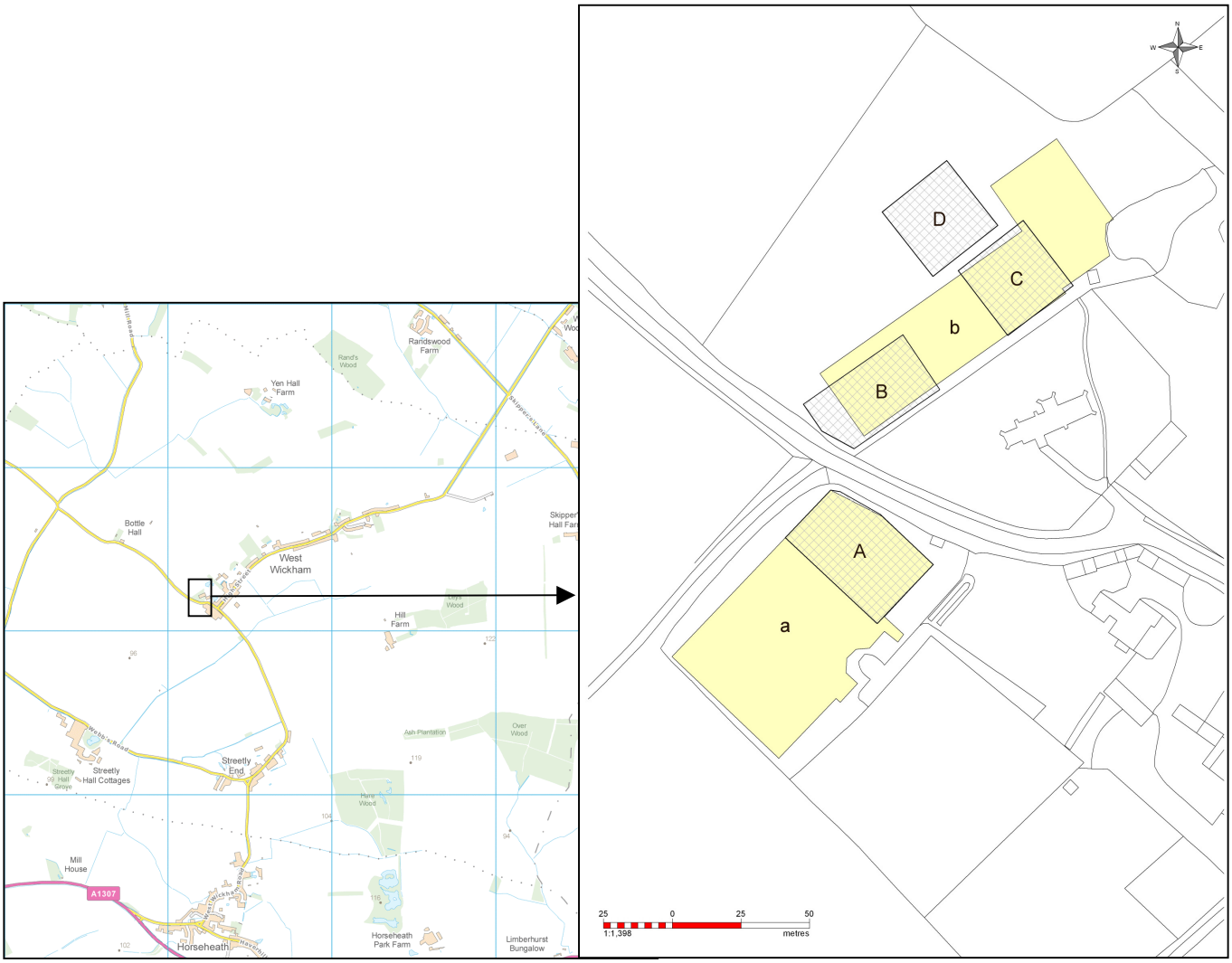
West Wickham West End Report

During 2015 Archaeology RheeSearch Group carried out magnetometry and resistivity surveys on this site to determine whether any archaeological features were detectable.
Members participating: Pat Davies, Brian Bridgland, Liz Livingstone, Ian Sanderson, Gill Shapland, Maureen Storey and Tony Storey.
Site liaison: Janet Morris.
Site conditions: 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 stored by Archaeology RheeSearch Group.

Location: TL611492, West Wickham, Cambs.



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

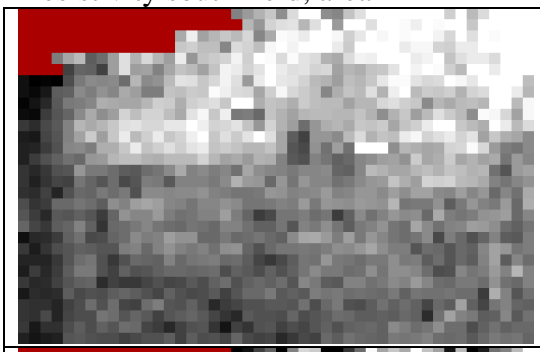
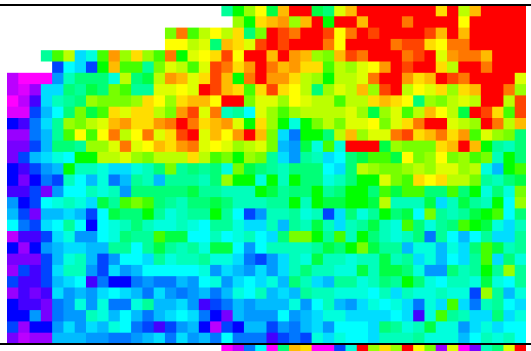
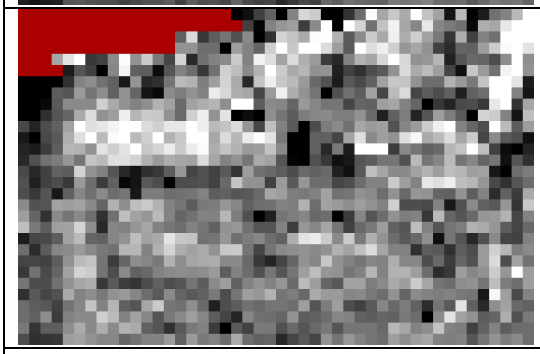
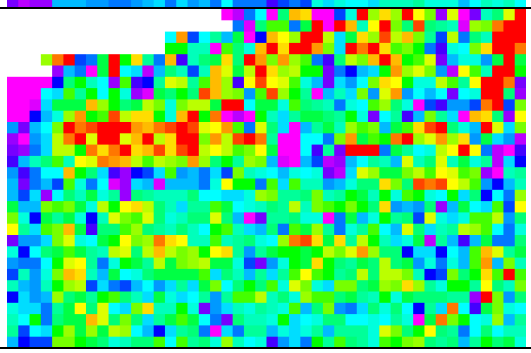
Purpose of survey: The purpose of this survey was to determine if any subsurface features could be detected to identify earlier activity on the site.

Site topography:
The south field was a level coarse mown grass paddock. The north field had a slight slope down to the south west with close grazed grass in the southern part and coarse grass with some residual earthworks in the northern part.

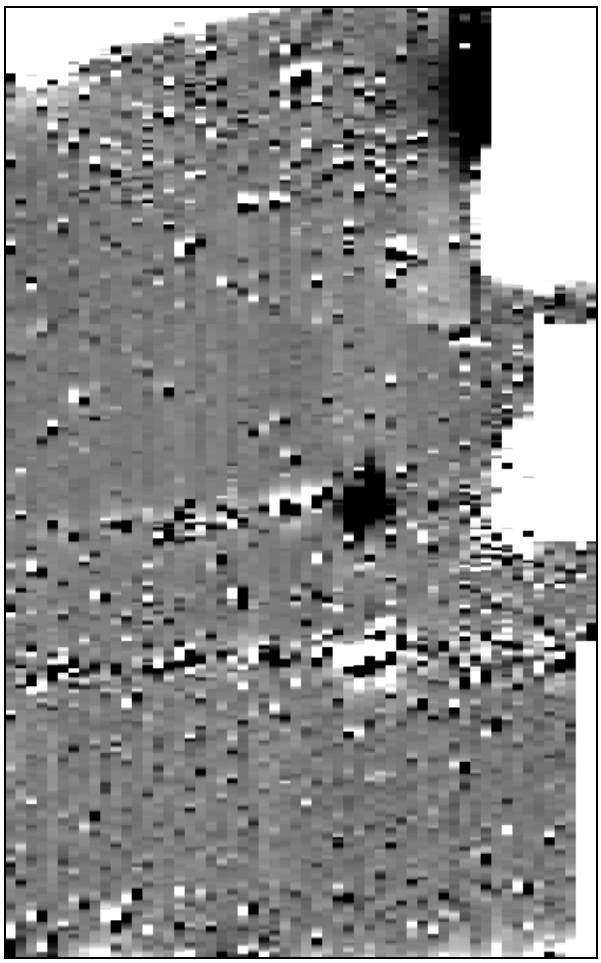
Results:

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

Resistivity south field, area A

		Resistivity 60 m x 30 m Raw data N
		High pass filter 7 N
(black – low, white – high, red – null)	(purple/blue – low, red – high, white – null)	

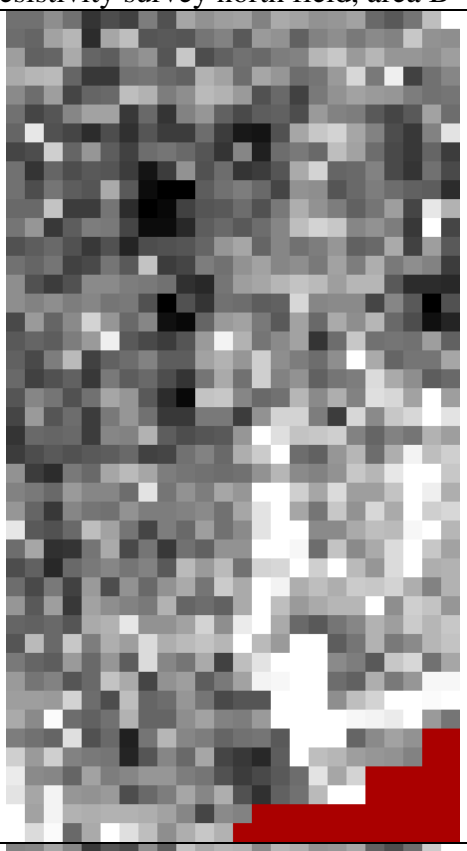
Magnetometry south field, area a

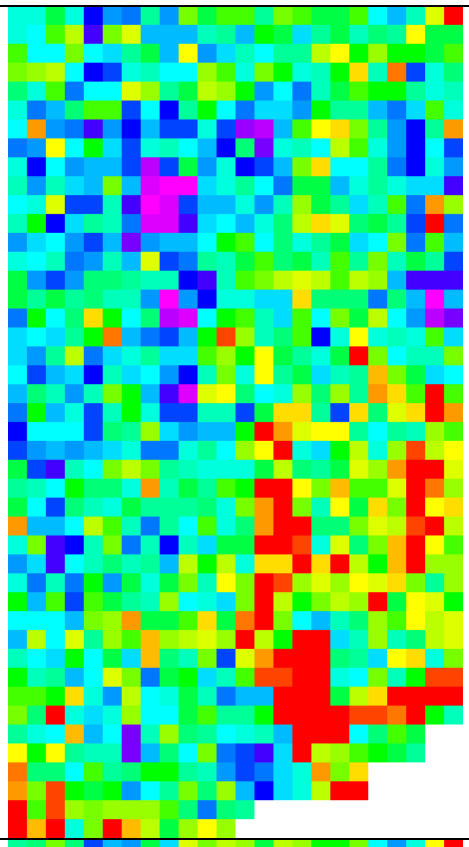


N

Magnetometry survey area a 90 m x 56 m range +9 to -9 nT

Resistivity survey north field, area B

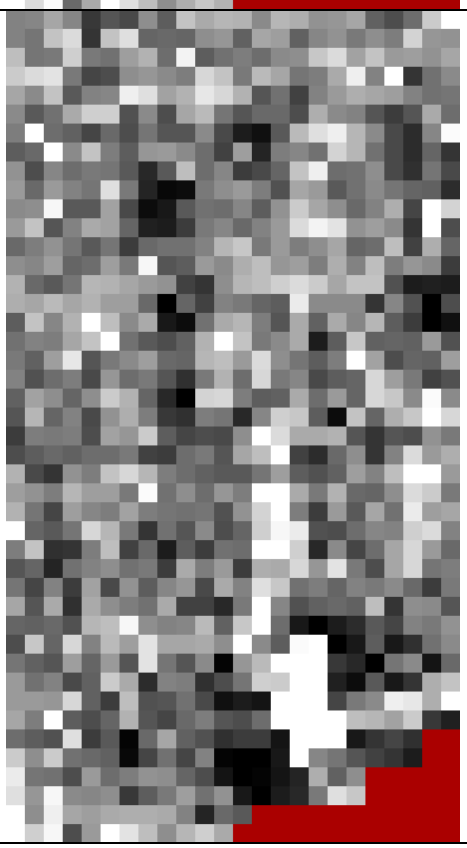


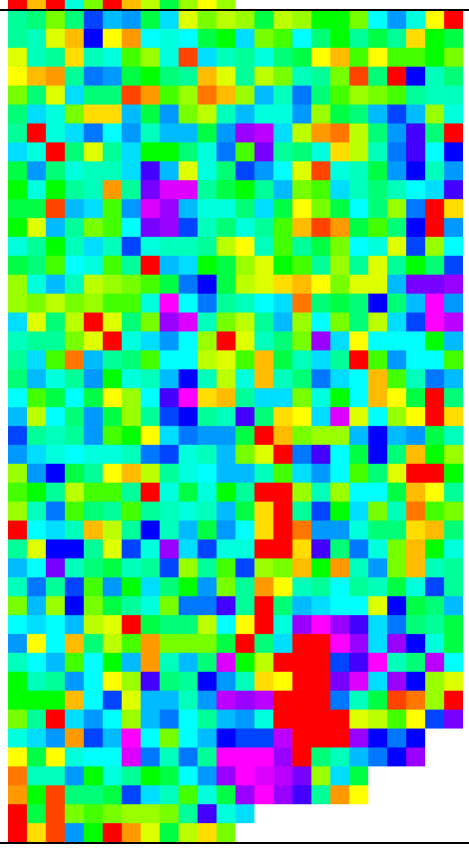


Resistivity 24 m x 45 m

Raw data

N





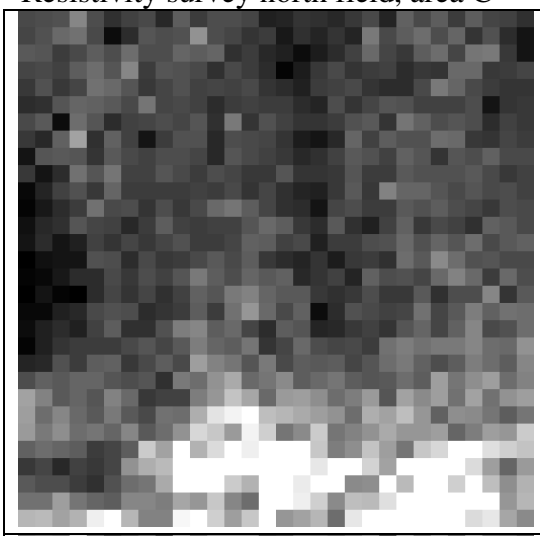
High pass filter 7

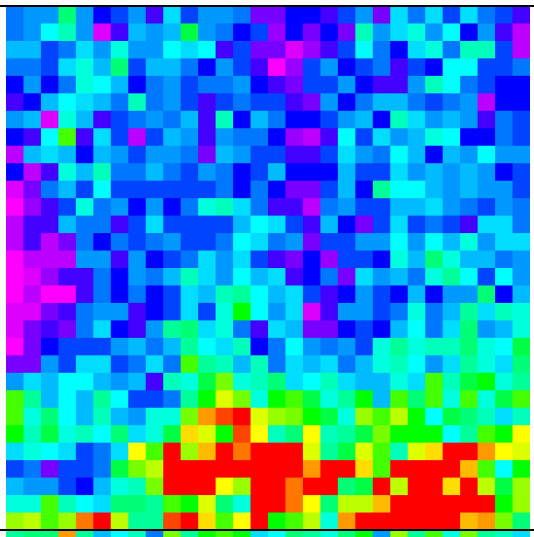
N

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

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

Resistivity survey north field, area C

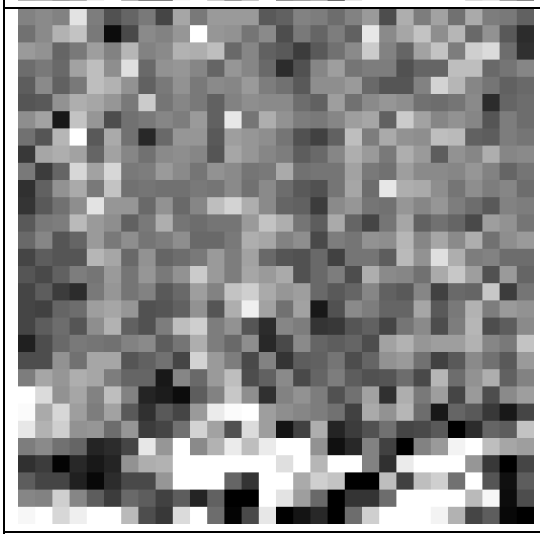


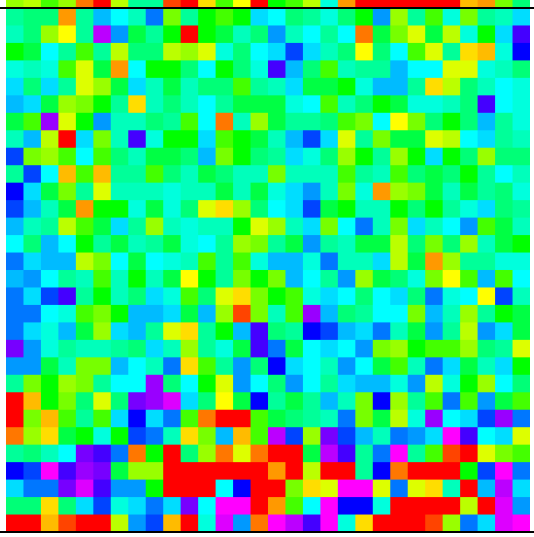


Resistivity 30 m x 30 m

Raw data

N





High pass filter 5

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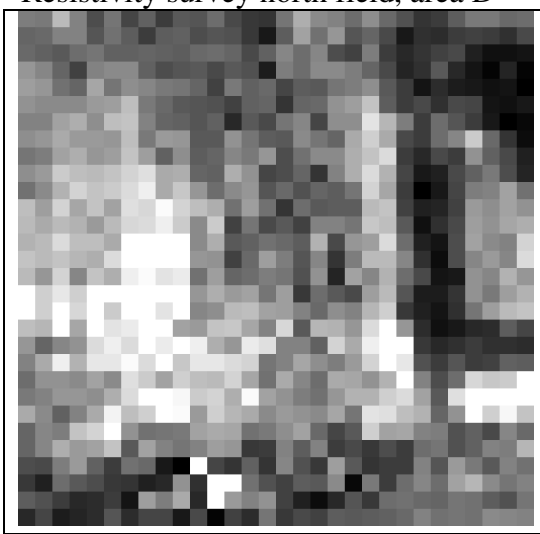
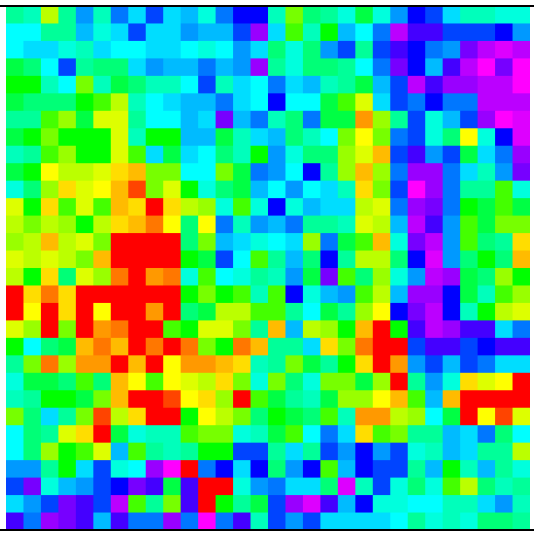
(black – low, white – high) | (purple/blue – low, red – high)

Resistivity survey north field, area D

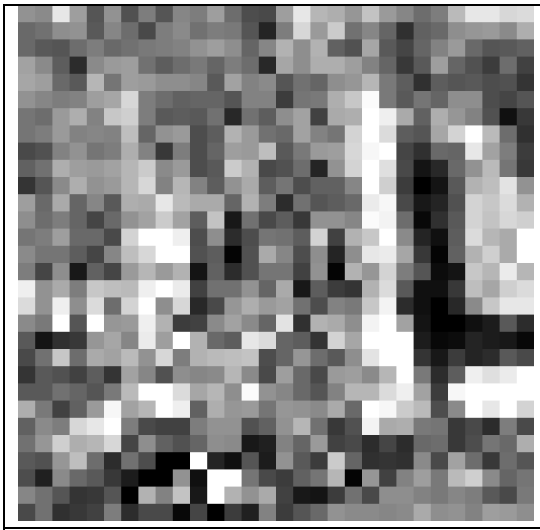
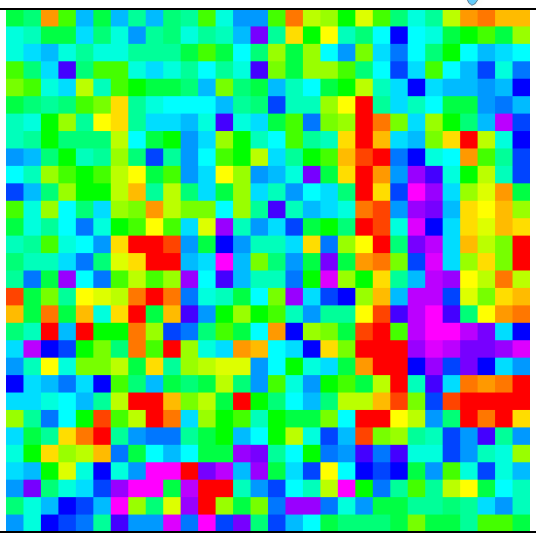
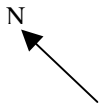




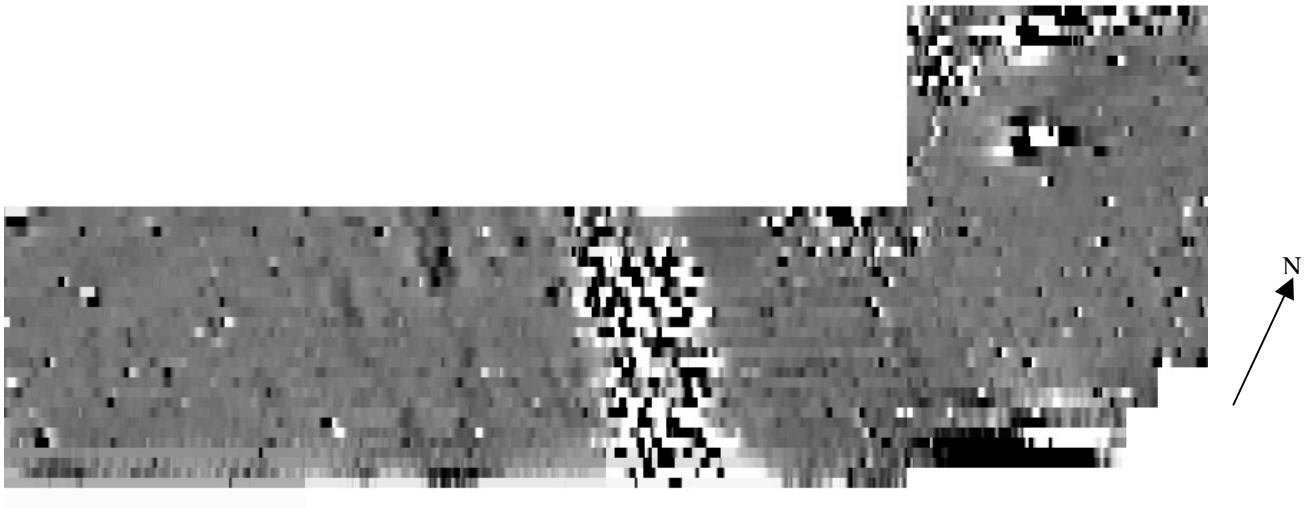
Resistivity 30 m x 30 m

Raw data

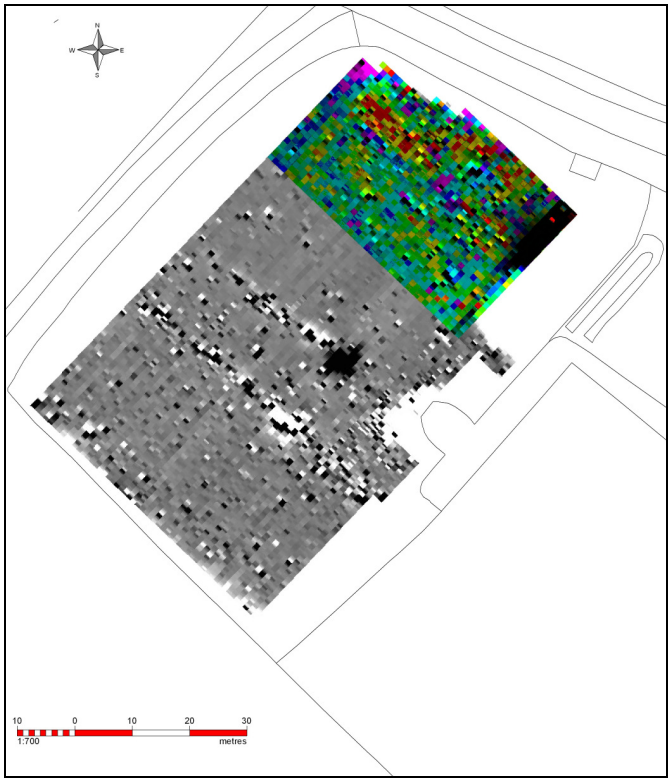
N

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

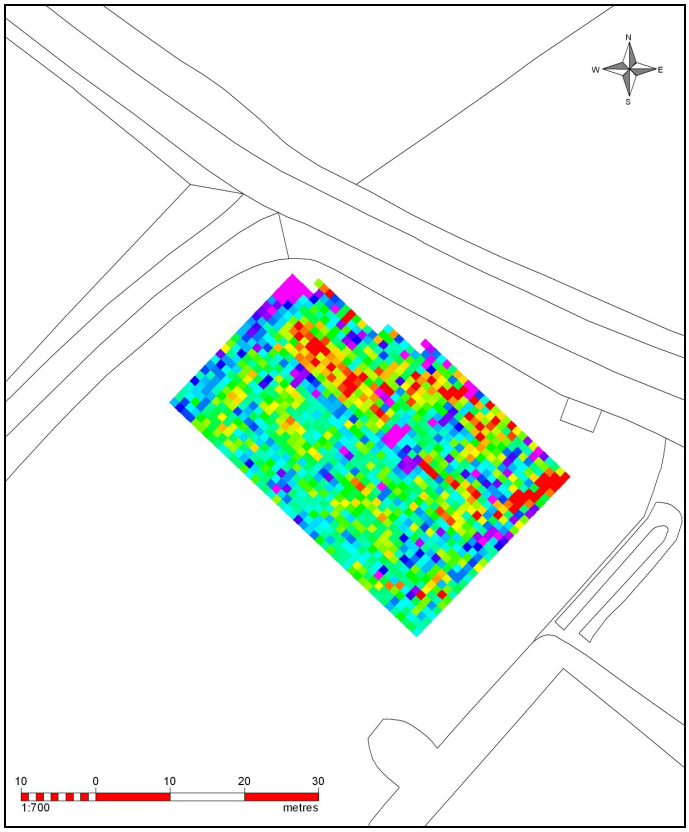
Magnetometry north field, area b



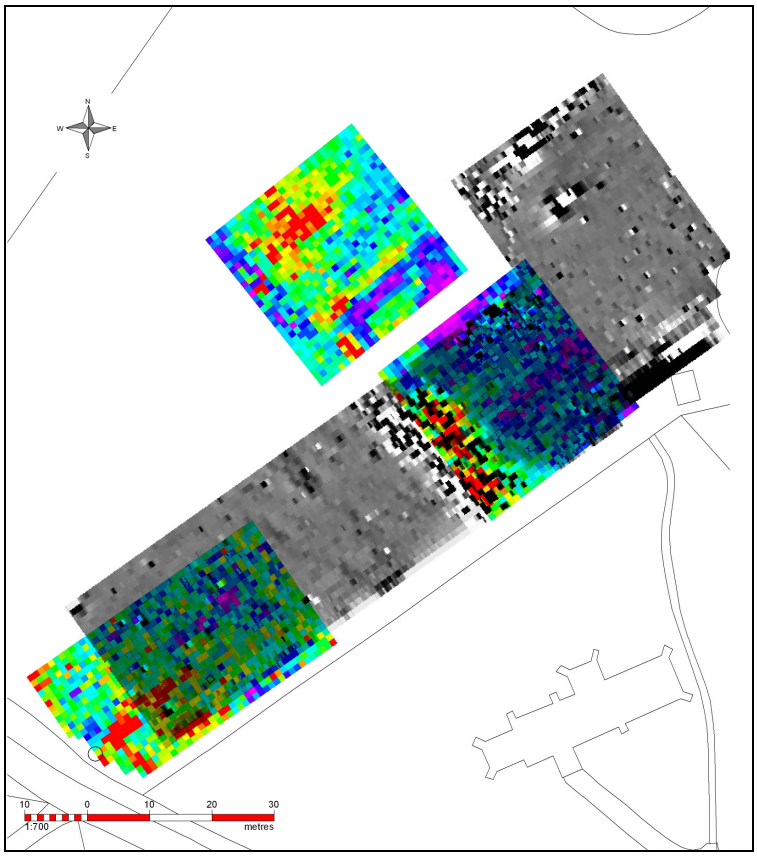
Magnetometry survey area a 120 m x 48 m range +8 to -9 nT



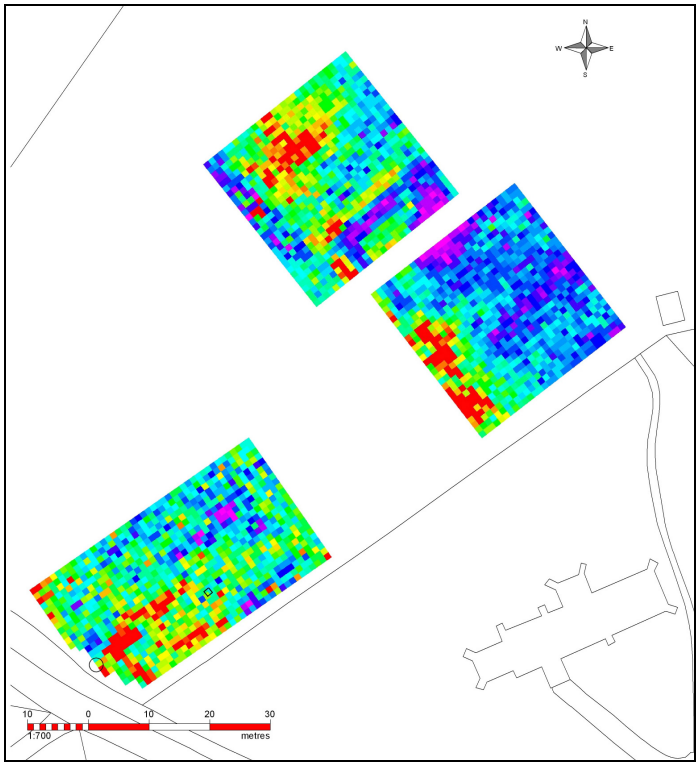
Magnetometer and resistivity surveys south field



Resistivity surveys south field



Magnetometer and resistivity surveys north field



Resistivity surveys north field

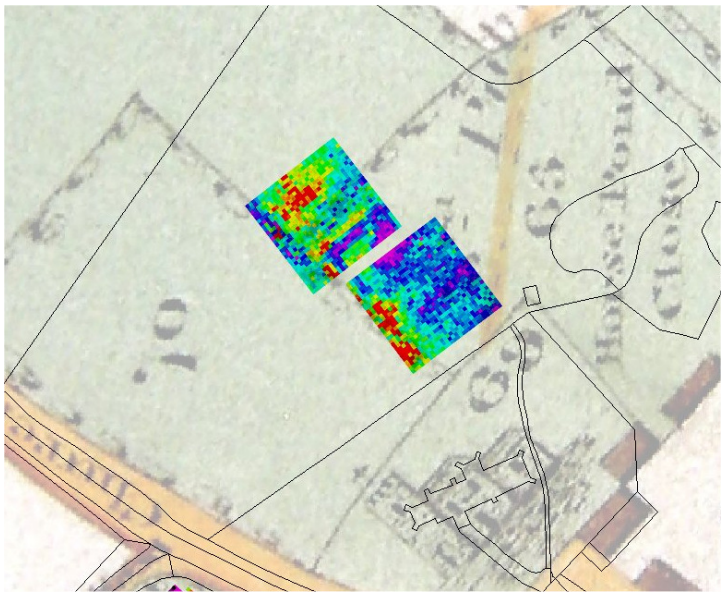
Discussion:

South field

The main features in the magnetometry survey are two parallel lines of stronger responses running across the survey area. The one to the SW corresponds to the boundary of the Bowling Green given on the Inclosure plan. The central line terminates in a wider discrete area of strong responses a few metres from the SE boundary of the paddock. It is possible that this represents a bonfire site and access to it. Around the NE end of the survey area there is a light scattering of magnetic noise. A heavier scattering often indicates building demolition residue so this could indicate that the majority of fired material was removed, or that some other activity has taken place in this area of the field. The resistivity results show a band of high values towards the N corner of the survey area running NW—SE which suggests a foundation, but it has no rectilinear pattern to indicate buildings. One possibility is that this is a metalled floor to a barn. An area of particularly high values occurs in the E corner of the survey along with a scattering of high values along the NE edge of the area but neither of these features has clear indications that it is due to building foundations.

North field

Resistivity area D shows low value responses which correspond to field boundaries shown on the Inclosure map illustrated below. It is curious that although low responses are apparent in area D, area C gave high responses further along one of the same boundaries. This suggests that the two parts of the original ditch were filled in with different materials and therefore possibly at different times. The magnetometry results in the vicinity of the boundary in area C show a broad band of magnetic noise about 10 m wide on the same alignment as the boundary. This is much wider than might be expected from filling in a ditch and this type of magnetic response is usually associated with building scatter. It does not quite cover the full width of the survey. One possibility is that a ditch boundary was replaced or enhanced with a wall or alternatively that there may have been a building adjacent to the boundary.



Area D also has a large area of high resistance values which have a broadly rectilinear form, perhaps indicating building foundations with a scatter of demolition material around. This area also has a very well defined rectilinear area of low values outlined with high values. The low values continue in area C in the SW arm, the NW arm becomes a wider area of low values in area D, again continuing in area C. The square of low values has a gap in its S corner in area C. The size of this feature suggests decorative rather than defensive intent.

Resistivity area B has an area of high values in its S corner which has some of the rectilinear characteristics of building foundations. On its N side is a similar area of rectilinear low values which can occur when stone foundations are robbed out. The magnetometry results (area b) show little response which is to be expected if no fired material is involved. The magnetometry survey show a discrete anomaly and some generalised disturbance on its N

edge which may be associated with an Inclosure boundary but does not extend far enough to be sure. There are multiple features within the north field which will only be clarified by excavation.

Report by Dr I Sanderson for Archaeology RheeSearch