

LAND AT HADLEY FARM, WHITCHURCH, SHROPSHIRE

Centred on NGR SJ 51640 40903

Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief

Shropshire County Council Planning Reference
14/02914/FUL (condition 4)

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On behalf of:
CgMs Consulting Ltd

Report No: ACD1220/1/0

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AC archaeology

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(Centred on NGR SJ 51640 40903)

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by AC archaeology in September 2015 on land at Hadley Farm, Whitchurch, Shropshire (NGR SJ 51640 40903). The watching brief was carried out under a condition of planning permission during the construction of an access road for a solar farm.

The groundworks involved the machine stripping of topsoil. No archaeological features were observed during the watching brief and a metal detector survey established that no metal finds were present.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig.1)

This report presents the results of a watching brief carried out on land at Hadley Farm, Whitchurch, Shropshire (NGR SJ 51640 40903) by AC archaeology during September 2015. The recording was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of clients and was required under Condition 4 of planning permission granted by Shropshire Council for a solar farm and associated infrastructure (planning reference 14/02914/FUL).

- 1.1 The site has been subject to a previous desk-based archaeological assessment (Owen 2014) and geophysical survey (Richardson 2015), which revealed no archaeological features within the area of the proposed development. An important Iron Age object was, however, reported from the area to the Portable Antiquities Scheme as a metal detecting find.

2. THE SITE (Fig. 1; Plate 1)

- 2.1 The overall development covers an area of approximately 14.5 hectares of agricultural land. The majority of the site is level and sits at approximately 90m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The land does, however, slope sharply to the south and west where the Red Brook forms the border between England and Wales. The access road follows the line of an informal farm track over a distance of approximately 170m.
- 2.2 The underlying solid geology comprises Halite-stone and mudstones of the Wilkesley Halite Member. These are overlain by glaciofluvial sands and deposits (BGS 2015).

3. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The aim of the watching brief was to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during topsoil stripping for the new access road. In addition, all exposed surfaces and spoil were subject to a metal detector survey. The investigations were carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological works prepared by Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) (Jones 2015).
- 3.2 All excavations were undertaken with a 360° tracked mechanical excavator and all layers revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (revised August 2012).

4. RESULTS (Fig. 2; Plate 2)

- 4.1** The groundworks for the site comprised the stripping of topsoil to a maximum depth 0.20m. The topsoil consisted of dark brown sandy silt. Natural subsoil was revealed in one small area only and consisted of light brownish yellow silty sand. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.
- 4.2** The metal detecting survey comprised the scanning of all spoil and exposed surfaces. No objects were recovered.

5. COMMENT

- 5.1** The watching brief, including a metal detector survey, found no evidence of archaeological features and no metal objects of archaeological interest were present along the route of the new access road.

6. ARCHIVE AND OASIS ENTRY

- 6.1** The archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology in Bradninch under the project number ACD1220. The paper archive will be offered to the Shropshire Historic Environment Record Office under their current accessions policy.
- 6.2** An entry to the OASIS database, which will include a digital copy of this report, has been created using the unique identifier **225424**.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1** This project was commissioned by Will Bedford of CgMs Consulting Ltd and was managed for AC archaeology by John Valentin. The watching brief was carried out by Abigail Brown and the illustrations for this report were prepared by Elisabeth Patkai.

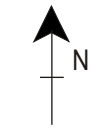
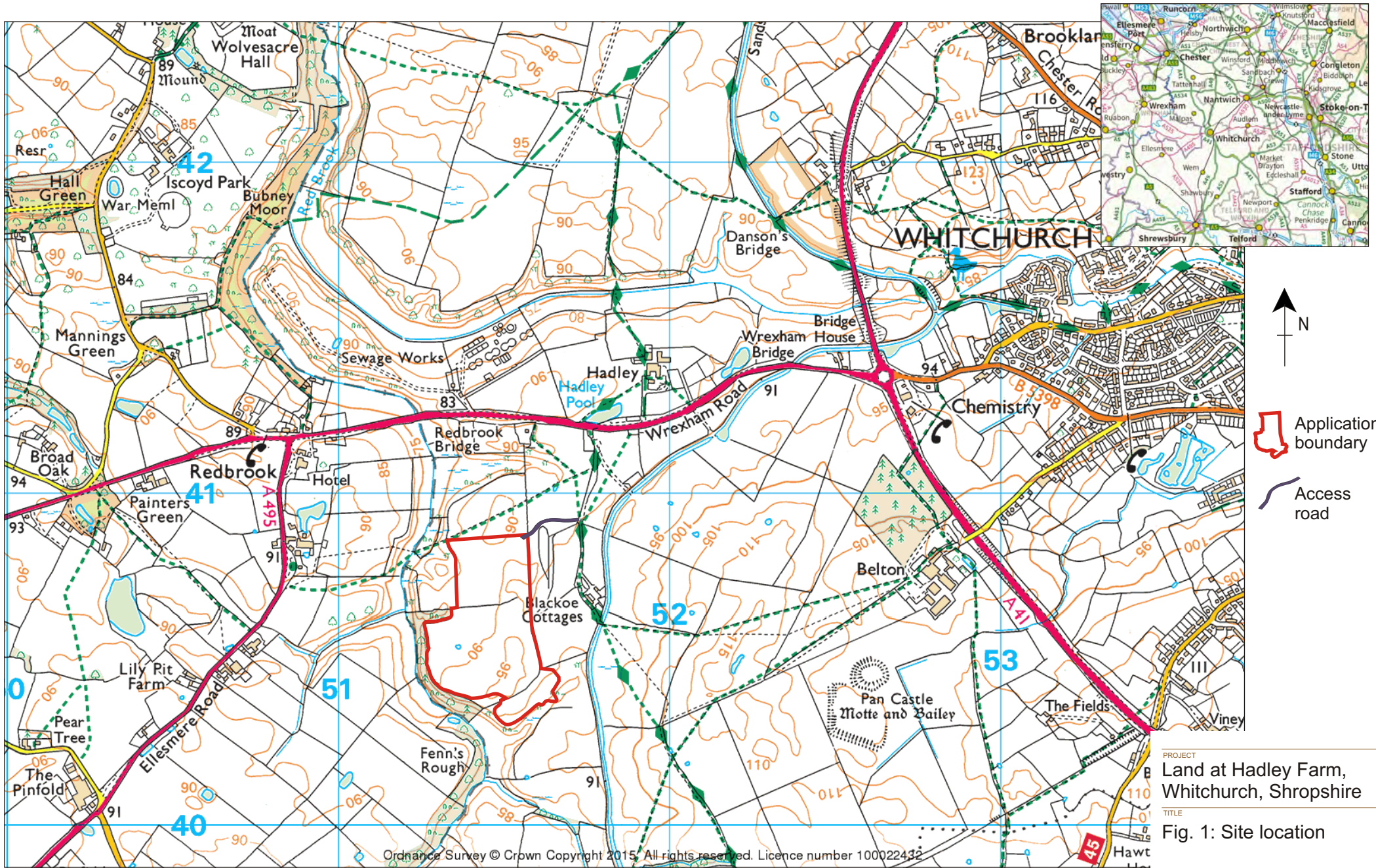
8. SOURCES CONSULTED



BGS, 2015, *British Geological Survey Online Viewer*, www.bgs.ac.uk

Jones, N.W. 2015, *Hadley Farm, Whitchurch, Shropshire, Archaeological Watching Brief: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished CPAT report no. 1579.

Owen, P. 2014, *Lightsource Hadley Farm Solar Development: Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment*. Unpublished Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd report no. UA007147-CH-001.

Richardson, T. 2015, *Hadley Farm, Whitchurch, Shropshire: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished Stratascan report.



-  Application boundary
-  Access road

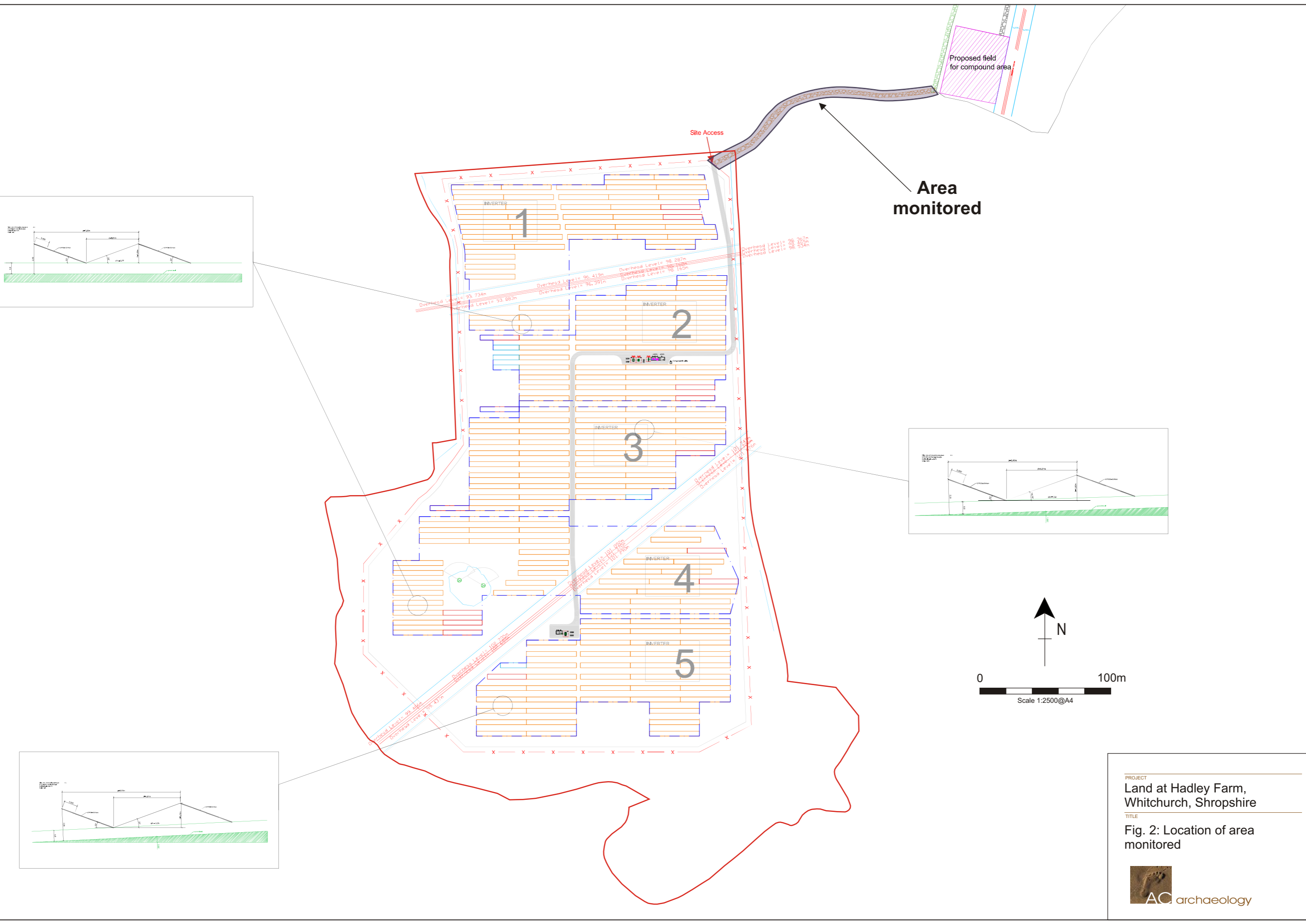
PROJECT
 Land at Hadley Farm,
 Whitchurch, Shropshire

TITLE
 Fig. 1: Site location

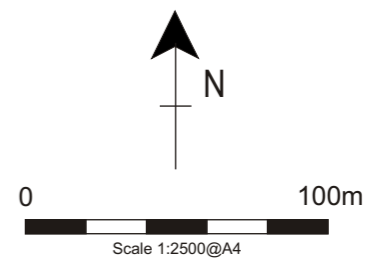
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0 500m
 Scale 1:15,000@A4





Area monitored



PROJECT
Land at Hadley Farm,
Whitchurch, Shropshire

TITLE
Fig. 2: Location of area
monitored





Plate 1: General view of location of new access road, looking to the west



Plate 2: General view of new access road during topsoil stripping, looking to the west (1m scale)

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