



# Hogwood Park, Finchampstead Parcel 6

Heritage Statement

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## Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Countryside Properties UK Ltd to prepare a Heritage Statement of land at Hogwood Park, Finchampstead, Parcel 6 centred on NGR 476765, 164272 (SU 76765 64272). This report is intended to support a reserved matters application for residential development within Parcel 6 within the wider development area, and to determine whether the programme of archaeological works undertaken within the application areas are sufficient to discharge the archaeological condition placed on the outline planning application.

The aims of the report were to assess and summarise the extent and nature of the archaeological works already undertaken within the wider application area and within Parcel 6. The works undertaken include geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation, trenching and excavation of an area of the Area G archaeological significance. These works have not identified any archaeological remains of national significance and have mitigated the potential harm to what remains are present through preservation in record. Berkshire Archaeology's Principal Archaeologist signed off the works in Area G upon completion, confirming that no further archaeological works are required to be undertaken either within the area of archaeological significance, or any other part of Parcel 6. The excavation works already undertaken are therefore considered to have been adequate to discharge Condition 61 for Parcel 6.

## Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Vistry Thames Valley on behalf of Countryside Properties UK Ltd, and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Caroline Belmont in this regard.



# Hogwood Park, Finchampstead Parcel 6

## Heritage Statement

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Countryside Properties UK Ltd ('the client'), to prepare a Heritage Statement for the Hogwood Park, Finchampstead, Parcel 6 (hereafter 'the Site', **Fig. 1**), centred on NGR 476765, 164272 (SU 76765 64272).
- 1.1.2 The Site lies within a wider development area which has outline consent (see **Section 2.1**). Discussions with the Principal Archaeologist at Berkshire Archaeology, who acts as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, have confirmed that for detailed and reserved matters applications coming forwards, statements are required outlining the heritage issues and how they have been addressed and resolved.
- 1.1.3 This study is intended to establish whether the archaeological condition placed on the outline planning application has been discharged in relation to the proposed residential development in Parcel 6, within the wider application area.

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site consists of one land parcel (Parcel 6) measuring approximately 5.43 ha. It lies towards the western side of the wider development area and is bounded by hedged agricultural fields on all sides, partially under development as part of the wider development and other reserved matters applications.

#### 1.3 Development proposals

- 1.3.1 The development proposals consist of residential development across the Site, including associated estate roads and other infrastructure. The proposals include vehicular access roads connecting to Parcels 2 and 7 to the north, with public green space wrapping around the outer edge of the Site.

#### 1.4 Assumptions and limitations

- 1.4.1 Data used to compile this report consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this Study. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

#### 1.5 Copyright

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## 2 PLANNING CONDITIONS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

### 2.1 Planning conditions

2.1.1 The site forms part of a wider development area for which a hybrid planning application was approved by Wokingham Borough Council (ref. O/2014/2179 and 140764) in January 2017, with conditions. The applications comprised outline permission for demolition of all existing buildings on site, the construction of up to 1,500 new dwellings, up to 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> of employment floor space, a Neighbourhood Centre, primary school, and associated infrastructure along with full permission for 29.7 ha of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). An application to vary some of the conditions was then made and approved in November 2018 (ref. 181194).

2.1.2 The conditions placed upon the outline/hybrid planning application included the following archaeological condition:

*61. No Reserved Matters applications for any sub phases of development shall be submitted until a programme of archaeological investigation for that sub phase has been implemented in accordance with a scheme that has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The results of that archaeological work shall be submitted with and used to inform the reserved matters application for that phase and shall provide for the in-situ preservation of any archaeological remains of national or regional importance should they occur on the site, and the archaeological investigation, recording and analysis of remains of lesser importance. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the borough in accordance with the NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3, and Policy TB25 of the Managing Development Delivery Document.*

2.1.3 In addition to multiple desk-based archaeological assessments undertaken both prior to and following the submission of the outline/hybrid application, a series of archaeological works have been planned and undertaken across the wider application area, in order to discharge this condition.

### 2.2 Archaeological works

#### *Previous parcelling*

2.2.1 The boundaries of the land parcels used during previous archaeological works and reproduced in **Figures 1-3** are slightly different from those being used for the submission of the current application. Parcel 6 largely corresponds to the earlier P6 boundary, but omits a small area in the north-east, whilst also overlapping with the edges of neighbouring Parcel 7 in the north-east and the northern SANG in the south and east.

#### *Detailed gradiometer survey: completed July 2018 (Project No. 206170)*

2.2.2 Between May and June 2018, Wessex Archaeology undertook a detailed gradiometer survey of 86.7 ha of the total 110.5 ha wider application area. This excluded two wooded areas in the centre and north of the wider application area, in addition to some farm buildings, trackways and hedges, which were not suitable for surveying (Wessex Archaeology 2018a).

2.2.3 The survey included good coverage of the Site, with only narrow strips along the field margins being omitted. The majority of the parcel showed high levels of background magnetic response, which may have disguised archaeological features (*ibid.* 5). The interpreted results of the detailed gradiometer survey within the vicinity of the current Site have been reproduced in **Figure 2**.

2.2.4 The survey identified a rectilinear anomaly in the north-western corner of the Site, interpreted as the remains of a ditched enclosure, but no other anomalies likely archaeological in origin (*ibid.*). The density of elevated magnetic responses around the enclosure were interpreted as a possible indication that it was associated with metal working (*ibid.*).

*Heritage assessment: August 2018 (Project No. 203370)*

2.2.5 In August 2018, Wessex Archaeology undertook a Heritage Assessment in order to assess the likely impacts on the significance of the surrounding above-ground heritage resource both directly and through impacts to setting. This followed several previous desk-based reports assessing the potential impacts of various iterations of the proposed development and is the most up-to-date assessment.

2.2.6 The report identified possible negative impacts to the significance of the Grade II Listed Hogwood Farmhouse and a non-designated Second World War pillbox, the latter of which is located within Parcel 13 (Wessex Archaeology 2018b, 4-5, 12). The report concluded that construction of residential development within its immediate vicinity would not harm its significance, despite a change in its setting, as it would still be possible to interpret the strategic siting of the pillboxes (*ibid.*, 12). The potential harm identified at the time was due to uncertainty over whether the pillbox would be retained as part of the proposed development. Development within Parcel 6 was not found to pose a threat to the significance of any heritage assets through a change in their setting.

*Archaeological evaluation: completed October 2019 (Project No. T24194)*

2.2.7 Following the geophysical survey, Wessex Archaeology undertook an evaluation comprising 251 trenches across the wider application area, the positions of which were informed in part by the results of the earlier survey.

2.2.8 The evaluation trenches excavated within the Site have been reproduced in **Figure 3**.

2.2.9 A total of 16 evaluation trenches were excavated within the current Site (Tr. 75-81, 84-91). The stratigraphy within the Site consisted of 0.11-0.32 m of topsoil overlying the geological substrate (Wessex Archaeology 2019, 25). Subsoil deposits of 0.09-0.15 m were identified only in the north-west and south of the parcel.

2.2.10 Archaeological remains were encountered in all trenches, with the exception of trench 87, the features within which were interpreted as natural in origin (*ibid.*). The archaeological remains encountered within the parcel consisted primarily of 17 linear ditches, several of which formed the rectilinear enclosure previously identified in the geophysical survey, in the north-west corner of the Site (*ibid.*). Seven pits/post-holes were identified across the parcel, including inside (trench 75) and outside of (trenches 81, 83, 85) the enclosure (*ibid.*).

2.2.11 Very little artefactual material was recovered, with finds generally made either in either unstratified or tertiary contexts and most features were assumed to be post-medieval in origin, with Iron Age and Romano-British material being residual (*ibid.* 25, 72). Consequently, the archaeological remains were largely undated, although the ditches appeared to predate the available 19th century mapping and fell into two groups (a north-

north-west to south-south-east group and a north-north-east to south-south-west group) (*ibid.* 26).

- 2.2.12 Multiple possible interpretations of the enclosure in the north-west corner of the Site were suggested at this phase, although it could be shown with confidence to have gone out of use in the post-medieval period (*ibid.* 73). The remainder of the archaeological remains identified within the parcel were considered to represent post-medieval field systems, located away from any settlement foci, with the pit/post-hole features relating to tree throws and fence posts (*ibid.*).

#### *Mitigation works*

- 2.2.13 Based on the findings of the geophysical survey and evaluation trenching, 11 'areas of archaeological significance' were defined by the Principal Archaeologist at Berkshire Council, as archaeological advisor to the LPA (**Fig. 1**). These areas require archaeological mitigation as part of any intrusive development, including both excavation (preservation in record) and preservation *in situ*.
- 2.2.14 This includes one area of archaeological significance, Area G, within Parcel 6. This measured 0.33 ha and covered the approximate extent of the enclosure identified in the north-western corner of the parcel. This was established as the nature and dating of the enclosure was not well understood and the remains could relate to multiple different regional research questions (*ibid.* 73).
- 2.2.15 Wessex Archaeology undertook the excavation of Area G in 2023 and a draft interim statement has been produced (Wessex Archaeology 2023), although full results will be published as part of a forthcoming overarching post-excavation report. The excavation succeeded in uncovering the remains of the enclosure, including multiple internal divisions (*ibid.*). Large quantities of 16th-19th century pottery confirmed a post-medieval date for the use and disuse of the enclosure, with large quantities of contemporary building material recovered from these features interpreted as demolition rubble from a structure located outside of the excavation area (likely to the north or west; outside of Parcel 6) (*ibid.*).
- 2.2.16 Iron slag was also recovered from multiple contexts, which, taken into consideration with the geophysical survey results, likely indicates that the enclosure was used for metal working for at least part of its life (*ibid.*).
- 2.2.17 Further areas of archaeological mitigation have also been undertaken outside of the identified areas of archaeological significance. This primarily consist of archaeological watching briefs being undertaken on linear works, including topsoil stripping for the creation of haul roads and underground service trenches. A linear band of topsoil stripping was monitored 60 m north of and 90 m west of the Site. No archaeological remains were recorded in this area. A full assessment of the findings of all mitigation works will be published as part of an overall excavation report.

### **3 CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1.1 Condition 61 states that archaeological remains not of national or regional importance do not need to be preserved *in situ*, but need to be investigated, recorded and analysed. The combined analysis of the multi-phase archaeological investigation has concluded that the archaeological remains identified within the current Site are not of national or regional importance.



- 3.1.2 The archaeological potential and significance of the current Site has been investigated through geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching and excavation. These works have demonstrated the low potential for any significant archaeological remains to be present, beyond the enclosure identified in the north-western corner of the Site. Any remains present across the majority of the Site are likely limited to further evidence of undated (likely post-medieval) field boundaries containing minimal artefactual or ecofactual material. This is reflected in the decision by Berkshire Archaeology's Principal Archaeologist not to include any areas beyond Area G in any of the Areas of Archaeological Significance.
- 3.1.3 Excavation has been completed in in Area G in order to more-fully establish the nature and significance of the enclosure identified in the north-west corner of the Site. These features' degree of significance will be fully assessed in the forthcoming overarching post-excavation report; however, they are understood to be of local to regional significance (i.e. not nationally significant). Berkshire Archaeology's Principal Archaeologist signed off the works in Area G upon completion, confirming that no further archaeological works are required to be undertaken either within the area of archaeological significance, or any other part of Parcel 6. The excavation works already undertaken are therefore considered to have been adequate to mitigate the potential harm of the proposed development to these remains, through preservation in record, in line with Condition 61.
- 3.1.4 Additionally, the previous Heritage Assessment has already outlined that residential development within the current Site would not result in harm to the significance of any above ground heritage assets through a change in their setting. The current development proposals are consistent with those considered in the heritage statement, and consequently, there remains no potential for the proposed development to result in harm to the significance through a change in setting



## REFERENCES

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Terminology

#### Glossary

The terminology used in this assessment follows definitions contained within Annex 2 of NPPF:

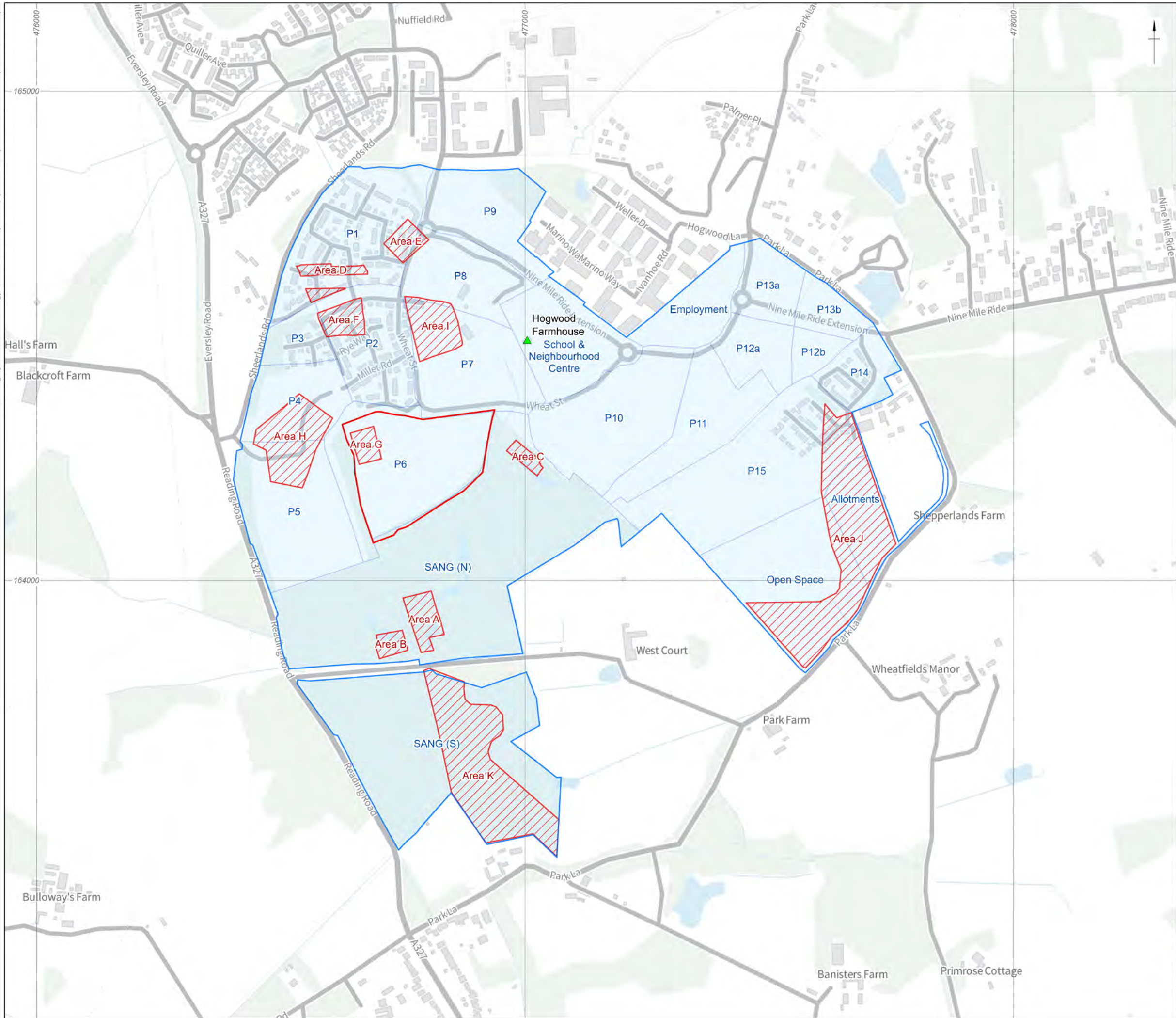
|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Archaeological interest</b>            | There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Conservation (for heritage policy)</b> | The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Designated heritage asset</b>          | A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Heritage asset</b>                     | A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Historic environment</b>               | All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Historic environment record</b>        | Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Setting of a heritage asset</b>        | The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.                                                                                                      |
| <b>Significance (for heritage policy)</b> | The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance. |

#### Chronology

Where referred to in the text, the main archaeological periods are broadly defined by the following date ranges:

| Prehistoric         |                   | Historic              |                  |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Palaeolithic</b> | 970,000–10,000 BC | <b>Romano-British</b> | AD 43–410        |
| <b>Mesolithic</b>   | 10,000–4000 BC    | <b>Anglo-Saxon</b>    | AD 410–1066      |
| <b>Neolithic</b>    | 4000–2400 BC      | <b>Medieval</b>       | AD 1066–1500     |
| <b>Bronze Age</b>   | 2400–700 BC       | <b>Post-medieval</b>  | AD 1500–1800     |
| <b>Iron Age</b>     | 700 BC–AD 43      | <b>19th century</b>   | AD 1800–1899     |
|                     |                   | <b>Modern</b>         | 1900–present day |

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- Site Boundary
- Wider Application Area
- Areas of Archaeological Significance
- Parcels
- Hogwood Farmhouse

0 250 m

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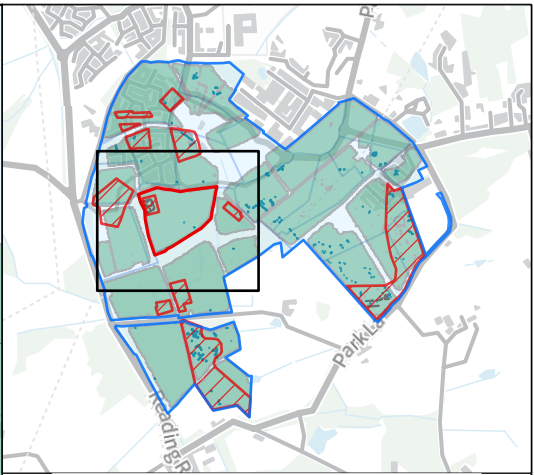
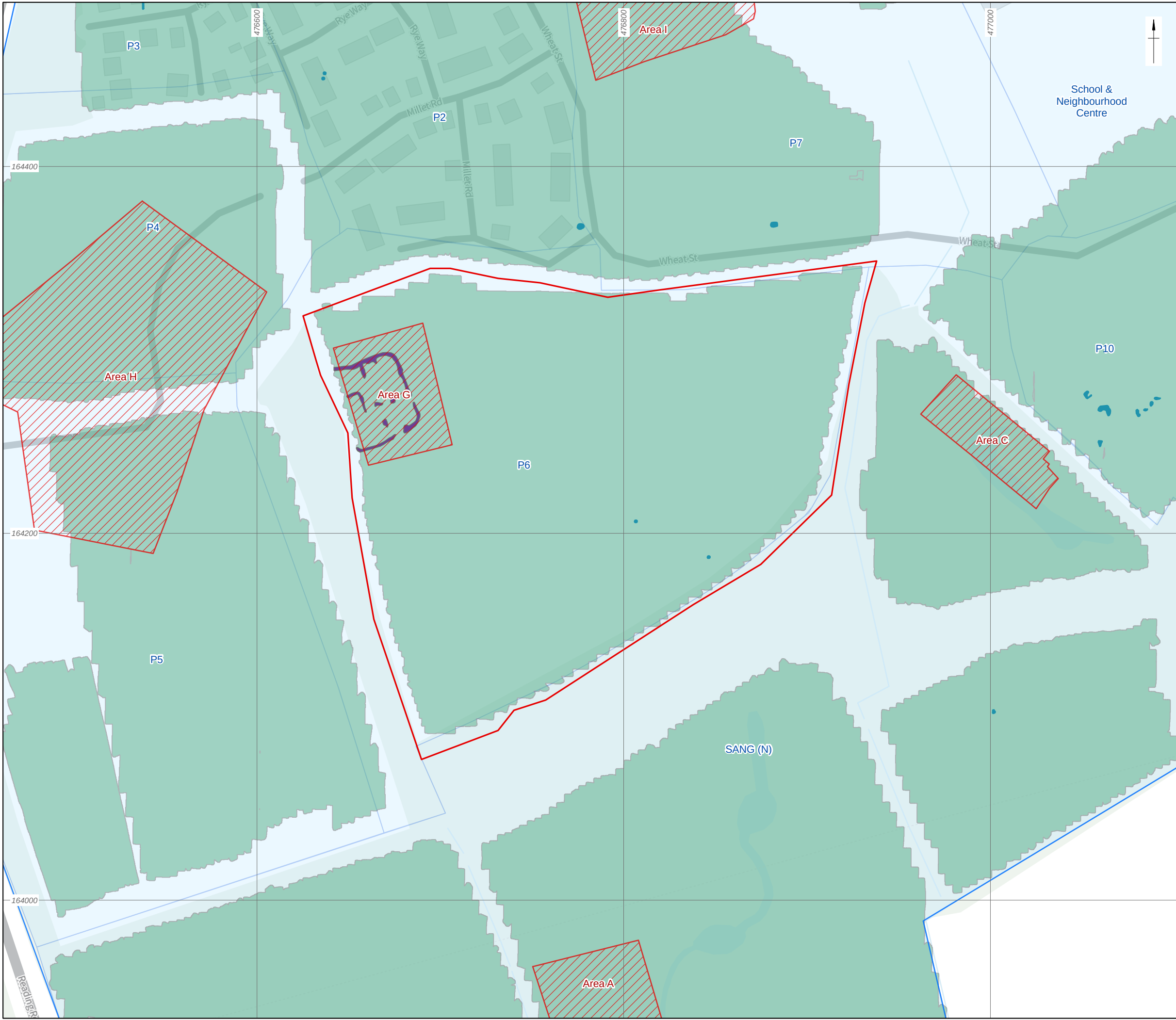
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Figure 1: Site location and wider application area

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- Site Boundary
- Areas of Archaeological Significance
- Wider Application Area
- Probable Archaeological Features
- Possible Archaeological Features
- Geophysical Survey
- Parcels



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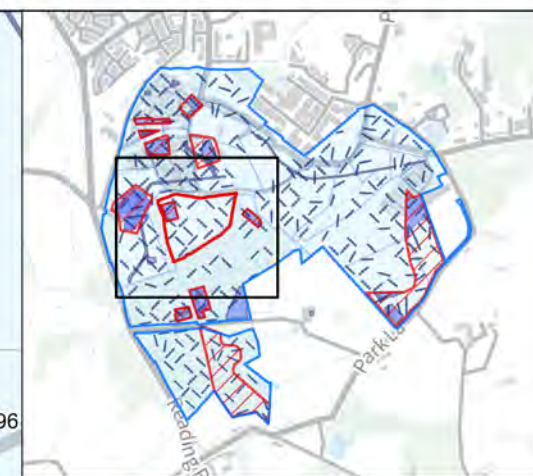
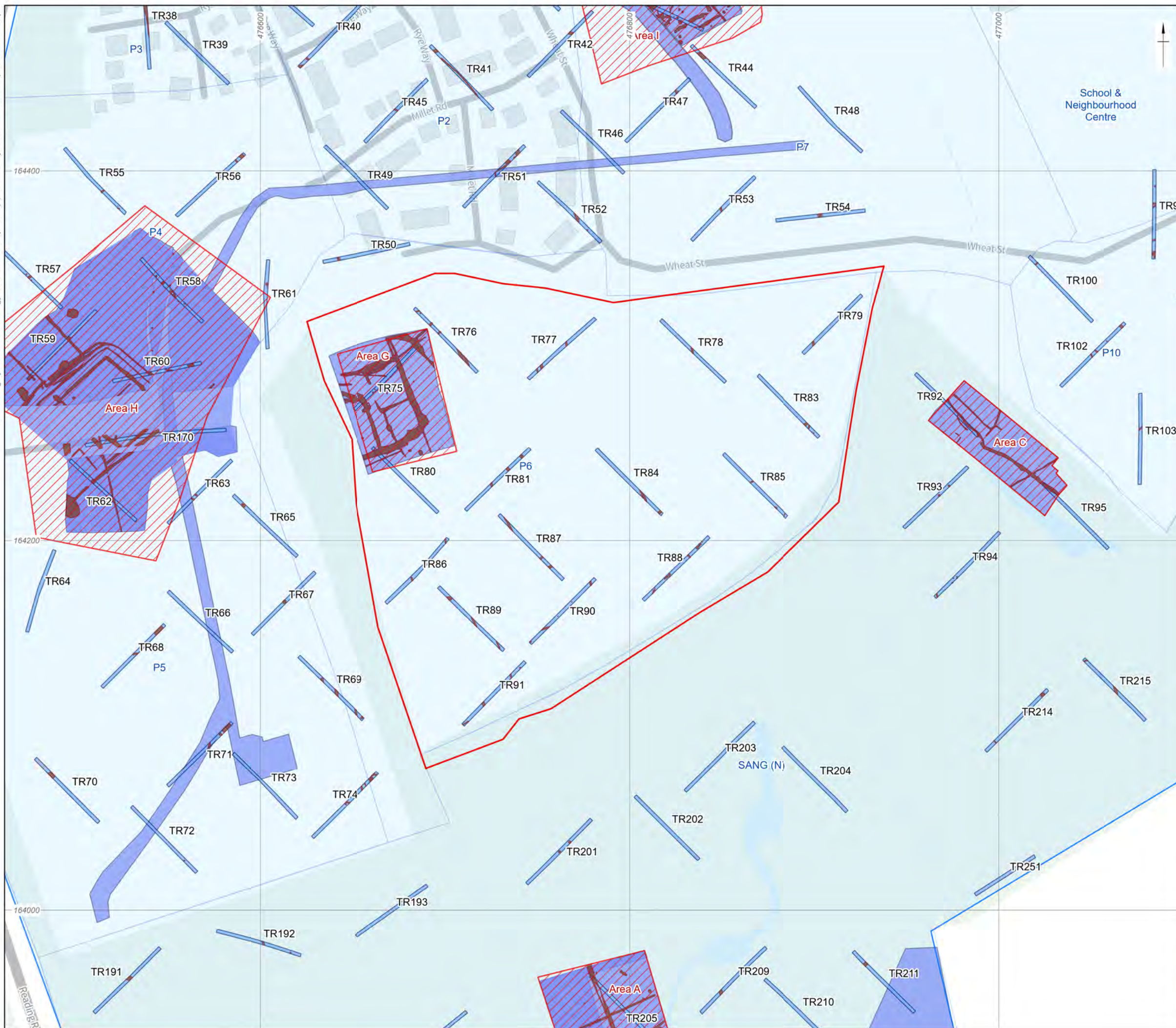
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Figure 2: Geophysical survey within the Site

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- Site Boundary
- Areas of Archaeological Significance
- Wider Application Area
- Parcels
- Archaeological Features (excavated)
- Evaluation trenches
- Mitigation works

0 100 m

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Figure 3: Archaeological evaluation and mitigation within the Site



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