

FIVE LANES SOLAR SITE, MALMESBURY, WILTSHIRE

(Centred on NGR ST 9356 8998)

Archaeological Management Plan

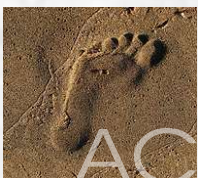
Wiltshire Council planning reference 20/08618/FUL
(Condition 7)

Prepared by:
Laurence Vinnels

On behalf of:
Stark Energy Limited

Report No: ACA0451/1/0

Date: January 2026



archaeology

FIVE LANES SOLAR SITE, MALMESBURY, WILTSHIRE

(Centred on NGR ST 9356 8998)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out an Archaeological Management Plan for the installation of a solar farm on land at Five Lanes Solar Site, Malmesbury, Wiltshire (centred on NGR ST 9356 8998). It represents the management of archaeological exclusion zones required by Wiltshire County Council as Condition 7 of planning permission 20/0861/FUL, following consultation with the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist.
- 1.2 This document has been prepared by AC archaeology and commissioned by Lighthouse Development Consulting on behalf of Stark Energy Limited.
- 1.3 The solar farm is located 2km to the north of Malmesbury. Its design covers an area of approximately 53 hectares and comprises eight agricultural fields situated on land with a general trend of sloping gradually downwards to the south, between 92m and 103m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying solid geology comprises Bathonian limestone and mudstone of the Forest Marble Formation. There are no superficial deposits recorded (British Geological Survey online viewer 2026).
- 1.4 As part of the lead up to the development the site had been the subject of a geophysical survey (Webb 2021) and an archaeological evaluation (Brett 2022). The geophysical survey identified a concentration of activity within approximately the centre of the site that comprised funnel-shaped and square enclosures set within a larger sub-circular enclosure, that contained several further internal anomalies. It was suggested that this enclosure was probably used as a stock enclosure. To the northeast of these enclosures a second enclosure was identified, which was broadly rectangular in shape and contained a number of smaller enclosures of varied shape and size. This enclosure was interpreted as more indicative of settlement activity. A number of linear anomalies were also identified as possibly associated with the enclosures, including a linear that potentially blocked the gap between the enclosures. Elsewhere two curvilinear anomalies, thought to potentially represent round barrows, and ridge and furrow were identified.
- 1.5 The subsequent archaeological evaluation targeted the anomalies identified during the previous geophysical survey. Due to the concentration of settlement activity in the central portion of the site. This area, aside from the route of a proposed access track, was excluded from development. As such only a small number of trenches that targeted the access track were carried out in this zone. These trenches nevertheless exposed a series of archaeological features that were dated from finds recovered to be of Romano-British date. These confirmed the presence of settlement activity, with the finds indicating the main settlement was focussed during the 2nd to 3rd century AD date, but with some indication of potential occupation during the 1st to 2nd century and 3rd to 4th century. Ditches identified to the south of the enclosures possibly represent an associated north to south aligned trackway or driveway, and elsewhere possible field systems associated with the settlement. Further features of this period representing plot boundaries were also identified in several trenches surrounding the main focus of activity.

- 1.6 Undated features consisting of a ditch and two postholes were recorded in Trench 53. These were recorded in proximity to an interpreted ring ditch representing possible prehistoric barrow remains identified immediately to the west and outside of the site. The activity exposed in Trench 53 was interpreted as of potential association with the adjacent ring ditch. Based on these results, this part of the site was also excluded from settlement.
- 1.7 This archaeological management plan has been prepared in consultation with the Historic England guidance document *Preserving Archaeological Remains: Decision-taking for Sites under Development* (2016) - <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/preserving-archaeological-remains/>.
- 1.8 Following consultation with the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist a management programme has been prepared that will include the following items:
1. Protection prior to and during construction;
 2. Protection following construction phase; and,
 3. Protection prior to and during decommissioning.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The objective of the Archaeological Management plan is to ensure the principal archaeological features identified by the geophysical survey and subsequent archaeological evaluation are protected during construction, use and decommissioning of the solar farm. To achieve this this document sets out methodology for the protection of two areas excluded from the development (Fig. 1).

Protection prior to and during construction

- 2.2 Prior to works commencing, the areas excluded from development will be plotted by AC archaeology, who will brief the construction management team on the archaeological constraints.
- 2.3 The areas will be demarcated with HERAS fencing to ensure that there will be no solar PV panels located within these areas, as well as to ensure that no excavation, plant movement, or the storage of materials will be carried out. The HERAS fence barrier will be maintained until the completion of the construction phase.
- 2.4 An access track, shown on Figure 1, will be installed within one of the areas excluded from the development. The previous archaeological trench evaluation demonstrated that features along the route of the access track were sealed by soil overburden at a depth of between 0.38-0.45m below existing levels. The construction of the access track will comprise the excavation of up to 0.2m below ground surface to install permeable gravel surfacing. The works for the access track are anticipated to be entirely contained within soil overburden, with no impact to the archaeological remains. Archaeological monitoring during the excavation of the access track will be maintained to ensure that no deeper excavations than the planned 0.2m below existing levels are carried out and to recover any artefacts present within the overlying excavated soils. This work will be carried out in accordance with a Project Design.

Protection following construction phase

- 2.5 During the use of the solar farm following construction, should any works be carried out within the areas excluded from the development Stark Energy Limited, or any subsequent stakeholder, should seek the advice of the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist.

Protection prior to and during decommissioning

- 2.6 Prior to works commencing, the areas excluded from development and the area of 'no dig' construction will be plotted by an appointed archaeological contractor, who will brief the construction management team on the archaeological constraints. The areas will be demarcated with HERAS fencing to ensure that there will be no excavation, plant movement, or storage of

materials. The HERAS fence barrier will be maintained until the completion of the decommissioning phase.

3. SOURCES CONSULTED

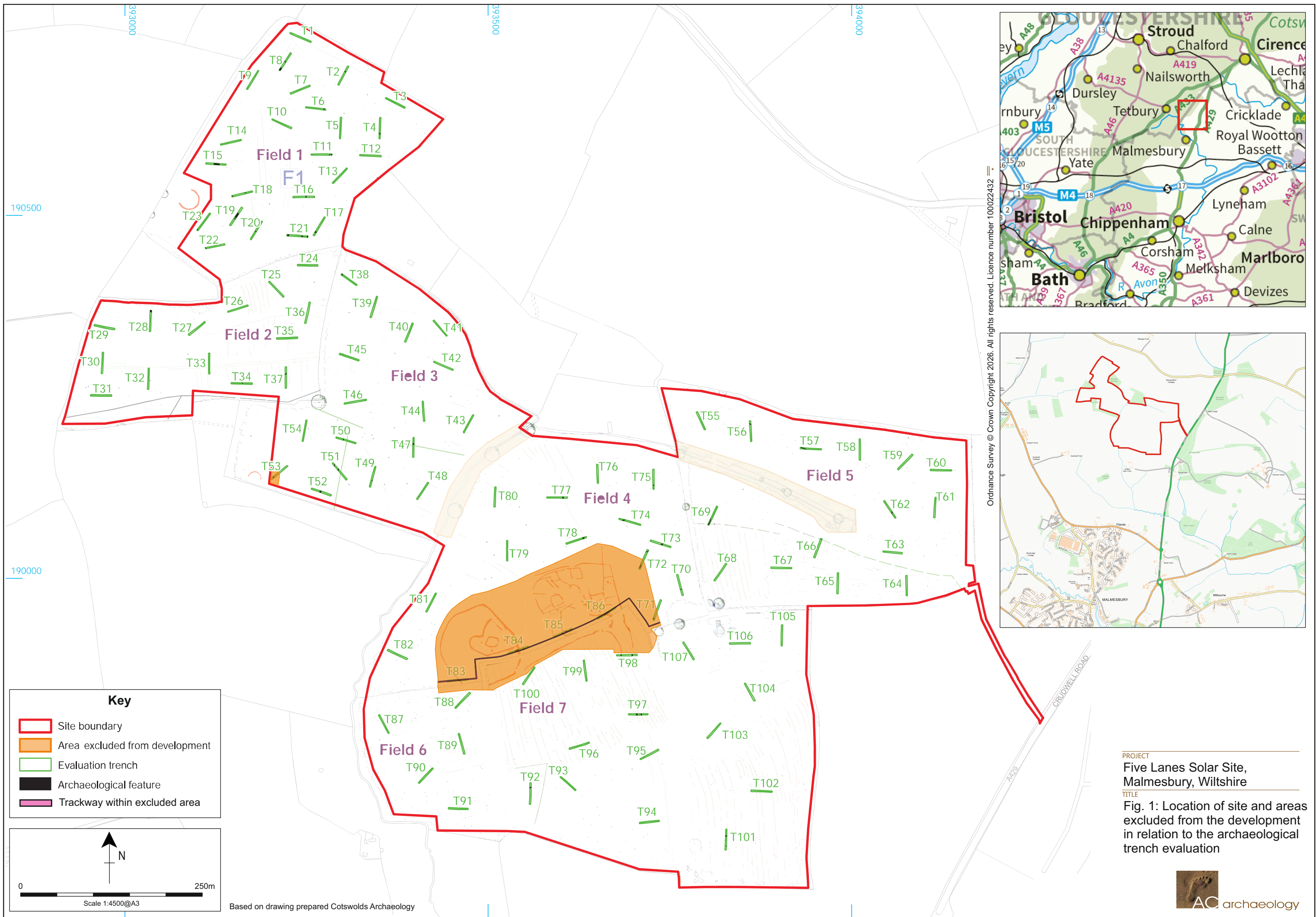
British Geological Survey Online Viewer, accessed January 2026, www.bgs.ac.uk.

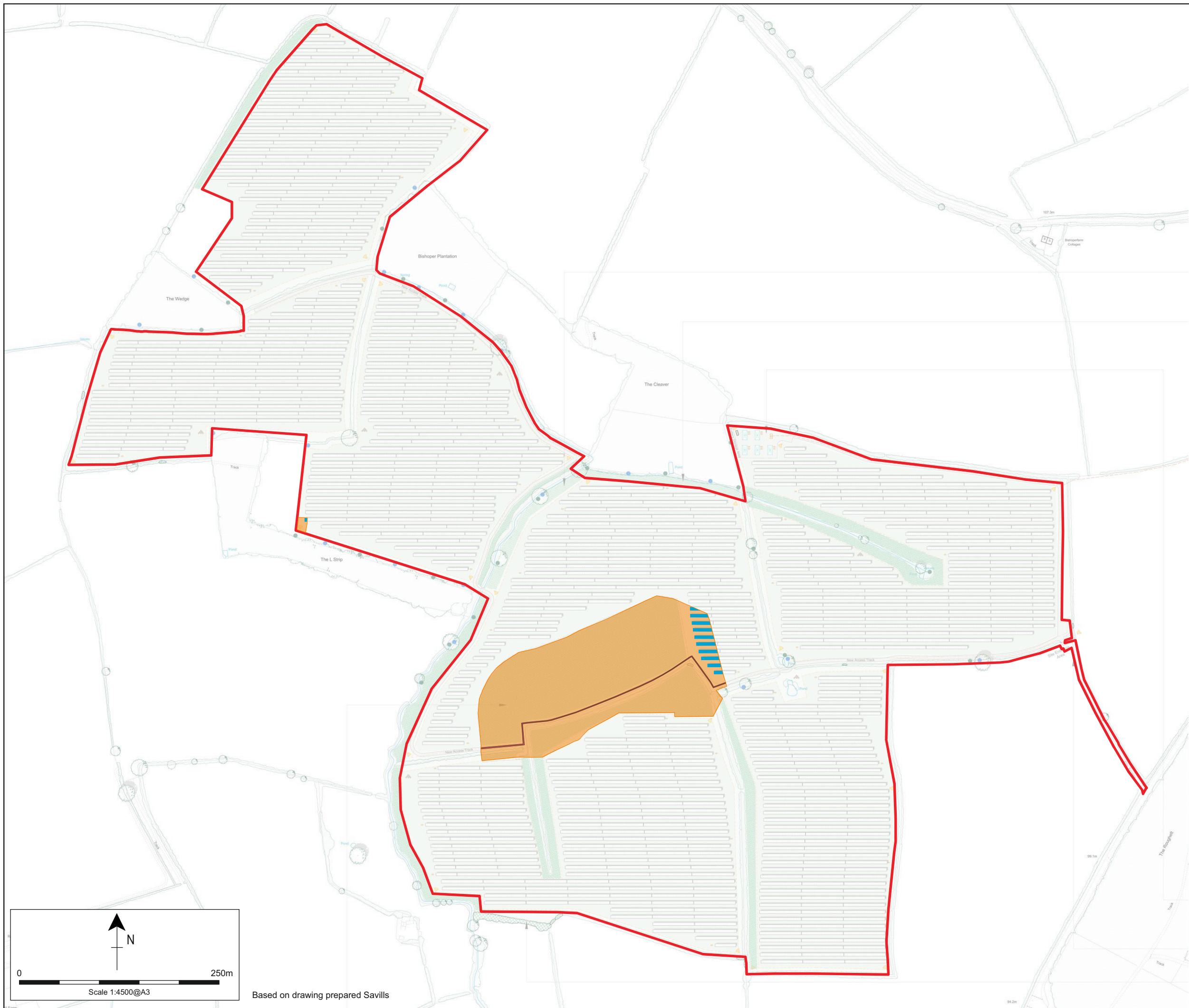
Brett, M., 2022, *Five Lanes Solar Site, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished Cotswold Archaeology report ref. CR1155_1.

Historic England. 2016. *Preserving archaeological remains: Decision-taking for sites under development*. Swindon. Historic England.

Webb, A., 2021, *Five Lanes Solar Project, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Geophysical Survey Report*. Unpublished Headland Archaeology report.

Version 1
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16 January 2026





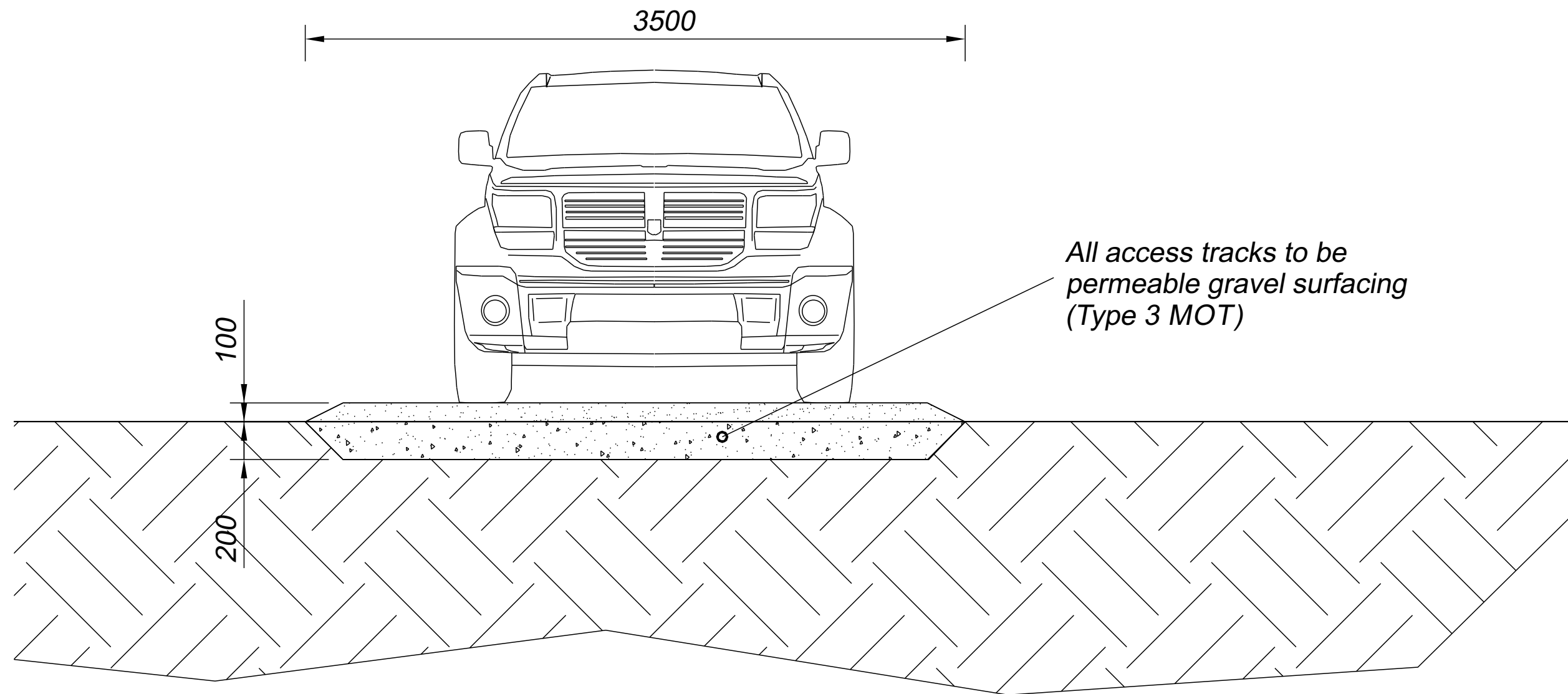
Key

- Site boundary
- Area excluded from development
- Trackway within excluded area
- Solar PV panels to be removed from the final design

PROJECT
Five Lanes Solar Site,
Malmesbury, Wiltshire

TITLE
Fig. 2: Location of areas
excluded from the development
in relation to the development
plan





0 1m
Scale 1:25@A3

Based on drawing prepared Lighthouse Development Consulting

PROJECT
Five Lanes Solar Site,
Malmesbury, Wiltshire
TITLE

Fig. 3: Construction specification
for the access tracks

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