Herefordshire Archaeology
Conservation and Environmental Planning
Planning Services
Environment Directorate
Herefordshire Council

Herefordshire Woodlands Pilot Study: Phase 2 Haye Park Wood, Richards Castle

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 79

Report prepared by
Richard Lello

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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.

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Haye Park Wood, Richards Castle
Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 79

Herefordshire Archaeology, March 2003

Summary

The survey described in this report (EHE33651) formed part of a pilot study in partnership with the Forestry Commission. A rapid walk over survey was carried out in Haye Park Wood using a hand held Global Positioning System to record the location of archaeological features encountered.

Features were recorded within the wood that illustrate the intensive use of the woodland resource in the medieval and post medieval periods, e.g., deer park pales, charcoal burning platforms, saw pits, holloways and woodland management boundaries. In addition, several quarries relating to industrial activities were recorded. Of particular interest are park pales that delineated the boundaries of the medieval deer park, and a likely Iron Age or Romano-British enclosure.

Contact details: Herefordshire Archaeology, PO Box 144, Hereford, HR1 2YH

Introduction

This report provides an account of a rapid survey of Haye Park Wood (*EHE33651*). The survey was undertaken as part of a pilot study undertaken 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 Enterprise; woodlands owned by large private estates; woodlands that have recently been the subject of Woodland Grant Scheme applications; woodlands for which Native Woodland Plans have been prepared 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 historical changes within a woodland have been documented and understood, and combined 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 other 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 the woodlands influence the ecological data from that woodland. Archaeological survey can contribute significant data concerning woodland history, management history and sequential development. This may provide independent verification of historical change ascertained through ecological studies.

Location

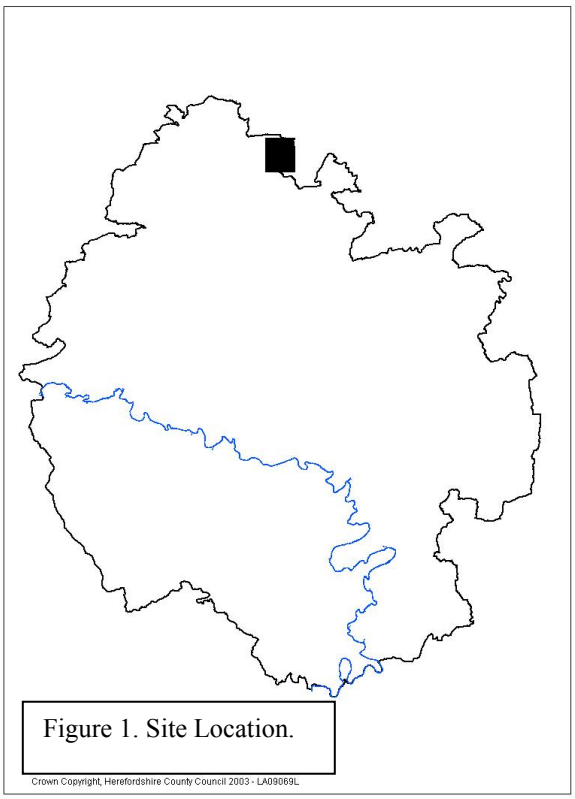

Figure 1. Site Location.

Haye Park Wood is located at NGR: SO 3494 2717, approximately 12km north of Leominster. The woodland was previously known as Richard's Castle Wood (Bryant, 1835). The wood covers part of the south-east facing slopes of a ridge aligned north-east to south-west between the Teme valley at Ludlow and the Lugg valley near Aymestrey.

The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study for Herefordshire (HLC) describes Haye Park Wood as woodland, part of the Richard's Castle estate, with the adaptation of enclosures from woodland (HLC 83).

Geologically, the Haye Park Wood survey area is underlain by siltstone and limestone beds of the Whitcliffe Formation of the Upper Ludlow Shales. The upper slopes to the north-west are underlain by siltstones and mudstones of the Lower and Upper Leintwardine Formations. To the east and south-east lie sandstone and mudstone beds of the Downton Castle Sandstone Formation of the Lower Old Red Sandstone (British Geological Survey, 2000; Earp and Haines, 1971).

Previous Fieldwork/Records

A search of the Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record revealed the following entry for Haye Park Wood:

SMR Record: 6368
Site Name: Moat?
NGR: SO 4920 7225
Site Type: Moat
Description: (1) Enclosure, probably a homestead moat (Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments, 1934).
(2) Possible site of a lodge almost certainly connected with the park (Ordnance Survey, 1972).
Period: Medieval

Method

Haye Park Wood was surveyed on 19 February 2003. 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 approximately10m under tree canopy.

The wood was walked in transects aligned approximately east to west, 50m to 100m apart. Where a large, or linear, feature was encountered and no other features of archaeological significance could be seen in the vicinity, this feature was followed (where conditions allowed) and any other features 50m on either side of it were recorded. Field observations and grid references were recorded using a dictaphone and transcribed later.

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

Field Conditions

Haye Park Wood covers part of the south-east facing slopes of a ridge aligned north-east to south-west. The slopes are relatively gentle with several small, deeply cut valleys aligned west to east.

The woodland is intensively managed. Much of the area is under immature conifer, with stands of mature trees in places. The central area of the woodland has recently been re-planted, while the conifers in the southern area are more mature. The woodland is generally dense with thick undergrowth. There is evidence of older, deciduous woodland on the eastern margins, previously recorded as common land (Ordnance Survey, 1889).

Survey Conditions

A rapid walk over survey was conducted on 19 February 2003. The weather was dry and clear with good visibility.

Results

Recorded archaeological features will be described, and a brief discussion will highlight the historical development of the woodland. The significance of the features and management implications will be commented upon.

Each archaeological site or feature is assigned a unique Sites and Monuments Primary Record Number, prefixed by HSM (Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record). Features will be referred to by their HSM number in this report. The appendix contains a simple database in which each feature is cross-referenced to its HSM number and to the Ordnance Survey National Grid (NGR).

Woodland management features

The most frequently occurring archaeological features are holloways. Eleven sections of holloway were recorded during the survey, seven of which are in a good state of preservation, e.g., HSM 33663, HSM 33670, HSM 33678. Holloways are concentrated on the lower south-eastern slopes, e.g., HSM 33675, HSM 33679, HSM 33681. Several well-preserved examples (HSM 33663, HSM 33669) were recorded on the upper slopes in the central area, one of which shows evidence of two parallel tracks, used as a passing place (HSM 33669). The holloways all appear to be associated with post-medieval woodland management practises. Two trackways were also recorded, one of which (HSM 33667) is also likely to be associated with post-medieval woodland management activities.

A number of well-maintained modern forestry roads and recreational footpaths are present in the woodland today. Many of these may also follow the course of earlier holloways or trackways.

Two saw pits were recorded (HSM 33672, HSM 33680). Both are located near the eastern edge of the wood in an area of older woodland. They are of post-medieval date, and both poorly preserved. One charcoal burning platform was recorded (HSM 33671). It is located on the eastern edge of the woodland near a saw pit (HSM 33672), and is also poorly preserved. In the same area, a platform was recorded (HSM 33682). It is likely that it was used for assembling and stacking wood or timber prior to processing and transportation. It is probable that other such features in Haye Park Wood have been damaged or destroyed as a result of recent forestry activities.

Park Pales

Two medieval deer park pales (consisting of a bank and ditch) were recorded. One park pale (HSM 33652) is located on the north side of Haye Park Wood; the other is (HSM 33676) on the east side.

An extensive park pale (HSM 33652), aligned north-west to south-east from NGR: SO 349161 272280 to SO 349829 271972, extends along the northern boundary of Haye Park Wood. The ditch is 1m wide at the base; the depth below the top of the bank on the south side is up to 3m, and on the north side up to 2m. The park pale is generally in good condition, but at several locations it is cut by footpaths, and erosion has occurred. The park pale cuts through a ditch (HSM 33653) at SO 349392 272263. The ditch is aligned east to west; it is 1.5m wide at the base, the depth below the top of the bank on the north side is up to1.5m, and on the south side up to 1m. It is in good condition, but covered by thick undergrowth. The ditch may represent an earlier park pale.

A park pale (HSM 33676), aligned north-west to south-east, is located on the east side of Haye Park Wood near the car park. The park pale extends south-east from NGR: SO 349574 271808, where it is cut by (and therefore predates) a holloway (HSM 33681), to SO 349788 271759, where it is cut by a modern road, the B4361. This park pale is in a good state of preservation from the first recorded position (above) to SO 349698 271773. The width at base is up to 3m, and the depth below the top of the banks is up to 2m, with the south bank slightly higher than the north bank. At this position the park pale is cut by the car park. The park pale continues, on the south side of the car park access road, to the B4361, but it has been damaged by construction of the access road. The park pale is not discernible north-west of SO 349574 271808; it appears to have been destroyed as a result of modern forestry activities. This feature is closely aligned with the present county and parish boundary, and may represent an earlier alignment of that boundary.

Woodland boundaries

Haye Park Wood is contained within a larger area of woodland. The park pales on the north side (HSM 33652) and on the east side (HSM 33676) of the wood indicate the boundaries of the medieval deer park. Ditches, generally aligned west to east and north-west to south-east extending down slope, may have served as compartment boundaries within the later, post-medieval, woodland (e.g., HSM 33654, HSM 33656 possibly continuing as HSM 33659, HSM 33664 possibly continuing as HSM 33668, HSM 33665).

Several modern forestry roads and trackways may also follow earlier woodland boundaries. A road aligned north-east to south-west, running along the west side of the enclosure (HSM 6368), appears to follow the boundary between Wood Eaves and Hays Coppice, as recorded on the parish of Richards Castle Tithe Map of 1840. A trail aligned west to east may follow the boundary between Wood Eaves and Hope Coppice, also recorded on the Tithe Map of 1840.

Enclosure

An enclosure (HSM 6368) is located on the north side of Haye Park Wood at NGR: SO 349161 272294. It is rectangular, aligned north to south, approximately 85m long on the west side. The enclosure consists of a ditch with an inner bank on the west and south sides, and an outer bank on the north and east sides. It is generally in a good state of preservation, but it is cut on the east and west sides by a medieval park pale (HSM 33652) and by a footpath (Mortimer Trail). The ditch on the west side of the enclosure has been damaged by a modern forestry road, and the site is covered by immature conifers.

The Herefordshire SMR describes the enclosure as (1) a homestead moat, or (2) the possible site of a lodge connected with the medieval deer park. The enclosure is cut at 2 positions by the medieval deer park pale (HSM 33652) aligned north-west to south-east on the north side of Haye Park Wood. The enclosure is cut on the east side at NGR: SO 349249 272258, and on the west side at SO 349161 272280. The pale continues through the enclosure. The cutting of the enclosure indicates that this feature predates the

medieval park pale. Enclosures of similar form and dimensions, located 5km to the south-west on Bircher Common, are identified as either Iron Age or Romano-British in date. The Haye Park Wood enclosure (HSM 6368) is also likely to date to this period, broadly between 500 BC and AD 400.

Industrial features
Two quarries were recorded. Both are well preserved and are of post-medieval date.

In the central area, a quarry (HSM 33657), 35m x 25m and up to 20m deep, is located on the south side of a gully. The entrance is on the east side; a spoil heap is located on the north side. A trackway (HSM 33658) extends eastwards from the entrance, and follows the course of the gully into a small valley leading to the eastern edge of the woodland at Black Pool. A large, irregularly shaped quarry (HSM 33674) is located on the south-eastern edge of the woodland. The dimensions are 70m x 50m and up to 20m deep, with several spoil heaps on the south side. The entrance is to the south, outside the boundary of Haye Park Wood.

Quarrying activities in the central area of Haye Park Wood would have given access to the limestone and siltstone deposits of the Whitcliffe Formation. Quarrying on the south-eastern side of the woodland may also have given access to the sandstone beds of the Downton Castle Sandstone Formation (British Geological Survey, 2000).

Indications of Former Land Use

The earliest evidence of human occupation in the Haye Park Wood survey area is the enclosure (HSM 6368). This feature probably represents a homestead enclosure associated with farming activities during the later prehistoric or Romano-British period.

During the medieval period, deer parks were created in the extensive woodlands to the north and west of Richards Castle, including the present Haye Park Wood (see, e.g., Whitehead, 2001). Remnants of the medieval deer park boundary are still present today, i.e., the park pales on the north (HSM 33652) and east (HSM 33676) sides of the wood, and a ditch that may mark an earlier boundary (HSM 33653).

Throughout the post-medieval period, Haye Park Wood has existed as woodland. Evidence of post-medieval woodland management practices survives on the eastern fringes, where an older deciduous woodland is still present, in the form of a charcoal burning platform (HSM 33671), saw pits (HSM 33672, HSM 33680), and a platform (HSM 33682). Holloways and trackways also survive here and in other areas of the woodland, including a holloway with two parallel tracks, used as a passing place (HSM 33669).

Evidence of industrial activity during the post-medieval period is present in the form of two quarries. A quarry (HSM 33674) located on the south-eastern edge of Haye Park Wood may have provided sandstone for building purposes. The Downton Castle Sandstone Formation which forms the bedrock in this area has provided material for

roofing tiles as well as ashlar and massive freestone (Earp and Haines, 1971). A quarry (HSM 33657) in the central area would have given access to limestone and may have supported local lime producing activities.

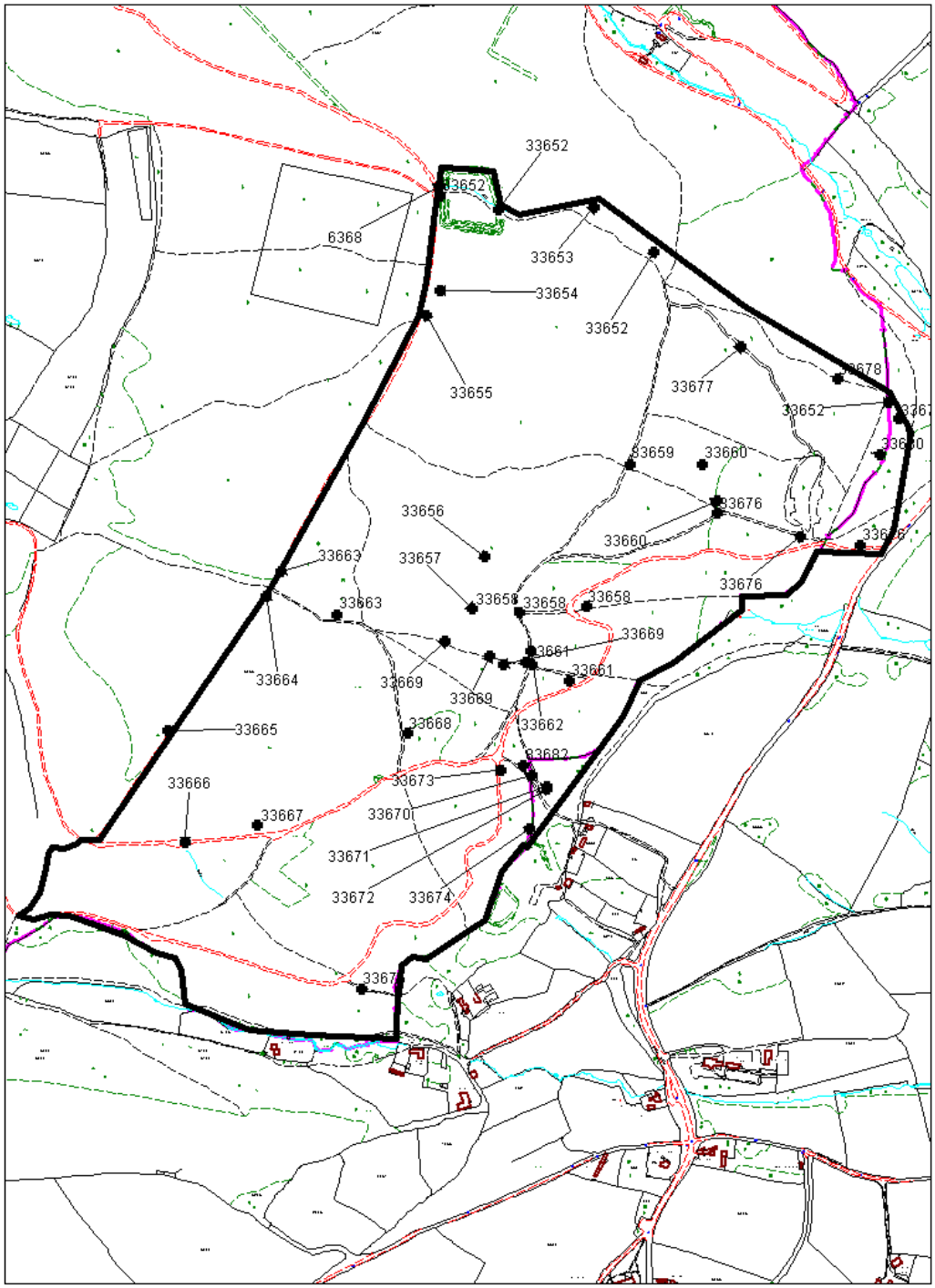

Figure 2: Location of features recorded during the survey.

Site and Feature Condition

Many of the archaeological features recorded in Haye Park Wood are in a good state of preservation. An unknown number of features are likely to have been destroyed or damaged, however, as the result of modern, intensive forestry management practices. For instance, the park pale (HSM 33676) on the east side of the wood appears to have been cut by a conifer plantation; the ditch of the enclosure (HSM 6368) on the north side of the wood has been damaged by a modern forestry road. The distribution of surviving archaeological features is concentrated particularly on the lower south-eastern slopes and eastern fringes of Haye Park Wood; this is likely the result of more intensive forestry activities in other areas of the wood.

Archaeological features have also been damaged as a result of modern recreational activities. The park pale (HSM 33676) on the east side of the wood has been damaged by the construction of a car park access road. The park pale (HSM 33652) on the north side of the wood is eroded in places where it is cut by recreational footpaths. The enclosure (HSM 6368) is cut on its east and west sides by the Mortimer Trail.

Discussion and Implications

Implications regarding the archaeological resource

The slopes of Haye Park Wood are susceptible to erosion through clear felling and scarification. Archaeological features are at risk as a result of erosion, and as a result of modern forestry activities that include the replacement of deciduous woodland by conifer plantations. Two archaeological features that are particularly at risk are the later prehistoric enclosure (HSM 6368) on the north side of Haye Park Wood, and the park pale (HSM 33676) on the east side of the wood near Black Pool. The enclosure has been damaged on its west side by construction of a a forestry road, and is now covered by immature conifers. The park pale been damaged by forestry activities.

Recreational activities also pose a threat. The park pale (HSM 33676) on the east side of the woodland has been damaged by the construction of a car park and access road. On the north side of the wood, the park pale (HSM 33651) and the enclosure (HSM 6368) have both been damaged by recreational footpaths, including the Mortimer Trail that is heavily used in this section.

Implications regarding site condition

Some linear features, including holloways and woodland boundaries, have survived well. In some instances, functional and chronological relationships between features can be determined. For example, the enclosure (HSM 6368) and a ditch (HSM 33653) are cut by the medieval deer park pale (HSM 33652). They both, therefore, predate the park pale and are unlikely to be functionally associated with it. The juxtaposition of the charcoal burning platform (HSM 33671) and the saw pit (HSM 33672) suggests that both are contemporary and functionally associated.

Implications for future management

Archaeological features are at risk in areas of intensive recreational use and forestry activities. Preservation of archaeological features can be enhanced through well-informed management strategies that recognise both the value and the non-renewable nature of the archaeological resource. This applies especially to the later prehistoric or Romano-British enclosure (HSM 6368) and to the medieval deer park pales (HSM 33652, HSM 33676). This should also apply to features that represent post-medieval woodland management practices, e.g., well-preserved holloways, including HSM 33663, HSM 33669, HSM 33670, HSM 33678; charcoal burning platforms (HSM 33671) and saw pits (HSM 33672, HSM 33680).

Implications for future field work.

Haye Park Wood contains archaeological evidence of a range of human activities, including Iron Age or Romano-British occupation, deer park management, woodland management, and quarrying over a considerable span of time, from the early medieval period to the post-medieval. It is possible to determine functional and chronological relations between some archaeological features, and to outline broad phases of change in woodland management and resource exploitation. A more intensive archaeological survey should be undertaken, particularly in those areas where the archaeological resource is at risk. This is, perhaps, best undertaken as part of an overall management strategy for the woodland, in order to record, identify and assess archaeological features, prior to any future extension of recreational facilities or forestry activities in Haye Park Wood.

Archive

1 Dictaphone Tape
1 Transcription Record
1 Excel Database
1 Mapinfo Data File
This Document

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the co-operation and support given by the Forestry Commission during this survey, and their commitment to the pilot scheme.

I would like to thank Dr. Keith Ray, County Archaeologist, and Tim Hoverd, Archaeological Projects Officer, for their advice and editorial comments in the preparation of this report.

Validation

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. Keith Ray, County Archaeologist

Appendix: Database of Features and Grid References

HSM No.	Easting	Northing	Site Type	Period	Description
33652	349829	271972	Park Pale	Medieval	Aligned NW-SE, good preservation
33652	349480	272196	Park Pale	Medieval	Continuation
33652	349249	272258	Park Pale	Medieval	Continuation
33652	349161	272280	Park Pale	Medieval	Continuation
33653	349392	272263	Ditch	Medieval	Aligned E-W, good preservation, cut by park pale 33652
33654	349161	272138	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned E-W
33655	349141	272101	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned E-W
33656	349228	271742	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33657	349210	271664	Quarry	Post-medieval	Semi-circular, 35m x 25m x 20m deep, entrance on E
33658	349210	271664	Trackway	Post-medieval	Aligned E-W from entrance to quarry 33657, good preservation
33658	349281	271659	Trackway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33658	349380	271668	Trackway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33659	349444	271880	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33660	349553	271880	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NE-SW, good preservation
33660	349575	271825	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33661	349355	271558	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33661	349290	271586	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33662	349297	271601	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33663	349008	271656	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE, good preservation
33663	348925	271720	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33664	348902	271684	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33665	348757	271484	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33666	348782	271316	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned N-S
33667	348890	271342	Trackway	Post-medieval	Aligned N-S
33668	349113	271480	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33669	349169	271617	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned E-W, good preservation
33669	349235	271595	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33669	349257	271581	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33669	349298	271582	Holloway	Post-medieval	Continuation
33670	349298	271416	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE, good preservation
33671	349321	271400	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post-medieval	Circular, 5m diameter, poor preservation
33672	349321	271396	Saw Pit	Post-medieval	Sub-circular 1.5m diameter, 0.5m deep, poor preservation
33673	349253	271424	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE, good preservation
33674	349295	271338	Quarry	Post-medieval	Irregular, 70m x 50m x 20m deep, entrance on S
33675	349045	271099	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33676	349574	271808	Park Pale	Medieval	Aligned NW-SE, good preservation until cut by forestry activities
33676	349698	271773	Park Pale	Medieval	Cut by car park access road
33676	349788	271759	Park Pale	Medieval	Cut by modern road B4361
33677	349609	272056	Ditch	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE

33678	349754	272007	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned E-W, merges with park pale 33652, good preservation
33679	349845	271947	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NW-SE
33680	349816	271894	Saw Pit	Post-medieval	Rectangular, 1.5m x 0.5 x 0.5m deep, poor preservation
33681	349574	271808	Holloway	Post-medieval	Aligned NE-SW, good preservation
33682	349285	271432	Platform	Post-medieval	Rectangular, 20m x 5m x 0.5m deep, good preservation
6368	349161	272294	Enclosure	Iron Age/ Romano-British	Rectangular, bank and ditch, 85m x 70m, good preservation but cut by park pale 33652, forestry road and footpath