

Land at Park Farm Seend Cleeve Wiltshire

MAGNETOMETER SURVEY REPORT

for

White Horse Housing Association

Kerry Donaldson & David Sabin November 2021 Ref. no. J893

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS LTD

Land at Park Farm Seend Cleeve Wiltshire

MAGNETOMETER SURVEY REPORT

for

White Horse Housing Association

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SUMMARY

Detailed magnetometry was carried out over 0.25ha by Archaeological Surveys Ltd ahead of a development of affordable housing at Seend Cleeve in Wiltshire. The results of the survey indicate the presence of a small number of pit-like anomalies as well as a number of weakly positive linear anomalies. However, they are poorly defined and lack a coherent morphology and their origin is uncertain. A number of negative linear anomalies could be associated with land drainage.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Survey background

1.1.1 Archaeological Surveys Ltd was commissioned by Nixey Powell Partnership Limited, on behalf of White Horse Housing Association, to undertake a magnetometer survey of an area of land at Park Farm, Seend Cleeve, Wiltshire. The site has been outlined for a proposed development of affordable housing (Wiltshire Council planning application no. 20/02213/FUL) and the survey forms part of an archaeological assessment.

1.2 Survey objectives and techniques

- 1.2.1 The objective of the survey was to use magnetometry to locate geophysical anomalies that may be archaeological in origin so that they may be assessed prior to development of the site. The methodology is considered an efficient and effective approach to archaeological prospection.
- 1.2.2 Geophysical survey can provide useful information on the archaeological potential of a site; however, the outcome of any survey relies on a number of factors and as a consequence results can vary. The success in meeting the aims and objectives of a survey is, therefore, often impossible to predetermine.

1.3 Standards, guidance and recommendations for the use of this report

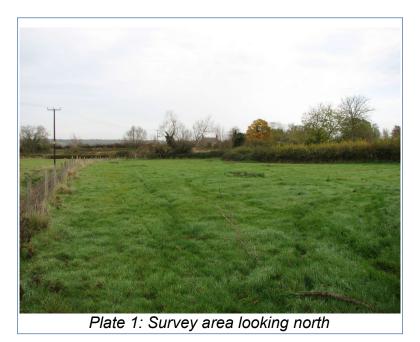
- 1.3.1 The survey and report follow the recommendations set out by: European Archaeological Council (2015) *Guidelines for the Use of Geophysics in Archaeology;* Institute for Archaeologists (2002) *The use of Geophysical Techniques in Archaeological Evaluations.* The work has been carried out to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) (updated 2020) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey.*
- 1.3.2 Archaeological Surveys Ltd provide a detailed geophysical survey report and it is recommended that where possible the contents should be considered in full. The Summary provides a brief overview of the results with more detail

available in the Discussion and/or Conclusion. The *List of anomalies* within the Results provides a detailed assessment of the anomalies within separate categories which can be useful in inferring a level of confidence to the interpretation. Quality and factors influencing the interpretation of anomalies is also set out within the results.

- 1.3.3 It is recommended that the full report should always be considered when using data and interpretation plots; where this is not possible, in the field for example, the abstraction and interpretation plots should retain their colour coding and be used with a corresponding legend.
- 1.3.4 Where targeting of anomalies by excavation is to be carried out, care should be taken to place trenches over solid lines or features visible on the abstraction and interpretation plots. Archaeological Surveys abstraction and interpretation avoids the use of dashed or dotted line formats, and broken or fragmented lines used in interpretive plots may well correspond closely with truncation of archaeological features.

1.4 Site location, description and survey conditions

- 1.4.1 The site is located on land to the north of Park Farm, Seend Cleeve, Seend, Wiltshire. It is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) ST 93040 61218, see Figs 01 and 02. The geophysical survey covers approximately 0.25ha of pasture located at the northern end of the village.
- 1.4.2 The ground conditions across the site were generally considered to be favourable for the collection of magnetometry data. Weather conditions during the survey were fine.



1.5 Site history and archaeological potential

1.5.1 The site does not contain any designated or undesignated heritage assets, although it has not be subject to previous archaeological investigation. The land immediately to the west contains evidence for extant ridge and furrow (Wiltshire Historic Environment no. MWI73955) and a small, square enclosure of probable medieval date (MWI4975) is located approximately 215m to the south west and a probable medieval holloway (MWI73953) situated 335m to the west. The buildings of Park Farm (MWI68872) are situated 100m to the south west and these date from the 18th century. A Romano-British coin (MWI4940) was located 85m to the south east. The Kennet and Avon Canal is situated 115m to the north of the site. The site has been separated from the larger field to the west by a drainage ditch some time in the early 20th century.

1.6 Geology and soils

- 1.6.1 The underlying geology is mudstone from the Oxford Clay Formation with overlying head deposits of clay, sand, silt and gravel in the south eastern corner of the site (BGS, 2017).
- 1.6.2 The overlying soil across the site is from the Denchworth association and is a pelo-stagnogley. It consists of a slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, clayey soil (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983).
- 1.6.3 The underlying geology and soils are frequently associated with low magnetic contrast and low levels of magnetic susceptibility. However, cut features of archaeological potential may be located where human activity has altered the magnetic characteristics of the soil sufficiently. The underlying geology and soils are, therefore, considered acceptable for magnetic survey.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Technical synopsis

- 2.1.1 Magnetometry survey records localised magnetic fields that can be associated with features formed by human activity. Magnetic susceptibility and magnetic thermoremnance (also known as thermoremanence) are factors associated with the formation of localised fields.
- 2.1.2 Iron minerals within the soil may become altered by burning and the break down of biological material; effectively the magnetic susceptibility of the soil is increased, and the iron minerals become magnetic in the presence of the Earth's magnetic field. Accumulations of magnetically enhanced soils within features, such as pits and ditches, may produce magnetic anomalies that can be mapped by magnetic prospection.
- 2.1.3 Magnetic thermoremnance can occur when ferrous minerals have been heated to

- high temperatures such as in a kiln, hearth, oven etc. On cooling, a permanent magnetisation may be acquired due to the presence of the Earth's magnetic field. Certain natural processes associated with the formation of some igneous and metamorphic rock may also result in magnetic thermoremnance.
- 2.1.4 The localised variations in magnetism are measured as sub-units of the Tesla, which is a SI unit of magnetic flux density. These sub-units are nano Teslas (nT), which are equivalent to 10⁻⁹ Tesla (T). Additional details are set out in 2.2 below and within Appendix A.
- 2.2 Equipment configuration, data collection and survey detail
- The detailed magnetic survey was carried out using a SENSYS 2.2.1 MAGNETO®MXPDA 5 channel cart-based system. The instrument has 5 fluxgate gradiometers (FGM650) spaced 0.5m apart with readings recorded at 20Hz. The cart is pushed at walking speed and not towed. Each sensor is not zeroed in the field as the vertical axis alignment is precisely fixed leaving sensor offsets that are removed during data processing. The fixing of the vertical alignment ensures the sensors are not unduly influenced by localised magnetic fields and that the vertical component of a magnetic anomaly is measured. The gradiometers have a measurement range of ±8000nT, although the recorded range is ±3000nT, and resolution is around 0.1nT. They are linked to a Leica GS10 RTK GNSS with data recorded by SENSYS MAGNETO®MXPDA software on a rugged PDA computer system.
- 2.2.2 Due to the fixed offsets within the fluxgate sensors, as a result of the manufacturing and tensioning process, the survey data do not provide a visually useful dataset until a zero median traverse algorithm is applied. It is recognised that this has the potential to affect some anomalies detrimentally by removing linear features orientated parallel to survey transects. However, this has not been noted as a particular problem with the system due to the high resolution data collection, generally long length of traverses and variability within the magnetic characteristics of a linear anomaly.
- 2.2.3 Data are collected along a series of parallel survey transects to achieve 100% coverage of the surveyable land. The length of each transect is variable and relates to the size of the survey area and other factors including ground conditions. A visual display allows accurate placing of transects and helps maintain the correct separation between adjacent traverses. Data are not collected within fixed grids and data points are considered to be random even though the data are collected in a systematic manner covering all accessible areas (Aspinall, Gaffney and Schmidt, 2009).
- Fluxgate sensors are highly sensitive to temperature change and this manifests as drift during the course of a survey. This can be particularly noticeable during the morning as temperatures rise and the equipment warms or cools. Sensor drift within the course of a traverse will appear as a line trending from negative to positive after processing with a zero median traverse algorithm. To remove the potential for

temperature drift, data were collected after a 20 minute stabilisation period and traverses were limited to a time of generally <100s.

2.3 Data processing and presentation

- Magnetic data collected by the MAGNETO®MXPDA cart-based system are initially prepared using SENSYS MAGNETO®DLMGPS software. The software effectively allocates a geographic position for each data point and can compensate for fixed offsets present within the FGM650 sensors. The offsets are positive or negative values present on all fluxgate gradiometer sensors. Some systems use manual or electronic balancing to effectively zero the sensors; however, this is a short term measure that is prone to drift through temperature changes and vibration and can easily be incorrectly set due to localised magnetic fields. The FGM650 sensors are very accurately aligned to the vertical magnetic gradient and are highly stable showing negligible drift on long traverses. The offset values are removed using TerraSurveyor software.
- 2.3.2 Survey tracks are analysed and georeferenced raw data (UTM Z30N) are then exported in ASCII format for further analysis and display within TerraSurveyor. The removal of the offset values (compensation) of the sensors is also carried out in TerraSurveyor using a zero median traverse function. Data are then considered to be minimally processed. Note: without the zero median traverse function it is not possible to create a meaningful data plot as all sensors have a different offset value. Although a zero median traverse algorithm can remove anomalies aligned with the survey tracks, in practice this rarely occurs due to the use of long traverses, high resolution measurement and variability within the magnetic susceptibility of long linear features.
- The minimally processed data are collected between limits of ±3000nT and clipped for display at ±3nT. Data are interpolated to a resolution of effectively 0.5m between tracks and 0.15m along each survey track.
- 2.3.4 Appendix C contains metadata concerning the survey and data attributes and is derived directly from TerraSurveyor. Reference should be made to Appendix B for further information on processing.
- A TIF file is produced by TerraSurveyor software along with an associated 2.3.5 world file (.TFW) that allows automatic georeferencing (OSGB36 datum) when using GIS or CAD software. The main form of data display used in the report is the minimally processed greyscale plot. With regard to the Sensys MXPDA, minimally processed data are considered by the manufacturer to be data that are compensated by SENSYS MAGNETO DLMGPS software, see 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. Note: traceplots are not considered to be appropriate as they do not provide an accurate or useful assessment of the magnetic anomalies due to the very high density of data collection. In addition, traceplots cannot be meaningfully plotted against base mapping and in areas of complexity traces may be lost or highly confused. Traceplots may be used to demonstrate

- characteristic magnetic profiles across discrete features where it is considered beneficial.
- 2.3.6 The raster images are combined with base mapping using ProgeCAD Professional 2021, creating DWG (2018) file formats. All images are externally referenced to the CAD drawing in order to maintain good graphical quality. The CAD plots are effectively georeferenced facilitating relocation of features using GNSS, resection method, etc.
- 2.3.7 An abstraction and interpretation is drawn and plotted for all geophysical anomalies located by the survey. Anomalies are abstracted using colour coded points, lines and polygons. All plots are scaled to landscape A3 for paper printing. Appendix E sets out CAD layer names with colour and graphic content for each interpretation category, see 3.3.
- 2.3.8 A brief summary of each anomaly, with an appropriate reference number, is set out in list form within the results (Section 3) to allow a rapid and objective assessment of features within the survey area.
- 2.3.9 The abstraction and interpretation procedure has been supported by analysis of a digital terrain model plot derived from the Environment Agency's LiDAR data. Shaded relief plots and contours are created using Surfer 15 (Azimuth:56, Altitude:45, Z factor:10), (Fig 04).
- 2.3.10 A digital archive is produced with this report, see Appendix D below. The main archive is held at the offices of Archaeological Surveys Ltd.

3 RESULTS

3.1 General assessment of survey results

- 3.1.1 The detailed magnetic survey was carried out over 0.25ha within a single area of pasture.
- 3.1.2 Magnetic anomalies located can be generally classified as positive and negative anomalies of an uncertain origin, areas of magnetic debris and disturbance and strong discrete dipolar anomalies relating to ferrous objects. Anomalies located within each survey area have been numbered and are described in 3.4 below.
- 3.2 Statement of data quality and factors influencing the interpretation of anomalies
- 3.2.1 Data are considered representative of the magnetic anomalies present within the site. There are no significant defects within the dataset.
- 3.2.2 The survey area contains high magnitude anomalies relating to magnetic

- debris and disturbance of modern origin. However, it is unlikely that these have obscured weaker anomalies of archaeological significance.
- 3.2.3 At the time of survey the area contained eight recently infilled geotechnical investigation pits. The soil did not appear to contain any significant cultural material. A small diameter terracotta pipe was visible and this is considered likely to relate to disturbance of 19th or 20th century land drains.

3.3 Data interpretation

3.3.1 The list of sub-headings below attempts to define a number of separate categories that reflect the range and type of features located during the survey. A general explanation of the characteristics of the magnetic anomalies is set out for each category in order to justify interpretation, see Table 1.

Interpretation category	Description and origin of anomalies		
Anomalies with an uncertain origin	The category applies to a range of anomalies where there is not enough evidence to confidently suggest an origin. Anomalies in this category may well be related to archaeologically significant features, but equally relatively modern features, geological/pedological features and agricultural features should be considered. Morphology may be unclear or uncharacteristic and there may be a lack of additional supporting information. Positive anomalies are indicative of magnetically enhanced soils that may form the fill of 'cut' features or may be produced by accumulation within layers or 'earthwork' features; soils subject to burning may also produce positive anomalies. Negative anomalies are produced by material of comparatively low magnetic susceptibility such as stone and subsoil.		
Anomalies associated with magnetic debris	Magnetic debris often appears as areas containing many small dipolar anomalies that may range from weak to very strong in magnitude. They often occur where there has been dumping or ground make-up and are related to magnetically thermoremnant materials such as brick or tile or other small fragments of ferrous material. This type of response is occasionally associated with kilns, furnace structures, hearths and nail spreads from former wooden structures or rooves and may, therefore, be archaeologically significant. It is also possible that the response may be caused by natural material such as certain gravels and fragments of igneous or metamorphic rock. Strong discrete dipolar anomalies are responses to ferrous objects within the topsoil.		
Anomalies with a modern origin	The magnetic response is often strong and dipolar indicative of ferrous material and may be associated with extant above surface features such as wire fencing, cables, pylons etc. Often a significant area around these features has a strong magnetic flux which may create magnetic disturbance; such disturbance can effectively obscure low magnitude anomalies if they are present. Fluxgate sensors may respond erratically adjacent to strong magnetic sources. Buried services may produce characteristic multiple dipolar anomalies dependant upon their construction.		

Table 1: List and description of interpretation categories

3.4 List of anomalies

Area centred on OS NGR 393040 161218, see Fig 03.

Anomalies with an uncertain origin

(1) – The site contains a number of discrete positive responses which appear to relate to pit-like features. They range in magnitude from 1.2nT to over 18nT, the stronger ones indicating a moderately high level of magnetic enhancement which could be associated with burnt material. It is not clear if they are associated, or what their date or function is as such pit-like anomalies can be formed by a range of

anthropogenic and natural processes.

- (2) The survey area contains a number of short, negative linear anomalies with two different orientations. Such anomalies are a response to material that has a lower magnetic susceptibility than the surrounding soils, such as sub-soil and agricultural activity, including ridge and furrow and mole drainage, can result in similar features. However, the site was part of the larger field to the west until the 20th century and the LiDAR imagery (Fig04) shows a continuation of the ridge and furrow seen in the field to the west into the survey area on a similar north to south orientation. This is different from the east to west and north east to south west orientation of anomalies (2). A linear depression with a similar orientation can be seen in the LiDAR imagery within the site, it does not have a corresponding geophysical response. Also to the west, a linear depression extends across the field appearing to truncate the ridge and furrow. It is not clear if these anomalies have an association with the linear depressions, but the response is suggestive of an association with land drainage.
- (3) A number of short, weakly positive, linear anomalies can be seen within the survey area. They lack a coherent morphology and cannot be confidently interpreted as cut features.

Anomalies associated with magnetic debris

- (4) Patches of magnetic debris are evident primarily in the southern part of the survey area. This is a response to ferrous and other magnetically thermoremnant material such as brick and tile and is generally associated with dumped material or ground make-up.
- (5) The survey area contains a number of strong, discrete, dipolar responses which are likely to relate to ferrous objects and items such as brick/tile within the topsoil.

Anomalies with a modern origin

(6) – Magnetic disturbance from ferrous material is evident around the margins of the site.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1.1 The geophysical survey located a number of anomalies within the site; however, none can be confidently characterised as of archaeological potential. A small number of pit-like responses can be seen as well as a number of short, weakly positive, linear anomalies but they lack a coherent morphology. Several negative linear anomalies have also been located, and it is possible that they have an association with land drainage, but this is uncertain. Modern magnetic debris and disturbance is also evident.

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Appendix A – basic principles of magnetic survey

Iron minerals are always present to some degree within the topsoil and enhancement associated with human activity is related to increases in the level of magnetic susceptibility and thermoremnant material. Magnetic susceptibility is an induced magnetism within a material when it is in the presence of a magnetic field. This can be thought of as effectively permanent due to the presence of the Earth's magnetic field. Thermoremnant magnetism occurs when ferrous material is heated beyond a specific temperature known as the Curie Point. Demagnetisation occurs at this temperature with re-magnetisation by the Earth's magnetic field upon cooling.

Enhancement of magnetic susceptibility can occur in areas subject to burning and complex fermentation processes on biological material; these are frequently associated with human settlement. Thermoremnant features include ovens, hearths, and kilns. In addition thermoremnant material such as tile and brick may also be associated with human activity and settlement.

Silting and deliberate infilling of ditches and pits with magnetically enhanced soil can create an area of enhancement compared with surrounding soils and subsoils into which the feature is cut. Mapping enhanced areas will produce linear and discrete anomalies allowing an assessment and characterisation of hidden subsurface features.

It should be noted that areas of negative enhancement can be produced from material having lower magnetic properties compared to the topsoil. This is common for many sedimentary bedrocks and subsoils which were often used in the construction of banks and walls etc. Mapping these 'negative' anomalies may also reveal archaeological features.

Magnetic survey or magnetometry can be carried out using a fluxgate gradiometer and may be referred to as gradiometry. The SENSYS gradiometer is a passive instrument consisting of two fluxgate sensors mounted vertically 65cm apart. The instrument is carried about 10-20cm above the ground surface and the upper sensor measures the Earth's magnetic field as does the lower sensor but this is influenced to a greater degree by any localised buried magnetic field. The difference between the two sensors will relate to the strength of the magnetic field created by the buried feature.

There are a number of factors that may affect the magnetic survey and these include soil type, local geology and previous human activity. Situations arise where magnetic disturbance associated with modern services, metal fencing, dumped waste material etc., obscures low magnitude fields associated with archaeological features.

Appendix B – data processing notes

Clipping

Minimum and maximum values are set and replace data outside of the range with those values. Extreme values are removed improving colour or greyscale contrast associated with data values that may be archaeologically significant. Different ranges are applied to data in order to determine the most suitable for anomaly abstraction and display.

Zero Median/Mean Traverse

The median (or mean) of data from each traverse is calculated ignoring data outside a threshold value, the median (or mean) is then subtracted from the traverse. The process is used to equalise differences between the offset values of the gradiometer sensors. The process can remove archaeological features that run along a traverse but with the high resolution datasets created by the Sensys FGM650 sensors and the method of data collection this has not been a notable problem. In fact, the removal of offsets using software avoids carrying out a balancing procedure on site, which inevitably can never be done in magnetically clean conditions and results in improperly aligned fluxgate sensors and/or electronic adjustment values.

3.32

Appendix C – survey and data information

-3.30 J893-mag-proc.xcp Description: Imported as Composite from: J893-mag.asc Std Dev: 1.53 Instrument Type: Sensys DLMGPS 0.01 0.03 Units: Median: Composite Area: Surveyed Area: UTM Zone: 30U 0.41958 ha Survey corner coordinates (X/Y):OSGB36 0.21233 ha Northwest corner: 393013.79, 161262.04 m 393063.74, 161178.04 m PROGRAM TerraSurveyorPre Name: Southeast corner Collection Method: Randomised Version: 3.0.36.24 Processes: Sensors: Dummy Value: 32702 1 Base Laver Dimensions GPS based Proce4 Survey Size (meters): 50 m x 84 m Base Layer.
 Unit Conversion Layer (Lat/Long to UTM). 0.15 m Source GPS Points: Active: 68872, Recorded: 68872 DeStripe Median Traverse: 4 Clip from -3.00 to 3.00

Appendix D – digital archive

Archaeological Surveys Ltd hold the primary digital archive at their offices in Wiltshire. Data are backed-up onto an on-site data storage drive and at the earliest opportunity data are copied to CD ROM for storage onsite and off-site.

A PDF copy will be supplied to the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record with greyscale images and abstraction layers made available on request. The report will also be uploaded to the Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS (OASIS).

Archive contents:

File type	Naming scheme	Description
Data	J893-mag-[area number/name].asc J893-mag-[area number/name].xcp J893-mag-[area number/name]-proc.xcp	Raw data as ASCII CSV TerraSurveyor raw data TerraSurveyor minimally processed data
Graphics	J893-mag-[area number/name]-proc.tif	Image in TIF format
Drawing	J893-[version number].dwg	CAD file in 2018 dwg format
Report	J893 report.odt	Report text in LibreOffice odt format

Table 2: Archive metadata

Appendix E – CAD layers for abstraction and interpretation plots

The table below sets out Archaeological Surveys Ltd CAD layer names with associated colours and graphical content. Where CAD files are available layers may be extracted for further CAD/GIS use. Note: hatched polygon boundaries are contained within layers with the RGB colour code 254, 255, 255 (near white) in order to prevent their visibility.

Report sub-heading and associated CAD layer names		ur with RGB index	Layer content
Anomalies with an uncertain origin	·		
AS-ABST MAG POS LINEAR UNCERTAIN		255,127,0	Line, polyline or polygon (solid)
AS-ABST MAG NEG LINEAR UNCERTAIN		Blue 0,0,255	Line, polyline or polygon (solid)
AS-ABST MAG POS DISCRETE UNCERTAIN		255,127,0	Solid donut, point or polygon (solid)
Anomalies associated with magnetic debris		_	
AS-ABST MAG DEBRIS		132, 132, 132	Polygon (cross hatched ANSI37)
AS-ABST MAG STRONG DIPOLAR		132, 132, 132	Solid donut, point or polygon (solid)
Anomalies with a modern origin			
AS-ABST MAG DISTURBANCE		132, 132, 132	Polygon (hatched ANSI31)

Table 3: CAD layering

Appendix F – copyright and intellectual property

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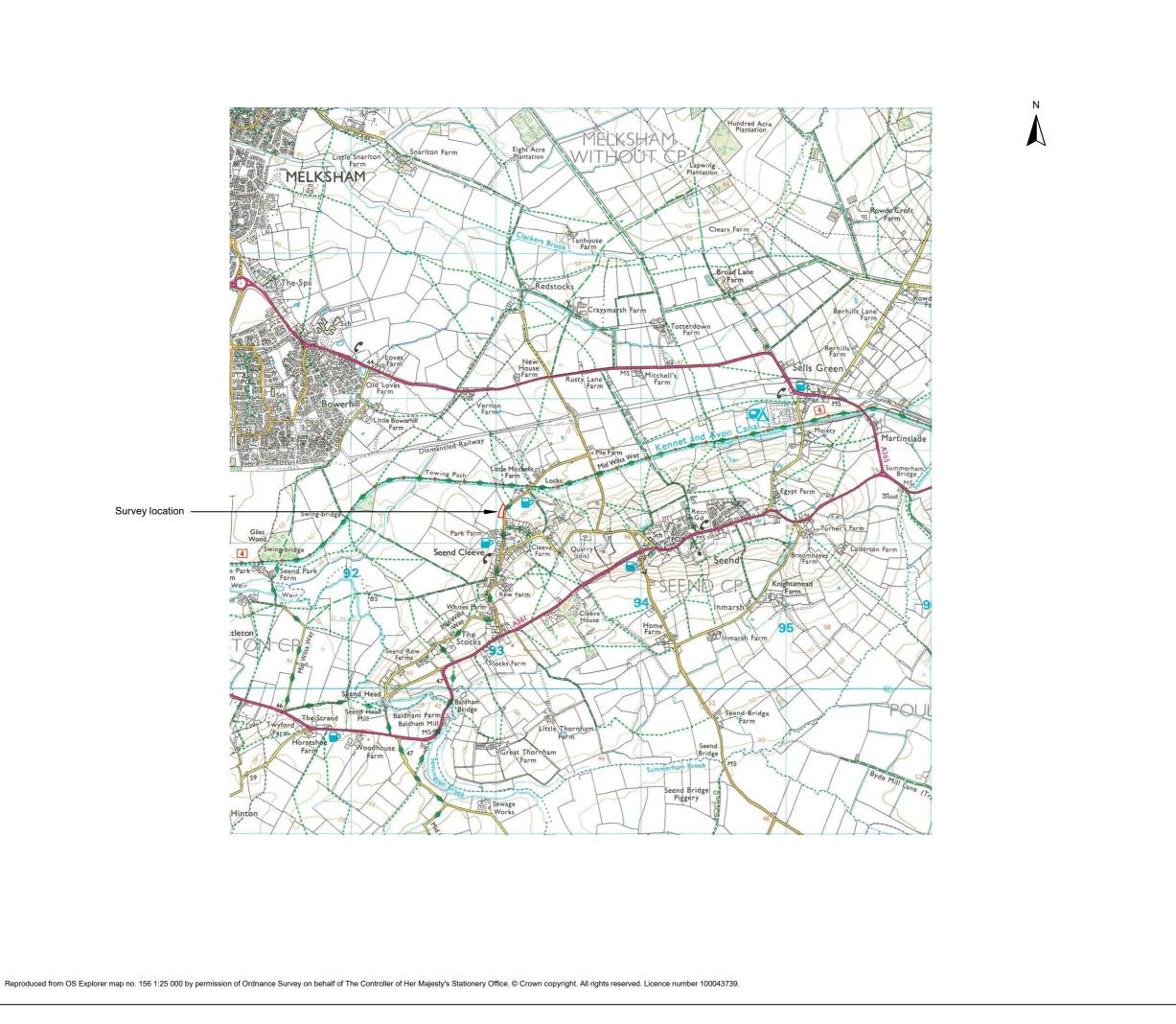
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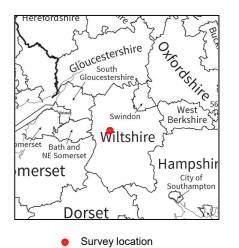






Geophysical Survey Land at Park Farm Seend Cleeve Wiltshire

Map of survey area



Site centred on OS NGR ST 93040 61218

SCALE 1:25 000

Om 500m 1000m

SCALE TRUEATAS

DRAWNBY CHECKED BY KTD DJS FIG 01

