

**PRIORY FARM SOLAR FARM, GRAVELEY LANE AND EAST OF
GREAT WYMONDLEY, NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE**

**SPECIFICATION FOR A PROGRAMME OF TARGETED
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

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Report prepared for

AGR Solar 4 Ltd.

by R. D. Savage

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PCAS Archaeology Ltd
47, Manor Road
Saxilby
Lincoln
LN1 2HX

Tel. (01522) 703 800
e-mail info@pcas-archaeology.co.uk

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Summary

A programme of targeted archaeological excavation is to take place in advance of the construction of a solar array on land at Priory Farm, off Graveley Lane to the east of Great Wymondley in the district of North Hertfordshire. These works are required as a condition of planning permission for the development, and follow on from a Heritage Impact Assessment, a geophysical survey and a targeted trial trench evaluation that identified three areas containing concentrated archaeological remains.

The site lies within an area of archaeological interest, within which Roman and medieval remains are known to be present. A Roman settlement site, including a cremation cemetery, was identified in the 19th century immediately to the west of the application area, and the course of a Roman road runs a short distance to the east. The Scheduled Monument of Great Wymondley Castle, a medieval motte-and-bailey castle with an associated manorial enclosure, stands at the eastern edge of Great Wymondley village, approximately 250m to the west of the south-western corner of the northern part of the application area, while western edge of the southern part skirts the Scheduled Monument of Wymondley Priory, an Augustinian priory established as a hospital in the early 13th century. A conduit wellhead associated with the priory is located close to the western edge of the site.

A programme of archaeological evaluation trenching, targeted on the results of a geophysical survey, has already been carried out on the site and recorded significant remains, all of Iron Age to Roman date, in three areas. One of these areas was found to be sealed by deposits deep enough to protect it from disturbance by the proposed development groundworks, but Areas 2 and 3 are less deeply buried. A programme of targeted archaeological excavation is to be undertaken within these two areas, in order to preserve the archaeological remains identified there by record before the commencement of development.

No significant archaeological remains were identified outside of the three main areas referred to above and consequently no other parts of the site are considered to require any form of archaeological mitigation works

1.0 Introduction

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by AGR Solar 4 Ltd. to prepare a specification for a targeted archaeological excavation in advance of the construction of a solar array on land at Priory Farm, off Graveley Lane to the east of Great Wymondley in the district of North Hertfordshire. These works are required as a condition of planning permission for the development, and follow on from a Heritage Impact Assessment, a geophysical survey and a targeted trial trench evaluation that identified three areas containing concentrated archaeological remains (Wolf, 2025).

Given the potential significance of the archaeological remains present within the Site, further consultation was undertaken with NHDC and the Hertfordshire County Council Senior Historic Environment Advisor, acting as the archaeological advisor to NHDC. Following on from this, and in accordance with a Brief provided by the Historic Environment Adviser, an outline mitigation strategy was established, including preserving in-situ the remains located within the three areas (1-3) of archaeology identified by the geophysical survey. A programme of archaeological evaluation trenching has already been carried out on the site, and a further scheme of targeted archaeological excavation has been compiled in the light of the evaluation results. The results of the trial trenching suggest that the remains present in Area 1 are buried at sufficient depth and are robust enough in nature to enable standard micro-piling of the solar panels in this area, without the need for concrete feet. However, remains exposed in Areas 1 and 2 are considered to be vulnerable to both piling operations and, due to the shallow depth of overburden, construction operations associated with the installation of concrete feet, including potential rutting and compaction. The remains in this area would also be impacted by cable trenching. No significant archaeological remains were identified outside of the three main areas referred to above and consequently no other parts of the site are considered to require any form of archaeological mitigation works.

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) follows current best practice and appropriate national guidance including:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012, revised 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025;
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct, revised 2014, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022;
- CIfA Standard for Archaeological Excavation, 2023;
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE ver. 1.2, 2015);

2.0 Site Location and Description (figs. 1 and 2)

The proposed solar farm is located on agricultural land at Priory Farm in the civil parish of Wymondley, between the villages of Great Wymondley to the north-west, Little Wymondley to the south and Graveley to the east. It is located to the north-west of Junction 8 of the A1(M), which runs along the eastern side of the proposed development, at a central National Grid Reference of TL 22461 28489.

The proposed solar array will occupy two irregular areas, one to the north and one to the south of Graveley Lane. The northern area consists of three fields, bounded by the Hertfordshire Way to the north and north-east, with agricultural land on all sides except for the short eastern boundary, which adjoins the A1(M). The southern area consists of two fields, both adjoining the A1(M) to the east with agricultural land to the south and west: the western border of this area skirts the remains of a medieval priory. A cable route runs

southwards from the western edge of the solar farm along existing roads to Little Wymondley and then to the National Grid Wymondley Transforming Station near St. Ippolyts village.

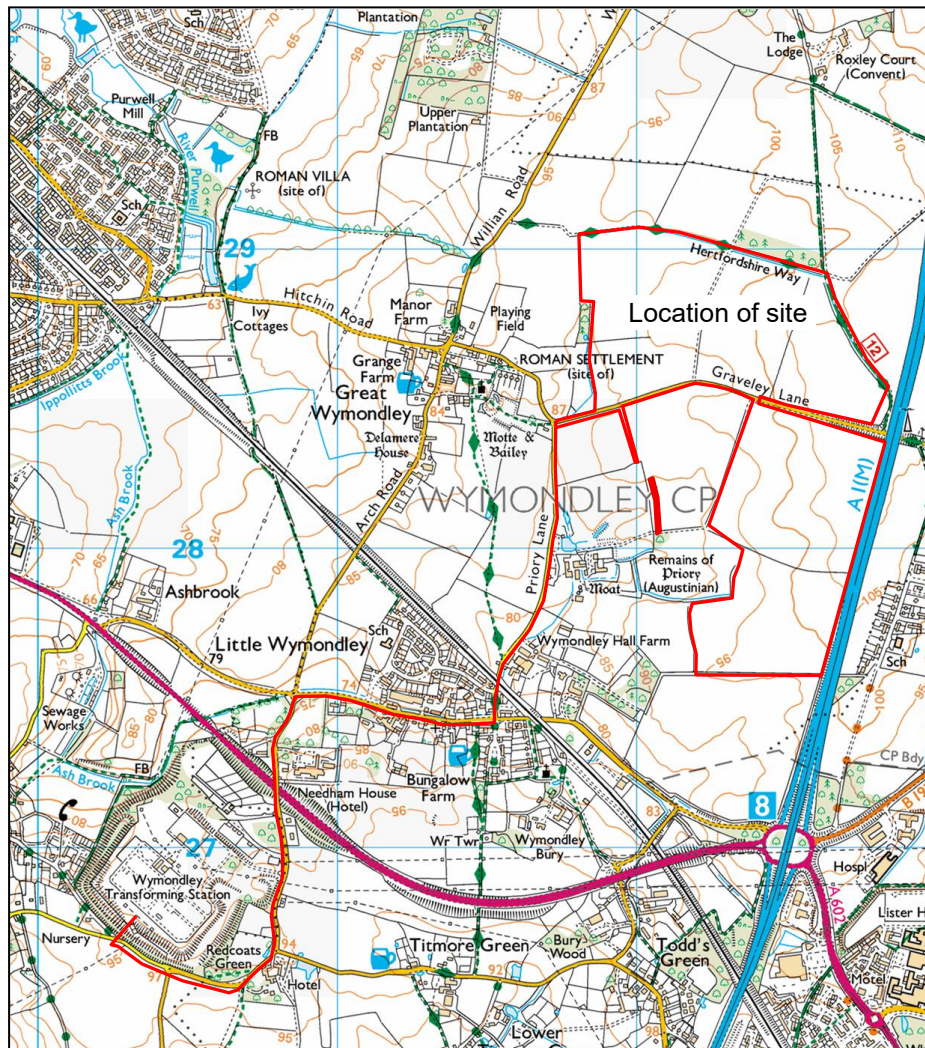


Figure 1: Location plan of the site at scale 1:25,000. The application area is outlined in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

3.0 Topography and Geology

Priory Farm lies within agricultural land that slopes generally upwards towards the east and north. The ground level is recorded at approximately 95m above Ordnance Datum sea level in the lowest lying parts of the application area adjacent to the south and west boundary, and at approximately 110m AOD close to the north eastern corner of the site (Wolf, 2025).

The site is located within the 'Hitchin-Stevenage Gap', a broad glacial valley cut through the scarp of the Chilterns during the last Ice Age. Lakes formed in hollow left behind following the retreat of the Anglian ice sheet, which were gradually infilled with fine sediments. Mid-Pleistocene glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel are recorded in the central part of the application area and glaciolacustrine deposits of clay and silt are recorded in the north-eastern corner, while superficial deposits of diamicton (mixed, glacially deposited material) of the Lowestoft Formation are recorded within the remainder of the site, including along most of the eastern boundary. All of these superficial deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in ice age conditions. The underlying solid geology is undifferentiated Cretaceous chalk of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation throughout.

Boreholes recorded by the British Geological Survey along the proposed course of the A1(M) recorded silty and sandy clays to more than 4m below existing ground level, while a further borehole on Graveley Lane recorded chalk bedrock at 1.07m below EGL, with brown sandy clay with chalk and flint gravel above (*ibid.*).

4.0 Planning Background

Planning permission for the construction of a solar array with associated battery storage containers and ancillary development including means of access and grid connection cable, in accordance with application ref. 21/03380/FP was granted by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, following a public local inquiry, in March 2024 (decision ref: APP/X1925/V/23/3323321)

Although an archaeological mitigation strategy compiled by AOC Archaeology Group had been submitted in support of the planning application, Condition 13 of the decision requires revised Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (North Hertfordshire Council). No development is to take place until the pre-development actions specified in the WSI have been completed, and development is to take place only in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in it. Condition 14 states that no excavation activities are to take place within the no-dig areas identified in the revised WSI.

5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

A comprehensive archaeological and historical background for the application area was compiled as part of a Heritage Impact Assessment presented in support of the planning application (AOC, 2021).

A Roman settlement site, marked on the modern OS map (fig. 1) was identified in the 19th century immediately to the west of the application area. Roman artefacts, including pottery, building material and coins, were found over an area covering some 20 acres; the coins dated from the reigns of the Emperor Vespasian in the late 1st century to the Emperor Julian in the later 4th. A Roman cremation cemetery containing 43 urns in a 7 yard x 5 yard area was found in 1882 in the north-eastern corner of the occupation site; the urns probably dated to the 2nd century (HER refs. 471, 473).

The straight routeway, followed in some stretches by a road and in others by a track, running north-north-east to south-south-west near the eastern side of the modern A1(M) follows the course of a Roman road, which is well documented for a length of some 10km: it probably ran to Verulamium, but cannot now be traced so far (HER ref. 4635).

The Scheduled Monument of Great Wymondley Castle, a medieval motte-and-bailey castle with an associated manorial enclosure, stands at the eastern edge of Great Wymondley village, approximately 250m to the west of the south-western corner of the northern part of the application area (HER ref. 34). The western edge of the southern part skirts the Scheduled Monument of Wymondley Priory, an Augustinian priory established as a hospital in the early 13th century. The priory ruins with a post-Dissolution 'great barn' stand within a moated enclosure, although this may not be medieval; associated earthworks and a conduit wellhead lie beyond it (HER ref. 1037). The layout of the priory is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, and the conduit wellhead, near the western site boundary, is marked 'Old Well' (fig. 3).

A geophysical survey carried out in 2022 was followed by targeted evaluation trenching. The correlation between geophysical anomalies and the features identified in the trenches was

shown to be very accurate: apart from features that proved to be variations in the geological substrate, natural features such as tree throws or animal burrows, modern field drains, infilled field ditches and the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation, no archaeological remains were identified outside of the three main areas identified by the geophysical survey. Evidence of earlier prehistoric activity was scarce, present mainly as redeposited flint in later features, with no clearly defined activity predating the Iron Age being identified.

Area 1, in the northwest part of the site, north of Graveley Lane and targeted by trenches 8, 20 and 22-24, was confirmed to contain a double ditched D-shaped enclosure with a subcircular extension adjoining the external north side. A ring ditch located in the southeast corner of the main D-shaped enclosure was also investigated. Correlation between the results of the geophysical survey was very good. Pottery recovered from the enclosure ditches in particular suggests a Late Iron Age origin for the activity here, with the latest material present in the upper ditch fills indicating activity ceased in the late 2nd – 4th century. Environmental evidence suggested the enclosure system was situated in a relatively open landscape with areas of shade possibly resulting from the presence of hedgerows associated with at least some of the enclosure ditches. The depth of topsoil and subsoil over the area of archaeological sensitivity varied from 0.38m deep in trench 21 to approximately 0.82m in trench 22. A number of ditches were identified in the area surrounding Area 1, probably representing field boundaries associated with the agricultural management of the landscape through time.

South of Graveley Lane, in Area 2, an extensive group of enclosures, trackways and a likely area of settlement, including pits, a wall and a chalk rubble surface were identified, again corresponding closely with the results of the geophysical survey. The focus of settlement activity was identified in trenches 169, 170, 224 and 225, along the western side of the A1(M) trunk road, seemingly connected to an extensive enclosure system to the south and southwest by a trackway demarcated by two ditches running north-south through trenches 171 to 174. The presence of an associated series of enclosures suggested by the geophysical survey was then confirmed in trenches 173, 174 and 175, through which the trackway directly passed, and to the west across trenches 153, 154, 156-161, 165 and 167 – 168. In addition to a wall foundation in trench 169 and a probable crushed chalk surface in trench 170, large quantities of pottery, ceramic building material including imbrex and tegula, and daub with wattle impressions were recovered from features in trenches 169, 170, 224 and 225. While pottery from this area again suggests a Late Iron Age or Late Iron Age/ Early Roman start to the activity here, the bulk of the pottery assemblage, deriving from the stratigraphically latest features/ layers, was of 3rd to 4th century date. The overall character of much of the finds assemblage from trenches 169, 170, 224 and 225 was of domestic waste and building rubble, possibly disposed of/ discarded following the demolition of one or more buildings. The Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER) notes a possible Roman farmstead, located partly within the eastern extent of the site, suggested by finds of Iron Age and Roman material. It is further suggested that the site may have been partly destroyed by the construction of the A1(M) and it is considered that the remains in trenches 169, 170, 224 and 225 in particular, adjacent to the road, are probably part of this farmstead. The quantity of artefacts present in the features to the south and southwest was noticeably less than that present in trenches 169, 170, 224 and 225, further supporting the suggestion of outlying fields and/ or paddocks located beyond the zone in which domestic rubbish was routinely being disposed of.

In Area 3, in the far south of the site, archaeological remains corresponding with a series of geophysical anomalies suggestive of a group of enclosures with internal features were identified in trenches 216 to 218, comprising a series of enclosure ditches, rubbish pits and possible occupation layers. Pottery from this area was primarily Late Iron Age to Early Roman, suggesting that these remains represent an early focus of activity in the Roman period, with settlement shifting elsewhere from this location by the mid Roman period. The remains in this part of the site do not appear to extend into trench 215 but two ditches and

two pits investigated in trench 213 are likely to be associated with the remains in trenches 216-218, having produced Iron Age and Roman pottery. Very little topsoil and no subsoil was present in this part of the development area, with the features encountered at a depth of 0.25 – 0.3m below existing ground level.

At the south-western end of the site a series of enclosures were investigated in trenches 191 – 193 and 202 – 204. These shared a similar morphology to the LIA/ ERB/ Roman enclosures identified further north in trenches 150, 153-154, 156-160, 164-165 and 167-168 and are possibly contemporary, although the presence of free-threshing wheat in the enclosure ditch in trench 193 would suggest a post-Roman date and a medieval or early post-medieval date cannot therefore be discounted. The absence of artefactual material would however suggest that these enclosures were located at a distance from any settlement, beyond the zone in which domestic rubbish was being routinely discarded (Wolf, 2025).

6.0 Archaeological Requirement

Targeted archaeological excavation is to take place in the areas marked as Zones 2 and 3 in the southern portion of the application area, in order to investigate and characterise the Iron Age and Roman remains identified by the evaluation trenching. In the previously approved scheme of archaeological mitigation these areas were designated as Exclusion Zones, scheduled for preservation *in situ*, and they may still appear with this label on some contractors' documentation.

The purpose of the programme of targeted excavation should be to identify and sample any archaeological remains on the site and to record and interpret them prior to their destruction by construction groundworks, preserving them by record. Environmental evidence should be taken into account as appropriate: sampling carried out during the evaluation suggests that palaeoenvironmental preservation conditions may be moderately favourable.

The site should not be treated in isolation, and reference should be made to relevant historical sources and previous archaeological work in the area when interpreting the results.

An online record of the project data shall be initiated with the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS database) before fieldwork commences, and completed at the end of the project, including an uploaded digital copy of the report.

The fieldwork results may contribute to a number of research themes identified in the East of England Regional Research Framework (ALGAO 2025), as well as previous iterations of the research framework. Research aims and objectives will be reviewed and refined, and any further suitable themes/ contributions will be identified as the fieldwork and post-excavation work progresses and the nature and date of any remains encountered is better understood. A selection of potentially relevant research questions identified by the framework, detailed below, were identified by the previously approved scheme of archaeological mitigation.

6.1 Regional Research Framework

Given that activity in the three principal areas of archaeological interest seems to have commenced in the Late Iron Age then further work at the Site has the potential to contribute to research themes regarding the Iron Age – Roman transition, the process of Romanisation and the adoption of Roman ideas, techniques and methods, and changes in settlement morphology. This is particularly the case with regard to settlement morphology and structure – the settlement form in Areas A and C seemingly remains more in the Iron Age tradition despite extending through to at least the late 2nd century, while that in Area B appears from the results of the evaluation to have at least made greater use of the full range of Romanised

construction materials such as tegula, imbrex, wall foundations etc, although no building plan has been exposed as yet to confirm how “Romanised” that settlement/ building may have appeared compared to the settlement in areas A and C. Pertinent research themes here with regard to the East of England Research Framework include: LIA-Rom 05: How can we better understand the Late Iron Age to Roman transition?; LIA-Rom 13: How can we increase our understanding of Late Iron Age and Roman farmsteads?; and, LIA-Rom 16: Can we better distinguish between Late Iron Age and Early Roman features and sites?

The Late Iron Age/Roman transitional and Roman pottery assemblage from the site as a whole comprises largely locally produced grog-tempered, shell-tempered and reduced sandy coarsewares. Regional and continental imports are present as Southeast Dorset Black burnished ware, pink grog-tempered ware from Buckinghamshire and Lower Nene Valley wares from Cambridgeshire and Central Gaulish samian ware. Furthermore, the pottery assemblage provides evidence for long-running, possibly continuous, activity during the Iron Age and Roman periods, with the largest quantities dating to the 1st century AD and the later Roman period, c. the late 3rd or 4th century AD, concentrated in Trenches 224 and 225. Further work at the Site therefore has the potential to increase understanding of pottery supply/ consumption and access to markets in this part of the region over an extended period of time. Pertinent research themes here with regard to the East of England Research Framework include: LIA-Rom 24: How can we increase our understanding of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery industries?

The preservation of animal bone was generally good enough to facilitate identification and preserve a range of indicators. Therefore the material has the capacity to inform about the livestock economy, production, consumption, and disposal of animals, as well as some information about the background environment suggested by the recovery of some small vertebrates from soil samples. The volume of material suggests it is likely that a useable assemblage would be recovered to inform on diet, economy and social behaviour. Pertinent research themes here with regard to the East of England Research Framework again include: LIA-Rom 13: How can we increase our understanding of Late Iron Age and Roman farmsteads?; and LIA-Rom 14: How can we improve the environmental sampling of Late Iron Age and Roman farmsteads?

7.0 Methodology: Fieldwork and Recording

The archaeological excavation will take place in two targeted areas, outlined in blue on Figures 5 and 6, each measuring approximately 1 hectare. Area 2 has been laid out to investigate a likely area of Late Iron Age/Early Roman settlement, including pits, a wall and a chalk rubble surface encountered across Trenches 169-170 and 224-225, while Area 3 is to investigate a group of enclosures with internal features including rubbish pits and possible occupation layers of likely Late Iron Age/Early Roman date, encountered across Trenches 216-218. If required, and after discussion with the Historic Environment Adviser, the excavation areas may be extended in the event that archaeological features are shown to extend beyond the core area limits and warrant further investigation. The excavation contingency would take the form of a rolling 10m buffer, but will in any event be constrained in the north of Area 2 by the extent of the area under panels and to the east and west by the presence of the site boundary and an underground utility and a high pressure gas main respectively. Similarly, the southern extent of excavation area 3 is fixed by the site boundary and to the east by the high pressure gas main (Wolf, 2025).

The excavation areas will be checked for live services both visually (for overhead cables) and by CAT (for buried services) before work commences; if live services or other hazards are identified, the affected area will be repositioned or a buffer zone designated as appropriate. Topsoil and subsoil (where present) will then be removed by machine, under archaeological supervision, to the first archaeologically significant horizon or the natural

geology, whichever is encountered first. A pre-excavation plan of each of the stripped excavation areas will be drawn, and archaeological deposits encountered will then be cleaned and excavated by hand. Unless ground conditions (e.g. concrete or compacted rubble) dictate otherwise, a **toothless** bucket will be used for machine excavation.

Details of the site team will be provided before site works commence on request. The site team will include an experienced Project Officer as a minimum. CVs will also be provided if requested.

As a minimum, all identified archaeological deposits and features will be sample excavated, in order to establish their form, depth, character, date, state of preservation and extent, as well as to recover artefactual / ecofactual remains for further study. This process will typically include the following level of sampling:

- All structural remains (e.g., eaves drip gullies, beam slots and post-holes) will be fully or extensively excavated, and all relationships recorded. Any industrial features, including domestic ovens and hearths, will be 100% excavated and sampled for analysis; this will typically involve excavation in opposing quarter-sections in order to obtain full section drawings.
- All zones of specialised activity (e.g., industrial, agricultural processing, ceremonial, funerary) will be fully or extensively excavated and sampled for analysis, and all relationships recorded.
- Ditches, gullies and linear features will be excavated sufficiently to determine the character of each individual linear feature over its entire course, with consideration given to possible re-cutting of ditches which may not have taken place over their entire lengths: generally, sampling will be done at 10m intervals in 1m wide sections up to a potential 25% of the feature, although for post-medieval ditches associated with field systems, a single intervention to confirm the date will be sufficient. Linear features up to 5m in length will be 20% sampled (a single 1m wide section) as a minimum. All terminals and intersections will be excavated. Should specialised deposits (e.g., localised refuse dumping, industrial wastes) be present, more extensive excavation will be required, up to 50% of the feature as necessary. Sufficient artefact assemblages will be recovered to assist in dating stratigraphic sequences and for obtaining sufficient ceramic assemblages for comparison with other sites.
- Pits will be generally half- or quarter-sectioned according to size. Some pits may be fully excavated in the light of information gained in sampling. Pits containing significant structural traces or important artefactual or environmental material will be fully excavated. Deep features such as wells and large pits will be excavated to their full depth. Any features below a depth of 1.2m may need to be box-sectioned to safely reach the full depth of deposits.
- Post-holes and stake-holes where not clearly forming a structure will be half-sectioned, ensuring that relationships are investigated. Those features with a significant artefactual or environmental content will be fully excavated.
- Other features such as working hollows or quarry pits will be investigated to define their extent, date and function. All relationships will be defined.
- Bulk horizontal deposits will initially be examined by a 1m x 1m hand-excavated sondage to establish their nature, their depth and, if possible, their date, and to ascertain the presence or absence of any underlying layers of archaeological interest; after which, a decision may be taken (in conjunction with the archaeological advisor to the LPA) to undertake further hand excavation, up to a 10% sample of the deposit, before removing the remainder with machinery to expose underlying deposits or

features if necessary. Priority will be attached to features which yield sealed assemblages which can be related to the chronological sequence of the site.

All excavated deposits and features will be recorded by measured plan and section drawings at appropriate scales (normally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 or 1:20 for sections), incorporating Ordnance Survey datum heights, which will be located on a scale base plan of the site derived from drawings provided by the developer.

A metal-detector, operated by a trained, experienced member of PCAS staff, will be used to aid the recovery of artefacts. The metal-detector used will be a Fisher M-scope 1236-X2, set to a high sensitivity setting for maximum depth, and a relatively low discrimination to pick up a wide range of objects. Stripped areas and spoilheaps (where accessible) will be scanned.

A written record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature will be made on standard PCAS context recording forms, supplemented by specialised masonry and timber recording forms if required. These will be supplemented by a narrative account in the form of a site diary. The archaeologist will pay due attention to the landscape aspect of any exposed remains – both the cultural and the natural landscape – which may require a brief assessment to be made of neighbouring conditions (e.g. visible earthworks in adjacent areas, surface observation, standing buildings, vegetation cover etc).

A photographic record will be maintained during the course of the archaeological intervention: this will consist of digital SLR photography which supplies both JPEG and RAW formats. Photographs will incorporate an identification board, north arrow and vertical/horizontal scales as appropriate. The photographic record will include:

- general location shots depicting the area of works;
- working shots chronicling the progress and recording the methodology of the groundworks;
- individual features in plan and/or section as appropriate;
- groups of features, where relationships are important.

If human remains are discovered, lifting will be kept to the minimum which is compatible with the planned development processes and the aims of the archaeological project; remains will be left *in situ* where possible. The landowner and/or developer, the Historic Environment Officers for LCC and Heritage Lincolnshire and the coroner will be informed of the discovery. Where removal is considered to be necessary, a Ministry of Justice Exhumation Licence will be requested, in accordance with the Burial Act of 1857 and the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014, No. 1 Section 2 and the local Environmental Health Officer will be advised. All reasonable requests of interested parties concerning the methods of removal, reinterment or disposal of the remains and associated items will be complied with, and attempts will be made at all times not to cause offence to interested parties. Christian burials are not expected on this site; as a standard, pre-Christian remains are retained in a museum of record for possible future study following initial specialist assessment post-excavation, and the terms of the exhumation licence will be arranged to reflect this. The treatment of human remains will be at all times in accordance with the requirements of civil law and all relevant CIFA and Historic England (formerly English Heritage) guidance, including *Human Bones from Archaeological Sites: Guidelines for Producing Assessment Documents and Analytical Reports* (EH, 2004).

All artefacts will be treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neale 1998). All artefacts encountered during the groundworks will be retrieved and returned to PCAS offices for initial assessment. A register of finds that are potentially of particular interest will be kept, and such finds will be located on the plan and section drawings by GPS; recorded finds typically include all items of precious metal;

recognisable base metal artefacts other than those identifiable as modern; complete ceramic or glass vessels other than those identifiable as modern; glass or ceramic sherds with dates, inscriptions or significant decoration (e.g. stamped mortarium); worked bone artefacts; wooden artefacts, and complete flint artefacts. All finds will be stored in polythene bags labelled with the site code and the context number of the individual deposit from which they were recovered, in order to be returned to PCAS premises for later cleaning, marking and in-house assessment or dispatch to external specialists. An initial record of the presence of finds by type will be made for each context as part of the written recording on site; a full record of the type and count of artefacts retrieved from each context will be made during initial processing (see section 8 below).

All finds that qualify as 'treasure' under the 1996 Treasure Act (Treasure Act Code of Practice – 3rd revision 2023) will be treated in accordance with the Act; HM Coroner and the regional Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme will be informed and the finds will be safely stored. PCAS will be deemed to be 'the finder' with regard to treasure (or potential treasure) as defined under the Treasure Act 1996, and the Applicants' and PCAS' obligations will cease with regard to the artefacts on the handing over of any such items to the party designated by the Coroner (or to the Coroner's Office) and will not recommence unless the items are declared not to be Treasure under the Act or if they are returned further to being declined for acquisition by appropriate bodies.

In line with the recommendations made in *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation* (English Heritage, 2011, 2nd edition), palaeoenvironmental samples will be taken from interpretable and datable archaeological deposits. The topography and geology of the site suggest that palaeoenvironmental preservation conditions are likely to be moderately favourable, and this impression was borne out by the results of environmental sampling carried out during the evaluation, which retrieved charred seeds including cereal remains: fills with visible evidence of burning or heat-affected material will be prioritised for sampling. Recommended sample sizes are 40-60 litres, or the whole of smaller features. Bulk samples for environmental processing will be taken in 10-litre capacity lidded plastic buckets. Where the deposit to be sampled is large, the sample will be taken from several locations within the deposit, at different depths; material from each location will be divided among all the sample buckets being filled, rather than filling one bucket from each of four different places in the deposit, to ensure that any one bucket being processed as an initial sub-sample will still contain material from several places in the deposit. All samples will be 'whole earth': visible finds will not be removed unless their nature demands special treatment (e.g. precious metal, human remains or artefacts in need of immediate conservation) or they are likely to be adversely affected by the sieving process. The removal of any such material will be noted on the sample record. All samples will be labelled with the site code, context number and sub-sample count (e.g. '1 of 4', '2 of 4') with indelible pen on plasticized labels; two labels will be sealed inside each bucket, and two attached to the exterior of each bucket. Smaller and specialised samples may be kept in polythene finds bags: these will be double-bagged, with the site code, context number and sub-sample count written on the white panels of both bags, and a label placed in the inner bag and between the inner and outer bags, duplicating this information. If human remains are encountered and are to be removed, samples will be taken from the grave fill in the head, torso and leg/foot areas after the visible bones have been lifted; these samples will be kept separate from one another and given individual numbers, and will be processed in-house for the recovery of small bones, loose teeth and possible grave goods.

Excavated areas will not be signed off until the county Historic Environment Advisor has either visited the site and confirmed that the archaeological work has been carried out to an acceptable standard or has confirmed the signing-off remotely.

8.0 Methodology: Post-Fieldwork

Following completion of site works, all archaeological records and finds will be taken to the offices of PCAS prior to processing and dispatch or in-house assessment; all written and drawn archaeological records will be checked, ordered and cross-referenced before leaving the site. Certain classes of bulk find, such as post-medieval pottery and building material, may be discarded during this process, with the prior approval of the Historic Environment Advisor and the receiving museum, providing that a sample is kept and that the full count of material is recorded.

Stable finds (e.g. pottery, bone etc) will be washed, marked and packaged at PCAS prior to dispatch. Unstable finds will be dispatched for remedial conservation as a prelude to assessment. Following the completion of site works, the processed finds will be dispatched for specialist identification and assessment, and bulk and specialist environmental samples will be dispatched for processing and reporting. PCAS have used the services of the following specialists in the past and may use any/all of the following again, depending on suitability, availability etc.

Archaeological Contractors:

- University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) – provides a comprehensive service in all areas of post-excavation analysis.
- Durham University Archaeological Services (DUAS) – provides environmental archaeology services.
- York Archaeological Trust (YAT) – identification and assessment of registered special finds; X-Ray analysis and Conservation Services.
- Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) – radiocarbon dating laboratories.

Other Freelance Specialists:

- P. Blinkhorn – specialising in the identification and assessment of post-Roman pottery.
- J. Curl – specialising in the identification and assessment of animal bone.
- R. Devaney – specialising in the identification and assessment of lithic materials and tools.
- G. Kiraly – specialising in the identification and assessment of human remains.
- Dr. K. Leahy – specialising in the identification and assessment of post-Roman and early medieval artefacts, particularly metalwork.
- Dr. R. Mackenzie – specialising in the identification and assessment of waste metalworking residues.
- G. Monteil – specialising in the identification and assessment of samian ware.
- Q. Mould – specialising in the identification and assessment of leather artefacts.
- S. Percival – specialising in the identification and assessment of prehistoric pottery and ceramics.
- I. Rowlandson – specialising in the identification and assessment of Iron Age and Roman pottery.
- C. Simpson – specialising in processing, assessment and analysis of environmental remains.

- G. Taylor – specialising in the identification and assessment of general small-finds assemblages.
- Z. Tomlinson – specialising in the identification and assessment of general small-finds assemblages.
- I. Tyers – specialising in dendrochronology and the identification and assessment of timber and worked wood.
- R. Tyson – specialising in the identification and assessment of medieval and post-medieval glass.
- M. Wood – specialising in registered and other finds, including slag, metal objects, worked stone and glass;
- J. Young – specialising in the identification and assessment of post-Roman pottery and ceramic building material.

In the event that regional specialists with specific expertise in this area are required, advice will be sought from the county Historic Environment Advisor.

A post-excavation assessment (PXA) report on the results of the project will be submitted within six months of the completion of the groundworks. If a full report cannot be made within this time, due to the extra demands made on specialist assessment, analysis and time by the anticipated large and highly significant finds assemblages, an interim report may be produced, in agreement with the client and the county Historic Environment Advisor.

The PXA report will be prepared in accordance with current guidelines and will include the following minimum information:

- A non-technical summary
- Museum accession number, site code and project number
- Planning reference number
- Grid reference, site location, topography and geology
- Archaeological and historical background
- A statement of aims and objectives of the project
- A description and analysis of the fieldwork undertaken
- A geo-referenced location plan at a minimum scale of 1:10,000
- A scaled overall site plan showing the accurately surveyed location of the development site in relation to known and speculated archaeological features (if appropriate)
- Scaled section and plan drawings of all archaeological features encountered within the excavation area.
- Discussion and conclusions, including interpretation of the results and their context within the surrounding landscape, consideration of the importance of the findings on a local, regional and national basis with reference to the East of England Archaeological Research Framework, and a critical review of the effectiveness of the methodology
- A matrix to determine the phasing of recorded features and deposits, where applicable, with dating applied where possible.
- Tables summarising features and artefacts with full descriptions and brief interpretation

- Specialist artefact and environmental reports, as necessary, with reference made to appropriate published type-series
- Colour photographs, including general views and appropriate detail
- Acknowledgements
- Bibliography of sources used
- Archive deposition location and agreed deposition date
- A summary of the report's presence and location on the OASIS online database

Copies of the project report will be sent to the client, the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the county Historic Environment Advisor. Copies of the report will also be deposited with North Hertfordshire District Council Museum as part of an ordered and indexed project archive. The data from the project, along with a digital copy of the report, will be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS) database for public consultation: an OASIS form has been opened for this project and the OASIS ID number preconst3-535659 assigned.

9.0 Archive and Deposition

Following acceptance of the final report, a project archive (documentary and material) will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines contained in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (2019 revision), *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990) and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992). The entire archive will be prepared at the offices of PCAS, prior to deposition with North Hertfordshire District Council Museum or with the Archaeology Data Service as appropriate: a Project Notification Form has been sent to the museum, and the museum site code WYM/GL '25 has been issued to this project.

10.0 Publication and Dissemination

Deposition of the report with the HER, where it will be incorporated into their database for public consultation, and uploading the project data to OASIS will be considered as placing the results of the project in the public domain. Where the significance of the results warrants it, wider publication of the results is routinely considered: the content and place of publication is dependent on what is found (e.g. an account of discoveries of regional interest might appear in a county journal), and will be subject to discussion with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority.

under the terms of the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988, PCAS shall retain full copyright with regard to written, digital and graphic material. However, following project completion, the commissioning body, the Hertfordshire HER and the Archaeology Data Service may all, in the interest of informing and advancing the profession, make responsible use of the data, provided that any material copied or cited in reports is duly acknowledged and all copyright conditions observed.

11.0 Health and Safety

All work will be carried out in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its related regulations and codes of practice.

Employees and sub-contractors of PCAS Archaeology Ltd will perform their duties in accordance with company safety policy (revised 2023). Where employees are temporarily engaged at other workplaces, they are to respect relevant local regulations, both statutory and as imposed by other employers within the Health and Safety at Work Act.

In furtherance of the duty of care imposed by the Health & Safety at Work Act, the Employer shall make available to his employees whatever reasonable facilities are required by particular circumstances, e.g. appropriate protective clothing, safety equipment, rest breaks for specialised tasks, etc.

A site risk assessment will be prepared prior to any site works taking place; this will be reviewed and updated as appropriate and a copy will be kept available on site.

12.0 Insurance

PCAS Archaeology Ltd has the following insurance cover:

Employers' Liability: £10,000,000

Public Liability: £5,000,000

Professional Indemnity: £1,000,000

13.0 Monitoring Arrangements

Internal monitoring will be the responsibility of Leigh Brocklehurst, Project Manager, PCAS. The county Historic Environment Advisor will be informed, with not less than two weeks' notice, of the start of the mitigation scheme. He will be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and regularly updated on the project's progress, and will be free to visit the site by prior arrangement with the site director. The North Hertfordshire Museum Curator and Heritage Access Officer will also be informed of the start of works and invited to visit.

14.0 Contacts

Leigh Brocklehurst, Project Manager, PCAS (01522) 703 800

Andy Instone, Hertfordshire County Council (01992) 555 241

Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews, North Hertfordshire Museum (01462) 474 598

15.0 References

Association of Local Government Officers (ALGAO), 2025, East of England Regional Research Framework available online at <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>.

English Heritage (EH), 2011, *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation (second edition)*. English Heritage Publishing.

Ordnance Survey, 2015, *Luton & Stevenage, Hitchin & Ampthill: 1:25,000 scale Explorer series map sheet 193*. The Ordnance Survey, Southampton.

Ordnance Survey, 1884, 1st edition 6 inch to the mile scale map sheet Hertfordshire XII, surveyed 1878-81.

Wolf, A., 2025, *Priory Farm Solar Farm, Wymondley, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Mitigation Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished planning document consulted 24-07-2025 at https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/GetDocList/Default.aspx?doc_class_code=DC&case_number=21/03380/FP.

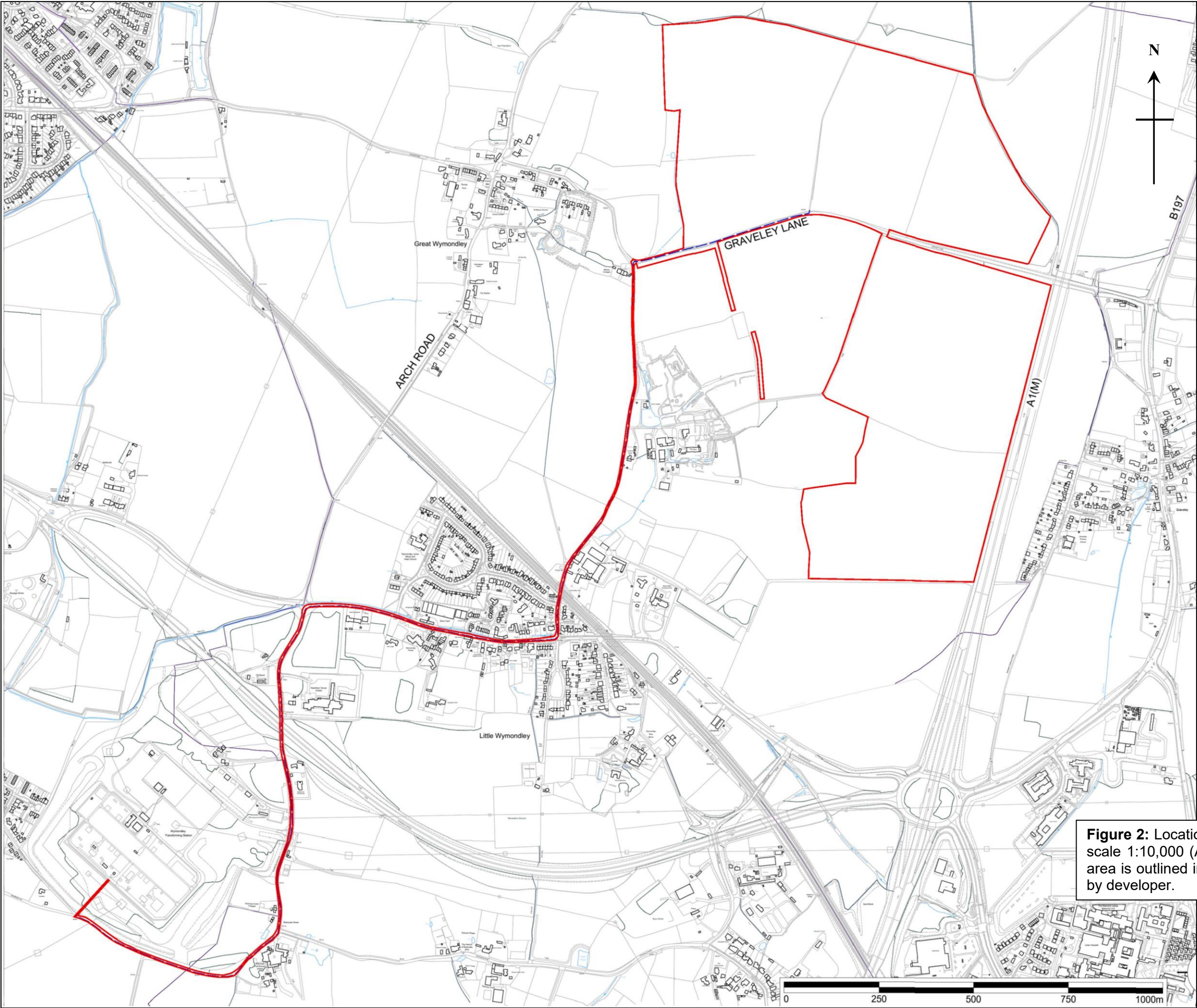


Figure 2: Location plan of the site at scale 1:10,000 (A3). The application area is outlined in red. Plan supplied by developer.

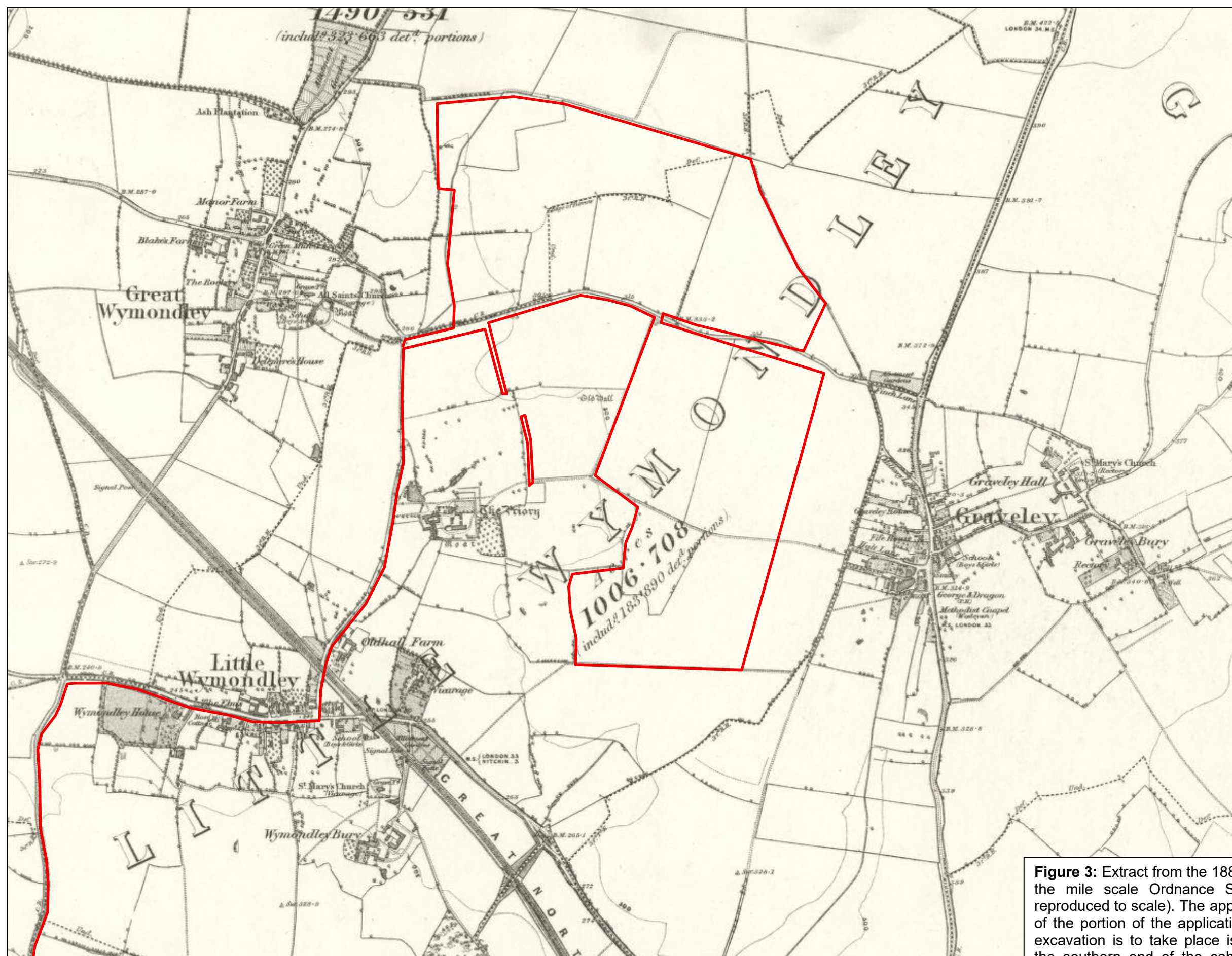
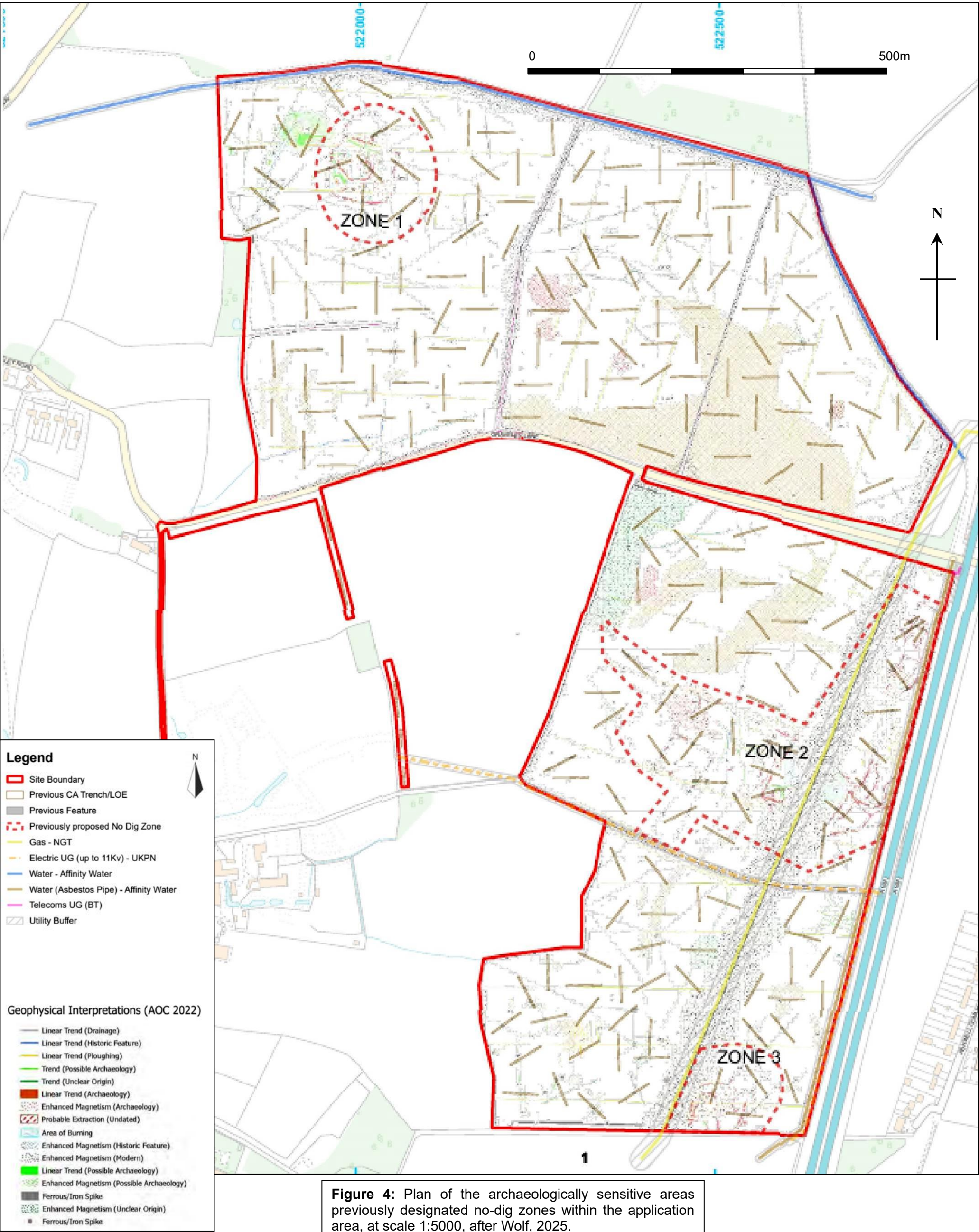
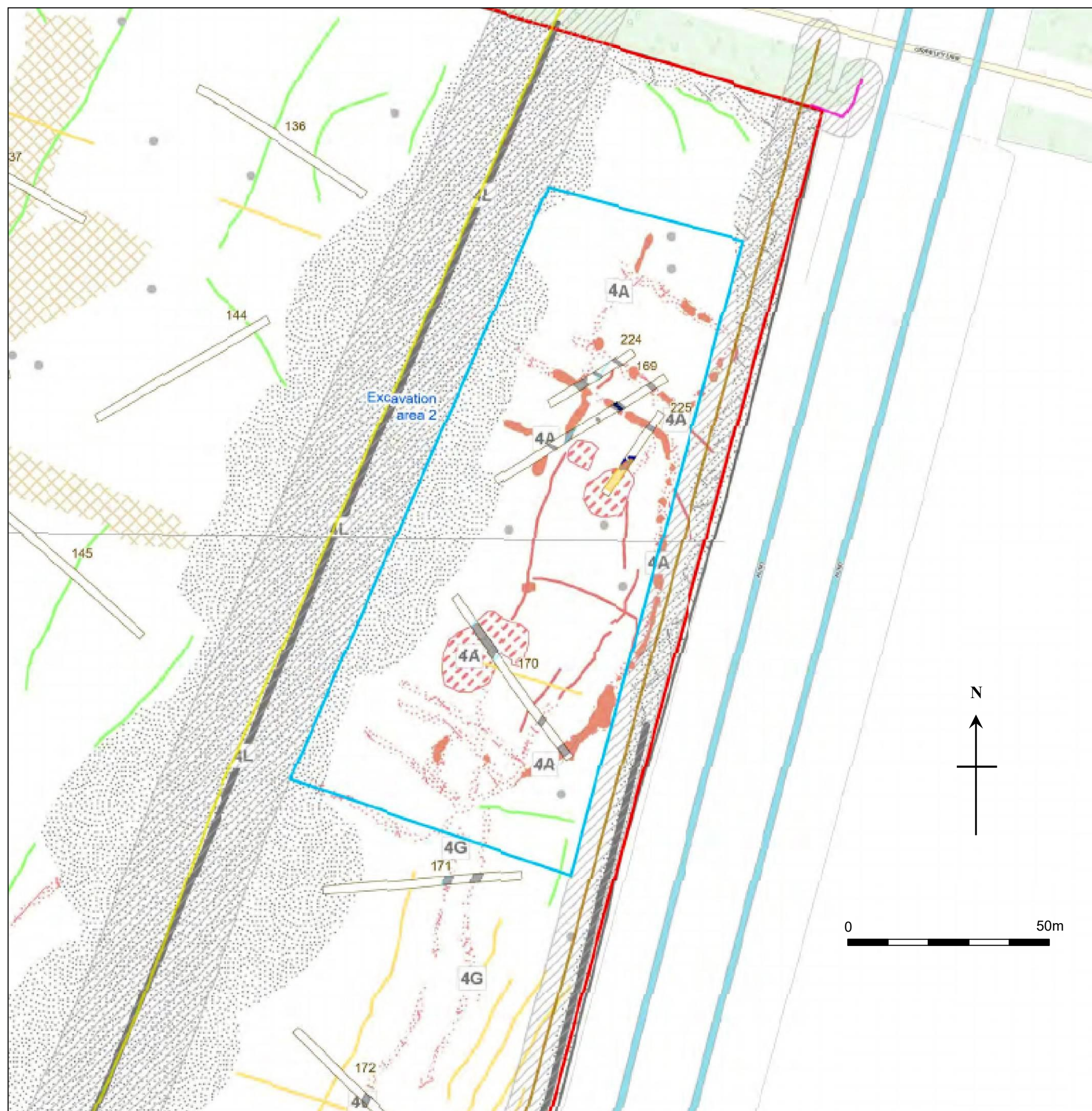


Figure 3: Extract from the 1884 1st edition 6" to the mile scale Ordnance Survey map (not reproduced to scale). The approximate location of the portion of the application area in which excavation is to take place is overlaid in red; the southern end of the cable route extends onto the adjoining map sheet.





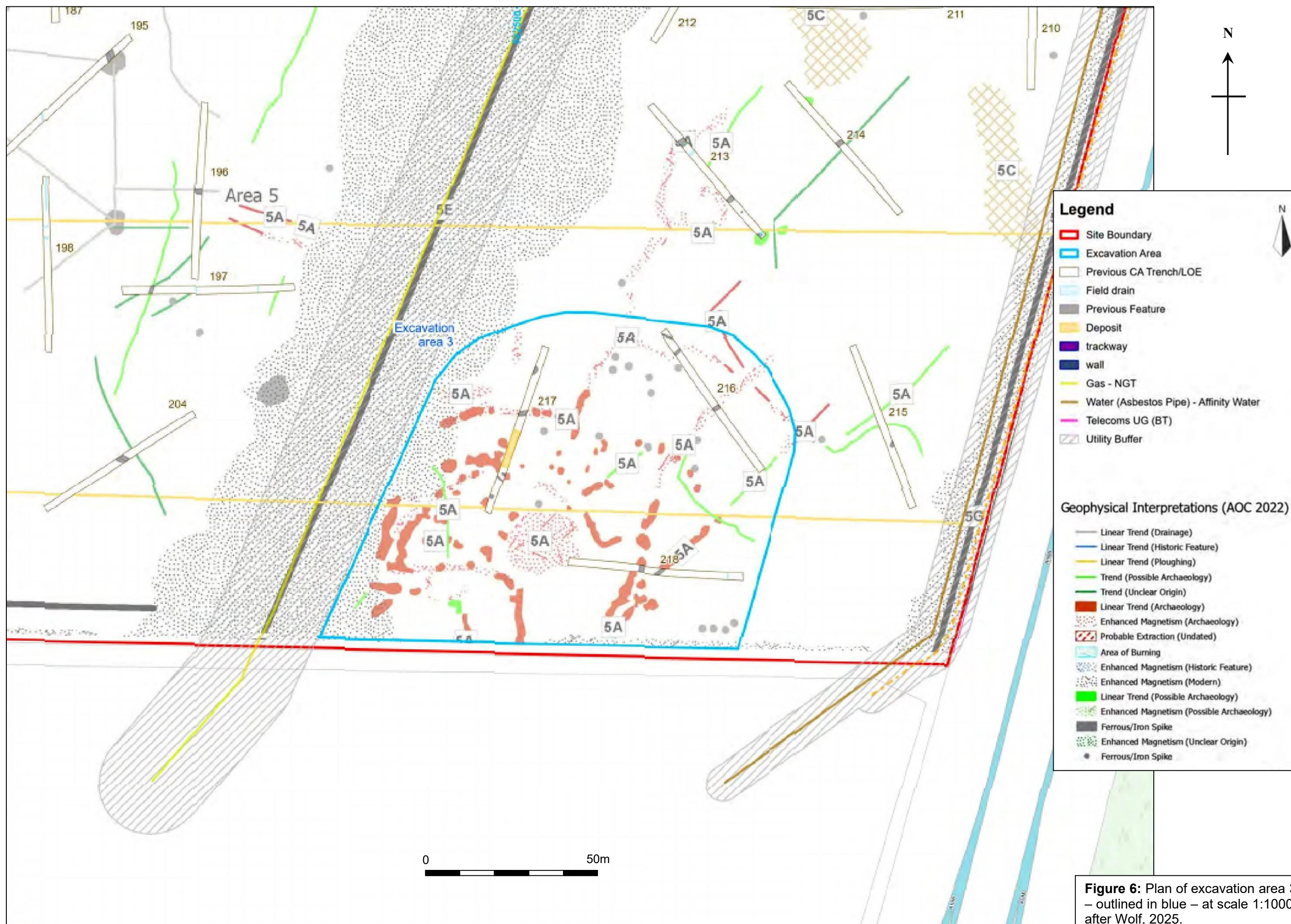
Legend

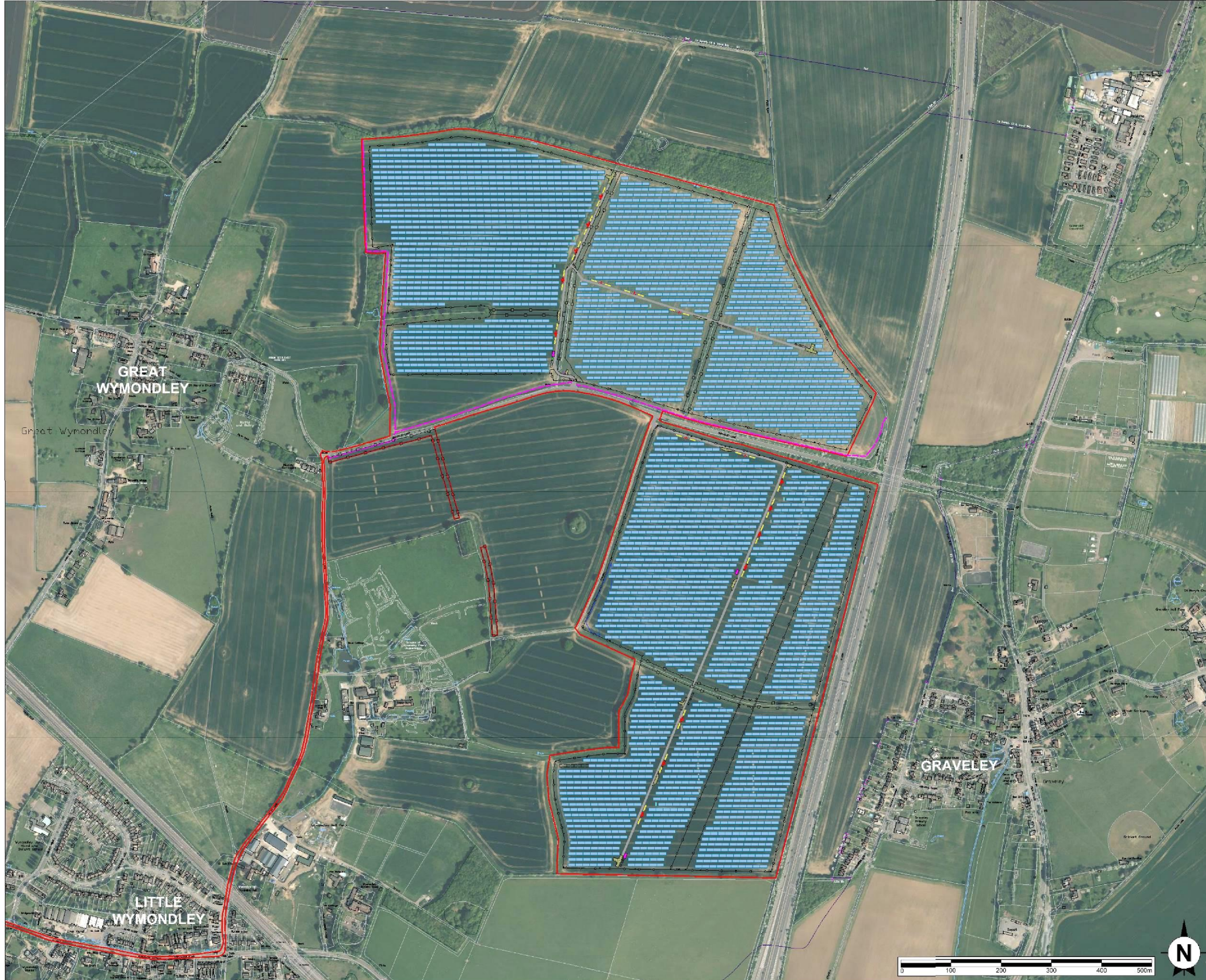
- ▬ Site Boundary
- ▬ Excavation Area
- ▬ Previous CA Trench/LOE
- ▬ Field drain
- ▬ Previous Feature
- ▬ Deposit
- ▬ trackway
- ▬ wall
- ▬ Gas - NGT
- ▬ Water (Asbestos Pipe) - Affinity Water
- ▬ Telecoms UG (BT)
- ▬ Utility Buffer

Geophysical Interpretations (AOC 2022)

- ▬ Linear Trend (Drainage)
- ▬ Linear Trend (Historic Feature)
- ▬ Linear Trend (Ploughing)
- ▬ Trend (Possible Archaeology)
- ▬ Trend (Unclear Origin)
- ▬ Linear Trend (Archaeology)
- ▬ Enhanced Magnetism (Archaeology)
- ▬ Probable Extraction (Undated)
- ▬ Area of Burning
- ▬ Enhanced Magnetism (Historic Feature)
- ▬ Enhanced Magnetism (Modern)
- ▬ Linear Trend (Possible Archaeology)
- ▬ Enhanced Magnetism (Possible Archaeology)
- ▬ Ferrous/Iron Spike
- ▬ Enhanced Magnetism (Unclear Origin)
- Ferrous/Iron Spike

Figure 5: Plan of excavation area 2 – outlined in blue – at scale 1:1000, after Wolf, 2025.





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Follow any figured dimensions - do not scale for construction purposes. IF IN DOUBT ASK.

• Revision History	• Date
M Updated Drainage Basin	18-12-24
N Updated BES Unit Layout	06-01-25
O Updated BES Unit and Infrastructure	13-02-25
P Revised Layout	20-02-25
Q Solar Transformer Units revised	26-02-25
R 30m Easement from Gas Pipeline updated	26-03-25
S Gates relocated	22-04-25
T Permissive Path updated in line with Landscape Plan	29-04-25
U Update made to Grasscrete and Legeid	01-05-25

- Site Boundary
- Photovoltaic Panels
- Solar Transformer
- Inverter / Transformer Station
- Battery Storage Container
- Storage
- Welfare
- Switchgear Building
- Deer / stock fence 2.1m
- Stock fence 1.2m
- Proposed access track
- Permissive Path
- Surface Water Attenuation Basin / Flood Storage Area
- Permeable Grasscrete Turning/Passing Area
- Items Omitted/Relocated
- Water Hydrant
- CCTV

Client: AGR	
Project: PRICORY FARM SOLAR ARRAY	
Drawing title: GENERAL ARRANGEMENT	
Date: October 2021	Drawn by: TR
Drawing number: 3004-01-003	Checked: FR
Status:	

Figure 7: Plan of the general as-proposed site layout at scale 1:7500 (A3). Plan supplied by developer.

Appendix 1: Digital Data Management Plan

Project Manager	Leigh Brocklehurst																					
Project Name	Priory Farm Solar Farm, Wymondley, North Hertfordshire.																					
PCAS Job Number	3176																					
Site Code	GLWX 25																					
Author (s)	R. D. Savage																					
Date:	July 2025																					
Project Stages covered	Excavation and Post-Excavation																					
Status	Pre-commencement																					
File Name/Location	3176 Priory Farm Solar Farm, Hertfordshire WSI/Stored in the Project Specifications file on the server.																					
Data Collection/Creation																						
Data to be Collected/Created	Paper recording on standard PCAS Archaeology Ltd recording sheets forms the basis for the site archive. Drawings will be created by hand using permatrace drawing film, using a suitable pencil (6H Staedler Mars Lumograph are issued by the company). The paper archive will be digitised upon completion of project. In addition to the physical archive, the digital archive will include GIS data, site photography, and databases. The documentary archive will consist of: Text: Various Word Documents; including Written Scheme of Investigation, Assessment Reports, Specialist Reports, Full Excavation Report. This will also include context sheets, registers, and site diaries. Databases: These will include context databases and finds lists in Excel files, GIS database, etc. All data generated will be held on the PCAS Archaeology Ltd servers and will be stored within its own project file on the server. Images: Hard copy Permatrace drawings, digital images; to include site photography, scanned Permatrace drawings, and site plans produced for the report. Data formats used are standardised and openly documented, ensuring that data is shareable. <table><tr><th colspan="3">Expected Data to be used</th></tr><tr><th>Type</th><th>Format</th><th>Estimated Volume</th></tr><tr><td>Spreadsheets</td><td>Excel (.xlsx). To be deposited in preservation format (.csv)</td><td>Up to 10 objects (less than 2MB total) (Context Register, Finds and Samples Register, Drawing Register, Specialist Finds Tables)</td></tr><tr><td>Text/ Documents</td><td>Word (.doc) PDF (.pdf/a)</td><td>Up to 25 objects (less than 100MB total) (Project Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation, Assessment Report, Final Grey Literature Report, Specialist Reports)</td></tr><tr><td>Vector Graphics</td><td>CorelDraw (.svg) QGIS (.shp) Word (.doc)</td><td>Site Plans (average size 5MB), Report Images (average size 2MB)</td></tr><tr><td>Images</td><td>Intended deposition format (.tiff)</td><td>Archive shots - Between 50 and 100 (average size 4MB)</td></tr><tr><td>GIS</td><td>ESRI Shapefile (.shp & .shx & .dbf, plus associated files)</td><td>Up to 20 overall GIS files (less than 20MB)</td></tr></table>	Expected Data to be used			Type	Format	Estimated Volume	Spreadsheets	Excel (.xlsx). To be deposited in preservation format (.csv)	Up to 10 objects (less than 2MB total) (Context Register, Finds and Samples Register, Drawing Register, Specialist Finds Tables)	Text/ Documents	Word (.doc) PDF (.pdf/a)	Up to 25 objects (less than 100MB total) (Project Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation, Assessment Report, Final Grey Literature Report, Specialist Reports)	Vector Graphics	CorelDraw (.svg) QGIS (.shp) Word (.doc)	Site Plans (average size 5MB), Report Images (average size 2MB)	Images	Intended deposition format (.tiff)	Archive shots - Between 50 and 100 (average size 4MB)	GIS	ESRI Shapefile (.shp & .shx & .dbf, plus associated files)	Up to 20 overall GIS files (less than 20MB)
Expected Data to be used																						
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Spreadsheets	Excel (.xlsx). To be deposited in preservation format (.csv)	Up to 10 objects (less than 2MB total) (Context Register, Finds and Samples Register, Drawing Register, Specialist Finds Tables)																				
Text/ Documents	Word (.doc) PDF (.pdf/a)	Up to 25 objects (less than 100MB total) (Project Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation, Assessment Report, Final Grey Literature Report, Specialist Reports)																				
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Images	Intended deposition format (.tiff)	Archive shots - Between 50 and 100 (average size 4MB)																				
GIS	ESRI Shapefile (.shp & .shx & .dbf, plus associated files)	Up to 20 overall GIS files (less than 20MB)																				

How Data will be Collected/Created	The data will be collected and created according to the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation for Priory Farm Solar Farm, Wymondley, Hertfordshire (available to all site staff). GIS data will be collected and created according to the PCAS Archaeology Ltd Survey Manual (Version 2 2024). This is available for all site staff; however, the data collection, creation and storage is the responsibility of the PCAS appointed surveyor. These standards conform to CIFA Codes of Conduct (2022 Revision), Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (2015 Revision) and ADS Guidelines for Deposition. Instruments used in the collection of data are calibrated yearly and are routinely checked to ensure they are in full working order. The digital project archive will be stored in a project-specific folder on the internal PCAS Archaeology Ltd server. Project folders are to be named following established organisation procedures (Job Number and Site Name). All files included as part of this project archive will include the organisational identifier (job number), the site name (Priory Farm Solar Farm, Wymondley, Hertfordshire WSI), the file descriptor (e.g. WSI) and the version number (e.g. V2). All site records and data collected will be reviewed by the Project Officer throughout the project to ensure the data is accurate and secure. Whilst project folders are reviewed internally on a regular basis by the Project Manager to ensure that organisational data management standards are being met.
Relations	N/A
Documentation and Metadata	
Metadata	Metadata will be created as listed above to PCAS Archaeology Ltd standards which adheres to ADS guidelines for deposition (see https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors.xhtml).
Documentation	An archive catalogue documenting both physical and digital archive products will be maintained throughout the project. Site archive documentation will be included alongside the data in order for secondary users to understand and reuse it. This will include documents such as photo registers, context summaries, drawing records. These will include descriptions of the data collected, who collected it and the date of collection.
Ethical and Legal Compliance	
Data Security Issues	None
Intellectual Property Rights	All Data created by PCAS Archaeology Ltd employees are the intellectual property rights of PCAS Archaeology Ltd.
Data Storage	
Storage and Backup	All data collected and recovered during the excavation will be stored and backed-up on the PCAS Archaeology Ltd servers. These are backed-up daily in order to prevent loss of Data. Initial recovery of site Data may be from site to company laptops, however the data will be transferred to the company's server at the earliest opportunity. Prior to it being on the server, the Project Officer will back-up data on laptops through use of external hard drives/memory sticks. PCAS Archaeology Ltd's IT is managed by an external data management provider, who is also responsible for the management and verification of our daily back-ups and who supports access to security copies as needed.
Access and Security	Data will be freely available to all members of the team throughout the project. There are no security issues.

Selection and Preservation	
Preservation Plan	The physical archive, documentary and material, will be transferred to the North Hertfordshire Museum as part of an ordered and indexed project archive. The documentary archive will contain any hard copy data reports the repository wish to receive. The archive, including the Data from the project, will be archived with the ADS. Digital photographs born of the project and any other digital content considered suitable for long term storage will be deposited with North Hertfordshire Museum as part of an ordered archive, and with ADS Easy or similar dependant on the size of the final digital archive. A complete set of the digital data does not need to be retained in full. A Selection Strategy has been developed in association with this project, considering the likely contents of the archive and the requirements of North Hertfordshire Museums archaeological archive deposition guidelines (Hertfordshire Archaeological Archives Standards – A Countywide Standard for the Creation, Compilation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives in Hertfordshire (2024). This selection strategy will be under constant review by all stakeholders (project team, project management and intended repository) to determine the final archive for retention and deposition. Advice on the selection strategy can be found in the CIFA's Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives 2022.
Data Sharing	
Data Sharing Plan	A copy of the final reports will be supplied to the North Hertfordshire Senior Historic Environment Advisor, the Hertfordshire HER and the landowner / client. A summary of the project will be included on the OASIS Index of Archaeological Investigation and will be updated as the project progresses. A final version of the project reports will be supplied to the Historic Environment Record via OASIS, and any data which they request can also be provided directly. Awareness of the work will be raised through publication, and documentation with the HER, in addition to suitable photos being shared via PCAS' social media platforms.
Data Sharing Restrictions	There are no restrictions on the use of this data after project completion.
Responsibilities and Resources	
Responsibilities	The Project Manager, Leigh Brocklehurst, and the site's Project Officer are responsible for ensuring the data management plan is followed. Data capture, metadata production and data quality are the responsibility of the Project Team, overseen by the Project Officer. Storage and backup of data in the file is the responsibility of the Project Officer. Once data is incorporated into the organisations project server, storage and backup is managed by an external company. Data archiving is undertaken is undertaken by the Finds and Archives Officer, who is responsible for the transfer of the project archive to the agreed repository.
Resources	Resources required to deliver this project are provided by the developer.