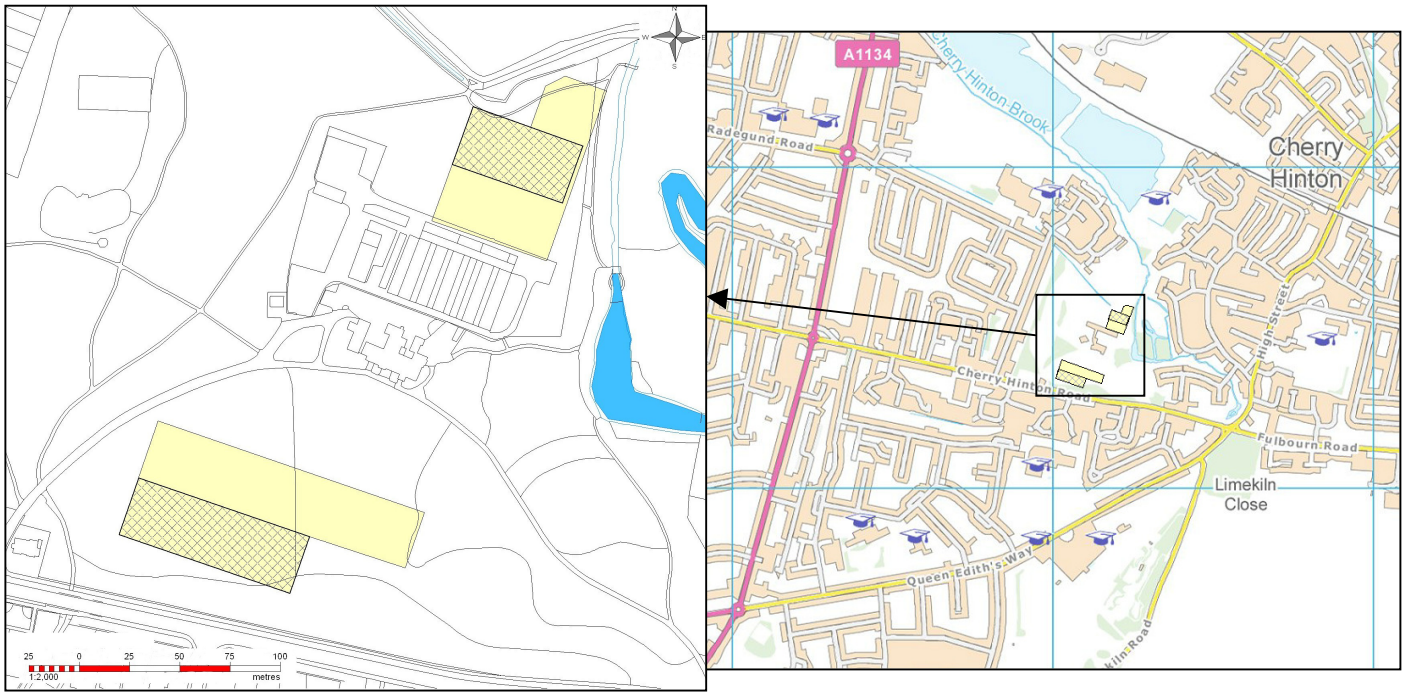
Cherry Hinton Hall, Cambridge Report

During September 2022 Archaeology RheeSearch Group carried out magnetometry and resistivity surveys on this site to determine whether any archaeological features were detectable.
Members participating: Brian Bridgland, Pat Davies, Richard Freeman, Liz Livingstone, Ian Sanderson, Gill Shapland, Maureen Storey and Tony Storey.
Site liaison: Michelle Bullivant.
Site conditions: Parkland.
Equipment: Bartington 601 gradiometer; TRCIA 50 cm twin probe.
Magnetometry readings: 8/m, 1 m separation.
Resistivity readings: 1 m interval, 1 m separation.
Raw data are available as separate appendices.

Location: TL481564, Cherry Hinton Hall, Cambridge.



Location plan: Survey areas
(resistivity survey areas hatched, magnetometry area solid,)

Purpose of survey: To determine if any subsurface features could be detected to enhance the history of the site.

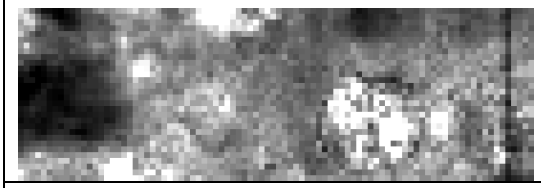
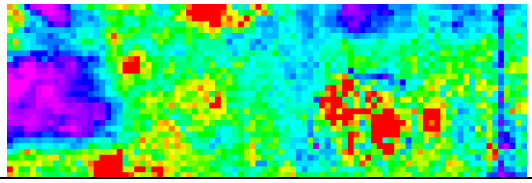
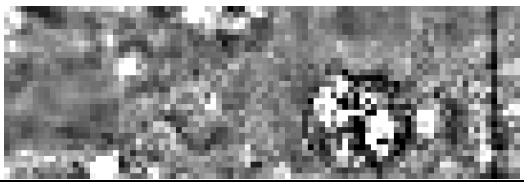
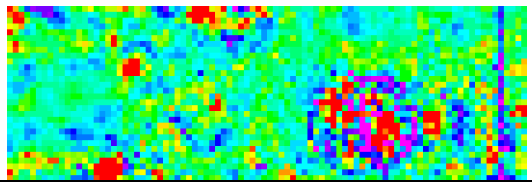
Site topography:
The site is a well maintained public access park. The southern survey areas were mainly level close cropped grass bounded by well made paths and a mix of small and mature trees. One large tree within the resistivity survey area was in the centre of a circle of rougher ground with rank grass and plants. There was a small ridge encompassed in the eastern end of the magnetometry area. The northern survey areas were level cross cropped grass bounded by well made paths

Aerial photograph of the site

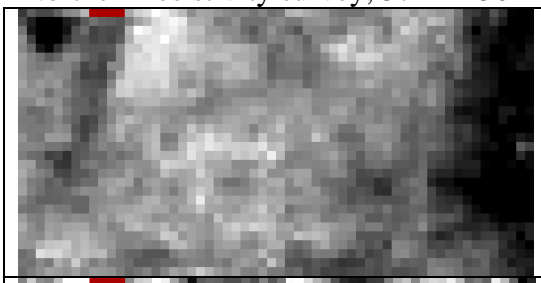
Results:

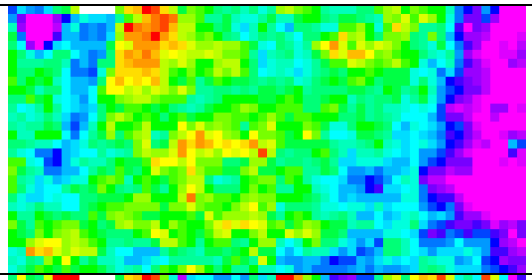
The images in this section are orientated for presentation. The images are not to a common scale.

Southern resistivity survey, 30 m x 90 m

		Resistivity Raw data N
		High pass filter 5 N
(black – low, white – high)	(purple/blue – low, red – high)	

Northern resistivity survey, 57 m x 30 m

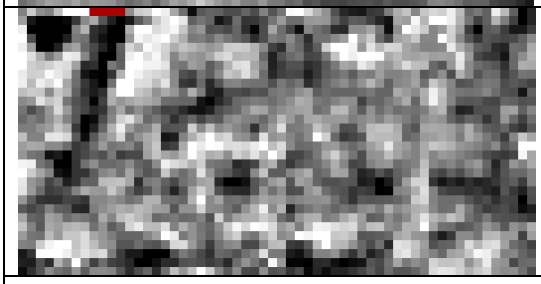


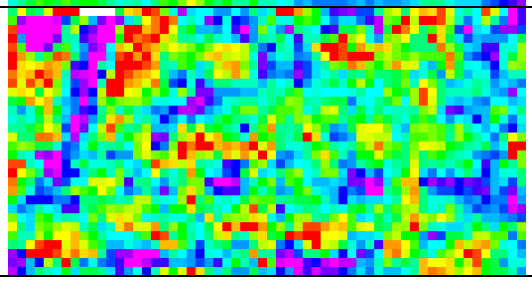


Resistivity

Raw data

N





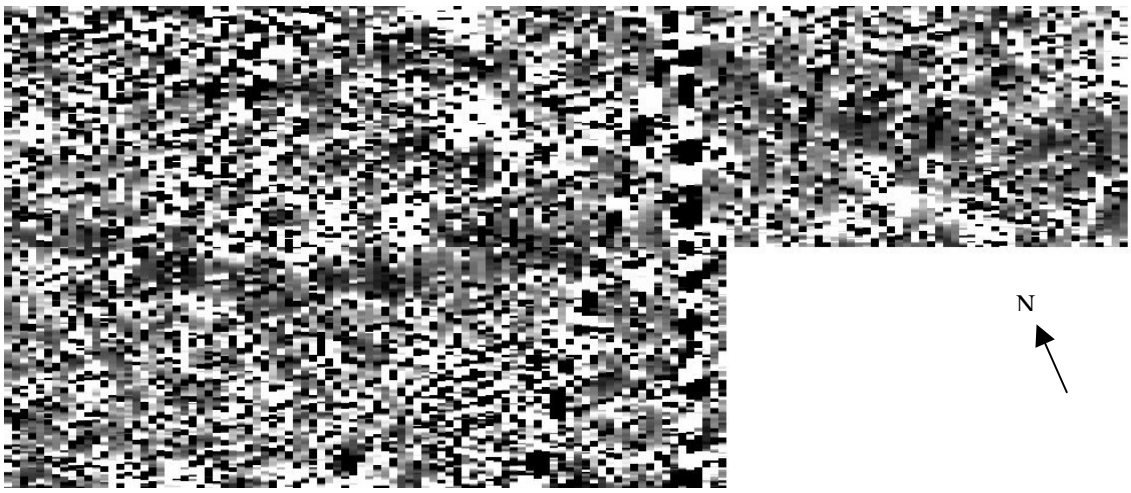
High pass filter 6

N

(black – low, white – high, red – null)

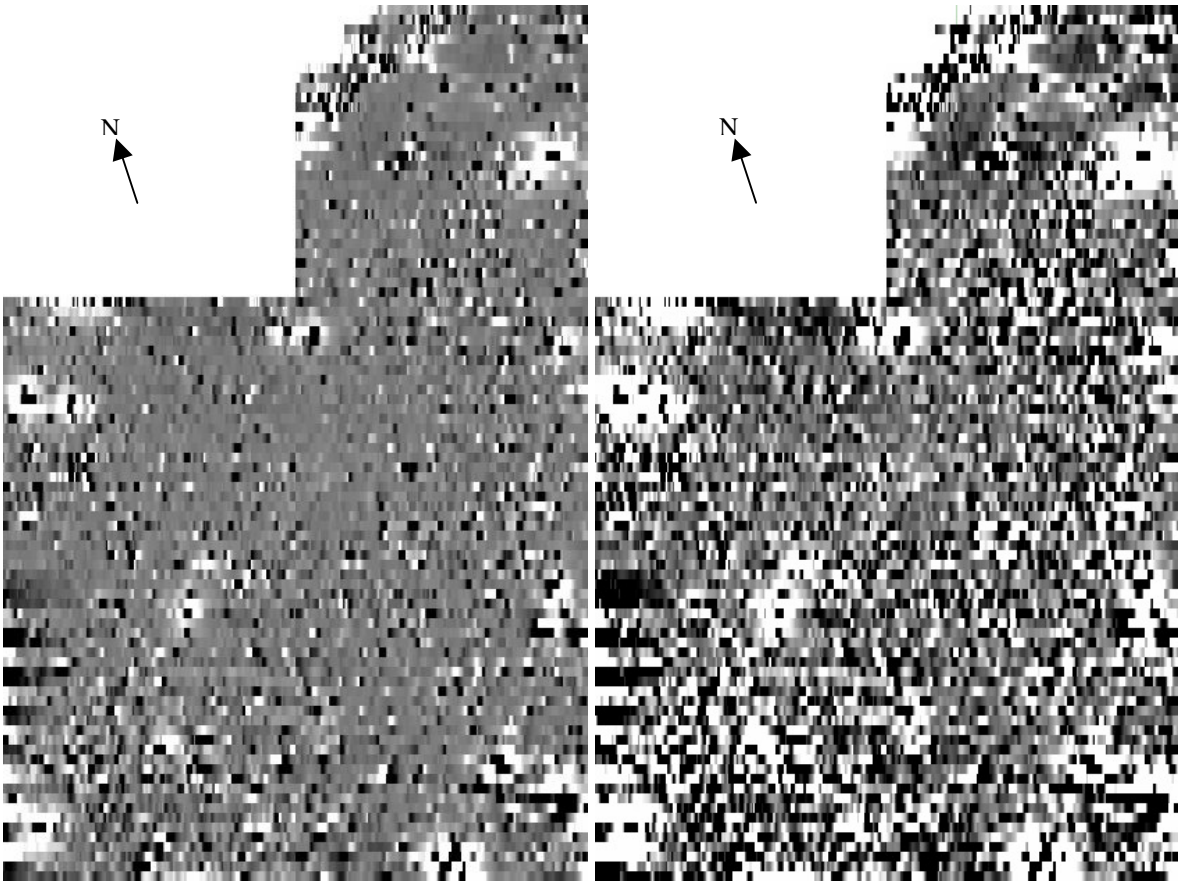
(purple/blue – low, red – high, white – null)

Southern magnetometry survey 140 m x 60 m range +9 to -8 nT



N

Northern magnetometry survey 90 m x 60 m range +38 to -39 nT (left), +9 to -10 nT (right)

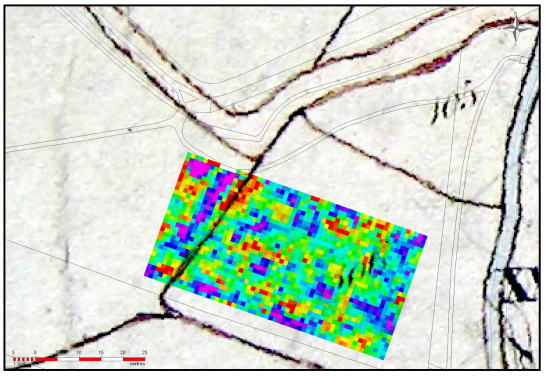


Discussion:
Both of the magnetometry surveys suffered from very high levels of background noise which would obscure most archaeological features. This was particularly high in the S survey probably reflecting debris from that area's use as a campsite for the annual folk festival held on the site. The noise on N site was slightly lower being the area of the main stage at that event. No archaeological features were identified in either of the magnetic surveys but there were two utility lines running roughly N – S crossed the S survey. Two diffuse darker bands running roughly E – W across the S survey were coincident with access routes through the event camping zone.

The southern resistivity survey had a line of low values running across the E end of the survey area. This represents the trench for one of the utility lines shown in the magnetometry results. A confused roughly circular area of low and high values dominated the E end of the results. This corresponded with the large tree and disrupted ground mentioned in the topography section above. It is possible that the three blocks of high values are foundations, but with the exception of the block on the NE edge of the survey, they appear to be discrete suggesting plinths or similar. The block on the NE edge has a small linear high value extension suggesting the foundations for a small building or garden feature.

The Northern resistivity has two features of possible archaeological interest, a band of low values running to the N near the W edge of the survey and a square of high values towards the middle. The band of low values probably represents a boundary shown on the Cherry

Hinton draft Inclosure map, which was adjusted on the Award map of 1810. The Award boundary line, which would have crossed the resistivity survey area was not detected. The square of high values may be a coincidental juxtaposition of responses rather than an archaeological feature as there is no continuity along the E side. It does seem to have a return at the end of its N line but only an excavation would be able to confirm any archaeological relevence.



Draft Inclosure map overlaid on the Northern resistivity results.

Report by Dr I Sanderson for Archaeology RheeSearch