

Field Investigations Durley Hill

BACAS

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Director of Archaeology



Advert!

- BACAS is an active local society, with the goal of the promotion of archaeology in all its branches.
- BACAS is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation run by and for volunteers.
- BACAS engages in excavations and investigations of general archaeological interest, and encourages our members to undertake their own projects, which we are happy to support. There is a committed field work group carrying out excavations all year round and we have a highly active geophysics group, which is constantly adding to the understanding of the local archaeological remains.
- We also have a regular programme of lectures and excursions

- 170 Members (room for more!)
- Multiple projects yearly including:
 - Excavation
 - Post excavation processing (pot washing/finds cleaning & recording)
 - Geophysics
 - Research
 - Landscape interpretation

Excavation

- We dig all year round where practical
- Small and large projects



**December 2025 Santa
lent me two of his elves**



Summer
2026

Geophysics



Resistivity



Magnetic Susceptibility



Ground Penetrating Radar

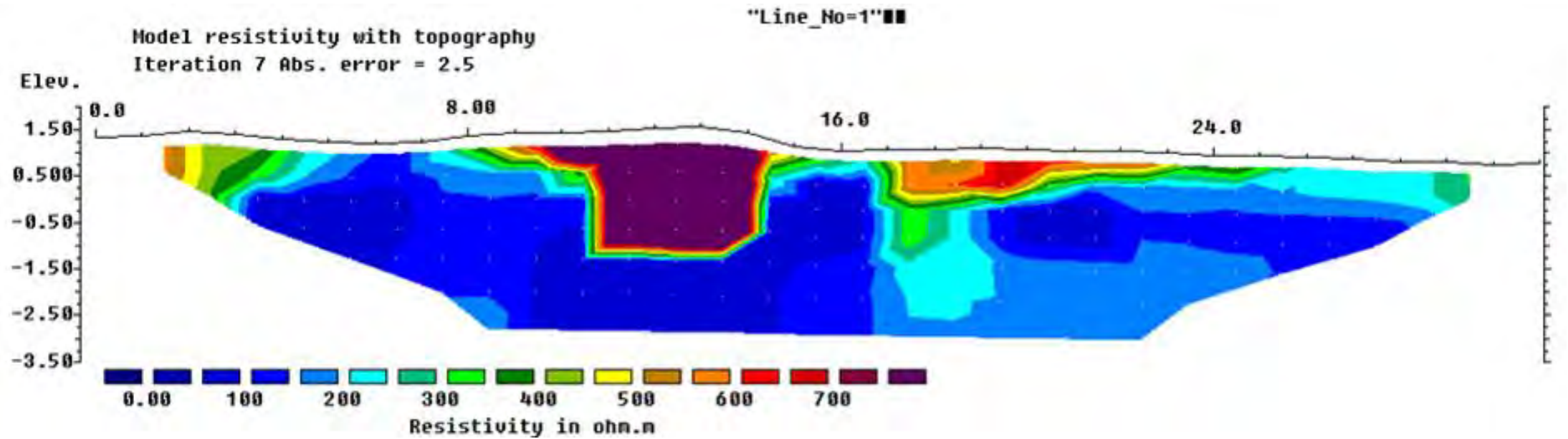


Profiling - Electrical Resistivity Tomography (ERT)



Magnetic Survey

Profiling

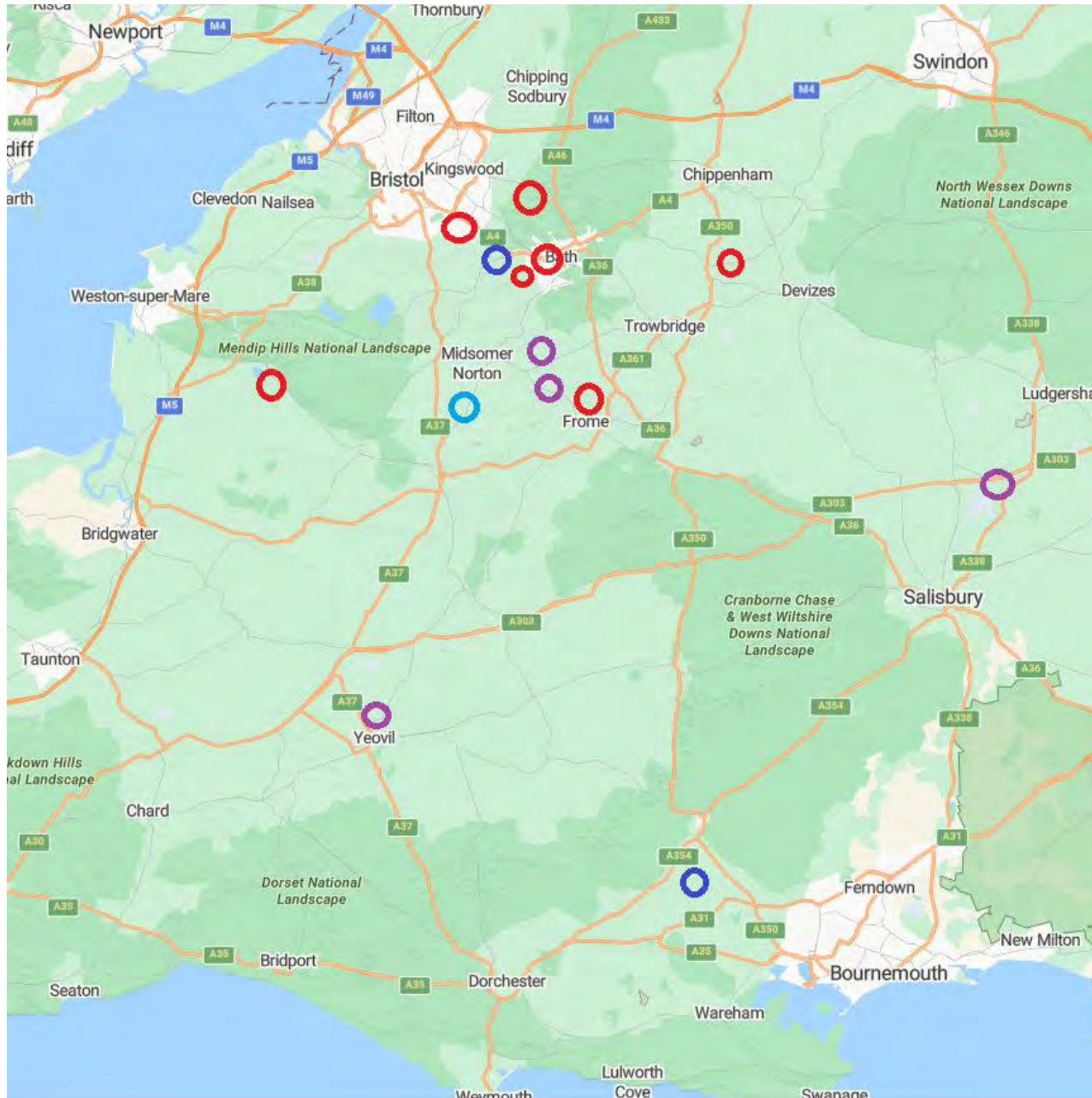


Downside School, Stratton-on- the-Fosse Jun 2025

New equipment PAYG GNSS Survey



BACAS Projects Last 12 Months



Red = Full Projects using all resources incl. excavation

Blue = Geophysics Projects

Purple = Consultation and/or Desk Bound Assessments

End of Advert!

Durley Hill Project 2026

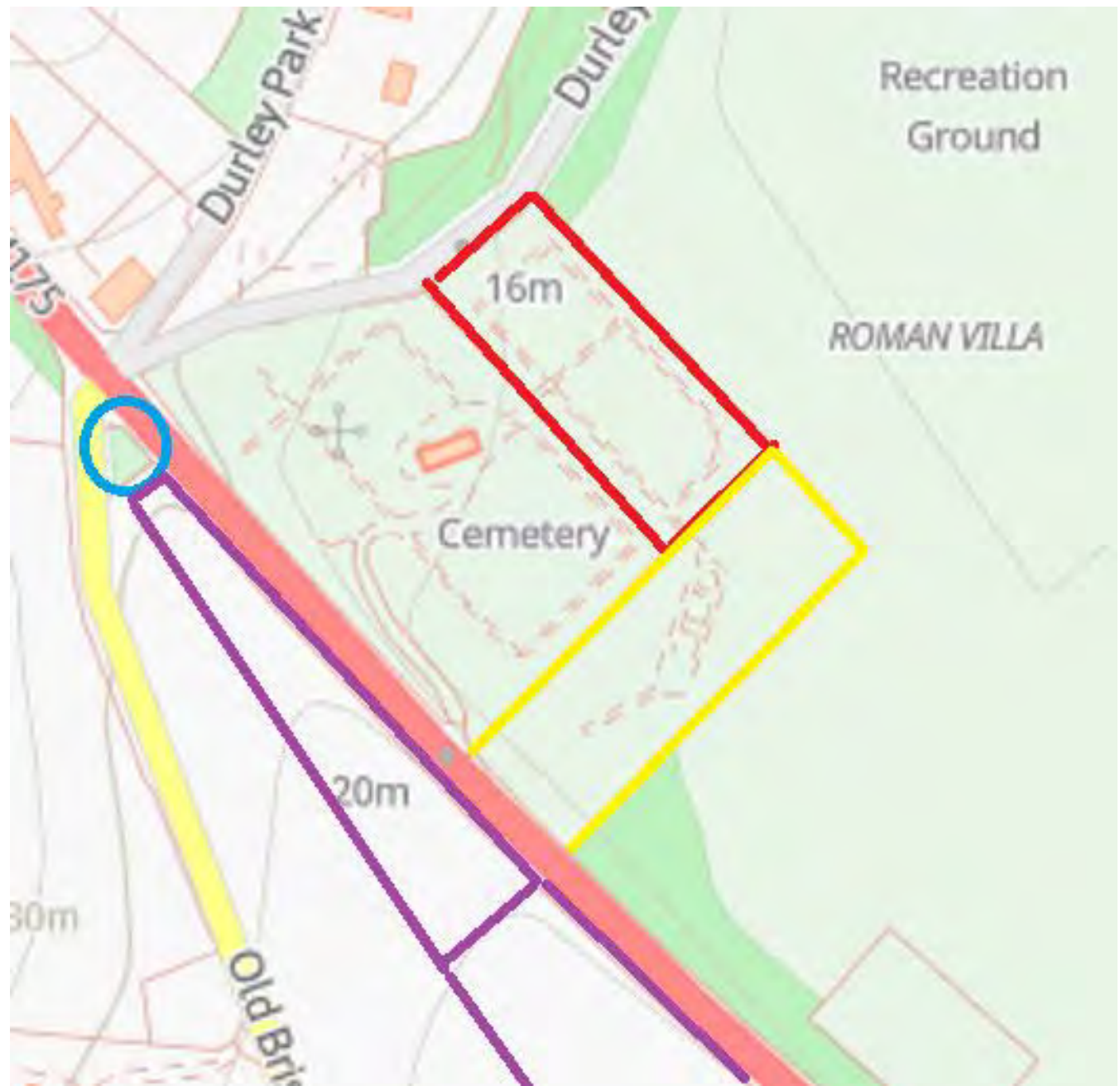
*The Durley Hill Roman
building is unusual and
significant, perhaps nationally!*



Past Archaeological Investigations at Durley Hill

There is a general professional opinion that a re-evaluation of the Durley Hill 'villa' is long overdue. There are anomalies in parts of the structure exposed by Bullied and Horne in the 1920's which do not form part of the usual appointments in a Romano-British villa

Bryn Walters (ARA) 2016



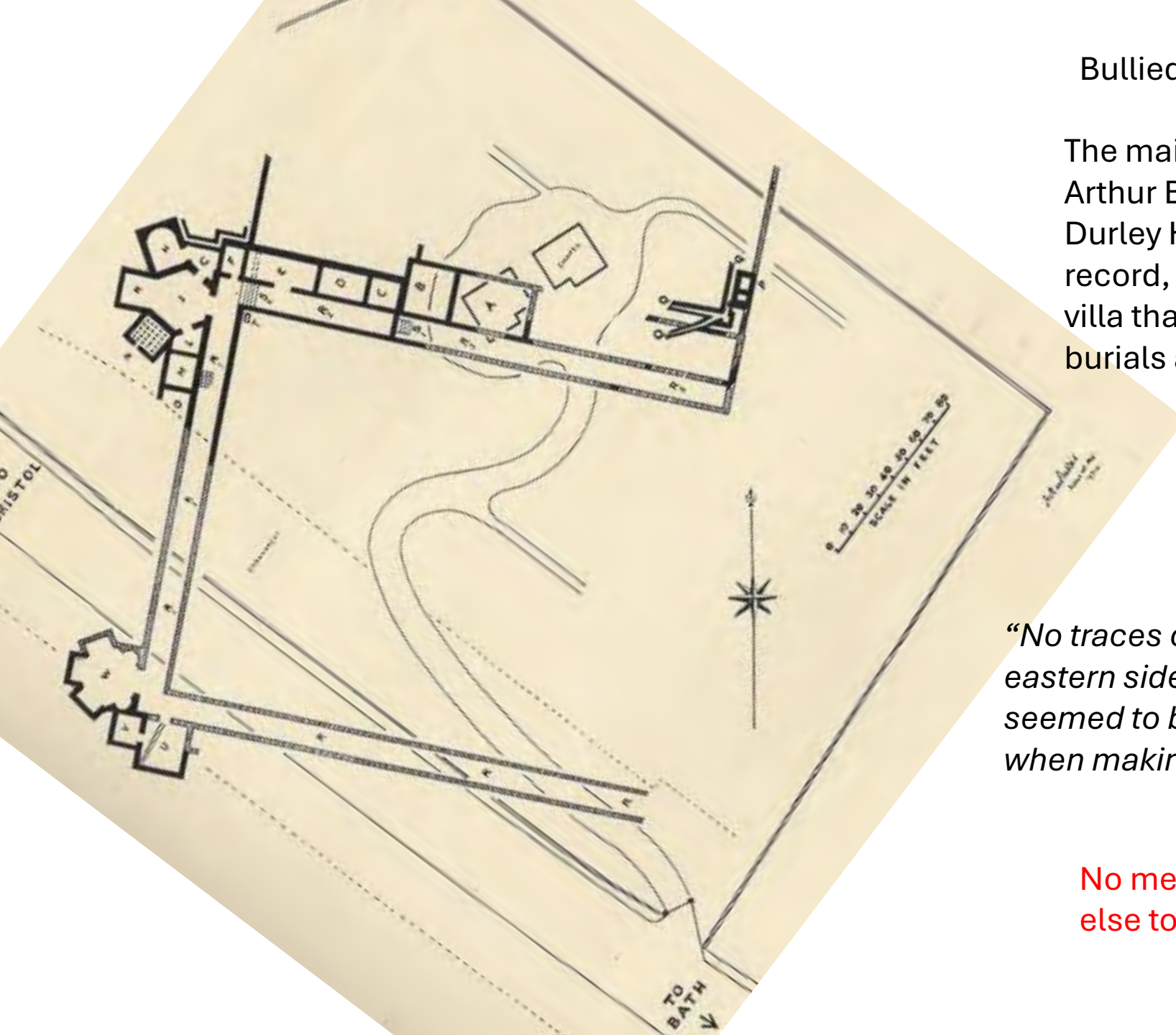
Bulleid and Horne 1924

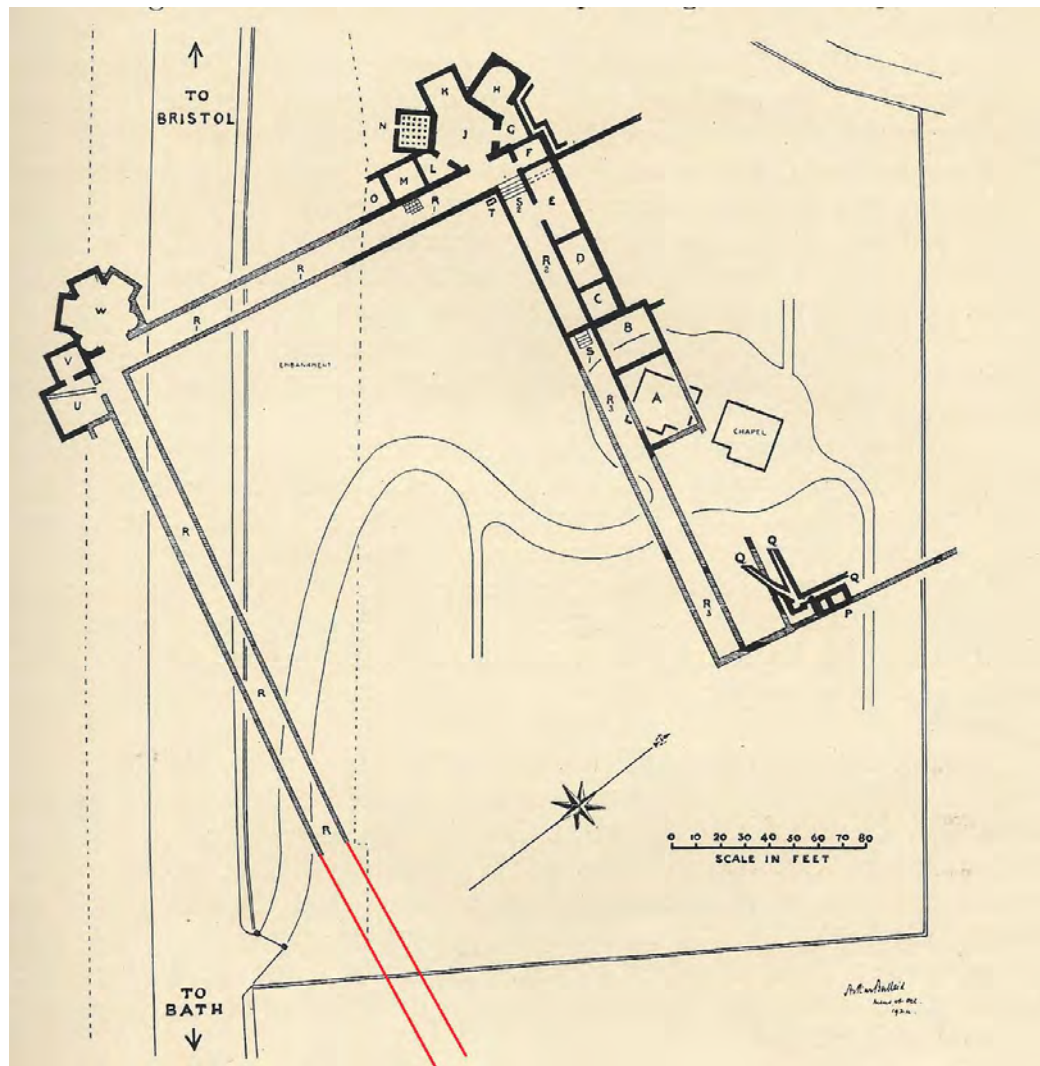
The main aim of the excavation carried out by Arthur Bulleid and Dom Ethelbert Horne at Durley Hill, Keynsham was to investigate, record, and preserve the remains of a Roman villa that was being damaged by cemetery burials and construction work.

Rescue Archaeology!

“No traces of walls were discovered closing in the eastern side of the quadrangle, and the grave-digger seemed to be clear that he never encountered walls when making graves on this side”

No mention of anything
else to the north





BACAS & ARA 2016



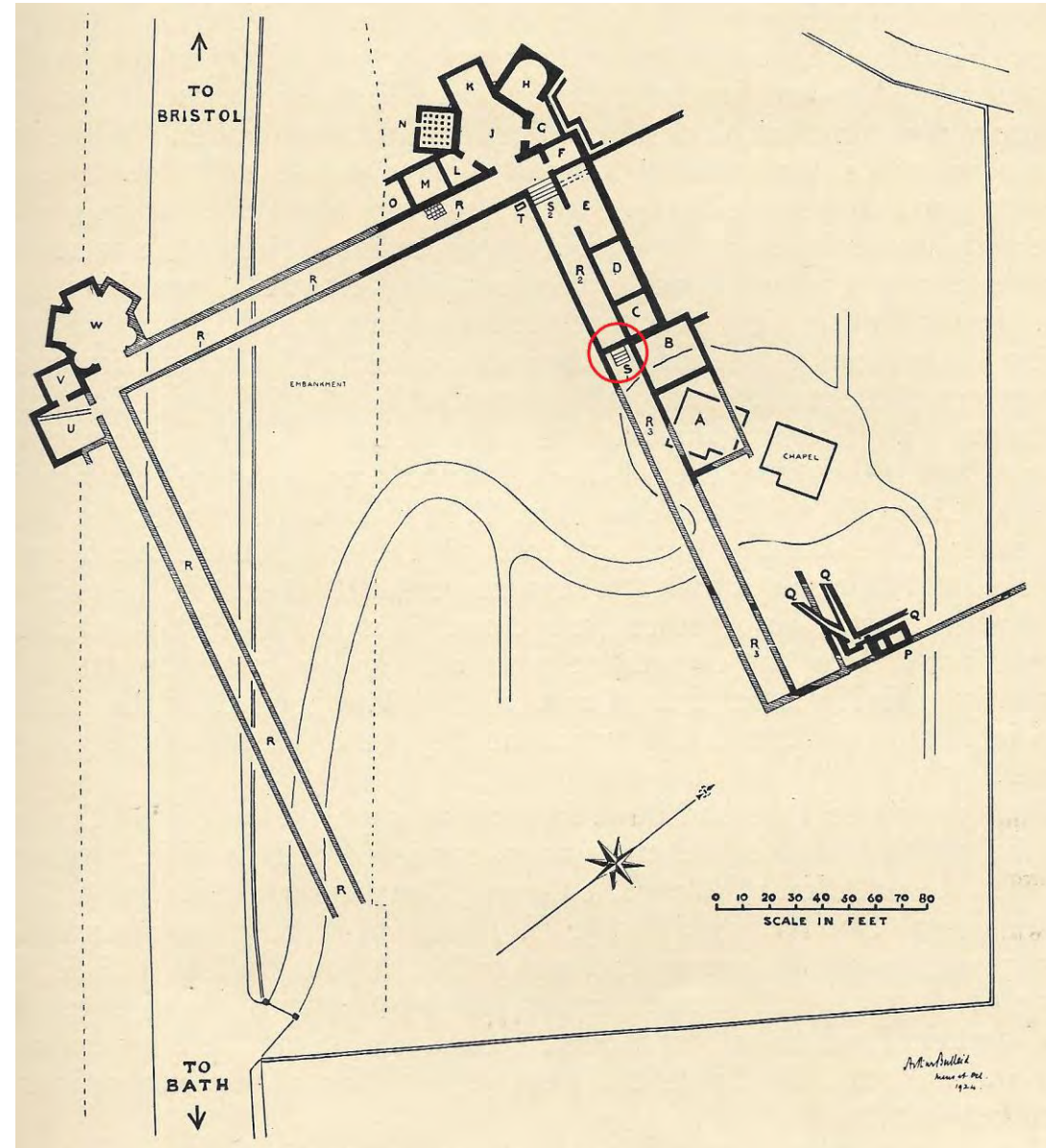


BACAS & ARA
2017

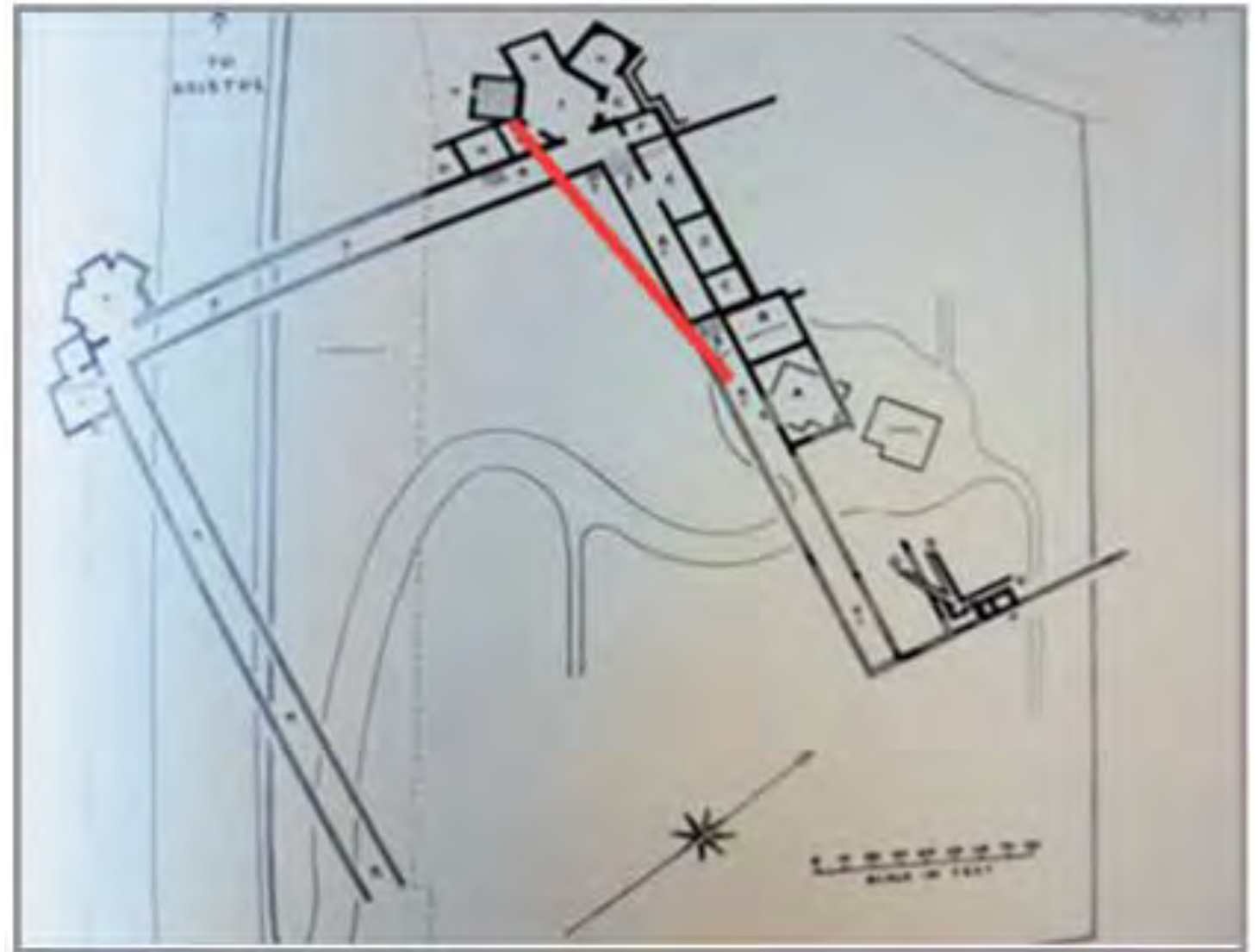
29.04.2026



“Once the trench was excavated and the walls and steps partly uncovered a GNSS system of recording was undertaken, the angle of alignment (degrees) was taken and recorded of the walls and steps, **which clearly indicated that the published plan is inaccurately aligned**”.



“Re-exposure of part of the NE corridor in late August 2017 implies that it deviates by up to 14 degrees north of the west range as shown on the 1926 plan”.



“the cardinal points of the compass are inaccurately positioned on their plan”

What if N on the drawing isn't True North?

Magnetic Variation of True
North

-14 degrees in 1923

Dec to May 2026 – Wait!





Spring/Summer 2026



26th May, finally got going



Day 1 wall becomes visible.

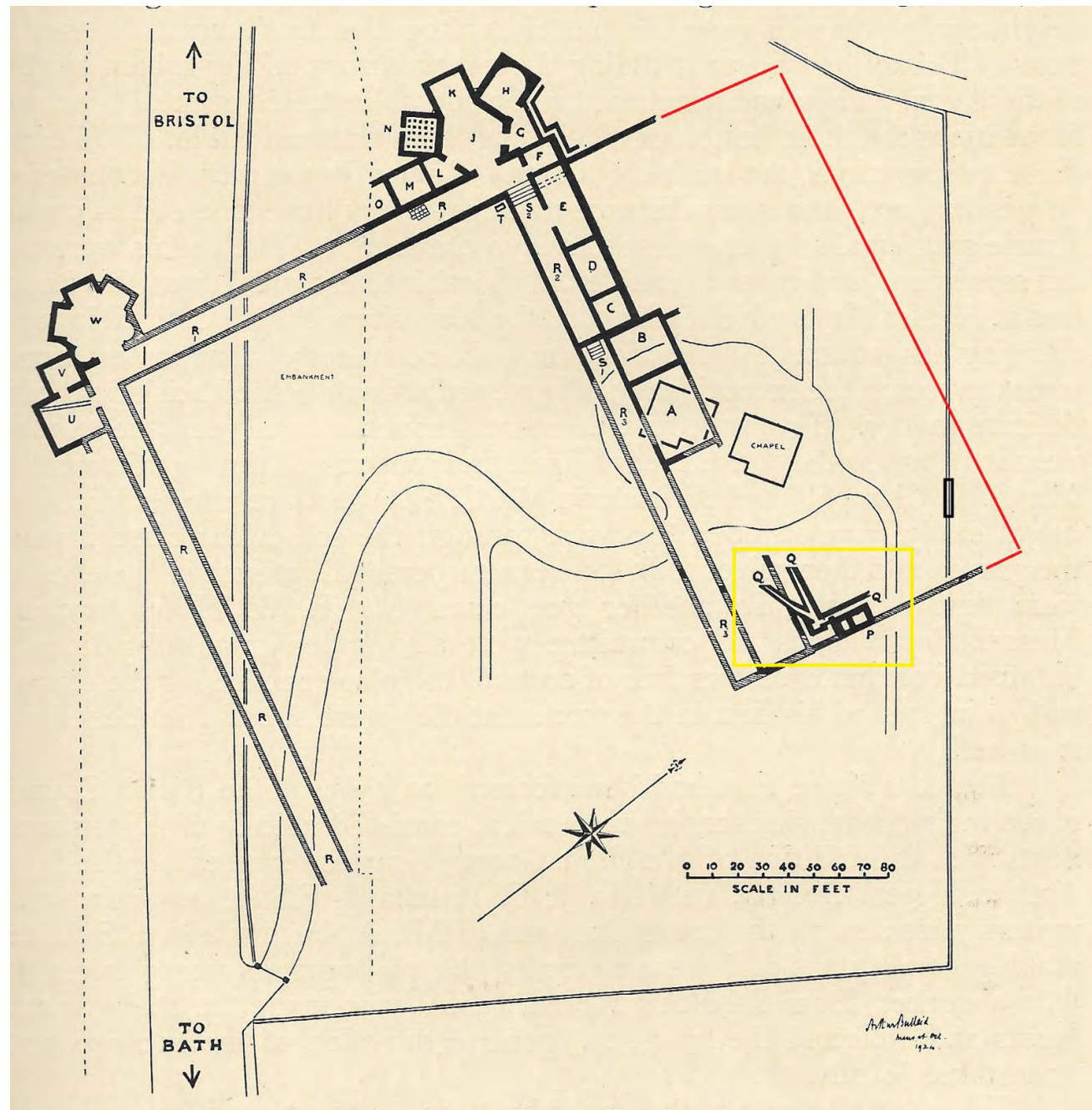
Note on the left we have extended 1 metre beyond the grave cut towards the path

9 Jun – still ground water at 1 metre



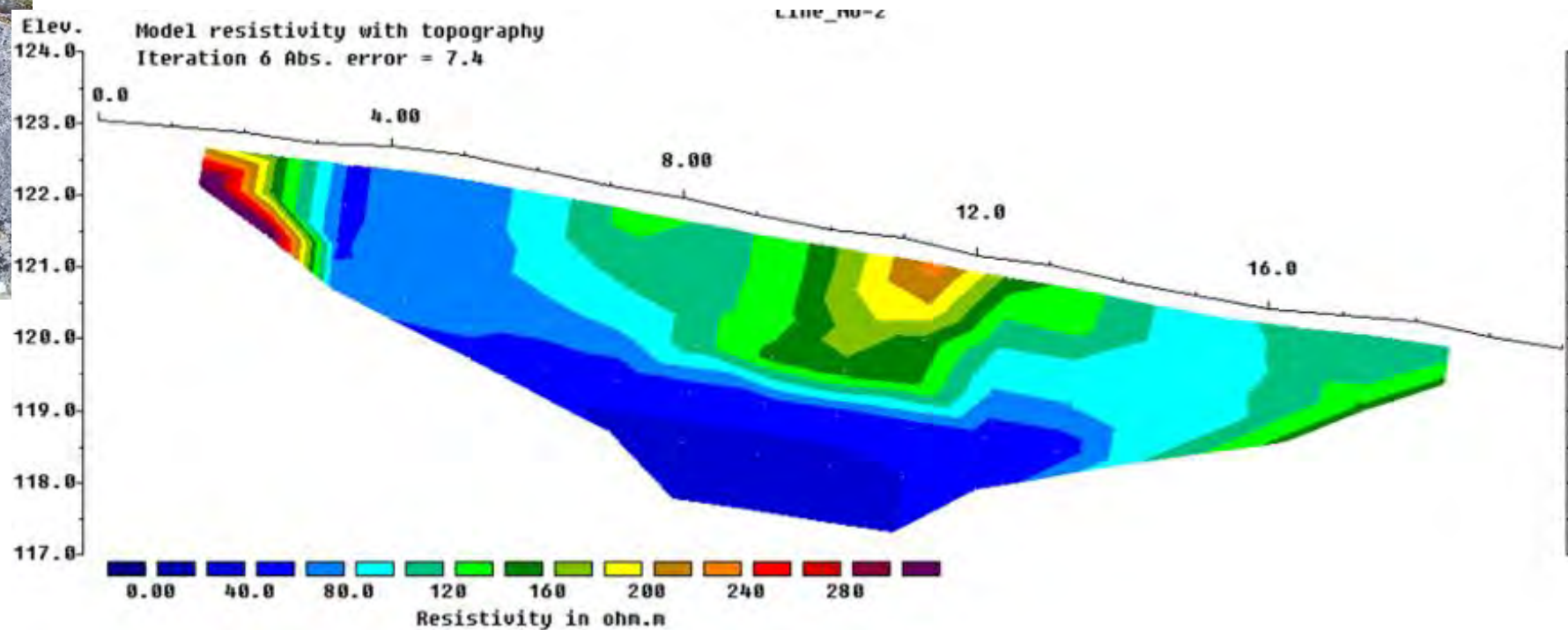
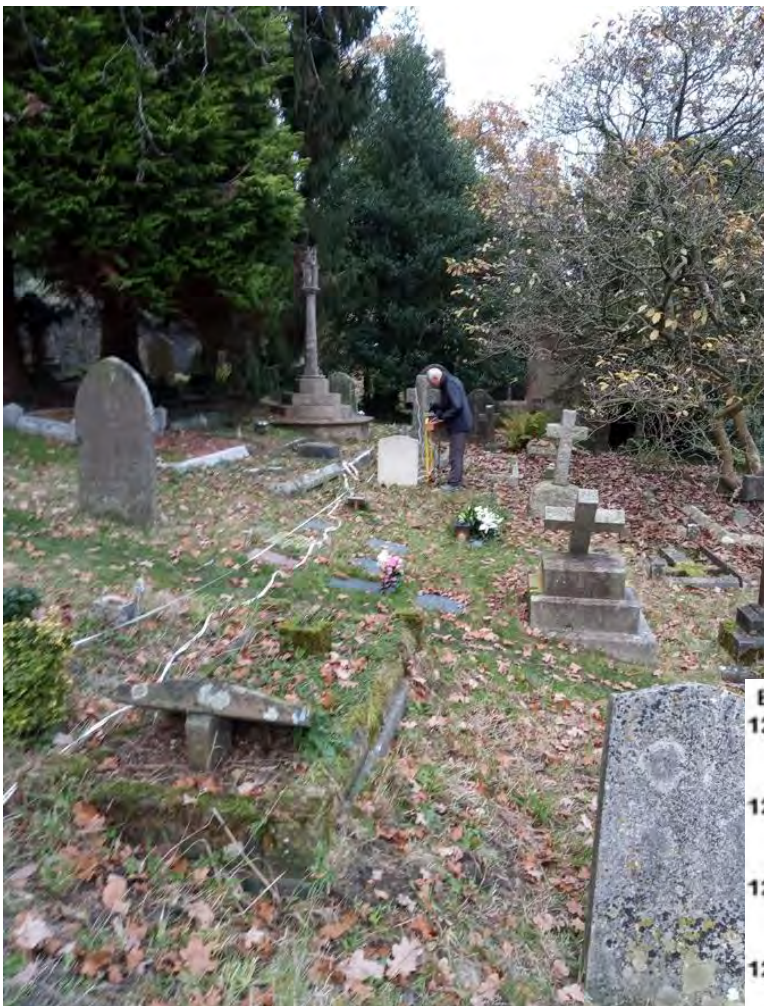






So, where next !

Profiling Project



Excavations (keyhole surgery)

Also:
Carry out a
review of all
current reports

Investigate the
structure's place
in the landscape



Mansio (Road Station)

On the Roman road system there were larger road stations with service facilities built at intervals of, on average, 40 km. In between there were smaller staging posts with simple accommodation every 17 km.

Caerwent (Venta Silurum)

The large building on the left of the south gate is thought to have been a mansio. A mansio (from the Latin word mansus, meaning “to remain” or “to stay”) is a form of inn or stopping place where officials and couriers of the imperial posting service (cursus publicus) would lodge and change horses while on official business.

Bath 14 Km

Sea Mills 16 Km

Why a mansio here?

