# National Trust Survey Uncovers Hidden Roman Villas at Attingham Park Estate



A large-scale geophysical survey commissioned by the National Trust has revealed two previously unknown Roman villas on the grounds of Attingham Park estate in Shropshire. This research effort utilized advanced magnetometer technology to map over 1,000 hectares, uncovering significant archaeological remains, including a Roman cemetery and several Roman roads, outside the buried Roman city of Wroxeter.

The survey, the largest ever undertaken by the National Trust, exhibited evidence of complex floor plans and outbuildings, suggesting the villas likely featured typical Roman luxuries such as underfloor heating, bathhouses, and mosaic floors. In addition to the villas, the survey also detected eight ditched enclosures, potentially Iron Age or Romano-British farmsteads, with four previously unrecorded.

Other historical findings included features connected to an Anglo-Saxon great hall and substantial remains of RAF Atcham, a Second World War airfield. These discoveries will inform the National Trust's future land use and conservation efforts, facilitating the creation of habitats like woodlands and wetlands while preserving the estate's rich archaeological heritage.

National Trust archaeologist Janine Young and project manager Alice Collier emphasize that these insights are crucial for balancing nature restoration with heritage preservation. English Heritage also regards these findings as a substantial addition to understanding the historical significance of the Wroxeter area.