Wendens Ambo Report

In April 2016 Archaeology RheeSearch Group carried out magnetometry and resistivity surveys on part of this site. In July 2016 further resistivity surveys were carried out in the grounds of the adjacent property.

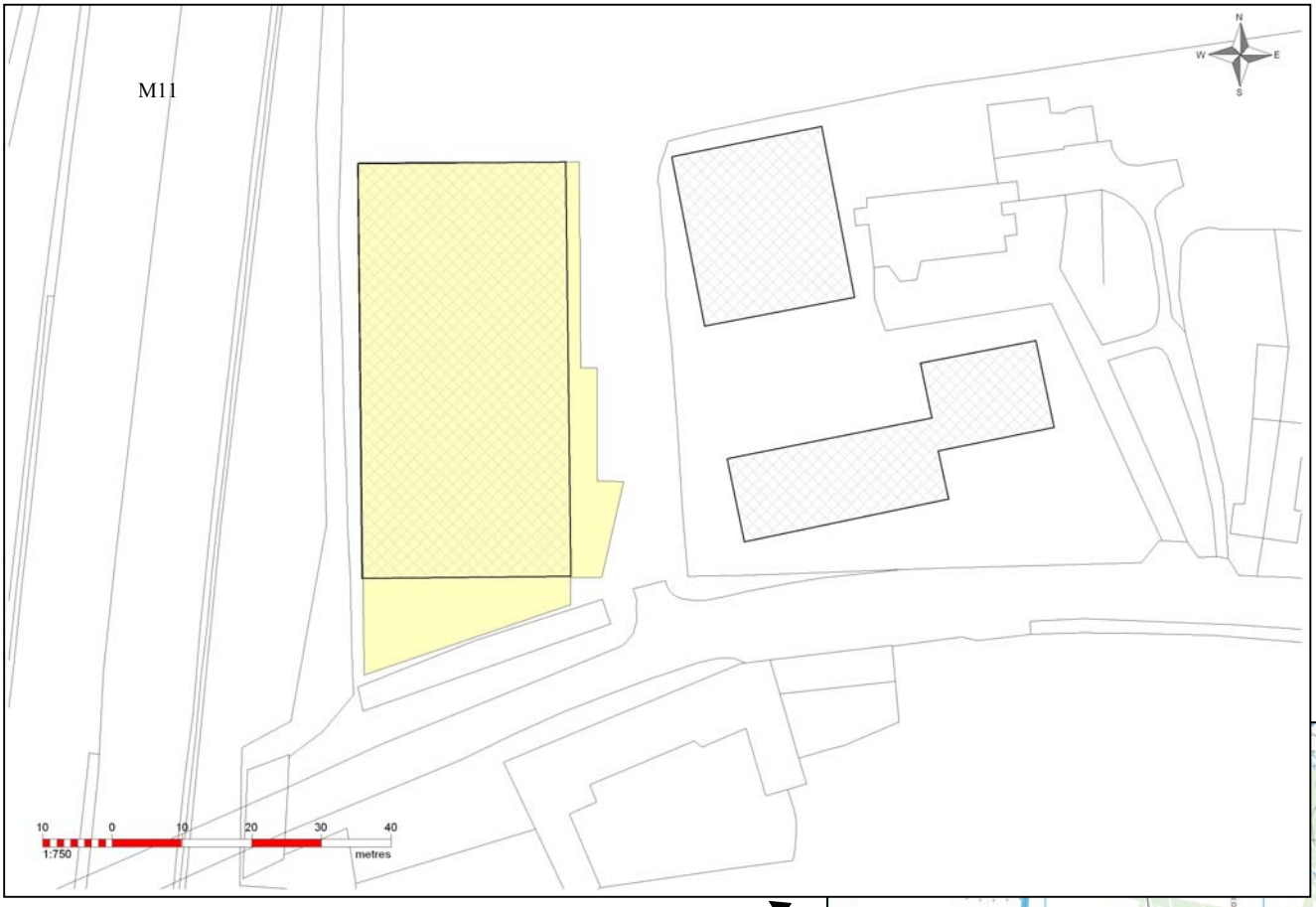
Members participating: Pat Davies, Brian Bridgland, Liz Livingstone, Ian Sanderson, Gill Shapland, Maureen Storey and Tony Storey.

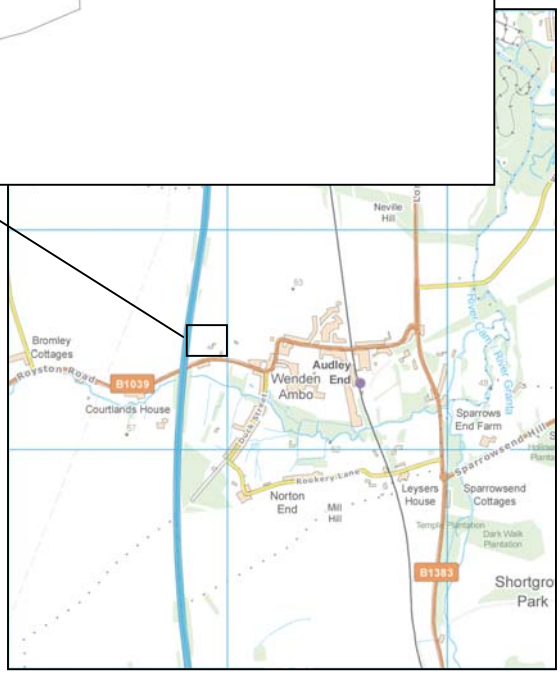
Site Liaison: John Goodger and Susan Watson.

Site conditions: Slightly rough grass.

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: TL 508 364, Old Vicarage. Wendens Ambo, Essex.



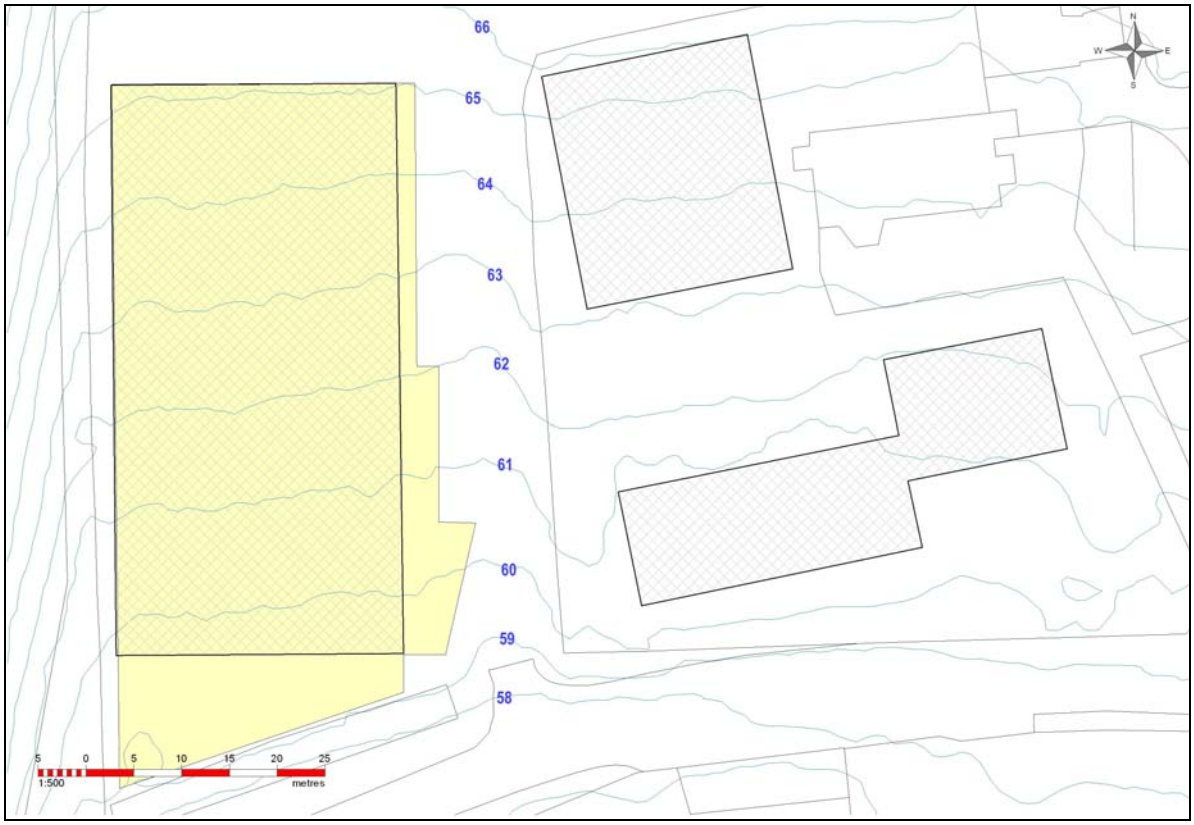


Location plan: Survey areas
(resistivity survey areas hatched, magnetometry areas solid)

Purpose of survey: The purpose of this survey was to determine if any subsurface features could be detected to identify the position of Little Wenden church.

Site topography:

Three areas are included in this report. The first was rough grass bounded on the W by the M11 motorway embankment, on the S by small trees next to a sharp fall to the E—W (B1039) road, on the E by scrub, and on the N by a ploughed field. This site had a marked N—S slope, being lower to the S. The second and third areas were within the gardens of the adjacent Old Vicarage at Wendens Ambo. The N garden area sloped slightly down to the S. It had scrub to the W, buildings to the E and a short sharp rise to a field to the N. The S side comprised trees and shrubs delineating a garden terrace. The surface was rough mown grass with a decorative circle of logs. The S garden area was levelled garden terrace with tree and shrub planting. Marked slopes defined N and S boundaries. Surveying was confined to the level area.



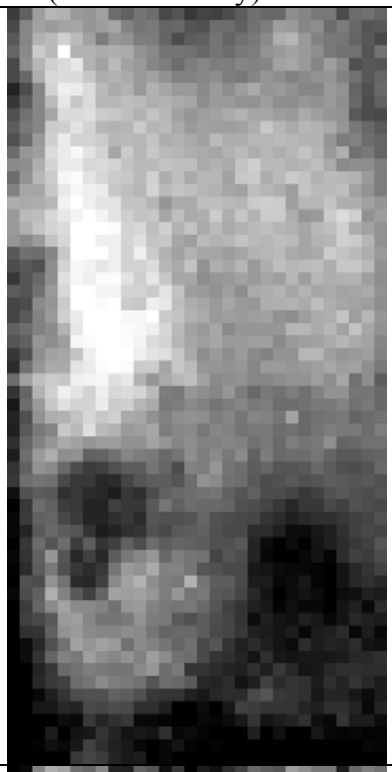
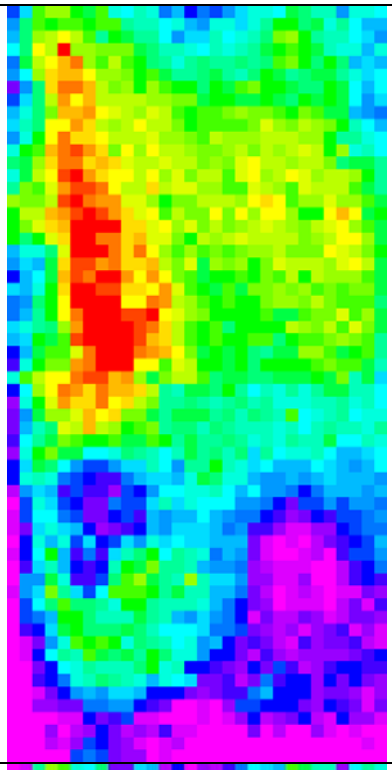
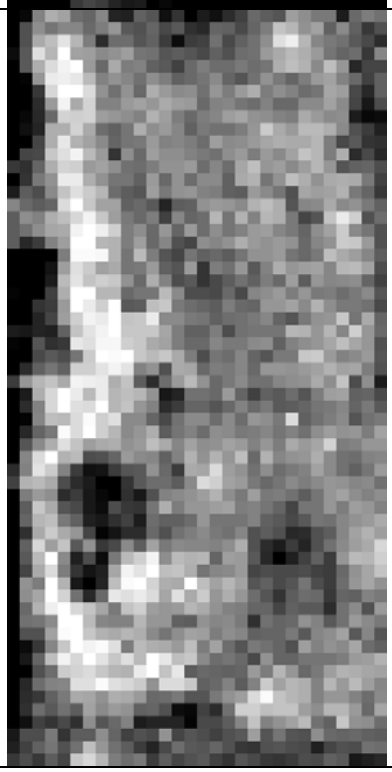
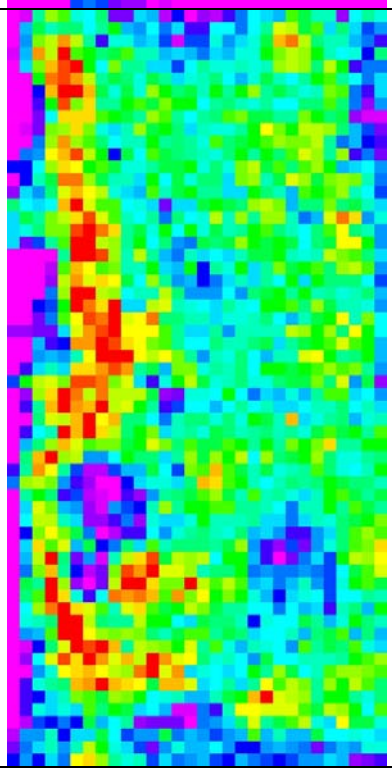
Site contours (1 m intervals)

Results:

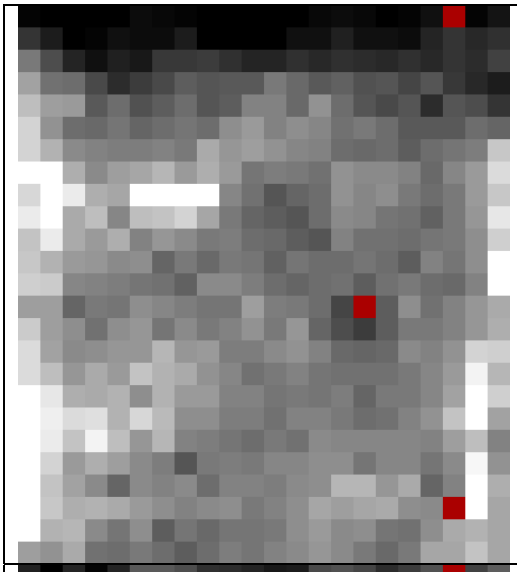
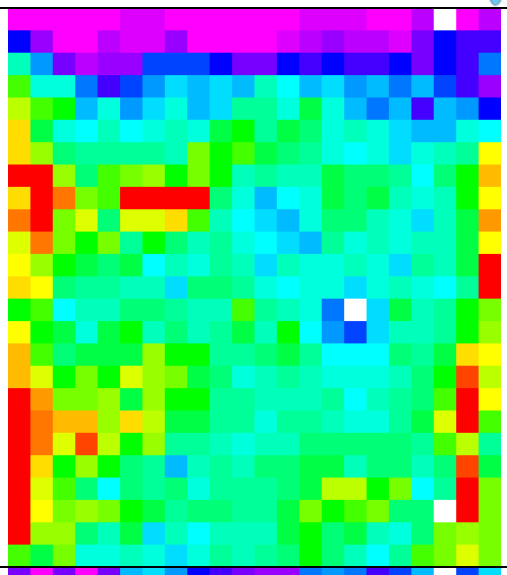
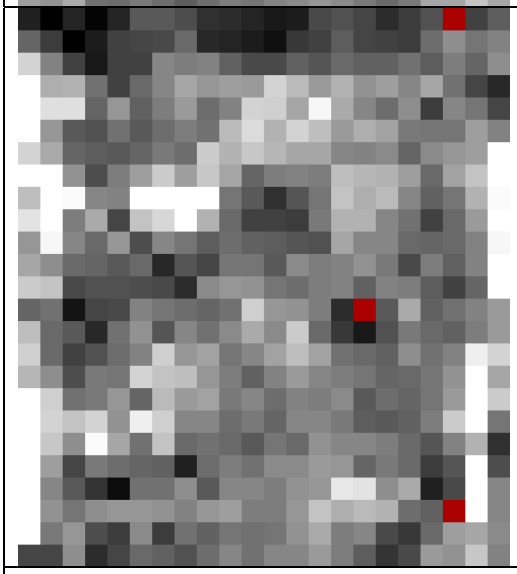
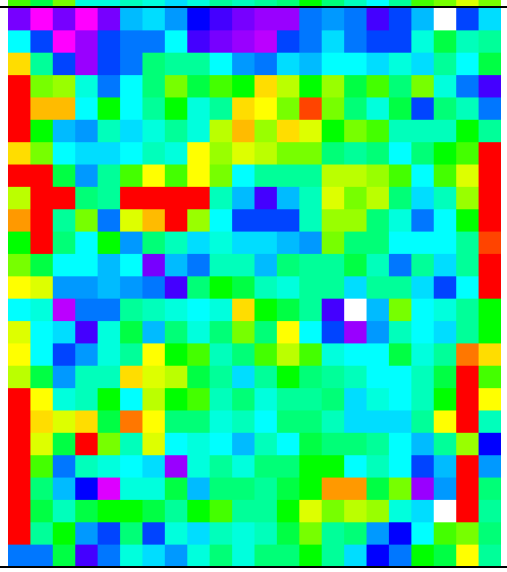
The images in this section are orientated for presentation. The images are not to a common scale.

Resistivity

Area 1 (next motorway)

		Resistivity 60 m x 30 m Raw data N
		Resistivity 60 m x 30 m High pass filter 6 N
(black – low, white – high, red – null)	(purple/blue – low, red – high, white – null)	

66 Area 2 (N garden)

		Resistivity 25 m x 22 m Raw data N
		Resistivity 25 m x 22 m High pass filter 5 N
(black – low, white – high, red – null)	(purple/blue – low, red – high, white – null)	

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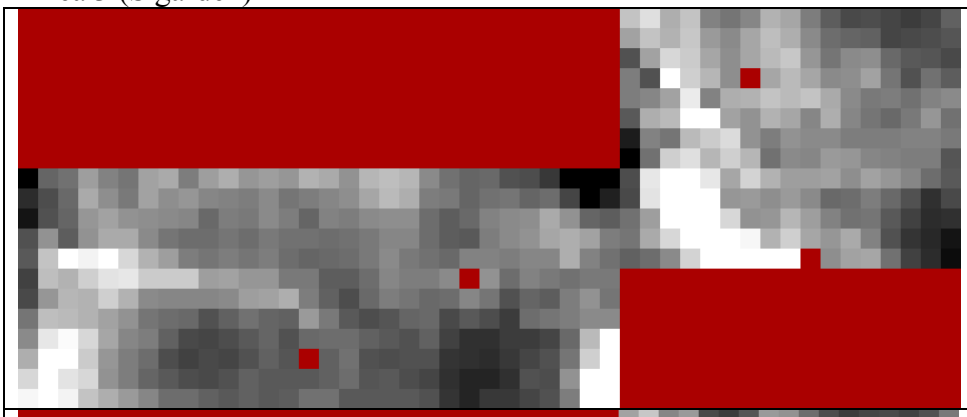
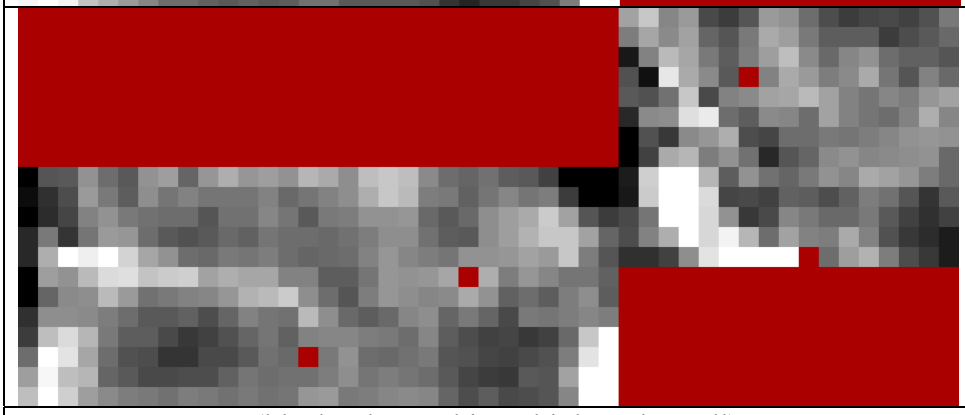
Area 3 (S garden)



Resistivity
47 m x 20 m

Raw data

N

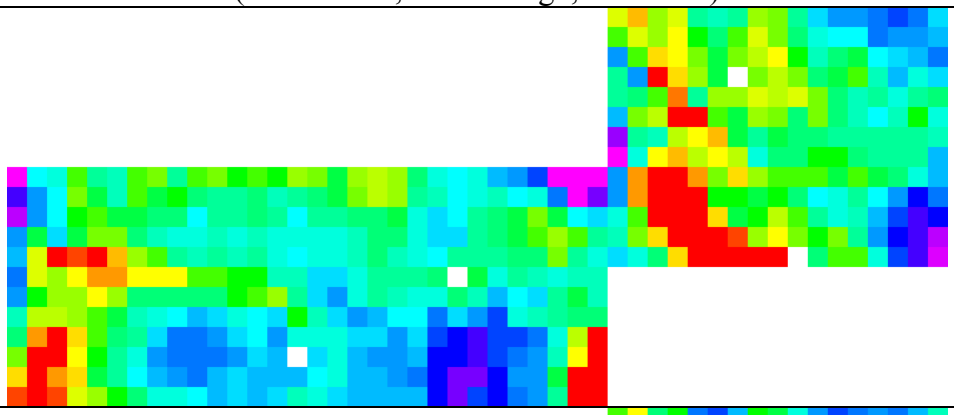


Resistivity
47 m x 20 m

High pass filter 5

N

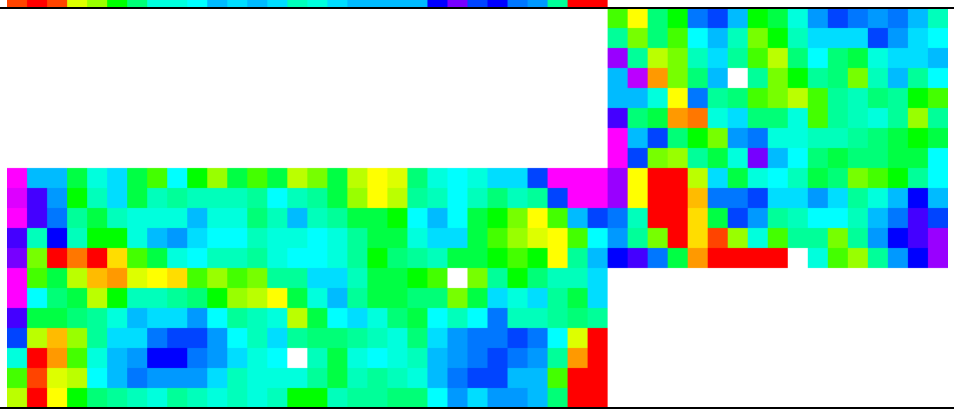
(black – low, white – high, red – null)



Resistivity
47 m x 20 m

Raw data

N



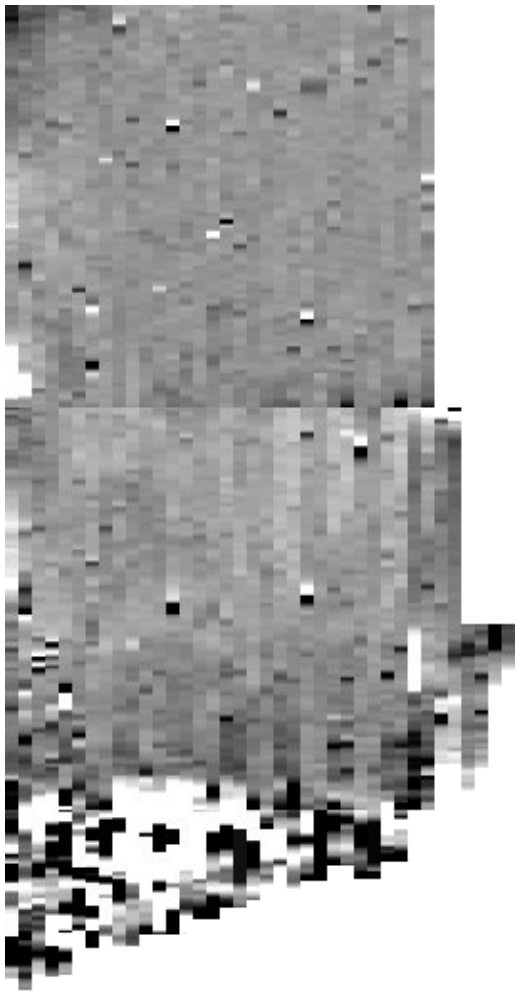
Resistivity
47 m x 20 m

High pass filter 5

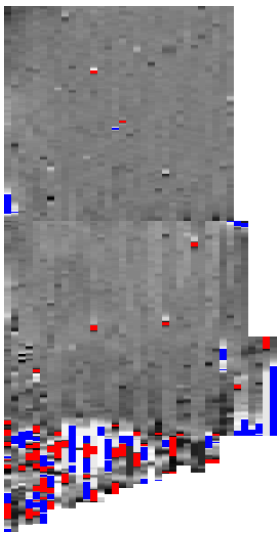
N

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

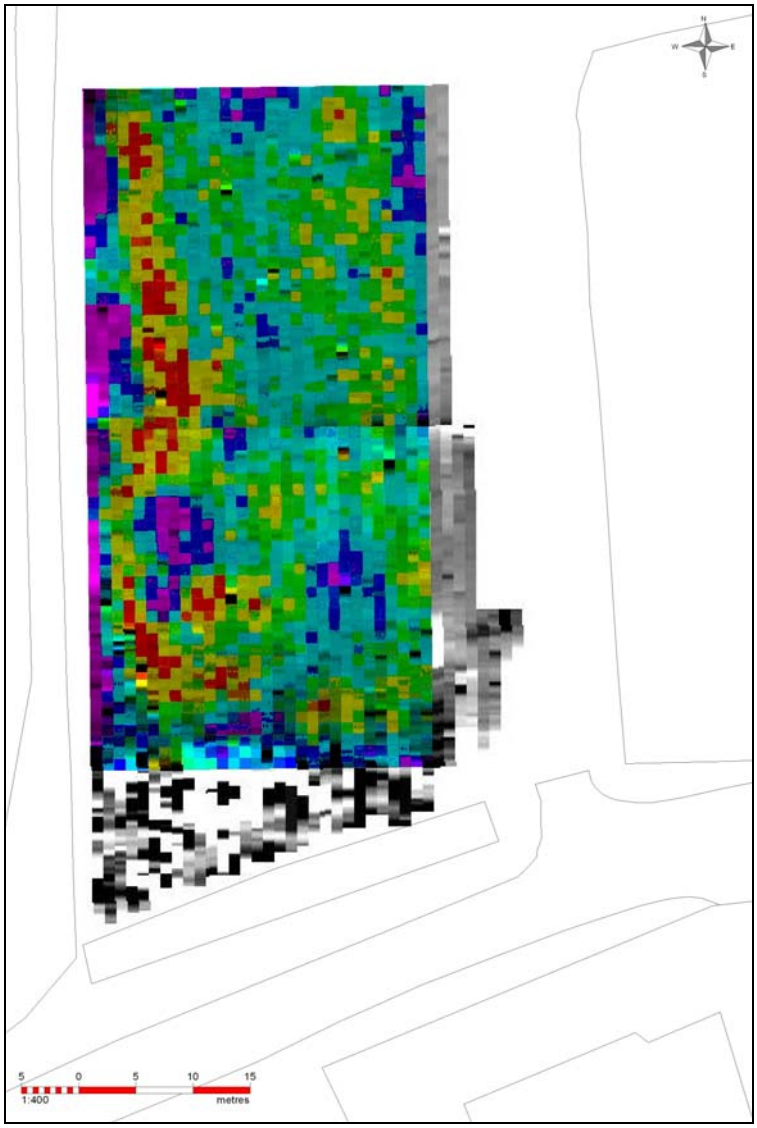
Magnetometry



Magnetometry approximately 38 m x 74 m, range +8 to -6 nT

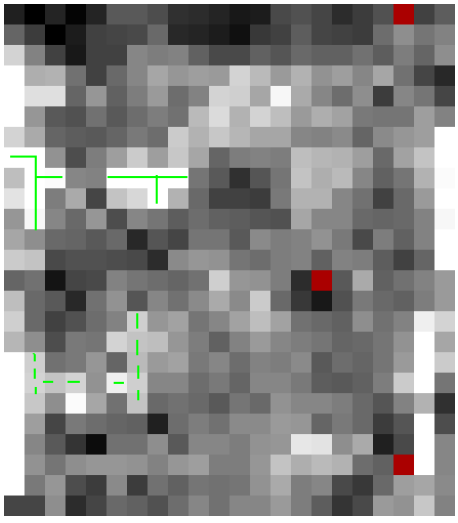


Magnetometry extreme values coloured, range +9 to -21 nT



Superimposition of resistivity and magnetometry results

Discussion:



The magnetometry results do not show any archaeological features, but the high responses at the S end of the survey suggests that the area adjacent to the road may have been reconfigured when the nearby motorway bridge was built. The resistivity results for the same area show a line of very low values and a line of high values along the W side, most probably associated with drainage at the base of the motorway embankment.

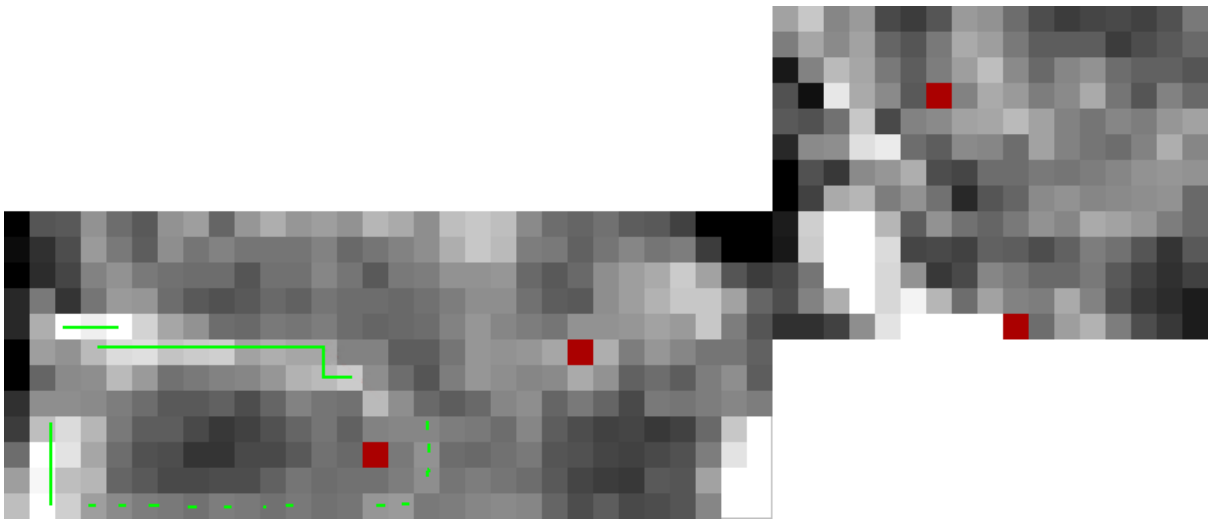
The resistivity results in the N garden area have no clear pattern that could be identified as the remains of a building. Centrally to the W side there are disjointed elements which could possibly be associated with building foundations outlined in green (dashed indicating a lower degree of confidence). There are linear high values along the W edge

of the survey. These values may be attributable to a decrease in soil moisture content caused by the trees near that edge, but given their relatively sharp delineation, the possibility that they may be caused by lines of foundation material cannot be excluded.

A similar situation occurs on the E edge of this survey. In the N part of the E side the high values are likely to be associated with the present building. In the S part of the E side the high values are separated from the edge of the survey, which might suggest a path around the building but again the possibility that they may be caused by lines of foundation material cannot be excluded.

The W side of the S garden area has a set of high resistance responses (outlined in green below with dashed indicating a lower degree of confidence) which could reflect the foundation remains of a building roughly 12 m long and 6 m wide with its long axis orientated E—W . The strength of the responses is lower than might be expected but that may be due to a combination of robbing of materials and the area being levelled as a tennis court. A test excavation would be needed to establish whether this is the site of a church.

The larger area of high resistance values E of the centre of the S garden survey probably indicates metalling of a previous driveway to the house.



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

Report by Dr I Sanderson for Archaeology RheeSearch