

YCCART 2021 /Y14

Resistivity Surveys at Woodspring Farm

**YATTON, CONGRESBURY, CLAVERHAM AND CLEEVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESEARCH TEAM (YCCART)**



Surveying the garden

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Abstract

A resistivity survey carried out to the west of the modern farmhouse confirmed the location of a medieval fishpond associated with Woodspring Priory. It appears to be divided into circular features which are possibly stone lined.

Acknowledgements

A Heritage Lottery Grant enabled the purchase, by YCCCART, of a Geoscan RM 15 resistivity meter without which this survey could not have been undertaken.

This survey would also not have been carried out without the willing permission of the landowner Mr A and Mrs V Kamleton, Landmark Trust and Historic England.

The authors are grateful for the hard work by the members of YCCCART in performing the surveys.

Introduction

Yatton, Congresbury, Claverham and Cleeve Archaeological Research Team (YCCCART) is one of a number of Community Archaeology teams across northern Somerset, formerly supported by the North Somerset Council Development Management Team.

Our objective is to undertake archaeological fieldwork to enable a better understanding and management of the heritage of the area while recording and publishing the activities and locations of the research carried out.

Site Location



Fig 1 Site locations

The sites surveyed are in the farm to the west of Woodspring Priory.

The areas surveyed were

- 1) South and adjacent to the farmhouse
- 2) South of the farmhouse
- 3) In an adjacent field to the west of the farmhouse

as indicated by the numbers in Fig 1 above.

Land use and geology

Areas 1 and 2 are in the garden and area 3 is used to graze livestock such as pigs.

Historical & archaeological context

The history of Woodspring Priory

Woodspring Priory is, and always has been, a somewhat remote site, most easily reachable by water through the Woodspring Pill, which lidar and air photographic evidence shows once reached the edge of the priory property, beside the modern road bridge. The site features a number of standing medieval buildings, including the nave of the church, a structure known as the refectory (although this is clearly the former infirmary), and the ruins of other buildings, such as part of the cloister and the entrance gate. Fragments and indications of other buildings survive in arches and old stairs in the walls of surviving buildings. Outside of the precinct that is open to the public is a great medieval barn (although its roof is 20th century pastiche after a fire in the 1920s). This is in private use and is not available for public visits. In the outer precinct, what appears to be a medieval moated site has been recently recognised. During recent heavy rain, this was very noticeable and water filled (pers comm R Cleland)

The whole site (including the site of the infilled fishponds to the west of the adjacent farm) is Scheduled (SM22847); several structures are also Listed.

An excellent guidebook has been produced (Tomalin D & Crook C, 2007) which includes details of the fishponds.

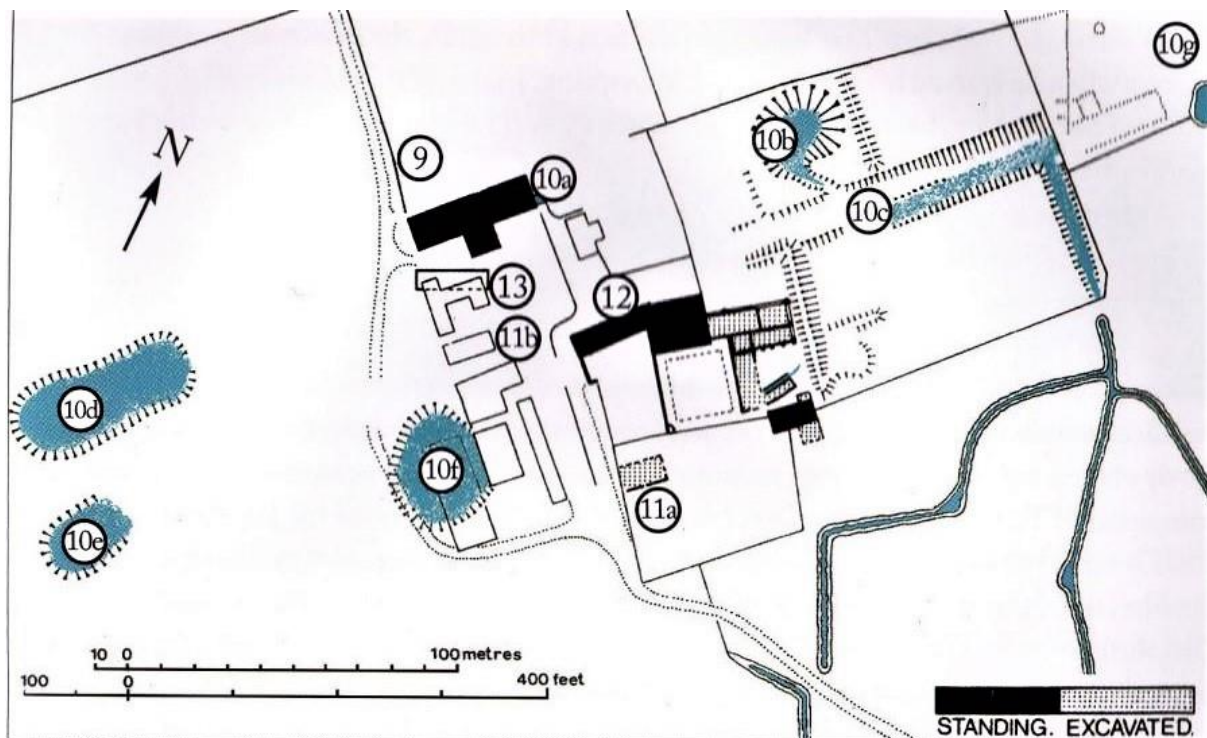


Fig 2 Extract from guidebook showing location of fishponds and waterways in blue.

The guidebook map at Fig 2 above shows fishponds 10d and 10e to the west of Woodspring Priory.



Fig 3. Lidar image of fishponds beside farm

The Lidar view in Fig 3 above suggests the survey relates to 10d in Fig 2.

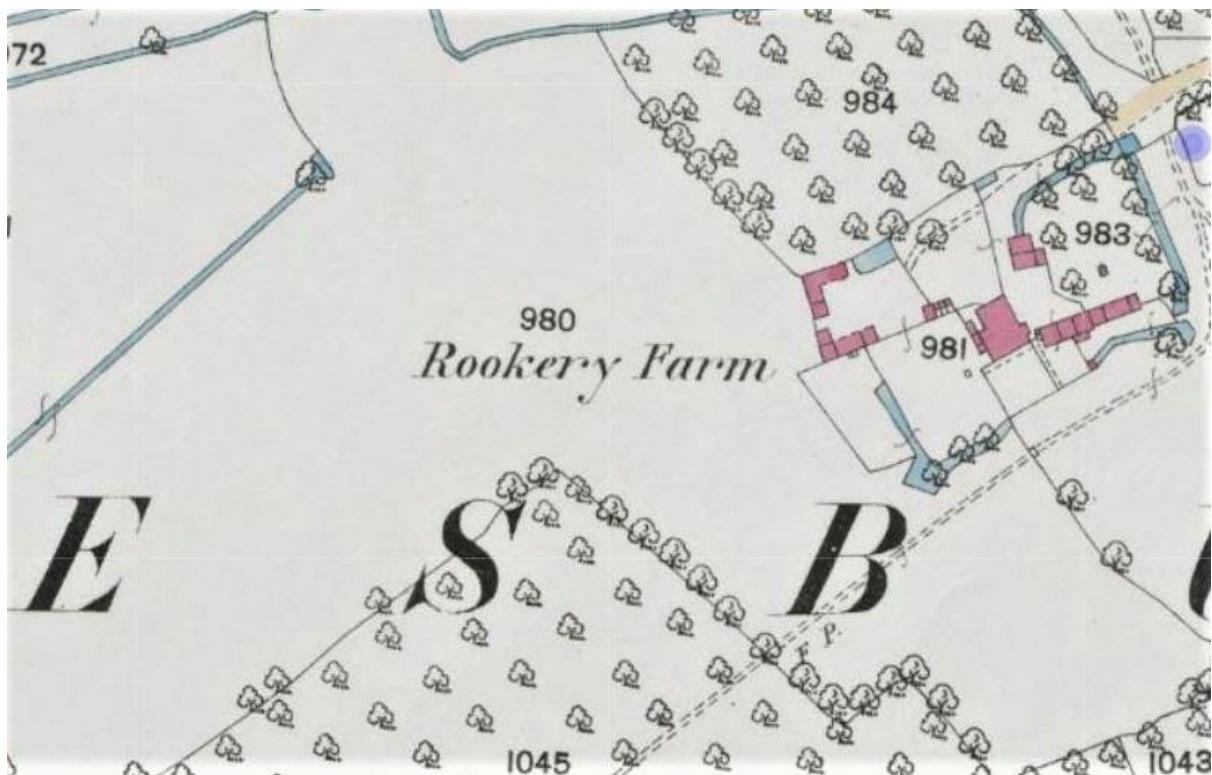


Fig 4: Tithe map c 1840 above does not show the fishponds to the left of the Priory

YCCCART surveys

Extensive geophysical surveys have been undertaken by YCCCART in and around Woodspring Priory. Reports of these can be found online at ycccart.com.

Survey objectives

The objective of the resistivity survey was primarily to investigate the known fishponds to the west of the farmhouse. The opportunity was taken to also survey the farm gardens.

Methodology

The survey of the fields was undertaken during the period June to December 2021 by teams from YCCCART using a Geoscan RM 15 resistance meter

The completed survey was downloaded to a TerraSurveyor programme and the resultant composite adjusted using the following filters:

- Band weight equaliser
- Grad shade
- Despiked
- Clip SD2
- High Pass filter.

The report was written in Microsoft Word.

Photographs were taken by members of YCCCART and remain the copyright of YCCCART.

Results

Area 1

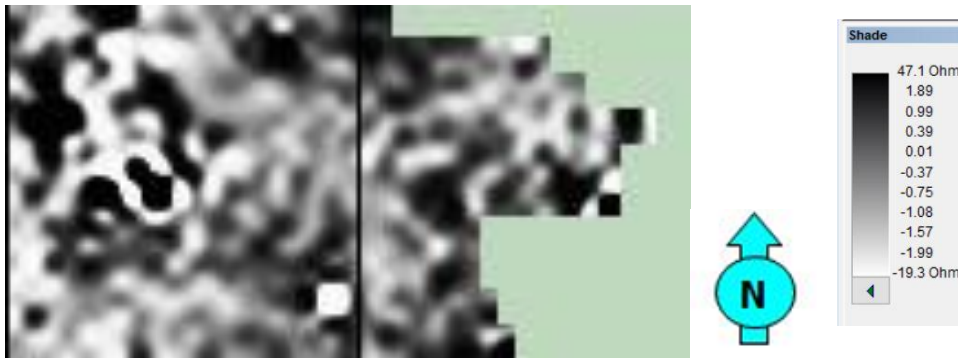


Fig 5. TerraSurveyor shade view image. High readings are black.

This area is adjacent and south of the house and results merely show debris and service features connected to the building of the new house. The survey was very restricted because of shrubs, bushes etc. Hence the green areas were not surveyed.

Area 2

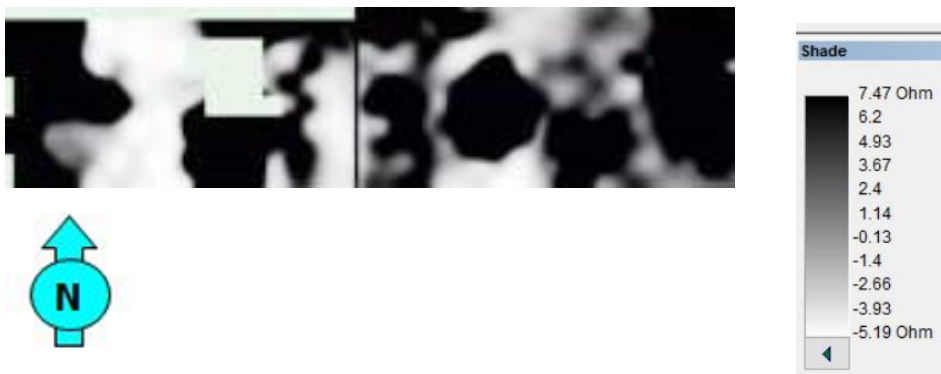


Fig 6 TerraSurveyor shade view image. High readings are black.

Surveying was again restricted because of garden vegetation. The only anomaly of interest is the circular feature in the right-hand grid. This could simply be building rubble.

Area 3

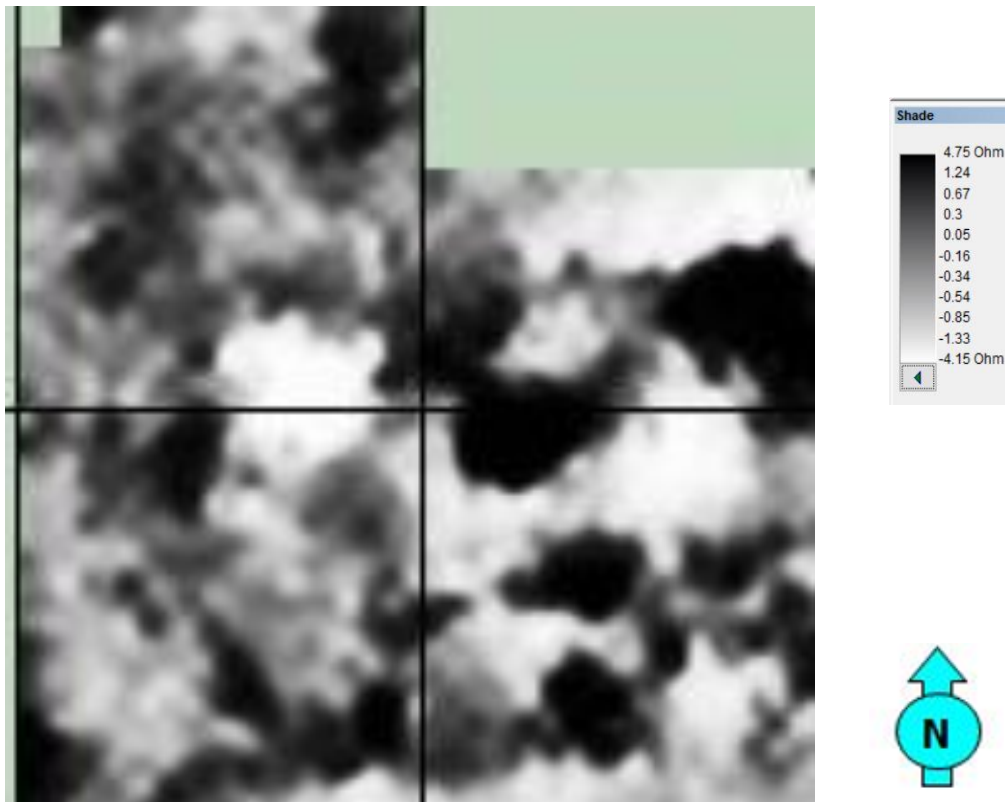


Fig 7 TerraSurveyor shade view image. High readings are black.

The fishponds are clearly defined by the high resistance readings. The pond appears to be sub divided into to be a number of circular features. The high (black) resistance results indicate perhaps stone lining.



Fig 8 TerraSurveyor image superimposed on Google Earth image.

Recommendations

A geophysical survey of the fishpond shown to the south of site 3 on the Fig 2 map may be worthwhile.

References

Tomlinson D J, 1974	<i>Woodspring Priory, Somerset, The Landmark Trust. First edition 1974</i>
Tomlinson D J & Crook C, 2007	<i>Woodspring Priory, Somerset, The Landmark Trust. Revised edition 2007.</i>
YCCCART 2012 to 2021	<i>www. ycccart.co.uk</i> <i>Reports</i> <i>Y 12/2012</i> <i>Y15/ 2014</i> <i>Y6/ 2018</i> <i>Y7/2020</i> <i>Y8/2020</i> <i>Y1/ 2021</i> <i>Y7/2021</i> <i>Y10/2021</i>

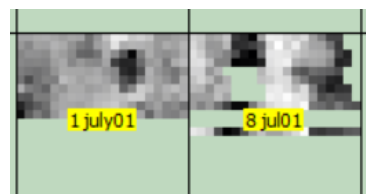
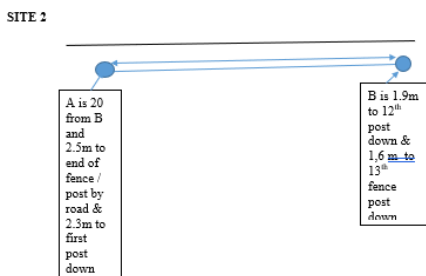
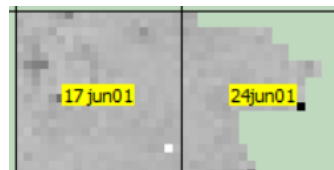
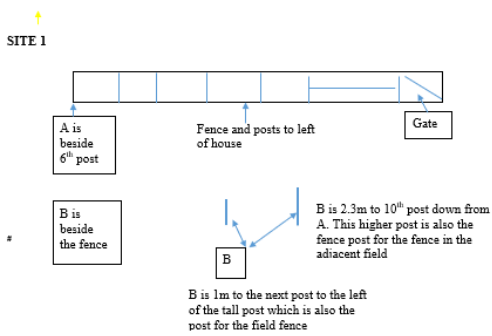
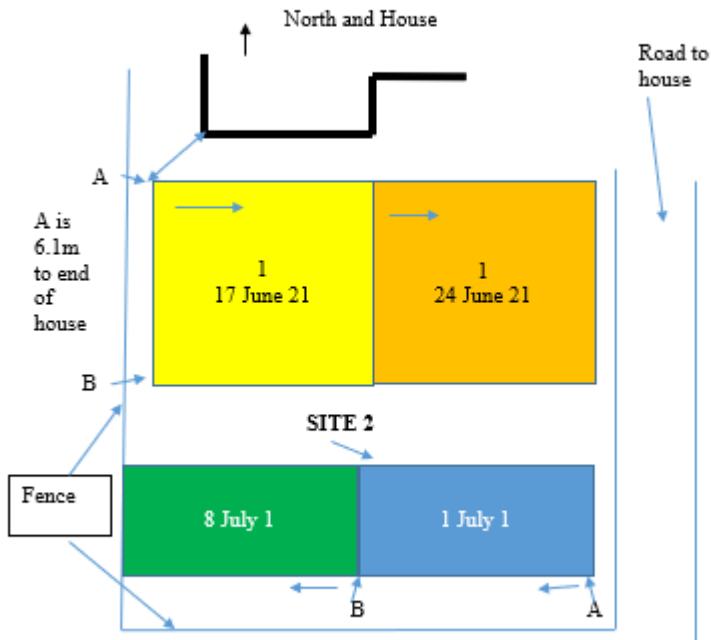
Chris Short

April 2022

APPENDIX - GRID LAYOUT

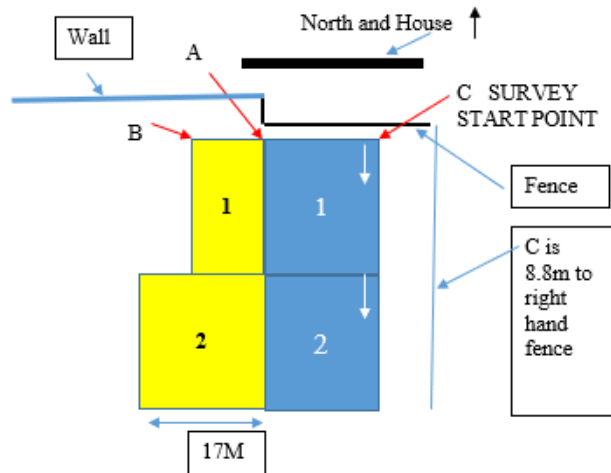
Including TerraSurveyor grid layout)

Layout

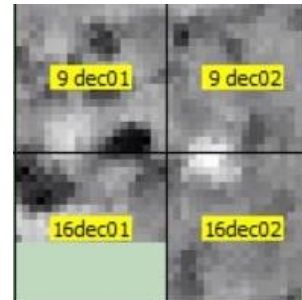


SITE 3

Layout



Grids 1 & 2 are 20 by 20m
 A to B is 10 m only because of sheds
 But surveyed to 13m



**8.4M FROM RIGHT HAND CORNER OF HOUSE
 5M FROM LEFT HAND CORNER OF HOUSE**



**B
 10.94 M FROM RIGHT HAND CORNER OF WALL
 10M TO LEFT HAND SIDE CORNER OF WALL**