

*The Stiperstones Hills  
Archaeological Survey:  
A report for land management purposes*

by  
H R Hannaford



Archaeology Service



Shropshire  
County Council

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**THE STIPERSTONES HILLS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY:  
A REPORT FOR LAND MANAGEMENT PURPOSES**

by  
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A Report for



**ENGLISH HERITAGE**



**ENGLISH  
NATURE**

and



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## **SUMMARY**

In 2003-4 the Archaeology Service, Shropshire County Council, carried out a survey of the Stiperstones Hills in south Shropshire to identify and assess the archaeological resource of this area. The known archaeology of the area was characterised by prehistoric monuments of the early Bronze Age (cairns), an Iron Age hillfort, and post-medieval mining remains and associated squatter settlements (mainly) on the on the lower slopes of the hills. Recent field inspections however, had shown that the small number of known archaeological sites and monuments on The Stiperstones hills greatly under-represented the actual number and complexity of sites within this landscape.

The chosen study area was a upland generally above the 350m contour line, and included all of the English Nature designated Stiperstones National Nature Reserve and part of the Brook Vessons Shropshire Wildlife Trust site. The study area also included The Hollies SSSI to the northeast of the National Nature Reserve, and The Knolls, Nipstone Rock, The Rock, and Black Rhadley Hill to the southwest.

The survey comprised desk-based research followed by a Level 1 Rapid Field Survey using Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment for the accurate location of features. The data collected was transferred to GIS shape files and a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for integration with Shropshire County Council's Environmental Record. Two reports on the work have been produced. A general report on the results of the survey which it is intended to publish in the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society and this report which is an internal Shropshire County Council publication intended to assist the project partners in developing management prescriptions for the archaeological resource in The Stiperstones hills

The Survey has been funded by English Heritage, English Nature, and Shropshire County Council. Other partners have included The Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the Forestry Commission, and Linley Estates.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** This paper presents a report for land management purposes on the results of The Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey project in Shropshire. It has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out in Management of Archaeological Projects [MAP2] (English Heritage 1991a). It follows the completion of the desk-based survey and Level 1 rapid field survey, and an updated research design for the project.

**1.2** The Stiperstones hills form part of the upland area of south Shropshire. The area comprises rough moorland and areas of unimproved pasture surrounding ridge-top peaks of frost-shattered tors of distinctive white quartzite sandstone.

**1.3** A large proportion of The Stiperstones lie within an English Nature designated National Nature Reserve. There are also currently proposals to introduce new land management practices to areas outside the National Nature Reserve as part of the English Nature-led project known as "Back to purple: conserving and restoring The Stiperstones". This project involves the restoration to heathland of significant areas planted with conifers. Groundworks associated with this project may however have a significantly adverse effect on the archaeological resource of the area. Recent field inspections had demonstrated that the small number of recorded archaeological sites and monuments on The Stiperstones hills greatly under-represented the actual number and complexity of sites within this landscape.

**1.4** It was considered essential that an archaeological survey should be made of The Stiperstones in order to identify and assess the archaeological resource of this area. Shropshire County Council's Archaeology Service has undertaken this archaeological survey, which comprised a desk-based assessment followed by a Level 1 field survey. The survey project was funded by English Heritage, English Nature, and Shropshire County Council.

**1.5** Work on the survey project began in September 2003, and the desk-based and field survey elements were completed by March 2004.

**1.6** The results of the survey will be drawn upon by English Nature and other landowners in The Stiperstones hills when formulating their land management policies. It has been proposed that English Nature and Shropshire County Council should work together in developing management prescriptions for the archaeological resource in The Stiperstones hills, in order that the management of wildlife habitats can continue whilst paying due regard to the archaeological resource.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 The study area**

The Stiperstones hills form part of the upland area of south Shropshire. The hills that include the Stiperstones form a ridge within this upland area approximately 12km long northeast to southwest by c 2km wide.

The Stiperstones form part of the Shropshire Hills Natural Area and lie within both the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Shropshire Hills Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), and form part of the Stiperstones and Hollies Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is a candidate for Special Area for Conservation under the European Habitats Directive.

The study area was chosen to investigate upland area generally above the 350m contour line (Fig. 1). The study area includes all of the English Nature designated Stiperstones National Nature Reserve and part of the Brook Vessons Shropshire Wildlife Trust site. The study area also includes The Hollies to the northeast of the National Nature Reserve and The Knolls, Nipstone Rock, The Rock and Black Rhadley Hill to the southwest.

### **2.2 Type of area**

The Stiperstones hills comprise a ridge rising to between 400m to 530m above sea level. The geology of the area consists of a sequence of Ordovician rocks, dipping sharply down to the west. The ridge-top is marked by an outcropping band of distinctive white quartzite known as the Stiperstones Quartzite (a pure white quartz sandstone), over the Mytton Flags, a blue-grey, flaggy, greywacke siltstone. Mineralization within the Mytton Flags gave rise to mining industries principally for lead (and silver) and barytes (Toghill, 1990). Steep-sided valleys, known locally as "beaches" (or "batches" on the Long Mynd to the east), run into the western side of the hills, creating the promontories of Crowsnest, Oak Hill, and Green Hill.

The majority of the study area is covered by heathland. The vegetation comprises a mixture of dwarf shrubs and gorse, with an admixture of bracken on the middle to lower slopes of the hillsides. There is some mixed woodland and scrub at the northern end of the study area (on Resting Hill and Crowsnest Dingle) which has been in place since the 19th century at least, although there has been some felling of these areas in the 20th century for the creation of new pasture. A 19th-century conifer plantation on the southeastern flank of the hills (Gatten Plantation) was re-planted in the second half of the 20th century, and this and another plantation on Nipstone Rock have recently been felled as part of the "Back to Purple" heathland regeneration programme. There are further conifer plantations on the southwestern and southeastern flanks of Nipstone hill and The Rock.

There is some rough grazing of the heathland, but there are also areas of grass pasture. These consist of the areas known as Blakemoorgate, Blakemoorflat, and the Paddock, The Bog at the southern end of the study area, and Perkins Beach on the west side, areas of former squatter-type subsistence farming settlements, some associated with lead mining industries. The settlements at Blakemoorgate, Blakemoorflat, and the Paddock are now deserted, (although Blakemoorgate was still occupied in the second half of the 20th century).

There are the remains of former mining industries and associated squatter settlements at the southwestern end of the study area at Black Rhadley Hill, The Rock, Nipstone and The Bog, on the western side of the hills in the steep valleys or beaches of Perkins Beach, Mytton Dingle, and Crowsnest Dingle, and at the northern end by Blakemoorgate. Beyond the northern end of the study area lies the major lead mining complex of the Snailbeach Lead Mine, where lead has been worked since the Roman period.

### **2.3 Archaeological background**

The number of known archaeological features on the Stiperstones is relatively small. This may be due in part to the natural vegetation cover, but to a large extent is probably due to a lack of survey work on these hills.

Past OS field inspections and a limited amount of aerial photographic recording of sites on the Stiperstones have in the past identified a number of features. These include a group of cairns along the main ridge of the Stiperstones hilltop, some of which have been scheduled as ancient monuments as defined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (Shropshire Nos. 19114, 19115, 19116, & 19136); a field system (SMR No. 01888) which was photographed and recorded by Gp. Capt. G E Livock in 1938; and an Iron Age hillfort, Castle Ring (SMR No. 01357) on Oak Hill, also scheduled as an ancient monument (Shropshire No. 19203)

One of the transects surveyed by the Marches Upland Survey (MUS) between 1991 and 1999, the Long Mynd Transect, ran across the southwest of the Stiperstones Survey study area. The number of known archaeological sites in the Long Mynd transect of the MUS was increased sevenfold overall by that survey's programme of data collection and fieldwork.

The extensive remains of post-medieval lead mining around the lower edges of the study area have been the subject of numerous studies, usefully catalogued by the MUS Extensive Mines Survey. The MUS Intensive Mines Survey investigated the area of the Bog Mine and Nipstone Rock in the southwestern part of the proposed Stiperstones Survey study area.

Field inspections undertaken as a part of the research design for this survey demonstrated the potential of the area by identifying a number of previously unknown sites of the prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval periods within the proposed study area. It was noted that a number of boundaries shown on the OS mapping related to deserted settlements of probable post-medieval date similar to the scheduled Ancient Monuments of Blakemoorflat and Blakemoorgate but un-remarked in the formal archaeological record.

### **3 THE CHARACTER OF THE STUDY AREA**

#### **3.1 Zones**

For the purpose of this report, the study area has been divided into a number of zones (Fig. 2). Discussion of the archaeological features recorded by the survey and their condition will be made by zone. The following is a list of the various zones:

Black Rhadley,  
Nipstone and The Rock,  
The Knolls/The Bog/Rigmoreoak,  
Pennerley Dingle,  
The Main Ridge,  
The Paddocks,  
Resting Hill,  
The Hollies

#### **3.2 Landscape types and current land-use**

The study area contains a number of different landscape types, each with its own characteristics and pressures (Fig. 3). For the purpose of this report these have been summarised into five broad types:

Heathland  
Conifer plantations  
Mixed woodland  
Pasture  
Industrial

##### **3.2.1 Heathland (GH1)**

The heathland is generally encountered at the higher altitudes, usually above the 400m contour, but extending below this height down the sides of the valleys on the western side of the main ridge. The topography in these areas is marked by the tors and broken rock on the ridge tops, and the boulder streams and scree slopes on the ridge flanks. Between the tors and broken rock there are extensive areas of open moorland. The heathland vegetation cover consists of dwarf shrubs, bracken, and gorse, but with some areas of rough cotton grass. There is some light grazing by cattle on the heathland and grouse are also reared for shooting. The main paths are well used by walkers and riders throughout the year.

Occurs in zones: Resting Hill, The Hollies, Pennerley Dingle, The Main Ridge, Nipstone and The Rock, Black Rhadley

##### **3.2.2 Conifer plantations (WL4)**

The main area of conifer plantation covers The Rock and the southern part of Nipstone, the eastern flank of Nipstone (Big Wood), and the area to the north of Nipstone (The Knolls). Much of this conifer plantation is of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century origins, although felling and replanting had taken place up to the 1970s. In the mid 1990s felling took place on Nipstone and the Gatten Plantation (the latter was excluded from the study area) as part of the "Back to purple" project, and further felling was being carried out at the time of writing in the area of The Rock/Rock Farm on the southwestern side of Nipstone. There is also a narrow strip of conifer

plantation at the northern end of the study area which separates The Hollies and Main Ridge (Blakemoorgate) zones.

Occurs in zones: Nipstone and The Rock

### **3.2.3 Mixed Woodland (WL3):**

There are a number of areas of mixed woodland around the edges of the study area. These occur on the lower slopes and valley sides. In places these consist of (mainly) birch and rowan scrub which have developed into mature and semi-mature trees and may be of fairly recent date (since c. 1940) and are encroaching on areas of former mining activity and poorer quality pasture (e.g. Black Rhadley, Perkins Beach, Green Hill/Myttons Dingle). Elsewhere, these patches of woodland are more diverse have colonised areas of abandoned former settlement (e.g. The Paddock/Brook Vessons) and may be slightly older (since c. 1900). On Resting Hill is an area of former oak coppice that is earlier than 1875.

Occurs in zones: Resting Hill, The Paddock (Brook Vessons), Main Ridge (Perkins Beach), Black Rhadley

### **3.2.4 Pasture (GH2 & GH3)**

Areas of pasture within the study area are mainly confined to the lower slopes, on the southwest side of Nipstone and the Main Ridge and in the saddle between the Main Ridge and Nipstone (Rock Farm, The Knolls, The Bog, Rigmoroak, Pennerley Dingle/The Hollows), at the northern end (Resting Hill and The Hollies) and on the northeastern side of the main ridge (The Paddock/Brook Vessons). There are however three areas of pasture on the main ridge itself (Tin House, Blakemoorflat, and Blakemoorgate), each the site of abandoned post-medieval subsistence settlements. The grass cover here is maintained by the current grazing regime; the fragility of the grass cover in these areas is demonstrated by attempted heather re-colonisation, which is just kept in check by the current grazing regime. The steep valley sides on the western edge of the main ridge (Perkins Beach, Myttons Dingle, Crowsnest Dingle) are also given over to pasture. Here the vegetation cover comprises grassland, sometimes with patches of gorse, enclosed by decayed hedgerows and earthen banks (which often contain drystone rubble walls). Again, these areas are gradually reverting to heathland and are being slowly re-colonised by dwarf shrubs, gorse, bracken and scrub (particularly birch and rowan).

Occurs in zones: The Hollies, Resting Hill, The Paddocks, Main Ridge (Blakemoorgate, Blakemoorflat, Myttons Beach, Perkins Beach, Tin House), Pennerley Dingle, Rigmoroak, The Bog, The Knolls, Nipstone and The Rock (Rock Farm)

### **3.2.5 Industrial (mining)**

The remains of former mining activity can be found all along the western side of the Stiperstones. The minerals being exploited were principally lead ore and barites, and the mineworkings were abandoned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The vegetation cover in these areas usually comprises rough pasture but the presence of mining waste and other features associated with the mining activity (shafts, adits, and structural remains) gives these areas a distinct character. However, as the primary landscape characteristic in these areas is usually pasture (although occasionally heathland, conifer plantation, or mixed woodland) these areas have been mapped as GIS shape-files but features found within them have been assigned the dominant natural landscape designation.

Abandoned workings, in some cases with associated settlements, can be found in all of the valleys cutting into the western side of the main ridge (Crows Nest Dingle, Myttons Dingle, Perkins Beach and Pennerley Dingle. There is an extensive mining site at The Bog on the saddle between the main ridge and Nipstone, the eastern end of which lies within the study area. There are further mining remains on the southern hills at Nipstone, The Rock, and Black Rhadley. At the northern end of the study area are a few isolated shafts and spoil tips, and what may be the remains of early post medieval smelting boles.

There are also disused stone quarries on the eastern side of the main ridge below Shepherds' Rock, and on the western side below Resting Hill and at Pennerley Dingle.

Occurs in zones: The Hollies, Main Ridge (Crows Nest Dingle, Myttons Beach, Perkins Beach), Pennerley Dingle, The Knolls, The Bog, Nipstone and The Rock, Black Rhadley

## **4 MONUMENT TYPES**

**4.1** The desk-based research and the field survey generated a total of 1606 records. The records were compiled on a Microsoft Excel Worksheet, designed by the project staff to be compatible with the data format of the County Sites and Monuments Record. The desk-based survey produced 498 records (Survey nos. 1-498), and the rapid field survey produced 1108 records (Survey nos. 500-1628).

The principal monument types for each of the zones have been listed by the Sites and Monuments Record Monument Type used in the project database. The main categories include:

- cairns (prehistoric and modern),
- settlements,
- field systems & field boundaries,
- buildings,
- mineral extraction sites,
- paths and tracks,
- shooting butts.

## **4.2 Cairns**

**4.2.1 Prehistoric cairns** A total of 22 prehistoric and possibly prehistoric cairns were identified by the survey along or close to the main ridge around Cranberry Rock and Manstone Rock. Two ring cairns were also identified by the survey either side of Cranberry Rock, and a feature at Shepherds' Rock which may be a prehistoric long cairn or a post-med quarrying feature.

**4.2.2 Modern cairns** Additionally 27 modern cairns, referred to here as "walkers' cairns" were recorded by the rapid field survey. Some of these cairns may have been created initially to mark the many paths and trackways over the ridge top between the various squatter and mining settlements – essential in the poor visibility often created by low cloud on the hill top. These cairns have been added to and in some cases created within the last 100 years by recreational users of the paths. These generally small cairns range in size from c. 1m diameter x 0.5m high to 7m diameter x 1.5m high. It is possible that some of the larger walkers' cairns are modern additions to an earlier feature.

## **4.3 Settlements**

**4.3.1** The various types of settlement present in the study area have been subdivided here into three categories.

### **4.3.2 Prehistoric settlement**

There is a large univallate Iron Age hillfort, Castle Ring (1), on Oak Hill on the western side of the Main Ridge. The hillfort encloses about 3.8ha, and is approached along a neck of high ground from the south.

### **4.3.3 Squatter settlements**

There are a number of abandoned "squatter" settlements within the study area. Most probably have their origins in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but some may be earlier in date. The

settlement remains are characterized by ruined drystone buildings, field boundaries of drystone walls, earthen banks (usually with drystone wall cores), ditches and hedgerows, and field clearance cairns. The fields within the settlements have been cleared of stone and areas of grass pasture are still maintained by grazing at least 50 years after the settlements were finally abandoned.

Two of these abandoned settlements, Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat, are scheduled Ancient Monuments. Others, equally well preserved, e.g. The Paddock and Tin House, are not.

#### **4.3.4 Mining settlements**

The well-preserved remains of former mining industries and their associated subsistence farming settlements on the lower slopes of the Stiperstones comprise spoil heaps, shafts and adits, ruined drystone buildings, and field boundaries. Before the survey, the various mines had been entered as point data on the SMR GIS mapping; neither the areas of the mines or the associated settlements had been defined.

#### **4.4 Field systems and field boundaries, boundary banks and ditches**

One identified field system (14) had been recorded prior to the present survey by the SMR. This system is recorded by the SMR (01888) as a series of parallel stone rows. No trace of these could be found by this survey. Other field systems apparent on the modern mapping and aerial photography are in fact the remains of the former abandoned settlements (see above).

There are a number of boundary features surviving as earthworks within the study area. Most of the boundary banks (Perkins Beach, Rigmoroak) appear to be post-medieval in date and reflect enclosure onto common land by small-holders and squatters/mining settlements. Some of the boundary features may be of older date however, e.g. the Black Ditch (or Monks' Ditch) which forms the boundary between the Main Ridge zone and The Bog and Rigmoroak zones. In the southern part of the Nipstone zone around The Rock there are a number of stone walls marking estate and property boundaries.

#### **4.5 Buildings**

Most of the structures within the deserted settlements (including mining settlements) are entirely ruinous and consist at best of drystone walls just a few courses high. The condition of the structures within the mining settlements presents difficulties in identification – i.e. whether the buildings were domestic or industrial (or both). Sometimes the presence of identifiable outbuildings such as a potato store indicates domestic usage in an area where the presence of a number of mine shafts and spoil tips might otherwise have suggested an industrial function. Elsewhere the survival of fixings and the size of cells within the structures suggest industrial usage. Many buildings in the mining settlements however may have had a mixed use or a change of use.

#### **4.6 Mineral extraction sites**

The most easily visible remains of the former mining sites are the spoil heaps, which consist the waste stone extracted with the ore and the remains of ore processing. The spoil tips are often free of vegetation, due partly to the fine and loose nature of some of the spoil, but also to the high zinc content of the mineral waste which inhibits plant growth. Some of the shafts and adits are open, marked and fenced (and occasionally grilled). Many former mine shafts occur as hollows whose origin is usually indicated by associated spoil heaps. While many of these former shafts appear to have been filled, the nature and stability of this fill may be suspect. These former shafts are often hidden from view by the vegetation cover (e.g. a line of shafts which runs across Birchill from Perkins Beach to Pennerley Dingle).

#### **4.7 Paths and Tracks**

A study of the historic mapping for the study area reveals a network of tracks and footpaths far more extensive than survives on the modern mapping. The desk-based survey recorded tracks that were not shown on the modern mapping. The field survey was less consistent in its approach. Originally it had been intended to plot only those features that had not been picked up by the desk-based study and were not on the modern mapping. However, in some cases where a path was clearly un-used and had disappeared from view, sections were recorded where they had given rise to earthwork features (e.g. 852 and 853 running southeast from Blakemoregate). Within the deserted settlements a number of tracks were recorded as components of the settlements (e.g. 1623 & 1624 at The Paddock). The reduction in the number of paths and tracks, and the actual non-use of a number of paths that are still shown on the modern mapping is a reflection of the dramatic decrease in use of the landscape in the last 100 years.

#### **4.8 Shooting butts**

One class of monument reflects the use of parts of the study area for a particular leisure activity, i.e. the shooting of game, in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This monument type comprises shooting butts, which occur along the Main Ridge and on Black Rhadley hill. On the Main Ridge the shooting butts are generally made of low, drystone walls in a variety of shapes. On Black Rhadley they are earth-cut hollows with a horseshoe-shaped earthen bank on one side. 25 shooting butts were recorded by the field survey (503, 551, 553, 574-6, 720-8, 733, 752-4, 761, 849, 935-6, 1135, & 1584). Shooting rights on the main ridge within the NNR are not held by English Nature and are still occasionally exercised; the shooting rights on Black Rhadley are exercised by Linley Estates.

## 5 CONDITION OF THE MONUMENTS

5.1 The field survey recorded the condition of the monuments identified by the survey within the study area, according to condition terms provided by the County SMR:

Condition	Description
Good	All or nearly all features of interest are well preserved for the period they represent. No sign of active damage.
Fair	Some damage or part destruction of features of interest apparent, or some features of interest are obscured by more recent additions/alterations. For buildings, indicates structurally sound, but in need of minor repairs.
Poor	Damage to the majority of the original features of interest is apparent, some significant features are missing. Some features of interest remain. Active damage apparent (e.g. for buildings water penetration, rot etc).
Very bad	The majority of features of interest are so damaged as to be not surveyable or are missing. For buildings, this indicates structural failure or evident instability, loss of significant areas of roofing, or damage by a major fire or other disaster.
Uncertain	Features of interest can not be investigated at the time of the assessment for any reason, e.g. obscured by cloud-cover, vegetation, ongoing building work, below ground services etc or the site could not be found.
Destroyed	All features of interest have been destroyed. No further information can be gained from future investigation of the site. Includes demolished buildings unless foundations, basements etc exist which are of interest, for which use <i>very bad</i> .

5.2 The features recorded by the rapid field survey fell overwhelmingly into the “fair” and “poor” condition categories. 8 features were recorded as being in a “good” condition, 105 features as “very bad”, and 3 as uncertain.

5.3 In the northern half of the study area, the majority of the features recorded as “very bad” are the remains of former buildings; they are found chiefly in areas of pasture, i.e. in the Blakemoorgate, Blakemoorflat, Perkins Beach, Tin House and Pennerley Dingle subzones of the Main Ridge zone, and The Paddock, Rigmoroak and The Bog zones. In fact in these settlements, most of the building remains fall into the “very bad” category, with few even being recorded as poor. However, whilst these individual structures have been recorded as being in a “very bad” condition on the basis of the above criteria, their archaeological potential is very high, as most of these features are undisturbed. Moreover, when these features are grouped together into complexes, i.e. deserted settlements or deserted mining settlements, then these monument complexes could be described as being in a “good” condition because of their completeness and lack of disturbance.

5.4 Of the 6 other features in a “very bad” condition, one (520) is a low bank on Nipstone which has been spread and damaged recently probably by forestry in the 1990s, two (636 & 637) are low banks of former field boundaries in an area of pasture on Resting Hill that have been spread by past agricultural activity, earth and stone banks (681 & 983) at Blakemoorflat and Rigmoroak, and a drystone wall (1052) at The Rock.

## **6 ASSESSMENT OF THE ZONES**

### **6.1 Black Rhadley**

**6.1.1** Black Rhadley is a hill at the southernmost end of the study area separated from Nipstone and The Rock by the lane from The Bog to Linley. The vegetation cover on the hill is mainly heathland, but there is an area of mixed woodland on its southern slopes, and small areas of mining remains. (Fig. 7)

There are a number of features of known or probable post-medieval date on the hill. These mainly consist of mining remains. Most of these remains probably belong to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Black Rhadley Mine (18) and consist of a group of shafts, a spoil tip, and an adit. A number of possible trial pits and trenches may be part of these workings or represent later unsuccessful prospecting. There are a number of shallow hollows within semi-circular banks that are probably shooting butts, and on the summit of the hill are a couple of small cairns of recent date.

#### **6.1.2 Mining remains**

There are extensive mining remains on Black Rhadley Hill. Some of these are probably components of the Black Rhadley Mine (18) and include an area of former mine working (549) at the top of the hill, where 4 shafts (184-7) were shown on the 1902 OS map, and a large spoil heap (813) on the NW side of hill. Other features which may have been part of the Black Rhadley Mine include further shafts (571-2) with a possible associated path (570), and a shaft and adit (or bob-hole) (559-60) on the west side of the hill, marked as a "cave" on OS maps, with two associated gullies (504-5).

At the northeastern end of the hill are a number of straight trenches (561-2, 565, 567) 0.5m wide by 0.3m deep with a bank on north (downslope) side and associated pits (563-4, 566, 568) between 2 and 7m in diameter and 1-2m in depth. The function of these features is unknown, but they may possibly represent prospecting for mineral veins (lead or barytes). Further features associated with trial pitting lie on the southwest side of the hill below the summit (554-8)

All these features are in a fair condition and not under any obvious threat. The existing land-management regime is adequate to ensure the survival of features that are significant at a local level.

**6.1.3 Shooting butts** 6 possible shooting butts reflecting the use of the hill for recreational shooting were recorded on Black Rhadley. All comprise hollows cut in the ground surface with semi-circular banks along one edge (503, 551, 553, 574-6)

**6.1.4 Cairns** Three small modern cairns were also noted on the summit of the hill (501-2, 552)

## **6.2 Nipstone and The Rock**

**6.2.1** Nipstone and The Rock form the southern end of The Stiperstones ridge, separated from the main ridge by the saddle of The Knolls. Rock tors outcrop at both ends of Nipstone hill and at The Rock. The summit of Nipstone hill is covered by heath, the northern end of which was until recently conifer plantation. This end was felled and scarified under the "Back to purple" project in the late 1990s. Further conifer plantations (including "Big Wood") cover the flanks of the hill on its eastern, southern, and southwestern sides. Felling is currently being undertaken in these plantations with a view to regenerating heathland with some mixed deciduous planting. (Fig. 8)

**6.2.2 Settlement at Rock Farm.** Rock Farm is a sub-zone of Nipstone and The Rock and comprises a small deserted settlement (999) of (probable) post-medieval date at the southwestern end of Nipstone and The Rock. It consists of a number of buildings (1044-51), some agricultural, some mining related, with associated paddocks and spoil tips and shafts. The buildings are in a variety of conditions, ranging from good (the farmhouse 1050 and some of its outbuildings) to very bad (other disused outbuildings and possible mine buildings).

**6.2.3 Settlement at Rock House.** At the southwestern end of Nipstone, overlooking The Rock, a series of drystone walls run between the tors on the peak (510-4 & 524), one of which (524) continues downhill to the southeast into a recent conifer plantation on the southeast flank of the hill. Further drystone walls on the west side of the hill (515 & 525) mark the boundary of the former Rock House gardens. The remains of Rock House (1587) and a small outbuilding (526) survive as ruins only, the former heavily overgrown, both in the edge of a conifer plantation. A number of other stone walls and banks presumably associated with Rock House were noted in the plantation but were not recorded by the rapid field survey. The remains of rock House are in a very bad condition, the drystone boundary walls and other features in a poor to fair condition.

**6.2.4 The Rock Mine.** The mining remains at Rock Farm are part of The Rock Mine (17), which according to the SMR was a mining venture that failed to strike ore. Nevertheless there are extensive remains in this area associated with the mine. Whether the farm originated as mine buildings or vice versa is not known. Four of the small fields to the west of the Bog-Linley lane were included in the study area; the northeastern of these fields contained a few mining-related earthwork features including a holloway and the site of a former adit (1588-90). Further remains are located beyond the study area to the northwest.

A drystone wall (1056) runs along the More/Worthen with Shelve parish boundary running from the tor peak at The Rock through the woodland to the south. A short length of wall (1040) also runs along the parish boundary on the northwest side of the peak towards the northeastern corner of the Rock Farm complex. A second wall (1052) runs from the peak to the southeastern corner of the complex, where it meets the farm boundary wall (1039). A shaft (1041) and the ruinous remains of two buildings (1042-3) are enclosed by these three walls and the tor. A large open shaft and associated spoil heap (548) is located immediately to the northeast of Rock Farm, and at least four more shafts (578-9 & 582-3) are to be found in the woodland to the northeast. Three further shafts (1053-5) are located to the south.

**6.2.5 Nipstone Mine.** As a group of workings Nipstone Mine (16) is in a very bad condition, having been extensively eroded since the mining ceased on the site. The remains have been damaged further by forestry work at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The remains on the site include a large stope (536) and track (537), shafts (521, 522), a spoil heap (540), other spoil and heaps and mounds probably associated with mining (506 & 538) and some possible trial trenching (541, 509, 532).

**6.2.6 Other features.** A boundary bank (519-20) of unknown date runs east from the tor on the summit towards the Big Wood conifer plantation. The southeastern end of this feature (520) appears to have been truncated and spread by recent forestry work.

### **6.3 The Knolls, The Bog, and Rigmoroak**

**6.3.1** The Knolls is situated on a saddle of lower ground which separates the main ridge of The Stiperstones from Nipstone hill. The Knolls is covered by a conifer plantation and areas of pasture. The pasture of The Knolls continues north into The Bog and Rigmoroak, which lie below the southwestern side of the main ridge. (Fig. 9)

The Knolls area and most of The Bog lay within the Longmynd Transect of the Marches Upland Survey (MUS), and so were excluded from the rapid field survey element of the current project. Part of Rigmoroak was included in the study area at request of EN as it lay within the NNR

**6.3.2** The Knolls area lay almost entirely within the Longmynd Transect of the MUS. It was covered only by the desk-based assessment of the current study. An assessment of the condition of the field monuments in this zone forms an appendix on the report on the Long Mynd Transect of the MUS (Dinn, 1996, pp21-4 & Appendix 5).

A shallow gully (1187) of unknown date or function was recorded by the field survey in the extreme northeastern corner of Knolls zone.

**6.3.3** The Bog. The southern half of The Bog zone also lay within the Longmynd Transect of the MUS. The Bog Mine (19) lay partly within this part of the zone. The Bog zone lies outside the NNR but was included in the survey

The condition of features in the The Knolls sub-zone (20-8, 31-43, 46) and the southern part of The Bog subzone (29, 30, & 45) are detailed in the gazetteer ("Fieldwork database listing" in Marches Upland Survey: Long Mynd Transect, Appendix 5 - 40368, 40372, 40373, 40384/01, 40384/02, 40384/03, 40384/04, 40385/01, 40385/02, 40422, 40425, 40427, 40428/01, 40428/02, 40428/03, 40428/04, 40428/05, 40428/06, 40428/07, 40428/08, 40428/09, 40454/01, 40454/02, 40456, 40461/01, 40461/02, 40895)

In the northern part of The Bog (outside the MUS area) there are two smallholdings which are still occupied (Hill Cottage and Bog Hill Farm), set within small fields enclosed by earth and drystone banks (1235-7, 1246). There is a further abandoned smallholding represented by the ruins of a building (1239) and field boundaries (1238, 1241-2). A mound and rubble spread (1244-5) just to the west of the Black Ditch may represent field clearance or the spread remains of a small stone outbuilding.

**6.3.4** Rigmoroak Rigmoroak is a former subsistence settlement below the western edge of the main Stiperstones ridge (Fig. 10). The eastern half of the zone, to the east of the bank and ditch feature "The Black Ditch" lies within the NNR. The western half was included in the study area at the request of English Nature. The landscape here is characterised by small fields typically between 1500m<sup>2</sup> and 9000m<sup>2</sup> in size. The fields are enclosed by drystone walls or banks or earthen banks with drystone cores, all in a poor to fair condition. There are a number of groups of ruined structures representing the former smallholdings; all are in a very bad condition. Rigmoroak itself is a ruin with walls 1m in height, (951 & 954), a second settlement

170m to the northeast (170, 978-81 & 984-9) and a third (1256-8) to the northwest are in similar very bad conditions.

A group of larger fields on the eastern side of Rigmoroak extending up towards Manstone Rock have been included in the Main Ridge zone, although they were in place by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and will have belonged to the Rigmoroak/Pennerley settlements (817, 820, 822, 832, 842-4).

Another feature (970) which appears on the digital aerial photographs as a sub-rectangular feature (87) enclosed by a slight bank or ditch could not be accessed by the survey because of dense gorse bushes.

The Black Ditch (919) continues its straight course SE-NW through Rigmoroak before heading WNW

## **6.4 Pennerley Dingle**

**6.4.1** The Pennerley Dingle zone comprises an arm of the NNR area which extends south from Perkins Beach to encompass the head of the Pennerley Dingle valley (Fig. 11). This small zone includes a variety of landscape and vegetation types: heathland, pasture, mixed woodland and industrial. The heathland and some of the mixed woodland represent areas of former pasture that are reverting due to under-grazing. The industrial landscape comprises mainly the remains of former mining and associated settlement, but there is also a dis-used quarry at The Hollows.

There are two main groups of features in this zone of the study area, both mining related sites.

**6.4.2** The first consists of a number of shafts, an adit, and spoil heaps (1455-72, 1475-7) on the line of the ore vein which runs between Tankerville and Perkins Beach. The remains of three buildings (1473-4 & 1478), all in very bad condition, are associated with the mining features, and probably represent former mine buildings. A number of former field boundaries, shown on the early OS mapping, also survive here as earthen banks, some with relict hedgerows along them (1454, 1465-9, 1499).

**6.4.3** The second group of features has as its focus a group of ruined buildings (1484-5, 1491-2). Of these buildings one (1484) at least was in part domestic as it has the remains of a cold-store attached (1485). These stores are a feature of the post-medieval cottages on the hills here and consist of a partially underground rectangular structure with drystone walls and a barrel-vaulted drystone roof covered with turf. Further examples survive at Blakemoorgate and The Paddocks. These buildings are all in a very bad condition. However the presence of a small number of shafts, possible shafts and small spoil heaps (1479-83) suggest that this group of buildings may also have been associated with mining activity. A number of earthen banks with relict hedges and the remains of drystone walling (1486-8, 1493, 1495-6, 1503), and a trackway (1494) are also associated with this small settlement.

**6.4.4** There is also a disused stone quarry (1447) at the head of the Pennerley Dingle valley at The Hollows.

## **6.5 The Main Ridge zone**

**6.5.1** The Main Ridge zone extends north from The Knolls to include most of the National Nature Reserve (NNR). This zone thus includes all the tors and stone outcrops on the ridge itself, the moorland below the tors and the headlands and valley sides on the western slopes. Boulder streams run down the steeper slopes from tors for up to 150m on either side. As well as the moorland and crags of the main ridge itself, the Main Ridge zone also includes a number of headlands and valleys on the western side of the ridge, which have been the sites of settlement and mining activity in the post-medieval period. (Figs. 10-12)

The Main Ridge Zone includes a number of subzones: Perkins Beach, Myttons Dingle, Oak Hill and Green Hill, Tin House, Blakemoorflat, and Blakemoorgate

### **6.5.2 Cairns**

A total of 22 prehistoric and possibly prehistoric cairns were identified by the survey in the Main Ridge zone. Most of these occur in the area around Cranberry Rock (756, 757, 758, 777, 778, 1504 & 1625) and Manstone Rock (732, 772, 773, 774, 775, 779, 780, 781 & 783) and all lie along or close to the ridge itself. 5 of these cairns (758, 775, 777, 779, 783) were listed on the SMR prior to this survey and are scheduled ancient monuments. A further possible cairn (840) was recorded below the main ridge to the west.

A ring cairn (759) and a small satellite cairn (760) were recorded to the southwest of Cranberry Rock, and a second possible ring cairn (807) to the east of Cranberry Rock.

Two further possible cairns (861 & 863) were recorded some way to the north of this group at the north end of the main ridge, overlooking The Paddock to the east and Blakemoorflat and Blakemoorgate areas to the west.

The smallest of the cairns (760) is about 6m in diameter by 0.8m in height, the largest (783) 25m in diameter by 3m in height (although this latter lies close to the main path along the ridge and has been added to significantly by visitors in recent years).

Most of these cairns were recorded as being in a fair condition although 7 were regarded as poor (779-81, 840, 861, 1504 & 1625). A number of the (possible) prehistoric cairns that might otherwise have been recorded as being in a "good" condition (well preserved for the period they represent) were downgraded by either having been added to (probably over the last half century) or were heavily overgrown by vegetation, notably heather and whinberry.

A feature (878) comprising a rectangular mound of stone fragments with drystone wall sides and rock-cut ditches along its long (northern and southern) sides was noted at Shepherds' Rock. Although heavily overgrown with dwarf shrubs, the mound bears some resemblance to a prehistoric long cairn. However, quarrying for road-stone is believed to have taken place here in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and the mound may be associated with these works. The eastern end of the mound has been damaged recently (apparently being quarried for stone for path repairs).

**6.5.3 Standing stones/Possible stone row:** A possible stone row was identified to the north of The Paddocks (1064-8, 1072-6) with outliers to the south (1077, 1080)

**6.5.4 Field system:** At the Knolls end of the Main Ridge the SMR records a field system (14) spotted from air in 1939 by a Grp. Capt. Livock as series of stone rows (SMR No. 01888), and noted by a field observation by the Ordnance Survey in 1973, who interpreted them as a series of medieval strip field separated by rows of clearance stones. No sign of these stone rows or strip fields was seen by the present survey despite some intensive searching amongst the grass, dwarf shrubs and bracken. The only feature seen in this area was a curvilinear ditch and bank (800, 805), which might have enclosed the northwestern part of this field system.

**6.5.5 Boundary banks:** The western edge of the Main Ridge zone is defined by a straight length of bank with a ditch on its east side, known as the Black Ditch (before c. 1850 also known as the Monks' Ditch [Foxall, 1984]) (71, 919, 1626). The ditch runs in a straight line north-northwest from The Knolls for over 1km before turning west, when it picks up a stream and follows a more sinuous course. The map evidence also suggests that before 1900 it may have extended further to the south east. The straight length of earthwork between the Main Ridge and The Bog zones is followed by the Worthen/Ratlinghope parish boundary.

A further length of bank and ditch (925 & 926) is also followed by the same parish boundary on the crest of the main ridge between the Devil's Chair (Great Rocks) and Broad Rocks, and then again by a further bank and ditch (867) northeast of Shepherds Rock. Here the bank (859, 1595, 1521, 1518) turns east and runs down the side of the ridge, forming the southern boundary of The Paddock. This section of bank was known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as Harwood or Scarlett's Wall [Foxall, 1984].

A number of boundary stones survive along this length of boundary between The Devils Chair and The Paddock, (866, 868, & 857)

A further length of bank (952) runs southwest from near the southeastern corner of Perkins Beach for a distance of 250m.

#### **6.5.6 Modern cairns**

27 "walkers' cairns" were also recorded by the survey. The term "walkers' cairn" was coined to include all cairns (mostly small in size) of presumed recent date (501-2, 552, 732, 735, 755-7, 762-3, 765-6, 773-6, 782, 796, 810, 858, 860, 862, 883, 937, & 1505), most of which lie alongside footpaths on the main ridge.

#### **6.5.7 Shooting butts**

A number of shooting butts were recorded in the Main Ridge zone. In this zone, the shooting butts comprise low stone walls set in a U, C, L, A or H shape. Two rows of these butts run down the east side of the main ridge to the east of the Devil's Chair (725-8 and 720-4, 733). A further butt (849) was recorded west of, and two (935-6) to the east and southeast of Manstone Rock, and another (761) at Cranberry Rock.

At the northern end of the zone, three widely spaced shooting butts lie to the south of Blakemoorgate (752-3 & 1584), and a further butt (754) was recorded 75m to E of

Blakemoorgate, possibly originally associated with one (1135) a little to the north in The Hollies zone..

### **6.5.8 Oak Hill and Green Hill**

One of the principal prehistoric features on The Stiperstones is the Castle Ring Iron Age hillfort (1).

The hillfort is a large univallate hillfort in a naturally strong defensive position, situated on a spur with ground falling steeply away on all sides but the south. On the south side the defences comprise a single bank rising up to 3.5m above an outer ditch. There is an off-set in-turned entrance in the southern defences. A length of ditch (704) recorded by this survey just outside the entrance may be part of the defences. The natural defences on the west and north sides of the promontory are strengthened by the construction of a steep scarp slope 3m high and an outer berm 3m wide. The defences enclose about 3.8ha.

The 1990-91 Monuments Protection Programme suggested there was no visible evidence of habitation in the interior of the hillfort. However, the present survey has recorded a number of probable building platforms or terraces (1263-76) inside the entrance of the fort. The survey has also identified three low mounds in the centre of the hillfort (712, 715, 716) and a short gully (717) on its eastern side of unknown function.

The hillfort is a scheduled ancient monument (County no 19203) and is in a good condition.

Only one feature was recorded on Green Hill; this is a small shallow hollow (1000), possibly a natural feature.

### **6.5.9 Blakemoorgate, Blakemoorflat and Tin House**

Blakemoorgate (003), Blakemoorflat (002) and Tin House (008) are situated at the northern end of the Main Ridge zone on exposed very marginal land on the top of the ridge. The settlement remains are characterized by ruined drystone buildings, field boundaries of drystone walls, earth banks, ditches and hedgerows, and field clearance cairns. The fields within the settlements have been cleared of stone and areas of grass pasture are still maintained by grazing at least 50 years after the settlements were finally abandoned. The settlement remains are under various threats, ranging from gradual decay from weathering, erosion and damage by livestock, through to damage that may be incidentally caused by land management. These threats, actual and potential, and the efficacy of the current levels of protection for the settlements remains, will be considered by the land management report. Blakemoorflat and Blakemoorgate are scheduled ancient monuments, Tinhouse was not listed on the county SMR prior to this survey.

These three settlements lie away from the areas of mining operations. The settlements were probably established with the permission of the landowners, and possibly even at their behest, and were occupied mainly by miners.

**6.5.10 Blakemoorflat** The remains of six structures (662-3, 676-8, & 682) survive within a series of paddocks enclosed by drystone walls and earthen banks with drystone cores. The structures, which comprise the remains of former cottages and outbuildings, are all in a “very bad” condition – two (662 & 676) have been reduced to mounds of stone).

Name	All components	Field boundaries	Structures
Blakemoorflat Deserted Settlement 002	655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683	655, 657, 659, 660, 661, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 680, 681, 683	662, 663, 676, 677, 678, 682

### 6.5.11 Blakemoorgate

Blakemoorgate is a somewhat larger settlement than its neighbour, Blakemoorflat, with the remains of at least 20 structures representing at least 6 individual holdings. Even though almost all of the structures are in a “very bad” condition, most have decayed to the extent that they are now relatively stable. An exception is a former cottage (1175) which is currently in a state of collapse and is the subject of planned conservation. Associated with this cottage is a small circular stone structure, probably an outside privy (1176). Exceptionally at Blakemoorgate two structures are categorized as being in a “good” condition. These are a cottage (1181) and an adjacent store (1182). The cottage was occupied as late as the 1950s and was re-roofed by English Nature in the 1980s; it is a Grade II Listed Building no. 1760-0/6/10000. The paddocks within this settlement are again bounded by drystone walls and earth banks with drystone cores. A number of these banks have decayed hedgerows running along them, which in some cases have developed into mature trees. Several trackways also run through the settlement dividing the former holdings.

Name	All components	Field boundaries	Structures
Blakemoorgate Deserted Settlement 003	585, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 1125, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1133, 1134, 1139, 1140, 1141, 1142, 1143, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153, 1154, 1155, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1159, 1160, 1161, 1162, 1163, 1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1171, 1172, 1173, 1174, 1175, 1176, 1177, 1178, 1179, 1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186	1101, 1110, 1111, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1131, 1132, 1139, 1141, 1143, 1144, 1147, 1148, 1152, 1153, 1157, 1158, 1164, 1166, 1168, 1171, 1172, 1173, 1178, 1179, 1186	1105, 1106, 1107, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1146, 1149, 1150, 1151, 1167, 1174, 1175, 1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185,

**6.5.12 Tinhouse** Tinhouse is an abandoned settlement on the crest of the hillside overlooking the southern arm of the Perkins Beach valley. The settlement includes

the ruins of a number of structures (904-7, 914) all in a very bad condition, and a number of small fields enclosed by drystone walls or earthen banks with drystone cores.

Name	All components	Field boundaries	Structures
Tinhouse Deserted Settlement 995	897, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915	897, 899, 900, 901, 903, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 915	904, 905, 906, 907, 914

### 6.5.13 Perkins Beach

Perkins Beach is a large and complex site running up a forked valley on the west side of the main ridge. Components of this site reach up to the edge of the rock outcrops of the main ridge summit. The site comprises both a mining complex and a subsistence settlement, and includes structures, comprising the remains of former cottages, outbuildings, and/or possible mine buildings, shafts, adits and spoil heaps, all set in a patchwork of small paddocks enclosed by drystone walls and earthen banks with drystone cores. Although the area is grazed and under rough pasture, scrub, in particular gorse, is encroaching into the site, particularly on the steeper slopes.

The identification of mine structures as opposed to domestic/agricultural buildings is problematic. The proximity of mining features (shafts, spoil heaps etc.) to structures is not necessarily an indicator of function, as the dates of the structures and adjacent mining remains may differ – areas were frequently re-worked e.g. the New Venture Mine at the top end of Perkins Beach. The interpretation of individual structures is also hampered by their poor state of preservation – all are in a “very bad” condition. A more detailed analysis – probably including both detailed documentary research and archaeological excavation - would be required for this.

Name	All components	Field boundaries	Structures	Shafts & adits
Perkins Beach Mine and Settlement 006	1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 1005, 1006, 1007, 1008, 1009, 1010, 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1016, 1017, 1018, 1019, 1020, 1191, 1192, 1193, 1194, 1195, 1196, 1197, 1198, 1199, 1200, 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1208, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1213, 1214, 1215, 1216, 1217, 1218, 1219, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1234, 1260, 1277, 1278, 1279, 1280, 1281, 1282, 1286, 1287, 1288, 1289, 1290, 1291, 1292, 1293, 1294, 1295, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1307, 1308, 1309, 1310, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1318, 1319, 1320, 1322, 1323, 1324, 1325, 1326, 1327, 1328, 1329, 1330,	1003, 1018, 1020, 1191, 1193, 1194, 1196, 1197, 1199, 1200, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1207, 1212, 1213, 1214, 1215, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1278, 1279, 1286, 1287, 1289, 1290, 1293, 1294, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1307, 1309, 1310, 1311, 1312, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1319, 1320, 1336, 1337, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1348, 1349, 1351, 1554, 1555, 1556	1001, 1198, 1201, 1208, 1216, 1217, 1218, 1219, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1260, 1277, 1295, 1305, 1306, 1308, 1318, 1333, 1338, 1355	943, 945, 1006, 1007, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1019, 1192, 1228, 1291, 1300, 1322, 1328, 1332, 1339, 1353, 1354, 1356  <b>Spoil heaps</b> 1004, 1195, 1229, 1327, 1330, 1331, 1335

	1332, 1333, 1334, 1335, 1336, 1337, 1338, 1339, 1340, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1348, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352, 1353, 1354, 1355, 1356, 1554, 1555, 1556, 1558			
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#### 6.5.14 Myttons Dingle

At the base of Myttons Dingle are the remains of a small mining settlement. The settlement comprises an adit (1365), shafts (1371 & 1375), and spoil heaps (1364, 1368-70, 1376), with 2 associated structures (1366 & 1367), probably former mine buildings (both in a very bad condition), and a small enclosure on the northern valley side marked by three earthen banks (1372-4). A track (1361, 1363), possibly a former tramway, leads west from the mine; it forks just before it leaves the study area, the northern branch terminating at a pair of ruined structures (1362) one of which lies outside the study area.

**6.5.15 Un-named settlement:** At the southern end of the Main Ridge zone are the remains of a former un-named settlement (998) with some possibly associated mining remains (546). The former settlement consists of the remains of structures (1419 and 1627), both in very bad condition, of which one survives only as a levelled platform, and a number of banks and ditches marking field boundaries (795, 797-8, 1413-16, 1420). The mining remains comprise a shaft, spoil heaps, and associated length of ditch (785, 784, 788, 787).

## 6.6 The Paddock

**6.6.1** The Paddock zone lies on the northeast side of the Main Ridge and lies partly within the NNR, the Shropshire Wildlife Trust Brook Vessons Nature Reserve, and continues to the south beyond the survey area. This zone encompasses The Paddock (994), a well-preserved squatter settlement of late post-medieval to early modern date. This extensive and moderately well-preserved deserted settlement was not listed on the county SMR prior to this survey. The earliest part of The Paddock settlement probably lies in the angle of the Worthen & Shelve parish boundary, later spreading to the north and to the south into Ratlinghope parish. The settlement was confined between the steep east slope of the main ridge and areas of boggy ground to the east and north. The settlement remains at The Paddock are characterized by ruined drystone buildings, field boundaries of drystone walls, earth banks, ditches and hedgerows, and field clearance cairns. (Figs. 11-12)

**6.6.2** As with most of the other abandoned settlements, all the buildings in The Paddock zone were recorded as being in a very bad condition, with the exception of one (1605) which was recorded as “uncertain”. Although still in a “very bad” condition, one structure (1508) still survived to second floor level, with the remains of a brick chimney stack and timber lintels in place; this cottage had been (re-)pointed with mortar (unlike the majority of the ruins which appear to have been of drystone construction). The occupation sites again are sited within small fields enclosed by drystone walls and earthen banks with drystone cores, often with decayed hedgerows running along them.

**6.6.3** A bank and ditch (604, 1406, 1408) runs through the northeastern corner of the zone. This feature continues the boundary feature that runs through The Hollies (604) and continues south beyond study area into Gittinshay Wood. It clearly pre-dates the squatter settlement at The Paddock, and appears also to pre-date the fields and copses in the northeastern part of this zone, as it is cut by boundary features and paths associated with both of these.

Name	All components	Field boundaries	Structures
The Paddock	1062, 1063, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1078, 1079, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1094, 1095, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1380, 1381, 1382, 1383, 1384, 1385, 1386, 1387, 1388, 1389, 1390, 1391, 1392, 1393, 1400, 1401, 1402, 1403, 1404, 1405, 1409, 1410, 1411, 1412, 1422, 1423, 1424, 1425, 1426, 1427, 1428, 1429, 1430, 1431, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, 1437, 1438, 1439, 1440, 1441, 1442, 1443, 1444, 1445, 1446, 1506, 1507, 1508, 1509, 1510, 1511, 1512, 1513, 1514, 1515, 1516, 1517, 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, 1522, 1523, 1524, 1525, 1526, 1527, 1528, 1529, 1530, 1531, 1532, 1533, 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1538, 1539, 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544, 1561, 1562, 1563, 1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1575, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1601, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1617, 1618, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624	1063, 1078, 1084, 1085, 1091, 1094, 1095, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1382, 1383, 1390, 1392, 1393, 1403, 1404, 1405, 1422, 1423, 1424, 1429, 1431, 1432, 1433, 1437, 1440, 1442, 1443, 1445, 1446, 1506, 1507, 1509, 1516, 1517, 1518, 1519, 1521, 1522, 1523, 1527, 1528, 1529, 1530, 1531, 1535, 1536, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544, 1561, 1563, 1564, 1565, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1581, 1582, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1614, 1615, 1617, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624	1092, 1093, 1391, 1400, 1435, 1436, 1444, 1508, 1524, 1525, 1532, 1534, 1540, 1575, 1580, 1583, 1593, 1600, 1601, 1605, 1616, 1618

## **6.7 Resting Hill**

The resting Hill zone lies at the northwestern end of the study area above the north side of Crowsnest Dingle and overlooking Snailbeach Mine to the north. The zone contains an area of grass pasture at the top of the hill with deciduous woodland on the hill sides. (Fig. 12)

Within the pasture at the top of the hill is a group of low spread banks and a shallow gully (629-30, 632-3, 636-7) representing a former field system which pre-dates existing field pattern. This field pattern is nevertheless respected by the line of the footpath over the hill and is continued by a boundary on the north side of the hill running down towards Snailbeach mine.

The eastern boundary of the zone is marked by a bank (631) with a decaying hedgerow, which continues to the southeast towards Blakemoorgate as a bank and lynchet (654). To the southwest of this is a small area of narrow-rig ridge and furrow (640) enclosed by an earthen bank (642), right on crest of the Crowsnest Dingle valley.

At the northern end of the ridge and furrow are two pits (638-9) c.6m diameter by 1m deep. There are two further shallow pits on the top of the hill (634-5). These features may possibly might be trial mine workings.

On the side of the hill on the north side of Crowsnest Dingle is a group of mine workings comprising a shaft, adit and spoil heap (1549-51). There is further mineworking or quarrying at the western corner of the zone (1545-8)

## **6.8 The Hollies**

**6.8.1** The Hollies zone comprises an area of grass pasture on the approach to the Main Ridge from the north. The central part of the zone has a distinctive plantation of holly trees, giving the area its name. The holly trees may possibly have originally been planted as hedgerows, although the present trees and bushes are now scattered and no pattern survives in their distribution. The landscape here slopes down to a stream to the east, where the grass is rougher, and there is an area of marshy ground at the bottom of the slope. (Fig. 12)

### **6.8.2 Mining remains.**

The main archaeological features in this zone comprise the scattered remains of small-scale mining activity. These remains have been grouped together on the county SMR as the Yew Tree Level (4). The Yew Tree Level is sometimes regarded as an outlier of the Snailbeach Mine, but in fact the remains here may be widely scattered in date.

One of the groups of mining remains is situated at the southern end of the zone and comprises an adit and spoil heap (601-2) and several drystone walls (603, 1136-7). A second group lies 200m to the north and consists of a shaft and spoil heap (595 & 1138) and further spoil heaps (599 & 547) down the slope to the east. A bank and ditch (598, 600, 605) carrying a stream runs northward from the first of these groups on mining remains and may have been cut to provide drainage from adit 602.

Other possible mining remains include two groups of mounds and stone spreads, which include a quantity of burnt stone (621-5 & 628), both of which lie close to the track at the northern end of The Hollies. These may possibly be bole (early smelting/ore roasting) sites, and may be of early post-medieval date.

### **6.8.3 Other features**

A bank and ditch (604) runs into the southeastern corner of the zone. This feature continues the boundary feature that runs through The Paddock and pre-dates the squatter settlement there. The feature runs into the marshy ground on the eastern edge of The Hollies zone where it is lost. The eastern boundary of the zone is marked by a ditch and in places a bank containing remains of drystone walling (613-4, 616-7).

A further bank and ditch runs west across the southwestern corner of the zone. The function and date of this feature is unclear. It is currently dry (although it slopes down to the west and could have carried water) and does not appear to be part of the modern field pattern in the area.

A shooting butt (1135) was also recorded at the southern end of the zone, 170m NE of Blakemoorgate, probably paired with one (754) at the NE end of the Main Ridge zone.

## **7 THREATS TO THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

**7.1** A variety of actual and potential threats to the archaeological resource on The Stiperstones hills have been identified. The threats may or might result from natural causes (e.g. weather erosion), management practices (e.g. forestry, grazing regimes), and other human causes (e.g. visitor pressure).

### **7.2 Conifer Plantations**

**7.2.1** There are currently proposals to regenerate areas of heathland outside the Stiperstones National Nature Reserve as part of English Nature's "Back to Purple" initiative. This is to be achieved by felling existing woodland, then scarifying the ground surface and seeding with heather. Felling and scarifying has already been carried out on part of Nipstone Rock at the southwestern end of the ridge in the south of the study area, and to the Gatten Plantation on the southeastern flank.

Further felling of conifer plantations at Nipstone Rock and The Rock is being carried out over the next five years (2004 -2009). Some of the felled areas are to be returned to heathland, other areas will be planted as mixed broad-leafed woodland.

**7.2.2** The principal threat to archaeological features from this work is damage from contractors' plant, both in the creation of compounds and access routes, and in the actual felling of timber.

**7.2.3** The scarifying involves the harrowing of the ground surface, this can remove or damage landscape features, some of which may date from the prehistoric periods.

**7.2.4** Re-planting of woodland can have a negative affect on the archaeological resource. Ground preparation by forestry plough e.g. The Gatten Plantation) is very destructive of archaeology and should be avoided. Different species of tree behave differently, some being deep rooted, others shallow. Some trees are more prone to wind-throw, in which case a large root-plate may be lifted, pulling up any underlying archaeology; the tree may also fall across vulnerable structures such as walls.

Zones potentially affected: Nipstone and The Rock; The Knolls

### **7.3 Mixed woodlands**

**7.3.1** Again, the principal threat to the archaeological resource in the areas of mixed woodland is through woodland management, where felling or thinning of woodland might involve the use of heavy plant. The creation of access tracks and working compounds may adversely affect archaeological earthworks. There is currently (June 2005) some thinning of the oak coppice on Resting Hill where it overlooks the west end of Crowsnest Dingle.

Zones potentially affected: Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies

## **7.4 Heathland**

**7.4.1** The effect of natural erosion on the archaeological resource in the heathland landscapes is mainly confined to the gradual weathering of the built features – the drystone walls and earthen banks and drystone structures of the abandoned settlements. In the steeper valleys, occasional very heavy rainfall may cause flash flooding which could have the potential to accelerate the natural weathering of features within the valleys.

**7.4.2** Fires on heathland have been recognised as a serious threat to the archaeological resource, particularly in areas of peat deposits where the fire can burn undetected for several months within the peat (Archaeology Service, The Highland Council). Fires can take the form of “wildfires” on the heathland which occur as a product of natural forces, e.g. lightning strikes, and other human activity (accidental heath fires), or can be controlled fires, e.g. the burning of heather, undertaken as part of land management regimes.

Wildfires may damage archaeological sites, and may also have the effect of contaminating or even destroying archaeo-environmental and scientific dating evidence on archaeological sites within the heathland. Another serious threat comes from the use of heavy plant (e.g. bulldozers) to create firebreaks. These can damage archaeological features in their path and create scars that will become part of the landscape. Several such features were created on the main ridge at about the time of a serious wildfire in 1976, 2 on the west side (837,839,846 & 729-31, 841) and one possible break on the east side (851) and along the western edge of the Gatten Plantation.

The management of the heathland requires the burning of heather on a 15 year cycle. This traditional practice has an important part to play in controlling ‘wild fires’ Nevertheless, controlled heather burning, like ‘wild fires’ may also have the effect of contaminating or even destroying archaeo-environmental and scientific dating evidence on archaeological sites within restored or newly-created heathland. This should be balanced against the potential for discovering “new” sites and features that may only be revealed when the dwarf shrubs and bracken have been burned back.

**7.4.3** The visitor erosion to archaeological sites and their landscape setting along popular routes along the summit and up the valleys does not appear to be a problem. There is the question of the addition of material to cairns close to the main paths, which may have the effect of obscuring the origins of these features. However, this process has probably been taking place for at least the last 100 years at least, and would be difficult to control.

Zones potentially affected: Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; Rigmoreoak; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies

## **7.5 Pasture land**

**7.5.1** The principal potential threat to archaeological features within the areas of pasture would be the introduction of new agricultural practice that might cause disturbance to the archaeological resource (for example, a substantial increase in the numbers of cattle or sheep grazed). The present regime of low level grazing

however is generally benign. The installation (and location) of water troughs and pipes (as at Blakemoorgate) and the use of tractors in very wet conditions (as at The Hollies) can cause some ground disturbance; this could adversely affect the archaeological resource in certain areas. Within the deserted settlements, grazing cattle may adversely affect the sometimes fragile remains of drystone structures, and hasten the collapse of structures which still survive to any height.

**7.5.2** The encroachment of scrub into areas of pasture may threaten the archaeological resource within these areas. As well as masking features from view, the roots of scrub and dwarf shrubs can erode dry-stone walls and cause their eventual collapse. The potentially damaging effect of bracken rhizomes on sensitive archaeological features has also recently been demonstrated (The Dartmoor Archaeology and Bracken Project)

Zones potentially affected: The Knolls; The Bog; Rigmoroak; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies

## **7.6 Industrial areas**

**7.6.1** Additional threats to the areas of former industrial (mineral extraction) settlements and complexes are both natural and man-made. The main “natural” threat is that of collapse of former underground mine-workings. This may take the form of the collapse of underground stopes or of the fill of former shafts.

**7.6.2** The human threat comes in the form of the quarrying of mine waste from the spoil tips, possibly for use as material for path repairs. There are potential contamination issues as well as the spoil is likely to contain zinc and cadmium compounds, as well as lead and barites.

Zones potentially affected: Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; The Knolls; The Bog; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; Resting Hill; The Hollies

## **7.7 Paths.**

There is a threat to the archaeological resource related to the need to manage and maintain footpaths and tracks. One of the management needs is to remove water from the footpaths. This often requires the cutting of drains across the paths, particularly in the valleys. Where these paths run through the abandoned settlements, the paths are often lined with stone walls or earth banks with dry-stone walls, and in at least one area (the Perkins Beach subzone of the Main Ridge zone) this has resulted in recent years to these banks being cut through to create drains. In one instance at least, an archaeological feature in the Main Ridge has been quarried to provide stone for footpath repairs.

<b>Landscape Type</b>	<b>Zones affected</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Conifer Woodland</b>	Nipstone and The Rock; The Knolls	7.2.2 Felling; location of contractors' compounds and access; use of heavy plant 7.2.3 Scarifying 7.2.4 Re-afforestation
<b>Mixed Woodland</b>	Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies	7.3.1 Felling; location of contractors' compounds and access; use of heavy heavy plant
<b>Heathland</b>	Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; Rigmoroak; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies	7.4.1 Natural erosion 7.4.2 Wildfires and heather-burning 7.4.3 Visitor erosion/damage
<b>Pasture</b>	The Knolls; The Bog; Rigmoroak; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; The Paddock; Resting Hill; The Hollies	7.5.1 Change in grazing regime; installation of water troughs & pipes; damage to soft ground by tractors etc. 7.5.2 Scrub encroachment
<b>Industrial areas</b>	Black Rhadley; Nipstone and The Rock; The Knolls; The Bog; Pennerley Dingle; The Main Ridge; Resting Hill; The Hollies	7.6.1 Collapse of mine workings 7.6.2 Use of mine spoil in paths maintenance
<b>Paths</b>		7.7 Drainage and surface repairs

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**8.1** This section is intended to provide recommendations for the management of the archaeological resource within the study area to address the potential threats to the resource outlined in the previous section. The recommendations made here are generic; as the majority of the threats identified are closely linked with the landscape type and land-use the recommendations have been grouped accordingly. A number of recommendations for specific sites or site types follow along with suggestions for further study.

### **8.2 Conifer Plantations**

**8.2.1** There are features within the denser woodland that have not been mapped and the opportunity to map these features should be made available. In particular this opportunity should be given if the ground surface is to be scarified after felling it or if the felled area is to be replanted. This will ensure that significant or sensitive features can be avoided.

**8.2.2** To minimise the impact of forestry work on the archaeological resource the location of site compounds and routing of access tracks associated with forestry work should be discussed with Shropshire County Council's Historic Environment Officer. The use of brush mats and other devices would help to preserve earthwork and other built features. Trees should be cut where practical, and the cut timber removed without causing unnecessary damage to earthworks or built features.

**8.2.3** Re-planting of woodland should also be carried out in such a way as to avoid damage to earthworks and other archaeological features. Where re-planting on archaeologically sensitive sites is unavoidable, the use of forestry ploughs should be avoided and consideration should be given to the species to be planted.

### **8.3 Mixed Woodlands**

**8.3.1** A similar approach to section 8.2 should be taken in areas of mixed woodland where felling or thinning might involve the use of heavy plant.

### **8.4 Heathland**

**8.4.1** The gradual natural erosion of the archaeological resource is part of the archaeological process. However accelerated erosion of features or structures due to, for example, severe weather conditions, may require intervention. The level of response would depend on the archaeological features affected and the nature of the erosion, but should involve restoration, consolidation, or detailed recording of the affected features. Consideration should be given to putting in place a procedure for monitoring and reporting signs of accelerated erosion or damage to archaeological features or structures, perhaps in conjunction with the landowners, tenants, commoners, and/or local community groups.

**8.4.2** Wildfires and heather burning can be potentially serious threats to the archaeological resource. However, in older areas of heathland where heather-burning has been practiced for many years, the likelihood of fresh damage being caused by heather burning is low. On the other hand, heather burning can expose

previously hidden archaeological features, and there should be an opportunity for archaeologists to visit the site after larger scale programmes of burning. Similarly, archaeological site visits should be made after wildfires.

## **8.5 Pasture land**

**8.5.1** The present grazing regimes in the areas of existing pasture within the study area appear to achieve the balance of maintaining the character of the landscape with minimal damage to the archaeological resource. Attention should be drawn to tenants/commoners of the scheduled nature of some of the sites, e.g. Castle Ring hillfort, Blakemoorgate, and Blakemoorflat, and the implications of their scheduled status. Similar consideration should be given to some of the currently un-protected sites e.g. The Paddock, Perkins Beach and Tinhouse. Where possible or practical, cattle should be kept away from unstable dry-stone structures, particularly in the scheduled sites of Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat and the other deserted subsistence settlements, where there is a likelihood that cattle may accelerate erosion of structures. Water troughs and water-pipes should be located to avoid disturbance to known archaeological sites and features.

**8.5.2** The ideal balance of grazing in the areas of the abandoned settlements is one that will limit the regeneration of scrub but will not affect the integrity of the archaeological resource. Active management of the scrub and bracken may need to be undertaken to prevent encroachment. In areas of pastureland that are being colonized by scrub, gorse, and bracken, some manual clearing of the scrub should be considered, both to prevent damage to archaeological features (dry-stone walls and structures) and to prevent pasture land reverting to scrub. This would have the additional benefit of enhancing the visual appearance of the archaeological sites in these areas.

## **8.6 Industrial areas**

**8.6.1** Areas where there are known to be former mineworkings should be monitored for signs of collapse or deterioration. Visitors should be warned of the dangers of leaving the paths in these areas. Where it is considered to be necessary to fence off open workings (e.g. open shafts, adits or collapsed stopes) the fencing should be sympathetic to the environment. Any infilling or permanent sealing of open shafts, adits, and other mine workings should take into account the potential loss of archaeological resource.

**8.6.2** Spoil heaps are a part of the industrial archaeology of the area; mine spoil should not be used as a source of materials for path maintenance.

## **8.7 Footpath maintenance and drainage**

**8.7.1** The siting of drains to remove water from footpaths should be undertaken with care. A balance should be sought between the need to maintain footpaths and minimising damage to archaeological features. Where there is no option but to cut through drystone walls or earthen banks, a drain or small stone culvert should be inserted and the bank restored over the drain.

**8.7.2** Clitter from the tors, or material from spoil tips or other archaeological features should not be removed for path maintenance. Advice should be sought in cases of doubt. The possibility of re-opening dis-used quarries for small amounts of stone should be explored.

**8.7.3** The re-opening of some of the footpaths and tracks marked on 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25" OS maps but now dis-used could be considered.

## **8.8 Specific sites / monument types**

**8.8.1 Blakemoorgate:** Plans are currently being drawn up by English Nature in consultation with English Heritage for repairs to the derelict cottage and the possible use and development of the listed cottage at Blakemoorgate. The management of livestock and grazing regime is also being reviewed for this site.

**8.8.2 Perkins Beach:** The settlement around the mining remains at Perkins Beach deserves a similar level of protection to the Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat settlements. The added dimension of the former lead and barytes mining at Perkins Beach suggests that this well preserved and complex site should be considered for an enhanced level of protection. The present light grazing regime across this settlement has kept much of this site clear of scrub without causing erosion to its archaeological features by sheep or cattle. However there are significant areas where scrub has encroached, and active management of the scrub, particularly gorse and birch, should be considered.

**8.8.3 The Paddock:** Similarly the abandoned settlement at The Paddock, which lies partly in the NNR, the SWT Brook Vessons LNR, and in private ownership, should be accorded a similar level of protection as that enjoyed by Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat.

**8.8.4 Tinhouse:** Although smaller than the other deserted settlements, Tinhouse, situated on the hilltop overlooking Perkins Beach, is in a similar state of preservation to the others. The present light grazing regime around this settlement has kept this site clear of scrub without causing erosion to its archaeological features by sheep or cattle. Nevertheless there are signs that scrub and dwarf shrubs are beginning to encroach on this site too, and again, active management of the scrub should be considered.

**8.8.5 Cairns on the Main Ridge:** The present survey noted that none of the cairns identified on the main ridge of The Stiperstones has been satisfactorily dated. Although, firm dating evidence can at present only be achieved through excavation, a detailed topographical measurement of the cairns and recording of the different visible construction methods and materials (i.e. boulders and large rock fragments as opposed to clitter and scree) would produce a typology of the cairns in this area. This would also be useful to measure whether (and if so the degree of) damage to the cairns that is caused by visitors to the ridge adding to or removing material.

## **8.9 Further study**

**8.9.1** The survey has increased the number of probable prehistoric features from the 5 cairns in the Cranberry and Manstone Rocks area plus a field system (that was listed as prehistoric or medieval), and the Castle Ring Iron Age hillfort, to at least 24 sites. In addition to the known cairns, this total includes a number of monument types (ring cairns, a possible long cairn and a possible stone row or standing stones) that had not previously been identified in the study area. The increase in the number and type of these monuments, and their distribution, suggests that a re-appraisal of this prehistoric funerary and ritual landscape may be necessary. The field survey did not locate any boundary features that could be directly associated with the prehistoric cairns, although the relationship between the prehistoric cairns, modern “walkers” cairns, and the network of modern trackways on the ridge top would also merit further study, in terms of the identification and distribution of the cairns, their condition and survival, and the circumstances of their discovery (for example, the effect that heather-burning may have on revealing such features).

**8.9.2** The survey has also confirmed the potential of Castle Ring for further study as suggested in the project Research Design. The field survey identified a number of platforms or terraces within the interior of the hillfort which may indicate areas of occupation. The hillfort is undisturbed and well preserved and is a suitable candidate for a non-destructive study similar to those undertaken by the joint English Heritage AML/CAS & Oxford University Wessex Hillfort Study. Geophysical survey might be hampered by the vegetation cover of dwarf shrubs within some parts of the hillfort, but a detailed topographical survey would refine and increase the defined areas of possible hut platforms within the fort.

**8.9.3** There is also scope for further detailed survey of the various post-medieval subsistence settlements on the Stiperstones. Detailed survey would help identify the elements within the building complexes that mark many of the individual smallholdings within these settlements. In particular, a detailed survey of the Perkins Beach mining and subsistence settlement might help identify the function of different elements within the settlement.

## **8.10 Interpretation**

**8.10.1** There is considerable scope for an increased level of interpretation of the archaeological and historical resource contained within the study area. In particular, there is the opportunity to tell the story of the mining communities who lived on The Stiperstones for at least 200 years. The opportunity should be taken to look at the area holistically, making use of existing facilities at Snailbeach Lead Mine, The Bog and Stiperstones village as well as the huge resource on The Stiperstones Hills themselves.

<b>Landscape Type</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Conifer Woodland</b>	8.2.1 Opportunity for archaeological recording after felling; archaeological features avoided. 8.2.2 Location of compounds and access agreed. Trees cut. 8.2.3 Avoid forest ploughs; re-planting to avoid known archaeological features.
<b>Mixed Woodland</b>	8.3.1 Location of compounds and access agreed. Trees cut. Opportunity for archaeological recording after felling.
<b>Heathland</b>	8.4.1 Systematic monitoring; restoration, consolidation, or recording. 8.4.2 Opportunity for archaeological recording after fires and heather-burning.
<b>Pasture</b>	8.5.1 Maintain benign grazing regime; promote awareness of scheduled status of certain areas; similar levels of protection to other archaeologically sensitive areas. 8.5.2 Active management of scrub.
<b>Industrial areas</b>	8.6.1 Monitor areas of known mine-workings; danger areas to be fenced sympathetically. 8.6.2 Mine waste not to be quarried e.g. for use in path maintenance.
<b>Paths</b>	8.7.1 Damage to archaeological features avoided. 8.7.2 Clitter and mine spoil not to be used for maintenance. 8.7.3 Bring some old paths back into use.
<b>Specific sites / monument types</b>	8.8.1 Blakemoorgate: Proposals for repair of derelict cottages and grazing regime under discussion.
	8.8.2 Perkins Beach: Give similar levels of protection as given to Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat. Active scrub management.
	8.8.3 The Paddock: Give similar levels of protection as given to Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat.
	8.8.4 Tinhouse: Give similar levels of protection as given to Blakemoorgate and Blakemoorflat. Active scrub management.
	8.8.5 Cairns on the Main Ridge: carry out topographical recording and typology.
<b>Further study</b>	8.9.1 Re-appraisal of prehistoric significance of Main Ridge 8.9.2 Non destructive study of the Castle Ring hillfort 8.9.3 Detailed survey of post-medieval settlements, in particular Perkins Beach
<b>Interpretation</b>	8.10.1 Telling the 200 year story of the Stiperstones mining communities.

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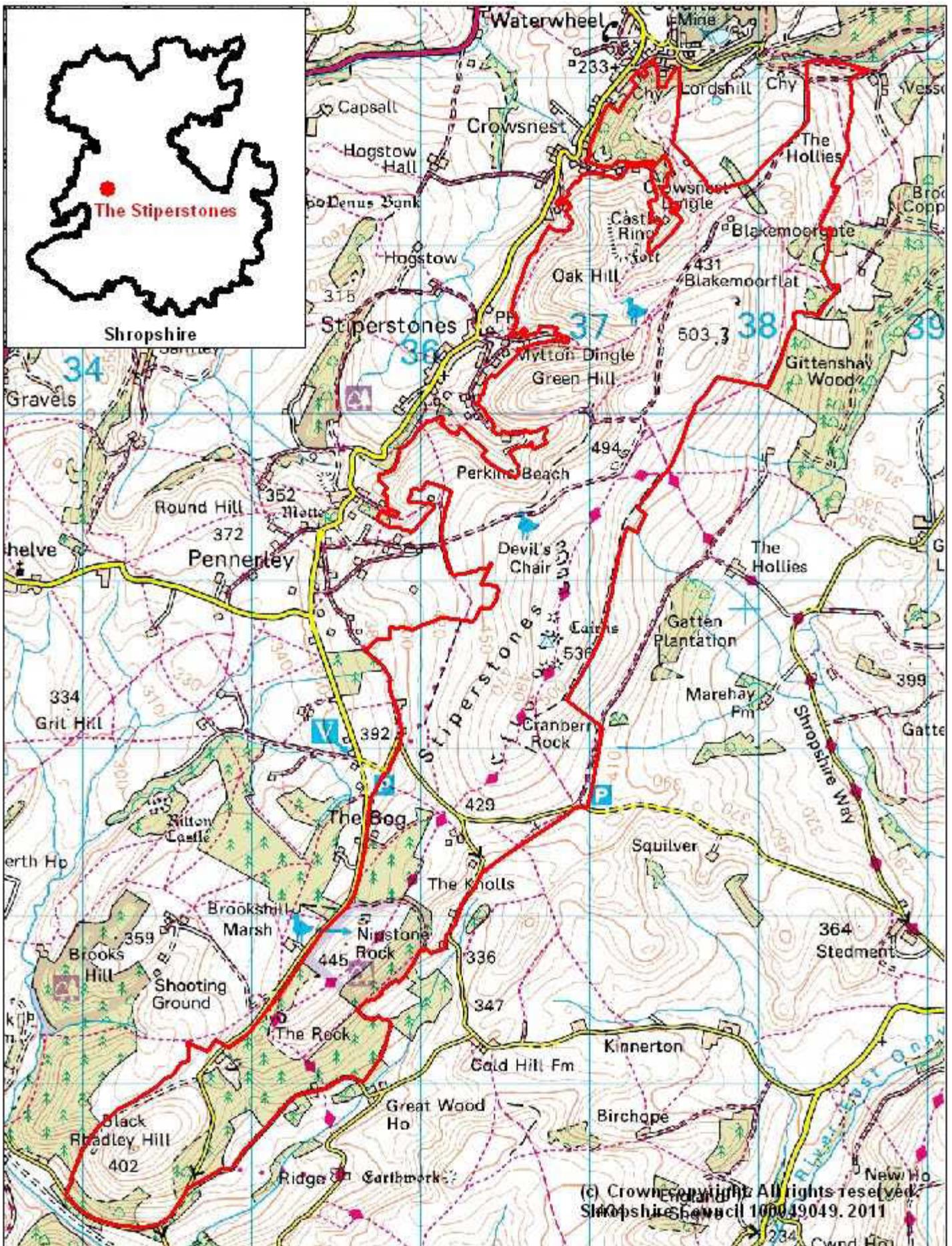
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### Abbreviations

<b>CBA</b>	Council for British Archaeology
<b>EH</b>	English Heritage
<b>EN</b>	English Nature
<b>HLC</b>	Historic Landscape Characterization
<b>HWCC</b>	Hereford and Worcester County Council
<b>JMC</b>	Journal of Material Culture
<b>MUS</b>	Marches Upland Survey
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>PRN</b>	Primary Record Number
<b>RCHME</b>	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
<b>SA</b>	Shropshire Archives
<b>SAM</b>	Scheduled Ancient Monument
<b>SCC</b>	Shropshire County Council
<b>SMR</b>	Sites and Monuments Record
<b>SWT</b>	Shropshire Wildlife Trust

## 10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

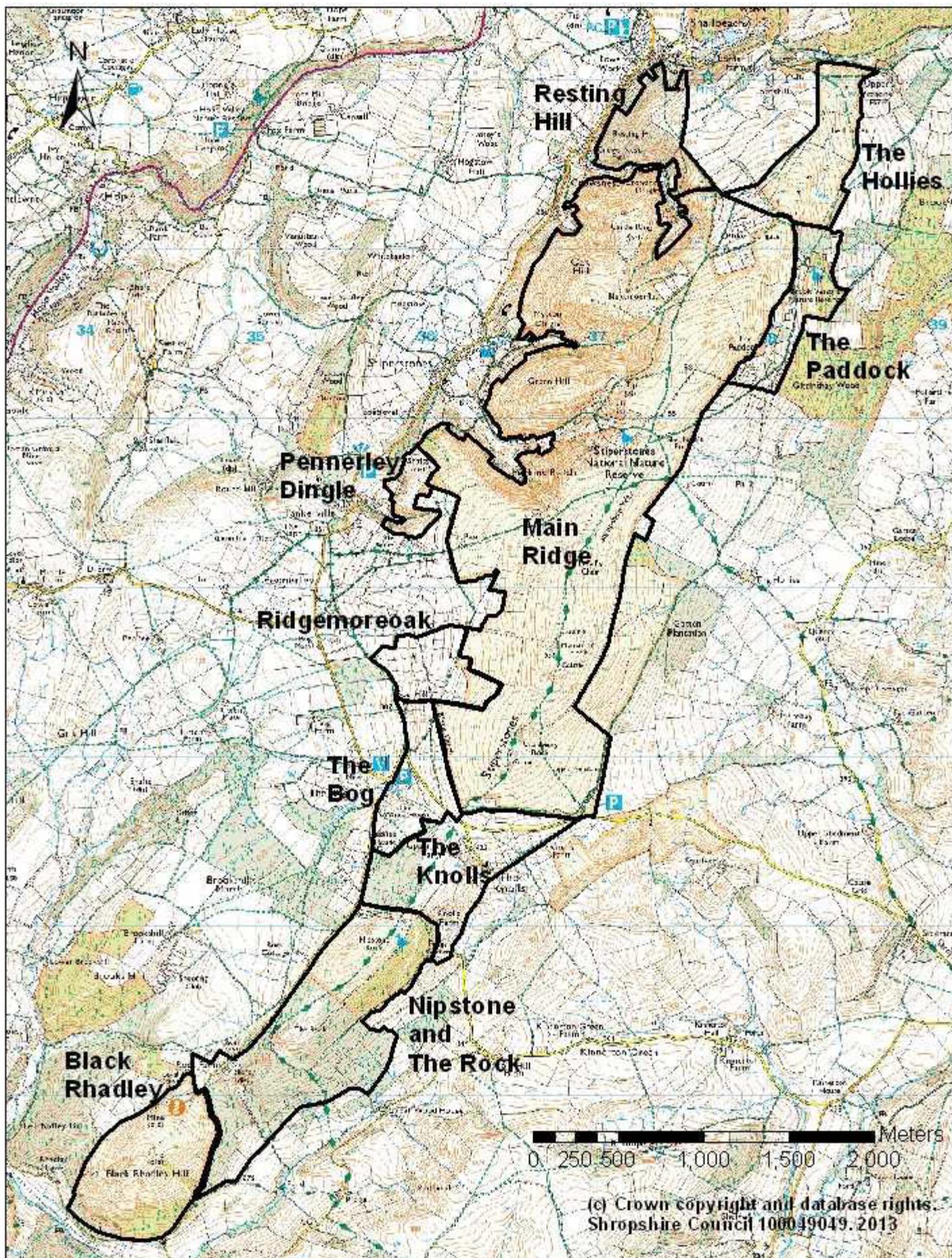
Thanks are due in the first place to the organisations that have funded this project: English Heritage, English Nature, and Shropshire County Council. In addition to English Nature, who own and manage The Stiperstones National Nature Reserve, many other land-owners and their tenants gave unrestricted access to their land – these included the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, The Forestry Commission, Linley Estates, Mr John Pockett, Mr Frank Pinches, Jacqueline Horridge, and Mr Phillip Dudlestone. The writer would particularly like to thank Michael Fradley, Project Assistant, for his work on the rapid field survey and data processing, and also Phil Cawood and Emily Harrison, volunteers, who also helped with the rapid field survey.

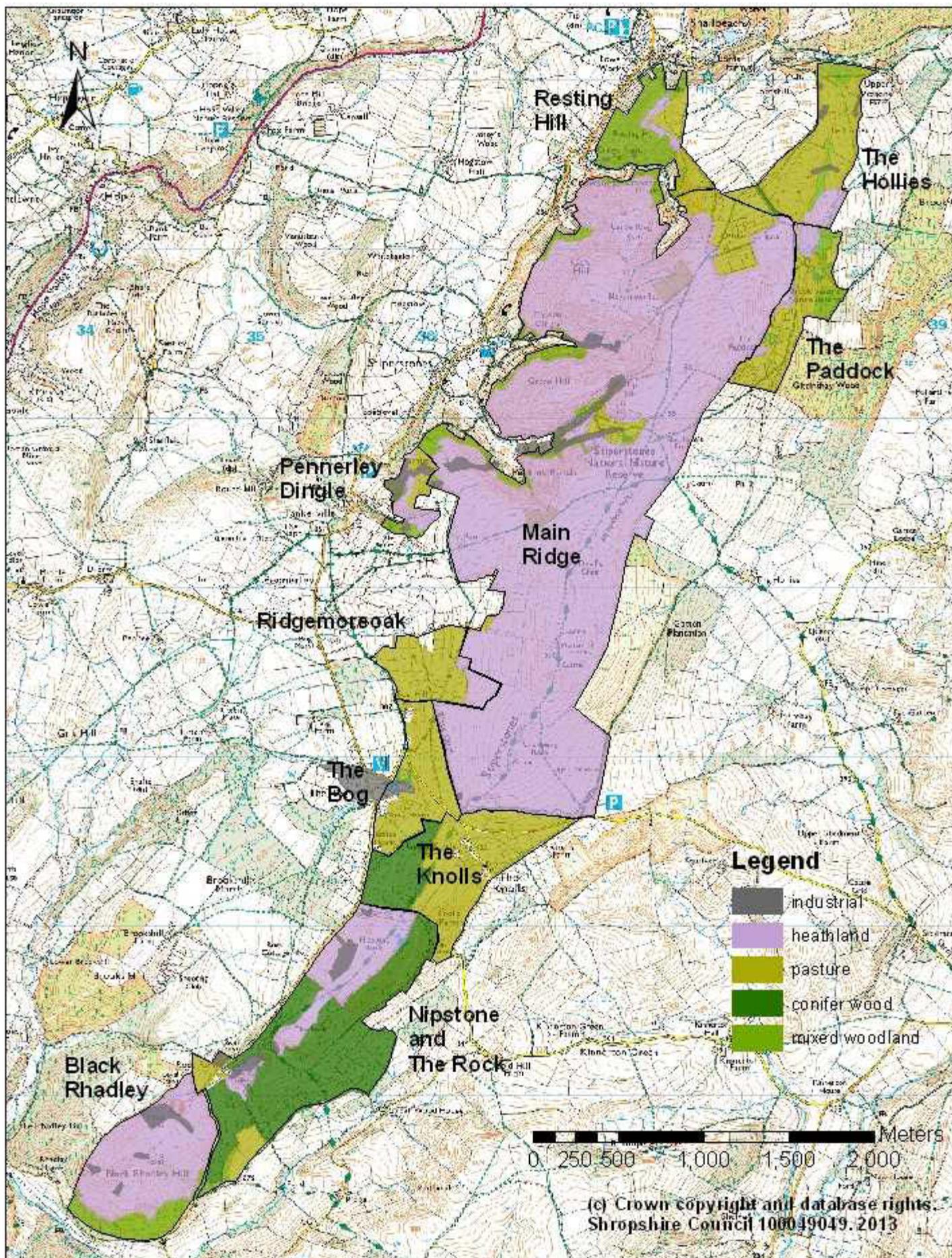


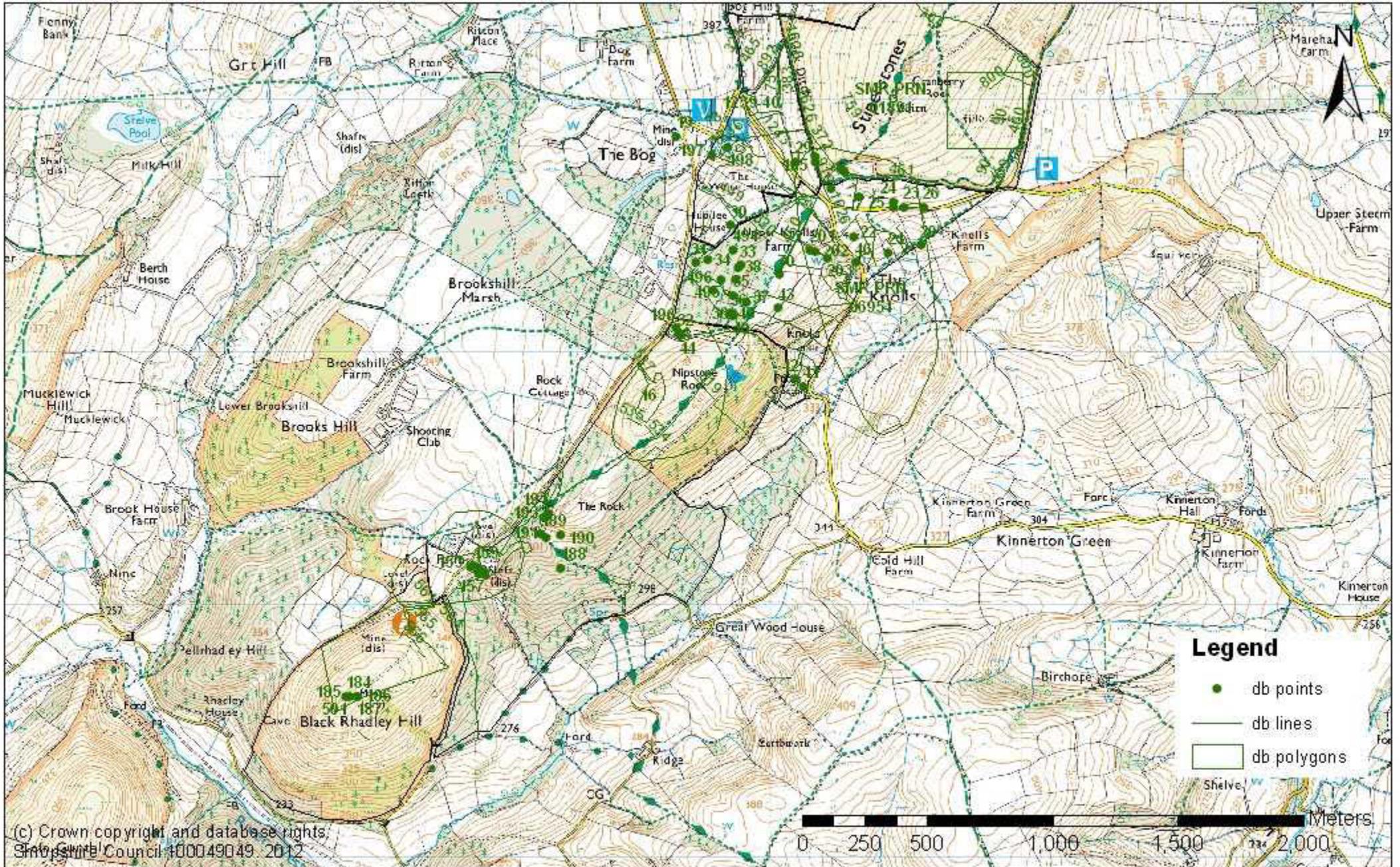
**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
 Figure 1: The study area

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 Shropshire Council  
 Historic Environment Team,  
 Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,  
 Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

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**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 4: Features identified by the desk-based survey (south)**

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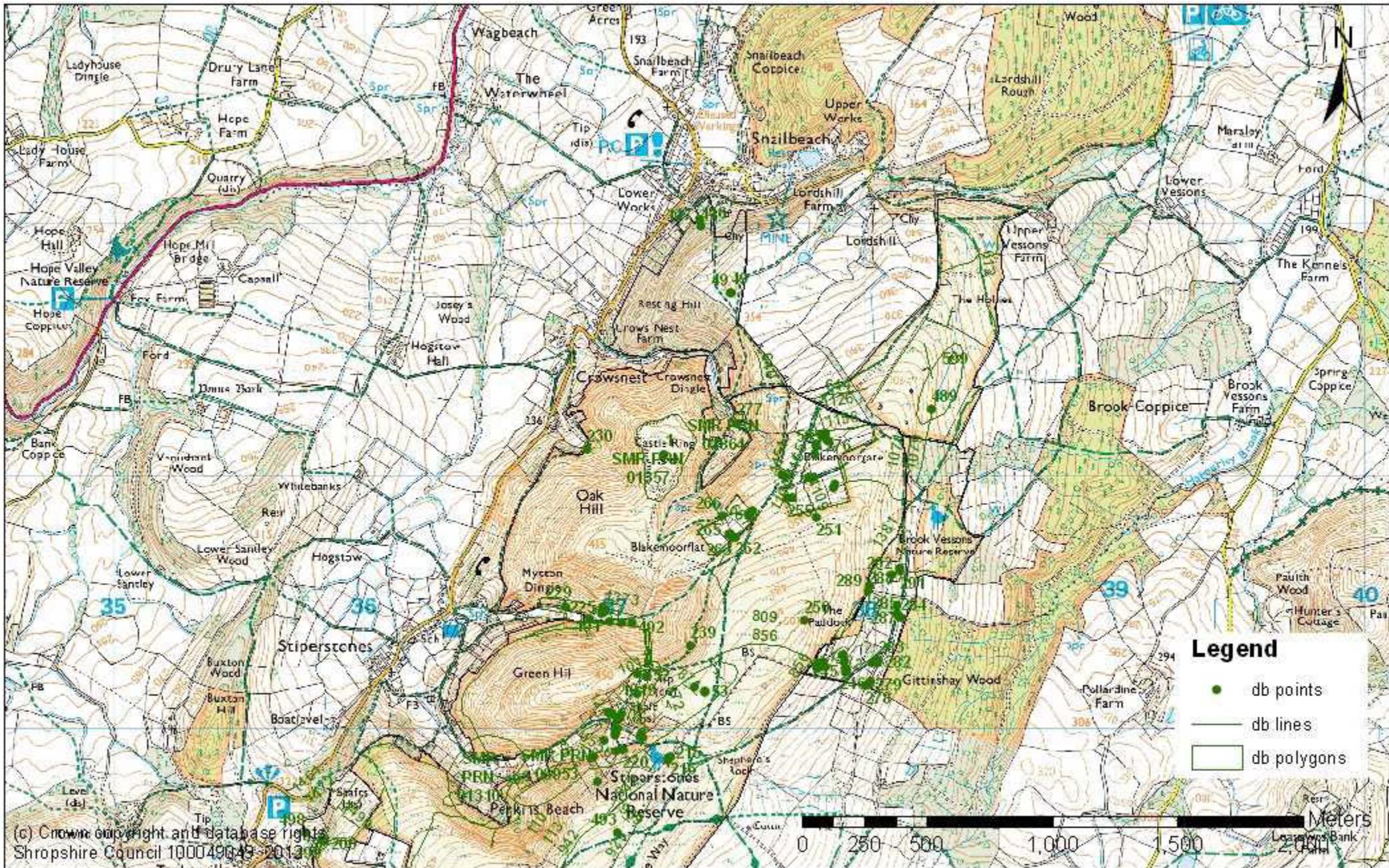


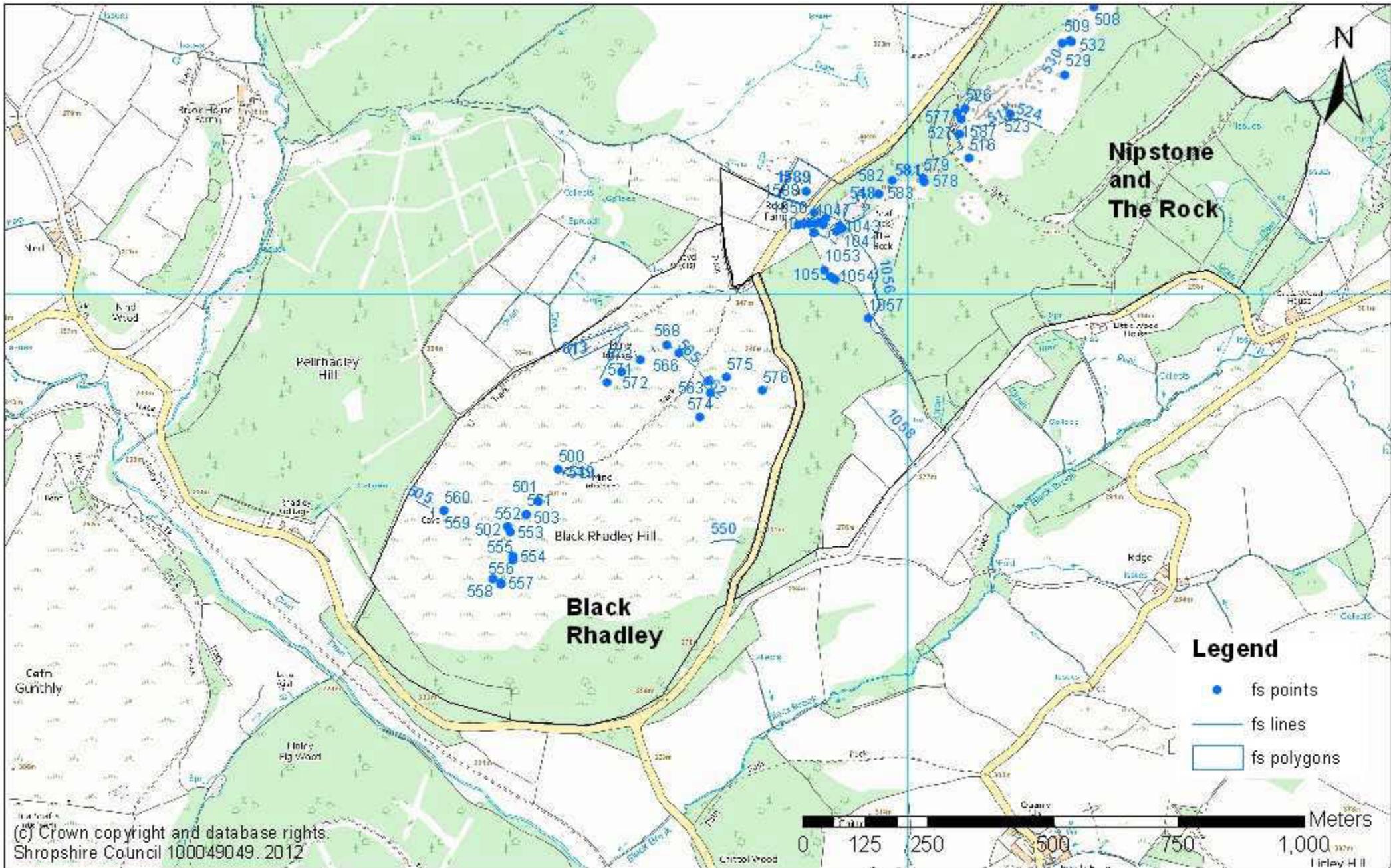
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**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 5: Features identified by the**  
**desk-based survey (central)**

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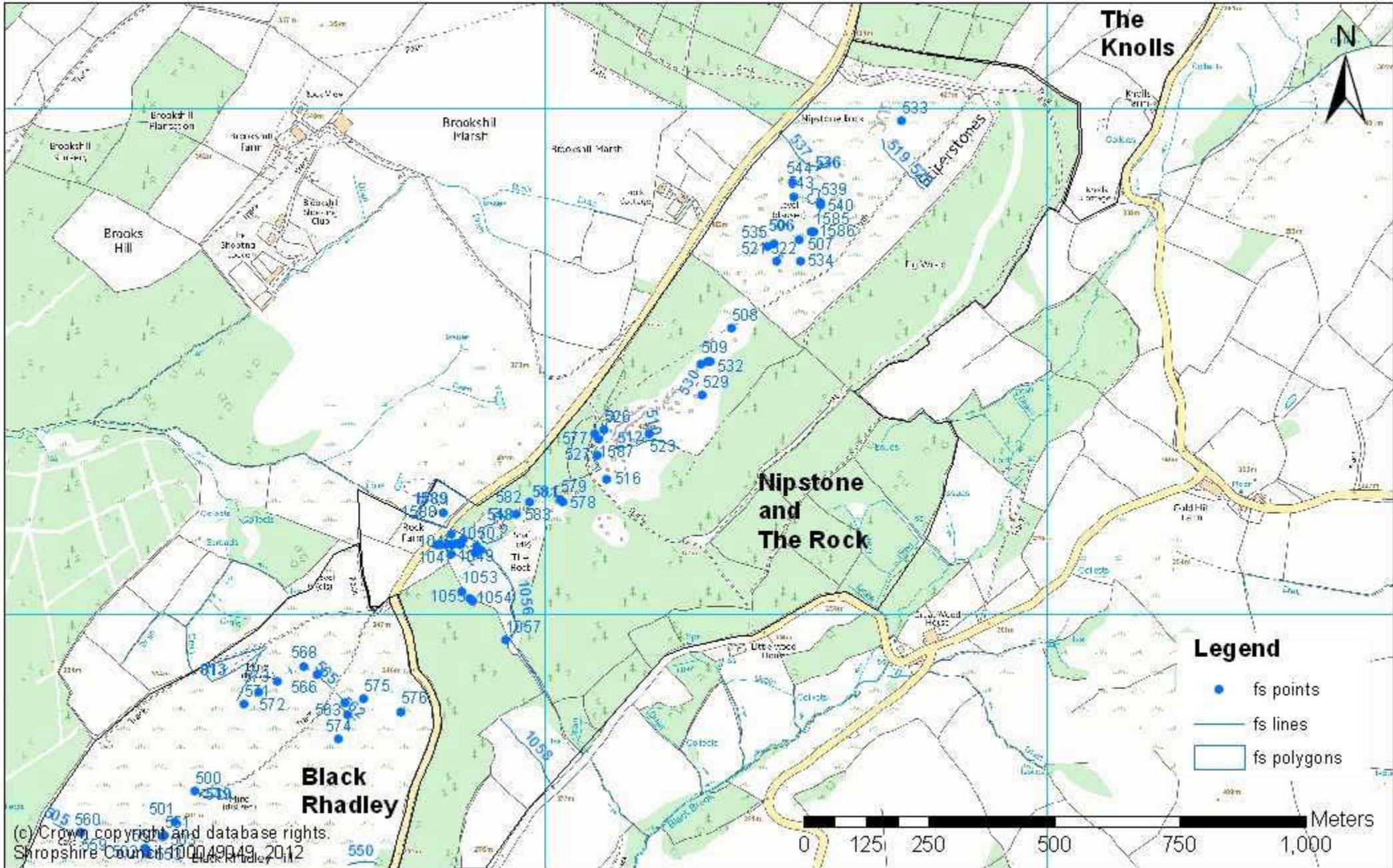


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**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 7: Field survey features (Black Rhadley)**

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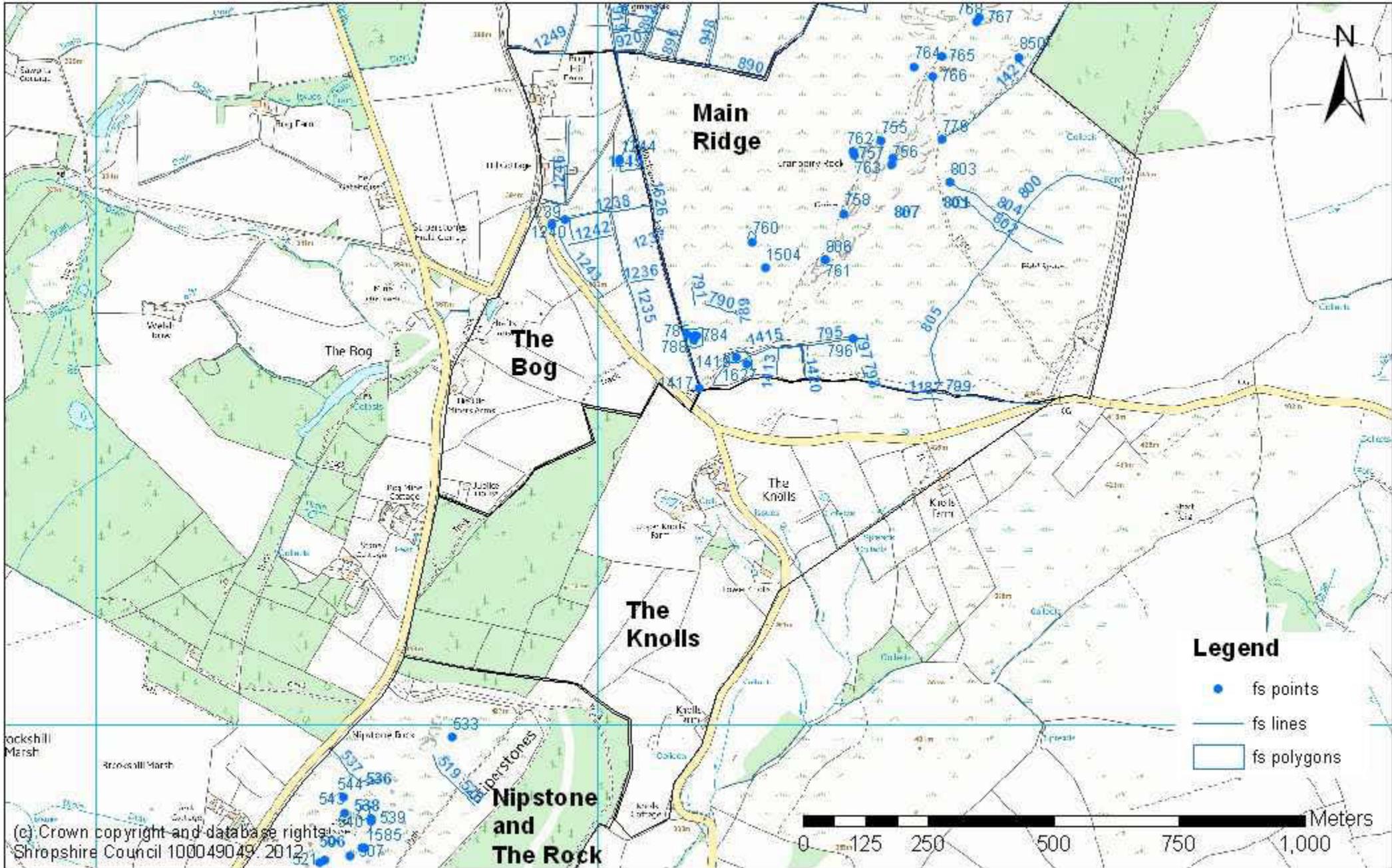


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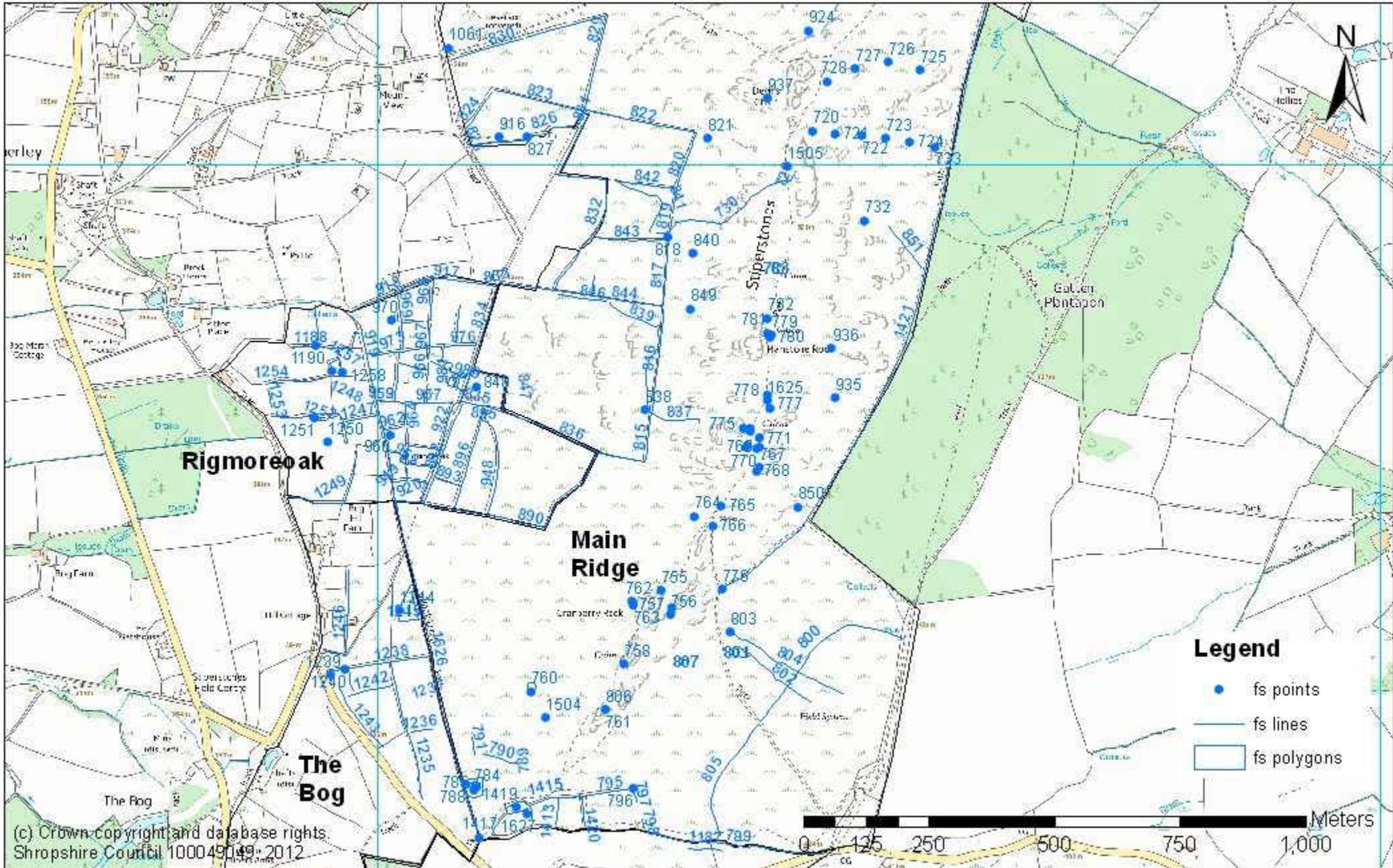
**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 8: Field survey features (Nipstone and the Rock)**

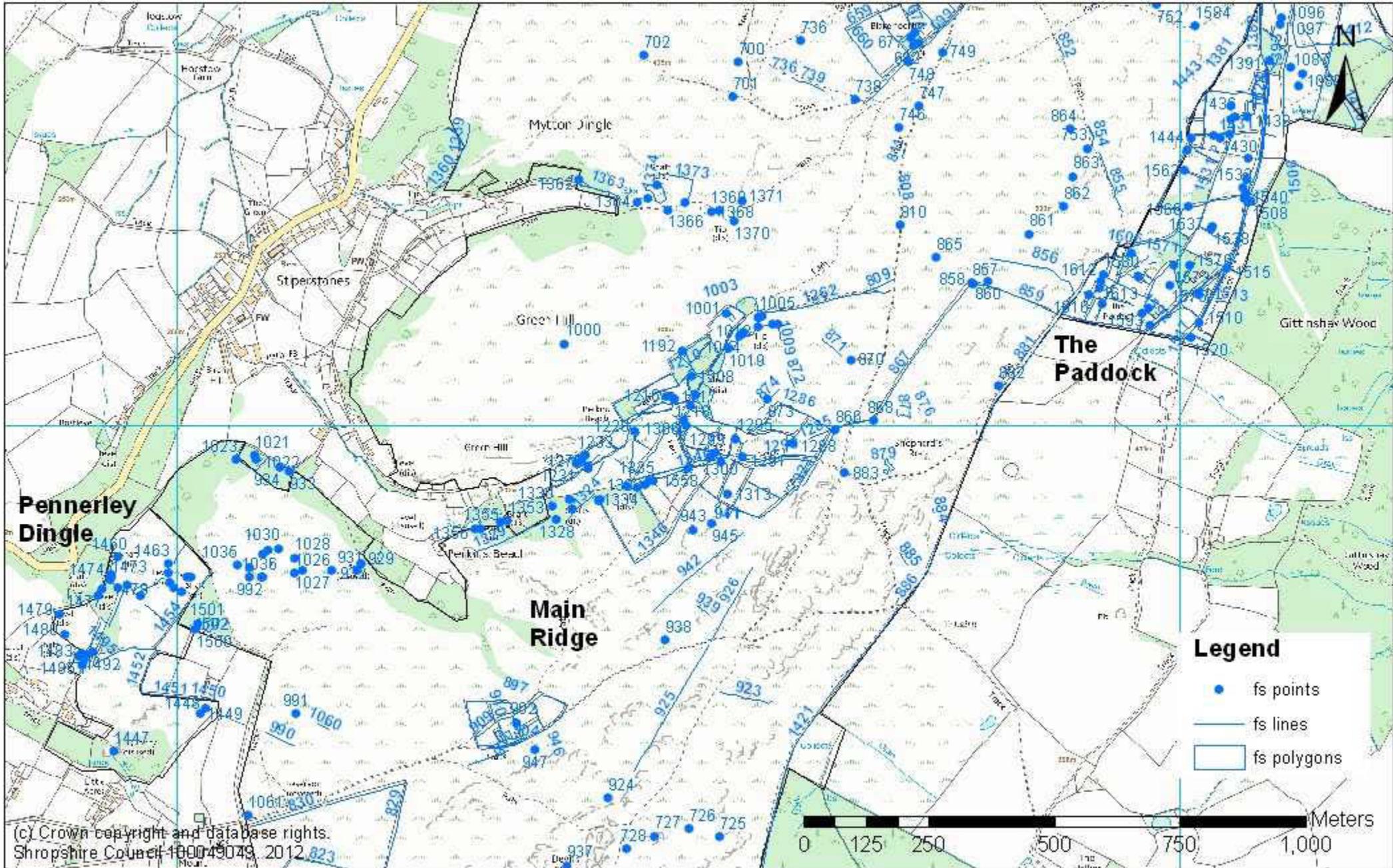
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**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 9: Field survey features (The Knolls, The Bog, and the Main Ridge)**

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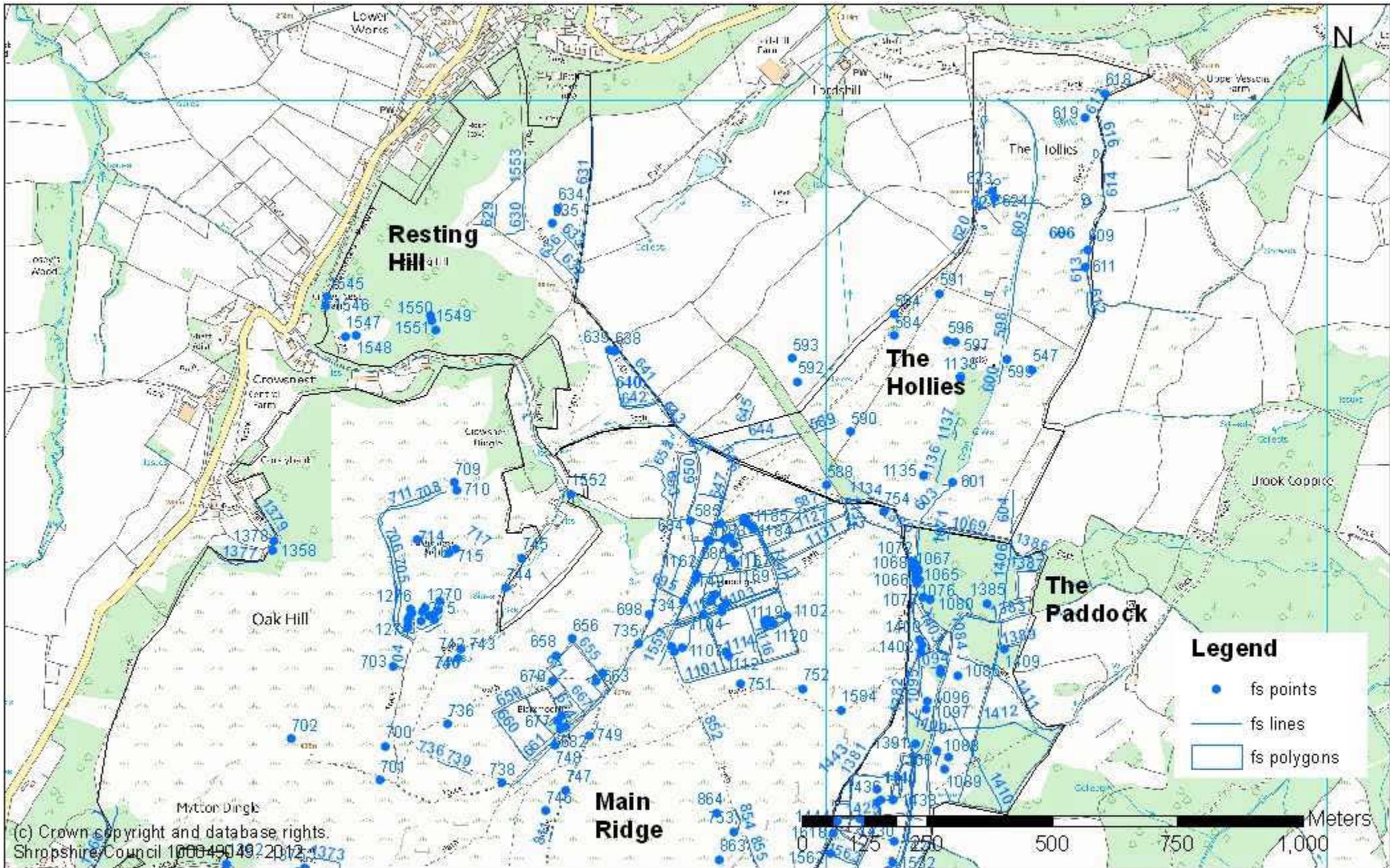


**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 11: Field survey features (Main Ridge, Pennerley Dingle, and The Paddock)**

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**Stiperstones Hills Archaeological Survey**  
**Figure 12: Field survey features (Main Ridge, The Paddock, Resting Hill, and The Hollies)**



Photo 1: Cairn 758 at Cranberry Rock



Photo 2: Satellite cairn 760 below Cranberry Rock



Photo 3: Standing stone 1068 in wall 1063 near The Paddock



Photo 4: Drystone wall 511 on The Rock



Photo 5: Open stope at Nipstone Mine



Photo 6: Shafts and spoil heaps at Perkins Beach



Photo 7: Ruined cottage at Blakemoorflat



Photo 8: Cottage at Blakemoorgate



Photo 9: Potato store at Blakemoorgate



Photo 10: Remains of outdoor privy at Blakemoorgate



Photo 11: Shooting butt 723 below the Devil's Chair