ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

EAST HANNEY
SOLAR FARM
OXFORDSHIRE

Prepared for
ARMOUR HERITAGE
by
Archaeological Project Services

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APS Report No: 64/20

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Site name	**East Hanney, Solar Farm** **-Geophysical Survey Report**
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1. SUMMARY

A detailed magnetic gradiometer survey was undertaken for Armour Heritage in advance of construction of a proposed Solar Farm on land west of the A338 north of East Hanney, Oxfordshire. The survey area totalled c. 62.8ha.

The site has identified many anomalies believed to be related to archaeological activity, including an area of sub-rectangular enclosures thought to indicate a medieval settlement and two potentially prehistoric ring features.

There are also a large number of modern anomalies associated with two former clusters of buildings and agricultural drainage activity.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of an Evaluation

A geophysical survey is a non-intrusive method of archaeological evaluation. Evaluation is defined as *'a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site. If such archaeological remains are present Field Evaluation defines their character and extent, quality and preservation, and it enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate'* (CIfA 2014a).

2.2 Project Background

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Armour Heritage to undertake a detailed magnetometer survey totalling some 62.8ha on land to the west of the A338 north of East Hanney, Oxfordshire. This was in advance of a proposed Solar Farm. The work was undertaken in accordance with a method statement prepared by APS. The survey was carried out between the 3rd - 25th of November 2021.

2.3 Topography and Geology

East Hanney is situated 16.8km southwest of Oxford, in the administrative district of Vale of White Horse (Fig. 1). The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 4190 9434 and lies 1.6km north of the centre of East Hanney as defined by Hanney Chapel (Fig. 2). The total area of the site is 62.8ha, encompassing two fields. The site is bounded on all sides by fields with Childrey Brook on the northern and western edges and Letcombe Brook on the south and eastern sides.

Local soils are mostly slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils, but to the far north are described as loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater (CSAI 2021). These soils mostly seal alluvial clay, silt, sand and gravel deposits, but in the southwest corner of the site lies some Northmoor sand and gravel deposits both of which seal a solid geology of mudstone of the Ampthill and Kimmerige clay formation (BGS 2021). The site lies at a height of *c.*60m OD on generally level ground.

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Armour Heritage (Armour Heritage 2021) has undertaken a detailed assessment of the historical setting of the site. This identified a moderate potential for prehistoric features, chiefly related to Bronze Age sites in the area. A Bronze Age barrow cemetery consisting of

at least 10 round barrows has been recorded at Garford, *c*. 960m northeast of the Site. A short distance to the east of the barrow cemetery, archaeological excavations in advance of development recorded a range of features spanning the Bronze Age, Iron Age, early and later Romano-British and medieval periods (TVAS 2014). Further evidence for Bronze Age funerary activity has been recorded from a site some 715m north of the proposed development. Aerial photography has identified a group of potentially later prehistoric features at Garford, also a considerable distance north of the site, comprising a likely prehistoric settlement.

A Roman road passes 300m east of the site and some scatters of Roman pottery are associated with this, leading to an assessment concluding a low-moderate potential for Roman activity on the site.

A manor or settlement at East Hanney is first identified as *Hannige* in Saxon royal charters of AD956 and AD968. The place name is thought to derive from the Old English *hana* and *Ĥg*, meaning 'island or land between two streams frequented by wild birds' (Mills 2003). This is thought to be located over 500m to the south, within the modern village of East Hanney. Several medieval features have been identified in the area of East Hanney, either related to the abandoned hamlet of Paufrey or the shrunken area of East Hanney. Armour Heritage assessed the potential for medieval remains on the site to be low.

Overall there appears to be significant archaeological activity in the local area, with settlement activity nearby; however, nothing is apparent within the site itself from aerial shots or lidar data.

The 1842 tithe map (Armour Heritage 2021, 24) shows there were two building clusters on the site, which was still the case in the late 19th century when Ordnance Survey maps are available (Plate 1). Several field boundaries which have since been removed are also visible.

Plate 1: OS map, 1898 showing the survey area.

3. GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

3.1 Methods

A magnetic gradiometry survey was carried out with a Bartington Grad 601-2 fluxgate magnetometer. The fields were divided into 40m^2 grids using a survey-grade GPS. Each grid was walked systematically in a zigzag pattern, taking readings every 0.25m in traverses 1m apart.

The layout of the survey area is shown in Figure 3, with the area divided into field 1 and field 2. At the time of the survey all the fields were covered in young crop and conditions were good for surveying. There was, however, cover crop for pheasants at the edges at the north and west of the site and this area was unable to be surveyed due to the crop's height.

The survey was undertaken in accordance with Historic England (2008) and CIfA (2014b) guidelines and codes of conduct. A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Results

The presentation of the data for the site comprises a greyscale print-out of the raw data (Fig. 4-8; clipped for display but otherwise unprocessed) and the processed data (Fig. 9-13). Magnetic anomalies have been identified and plotted onto interpretative drawings (Fig. 14-18). A summary of the identified features has been presented on Figure 19 and overlaid onto a historical map on Figure 20. A trace plot of the raw data has been provided on Figure 21.

Field 1

Positive linear anomalies

Within this field there are many positive linear anomalies (marked by solid red lines). These are likely to be caused by cut features, such as ditches.

Most of the linear anomalies are located to the southwest of this field and can be readily interpreted as a broad track defined by parallel curvilinear ditches 20m apart, with adjacent small enclosures or property boundaries. The enclosures vary in size from 15m by 15m to 30m by 30m and are sub-rectangular. It is likely the complex is a small settlement.

Within the cluster of roughly rectilinear anomalies there are several curvilinear anomalies. These can potentially be interpreted as enclosures, but perhaps belonging to a different phase than that associated with the rectilinear features. One in particular has been highlighted (A on figures 16 and 19) because of the possibility of a prehistoric origin.

An annular sub-oval anomaly (marked 'B' on figures 15 and 19) measuring 21m by 27m is visible. Based on morphology, the anomaly may be prehistoric in origin.

Weak positive linear anomalies

Within the field are multiple weak positive linear anomalies (marked by dashed red lines). These are likely caused by cut features such as ditches, but with a reduced quantity of magnetic material in the fills. Typically they represent shallower features, although there can be several reasons why a ditch accumulates less magnetic material.

Most of these are similar in position and form to the stronger linear features and also relate to the possible settlement activity in the southwest corner of the field. However, in the north of this field, there are several other weak positive anomalies. These could relate to larger field boundaries.

Modern agricultural practices can create ridges of topsoil which produce a weakly positive

magnetic response and can be mistakenly interpreted as cut features. Therefore it is possible some of the weak positive anomalies are non-archaeological in nature.

Isolated positive anomalies
There are many isolated positive anomalies (the most prominent examples of which have been marked by red spots). This type of anomaly can be caused by archaeological features such as pits or geological accumulations of magnetic material. The interpretation hinges on the context, with those anomalies near settlements or exhibiting patterns being judged more likely to be human-dug pits, and those remote from other features more likely to be natural in origin. The examples marked are those most likely to have an archaeological origin.

Isolated dipolar anomalies
The field has multiple isolated dipolar anomalies (examples of which have been marked by blue spots). These anomalies are typically caused by small metallic items in the topsoil which arrive by the process of manuring or derive from fragments of agricultural machinery. Therefore they are not typically assigned any archaeological significance.

Bipolar linear anomalies
There is a bipolar linear response running north-south through the north of the field (marked by a solid blue line), with a small kink in it. This matches a historical field boundary shown on early Ordnance Survey maps. The bipolar signature implies a ditch that contained a service or was backfilled with rubble and detritus.

Weak bipolar linear anomalies
Within the field are multiple weak bipolar linear anomalies (marked by dashed blue lines). These are likely to relate to modern field drains.

Area of bipolar disturbance
There is a large area of bipolar disturbance (marked by blue crosshatch) in the centre of the field, where the ditch intrudes into the field. Broad areas of bipolar disturbance are frequently associated with scatters of ceramic building material and modern detritus. Given buildings are shown in this location on historical OS mapping from 1898 (see plate 1), it is likely the anomaly is related to demolition waste from these.

There are also four other small areas of disturbance in the field. These are likely to be caused by dumps of modern material in the topsoil, which is particularly likely given the anomalies are present at the edge of ploughing where detritus tends to accumulate.

Agricultural anomalies
Several weak positive linear anomalies are arranged in parallel lines separated by *c.*9m. This is typical for modern agricultural features an correlates with the weak bipolar anomalies that mark field drains elsewhere in the field.

Field 2
Bipolar linear anomalies
There are two bipolar liners (marked by solid blue lines) that are likely to relate to a service or land drain.

Weak bipolar linear anomalies
Within the field, there are several weak bipolar linear anomalies (marked by dashed blue lines). Some of these are likely to be associated with field drains. However, there is no clear pattern visible and so it is possible some of them may represent defunct land boundaries.

Area of bipolar disturbance
Within this field, there are several areas of bipolar disturbance (marked by blue crosshatch).

The area to the west of the field corresponds with a cluster of buildings shown on historical mapping and implies brick or tile rubble is present. The remaining examples could have an archaeological origin, but are most likely due to modern metallic detritus in the topsoil, especially at the edges of the field where refuse gathers or is dumped.

Isolated dipolar anomaly
The isolated dipolar anomalies in this field are again abundant and only the stronger responses that have been identified (marked by blue spots). These are likely to be caused by modern fragments of metallic items.

4. DISCUSSION

The survey data has captured multiple anomalies, many associated with archaeological features. Of particular note are the assortment of anomalies in the southwest of field 1 and the rounded anomaly in the centre of field 1.

The mass of linear anomalies in the southwest of field 1 is suggestive of settlement activity. Due to the different patterns that can be seen, it is likely that this occurred in multiple phases. The form of the settlement is suggestive of a medieval village, with small tofts and crofts arranged around a central triangular green and having a broad trackway for access. The meandering nature of the arrangement is not traditionally found in Roman settlements and the compact, semi-square plots of land would be unusual for a prehistoric settlement. There are no strong magnetic signals to suggest industrial activity was taking place in the settlement, or that any buildings contained brick or tile, implying a rural settlement of predominately timber and/or wattle and daub. No anomalies are readily identifiable as buildings, but this is typical where buildings were post-built or otherwise had very shallow foundations. No surface indications of settlement (e.g. clusters of pottery or distinct changes in soil colour) were noted by the surveyors.

There is a circular anomaly central to this mass of anomalies (A) that could be an earlier feature, potentially of a prehistoric date. It would be unusually large for a barrow at over 25m wide, so an enclosure is considered to be more likely.

Similarly there is a much stronger circular anomaly to the north of the settlement (B). This is also suspected to be a prehistoric feature, but is very large for a barrow, at 27m wide and would have an unusually irregular shape. There is no sign of these anomalies being present on the surface or in lidar data.

There are multiple weaker bipolar anomalies that are likely to be caused by land drains, but as these do not appear to form a singular pattern it is likely that there may be several phases of land drainage in the field, or some of the anomalies are instead related to defunct land boundaries.

Two former buildings have been removed, and much of their material appears to have been spread into the surrounding area. This is also along the line of a former boundary and so has caused an area of noise that could mask weaker anomalies beneath and nearby.

There is no clear agricultural pattern visible in the data. This shows that the soil is likely to exhibit very weak magnetic properties which might disguise shallow cut features and/or features away from human habitation. This could mean that further features may be present within the area, but not be visible to magnetic survey methods.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge Armour Heritage for commissioning this project and Sue Far for constructive feedback. Jonathon Smith and Mark Dymond edited this report.

6. PERSONNEL

Project coordinator: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Geophysical Survey: Sean Parker and Ryan Godbold
Survey processing and reporting: Sean Parker
Archiving: Denise Buckley

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8. ABBREVIATIONS

AOD Above Ordnance Datum

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

TVAS Thames Valley Archaeological Service

Figure 1 - General location plan

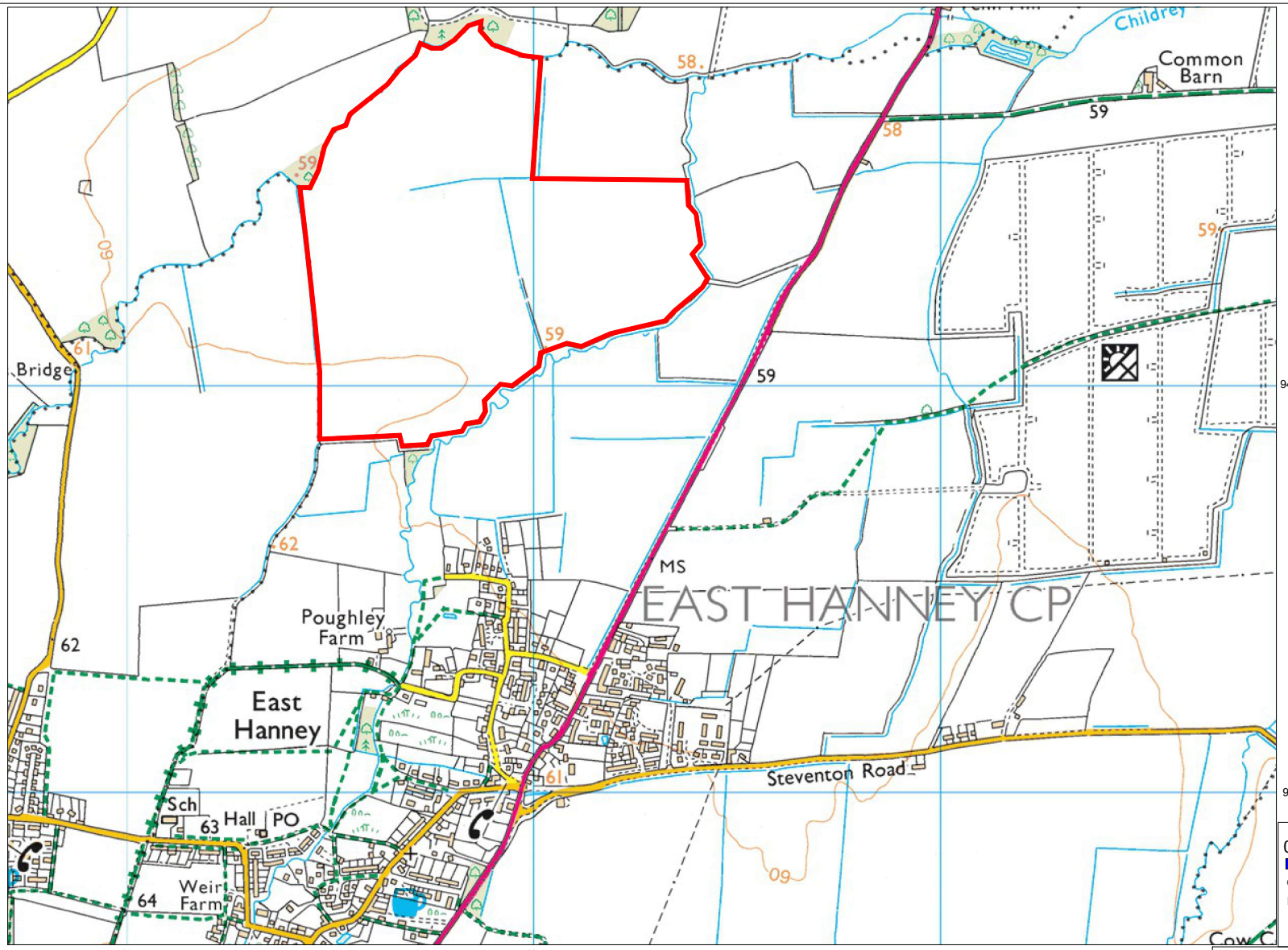
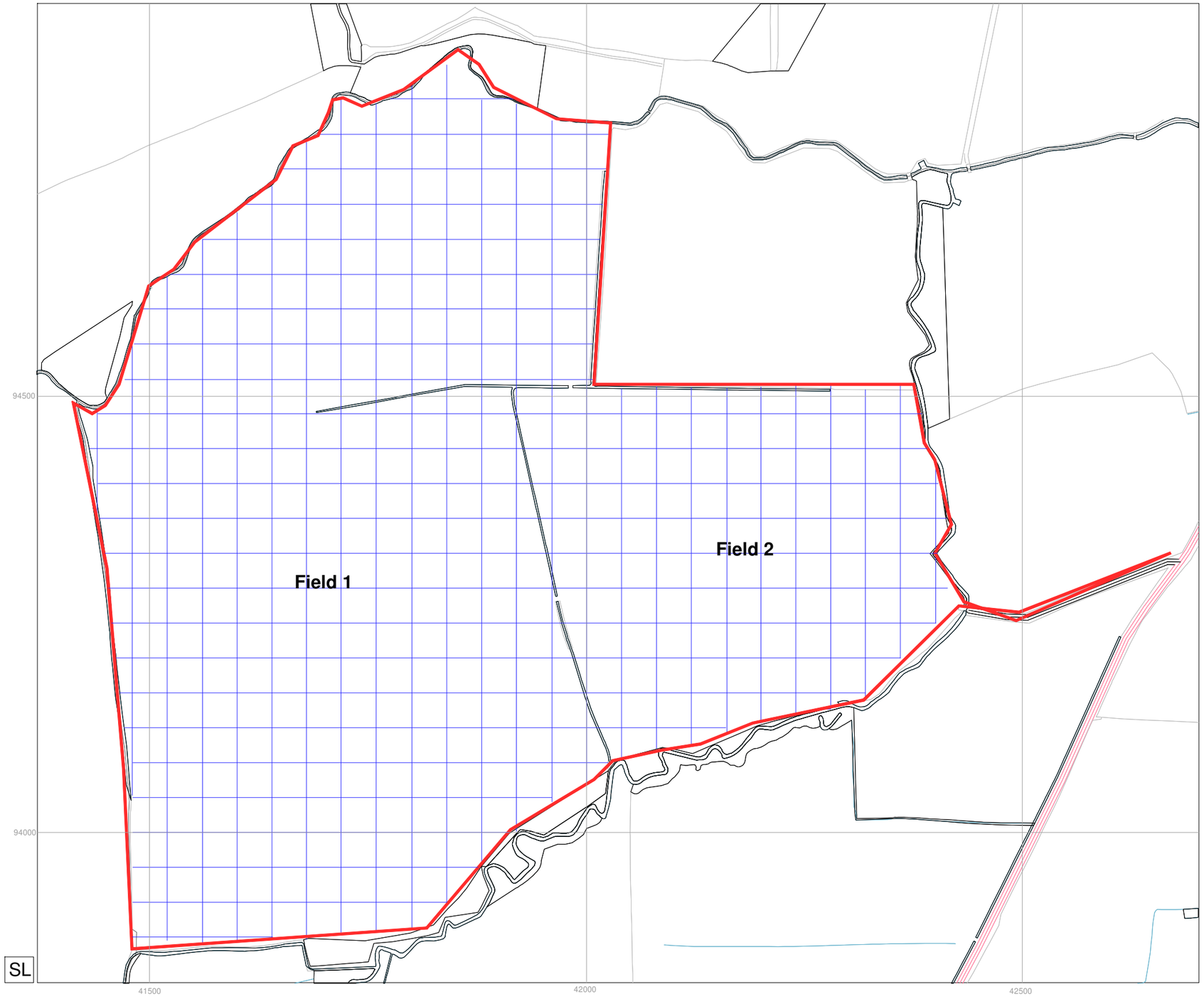


Figure 2 - Survey location plan



N

Site boundary

Survey Grid

0 250m

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Figure 3 - Survey Layout

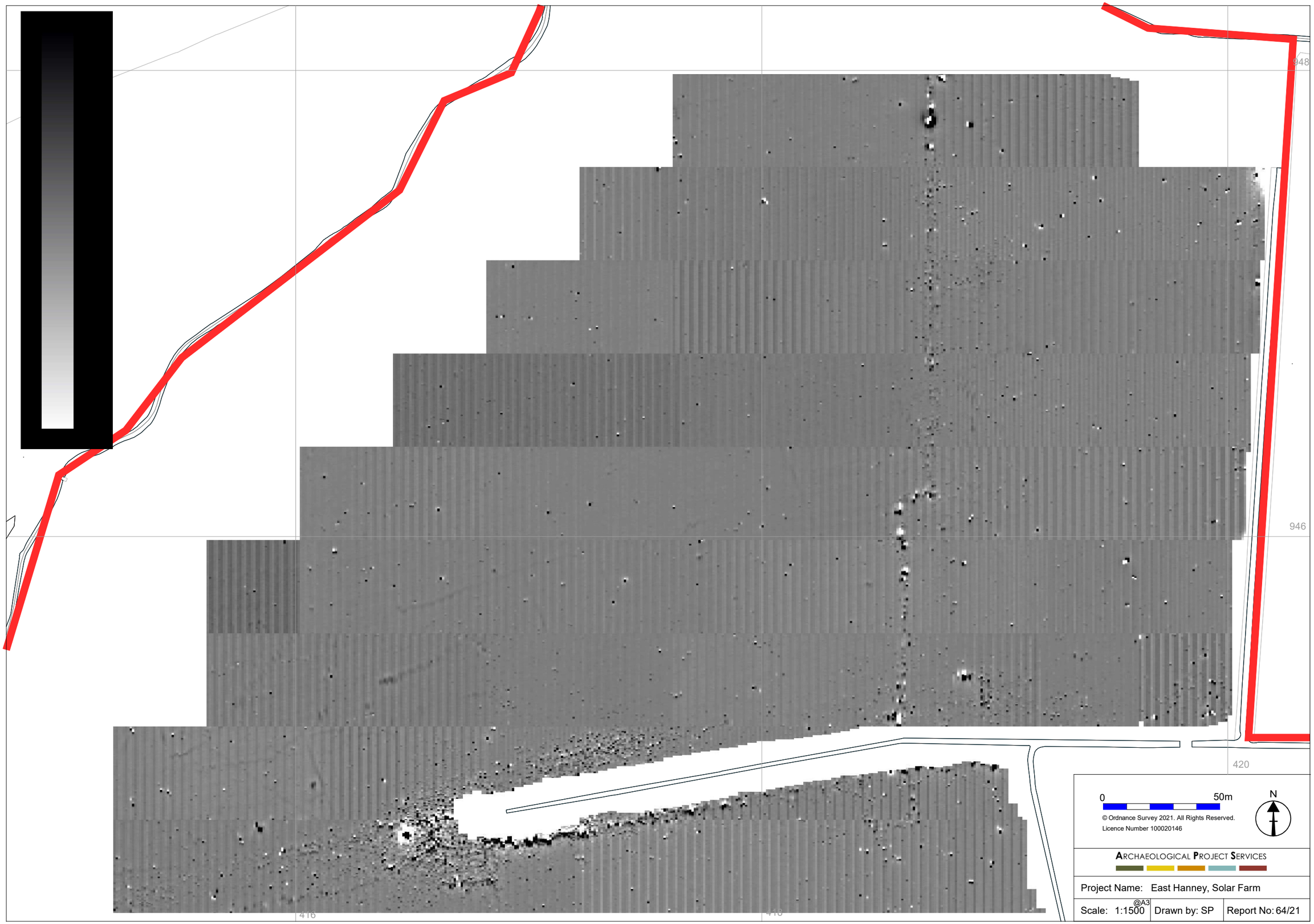


Figure 4: Field 1 top raw greyscale data

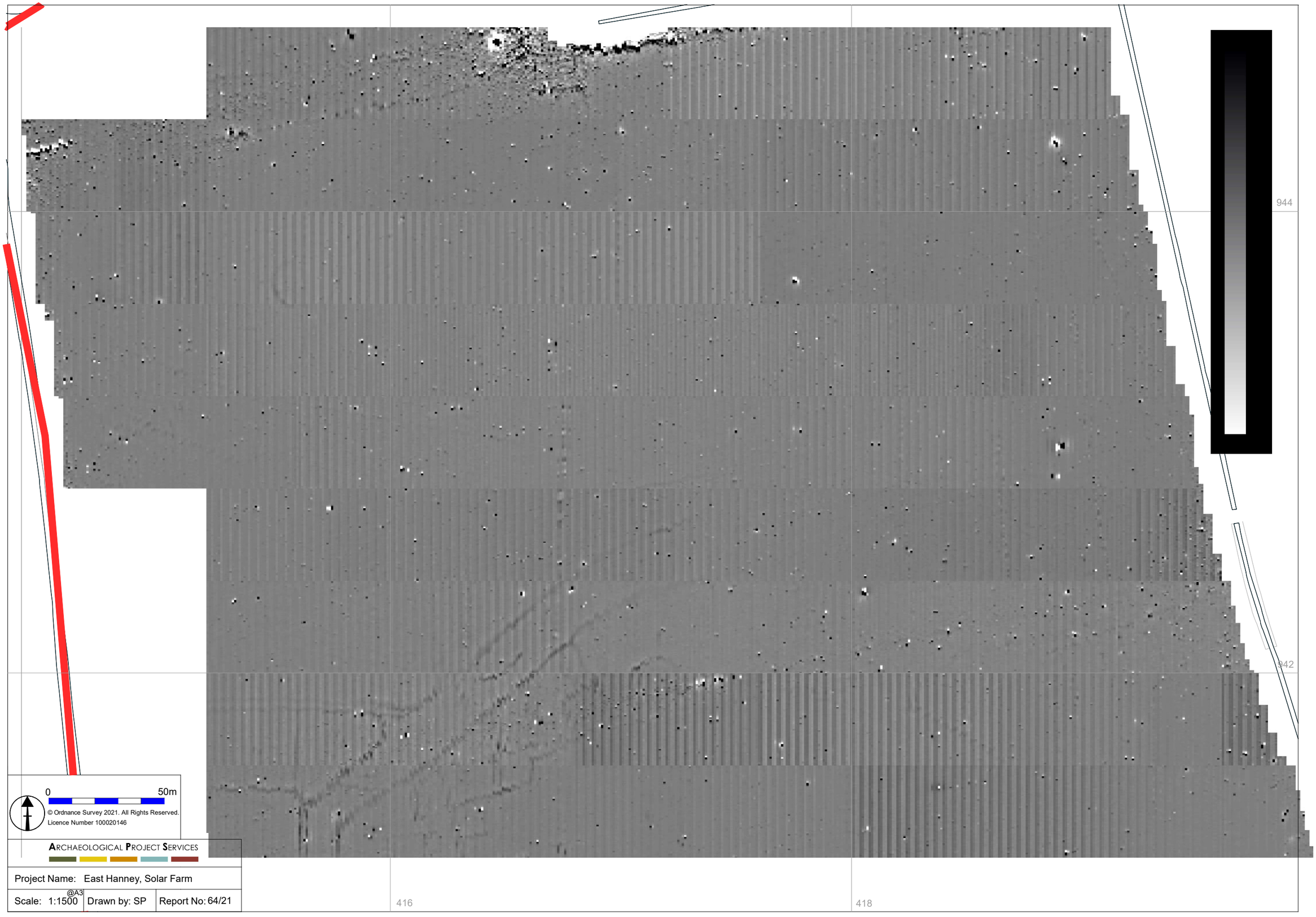


Figure 5: Field 1 central, raw greyscale data

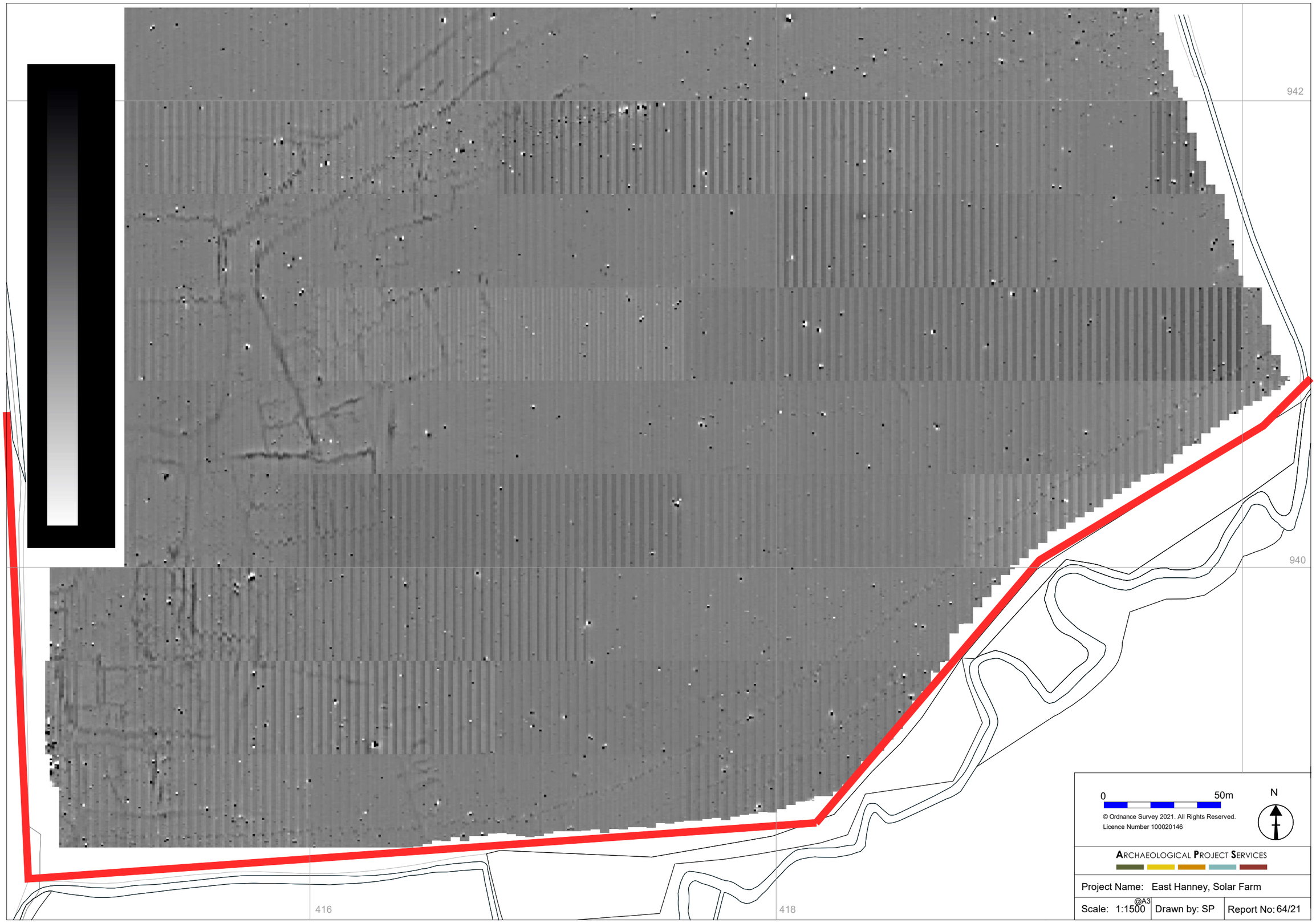


Figure 6: Field 1 bottom, raw greyscale data

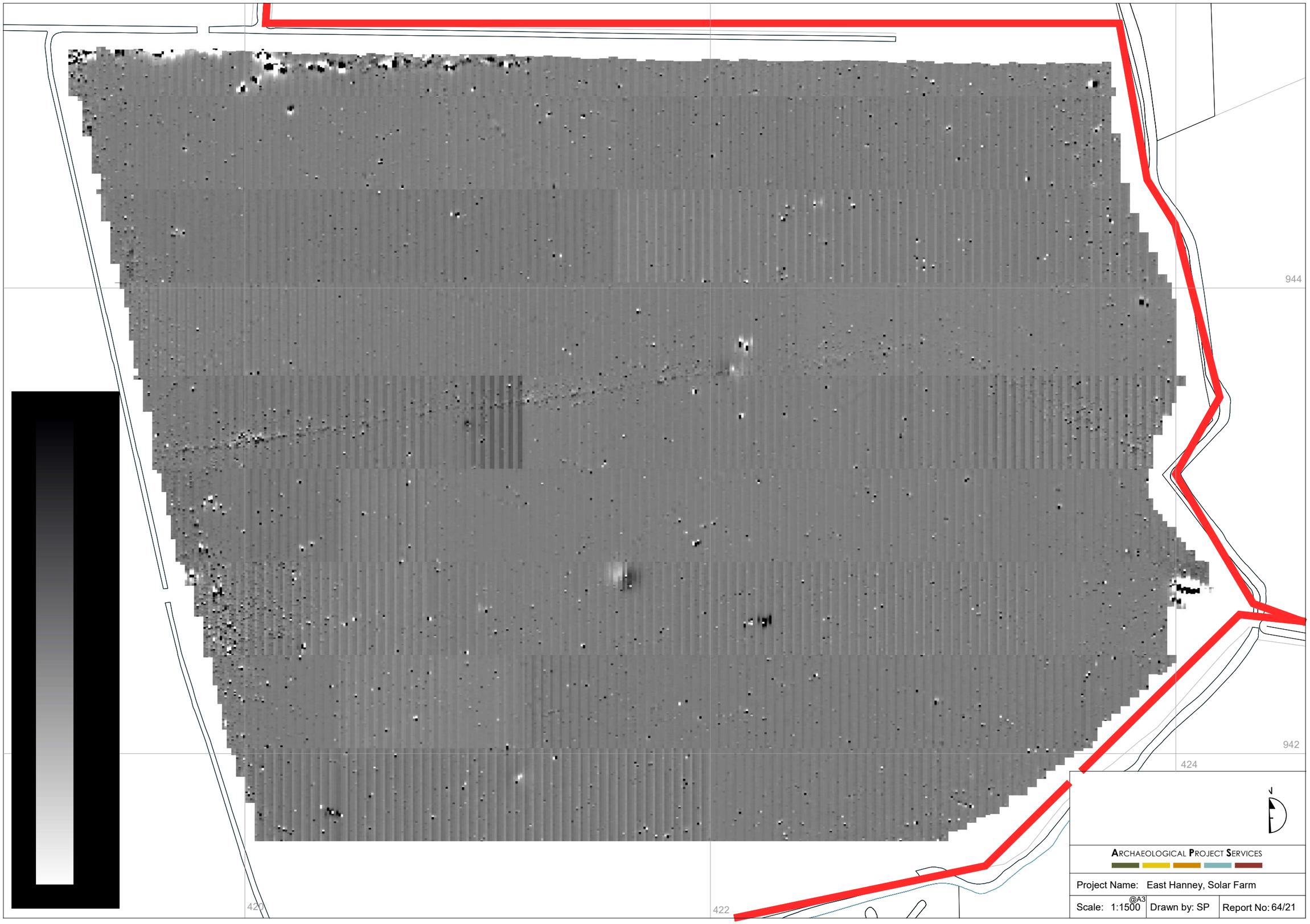


Figure 7: Field 2 top, raw greyscale data

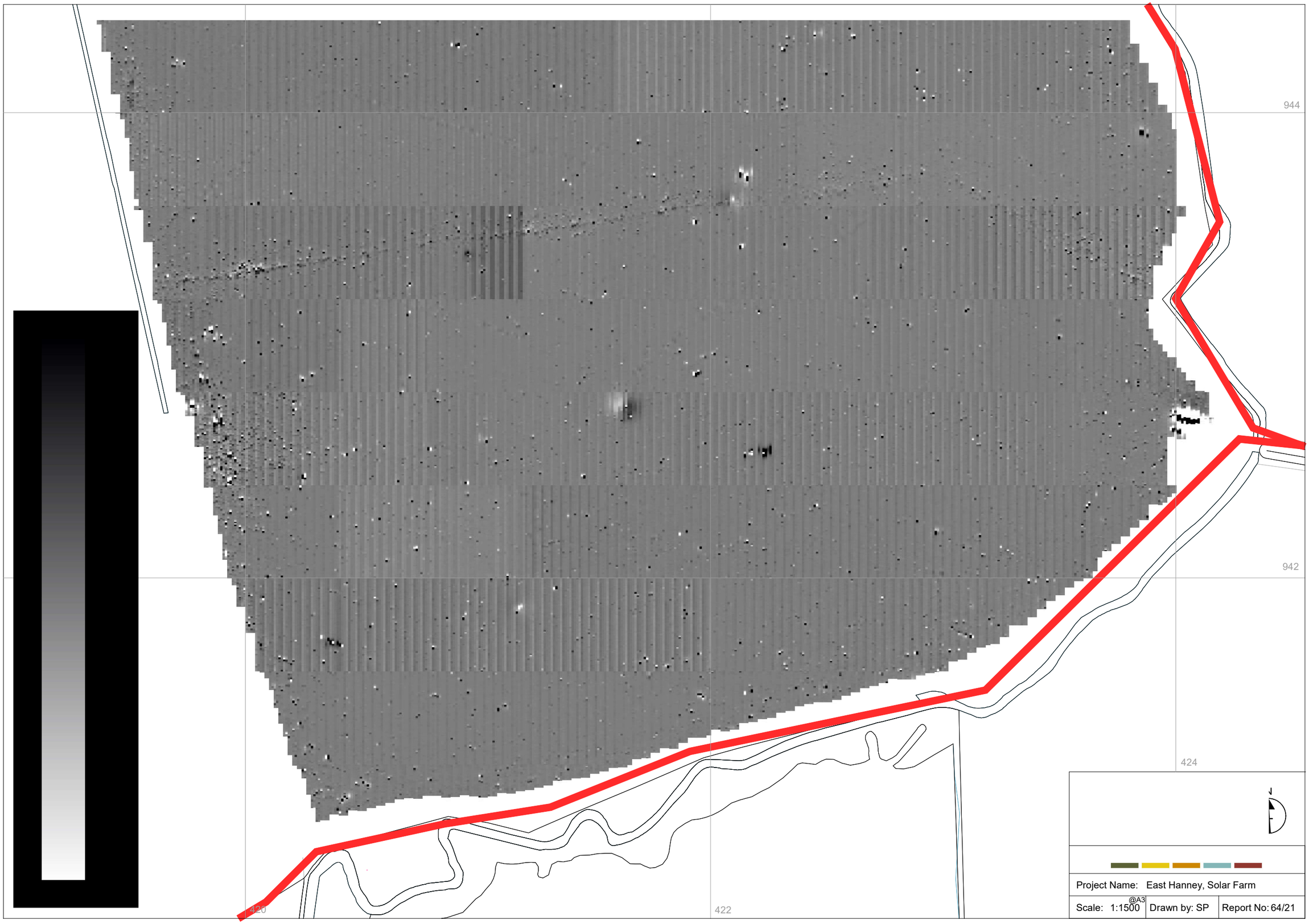


Figure 8: Field 2 bottom, raw greyscale data

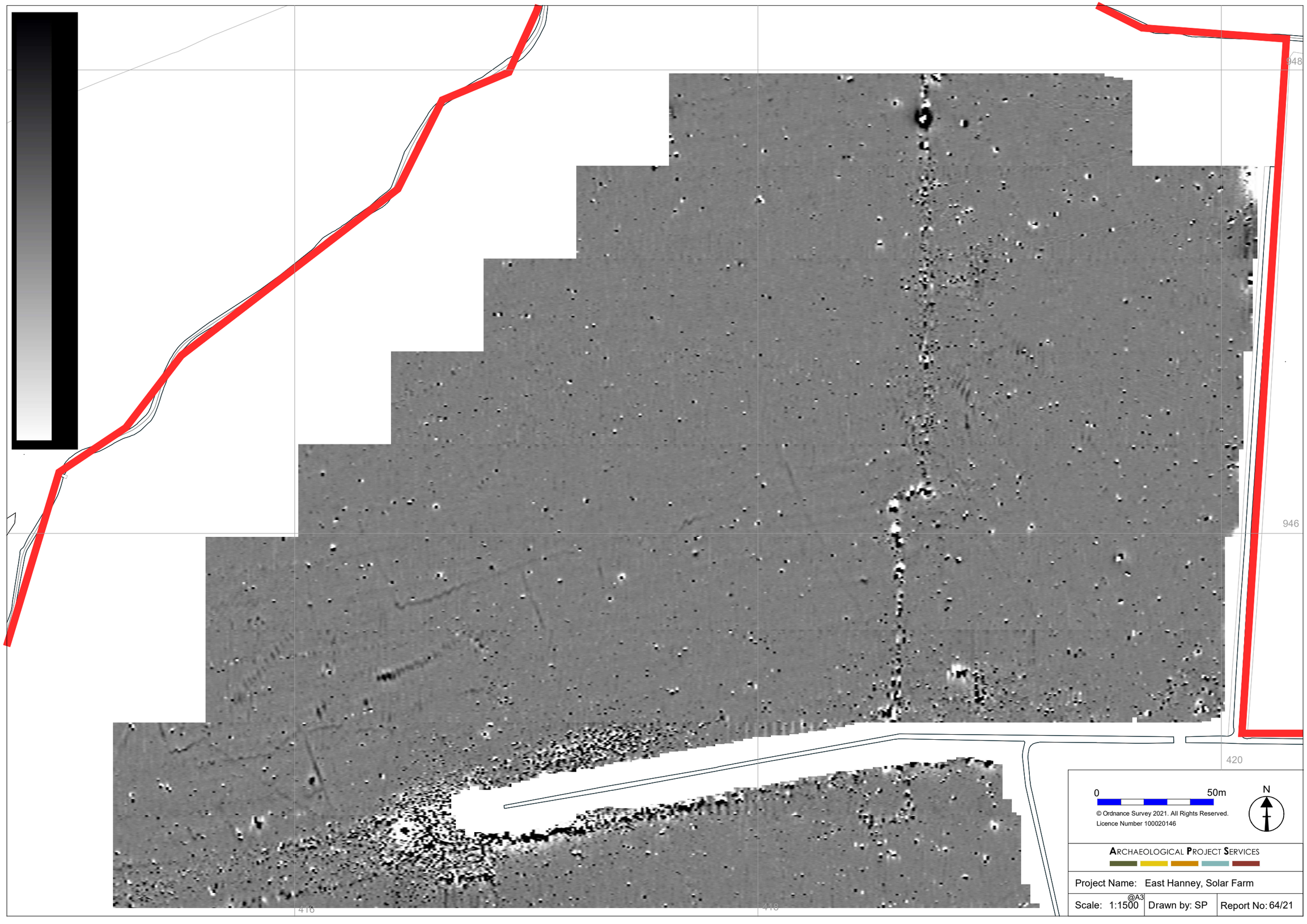


Figure 9: Field 1 top processed greyscale data

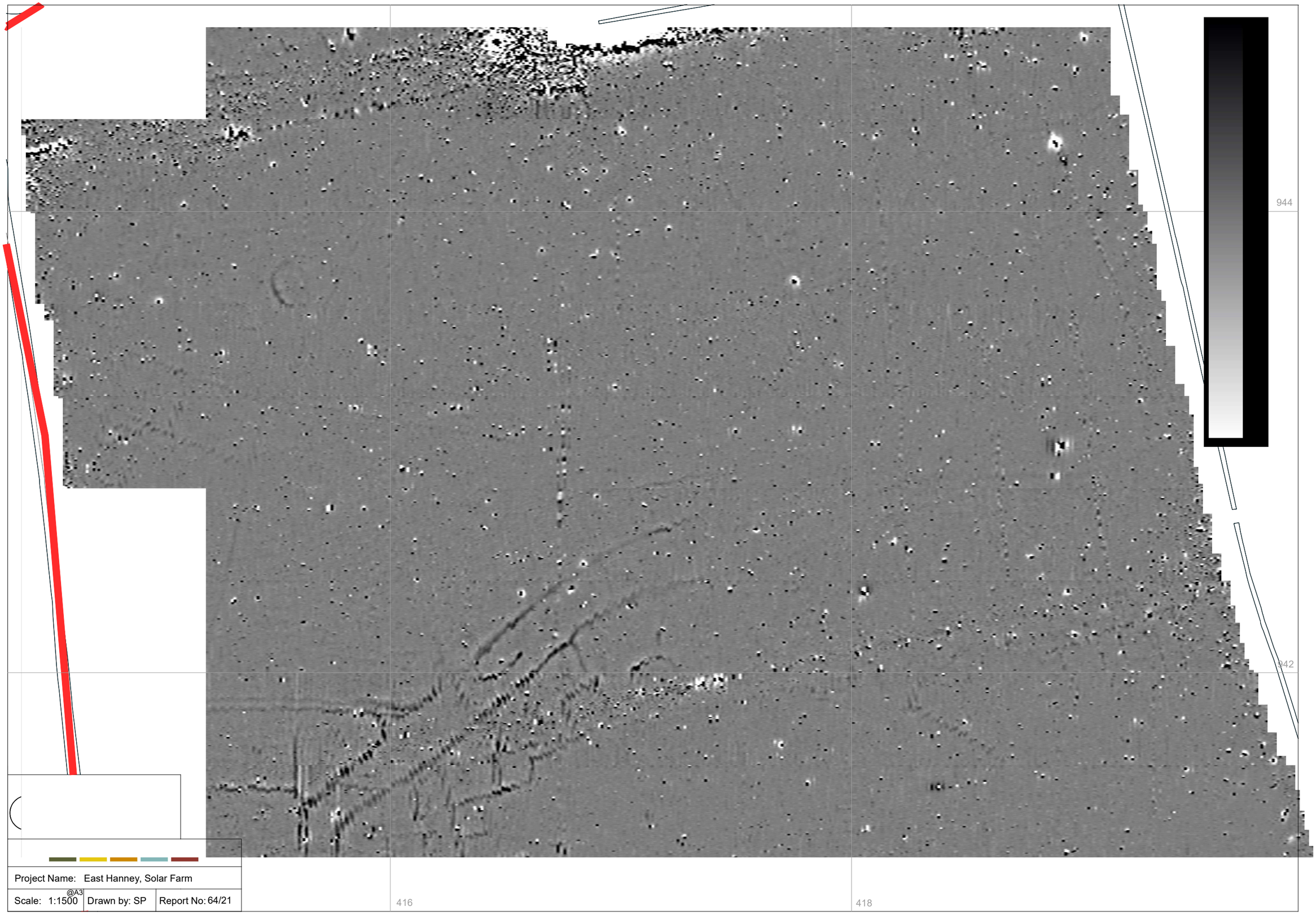


Figure 10: Field 1 central, processed greyscale data

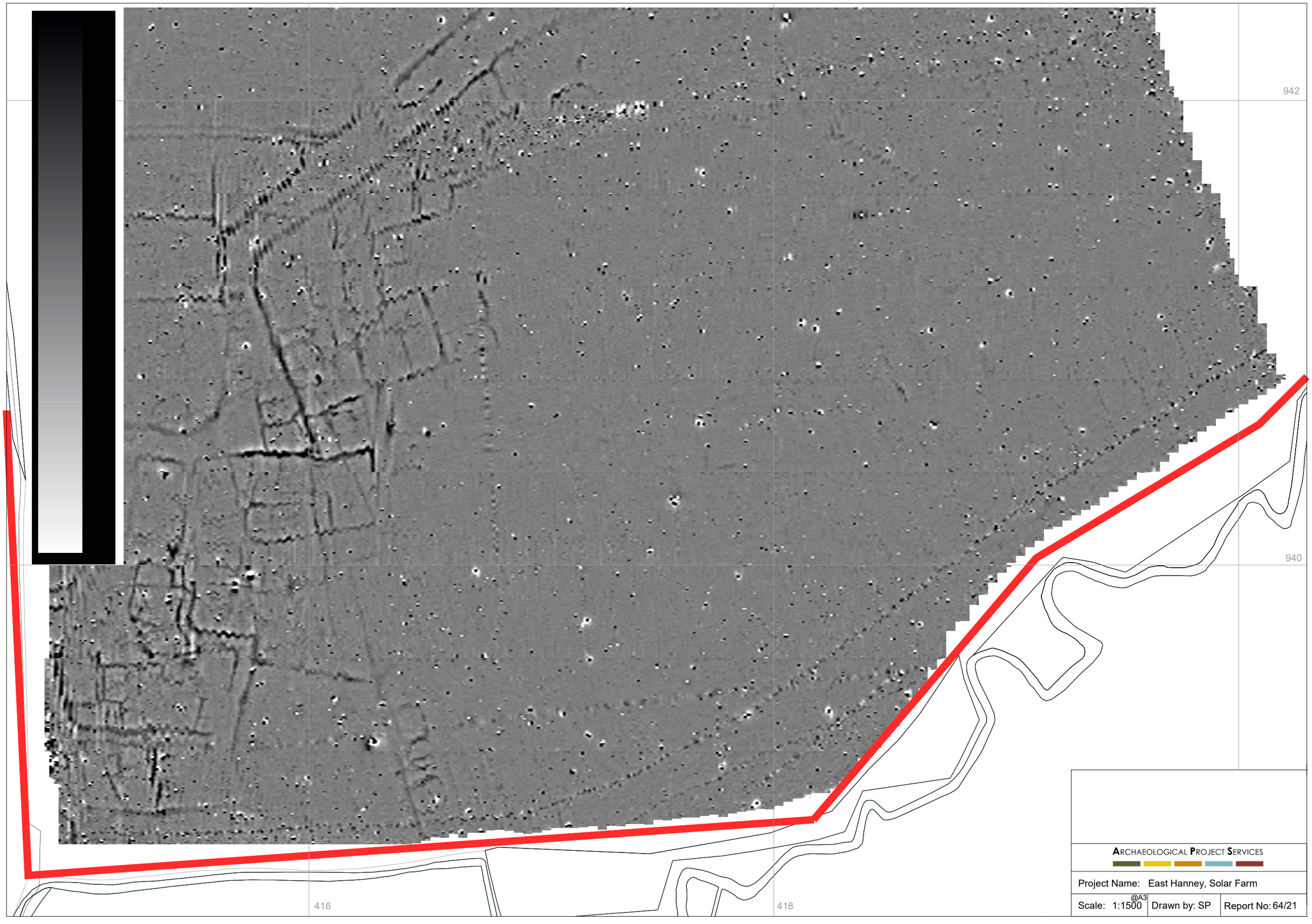


Figure 11: Field 1 bottom, processed greyscale data

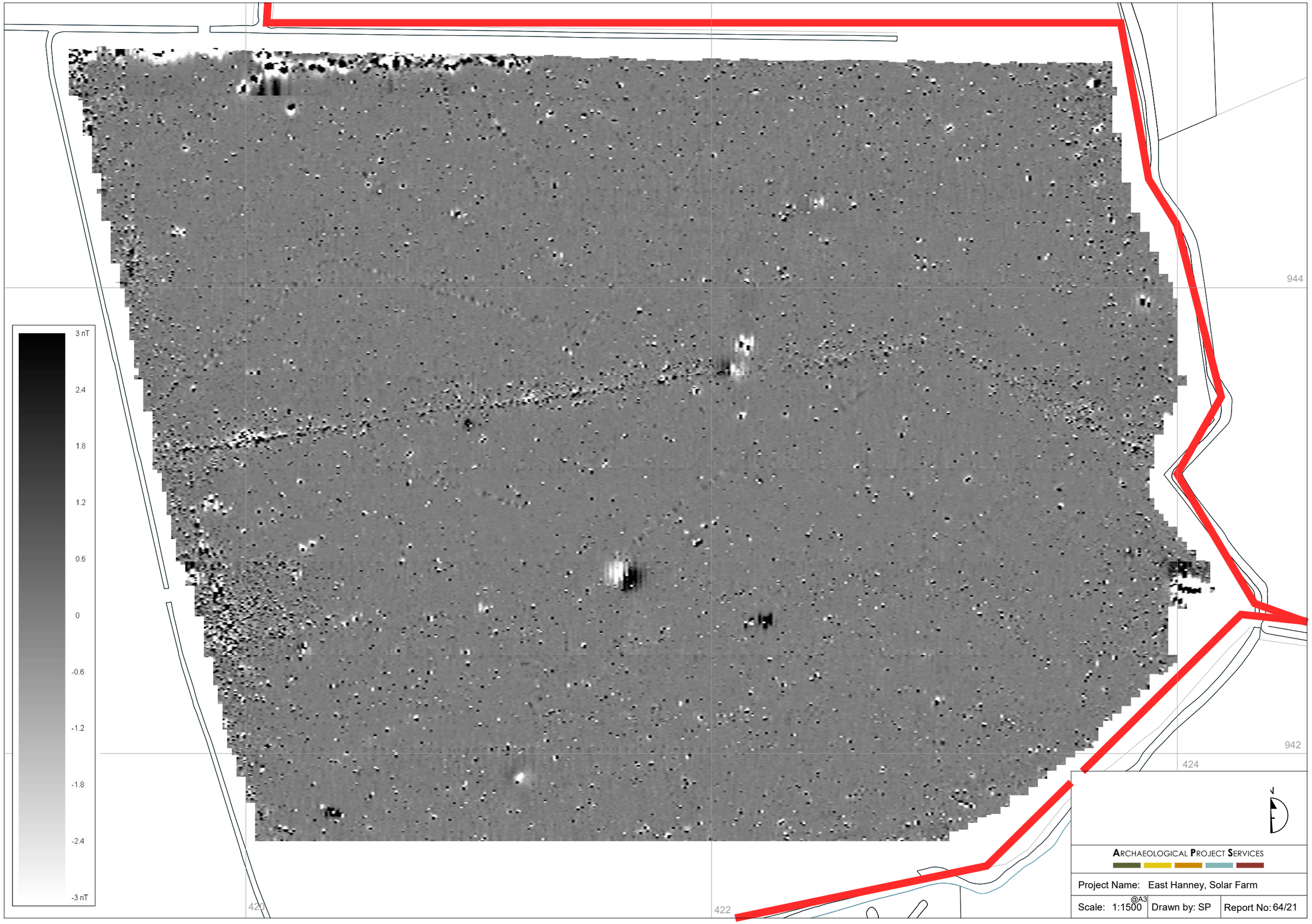


Figure 12: Field 2 top, processed greyscale data

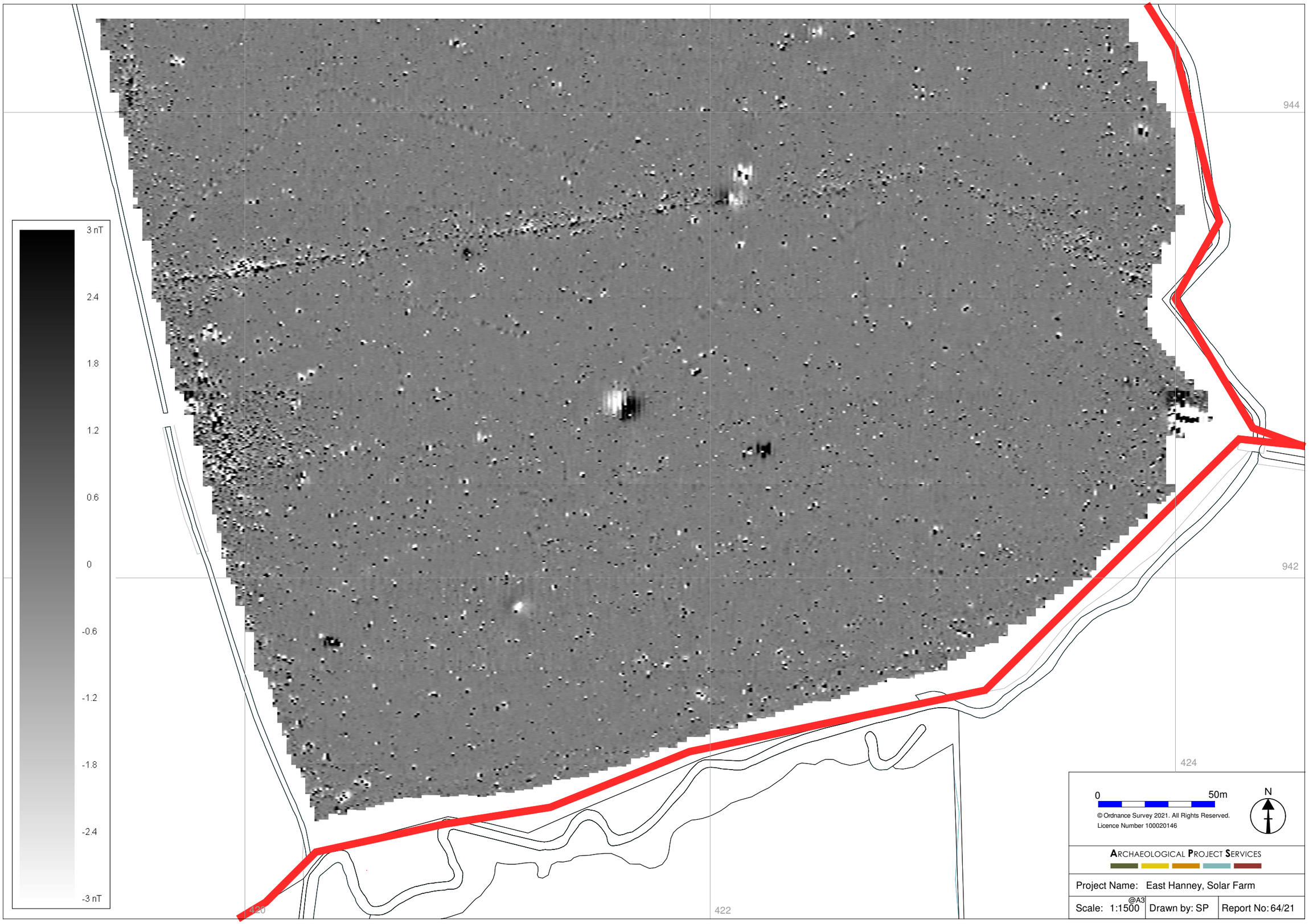


Figure 13: Field 2 bottom, processed greyscale data

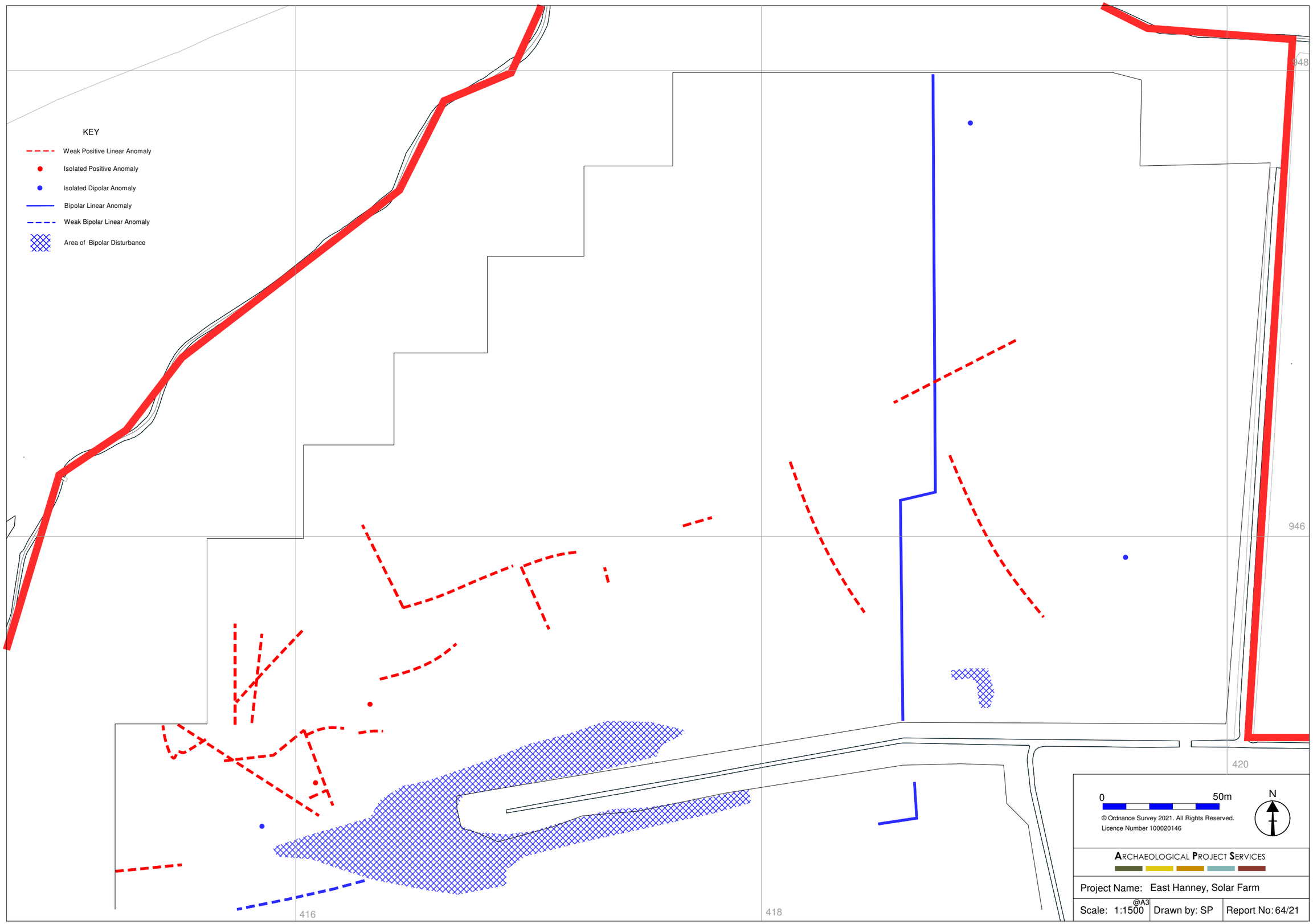


Figure 14: Field 1 top interpretation

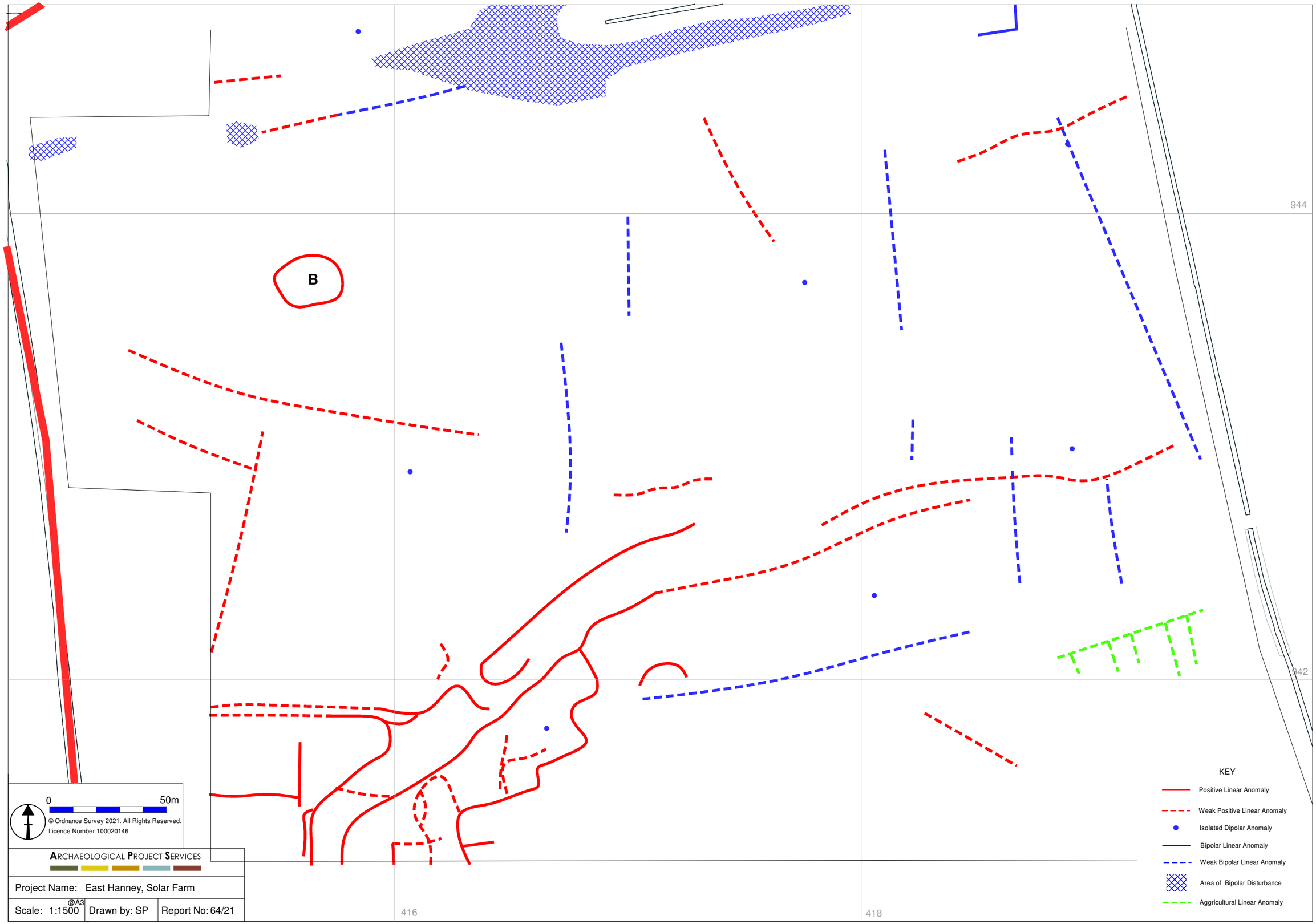


Figure 15: Field 1 central, Interpretation

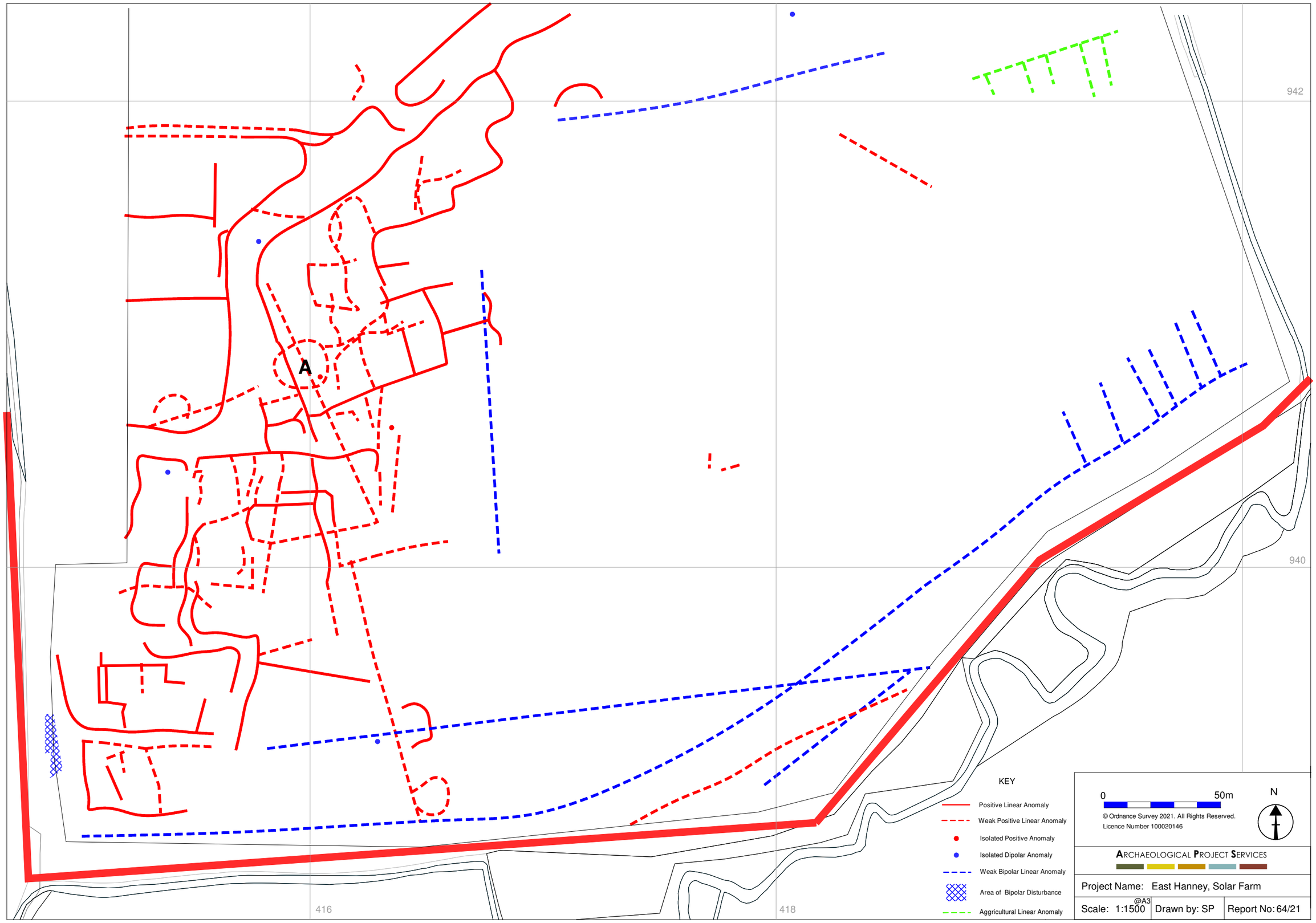


Figure 16: Field 1 bottom, Interpretation

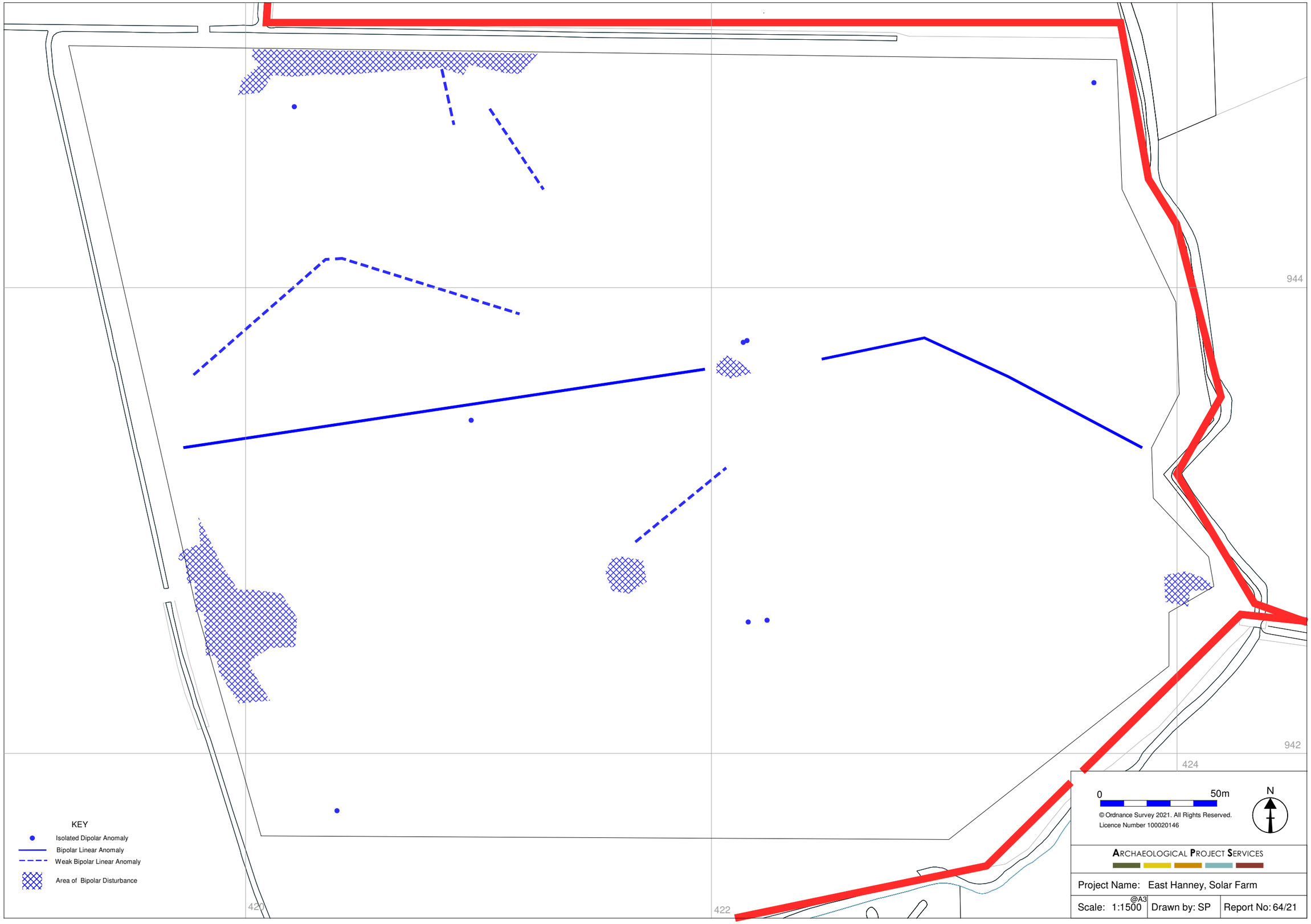


Figure 17: Field 2 top, interpretation

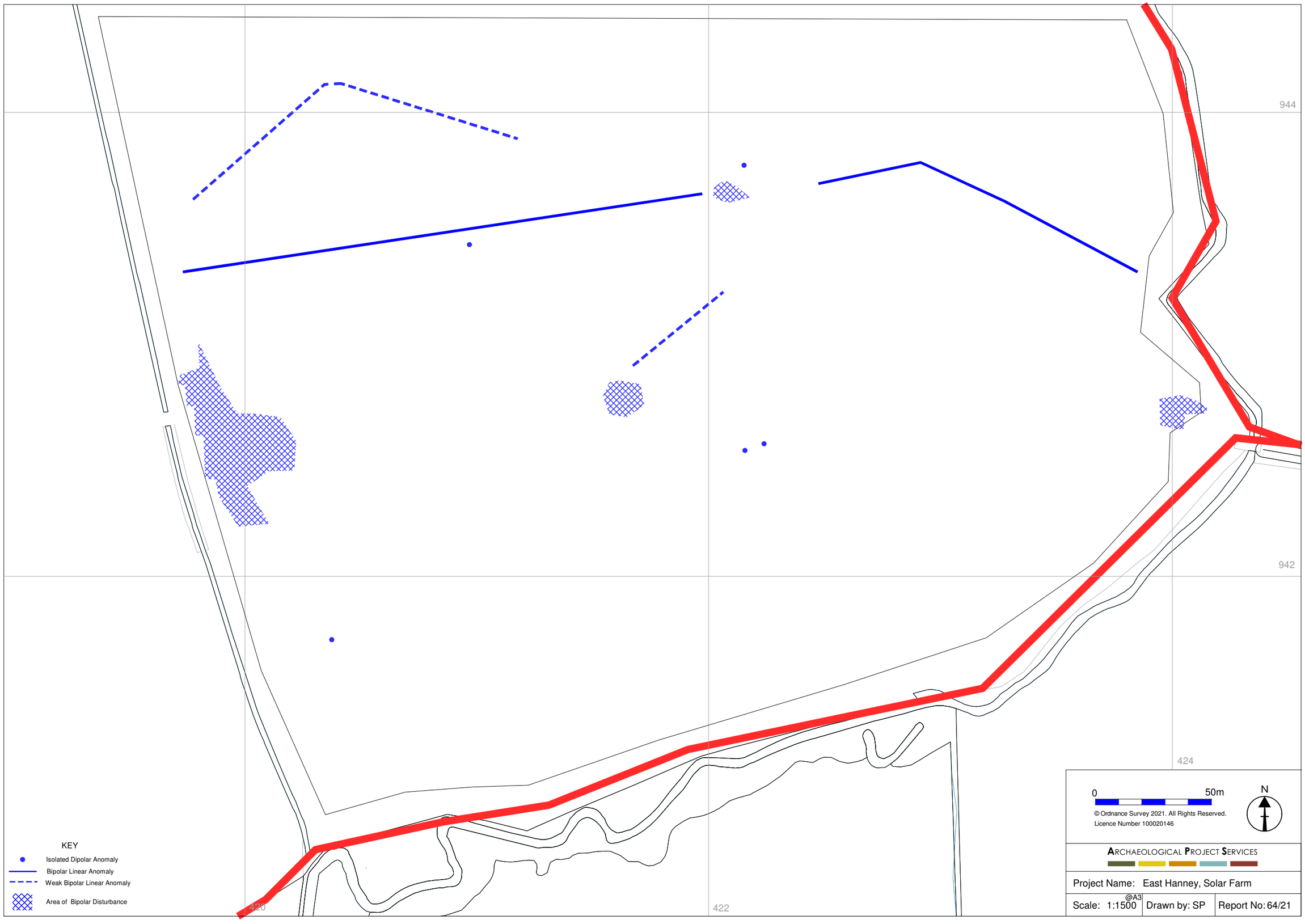
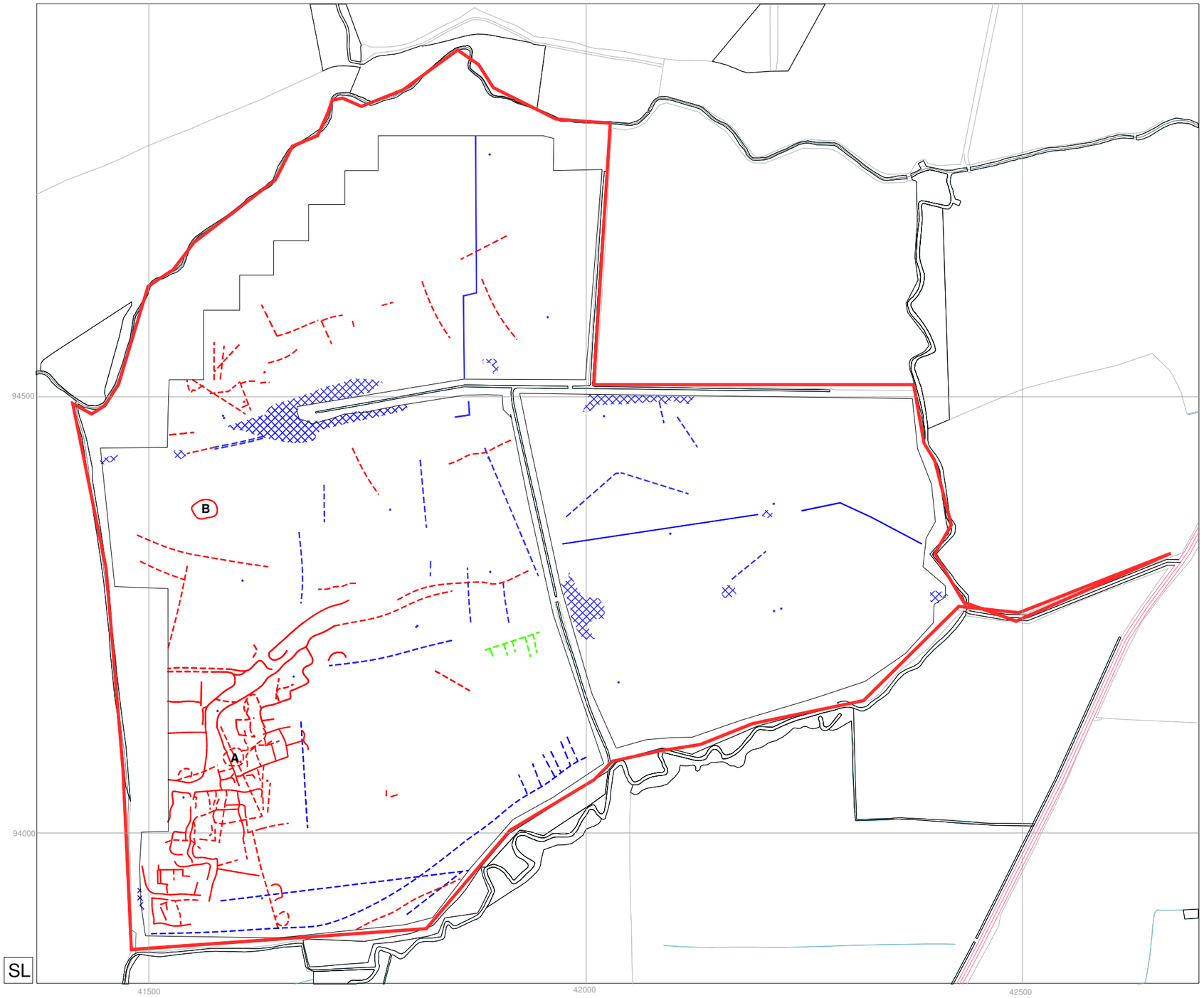


Figure 18: Field 2 bottom, interpretation



N

KEY

Site boundary

Positive Linear Anomaly

Weak Positive Linear Anomaly

Isolated Positive Anomaly

Isolated Dipolar Anomaly

Bipolar Linear Anomaly

Weak Bipolar Linear Anomaly

Area of Bipolar Disturbance

Aggricultural Linear Anomaly

0 250m

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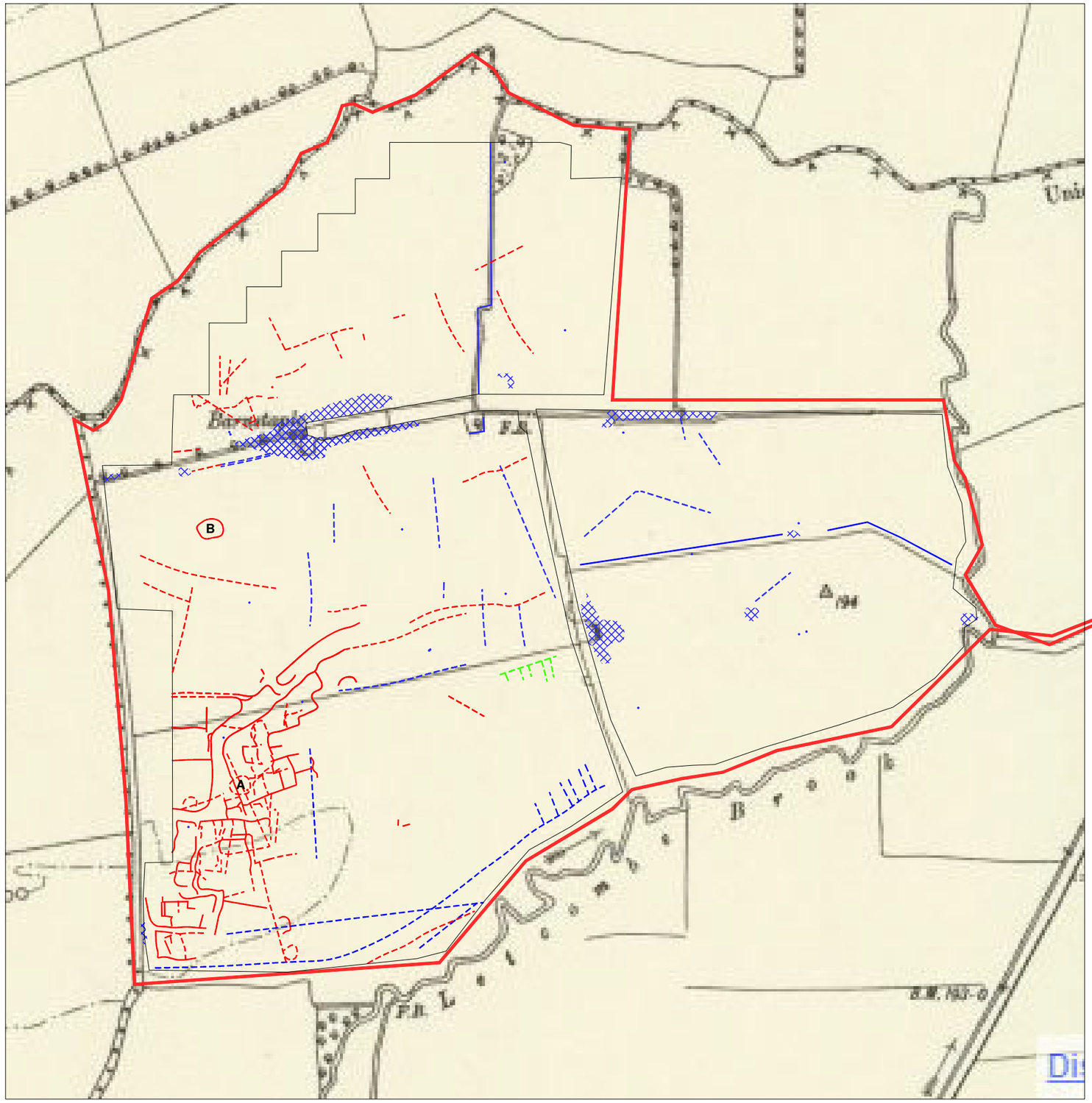
Figure 19 - Summary of interpretations



Composite 1888 Ordnance Survey maps, 6" scale

N

KEY

Site boundary

Positive Linear Anomaly

Weak Positive Linear Anomaly

Isolated Positive Anomaly

Isolated Dipolar Anomaly

Bipolar Linear Anomaly

Weak Bipolar Linear Anomaly

Area of Bipolar Disturbance

Aggricultural Linear Anomaly

0 250m

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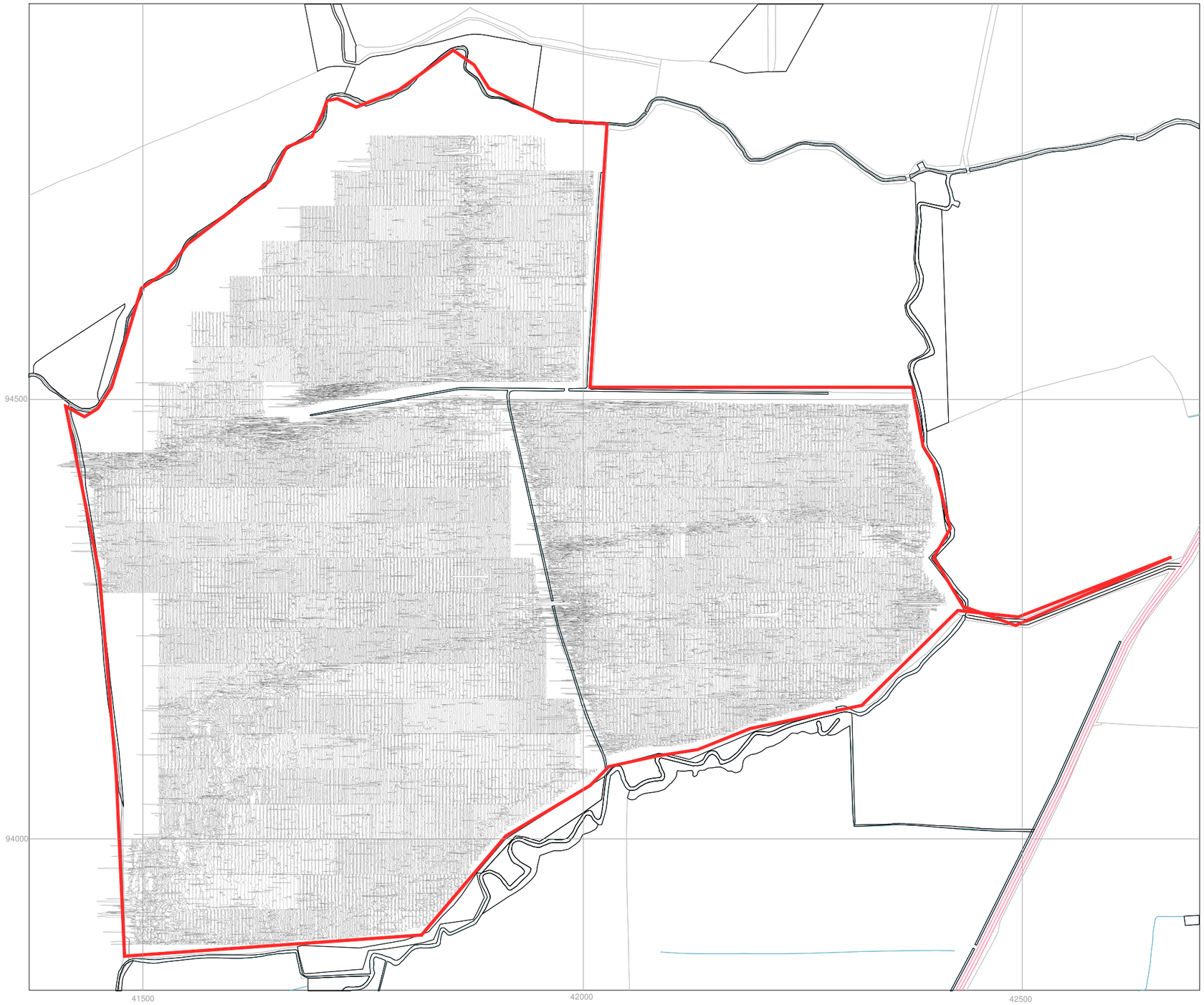
Figure 20 - Interpretation overlaid on historical map



N

KEY

Site boundary

20nT 0 -20nt

0 250m

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Figure 21 - Trace Plot

Appendix 1

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Principles of magnetometry
Magnetic prospecting is designed to identify concentrations of magnetised iron oxides in the soil. Iron oxides can exist in states of weak or a strong magnetisation (Gaffney and Gater 2003).

Human activities tend to enhance the magnetic properties of iron oxide particles. Where these particles accumulate, such as in cut features like ditches and pits, a weak positive magnetic anomaly is apparent. In cases where very strong heat has been applied, such as furnace and kiln bases, a bipolar magnetic anomaly will be apparent, with one area having a strong positive signature and one area having a strongly negative signature. Where banks have been built up from natural geological material which excludes magnetically enriched sediments, or walls have been made of stone, this may result in a negative anomaly. Modern metallic items and fired bricks cause sharp bipolar spikes. Modern services have a tendency to alternate between positive and negative readings along their length.

It should be noted that not all features will be detectable magnetically and an absence of anomalies does not necessarily indicate absence of archaeological features (Clark 1996).

Bartington Grad 601-2
A gradiometer uses two sensors separated by a fixed distance in order to measure the difference in strength between the earth's magnetic field and the soil. The Bartington Grad 601 uses two fluxgate sensors separated vertically by 1m to take these readings. This reduces natural variations associated with the Earth's magnetic field and deep geology. Changes as small as 0.2 nanoTesla (nT) in an overall field strength of c. 49,000nT can be accurately detected using this instrumentation, although in practice instrument interference and soil noise can limit sensitivity. The instrument has typical penetration of 0.5m-1m, although stronger anomalies can be detected at greater depths. The 601-2 model uses two sets of sensor pairs to take parallel readings 1m apart horizontally.

Methodology
The survey area is divided into grid squares of 40x40m. The grids are set out using a survey grade GPS, accurate to 0.03m. The grids are systematically walked in a zigzag pattern with the gradiometer taking readings every 0.25m along a traverse, and each traverse being separated by 1m. This equates to 6400 sampling points in a full 40m x 40m grid. Readings are automatically recorded on a datalogger which is downloaded at the end of each day. The gradiometer is 'zeroed' at the start of each day and at intervals throughout to ensure consistent results are achieved throughout the survey.

Data Processing
The data is downloaded and processed using TerraSurveyor software (version 3.0.37.25). The raw data is then adjusted to emphasise possible features. At each stage the data is examined as a greyscale image and as a trace plot.

Minimally Processed data
The data is clipped so that the mid-range of readings is most visible. This involves excluding all readings outside of the -10nT to 10nT range.

Processed Data
The following processes are applied to produce the processed greyscale image:

- Destripe: Each traverse is flattened with regard to surrounding traverses by setting the median value of the traverse to 0nT. This produces cleaner images, but may cause bleeding where particularly strong signals are present at one end of a traverse.
- Data Clip: The data is clipped to provide the most suitable contrast for seeing archaeological features. This excludes readings outside of the -3nT to 3nT range.
- Gradshade: this process removes pixelation allowing clearer interpretation

Data is exported as a PNG image and georeferenced for use in scale plans of the site. Anomalies are then checked against historical maps, and where available, lidar contour data.

References

Clark, A., 1996 *Seeing Beneath the Soil*, London, 2nd edn.

Gaffney C. and Gater, J., 2006 *Revealing the Buried Past: Geophysics for Archaeologists,* The History Press

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Croft	A piece of enclosed ground used for tillage or pasture, often an arable field near a house.
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Drift	Material that has been eroded, transported or deposited by glaciers (or their melt water). The term 'drift' is commonly used to describe any deposits of Quaternary age.
Geophysical Survey	Essentially non-invasive methods of examining below the ground surface by measuring deviations in the physical properties and characteristics of the earth. Techniques include magnetometry and resistivity survey.
Headland	Strip of uncultivated land left between areas of ridge and furrow which was used for turning the plough. These strips provided access and often became lanes or roads.
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Lidar	An aircraft-based method of survey using analysis of pulses of laser light reflected from the surfaces of the ground and buildings. It is cable of identifying subtle differences in topography.
Manuring Scatter	A distribution of artefacts, usually pottery, created by the spreading of manure and domestic refuse from settlements onto arable fields. Such scatters can provide an indication of the extent and period of arable agriculture in the landscape.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Modern	The current period, dating from around AD 1900 to the present time.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
Roman	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Till	A deposit formed after the retreat of a glacier. Also known as boulder clay, this material is generally unsorted and can comprise of rock flour to boulders to rocks of quite substantial size.
Toft	The site of a house or former house.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

16 Daily record sheets
1 Report text and illustrations
1 Digital data

File names	EHSF21.csv
Explanation of codes used in file names	.csv files allow the whole composite to be generated and stored easily.
Description of file formats	All files are in csv format where Z= nT reading
List of codes used in files	
Hardware, software and operating systems	TerraSurveyor 3.0.35.10 running under Windows 10
Date of last modification	23/01/220
Indications of known areas of weakness in data	
Survey Technique	Zigzag
Origin	Starts at A1. X axis progresses east. Y axis progresses south
Grid size	40mx40m
Interval	X=1, Y=0.25m
Dummy Value	2047.5
XYZ Separation	Comma

All primary records are currently kept at:

Heritage Lincolnshire/Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

Final destination of the archive is:

Museum Resource Centre
Cotswold Dene,
Standlake Oxon
OX29 7QG

OASIS code: TBC

Summary for archaeol1-505649

OASIS ID (UID)	archaeol1-505649
Project Name	GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY: EAST HANNEY, SOLAR FARM, OXFORDSHIRE
Sitename	
Activity type	Magnetometry Survey
Project Identifier(s)	Geophysical Survey: East Hanney
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Pre application
Organisation Responsible for work	Archaeological Project Services
Project Dates	03-Nov-2021 - 25-Nov-2021
Location	East Hanney NGR : SU 41900 94340 LL : 51.6463029496649, -1.39583611767716 12 Fig : 441900,194340
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Oxfordshire District : Vale of White Horse Parish : East Hanney
Project Methodology	A magnetic gradiometer survey using a Bartington Grad 601-2. Readings taken every 25cm in traverses separated by 1m.
Project Results	The survey identified a probable settlement, thought to be medieval in date. Two large ring ditches were also identified, which may have been prehistoric in date.
Keywords	Croft - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Deserted Settlement - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Village Green - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ring Ditch - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	
HER	Oxfordshire HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	S, Parker
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive