

**SURVEY RESULTS**

2006 / 55 Wicken, Northamptonshire

**1. Survey Area**

- 1.1 Magnetic survey (using a Bartington Grad 601-2 instrument) was carried out in two areas totalling just under 1ha. Resistance survey (using a Geoscan RM15 meter) was conducted in five areas totalling just over half a hectare.
- 1.2 The survey grid was set out by *GSB Prospection Ltd* and tied in to the Ordnance Survey (OS) map by *Dr Henry Chapman* using a Trimble differential GPS System. The location of the survey areas are shown in Figure 1 at a scale of 1:2500.

**2. Data Processing and Display**

- 2.1 The magnetic data have been pre-processed by removing baseline shifts due to zig-zag data collection. Where appropriate, traverses have been corrected for minor misalignments; these are due to variations in walking speed, which are usually a result of ground conditions or topography. Unless stated it should be assumed that no filtering has been undertaken on the datasets collected in this project. The data have been interpolated to improve visualisation in the greyscale images.
- 2.2 De-spiking of the resistance data has been undertaken, to reduce minor errors from contact with the ground surface; this is carried out prior to interpolation, which is often employed to reduce pixilation in greyscale visualisation. Filtering is commonly used on resistance data to suppress, for example, a geological background and where used this will be noted on the relevant diagrams.
- 2.3 Figures 2-5 show summary diagrams of the gradiometer and resistance data as greyscales and interpretations, at a scale of 1:1000.
- 2.4 The gradiometer results are displayed as XY traces, greyscale images and interpretations at a scale of 1:500. The resistance results are displayed as greyscale images and interpretations. These display formats and the interpretation categories used are discussed in the *Technical Information* section at the end of the text.
- 2.5 Letters and numbers in parenthesis refer to specific magnetic or resistance anomalies, respectively, highlighted in the text.

**3. General Considerations and Complicating Factors**

- 3.1 Conditions for resistance survey were poor as a spell of hot, dry weather made the ground very hard and therefore achieving a good electrical contact between the probes and the ground proved difficult.
- 3.2 Small scale ferrous anomalies within the magnetic data are likely to be of a modern origin and will not be discussed in the text unless thought relevant.

**4. Results of Gradiometer Survey****Area 4**

- 4.1 A number of pit-type responses (A) are the only evidence for potential archaeology within this area, but since they are isolated such an interpretation must remain cautious.
- 4.2 Bisecting the data on an approximate east – west alignment is a pipe and the response from this will have masked any archaeological remains. The western and northern limits of the data have also produced a ferrous response from the metal fence which was situated along the field boundary.

**Area 5**

- 4.3 This survey block was situated over earthworks and an area of increased magnetic response (B) corresponds with these. Archaeological type response (C) follows the same alignment as the earthworks and is therefore likely to represent the ditch, whereas (B) indicates the bank.
- 4.4 A few other isolated pit-type responses are evident, and due to the high archaeological potential of the area are likely to have an archaeological potential
- 4.5 Ferrous responses in and around the edges of the survey block will have masked any other detectable archaeology within the area. These anomalies were produced by modern objects such as a water trough, telegraph pole and metal fences.

**5. Results of Resistance Survey****Area 1**

- 5.1 Running in a northwest – southeast orientation is a band of high resistance (1) which is likely to be the remains of an old road. It is on the same alignment as the current road to the east and matches a line indicated on early maps (S Ainsworth *pers comm*).
- 5.2 To the south of the purported road (1) are a number of high resistance anomalies which may suggest areas of rubble associated with roadside buildings, this interpretation must be viewed with care as other causes, such as topography can produce the same responses.
- 5.3 Low resistance zones within the survey area are likely to indicate topographical variations.

**Area 2**

- 5.4 This area was situated in a large back garden that had been extensively landscaped. As such, the resistance results reflect this as zones of both high and low resistance. Any archaeology that may be present will have been masked by the landscaping.

**Area 3**

- 5.5 An area of high resistance (3) marks the position of St. James Church; this was confirmed by excavation. Further high resistance readings probably indicate rubble spread surrounding the former church.

**Area 4**

- 5.6 Results from this area consist of responses typical of those of topographical variations though an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out in light of the gradiometer survey within this area (see paragraph 4.1) which contains possible pit-type anomalies.

**Area 6**

- 5.7 High resistance response (4) was situated near several large trees and therefore a natural interpretation is preferred. Also, within this area a concrete man-hole cover was present which will have added to the elevated resistance.
- 5.8 A linear band of high resistance in the north of the data corresponds with a slight bank visible on the ground and has been given a topographical interpretation.

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| <b>6. Conclusions</b> |
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- 6.1 Gradiometer survey has produced a number of pit-like responses in Area 4 though whether these relate to early settlement is uncertain. In Area 5 the magnetic results did not add significantly to what is visible as earthworks.
- 6.2 Resistance survey within Area 1 shows the remains of an old road. When placed on the OS map, the alignment is the same as the current road running through the village to the east. High resistance anomalies to the south of the road have the potential of being road-side buildings.
- 6.2 The 'lost' site of St. James church was located within the resistance survey in Area 3, as an area of high resistance. The remainder of the survey areas yielded results of a topographical nature due to landscaping; the hot weather at the time of survey will also have influenced the strength of the resistance data.

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**Project Assistants:** F Chester, Dr J Gater & G Taylor

**Date of Survey:** 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2006  
**Date of Report:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006

**References:**

- Knappett B and Edwards K 2006 *Proposed Archaeological Evaluation at Wicken, Northamptonshire.* Unpublished Report.
- SSEW 1983 *Soils of England and Wales. Sheet 4, Eastern England.* Soil Survey of England and Wales.

## SITE SUMMARY SHEET

2006 / 55 Wicken, Northamptonshire

NGR: SP 744 394 (approximate centre)

### Location, topography and geology

Wicken is located approximately 5 miles north west of Milton Keynes, on the north bank of the Great Ouse River, which forms the boundary between Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. Topography of the survey areas varied, from a flat terrain to slightly sloping. Soils of the area belong to the Hanslope (411d) association, formed from a parent of Chalky Till, whilst the underlying geology is Great Oolitic Limestone overlain with boulder clay (SSEW 1983).

### Archaeology (Background Information taken from Knappett and Edwards 2006)

Wicken existed as a single manor pre-Domesday but was divided into two entities; Wick Dive and Wick Hamon prior to 1086. The current Wicken was created in 1587 by joining the two villages. Wick Dive had a manor house with dove cote. The church at Wick Dive is not mentioned in Domesday but around 1130 a gift of two tithes is given to the church at Oxford Castle. The current parish church is a rebuild of the medieval one. The church of St. James at Wick Hamon was presented a chaplain in 1218; however it was demolished in 1619 due to poor condition.

### Aims of Survey

The aims of the survey were to locate any anomalies associated with the lost church of St. James, and to locate responses associated with the early settlement site. This work forms part of a wider investigation being carried out by Channel 4's **Time Team**.

### Summary of Results \*

St. James' church has been successfully identified within the resistance data (Area 3). In the northwest of the village Area 1 produced results indicating an old road and potential roadside buildings. Topographical responses were noted within the remainder of the survey areas (2, 4 and 6).

Gradiometer results yielded anomalies of archaeological interest over the earthworks, (south of the current church) linked to the early settlement (Area 5). A second survey area (Area 4) has produced pit-type responses, though the presence of a pipe makes any archaeological interpretation tentative.

**\* It is essential that this summary is read in conjunction with the detailed results of the survey.**

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