

METRIC SURVEY OF PART OF WEST AND EAST
PINFORD, EXMOOR FOREST
Exmoor Mires Project EWF14

PROJECT REPORT

By Hazel Riley



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Date of report: June 2014
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Hazel Riley BA (Hons), AIFA, FSA
Consultant in Landscape History, Management and Conservation Grazing
The Furley Herd of Dexter Cattle
New House Cottage
Furley
Axminster
Devon
EX13 7TR
01404 881330
hazelfurleydexter@btinternet.com

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SITE GAZETTEER

OASIS PROJECT NO 181529

ABBREVIATIONS

EH English Heritage

ENPA Exmoor National Park Authority

GPS Global Positioning System

NMP National Mapping Programme

NMR National Monuments Record

OSGB36 Ordnance Survey National grid

OSTN02 Ordnance Survey transformation parameters for conversion of WGS84 coordinates to the Ordnance Survey National Grid coordinates

RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

RICS Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

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ABSTRACT

A metric survey of part of West and East Pinford was carried out to clarify the nature and location of the prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval archaeological monuments in the area. The survey has located and recorded a previously unrecorded and poorly mapped prehistoric standing stone, field boundary and hut circle settlement. The standing stone appears to have been used as a marker for the layout of the field boundary; there is field evidence for a formal process of closure of the hut circle and the field boundary.

INTRODUCTION

This survey of part of West and East Pinford was undertaken for the Exmoor Mires Project (EMP) on behalf of the Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA). The principal aim of the work was to carry out a walkover and metric survey of the area to identify, accurately locate, record and interpret extant archaeological features in the survey area. This is part of a larger area which will be affected by mire restoration work carried out by EMP in the environs of West and East Pinford. In particular, there was some confusion in the records as to the location and extent of several prehistoric field boundaries, hut circles and a standing stone or stone row.

The report consists of two sections: the archaeological features and their historic landscape context are outlined and interpreted in the first section.

The second section contains the evidence base for this in the form of a Site Gazetteer which presents the detailed results of the survey work.

Location, topography and geology

The survey area takes in the northern ends of the spurs of West and East Pinford, around the headwaters of Badgworthy Water (SS 728 423), on the northern edge of the former Royal Forest of Exmoor and within Exmoor National Park (Figs 1 and 2). The underlying geology is rocks of the Devonian period: sandstones of the Hangman formation; there are deposits of blanket peat on the level plateaux and alluvium deposits on the valley floors (bgs.ac.uk).

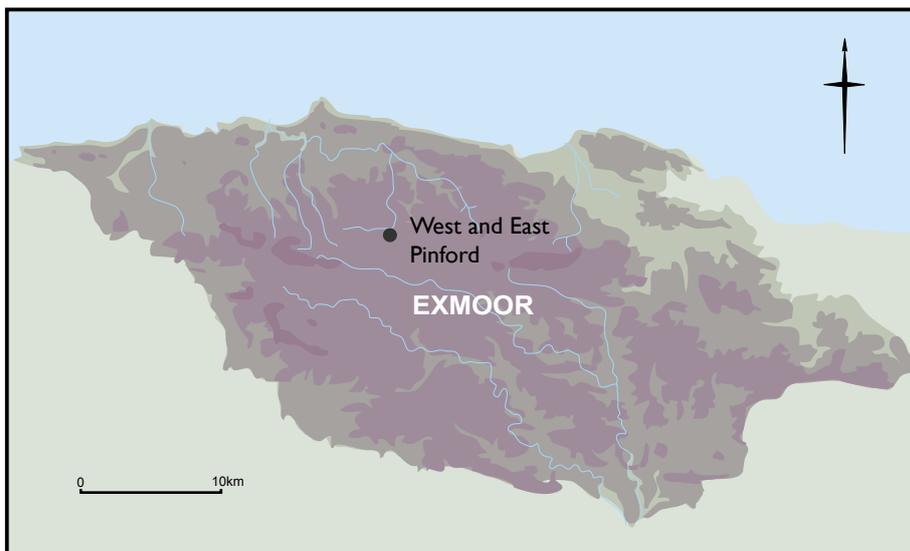


Fig 1 Location map

Site numbering

Each archaeological feature has been given a unique number with the prefix EWF14, and these numbers are used throughout this report: EWF14(201) to EWF14(217). There are several duplicate records in the Exmoor HER and these are all noted in the Site Gazetteer for clarity.

PREVIOUS WORK

Charles Whybrow reported several archaeological features in the area in the 1970s. Subsequent fieldwork by OS and RCHME investigators and Richard McDonnell showed that there was an extensive prehistoric landscape surviving on the northern ends of West and East Pinford. This included ceremonial and funerary monuments, together with field banks, hut circles and a large enclosure (Exmoor HER records; EH NMR records; Whybrow 1977; Burrow *et al* 1982; McDonnell 1985; Quinnell and Dunn 1992; Best 1996; Riley and Wilson-North 2001). The EH NMP project for Exmoor mapped the archaeological and historic landscape features of the whole of the National Park from air photographs (Hegarty and Toms 2009). The NMP transcription recorded the drainage channels, some of the hollow ways and one of the prehistoric field banks in the area. Geophysical surveys of the cairns EWF14(203) and (204) were carried out in 2005 (Gillings *et al* 2005)

THE SURVEY

The fieldwork was carried out during May 2014. All of the features recorded in the Exmoor HER were located, photographed and recorded. These detailed descriptions and photographs make up the Site Gazetteer. All of the extant archaeological features were surveyed at a scale of 1:2500 using survey grade differential GPS. The GPS-derived geodetic WGS84 coordinates were transformed to the Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) using the Ordnance Survey's grid transformation (OSTN02) in Leica's GPS post-processing software. Observation times were based on those recommended by

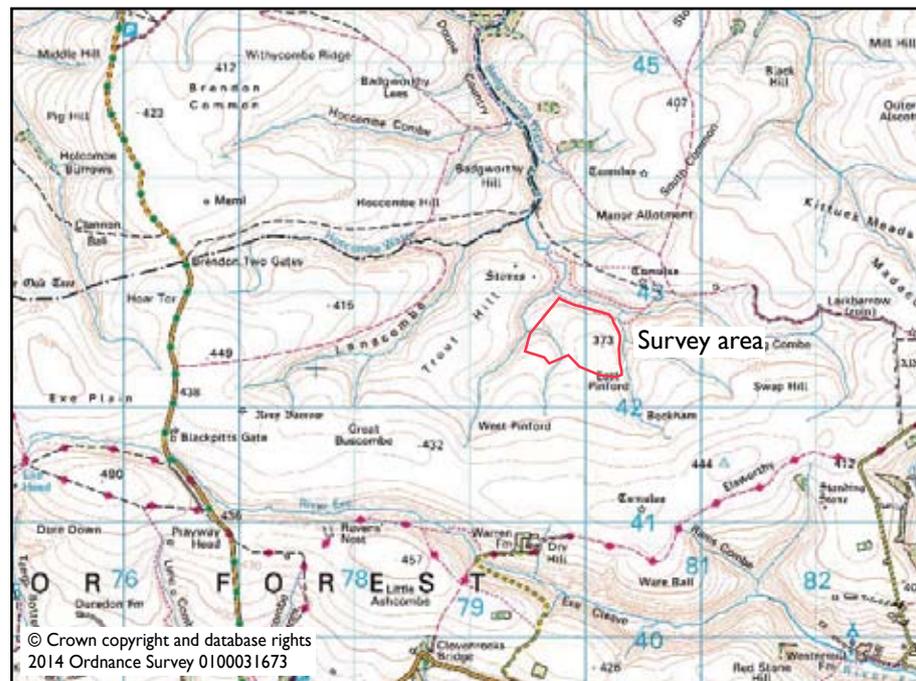


Fig 2 Survey location and topography

the OS and the RICS in order to obtain accurate heighting information (OS 2010; RICS 2010). Figure 3 reproduces the survey plan at 1:2500 scale and shows the surveyed features with their EWFI4 numbers.

DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Prehistoric ceremonial and funerary monuments

A stone setting and a single upright stone lie within the survey area. These are the well known stone alignment on the NW end of East Pinford, EWFI4(201) (Fig 4), and a standing stone on the west side of East Pinford. This stone, EWFI4(202), is associated with a prehistoric field boundary and hut circle settlement and seems to have been used as a marker to lay out the field boundary (Front cover). One large cairn and three small cairns lie within the survey area. The large cairn has a stony mound to the south and this is probably spoil from unrecorded excavations of the cairn which has irregular hollows on its top (Fig 5). The other cairns are small, stony mounds 3.4-6.3m in diameter and up to 0.5m high, and are recognisable by the difference in vegetation between the moss and turf covered stones and the surrounding reeds and molinia (Fig 6). Geophysical survey has confirmed the presence of burning in or under the large cairn EWFI4(203), and the small cairn to the south of the stone setting, EWFI4(204) (Gillings *et al* 2005).



Fig 4 (above left) Stone setting on East Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 5 (left) Large cairn on the northern end of East Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 6 (above) Small cairn on the NW end of West Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Prehistoric field systems and settlement sites

The remains of four prehistoric field boundaries lie within the survey area. On West Pinford, a stony bank with the suggestion of a field corner at its SE end, EWF14(207), lies to the south of the small cairn. On East Pinford the remains of the NW corner of a field are defined by the stony bank EWF14(208) (Figs 7 and 8). To the south of this a stony bank, EWF14(209), which appears to have been laid out using the standing stone EWF14(202) as a marker, is cut across by at least two stony banks. These may well be the physical remains of a formal process of ending the use of this field system. The hut circle at its western end, EWF14(210), has a similar stony mound in its interior, again suggesting a deliberate ending to the use of the site. Three possible or probable hut circles and hut platforms are associated with this well defined hut circle (Figs 9 and 10). A single hut circle, EWF14(211) lies 160m to the SE of the hut circle settlement and field boundary.

The enclosure on the eastern side of East Pinford has been interpreted as a later prehistoric settlement (McDonnell 1985; Best 1996). There are no obvious hut circles or platforms inside it, however, and its size and morphology suggest that it is more likely to be part of the prehistoric field system on East Pinford (Fig 11), with affinities in dimensions and shape to the (presumed) prehistoric field system on Little Tom's Hill.



Fig 7 (above right) Prehistoric field boundary on West Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 8 (below right) Prehistoric field boundary on East Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 9 (above) Hut circle on the western side of East Pinford (Hazel Riley)



Medieval and post-medieval hollow ways and drainage

Two areas of braided hollow ways lead down to fording points of the headwaters of Badgworthy Water. The presence of several deeply hollowed tracks down to the fords suggests routes of some antiquity, probably originating from as early as the medieval period (Fig 12). These hollow ways are part of a number of routes and tracks which lead towards the Forest boundary in the environs of the confluence of Hoccombe and Badgworthy Waters. To the NW are the deserted medieval and post-medieval settlements at Badgworthy and a route down the valley to Malmsmead and the coast at Lynmouth; to the north and NE are routes across the commons to Oareford and the coast at Porlock. Several drainage channels on East Pinford are part of the drainage system begun in the mid- 19th century by the Knights as part of the improvement of grazing areas on the higher ground of their Exmoor estates (Orwin 1929). One of these channels, EWF14(217), cuts across the hollow ways EWF14(214), indicating that the route was abandoned prior to the early 19th century.

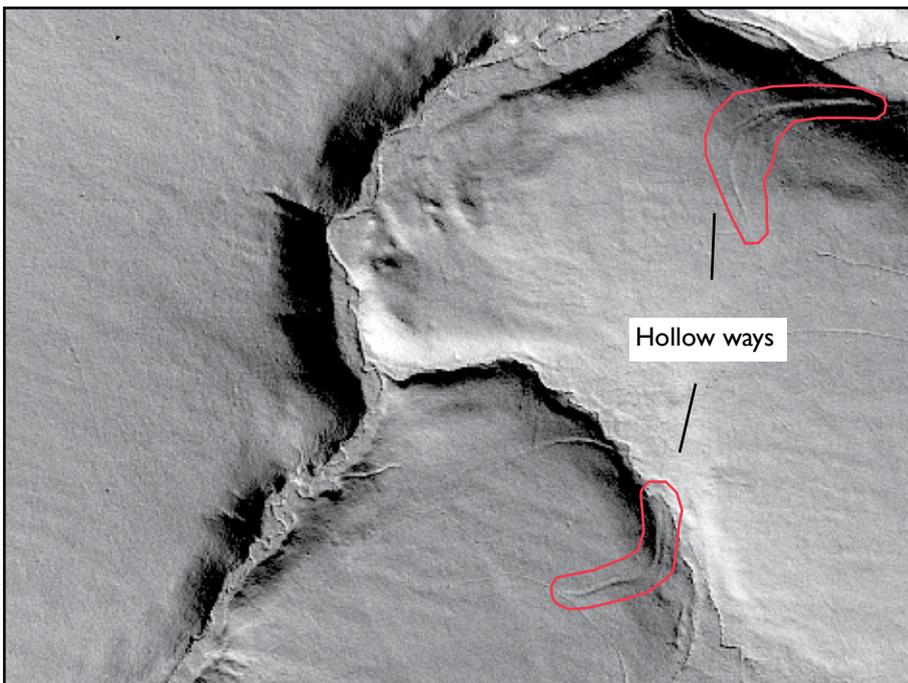


Fig 10 (above left) Hut circle on western side of East Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 11 (above) Western edge of enclosure on East Pinford (Hazel Riley)

Fig 12 (left) Extract from Lidar data (based on data supplied by South West Water) (© Geomatics)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey area contains some of the most important evidence for the association of prehistoric ceremonial and settlement monuments on Exmoor. The use of a standing stone as a marker for the layout of a prehistoric boundary is a key relationship in understanding the chronology and function of these sites; the evidence for the decommissioning of the field systems and settlement is part of a growing body of evidence for such a process in the later second millennium BC on Exmoor (Riley 2013).

The hut circle EWF14(211) and the enclosure EWF14(212) are both close to tracks used by vehicles; vehicles drive over the hut circle and through the enclosure. The monuments should be marked to avoid further damage by vehicles.

The standing stone EWF14(202), the hut circle settlement EWF14(210), and the field boundary EWF14(209) were not accurately located and recorded until this survey, which recorded them at 1:2500 scale. The monuments should be surveyed at 1:500 and larger scales as appropriate to aid interpretation and to plan for future investigations.

The field systems and hollow ways on Little Tom's Hill are not fully understood. It appears from the Lidar and AP evidence that the remains represent an extensive prehistoric field system cut by medieval and post-medieval hollow ways. Further field survey in conjunction with the Lidar data and AP evidence should help to more fully understand this significant part of Exmoor's prehistoric and medieval landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lee Bray organised access and provided background material; Matt Sully supplied enhanced versions of the Lidar data and Rob Wilson-North helped with information about previous work in the area.

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EWFI4 SITE GAZETTEER

EWFI4(201)

Exmoor HER: 6820

Location: SS 79646 42727

Type: STONE SETTING

Period: Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age (2200-1500 BC)

Description and interpretation: East Pinford stone alignment

References: EWFI4(201)_W_HRILEY

EWFI4(202)

Exmoor HER: 12244; 12248

Location: SS 79872 42531

Type: STANDING STONE

Period: Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age (2200-1500 BC)

Description and interpretation: A standing stone lies on the NW end of East Pinford, overlooking a tributary stream of Badgworthy Water. The stone is an upright slab of local sandstone, 40cm high, 22cm wide and 10cm thick. The upright stone forms the focus for the layout of prehistoric field banks and a hut circle settlement, EWFI4(209;210).

References: EWFI4(202)_E_HRILEY

EWFI4(203)

Exmoor HER: 6822; 10904

Location: SS 79794 42771

Type: CAIRN

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A large, flat topped cairn on the NW end of East Pinford, 8m in diameter and up to 0.8m high, with two recent hollows in the top of the mound. Immediately to the south of the cairn, and butting up to it, is a stony mound, 4m long, 2m wide and up to 0.25m high, presumably spoil from these unrecorded investigations.

References: EWFI4(203)_N_HRILEY

EWFI4(204)

Exmoor HER 6821

Location: SS 79620 42687

Type: CAIRN

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A small cairn on the NW end of East Pinford, overlooking a tributary stream of Badgworthy Water, 3.4m in diameter and up to 0.5m high.

References: EWFI4(204)_NW_HRILEY

EWFI4(205)

Exmoor HER: 6827

Location: SS 79568 42563 (wrongly located on OS map)

Type: CAIRN

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A small cairn, on the northern end of West Pinford, overlooking a tributary stream of Badgworthy Water, 3.5m in diameter and up to 0.4m high.

References: EWF14(205)_N_HRILEY

EWF14(206)

Exmoor HER: 6875; 11002

Location: SS 80253 42319

Type: CAIRN

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A small cairn on the eastern edge of East Pinford, overlooking a tributary stream of Badgworthy Water, 6.3m in diameter and up to 0.4m high.

References: EWF14(206)_N_HRILEY

EWF14(207)

Exmoor HER: 6830 (West Pinford); 6833; 11020; 12238

Location: SS 79552 42517 to SS 79600 42491

Type: FIELD BOUNDARY

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A stony, linear bank on the northern end of West Pinford. The bank is 50m long, 2m wide and up to 0.5m high. The bank is oriented NW/SE and turns to the east at its SE end for some 15m, suggesting it was originally part of a prehistoric field system.

References: EWF14(207)_NW_HRILEY

EWF14(208)

Exmoor HER: 2367; 6830 (East Pinford); 11001

Location: SS 79861 42619 to SS 79885 42595 and SS 79870 42621 to 79940 42657

Type: FIELD BOUNDARY

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A stony bank on the NW end of East Pinford, 35m long, 2m wide and up to 0.5m high, oriented NW/SE. At its NW end is a second stony bank, 80 m long, 1-2m wide and up to 0.25m high, oriented NE/SW. These two banks form part of a prehistoric field system.

References: EWF14(208a)_NW_HRILEY; EWF14(208b)_NW_HRILEY

EWF14(209)

Exmoor HER: 11001; 12248

Location: SS 79855 42535 to SS 79953 42521

Type: FIELD BOUNDARY

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A stony bank on the NW edge of East Pinford. The bank is 100m long, 1.5-3m wide and up to m high. It is oriented W/E, and is made up of small stones. The standing stone EWF14(201) seems to have been used as part of the layout of the bank. Two stony banks run across this bank, suggesting a deliberate closure of

the monument. The hut circle settlement EWF14(210) lies at its western end. The bank is a prehistoric field boundary, associated with a settlement and an earlier ceremonial monument, making it a highly significant part of the prehistoric landscape of Exmoor. References: EWF14(209a)_E_HRILEY; EWF14(209b)_E_HRILEY

EWF14(210)

Exmoor HER: 11000; 12402

Location: SS 79834 42540

Type: HUT CIRCLE SETTLEMENT

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: One very well defined hut circle and three probable hut circles lie on the NW edge of East Pinford. The clearest hut circle is centred at SS 79834 42540. It is formed by a stony bank, 1.2m wide and up to 0.4m high, defining a level area 3.5m N/S and 4m E/W. There are traces of collapsed walling on the eastern, interior, edge of the bank. The interior of the hut has a low, linear stony spread across it, suggesting a deliberate closure of the settlement. Immediately to the SE of this hut circle is a possible hut circle, centred at SS 79845 42536. It is 10m in overall diameter and defined by four low, spread stony banks which may be the remains of collapsed walling. A second possible hut circle is centred at SS 79818 42540. It comprises a stony mound, 5m in diameter and 0.5m high, with a hollow 2m in diameter in the centre. It may be the remains of a ruined hut circle; field clearance or a small cairn. A possible hut platform lies at SS 79812 42548. Measuring 8m in overall diameter, it is defined by scarps to the west and east up to 0.5m high.

References: EWF14(210a)_E_HRILEY; EWF14(210b)_E_HRILEY; EWF14(210c)_E_HRILEY

EWF14(211)

Exmoor HER: 6828; 11000; 123963

Location: SS 79944 42412 (wrongly located on OS mapping)

Type: HUT CIRCLE

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: A hut circle on the NW side of East Pinford, 8.5m in diameter and defined by a bank 3m wide and 0.3m high.

References: EWF14(211)_SE_HRILEY

EWF14(212)

Exmoor HER: 6871; 10999

Location: SS 80220 42562

Type: ENCLOSURE

Period: Bronze Age (2000 BC to 700 BC)

Description and interpretation: An oval enclosure on the east side of East Pinford, 60m N/S and 70m E/W, and defined by low stony banks. There is no evidence for settlement remains inside the enclosure and it could well be part of the prehistoric field system on East Pinford.

References: EWF14(212)_NE_HRILEY

EWFI4(213)

Exmoor HER: 2366

Location: SS 79759 42526

Type: HOLLOW WAY

Period: MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL (1066-1900 AD)

Description and interpretation: Braided hollow ways on the NE edge of West Pinford leading to a crossing point of a tributary stream of Badgworthy Water. The hollows are 2.5m wide and up to 1m deep and represent the remains of well used routes across the former Royal Forest. This route led across West and East Pinford to the settlement at Badgworthy and west to the coast at Lynmouth, or across the commons to the NE to Oare and the coast at Porlock.

References: EWFI4(213)_E_HRILEY

EWFI4(214)

Exmoor HER: 2492

Location: SS 79883 42901

Type: HOLLOW WAY

Period: MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL (1066-1900 AD)

Description and interpretation: Braided hollow ways on the northern end of East Pinford leading to a crossing point of Badgworthy Water. The hollows are up to 3m wide and up to 1m deep and represent the remains of well used routes across the former Royal Forest. This route led across West and East Pinford to the settlement at Badgworthy and west to the coast at Lynmouth, or across the commons to the NE to Oare and the coast at Porlock. It was out of use by the early 19th century, as the channel EWFI4(217) cuts across the hollow ways.

References: EWFI4(214)_NE_HRILEY

EWFI4(215)

Exmoor HER: 2361

Location: SS 79879 42683

Type: DRAINAGE DITCH

Period: 19th century (1800-1899 AD)

Description and interpretation: Drainage channels on the northern end of East Pinford are part of a drainage system dug by the Knights across their Exmoor estate in the 19th century to improve rough grazing on the highest ground.

References: EWFI4(215)_NE_HRILEY

EWFI4(216)

Exmoor HER: 2368

Location: SS 79942 42488

Type: DRAINAGE DITCH

Period: 19th century (1800-1899 AD)

Description and interpretation: A V-shaped drainage channel on the western side of East Pinford part of a drainage system dug by the Knights across their Exmoor estate in the 19th century to improve rough grazing on the highest ground.

References: EWFI4(216)_SW_HRILEY

EWFI4(217)

Location: SS 80042 41195 to SS 79762 42959

Type: DRAINAGE DITCH

Period: 19th century (1800-1899 AD)

Description and interpretation: A channel 1.5m wide and 0.5m deep, with a bank, 1.7m wide and 1.1m high on the downslope side, is part of an extensive drainage network which takes water off Elworthy and East Pinford. It runs for over 2km from Elworthy along the eastern and northern sides of East Pinford and was dug by the Knights across their Exmoor estate in the 19th century to improve rough grazing on the highest ground.

References: EWFI4(217)_E_HRILEY

Exmoor HER: 10354

A small platform was recorded from air photographs in 1982 at c SS 7954 4262. It was not located during subsequent field investigation; exploration of the environs of the NGR during the course of this survey failed to locate any features.

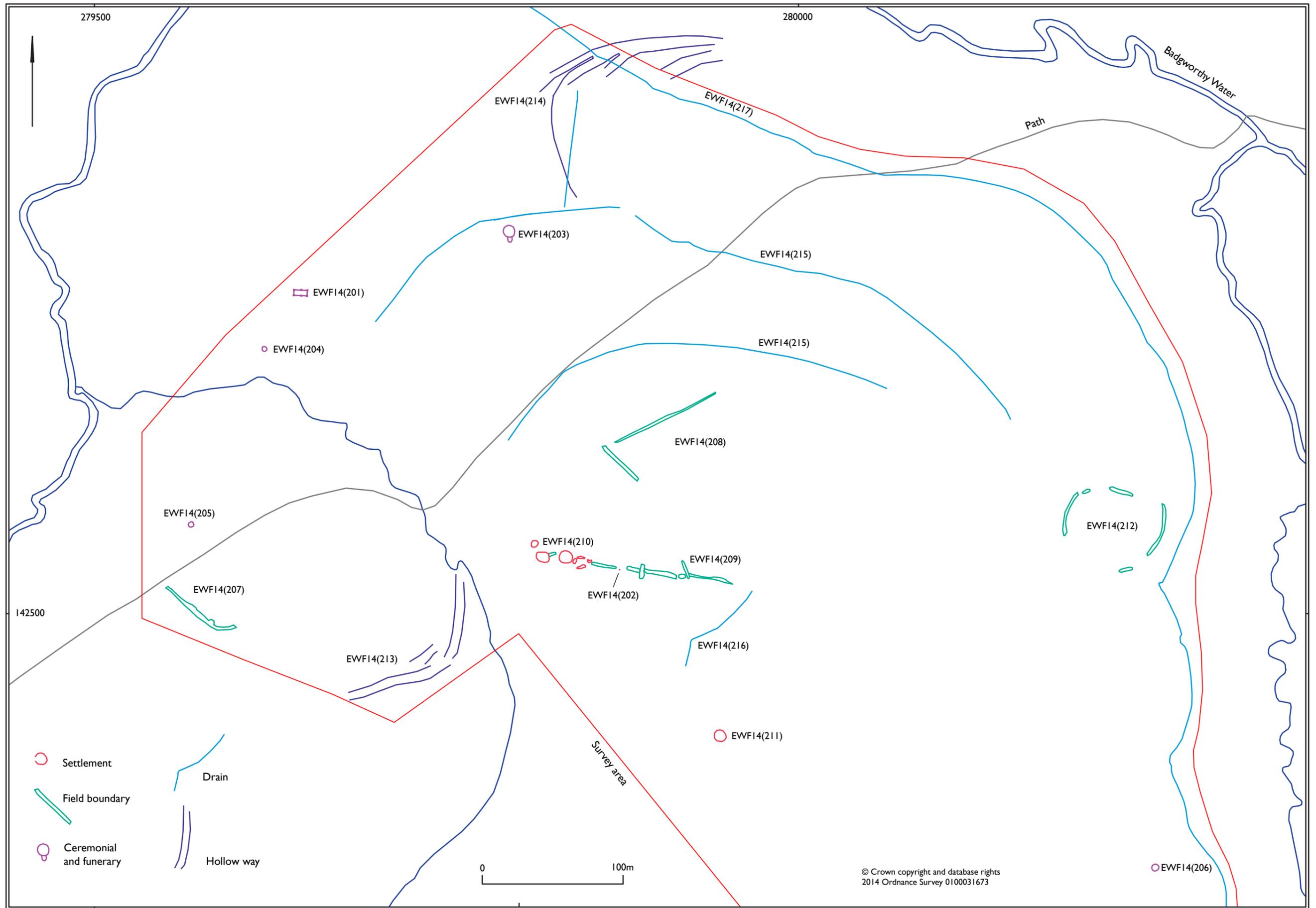


Fig 3 Survey plan showing site reference numbers (1:2500)

