

Geophysical Survey

Friary, Somerset - October 2016

NGR ST 78861 59133

Schedule Monument No. 1434671

Francesca Breeden

March 2017



The
University
Of
Sheffield.



White Rose
College of the Arts
& Humanities

Universities of Leeds, Sheffield & York

Contents

Summary	3
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Methodology	7
Results	10
Conclusions	15
Copyright	16
References	17
Appendix	18

Figures

Figure 1 - Location of Site	6
Figure 2 - Location of Survey	8
Figure 3 - LiDAR data for the study area	9
Figure 4 - Magnetometry Survey	12
Figure 5 - Interpretation of Magnetometry Survey	13
Figure 6 - Interpretation of Magnetometry Survey displayed with Interpretation of 2016 Resistivity Survey	14

Summary

In October 2016, a magnetometer survey was carried out at the site of Friary, Somerset. The survey was carried out to further investigate the Carthusian lay brothers' house which was situated on the site during the monastic occupation. Previous resistivity survey was conducted in 2012 by Sophie Hawke (Hawke 2015), and by Francesca Breeden in 2016 (Breeden 2016). The site has never been excavated.

The survey identified a number of areas of the monastic complex which had already been located with resistivity survey, as well as some new features. These include areas of the lay brothers' cells in the northern part of the survey area, and areas of the service buildings in the south west of the survey area.

Modern features were also identified by the magnetometer survey, which were confirmed through aerial photographs and consultation with local tenants.

Acknowledgements

The geophysical fieldwork was supervised by Francesca Breeden. Francesca Breeden prepared and interpreted the geophysical data and produced the report.

The author would like to thank Chris Breeden for his help in carrying out the field work. Thanks also to Penny and Richard Williamson for their cooperation and enthusiasm whilst working on the site, which is in their ownership.

Introduction

On the 6th October 2016, a geophysical survey was carried out at Friary, to the south of Freshford, Somerset (fig. 1; NGR ST 78861 59133). The area is a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the survey was undertaken under the authority of a Section 42 licence (SL 141742). The survey area lies 53 metres above sea level and comprises flat short grass pasture. The terrain remains a constant level across the area of survey. The total area surveyed was approximately 0.45ha.

The Carthusian monastery at Hinton Priory was founded in 1222 by William Longespée, the illegitimate son of Henry II, and his wife, Ela, Countess of Salisbury (Page 1911). The house was the second Charterhouse to be founded in England, after nearby Witham Charterhouse. The early charterhouses were split into two complexes - the upper house for the monks, and the lower house for the lay brothers. The site in question comprises the lower house, where the lay brothers would have lived. The Charterhouse was surrendered to John Tregonwell on the 31st of March, 1539, and the prior was given an annuity of £44 (L&P Hen VIII, vol. 14, pt. 1, 637; Thompson 1896, 332).

Following the surrender, Sir Walter Hungerford had arranged to buy the site, but when the king's commissioners arrived to survey the site, they subsequently tore down large parts of the church and other buildings, not knowing it had already been earmarked for Hungerford (L&P Hen VIII, vol. 14 pt. 1, 1154). Hungerford consequently did not follow through with the purchase.

In 1545, the site was granted to John and Robert Bartlett, who sold the site to Sir Matthew Colthurst, the Royal Auditor from 1539 to 1551 (Virgoe 1982, 679). In 1578, the site was alienated by Edmund Colthurst to the Hungerford family, and it remained part of the Hungerford estate until the 18th century (Thompson 1896, 344)

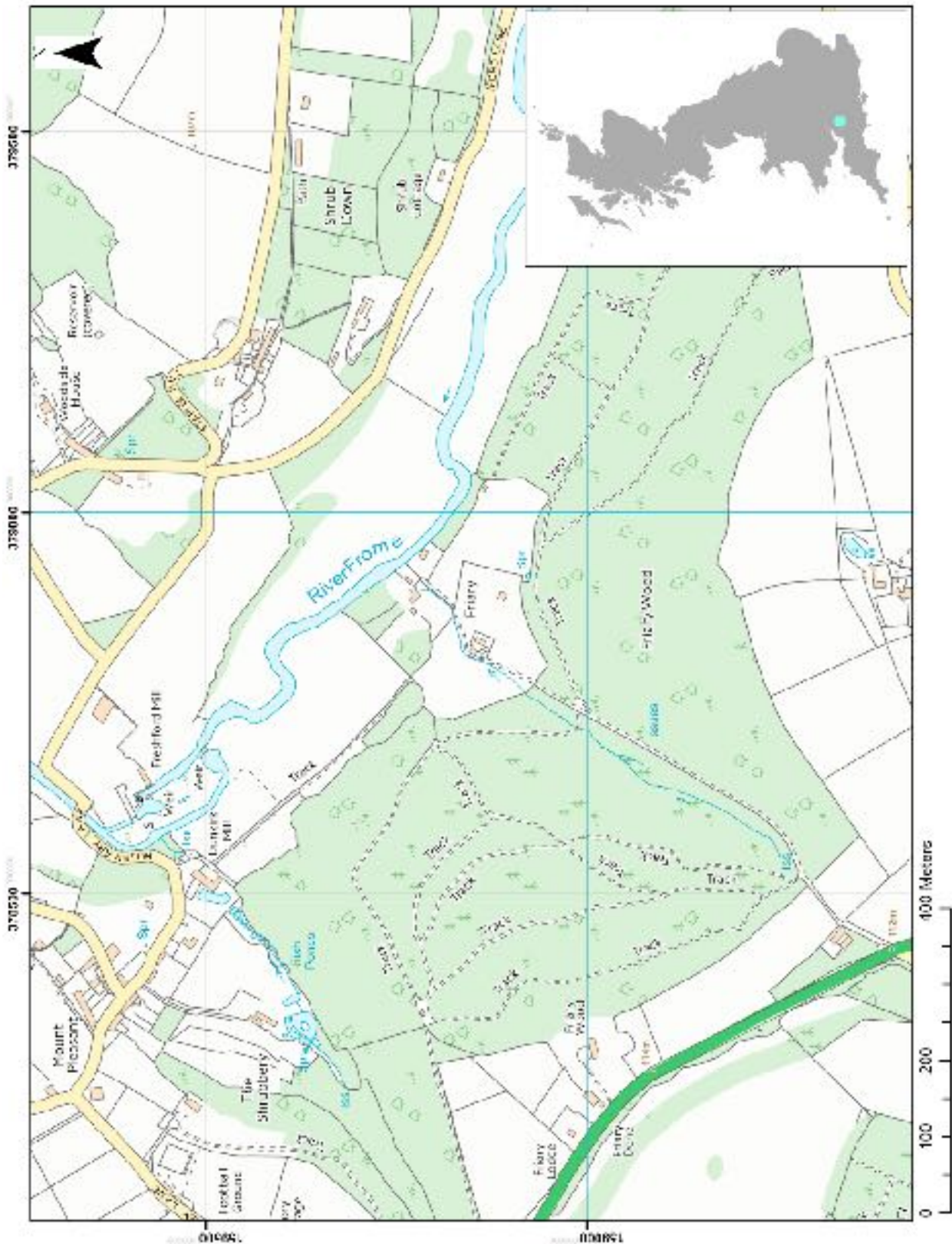


Figure 1: Location of Study Area, at Friary, North East Somerset. (© Crown Copyright 2017. All rights reserved.)

Methodology

The survey area (fig. 2) was located over the remains of the Carthusian Lay Brothers' house, as located by previous resistivity survey (Hawke 2015; Breeden 2016). The remains were evident from the resistivity survey, and the magnetometer survey was conducted to enhance these results. The LiDAR data (fig. 3) revealed little that could not already be seen from the resistivity survey. A total of 6 grid squares were surveyed over one day. The weather remained dry throughout, and all metals were removed, so as to avoid creating false readings.

A 30m x 30m site grid was established across the area of proposed survey using a Leica survey grade GP so that the data collected could be tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The grid was laid out with flat-headed yellow survey pegs. A Bartington Grad601-2 magnetic gradiometer was used to carry out the magnetometry survey. The machine was set to a traverse interval of 1m and a sample interval of 0.25m. This produced a data set of 3600 data points for each 30m x 30m grid surveyed. The data was then produced using the GEOPLOT 3.0 software package and located on the Ordnance Survey using ArcGIS 10.4.1. A greyscale plot was produced and added to an OS map for interpretation. The data was processed with a zero-mean traverse calculation, and de-staggered to remove anomalous results.

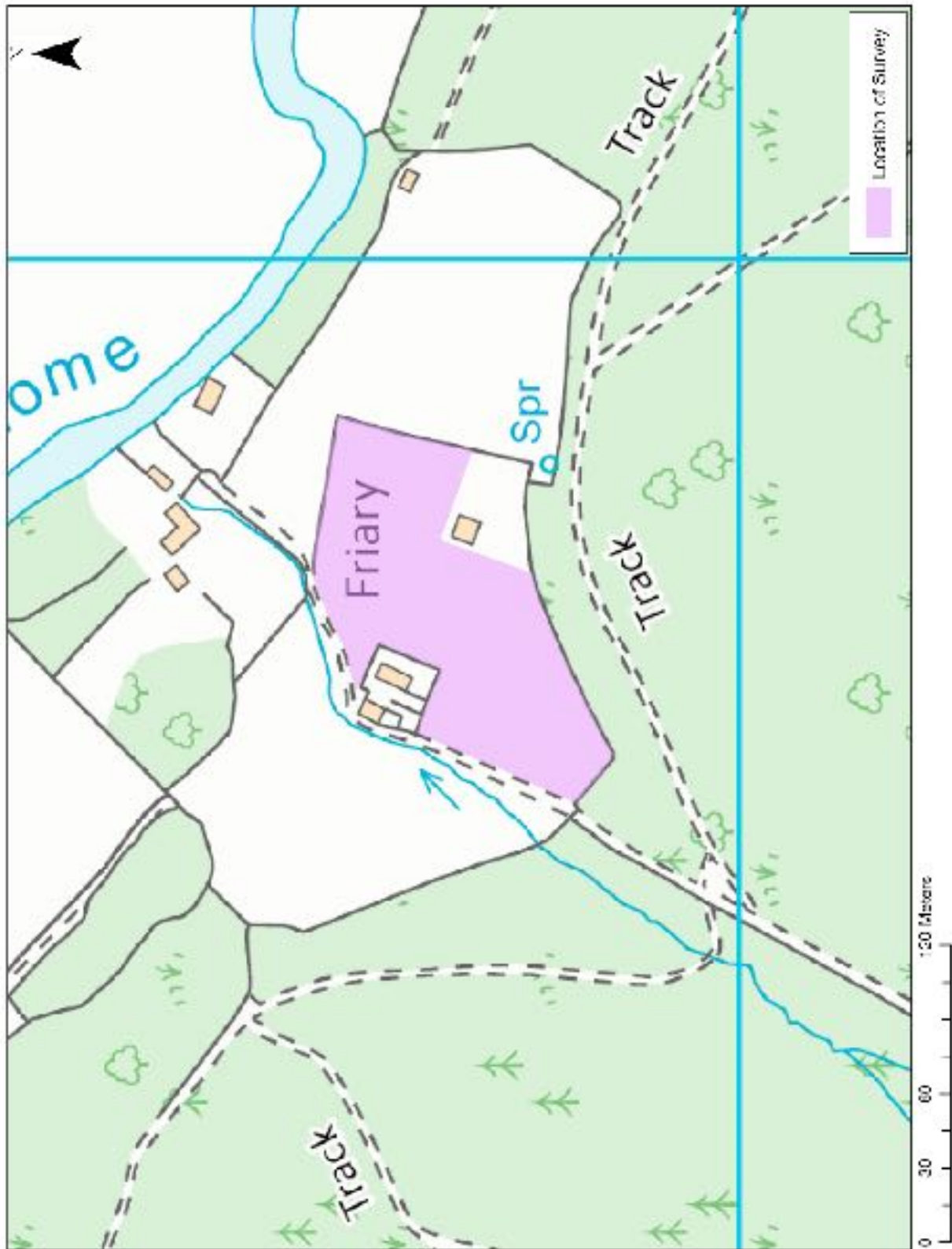


Figure 2: Location of survey. (© Crown Copyright 2017. All rights reserved.)

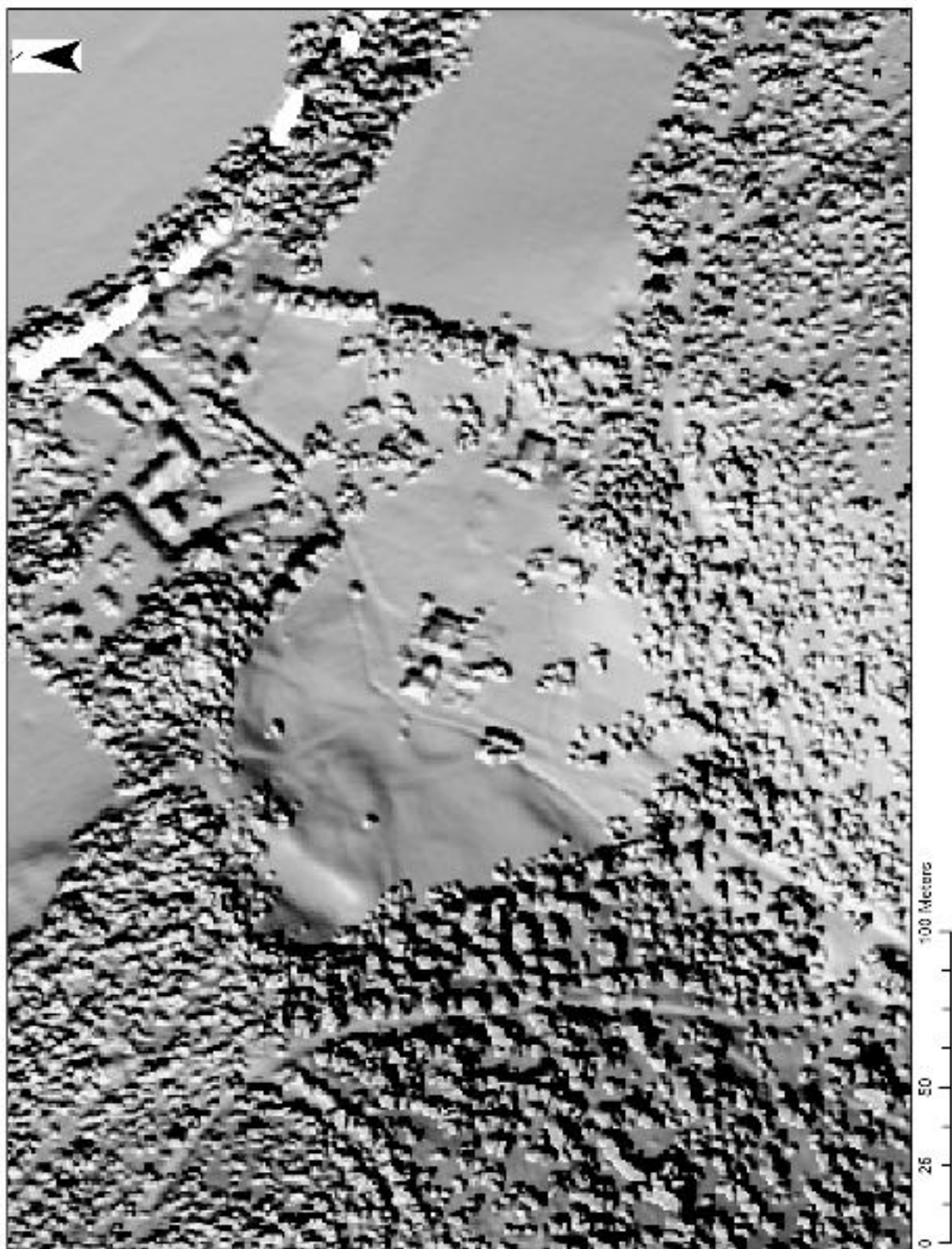


Figure 3: LiDAR data for the study area. (© Environment Agency 2017. All rights reserved.)

Results

The majority of features represented in the magnetometry plot (figs. 4, 5) relate to the monastic occupation of the site. Some of the features can be positively attributed to modern activity on the site.

A - Modern Boundary Wall

Feature A represents the footprint of a modern boundary wall, which was removed before an Aerial Photograph was taken in 1968. The same feature was located on the resistivity survey (fig. 6), and can be identified from Aerial Photographs taken in 1945 and 1946.

B - Modern Pipeline

Feature B is characterised as a strong linear anomaly, and through consultation with the owners of Woodman's Cottage, it was determined that this feature represents a pipeline that was recently installed by the current occupants. This feature can also be identified in the resistivity survey.

C - Possible boundary or enclosure

Feature C is a rectilinear anomaly on the same alignment as other monastic features identified in the magnetometry survey, and so could be considered to be contemporary. As there is little immediately related to the feature, it may be the result of some modern activity on the site.

D - Possible entrance hall or other building.

The linear feature at D may represent an entrance hall to the monastic complex from the East, or another building situated on the eastern edge of the cloister. Comparison with the resistivity survey shows that it correlates with high resistance features forming a rectilinear anomaly.

E - Claustral Buildings

The group of linear anomalies comprising feature E represent the location of the lay brothers' cells, and other claustral buildings, from the monastic occupation of the site. The results from the magnetometer survey match up with the resistivity survey, and give new information. That the walls can be identified through magnetometer survey may suggest that they were burnt when the lay brothers left, resulting in the highly magnetic readings.

F - Service Buildings

This group of two rectilinear features have been interpreted as representing service building just outside the main complex. This is again due to comparison with the resistivity plot. These two features run on the same alignment as features C-E, pursuing the theory that they are all part of the same complex.



Figure 4: Magnetometry Survey. (© Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd 2017. All rights reserved.)



Figure 5: Interpretation of Magnetometry Survey. (© Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd 2017. All rights reserved.)

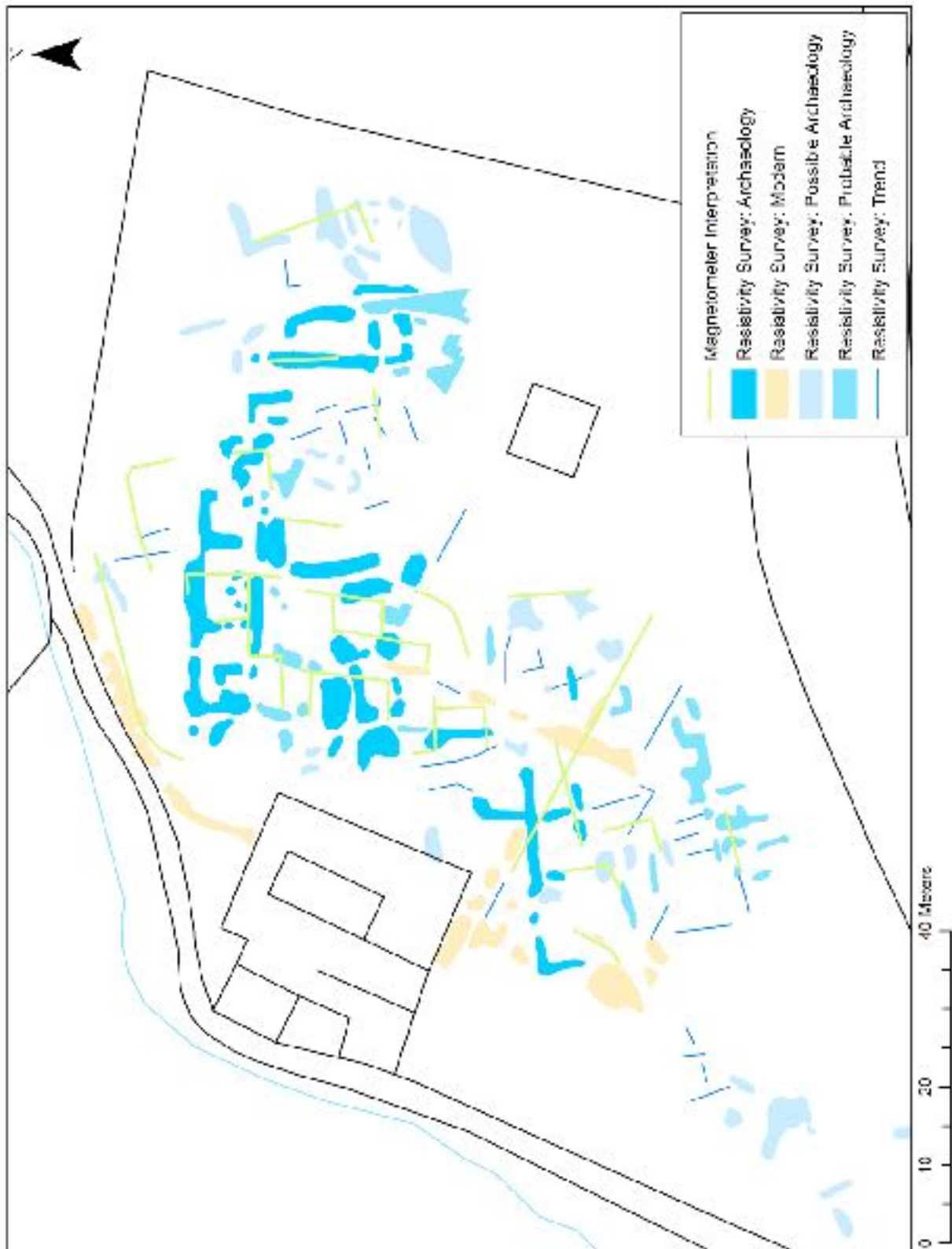


Figure 6: Interpretation of Magnetometry Survey displayed with Interpretation of 2016 Resistivity Survey. (© Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd 2017. All rights reserved.)

Conclusions

The results from the magnetometry survey correlate well with the interpretation already yielded from a previous resistivity survey. This is in keeping with the monastic phase of occupation on the site, where the lay brothers of Hinton Priory would have lived. The areas identified by the magnetometry survey are likely representative of the cells where the lay brothers slept, the service buildings, which would have included the kitchen, bake house and stable, and a possible entrance way or other building to the east of the site.

The survey also identified modern activity on the site, including a modern boundary wall and pipeline. This ties in with the resistivity survey, as well as consultation with local tenants, and the boundary wall can be identified on aerial photographs from the 1940s.

From the survey data alone, it is impossible to make fully accurate claims as to the usage of these buildings. Further work in the form of an excavation would be needed in order to make a detailed assessment of the quality and preservation of any extant subsurface archaeological remains, as well as to make suppositions as to the function of the buildings.

Copyright

The copyright of all included written, graphic or photographic records and reports rests with the University of Sheffield.

References

- Breeden, F. 2016. *Results of geophysical survey, Friary*. Unpublished survey results held by author.
- English Heritage. 2006. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. Swindon: English Heritage.
- English Heritage. 2008. *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation*. 2nd Edition. Swindon: English Heritage.
- Gairdner, J. and Brodie, R. H. (eds). 1894. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 14 part 1, January-July 1539*. London: HMSO.
- Hawke, S. 2015. *Friary, Freshford ST788592. A Geophysical Survey of Church Field*. Unpublished report produced for Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society.
- Page, W. 1911. *A History of the County of Somerset: Volume 2*. Available at www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/som/vol2/pp118-123 [accessed 19 March 2017].
- Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM). 1986. *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology*.
- University of Sheffield. 2004. *Health & Safety: Code of Practice*. Unpublished Report.
- Thompson, E. M. 1896. *A History of the Somerset Carthusians*. London: Hodge
- Virgoe, R. 1982. "Colthurst, Matthew (by 1517-59), of Wardour Castle, Wilts. and Claverton, Som.". In S. T. Bindoff (ed). *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1509-1558. Volume 1*. London: Secker & Warburg for the History of Parliament Trust, 679-680.

Appendix

