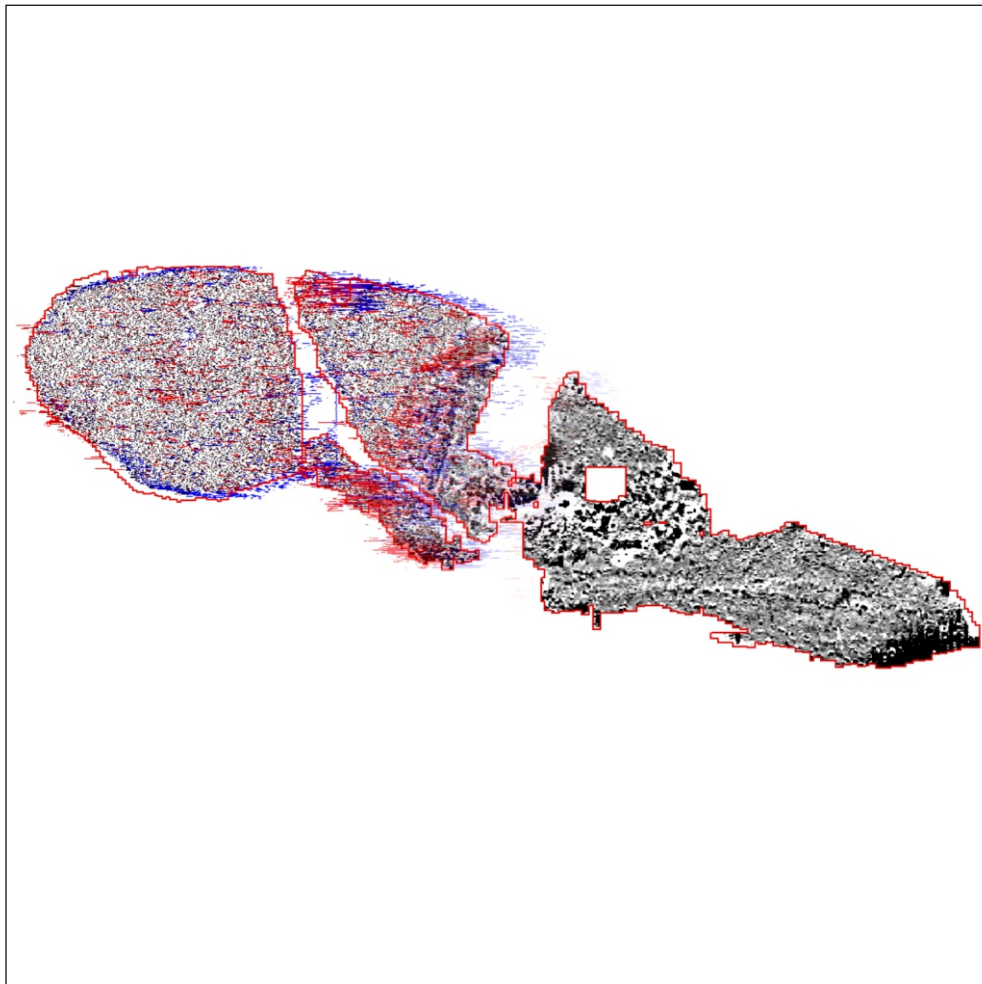




making sense of heritage

# Edgmond Road Newport, Shropshire

Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report



Ref: 103560.01  
May 2014



**Edmond Road  
Newport, Shropshire**

**Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report**

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## Quality Assurance

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# Edgmond Road Newport, Shropshire

## Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report

### Contents

Summary .....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Project background .....	1
1.2 The Site.....	1
1.3 Archaeological and Historical background.....	2
1.4 Prehistoric and Roman.....	2
1.5 Medieval.....	2
1.6 Post-medieval .....	2
<b>2 METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	3
2.2 Method .....	3
<b>3 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	4
3.2 Gradiometer Survey Results and Interpretation.....	4
<b>4 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5 REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: SURVEY EQUIPMENT AND DATA PROCESSING.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: GEOPHYSICAL INTERPRETATION.....</b>	<b>10</b>

### Figures

Figure 1:	Site Location
Figure 2:	Greyscale Plot
Figure 3:	XY Trace
Figure 4:	Interpretation



# Edgmond Road Newport, Shropshire

## Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report

### Summary

A detailed gradiometer survey was conducted over land adjacent to Edgmond Road, Newport, Shropshire. The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting with the aim of establishing the presence, or otherwise, and nature of detectable archaeological features on the site ahead of a proposed development.

The site comprises pasture fields to the south of Edgmond Road, on the northwest outskirts of Newport, approximately 6km north of Telford. The site occupies a level area between 70m and 75m aOD and is currently used as horse paddocks. The gradiometer survey was undertaken between 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and covered 6ha; it has demonstrated the presence of anomalies of possible archaeological interest within the survey area, along with several regions of increased magnetic response.

Of the four fields surveyed large areas of increased magnetic response were identified within the central and eastern fields; these areas contained anomalies of archaeological potential interpreted as possible building foundations. Extensive magnetic disturbance can be seen throughout the site, consistent with former industrial and modern activity, largely concentrated on the central and eastern parts of the survey area.

One anomaly considered to be archaeological in origin was identified in the western field interpreted as a possible section of ditch. Several isolated pit-like anomalies can be seen within the survey data, for which an archaeological interpretation cannot be ruled out entirely.

Numerous small-scale ferrous responses were seen throughout the dataset, consistent with former industrial activity and its current usage as horse paddocks.

The geophysical survey has demonstrated that the archaeological potential within the survey areas is mainly confined to the central and eastern parts of the Site, in the form of possible structures and activity areas relating to industrial use; a previous desk-based assessment (CgMs Consulting, 2012) indicated the presence of a former brick-making works and these anomalies are consistent with such an interpretation.



# **Edgmond Road Newport, Shropshire**

## **Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

The detailed gradiometer survey was commissioned by CgMs Consulting. The assistance of Dr Rob Smith is gratefully acknowledged in this regard.

The fieldwork was carried out by Philip Roberts and Philipp Maier. Ross Lefort processed and interpreted the geophysical data with Genevieve Shaw writing this report. The geophysical work was quality controlled by Dr. Paul Baggaley and Ben Urmston. Illustrations were prepared by Richard Milwain and Karen Nichols. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill.



# Edgmond Road Newport, Shropshire

## Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a geophysical survey of land off Edgmond Road, Newport, Shropshire (**Figure 1**), hereafter “the Site” (centred on NGR 374171 319810). The survey forms part of an ongoing programme of archaeological works being undertaken ahead of a proposed housing development at the Site.
- 1.1.2 The aim of the geophysical survey was to establish the presence/absence, extent and character of detectable archaeological remains within the survey area.
- 1.1.3 This report presents a brief description of the methodology followed, the detailed survey results and the archaeological interpretation of the geophysical data.
- 1.1.4 An archaeological Desk-Based Assessment was carried out by CgMs Consulting for the Site and it will be referred to in relation to the interpretation of the geophysical results (CgMs 2012)

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The survey area comprises pasture fields off Edgmond Road, on the northwest outskirts of Newport, some 6km northeast of the centre of Telford (**Figure 1**). Detailed gradiometer survey was undertaken over all accessible parts of the Site, a total of 6 ha.
- 1.2.2 The Site occupies a level expanse of ground, extending E-W, and sloping gently towards the south between approximately 70m and 75m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The survey area is bounded by Edgmond Road to the north, with the other extents of the survey area defined by Chetwynd Road to the east, a private road and pasture fields to the west, and further pasture fields, livery stables and a caravan park to the south. There is a residential property that is surrounded by the Site and the Site lies approximately 500m to the north of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal.
- 1.2.3 The underlying geology of the area is predominantly sedimentary and composed of Bridgnorth Sandstone Formation with superficial deposits consisting of Devensian glaciofluvial sands and gravels.
- 1.2.4 The soils underlying the Site are likely to be typical brown sands of the 551d (Newport 1) association and the earthy eutro-amorphous peat soils of the 1024a (Adventurers’ 1) association (SSEW Sheet 3 1983). Soils derived from such geological parent material have been shown to produce magnetic contrasts acceptable for the detection of archaeological remains through magnetometer survey.



### **1.3 Archaeological and Historical background**

- 1.3.1 The following information is summarised from the Desk-Based Assessment of the Site with a 500m buffer surrounding it (CgMs 2012). There are no designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Buildings or Conservation Areas) within the Site development boundary. There is one undesignated asset within the Site, a recorded field observation of a possible post-medieval building (Shropshire HER ESA00809).

### **1.4 Prehistoric and Roman**

- 1.4.1 There are no recorded sites of prehistoric significance within the area of investigation. The only evidence of prehistoric activity consists of a flint arrowhead found in the Strine near Chetwynd End sometime before 1909, approximately 350m south of the site (Shropshire HER 00811). Animal bones dating to the prehistoric period were also found during the construction of the Shropshire Union Canal (CgMs 2012).
- 1.4.2 There is no recorded archaeological evidence of Roman activity within the study area or the wider area. However, Newport lies on a branch of the Watling Street Roman road. There may have also been a trading settlement at Newport but the lack of supporting evidence suggests the survey site is of low potential.

### **1.5 Medieval**

- 1.5.1 There is no recorded archaeological evidence of Saxon date within the survey area and the wider vicinity. An assessment of Newport, as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey identified the medieval market town of Newport. This also includes the church and churchyard, although its full medieval extent is not known (CgMs 2012).

### **1.6 Post-medieval**

- 1.6.1 There is one undesignated archaeological feature of probable post-medieval date within the survey area. Field observations in 1971 indicate a possible building of unknown date in the central and eastern fields of site. Stone foundations were sectioned by a trench excavated in 1971 in laying a water pipe to Summerhill Cottage. The foundations were dated via the recovery of Willow Pattern pottery and it is probable that the structure relates to the brick making activities indicated by the 1838 tithe map (CgMs 2012).





## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The detailed magnetometer survey was conducted using a Bartington Grad601-2 dual fluxgate gradiometer system. The survey was conducted in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 2008).
- 2.1.2 The geophysical survey was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology's in-house geophysics team between 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Field conditions at the time of the survey were variable, although conditions were firm under foot.

### 2.2 Method

- 2.2.1 Individual survey grid nodes were established at 30m x 30m intervals using a Leica Viva RTK GNSS instrument, which is precise to approximately 0.02m and therefore exceeds English Heritage recommendations (2008).
- 2.2.2 The magnetometer survey was conducted using a Bartington Grad601-2 fluxgate gradiometer instrument, which has a vertical separation of 1m between sensors. Data were collected at 0.25m intervals along transects spaced 1m apart with an effective sensitivity of 0.03nT, in accordance with EH guidelines (2008). Data were collected in the zigzag method.
- 2.2.3 Data from the survey was subject to minimal data correction processes. These comprise a zero mean traverse function ( $\pm 10\text{nT}$  thresholds) applied to correct for any variation between the two Bartington sensors used, and a de-step function to account for variations in traverse position due to varying ground cover and topography. These two steps were applied to all survey areas, with no interpolation applied.
- 2.2.4 Further details of the geophysical and survey equipment, methods and processing are described in **Appendix 1**.



## 3 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The gradiometer survey has been successful in identifying anomalies of probable and possible archaeological interest across the Site, along with areas of increased magnetic response and a large amount of ferrous. Results are presented as a series of greyscale and XY plots, and archaeological interpretations, at a scale of 1:2,000 (**Figures 2 and 3**). The data are displayed at -2nT (white) to +3nT (black) for the greyscale image and  $\pm 25$ nT at 50nT per cm for the XY trace plots.

3.1.2 The interpretation of the datasets highlights the presence of potential archaeological anomalies, ferrous/burnt or fired objects, and magnetic trends (**Figure 4**). Full definitions of the interpretation terms used in this report are provided in **Appendix 2**.

3.1.3 Numerous ferrous anomalies are visible throughout the detailed survey dataset. These are presumed to be modern in provenance and are not referred to, unless considered relevant to the archaeological interpretation.

### 3.2 Gradiometer Survey Results and Interpretation

#### Western field

3.2.1 A ditch-like anomaly **4000** has been interpreted as being archaeological in origin; it has a ferrous anomaly present at its eastern end, possibly associated with it, although this may be a later intrusion. It seems to be isolated in this field, and is not in the vicinity of other archaeological anomalies.

3.2.2 There are a number of linear ploughing trends throughout the westernmost field oriented approximately NW-SE and NE-SW.

3.2.3 An irregular shaped area **4001** of increased magnetic response comprises a bipolar anomaly, possibly from ceramic or ferrous debris. A cluster of ferrous anomalies in the immediate vicinity suggests that **4001** may be modern in origin.

3.2.4 **4002** is a small weak approximately circular positive anomaly and interpreted as possible archaeology, possibly a pit type feature. It is in an area of ferrous anomalies, present throughout this field; it is possible that other similar pit-like responses would have been masked by the stronger ferrous anomalies.

#### Central field

3.2.5 Linear band of anomalies **4003** is oriented parallel with nearby ploughing trends near the northwestern corner of this field, although the largely negative responses suggest a different origin for these anomalies. It is likely that they are agricultural in origin, although an archaeological provenance cannot be ruled out.

3.2.6 A series of strong rectilinear and other anomalies dominates the centre of the field, largely oriented NE-SW, parallel with the existing enclosure forming the eastern boundary of the field. **4004** is a large curvilinear anomaly extending WSW from the boundary. Its strength, shape and position to the north of **4005** suggest that it is likely to be structural or perhaps of ferrous construction material and related to an industrial purpose.



- 3.2.7 Around **4005** is a large approximately rectangular area containing several strong bipolar and positive magnetic anomalies that have been interpreted as archaeology and probable archaeology. There are several intermittent positive magnetic anomalies that overall make up larger extended linear and rectilinear shaped anomalies suggesting a large structural feature. Strong bipolar responses around structural remains are often characteristic of industrial activity. The strong bipolar responses might be masking weaker archaeological anomalies in the area that are in response to more ephemeral features.
- 3.2.8 The anomalies are more defined and visible to the northern and eastern areas but become weaker, more irregular in shape and less defined to the southern and western areas possibly suggesting disturbance and lower survival in these areas. The anomalies around **4004** and **4005** lie in a discrete area of increased magnetic response which suggests a concentration of debris or material containing ferrous and ceramic debris or a level of ground disturbance. In the context of this site where brick-making activity is suspected the areas of increased magnetic response could indicate areas of industrial activity. A region of magnetic disturbance **4006** in the small field to the south is likely to be associated with the archaeological anomalies immediately to the north, although it probably relates to spreads of demolition material.
- 3.2.9 At **4007** are two L-shaped bipolar magnetic anomalies that have been interpreted as archaeology due to their shape and are possibly related in function to the structural remains at **4005**. Between the two L-shaped anomalies are two weaker and less defined approximately sub-circular positive magnetic anomalies, they have been identified as being of probable or possible archaeological interest and are consistent with former cut features such as pits.
- 3.2.10 Around **4003** are a few linear ploughing trends orientated approximately NE-SW. Given the difference in magnitude of response, the relationship between the ploughing and former structure is not clear and it is not possible to determine whether the ploughing is associated with an earlier field system or later agricultural activity following the demolition.

### Eastern field

- 3.2.11 The recorded post-medieval stone building foundation is recorded at a location between the central and eastern field and straddles the boundary between the two. A linear anomaly **4008** is within a larger area of increased magnetic response and bipolar anomalies. It is similar in strength and response to the anomalies around **4005** interpreted as potentially structural remains. The post-medieval building was described as being 'heavily truncated' by the excavation of a water pipe trench, although the course of the water pipe is not obvious in the gradiometer data due to the extents of magnetic disturbance.
- 3.2.12 A large area of increased magnetic response **4009** extends from the western boundary of the central field to the eastern boundary, which contains numerous dipolar and bipolar anomalies. There are two particularly strong ferrous anomalies to the north-east of **4008**, likely to relate to the water-pipe trench extending to the cottage and are presumed to be modern in origin.
- 3.2.13 Several irregular bipolar anomalies extend in an approximately circular or flattened oval distribution across the northern parts of **4009** but also with numerous dipolar anomalies characteristic of ferrous material interspersed among them. The nature and response of the anomalies suggests industrial activity or an area containing ferrous and ceramic debris; it is interesting to note that anomalies **4004** to **4009** form an almost uninterrupted band of responses and are therefore likely to be related to one another.



- 3.2.14 Area of increased magnetic response along the length between **4010** and **4011** defines an elongated area that contains several smaller dipolar and bipolar anomalies in an approximately linear but discontinuous orientation. The strength and shape of the anomalies are not as strong or regular as those around areas such as **4005** and **4009** therefore it is suggested that they are not the site of industrial activity but possibly a former track or boundary associated with it. The area contains several dipolar anomalies consistent with material of ferrous construction. An irregular positive magnetic anomaly **4011** is interpreted as being of archaeological interest and lies within a loose cluster of smaller pit-like anomalies.
- 3.2.15 A large concentration of dipolar anomalies of a ferrous response at the south-eastern boundary of this field is probably modern disturbance bordering the caravan park.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 The detailed gradiometer survey has been successful in detecting anomalies of archaeological interest within the Site, in addition to anomalies of probable and possible archaeological interest and regions of increased magnetic response.
- 4.1.2 There are known stone foundations from a former building at the Site, straddling the central and eastern fields at **4008**, which is thought to be related to the local brick-making industry. A linear anomaly within an area of increased magnetic response is possibly evidence of this.
- 4.1.3 Further to the known stone building foundation, the gradiometer survey has identified a large area of increased magnetic response containing linear and rectilinear positive anomalies characterised as archaeological in origin; these extend into a bigger and much more substantial area in the central and eastern fields concentrated around **4004**, **4005**, **4007** and **4009**. The form and strength of the anomalies suggests industrial activity and could also possibly be related to further structures and activity use areas relating to the local brick-making industry if the original suggestion for the stone foundation building is correct.
- 4.1.4 In the eastern field around **4010** and **4011** a long linear area of increased magnetic response and containing several anomalies of archaeological potential as well as numerous ferrous anomalies interspersed is tentatively identified as a possible former track or field boundary. It continues at the same level as a short section of field boundary extending into this field from the central field and detailed on the current OS map (CgMs 2012). The earliest map showing detail for this area is the Chetwynd Tithe Map from 1838 but there is no field boundary present in this field at this location.
- 4.1.5 The tithe map describes a pond in this field which it has been interpreted as connected to the historic brick-making but could also be associated with agricultural and pastoral activity. The site visit points to a waterlogged area in the centre of the field as the potential area of the former pond on the tithe map, which is beyond the area around **4009**. From the site visit this field has also had the suggestion that it has been artificially levelled at some point but this is not seen in the gradiometer data but from visual inspection of the site.
- 4.1.6 It should be noted that small, weakly magnetised features may produce responses that are below the detection threshold of magnetometers. It may therefore be the case that more archaeological features may be encountered than have been identified through geophysical survey. The extent of magnetic disturbance across the Site, but particularly within the central portion, suggests that even relatively strongly magnetised features may



not be fully identifiable through the gradiometer survey in these regions. In particular, these may include structural features consisting of stonework that would not typically produce large magnetic anomalies.

## 5 REFERENCES

CgMs Consulting, 2012 *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Land off Edgmond Road, Newport, Shropshire*. Client report

English Heritage, 2008. *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Research and Professional Service Guideline No 1, 2nd edition.

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983. *Sheet 3, Soils of Northern England*. Ordnance Survey, Southampton.



## APPENDIX 1: SURVEY EQUIPMENT AND DATA PROCESSING

### *Survey Methods and Equipment*

The magnetic data for this project was acquired using a Bartington 601-2 dual magnetic gradiometer system. This instrument has two sensor assemblies fixed horizontally 1m apart allowing two traverses to be recorded simultaneously. Each sensor contains two fluxgate magnetometers arranged vertically with a 1m separation, and measures the difference between the vertical components of the total magnetic field within each sensor array. This arrangement of magnetometers suppresses any diurnal or low frequency effects.

The gradiometers have an effective resolution of 0.03nT over a  $\pm 100$ nT range, and measurements from each sensor are logged at intervals of 0.25m. All of the data are stored on an integrated data logger for subsequent post-processing and analysis.

Wessex Archaeology undertakes two types of magnetic surveys: scanning and detail. Both types depend upon the establishment of an accurate 20m or 30m site grid, which is achieved using a Leica Viva RTK GNSS instrument and then extended using tapes. The Leica Viva system receives corrections from a network of reference stations operated by the Ordnance Survey and Leica Geosystems, allowing positions to be determined with a precision of 0.02m in real-time and therefore exceed the level of accuracy recommended by English Heritage (2008) for geophysical surveys.

Scanning surveys consist of recording data at 0.25m intervals along transects spaced 10m apart, acquiring a minimum of 80 data points per transect. Due to the relatively coarse transect interval, scanning surveys should only be expected to detect extended regions of archaeological anomalies, when there is a greater likelihood of distinguishing such responses from the background magnetic field.

The detailed surveys consist of 20m x 20m or 30m x 30m grids, and data are collected at 0.25m intervals along traverses spaced 1m apart. These strategies give 1600 or 3600 measurements per 20m or 30m grid respectively, and are the recommended methodologies for archaeological surveys of this type (EH, 2008).

Data may be collected with a higher sample density where complex archaeological anomalies are encountered, to aid the detection and characterisation of small and ephemeral features. Data may be collected at up to 0.125m intervals along traverses spaced up to 0.25m apart, resulting in a maximum of 28800 readings per 30m grid, exceeding that recommended by English Heritage (2008) for characterisation surveys.



### *Post-Processing*

The magnetic data collected during the detail survey are downloaded from the Bartington system for processing and analysis using both commercial and in-house software. This software allows for both the data and the images to be processed in order to enhance the results for analysis; however, it should be noted that minimal data processing is conducted so as not to distort the anomalies.

As the scanning data are not as closely distributed as with detailed survey, they are georeferenced using the GPS information and interpolated to highlight similar anomalies in adjacent transects. Directional trends may be removed before interpolation to produce more easily understood images.

Typical data and image processing steps may include:

- Destripe – Applying a zero mean traverse in order to remove differences caused by directional effects inherent in the magnetometer;
- Destagger – Shifting each traverse longitudinally by a number of readings. This corrects for operator errors and is used to enhance linear features;
- Despike – Filtering isolated data points that exceed the mean by a specified amount to reduce the appearance of dominant anomalous readings (generally only used for earth resistance data)

Typical displays of the data used during processing and analysis:

- XY Plot – Presents the data as a trace or graph line for each traverse. Each traverse is displaced down the image to produce a stacked profile effect. This type of image is useful as it shows the full range of individual anomalies.
- Greyscale – Presents the data in plan view using a greyscale to indicate the relative strength of the signal at each measurement point. These plots can be produced in colour to highlight certain features but generally greyscale plots are used during analysis of the data.



## APPENDIX 2: GEOPHYSICAL INTERPRETATION

The interpretation methodology used by Wessex Archaeology separates the anomalies into two main categories: archaeological and unidentified responses.

The archaeological category is used for features when the form, nature and pattern of the anomaly are indicative of archaeological material. Further sources of information such as aerial photographs may also have been incorporated in providing the final interpretation. This category is further sub-divided into three groups, implying a decreasing level of confidence:

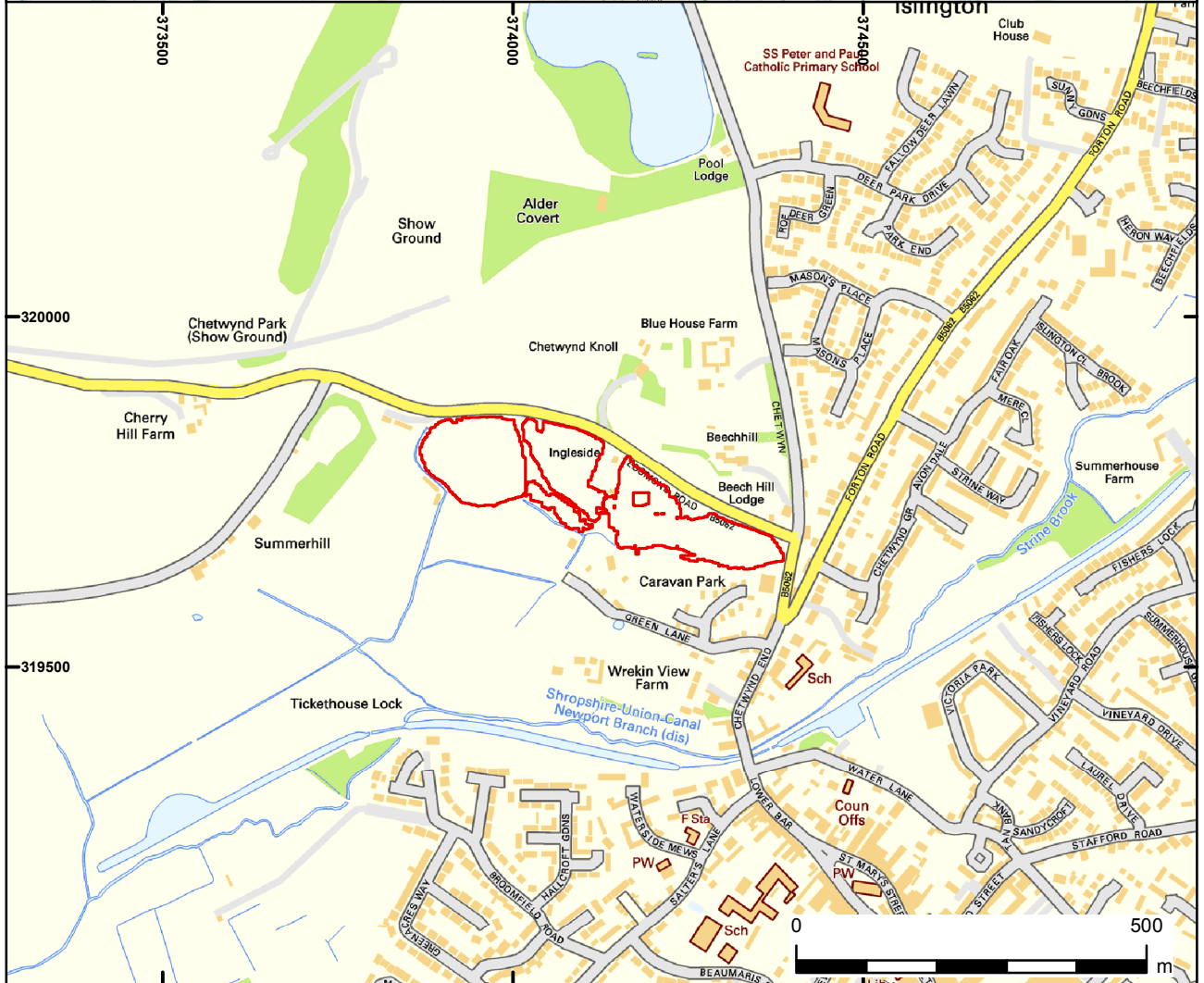
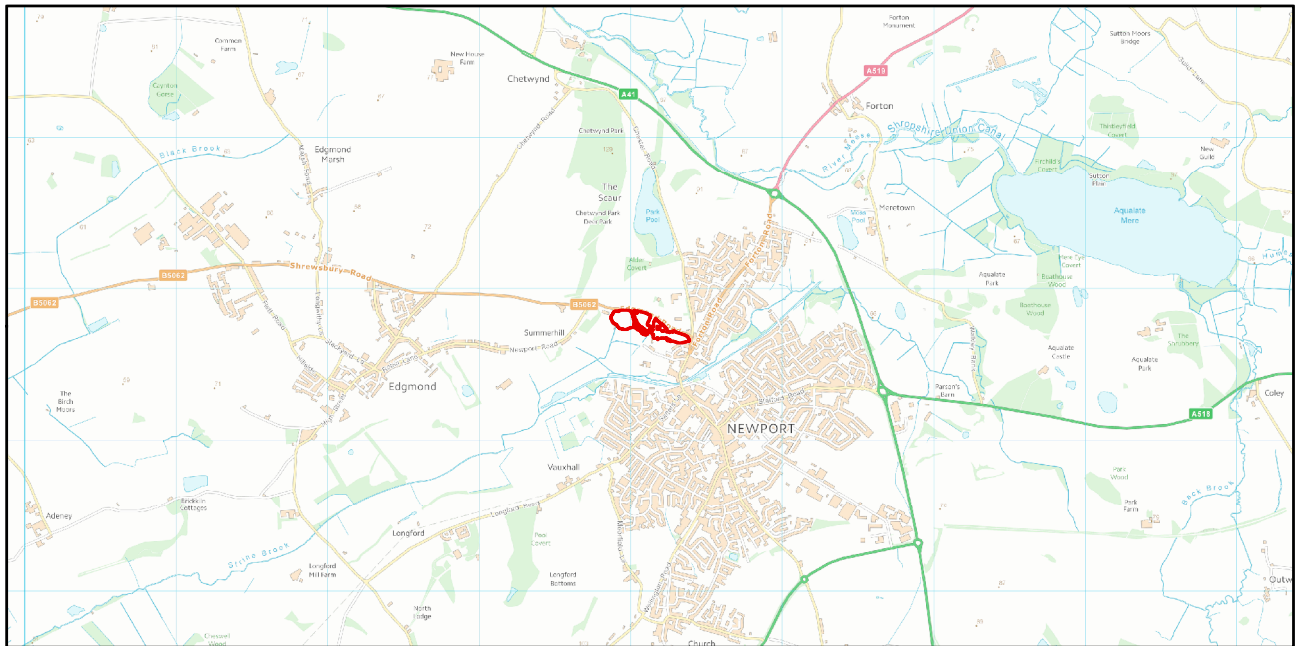
- Archaeology – used when there is a clear geophysical response and anthropogenic pattern.
- Probable archaeology – used for features which give a clear response but which form incomplete patterns.
- Possible archaeology – used for features which give a response but which form no discernible pattern or trend.



The unidentified category is used for features when the form, nature and pattern of the anomaly are not sufficient to warrant a classification as an archaeological feature. This category is further sub-divided into:

- Increased magnetic response – used for areas dominated by indistinct anomalies which may have some archaeological potential.
- Trend – used for low amplitude or indistinct linear anomalies.
- Ferrous – used for responses caused by ferrous material. These anomalies are likely to be of modern origin.

Finally, services such as water pipes are marked where they have been identified.

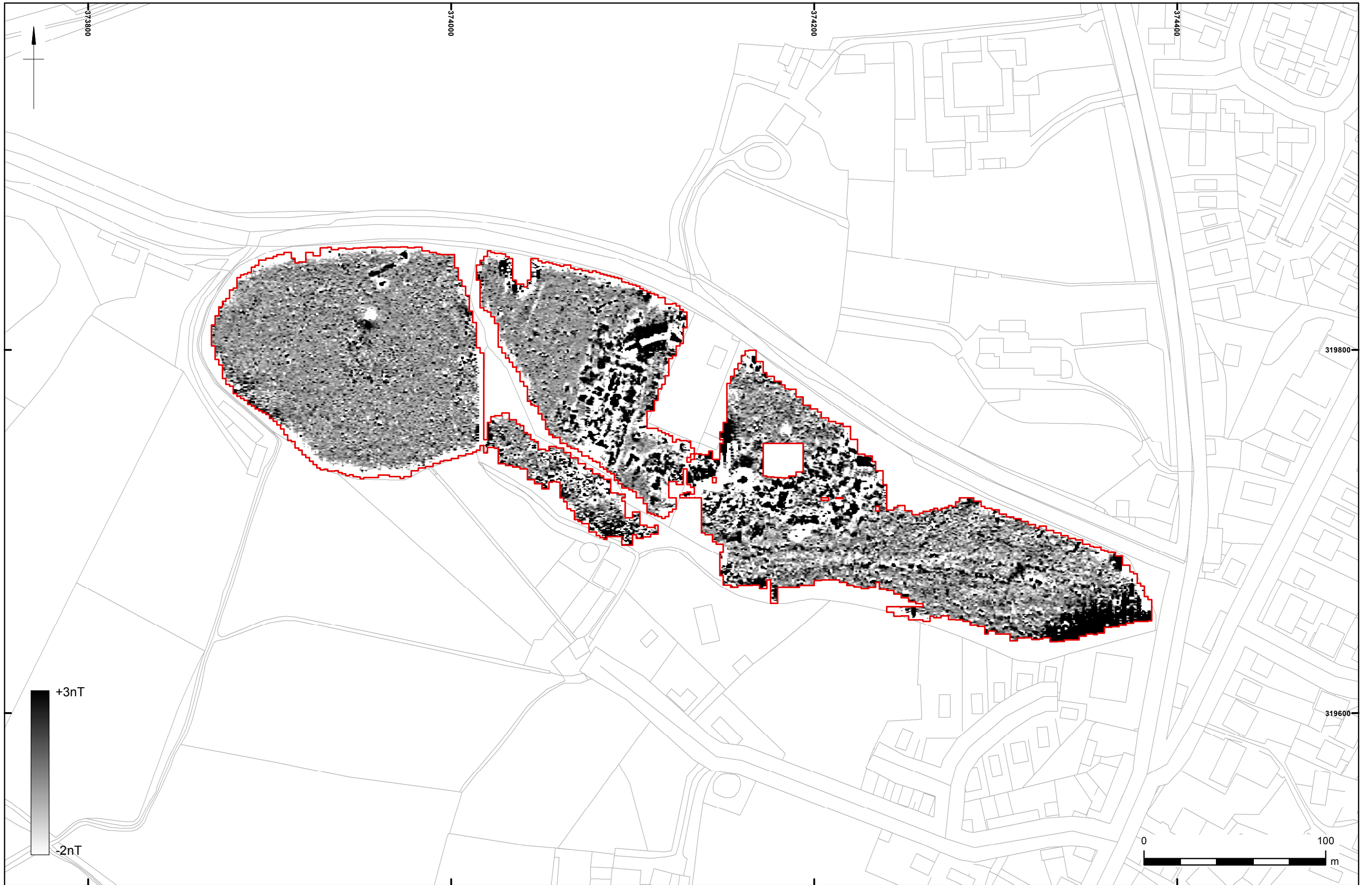




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Site location and survey extents

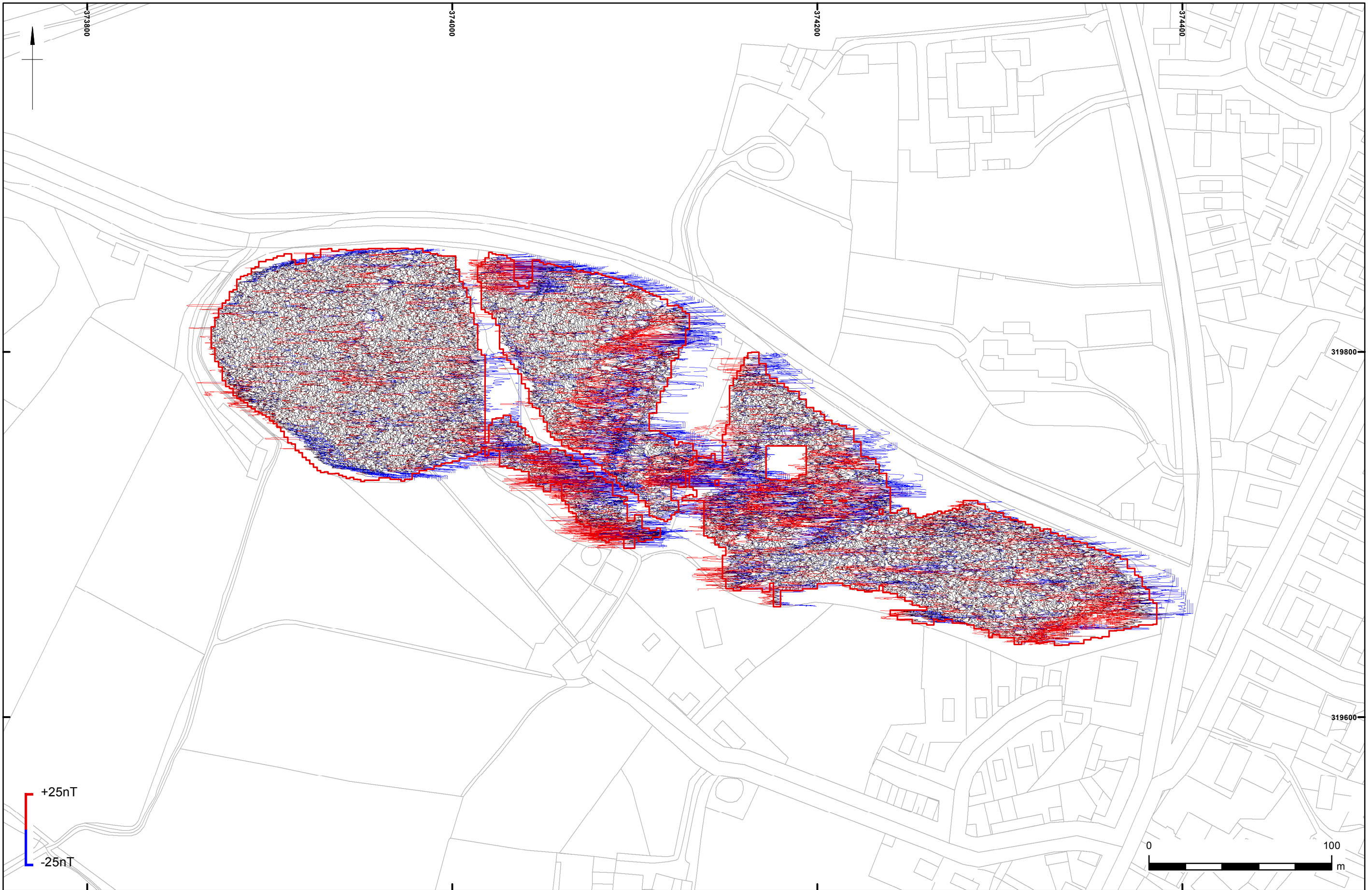
Figure 1



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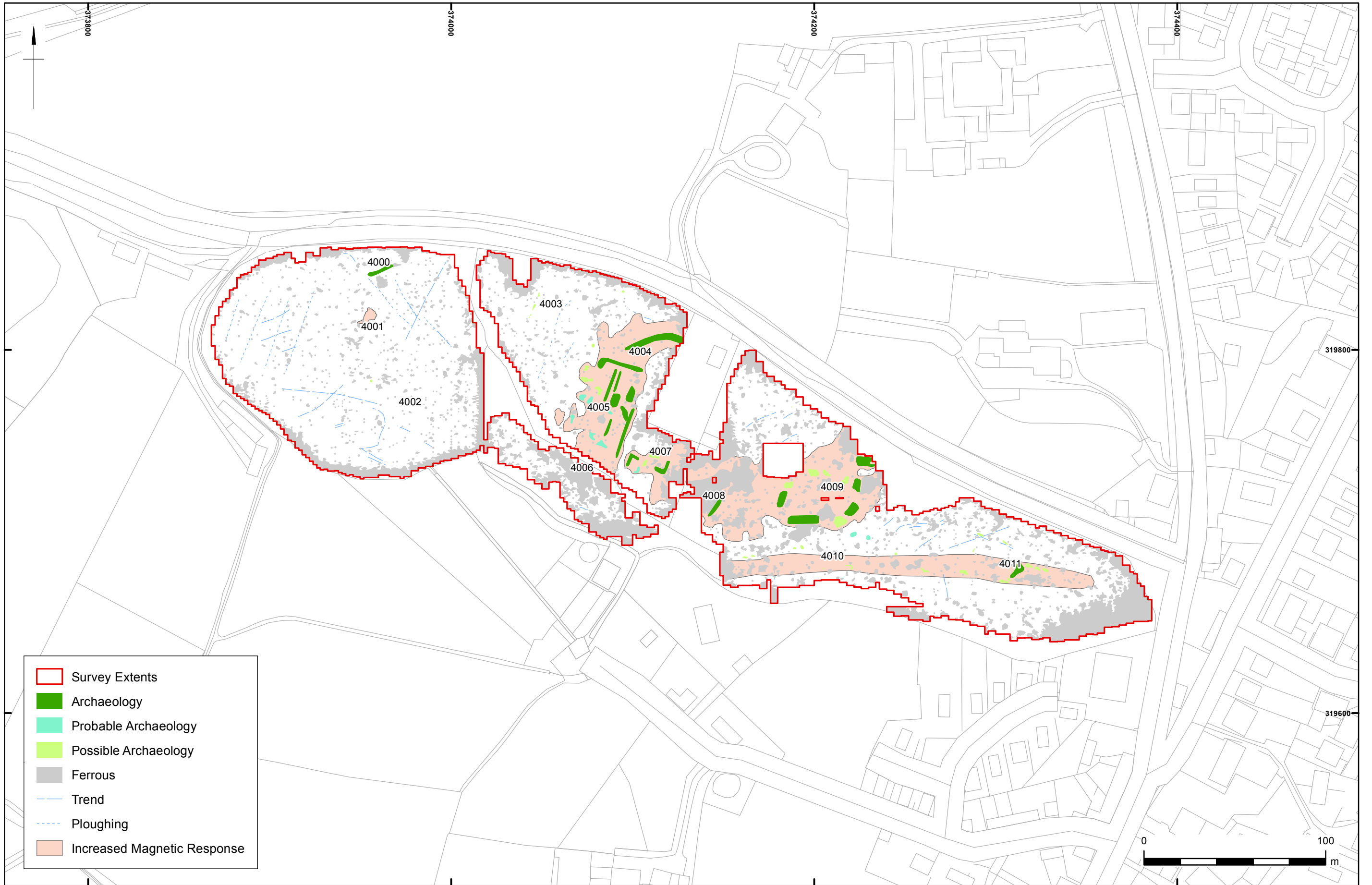
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XY trace

Figure 3



	Survey Extents
	Archaeology
	Probable Archaeology
	Possible Archaeology
	Ferrous
	Trend
	Ploughing
	Increased Magnetic Response



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