

PV & Lagoon Proposal, Tottenham Estate, Marlborough, Wiltshire

Project specification for an archaeological excavation

13th February 2026
Rev. 2nd March 2026
Rev.2 17th March 2026



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Proposal for an archaeological excavation

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Planning permission (ref. PL/2025/03471) was granted on 30th October 2025 by Wiltshire Council to deliver a PV array, drainage lagoon and water main connection in association with the restoration and operational requirements of Tottenham House and Estate, Marlborough, Wiltshire (SU 2500 6457) (Fig. 1) (Planning ref. (PL/2025/03471)). As the proposed infrastructure is located outside of the red line boundary for Tottenham House and Estate granted under the extant masterplan (ref: 17/12461/OUT) and associated listed building consent (ref: 18/00195/LBC), a standalone application for Full Planning Permission was submitted and permission subsequently granted.

Condition 6 attached to Full Planning Permission (PL/2025/03471) states that:

No development shall commence within the area indicated by application PL/2025/03471 until:

- a) A program 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 by the Local Planning Authority; and*
- b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

After the initial phase of works (archaeological evaluation) revealed a number of features in one trench in the south of the area affected, a targeted excavation area is proposed in advance of groundworks due to the potential disturbance and destruction of surviving below-ground archaeological features.

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in an Archaeology Statement prepared by BSA Heritage using the results of an HER search and a geophysical survey in 2024. In summary, the site is located in the archaeologically rich Upper Thames Valley, which has received much archaeological attention and within the extensive Grade II* Tottenham House and Savernake Forest Registered Park and Garden. Past investigations of the site confirmed a range of activity within the wider park, including a Roman road which runs from north west to south east immediately south west of the site. Trial trenching undertaken to the east of Tottenham House itself identified an area of Roman pottery kilns.

Other investigations have suggested the Savernake Forest was a centre for Iron Age and Roman pottery production, with a recent investigation confirming Roman features within the scheduled area (Hood 2020). It has also been suggested that a Roman villa may be sited to the south of the main house, after a tessellated floor was exposed in the 19th century. However, no further indicators of such a high-status structure have since come to light.

- 1.2 From the wider area evidence for Mesolithic through to Iron Age activity and sites has been identified, including finds of worked flint, a Neolithic causewayed enclosure and Bronze Age barrows – trial trenching to the southeast of the site identified two areas of Bronze Age occupation focussed on higher ground.

Past analysis of aerial photographs has indicated numerous features within the Registered parkland and Site itself. These include a complex of cropmarks including possible enclosures and other linear features within the Site which may reflect late prehistoric or Roman sub-surface features. The HER records these as representing a D-shaped enclosure, field system and trackways. The enclosure appeared to contain a circular feature and to have had a bank and (outer) ditch. Other linear features to its south are thought to include a medieval boundary.

Given the high archaeological potential, a geophysical survey was commissioned and completed by SUMO Services (2024) across the Site. This revealed a number of magnetic responses, which were interpreted as being of archaeological interest and were thought to include ditches and possible pits. On morphological and contextual grounds, the remains were thought to be later prehistoric or Roman.

An archaeological evaluation consisting of 30 twenty five metres long trial trenches targeted on areas affected by the proposal was subsequently carried out across the site (Manisse and Huvig 2025). This indicates that none of the geophysical anomalies which would be affected by the proposal reflect significant surviving sub-surface archaeological features. Although a number of prehistoric struck flints were recovered, these areas of the site

have minimal archaeological potential and no further response would be appropriate. However, the trial trenching did identify a small number of cut features, of certain or possible archaeological interest in Trench 15 in the south of the site. These features were dated to the late Saxon or Saxo-Norman period and are of local, if not greater significance.

- 1.3 The underlying geology is recorded as Newhaven Chalk Formation – Chalk to the west of the site and Lambeth Group - Clay, silt and sand to the east (BGS 2006). The site lies at a height of between 165m and 155m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2.0 Requirement for the work

- 2.1 As a consequence of the presence of significant archaeological deposits in Trench 15 which may be damaged or destroyed by proposed service links and planting, it is proposed that an archaeological excavation is to be carried out as detailed in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2025) and the Council's policies on archaeology.

This project design is in response to the results of the field evaluation. Due to the positive findings of the initial component of works further archaeological investigation has been requested after consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council. This document is concerned with the archaeological excavation phase of archaeological works.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 It is proposed to excavate one area 30m by 30m (900 sq m) centred on Trench 15 (Figs. 2 and 3).

- 3.2 General Objectives:

The general objectives of the project are to:

- Excavate and record archaeological deposits within the excavation area;
- Produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site;
- Establish the character of these deposits in an attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc;

Produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.

- 3.2.1 The excavation and post-excavation project will:

- Set out the archaeological background to the site drawing together the results of previous archaeological work in the vicinity of the site;
- Complete a site archive of all project records, artefacts, ecofacts, any other sample residues and summaries of the context, artefact and environmental records;
- Complete an assessment report on the site archive and its potential to answer the research questions and for further analysis.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 It is proposed to target one area for archaeological investigation as can be seen on Figures 2 and 3.

4.2 The excavation area will be stripped of topsoil and overburden using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. If wheeled plant (dumpers) are used to remove spoil these will not be allowed to track over un-stripped areas of the site during wet weather when deep rutting may occur. Provision will be made for dumpers to use haul roads, or a causeway constructed to remove rutting of the subsoil. Bulldozers may be used to remove spoil in wet conditions.

4.2.1 If clearly significant features are revealed on the edge of the initial area of investigation, it may be necessary to extend the area excavated to clarify the nature of these features. However, the exact scope of any extension to the original excavation area will be agreed following discussions with the client and the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council. It may be decided that the exposed area should be investigated ahead of any decision on extending the overall area.

4.2.1 The area will then be hand-cleaned by archaeological staff as appropriate, to expose any potential features. Machines will not be allowed to track over the stripped area until the fieldwork has been completed. Spoil will be stored close to the excavation area, as decided by the client.

4.3 Archaeological Excavation

4.3.1 All archaeological features will be planned and sectioned as a minimum objective, with their treatment being in line with the guidance issued in Wiltshire Archaeology general standards for archaeological fieldwork projects.

4.3.2 Full excavation of isolated, discrete features such as pits and postholes (less than 2 sq m in area) not belonging to structures or activities discussed in paragraph 4.3.4 (below) will take place following half-sectioning and recording.

4.3.3 Sampling of linear features such as ditches and gullies relating to settlement activity (ie rich deposits) will be a minimum of 25%. Other linear features such as field boundaries will be sampled at a minimum of 10%. The linear features will be excavated in 1-3 m. wide slots. All termini and intersections will be examined. Sampling of large features such as quarry pits will be by machine, but will be carried out in consultation with the client and the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council.

4.3.4 Any deposits relating to funerary/ritual activities such as burials and cremation deposits and domestic/industrial activity such as walls, postholes, floors, middens, walls, hearths, ring gullies, or sunken featured buildings will be fully excavated. Discrete features such as cremation deposits will be 100% sampled for subsequent analysis. Discrete features of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age date will be fully excavated.

4.3.5 Discovery of any human remains will be reported to the coroner. Any subsequent excavation of human remains will be carried out following receipt of the appropriate Ministry of Justice licence. Recovery and recording methodologies for human remains will follow standard procedures identified by Mitchell and Brickley (2017) and TVAS Field Recording Manual (9th edition 2021). Any human remains that have to be removed will not be reinterred. They will be retained and securely stored by TVAS until deposited with Wiltshire Museum.

4.3.6 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained. At the post-excavation stage (see 4.7 below) some classes of building material, such as brick and tile or flint nodules may be discarded after recording with only a representative sample being retained. The discarding of materials will only be undertaken with the consent of the relevant specialist and the approval from the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council.

4.3.7 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in First Aid For Finds with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to our conservation advisor (see below).

4.3.8 A programme of environmental sampling will take place should sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits be located. Typically, this involves samples of 40L depending on the size of the feature examined. This will take place after a consultation with our environmental specialists and the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council. Where appropriate, the advice of the Historic England regional science advisor will be sought. Sampling will take place according to Historic England guidance (HE 2015a).

4.3.9 It is possible that unusual or important deposits (such as peat or waterlogged deposits) will be encountered in deep features. Should these be present, a programme of sampling under the guidance of our specialists will

take place in consultation with the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council. Where appropriate, the advice of the Historic England regional science advisor will be sought.

- 4.3.10 Metal detectors will be used by in-house staff or locally approved metal detector clubs to enhance the recovery of metal finds. All gold and silver, prehistoric base metal and any associated objects will be removed to a safe place and reported to the client, local coroner, county finds liaison officer and archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council, according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act (1996) and subsequent amendments. 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. No title will be assumed by the finder of any items of value. Metal detectors will primarily be used to search hand excavated spoil, although site surveys may also be undertaken, with a log kept of any features surveyed and the results.

4.4 Recording Methodology

- 4.4.1 A single context recording system will be used in accordance with the TVAS Field Recording Manual (9th edition 2021). Descriptions of individual deposits and features will be recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets.
- 4.4.2 All archaeological deposits exposed will be planned using a Korec real time GPS unit with sub decimetre accuracy. Where more complex archaeological features or deposits are encountered such as (but not limited to) wood, structures or skeletal remains, additional hand planning will be undertaken on drafting film at an appropriate scale. These hand planned areas will then be tied in to the general plan using specific geo-located planning points. Sections of all archaeological features will be drawn at a scale of 1:10 on drafting film.
- 4.4.3 Heights above OD will be taken and recorded on plans and sections. Heights will be taken using a Korec real time GPS unit with sub decimetre accuracy during the planning process (see 4.4.2).
- 4.4.4 Where appropriate, significant finds will be recorded in 3D. This will consist of multiple photos taken in appropriate lighting/weather conditions at different heights and angles to give good coverage of the entire object. The photos will then be stitched together using an appropriate photogrammetry programme allowing a 3D reconstruction of the object.
- 4.4.5 The location of the excavation areas, and of all plans and sections will be tied into the National Grid.
- 4.4.6 The photographic record will consist of digital images. It will record the principal features and finds discovered, both in detail and in their general context. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' and, where applicable, aerial photographs to illustrate the nature of the archaeological fieldwork programme.
- 4.4.7 All feature shots will include appropriate scales and a photo board, the latter positioned in such a way that the writing is legible and including the context number and site code. Digital images are taken on Canon EOS 4000D cameras with APS-C sensors taking 16-megapixel images. Digital working shots will also be taken during the fieldwork which will be forwarded to the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council for training and outreach purposes, if requested.

4.5 Post-fieldwork

- 4.5.1 Finds processing, environmental sample processing and analysis will commence immediately following the completion of the fieldwork in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015a), CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020) and TVAS post-excavation procedures (6th edition 2013) with the results included within the report.
- 4.5.2 Artefacts/ecofacts will be cleaned, conserved and prepared for long term museum storage.
- 4.5.3 Specialist reports will be prepared on the artefacts recovered. Particular attention will be paid to correlating the pottery recovered with local or regional fabric type sequences that have already been established for this area.
- 4.5.4 Provision for scientific (radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic and OSL) dating has been included in the project funding and will be called upon if and when necessary.
- 4.5.5 A Post-excavation Assessment report and Updated Project Design on the results of the fieldwork should

be available within two-three months following completion of the fieldwork. The report will be forwarded to and following discussion, will be agreed with the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council. A programme for any further post-excavation analysis and archive preparation will be agreed the advisor and client.

- 4.5.6 Within up to 15 months of the completion of the fieldwork a comprehensive report to publication standard will be produced. This will comprise of a descriptive text and illustrations of the stratigraphic sequence with its interpretation, catalogues, specialist reports, distribution plans of the finds, and any available environmental information followed by a discussion and interpretation of the results.

4.6 POST-FIELDWORK ASSESSMENT

- 4.6.1 Following the ordering of the site archive, a short summary will be prepared giving a preliminary account of the excavation findings and brief outlines of the artefactual and environmental data collected, as set out in MoRPHE (HE 2015a). Post-fieldwork will be completed according to TVAS post-fieldwork manual (6th edition 2013).
- 4.6.2 Discussion will take place between all specialist members of the Project Team (see 7.0 below), to assess the quality, character, and significance of the various data collected, and the degree to which it will enable the research aims to be addressed.
- 4.6.3 At this stage it may be possible to identify classes of material which will not fulfil their potential for information retrieval and allow resources to be re-allocated where they will be most beneficial.
- 4.6.4 Formal post excavation assessment documents or interim reports will be produced following completion of the fieldwork depending on the scale of any findings made.
- 4.6.5 A digital (pdf) version will be supplied to Wiltshire HER on the understanding that the report can be copied for *bona fide* research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download on the TVAS web site.
- 4.6.6 A digital version of the report will be provided to the OASIS project.

5.0 Report and Dissemination

- 5.1 A full report on the results of the excavation should be available within 2 years of completion of the fieldwork. This will incorporate the detailed results of the evaluation where coincident with the excavation areas, with a summary of the results of other evaluation trenches
- 5.2 The reports will follow our established format, comprising a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices.
- 5.3 The text will address the aims and objectives of the evaluation, the methodology employed, describe the basic nature of the archaeological deposits discovered, and report on the artefacts recovered. It will then attempt to place the significance of the findings in their local, regional and national setting if appropriate.
- 5.4 The reports will include a front sheet providing the following information:

- *Site name
- *District and Parish
- *Planning reference
- *Grid reference
- *Site activity (e.g. evaluation trenching, geophysical survey, fieldwalking, watching brief, excavation etc.)
- *Date and duration of project
- *Site code
- *Area of site
- *Summary of results

*Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)

*Location and reference of archive

5.5 The illustrations will include:

*A site location plan

*Plans showing the locations of all features excavated

*Detailed plans of areas of interest and/or complexity

*Sections of a representative range of features in general including any of particular interest and/or complexity

*Detailed plans of inhumation burials

*Distribution maps of various artefact classes as appropriate

5.6 Catalogues giving descriptions of archaeological features and artefacts will be contained in a series of appendices alongside full descriptions contained within the main body of the report.

5.7 Any findings of national or special local significance will be published as a dedicated report in an appropriate journal such as *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*. Otherwise, a summary as defined in Management of Archaeological Projects 2, Appendix 7.1 will be produced for publication in 'round up' sections in publications such as *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* or period specific national journals such as *Medieval Archaeology*.

5.8 Copies of the results will be supplied to Wiltshire HER in digital format. Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download on the TVAS web site. The trench plans in GIS Shape file format will also be supplied to the HER

5.9 Details will be supplied to the OASIS project.

5.10 A summary report of c.150-300 words will be sent to the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council on completion of the fieldwork, which will contain a brief description of the results of the project, with particular emphasis on the distribution of archaeological features found across the site.

5.11 Information will be made available to interested local historical or archaeological societies, along with members of the local community, including the opportunity to visit the fieldwork should this be requested. This is in keeping with the requirements of the recent *National Planning Policy Framework*, although due to health and safety considerations, and the possible issue of commercial confidentiality, any dissemination of information or arranging of site visits will only take place following consultation with the client and the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council.

6.0 Archive Deposition

6.1 The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015b), CIfA guidance (CIfA 2020), TVAS Data Management Plan 2024-6 (TVAS 2024) and after consultation with the recipient museum.

6.2 The site and finds archive will be deposited with Wiltshire Museum with Accession Number DZSWS:12-2026

6.3 With the consent of the landowner, the site finds will be deposited with Wiltshire Museum. A provision for the payment of deposition fees required by the receiving museum is included in the project.

6.4 The prior evaluation archive will be integrated with the excavation archive prior to deposition.

7.0 PROJECT TEAM

Project Management Dr. Steve Ford, Andy Taylor or David Sanchez

Fieldwork director (from)(one of) Mr Andrew Taylor, Dr. Steve Ford, Dr Pierre Manisse, Ms Maisie Foster, Mr Jamie Williams, Ms Sophie Peng, Mr. Tom Stewart or Ms Emily Gibson

Pottery Specialist	Dr. Jane Timby, Ms Sue Anderson, Mr Rob Perrin, Mr. Luke Barber, Ms Lorraine Mephram, Dr Barbara McNee (consultants) or Dr Cristina Mateos-Leal(TVAS)
Struck Flint Specialist	Dr. Steve Ford
Stone Specialist	Dr. Kevin Haywood (Consultant)
Metalwork Specialist	Ms Sophie Peng (TVAS) or Dr. Robin Taylor (consultant)
Carbonised Plant Remains	Professor Mark Robinson (University of Oxford) or Rossy McKenna (consultants) or Ms Molly Larkin (TVAS)
Mollusc Remains	Professor Mark Robinson, (University of Oxford)
Faunal Remains	Dr Matilda Holmes (consultant) or Ms Harriet Wright (TVAS)
Human Remains	Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Pollen Remains	Quest, (Reading University)
Soil Micromorphology	Quest, (Reading University)
Radiocarbon dating	Queens University, Belfast
Archaeomagnetic dating	Bradford University
Stable Isotopes	Ms Mikaila Walker (consultant)
Conservation	Wiltshire County Council Conservation Centre

8.0 GENERAL ITEMS

8.1 Health and Safety

All site operations will be carried out in a safe manner in accordance with TVAS health and safety policy and current Health and Safety legislation. A risk assessment will be prepared before commencement on site.

8.2 Professional standards

The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIFA Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation (2020b) and Code of Conduct (2019) and the quality control mechanisms set out in the TVAS fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals.

8.4 Insurance Cover

Insurance cover comprises £10m for public liability, £10m for employee liability, cover for any hired-in plant and professional indemnity cover for £5m.

8.5 Press Release

Should any significant archaeological deposits be located, a press release will be prepared in consultation with the County archaeological advisor and the client.

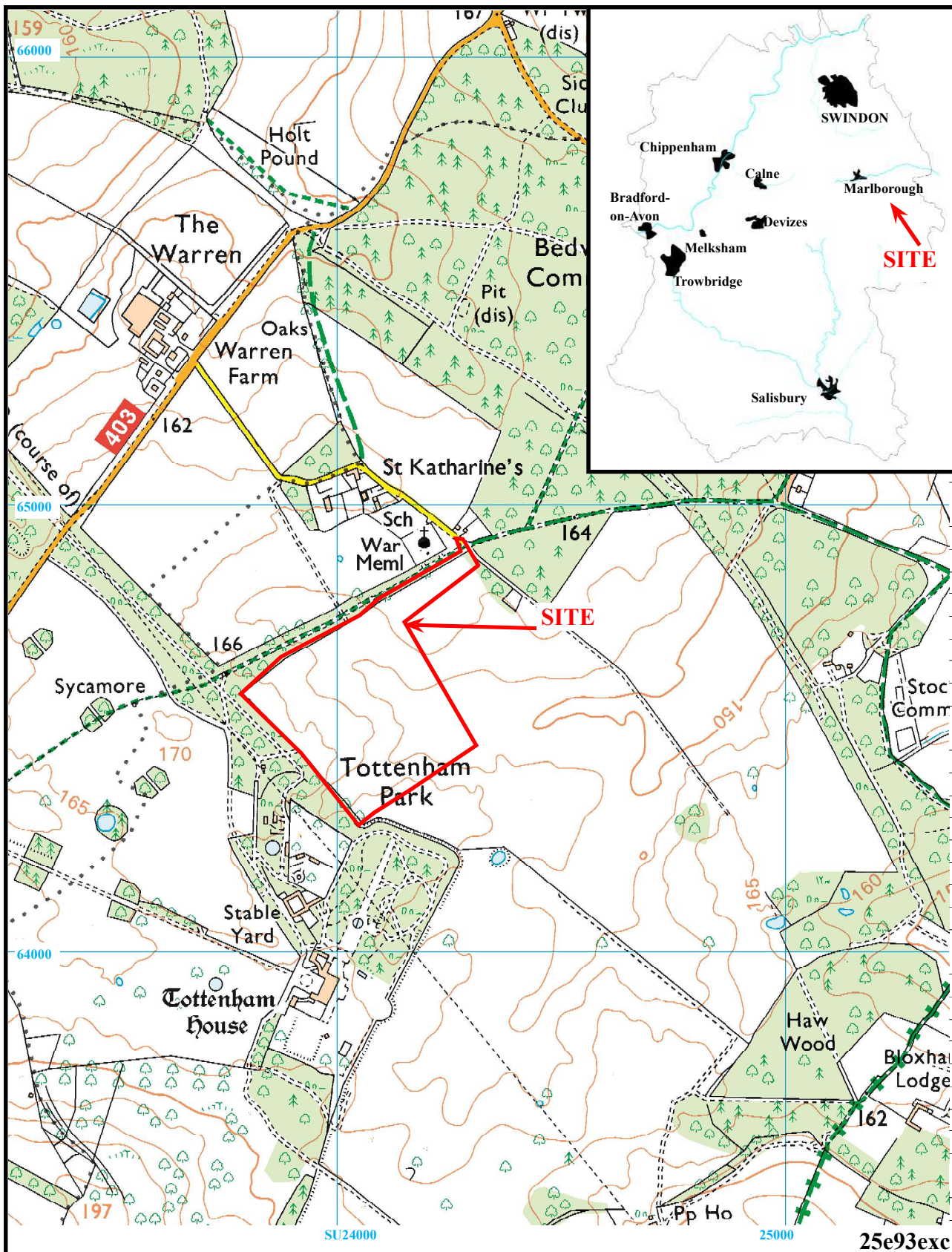
8.6 Monitoring

The fieldwork and post-fieldwork will be monitored by BSA Heritage and the archaeological advisor to Wiltshire Council and all reasonable access will be provided to the works. The archaeological advisor to the Council will be contacted both prior to work commencing on site, and during the recording action itself, to arrange a site monitoring visit.

9.0 REFERENCES

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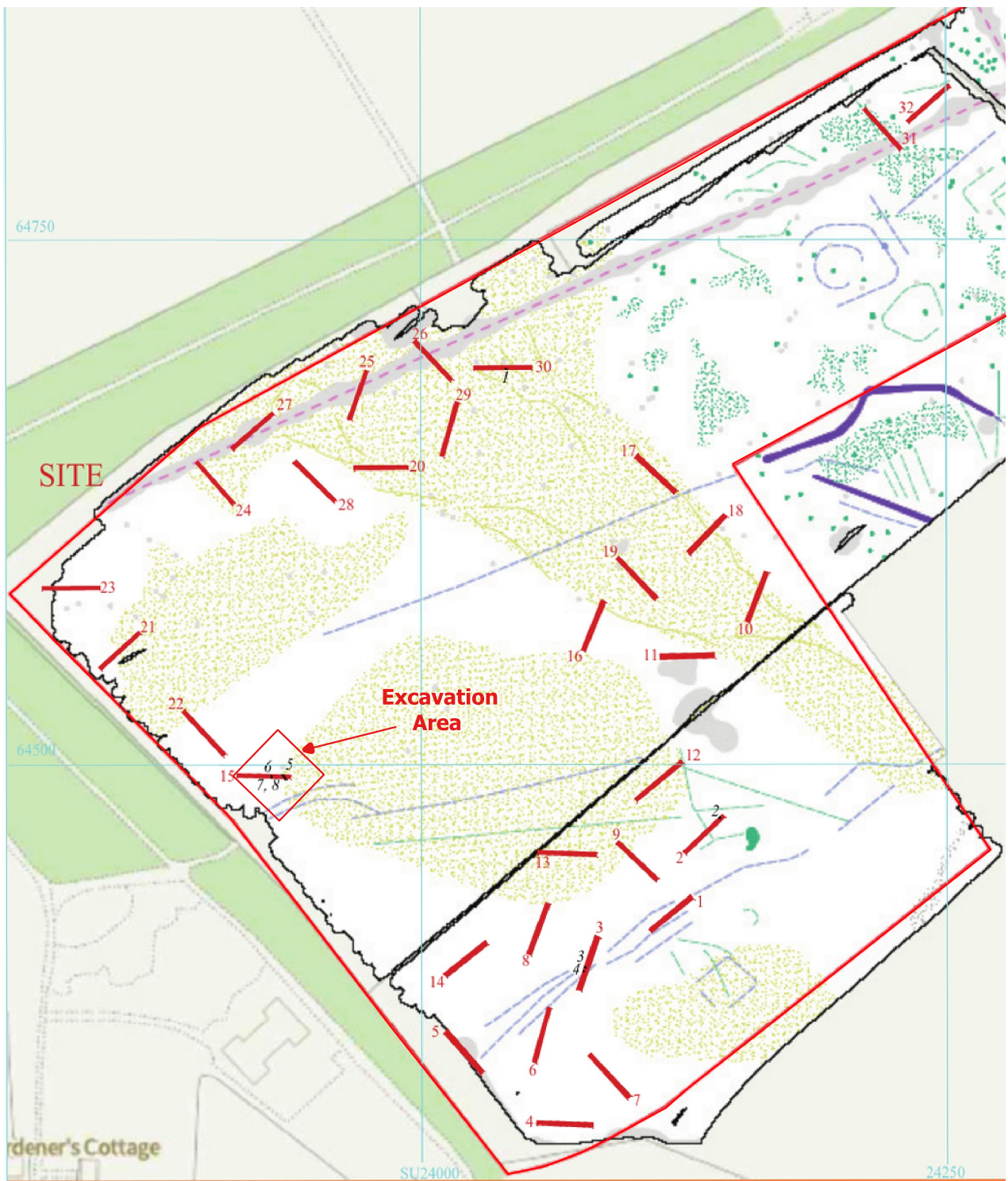
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**Land at Tottenham Estate,
Marlborough, Wiltshire, 2026**
Proposal for an Archaeological Excavation.
 Figure 1. Location of site within Marlborough and Wiltshire.

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**Land at Tottenham Estate,
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site showing Excavation Area,
trenches and Geophysical Survey results.

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