

## SURVEY RESULTS

2000 / 53 Rycote Park, Oxfordshire

### 1. Survey Areas

- 1.1 Detailed gradiometer and resistance surveys, totalling approximately 0.2ha and 1.2ha respectively, were undertaken in and around the site of Rycote Park. These areas are shown in Figure 1 at a scale of 1:1250.
- 1.2 The survey grids were tied in by Bernard Thomason of **Time Team** using a Trimble GPS system.

### 2. Display

- 2.1 The results are displayed as a series of XY traces, dot density plots and greyscale images. The relevant interpretation diagrams are presented at matching scales. Details of these display options are described in the *Technical Information* section at the end of the report.

### 3. General Considerations - Complicating factors

- 3.1 Problems were encountered due to the presence of flowerbeds, shrubs, hedges and other tall vegetation. These restricted survey in certain areas.

### 4. Resistance Survey

- 4.1 A concentration of high resistance linear and rectilinear responses was recorded at the centre of the survey grid. The anomalies are aligned north-east to south-west, approximately 80m in length and 55m wide. Several broad areas of high resistance were identified adjacent to these responses. Together the pattern of anomalies indicated the location of a network of walled foundations and associated floors/courtyards. Four excavation trenches targeted at the edges of this complex confirmed the presence of building remains, of different phases, as well as tiled floor surfaces.
- 4.2 Several low resistance linear and sub-angular responses were also recorded. These were thought to indicate the course of former walled foundations and/or floors, containing a low resistance fill. This interpretation corresponds with reports of removal of some of the original foundations after desertion of the house in the nineteenth century.
- 4.3 A number of high resistance anomalies at the eastern, southern, and north-western survey edges were detected. The pattern of these was thought to indicate the location of formal garden features. However, the possibility that some of these related to structures associated with the main building complex should not be dismissed.
- 4.4 Two broad low resistance linear responses to the north-east and north-west were detected and these were thought to indicate the in-filled remains of a former moat. The position of these responses appears to correlate with Kip's 1714 transcription of part of the moat.

- 4.5 A broad high resistance linear anomaly aligned north-west to south-east and situated c.10m to the east of Corner Cott reflects an existing trackway. Several faint low resistance linear anomalies have also been recorded and are presumed to reflect modern services.

## 5. Detailed Gradiometry

- 5.1 A small area of sample gradiometer survey was undertaken over part of the central building complex. This was carried out to locate any significant areas of magnetic enhancement/burning, which may indicate the location of ovens in the kitchens. The results show good correlation with the resistance survey confirming the presence of a number of linear foundation trenches and several concentrations of increased magnetic response. The latter appear to correspond with several broad high resistance anomalies showing further evidence for possible stone floors/courtyards within the main complex.
- 5.2 A strong linear ferrous response typical of a modern service was also recorded and this corresponds with the location of a faint low resistance anomaly.
- 5.3 Although there was a high level of noise throughout the data it was not possible to pinpoint any specific responses which may be indicative of oven or hearth remains.

## 6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Resistance survey detected a complex of significant responses indicating the location of the building remains of Rycote Park. The pattern of these was complicated overall and included a network of high resistance linear and sub-angular anomalies, as well as a similar pattern of low resistance features. The former are typical of building foundations and stone floors, and the location of some of these was confirmed by excavation. A number of the excavated features suggested several different building phases during occupation of the house.
- 6.2 The pattern of low resistance features indicated a series of in-filled ditches. These were thought to equate with the original foundation trenches from some of the building materials had been removed. This interpretation was confirmed by excavation and corresponded to the sale of building materials in 1807.
- 6.3 The in-filled remains of the moat were also detected and these show some correlation with Kip's sketch of the original outlay of the house in 1714. Several responses typical of former garden features were also recorded, although it was not possible to determine the extent of these within the time scale of the project.
- 6.4 Gradiometer survey was also undertaken with the aim of identifying the former kitchen area of the house. A number of anomalies corresponding to the resistance data were identified. No further areas of significant response were noted, although these may have been masked by more modern features, notably a pipe, which extends through this section of survey.

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**Project Assistants:** A Shields

**Date of Survey:** 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2000

**Date of Report:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2000

SSEW, 1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 4, Eastern England.

## SITE SUMMARY SHEET

2000 / 53 Rycote Park, Oxfordshire

NGR SP 667 047 (approximate location of Rycote Chapel)

### Location, geology and topography

The site is located between Oxford and Aylesbury, just north of the A329 and close to Junction 7 of the M40. Detailed resistance and gradiometer surveys were carried out over an area of lawn and two fields situated to the north of Rycote Chapel. The soils are slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils of the Denchworth (712b) Association overlying Jurassic and Cretaceous clay (SSEW, 1983).

### Archaeology

Rycote Park, built in the early sixteenth century was an occasional royal residence through to the seventeenth century and was renowned for its architecture and formal gardens. Occupation of the house proceeded till 1745, when it is believed to have been destroyed by fire.

### Aims of Survey

Detailed resistance and gradiometer surveys were undertaken to determine the location of any surviving remains of the former house and its formal gardens. This work forms part of an archaeological investigation carried out by **Time Team** on behalf of **Channel 4** television.

### Summary of Results

A broad complex of responses typical of building remains was recorded by resistance survey. Target excavation undertaken at the edges of this complex confirmed the presence of a network of walled foundations and tiled floors. The pattern of features revealed by excavation indicated several possible building phases, as well as disturbance to some of the original foundations. Several areas of increased magnetic response were recorded by the sample gradiometer survey and these correlated with the resistance results. No further areas of significant archaeological response were noted by the magnetic survey.

Beyond the main core of foundations several high resistance anomalies presumed to reflect former garden features were detected. Unfortunately it was not possible to determine the extent of these features within the time scale of this project.

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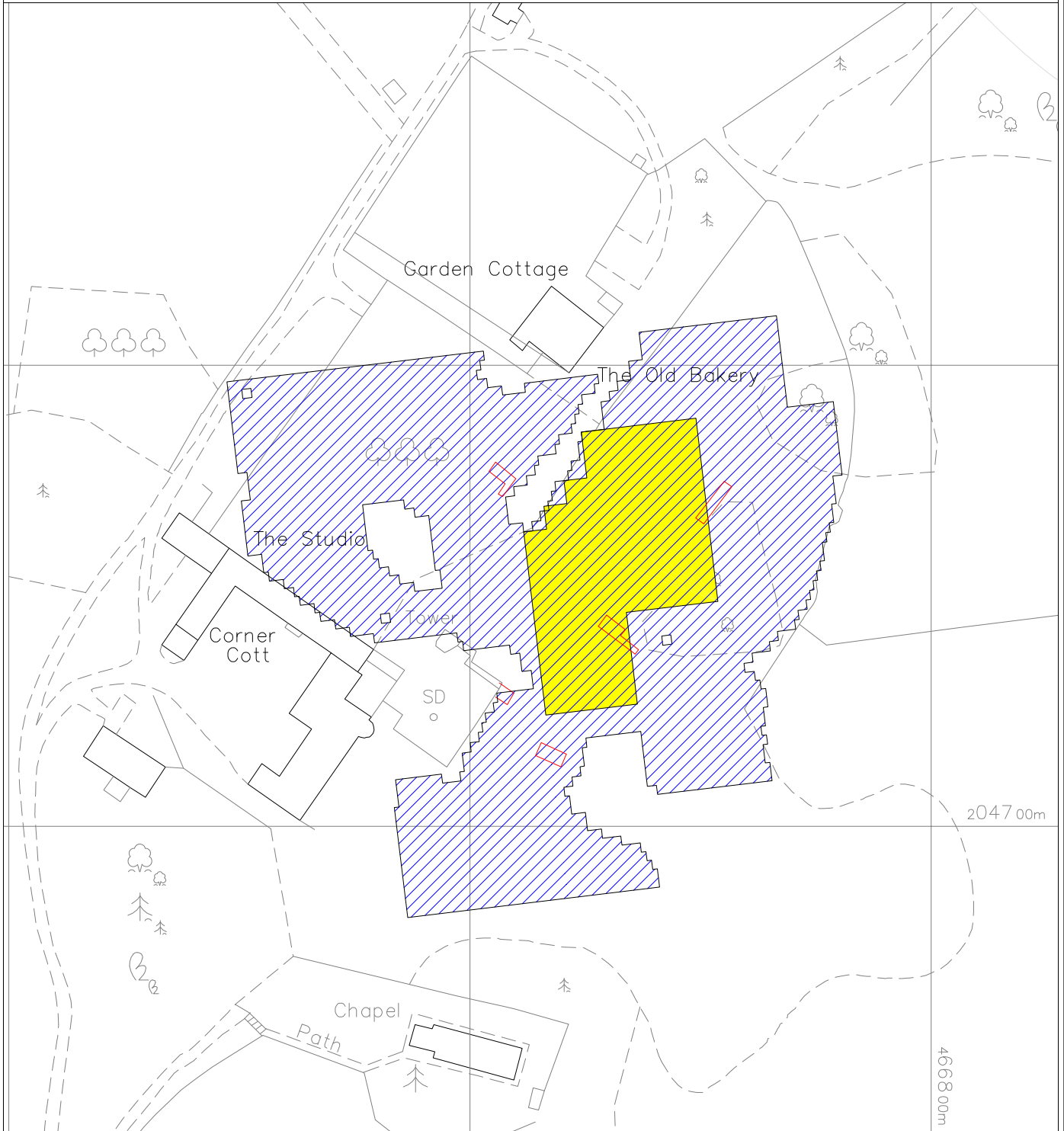
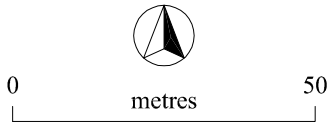
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**GSB PROSPECTION**


PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park

TITLE: Location Diagram

Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team



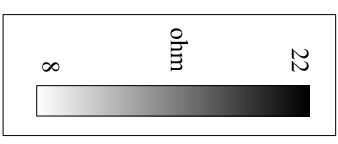
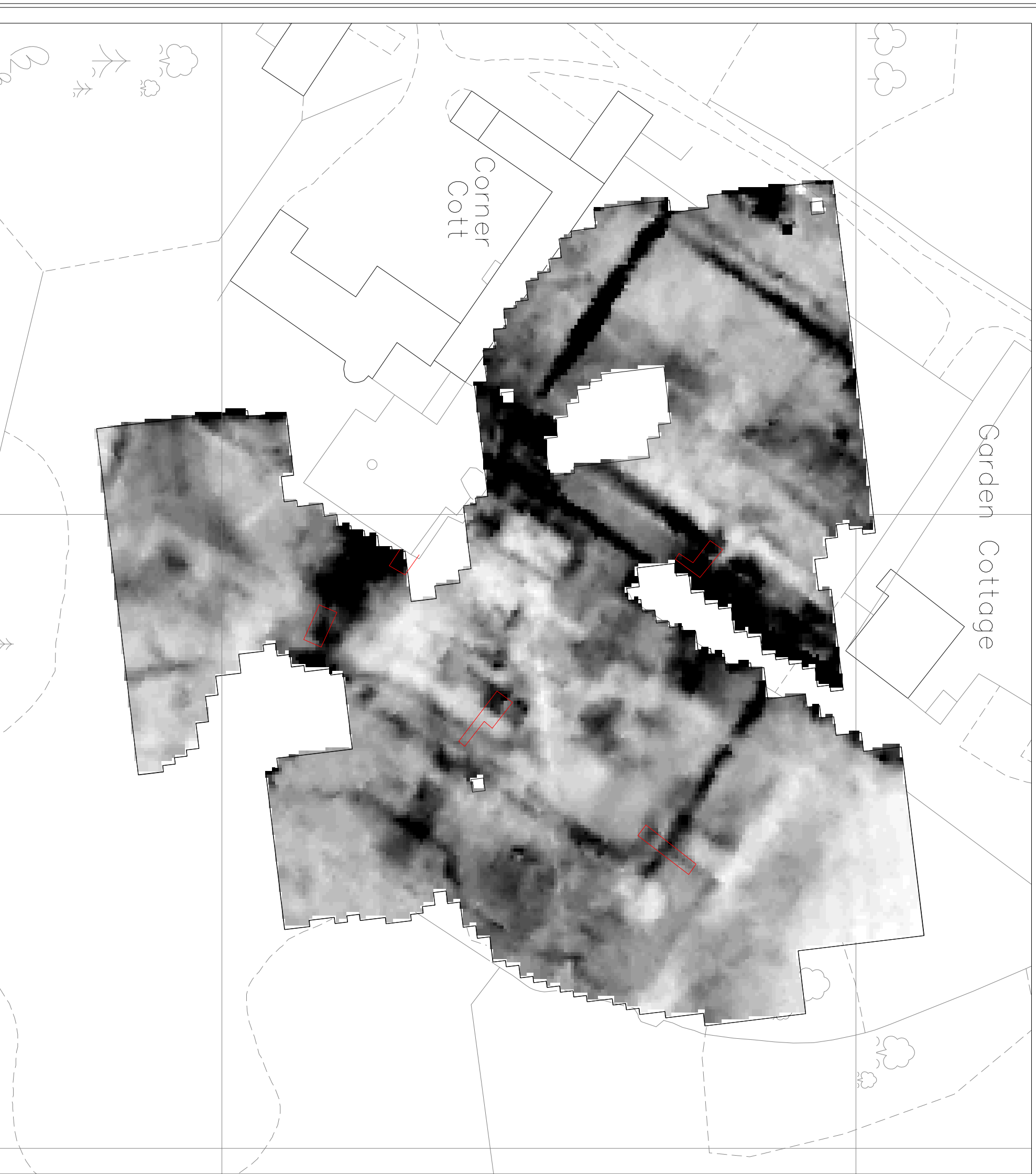
 Resistance Survey


 Gradiometer Survey

 Trenches

Figure 1

<b>GSB PROSPECTION</b>
PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park
TITLE: Resistance Data - Greyscale
Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team



 Trenches

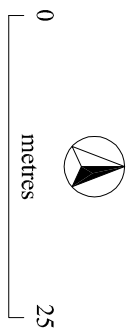


Figure 2

# RYCOTE PARK

## Resistance Data

Raw Data



Interpolated



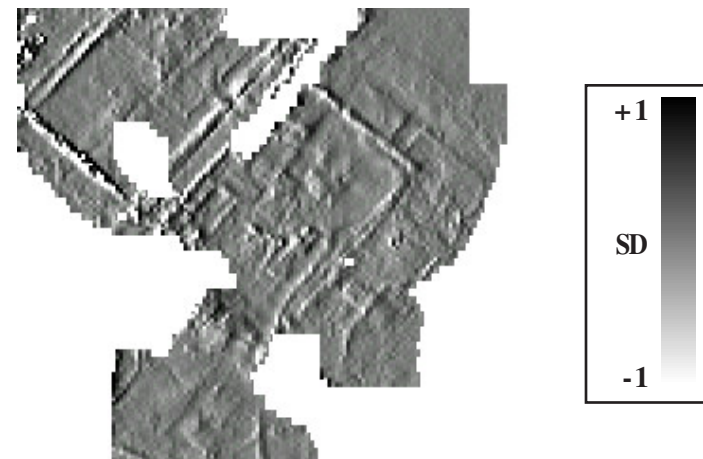
Interpolated



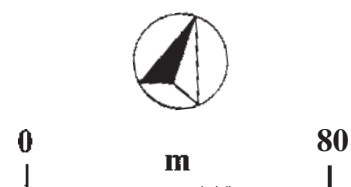
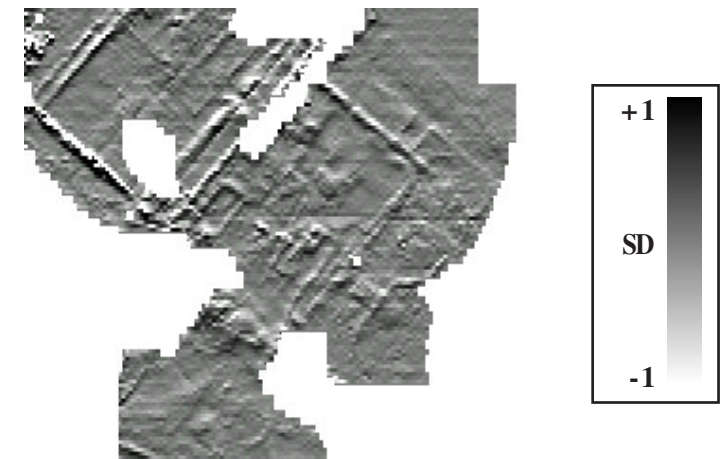
High Pass Filter



Relief Plot



Relief Plot



Garden Cottage

Corner  
Cott











**GSB PROSPECTION**

PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park

TITLE: Resistance Interpretation

Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team

-  High Resistance -  
?Walls/Rubble
-  High Resistance -  
?Floors/Yards
-  High Resistance -  
?Garden Features
-  Low Resistance -  
?Moat
-  Low Resistance
-  Modern Trackway
-  ?Tree
-  Services

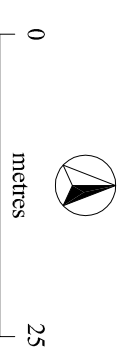
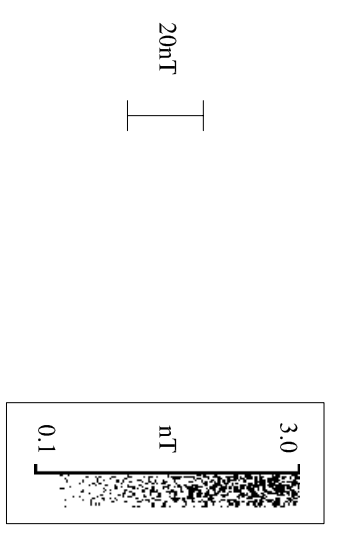
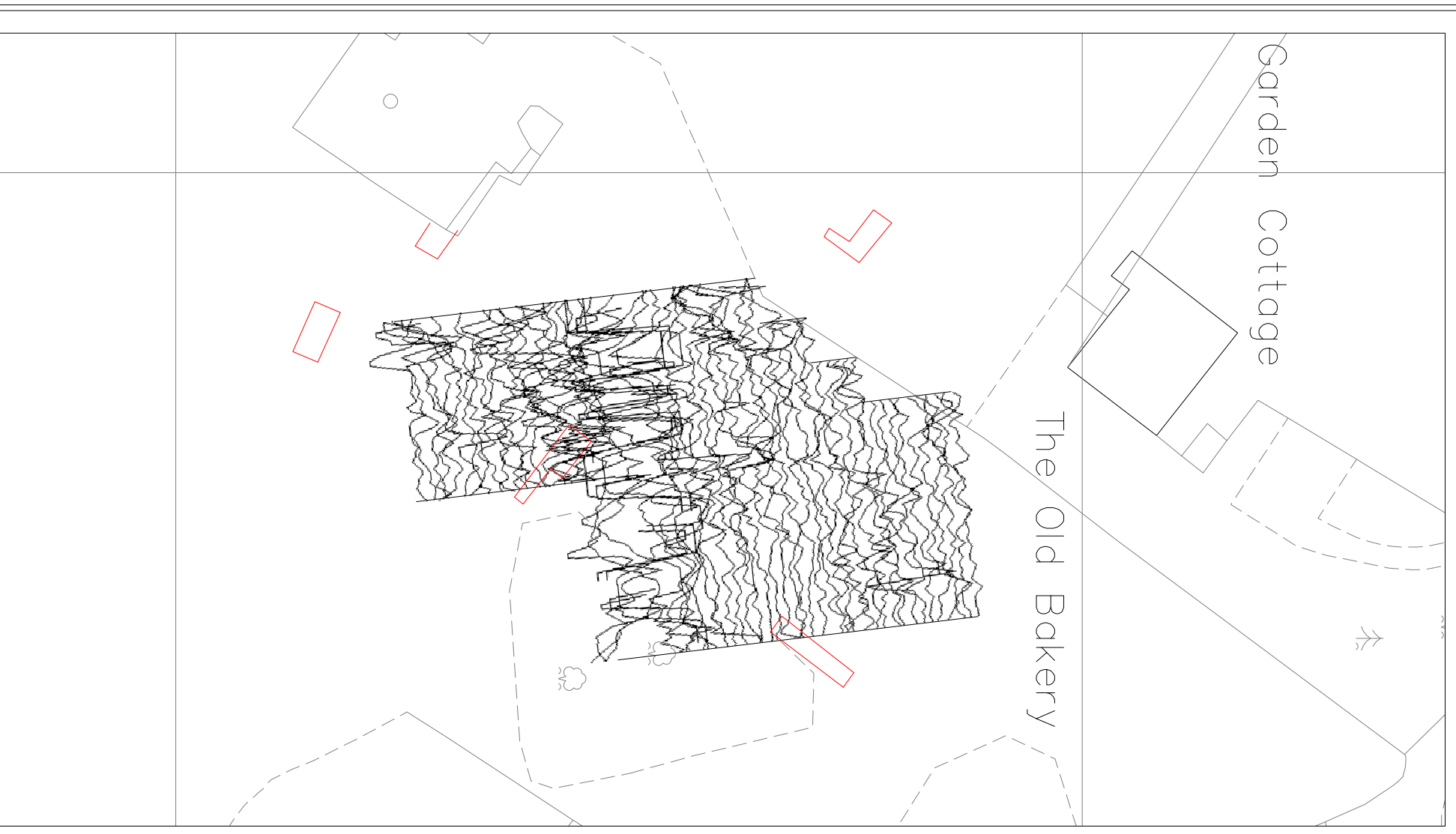


Figure 4



**GSB PROSPECTION**  
 PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park  
 TITLE: Gradiometer Data  
 Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team



20mT

Trenches

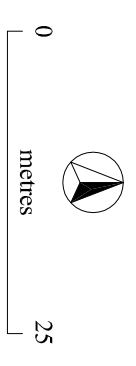


Figure 5

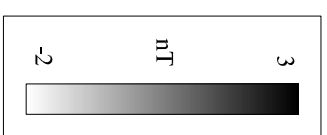
Garden Cottage





The Old Bakery

Garden Cottage

The Old Bakery

<b>GSB PROSPECTION</b>
PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park
TITLE: Gradiometer Data
Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team



-  ?Archaeology
-  Area of Increased Magnetic Response
-  Pipe
-  Ferrous

-  Trenches

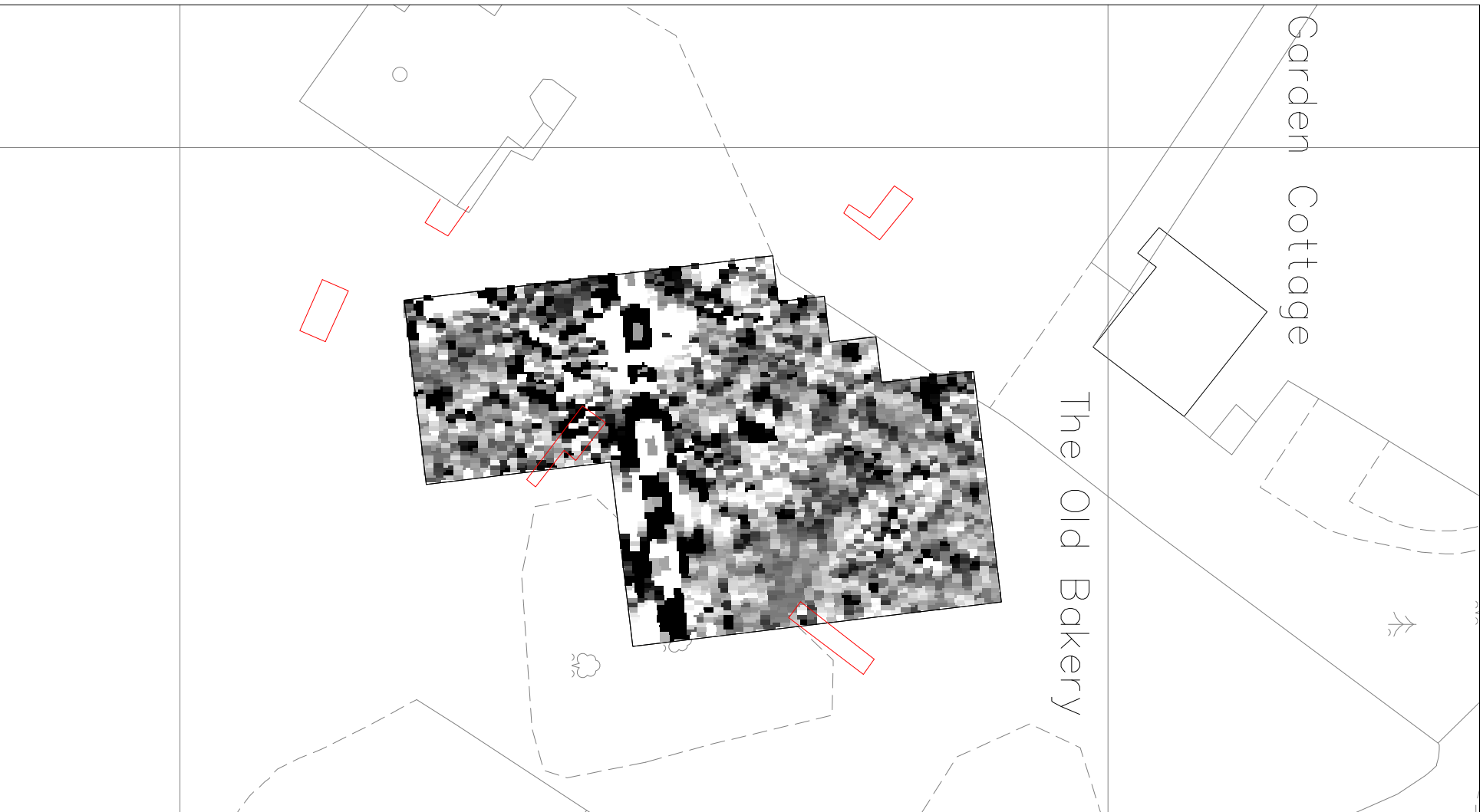
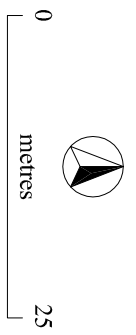


Figure 6

Garden Cottage

Corner  
Cott



**GSB PROSPECTION**

PROJECT: 2000/53 Rycote Park

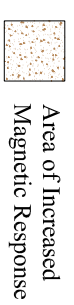
TITLE: Combined Interpretation

Based on a Plan supplied by Time Team

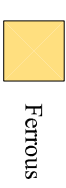
**Gradiometer**



?Archaeology



Area of Increased  
Magnetic Response

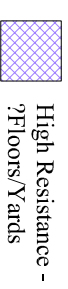


Ferrous

**Resistance**



High Resistance -  
?Walls/Rubble



High Resistance -  
?Floors/Yards



High Resistance -  
?Garden Features



High Resistance -  
?Moat



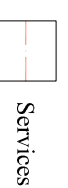
Low Resistance



Modern Trackway



?Tree



Services

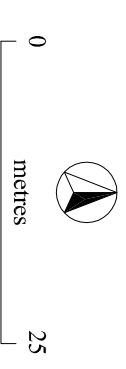


Figure 7