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**Herefordshire Woodlands
Pilot Study: Phase 1
Woodland on the Moor
Estate.**

**Herefordshire Archaeology Report
No.55**

Herefordshire Archaeology,
May 2002, revised 2004.

Report prepared by
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Herefordshire Archaeology is Herefordshire Council's county archaeology service. It advises upon the conservation of archaeological and historic landscapes, maintains the county Sites and Monument Record, and carries out conservation and investigative field projects. The County Archaeologist is Dr. Keith Ray.

Herefordshire Woodlands Pilot Study: Phase 1 Woodland on the Moor Estate.

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No.55, May 2002, (revised 2004).

Summary:

The survey described in this report has been produced as part of a pilot study in partnership with the Forestry Commission. A rapid walk over survey was carried out in the woodland concerned. A hand held G.P.S unit was used to record the location of features encountered. Structures were recorded within 6 areas of woodland that illustrate the intensive use of the woodland resource in the late and post medieval periods, i.e. Saw pits, charcoal burning platforms, quarries and woodland management boundaries.

The entire area of Rock wood was one large quarry that has been subsequently planted as woodland.

Cae-graig Wood has been quarried in its northern half but retains woodland management features in the southern area.

New Coppice has well defined woodland boundaries in its northern half, however its southern half has been subjected to modern machine disturbance on a large scale.

Garnold's Dingle contained no recognisable features of archaeological significance.

Garnold's Wood was surrounded by a well defined wood bank and internal features including quarrying and a sinuous woodland boundary now obsolete, suggesting that this wood is of some antiquity.

Hawks Wood contains many well defined features associated with woodland management despite the northern half having been clear felled with heavy machinery.

Disclaimer: It should not be assumed that land referred to in this document is accessible to the public. Location plans are indicative only. NGR's are accurate to approximately 10m. Measured dimensions are accurate to within 1m at a scale of 1:500, 0.1m at 1:50, and 0.02m at 1:20.

Figures contain material from the Ordnance Survey. The grid in this material is the National Grid taken from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. This material has been reproduced in order to locate the site in its environs.

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Introduction

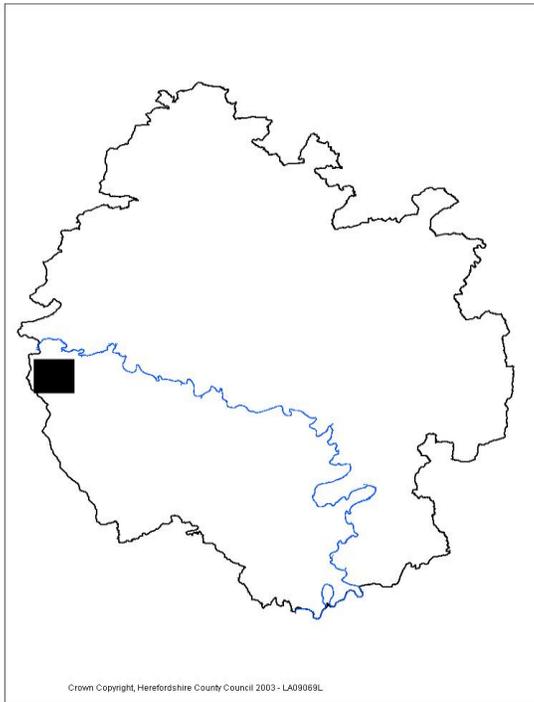
This report provides an account of a rapid survey of woodland on the Moor Estate, (EHE32540). The survey was undertaken as part of a pilot study in partnership with the Forestry Commission in order to document the archaeology of woodlands in the county. Woodlands are areas of high archaeological potential in that they have seldom been subjected to the types of disturbance associated with intensive modern agriculture. Relatively little information concerning archaeological sites within woodland has been recorded in the past. Access is often difficult, aerial photographs are of little or no use and until recently recording an accurate location within woodland was often not practicable.

Since 1999 Herefordshire Archaeology has been involved in regular discussions with the Forestry Commission concerning the lack of archaeological data available when management plans are being prepared and applications for Woodland Grant Schemes are submitted. As a result of these discussions, the Forestry Commission has grant aided Herefordshire Archaeology to undertake a two phase pilot study. Phase one took place in 2001-2 and involved the rapid survey of eight areas of woodland in different areas of the county. These woodlands were split into those that are owned and managed by Forest Enterprises, those owned by large private estates, those that have recently been the subject of Woodland Grant Scheme applications and those for which Native Woodland Plans have been or are in preparation.

The survey for each woodland area in the pilot study identified the potential for the survival of archaeological features and sampled the types of features present. The stage two survey will re-visit woodlands identified in the stage one study as being of high archaeological potential and a more detailed survey undertaken. This will illustrate the density of archaeological sites within the woodland and record the relationships between features to enable some degree of understanding concerning the evolution of the woodland. The stage two survey will also expand the stage one survey and subject additional woodlands to rapid survey.

It is only when the changes throughout history within a wood have been documented and understood and put together with ecological information that a well informed management strategy can be implemented. Woodland boundaries have often moved over the centuries, sometimes expanding to encapsulate and preserve evidence of alternative land-use, e.g. field systems and on other occasions shrinking and being subject to differing forms of woodland management. These variations in land-use within a woodland influence the ecological data from that woodland. As such archaeological survey can contribute significant data concerning woodland history, management history and sequential development. This can provide independent verification of historical change from ecological study.

Location



Six areas of woodland were surveyed. These were: Rock Wood (NGR SO: 260 438), Cae-graig Wood (NGR SO: 260 436), New Coppice (NGR SO: 263 433), Garnold's Dingle (NGR SO: 267 434), Garnold's Wood (NGR SO:269 437) and Hawks Wood (NGR SO: 252 429).

The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study for Herefordshire describes this area as containing indicators of an early retentive field pattern. The field boundaries represent the adaptation of contour axial inclosure that has been adapted the enclosure of former enclosure common arable fields (Ray and White, 2003).

Figure 1: Site Location.

Previous Fieldwork / Records

Prior to the survey taking place the county Sites and Monuments Record was consulted. However, no entries were found indicating the discovery of sites within the present woodland, and it is therefore assumed that no fieldwork has taken place here previously.

Method

The survey comprised a rapid assessment of the potential of the woodland to contain well preserved archaeological features. Features were mapped using a hand-held Garmin 12 XL Global Positioning System, enabling a ten figure grid reference to be recorded for each feature. This system is accurate to within approximately 10m under tree canopy.

The wood was walked in transects aligned roughly north / south and approximately 50m apart. If a large feature was encountered and no other features of archaeological significance can be seen, then this feature was followed and features 50m either side of it recorded. Field observations and grid references were recorded on a dictaphone and transcribed at a later date.

The following survey is only a sample of the woodland and should not be taken as exhaustive or its results as definitive. It is intended to record the type of features present, their state of preservation and their relationships to other features within the woodland.

Results (figure 2)

Woodland management features

A total of eight charcoal burning platforms were recorded all within Hawks Wood. These ranged in size from 6-10m in diameter and in the main comprised a level, circular platform with a pronounced down-slope lip. These were often recorded in small clusters of two or three, usually also associated with saw pits and possible storage platforms. The size of some of these charcoal burning platforms, (HSM 32571), would suggest prolonged use.

Five saw pits were recorded, all within Hawks Wood. Their earthwork remains comprise an oval depression between 4 and 6m in length, 1.5m wide and 0.3-0.5m deep with spoil on their down-slope sides. These were predominately located on the south-eastern portion of the wood.

Two large platforms were recorded on the south-western flank of the Hawks Wood, (HSM 32568 and HSM 32570). These comprised a levelled areas 12m square and 15m in length and 8m wide respectively, aligned east / west along the contour. Both platforms were in close association with both charcoal burning platforms and areas of quarrying, suggesting that they were either used as storage or seasonal accommodation.

Former Land Use

Three features were recorded which appear to relate to former land use. Two eroded but substantial banks were noted within New Coppice, HSM 32546 and HSM 32548. These may have been associated with one-another as they are similar in both form and scale. Each bank is approximately 8m wide and survives to a height of 1m and is aligned on a south-west / north-eastern axis. It is suggested that these features represent the earthwork remains of medieval, (or earlier), field boundaries.

A third feature, HSM 32566, was recorded immediately adjacent to the south-western corner of Hawks Wood. This feature has been previously recorded as the earthwork remains of a small ring-work dating from the early medieval period, (HSM 1231). However it was re-interpreted during this survey as a look-out site or possibly a beacon site, dating to the medieval period and probably associated with Mouse Castle, a motte and bailey approximately 250m due south. The earthwork comprises a circular bank and ditch, approximately 20m in diameter, cut into the northern slope of the hill. Its location affords wide ranging views to the north towards Huntington, as-well as to the west and east. It is too small for a defensive enclosure such as a ring-work, having a diameter of approximately 10m of levelled ground within the rampart. The surrounding earthen bank or rampart is out of scale with the over-all size of the monument, surviving to a height of over 2m in places and having a width of 5m. The rampart does however provide very

effective all round shelter from the wind which would facilitate either the lighting of a bonfire beacon regardless of wind strength and direction and / or the provision of a manned look-out post with unrestricted views along the upper Wye Valley into Wales.

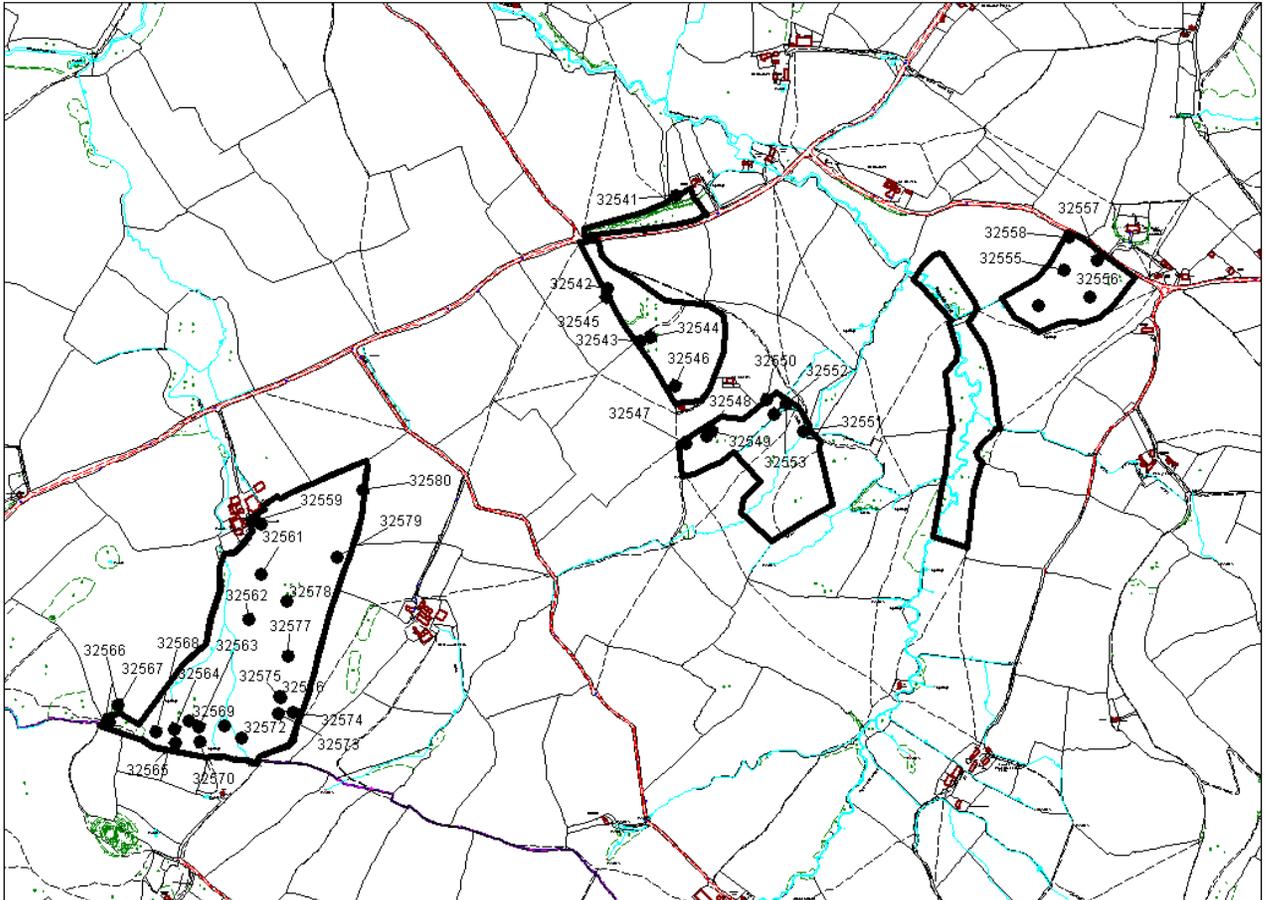


Figure 2: Location of earthworks recorded during the survey.

Whatever this features original use its location has a significant bearing on the former land use of this part of the Moor Estate. Whether it was a defensive ring-work, beacon or look out post, there would not have been woodland close to it. Without the present woodland this feature has a commanding view into Hay-on-Wye and would be visible from Mouse Castle. This suggests that much of the area now under Hawks Wood was under pasture or open moorland during the medieval period.

Woodland boundaries

Several of the smaller areas of woodland surveyed did not have a recognisable woodland boundary bank E.G. Rock Coppice and Garnolds Dingle. Cae-graig Wood was bounded on one side by a bank and ditch but this was associated with a stretch of green lane or drovers road.

New Coppice is surrounded by a woodland boundary bank, (HSM 32552). This is well defined and has a large ditch on its external sides. It is thought that this survives so well due to its ditches having been regularly re-cut and are today utilised as drains and have been linked into an extensive network of drainage ditches and small pools.

Garnold's Wood contains two phases of woodland boundary bank HSM 32556 and HSM 32559. HSM 32559 is a very eroded sinuous bank with no discernable ditch. It runs on a north-west / south-east axis and is only visible within the north-eastern portion of the wood where it runs well inside the present woodland boundary. HSM 32556 is a much straighter bank with ditch on its external side and is present on all sides of the present wood. No compartment boundaries were recorded within this area of woodland.

Eight compartment boundaries were identified. These all appear to relate to the post-medieval period. A single bank and ditch is present within Cae-graig Wood, (HSM 32544), which appears to act as a drain just as much as a boundary. There are a number of banks and ditches within New Coppice, e.g. HSM 32549, these could either be compartment boundaries or drainage channels, none appear to be particularly old. The remaining boundaries were present within Hawks Wood. This is, in general, a well drained wood and it is therefore suggested that all of these features represent compartment boundaries and that this area of woodland was intensively managed throughout the post-medieval period.

Industrial features

The entire area covered by Rock Wood was once a quarry, this is probably where bits name derived from. Trees have subsequently been planted into the spoil heaps forming a small woodland. None of the trees appear to be particularly ancient suggesting a late 19th or early 20th century date for the quarry.

The northern half of Cae-graig Wood has been extensively quarried, HSM 32541 and there are smaller delves in the northern portion of the wood, HSM 32545.

There is a large linear quarry within Garnolds Wood, HSM 32557.

Two quarries were noted within Hawks Wood. HSM 32572 comprised a small scoop quarry approximately 6m in diameter whilst HSM 32579 was a small linear quarry 15m long and 5m wide. Both quarries were 1.5m deep.

Communication routes and other route-ways

A single feature relating to this category was noted during the survey. This comprised a 10m wide track or roadway bounded on either side by low banks, HSM 32542. This appears to be the southern continuation of the road from Hardwick. Its width suggests a drovers road and is present on the western edges of both Cae-graig Wood and New Coppice.

Discussion and Implications

Indications of former land use

The two large banks or ridges within New Coppice appear to represent earlier land divisions or field boundaries whilst then location of both the circular feature on the northern slope immediately outside Hawks Wood and Mouse Castle strongly suggest a more open environment.

Site and feature condition

The survey recorded a wide range of features dating from the late 19th century to the medieval period. These included features associated with woodland management, industry, settlement and previous land use. The majority of features recorded were well preserved.

Implications regarding the archaeological resource

The survey has shown that much of archaeological significance survives in a good state of preservation within Hawks Wood, Garnold's Wood and New Coppice. These features cover all aspects of land use from relatively modern quarrying, through a period of many hundreds of years of woodland management.

The possible road running through both Cae-graig Wood and the western edge of New Coppice is an unusual feature in that it is not a holloway and is unusually wide, (c. 10m). It is possible that this is a section of post-medieval drovers road which continued along the line of the present road to the north, past Priory Farm to Clifford and to the south to link up with the Dorstone road.

Another interesting observation is the lack of charcoal burning platforms and saw pits in all the woodland except Hawks Wood. This is especially unusual in Garnold's Wood as it is clearly of some antiquity and has been coppiced. It is possible that these woods were too sheltered for this industry to be worthwhile and that the coppiced poles were either transported elsewhere or uses for other purposes. Hawkes Wood is a far more 'typical' piece of woodland containing many of the features associated with intensive woodland management commonly recorded in woodlands throughout the county.

Implications regarding site condition

Woodland boundary banks and compartment boundaries generally survive well as do other woodland management features and features relating to former landuse. Relationships can be established between the post-medieval woodland management features and earlier features. The northern portion of Hawks Wood and the southern half of Cae-graig have both been badly affected by extraction by heavy machinery.

Implications for future management

Existing access routes should be used for future management and extraction of the woodland. Care should be taken to avoid further damaging woodland management features, particularly those located on the more level ground.

Discussion

This survey has identified a range of well preserved features within the six areas of woodland reflecting the major changes that have occurred since the medieval period.

The survey has shown a range of potential for the survival of archaeologically significant features. Rock Coppice appears to have been used as a quarry and later planted as a wood and has no features related to woodland management within it.

Cae-graig Wood, whilst heavily quarried in its southern half, contains well defined features relating to past woodland management. It also contains a linear feature, possibly an old road which runs along its western edge.

New Coppice also contains the linear feature which may represent an old road. It is however difficult to understand the formation of some of the features within the wood due to the drainage; i.e. how many of these linear features were constructed as drains and how many have become drains?

Garnold's Dingle may never have been a managed woodland. The steepness of the dingle sides and the high velocity stream would make it virtually impossible to manage during the winter months.

Garnold's Wood contains traces of sinuous banks which appear to pre-date and be unrelated to the current woodland boundary bank.

Hawks Wood has been intensively managed for a considerable period of time. Well preserved features are present throughout the southern portion of the wood and around the wood edge in the northern part of the wood. There has clearly been much destruction of features within the central and northern parts of the wood due to the use of heavy machinery.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the help and co-operation of the Forestry Commission and the land owner and tenants of The Moor Estate.

Archive

1 Dictaphone tape
1 Transcription Record
1 Excel Database
1 Mapinfo data file
This document

Appendix 1: Database of features and grid references.

| SMR. No | East | North | Site type | Period | Description |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------|--|
| 32541 | 26051 | 43852 | quarry | Post-medieval | c.30m square and 2m deep |
| 32542 | 25903 | 43651 | linear feature | Post-medieval | Old road |
| 32543 | 25974 | 43535 | bank | Post-medieval | eastern bank of the 10m wide linear feature |
| 32544 | 25997 | 43543 | bank | Post-medieval | c.0.3m high and 1.5m wide |
| 32545 | 25900 | 43630 | quarry | Post-medieval | cut into edge of wood |
| 32546 | 26050 | 43438 | wide linear feature | Medieval | |
| 32547 | 26073 | 43313 | bank and ditch | Post-medieval | bank is 2m wide and the ditch is 2m wide |
| 32548 | 26118 | 43329 | low ridge | Medieval | 8m wide and 1m high running on a NE/SW axis |
| 32549 | 26128 | 43340 | ditch | Post-medieval | c.2m wide and 0.5m deep |
| 32550 | 26247 | 43409 | two banks | Post-medieval | c.5m apart |
| 32551 | 26326 | 43340 | pool | Post-medieval | 20m wide and runs for c.80m to the SW |
| 32552 | 26263 | 43378 | wood bank | Post-medieval | c.1.5m wide |
| 32553 | 26289 | 43401 | ditch | Post-medieval | c.1.5m wide |
| 32554 | 26834 | 43613 | depression | Post-medieval | 8m long and 4m wide and 0.5m deep |
| 32555 | 26890 | 43689 | quarry | Post-medieval | 4m deep and 50m diameter |
| 32556 | 26947 | 43632 | bank and ditch | Post-medieval | bank is c.1.5m wide and 0.25m high |
| 32557 | 26962 | 43711 | quarry | Post-medieval | 6m wide and 1m deep |
| 32558 | 26902 | 43762 | wood bank | Post-medieval | c.2.5m wide and 0.75m high and runs c.5m inside present wood |
| 32559 | 25142 | 43148 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | c.8m in diameter and north facing |
| 32560 | 25154 | 43139 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | 8m in diameter and north facing |
| 32561 | 25155 | 43030 | bank | Post-medieval | almost a lynchet c.0.75m high, cannot give width |
| 32562 | 25129 | 42934 | bank | Post-medieval | c.3.5m wide and 1m high |
| 32563 | 25020 | 42701 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | facing north and c.8m in diameter |

| | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|---------------------------|---------------|--|
| 32564 | 24968 | 42696 | saw pit | post medieval | c.6m long and 2.5m wide with spoil on its NW side |
| 32565 | 24970 | 42667 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | c.6m in diameter |
| 32566 | 24846 | 42747 | earthwork | medieval | 20m in diameter |
| 32567 | 24826 | 42711 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | facing north and 8m in diameter |
| 32568 | 24927 | 42690 | platform | Post-medieval | c.12m square |
| 32569 | 24999 | 42714 | ditch | Post-medieval | running for c.40m north, it is c.1m wide and 0.3m deep |
| 32570 | 25023 | 42669 | platform | Post-medieval | c.15 long and 8m wide, aligned E/W |
| 32571 | 25077 | 42702 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | c.8-10m in diameter |
| 32572 | 25114 | 42677 | quarry scoop | Post-medieval | c.20m long and 6m wide |
| 32573 | 25191 | 42729 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | c.7m in diameter and facing NW |
| 32574 | 25224 | 42733 | saw pit | post medieval | 6m long and 2m wide with spoil on its NW side |
| 32575 | 25197 | 42763 | charcoal burning platform | Post-medieval | c.6m in diameter and facing NW |
| 32576 | 25196 | 42765 | saw pit | post medieval | c.5m long and 2.5m wide with spoil on its NW side |
| 32577 | 25212 | 42854 | saw pit | post medieval | c.6m long with spoil to the NW |
| 32578 | 25210 | 42972 | saw pit | post medieval | c.6m long and 3m wide with spoil on its NW |
| 32579 | 25319 | 43068 | quarry | Post-medieval | c.15m long and 5m wide and 1.5m deep |
| 32580 | 25374 | 43213 | small pool | Post-medieval | c.30m E/W and 20m N/S |

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| Validation |
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Herefordshire Archaeology operates a validation system for its reports, to provide quality assurance and to comply with Best Value procedures.

This report has been checked for accuracy and clarity of statements of procedure and results.

Dr. K. Ray County Archaeologist