

THE FIELD AT OLD ROAD, ALDERBURY, WILTSHIRE

(Centred on NGR SU 18124 27573)

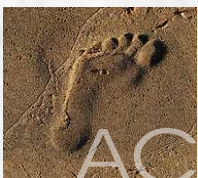
Project Design for archaeological monitoring and recording

Wiltshire Council planning reference PL/2025/07705
(Condition 6)

Prepared by:
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archaeology

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out proposals for undertaking archaeological monitoring and recording associated with the creation of a new car park on the field at Old Road, Alderbury, Wiltshire (centred on NGR SU 18124 27573). It represents the Written Scheme of Investigation required by Wiltshire Council as condition 6 of planning permission PL/2025/07705, following consultation with the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist (hereafter WCACA).
- 1.2 The archaeological work will be carried out by AC archaeology and has been commissioned by Altas Planning Group on behalf of their client.
- 1.3 The site is located on the current northwest extent of Alderbury and occupied the northeast corner of a wider agricultural field, which is bounded by Old Road to the north and east, existing car park to the southeast and Southampton Road to the southwest. It is situated on land that slopes downwards gently to the southwest at approximately 97m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying solid geology comprises interbedded sand, silt and clay of the Wittering Formation. There are no superficial deposits recorded (British Geological Survey online viewer 2026).
- 1.4 The proposed scheme will comprise the creation of a new car park. The advice of the WCACA provided to Wiltshire Council for planning reference PL/2025/07705 is as follows:

Wiltshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the field in which the car park is proposed lies within the presumed extent of the historic village of Alderbury, which has Saxon origins. The field is included on the HER because the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (RCHME) noted earthworks here and in other locations around the village. The RCHME did not survey these earthworks, as they did with other earthwork complexes in south Wiltshire at this time. The nature, character and significance of these earthworks are therefore currently unknown as they have never been tested by archaeological investigation.

It is notable that on the opposite side of Old Road is the site of the 12th-century priory of Ivychurch. The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine notes that the priory was dedicated to St Mary, was founded in Stephen's reign, and was dissolved in 1536. In the late 1920s some wall fragments, a Norman pier, and part of an arcade were recorded as still visible. Many fragments of stone carving and tiles were also recorded in the late 19th-century, found when pulling down buildings at Ivychurch House.

It is also noted that there is a large earthwork bank on the south side of Old Road. This is evident on the applicant's 'Proposed Parking Site Plan and Part Cross Section', the bank showing in contours and in the cross section. The date and significance of this bank is unknown but appears far larger than a field boundary bank. The proposed access into the new car parking will cut a section through a portion of this earthwork bank.

There is therefore an archaeological interest in the site of this proposed new car park. However, this can be mitigated by an appropriate programme of archaeological work, and it would be appropriate as a

precaution to provide for archaeological monitoring and recording during ground works should this application be permitted. This can be secured by an appropriately worded condition as follows:

No development shall commence within the red line boundary shown on the location plan submitted with this application until:

a) A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost in a manner proportionate to their importance and to make this evidence and any archive generated publicly accessible in accordance with Paragraph 218 of the NPPF.

The programme of archaeological work should comprise archaeological monitoring and recording of below ground works that have the potential to impact on archaeological features and remains, placing an emphasis on the earthwork bank on the south side of Old Road. The programme of archaeological work will conclude with the preparation of a report on the results commensurate with their significance.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The site is located immediately to the northwest of the Alderbury Conservation Area, which is concentrated around the historic core of Alderbury. The village has probable Saxon origins and was first recorded as *Aepelware Byrig* in AD972 (Gover *et. al.* 1939). The Wiltshire Council Historic Environment Record (HER) holds a number of records of findspots dating to the Prehistoric and Romano-British periods. These comprise of two lower Acheulian axes of Palaeolithic date found to the southeast of Alderbury (Wiltshire Council Historic Environment Record ref. SU12NE001), a Mesolithic tranche axe or adze to the northeast (SU12NE054), and a single sherd of Romano-British pottery to the northwest (SU12NE306).
- 2.2** To the northeast of the site is the location of a 12th century Augustinian priory founded by Henry II (SU12NE460), with upstanding fabric of the west end of the prior church surviving and is Grade II Listed (National Heritage List for England ref. 1355751). The HER records further surviving medieval fabric in the form of a stonework and tile culvert (SU12NE461), located to the southeast of the site.
- 2.3** In the WCACA consultation comments for planning reference PL/2025/07705 it was noted that Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (RCHME) noted earthworks within the field, and other locations around the village, but that these were not surveyed. As such, the nature, character and significance of these earthworks are unknown.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** The overall aim of the archaeological monitoring and recording is to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during groundworks associated with the scheme. This is with particular reference to the potential to expose remains associated with the Saxon and medieval origins of the village, and earthworks noted by the RCHME.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** All works will be carried out in accordance with this Project Design and the AC archaeology *General Site Recording Manual Version 2*. Attendance by the site archaeologist undertaking the monitoring and recording will be undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' documents *Standards for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (2023a) and *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (2023b) i.e. present during all (relevant) groundworks.
- 4.2** The anticipated groundworks will comprise the bulk reduction for the car park and gravel footpath, and the removal of bank located along the route of the access road.
- 4.3** All machine excavation will be carried out using a machine fitted with a toothless bucket. The groundwork excavations will be directly supervised by the attending archaeologist, who will have the authority to request the main contractor to halt excavations in the case of archaeological features or deposits being exposed, to enable sufficient time for the area to be cleaned and investigated. The main site contractor will be expected to allow a reasonable time delay for the attending archaeologist to complete the recording of complex or important deposits. In the unlikely event that agreement cannot be reached between the developer and the archaeological contractor, or where a delay of more than 24 hours is requested, the archaeological contractor shall inform and seek the advice of the WCACA.
- 4.4** Should human remains be encountered the WCACA will be informed. Their excavation and removal will be undertaken in accordance with a licence obtained from the Ministry of Justice. A licence has been obtained on behalf of the client by AC archaeology.
- 4.5** Any object which falls under the definition of treasure, as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 and the 2023 Explanatory Memorandum to the Treasure Act 1996: Code of Practice (3rd Revision), will be reported to the local coroner within the notice period and the WCACA notified immediately. The object or objects will be removed to a safe place (usually the nearest AC archaeology office) on the day of discovery or excavation. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect finds from theft.

5. RECORDING

- 5.1** All artefacts or deposits revealed will be recorded using the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*. Plans of the monitored areas will be drawn at a scale of 1:50 or at 1:20 if more detail is needed and sections of features and baulk sections at 1:10 or 1:20. An overall plan of the monitored electricity cable trench will be prepared at a scale of 1:1,000 or 1:2,000 and related to published property boundaries.
- 5.2** All site levels will be related to Ordnance Datum.
- 5.3** All metal finds and other typologically distinct or closely dateable artefacts will be recorded three-dimensionally.
- 5.4** A comprehensive photographic record of all archaeological deposits will be made in both plan and section. This will comprise colour digital format only (minimum 16 megapixels), illustrating in both detail and generally the main features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working views to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. A photographic scale shall be included in the case of detailed photographs.

Guidance as set out in Historic England (2015a) *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice* will be followed.

6. FINDS AND SAMPLES

- 6.1** All finds will initially be retained and examined by the AC archaeology Finds Manager in consultation with relevant specialists. Following this initial examination, later post-medieval and modern finds will not be retained except where they are items of intrinsic interest, or their further examination is considered necessary for the dating of specific features or deposits, or for the interpretation of the site.
- 6.2** Necessary conservation work, including any on-site emergency conservation actions, will be undertaken by the Exeter Museum Conservation Laboratory, who regularly provide sub-contract services and conservation advice to AC archaeology.
- 6.3** All artefacts recovered are to be washed (where the condition of the material allows) and marked. Finds will be bagged, boxed labelled and stored in accordance with current UKIC guidelines as set out in *Guidelines for the treatment of finds from archaeological sites*. Appropriate separation will be maintained of bulk finds from those small or delicate objects requiring special treatment or packaging.
- 6.4** Where deposits of palaeoenvironmental potential are encountered, including carbonised or waterlogged organic deposits, these will be sampled as appropriate in accordance with English Heritage (now Historic England) guidelines (English Heritage 2011). Sampling will be undertaken, as appropriate, in consultation with the South West Historic England Scientific Adviser.
- 6.5** The following techniques will be used:
- 40/60 litre bulk samples will be taken from any deposits relevant for environmental sampling (waterlogged deposits, peat deposits etc). Bulk samples will be fully processed. Peat or waterlogged contexts will require sequential sampling and discussion with the relevant specialist (see below);
 - If it is felt appropriate by the relevant specialist, samples taken (both bulk samples and monolith tin samples) will be examined for pollen, diatoms, insect, plant macrofossils and molluscs.
 - Bulk samples will be processed using the standard flotation/sieving methods, with the float collected on a mesh size of 250 microns. Residues will be sieved through mesh sizes of 5.6mm, 2mm and a minimum of 500 microns.
 - Monolith tin samples, with tins measuring no more than 500mm in length, will be overlapped in the standard way to allow for a continuous sample of the entire sequence to be taken. Samples will be adequately recorded and labelled. A register of samples will be made and sampling record sheets (Using the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system – see section 5 above) will be completed for all samples taken and will include the following information: sample type, reason for sampling, sample size, context, sample number, spatial location, date, context description and the approximate percentage of the context sampled. The samples will be recorded on the relevant site section drawing and photographs of the sample locations taken.
 - Radiocarbon samples will be taken and dates obtained if sufficient material from relevant deposits is located. AMS dating can be taken from monolith samples. If early peat deposits are encountered, the Historic England Science Advisor will be consulted to discuss the method of sampling for radiocarbon dating.

- If surviving animal bone is encountered then the English Heritage (2014) guidance *Animal Bones and Archaeology* will be used <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/archaeological-science/environmental-archaeology/>).

7. THE PROJECT ARCHIVE

- 7.1** Depending on findings a fully integrated site archive will be prepared with reference to the English Heritage 2015b document *Management of Archaeological Projects* (Appendix 3) and Brown, DH, 2011, *Archaeological Archives A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*. A digital archive will be compiled, if required, in accordance with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) standards and guidelines, as well as the AC *archaeology Data Management Plan for Digital Archives* (Coles 2018). It will consist of:
- All relevant born-digital data (images, survey data, digital correspondence, site data collected digitally etc.); and,
 - Digital copies made of all other relevant written and drawn data produced and/or collected during fieldwork and as part of the subsequent post-excavation analysis phase.
- 7.2** The digital archive will be deposited with the ADS within three months of acceptance of the final report/publication.
- 7.3** The finds and paper archive will initially be stored at the offices of AC archaeology in Bradninch under the unique project code **ACA0479** and a temporary accession reference **pending (requested)** issued by Salisbury Museum, Salisbury. On completion of all fieldwork the content of the finds archive will be reviewed by the museum, and if they are considered worthy of retention then they will be transferred under an allocated accession number. As part of the overall commitment to archive costs, the Client, through AC archaeology, will cover the costs of all museum storage boxes. Material not retained by the museum, or the landowner, will be discarded three months from acceptance of the final report.
- 7.4** If the fieldwork does not expose deposits of archaeological interest and yields little or no artefactual material, then no archive will be prepared or deposited. The results of the fieldwork will be held by the Historic Environment Record in the form of the final report and the creation of an OASIS entry and uploading of the final report.

8. REPORTING

- 8.1** Following the completion of the fieldwork an illustrated summary report on the results of the test pit evaluation and archaeological monitoring and recording will be prepared within 12 weeks of completion on site. The contents of the report will vary depending on the findings, but as a minimum will contain:
- A non-technical summary;
 - Archaeological and historical background;
 - A description of the investigation methodology;
 - A description of results including an assessment of any artefact or palaeoenvironmental analysis undertaken;
 - A plan showing the location of the archaeological investigations;
 - Relevant plans, sections and photographs;
 - A comment on the archaeological importance of the results, with reference to other published archaeological research from the area;

- The OASIS reference number; and,
- An assessment of potential of the finds and archive for further analysis.

8.2 Should any finds or samples be recovered during the investigations then, following an initial assessment by the AC archaeology Finds Manager, the following specialists will contribute to the report as necessary:

- An assessment of any prehistoric ceramics will be provided by Imogen Wood PhD;
- Other ceramics will be assessed by Naomi Payne BA MA PhD MCIfA, Finds Manager, AC archaeology, or other regional specialist as required;
- Land snail analysis, environmental, geoarchaeological and radiocarbon sampling will be carried out by Mike Allen PhD MCIfA FLS FSA;
- Pollen analysis will be carried out by Rob Scaife BSc PhD FRGS;
- General plant macrofossils will be assessed by John Georgi MSc;
- An assessment of worked flint will be carried out by Julian Richards BA FSA MCIfA;
- Metalworking residues will be assessed by Dr Tim Young;
- An assessment of any human remains will be carried out by Charlotte Coles BSc MSc MCIfA;
- An assessment of animal bone will be reported on by Charlotte Coles BSc MSc MCIfA;
- An assessment of metal objects will be undertaken by Naomi Payne BA MA PhD MCIfA; and,
- Coins will be identified by Naomi Payne BA MA PhD MCIfA.

Other finds or environmental reports will be prepared by appropriate specialists or in-house staff as required.

8.3 The report will be submitted in digital (.pdf) format to the WCACA. Digital copies of the report will be produced for distribution to the Client and the Local Planning Authority.

8.4 Details of the project will be submitted to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS). The OASIS number for this project is **539857**.

8.5 In the event that significant remains are recorded then the WCACA may require more detailed analysis and publication of the results. If such remains are encountered, the publication requirements, including any further analysis that may be necessary, will be confirmed by the WCACA and set out in a post-excavation assessment report, which will be prepared within six months of the completion of the fieldwork. A final draft, together with confirmation that it has been accepted by the editor of an appropriate journal or publisher, will be submitted to the WCACA within 18 months of the date of the completion of the fieldwork.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY AND INSURANCE

9.1 Archaeological staff will operate under AC archaeology's Health and Safety Policy. All works will also be carried out in accordance with current Health and Safety legislation, to include (but not exclusively rely upon) the *Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974*, the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999* and the *Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2007*.

9.2 The Project Manager responsible for Health and Safety for AC archaeology is Laurence Vinnels. Laurence is accredited under the *Site Manager's Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS)*.

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the AC archaeology Health and Safety Policy, the AC archaeology site representative will be responsible for ensuring that operations under their control are carried out in accordance with the procedures outlined in 9.1 and in the site-specific risk assessment.

- 9.4** Archaeological staff will not work in unsafe or unhealthy conditions, even where not to do so will result in the possible under-recording of the archaeological resource. Safety helmets, high visibility vests and boots are to be used by all site personnel as necessary. Archaeological staff **must not** enter any area where there is a considered to be a health and safety risk that has not or is not being appropriately mitigated against.
- 9.5** All senior members of staff hold up to date Cat and Genny, banksman, first aid, and asbestos awareness qualifications. AC archaeology is registered as an approved contractor under the Worksafe Health and Safety Scheme (SMAS), Contractor's Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) and CQMS Safety Scheme, as recognised by SSIP (Safety Schemes in Procurement).
- 9.6** AC archaeology carries Public Liability Insurance cover to £5,000,000, Employers Liability to £10,000,000 and Professional Indemnity cover to £5,000,000.

10. PERSONNEL, PROGRAMME AND MONITORING

- 10.1** The project will be managed by Simon Hughes BSc, Director of AC archaeology Ltd. Other personnel will be permanent and contract staff members of AC archaeology, all with suitable experience of this type of investigation and adhering to the ClfA Code of Conduct. The attending archaeologists will familiarise themselves with the content of this document prior to commencing the work.
- 10.2** A date for commencement has not yet been established. The WCACA will be provided at least 2 weeks notice prior to commencement and will be kept up to date on progress as well as the completion of the work.
- 10.3** The project will be monitored by the WCACA who will be informed of the completion of the fieldwork. Any variations to this document shall be agreed with the WCACA before they are carried out. A date of completion of archaeological site work will be confirmed with the WCACA at the time, and the timescale for reporting and archiving will run from that date.

11. COPYRIGHT

- 11.1** AC archaeology Ltd shall retain full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of the report by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be freely copied for planning, development control, education and research purposes without recourse to the Copyright owner subject to all due and appropriate acknowledgements being provided.

12. INSURANCE

- 12.1** AC archaeology carries Public Liability Insurance cover to £5,000,000, Employers Liability to £10,000,000 and Professional Indemnity cover to £5,000,000.

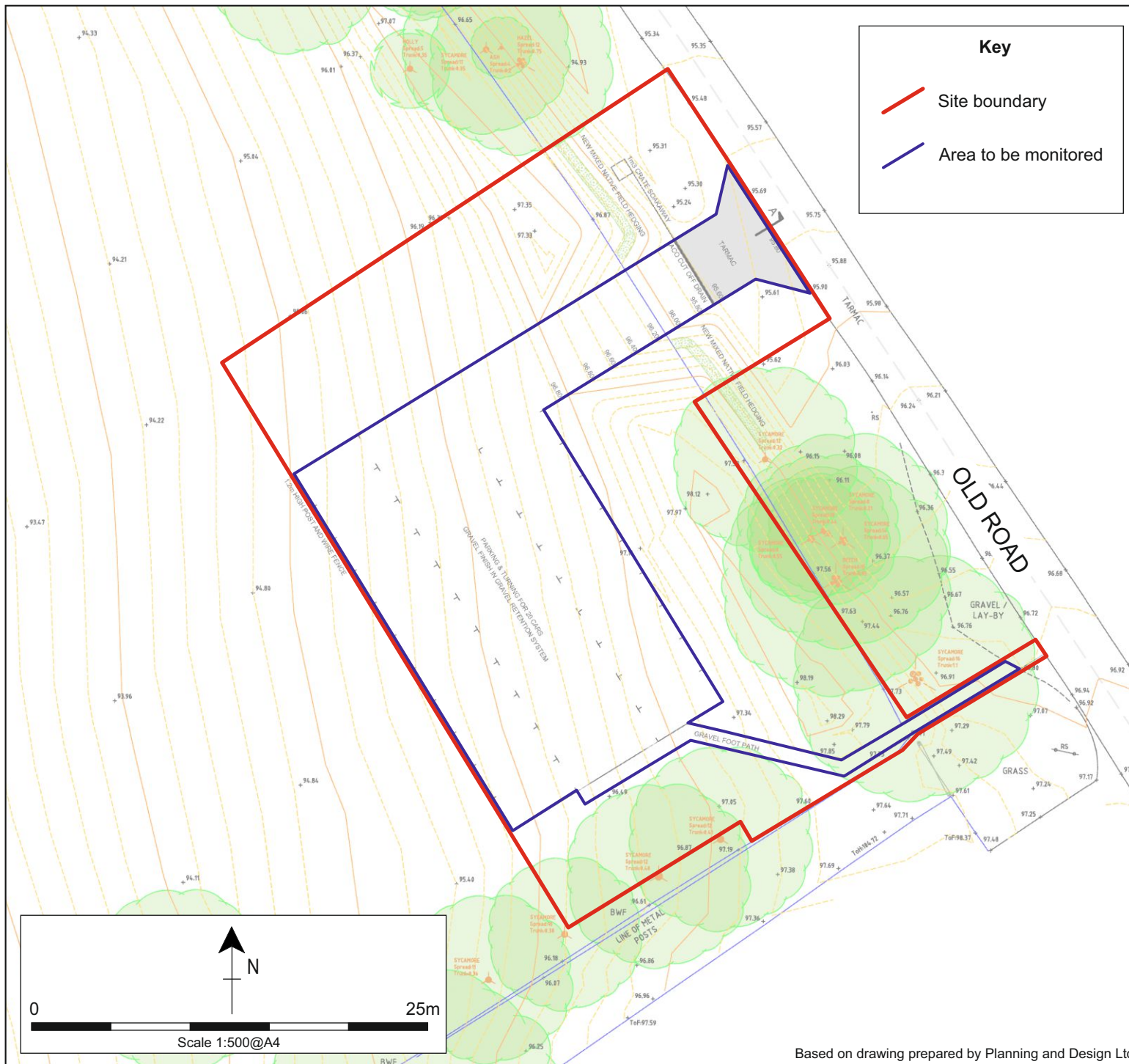
13. SOURCES CONSULTED

AC archaeology, 2014, *General site recording manual version 2*.

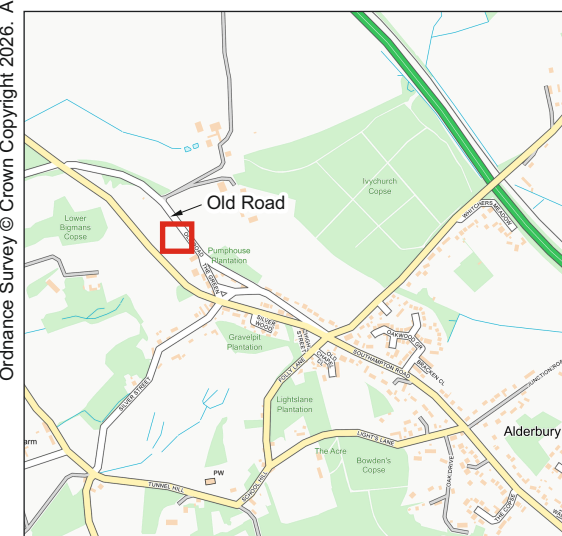
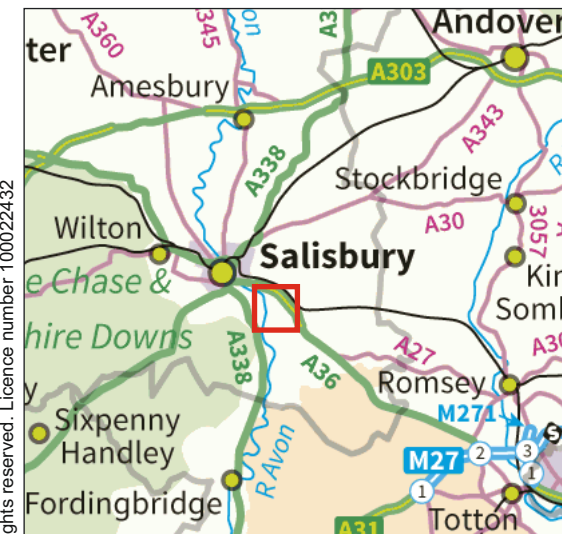
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Version 1
 Laurence Vinnels
 Project Manager
 AC archaeology
 19 January 2026



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PROJECT

The field at Old Road, Alderbury, Wiltshire

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site and area to be monitored

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