

**YCCART 2010 / Y31
North Somerset HER 2011/140**

St Andrews Church, Congresbury

Geophysical survey of area to west and south of vicarage

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RESEARCH TEAM (YCCART)**

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An early postcard showing the vicarage (left) and Refectory (right).

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Abstract

Two small further areas to the west and south of the vicarage, Congresbury, have been surveyed with the RM15 resistivity meter. While generally confirming the details of surveys published elsewhere (YCCART 2010/Y23 on this web site), the surveys do not radically change the previous picture of a complex of stone buildings pre-dating, and at an angle to, the current vicarage and refectory.

Introduction

This report is supplementary to YCCART's report Congresbury Church Y23 which details surveys undertaken in the prayer garden / orchard and vicarage lawn.

In September 2010 further surveys were carried out to the west and south of the current vicarage in order to establish the extent of the buildings revealed by the earlier surveys.

Site location



Fig 1 Site location of surveyed area

Land use and geology

The surveyed areas are part of the church ground, forming part of the curtilage of the vicarage.

The solid geology is a low knoll of Mercia Mudstone, surrounded on all sides by the alluvium of the North Marsh.

Historical & archaeological context

Please see YCCCART report Y23

Survey objectives

The survey had the following objectives.

- 1) To identify any features indicating lost buildings or earlier occupation of the site.
- 2) To use the survey to further train YCCCART members and members of Community Archaeology in North Somerset (CANS) in the use of the Bartington Gradiometer 601 and Resistance Meter RM15.

Methodology

The resistivity survey was undertaken during September 2010 by teams from YCCCART using a RM15 resistivity meter

The survey was downloaded using ArcheoSurveyor 2.4.0.23 and adjusted using the following filters.

- Band weight equaliser
- Grad shade
- Despiked
- Clip SD2

The surveys were also downloaded to a geophysics programme, Snuffler.

Results

1) West of the vicarage

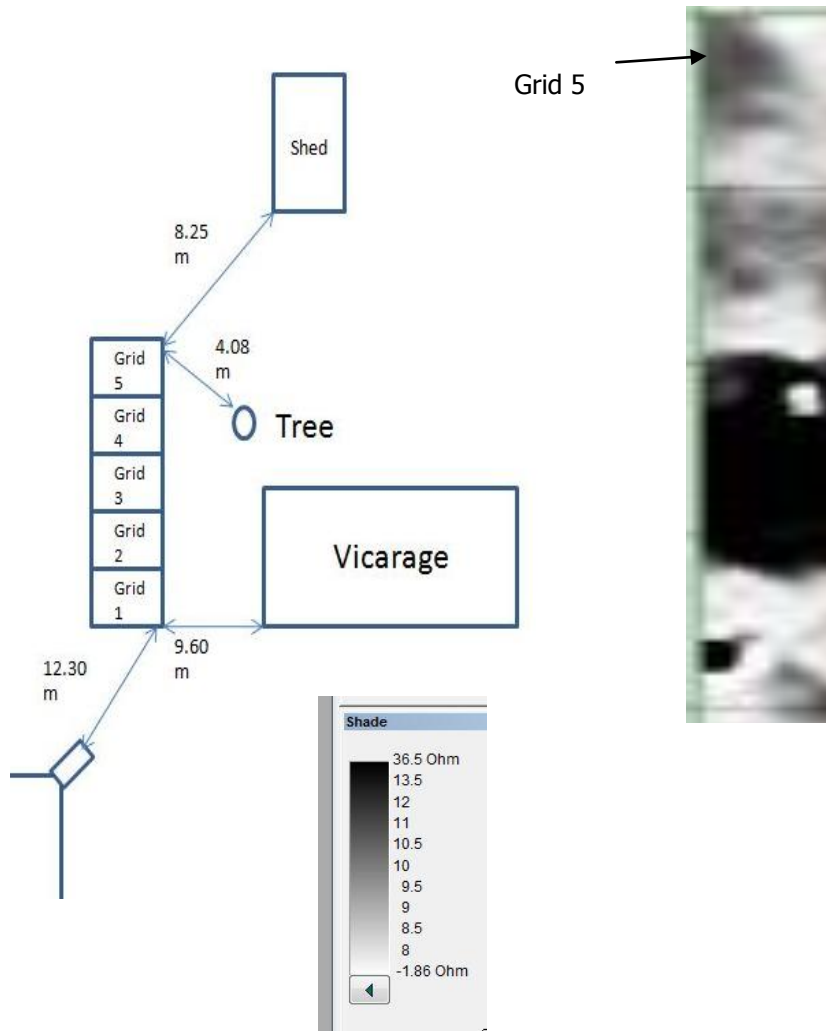


Fig 2 Survey plan plus Archeosurveyor results – west of vicarage

These results are complicated by the presence of several large mature trees, making the interpretation of the results more difficult due to moisture deficit around their roots. In Grid 5, there is a low resistance feature trending NW – SE, not dissimilar to those seen in earlier studies, but otherwise, this survey adds little to the earlier studies reported in Y23.

2) South of the vicarage

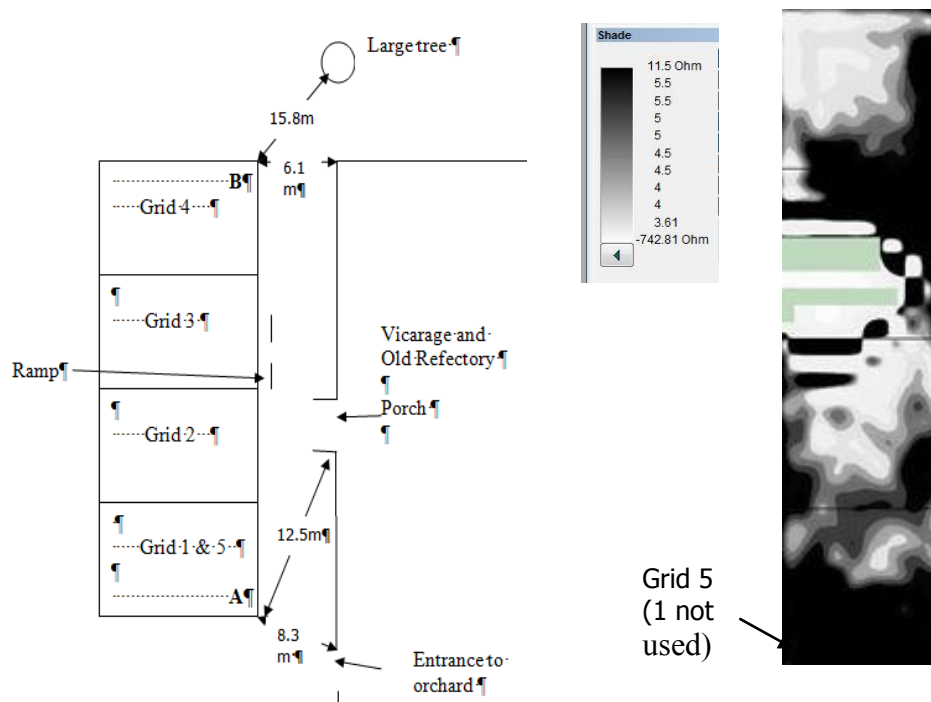


Fig 3 Survey plan plus Archeosurveyor results – south of vicarage

These results are not capable of clear interpretation. From earlier studies, and a watching brief on works to the ramp in 2007, it is clear that a stone bank runs from the top of the ramp at right angles, and in line with the eastern edge of the current churchyard, which is represented by a substantial lynchet today. It may be indicated by the patch of high resistance in Grid 3, although the artefacts in the area immediately to its east make this interpretation less than secure.

The survey does not extend far enough to reach the potential moat seen in the Glebe field to the east (see report Congressbury church Y14 this web site).

3) Combined results – from report Y23 and above results



Fig 4 Results from this report and Y24 superimposed approximately on map.

This report adds a little to the overall conclusions reached in earlier reports. The general NW – SE trend of the results is striking, and as reported in the earlier work, this respects the alignment of the parish church, and not the late medieval building of the Refectory.

Presumably, this reflects the alignments of the earlier (minster) buildings at the church, although the square enclosure indicated by ditches historically recorded around three sides of the church does not, maintaining a more ritually 'correct' E – W alignment. The origins of this discrepancy are unclear. Is it a coincidence in the layout of the village that the long axis of the church, if projected from its south wall, runs exactly through the site of the village cross?

Recommendations for further work

This report completes the publication of the geophysical surveys around the vicarage / refectory at Congresbury. While general conclusions were drawn in the earlier reports (e. g. Congresbury church Y23, this web site), it is clear that substantial building remains exist around, and almost certainly under, the buildings.

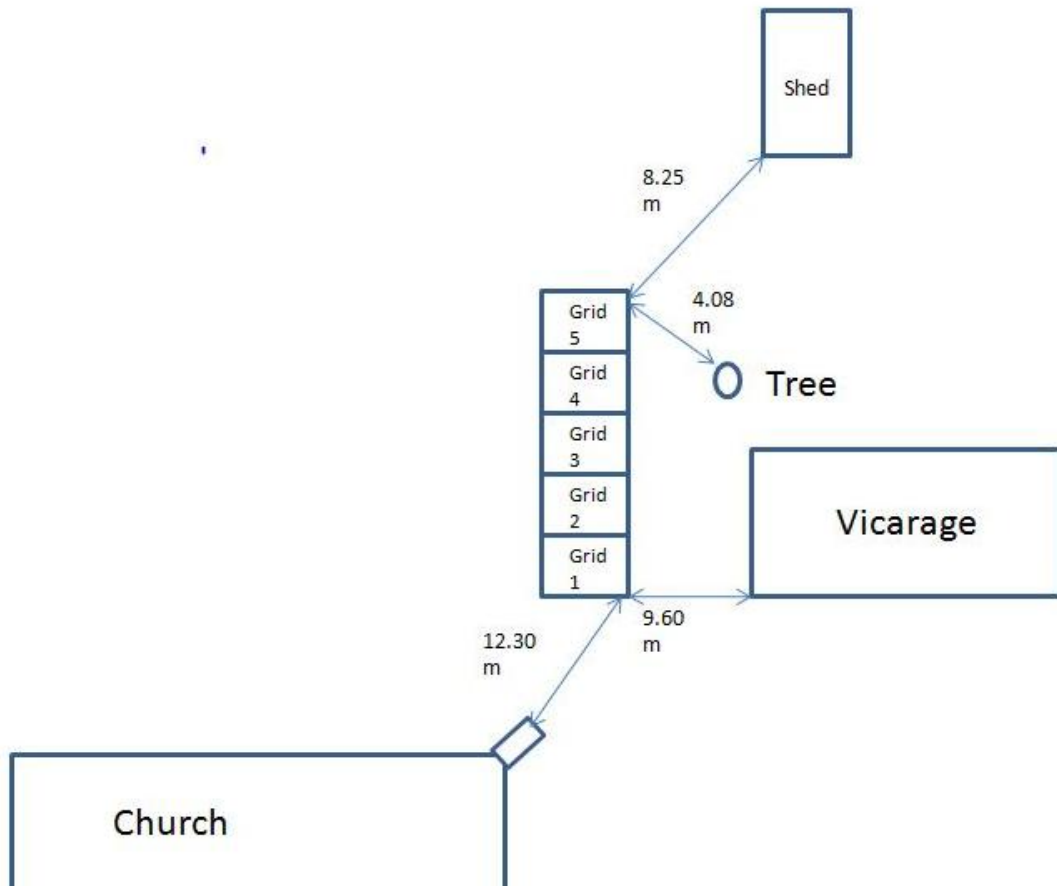
Since the historic context for these remains is known, and that they pre-date the Grade I refectory of c1440, they are of regional, if not national, importance, and a major discovery with significant implications for both the origins and development of Congresbury village, but also the estates of the bishopric of Bath and Wells in the medieval period.

The evaluation in the orchard by Broomhead shows that the remains are both close to the surface and fairly substantial, and will be easily destroyed by the slightest of interventions.

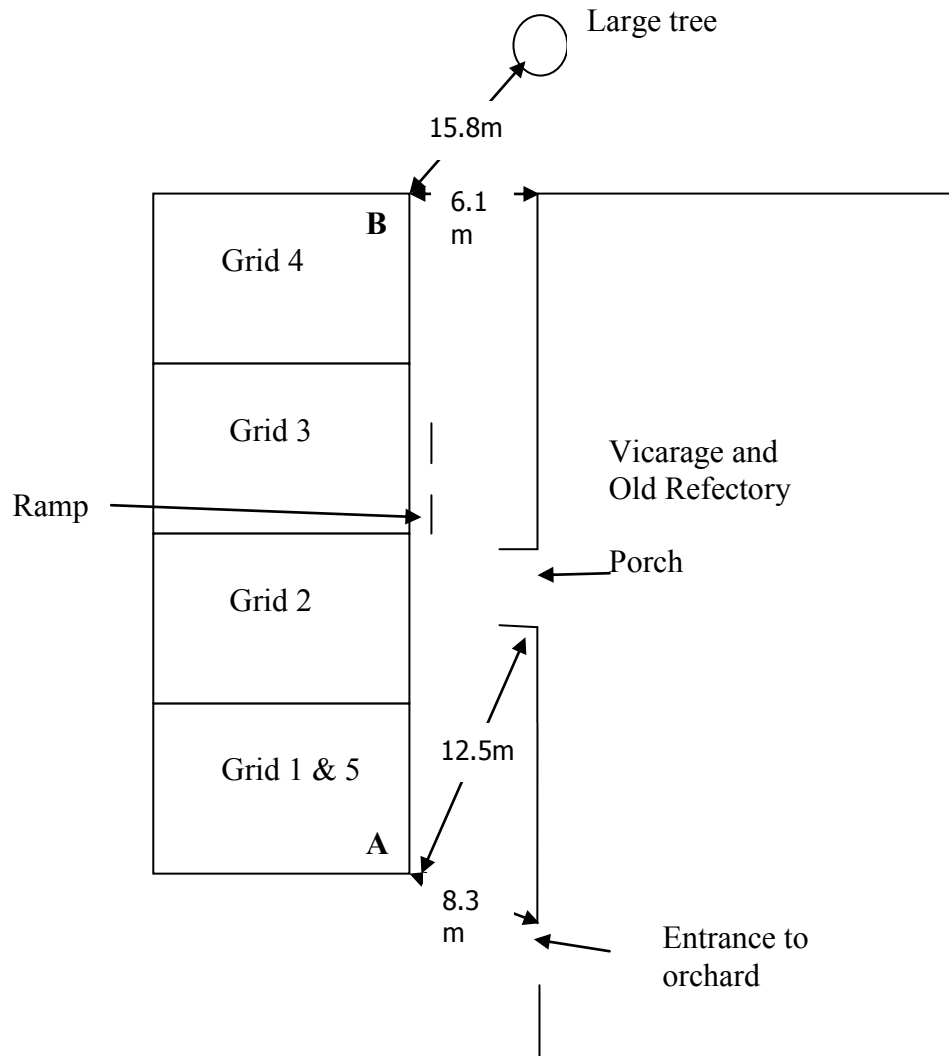
It is clear, therefore that any proposals to develop these areas will require significant archaeological responses.

Appendix – Daily site records

YCCART Site Survey						
Project – Congresbury Church						
Survey date		9 September				
Report date		10 September 2010				
Type /Instrument		RM15				
		Gain x1, Current 1mA Frequency 137Hz Probes 'Config 1' (2 probes)			Grid size: 10m x10m Pattern : Zig Zag Sample interval 1m Traverse Interval 1m. Mode Zig-Zag	
Weather		Dry & sunny				
OS Ref or Lat-Longitude		ST 43596379				
Site name		Congresbury Church				
Landowner		Church				
Tenant		Rev M Thompson				
HER ref		2011/140				
Site type		Lawn in front (west)of vicarage				
Description		Lawn				
Period		Medieval				
Geology		Mercia mudstones				
Land use		Curtilage lawn				
<i>Survey team</i>		<i>Colin Campbell, Chris Short, Mike Fox, David Long , Robert Cleland & Judy Sacks.</i>				
Survey area		notes			readings	
		size	walk direction			
	Grid 1	1 x 10m	W			
	Grid 2	1 x 10m	W			
	Grid 3	1 x 10m	W			
	Grid 4	1 x 10m	W			
	Grid 5	1x 10m	W			
Summary		Downloaded as:				
		Snuffler ArcheoSurveyor: Church last / 9 Sep grids 1-5				



YCCART Site Survey						
Project – Congresbury Church - lawn south of vicarage						
Survey date		30 September 2010				
Report date		30 September 2010				
Type /Instrument		RM15				
		Gain x1, Current 1mA Frequency 137Hz Probes 'Config 1' (2 probes)		Grid size: 10m x10m Pattern : Zig Zag Sample interval 1m Traverse Interval 1m. Mode Zig-Zag		
Weather		Dry & cloudy				
OS Ref or Lat-Longitude		ST				
Site name		Congresbury Church				
Landowner		Church				
Tenant		Rev M Thompson				
HER ref						
Site type		Lawn in front (south) of vicarage				
Description		Lawn				
Period		unknown				
Geology		unknown				
Land use		Grazing				
<i>Survey team</i>		<i>Colin Campbell, Chris Short, Mike Fox, Geoff Pearson & Richard Baker</i>				
Survey area		notes		readings		
		size	walk direction			
	Grid 1	1 x 10m	S			
	Grid 2	1 x 10m	S			
	Grid 3	1x 10m	S			
	Grid 4	1x 10m	S			
	Grid 5 (Repeat of grid 1)	1x 10m	S			
Summary		Downloaded as: ArcheoSurveyor Resistivity/Cong church siuth of Refectory/ 30 Sep 1 to 5 Snuffler "iwood1", "iwood2", "iwood3"				



A- Start point

B -Finish point

A is 12.5 m to corner of join between Refectory porch and Refectory wall & 8.3m to nearest entrance to orchard

B is 15.8 m to large tree and 6.8 m to corner of vicarage