

**Latham Road
Swindon
Wiltshire**

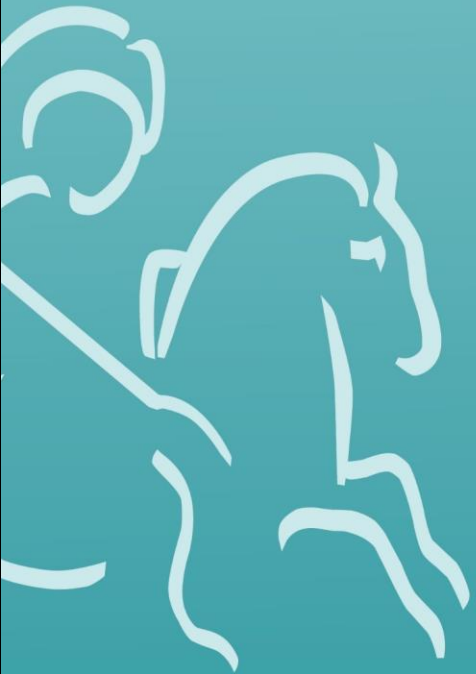
Archaeological Evaluation



for:
BoKlok UK

CA Project: CR1124
CA Report: CR1124_1
SMAG Accession No.: SWIMG:2022.11

September 2022



Latham Road Swindon Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Latham Road
Location:	Swindon, Wiltshire
NGR:	414864 189665
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	30 August – 2 September 2022
Planning reference:	Swindon Borough Council ref: S/22/0045
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
Accession Number:	SWIMG:2022.11

In August and September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire. A total of five trenches were excavated.

Truncation of the natural substrate was recorded throughout the site and no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed. No artefactual material was recovered during the course of the evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In August and September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 414864 189665; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for BoKlok UK.
- 1.2. The evaluation results will inform a planning application for the residential development of the site, which has been made to Swindon Borough Council (SBC; planning ref: S/22/0045).
- 1.3. The scope of this evaluation was defined during consultation between CA and Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council (WC), the archaeological advisor to SBC. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2022) and approved by Tim Havard, Assistant County Archaeologist, WC.
- 1.4. The evaluation was also undertaken in line with *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014; updated October 2020), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.5. The proposed development site is approximately 6.9ha in extent and currently consists of a former car parking area, landscaped grassed areas, an access road and areas of demolished industrial buildings. It lies on the southern side of the B4534 and A419 Blunsdon Bypass. The site is bounded to the east by hospitality venues, to the south by industrial buildings, and to west by residential properties and Swindon Abbey Stadium. The site lies at approximately 143m AOD, with the ground level dropping away gently to the east.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site comprised of limestone of the Stanford Formation and mudstone of the Ampthill Clay Formation, both of the Jurassic Period (BGS 2022). The natural substrate identified during the course of the evaluation comprised mixed clays and limestone brash.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The site has previously been the subject of an Archaeological Assessment (CA 2021) and geophysical survey (Sumo 2021). There has been a significant amount of previous archaeological work undertaken within the vicinity of the site, including geophysical surveys, archaeological evaluations and excavations, and the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER) records a total of 77 previous investigations in the immediate vicinity of the current site.
- 2.2. The area immediately to the west of the site has been subject to archaeological (CA 2000). The remains of a prehistoric settlement, an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, a medieval settlement, and quarrying were identified. The results of the evaluation subsequently led to an excavation of the site in 2003 (CA 2003). Several archaeological features, predominantly of medieval date, were identified; including stakeholes, postholes, gullies, ditches, and pits; a trackway was also recorded (ibid.).
- 2.3. An area located c. 25m to the north-west of the site was also a subject of archaeological evaluation (CA 2007). However, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded.
- 2.4. Archaeological investigations carried out immediately to the north and north-east of the site, during the construction of the A417 Blunsdon Bypass (CA 2004; CA 2008; Brett and McSloy 2011), identified a ditch of potential Iron Age/Roman date, along with several shallow prehistoric pits and evidence of former ridge-and-furrow cultivation. Subsequent excavations discovered a range of features dating from the prehistoric, Roman, medieval, and post-medieval/modern periods. The features included small pits, postholes, quarry pits ditches, and gullies.
- 2.5. During an evaluation undertaken by CA in 2005 (CA 2005), immediately to the east of the current site, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded.
- 2.6. Approximately 110m to the south of the site, CA conducted an excavation of several cropmarks which were first identified in the 1960s by aerial photography (CA 2001). The photographs showed a large irregular L-shaped enclosure, a semi-circular enclosure, and a linear ditch. Excavations revealed at least ten roundhouses, along with several pits, post-built structures, boundaries, and enclosures. These features were dated to the 5th to 6th centuries BC and encompassed four phases of activity (ibid.).

Geophysical Survey

- 2.7. During the geophysical survey conducted within the site (Sumo 2021), tentative curvilinear trends suggestive of a circular feature were noted in south-western corner of the site. The geophysical survey report notes that given the archaeological context of the site with the nearby Iron Age settlement site, it is possible that the responses have an archaeological explanation. However, it also notes that 'such an interpretation is tentative at best. The responses are very weak and could have a modern explanation' (ibid.).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable SBC to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and the development proposals, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021).
- 3.2. The specific objective of the evaluation was to investigate the anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey (Sumo 2021).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Four trenches measured 40m in length (Trenches 1-4) and one trench measured 20m in length (Trench 6). All trenches measured 1.8m in width.
- 4.2. The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies and to provide a representative sample of the remainder of the site, specifically in areas that had not previously been subject to truncation by the now-demolished buildings. Trench 5, as originally proposed in the WSI, was not excavated due to health and safety concerns, with the approval of Tim Havard.
- 4.3. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. Overburden was stripped from the trenches by a mechanical excavator fitted with a

toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features would have been if encountered.

- 4.4. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.5. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.6. CA will make arrangements with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery for the deposition of the project archive, under accession number SWIMG:2022.11. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.7. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2. The general stratigraphic sequence recorded during the course of the evaluation was broadly uniform. The natural geological substrate, comprising mixed clays and limestone brash, was identified within all of the excavated trenches at an average depth of 0.88m below present ground level (bpgl). This was directly overlain by deposits of made ground, measuring up to 0.7m in thickness, which were subsequently sealed by topsoil (in Trench 6) or modern surfacing.
- 5.3. The results of the evaluation showed poor correlation with the anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey, where undertaken: the targeted geophysical anomaly in Trench 6 was found to relate to natural variation. Modern service trenches were recorded in Trenches 1-4.

-
- 5.4. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed, and no artefactual material was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see *Archaeological Background*, above), no archaeological remains were identified within the excavated trenches.
- 6.2. The absence of *in situ* subsoil deposits, with the natural substrate overlain by made ground deposits throughout the site, suggests that the site was levelled and truncated during previous phases of development; this would have removed any archaeological horizons within the site, had they been present.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Matthew Coman, assisted by Alistair Thomson. This report was written by Richard Scurr. The report illustrations were prepared Ken Lymer. The project archive has been compiled by Matthew Coman and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.

8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2022 *BGS Geology Viewer*
<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> Accessed 13
September 2022
- Brett M & McSloy E R 2011 'Prehistoric pits and Roman enclosures on the A419
Blunsdon Bypass, Blunsdon St Andrew: Excavations 2006-7', *Wiltshire
Archaeological & Natural History Magazine*, Vol **104**, 95-114
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2000 *Abbeymeads (Groundwell West), Swindon,
Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation* CA Ref: **001233**
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- CA 2003 *Abbeymeads (Groundwell West), Swindon: Archaeological Excavation* CA
Ref: **03075**
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Ref: **04004**

CA 2005 *Land to the east of Motorola, Blunsdon St Andrew, Swindon, Wiltshire;*
Archaeological Evaluation CA Ref: **05133**

CA 2007 *Abbeymeads, Swindon: Archaeological Evaluation* CA Ref: **07002**

CA 2008 *Two Anglo-Saxon Burials at Abbeymeads, Blunsdon St. Andrew, Wiltshire*
CA Ref: **08027**

CA 2021 *Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Assessment* CA Ref:
CR0643_1

CA 2022 *Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an*
Archaeological Evaluation

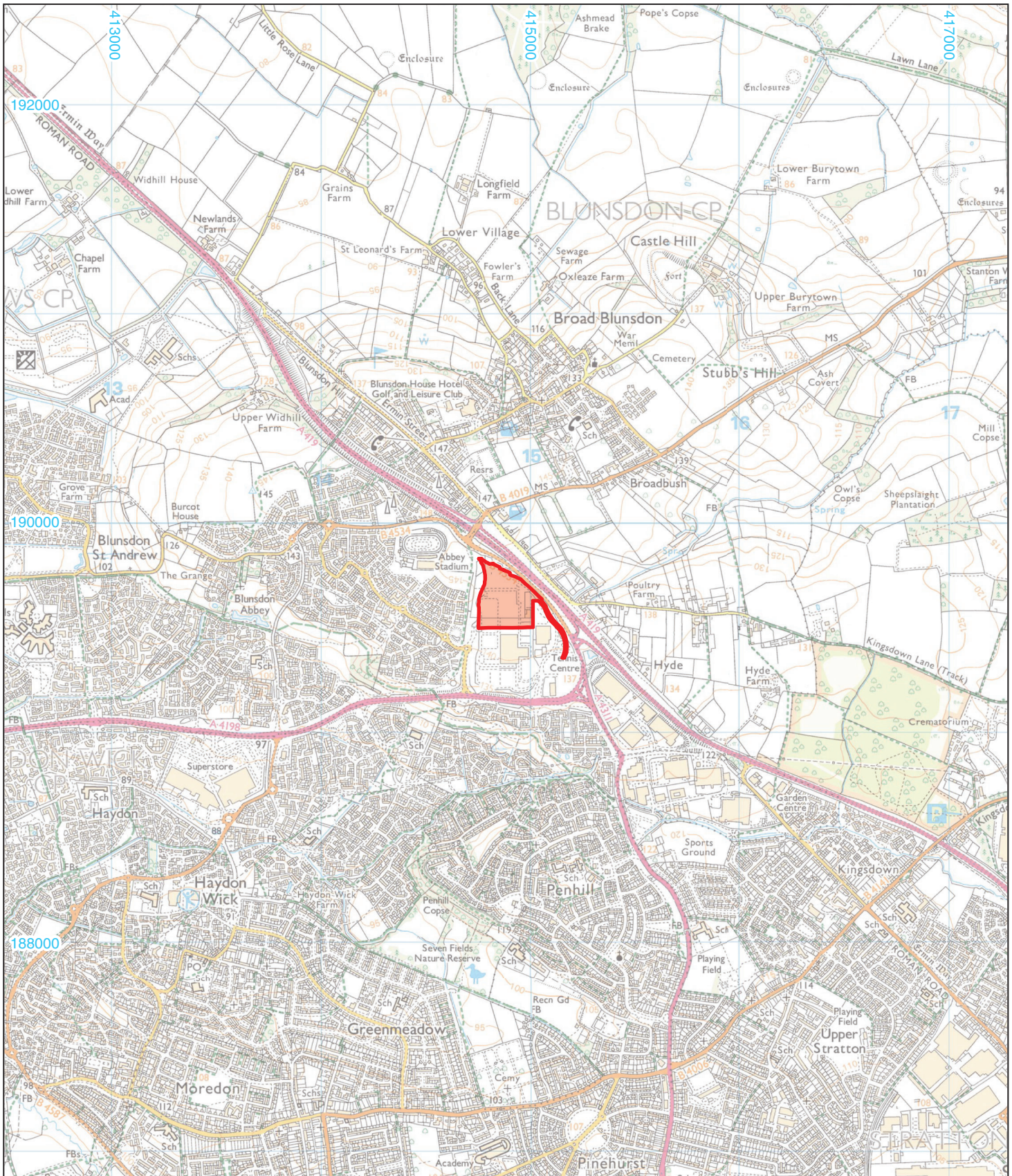
Sumo 2021 *Geophysical Survey Report, Land at Latham Road, Swindon* Report
02095

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		Carpark subsurface	Modern tarmac surface with sandy subsurface/bedding	40	>1.8	0.19
1	101	Layer		Made-ground	Yellow-brown silty clay with frequent chalk and rubble inc	40	>1.8	0.69
1	102	Layer		Natural Substrate	Yellow-brown clay and grey-blue clay with rare chalk fragments and patches of brash	40	>1.8	
2	200	Layer		Carpark subsurface	Modern tarmac surface with sandy subsurface/bedding	40	>1.8	0.3
2	201	Layer		Made-ground	Yellow-brown silty clay with frequent chalk and rubble inc	40	>1.8	0.4
2	202	Deposit		Deposit	Compact dark blue-grey humic clay	40	>1.8	0.3
2	203	Deposit		Deposit	Compact dark yellow brown silty clay	40	>1.8	0.5
2	204	Layer		Natural Substrate	Yellow-brown clay and grey-blue clay with rare chalk fragments and patches of brash	40	>1.8	
2	205	Cut		Linear	Unexcavated	>2.43	1.42	
2	206	Fill	205	f/o 205	Dark yellow brown silty clay with regular chalk fragments inc	>2.43	1.42	
3	300	Layer		Carpark subsurface	Modern tarmac surface with sandy subsurface/bedding	40	>1.8	0.26
3	301	Layer		Made-ground	Yellow-brown silty clay with frequent chalk and rubble inc	40	>1.8	0.12
3	302	Deposit		Deposit		40	>1.8	0.5
3	303	Layer		Natural Substrate	Yellow-brown clay and grey-blue clay with rare chalk fragments and patches of brash	40	>1.8	
4	400	Layer		Carpark subsurface	Modern tarmac surface with sandy subsurface/bedding	40	>1.8	0.28
4	401	Layer		Natural Substrate	Yellow-brown clay and grey-blue clay with rare chalk fragments and patches of brash	40	>1.8	>0.14
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Loose grey-brown, humic with occasional rubble	20	>1.8	0.3
6	601	Layer		Made-ground	Yellow-brown silty clay with frequent chalk and rubble inc	20	>1.8	0.5
6	602	Layer		Made-ground	Light blue-grey clay	20	>1.8	0.4
6	603	Layer		Natural Substrate	Yellow-brown clay and grey-blue clay with rare chalk fragments and patches of brash	20	>1.8	>0.7

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Short description	<p>In August and September 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire. A total of five trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Truncation of the natural substrate was recorded throughout the site and no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed. No artefactual material was recovered during the course of the evaluation.</p>	
Project dates	30 August – 2 September 2022	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Archaeological Assessment (CA 2021) Geophysical survey (Sumo 2021)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Study area (m ² /ha)	6.9ha	
Site co-ordinates	414864 189665	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Alex Thomson	
Project Supervisor	Matthew Coman	
MONUMENT TYPE	none	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	none	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content
Paper	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery/ SWIMG:2022.11	Trench recording forms, photographic registers
Digital	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery/ SWIMG:2022.11	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2022 <i>Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> , CA typescript report CR1124_1		



 Site boundary



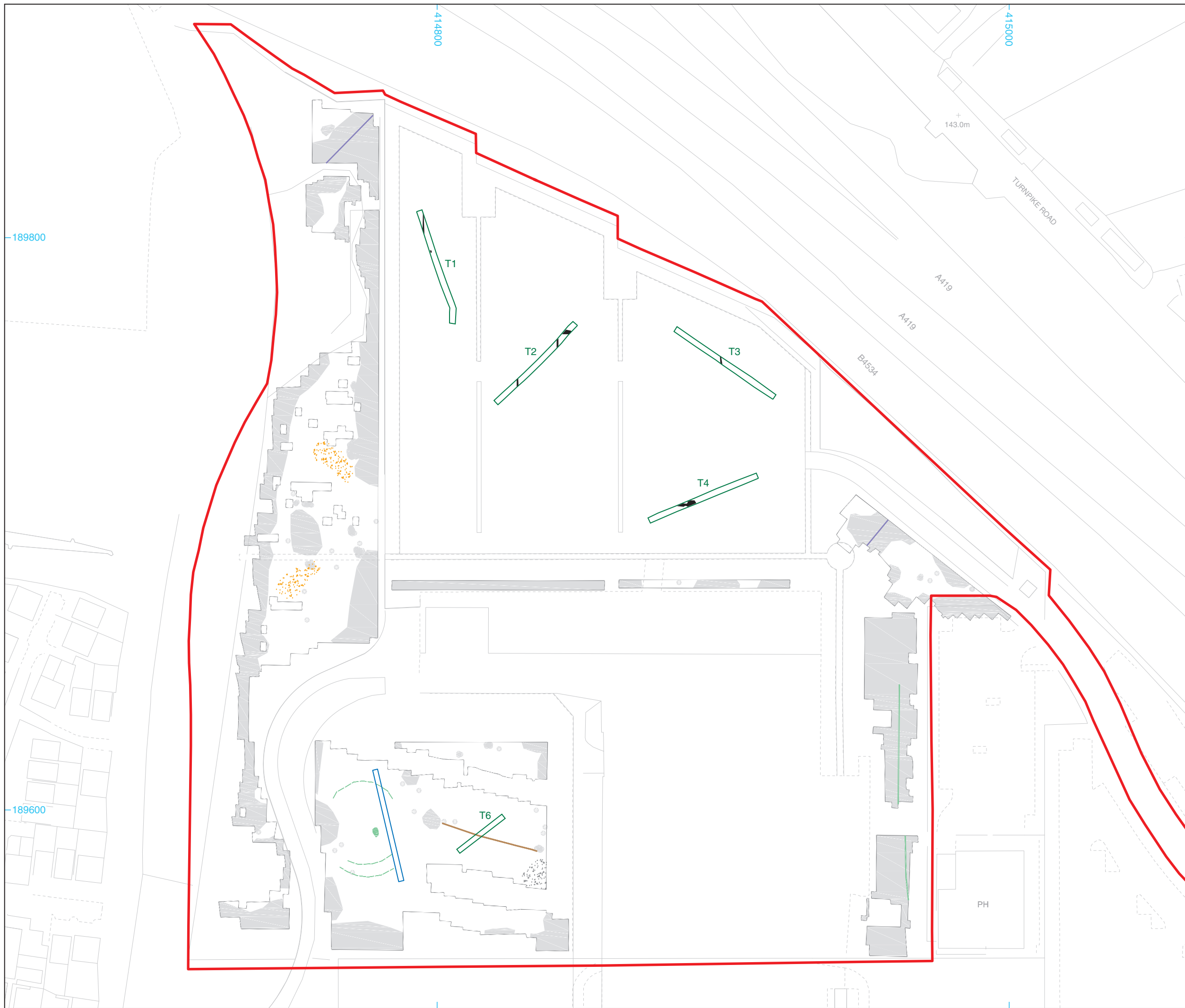
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PROJECT TITLE
 Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

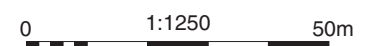
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APPROVED BY	AT	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Modern feature
- Unexcavated trench

- Geophysical survey results (SUMO 2021)
- Geophysical survey area
 - Former field boundary
 - Service
 - Uncertain origin
 - Natural
 - Magnetic disturbance
 - Ferrous



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PROJECT TITLE
 Latham Road, Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan, showing geophysical survey results

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Trench 1, looking south-east (1m scales)



Trench 3, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 4, looking south-west (1m scales)


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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

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