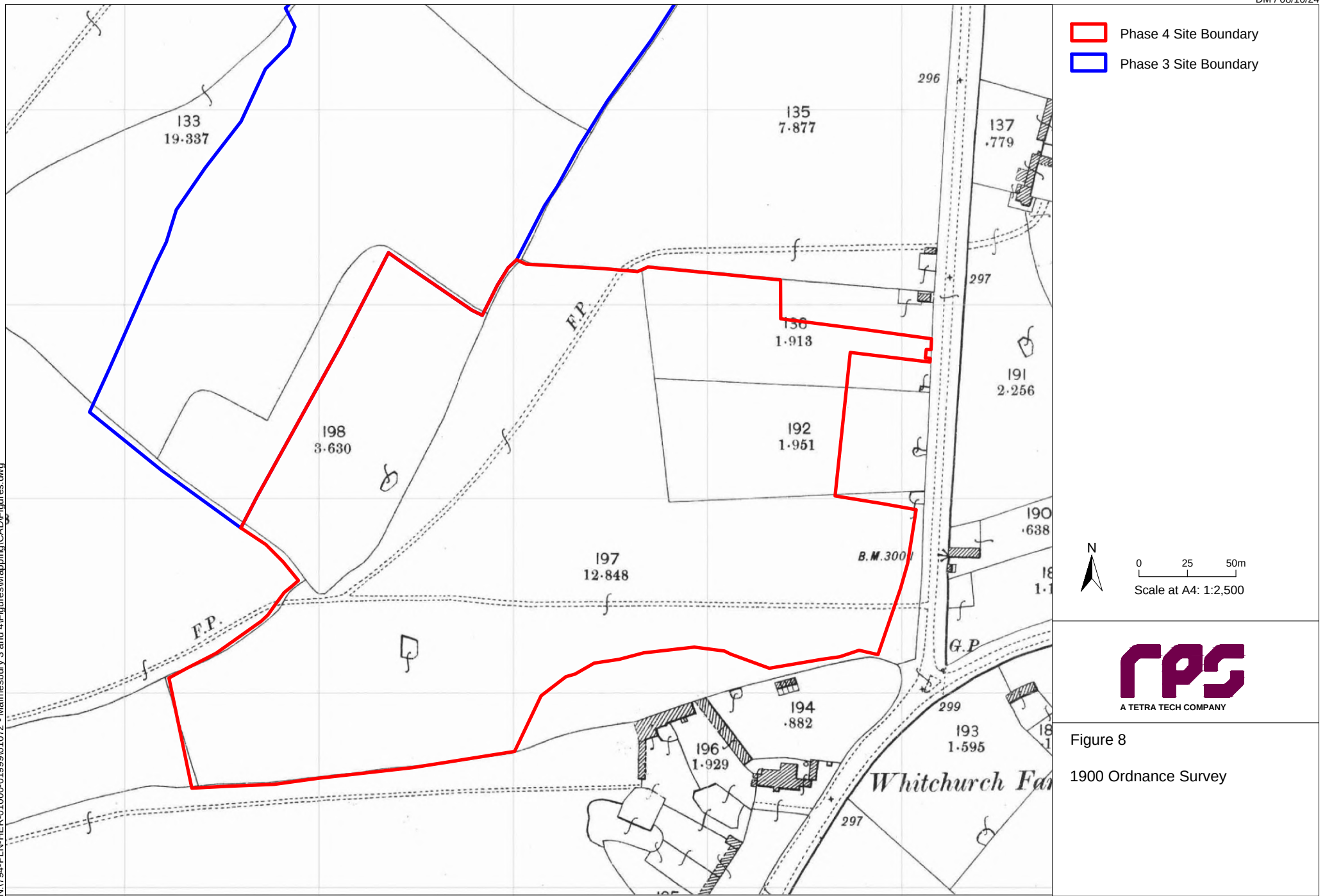


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Scale at A4: 1:2,500



Figure 7

1886 Ordnance Survey



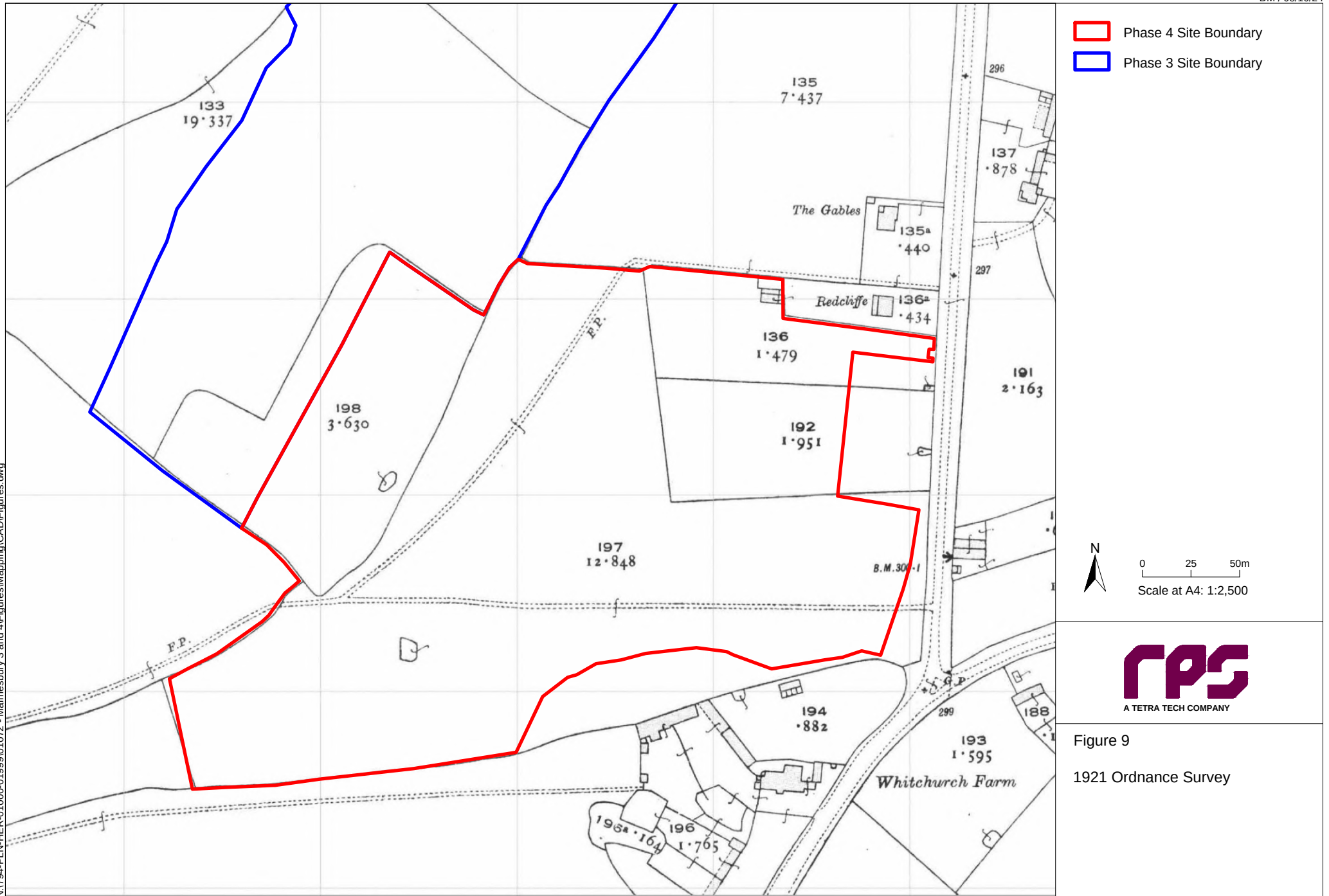
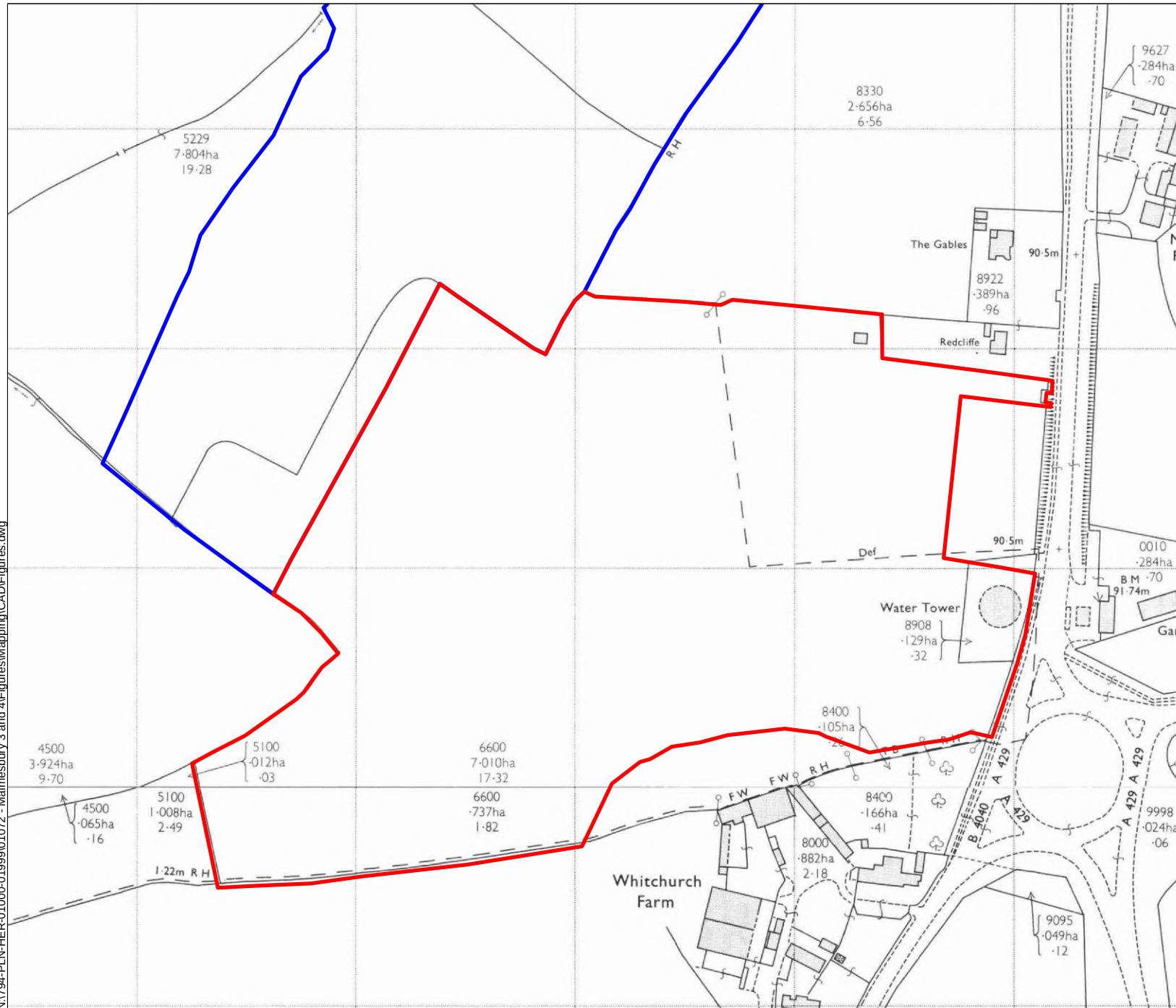


Figure 9

1921 Ordnance Survey



- Phase 4 Site Boundary
- Phase 3 Site Boundary



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Scale at A4: 1:2,500



Figure 10

1979 Ordnance Survey

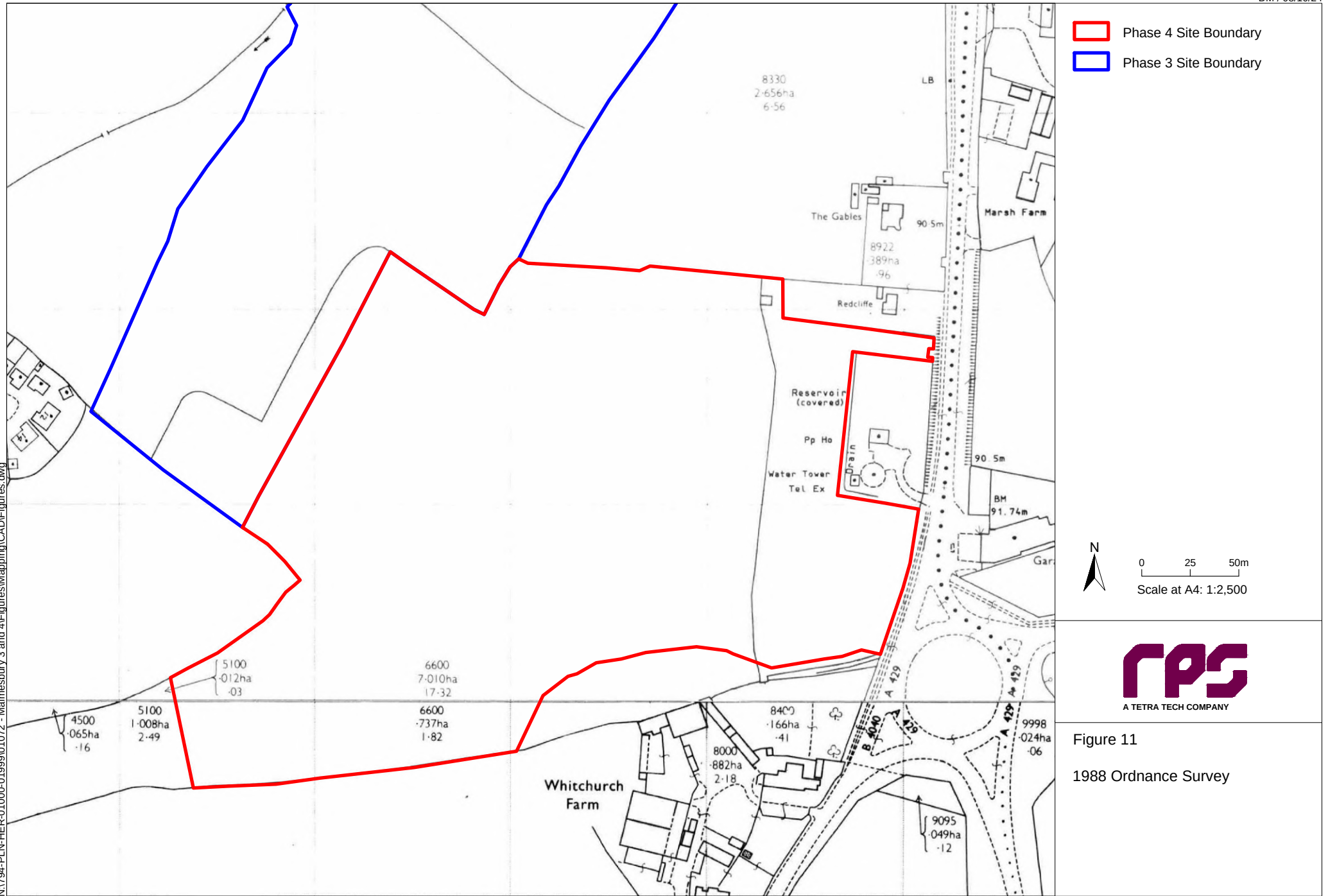
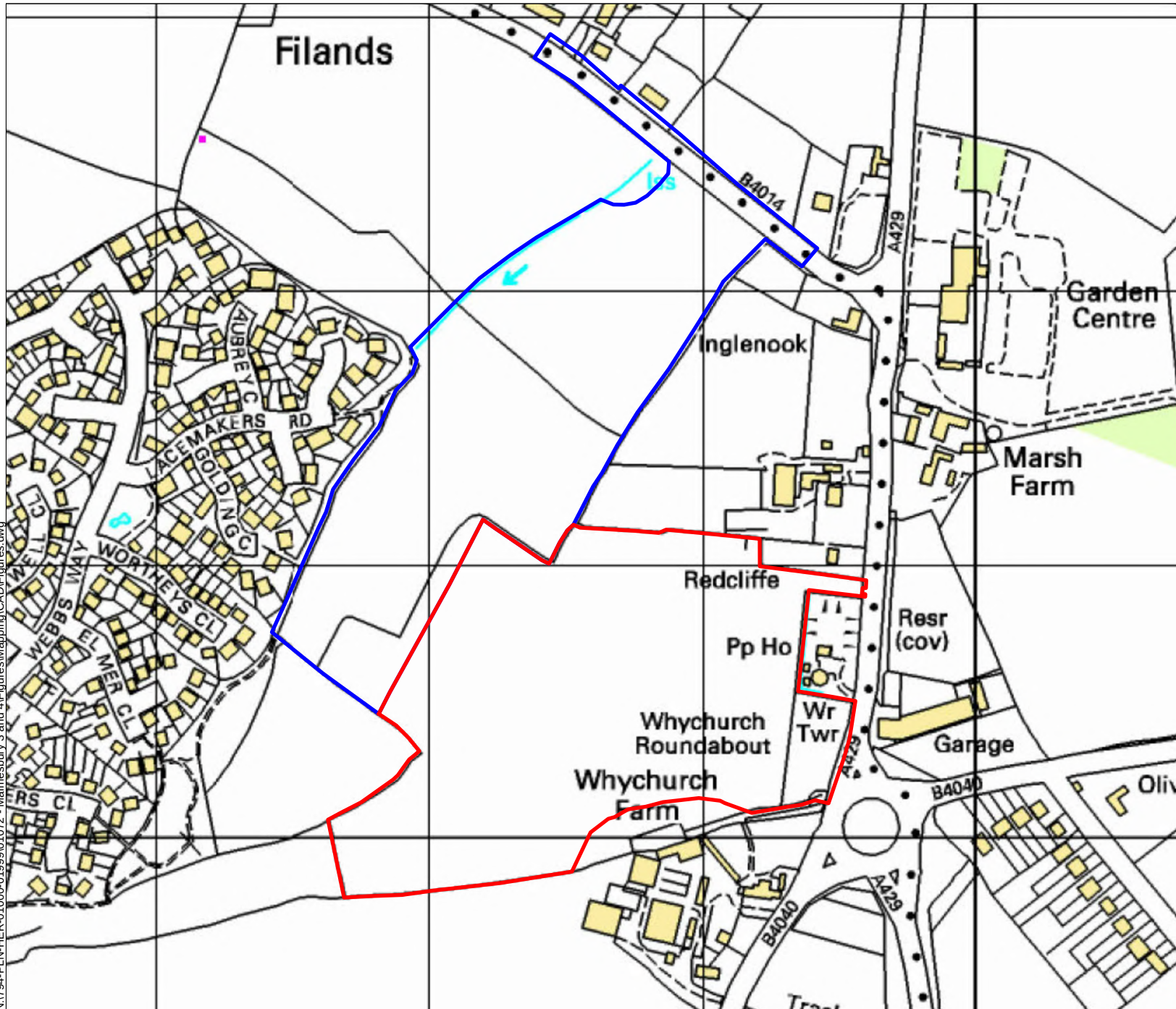


Figure 11
1988 Ordnance Survey



- Phase 4 Site Boundary
- Phase 3 Site Boundary



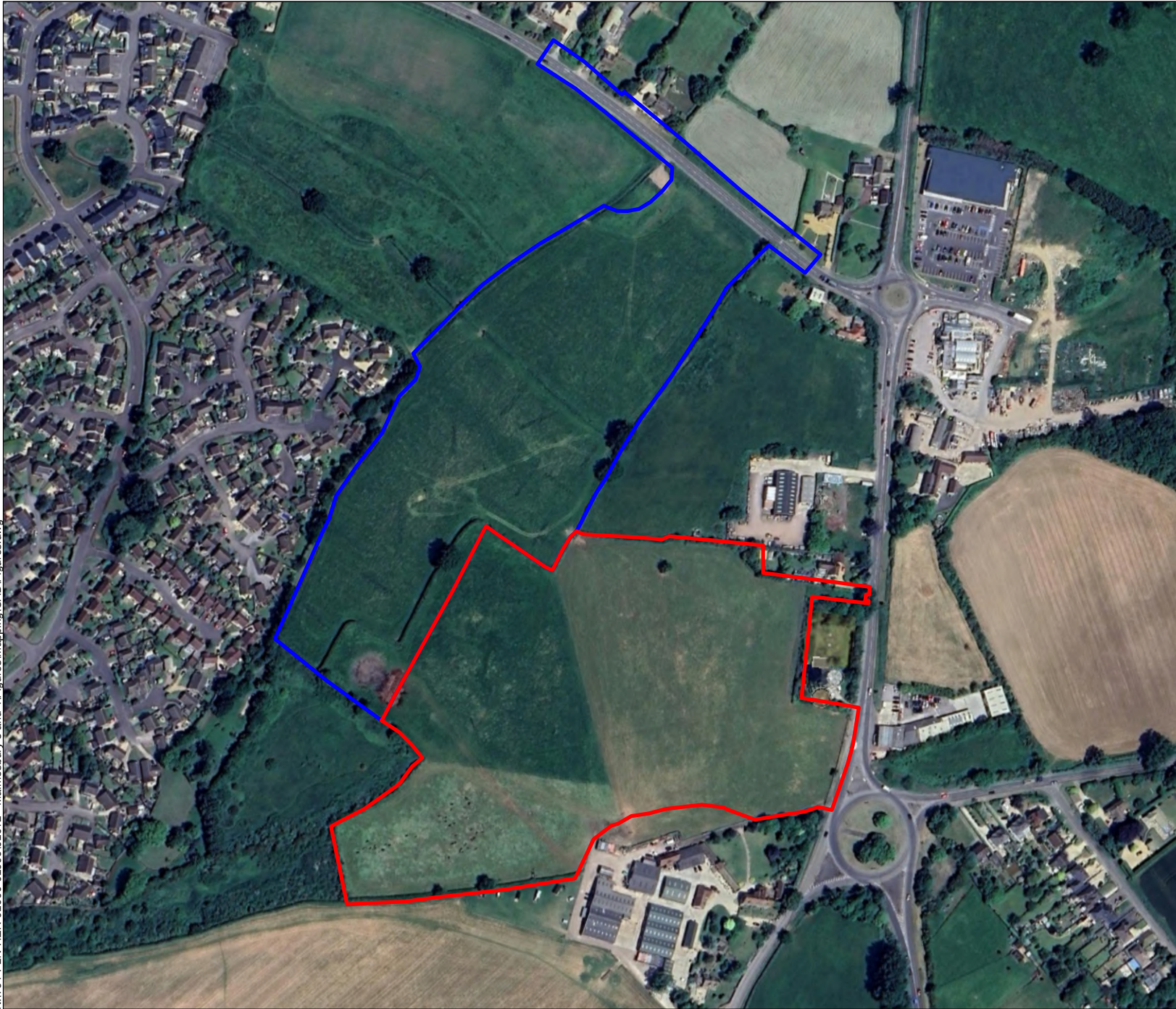
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Figure 12

2011 Ordnance Survey

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- Phase 4 Site Boundary
- Phase 3 Site Boundary

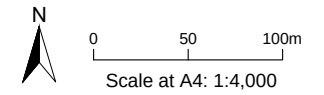
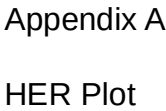


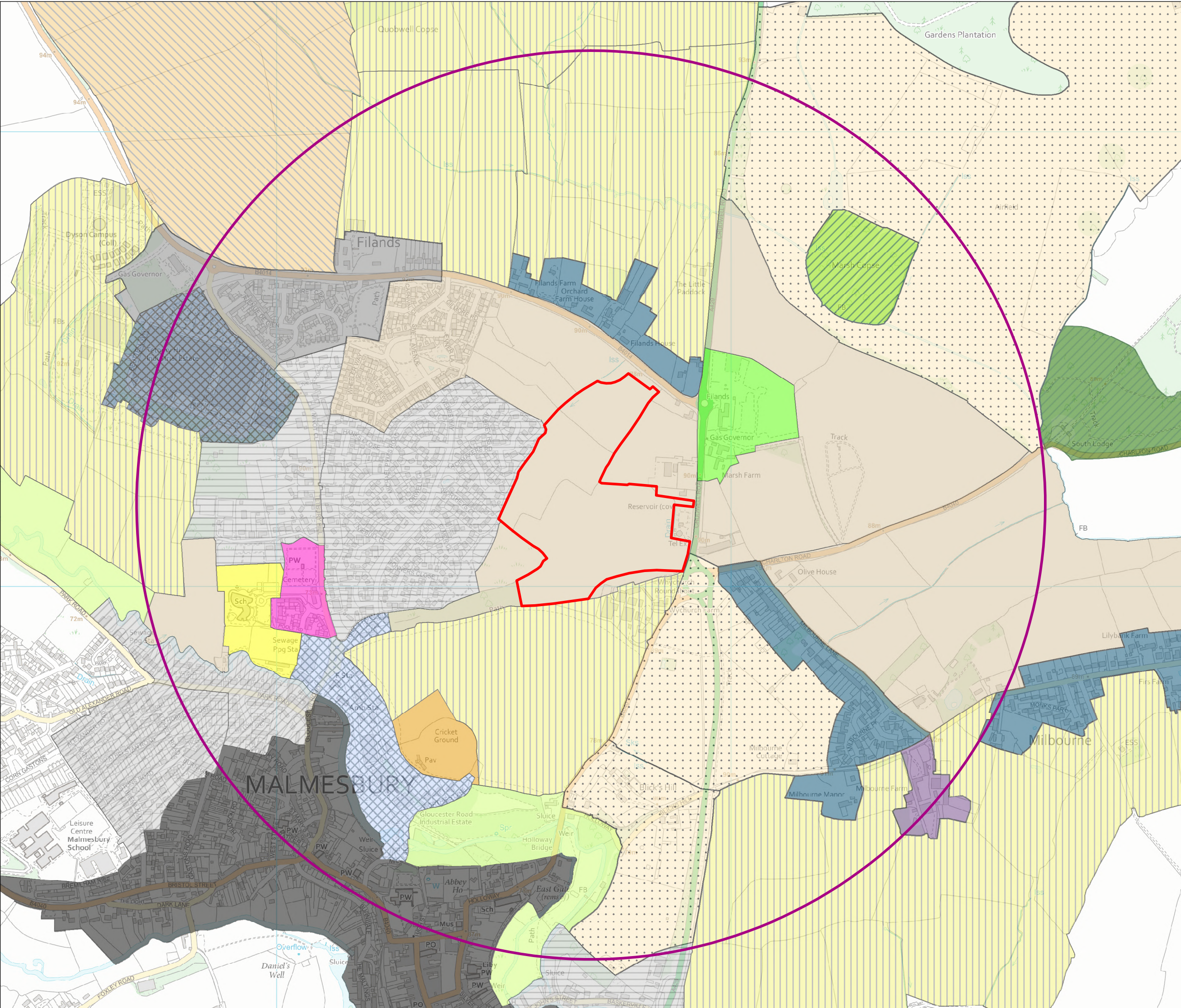
Figure 13

2023 Aerial Photograph
(GoogleEarth)

APPENDICES

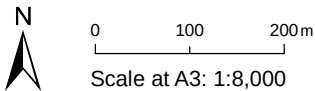


Appendix A
HER Location Plan (Wiltshire Historic Environment Record 2020)



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Search Radius 1km
- Historic Landscape Characterisation:**
 - Ancient semi-natural woodland replanted
 - Coppice
 - Meadows
 - Amalgamated fields
 - Planned enclosure
 - Piecemeal enclosure
 - Re-organised fields
 - Plant nursery or garden centre
 - Manufacturing
 - Industrial estate
 - Municipal cemeteries and graveyards
 - School/college
 - Sports pitch
 - Farmstead
 - Hamlet
 - Historic urban core
 - Terraced housing
 - Semi detached housing
 - Detached housing



Appendix B
**Historic Landscape
Characterisation (Wiltshire Historic
Environment Record 2020)**

Appendix B

Historic Landscape Characterisation (Historic Environment Record 2020)



Legend

 Site Boundary

LiDAR DATA

Source:
Environment Agency

Data Type: DTM

Resolution: 0.5m

Date Captured:
Feb 2013

Processing:
simple Local Relief Model overlaid on
Multi-direction Hillshade



0 50 100m
Scale at A3: 1:2,500



Appendix C

LiDAR Plot

Appendix C
LiDAR Survey Data (Environment Agency 2013)

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

Land North of Whychurch Farm, Malmesbury, Wiltshire

JAC26586
Land North of Whychurch
Farm, Malmesbury
WSI
1
September 2023

LAND NORTH OF WHYCHURCH FARM, MALMESBURY, WILTSHIRE: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

Document status					
Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
1	Final	Suzanne Gailey			
Approval for issue					
Suzanne Gailey				18 September 2023	

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Figure 2: Evaluation trench locations and Proposed Excavation Areas

1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been prepared by RPS, on behalf of their client Gleeson Land, as a specification for a programme of archaeological mitigation on land North of Whychurch Farm, Malmesbury, Wiltshire (Fig.1).
- 1.2 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) was written by RPS in August 2021 in support of an outline planning application for residential development and associated landscaping and infrastructure (PL/2021/08453). The DBA included the results of a geophysical survey undertaken by Magnitude Survey in October 2020 and a LiDAR survey (RPS 2021)
- 1.3 The DBA concluded that there are no designated archaeological assets on the site. Anomalies recorded during the geophysical survey and on the LiDAR survey represent likely evidence of Medieval/Post Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. A curvilinear anomaly recorded during the geophysical survey in the eastern part of the site was considered likely to relate to agricultural activity or variations in the natural geology though the possibility of an archaeological origin could not be ruled out.
- 1.4 In response to these conclusions a programme of archaeological trial trenching was also undertaken to support the outline planning application. This fieldwork was undertaken in May 2022 (Oxford Archaeology 2022/23). Two areas of medieval archaeological interest were discovered. The first, located in the south-east of the site comprised a series of substantial masonry wall foundations associated with a gravel floor or yard surfaces. The second focus, located in the north-east of the site comprised a group of ditches and pits, which were overlain and partially infilled with stony rubble deposits, possibly from another former masonry building. The relatively large pottery assemblages from both locations appear to have a strong 12th-13th century focus, with some possible continuation into the early 14th century. The trenches across the remainder of the site were either void of archaeology or contained plough furrows as identified from the geophysical survey.
- 1.5 Following the granting of outline consent at Appeal (APP/Y3940/W/22/3290305) the following condition was placed on the outline scheme:

10) No development shall take place within the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been previously submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment (including provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition) has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, in consultation with the County Council's archaeological officers.
- 1.6 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has therefore been prepared to satisfy the pre-commencement requirements of Condition 10. It has been prepared in accordance with all relevant guidelines, including those set down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and Historic England (HE).
- 1.7 This WSI forms the basis for the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological contractor to implement the works and is to be submitted for approval with the Local Planning Authority. Once appointed, the archaeological contractor will prepare a Project Design which will be submitted for approval to the assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire County Council ahead of works commencing.

Topography and Geology

- 1.8 The solid geology of the study site comprises mudstone of the Kellaway Clay Member. No superficial geology is recorded across the study site (BGS Mapviewer).
- 1.9 The archaeological trial trenching on the site (RPS/OA 2022/23) recorded the natural geology (derived from weathered Mudstone bedrock) comprised yellowish brown clay with grey streaks. This was revealed below a 0.10m-0.15m thick reddish brown silty clay loam subsoil with occasional charcoal specks which was in turn sealed below 0.15m-0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil with occasional charcoal flecks and limestone fragments.
- 1.10 The site gently undulates with a slight southern gradient but overall is generally flat at approximately 90m AOD. The nearest major watercourse is the River Avon which lies approximately 1km south of the site. A minor tributary to the Avon lies approximately 750m south of the site. A further water channel lies approximately 400m north-east at its closest point.

Archaeological Background

- 1.11 This archaeological background is a summary based on the conclusions of the DBA (RPS 2021) and the results of the archaeological trial trenching (OA 2022/23).

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

- 1.12 The DBA concluded that the site had a low potential for prehistoric settlement evidence but a moderate potential for agricultural evidence dating to the later prehistoric periods (Bronze Age and Iron Age). The DBA concluded that the site had a low potential for Roman evidence.
- 1.13 The site is situated c 900m north of the Saxon Abbey and historic core of Malmesbury, founded during the mid-7th century. Previous trial trench evaluation adjacent to the study site to the north-west recorded a small number of pits and ditches indicative of agricultural activity, which contained pottery spot-dated to the 12-15th centuries. Excavations undertaken on land approximately 300m west of the study site recorded a large rectilinear enclosure of Medieval date and evidence of ridge and furrow. Ridge and furrow has also been recorded from aerial photographs from within the site itself. Incorporated into the building of Whychurch Farm approximately 350m south-east of the study site are the remains of the Medieval chapel of St James (originally built before the conquest) and it is therefore possible that settlement evidence associated with the former chapel may be located closeby. A settlement known as Filands (Fulinge), situated to c 100m north-west of the study site, is believed to have been established during this period with documentary evidence of an estate of the same name occurring in the 12th century under the ownership of the abbey.
- 1.14 A review of LiDAR data recorded a cluster of anomalies of possible archaeological interest outside the south-eastern boundary of the study site potentially relating to early/late Medieval settlement activity.

Archaeological Geophysical Survey

- 1.15 A geophysical survey recorded evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation. In the east of the site a curvilinear anomaly of unknown origin could relate to natural variation although an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out (Magnitude Survey 2020).

Archaeological Evaluation

- 1.16 The evaluation identified two apparently distinct foci of medieval activity. The first, located in the south east of the site (in Trench 29 (extending slightly into Trench 28) Fig 2), comprised a series of NE-SW aligned masonry wall foundations associated with gravel floor or yard surfaces. These substantial structural remains, which include the corner of a building at least 6.5m long and a possible internal subdivision, were overlain by stony demolition deposits containing iron nails, horseshoe nails, a horseshoe fragment, medieval pottery and animal bone. The medieval building

- or buildings has been demolished down to foundation level but appeared sufficiently well-preserved that excavation would expose their full plan. In situ floor or yard surfaces are clearly present underlying heavily-plough-truncated and disturbed demolition deposits.
- 1.17 The second focus of medieval archaeology, located along the eastern edge of the site (Trench 8 Fig 2), comprised a group of ditches and pits, which were overlain and partially infilled with stony rubble deposits, possibly from another former masonry building. The relatively large pottery assemblages from both locations appear to have a strong 12th-13th century focus, with some possible continuation into the early 14th century.
- 1.18 Both of the foci of medieval activity are associated with reasonably large assemblages of medieval pottery, which form the primary dating evidence. While the pottery could reflect activity on the site from the 11th to the 13th century, potentially extending into the post-medieval period, the most likely focus of the pottery assemblage seems to have been in the 13th century. This may reflect the settlement's most economically prosperous phase and does not necessarily indicate that it was completely abandoned in the post-medieval period.
- 1.19 It is possible the evidence identified during the evaluation is associated with the potential settlement anomalies identified on the LiDAR survey to the south-east of the site which in turn could be associated with St James' chapel the remains of which were incorporated into Whitchurch (later Whychurch) Farm by 1670. It is conjectured that this settlement may represent the medieval Whitchurch manorial complex, which was presumably superseded by the present Whitchurch (later Whychurch) Farm in the 17th century. The reason for the shift in settlement location is likely to be complex. The late medieval decline may have been connected with the Black Death and other demographic disasters of the 14th century. The 17th-century revival on a new site next to the main road running north from Malmesbury probably reflects widespread economic expansion and the realignment of the rural landscape along new or reinvigorated local and regional trade networks in the post-medieval period (OA 2022/23).
- 1.20 The Victoria County History identified several documentary references supporting the existence of a chapel here in the medieval period, up until the 17th century:
- In 1252, Malmesbury abbey was granted a St James's fair on its land at Whitchurch;
 - In 1535 offerings made from or at Whitchurch to an image of St James were taken by the abbey;
 - Alms were distributed in a chapel at Whitchurch by the abbey or by the lessee of its Whitchurch estate at mass on the eve and feast of St James in the early 16th century;
 - By 1670 the chapel building had been dismantled and incorporated into Whychurch Farm.
 - In 1268 Nicholas of Malmesbury gave land at Fowlswick in Chippenham for a chaplain to say masses for his parents in the chapel of 'la Charnere' in Malmesbury (Bags et al. 1991).
- 1.21 No palaeoenvironmental samples were recovered and thus little can be said about the potential of the site for palaeoenvironmental analysis. All of the deposits encountered were much-disturbed secondary demolition deposits or structural remains and thus not deemed suitable for sampling. Several demolition contexts were observed to contain charcoal which clearly survives in the soil conditions present on the site. No waterlogged deposits were encountered (OA 2022/23).

2 SCOPE OF WORKS AND ITS AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Scope of Works

2.1 The scope of works will comprise:

1. Controlled targeted excavation of 2 areas of the site where significant archaeological remains defined by the evaluation will be impacted by the proposed development groundworks (Figure 2)

2.2 The programme of archaeological investigation shall comprise:

- The stripping of top-soils and other non-significant overburden under close archaeological supervision;
- The investigation, sampling and recording of significant archaeological deposits;
- A post-excavation assessment to quantify the archive of records and finds and to assess their potential for further analysis;
- The analysis of the archive of records and finds, the compilation of a report on the significant results of the archaeological mitigation, and the publication of that report; and
- The deposition of the archive of records and finds arising from the programme of archaeological mitigation in an appropriate museum.

Objectives

2.3 The primary objective of the archaeological mitigation strategy is to mitigate the effect of the residential development on the surviving buried archaeological remains within the defined archaeological mitigation areas (Figure. 2) through archaeological investigation, recording, analysis, publication and deposition of the excavated data and associated records.

2.4 The fieldwork will be undertaken in accordance with the following standards and guidance:

Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (December 2014 ClfA)

The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda (Webster 2007)

South West Archaeological Research Framework: Research Strategy 2012–2017 (Grove and Croft 2012)

Specific Aims

2.5 To establish a chronological framework for the site and establish the date, form, function, evolution and economic status of the activity previously identified on the site by assessment and evaluation. Priority is given to establishing an overall plan of the site and determining the various phases and sub-phases of activity in order to address the following research aims:

What is the extent of Medieval settlement on the site

Is it possible to ascertain the date of occupation

Is it possible to ascertain the function of the buildings

How can we better understand the Medieval to Post Medieval transition

What is the evidence to suggest an association with the chapel incorporated into Whychurch Farm

- 2.6 Research aims for the project are in line with those laid out in The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda (Webster 2007) and the South West Archaeological Research Framework: Research Strategy 2012–2017 (Grove and Croft 2012).

3 METHOD STATEMENT

General

- 3.1 In order that the investigation supplies information of the required quality, the Codes, Standards and Guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) form a requirement of this specification.
- 3.2 The following provides an outline of the methodology and sampling procedures that are to be implemented at each stage of the archaeological works, as appropriate, to ensure the satisfactory investigation and record of matters of archaeological interest on the site.

Targeted Archaeological Excavation

- 3.3 The area for archaeological excavation, as defined by Figure 2, will be excavated using a suitable machine with a toothless bucket.
- 3.4 The excavations will be undertaken ahead of development. Machine excavation will be undertaken by a machine of an appropriate size with a suitably qualified and experienced driver/operator. Machine work will be under constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist and will proceed in level spits of approximately 50-200mm until either the archaeological horizon or the natural geology is exposed.
- 3.5 All topsoil and sub-soil will be stripped mechanically under archaeological direction. Care should be taken not to machine into archaeological features or deposits but it is important that the archaeological level is reached and not still covered by overburden. Where potential structural remains are encountered, further testing of the depth of adjacent overburden by hand will be implemented in order to help to ensure that appropriate levels have been reached without compromising any structural components. It is hoped that general hand cleaning can be kept to the minimum so machine stripping needs to be well supervised and of a high quality.
- 3.6 Metal detector searches should be undertaken of the stripped excavation area by an experienced metal detectorist.
- 3.7 No vehicles or plant will travel on freshly stripped subsoil and areas of archaeological investigation.
- 3.8 Stripping will be carried out using a wide, toothless bucket. Machinery would be required to work back from one or several fronts but not track over the surface exposed.
- 3.9 A site grid is to be established using a GPS, and this is to be tied into the national grid, at the outset of the project.

Hand Excavation

- 3.10 Following stripping of overburden, priority will be given to the cleaning of features as required to produce a pre-excavation site plan. The stripped surface will be kept clean and free of loose spoil. Wherever possible spoil arising during hand-cleaning and hand-excavation will be stockpiled beyond the limits of excavation; where those limits are too distant to make off-site storage practicable then spoil will be stored on spoil-heaps set aside on areas of natural geology away from any archaeological features.
- 3.11 Areas containing particularly significant or sensitive archaeological remains should be protected, i.e. not left open to the weather.
- 3.12 Data-capture for site plans will be by electronic distance measurement, measured survey or a combination of these measures; data-capture for site plans will as standard be capable of reproduction at a scale of 1:100; more complex features or areas of complex archaeological remains will be recorded at greater resolution (for reproduction at 1:10, 1:20, or 1:50 as necessary). The site

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grid will be established relative to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and all levels taken will be relative to Ordnance Datum.

- 3.13 The archaeological team is to be structured to ensure that the hand-cleaning and planning operations run in close sequence. The initial site plan should be updated as new features become apparent.

Feature and deposit sampling

- 3.14 All sampling of archaeological features is to be by hand unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor following on-site discussion.

- 3.15 The excavation strategy will be justified against the stated aims and objectives of the project and/or any other appropriate criteria. The site will be excavated stratigraphically. The various types of features and deposits revealed following the removal of non-significant overburden will be subject to the following sampling levels:

- any deposits relating to funerary/ritual activity (eg, burials, cremations) and domestic/industrial activity (post-holes, hearths, floor surfaces/floor make-up deposits) will be investigated by removing a 100% sample of the deposit from each feature.
- Pits will require a minimum of a 50% sample of the deposits from each feature, but a 100% sample may be necessary should significant assemblages of finds be present; linear features (e.g. ditches/gullies, paths/tracks) will require a minimum of a 20% sample of the deposits from each feature.
- Non-structural post and stake-holes will require a minimum of 50% sample of the deposits from each feature to sufficiently clarify character, relationships and chronology;
- Non-structural linear cut features (eg. ditches/gullies, paths/tracks) will require a minimum of a 20% sample of the deposits from each feature to clarify character, date and morphology. Intersections will be excavated and recorded to establish relative chronologies. Other minor linear features will also be sample excavated if appropriate to the understanding the site's character, date and morphology.
- There should be a provision for hand excavation of spreads/deposits (ie dark earth) at a minimum this should be 2.5-1m systematic gridded squares, which would need to be agreed on the basis of the complexity/extent of such layers with WCC. The strategy will need to be accompanied by an appropriate finds recovery strategy which must include metal detector survey and on site sieving to recover smaller artefacts/ecofacts.
- Features which may be geological in origin should be sampled until confidence can be established.
- Provision should be made to fully investigate the depth of sequences and depth of features. This may involve stepping or shoring. Appropriate provision for working at depth should be made. For very large/deep features a strategy for the excavation and recording will need to be agreed with WCC and where appropriate machine assistance may be used, only in agreement with WCC.

- 3.16 All features will be investigated unless otherwise agreed with WCC. Any variation from the agreed strategy can only be made by agreement with WCC and must be confirmed in writing.

- 3.17 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation, including the scanning of excavation areas before they are stripped and the surface of the archaeological excavation area following the machine strip by an experienced metal detectorist.

- 3.18 Appropriate provision for extracting water from features should also be made.

Human remains

- 3.19 Excavation of human remains can only take place under appropriate Ministry of Justice (MoJ) licence and environmental health regulations. Such removal must be in compliance with the Disused Burial Grounds Amendment Act 1981 (if appropriate). In the event that such remains are exposed the site archaeologist shall inform the developer, RPS, local Environmental Health Officer and the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor in order that appropriate measures can be taken for their recording and removal.
- 3.20 Following the discovery of human remains, the remains will be cleaned with minimal disturbance, prior to recording and removal. Investigation and excavation of human remains will be undertaken by, or under supervision of, suitably experienced specialist staff and in accordance with ClfA Guidelines (*"Excavation and Post-excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains"* Roberts, C & McKinley, J 1993 – IFA Technical Paper 13; *"Guidelines to the standards for recording human remains"* ed. Brickley, M & McKinley, J 2004 – IFA Paper 7). Assessment of excavated human remains will be undertaken in line with current Historic England Guidelines (*"Human Bones from archaeological sites: Guidelines for the production of assessment documents and analytical reports"* Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 2004).
- 3.21 The excavation of any exposed inhumations, cremations and any other ritual, or possible ritual features or deposits, will be given priority in the excavation programme in order to limit the chances of deterioration of the feature and vandalism.
- 3.22 Should furnished burials be identified during the excavation WCC should be notified immediately and WCC should be consulted with regards to guidance on Excavating Inhumations for Mineral Preserved Organics Guidance (SCCAS 2023).

Treasure

- 3.23 Finds discovered by the Archaeological Contractor falling under the statutory definition of Treasure (as defined by the Treasure Act of 1996 and its revision of 2002), will be reported immediately to the relevant Coroner's Office, the landowner and the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor. A Treasure Receipt (obtainable from either the FLO or the DCMS website) must be completed and a report submitted to the Coroner's Office and the FLO within 14 days of understanding the find is Treasure. Failure to report within 14 days is a criminal offence. The Treasure Receipt and Report must include the date and circumstances of the discovery, the identity of the finder (put as unit/contractor) and (as exactly as possible) the location of the find. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

Artefact recovery

- 3.24 In order to establish clearly dated stratigraphic sequences, artefacts will be recovered carefully from feature intersections. Where artefact assemblages are concentrated, the percentage of sampling will be increased to ensure maximum retrieval and recording of this material.
- 3.25 Spot dating of pottery will be implemented on a weekly basis and the results fed back to the site team to inform the on-going site investigation strategy.

Environmental Sampling

- 3.26 An appropriate sample of deposits will be excavated in order to meet the stated aims and objectives of the work. Environmental samples will be taken from well-stratified, datable deposits that are deemed to have potential for the preservation/survival of environmental material. There will be an assumption that samples will be taken from all contexts within pits, postholes and structural deposits as a minimum. Linear features will also be sampled initially although the scale and scope of this may be reviewed in consultation with WCC. Where appropriate monolith samples will be taken from suitable features. Bulk soil samples (40 litres or 100% of context) will be taken for wet sieving and flotation, and for finds recovery. All recovered artefacts and ecofacts, including pollen, will be

assessed as part of the first stage of post-excavation work and recommendations made as to the benefit for further analysis. If necessary, the Historic England regional scientific advisor will be consulted. Deposits with clearly intrusive material will not be sampled. Provision will be made for scientific dating such as radiocarbon dating or OSL, for example, where appropriate.

- 3.27 Further details of the environmental strategy will be submitted with the commissioned archaeological contractors method statement (see *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*: English Heritage/Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 2002): the sampling strategy should include a reasoned justification for selection of deposits for sampling.

Recording

- 3.28 All structures, deposits and finds are to be recorded according to accepted professional standards. The stratigraphy in any sections is to be recorded, even where no archaeological deposits have been identified.
- 3.29 A plan to indicate the location of the boundaries of the excavated area and the site grid is to be drawn at a scale of 1:1250. Plans to indicate the locations of archaeological features are to be drawn at a scale of 1:100, with more detailed plans and sections as necessary. Detailed plans shall normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10. All detailed plans and sections are to be related to the 1:100 plans. All plans are to be related to the site grid.
- 3.30 All plans and sections are to be drawn with pencil on waterproof polyester-based drawing film and each plan and/or section is to be clearly labelled.
- 3.31 All archaeological contexts are to be recorded individually on context record sheets. A further, more general record of the work, comprising a description and discussion of the archaeology is to be maintained as appropriate.
- 3.32 A full photographic record will be made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. This will record both the detail and the general context of the principal features and the site as a whole. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.33 The archaeological contractor shall allow project records to be inspected and examined at any reasonable time, during or after the excavation work by the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor.
- 3.34 Archive (including finds) - all artefacts recovered during the excavations on the site are the property of the landowner. They are to be processed in accordance with the *United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Conservation Guidelines nos. 2* for them to be deposited in a museum or similar repository agreed with the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor.
- 3.35 All metal objects, other than late post medieval objects, will be X-rayed unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor.
- 3.36 The site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, is to be prepared in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990)*. The intended repository for the archive would be the SCCAS county store. The archaeological contractor, via the consultant, shall notify the planning authority's archaeological advisor when the archive of records and finds has been deposited with the appropriate museum.

Report and Archive

- 3.37 All post-excavation procedures, archiving and report production (including publication as appropriate) will be in accordance with ClfA Standards and Guidance, the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) English Heritage 2006.

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- 3.38 The digital archive will be deposited with the ADS.
- 3.39 Within 6 months of completion of excavation work on site the archaeological contractor will produce a MAP2 'Post-Excavation Assessment Report' covering all phases of fieldwork. This report will include an 'Updated Project Design' to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor that sets out a programme of post excavation analysis through to completion of a 'Full Report' and 'Publication' of the findings. Copies will be provided to RPS, the client and the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor.
- 3.40 The Archaeological Contractor may determine the general style and format of the 'Post-excavation Assessment Report' and the 'Full Report' but they must be completed in accordance with this specification. The reports must provide sufficient information and assessment to stand as a detailed report on the archaeological fieldwork for future research and to inform on further stages of the post excavation programme.
- 3.41 The completed post-excavation assessment will include proposals for the final report, including a summary report for publication. Final report outlines will be included in the PXA. The PXA report (including the scope of the analysis and reporting) will be agreed with the LPA's archaeological advisor.
- 3.42 Reports that do not provide sufficient information or that have not been compiled in accordance with the relevant sections of this specification will be returned to the Archaeological Contractor for revision and resubmission.
- 3.43 The Post-excavation Assessment Report will contain as a minimum the following:
- 3.44 An Abstract summarising the scope and results of the archaeological investigation.
- 3.45 An Introduction including:
- the location of the site including a National Grid Reference for the centre sufficient to locate the site to 1m accuracy (e.g. TQ 55555 77777 or easting: 555555, northing: 177777);
 - an account of the background and circumstances of the work;
 - a description of the development proposals, planning history and planning reference together with the planning condition (where appropriate);
 - the nature of potential impacts arising from the proposals;
 - the scope and date of the fieldwork, the personnel involved and who commissioned it;
- 3.46 An account of the Archaeological Background of the development site including:
- geology, soils and topography;
 - any known existing disturbances on the site;
 - background archaeological potential of the site. This will include a summary of the known Historic Environment Record (HER) entries within 500m of the boundaries of the site (or wider where appropriate). The Historic Environment Record entries should be quoted with their full Gloucestershire HER identifier;
 - summary of any previous phases of archaeological investigation at the development site;
 - any constraints on the archaeological investigation.

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- 3.47 The Methodology employed during the investigation must be detailed in the report. Simply referring to the methodology outlined in the specification is not acceptable. Any aims and objectives specified in the specification will be included, as will any further objectives identified during the course of the investigation.
- 3.48 The report will include a quantification of the archive contents, their state and future location.
- 3.49 A description of the Results of the archaeological investigation. This description must include:
- the nature and depth of overburden soils encountered;
 - a description of the geological subsoil encountered across the site;
 - description of all archaeological features and finds encountered, their dimensions, states of preservation and interpretation;
 - heights related to Ordnance Datum will be provided for each feature and deposit.
 - for complex remains a Harris Matrix diagram will be provided
- 3.50 The finds recovered during the course of the investigation will be described, quantified and assessed by artefact type within the report. The report will also indicate the potential of each category of artefact for further analysis and research. For each category of artefact the report will describe the method of processing, any sub-sampling, conservation and assessment undertaken. Where appropriate local reference collections will be referred to for descriptive and analytical consistency. Any implications for future archive, conservation or discard of the artefacts will also be detailed.
- 3.51 The report will include a table showing the contexts, classes and quantity of artefacts recovered, together with their date and interpretation.
- 3.52 The report will include an assessment of the Environmental potential of the site. Details will be provided of any environmental sampling undertaken in connection with the fieldwork and the results of any processing and assessment of the samples. The report will describe the method of processing, any sub-sampling and assessment. Any potential for future analysis of the samples or environmental remains recovered from the investigation will be described. Implications for future archive, conservation or discard of environmental samples or remains will be detailed.
- 3.53 The report will include, as appropriate, tables summarising environmental samples taken, together with the results of processing and assessment.
- 3.54 Any results from the application of archaeological scientific techniques e.g. specialist dating will be included in the assessment report.
- 3.55 An interpretation of the archaeology of the site. This will be a synthesis of the stratigraphic, finds and environmental results of the investigation and a consideration of the site in its wider context as appropriate. This section will be supported by a phased interpretative plan of the site, clearly showing the major areas and periods of archaeological activity.
- 3.56 The report will include an assessment of the results of the archaeological investigations and their potential to address both the original research aims and objectives of the project and any further research objectives identified during the course of the on-site and post excavation works.
- 3.57 The report will include a detailed proposal for any further analysis necessary on the project records, artefact and environmental assemblages to achieve the research potential of the site. A justification will be included for each analysis proposed.

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- 3.58 The proposal will set out a timetable for completion of analysis and reporting, detailing all individual tasks to be completed, resources required and the key personnel involved. The proposal will set out arrangements for monitoring of the post excavation process.
- 3.59 The report will include a synopsis of the proposed '*Full Report*' and '*Publication*' and identify the likely destination of the publication.
- 3.60 Figures - as a minimum the assessment report will include the following figures:
- a site location plan tied into the Ordnance Survey at 1:1250 or in the case of larger sites at 1:2500. The plan will also include at least two National Grid points and show the site boundary;
 - a plan at 1:1250, or a scale to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor, showing the layout of the development groundworks clearly indicating the areas investigated. The plan will show significant archaeological features, coloured by phases or period as related to the development site. This plan will also include two National grid points;
 - plans of the features revealed in each of the investigation areas at a larger scale e.g. 1:20 or 1:50; such plans are to also illustrate areas of disturbance, change in subsoil and location of sections; The location of significant finds and samples taken will also be indicated;
 - relevant section drawings and soil trench profiles as appropriate;
 - illustrations and/or photographs of significant finds will be included where appropriate.
- 3.61 All report illustrations must be fully captioned and scale drawings must include a bar scale. Standard archaeological drawing conventions must be used. Plan and section illustrations must include the numbers of all contexts illustrated. North must be included on all plans. Sections must indicate the orientation of the section and the Ordnance Datum height of the section datum.
- 3.62 Black & White or Colour photographs will be included to illustrate the archaeology of the site, the development operations or the range of soil profiles encountered. All photographs will be appropriately captioned.
- 3.63 The report will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor in digital format. The digital copy will be supplied for preference in .pdfa format or alternatively in .rtf format accompanied by digital copies of images, plans and maps in .bmp, .tif or .jpg format.
- 3.64 A digital copy in PDF/A format of all archaeological reports arising out of the project shall be given to the County Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition, the HER will be provided with geo-referencing data as follows; Digital vector plans of mitigation areas, recorded archaeological features, excavated sections as georeferenced (EPSG:27700) ESTR1 shape or QGIS GPK files. These files should have the relevant attributes attached to them including: HER Parish Code, Primary Reference Number (eg Section Number, Context Number, Sample Number, Small Find number etc), Group or Feature Number, Archaeological Periods and Phases. These GIS files will be provided to the Wiltshire HER following approval of the final report.
- 3.65 Publication - The Archaeological Contractor shall discuss with RPS and the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor the format and destination of subsequent publication(s) arising from excavation and post-excavation work on the site. The Archaeological Contractor will produce a paper suitable for publication within 24 months of completion of work on site.

Monitoring

- 3.66 Reasonable access to the site is to be arranged for the LPA's Archaeological Advisor (or their representative), to make site inspections to ensure that the archaeological investigations are progressing satisfactorily.

3.67 Arrangements for this meeting will be made by RPS.

4 GENERAL SITE REQUIREMENTS

Archaeological Contractor

- 4.1 The Archaeological Contractor will be a ClfA Registered Archaeological Organisation who has previous experience of undertaking this type of work in Wiltshire.
- 4.2 The field team deployed by the Archaeological Contractor will include only full time professional archaeological staff. All staff in supervisory positions should be members, at an appropriate level, of the ClfA.
- 4.3 The composition of the project team must be detailed and agreed in advance with RPS (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 4.4 The following statutory provisions and codes of practice are to be adhered to where relevant:
- all statutory provisions and by-laws relating to the work in question, especially the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974;
 - the ClfA Code of Conduct;
 - the ClfA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology;
 - the Country Code.

Copyright

- 4.5 It is recognised that the copyright of written, graphic and photographic records and the excavation reports rests with the originating body. However, RPS and their client require an agreement to facilitate the copying and use of any or all materials resulting from this project.

Variations

- 4.6 Variations to this Written Scheme of Investigation that the Archaeological Contractor may wish to make must be approved, in advance, by RPS, the client, and WCC.

5 HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 All relevant health and safety regulations must be followed including, but not exclusively:
- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974);
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999);
 - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002);
 - The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (2015); and,
 - The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (2013).
- 5.2 A risk assessment will be prepared, and a copy will be sent to RPS and the client prior to commencement of the contract. Where a site is operating under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (2015), all works will be implemented in accordance with a Construction Phase Plan prepared by a Principal Contractor.
- 5.3 Machinery will be kept away from unsupported edges and access routes will be supervised and controlled. Hi-visibility plastic mesh and warning notices will be installed as appropriate. Safety helmets and high visibility jackets are to be used by all personnel as necessary.
- 5.4 The client will supply all necessary information to the archaeological contractor concerning live services on the site. Where live services may be suspected, on the basis of this information, within the area of the site to be stripped, this area will be scanned with a CAT Scanner prior to and during topsoil and subsoil removal works. Extreme care will be taken to ensure that any services located are avoided.

SOURCES

CIfA 2014 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation

CIfA, 2014 Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials

Grove and Croft 2012 South-West Archaeological Research Framework: Research Strategy 2012-2017

Historic England, 1991 Management of Archaeological Projects 2

Historic England, 2008 Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment

Historic England, 2011 Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation

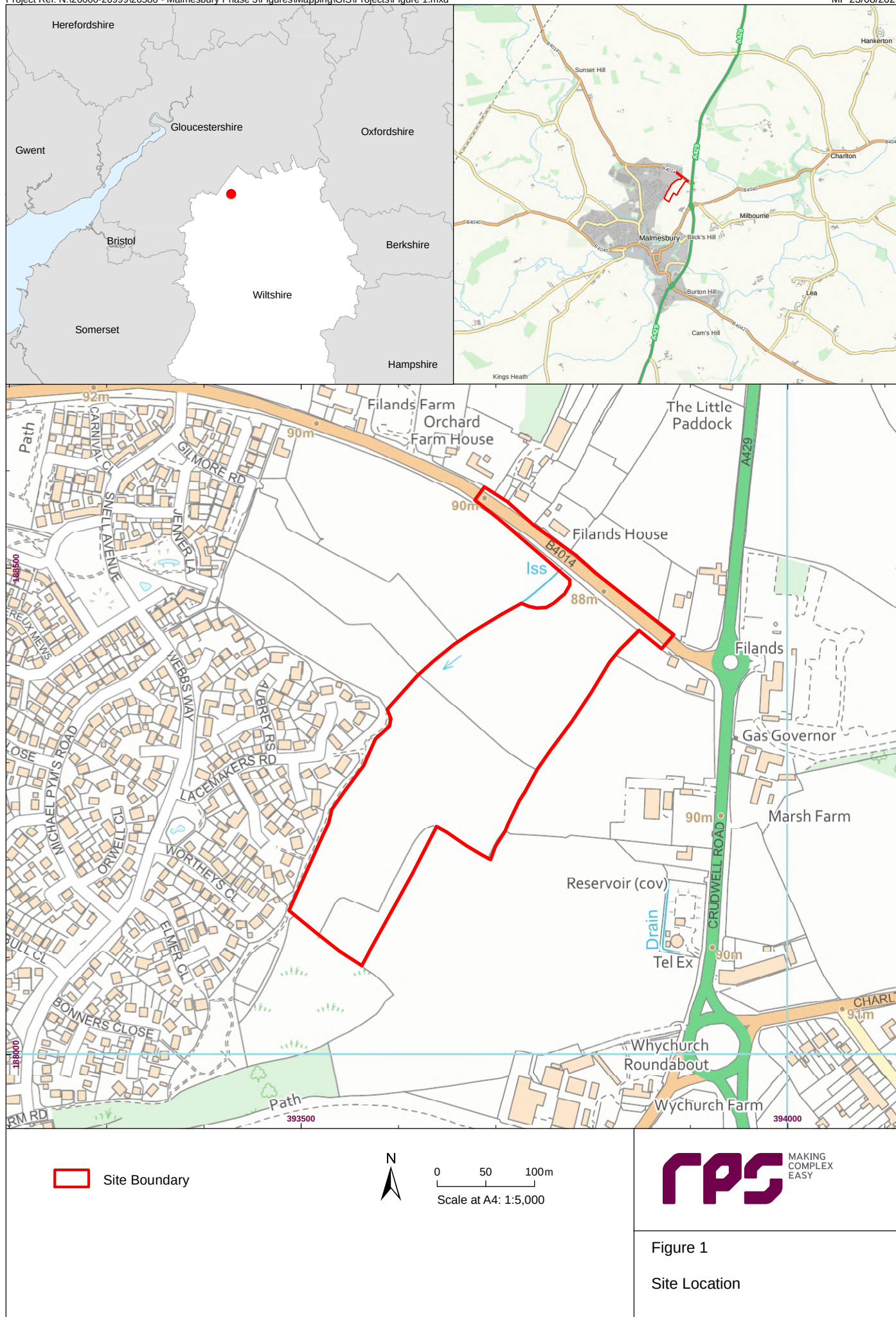
Magnitude Survey 2020 Geophysical Survey Report of land north of Whychurch Farm, Malmesbury, Wiltshire

Oxford Archaeology 2022/23 Land north of Whychurch Farm, Malmesbury, Wiltshire Archaeological Evaluation Report

RPS 2021 Archaeological Desk Based Assessment Land North of Whychurch Farm, Malmesbury, Wiltshire

Society of Museum Archaeologists, 1993 Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections, Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, (1st ed)

Webster 2007 The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda



Site Boundary
Mitigation Areas



Site Boundary

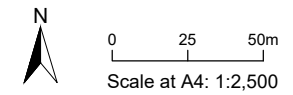


Figure 2
Evaluation trench locations and
Proposed Excavation Areas