

Land off London Road Shipston-on-Stour Warwickshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
The Environmental
Dimension Partnership

on behalf of
Orbit Homes

CA Project: 660801
CA Report: 16646

November 2016



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire
NGR:	SP 2626 3961
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	31 October 2016
Planning Reference:	Stratford-on-Avon District Council APP/J3720/W/15/3007063
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Warwickshire Museum Service
Site Code:	LRSS16

In October 2016, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology of a pasture field off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire. The evaluation, which was commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), acting on behalf of Orbit Homes, was carried out in order to fulfil a condition attached to outline planning consent for residential development. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trial trenches.

A geophysical survey of the site had revealed evidence for ridge and furrow but had otherwise indicated that it had a low potential for archaeological remains. The purpose of the evaluation was to test the effectiveness of the survey and investigate if the ridge and furrow had been masking earlier features. There was no evidence for any earlier remains pre-dating the ridge and furrow earthworks in the areas investigated. There were no archaeological remains of any description, including stray artefactual material, were located, other than ridge and furrow which was evident as earthworks. This has further confirmed the 'low potential' identified by both the geophysical survey and desk-based assessment.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of a pasture field off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire (site centred on NRG: SP 2626 3961; Fig 1). The evaluation, which was commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) on behalf of Orbit Homes was undertaken in respect of outline planning permission (APP/J3720/W/15/3007063) granted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SoADC) for the residential development of the site. The outline planning permission followed an appeal (APP/J3720/W/15/3007063) and Condition 27 of the appeal decision stated:
- “No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.”*
- 1.2 The scope of the evaluation, which comprised the excavation of two 30m trenches, was agreed during discussions between EDP and SoADC. The discussions were informed by an Archaeological and Heritage Assessment prepared by EDP (2013) and a geophysical survey prepared by WYAS (2013). The scope of the project was formalised in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by EDP (2016) and a supplementary *Method Statement* (MS) produced by CA (2016).
- 1.3 The project was carried out in accordance with the WSI and MS and advised by *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager’s Guide* (HE 2016).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area is approximately 2.5ha in size and comprises open grassland (Fig. 3), surrounded by hedgerows to the north-east, south-east and south-west and a fence line to the north-west. The site is bounded to the south-west by London Road (the A3400), to the north-west/north by residential properties and to the north-east and south-east by agricultural land and farm buildings. The site lies at approximately 70m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the north-east, rising gently to approximately 80m aOD in the south-west.

- 1.5 The bedrock geology within and around the site comprises Jurassic rocks of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by superficial deposits comprising River Terrace deposits of sand and gravel (BGS 2016).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been presented in detail in the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment prepared by EDP (2013) and the geophysical survey undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS (2013), the results of which are summarised below

Prehistoric (500,000BC – AD43)

- 2.2 There is no evidence for prehistoric activity recorded on the Warwickshire HER within the site or surrounding 1km area (EDP 2013). The West Midlands has been identified as a region that produces only small and patchy amounts of prehistoric evidence. However, it has been suggested that this may be the result of an uneven spread of fieldwork (Garwood 2011, 15).

Roman (AD43-AD410)

- 2.3 There are no Roman period remains recorded on the Warwickshire HER within the application site and there are only three findspots recorded within the surrounding 1km area (EDP 2013). The site is located in the south-east of the West Midlands region, which is an area notable for producing more evidence of Roman material culture than other parts of the region (Esmonde-Cleary 2011, 133-34). The three recorded heritage assets comprise find spots of individual artefacts including a sherd of samian ware (**MWA5056**) found c. 160m to the east of the site, a coin of the Constantinian period (**MWA2128**) found 680m to the north-west and a sherd of pottery (**MWA9818**) found 1km to the east (EDP 2013).

Early medieval (AD410-1066)

- 2.4 There is no evidence for early medieval activity recorded on the Warwickshire HER within the site and there are only two findspots recorded in the surrounding 1km area (EDP 2013). The town of Shipton-on-Stour, c. 470m to the north of the site, is not detailed on the Warwickshire HER; however it is mentioned in 10th-century documents (VCH 1913) possibly indicating early medieval settlement. Scatters of pottery c. 900m to the east of the site (**MWA8803**) also suggest the presence of

early medieval/medieval settlement. In addition a coin (**MWA2256**) was found c. 300m to the north-east of the site.

Medieval (AD1066 – AD1539)

- 2.5 There are no previously identified medieval remains recorded on the Warwickshire HER within the but there are ten entries recorded in the surrounding 1km area (EDP 2013). Shipston-on-Stour lay within the Hundred of Oswaldslo within the county of Worcestershire. Four areas of medieval settlement are recorded in the surrounding 1km area. Medieval Shipston-on-Stour (**MWA6460**) is located c. 520m to the north of the site. In addition the medieval settlements of Barcheston (**MWA8978**), Willington (**MWA2258**) and Tidmington (**MWA8980**) are recorded c. 260m to the east, c. 600m to the south-east, and c. 755m to the south of the site respectively.
- 2.6 Evidence relating to transportation and the agricultural use of the landscape includes a medieval trackway or saltway (**MWA8672**) located c. 620m to the north of the site and ridge and furrow earthworks (**MWA6453** and **MWA3910**) of medieval or post-medieval date c. 135m south-west and c.740m south of the site respectively. The site itself also contains ridge and furrow earthworks, which were identified as anomalies during the geophysical survey (WYAS 2013; EDP 2013).
- 2.7 Additional evidence for medieval activity comprises findspots including that of a spur of silvered iron and ceramics (**MWA2256**) c. 300m to the north-east of the site, a sword pommel and Rondel dagger (**MWA9274**) and a strap end and coins (**MWA7347**) located c. 800m to the north of the site (EDP 2013). It is likely that the area was used for agriculture throughout the medieval period, as evidenced by the remains of ridge and furrow earthworks (EDP 2013).

Post-medieval (AD1540 – AD1800)

- 2.8 There are no post-medieval heritage assets recorded within the site in the Warwickshire HER (EDP 2013). It appears that the site continued in use as agricultural land in this period, as suggested by the survival of ridge and furrow earthworks (EDP 2013).

Geophysical Survey

- 2.9 A geophysical survey of the site carried out by Archaeological Services WYAS (WYAS 2013) found no anomalies of archaeological or historical significance other than linear trends caused by ridge and furrow ploughing. However, it was

considered possible that magnetic disturbance across the northern quarter of the site, probably caused by tipping from the adjacent development had precluded the interpretation of much weaker archaeological features, if present (WYAS 2013).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (EDP 2016) and MS (CA 2016), were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance with *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the evaluation was designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable Stratford-on-Avon District Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).
- 3.2 The evaluation also sought to determine whether evidence of medieval agricultural activity, including buried soils and/or field boundaries were preserved under the ridges of the ridge and furrow earthworks and whether the same earthworks have preserved evidence of activity from periods earlier than the Middle Ages.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches, both measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide (Fig. 2). The trenches were targeted on geophysical anomalies and positioned to test the area bordering the north-western boundary of the site, which was extremely magnetically disturbed due to tipping of material from an adjacent settlement (WYAS 2013). Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with *Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual* (CA 2009).
- 4.2 The trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to

the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the geological substrate, whichever was encountered first. Features and deposits were investigated and recorded in accordance with *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007). There were no finds and no archaeological deposits were encountered, as such environmental sampling was unnecessary.

- 4.3 The archive from the evaluation, which is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes, will be deposited with Warwickshire Museum Service. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-5)

- 5.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two 30m trenches (60 linear metres of trench at 1.8m wide) in the locations shown on Figure 2. No archaeological remains or deposits were revealed; details of the deposits encountered are presented in Appendix A.

- 5.2 The trenches were machine-excavated to the surface of the geological substrate, which comprised mid yellowish grey compacted silty clay with frequent gravels to mid yellowish brown compact silty sand with moderate gravels (Figs 4 to 6). The geological substrate was overlain by mid-yellowish brown subsoil which ranged between 0.1m thick in Trench 1 to 1.0m thick in Trench 2. This was sealed by a mid greyish brown sandy silt topsoil, which ranged between 0.30m thick in Trench 1 to 0.32m thick in Trench 2. No archaeological features were encountered and there was no artefactual material in the topsoil or subsoil.

- 5.3 Ridge and furrow earthworks were observed across the site at ground level but no corresponding furrows were evident in the bases of the trenches.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The trial trench evaluation confirmed the results of the geophysical survey (WYAS 2013) and found no evidence for archaeological remains within the site, other than ridge and furrow, which was evident as earthworks. The depth of subsoil/ alluvial deposits towards the base of the slope in Trench 2 prevented the observation of any

furrows in plan or section and it is considered unlikely that any furrows would have truncated the geology within this part of the site. There was no evidence for any earlier remains pre-dating the medieval period preserved under the ridge and furrow earthworks in the areas investigated. The topsoil and subsoil were fairly homogenous, sterile deposits containing no artefactual material of any period.

- 6.2 There were no archaeological remains of any description, including stray artefactual material, were located, other than ridge and furrow which was evident as earthworks. This has further confirmed the 'low potential' identified by both the geophysical survey and desk-based assessment

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork was undertaken by James Coyne, assisted by Mathieu Ferron. The report was written by James Coyne and the illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans and prepared for deposition by Jessica Cook. The project was managed for CA by Michelle Collings.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 9 November 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire: Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation*, unpublished document

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

EDP (The Environmental Dimension Partnership) 2013 *London Road Shipston-on-Stour: Archaeological and Heritage Assessment*, EDP Report No. **EDP1999_01a**

EDP (The Environmental Dimension Partnership) 2016 *Land off London Road Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation*, EDP Report No. **EDP1999_02a**

VCH 1913 *A History of the County of Worcester: Volume 3* London pp521-524
Warwickshire

WYAS (Archaeological Services WYAS) 2013 *Land at London Road Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire: Geophysical survey* WYAS Report No. **2512**

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**TRENCH 1**

Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
100	Layer	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown friable sandy silt.	-	-	0.3
101	Layer	Subsoil	Mid yellowish brown compact silty sand with moderate small rounded stones (<1%).	-	-	0.1
102	Layer	Natural	Mid yellowish grey compact silty clay with frequent gravels (>25%).	-	-	-

TRENCH 2

Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
200	Layer	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown friable sandy silt.	-	-	0.32
201	Layer	Subsoil	Mid yellowish brown compact silty sand with moderate small rounded and sub rounded stones (<1%).	-	-	1.0
202	Layer	Natural	Mid yellowish brown compact silty sand with moderate gravels (<5%).	-	-	-

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Land off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire
Short description	In October 2016, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at Land off London Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire. The evaluation, which was commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), acting on behalf of Orbit Homes, was carried out in order to fulfil a condition attached to outline planning consent for residential development. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trial trenches. A geophysical survey of the site had revealed evidence for ridge and furrow but had otherwise indicated that it had a low potential for archaeological remains. The purpose of the evaluation was to test the effectiveness of the survey and investigate if the ridge and furrow had been masking earlier features. There was no evidence for any earlier remains pre-dating the ridge and furrow earthworks in the areas investigated. No archaeological remains of any description, including stray artefactual material, were located, other than ridge and furrow which was evident as earthworks. This has further confirmed the 'low potential' identified by both the geophysical survey and desk-based assessment.
Project dates	31 October 2016
Project type	Archaeological Evaluation
Previous work	Archaeological and Heritage Assessment (EDP 2013) and Geophysical Survey (WYAS 2013)
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire
Study area (M ² /ha)	2.5ha
Site co-ordinates	SP 2626 3961
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	EDP
Project Design (WSI) originator	EDP & Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Michelle Collings
Project Supervisor	James Coyne
MONUMENT TYPE	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
	Content (
Physical	None
Paper	Warwickshire Museum Service Site records .
Digital	Warwickshire HER Report, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Land off London Road, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire : Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 16646	

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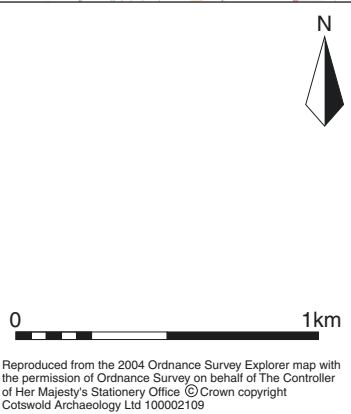
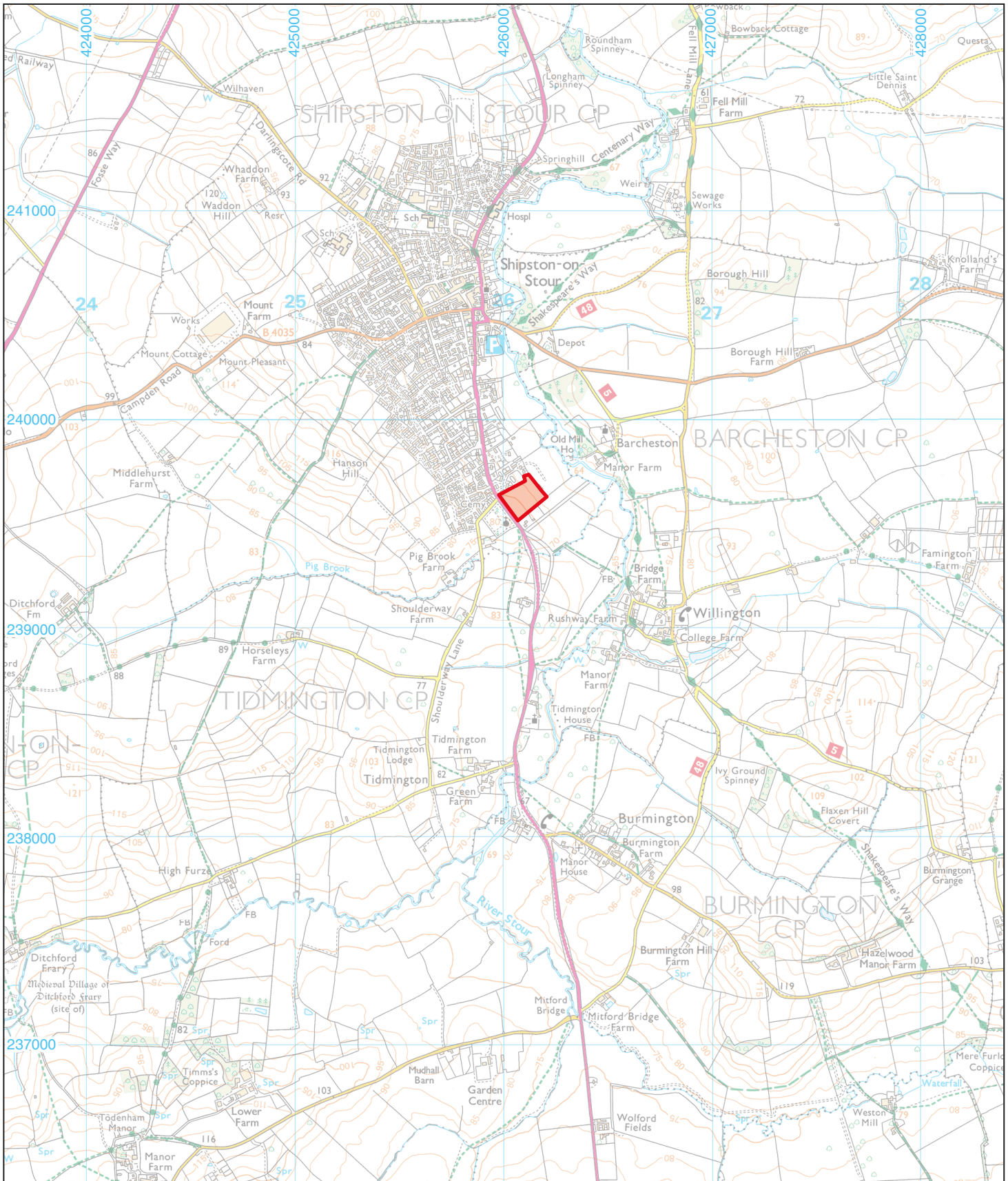
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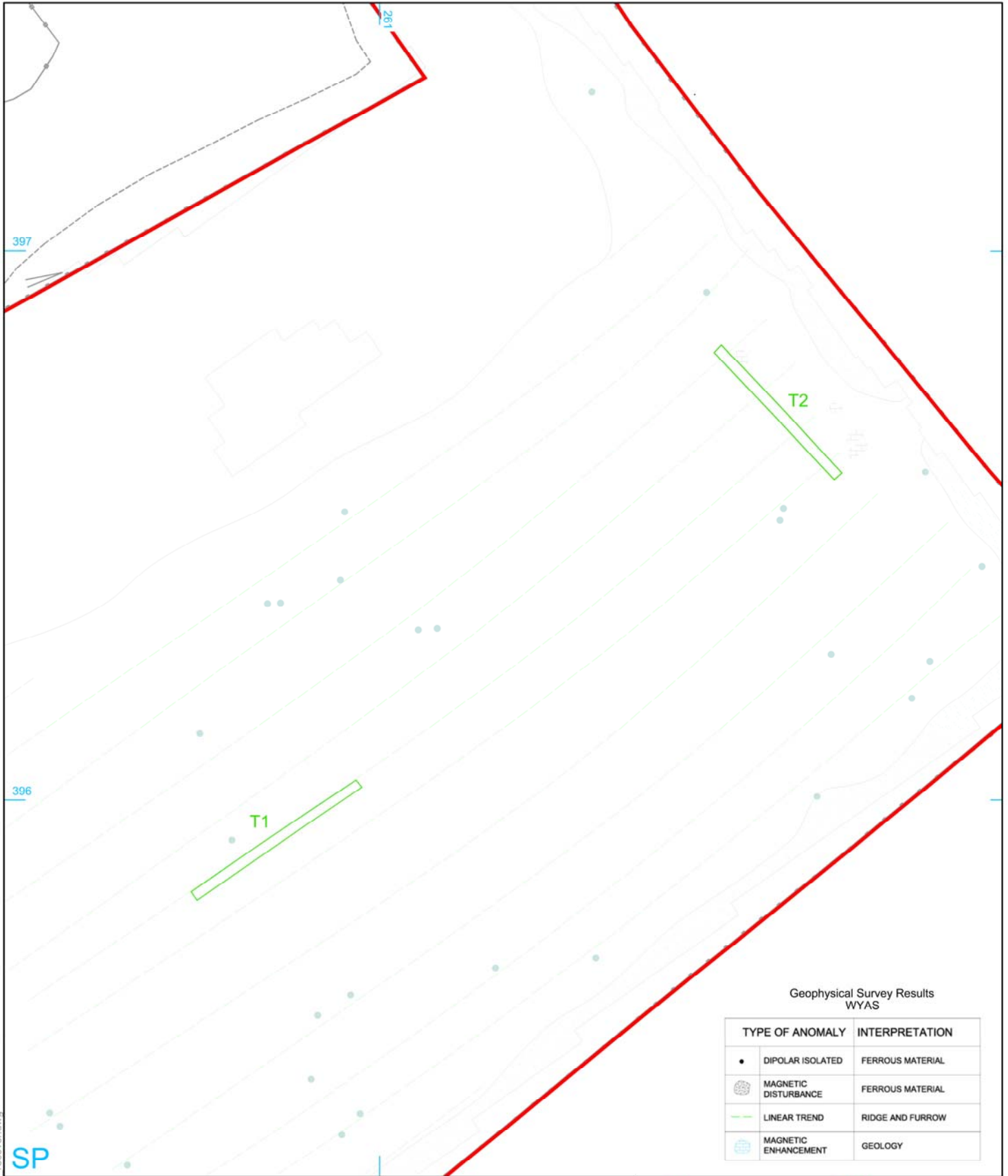

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PROJECT TITLE
 Land off London Road,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	660801	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	10/11/2016	1
APPROVED BY	KD	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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Geophysical Survey Results
WYAS

TYPE OF ANOMALY	INTERPRETATION
•	DIPOLAR ISOLATED FERROUS MATERIAL
⊗	MAGNETIC DISTURBANCE FERROUS MATERIAL
—	LINEAR TREND RIDGE AND FURROW
⊕	MAGNETIC ENHANCEMENT GEOLOGY

site boundary

evaluation trench



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PROJECT TITLE
 Land off London Road,
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FIGURE TITLE
**Trench location plan showing
 geophysical survey results**

DRAWN BY EE PROJECT NO. 660801
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 09/11/2016
 APPROVED BY KD SCALE@A3 1:750

FIGURE NO.

2

0 25m



3



4

3 General view of the site, looking east

4 Trench 1, general view looking north-east



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PROJECT TITLE

Land off London Road,
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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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5



6

5 Trench 2, general view looking south-east

6 Trench 2, soil profile, looking north-east



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PROJECT TITLE

Land off London Road,
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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

5 & 6