

Substrata

Archaeological Geophysical Surveyors

An archaeological magnetometer survey

**Land at Manor Farm Caravan Site,
Seaton, Devon**

Centred on NGR: 323845, 091138

Report: 2509SEA-R-1

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6th October 2025

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Client	1
3. Copyright	1
4. Survey type and location	1
5. Summary	1
6. Standards	2
7. Aims and objectives.....	2
8. Methodology.....	2
9. Survey Area	2
10. Archaeological background	3
11. Results	3
12. Discussion.....	3
13. Conclusions	4
14. Disclaimer.....	6
15. Archive	6
16. Acknowledgements.....	6
17. Bibliography	6
Appendix 1 Figures	7
Appendix 2 Tables.....	13
Appendix 3 Project archive contents	18

Figures

Figure 1: location map	8
Figure 2: survey interpretation.....	9
Figure 3: shade plot of processed data	10
Figure 4: shade plot of minimally processed data.....	11
Figure 5: grid plan and location	12

Tables

Table 1: data analysis	14
Table 2: methodology information	15
Table 3: processed data metadata	16
Table 4: minimally processed data metadata.....	17

1 Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological magnetometer survey at the proposed development site listed in Section 4.

The survey was commissioned by AC Archaeology Ltd on behalf of clients in advance of a planning application. The commissioning of this report was in keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework, Chapter 16, Paragraph 207 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2024). The survey and report were completed in compliance with a Survey Method Statement (Substrata Ltd, 2025).

2 Client

AC Archaeology Ltd, 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch Nr Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ

3 Copyright

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4 Survey type and location

4.1 Survey

Method:	shallow depth magnetometer survey
Instrument:	twin-sensor fluxgate gradiometer
Survey Date(s):	September 2025
Investigation level:	Level 2 (prospection and delineation)
Survey resolution:	1m by 0.25m
Survey Size:	2.1 ha

4.2 Location

Name:	Land at Seaton, East Devon
Parish:	Seaton
County:	Devon
Nearest Postcode:	EX12 2FY
Survey centre NGR:	SY238911
Survey centre NGR (E/N):	323845 , 091138
Historic environment designation:	None
OASIS ID:	substrat1-537318

5 Summary

Substrata were commissioned by AC Archaeology in 2025 to carry out an archaeological magnetometer survey of c. 2.1 hectares of land on the western fringe of the town of Seaton in East Devon. Seven geophysical anomaly groups were detected of which six are characterised as representing potential buried archaeological deposits, with the remainder classed as modern deposits.

Of these, one group likely represents a former field boundary previously recorded on the Seaton tithe map. Another group is tentatively identified as a possible ring-ditch. Two groups probably represent ditched features, one of which may represent a former boundary or drainage measure. A rectilinear group may represent a small enclosure or general parcel. An indistinct linear group spanning the southern half of the Survey Area probably represents a paleochannel although an archaeological origin is possible.

One group was characterised as modern—a linear negative anomaly spanning the Survey Area is a probably a service or drain.

6 Standards

The standards that were used to complete this survey are defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014a) and the European Archaeological Council (Schmidt *et al.* 2016). The codes of approved practice to be followed are those of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014b) and Archaeology Data Service (Schmidt and Ernenwein, undated).

7 Survey aims and objectives

7.1 Aims

1. Within the framework set out in Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014a) and European Archaeological Council (Schmidt *et al.* 2016), complete an archaeological geophysical survey and report which will, as far as possible, establish the presence or absence, extent and character of any buried archaeology within the survey area.
2. Provide sufficient information on the nature of any archaeological remains to facilitate the assessment of their interest prior to the determination of the planning application.

7.2 Objectives

1. Complete a magnetometer survey across the Survey Area.
2. Identify any magnetic anomalies that may be related to buried archaeology.
3. Within the limits of the technique and dataset, archaeologically characterise any such anomalies or patterns of anomalies.
4. Accurately record the location of the identified anomalies.
5. Produce a report based on the survey that is sufficiently detailed to inform any subsequent development on the survey area about the location and possible archaeological character of the recorded anomalies.

8 Methodology

The magnetometer survey was undertaken in accordance a Survey Method Statement (Substrata Ltd, 2025) using the standards specified in Section 6 to achieve the aims and objectives set out in Section 7. The survey method was selected to provide a relatively fast and cost-effective evaluation of any buried archaeology across the Survey Area (see Section 14).

Data processing was undertaken using appropriate software (Table 2), with all anomalies being digitised and geo-referenced. The final report (this document) includes a graphical and textual account of the techniques undertaken, the data obtained and an archaeological interpretation of that data and conclusions about any likely archaeology.

9 Survey Area

9.1 Location and description

The area surveyed (hereafter referred to as the Survey Area) consists of a field on the northwestern fringe of the town of Seaton in East Devon, covering c. 2.1 hectares. To the east is the residential area of Seaton town, to the north is a caravan park, and on all other sides are fields. Topographically the Survey Area lies on the eastern slope of a Seaton Down Hill, with elevations in the west of c. 65m above ordnance datum (AOD) and c. 46m AOD in the east. Within this general topographic trend there is a subtle combe running east-west across the centre of the field.

9.2 Geology and sub-surface deposits

The solid geology of the Survey Area comprises Branscombe Mudstone Formation - Mudstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 228.4 and 201.3 million years ago during the Triassic period. No superficial geology is recorded (British Geological Society, undated).

A magnetometer survey can be recommended over any sedimentary geology. There are few significant distorting factors although a wide range of magnetic susceptibility in the parent rock results in a very variable background response to survey (English Heritage 2008, Table

4).

9.3 Soils

The soils within the Survey Area are slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute, undated).

10 Archaeological background

10.1 Historic landscape characterisation

Medieval enclosures based on strip fields: This area was probably first enclosed with hedge-banks during the later middle ages. The curving form of the hedge-banks suggests that earlier it may have been farmed as open strip-fields.

10.2 Summary of the archaeological background

This section is not designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the historic environment of the surrounding area and should not be used as a source for further work.

An initial search of the Heritage Gateway (Heritage Gateway 2012) shows that there are no scheduled monuments, or HER entries within the Survey Area.

An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken in the field to the northeast (now developed into Rogers Way) in 2017 by AC Archaeology (Cooke and Rainbird 2017) following a geophysical survey undertaken by Substrata Ltd (Substrata 2013). The evaluation uncovered several linear features relating to an historic agricultural landscape, the small number of finds indicating that these are probably located away from contemporary settlement. Some residual late Neolithic flint and Romano-British pottery sherds were also recovered (MDV120380).

The scheduled monument of Honey ditches Roman villa or *mansio*, and earlier settlement phases are located across the three fields immediately south of the Survey Area (MDV14057).

11 Results

11.1 Scope and definitions

This survey was designed to record magnetic anomalies. A magnetic anomaly is a local variation in the earth's magnetic field. Such variations can result from differences in the magnetic properties of the underlying solid geology, superficial geology and other near-surface deposits including those altered and created by past human activities. Near-surface artefacts can also create magnetic anomalies.

The dimensions of magnetic anomalies mapped as representing potential buried archaeology do not represent the dimensions of any associated archaeology.

The analysis presented below identifies and characterises anomalies and anomaly groups that may relate to buried archaeology.

11.2 Analysis

Figure 2 shows the interpretation of the survey data and includes the anomaly groups identified as possibly relating to buried archaeology along with their identifying numbers. Table 1 is an extract of the detailed analysis of the survey data sourced from the attribute tables of the GIS project provided in the project archive.

Figure 2 and Table 1 comprise the analysis of the survey data.

Figure 3 is a plot of the processed data as specified in Table 3. Figure 4 is a plot of minimally processed data as specified in Table 4. Figure 5 shows the location of the survey grid and grid data files.

12 Discussion

12.1 General points

Scope

Not all anomalies or anomaly groups identified in Table 1 are necessarily discussed below. All identified anomaly groups are recorded in the GIS project held in the survey archive.

Data collection

Data collection along the survey area edges was restricted as shown in the figures due to the presence of magnetic materials within and adjacent to the plot boundaries. Strong magnetic responses mapped close to the boundaries are likely to relate to the magnetic materials except where otherwise indicated in Figure 2 and Table 1.

Anomaly characterisation

There are a number of anomaly groups that could be interpreted as relating to large postholes or pits although most will have natural origins. Anomalies of this sort are mapped as potential archaeology when they are well defined in the data, associated with other significant anomaly groups or otherwise formed recognisable patterns as listed in Table 1.

Anomalies thought to relate to natural features and recent modern objects such as inspection covers, water management equipment, drains, cables and other services are only mapped where they comprise significant magnetic responses across the dataset that need clarification.

Numerous dipole magnetic anomalies are present within the dataset. These are likely to represent recent ferrous objects. They are only mapped if they could influence the analysis of anomaly groups thought to have an archaeological origin.

Parallel, linear anomalies following the trend of the extant field boundaries (Figures 3 to 4) and not otherwise discussed below are likely to represent relatively recent ploughing disturbance.

12.2 Data relating to historic maps and other records

Anomaly Group 2 is likely to reflect a former field boundary recorded on the Seaton tithe map of 1840.

12.3 Data with no previous archaeological provenance

Anomaly Group 1 is a subtle circular anomaly, possibly a curvilinear or ring-ditch, of uncertain date. Its location close to the hedge bank may suggest an agricultural deposit.

Anomaly Group 3 is a subtle rectilinear anomaly, tentatively interpreted as a small enclosure/land parcel, of uncertain date.

Anomaly Group 4 is a long (c.92m) linear anomaly running downslope, that is probably a cut, ditch-type feature. This may represent a former boundary, noting that it is not aligned on the modern or postmedieval field system and so may be indicative of an earlier field layout regime. Conversely, it also appears to be an isolated feature, and so may be more utilitarian, e.g. the a drainage measure, funneling water runoff downslope.

Anomaly Group 5 is a linear anomaly, possibly a cut ditch.

Anomaly Group 6 is a long, linear trend of raised positive response, spanning the southern half of the Survey Area. This corresponds with a crop mark visible on satellite imagery (Google). The group follows a topographic combe across the survey area and probably indicates a paleochannel, however an archaeological origin is possible.

Potential modern and services

Anomaly Group 101 is a linear, negative anomaly spanning the Survey Area, that incorporates two dipolar spikes along its length. It is visible as a crop mark on multiple satellite imagery sources. This probably represents a drain or other utilitarian feature with some ferrous fittings.

Additionally, several dipolar spikes were detected across the Survey Area, which are considered to represent modern ferrous material, and so have not been formally mapped.

13 Conclusions

The geophysical survey was successful in detecting and locating anomalies of possible and likely archaeological origin. Seven geophysical anomaly groups were detected of which six were characterised as representing potential buried archaeological deposits, with the remainder classed as modern deposits.

Of these, one group (Group 2) likely represents a former field boundary previously recorded on the Seaton tithe map. Another group (1) is tentatively identified as a possible circular ditch. Two groups (4, 5) probably represent ditched features. Of these, Group 4 is a rigidly linear anomaly that may represent a former boundary that predates the postmedieval field layout seen on historic mapping sources, or alternatively may indicate a more recent drainage measure deliberately aligned downslope. A subtle rectilinear group (3) is tentatively identified as a small enclosure or general parcel. An indistinct linear group (6) spanning the southern half of the Survey Area probably represents a paleochannel although an archaeological origin is possible.

14 Disclaimer

The description and discussion of the results presented in this report are the authors', based on their interpretation of the survey data. Every effort has been made to provide accurate descriptions and interpretations of the geophysical data set. The nature of archaeological geophysical surveying is such that interpretations based on geophysical data, while informative, can only be provisional. Geophysical surveys are a cost-effective early step in the multi-phase process that is archaeology.

15 Archive

15.1 Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS)

OASIS ID: substrat1-537318

The OASIS entry has been completed and the boundary file and report uploaded with six months delay in publication.

15.2 Substrata Limited archive

A full archive of this survey will be held by Substrata Limited on cloud and local hard drive storage as specified in Appendix 3.

15.3 Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

Depending on local authority policy, an archive may be deposited with the ADS as specified in Appendix 3.

15.4 Historic Environment Record (HER)

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, a PDF or printed copy of the report will be submitted to the appropriate HER within six months of completion.

16 Acknowledgements

Substrata would like to thank John Valentin of AC Archaeology Ltd for commissioning us to complete this survey.

17 Bibliography

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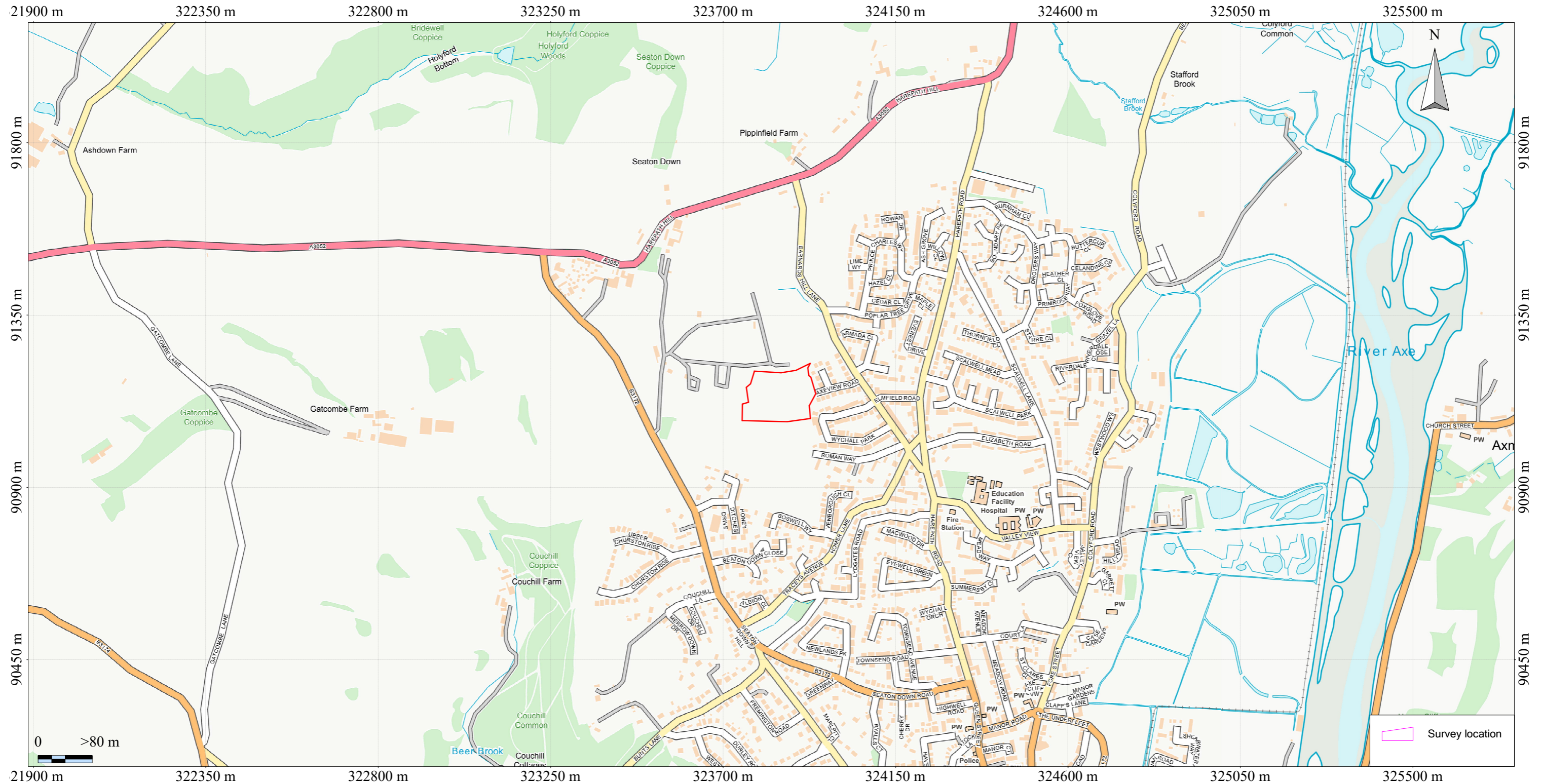
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https://f64366e3-8f7d-4b63-9edf-5000e2bef85b.filesusr.com/ugd/881a59_fdb1636e95f64813a65178895aea87cf.pdf. [Accessed 23.09.21]

Appendix 1 Figures

General Guidance

The anomalies represented in the survey plots provided in this appendix are magnetic anomalies. The apparent size of such anomalies and anomaly patterns are unlikely to correspond exactly with the dimensions of any associated archaeological features .

A rough rule for interpreting magnetic anomalies is that the width of an anomaly at half its maximum reading is equal to the width of the buried feature, or its depth if this is greater (Clark, 2000: 83). Caution must be applied when using this rule as it depends on the anomalies being clearly identifiable and distinct from adjacent anomalies. In northern latitudes the position of the maximum of a magnetic anomaly will be displaced slightly to the south of any associated physical feature.



British Grid
 centre X: 323825.90 m, centre Y: 91142.68 m

Geophysical survey: Copyright Substrata Limited.
 Base map: Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2018.
 All rights reserved. Licence number 100053143

Scale: 1:10000 @ A3. Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

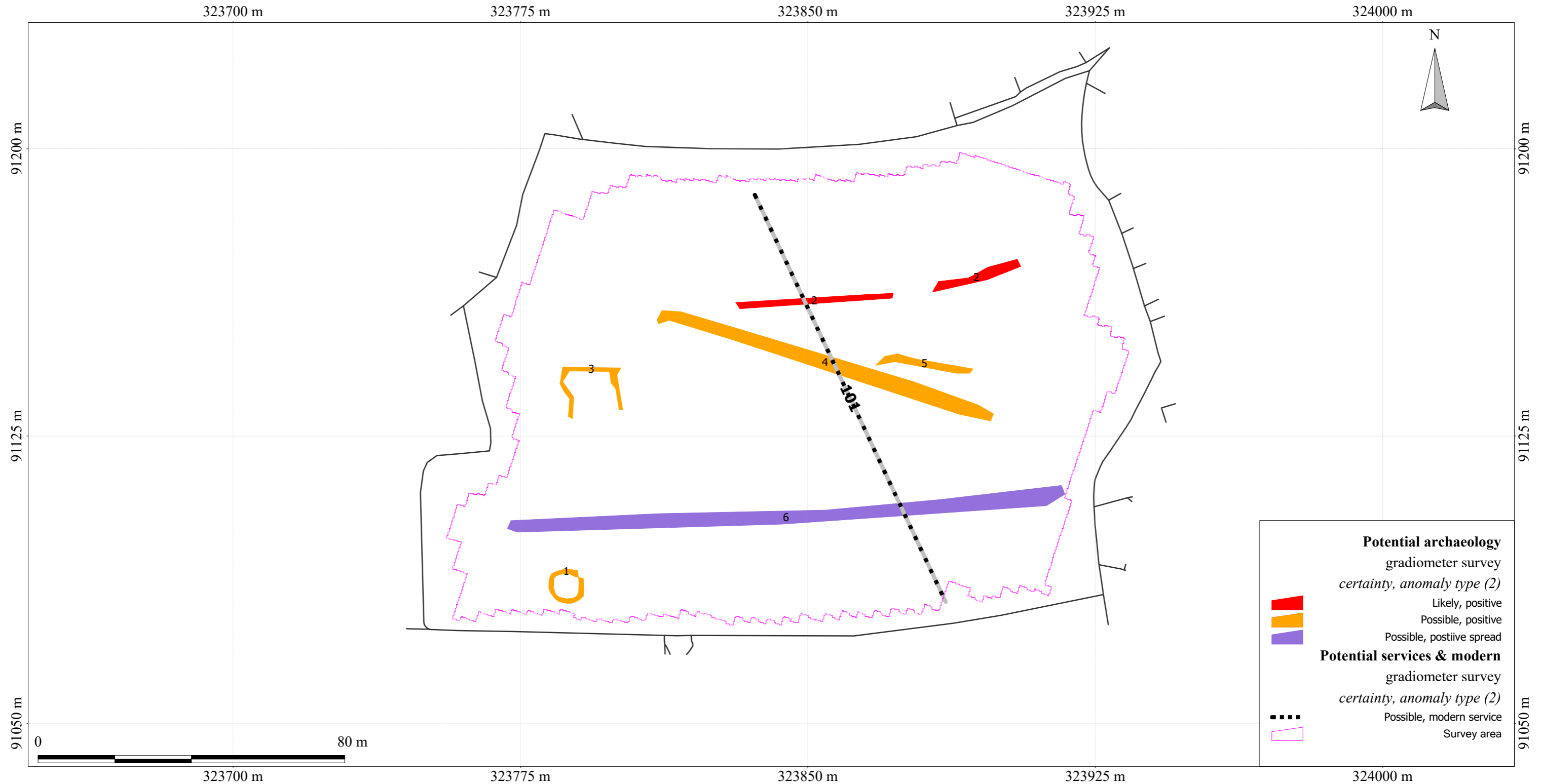
Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. 'Anomaly type' is a description of the magnetic anomaly. See the report text or GIS for an archaeological characterisation.
3. Anomalies designated "likely archaeology" have supporting evidence e.g. historical maps and or visible earthworks.
4. Not all instances are mapped.
5. Anomalies likely to represent recent deposits or ground disturbance, or geological and other natural deposits are not mapped unless relevant to potential buried archaeology.

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 Land at Manor Farm Caravan Site
 Centred on NGR: 323845, 091138
 Report: 2509SEA-R-1

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Figure 1: Location map



British Grid
 centre X: 323840.46 m, centre Y: 91135.84 m

Geophysical survey: Copyright Substrata Limited.
 Base map: Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2018.
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Scale: 1:1000 @ A3. Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

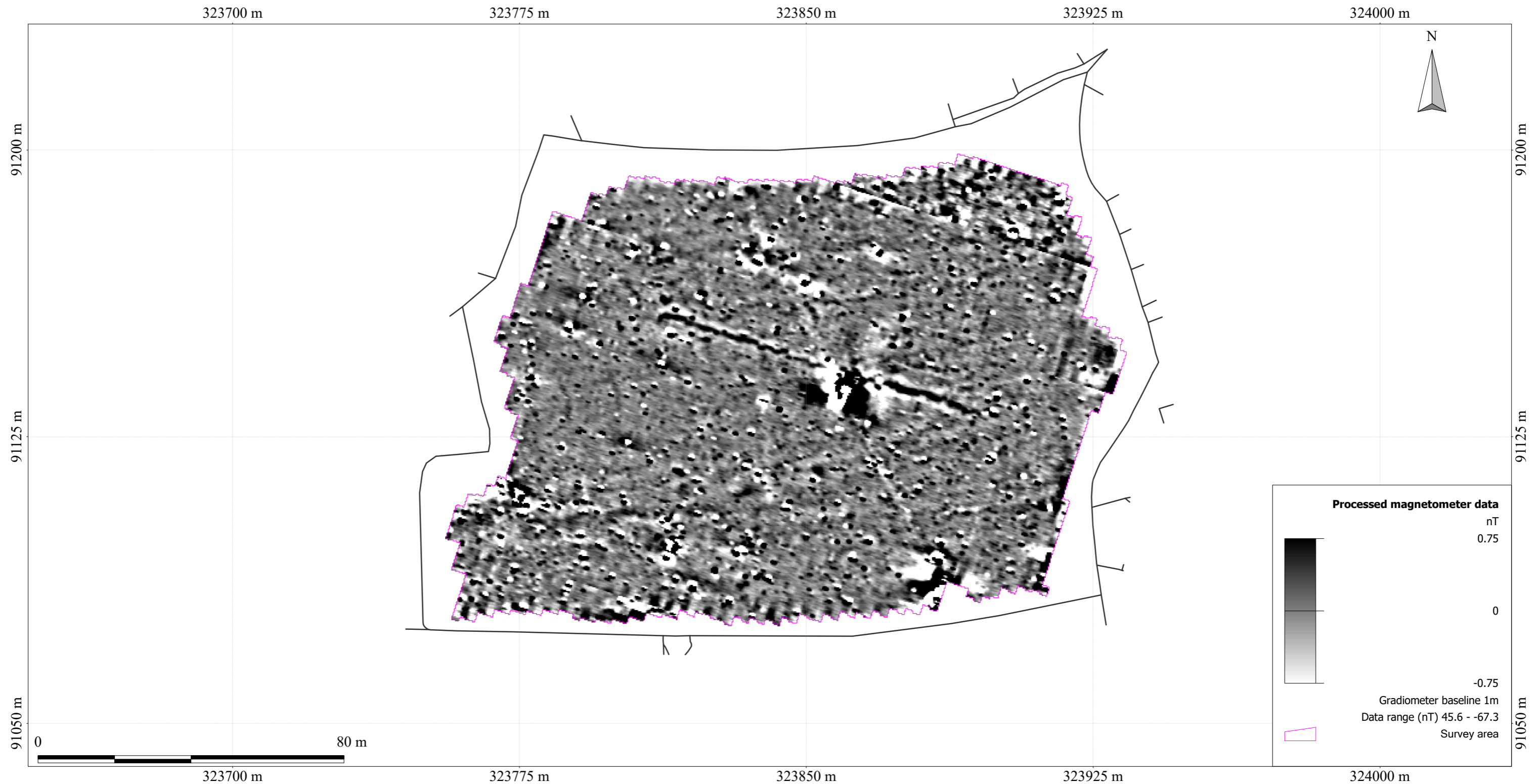
Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. 'Anomaly type' is a description of the magnetic anomaly. See the report text or GIS for an archaeological characterisation.
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Figure 2: Survey interpretation



British Grid
 centre X: 323840.46 m, centre Y: 91135.84 m

Geophysical survey: Copyright Substrata Limited.
 Base map: Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2018.
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Scale: 1:1000 @ A3. Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

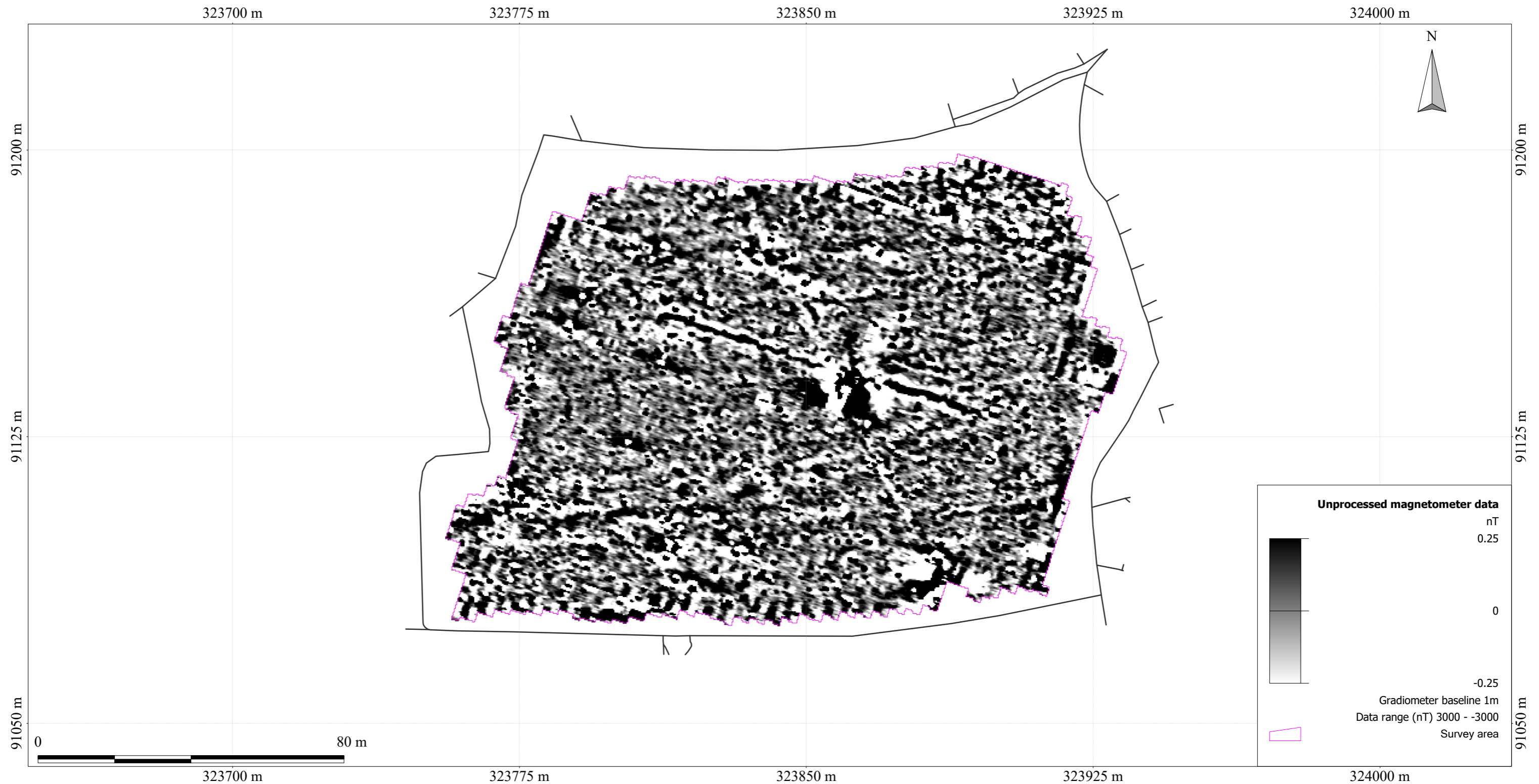
Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. 'Anomaly type' is a description of the magnetic anomaly. See the report text or GIS for an archaeological characterisation.
3. Anomalies designated "likely archaeology" have supporting evidence e.g. historical maps and or visible earthworks.
4. Not all instances are mapped.
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Figure 3: Processed magnetometer data



British Grid
 centre X: 323840.46 m, centre Y: 91135.84 m

Geophysical survey: Copyright Substrata Limited.
 Base map: Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2018.
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Scale: 1:1000 @ A3. Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

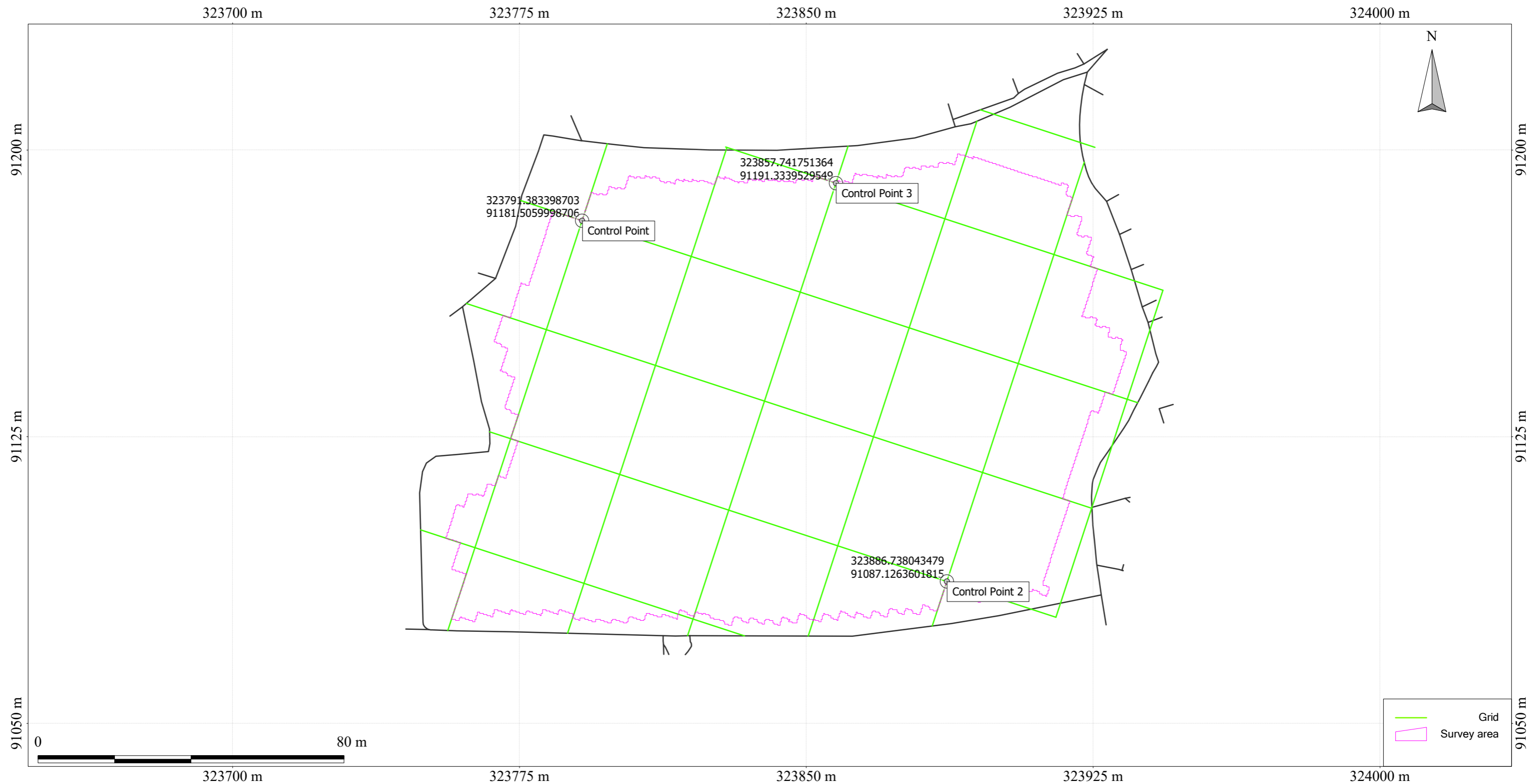
Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. 'Anomaly type' is a description of the magnetic anomaly. See the report text or GIS for an archaeological characterisation.
3. Anomalies designated "likely archaeology" have supporting evidence e.g. historical maps and or visible earthworks.
4. Not all instances are mapped.
5. Anomalies likely to represent recent deposits or ground disturbance, or geological and other natural deposits are not mapped unless relevant to potential buried archaeology.

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Figure 4: Unprocessed magnetometer data



British Grid
centre X: 323840.46 m, centre Y: 91135.84 m

Geophysical survey: Copyright Substrata Limited.
Base map: Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2018.
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Scale: 1:1000 @ A3. Spatial Units: Meter. Do not scale off this drawing

Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. 'Anomaly type' is a description of the magnetic anomaly. See the report text or GIS for an archaeological characterisation.
3. Anomalies designated "likely archaeology" have supporting evidence e.g. historical maps and or visible earthworks.
4. Not all instances are mapped.
5. Anomalies likely to represent recent deposits or ground disturbance, or geological and other natural deposits are not mapped unless relevant to potential buried archaeology.

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Figure 5: Grid plan and control points E/N

Appendix 2 Tables

Site: Land at Manor Farm Caravan Site, Seaton
 Centred on NGR: 323845, 091138

plot	anomaly group	associated anomaly groups	anomaly characterisation certainty & class	anomaly form	additional archaeological characterisation	comments	supporting evidence
	1		possible, positive	ring	possible ring ditch?	close to hedgebank- possibly agricultural	
	2		likely, positive	linear	possible boundary	roughly lines up with boundary on tithe	Tithe map
	3		possible, positive	rectilinear	ditch?		
	4		possible, positive	linear	ditch?	possible drainage feature?	
	5		possible, positive	linear	ditch?		
	6		possible, positive spread	linear	paleochannel?	possibly a natural channel	
	101		modern sewer	linear			

Table 1: data analysis

<p>Grid <i>Method of Fixing:</i> DGPS set-out using pre-planned survey grids and Ordnance Survey coordinates. <i>Composition:</i> 30m by 30m grids <i>Recording:</i> Geo-referenced and recorded using digital map tiles. <i>DGPS used:</i> Spectra Precision PM5V2 GPS with external antenna and survey pole and DigiTerra Explorer 7 as the survey control program.</p>	
<p>Equipment <i>Instrument:</i> Bartington Instruments grad601-2 <i>Firmware:</i> version 6.1</p>	<p>Data Capture <i>Sample Interval:</i> 0.25m <i>Traverse Interval:</i> 1 metre <i>Traverse Method:</i> zigzag <i>Traverse Orientation:</i> GN</p>
<p>Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation Software IntelliCAD 8.4 DW Consulting TerraSurveyor3 Manifold System 8 GIS Microsoft Corp. Office 365: Excel, Publisher, Word Adobe Systems Inc Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro Extended</p>	

Table 2: methodology information

Description:	
Instrument Type:	Grad 601 (Magnetometer)
Units:	nT
Direction of 1st Traverse:	0 deg
Collection Method:	ZigZag
Sensors:	2 @ 1.00 m spacing.
Dummy Value:	32702
Dimensions	
Composite Size (readings):	1080 x 390
Survey Size (meters):	270 m x 390 m
Grid Size:	30 m x 30 m
X Interval:	0.25 m
Y Interval:	1 m
Stats	
Max:	13.15
Min:	-14.74
Std Dev:	4.03
Mean:	0.08
Median:	0.00
Processes: 4	
1	Base Layer
2	Clip at 1.00 SD
3	De Stagger: Grids: All Mode: Both By: -2 intervals
4	DeStripe Median Sensors: All
Note: Input to the GIS results in slight changes to the stats shown above. The data stored in the archives (Appendix 3) will have the above metadata and the values quoted in the report figures will be those quoted in this metadata table.	

Table 3: processed data metadata

Description:	
Instrument Type:	Grad 601 (Magnetometer)
Units:	nT
Direction of 1st Traverse:	0 deg
Collection Method:	ZigZag
Sensors:	2 @ 1.00 m spacing.
Dummy Value:	32702
Dimensions	
Composite Size (readings):	1080 x 390
Survey Size (meters):	270 m x 390 m
Grid Size:	30 m x 30 m
X Interval:	0.25 m
Y Interval:	1 m
Stats	
Max:	98.79
Min:	-100.00
Std Dev:	7.44
Mean:	6.15
Median:	6.05
Processes: 1	
1 Base Layer	
Note: Input to the GIS results in slight changes to the stats shown above. The data stored in the archives (Appendix 3) will have the above metadata and the values quoted in the report figures will be those quoted in this metadata table.	

Table 4: Unprocessed raw data metadata

Appendix 3 Project archive contents

A3.1 Substrata Limited archive

A full archive of this survey will be held by Substrata Limited on cloud and local hard drive storage as follows:

Report:	Adobe PDF (.pdf), Microsoft Publisher (.pub)
Raw grid data files:	DW Consulting TerraSurveyor 3 (.xgd) and CSV (.xyz)
Raw data composite files:	CSV (.xyz)
Minimally processed data composite files:	DW Consulting TerraSurveyor 3 (.xgd) and CSV (.xyz)
Final data processing composite files:	DW Consulting TerraSurveyor 3 (.xgd) and CSV (.xyz)
GIS project:	GIS project Manifold 8 (.map)
Survey interpretation:	ESRI shape files
AutoCAD version of the survey interpretation: (if generated)	AutoCAD (.dwg)
All project working files:	IntelliCAD 8.4 Microsoft Corp. Office 365: Excel, Publisher, Word Adobe Systems Inc Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro Extended

A3.2 Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS (OASIS)

Metadata:	online form
Georeferenced survey boundary file:	ESRI shape file
Report:	Adobe PDF (.pdf)

A3.3 Archaeological Data Service

Depending on local authority policy, an archive may be deposited with the ADS as follows:

Raw data composite file:	CSV (xyz)
Processed data plot:	rendered images in TIFF format
Survey grid plot:	image in TIFF format
Details of data processing:	image in TIFF format
Interpretation plot:	rendered images in TIFF format
Metadata:	Microsoft Excel format

A3.4 Historic Environment Record (HER)

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, a PDF copy of the report will be submitted to the appropriate HER within 6 months of the completion of this report via the OASIS process or by other means, depending on the relevant HER process.