

Ford Farm, Bawdrip

BA student's search for Roman building continues

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I contacted BACAS about the possibility of using their geophysics equipment, and it was agreed with John Oswin that a resistivity survey could take place in August 2008.

As part of my dissertation for the BA in Archaeological Studies at Bristol University, I needed to survey a previously excavated site at Ford Farm, Bawdrip (NGR 367 387), where the foundations of a Romano British building had been found by Bridgwater Archaeological Society in 2002-2003. I was interested in confirming the position of the building from previous records and ascertaining whether there were any extensions to the foundations already excavated.

The illustration shows the areas investigated: part of an arable field, South Field, and an old orchard. The results show a large positive anomaly in South Field and at either end of this there are fainter anomalies which might indicate stone foundations. These are rectangular and reflect similar alignments on the other side of the lane in the Orchard. In the north western corner of the South Field survey there are known to be stone foundations and they lie below the area of stronger anomaly, which could be demolition spread from the building. This large area of stronger signals could also indicate the presence of tufa rock, which is known to exist over parts of the site. At the south eastern end of the South Field survey area, the fainter rectangular anomalies may indicate a continuation of the building, again reflected in the Orchard area. There are a number of positive anomalies in the Orchard, again it is possible that some of these are other areas of tufa rock, but there could be an indication of trackways. Further archaeological investigation is required to explore some of these possibilities. This would involve further geophysical survey, including magnetometry and excavation in both areas to try and establish the presence of further building foundations, then a more complete picture of the 'villa' might be possible. If anyone has some good ideas about the interpretation, I would be most interested!

My thanks go to Dave Denney, Dave Durkin and Steve Tofts for their help with the survey, despite the metre high nettles! Thanks also to John Oswin for his help and enabling the use of the BACAS kit. Particular thanks go to Paul and Caroline Warren for permission to survey their Farm.

Figure 1
The resistivity survey results found in South Field at Ford Farm

