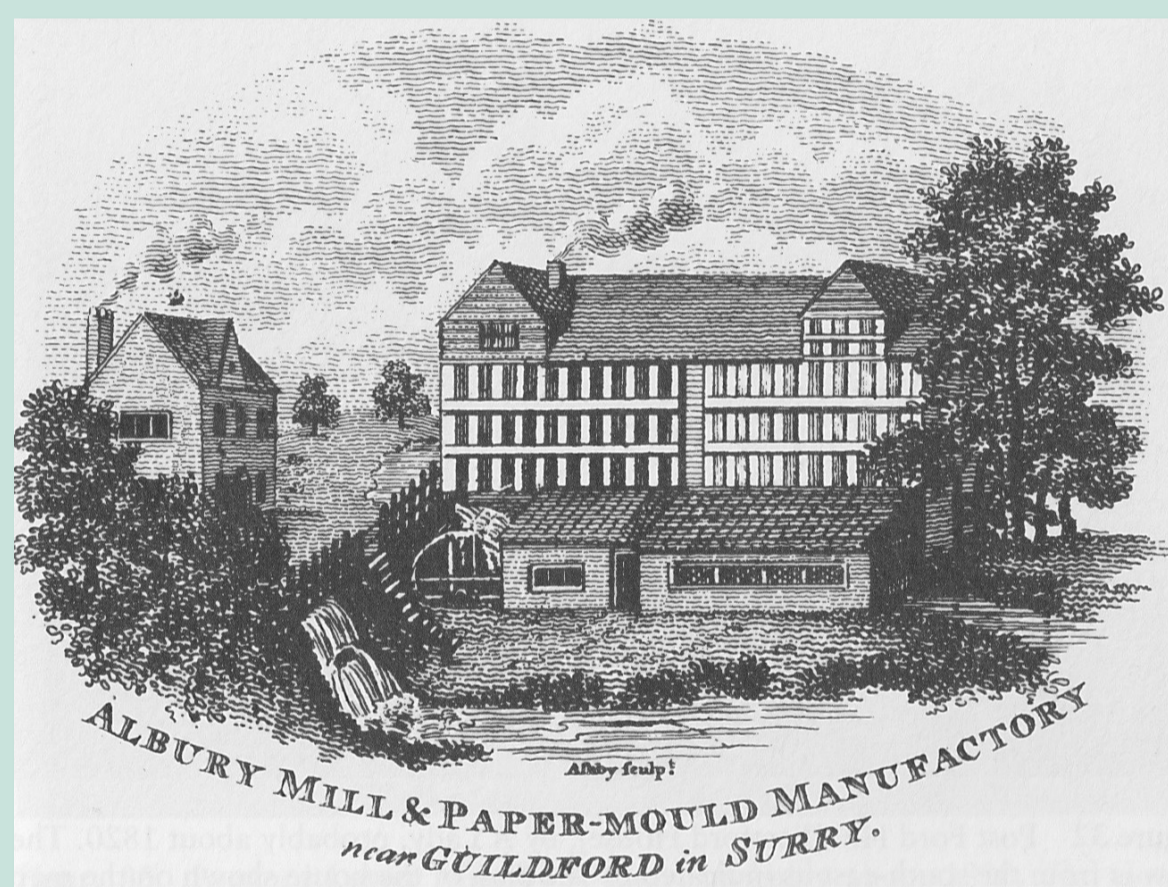
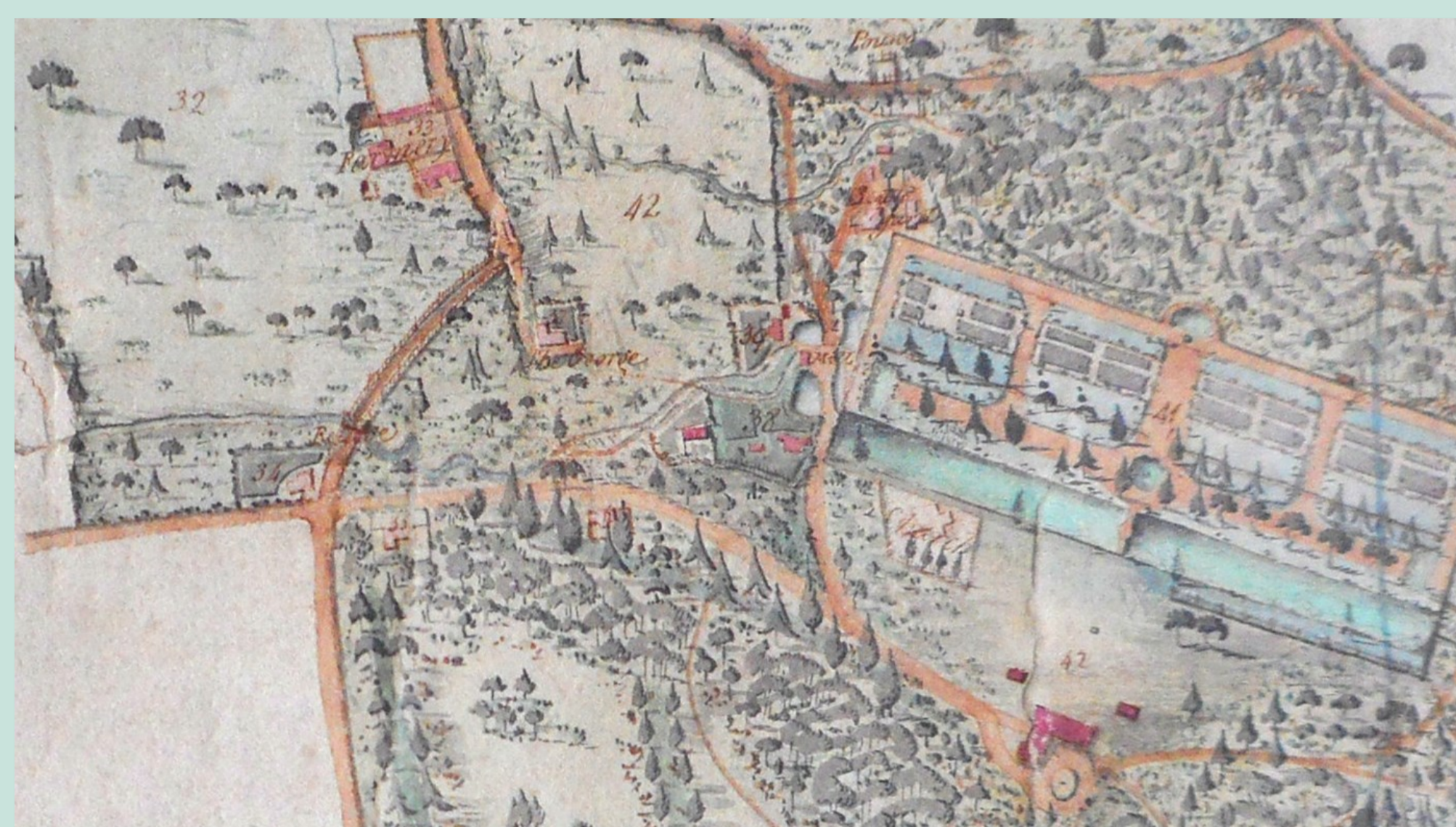


Albury Park – early history

Little is known of Albury's early history beyond its record in Domesday in 1086, when it had been held by Azor prior to the Norman Conquest (granted from Edward the Confessor) and later granted to Richard de Tonbridge. At this time, it had a church and a mill listed amongst its values, along with eleven villagers.

Besides the documentary evidence – and possible Saxon fabric in the tower base of Old St Peter and St Paul's Church – there are no finds or other evidence of early medieval activity from the site. This leaves little known about the original settlement along the Tillingbourne, as the earliest depictions of the village are not until the 18th century, including Abraham Walter's map of the manor in 1701 (*top right*), followed by Captain Finch's map of the estate *c.*1782 (*right*).



The only surviving cottage from the old village is Grange Cottage (*far left*), at one time the Little George Inn, which has been dendro-dated to the 16th century. It is assumed, however, that many of the cottages which appear on the earliest maps have older – possibly medieval – origins. Albury mill (*left*), situated where the Old Laundry now is, was likely the Norman corn mill, later converted to paper-making before closing in 1810.

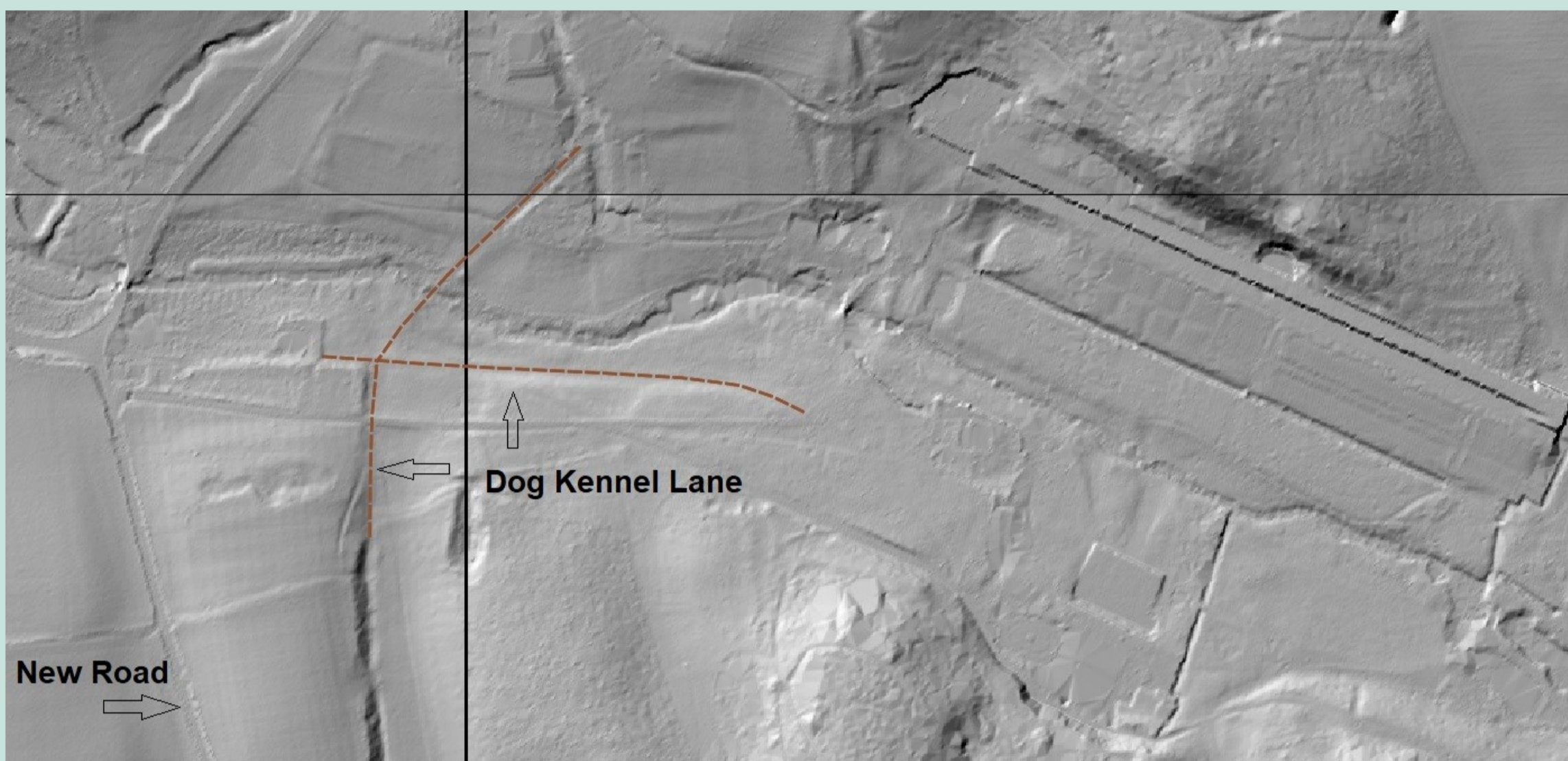


The current mansion (*right*) – assumed to be the site of the medieval manor house – has Tudor origins but was rebuilt in the 17th century. The wooded pleasure grounds and park are thought to have been planted as early as the 15th century, though the ornamental terraced gardens – for which the site is best known – were designed by John Evelyn in 1667 and have elements including the bath-house, pool and crypta/tunnel (*above*) still largely intact.

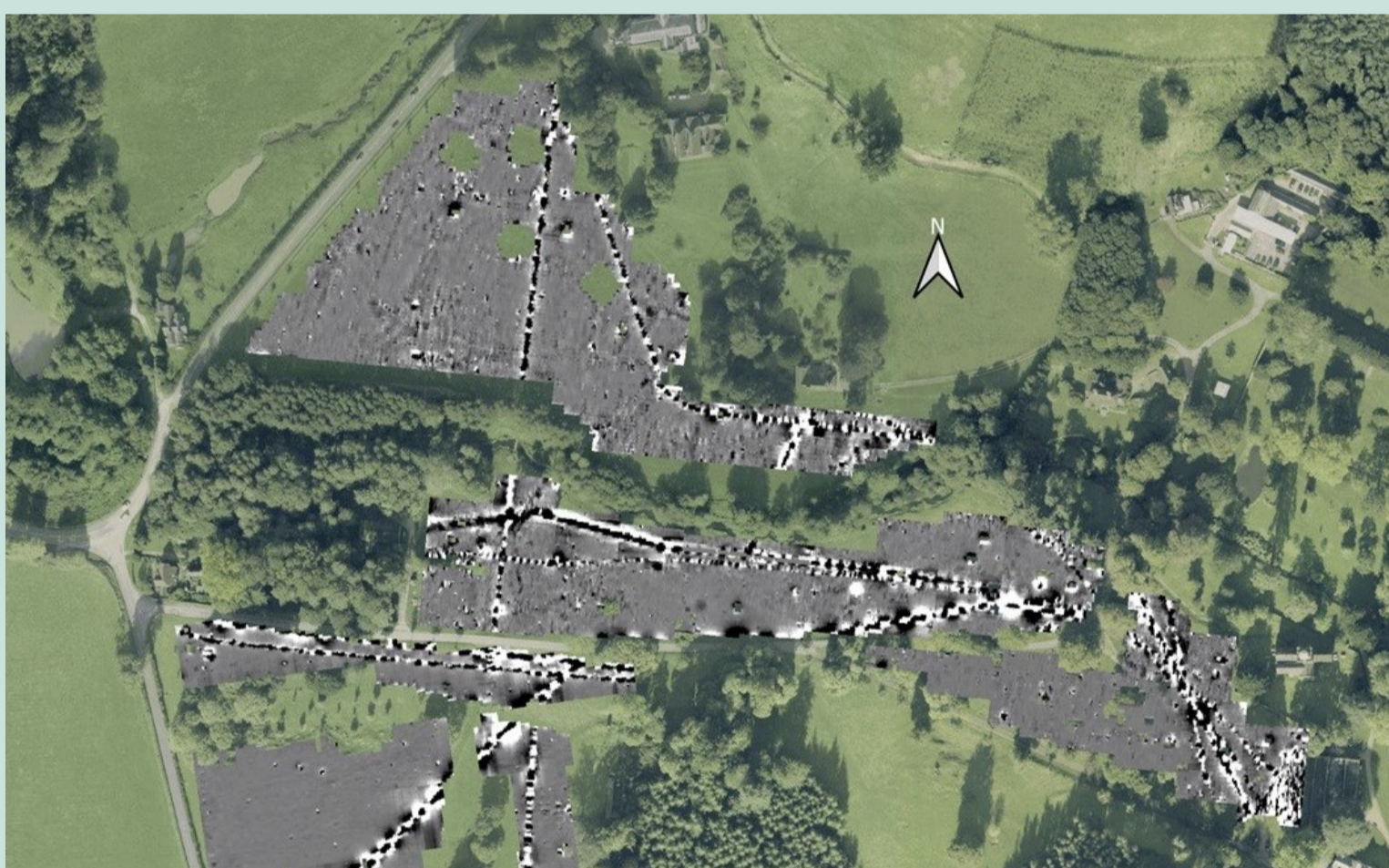


Albury Park – tracing the former village

In 1784, Captain William Clement Finch obtained an order to close the road to Shere which ran through the park past the manor house. This began a period of harassment for the villagers, which continued under Charles Wall (1811-1819), who demolished the cottages and moved their occupants to Weston Street – the current Albury – half a mile to the west. By the time of Henry Drummond c.1842, the present New Road from Albury Heath was built, replacing the original Dog Kennel Lane.

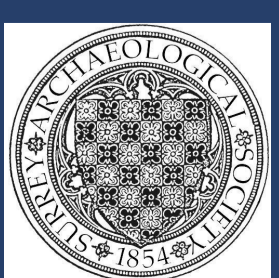


There is little on the ground today to suggest a former village at Albury Park, although landscape clues can give indications of the former settlement. LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) uses laser scanning to create a precise 3D map of the landscape surface. The LiDAR of the park (*above left*) clearly shows not only the former road running through the meadow (*above right*), but also raised platforms of the former cottages.



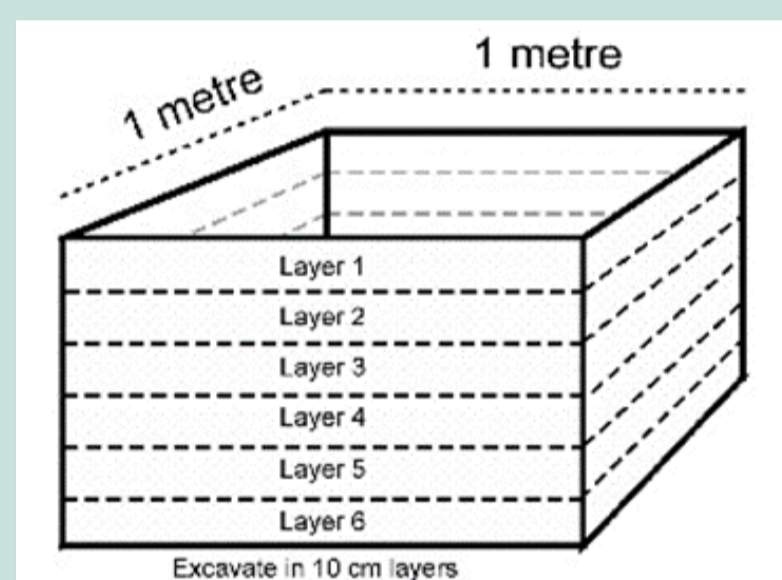
Geophysical survey is another survey technique which can indicate the presence (or absence) of archaeological features. Magnetometry is one method which maps magnetism patterns in the soil. It is particularly useful for buried features such as pits or ditches which often contain burnt material, as well as concentrations of pottery and tile. In the case of Albury (*left*), it also detected the modern service pipes throughout the park.

Electrical resistance is a more time-consuming technique and usually done over smaller areas. It measures the patterns as electrical current is passed through the ground, allowing features with varying moisture content – e.g. ditches and pits versus stone walls – to stand out. Many of the former cottage foundations can be seen as faint white outlines in the map (*right*).



Albury Park – test pitting

Test pitting involves small-scale excavation targeted to assess settlement change over time. Generally, it follows the CORS (Currently Occupied Rural Settlement) methodology, where all pits are the same size (1m²) and follow the same procedures. Soil is dug in 10cm spits, with finds from each recorded separately. Several pits spread over a site – such as a village – can then indicate the period certain areas date to.



The 2023-4 excavations focused on the meadows both sides of the Tillingsbourne where the old road ran through. Over 40 test pits were spread across the area, locating where the former cottages were situated, but also testing where the medieval (and earlier) pottery is concentrated.



Most pits do not uncover features. However, floor levels for the post-medieval cottage on the hillside were found, including the edge of a flagstone surface in TP4 (*far left*). North of the river, TP46 (*left*) uncovered a chalk surface related to a larger, masonry-built structure, likely medieval or even, possibly, Roman.



In many of the pits, medieval levels were reached at about 0.5m down, indicated by the pottery recovered. TP10 (*upper right*), just east of Dog Kennel Lane, had large amounts of 14th-century pottery (*below*). Although often mixed in upper levels, other finds such as 14th-century jetons (*left*) and a heraldic badge (*right*) also indicate medieval activity along the course of the old road.



“Moor’s Head” French type (1350-1425) and Edward II (1310-1327) jetons (© Surrey County Council)



A tray from TP10 spit 5 with a mix of pottery, including coarse whiteware (Border Ware)

Beauchamp heraldic badge (1250-1400) (© SCC)

