

LAND OFF FORE STREET LANGTREE TORRIDGE DEVON

Results of a Geophysical Survey



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 170524

Land off Fore Street, Langtree, Torridge, Devon Results of a Geophysical Survey

By J. Bampton
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Work undertaken by SWARCH for
Christopher Wilson of Wilson Architecture and Planning

SUMMARY

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned to undertake a geophysical survey on land off Fore Street, Langtree, Devon, in advance of a planning application for a residential development.

The rapid desk-based appraisal undertaken did not identify known heritage assets on the site or in its immediate vicinity, although the 1838 field name Church Close may hint at a connection to the glebe.

The geophysical survey undertaken did not identify any archaeologically-significant features. The only geophysical anomalies present are likely to be natural tree-throws or geological variation.

The development of this site would damage or destroy any archaeological features or deposits that might be present. However, the desk-based appraisal and geophysical survey would suggest the archaeological potential of this site is low, and further archaeological works are unlikely to produce any meaningful results.



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THE STAFF AT THE DEVON HERITAGE CENTRE (DHC)
THE STAFF AT THE DEVON COUNTY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TEAM (DCHET)

PROJECT CREDITS

PROJECT DIRECTOR: DR. SAMUEL WALLS
PROJECT OFFICER: JOE BAMPTON
FIELD WORK: JOE BAMPTON
REPORT: JOE BAMPTON
EDITING: DR. BRYN MORRIS
GRAPHICS: JOE BAMPTON

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Location: Fore Street, Langtree
Parish: Langtree
District: Torrridge
County: Devon
NGR: SS 44651 15489
SWARCH ref: LFS17

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Christopher Wilson of Wilson Architecture and Planning (the Client) to undertake a geophysical survey on land off Fore Street, Langtree, Devon, in advance of the residential development of the site. This work was carried out in accordance with best practice and ClfA guidelines.

1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located in a square field on the western side end of Langtree village on, c.5km south-west of Great Torrington. Langtree is located on a ridge of land between two tributaries of the River Torrridge; the site lies on a relatively level plateau at a height of c.167m AOD. The soils of this area are the well-drained fine loamy soils of the Neath association (SSEW 1983), which overlie the interbedded siltstones, mudstones and sandstones of the Bude Formation and Holsworthy Group (BGS 2017).

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Langtree is located in the hundred of Shebbear and the deanery of Torrington. The lords of the Manor of Langtree were entitled to dispense capital punishment. Prior to the Norman Conquest it was held by Beorhtric (Williams & Martin 2002), but in 1086 King William held Langtree (*Langtrey*), from whom it passed to Queen Matilda. The placename *Langtree* is derived from the Old English *Lang* and *trēow* meaning 'the tall tree' (Watts 2004); the use of the element *trēow* hints at religious or judicial functions (Morris 2012).

The Manor of Langtree was later held by the Earls of Gloucester and passed through successive female heirs to the Spencers and Beauchamps. The manors of Langford and Stowford in Langtree Parish were held by Lord Rolle; the 1838 tithe records indicate the site (field nos. 464 & 465) formed part of the tenement of *Hockridge*, which was owned by Lord Rolle. It was leased to William Blight and others. The plots were named *Church Close* and were listed as arable. Most of the surrounding fields were under arable cultivation and feature prosaic names. The *Church Close* field names may be locational (i.e. the closest fields to the church) or possibly indicate a (former) connection to glebe land.

1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

THE site is located within an area characterised by the Devon HLC as *post-medieval Barton Fields: these relatively large regular enclosures seem likely to have been laid out between C15th-C18th. Some curving boundaries may be following earlier divisions in the pre-existing medieval fields.* The shape and form of the neighbouring field boundaries (Appendix 1) is indicative of enclosed medieval strip fields. There have been very few archaeological investigations in this area, and there are no Prehistoric or Romano-British heritage assets within 1km of the site listed on the Devon HER. Medieval and post-medieval heritage assets listed on the HER include a medieval field

system (MDV35152) to the south-west; a coin hoard of 16 late medieval coins (MDV15268); Grade II listed 17th century farmhouses at Doggaport (MDV35683; MDV99101); a quarry in Frithelstock parish (MDV35004); the settlement of Langtree (MDV18903), with 19th century chapel (MDV2631), Grade II Listed rectory (MDV35641; MDV101542), Grade II* Listed 15th century All Saints Church (MDV430); also listed is post-medieval Loveland house (MDV35008), and the questionable ruins of a windmill (MDV57591; MDV439).

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The desk-based element of this report follows the guidance as outlined in: *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (ClfA 2014a), *Understanding Place: historic area assessments in a planning and development context* (English Heritage 2012), and *The Setting of Heritage Assets, GPA3* (Historic England 2015). The gradiometer survey follows the guidance outlined in *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation* (English Heritage 2008) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey* (ClfA 2014b).

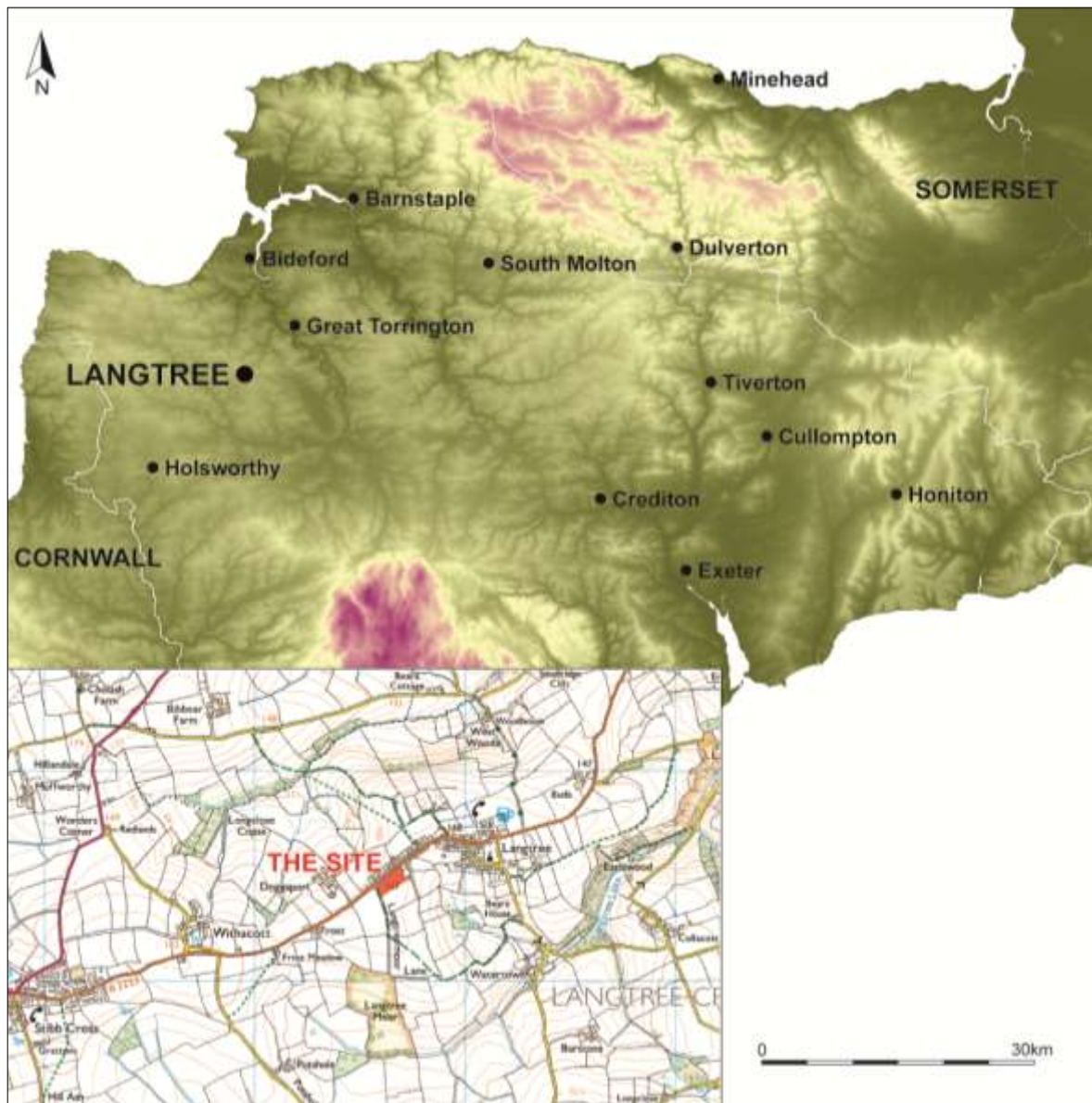


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).

2.0 GRADIOMETER SURVEY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey is to identify and record magnetic anomalies within the area of the proposed site. While the anomalies may relate to archaeological deposits and structures, the dimensions of recorded anomalies may not directly correspond with any associated archaeological features. The following discussion attempts to clarify and characterise identified anomalies. The survey was undertaken on the 15th of May 2017 by J. Bampton under showery conditions. The survey data was processed by J. Bampton. An area of approximately 1ha was surveyed. The survey identified a single anomaly group, representative of tree-throws or pits. Directional trends in responses of the underlying geology may be indicative of geological striations or agricultural activity such as ploughing or drainage resulting in shallow, weak responses.

2.2 SITE INSPECTION

The site consists of the north-western half of a single large square field bounded by Devon hedgebanks up to 1.5m high and c.2m wide. The site is accessed by gateways in the north-west and south-east boundaries associated with compacted and disturbed ground. The site is relatively level, with only a very slight east-facing slope. At the time of the survey the field was under a pasture crop with ankle to knee length grass. No archaeological earthworks were observed.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

The gradiometer survey follows the general guidance as outlined in the appropriate English Heritage (2008) and ClfA (2014b) guidance. The survey was carried out using a twin-sensor fluxgate gradiometer (Bartington Grad601); these machines are sensitive to depths of up to 1.5m. The survey parameters were: sample intervals of 0.25m, traverse intervals of 1m, a zigzag traverse pattern, traverse orientation was circumstantial, grid squares of 30×30m. The gradiometer was adjusted ('zeroed') every 0.5-1ha. The survey grid was tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The data was downloaded onto *Grad601 Version 3.16* and processed using *TerraSurveyor Version 3.0.25.0*. The primary data plots and analytical tools used in this analysis were *Shade* and *Metadata*. The details of the data processing are as follows:

Processes: Clip +/- 3SD; DeStripe all traverses, median.

Details: 0.82005ha surveyed; Max. 120.51nT, Min. -99.29nT; Standard Deviation 10.64nT, mean 0.65nT, median 0.00nT.

2.4 RESULTS

Table 1 with the accompanying Figures 2 and 3 show the analyses and interpretation of the geophysical survey data. Additional graphic images of the survey data and numbered grid locations can be found in Appendix 2.

TABLE 1: INTERPRETATION OF GRADIOMETER SURVEY DATA.

Anomaly group	Class and Certainty	Form	Archaeological Characterisation	Comments
1	Moderate positive, possible	Oval	Tree-throw or pit	Three discrete positive anomalies indicative of pits or tree-throws. Given the irregular spread of positive and negative responses – presumably the natural geology – it is possible that these responses are natural in origin. Responses vary between +18 and +25nT.

2.5 DISCUSSION

The survey identified a single anomaly group comprising three possible archaeological or natural features. Probable ferrous objects or fragments were detected across the site, as were areas of modern disturbance along the edges of the field. A series of weak parallel trends in the data may be geological in origin, or arise from ploughing or under drainage; and along the edges of the field these indicate areas of compacted topsoil from the transit of farm machinery. A modern service trench crosses the site approximately south-west by north-east along the northern half of the surveyed area.

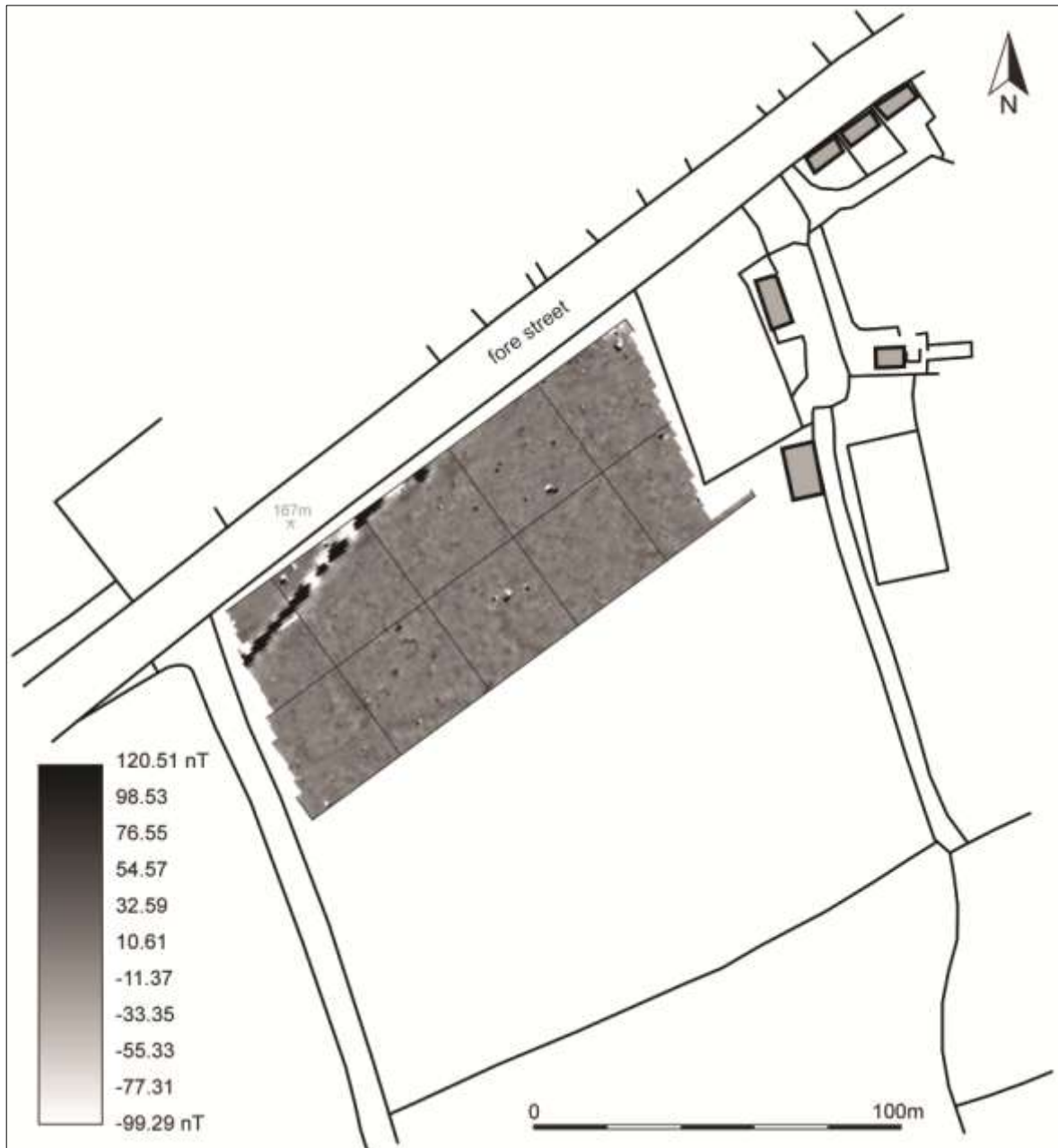


FIGURE 2: SHADE PLOT OF GRADIOMETER SURVEY DATA; MINIMAL PROCESSING.

The geophysical anomalies of Group 1 consist of at least three oval moderate positive responses (c.+18nt to +25nT). These discrete responses are indicative of cut features such as pits or tree-throws. The general pattern of responses across the site may suggest that this anomaly group is

actually part of a naturally occurring phenomenon (such as tree-throws) and the lack of other clear features within the survey area reduces the likelihood that these anomalies are archaeological in origin. The historic field boundary shown on the tithe map may be located just to the south of the survey area. The response of the underlying geology was between $\pm 5nT$.

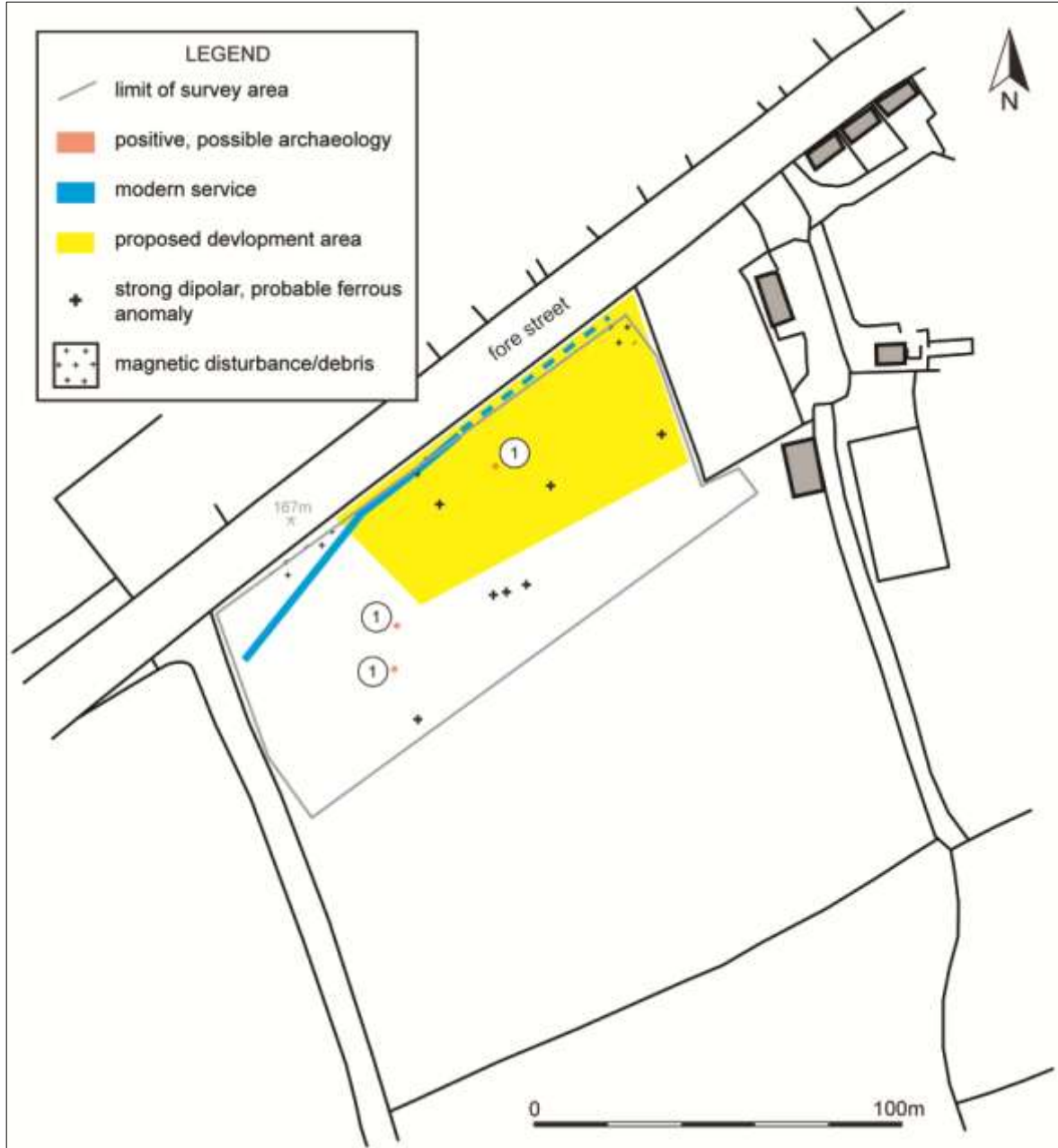


FIGURE 3: INTERPRETATION OF GRADIOMETER SURVEY DATA.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The rapid desk-based appraisal undertaken did not identify known heritage assets on the site or in its immediate vicinity, although the 1838 field name Church Close may hint at a connection to the glebe.

The geophysical survey undertaken did not identify any archaeologically-significant features. The only geophysical anomalies present are likely to be natural tree-throws or geological variation.

The development of this site would damage or destroy any archaeological features or deposits that might be present. However, the desk-based appraisal and geophysical survey would suggest the archaeological potential of this site is *low*, and further archaeological works are unlikely to produce any meaningful results.

4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Devon County Council Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)** 2015: *Viewer*
<http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer> [accessed 22.05.2017]

Unpublished Sources:

Devon Heritage Centre:

- OS surveyor's draft map of Hartland, 1804
- Langtree tithe map 1838
- Langtree tithe apportionment 1838
- Ordnance Survey (OS) 1st edition, published 1885
- Ordnance Survey (OS) 2nd edition, published 1906

APPENDIX 1: CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

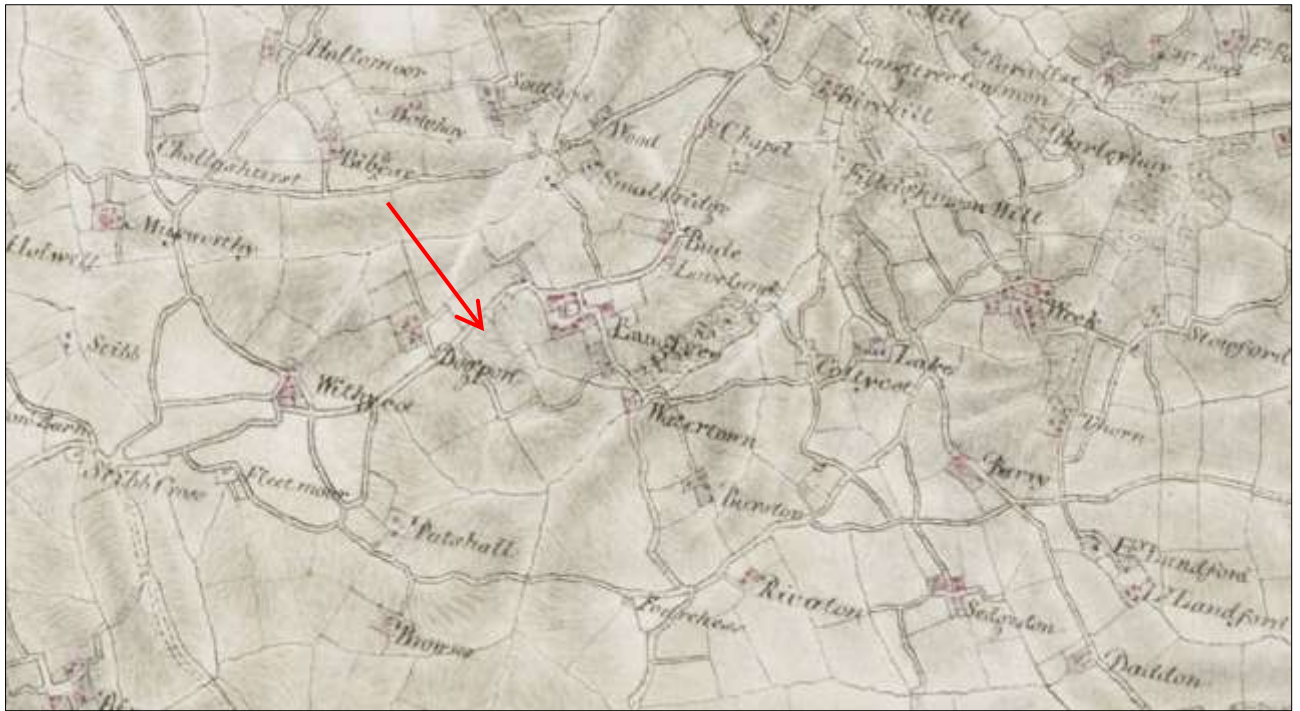


FIGURE 4: OS SURVEYOR'S DRAFT MAP FOR THE HARTLAND AREA, 1804 (DHC); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.

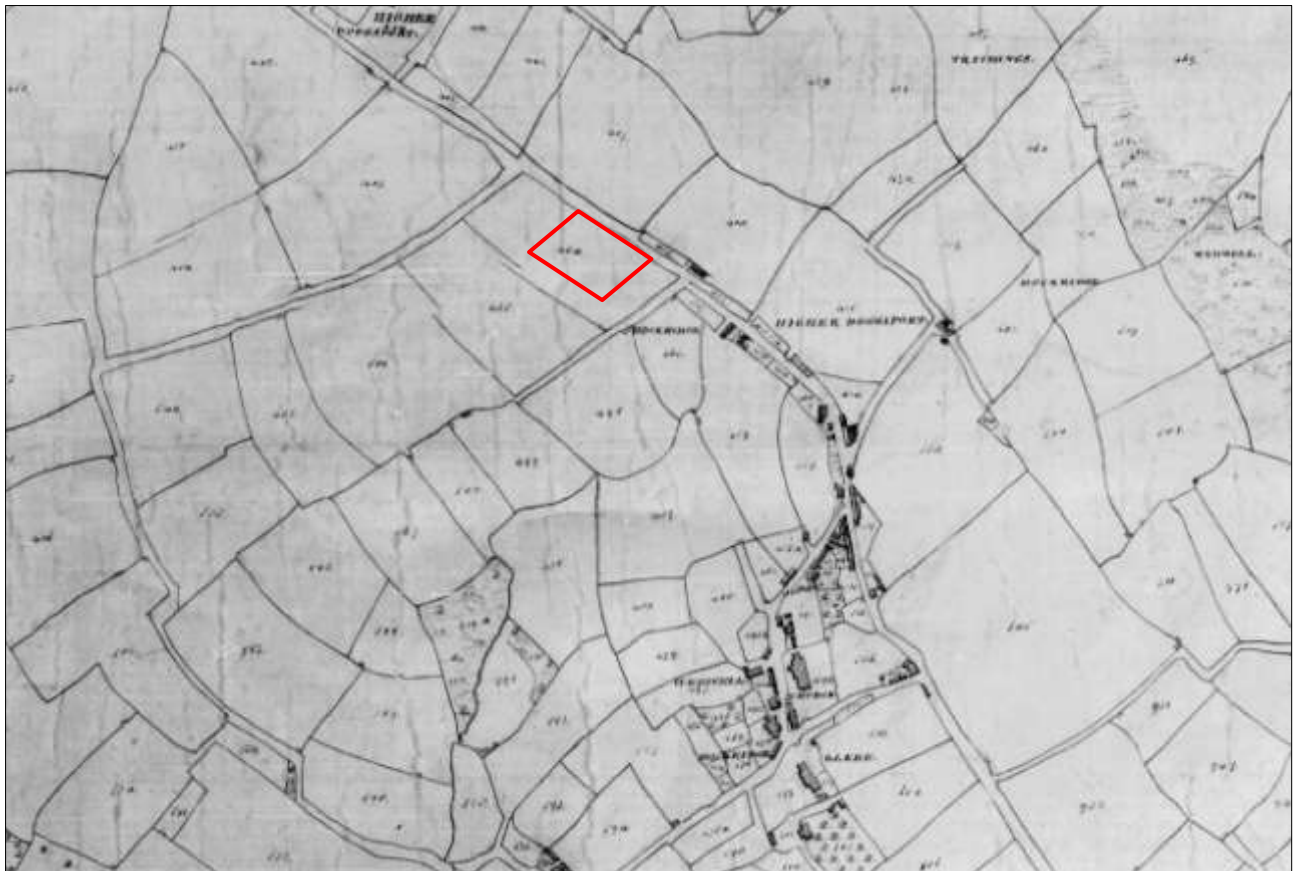


FIGURE 5: EXTRACT FROM THE 1838 TITHE MAP (DHC); THE SITE IS INDICATED.



FIGURE 6: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 1ST ED. 6" MAP SURVEYED 1884, PUBLISHED 1885 (DHC); THE SITE IS INDICATED.



FIGURE 7: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 2ND ED. 6" MAP SURVEYED 1904, PUBLISHED 1906 (DHC); THE SITE IS INDICATED.

APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL GRAPHICAL IMAGES OF THE GRADIOMETER SURVEY

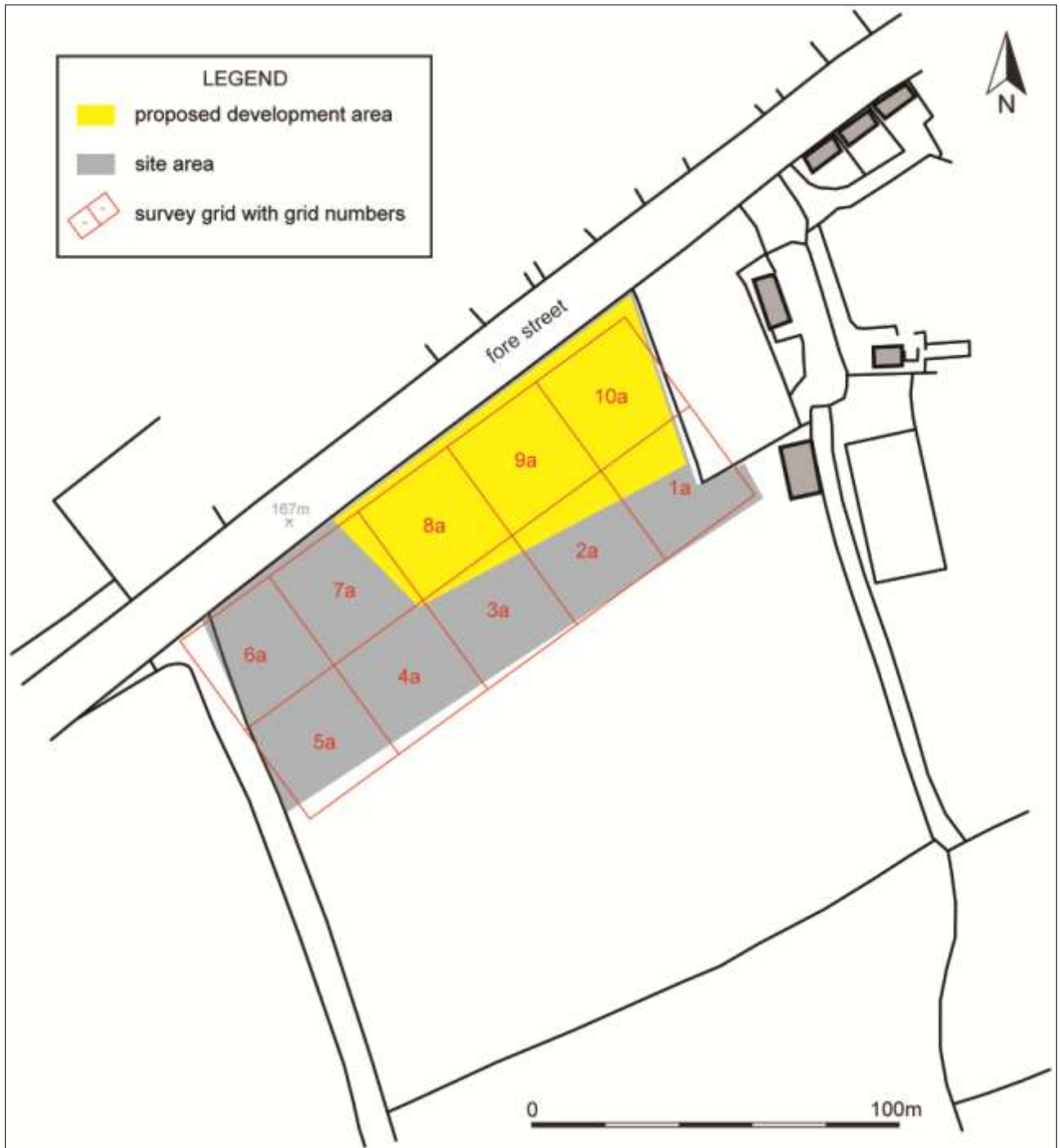


FIGURE 8: SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AREA WITH GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY GRID LOCATION, LAYOUT AND NUMBERING.

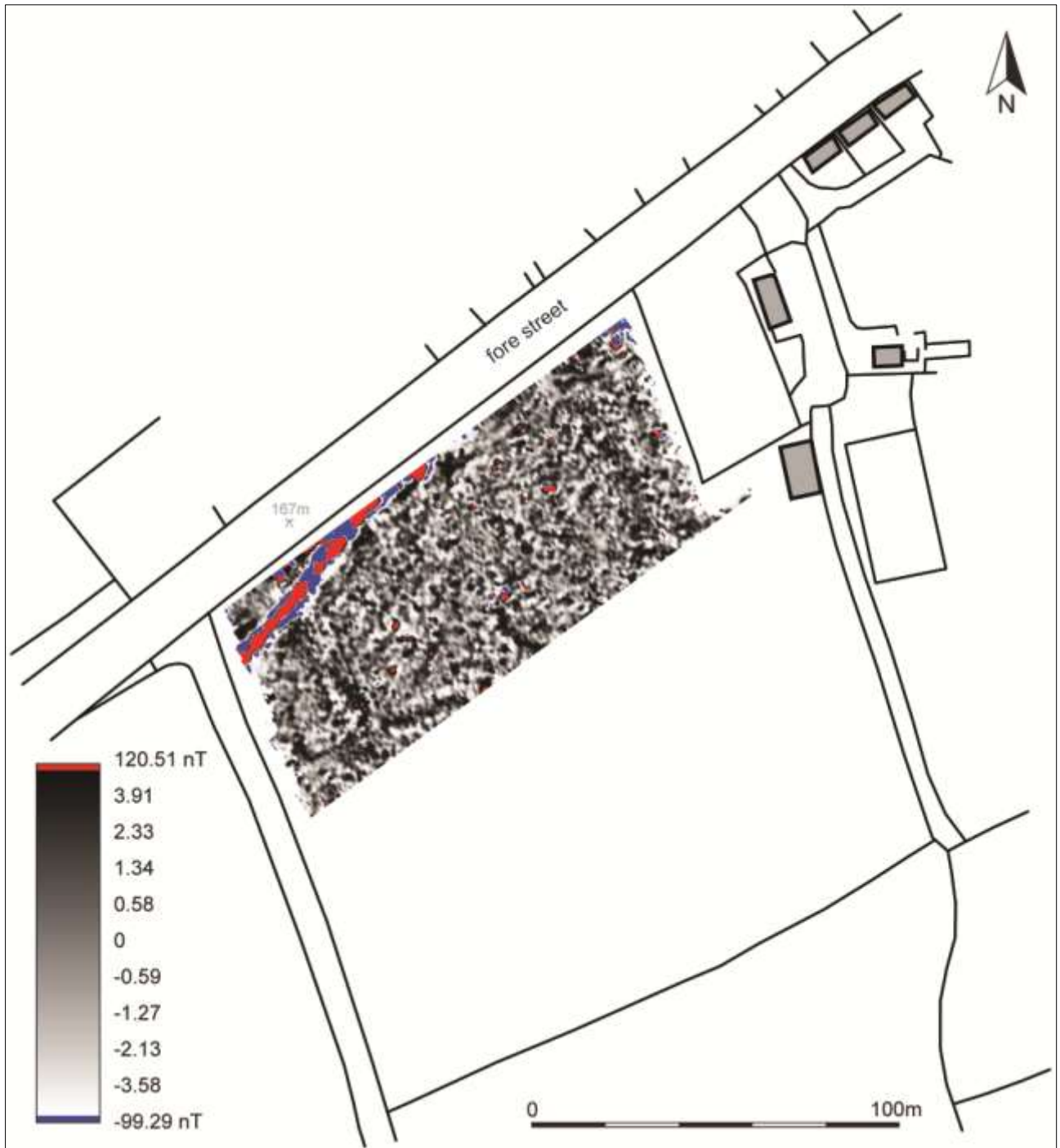


FIGURE 9: RED-GREY-BLUE SHADE PLOT OF GRADIOMETER SURVEY DATA: GRADIATED SHADING; BAND WEIGHT EQUALISED.

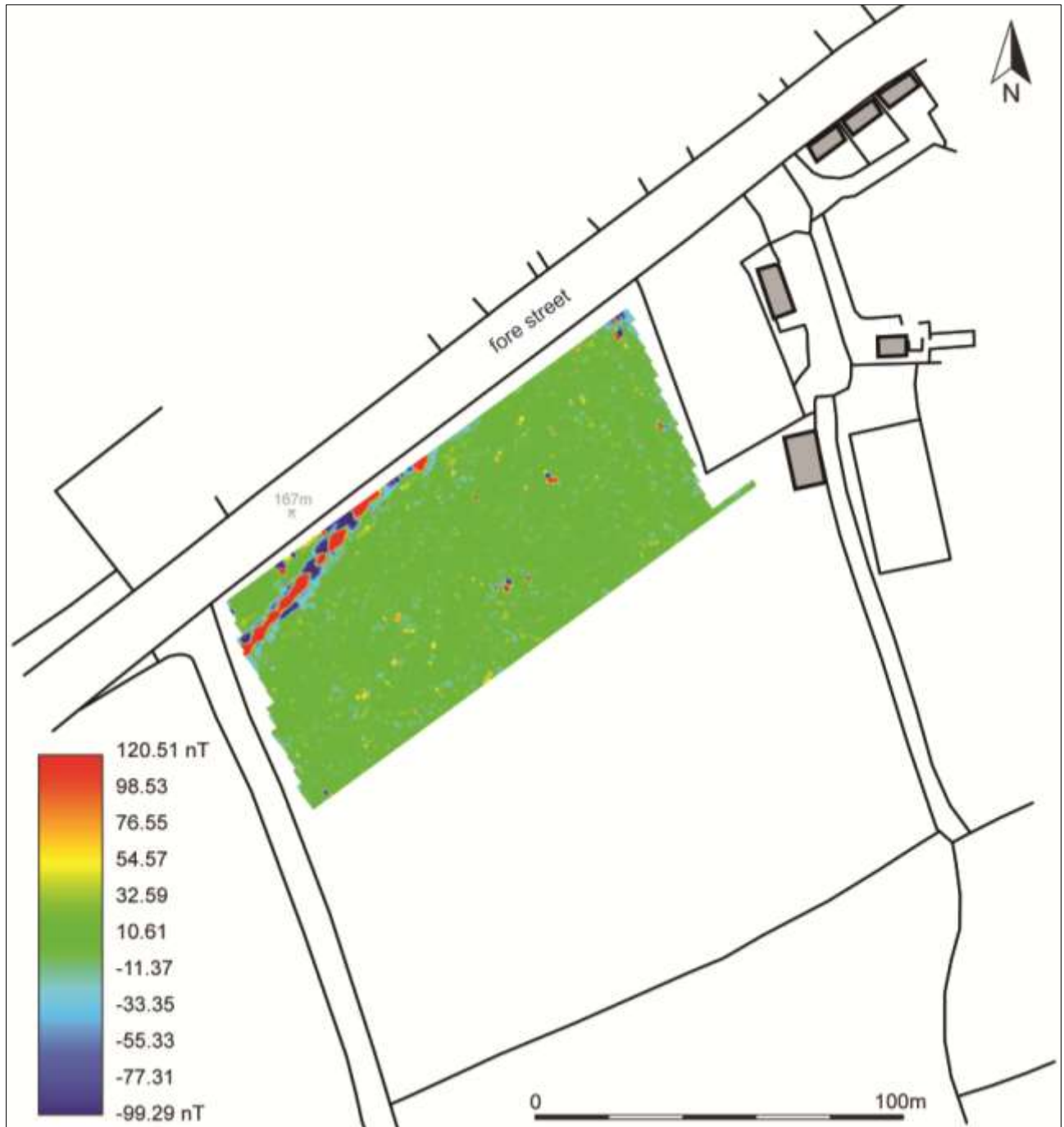


FIGURE 10: RED-BLUE-GREY (2) SHADE PLOT OF GRADIOMETER SURVEY DATA: GRADIATED SHADING.



The Old Dairy
Hacche Lane Business Park
Pathfields Business Park
South Molton
Devon
EX36 3LH

Tel: 01769 573555
Email: mail@swarch.net