Tasburgh, Norfolk. Report on geophysical survey, 1983. Report No. 37/83

Dates of fieldwork: 22-24, 28-30/11/83, 1/12/83 Field no. : 0001

Geology: sands and gravels

Plans enclosed: 1 - Location plan, 1: 2500

2 - magnetometer traces with interpretation, 1:500

A 30 m grid was laid out within the perimeter of the existing earthwork (see plan 1), and this was surveyed with the fluxgate magnetometer and recording system. Plan 2 shows the magnetometer traces superimposed on the site grid at a reduced scale, and with significant anomalies outlined in red.

RESULTS

Large expanses of the survey area contain no reliable magnetic evidence for buried features. What evidence there is is concentrated in the southern half of the area, and here there are several linear anomalies of varying strength, representing ditches, some of which apparently form subsidiary enclosures themselves containing features such as pits or hearths. The stronger anomalies in squares 33 and 40, and especially the latter, may result from kilns.

With the exception of the two strongly magnetic pits in square 10, features marked in the northern half of the area are weak and tenuous and may represent soil noise rather than significant magnetic anomalies.

CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological activity is with few exceptions concentrated in the southern part of the field, where enclosures and evidence of possible occupation, probably also extending to the south of School Lane, have been detected.

Large parts of the earthwork interior are blank, however, suggesting:

- a) no features exist in these areas. Topsoil magnetic susceptibility values (with a range of 27 - 34 x 10-8 SI Units/Kg) should be adequate for detecting most substantial features if they are present;
- or, b) ploug ... -damage has been severe in these areas and only a remnant remains to be detected. It is perhaps unlikely that plough-damage could have removed evidence selectively within the field.
- or, c) features exist, but are too small or damaged to be clearly detectable against background soil noise.

The magnetic evidence alone is not sufficient to determine with confidence the factors behind the distribution of anomalies although the magnetic susceptibility values support the probability that features are truly absent from large parts of the site. It is also a possibility that most of those features detected, lying as they do near the parish church, may not be contemporary with the earthwork which defines the site.

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