

Silchester Mapping Project 2005-10

This archive is for supplementary material to the Silchester Mapping Project, which is published as:

John Creighton with Robert Fry (2016) *Silchester: Changing Visions of a Roman Town: Integrating geophysics and archaeology: the results of the Silchester mapping project 2005-10*. Britannia Monograph Series 28, London, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies ISBN 9780907764427

The digital archive includes:

- 30 GIS files for the area, providing information on the landscape, aerial photography, fieldwalking, past excavation locations, geophysical prospection and interpretation.
- A digital version of the simplified fold-out plan provided in the above publication.
- A multi-layer PDF for those who are not used or able to manipulate the GIS files, to provide an easy visual way of turning layers on and off to see how the different datasets relate to each other. The line thicknesses are fairly thick when zoomed out, but are more appropriate when zoomed in on a particular area.

The contents page and the summary of the publication of the research are on the following two pages.

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SUMMARY

Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) is a Roman town in Hampshire, in central southern Britain. Unlike many the site was abandoned in the post-Roman period leaving it as a largely green-field site now. The Amphitheatre, Town Wall and some Outer Defences all remain visible for the visitor to see. The town has been highly influential in the development of Romano-British archaeology due to the large-scale excavation by the Society of Antiquaries in 1890-1908 developed an overall plan of the site.

This volume draws together for the first time all the fieldwork known to have taken place from the earliest located trenches in the 1720s up until the modern campaigns of Michael Fulford (1974-present). The cut-off date is 2013. It integrates this work with a new geophysical survey of the interior and vicinity to provide a new overarching narrative for the town.

The volume starts with a historiography of work on the city from earliest antiquarian investigations through to recent campaigns; and this sense of historiography and changing interpretations of the site permeates the later discussion, showing how new discoveries have transformed understandings.

The core of the volume contains the empirical data. Work has taken place digitising all the past excavation plans, and combining this with other datasets including: two major fieldwalking campaigns, the aerial photographic plots, landscape analysis from earlier maps from the Ordnance Survey and earlier sources, LiDAR, other mapping data, and finally with 217 ha of new geophysical prospection in and around the town. An atlas has been created which shows these data in a variety of formats, together with a detailed text outlining all the past interventions within each sheet, and providing a summary of the discoveries together with references to their later reinterpretation where relevant.

The final sections provide essays in interpretation, with thematic reviews of: the defences and linear earthworks; the development of the *oppidum*; the interpretation of Roman military metalwork; an interpretation of the evidence for the mortuary landscape of the town; discussions of urban infrastructure, trade, industry and public entertainment. Finally a narrative overview is provided seeing how the town's remains have been interpreted within an historical setting.

There are methodological innovations differentiating the signal strength of features in the fluxgate gradiometry data to map 'hotspots' representing possible cremations pyre areas, middens, and industrial activities to develop our understanding of the mortuary landscape and also that of shops and workshops within the towns; these techniques could readily be applied to other large-scale surveys of Roman cities which have already been undertaken.

The work provides the first overall synthesis of the city since Boon (1974). The new work includes a significantly revised impression of the development and chronology of the earthworks surrounding the town; mapping of all the Later Iron Age finds and evidence for the development of the street grid from both excavation data and geophysics; it has discovered several new cemetery areas including a series of large Later Iron Age or early Roman burial enclosures. Features are found which may represent elusive evidence for large-scale tanning operations near the town; and there are traces on the gravel terrace edge of a series of parallel lines which may be indicative of a circus, though ground-truthing is required to test that.

The overall urban assessment and synthesis enables Silchester to be seen alongside the other recent comprehensive reviews of major cities in south-east Britain, such as *Verulamium* (Niblett and Thompson 2005) and Colchester (Radford *et al.* 2013).