

Land South of Dyffryn Lane Imperial Park Newport

Archaeological Evaluation

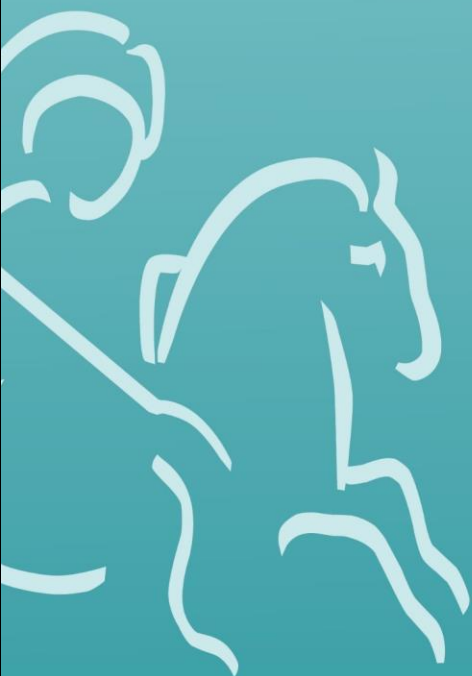


for:
Atkins

on behalf of:
Vantage Data Centres

CA Project: CR1530
CA Report: CR1530_1

June 2024



Land South of Dyffryn Lane Imperial Park Newport

Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief

CA Project: CR1530
CA Report: CR1530_1

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A	3 June 2024	Richard Scurr	Monica Fombellida	Draft	–	Monica Fombellida
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SUMMARY

Project name:	Land to the south of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport
Location:	Newport, South Wales
NGR:	328404 184180
Type:	Evaluation & Watching Brief
Date:	15-17 April 2024
Location of archive:	To be deposited with National Museum of Wales (Cardiff) and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

In April 2024, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land to the south of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport. A total of 4 trenches were excavated.

Made ground deposits were recorded in trenches located towards the centre of the site that may be interpreted as modern landscaping associated with the development of the Imperial park.

No further archaeology features or deposits were encountered, and no artefactual material was recovered.

Ym mis Ebrill 2024, cynhaliodd Cotswold Archaeology werthusiad archaeolegol o'r tir i'r de o Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Casnewydd. Cafodd 4 o ffosydd eu cloddio.

Cofnodwyd dyddodion tir wedi'u gwneud mewn ffosydd tuag at ganol y safle a allai gael eu dehongli fel tirweddu modern sy'n gysylltiedig â datblygu parc Imperial.

Ni chafwyd unrhyw nodweddion na dyddodion archaeolegol pellach, ac ni ddaethpwyd o hyd i unrhyw ddeunydd arteffactaidd.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In April 2024, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation and watching brief on land to the south of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport (centred at NGR: 328404 184180; Fig. 1). The evaluation and watching brief was undertaken for Atkins on behalf of Vantage Data Centres.
- 1.2. The evaluation and watching brief results will inform a planning application, that will be made to Newport City Council for the erection of an electric substation.
- 1.3. The scope of this evaluation and watching brief was defined by Rob Dunning, Curator for Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology, the archaeological advisor to NCC. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2024) and approved by Rob Dunning.
- 1.4. The evaluation and watching brief were also undertaken in line with:
 - *Standard for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2023);
 - *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2023);
 - *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015);
 - *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020); 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 1.3ha in extent. The site currently comprises of pastoral land with areas of trees and shrubs. It is bounded by a road on the north, east and west by Celtic Way, South Lake Drive and Dyffryn Lane. The site lies at approximately 12m AOD, with ground level rising away to the south-west to 14m AOD.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group, sedimentary bedrock which formed in Triassic period (BGS 2024). This is overlain by River Terrace sand and gravel, sedimentary superficial deposit which formed in the Quaternary period (ibid.).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The site has previously been the subject of an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA; CA 2018). What follows is a summary of the results of this assessment.

Prehistoric

- 2.2. There is very little information on the prehistoric period in the vicinity of the site. Small-scale archaeological works have indicated the existence of glacially deposited raised areas of ground on the valley floors and the site itself lies on the edge of the higher ground overlooking the adjacent Gwent Levels, which would have been coastal and/or saltmarsh throughout the prehistoric to medieval periods. This higher ground would have been an attractive location for settlement or temporary sites seeking to economically exploit the coastal and marshland resources (CA 2018).
- 2.3. A Scheduled Neolithic long barrow, known as Gwern-y-Cleppa (Cadw List Entry No.: MM022), is located c. 1km to the north-west of the site in Cleppa Park (CA 2018).
- 2.4. Bronze Age artefacts are recorded in the vicinity of the site, including a single late Bronze Age looped and socketed bronze axe, found c. 400m to the north-east of the site, and a flint scatter found at Graig y Season, c. 700m to the north-west of the site (CA 2018).

Roman

- 2.5. Information on the Roman occupation and use of the landscape in the vicinity of the site is scarce. Fragments of Roman brick and tegula were excavated from the Orangery Garden at Tredegar House, c. 500m to the north of the site, which could point out the location of a possible rural settlement (CA 2018).
- 2.6. A small segment of a Roman road has been identified c. 200m to the west of the site. This section of road has been interpreted as part of a lesser route running from the main Caerleon-Cardiff road towards a settlement site excavated at Great Pencarn Farm, located c. 1km to the south-west of the site, which showed evidence of multiple phases of activity, including road and building construction, as well as agricultural activities (CA 2018).

Medieval and post-medieval periods

- 2.7. The nearby Gwent Levels underwent extensive reclamation and drainage during the medieval period, with increasing enclosure of fields continuing up into the post-medieval period. It is during this period that a system of drainage ditches and flood defences were established, and these have mostly remained intact until the modern period (CA 2018).
- 2.8. As the site is on higher ground above the intertidal zone it is probable that these systems of ditches and rhynes did not extend as far as the current site; however, settlement would likely have been concentrated on this higher ground at the edge of the levels (CA 2018).
- 2.9. The primary feature of the landscape surrounding the site during the post-medieval period would have been Tredegar House and its surrounding parkland and agricultural landscape. No major developments occurred within the area and there are no records for the post-medieval period within the site. It is likely that the remained agricultural land on the edge of the Gwent Levels during this period (CA 2018).
- 2.10. The site continued in use as farmland up until the construction of the Imperial Park industrial estate in 1997. As part of the construction a series of archaeological evaluations and watching briefs were carried out by GGAT. Besides the archaeological remains mentioned above, no other historic assets were revealed during these works (CA 2018).

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 NCC 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 proposal, in line with the *Planning Policy Wales* (Welsh Government 2018).
- 3.2. A further objective of the project is to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive (see Section 5).

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- 3.3. If significant archaeological remains are identified, the watching brief report will make reference to *A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales* so that the remains can, if possible, be placed within their local and regional contexts.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of four trenches. Trench 1 measured 18m in length and 1.8m in width; trenches 2, 3 and 4 measured 25m in length and 1.8m in width. The locations of these trenches differ of those agreed in the WSI (CA 2024) and are shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The location of the excavated trenches were agreed with Rob Dunning and represented a sample of the proposed development area.
- 4.2. The Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. They were scanned for live services by trained CA staff using CAT and genny equipment, in accordance with the *CA Safe System of Work for avoiding underground services*. 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.
- 4.3. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.4. Deposits were assessed for their paleoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits however were identified that required sampling.
- 4.5. Artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.6. CA will make arrangements with the National Museum of Wales (Cardiff) for the deposition of the project archive and, subject to agreement with the legal landowner(s), the artefact collection. 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* (CIfA 2014; updated October 2020).

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- 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 (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation and watching brief results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2. A broadly analogous stratigraphic sequence was recorded throughout the site. The natural substrate, comprising a red-brown sandy clay, with patches of yellow-brown sandy gravel, was encountered at a depth of between 0.60m and 0.95m below present ground level (bpgl). This was directly overlain by between 0.12m to 0.45m in thickness of subsoil. In trenches 3 and 4, the subsoil was sealed by 0.45m of made ground deposits. These made ground deposits, recorded in Trench 3 and 4, and the subsoil recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, were sealed by 0.4m of topsoil.
- 5.3. No further features or deposits of archaeological interest found, and no artefactual material was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no archaeological features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the course of the evaluation.
- 6.2. The made ground deposits may be interpreted as modern layering associated with modern landscaping associated with the development of the site as Imperial park in 1997 (see *Archaeological Background*).

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. The Evaluation and Watching Brief was undertaken by Richard Scurr, assisted by Nathan Chinchin, and Thomas Millington. This report was written by Richard Scurr. The report illustrations were prepared by Charlie Patman. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Monica Fombellida.

8. REFERENCES

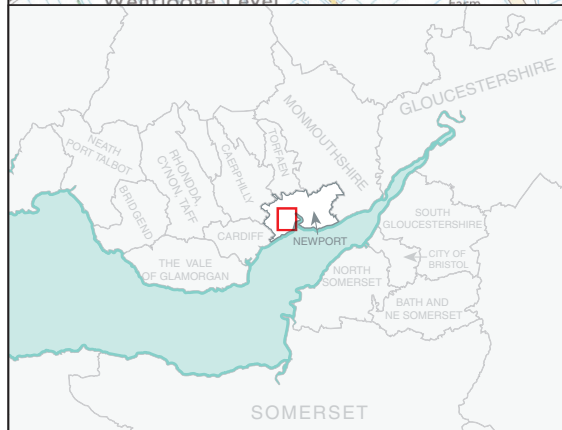
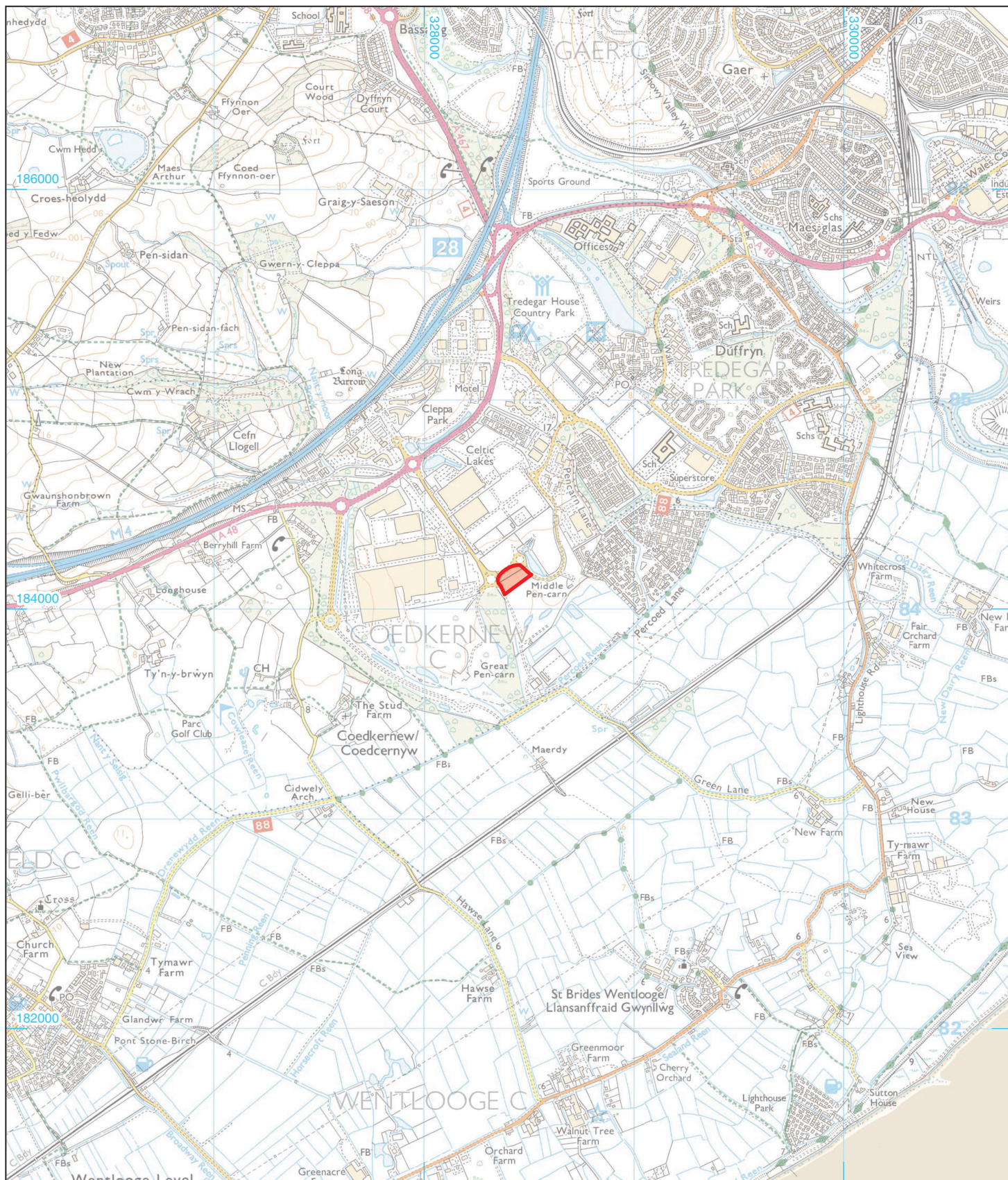
- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2024 *BGS Geology Viewer*
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- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2024 *Land South of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief and Evaluation*
- CA 2018 *Imperial Way, Duffryn, Newport: Desk Based Historic Assessment*, CA Report No.: **18120**
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities 2023 *National Planning Policy Framework*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay silt, humic	>18	>1.8	0.5	
1	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Red-brown silt clay	>18	>1.8	0.4	
1	1002	Layer		Natural	Red-brown sand clay with patches of yellow sandy gravel	>18	>1.8	>0.05	
2	2000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay silt, humic	>25	>1.8	0.4	
2	2001	Layer		Subsoil	Red-brown silt clay	>25	>1.8	0.35	
2	2002	Layer		Natural	Red-brown sand clay with patches of yellow sandy gravel	>25	>1.8	>0.05	
3	3000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay silt, humic	>25	>1.8	0.25	
3	3001	Layer		Made Ground	Yellow sandy gravel	>25	>1.8	0.08	
3	3002	Layer		Made Ground	Dark grey-brown clay silt	>25	>1.8	0.1	
3	3003	Layer		Made Ground	Brown silt sand with regular smooth pebbles	>25	>1.8	0.25	
3	3004	Layer		Made Ground	Dark grey-brown sand silt	>25	>1.8	0.07	
3	3005	Layer		Subsoil	Red-brown silt clay	>25	>1.8	0.12	
3	3006	Layer		Natural	Red-brown sand clay with patches of yellow sandy gravel	>25	>1.8	>0.05	
4	4000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown clay silt, humic	>25	>1.8	0.31	
4	4001	Layer		Made Ground	Dark black/grey clay silt	>25	>1.8	0.14	
4	4002	Layer		Made Ground	Red-brown sand clay	>25	>1.8	0.07	
4	4003	Layer		Made Ground	Dark brown clay silt	>25	>1.8	0.06	
4	4004	Layer		Natural	Red-brown sand clay with patches of yellow sandy gravel	>25	>1.8	>0.02	

APPENDIX B: NWRW REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Land South of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport	
Short description	In April 2024, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land to the south of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport. A total of 4 trenches were excavated. The subsoil within the centre of the site was covered by made ground deposits that may be associated modern landscaping. No further archaeology features or deposits were encountered, and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	15-17 April 2024	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Desk Based Assessment (CA 2018)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Land South of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport, South Wales	
Study area (m ² /ha)	1.3ha	
Site co-ordinates	328404 184180	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project design (WSI) originator		
Project Manager	Monica Fombellida	
Project Supervisor	Richard Scurr	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	National Museum of Wales	none
Paper	National Museum of Wales	Trench sheets
Digital	National Museum of Wales	Digital photos and plans
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2024 <i>Land South of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial Park, Newport: Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief</i> , CA typescript report CR1530_1		



Site boundary



0 1:25,000 1km

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PROJECT TITLE

Land South of Dyffryn Lane, Imperial
Park, Newport

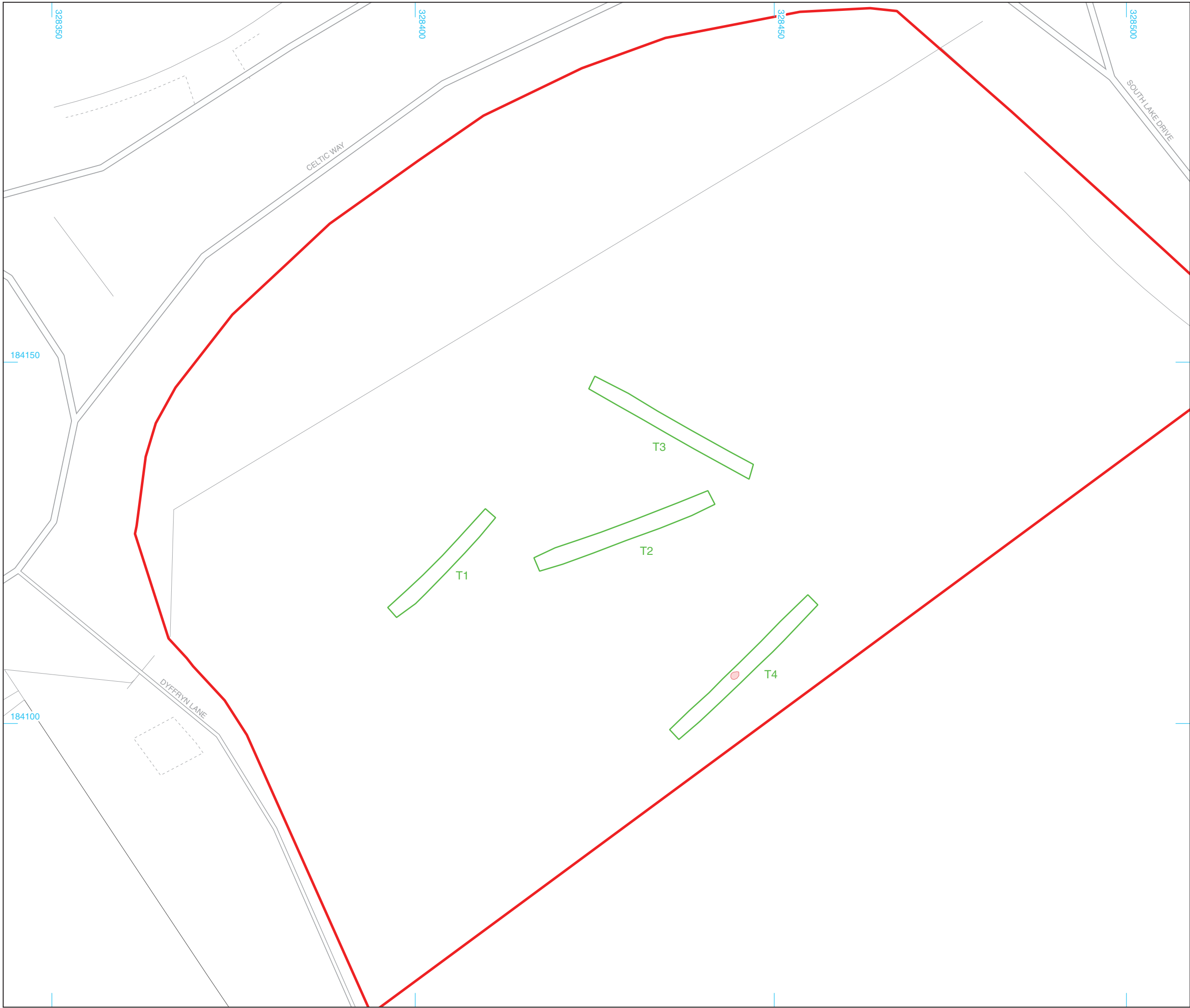
FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY CRP
CHECKED BY DJB
APPROVED BY MF
PROJECT NO. CR1530
DATE 07/06/2024
SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Tree throw



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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	CRP	PROJECT NO.	CR1530	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	07/06/2024	2
APPROVED BY	MF	SCALE@A3	1:500	



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



Trench 2, looking north-west (scales 1m)



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


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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	07/06/2024	
APPROVED BY	MF	SCALE@A3	NA	3



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



Oblique view of made ground layers in Trench 3, looking north (scale 1m)



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

4

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